6-1933

Foreign News

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FOREIGN NEWS

By

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the College of Journalism, Marquette University, in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Philosophy.

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

June, 1933

PURPOSE

The purpose of this thesis is to study the transmission of international news and the various problems connected with sending news from one country to other nations, stressing the effect of bias and propaganda. In the latter regard one's scope is necessarily limited. Underhanded methods in any undertaking are secretive, and in the instance of bias and propaganda in their relation to news one must lament the fact that there is not more authoritative information, and less conjecture, on the subject.

METHOD

In making this study of foreign news the material was gathered entirely from books, periodicals, newspapers and pamphlets. As the above printed matter was read, notes were taken on all pertinent facts, the object of the study being kept constantly in mind. At the conclusion of the reading period, the notes were rearranged and placed in groups according to the chapter classifications. The continuity of the material in each chapter was visualized, and thus the notes were again sifted and placed in the prospective order of their usage. In this manner they were readily accessible.

It is to be regretted that a few works which might have disclosed additional material on the subject were not accessible to the author, thereby perhaps leaving a small gap in the subject matter of the thesis.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the members of the faculty of the College of Journalism, and particularly to Professor Maynard W. Brown, M. S., for the generous aid and assistance tendered me in the preparation of this manuscript.

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CHAPTER I

FOREIGN NEWS AND CORRESPONDENTS

Many of the important American metropolitan dailies have special staff writers stationed in the large cities and important news centers throughout the world. The press agencies, too, have newspapermen belonging to their organizations in those places. These journalists are called foreign correspondents, and it is their duty to send important news by cable and correspondence by mail to their home offices.

The foreign correspondent, who largely judges for himself what to send, must understand the great events taking place on the continent where he is stationed. Whenever possible he must go to the scene of the occurrence for first hand information. As Chester S. Lord has said:

> "The great disaster by earthquake that destroyed Messina sent half of the correspondents scurrying from London into Italy. The election of a new Pope finds them in Rome. A revolution in Poland discloses them on the spot delving into the secrets of the leaders. Since the great war they have been constantly in every capital in Europe as some new development of finance or a startling revelation of starvation, insurrection, or political plot demanded their presence."[1]

Ten years ago, however, the situation was markedly different. Correspondents were few and far between, and some localities which today have numerous foreign correspondents were without them entirely. Demaree C. Bess, a

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1 Chester S. Lord, The Young Man in Journalism, p. 114.

United Press correspondent in China, has told of the situation in this regard in Shanghai in 1925 and of the resulting character of the news emanating from that section:

> "In 1925," he writes, "there was not a single staff correspondent for an American newspaper or press association in Shanghai. All of us were hard-working reporters or editors on local English-language newspapers, who acted as correspondents in our spare time. The situation is very different today, with a corps of able men devoting their entire attention to correspondence. But under the circumstances prevailing in 1925 careful reporting, backed by intensive investigation and thoughtful study of background, was difficult if not impossible. The correspondent was largely a 're-write' man, depending for his material upon the staff of the local newspaper upon which he worked."[2]

The cost of cable messages is great -- seven cents a word for those that take their time and 25 cents per word for rush messages. The business manager must be placated and here is where judgement as to what to send, cunning in condensing and skill in skeletonizing are paramount.

The ordinary press rate for messages for more than 20 years ranged between five and 10 cents a word. A little before the World war, however, the cable companies sent reports for five cents per word, but without assurance of prompt service. Then 10 cents a word for the regular message and 25 cents for the expedited dispatch was the price for a long time. Quick delivery was not assured on the ordinary message.

Later the expedited message was abandoned, and in its stead the commercial message sprang into existence. By

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2 Vernon McKenzie, Behind the Headlines, pp. 147-148.

this means, at 25 cents a word, the newspaper could immediately transmit its messages.

Rates on news transmission has ever been a much discussed and debated subject. There has been constant conflict between the press agencies and newspapers on the one hand and the wireless, telegraph and cable companies on the other. At the Conference of Press Experts, held at Geneva in 1927, in collaboration with the League of Nations, one of the main issues was the question of a reduction of rates of transmission. M. Paul Hymans, the League delegate from Belgium, set forth the purpose of the Conference of Press Experts as "to ensure the more rapid and less costly transmission of press news with a veiw to reducing risks of international misunderstanding."[3]

Letters were sent out by the League's Secretary-General to all the newspapers and press agencies represented at Geneva asking their opinions on the advisability of having a Conference of Press Experts and for suggestions as to matters to be discussed if such a conference materialized. Replies to this investigation were received from press representatives of 32 countries. Many of these replies contained suggestions as to important subjects to be brought before the conference. Nearly all of them mentioned as vitally important matters to be discussed: the reduction of rates of transmission, speedy transmission, and a uniform

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3 League of Nations, Documents Relating to the Preparation of the Press Experts Committee, p. 3.

urgent rate.

