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CURRENTS

READINGS IN RACE RELATIONS

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The Urban Alliance on Race Relations, formed in July 1975 "to promote a stable and healthy multiracial environment in the community," is a non-profit organization made up of volunteers from all sectors of the community.

The Urban Alliance on Race Relations is an educational agency and an advocate and intermediary for the visible minorities. It works toward encouraging better race relations, increased understanding and awareness among our multicultural, multiracial population through programmes of education directed at both the private and public sectors of the community. It is also focusing its efforts on the institutions of our society including educational systems, employment, government, media, legislation, police, social service agencies and human services, in order to reduce patterns of discrimination and inequality of opportunity which may exist within these institutions.

The work of the organization is carried out through working committees such as: Educational Institutions; Legislation; Media; Law Enforcement.

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RACISM IN THE PRESS

It should not surprise anyone that minorities want more and better coverage of their communities; they want that coverage to be supportive of them and their interests; they want the press to examine more responsibly issues which impact their welfare; and of course they are concerned about the fact that so few individuals from minority groups are employed by the media industry.

However there is really no obligation for the media to respond to any of these concerns. Canadian laws do not require the press to be fair, objective or representative. Yet if the press claims to represent the public and public interest, persuasive arguments can be made for the inclusion of minority issues in the media. Indeed, previous issues of this journal have presented some of those arguments in some detail.

While these concerns are of great importance, this particular issue of *Currents* is concerned with the more overt and more urgent and serious problem: the inclusion of ideas, images and words which demean and malign particular groups of people, and which encourage racial stereotyping and excites fear and hatred against racial minorities.

What can the community, the individual citizen do to stop this active promotion of racial intolerance and bias? While one must acknowledge that many newspapers and other sectors of the media have made enormous strides in attempting to respond fairly and accurately to the realities of a multiracial society, there are still a number of newspapers in Canada whose coverage remains selective and sensational.

The purpose of this issue of *Currents* is to contribute to an understanding of the effect that the dissemination of ideas in the print media can have in

POWER WITHOUT RESPONSIBILITY: THE PRESS WE DON'T DESERVE

A Content-Analysis of the Toronto Sun

Effie Ginzberg

"When we were children growing up in a seemingly more innocent world than present, we used to chant:

*'Sticks and stones may break my bones
but names will never hurt me!'*

With a little added knowledge of psychology and the experience of a great deal of history, we have sorely learned that just the opposite is the case. Sticks and stones, may in the circumstances, mean very little.

but words may lacerate a human being."

(Patrick Lawlor, Q.C., 1984)

For a number of years the Toronto Sun has been accused of treating various minority groups in a negative, derogatory manner. In particular, it has been accused of biased, inaccurate and unbalanced portrayals of visible minorities.

In order to address this concern, I was asked by the Urban Alliance on Race Relations to undertake an analysis of articles, columns and editorials of

the Toronto Sun, from 1978 to October 1985. A brief review of these findings is presented below. This review contains only a fraction of the materials referred to in the study.

The Toronto Sun has a daily circulation of 281,499, and on Sunday this number increases to 462,073. The potential impact on public opinion of such wide circulation cannot be underestimated. The press must be considered a potent and pervasive influence upon our society. Indeed the media has characterized itself as the third greatest force of influence in society, after the government and business (Dick, 1985:176). It is because of the power and influence of the press on society that we must respond to the concerns expressed by members of the community that the Toronto Sun presents a prejudiced and racist viewpoint toward racial and ethnic minorities.

furthering and reinforcing racial stereotypes. Secondly, it is hoped that this issue will encourage an on-going and serious scrutiny by us all of the attitudes, effects and behaviour of the press. Finally and perhaps most importantly, through describing various community initiatives, it will provide some assistance to individuals and community groups in pursuing appropriate and effective avenues for achieving a press we deserve. Racism and

prejudice in the press should not be tolerated.

The press not only has freedoms but also responsibilities.

The press observe and comment on what other people do. Equally, the individual citizen has a responsibility to observe, analyse and comment on what the media does.

Tim Rees

This study was undertaken with full awareness of the necessity of a free press for a free society. Censorship of reporting of the news is an evil which no democratic society can tolerate. But with all freedoms and rights come obligations and responsibilities. As was stated by the President of the C.B.C. (In C.B.C. Journalistic Policy 1982): . . .

"Freedom of the press, both written and electronic, is a cornerstone of our society, since freedom itself cannot flourish without the full flow and interchange of ideas, opinion and information. This is a tradition central to the democratic ideal and it has been accepted in that context as vital to the defense of individual liberty . . . journalism has become a powerful and influential part of the information media, it must enjoy the freedoms and recognize the obligations conferred upon it by that status.

. . . To meet these expectations, the media must be socially responsible; that is to say that freedom of the media requires a sense of public responsibility on their part. The journalist has become an "agent" for the citizen in the gathering of information and knowledge - which is a position of trust and great influence. In these circumstances, the media have an obligation to be fair, accurate, thorough, comprehensive and balanced in their presentation of information."

The press have freedoms and responsibilities, and so also does the community. The community has the right to fair representation in the media and the right and responsibility to address what they believe is unfair and prejudicial reporting.

It is important however to reiterate that there is no suggestion being implied that news which is critical of issues which affect racial minorities should be suppressed. This indeed would constitute a threat to press freedom. Moreover efforts to improve race relations would be damaged if the public were to feel that information was being hidden from them. A healthy democracy depends on the availability of facts and the clash of opinions about them.

There is however a crucial difference between the portrayal of facts from differing viewpoints so that the readers can make up their own minds about them, and the distortion of information that stereotypes racial minorities.

Racial tolerance and equality depend in large measure upon the pursuit of knowledge and understanding. Journalists and editors have an obligation to provide that understanding.

The Effects of Prejudice and Racism

Prejudice and racism are a community concern. And not just a concern of the groups that are the targets of prejudice. It is the concern of all the members of our society. We all pay the price, whether it is in the destruction of property, civil unrest or political instability. Racial minorities are part of the fabric of our society and prejudiced attacks upon them can delay or prevent their integration as full and equal participants. As well, such attacks have a direct impact on the total community as they encourage intergroup tensions and conflict. The recent experiences of other countries demonstrate the potentially destructive role the media can play in heightening racial prejudice and discrimination and creating a fertile environment for the eruption of racial conflict. These costs are social, but there are also the individual costs; the individual effects of prejudice and racism.

People subjected to racism and prejudice are profoundly affected by the experience. Discrimination often results in minority groups being constrained in social and occupational attainments. Individuals within the group are exposed to greater physiological and emotional stress, often due to greater financial stress and lack of opportunities to participate in positive social roles and interaction with the larger society.

The Components of Prejudice and Racism

To determine whether prejudice and racism is or is not present in the Toron-

to Sun we must first define our terms. What is prejudice and how do we know when it is present or absent? What is racism and how is racism manifested? Fortunately, there is a wealth of empirical research on the phenomena of prejudice and racism on which to draw for our understanding.

First, prejudice and racism are not independent of each other. They are related phenomena. Racism is a form of prejudice expressed along racial lines. We can state that prejudice is a general form of thinking and/or behaving, and racism is a particular type of prejudice.

Prejudice, as defined by the New English Dictionary, is a feeling or affect, either favourable or unfavourable, toward a person, group or object prior to, or not based on, actual experience, without sufficient warrant in that it lacks basis in fact.

Prejudice is operationalized, or put into action, in various ways. Since people very seldom express open contempt for racial and ethnic minorities in our society where such prejudices are not considered socially acceptable, it is often only in the presence of other behaviours that prejudice against these groups is made known. The most significant contribution of studies on prejudice to understanding the phenomenon is that prejudice is not a single thought or behaviour, but a pattern or system of behaviours (Allport, 1979). These behaviours are not independent of each other. When one is present, others are also likely to be present. We know the presence or absence of prejudice by the presence or absence of the related behaviours.

What are the component parts of prejudice? Prejudice is associated with the occurrences of these phenomena:

1. Negative Stereotypes;
2. Defense Mechanisms;
3. Racism;
4. Scapegoating;
5. A Pattern of Demagogy: The Inciting of Fear and Hatred.

Our research question, "Is there prejudice and racism in the Toronto Sun's articles, columns and editorials?" is answered by examining several distinct, but related questions. The research questions that directed this content-analysis of the Toronto Sun therefore were:

1. Does the Toronto Sun present a negative, stereotypic representation of ethnic and racial minorities?
2. Is there evidence of the presence of defense mechanisms? Do the writers in the Toronto Sun try to rationalize, deny or in other ways justify their prejudices?
3. Are there statements in the Toronto Sun that support the position of racism, that the White race is genetically superior to non-White races?
4. Does the Toronto Sun use Scapegoats as explanatory causes?
5. Is there evidence of a pattern of demagoguery in the presentation of issues that concern racial and ethnic minorities? Specifically, is there content in the articles, columns and editorials of the Toronto Sun that are likely to incite fear and hatred of racial and ethnic minorities.

The Findings

With respect to question one, the study found many examples of negative stereotyping of racial and ethnic minorities in the Toronto Sun, only a few of which are presented here.

"It is true for example, that the Brixton rioters were black and probably a lot of them were on drugs."

Barbara Amiel
"Straight Talk on Blacks"
Oct. 1, 1985

Stereotype: WEAKNESS

"Passive resistance was the perfect weapon for India - huge, apathetic, inert. Passive resistance required little effort. It is the tactic of doing nothing - ideal for the Indian masses . . ."

"This recognition of the Indian trait, the philosophy of resignation is as brilliant as it is simple and requires a minimum of effort and thought."

"Ghandi's Legacy"
Peter Worthington
Dec. 16, 1982

Stereotype: UNCIVILIZED

" . . . to engage in the highly sophisticated practice of democracy, a practice which, palpably, is beyond the aptitudes of the majorities in Asia."

" . . . too many Afro-Asians abroad, even some of those with claims to the august rank of diplomat, possess only a veneer of civilization."

"Host's Dilemma"
McKenzie Porter
April 23, 1984

Stereotype: VIOLENT

"Before the 18th century, British won control in India, that land seethed as dozens of small barbaric states constantly made war on one another."

McKenzie Porter
Dec. 17, 1982

" . . . a tendency to violence in the settlement of religious disputes characterizes the typical Muslim male."

McKenzie Porter
Aug. 15, 1983

Stereotype: UNCIVILIZED

" . . . of bloody outrages staged by terrorists representing intolerable interests of Medieval and Stone Age people."

" . . . against attacks by savages."

McKenzie Porter
Oct. 9, 1985

With respect to question two, we can conclude that there is evidence of the use of defense mechanisms. That is, writers in the Toronto Sun do try to persistently rationalize, deny and in other ways, justify their prejudices.

For example denial is evidenced by such quotes as:

"they're going to do something about it - whether there really is a problem or not."

(in reference to an Ontario government task force on visible minorities in advertising)

"Colour This Report Shoddy"
Claire Hoy
Oct. 6, 1982

which state that there is no real or significant problem.

The denial of motives is the term used to describe the attempts at trying to reduce the credibility of those individuals or groups who state that prejudice and discrimination are problems in our society. For example:

"The government of our time has realized that all these injustice collectors, the special interest groups, the race relations industry, the feminists - all the pressure groups - are vital to the growth of government. It is a biological principle gone pathological like cancer. Every pressure group gives government a marvellous potential for growth."

"Prejudice is Big Business"
Barbara Amiel
May 29, 1983

The Sun even extends the use of the denial of motives to try to discredit one of the major, international figures of this century.

"Gandhi did not seek peace, but power". "Compassion was irrelevant in Gandhi's light and, as Amiel has hinted, perhaps non-existent in his make-up."

"Gandhi's Legacy"
Peter Worthington
Dec. 16, 1982

Rationalizations are also defense mechanisms which seek to justify the presence of prejudice and racism as being normal (i.e. everyone is prejudiced) or understandable under the circumstances (i.e. it's for their own good or they brought it on themselves).

"Canadians have been guilty of discrimination, it's true. But compared to any other country - go ahead, pick one - we hardly qualify as heavy duty racists."

Claire Hoy
"Old Hair Shirt Doesn't Fit"
March 8, 1984

"Apartheid represents a successful plan to save South African cities from the squalor that afflicts Bombay, Delhi and Calcutta through the huge, uncontrolled influx of rural poor."

