

Newsman Generally Approve Media-Violence Report

By The Associated Press
Norman E. Isaacs, president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, expressed general approval Tuesday of a task force report of news media coverage of violence in the nation. But he said the media, rather than a government body, should police the press.

while the media's role in promoting violence often is exaggerated, the media contributes to violence by failing to report thoroughly the social problems that lead to violent confrontations.

The task force recommended establishment of a Center for Media Study, an independent national council appointed by the President, to serve as a watchdog over newspapers and television.

"I happen to see a lot of good things about the task force report," said Isaacs who is executive editor of the Louisville (Ky.) Times and the Courier-Journal.

"I'm among those who have been trying to lead the society into adopting a national grievance committee procedure to receive complaints from the public about the performance of daily newspapers and judging these complaints on the basis of ASNE's long-standing code of ethics," he said.

"My argument has been that the country's editors have to stand up as the conscience of the profession and we ought to be the ones to set up the machinery to police the calling," Isaacs said. "I contend we will be in a lot healthier position as to our credibility if we go ahead."

Describing the media as oversensitive to outside criticism, the task force recommends more self-examination by the press, more analytical reporting, greater control over the coverage of disorders, and improved relations between the media and minority groups.

It says the government should

keep a closer watch on mergers and other transactions that tend toward concentration in the news business.

The Federal Communications Commission, the report suggests, should clarify its fairness doctrine governing the broadcasting of controversial issues, and should consider news and public affairs broadcasting expenditures in evaluating broadcast license renewals.

The task force on "Violence and the Media" was headed by Robert K. Baker, a former Justice Department attorney, and Dr. Sandra J. Ball, a Seattle sociologist.

"It is undoubtedly true," the report says, "that some groups have learned to use violence and the press to exploit their goals. They have learned that the media generally can be counted on to give the violent behavior a prominent role in the day's news."

"The result is that when they

seek publicity for their grievances, conflict and possibly violence may be one of the techniques used in the fairly certain knowledge that the press will make sure "the whole world is watching."

"Although there is truth in this charge, it is probably a good deal less than seems to be popularly believed. First, violence is not necessary to gain media attention. In the case of television particularly, any kind of physical action or dramatization of conflict will usually suffice.

"Second, groups who engage in violence are apt to have their message lost because of the media tendency to focus on the violence to the exclusion of the message.

"Third, the use of violence, as is usually the case in university confrontations, is a political instrument used to provoke the police and thereby radicalize large numbers of students who are sympathetic to new left goals,

but ordinarily reject new left tactics.

"Today, the press is less dependent upon violent content — upon titillation in general — than it may ever have been. The hard fact is that violence is not primarily what the news media have to offer today. For those who suppose that it is, that may be because it is what they have come to expect — or choose — to

see and read."

However, the task force goes on, "The media have contributed to the widespread use of confrontation as an instrument of social change by their failure to report adequately the conditions underlying current protest, by the proposals for solution of pressing social problems, and by their attention-oriented coverage of conflict . . .

"The news media can play a significant role in lessening the potential for violence by functioning as a faithful conduit for intergroup communication, providing a true marketplace of ideas, providing full access to the day's intelligence, and reducing the incentive to confrontation that sometimes erupts in violence. That is a subtle and uncertain mission."

Ag Grad Student On Federal Panel

An A&M graduate student in environmental engineering has been elected to a student panel of five to advise the federal government of water pollution problems in South Central United States.

David Zoellner of Tuscaloosa, Ala., won the office at a recent conference on pollution in Dallas for students from Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and New Mexico.

The student panel will advise the Federal Water Pollution Control Administration, sponsor of the conference, and Secretary of the Interior Warren Hickel.

Zoellner is chairman of the Student Senate Legal Rights Commission and also represents the College of Engineering on the Graduate Student Council.

'Bacchus' Theme Of Junior Ball

"Bacchus — god of wine, women and song" will be the theme for the 1970 Junior Ball said Jim Tramuto, class president.

The ball is scheduled for 8-12 p.m. March 14 in Duncan Dining Hall.

Girls attending the ball will be encouraged to wear a mode of dress in line with the theme such as "mini-togas" or "revealing sheets", Tramuto said.

The weekend will begin with a decorating party in Duncan Friday night, Tramuto said, then a 12-4 p.m. barbecue Saturday and the ball that night.

The band will be "The Preachers" from Dallas, he said, estimating that they will be playing for approximately 500 couples.

Prices for the activities haven't been set as yet, Tramuto commented, but added that the cost should run somewhere between \$3 to \$4 for the ball and \$1.25 for the barbecue.

Applications for class sweetheart may be picked up from Tramuto, Dorm 3-304 or Bill Stockton, Dorm 3-303. A 5x7 photograph, which will be returned, must accompany each application.

Soph Ball Tickets Go on Sale

Tickets for the Sophomore Ball, schedule Feb. 13-14, will go on sale Thursday at the Student Programs office in the Memorial Student Center.

John Sharp, sophomore class president, said that the tickets will later be offered for sale in the dormitories. Each ticket, which is good for both nights,

will cost \$5 a couple.

Sharp also said that bands for both night have been acquired. The Cornerstone Blues will play Friday night and the Countdown Five will play Saturday night.

Sharp added that this Ball is expected to be one of the biggest ever and that they expect to sell 500 to 600 tickets.

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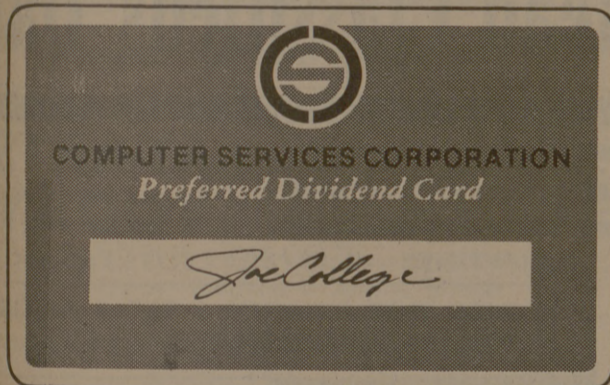
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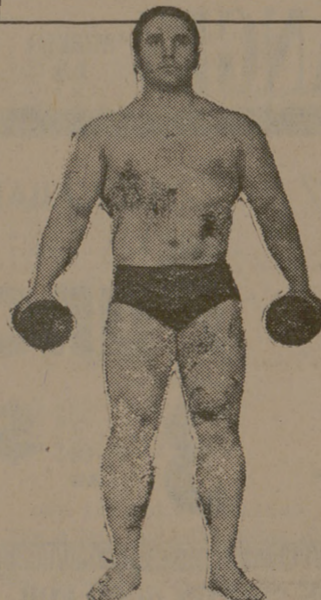
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