Because of the high cost of cable messages, the foreign correspondent sends as much material as possible to his home office beforehand. Clippings of events that are likely to occur are sent by mail. Then when the event takes place, a very brief skeletonized form of message is cabled, and the cable editor in America uses the mail correspondence to elaborate on the brief message he receives over the wires. He knows that, had anything unusual occurred, the correspondent would have notified him of the fact.

Newspaper clippings of men in public life, too, are sent to the home office by mail. Then, when something out of the ordinary happens to this person, the correspondent merely cables a brief account of the incident. From the mail clippings the cable editor can elaborate to get a long story. Thus a substantial amount of money is saved on transmission.

Forty morning dailies having a circulation of over 50,000 were observed for a period of nine months (January to October, 1927) by Professor Julian Woodward, the object being to determine the average percentage of foreign news appearing in the papers. This figure Professor Woodward declared to be 5/15 per cent of the total news. The conclusion drawn by the author is that apparently "the average newspaper editor of an American morning daily is convinced that at least in peace times an increase beyond five or six per cent in the proportion of news space devoted to foreign despatches will not pay its cost in terms of increased circulation. Thus his opinion is based on the supposition that American newspapers are edited with the circulation angle paramount in the editor's

mind.[4]

Two correlations were worked out by Professor Woodward to attempt to determine the relationship between the amount of foreign news and circulation. In the following statement he presents his results:

> "The fact that our two variable correlations give but small support to the original generalization concerning the relationship between size of newspaper circulation and the content of foreign news of course in no way invalidates it as an hypothesis. It is to be expected that other factors such as the distance from news distributing centers in the Associated Press network, the quality of the circulation to which the paper caters, the particular bias of the editor, and his estimate of the interests of the people in his community, will all share with the factor of relative cost in the determining of foreign news policy."[5]

Thus Professor Woodward hesitates to very strongly blame circulation for the actual low percentage of foreign news in the American morning daily. Although in one place he states that an increase in the amount of foreign news beyond five or six per cent would not pay its cost in terms of increased circulation and gives this as the various editors' reason for not printing more foreign news. Yet in another place he admits that his two variable correlations give but small support to that theory.

There are a number of other interesting statements made by Professor Woodward in his study, one of which is that

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4 Julian L. Woodward, Foreign News in American Morning Newspapers, p. 67.
5 Ibid., p. 77.

58.5 per cent of all the foreign news found in the 40 morning newspapers was furnished by a single agency, the Associated Press.

Another interesting figure is that, whereas, in the American morning papers studied, the percentage of foreign news was 5/15, for samples of five issues of five English, five German and five French newspapers he obtained percentages of foreign news, respectively, of 23, 30 and 35. This survey, however, he admits to be quite "inadequate."

CHAPTER II

INTERNATIONAL NEWS AGENCIES

There are two classes of news agencies or organizations having for their prupose the gathering of new throughout the world: 1. The group which are affiliated one with the other, many of which have an official or semi-official nature and which group is world-wide in its scope; and 2. The independent agencies which compete with the above.

The first group, the network of allied agencies, has marked off the world into four "reserved" divisions as follows: 1. The United States and Central America are "covered" by the Associated Press; the latter and the Havas agency of France report the news of South America. 2. France, the Romanic countries of Europe and the French colonies are allotted to Havas. 3. Germany is covered by the Wolff agency. 4. England, Holland, the British Empire and the Far East disseminate their news through the Reuter agency. Other sections of the world such as Central Europe, Norway, Sweden, Russia, Latvia, Esthonia, Finland, Lithuania, Turkey, Bulgaria, Greece and Roumania are covered jointly by Reuters, Havas and Wolff. In addition to the above mentioned four important members of the network there are 23 other national news agencies belonging to the first group.

One of the specifications in the contract made by the above press associations is that each agency will create the news reports in its own territory and send the stories to the related agencies. Another rule is that each news organization may spread its news items in another's territory only through the latter's agency.