McKenzie Porter
Sept. 23, 1985

With regards to question three, we found the belief in biological racism in that cultural representations are a product of genetics and that the White race is genetically superior to non-White races.

From McKenzie Porter:

"But the overwhelming majority of North American blacks now have some Caucasian blood and apart from the general economic and educational disparity they are little different from whites."

"... The blacks of North America have diverged widely from their distant relatives in Africa. In their music and dancing and in their athletic prowess some specific genetic distinctions shine through the environmental influences."

July 15, 1978

In reference to our fourth question, we found that the Toronto Sun uses scapegoats, specifically communists to blame as the cause of racial unrest.

"The hundreds of blacks dying in South Africa are victims of racism, but not by the dominating whites. It's the racism that is the by-product of the class warfare demanded by Marxists and liberals blinded by Marxism."

"Assigning Blame"
Editorial
July 24, 1985

And finally, and most disturbingly, the study found considerable evidence of statements that are likely to incite fear and/or hatred of racial and ethnic minorities. Statements that may cause fear and hatred suggest that racial and ethnic minorities are taking away jobs from Whites, eroding White values, and getting special privileges over Whites.

"Three months ago, I wrote a column about the large number of immigrants who are committing crimes and appearing in our courts to have their wrists slapped and then sent back on the streets to commit further crimes."

"Good Riddance to Trouble Makers"
Morton Shulman
April 2, 1985

"It strikes me that many self-proclaimed champions of racial harmony create more problems than they resolve."

"They cry out for equality, but demand special privileges."

"It's not equality they seek, it's privilege"

"Racial Harmony Clinker"
Claire Hoy
Jan. 9, 1985

Statements of fear and hatred occur in a pattern of demagoguery. Demagogues

play up false issues to divert the public attention from true issues as well as creating fear and hatred. An example of demagoguery from the Toronto Sun is:

"Toronto is gradually evolving its own set of Nuremberg race laws."

"Now City Hall authorities know the mayor wants visible minorities so self-censoring against whites begins."

"Our Nuremberg"
Editorial
March 4, 1983

"Because Muslims are more divisive than Christians they do not as yet constitute a serious military threat. If ever they resolve their differences, however, the 10 major sects of Muslims may present Christianity with an awesome challenge. Let us hope the Canadian department of immigration keeps in mind these points raised by the very liberal La Monde."

Pattern of Prejudice

While other newspapers have occasionally and perhaps inadvertently published inappropriate articles on these subjects there is a persistent pattern of prejudice and racism evident in the Sun.

The presence of prejudice in both editorials and columns of the Toronto Sun confirms a pattern that was found previously in the Toronto Sun by Rosenfeld and Spina (1977). In their review of the content of the Toronto Sun, they found that the Toronto Sun spoke with a single voice. The paper presented the reader with a single prejudiced world view in relation to racial and ethnic minorities, unlike the Toronto Star or the Globe and Mail, which presented differences of opinion and philosophy within their respective newspapers. They concluded that the Toronto Sun readers are not presented with a balanced set of opinions or ideology regarding racial and ethnic minorities.

Is this true of the Toronto Sun in 1985? Yes, despite the fact that we were able to identify two exceptions, one an editorial and the other a column by Joan Sutton*. The editorial "A Strand of Hair" discusses the injustice of apartheid. Joan Sutton's column "Waging War on Anti-Semitism" takes the perspective that to do nothing about racism and the spread of racism is not correct action. These two exceptions in no way invalidate the conclusions of this content-analysis given the massive preponderance of editorials and columns that are prejudiced and racist. The presence of these two exceptions do not serve to exonerate the Sun. Prejudice and racism is not an issue of balance. No responsible press should consider it acceptable journalistic policy to include content which reinforces racial prejudice. There is a crucial difference between the portrayal of issues from differing viewpoints, so that people can make up their own minds about them, and the distortion of these issues to promote a particular ideology.

The sheer volume of stereotypes, defense mechanisms, racism, scapegoating, and the presence of statements that are likely to cause fear and hatred can leave no doubt. There is considerable prejudice and racism manifested against non-Whites in the

Toronto Sun. All the elements of the pattern of prejudice were found to be present within the pages of the paper.

In addition, the pattern of prejudice in the Toronto Sun is observed across time. That is, articles were found that contain prejudice as early as 1973 and that the prejudice in the paper continues right through to the period in which this analysis was undertaken.¹

The evidence clearly shows the prejudice in the Toronto Sun is not an isolated single event but a series of events over time.

There can be no freedom without responsibility in the expression of freedom. The study concludes that the Toronto Sun has violated the fundamental freedoms and responsibilities that society has entrusted to the press.

Where do we find the prejudice in the Toronto Sun? We have found it in the editorials and in many columns by different writers. We did not examine the reporting of news items for prejudice. Such a quantified study was beyond the scope of this report. Likewise, Letters to the Editor were not reviewed. They also require a quantified approach. The quantified analysis remains to be done.

Reference to racial and ethnic minorities can be made without

negative stereotyping. Issues that concern racial and ethnic minorities can be discussed without inflammatory rhetoric and the incitement of fear and hatred. We do not say that all views must be our views. But we do say that there is not room for prejudice and racism in the Canadian press.

Effie Ginzberg is presently pursuing her M.A. in Social Psychology at York University. The study "Power Without Responsibility: The Press We Don't Deserve. A Content-Analysis of the Toronto Sun", is available from the Urban Alliance on Race Relations at \$10 a copy.

¹ Articles prior to 1977 are not reviewed in this report but we did find articles prior to 1977 that present the same pattern of prejudice. The Toronto Sun began publishing in 1971.

*Joan Sutton is not a regular columnist for the Toronto Sun.

THE COVERAGE OF CANADIAN IMMIGRATION POLICY IN THE GLOBE AND MAIL (1980 - 1985)

Michele DuCharme

The underlying premise of journalism is to inform, educate and entertain the reader in both an engaging and non-biased manner. Phrased in this way, the mandate for journalists seems clear and simple; the best news stories are those which convey a message quickly, accurately and objectively.

Unfortunately, as Robert Fulford, editor of *Saturday Night* has said "what is included in reporting bears the unbearable (sic) cultural markers, or the orientation of the writer/editor/publisher."¹ Failure to "... distinguish clearly between (the) writer's interpretations and the facts being reported"² has resulted in accusations of slanted coverage against the Canadian media by minority groups. Criticism over the kinds of news coverage given to minorities has ranged from "common complaints (which) involve (the) content of advertising, foreign and local news coverage, photos, editorial comment and cartoons"³, often deemed to be "unfair and inadequate"⁴, to outright charges of racism.

The Globe and Mail

Is the Globe and Mail guilty of this general accusation that the public is fed a steady diet of myths and stereotypes about minorities and immigrants?

As "Canada's national news-

paper", the Globe has been touted as an example of "reserved and even highbrow (journalism/reportage), aimed usually at a metropolitan audience of middle and upper income Canadians." Owned by Thomson Newspapers Ltd., the Globe caters to an upscale audience who, according to their own research, are better educated, better employed, wealthier and lead more vibrant active lifestyles."

The importance of the Globe and Mail in Canada can perhaps be summarized by the comment of a former employee, Walter Stewart, who said, "... if only 14 people across the country actually read the paper it would still be the most influential journal in Canada."

What kind of journalistic standards prevail at this "serious" publication?

Methodology

Immigration was chosen as an example of an issue which carries significant national importance. From the Canadian Newspaper Index files for the years 1980-85 under the headings "Immigrants" and "Immigration", 70 articles were selected from the Globe and Mail.

These articles were read several times and then analyzed according to criteria derived from *Between the Lines: How to Detect Bias and Propaganda in the Press and Everyday Life*,

by Eleanor MacLean. The analysis was based on data from the following:

1. Positioning and lay-out of the story i.e. what page did the article appear on; was the story placed above or below the fold? (The fold is the point at which the newspaper is folded in half. Important news is usually placed above the fold to grab the reader's attention).
2. Length of the article and size of type used.
3. Content of headlines and kickers (A kicker is a 2 or 3 word phrase placed under the headline).
4. Use of newsspeak (Newsspeak is language that distorts, confuses or hides reality).
5. Use of quotes.
6. Use of statistics.
7. Use of race/ethnic origin.

Slanted or biased reporting can result from any one of these "persuasion techniques" and the risk increases when they are combined. (In presenting the findings of this content-analysis, it should be stressed that this is a summary and does not represent the entire results. For reasons of space, it is not possible to cite all examples).

Content Analysis

1. Positioning and lay-out of articles

Studies on the "play" given to titles, positioning and lay-out of articles have proven that the "length of headline and location of story on the page and within the newspaper are indicators of the probability of a story being read as well as the importance readers will attach to it."⁵ Further evidence of the impact which these factors can have on meaning is found in the Equality Now! report which states that "... racial overtones can ... be conveyed by the positioning or layout of news items"⁶, particularly if the stories follow each other in one column or are placed side by side. While the items themselves might be unbiased, the cumulative effects of the positioning of headlines and of stories can give the impression that certain races or groups of people such

as immigrants, are always associated with the same characteristics and/or stereotypes.

This certainly proved to be the case in the survey of the Globe articles examined. The majority of the 70 stories tended to concentrate on the negative elements and consequences of immigration regulations. By emphasizing the problems immigrants cause for the system i.e., entrance rules have to be made tougher, quotas have to be set, amnesty plans must be implemented, refugee totals have to be cut, visa card systems need to be considered to curb illegal entry, and marriages of convenience must be refused, to name but a few examples drawn from the Globe articles, readers may come to believe that Canada has a serious 'immigration problem' and that immigrants themselves pose a threat, not only to the system, but also to Canadians.

In this instance, 16 of the 70 articles or 21% were found on the front page, and of those, 14 were placed above the fold. Several of these news items were separated by breaks (the point at which a story goes from one column or page to another) and corresponding heads were written to indicate where the articles continued. The following examples illustrate how unconscious bias or hidden meaning can be derived from the positioning and lay-out of stories.

- i) head: *"Immigration rules will be made tougher"*

(Globe and Mail, November 16, 1985, p. A1)

Kicker: *"Tighter rein on entrepreneurs"*

- break to page A24 -

new head: *"Entrance requirements tougher"*

- ii) corresponding story by the same reporter

head: *"Monitoring of immigrants pays off"*

(Globe and Mail, November 16, 1985, p. A24)

Kicker: *"Ontario stresses support for entrepreneurs"*

The issue of how many immigrant entrepreneurs are being let into Canada and what they are contributing seems to be a paradoxical one, if the reader is to go by these articles. On one hand, there is a "tighter rein" being placed on entrepreneurs, implying that they need to be held back. Yet Ontario is making a point of stressing its "support" for entrepreneurs. As a result, the reader may be confused as to whether or not there is actually an excess number of entrepreneurial immigrants coming into Canada. However, a glance at the two heads may help to sway opinion.

The reader learns that immigration rules will be made tougher (repeated twice) and that the monitoring of immigrants has paid off. The articles, placed side-by-side, would seem to support the impression that large numbers of immigrants, especially entrepreneurs, are trying to get into Canada illegally to find work or to start new businesses.

The manner in which the articles are presented reinforces the myth and stereotype that "immigrants are taking away jobs from Canadians. They shouldn't be allowed in the country." A careful reading of the two articles, however, reveals that procedures for "well-heeled immigrants" are to be toughened up because the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission (CEIC) doesn't "... know what they (the entrepreneurs) are up to or how successful they are", even though the CEIC is supposed to oversee the entrepreneurial program. Thus, despite the fact that the CEIC is at fault for not keeping track of any of the entrepreneurs after they arrived in Canada, it is the immigrant who gets the bad press and not the government.

2. Length of article and size of type used

The majority of the 70 articles were approximately 20 paragraphs long and followed the traditional inverted pyramid format for the presentation of news stories in which details are listed in descending order of importance. Ironically, one of the shortest

news items of all those surveyed was also one of the most positive in terms of portraying immigrants.

The six-paragraph article entitled "Otto Land says immigrants could rescue economy" (Globe and Mail, June 20, 1984, p. 6) dealt with the former 1970 federal minister of immigration's proposal that "... 20 million should be allowed to immigrate ... to provide unimagined stimulation for the struggling economy." The story could have been given more serious consideration and visibility by placing it on or nearer to the front page instead of on page six. Any measure deemed capable of rescuing the Canadian economy - an urgent matter of national concern - surely deserves more than a six-paragraph mention.

Size and style of type used was generally uniform for heads with the exception of "IMMIGRATION STING" (Globe and Mail, August 20, 1980), printed in all caps. The major variant for typeface was contrast in the blackness of type. Its drawing power can best be used when there are a number of top stories, all vying for space on the front page. By varying the contrast, the reader can be enticed to examine each article immediately or on a more leisurely basis. Thus, putting a headline like "IMMIGRATION STING" into all caps not only ignores the standard guidelines for writing heads (see Content of heads and kickers) but also displays a greater desire than usual to draw readers into the story. The message implied is that immigration is disrupting the system.

3. Content of headlines and kickers

The purpose of the headline/kicker is two-fold: in addition to encapsulating the content of the article in ten words or less, headlines attempt to first grab the reader's attention and then draw him/her into seeking additional information. This need to draw in the reader is understandable, considering that the headline is read more frequently than the item itself.

The reader generally reads the first one or two paragraphs, then skims the article for key words and

quotes and then jumps to the last few paragraphs.⁷ However, the question of which words are chosen to make up a headline or kicker is the real crux of the issue.

Headlines are generally classified into two basic categories: banners, which stretch the full width of the page and are reserved for top stories, and labels, which indicate the start of a new article but do nothing to arouse interest (i.e. "Doctor assails ideas of jury", *Globe and Mail*, April 3, 1980). However, headlines which sensationalize or capitalize on controversial items also appear in the press and are referred to as screamers (i.e. "Bar schizophrenic immigrants: jury", *Globe and Mail*, April 2, 1980).

An interesting analysis of the selection process involved in writing heads can be found in MacLean's *Between the Lines*, in which the author includes a chart on the formula for producing propaganda headlines. Although the formula "... comes from a description of actual techniques used widely in Latin America by various sources of propaganda", the bare bones structure is useful and illuminating when

applied to a breakdown of selected *Globe and Mail* heads⁸ as shown below:

4. Use of newsspeak (i.e. language that distorts, confuses or hides reality)

Impressions derived from headlines and kickers come from the choice of words used to produce them, which in turn are governed by the subject matter of those stories deemed appropriate enough to be covered or picked up by a wire service.

An overview of the words used to describe immigrants and how they should be 'dealt with', based on selected stories in the *Globe*, confirmed the findings of the 1983 Community Forum on Media Project which stated that "the media tends (sic) to feature negative aspects of immigrant-related issues." By emphasizing the "vivid, deviant and sensational details (of Canadian immigration policy) versus a comprehensive understanding and a sense of (its) historical development", the media give credence to familiar stereotypes and tired myths concerning immigrants and refugees.

A recent example of the *Globe and Mail* using newsspeak to turn a misconception into reality was a front-page article on 'public reaction' (in actual fact, 110 participants interviewed over a three-day period in six Canadian cities) which ran with the headline '3rd World immigrants seen as job-stealers, study finds' (*Globe and Mail*, November 30, 1985). It is important to emphasize that the word "job-stealers" never appeared in the story, although a connection between immigrants and employment was mentioned.

Newsspeak was also found in an item in the "Inside" listings (Inside is a one-column summary of four or five important news stories which contains a brief synopsis of each and is located on the front page) in response to the threat of illegal immigration. This particular item, entitled "New snare tried to stop illegals" (*Globe and Mail*, August 29, 1983), dealt with a proposal to issue disembarkation cards to visitors to Canada in an effort to reduce illegal immigration. Aside from the fact that the card system was not a novel concept, as the head implied, the word "snare", most commonly used in conjunction with trapping wild animals, did not appear anywhere in the story.

In both instances, the headlines elected to go with a familiar stereotype or an eye-catching word that gave the unmistakable impression that immigrants were more trouble than they were worth. How else could the reader help but regard a group of people described as being "desperate", "gullible"; and "unlawful",⁹ ... liable to a background check as criminal or security risks¹⁰ and who are supposedly "... crashing the borders in growing numbers each year and living underground in major cities across Canada?"¹¹

5. Use of quotes

A major dilemma for journalists is deciding which quotes should be included or discarded in a particular story. Used properly, quotes are an effective way of giving information a more human and/or authoritative

TABLE I
HEADLINE = SUBJECT + VERB + OBJECT

| SCAPEGOAT TERM | GROUNDLESS ACCUSATION IN THE FUTURE | GLITTERING GENERALITY |
|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| a) 3rd World immigrants | seen as | job-stealers |
| b) Immigration policy | called risk to | Canadian educators' jobs |
| c) Immigrant with record | gets to stay | in Canada |
| d) Poll | finds support for | all-white society |
| e) Deportation order is quashed: baby killer | can stay | in Canada |
| f) Bar immigrants | from skilled jobs | unions in construction trades urge |
| g) Immigration | flow | curbed |
| h) Immigrant | gave | nothing |

touch and can add colour and spice to what might otherwise be a dull recounting of events. However, a danger exists in using quotes out of context (often referred to as 'loaded' quotes), because they may overshadow the original intent of the story. And even though the journalist may not agree with the content of a particular quote, he or she is nonetheless responsible for the story.

It is a common journalistic practice to place powerful quotes near the end of an article, especially when said by a figure of authority. This often gives the story one last punch. However, the average reader does not have the time or the interest to read each and every article thoroughly from start to finish. Thus, an emphatic quote may be the last words a reader sees as he/she will likely skim the contents and then jump to the end of the article.

The following quotes are taken from the beginning, middle and endings of selected articles and are included with their corresponding headlines:

1) Head: *"Future mosaic: just a numbers game?"*

(Globe and Mail, May 24, 1980)

Quote: *"Being a ditch digger or a busboy in Canada is a very desirable job for most people in the world."*

One obvious interpretation of this remark is that immigrants do not have very high career aspirations and will gladly take on almost any kind of job, no matter how menial.

ii) Head: *"Immigration policy called risk to Canadian educators' jobs"*

(Globe and Mail August 6, 1980)

Quote: *"Qualified Canadian graduates face unemployment risk because immigration officials do not interfere with the hiring of foreign teachers by post-secondary institutes."*

The clear message is that immigrants are taking jobs away from Canadians, especially young people.

iii) Head: *"High unemployment curbs immigration"*

(Globe and Mail, November 2, 1983)

Quote: *"Although the economy is improving and the rate of employment is down (emphasis mine) I am continuing the restriction on selected workers from abroad to protect jobs for Canadians."*

Although it is not impractical to ensure that all Canadians who wish to work have access to employment, this quote implies that immigrants pose a threat to Canadian jobs no matter what the rate of unemployment and that restrictions are needed as safeguard measures.

iv) Head: *"New rules open doors to crime, Tory charges"*

(Globe and Mail, June 4, 1984)

Quote: *"The paranoia is in the immigration department and right now the paranoia is against the Pacific Rim, 'the Yellow Peril'."*

This headline and quotation suggests that even the Immigration Department is paranoid about the numbers of Chinese and Japanese people coming into Canada, and that by letting in more "Pacific Rim" immigrants, the crime rate will be increased.

v) Head: *"MacDonald says policy will reflect slow growth"*

(Globe and Mail, December 10, 1984)

Quote: *"She acknowledged a hardening of hearts toward immigrants and refugees in Canada - 'I can understand that there is a certain nervousness in any country . . . in a period of recession. People look at the job situation. They want to protect their own jobs.'"*

Again the message is that immigrants take jobs away from Canadians, especially during a recession - even Flora MacDonald, the Minister of Em-

ployment and Immigration, thinks so.

6. Use of Statistics

According to MacLean, "people often use statistics to 'prove' statements that the figures do not prove at all. Although they can be very useful, statistics must be used carefully and in moderation."¹²

About 80% of the Globe articles examined in this content-analysis focused on the issue of numbers of immigrants and refugees entering the country. News stories on immigration levels and quotas appeared at least once a month on average over the 5-year period studied, and sometimes more often, which tended to result in lists of varying figures, contradictory estimates and general confusion. Although actual numbers were not always included in the headlines, the substitutes used were just as effective in getting the meaning across, as indicated by the following examples:

- *"Ottawa revamps refugee program, increases 1980 quota by 10,000"*

(Globe and Mail, April 3, 1980)

- 7 months later -

- *"Canada cuts refugee total for next year"*

(Globe and Mail, November 1, 1980)

- *"Government to stem tide of alien entry"*
(Globe and Mail, June 30, 1983)

- *"New snare tried to stop illegals"*
(Globe and Mail, August 29, 1983)

- *"Ottawa to probe 75,000 suspected of being aliens"*
(Globe and Mail, May 18, 1984)

- *"Immigration level to keep dropping with 1985 quota"*
(Globe and Mail, November 20, 1984)

- "Immigration increase necessary to maintain population, study says" (Globe and Mail, June 28, 1985)

Not only are some of these statistics contradictory and misleading, but more importantly, the headlines leave the impression that Canada is being overrun by all sorts of illegal immigrants.

7. Use of race/ethnic origin

Unlike the British National Union of Journalists' code of conduct which encourages journalists to "resist the temptation to sensationalize issues which could harm race relations", Canadian journalists are subject only to their own conscience and the policy of the newspaper they work for.

The problem in using race or ethnic background in Canadian stories is magnified when one considers that the majority of immigrants now entering the country are non-white. The following examples show how inclusion of race and ethnic background may help to shape the reader's perceptions:

- "Indo-Pakistani, Chinese communities lead grown in Metro" (Globe and Mail, August 20, 1985)

paragraph 1: these communities "are growing by leaps and bounds"

paragraph 9: "the surge (emphasis mine) in Indo-Pakistani and Chinese immigration . . ."

- "Some would send you back", judge tells man from Jamaica" (Globe and Mail, June 25, 1985)

kicker: "Immigrant 'gave nothing'"

paragraph 1: "A Jamaican immigrant was sentenced to 26 years in jail yesterday . . . of attempted murder"

paragraph 7: "Judge Carruthers said that many Canadians look at the cost of imprisoning a perennial ne'er-do-well like Mr.

Payne and wonder: "Why don't you just send him back where he came from.""

- "The back door" (Globe and Mail, November 5, 1983) kicker: "Smugglers use Canada as aliens' route to U.S."

paragraph 4: "Investigators say Toronto with its large ethnic communities is the key smuggling centre in Canada with at least 10 smuggling rings."

paragraph 10: "According to an RCMP officer, gathering information about immigrant smuggling is difficult because it is not considered a crime by many people in the ethnic communities."

Once again, the reader may come away from these articles with the impression that many immigrants are unlawful troublemakers, who give "nothing" to Canada and condone illegal activities such as smuggling.

Conclusions

The majority of articles surveyed in the Globe and Mail were straight or hard news stories which attempted to relay the facts, as opposed to human interest stories. However, 12 of the 70 articles were judged to contain slanted or biased coverage, based on the seven criterion used in the content analysis.

While one certainly does not want to suggest that only positive news should be reported regarding immigrants and immigration, there is a very real danger in limiting coverage of immigrant-related issues to citations of quotas, regulations and problems. Any publication which refers to itself as "Canada's National Newspaper" should be representing the interests and issues of all Canadians in the same

manner. However, the Globe and Mail does not fulfill its promise according to this content analysis.

There is a lack of in-depth feature articles outlining how immigration policies affect immigrants as well as how immigrants themselves feel about their access to housing, health care, education and employment in Canadian society. Instead, too much emphasis appears to have been given to merely parroting government figures and policies concerning immigration levels and quotas, which tend to fluctuate on a frequent basis.

Greater attention must be paid to language, especially concerning the writing of headlines. Journalists and editors should be encouraged to stay away from clichés and stereotypic imagery, which includes such phrases as: "floods" of refugees; the "flow" of immigrants; the need to "stem the tide" of illegal aliens; the "luring" of entrepreneurs into Canada; how immigrants and refugees "wrack" and "gatecrash" the system, and the questionable "surge" in numbers of people immigrating to this country. For the most part, these expressions are outdated, overestimated and uncalled for.

Although several of the 70 articles studied attempted to go beyond the mere recounting of facts by injecting some human feeling in the "plight" of immigrants, most left the reader wondering what effects immigrants really are having on Canada and Canadians.