Dr. Herman Diez, editor of the Wolff agency, has explained the system under which the network operates:

> "The mutual exchange of news by the great agencies in general does not take place directly but through the mediation of the particular agency's own reprsentatives in the country of the sending agency.
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> "Reuters and Havas, for example, do not give their news items directly to Wolff's in Berlin, but to the Wolff correspondents in London and Paris. The daily supply of news of each agency is placed at the disposal of the representatives of the others. They sift the material, make it more complete, edit it, verify it and the like. In the same way Wolff turns over its news every day from Berlin to the Berlin representatives of Reuters, Havas and the Associated Press. Each of the great agencies can also furnish a supplementary service of news from its own territory to the papers of the reserved territories. When there are newspapers in the territories of the Associated Press, Havas and Reuters, who wish to be supplied directly with the German Wolff news, Wolff can furnish the service."[1]

Some of the leading news agencies of the world are:

United States.....Associated Press, United Press, International News Service, Central Press
Great Britain.....Reuters
Germany.....Wolff
France.....Havas
Italy.....Stephani
Russia.....Tass
Japan.....Nippon Tsushin and Rengo
Belgium.....Belga
Greece.....Athens
Turkey.....Anatolia
Denmark.....Ritzaus
Spain.....Fabra
Ygo-Slavia.....Avala
Roumania.....Rador
Hungary.....Ungarisches
Bulgaria.....Bulgare
Switzerland.....Schweizerische
Holland.....Nederlandsch
Norway.....Norsk
Sweden.....Tidningarnas
Poland.....Paf

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1 Douglass and Bomer, Annals of the American Academy, July 1932, p. 266.

Czechoslovakia.....C.I.K.C.
Portugal.....Havas (Branch Office)
Austria.....Amtliche
Finland.....Finska Notisbyran
Albania.....Agence Telegraphique d'Albanie
Lithuania.....Elta

In regard to the American news agencies, the press associations of the United States alone control more than a quarter of a million miles of leased wires. One of them files enough news every 24 hours to fill the news columns of a 24-page newspaper.

The membership of the Associated Press spreads from the Philippines to Porto Rico and from Alaska to the Argentine. In 1929 the organization, which is unique in that it is a purely cooperative body, has no stock capital, makes no profits and declares no dividends, had a total of 225,000 miles of leased wires and served a membership of 1,280 morning, evening and Sunday newspapers. This membership is so large in spite of the fact that its exclusiveness is carefully guarded within a member's territory by the association's constitutional provision of "right of protest." That the Associated Press membership is of great value is gathered from the fact that the New York Daily News paid $350,000 for the New York Commercial Bulletin in 1927 when it acquired the latter paper for the sole purpose of securing the Associated Press membership.

The United Press in 1929 utilized 140,000 miles of leased wires in the distribution of its services to North America, serving 1,237 newspapers in 45 countries and territories of the world. It had 50 bureaus in the principal news

centers of the United States and major bureaus at important points throughout the world.

William Randolph Hearst organized the International News Service in 1909. After 20 years' operation it had grown to the extent of maintaining 47 leased wire circuits with wires aggregating approximately 60,000 miles and 43 bureaus in the United States and abroad, besides thousands of correspondents throughout the world.

CHAPTER III

NEWS OF THE WAR

The war correspondent, who has perhaps the most adventurous job in journalism, must contend with just as many dangers and perhaps more hardships than the soldier. Barriers and obstacles forever beset his path. It is part of his job, however, to overcome these and get the news.

Undoubtedly the World war was the most difficult of all wars to report. In Britain's campaign in South Africa, for example, the London papers were permitted to send as many correspondents to the field of battle as they wished, and these correspondents had the privilege to go where and when they pleased. The London Daily Mail had 36 men and a staff editor present. A like number was maintained there by the other large London newspapers. The competition was keen to get as much valuable news as possible and send it swiftly to the home office. There was little censorship and no restrictions on the correspondents, and accordingly reporting of that war was made comparatively easy. This was true of nearly all wars up to the conflict between Turkey and the Balkans in 1912.

But with the great war, 1914-1918, came a drastic change in war reporting. The correspondent was looked upon with nearly as much hostility as the enemy. Every big newspaper in the world wanted to send a correspondent to the firing lines -- some of the larger dailies desired to send even more men to gather their news for them, since the line of battle in France soon became more than 100 miles long and even much longer in Russia on the Eastern front. At first, however,

no correspondents were allowed near the front lines. They were even barred from the divisional headquarters. The little information they were able to obtain was very strictly censored. These disadvantages, of course, were very unsatisfactory. London, at this time, was almost devoid of news of the war and, consequently, enthusiasm and patriotic ardor were at a minimum. It became hard to get enough men to go to the front, as the residents of Great Britain assumed from the lack of news that things were going well with the British army on the continent, that the war was not as bad as they were led to believe and that it would soon be over.