One way to strive for clarity in this area would be for the Globe and Mail to exercise more caution when reporting opinion polls and surveys. According to MacLean, "even the most painstakingly done statistical surveys must be examined closely, because it is not always possible to describe reality accurately by reducing it to numerical data. A survey or opinion poll should never be the sole basis on which you make a decision".¹³ The article entitled "3rd World immigrant seen as job-stealers, study finds"

was a glaring example of misusing statistics. Although it was considered important enough to rate a front-page banner headline, no other sources aside from the government study were consulted. When one remembers that only 110 people were involved in this survey over a three day period in six urban centres across Canada, this misuse of data becomes even more alarming.

Several examples of biased and slanted reporting have been illustrated in this content analysis of articles on Canadian immigration policy over the past five years. Equality Now!, the report of the Parliamentary Committee on Visible Minorities in Canadian Society, stated two years ago that "the concept of multicultura-

lism (in which immigrants play an integral part), is contradicted regularly and flagrantly, if unintentionally, in the current practices and products of the media institutions."¹⁵ The Globe and Mail, which has been dubbed Canada's national newspaper and the journal of the professional and managerial class, is clearly not exempt from this charge.

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FOOTNOTES

¹ Robert Fulford, "White Lies", *Saturday Night*. Toronto: Saturday Night Publishing, Sept. '83, p. 5.

² Eleanor MacLean, *Between the Lines: How to Detect Bias and Propaganda in the Press and Everyday Life*. Montreal: Black Rose

Books, 1981, p.56.

³ Toronto Star, May 20, 1985, p. A12.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Benjamin J. Singer, "Minorities and the Media", *Communications in Canadian Society*. Don Mills, Ont.: Addison-Wesley Publishers Limited, 1983, p. 229.

⁶ Canada, House of Commons, Report of the Special Committee on Visible Minorities in Canadian Society, *EQUALITY NOW!* Ottawa: March 1984, p. 94.

⁷ Singer, "Minorities and the Media", *op. cit.* p. 229.

⁸ The headlines are all taken from stories in the Globe and Mail from the following dates: November 30, 1985, pp. A1-A2; August 6, 1980, p. 10; January 6, 1982, p. 1; February 27, 1982, p.1; May 7, 1982, p. 5; December 5, 1980, p. 5; November 2, 1983, pp. 1-2; June 25, 1985, pp. 1-2.

⁹ Quotations taken from three separate Globe and Mail stories on the following dates: April 23, 1985, p. 1; May 15, 1981, p. 9; and August 29, 1983, p. 5.

¹⁰ Globe and Mail, May 24, 1980, p.10.

¹¹ Globe and Mail, December 10, 1984, p.M3.

¹² MacLean, *Between the Lines*, *op. cit.*, p.35.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Globe and Mail, November 30, 1985, p.1.

¹⁵ Canada, *EQUALITY NOW!*, *op. cit.*, p.96.

The Canadian newspaper is a strange melange of politics, religion, abuse and general information.

Susannah Moodie

WHEN CARTOONS ARE NOT FUNNY

Mary Mouammar

Cartoons form an important part of today's press. As one authority has suggested, the purpose of political cartoons is to "enable us to see, in a true light, facts that might otherwise be hidden or misrepresented."¹

Cartoons are particularly effective when they consist solely of pictures

conveying certain messages and no script. In this context, the cartoon provides a visual message alone. Research indicates that because visual messages are more closely associated with the emotional side of humans they are, in most cases, absorbed far less critically than verbal messages. While verbal messages are often geared to the ra-

tional activity of dialogue, pictures or images are more passively absorbed. Cartoons therefore may arouse feelings - positive or negative as the case may be - while at the same time discouraging a conscious and objective assessment of their validity or accuracy.

This is of course the reason why advertisers choose to use pictures and images to convey the message about the product. The old cliché 'a picture is worth a thousand words' is not quite accurate. One may also add that it is more effective because it is more likely to be passively or unconsciously absorbed.

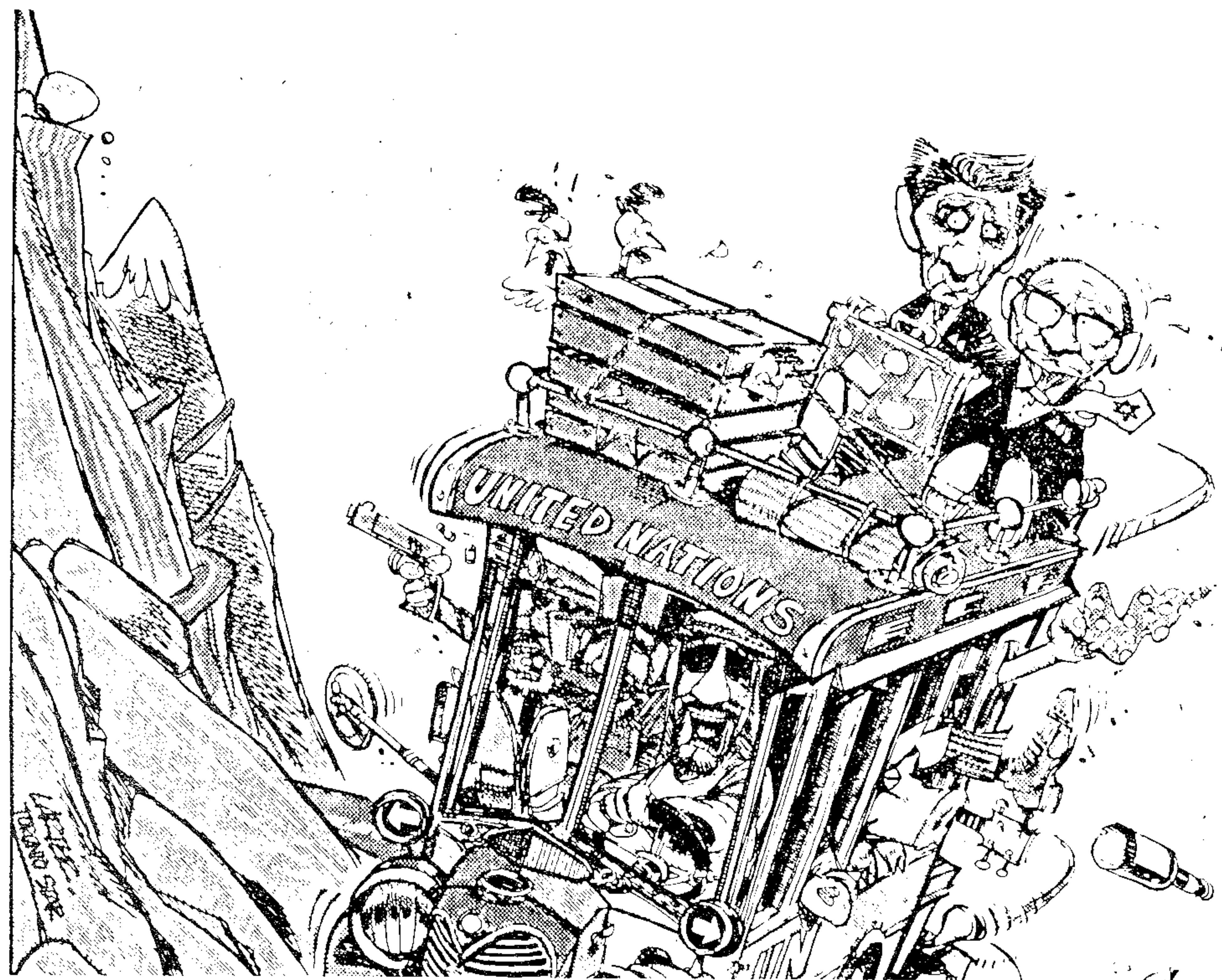
It is suggested that, because of the importance of the Editorial page, Editorial cartoons will have an even



There is a tendency among Canadian cartoonists to portray anyone they view as being 'rich, greedy and mean' as Arab: from Peter Lougheed as the 'blue eyed Arab' to Newfoundlanders now being called 'red-nosed Arabs'. 'Ara-

bised' Canadians are portrayed as living the fantasy life of great power and pleasure, as violent, and as taking the 'little guys' money. The three cartoons above, taken from the Toronto Star, indicate the point.

MACDONALD OF ARABIA



Wed., Feb. 10/82 Toronto Star
This cartoon is of interest in that it manages to incorporate a number of messages. First, Reagan and Begin are helplessly being driven by a bunch of Arab "bandits". Secondly, they are destroying the U.N. Third-

ly, they are littering the environment mindlessly. Fourth, they are a suicidal, trigger-happy bunch who are leading the world to a destructive end. And lastly, they are depicted as destroying the technology of the West (i.e. transportation).



The Jew as "terrorist and subversive" appeared on a Russian magazine cover, 1907.



An Arab with grotesque features flaunting control over the West appeared in the Boston Globe, 1980.

Another disturbing feature of the contemporary depiction of Arabs as grotesque and greedy Sheikhs, or as bloodthirsty subversives, is the striking

resemblance to the depiction of Jews in pre-Nazi Germany where Jews were either portrayed as greedy financiers strangling the West or as murderous anarchists.

stronger impact. The first reason is that the editorial page, like the first page, is a strategic one. More people read the first page and editorial page than any other. Secondly, the editorial page denotes authority. The editorial page is where a newspaper can reflect upon, analyze and interpret the news of the day within the context of its own policies and perspectives. Anything on the editorial page therefore tends to carry with it more weight because it is an 'appeal' to authority.

Political cartoons clearly play an important role in the media. In the busy world of today, a cartoon saves one time. Instead of reading a message, one can be informed of that message in one glance. The message is relayed quickly and effectively.

Because of their generally satirical nature, cartoons are often treated lightly as being just humorous. However, it should be clear that one should not underestimate the power of the message disguised in humour.

In objecting to a malicious "humorous" cartoon, one is often faced with the retort, 'where is your sense of humour?' The simple answer is that one's sense of humour ends where one's common sense begins. Common sense tells us that a malicious or damaging message not only has the same effect when conveyed verbally, but is often more effective when conveyed "humourously" in visual form.

An argument that has been used by editors is that the very nature of cartoons excuses the use of stereotypes. While cartoons certainly have their own conventions - and no one wishes to inhibit good humoured or pointed comments - one nevertheless does not have to accept that cartoons any more than other printed material, should be used either openly or by implication to stereotype racial minorities.

This is not to be interpreted that one is against political cartoons. Far from it. A once-in-a-while humorous cartoon is essential to make political figures and politics more bearable.

What one must object to however, is the repetition of certain themes that depict a whole race in a highly negative manner, to pinpoint them as the enemy and use them as scapegoats. Month after month, year after year, the repetition of the image is imprinted in the minds of the readers without any questioning. People become "unconsciously persuaded through repetition of the same theme." Through repetition in general and when the message is a humorous one it is absorbed even more readily.

The Arab as a Scapegoat

By way of illustration it is instructive to look at the media's treatment of Arabs.

The Western media, in general, has consistently given a distorted view of the Arabs. This is especially true of cartoons. Cartoons indeed have played an active role in sustaining and contributing to the highly negative image of Arabs by continually depicting them in images that help form and reinforce a negative stereotype.

Toronto's three major newspapers are no exception. The image of Arabs that has been depicted in their cartoons is that of bloodthirsty terrorists, blackmailing the West and threatening to destroy it. This, combined with with the depiction of Arabs as ignorant, cruel and backward, may lead to the conclusion that the Arabs are somewhat sub-human.

"Every war, every outburst of genocide, is prepared by propaganda which paints the victim, the Other, as less than human . . . This is the ultimate lesson of Auschwitz - he who treats his brother as less than human prepares the path to the furnace."

—I.F. Stone



The above cartoons are examples from German sources (circa 1920) depicting



the Jews as flaunting their wealth and control over European society.

The Washington Post
Thursday, May 28, 1981



Arabs pictured as flaunting their control over the West.



"Whew! I was afraid I'd be at the mercy of that bunch."

Depiction of both Arabs and Jews as being fat is a symbol that they are (or were) taking away the food from others.



The foundations for the Holocaust were laid by German caricaturists who depicted the Jews as serpents, defilers of Aryan maidens, wealthy through the exploitation of the Gentiles, and traitorous to German interests. In short, they were seen as different, and that made all the difference in treating them as less than human.

Now, as before, the political cartoon is being used, time and time again, to send messages conveying the image of an Arab as retrogressive, tyrannical, crafty, amoral, greedy, irrational, and the architect of international terrorism.

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Mary Mouammar is former Executive-Director of the Canadian Arab Federation and is a member of the National Action Committee on Ethnic and Visible Minority Women.

FOOTNOTE

¹. D. Grant in J.W. Benhough, *A Caricature History of Canadian Politics*, Grit Printing and Publishing, Toronto, 1974.

A ROTHSCHILD, LE ROI DES GRINCHES



Adding insult to injury, anti-Semitic cartoonists (both anti-Arab and anti-Jew) delight in depicting their victim as a pig. Two examples: left, a recent anti-OPEC cartoon, and above, a 60 year old anti-Rothschild cartoon.

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT: THE PRESS AND NATIVE PEOPLE

Kenneth Linklater

The press too often adopt an attitude of self-importance, which sometimes borders on a persecution complex, when accused of printing objectionable material. The press prefer to hide behind the moral wall of the principle of "the freedom of the press" to protect themselves against charges of racism and/or fomenting hatred against one or another ethnic or national group in Canada. It is as if the press, and the press alone, claim to represent freedom in the western world.

While my group, the Native Action Committee on the Media (NACOM) has asked for press censorship of sorts - somewhat similar to the Canadian content regulations or that of an overall agency such as the C.R.T.C. - I would think that most Canadians would want to see some sort of evenhanded treatment of all minorities.

Native Canadians keep telling me that they wish they could tell their side of the story. Their point of view on any number and variety of issues affecting not only themselves, but indeed Canadian and global issues is important. But even if there were Native Writers - we don't have many - they are constantly screened by Editors of a different persuasion.

The press - the owners and staff - represent the elite of Canada. The corporate Boards of Directors, the personalities on television, and the pictures of columnists in the print media are overwhelmingly Caucasian. There is nothing wrong with this per se, but it is important to recognize this fact when attempting to set the record straight.

In so much as the press refuse to organize their corporate structures to reflect the concerns of minority groups, then these groups are forced

to use other means or strategies to achieve some sort of balance in the Canadian media. The various avenues that have been pursued by NACOM include the Courts, lobbying the 'power-brokers' in Canadian society, and utilizing where possible government regulatory bodies such as Human Rights Commissions.

The following are examples of our experience with the Toronto Sun (1984) and the Winnipeg Sun (1983) and the problems which were encountered in trying to get corrective action.

The Winnipeg Sun - 1983

In March 1983, I and the Peguis Band Council laid complaints against the Winnipeg Sun and its' owners for contravening the Manitoba Human Rights Act.

We were concerned with two particular articles written by the columnist, Peter Warren. The first, entitled "Of Trudeau, Indians and Uncle Toms" which appeared on March 22, 1983, portrayed Native People as Aborigines and likened to a "Midget in a Whorehouse". The second article by Mr. Warren listed as the second of three parts and entitled "Let's end this National Disgrace", appeared in the Winnipeg Sun on March 24, 1983. In this follow-up article, Mr. Warren specifically stereotyped the Native Person to be a "drunk, a wastral, an idlemonger, a person who is only too happy to live on a government cheque, an inbreeder, a parasite, a non-contributor".

The particular sections of the Human Rights Act that we referred to were Sections 2 (1) and 2 (2) which state:

2 (1) No person Shall

- a) publish, display, transmit or broadcast or cause to be publish-

ed, displayed, transmitted or broadcast; or

- b) permit to be published, displayed, broadcast or transmitted to the public, on lands or premises, in a newspaper, through television or radio or telephone, or by means of any other medium which he owns or controls;

any notice, sign, symbol, emblem or other representation

- c) indicating discrimination or intention to discriminate against a person;

- d) exposing or tending to expose a person to hatred; because of the race, nationality, religion, colour, sex, marital status, physical or mental handicap, age, source of income, family status, ethnic or national origin of that person.

- 2 (2) Nothing in subsection (1) shall be deemed to interfere with the free expression of opinion upon any subject''.

The respondents, that is the journalist, the newspaper and its' owners, tried to have the hearing quashed with the argument that a newspaper editorial or journalistic comment did not fall within the classification of "notice, sign, symbol, emblem, or other representation". The legal argument was that editorial or journalistic comment should not be subject to the Manitoba Human Rights Act, although they might well be subject to other laws; for example, the Criminal Code or the law of defamation.

The second article put forward related to Section 2, subsection 2 which was felt to permit unrestricted editorial or journalistic comment. In an adjudication handed down March 12, 1984 by Jack M. Chapman, Q.C., both arguments were rejected and the preliminary objection was disallowed. With regard to the issue of Freedom of Speech, the adjudicator draws upon Professors Tarnopolsky and others to argue "that Subsection 2 should not be read as imposing an absolute limit on Section (2)1, but rather in context of a right of expression that is not ab-

solute and which must, in some circumstances, give way or be curtailed in order to make rights effective.

"It would appear unrealistic that on the one hand the legislature would enact enlightened legislation whose object was to lessen discrimination for all types and on the other hand would concurrently enact in the same stature legislation which would permit absolutely any type of discriminatory remark or comment and excuse same under the guise of freedom of expression."

On the topic of freedom of the press, Jack M. Chapman, Q.C. in his adjudication also quotes *Rinfret C. J. in Boucher v The King* 1951, SCR 265 at 271:

"Although freedom of expression is important, it does have its limitations . . . to interpret freedom as license, is a dangerous fallacy. Obviously, pure criticism or expression of opinion, however severe or extreme, is, I might say, to be invited. But, as was said elsewhere, there must be a point where restriction on individual freedom of expression is justified and required on the grounds of reason, or on the grounds of the democratic process and the necessities of the present situation. It should not be . . . that persons subject to Canadian jurisdiction, can insist on their alleged unrestricted right to say what they please and when they please, utterly irrespective of the evil results which are often inevitable".

Based upon this decision that the complaint should be heard under the jurisdiction of the Manitoba Human Rights Act, the Winnipeg Sun made an out of court settlement with the complainants.

The terms of the agreement included the preparation of policy guidelines that would be distributed to all journalists employed by the Sun, the publication of a series of informative articles on Indian issues, meeting with the Human Rights Commission with a

view to establishing an affirmative action programme for the hiring of persons of Indian origin, and a contribution of \$2,500 to the Winnipeg Foundation for the establishment of a fund for the advancement of Indian students in the journalism field.

The Toronto Sun - 1984

In the spring of 1984, I was involved in establishing the Native Action Committee on the Media (NACOM) in Toronto. The major concern of the organization was the Toronto Sun. It was our analysis that the Toronto Sun had gone beyond the moral and legal conventions of society in its coverage of Native Peoples. The coverage has resulted in causing hatred and misunderstanding toward Native peoples among the "majority society".

The purpose of NACOM is to seek a more balanced editorial viewpoint on or about the Native Peoples of Canada, to demand that the media (and the Toronto Sun in particular) expand its coverage of Natives away from self-serving, negative, or racist commentary to a more equitable balance from the Native viewpoint, and to seek redress for Natives on racist and negative media coverage.

Over the years, we have requested that the Attorney-General of Ontario file charges against the Toronto Sun under section 281 of the Criminal Code which prohibits inciting hatred and violence. We have also requested that the Ontario Human Rights Commission accept complaints under 12 or 28 of the Ontario Human Rights code, and to set up adjudication proceedings or legal tribunal to investigate past grievances against the Toronto Sun. In addition, we have laid a complaint with the Ontario Press Council. These efforts met with no success.

Another strategy we pursued was the compilation of a package of information concerning racist coverage by the Toronto Sun against Native Peo-

ple. This 47-page package was widely distributed throughout Canada to Human Rights Organizations, Anti-racist and Ethnic groups, Native Associations and Communities, and to all the print and non-print media. In addition, it was sent to all federal and provincial elected representatives demanding government intervention.

Conclusion

Although it is impossible to track the impact of this strategy, one can say that since the mass mailing (which incidentally was very expensive) was undertaken, the Toronto Sun coverage of Natives has not been altogether negative.

From our experience, it would appear that the law, as presently constituted, is an inadequate recourse to prevent the media from causing or fomenting hatred and/or violence against racial minorities. Officials of the Ontario Human Rights Commission felt that the Commission does not have the power or legislative base to deal with the media and could not take a formal complaint against the media. Their suggestion was that complaints on the media can only be handled by the Ontario Press Council. Our response to this suggestion was that the Ontario Press Council has not acted on previous complaints, nor is it likely to act to protect minority interests which do not further the corporate interest of its member organizations.

While the direct approach of negotiation and "conciliation" with the newspaper itself was inappropriate given the circumstances, the indirect approach of communicating with a wide number of decision-makers would appear to have made a difference. We do, however, continue to maintain a watchful eye on the coverage of Native Peoples.

Kenneth Linklater is Executive-Director of the Toronto Native Inter-Agency Council, the founder of NACOM, and a member of the Board of a number of Native organizations.

PREJUDICE, THE CANADIAN MEDIA AND ISLAM

Anab Whitehouse

Approximately ten years ago, a columnist for the Toronto Sun, Dr. Morton Shulman, expressed incredulity that anyone in the Muslim community could be upset by a passage in a school textbook used in Ontario that contained a number of laudatory comments about the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) just because the passage also contained a number of aspersions upon the character of the Prophet. Dr. Shulman attempted to create the impression that Muslims were being unreasonable, if not trying to accomplish a white-wash of history, to oppose the use of school textbooks that contained such material. The Sun columnist also was implying that the Muslim community was trying, unjustifiably, to find fault with what was, according to him, merely a "balanced" presentation of historical fact drawing from supposedly authoritative, scholarly sources.

This column encompasses many of the elements which have plagued the treatment of Muslims by the media in the West for many, many years. First of all, there tends to be a pervasive inclination among many individuals working in the media, especially the print media, to attack the integrity of, and cast aspersions upon, the personality of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.). Quite apart from the issue of the reliability or truth of the context of such "information", many media people relish any opportunity to give expression to this antagonistic inclination toward Islam and the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.). Moreover, sometimes when there is no 'real world' opportunity to hang a rumour on, they concoct their own opportunities to bear ill-will toward Muslims or their religious tradition.

For example, recently in one column of the Toronto Sun by Bob McDonald, the column used the hijacking of a TWA jetliner by two terrorists as a pretext for supposedly tracing the history and source of terrorism back to the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.). As is typical of so many situations of this nature concerning Muslims and Islam, however, Mr. McDonald got all the facts wrong and then jumped to incorrect conclusions on the basis of his fundamentally flawed data.

It is inexcusable negligence on the part of Mr. McDonald, as well as on the part of his superiors on the editorial staff of the Toronto Sun, for failing to check out and make certain of the accuracy of their data which formed the basis of the column's overzealous eagerness to assassinate the character of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.). Unfortunately, hundreds of thousands of readers of the Toronto Sun were indoctrinated a little further into the Western perspective where anti-Islamic lenses provide a grossly distorted vision of the religious tradition of Muslims. The distortive features of these media-supplied lenses are so great that many non-Muslims have become virtually blind – not only to the actual historical facts concerning Islam – but to the very existence of their own handicap of ignorance with respect to that religious tradition.

Credible Sources

Representatives of the media often contend that there are differences of opinion among scholars about the interpretation of the so-called facts of history. They tend to maintain that historical judgements are relative to the scholarly sources one holds to be

authoritative. The criticisms which Muslims voice about media presentations of Islam merely reflects a self-serving and quite unjustifiable subjective preference for their own biased assumptions (i.e. those of Muslims). Media representatives will even go so far as to say that it is only their own disinterested, unselfish commitment to determining the truth of matters which allows them to approach issues directly. As such, the establishment of such truth may be unpleasant for some people – in this case, Muslims.

In examining the kinds of sources which media representatives consult when researching issues involving the Islamic religious tradition of Muslims, one finds a pathetic absence of anything remotely resembling scholarly authoritativeness. For example, Mr. McKenzie Porter, in another column of the Toronto Sun, devoted an entire article to passing on the critical opinions of *Le Monde*, a major Paris newspaper, concerning Muslims and Islam. Mr. Porter has taken the prefabricated ideas of a Paris newspaper and merely regurgitated them in his own column in a slightly digested form. The extent of his "original" journalistic contribution was to add a few editorial comments to enhance the *Le Monde* article's negative portrayal of Muslims and Islam.