It was not until later, when the military authorities allowed stirring news of defeats as well as victories to be printed, that enthusiasm mouted in England and the calls for fighting men received a quick, favorable response.

Elaborate preparations were made by all the London newspapers to report the war. The Times, for example, sent 90 men to the front, all of whom were high priced men. Weekly their expenditure cost the Times something like $15,000. But they were not allowed within miles of the front -- the censors shut them out entirely so of course they were recalled. At first, the only news of the war printed in London, Paris and Berlin were the reports given out by the government.

Because of the public demand for the news a new plan was adopted, that of syndicating the news. Just a few correspondents were allowed at the front and each of these represented a number of papers. Sometimes eight or ten newspapers shared the expense of one correspondent. The Reuter agency had a man

at all fronts and his material was sent to all the member papers. This materially aided the smaller publications. But the large dailies still desired their own men to be allowed to do the work in spite of the facg that there was no room or facilities for several hundred correspondents at the front. The number of men had to be restricted.

In the latter months of the war conditions were greatly altered. The censorship regulations became more lax and correspondents were given better access to the front lines. Throughout the war there was a certain feeling of resentment toward the presence of the correspondents in the front ranks. This, however, was not so noticeable towards writers who observed the censorship rules. The syndicate plan was not changed. It worked much better when the various bans on the correspondents were loosened, but never was it entirely satisfactory to the large papers.

For the first time in any war correspondents were obliged to wear a uniform -- a plain officer's uniform, devoid of stripes, etc., except for a green band around the left upper arm. Every writer had to equip himself completely, even to motor cars and horses for transportation. The average correspondent's expenses were in the neighborhood of $800 a month. Their salary ranged from $4,000 to $10,000 a year, a few noted writers getting even more than the latter sum.

The cost of news transmission by cable in times of war is enormous. Often times during the World war it reached thousands of dollars for the report of a single battle. Many times such dispatches were sent day after day.

One thousand dollars for a single dispatch was not uncommon, and often the transmission of war reports cost some papers asmmuch as $10,000 a week. During the Fallipoli drive, for instance, reports were sent by automobile to Constantinople, wired from there to Vienna, then to Berlin, relayed to The Hague and again to London, from which they were cabled to America at a total cost of about one dollar and a half per word. In spite of this, the newspapers were relentless in their quest for news of the war. Money was spent lavishly for stories. The large dailies had correspondents stationed at every center of news -- in allied, belligerent and neutral countries. Holland and Switzerland, particularly, had large numbers of foreign correspondents. These were the best places to secure the German news and the newspapers to interview persons passing from Germany.

The censorship was the cause of great disadvantage to the newspapers. Censorship of comment as well as news made that of the European cities more exacting. Much more important war news was permitted to pass through Atlantic cables than was permitted to be published in London, Paris or Berlin. However, every cable message and every letter to America was carefully examined, and at the censor's will parts or complete messages were supressed, destroyed or changed. Messages from Paris were censored in that city, in London and again on their arrival in America. Dispatches from Vienna were censored there in Berlin, in London and in America. Of course, after our entrance into the war all the messages from Germany and Austria ceased for the most part. When Servia was crushed American

correspondents sent about 15,000 words, not one of which reached New York. The stories were stopped at London on the grounds that they were damaging to the Allied cause. One American correspondent sent four reports of the Champagne advance -- one third of them was delivered. All of the correspondents had experience akin to these. Not until the close of the war was any especial brilliance shown in reporting. The censorship during most of the war was the chief cause -- reporters who know that their material will be slashed to pieces before it reaches their editors lose much of their incentive and inspiration to do brilliant work.

The War College in Washington in justifying censorship cited cases in other wars where an absence of censorship had wrought serious harm. In the Crimean war the Russians received valuable information about trenches and armies from the English newspapers. The same newspapers were censored by Wellington who complained that Napoleon based many of his campaigns on reports gathered from the English press. Napoleon himself said that he kept accurae check on the British navy and army through perusal of English papers, contray to the British opinion that his spy system was the main source of his information. The French papers were guilty of the same error in the Franco-Prussian war when they printed valuable accounts of McMahon's concentration at Chalons, his march to Rheims and his advance to the Meuse. In the Civil war Sherman's famous "march to the sea" was largely the result of newspaper reports. The success of the American expedition which concentrated at Tampa in the Spanish-American war was greatly jeopardized by news-

paper writeups.

Chester S. Lord valiantly supports the newspapers in the much discussed question of war propaganda, saying that "it is difficult to recall any serious misrepresentation of facts or conditions."[1] This, in spite of the fact that the now famous German "atrocities" are everywhere conceded to have been figments of various propagandists' imaginations.

The power of the press was proven during the way years when all governments made great use of that medium to guide, to conceal and to accomplish. Proposed policies were often tested out through the newspapers, or suggested in them to direct attention from the real policy.

Warring nations direct all efforts to influence the opinions of neutral countries. This was a definite pdicy of both Great Britain and Germany before America's entrance into the World war. Germany, particularly, even to the end of the war, expended great sums of money on propaganda to influence the American public. The German method of doing so was so transparent, however, that everybody recognized the purpose.

In regard to the amount of space in the large American papers which was devoted to the news of the war, Mr. William H. Field, of the Chicago Tribune said that in April, 1918, his newspaper was devoting over half of its pages, other than advertising, to that purpose. The same was true of nearly all the important newspapers of the United States.

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1 Chester S. Lord, The Young Man in Journalism, p. 188.

CHAPTER IV

BIAS AND FAKING

Bias, faking and coloring of news by governments through the medium of the great news-distributing organizations of the world is a policy which differs with the various agencies. Subsidization, governmental influence and other accusations have been leveled at many of the news agencies.

Karl Bickel, president of the United Press, implies that there are two kinds of press organizations: "those that distribute news for its own sake and those that distribute news at the behest and under the direction of governments for the purpose of advancing their nationalistic programs."[1]

Professor Woodward seems to go a little further, hinting that many news stories are of a propagandist nature:

> "....students and critics of the press", he writes, "have not been lacking to point out the propagandist character of many of the so-called news stories."[2]

The opposite viewpoint is held by Edward Casey in his article, "Journalism and International Affairs":

> "The sensible and practical rule is always, so far as possible, to give peace the benefit of the doubt, so to address readers as to keep them cool, fair and rational. So far as concerns the text of the news as furnished by the press associations, this rule is generally followed. There is not much temptation for the agents of the association to depart from it. They are not likely to be goaded by any feeling of rivalry to make their dispatches more im-

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1 Karl A. Bickel, New Empires, p. 23.
2 Julian L. Woodward, Foreign News in American Morning Newspapers, p. 15.

> pressive, attractive, in a wor, sensational. Their interest, as well as their instructions and their duty, can best be obeyed by clear and uncolored presentation of the facts they have obtained."[3]

With regard to the American press organizations nearly all writers are agreed that none of the agencies have any connection with the government. There is a noticeable differnce of opinion, however, as to whether the various agencies indulge in sending out false news and faking.

> "Fortunately," writes Karl Bickel, "American journalism has never been burdened with an 'official' agency, and today any American news association that was even suspected of having a connection with the government or with any great special interest, would find its ability to serve enormously hampered and limited."[4]

This opinion is echoed by Hamilton Holt and amplified to the extent that he includes the entire press of the countr y:

> "...none of our papers are subsidized by the government itself, as is so often the case with the semi-official organs of Europe. Nor are any of our papers directly in the pay of foreign governments..."[5]

The opposite viewpoint is forcefully set forth by James Edward Rogers, who contends that many of our foreign correspondents are woefully ignorant of the customs, language, etc., of the country which they are covering, and as a result, much false news appears in the foreign columns of the American newspapers:

> "Perhaps the greatest accusation that can

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3 Vol. 21 (Aug. 1909) of publication of American Association for International Conciliation, pp. 9-10.
4 Karl A. Bickel, New Empires, p. 24.
5 Hamilton Holt, Commercialism and Journalism, pp. 55-56.

> be made against newspapers of this country is that they have a habit of printing 'false' news. Our foreign correspondents' ignorance of the politics, the language and the social institutions of the country in which they are stationed has been largely at fault, and for this very reason our foreign news columns have been the cause of much merriment to journalists of other countries. We have good proof of this in the famous Dreyfus case, when reams of 'stuff' not containing one counce of truth were brilliantly written and accepted as true by the American public. News was manufactured by the wholesale. Brilliant journalists were highly paid to write just for 'extras' which were published suring the trial sometimes ten times a day. The innocent public was daily given prejudiced and untrue accounts of the trial. Faked pictures were made. Facts were misrepresented and the public was deceived."[6]

Silas Bent holds an extreme view on the subject, stating that, for the most part, the American press is a tool of the government. He contends that "the American press is, with a few exceptions, an Administration press" and also that "we have in this country virtually a government press, although it is not subsidized, as were the organs of an earlier day."[7] In support of his contention, Mr. Bent quotes a passage from Everett Dean Martin's The Meaning of a Liberal Education: "Every government, our own included, fights with propaganda as deadly as poison gas." Silas Bent cites a forceful incident of one of the news agencies, the Associated Press, circulating propaganda for the government. In this case, Robert E. Olds, foremer assistant Secretary of State, summoned the representatives of the Associated Press, the United Press and the International News to his office to

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6 James Edward Rogers, The American Newspaper, p. 83.
7 Silas Bent, Ballyhoo, pp. 83-84.

inform them that Mexico was planning a Bolshevist hegemony of Central America. The correspondents of the United Press and the International News refused to send out the story unless Mr. Olds would sponsor it. This he refused to do. The Associated Press, however, according to Mr. Bent, sent the story, which was afterward proven false, to 1200 newspapers and "thus reached an audience of 24 millions with a piece of thoroughly discreditable propaganda."[8]

The Reuter agency of Great Britain pursues a course directly opposed to the accepted policy of the American news organizations. It is openly in league with the government and no attempts are made to deny the fact. Herbert Bailey has said of Reuter's:

> "In recent years Reuter's has become nothing but a presenter of offical news, handing out to the world the views of foreign governments and refusing to handle anything that would endanger its relations with those governments. No one can point to any revelation of the designs and works of foreign governments that would have roused the ire of such governments. In every part of the world, Reuter's is held in reverance by the foreign offices of all governments as the most agreeable presenter of what they have to say."[9]

Thus Mr. Bailey even goes further and claims that Reuter's is excessively friendly to all governments and refrains from criticizing the policies of any of them.

Harry Emerson Wildes, telling of the Japanese com-

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8 Silas Bent, Ballyhoo, p. 82.
9 Herbert Bailey, "Reuter as Propagandist," London Nation and Athenaeum, December 8, 1923.

plaints to the Reuter service, previous to the inaugeration of a Japanese news agency, says:

> "...suspicions of a pro-British bias were widely entertained by Japanese."[10]

Speaking of many of the European press organizations' relation to their respective governments and of Reuter's in particular, Karl Bickel writes:

> "In Great Britain the friendly relationship between the British government and the Reuter's agency has never been disguised. Reuter's receives no direct subsidy from the British Imperial Government but it has arrangements with certain of the dominions and colonies (as well as certain foreign governments) by which its income is enriched. The French (Havas agency), German (Wolff agency), Polish (Polish Telegraph agency), Turkish (Anatolian agency), Japanese (Rengo), and Russian (Tass agency) governments maintain, either directly or by subsidy, news services whose function is to see that their own national press receives that character of a foreign news report that their government approves, and that the press of foreign countries, if possible, receives and publishes their dispatches on events transpiring in their own country."[11]

Contrary to public opinion, the World war did not mark the advent of the "official" or "semi-official" news agency, neither did it mark the finish of this type of press organization. For years these press associations, sponsored or partially controlled by their respective governments, have existed in Europe. On July 19, 1930, Vorwaerts of Berlin published an editorial in which it condemned the handling of foreign news by the Wolff Telegraph Bureau, the German semi-

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10 Harry Emerson Wildes, Social Currents in Japan, p. 168.
11 Karl A. Bickel, New Empires, p. 24.

official agency declaring:

> "We assert that the government, due to the influence which it exerts uponthe Wolff Telegraph Bureau, systematically leaves the German public unclear as to the echo abroad on happenings in Germany. Whenever any more or less spontaneous hymn of praise for a German minister appears in a newspaper it is immediately presented to the German press. Anything unfavorable is almost always suppressed. This harsh word is unfortunately not exaggerated. For it is a fact that the foreign correspondents of the Wolff Telegraph Bureau report daily about the press comments in their territory to the central bureau. Now these Wolff Tlelgraph Bureau correspondents are for the most part also the press attaches of the German embassies and legations. We do not care to investigate into the question of how far these men are paid as Reich's officials and in what measure their telephone and telegraph expenses are borne by the government. In itself it would not be by any means unjustified that official quarters which make use of such news apparatus should also pay part or all of its cost.
>
> "But that is not the decisive thing here. The only important thing is the question: What happens with the reports of these correspondents? What sort of censorship is exercised which results in with-holding the comments of the foreign press from the German people?"[12]

Further on the subject Silas Bent declares that the German as well as the French and Italian governments still have a finger in the press"pie":

> "Only recently," he writes, "the German Foreign Office has sold the Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung to a syndicate, after an embarrassing ownership (an ownership punctuated by violent controversies and nasty public charges), in order not to handicap and incoming Cabinet. In France the subsidized political organ still persists. In Italy no subsidy is necessary: to be Facist is the price of life."[13]

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12 Karl A. Bickel, New Empires, pp. 32-33.
13 Silas Bent, Ballyhoo, p. 75.

The Japanese government, too, has been accused of exerting influence and pressure, as well as financial leverage, on reports to the printed both in Japan and outside of that country. "Neither the Japanese themselves nor foreigners," writes Harry E. Wildes, "dan learn the truth about the Island Empire from the press."[14]

Writing about the inception of a Japanese news agency, Mr. Wildes has this to say:

> "By studying the press history of other lands the Japanese were satisfied that the major nations each possessed news agencies, under government control for filtering the news. Reuter's was believed to be a British foreign-office adjunct; Havas, Wolff, and Stephani were held to be the property of French, German and Italian bureaucrats; the Associated Press was thought to represent the views of the United States. The conviction was encouraged in Japan that the Island Empire must also own and operate her own news agency."[15]

Accordingly the Japanese agency, Kokusai Tsushinsha, with John Russell Kennedy, formerly the Associated Press correspondent in Japan, as its head, was organized. The Associated Press, Reuter's, Tass, Stephani, Wolff, Havas and others affiliated agencies agreed to exchange news exclusively with the Kokusai agency.

Mr. Kennedy reaily realized that Kokusai would be attacked as a purely propaganda agency, so a plan was instituted whereby the agency would colledt the news within Japan, filter it and give it to the resident Reuter and Assocaited Press repsentatives. There would be no compulsion on the latter to put

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14 Harry Emerson Wildes, Social Currents in Japan, p. 131.
15 Ibid., p. 168

the news thus submitted on the wires and they were free to gather any additional information they desired. This system substantially like the usual Reuter-Associated Press network procedure, freed the agency, according to Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Ikwanaga, the heads of Kokusai, of the charges of circulating Japanese propaganda. Mr. Wildes terms this distinction "a somewhat academic one, since for nearly ten years Mr. Kennedy himself was both general manager of Kokusai and resident representative of Reuter."[16]

Mr. Wildes adds:

> "Editors in Peking, London and Calcutta reported to the writer that they distrusted Japanese dispatches, and the London correspondant of the Osaka Asahi laid the cause directly at the door of Reuter-Kokusai itself."[17]

In November 1923, Mr. Kennedy resigned his post, giving as one of his reasons for so doing that he resented the demands of the founders that Kokusai be used for propaganda purposes.

Thirty months later, in April, 1926, Kokusai was abandoned through a merger with what Mr. Wildes has termed the"frankly official" Tobo Tsushinsha into the Nippon Shimbun Rengo-Sha (Japanese Newspapers' Associated Press).[18]

Dean Williams has said of Kokusai, according to Harry Emerson Wildes:

> "Kokusai, while ostensibly a business enterprize of certain individuals, is closely affiliated with the Japanese government. It

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16 Harry Emerson Wildes, Social Currents in Japan, p. 178
17 Ibid., p. 191
18 Ibid., p. 181.

> is rather the expression of the news as the Japanese government would wish the world to know it than of the news as it actually happens."[19]

Of that same agency Kisaburo Kawabe offers much the same comment:

> "Kokusai Tsushin...is said to be a semi-official interpreter of the Japanese government to the world."[20]

The Rengo agency, mentioned above, is supplemented by Nippon Dempo Tsushin (Japan Telegraph News Agency), established in July, 1901, ostensibly to correct the disadvantages resulting from the passage of news to and from Japan through foreign-controlled wires. Nippon Dempo is believed by newspapermen to be a semi-offical agency. They allege that it receives a subsidy of 5,000 yen a month.[21]

> "A tiny group of foreign correspondents," writes Mr. Wildes, "accredited by leading British and Amerifan newspapers affords the only avenue for truthful comment on Japan. But foreign correspondents also have been brought within the circle of official 'inspiration'. An International Press Association, founded in 1909 by Motosada Zumoto, exerts a quiet pressure which few correspondents are able to withstand. Nor is it possible for correspondents to evade the services of this Association. Registration with the Press Association is essential."[22]

If one does not register with the Association the task of securing news is practically impossible. Mr. Wildes adds:

> "No independent source of news is now available wherewith to check the accuracy of news items from Japan."[23]

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20 Kisaburo Kawabe, The Press and Politics in Japan, p. 113.
21 Harry Emerson Wildes, Social Currents in Japan, pp.192-193.
22 Ibid., pp. 2180219.
23 Ibid., p. 218.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Summarizing the various problems and conditions intrinsically connected with the transmission and gathering of foreign news, certain definite conclusions are clearly evident.

In the first place, there must be a definite change in the present mode of collecting the news of foreign countries if bias and propaganda are to be eliminated or even diminished to a very great extent. This, of course, depends on the attitudes taken by the various governments on the elimination of propaganda from news emanating from their respective countries. The idea of allowing accredited foreign correspondents access to all parts of the country they are covering and of eliminating all government pressure upon their reports to their home country is perhaps too Utopian even to be realized. This, of course, would be a panacea for the distorted accounts which at present pour out of most nations. Government subsidization, too, would have to be eliminated; and this idea will perhaps never materialize. The various governments know only too well the power of the press and what a wonderful tool it is to sway public opinion with, both within their country's borders and outside them.

It is quite clearly evident that nearly all of the great press angencies of the world are in some way tied up with their governments -- some of them by direct subsidy, others by some of the myriads of devious channels which governments have of exerting influence. Reuter's of England, Havas of France, Wolff of Germany, Tass of Russia, Paf of

Poland, Anatolia of Turkey, Stephani of Italy and Rengo and Nippon Tsushin of Japan -- all are subverted through more or less open alliances with the governments of their countries. And as long as such influence is employed by national administrations on the news agencies true and accurate reports on most subjects can not emanate from their countries.

The American Press associations alone have retained their freedom as to what to print. It is true, the Associated Press at various times has been the target of veiled hints that its organization was connected in some degree with the United States government. But these accusations may justly be termed false and attributed to two reasons: the usual whole-hearted support by the Associated Press whenever possible of government policies in which that agency has faith and also the tie-up of the Associated Press with so many European agencies which are influenced or subsidized in some degree with their respective governments.

An example of this was the recent announcement by Joseph Paul-Boncour, leading propagandist of France, when petitioning the French government for 33,000,000 francs with which to inaugurate a new greater propaganda system to spread French good will, that the Associated Press would be used as one of the mediums to disseminate this propaganda in America. The officials of the American news agency, the weekly magazine Time informs us, were highly indignant. That same publication added that the Associated Press employes were gently chided by other newspapermen but that not one of the latter entertained the thought for one moment that the American agency would be a party to such an

agreement.

In time of war all governments utilize as far as possible the news agencies to spread propaganda, favorable, of course, to the mother country. It is not likely that this condition will be changed. It is a system that has been much abused by all countries, including our own.

Censorship in war time will always be an individual problem, regulated by the individual governments. It is a problem most disagreeable to the newspapers, but one which will likely remain unchanged, for the most part, because of the dangers connected with an absence of war-time censorship.

The plan put into practice during the World war of allowing a certain number of correspondents access to the front-line trenches is a favorable step in the right direction and gives evidence that the governments are struggling to find a method, suitable to the newspapers, whereby the important news from the front-line trenches may be gathered and published within certain limits of censorship.

The rates of news transmission have ever been thorns in the sides of publishers and press associations. For years they have denounced the high rates. The recent Congress of Press Experts at Geneva in 1927 promises to bear fruit in that regard--it is the first real coordinated effort by agencies and publishers throughout the world to secure lower rates.

At the same Congress a real step will perhaps be taken, too, in securing for newspaper owners and press associations a uniform rate of transmission which they have long desired. At present each nation has its own rates, which in

nearly all cases differ, and the process of sending a news report through five or six countries is complex and expensive. It is expected that the Geneva Congress, including as it does, the representatives of all nations, will arrive at some more suitable system of rates than is now in use.

Finally, the lowering of rates of transmission will perhaps mean one marked improvement in the content of the news columns of our daily journals -- the placing therein of a greater percentage of foreign news. This, I believe, will help materially in drawing the nations closer to each other, will give the people a better spirit of "world-consciousness," and will inculate in them a greater interest in world problems and affairs.