The reasons for Mr. Porter's limited creative offering in the aforementioned column are primarily two in number; one obvious, the other apparent. As for the obvious reason, Mr. Porter is quite ignorant about Islam and Muslims and, consequently, is in no position to provide an informed, insightful analysis of the *Le Monde* article's opinions about Muslims and Islam. As far as the second reason for Mr. Porter's uncreative parroting of the *Le Monde* article, he seems to desire to use the *Le Monde* article as a justification for explicitly urging immigration authorities to think twice before letting Muslims into Canada in the future. This desire is pursued with a total lack of squeamishness in resorting to whatever distortions are necessary.

Mr. Porter's general style of approach is fairly reflective of far too many media representatives when it comes to the Islamic religious tradition. They stubbornly refuse to examine original sources, either in terms of historical texts or in terms of Muslims themselves. It is apparent that they only consult and rely on sources which are antagonistic toward Islam – sources which have been under the shaping influence of the hostile spirit of the Crusades and their philosophical and theological heirs down through the centuries. These 'sources' conform to their preconceived (if ill-founded) and thoroughly entrenched anti-Islamic biases.

The Media as Censor

This close-minded attitude is clearly illustrated by the comment of a somewhat naive and young *Globe and Mail* reporter a number of years ago who said that if he had the choice between supporting Muslims and Anglo-Saxons in the previously mentioned school textbook controversy concerning prejudice against Islam, he would support Anglo-Saxons every time. In following the 'racial-religious party line', truth, justice and fairness apparently became irrelevant. Although other media representatives may not be honest enough to state their prejudices as openly as the *Globe and Mail* reporter, their prejudices exist all the same. It is these prejudices of media representatives which actively shape and distort not only what the media reports and how things are reported, but also serve as an effective censor of the Islamic point of view.

Ironically, the media are usually the first to be outraged at the spectre of censorship and any interference with freedom of speech. They consider themselves to be one of the bastions of a free and democratic society – a society that should have full access to the truth in all matters, as well as have access to a wide range of opinions from which people can choose their own informal course of action. Yet the various media play an integral role in perpetuating a conspiracy of igno-

rance concerning matters Islamic, and they accomplish this role by continuously practising censorship. The active aspect of this censorship is expressed in the way in which material on Islam and Muslims is, very frequently, selectively edited and creatively altered to conform with pre-established prejudices. The passive aspect of this censorship is manifested in the manner in which the Muslim point of view is only very infrequently ever allowed by the media to be presented accurately and fully to the Western public.

Canadian Society of Muslims

As far as the Muslim community is concerned, the *Toronto Sun* has, virtually from its inception as a newspaper, displayed extensive and persistent negligence in failing to exercise its obligation to the public to provide objective, truthful and unbiased information on Islam and Muslims. If the editors and columnists for the *Toronto Sun* wish to engage in a debate about various aspects of Islam, then they should do so on the basis of having consulted accurate data and original historical sources on Islam. The *Toronto Sun* should stop presenting Islam in the present underhanded manner that has more affinity with the journalistic practices of fascist societies than it does with a democratic society.

As blatantly prejudiced as many of the *Toronto Sun*'s columns are concerning Muslims and Islam, they are not, most regrettably, an isolated set of cases. Rather, they are part of a systematic and long-standing disease which has infected many generations of non-Muslims in the West. It is a disease which adversely affects common sense, fairness and integrity of judgement when it comes to exploring and understanding the Islamic religious tradition.

The experience of the Canadian Society of Muslims has been that unless one fights this infection with the antibiotic of accurate information about Islam, then the disease not only becomes more virulent, but it spreads like an epidemic. The Society has con-

sistently pursued a policy of actively resisting and where possible, overcoming the ever-present threat of this disease establishing itself irreversibly. Through such active resistance, we believe we are contributing to a stronger, safer society that is more firmly secured to the principles of democratic justice and fair access for all members of Canadian society – whether non-Muslim or Muslim.

Ideally, a democracy must be firmly rooted in a commitment to establishing as much truth about any matter as is possible. It is through informed, insightful understanding of issues that one discovers one of the best defenses which a democratic society has to protect its members against the dissolution of their rights and freedoms. The Muslim community has had to endure considerable suffering and heartache as a result of being the focus of long-standing prejudicial treatment by, among others, the media in the West. We are therefore very sensitive to, and incensed by, any suffering experienced by other racial, ethnic or religious minorities due to media abuse as expressed through biased and prejudicial coverage in news stories, editorials and so on. Our hearts go out to these people, and we empathize with their difficulties.

The Canadian Society of Muslims also believes that something more than empathy is both necessary and possible. We feel strongly that racial, ethnic and religious minority groups should write and work together on these issues of prejudicial treatment. Our mutual experiences form the basis for a strong common interest which could and should be used as a positive force for helping to generate harmony within Canadian society. These efforts in particular should involve those who are themselves unwitting victims of prejudice through the many biases they have been taught and have accepted with respect to racial, ethnic and religious minorities.

Anab Whitehouse is Secretary of the Canadian Society of Muslims.

THE TORONTO STAR AND THE CANADIAN ARAB FEDERATION

Mary Mouammar

It is said that the media plays a major role in shaping attitudes and influencing behaviour. This truism has been made abundantly clear to members of the Arab community for many years. The community had been quite aware of the connection between racism against Arabs and their negative image in the media. Recent evidence has been presented by several sources that the media is actually sustaining if not creating, racism against Arabs in Canada and North America.

The first indication of this correlation in Canada was presented in a study published by the Department of Secretary of State, Multiculturalism Directorate in 1973. The study, which looked at racism in Ontario high schools, showed that racism against Arabs ranked as high as East Indians who were found to suffer from the most overt forms of racial prejudice and discrimination. The only difference was that the cause of racism against Arabs was the direct result of their image in the media. Most students had admitted that they have never met an Arab and could not identify Arabs unless they were dressed in the traditional dress. The authors of the study concluded that hostility towards Arabs was transmitted to them directly by the media through films, cartoons, sitcoms, and newspapers.

My concern over this issue was intensified as a result of having met many Arab families whose children were facing problems in school because of their origin. In 1982, I conducted a study on the image of Arabs in cartoons. I gathered cartoon clippings from the three major Toronto dailies, from 1972

to 1982. The results were both shocking and alarming (see separate article). Despite the fact that I had always known that the image of Arabs was bad, I was completely overwhelmed by the intensity of the hostility in the cartoons. They all seemed to have the same basic themes and notions. Arabs, according to the cartoons were: cowardly, cruel, blackmailers, terrorists, and backward. One cartoon after another, over the ten year period, had portrayed Arabs in this manner. The result was an image that few people would want to be associated with. Inevitably, many young Arab Canadians began to deny or hide their origin and background.

Monitoring and Letter-Writing

Having recognized the problem, the question was, what can we do about it? The first initiative we undertook was to have several individuals monitor the media. Based upon their findings, we then embarked on a campaign of writing letters-to-the-editor in an attempt to counterbalance the ill-effects of the negative media convergence that we had found.

In pursuing this approach we concluded that its impact was minimal. The strategy was ineffective since the problem appeared much bigger than we anticipated. A broader and more concerted effort was required.

Community Awareness

In my capacity as the Executive Director of the Canadian Arab Federation, I gave the issue top priority. As part of our national convention in 1985, a media workshop was organized

which included speakers from the Globe and Mail, the Toronto Star and the Ontario Press Council.

While the dialogue was useful, and the participants were able to convey much of their concerns directly to the representatives of the press, it was clear that this in itself was still not enough.

Ontario Press Council

83% of all complaints against the press that are received by the Ontario Press Council are dismissed. Nevertheless, as one of the few channels that are available to the general public, we continued to pursue this route.

With the support of a number of members of the community, we were successful in getting an adjudication against the Toronto Sun for a misleading headline in one of its news items on the Middle East.

The level of community support and cooperation was felt to be extremely important in pursuing and getting such adjudications against newspapers.

Again however, the Ontario Press Council was not the answer to the problem which seemed to be getting more serious as events in the Middle East took a turn for the worse.

Community Threatened

During the first weeks of October 1985, the Arab community in Toronto had faced one of its most difficult periods. The daily barrage of news on the unfortunate Achille Lauro incident had caused many problems for Arabs in general, and Palestinians in particular. Both on a personal and group level, Arabs and Palestinians faced hostility from other Canadians. We attributed this in large measure to the sensationalistic nature of the reporting of the hijacking of the Achille Lauro. Several students in Toronto schools faced harassment and name-calling. The Arab Community Centre and other Arab organizations received threatening calls from individuals who called Arab Canadians "terrorists" and "murderers". With these calls came the frightening realization that something

must be done immediately if the community was to continue living harmoniously with other Canadians.

Dialogue

As a consequence, I contacted responsible officials with the *Globe and Mail*, and the *Toronto Star*. The response I received was quite encouraging, especially from the *Toronto Star*. The presence of the *Star's* ombudsman, Rod Goodman, made it easy for me to convey our concerns to the paper. After having made an appointment to meet with Mr. Goodman, I collected all the news clippings which we found objectionable and which had, in our opinion, evoked the hate calls our members were receiving. After having looked at these clippings, Mr. Goodman recognized the legitimacy of our concerns. He promised to arrange for an appointment with the appropriate editors, mostly in foreign news. Six editors and associate editors attended a luncheon meeting held in the Executive Suite of the *Toronto Star*. This informal atmosphere made our task much easier. While in the past such meetings had ended up being a shouting match with an abrupt end, this meeting was cordial and extremely productive.

We began the meeting by stressing that we were not in favour of censoring news events, and that our concern was not whether the *Star* should adopt a pro-Arab policy. Our concern had more to do with the welfare and well-being of the members of our community in Toronto. We stressed the point that more objective reporting on the Middle East would make Canadians understand the facts surrounding the conflict there, and as a result, would decrease hostility towards Arab Canadians. A clear understanding of facts, we argued, would make people aware that acts of violence were committed on both sides and were the result of frustrations and anger, also on both sides. Again, the press clippings were used to illustrate the danger of using emotionally charged reporting on the Middle East conflict.

We re-iterated our concern, not whether the *Star* had a neutral policy

towards the situation in the Middle East, but rather in projecting this complex conflict in terms of good guys and bad guys. The *Star* would be misleading its readers and creating unnecessary hostility towards Arabs who were, almost always, projected in sensational and simplistic terms as the bad guys. The effect of such portrayal is not only damaging to the image of Arabs in Canada, but has a serious effect on the self-image of young Arab Canadians.

In understanding the difficult task the press has in attempting to present an entirely objective picture of a controversial issue, the *Star* stressed that the press also has to deal with the interests of different groups and is often criticized by both sides in any conflict.

Another difficulty in presenting a balanced picture of the Middle East we were told, was the lack of easy access to Arab countries. In addition, there is a heavy reliance by the Canadian press on American sources. Having identified these problems, both sides developed a better understanding and appreciation of the difficulties involved. The meeting ended on the positive note of keeping the channels of communication open.

Implications for the future

In assessing the success of our efforts, we kept in mind that the type of dialogue we have entered into with the media is long term, and one that will involve several meetings. What is most encouraging about the efforts of the *Toronto Star* is the open-minded way the paper received our criticism and its recognition of the legitimacy of our grievances. This is not restricted to the Arab community. The *Star's* Editorial Page Editor, Ian Urquhart, expressed an open door policy to all ethnic minorities in a recent interview. He said if minorities feel that they have been ignored or stereotyped, they should call the editor responsible for the page that the item appears on. He also stated that dialogue such as the one we had had would prevent the need for such drastic action as boycotting or picketing. This strategy of dialogue however, is only possible

with newspapers who are sensitive to the concerns of minorities. In this area, and judging from their recent response to minority issues, I would argue that the *Star* is fulfilling its social responsibility.

It is difficult to speak of the media in a uniform fashion. As we have seen, not all members of the media are as responsive as we would like them to be. This fact makes our burden heavier than it should be. Our experience suggests that the following actions may help communities develop some knowledge and understanding of the media:

1. Appoint a media P.R. person whose duties include monitoring the print media on a daily basis.
2. Establish contact with key individuals in the media and keep in touch with them.
3. Communicate your community's concerns in a clear manner.
4. Seek sympathetic reporters and keep them informed of events in your community.
5. Learn how to handle negative news. Explaining the facts should be done calmly and politely.

The foregoing are only a few basic steps that need to be undertaken in dealing with one aspect of the media. It must be recognized that different minorities have different concerns: some about their image in news reports, some because they are not included in the news, while others are concerned about stereotyping through editorials and opinion columns. Depending on the issue, each community must develop its own strategy. At the same time, networking among communities on common concerns would give strength to our efforts.

THE RIGHT OF REPLY

How does one answer back if unjustly criticized in the press? How can social bias and stereotyping be challenged?

On the face of it, it might appear that very little can be done. However, the experiences of various communities described in earlier articles suggests that concerted action in mounting opposition and protest can have some impact upon the media's treatment of minorities - even if it is grudging and unacknowledged.

For the individual citizen, in objecting to the persistent prejudiced and racist coverage by a newspaper, the most obvious and direct form of action is to simply avoid it by not buying the newspaper.

Letters to the Editor

The one constant in every newspaper that acknowledges the right of people who have been unfairly represented to defend themselves is the letter-to-the-editor columns. It must be recognized however that letters may be cut or left out at the editors discretion, and may well be 'balanced' by racist letters published beside it. In addition, some newspapers even add their own editorial comment after the

letter, which may attempt to ridicule the points being made in the letter and defuse any opposition to their own policies.

Notwithstanding these reservations - or warnings - the right of reply through the letter-to-the-editor column is an important vehicle and should be used. Not only can it have the potential of having an impact upon the newspaper's editorial policies, but it is also very often the most widely read column of a newspaper.

Another approach to communicating directly with the newspaper is to write or speak directly to the editor, publisher and owner.

Ontario Press Council

The Ontario Press Council, a voluntary body, considers complaints from the public about the conduct of the press in gathering and publishing news, opinion and advertising. Anyone with a grievance can complain, even if it involves a newspaper that does not participate in the Council. All a complaint costs is postage and time.

A complaint must be specific and be about some specific conduct of the newspaper.

The Council examines a complaint in two stages, inviting complainant and newspaper to: (a) submit a final written summary of evidence and argument by a fixed date; and (b) at-

tend an informal oral hearing to argue the issue in person.

The Council announces its assessment in a press release which names complainant and newspaper. The newspaper involved is under an obligation to publish the adjudication.

The Ontario Press Council exists to watch over and 'safeguard' journalistic standards and the readers' interests. The end product of a Council proceedings is a publicized, advisory opinion. Its decisions have no legal status and newspapers are free to ignore them if they want.

Criticized as a toothless watchdog, the Ontario Press Council itself acknowledges that its influence "is marginal and is limited to correct minor failings". It also acknowledges in its 1983 report that "consumer associations, pressure groups and press ombudsmen have a stronger and more determining influence".

Notwithstanding these limitations, many argue that the Ontario Press Council can have a certain amount of moral suasion on journalists and editors, that it can help to create a body of professional standards, and that it can enhance the credibility of the media by their willingness to engage their critics in a public forum.

If these arguments appear weak, it can nevertheless be agreed that the Ontario Press Council needs to be encouraged to become a more effective body for press monitoring.

T.R.

THE NEWSPAPER OMBUDSMAN

Monitor of the Printed Page

Michele DuCharme

The newspaper as we know it today is a far cry from those produced over 100 years ago. In those days, the "golden press" reigned supreme and reporters basically wrote whatever they pleased with little thought to the consequences their words may have had on their readers. Generally speaking, "the newspaper was first a local medium that usually reflected and favoured, the interests of its immediate constituency. That reflex assumed a particular importance in controversies over race and religion."¹

However, the golden image of the press has become tarnished over the years as the newspaper has continued to lose its credibility by using "shorter stories, bigger type, more pictures (and) more punch"² instead of providing insightful details. In addition, the reader of today is much more attuned to the power behind the printed word and is no longer willing to accept the reporter's point of view as the gospel truth.

The very idea of objective reporting has been shelved because readers' perceptions and expectations of the news media have changed substantially. As a result, "people see the news media as a big, uncontrolled maker, rather than a mirror, of news."³ Today's reader is much more likely to voice complaints over coverage perceived as being unfair or inaccurate and to challenge the sacred concept of freedom of the press.

It became increasingly evident to the press itself that some mechanism must be developed which would handle readers' protests and concerns. To this end, the position of newspaper ombudsman was created. The idea originated in Houston, Texas in 1961 and began to spread across the United

States and to a lesser extent, up into Canada. Originally, the ombudsman served primarily as the bridge between consumers and corporate organizations and helped to facilitate communication between complainant and complainee by knowing how to short-circuit bureaucratic procedures.⁴

However, the position has become more refined over the past twenty-five years. According to Rod Goodman, ombudsman for the Toronto Star, "errors of commission, errors of omission, real and perceived incidents of national, religious or racial bias - all are investigated by the ombudsman. When needed, corrections or clarifications are published to set the record straight."⁵

The Toronto Star is one of a number of Canadian dailies who have delegated to someone, usually a senior editor, the responsibility to listen to - and respond to - readers' complaints. Although there are more than 117 daily newspapers in Canada, only the Montreal Gazette, the Ottawa Citizen, the London Free Press, the Edmonton Journal and the Calgary Herald as well as the Star have instituted ombudsmen for their readers, a decision made by each paper's publisher. These dailies have realized that "the days when readers accepted what was handed to them without debate have gone"⁶ and that a specific channel to handle complaints is necessary to make the newspaper more accountable to the reader.

The question of dealing with minority issues has become particularly crucial in recent years as Canada's multicultural population has continued to expand. The media generally has difficulties when it comes to repor-

ting stories about minority groups and this is reflected in the large number of complaints which the Toronto Star receives. As Goodman says: "The big problem, in acknowledging the existence of the real mosaic in Metro, is how to keep this newspaper (the Toronto Star) from being perceived as racist in different matters. We've got to reflect our community, which is made up of a sizeable percentage of visible minorities, by recognizing their existence and listening to them. We have to make sure the newspaper addresses their problems as well as anyone else's."⁷

No Easy Answers

However, this is not a cut-and-dried procedure. The difficulty arises when the reporter tries to find a balance between fact and interpretation. In Goodman's words, "you must give the reader as much information as possible (while also) bearing in mind the affect on the local community."⁸ A recent example of this occurred when the Star carried a wire report on the assassination of Olaf Palme, the late Swedish prime minister. The first reports in the Star mentioned that a Croatian group may have been involved, based on reports from the Swedish police. However, other Metro papers did not include this information.

Consequently, one of Metro's top Croatian leaders called Goodman to protest against the article. He felt that it gave the impression that Croats were murderers and that the story was based on police speculation and not proven fact. In a case such as this where the Toronto Star's motives were being questioned, a large part of Goodman's job involved checking back with the writer and editor of the piece to verify whether or not a bias was inferred. If bias had occurred, Goodman might have referred to the incident in his weekly column or perhaps have printed a clarification or a retraction, depending on his findings. However, in this particular case, the editor of the story admitted that although he could have toned down the reference to Croats, he had no bias in mind when he left it in the AP

wire story.⁹

There is one major guideline however, which deals specifically with reporting racial and minority issues. According to Goodman, "do not mention any race, religion, colour or creed in a story or a headline unless it is absolutely necessary."¹⁰ Unfortunately, this rule of thumb is based more on individual sensitivity than actual policy which often leads to accusations that the newspaper is favouring certain groups over others.

So what does it take to become an effective ombudsman? According to the results of "... a recent meeting of the 35 newspaper, television and radio ombudsmen (they go by different titles) in Canada and the United States, there was a consensus that the chief qualifications for the job include a knowledge of how newspapers, radio and television work, how mistakes can creep into a story or headline, the ability to admit them and explain them, and a very thick skin."¹¹

Thus, although newspaper ombudsmen act as representatives for the readers in the newsroom, newspapers themselves still have a long way to go towards increasing their credibility in

the public eye. David Lawrence Jr., publisher of the Detroit Free Press, says the solution is simple - a newspaper must be totally committed to honesty and fairness. Lawrence addressed the annual Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association (CDNPA) meeting in Toronto last May and urged publishers, editors and anyone who works in the newspaper business to work toward becoming more accessible to the public rather than unapproachable.

"Think for a moment about your own readers," he suggested. "Do they regard their newspaper as my newspaper, or that newspaper? Their answer will be determined by how much they believe that you and your newspaper genuinely care about them and their interests."¹²

The onus then, is on each individual newspaper to reach a balance between delivering information and injecting interpretation into daily news stories. Until responsible reporting is the norm, the newspaper ombudsman must continue to shoulder the weight.

FOOTNOTES

1 Paul Rutherford, *The Making of the Cana-*

dian Media, Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1978, p. 65.

² Peter Trueman, "A newsy diet for hungry viewers", *MacLeans*. Toronto: MacLean-Hunter Limited, September 6, 1982, p.9.

³ Rod Goodman, "Readers see media as makers, not mirrors, of news", *Toronto Star*, April 16, 1984 p. B3.

⁴ John A. Hannigan, "The Newspaper Ombudsman and Consumer Complaints", *Communications in Canadian Society*. Don Mills, Ont.: Addison-Wesley Publishers Limited, 1983, p.295.

⁵ Goodman, "Readers see media as makers, not mirrors of news", *op. cit.*, p. B3.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Interview with Rod Goodman, March 11, 1986.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Goodman, "Readers see media as makers, not mirrors of news" *op. cit.*, p.B3

¹² Bryan Cantley, "'Honesty, fairness' keys to credibility", *Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association/Canadian Managing Editors Conference - CDNPA/CMEC Newsletter*. Toronto: CDNPA, April - May 1985, Vol. 13, No. 3, p. 1.

RACISM IN THE U.K. MEDIA

Nancy Murray, "Race and
the press in Thatcher's
Britain" in *Race & Class*,
Volume XXVII, Winter 1986, No. 3

Phil Cohen & Carl Gardner (eds),

"It ain't half racist, mum. Fighting racism in the media".
Comedia Publishing, London, 1982

The press-created 'common sense' about race in Britain is one of seeing visible minorities in terms of an alien-influx which has violated the deepest instincts of a formerly homogeneous people. This racial interpretation of Britain is found in the range of national newspapers, in the polite prose of the most respected 'quality' newspapers to the most virulent right-wing gutter press.

This is the conclusion of Nancy Murray's analysis. From a reading of this issue of *Currents*, one might also conclude that this depressing conclusion might not be untrue of the Canadian press. The issue of racism in the press is not just a concern over a few isolated incidents by one or two of the more rabid right-wing tabloids but is a disease that has been easily assimilated by all media outlets. Murray argues that it is precisely because of the legitimization given to racism by the quality newspapers that the virulent racism of the tabloids is tolerated – and even encouraged. While the yellow press has alerted the people to the incoming 'floods' of immigrants, and the terror of Black crime on the streets, the quality press has given such 'scares' the stamp of respectability and the weight of truth, and erected the framework (Britain as

a just, tolerant, formerly homogeneous society) within which race is discussed. The quality press has accepted that 'natural fears' connected with the Black presence are fully justifiable: the incoming numbers are too many, and mugging is 'an activity of young black men'.

Another trend Murray identifies in the British press is an active campaign to discredit anti-racist initiatives. An example is the false accusation that there was a 'conspiracy of silence' about race which was imposed by the old Liberal establishment in collusion with various pressure groups, race relations advisors and so on who were seeking to suppress open discussion about the 'problem' of minorities. Columnists and journalists took it upon themselves to break the so-called 'silence'.

Another way in which the media has ridiculed anti-racist initiatives is to argue that they are something which black people inflict on white. Affirmative action is misinterpreted as 'anti-whites' racism, an enforced segregation, and even apartheid. Racism has been re-defined as something black aggressors practise against their white victims. This type of insolent casuistry and inversion of terms and meanings has managed to identify the proponents of racial justice as the new Inquisitors. The culture of resistance to racism has itself been deemed racist, as well as communist and fascist all at the same time!

This sort of nonsense might seem laughable were it not that one sees

similar trends in the Canadian press in the examples cited in some of the previous articles for this issue of *Currents*.

"It ain't half racist, mum. Fighting racism in the media" is a collection of twenty-one articles by various authors on their experience and observations of the way minorities are dealt with in the British newspaper and broadcasting industries – in news and documentary, drama and comedy. Half of this 120 page paperback is devoted to various initiatives that have been undertaken to counter media racism.

It is of interest to note in comparison to the Canadian situation, that most of these initiatives were undertaken by people who actually work in the mass media. One of the key groups, the Campaign Against Racism in the Media (CARM), was established in 1976 by 60 members of the National Union of Journalists who were concerned that Fleet Street's front pages were helping to fuel racial violence. Other important groups include the Black Media Workers Association and the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom. As a result of the work of these groups over the last few years, every union in print and broadcasting has now established formal policies to oppose racism.

"It ain't half racist, mum" is a useful handbook in understanding the complexities of racism in the media as well as in learning from the strategies that various groups have pursued in attempting to remedy the almost knee-jerk hostility that the British press has towards initiatives directed at promoting racial equality.

T.R.

Press freedom is "the right of the man who controls the newspaper to say what he likes, no matter how perverse, absurd or cross-grained."

(Lord Goodman, former chairman of the Newspaper Publishers Association.)

"A man who speaks in favour of racial intolerance cannot have the same rights as the man who condemns it."

(Sir Hugh Greene, former Director-General, B.B.C.)

"MINORITY OPINION"

Robert Fulford –
Saturday Night, April, 1986

In a lengthy and thoughtful article, Robert Fulford suggests that the Toronto Sun, rather than being deliberately racist, has a policy of carelessness and insensitivity in its treatment of racial issues. However, without wanting to wallow in semantic arguments about what is and what is not racist, Fulford nevertheless seems to contradict his own conclusions.

In examining in some detail particular columns by McKenzie Porter, Barbara Amiel and Douglas Fisher, Fulford shows clearly how racism is being expressed by these writers, and he goes further to acknowledge and argue that racism in Canada today rarely comes into the world bearing so clear and honest a label.

"For instance, racism can mask itself as a belief that the majority group is somehow losing out to minorities in jobs or housing. It may appear as criticism of multiracial immigration: someone who wants fewer Asians admitted to Canada, and yet does not call them genetically inferior, is still arguing for discrimination on the basis of race – which is what most people mean by "racism." Ideas of this sort, expressed occasionally in isolation, may be regarded as purely eccentric, like Porter's eugenics. But when they come together in one place, and are repeated by various writers, they may form an attitude that amounts to institutionalised racism."

A Reaction

In seeking to understand the seemingly inexplicable behaviour of the Toronto Sun, of why in the 1980's, the Toronto Sun is such a weird aberration, Fulford provides some interesting insights.

"Certainly something involving race – something curious and perhaps important – has happened at the Sun. For years we have been able to read in its pages, and only there (plus occasionally in its satellite papers in Edmonton and Calgary), a set of opinions on racial issues that are strongly held and venomously expressed..."

"The Sun staff appears more or less unanimous on most of these issues – if there is a writer who disagrees, he or she is silent. This collective attitude is reactionary in the literal sense: it is a reaction against the liberal consensus that has developed among all major political parties in Canada during the last twenty-five years. Most articulate opinion during that period has supported multiculturalism and bilingualism, sometimes out of genuine enthusiasm and sometimes (as Sun writers are not slow to note) out of political ambition or fear of organized minorities. The Sun writers see themselves as lonely and perhaps courageous critics of that consensus. As Barbara Amiel put it last October, writing about blacks is now the most difficult assignment "a Canadian journalist of integrity" can take on. "Blacks and minority groups have become sacred cows," she said, so journalists censor themselves and fail to point out the flaws of black groups or individuals. The implication was that Amiel was bravely facing up to the danger of telling the truth, as few journalists would do.

"More specifically, the Sun's attitude grew out of a reaction against the policies of The Telegram. In the 1950's and 1960's, as the second-place evening paper in Toronto, The Telegram

tried hard to overtake the Star. For decades the Star had been liberal as well as Liberal, so it was well placed to appeal to an increasingly multiracial city. The Telegram, which in the 1930's and 1940's had been directed at readers with British and Irish backgrounds, began working hard to attract the new minorities. Douglas Fisher recently wrote in a Sun article: "If you're an older Torontonian you might recall how the old Tely switched away from its Britishness and royalty-chases to go after ethnic support. . . The first prize groups were the Jews and Italians. The word 'cosmopolitan' became fashionable; so did 'mosaic'. When Fisher and others moved from The Telegram to the Sun, they put all that behind them. They were no longer slaves to multiculturalism, prisoners of liberal cant."

A Set of Opinions

As Fulford himself has said on a previous occasion, nobody in this day and age likes to be accused of racism, and he politely and studiously avoids making that accusation against the Toronto Sun. What he prefers to suggest is the Sun deliberately "countenances unthinking attitudes on race"!

Whether there is a conscious and deliberate racist policy or ideology at the Toronto Sun however, is really beside the point. Far more important and disturbing, as Fulford stresses in the conclusion to his article, is the impact and receptivity that the Toronto Sun has with its audience: "Confronted with issues that have destroyed communities and produced centuries of hatred, issues that still threaten and intimidate many of its readers, the Sun had decided to remain unmoved. At bottom, it doesn't much care. The fact that it can maintain this attitude, and prosper, says something unsettling about the life of our biggest, richest, and most racially varied city."

T.R.

MULTICULTURALISM MEANS BUSINESS

Described as a major new initiative, Multiculturalism Canada sponsored this national conference on multiculturalism and business in Toronto April 11 - 12.

The purpose of the conference - in the words of the Minister of Multiculturalism, the Hon. Otto Jelinek in his opening address - was to "promote equality of opportunity in a direct and meaningful way"...to..."create a climate in this country where the economic opportunities which reside within our multicultural communities are properly understood and developed"...to concentrate our efforts on "equality of economic opportunity, be it in career promotion, international trade, access to business networks or business financing".

It is now over 30 years since John Porter in his classic study "The Vertical Mosaic" clearly showed that the economic structure of Canadian society is highly stratified. The white Anglo-Saxon Protestant group dominates the economic elite structure and have discriminated against and assigned inferior roles to all the other ethnic and racial groups in Canada. The multicultural communities have of course known and experienced this reality for some hundreds of years. Ethnic and racial groups in Canada have not and still do not share equally in the wealth of this country.

It is therefore perhaps a sad reflection on the level of political and social awareness in Canada that one feels that the Minister of Multiculturalism should be congratulated for finally recognizing this obvious truth. It is sad too at this late date, that we should feel pleased at the symbolic importance of having a Prime Minister of Canada address a multicultural conference for the very first time in Canadian history.

That one needs to make a statement

that ethnic and racial minority businesspeople should play a full part in the Canadian economy as employers and as self-employed is an acknowledgement that there exist major obstacles to their being able to achieve their full economic potential. These disadvantages and barriers need to be removed.

Multiculturalism For Sale

To what extent did this conference address these issues and meet the purpose and objectives as outlined in Mr. Jelinek's opening address?

The conference was organized around three panel presentations entitled "Capitalizing on Multicultural Resources and Markets in Canada", "Multicultural Resources: Competing in the Global Marketplace", and "Networking: Forging Links to Achieve Business Goals". Unfortunately, once Mr. Jelinek left the podium, the Conference Chairman, Panel Leaders and Panelists all chose to misinterpret and abbreviate the theme of the conference of equality of economic opportunity to that of simply economic opportunity. Within this suddenly much broader and open-ended mandate, the conference lost its focus. The audience was treated to a number of messages. First, we were encouraged to consider the multicultural community as a market with enormous potential! It was suggested that to effectively exploit the ethnic market it might be appropriate to use the language of that ethnic group as well as the ethnic media. This valuable insight was based on the experience of the Milk Marketing Board who astoundingly hadn't thought of it!

Secondly, we were encouraged to consider exploiting the multicultural community as a tourism resource. We should sell our diversity, particularly to Americans who are more inclined

to come to Canada as Anti-American terrorism increases in other parts of the world!

Thirdly, we were encouraged to pursue new fields such as informatics and computer technology which for some reason are particularly suited to those of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds!

Our linguistic and cultural backgrounds and the business contacts in our country of origin were recognized as a valuable resource that would allow Canadians to compete more effectively in the global marketplace. In this context, it was announced that the Canadian Chamber of Commerce has been provided with \$52,000 from the Multiculturalism Directorate to study ways by which "multicultural resources" might be tapped for the purposes of Canadian trade development.

These messages were given to an audience comprised mostly of "ethnocultural entrepreneurs". Yet these were not penniless immigrants just off the boat. These were not ethnic peasants who are clueless about the business world or global economic trends. These are not marginal Canadians who really feel more comfortable in other parts of the world.

Yet these seemed to be the uncomfortable underlying assumptions behind many of the presentations. The substance of what the panelists had to say seemed to indicate that the ethnic markets and ethnic entrepreneurs are new and hopeful discoveries that should be used to improve the Canadian balance of trade and keep Canada abreast of global economic developments.

Another Bankrupt Slogan

While dismissing the old Liberal theme of "Celebrating Our Differences", the content of this conference appears, inadvertently perhaps, to have actually reinforced that theme by isolating and differentiating ethnic economic development. "Capitalize on Our Differences" appears to be the new interpretation - as touristic en-

agencies. As "mainstreaming multiculturalism" died with the last Minister of Multiculturalism, Mr. Jelinek is now caught with having to explain his way out of another inappropriate label for the multicultural mandate.

It is no wonder that "Multiculturalism Means Business" as the new thrust is creating apprehension and opposition from many quarters. And as the businesspeople on the stage at this conference have interpreted the new direction in its most literal sense, it would appear that the apprehension is fully justified. Ethnic economic development is in danger of moving from no recognition to one of being officially marginalised and segregated.

The few minutes that were allocated at this conference for questions from the floor indicated that minority businesspeople are facing difficulties in being accepted into the Canadian economic mainstream. The legitimacy of their arguments was unintentionally reinforced by the cavalier and dismissive attitude of the moderators who refused to address the questions. Instead, they resorted to repeated exhortations that Canada is a wonderful land of opportunity and one must simply work harder to succeed in private enterprise. (This, on the very same day that it was announced that the Conference Chairman will receive over \$64 million from the Government of Canada to build two factories in Cape Breton.)

From this conference, it was clear why ethnic minorities throughout Canadian history have responded to the economic conditions posed by life in Canada by creating their own self-help economic and financial institutions. Economic self-help still appears to be the only means to occupational mobility, protection from discrimination, and economic quality.

The major barriers to equality of economic opportunity for ethnic and minority businesspeople include problems of access to government assistance; problems of access to sources of finance, particularly for start-ups; growth limitations imposed by ethnic market dependence; lack of advice, information and training; environmental limitations; and ethnic and racial stereotyping and discrimination, both intentional and unintentional on the part of our economic and financial institutions.

The kinds of things that need to be done to remove these obstacles require greater intervention by both public and private sector organizations, particularly in areas such as the marketing of services through appropriate media, more direct and proactive business development support services that are more sensitive to the special needs and conditions of the ethnic communities, and the provision of leverage of 'seed' finance to assist the start-up of a business. A particular focus of attention is on the need to support a process of self-sufficiency and self-help through the development of community business support institutions and intermediaries.

There is a public and social responsibility to pursue these kinds of remedies as one means of addressing the disproportionately high level of unemployment suffered by many minority groups. Secondly, by encouraging and supporting the process of business development, it can help to address the imbalance of economic opportunity faced by minorities. Thirdly, it will address the material disadvantages suffered by many minority communities. Fourthly, such a programme of action can encourage greater community self-sufficiency apart from contributing to the wider national economy. Finally, it is an important means of improving the state of ethnic and race relations in Canada. Clearly, removing the barriers to equality of economic opportunity are vitally important to the future prosperity and well-being of Canada.

This conference "Multiculturalism Means Business" came nowhere near to tackling these issues. By Mr. Jelinek's own criteria, it must therefore be considered a dismal failure. One is left with the feeling that once again another glossy slogan has suffered irreparable damage to be consigned - with relief - to that growing junkpile of tainted and politically unfashionable multicultural flash in the pans.

T.R.

A NEW FORMAT

The size and lay-out of this journal has changed. There are significant economic savings in moving to this new format. Your comments, criticisms and suggestions in terms of both presentation and content of *Currents* would be most gratefully appreciated.

Editor

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In the next issue: