

## A court with a handful of pebbles

We're in another recession.  
But it's not an economic recession this time. It's a recession in free speech, brought on by a set of recent Supreme Court decisions that seem well-intentioned enough on the surface; but collectively, those decisions are making it harder and harder for this country's free press to do its job.

In the most recent of these decisions, the high court said just one week ago that police armed with a search warrant can legally make surprise searches of offices in hopes of finding clues or evidence related to some crime even if no one at the newspaper was involved in that crime.

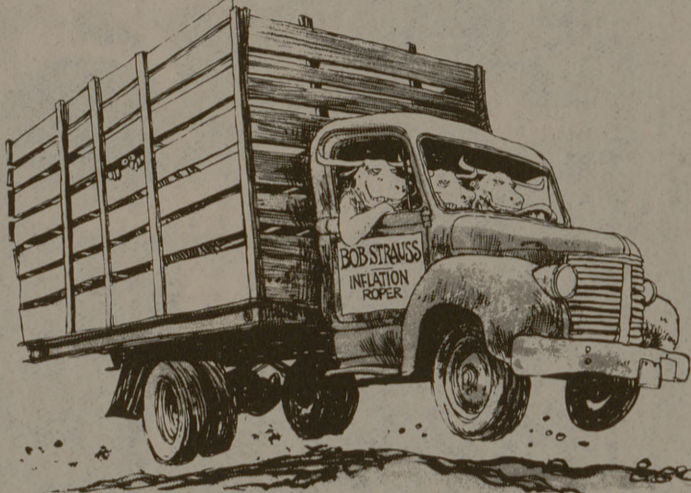
That Stanford University Daily, the newspaper involved in the case, argued that the police who searched the Daily's offices in 1971 should have subpoenaed the information they believed falsely the Daily had, rather than come as they did, like thieves in the night. The release of subpoenaed information can be contested in court; material seized under a search warrant cannot.

The Stanford Daily decision follows decisions which: denied reporters the right to protect confidential sources; limited the press' defenses against libel suits; made it easier for citizens to sue for invasion of privacy, and barred the press from some public court proceedings under some circumstances.

Now reporters cannot promise to confidential sources protection from either inquisitive grand juries or marauding police on fishing expeditions. And that promise is sometimes the only bargaining power a reporter has to uncover a Watergate.

Freedom, like most other things we take for granted, is seldom killed with one big rock. It's "pebbled" to death, hit by just one tiny pebble at a time. The Supreme Court is throwing lots of pebbles at freedom of the press these days.  
L.R.L.

M. CAHILL



## Senate ethics committee back in action

By STEVE GERSTEL  
United Press International

WASHINGTON — Eleven years ago this month, Sen. John C. Stennis left his office and briskly strode down the corridor. He was on a grim mission.

Stennis, the courtly former judge known for his personal integrity, went into the office of Sen. Thomas J. Dodd of Connecticut to deliver the verdict.

And Dodd, under investigation by the Ethics Committee for using political funds to pay personal expenses, was waiting.

As the report goes, Stennis, trying to ease the impact, said to Dodd: "Tom, the news is not all good."

And it wasn't. The committee had voted to recommend censure. Although the Senate later dismissed some of the charges and softened some of the language, Dodd was censured by his colleagues.

For many years after that, the Ethics Committee remained dormant. If there were any allegations brought against senators, they have remained a well-kept secret despite the continuing shuffle among its membership.

Talmadge has candidly admitted that during his career in public service — which spans 31 years — friends have given him cash gifts of \$5, \$10 or \$20 to help defray day-to-day expenses.

In a letter to Stevenson, Talmadge said the gifts "rarely, if ever," exceeded \$25 a week, a pittance for a man who has holdings worth well over a million.

The Georgia Democrat also conceded that he accepted clothing and let others pay his hotel bills when he traveled around the state.

In addition, Talmadge's office has confirmed that the Georgia senator filed erroneous reports with the Secretary of the Senate on his campaign expenditures.

Brooke's case differs from Talmadge's, but is just as intriguing.

Brooke, who is up for reelection, has conceded that he made a "misstatement" on a deposition related to his divorce proceedings when he claimed he owed an old friend \$49,000.

Confronted by the Boston Globe with the fact that he failed to list the loan as a liability on his statement of holdings — as required by the Senate — Brooke said the sum was really only \$2,000.

If Brooke's downward revision is correct, then he should have no trouble with the Ethics Committee. Loans under \$5,000 do not have to be disclosed.

The Boston Globe has also unearthed a maze of financial dealings with a family fund which may not be subject to the Senate's code of ethics.

What the judicial system may do and

how the electorate may react, is another question.

Talmadge — despite the embarrassment of being pictured as a millionaire who is willing to let friends stuff his pockets with small bills — may also get a clean bill from the Ethics Committee.

Senators now are only required to list gifts totalling more than \$100 a year from any individual with a direct interest in legislation.

And previous rules, which also would apply in the Talmadge case, required the confidential disclosure of gifts of \$50 or more from an individual.

Only if Talmadge violated those limits — which, if he did, would be extremely hard to prove — could the Ethics Committee bring charges against him.

## U.S. military vs. Mother Nature

### Washington Window

Now, a reconstituted committee which last year wrote a new code of ethics, has two cases to investigate.

The senators involved are Sen. Herman Talmadge of Georgia and Sen. Edward Brooke of Massachusetts.

Their cases have nothing in common except that the information which exploded into national headlines stems from ugly divorce proceedings which ended long marriages.

Talmadge and Brooke have both contacted the Ethics Committee — Talmadge asking for a quick determination and Brooke for a "review" of his situation.

The committee, under the chairmanship of Sen. Adlai Stevenson, D-Ill., has already announced it will hold a preliminary investigation into the Talmadge affair.

It is certain to grant Brooke's request for a review.

By DICK WEST  
United Press International

WASHINGTON — According to Rep. Robin Beard, the Endangered Species Act is beginning to endanger military training plans.

The Tennessee Republican cited several examples, including a report that six Army bases had restricted training exercises to avoid encroaching upon red-cockaded woodpeckers.

Eventually, he warned at a recent House hearing, the conflict between national defense and Mother Nature "may reach crisis proportion." Hmmm.

Somewhere on the Western Front, Supreme headquarters of the Allied Neutron Bomb Force. The commanding general is standing before a huge map, wooden pointer in hand.

"All right, gentlemen, this is it — the biggest military offensive in history. Here's our jumping off place — Torpor Bend on the east bank of Buttermilk Creek. At 0600 hours the 1st Corps will cross on pontoon bridges and secure the west bank preparatory to an assault on Mt. Balderdash. Any questions?"

A young lieutenant arises in the rear of the room.

"Begging the general's pardon, sir, but crossing Buttermilk Creek at that point is out of the question."

### The Lighter Side

The nape of the general's neck takes on a rosy glow. On his forehead a small artery starts to pulsate erratically.

"Whatta ya mean we can't cross there? Our recon shows Torpor Bend is the ideal spot for an operation of this type."

Droplets forming on the lieutenant's upper lip and the twitching of an eyelid betray a hint of stress.

"Begging the general's pardon, sir, I wasn't questioning the general's tactics. I'm Lt. Tiddlehood, 1st Corps Environmental Officer, in addition to other duties, and it's my job to inform you that Torpor Bend is the sole remaining natural habitat of the underslung guppy."

The general smites himself on the head

above the ear as though trying to clear his hearing passages of some impediment.

"Thundering, lieutenant! This is no time for a nature lecture. We're having a military briefing here."

"I understand that, sir, but for the general's information the underslung guppy is on the international endangered species list."

The general blanches. "You mean..."

"Exactly, sir. Under terms of the Geneva Convention on World Conservation, no military action detrimental to an endangered species is permitted."

"Because of anatomical peculiarities, underslung guppies are unable to swim more than three inches below the surface. Erection of pontoon bridges would therefore prevent those in Torpor Bend from reaching their spawning grounds upstream."

"When do they spawn, lieutenant?"

"Every 39 minutes, sir."

"Very well, gentlemen. It appears we have no choice. Have my aide prepare a message notifying the enemy that the war has been called off."

## Drug traffic keeping police busy 'down under'

By John Shaw  
International Writers Service

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA — There was a whiff of Arsenic and Old Lace in a federal courtroom here not long ago as two aged American women were given tough prison sentences for drug smuggling. Their stiff punishment, however, reflected less the magnitude of their crime than the Australian authorities' efforts to crack down on a growing narcotics traffic.

Vera Todd Hays and Florice Marie Bessire, a grandmotherly pair from the tiny town of La Pine, Ore., had pleaded guilty to smuggling nearly two tons of hashish from West Germany into Australia inside a camper van. They contended that they had been duped into the operation by Mrs. Hay's stepson.

IN SENTENCING THEM each to 14 years in jail, Judge James Staunton noted that the women had led "worthwhile and blameless lives" at home. But, he said, the court was "obligated to show the dismay and abhorrence of the community as regards such offenses."

To a large extent, the judge's severity was symptomatic of a certain panic among Australians who are awakening to the fact that a drug culture is beginning to take hold here.

This may surprise Americans, who have long been accustomed to a narcotics problem. But trends often arrive late in Australia.

Drugs are not entirely new to Australians, of course. There had been some backyard cultivation of marijuana by advocates of the so-called "alternative life-style," and vacationing students would occasionally bring in narcotics from Asia. But within the past few years, the market has grown.

It is estimated, for example, that there are some 400,000 regular cannabis users in Australia's population of 14 million. Heroin addiction is said to have jumped threefold over the last three years, especially in the 18-to-24-year-old age group.

Inevitably, the drug business has become a big commercial and criminal

venture. Here in Sydney alone, with a population of 3 million, the heroin trade reportedly amounts to \$50 billion per year.

APART FROM THEIR arrest of the little old ladies from Oregon, the police helicopters recently uncovered a plantation of marijuana worth some \$2 million tucked away in a valley near Canberra, the Australian capital. In another instance, smugglers were caught carrying cannabis from Southeast Asia to a remote Australian cattle ranch.

It could be that drugs are being raised at places in Australia's vast "outback." The police hope that U.S. satellites, which are used in normal agricultural surveys, can furnish them with information on narcotics farming.

The scale of the marijuana industry was first revealed less than a year ago, when a prominent businessman and political figure vanished after suggesting that orange-growers in the region between Sydney and Melbourne were also cultivating drugs.

The businessman, who has not been seen since, is presumed by the police to have been murdered by gangsters. Government investigators, empowered to subpoena witnesses and probe bank accounts, are still working on the case.

ANOTHER CASE, also under investigation, involves a heroin addict who fi-

nanced his costly habit by serving as a drug courier for a major narcotics ring. The addict, who is still being questioned, has been code-named "Mr. Melbourne" by the police.

According to an official account, his first mission took him to Taiwan, where he contacted a local shopkeeper who handed him a sealed box of photographic film that actually contained heroin.

On his route back, which had been carefully prearranged by his employers, he flew a scheduled airline to Bali, switched to boats that carried him to the northern coast of Australia, and finally boarded a light plane to a private landing strip near Sydney. His fee for the job was \$18,000.

On his second mission, a confederate met him in Bangkok and guided him to the Thai border with Burma, where he identified himself to drug traders showing an Australian postage stamp with its perforations cut off. This time the box of photographic film was packed with marijuana, and his honorarium was \$7,000.

Smuggling of this kind is now increasing, and ironically, the more contraband seized, the higher prices rise for drugs and the more attractive the trade becomes to traffickers.

THE POLICE are encountering enormous difficulties — partly because of Aus-

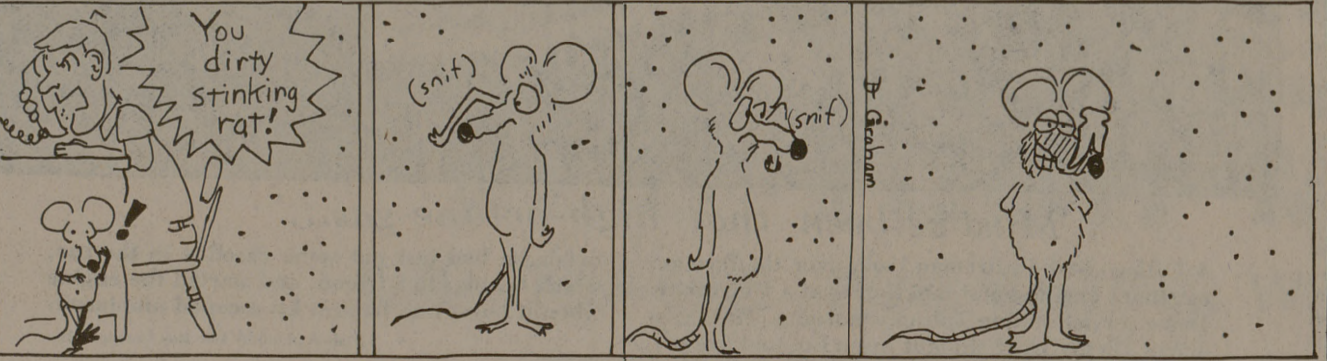
tralia's proximity to Southeast Asia, a rich source of drugs, and partly because this continent's extensive shoreline is tough to control.

Australia, like the United States, has a federal narcotics bureau. But in contrast with the United States, which has been dealing with the drug problem for some time, the Australian bureau is only now being strengthened. Present plans call for a force of 150 agents, plainly an inadequate staff.

Legislation is being drafted to impose heavier penalties on traffickers, and pressure is also building up to legalize the personal of marijuana, which is already tolerated by police more concerned with concentrating on professional smugglers of hard drugs.

Among other remedies being considered is the adoption of the British system of registering heroin addicts and providing them with free drug rations. The concept behind this approach is to break the underworld networks that push heroin.

All this indicates that Australia has gotten into step with the rest of the modern industrial world. Thus, as America discovered, progress has a price.  
(Shaw, a columnist for the Sydney Sun, writes on social and political issues in Australia.)



### Judge pleads for defendants

Nine persons in Houston refused to enter pleas Tuesday to federal riot charges filed against them in a May 6 disturbance near Moody Park. A state district judge entered innocent pleas on the defendants' behalf after the nine persons read identical typewritten statements saying they disputed the legality of the indictments.

### Military nixes three discos

The military in San Antonio has put three local discos on the "no limits" list because of racial discrimination against black GIs, claiming that conditions in the clubs are detrimental to the health, welfare and morale of the troops. Representatives of the clubs appeared before the board and protested the move, saying the only reason they turned anyone away was because the club was filled.

### Hill to meet with agency heads

Attorney General John Hill said today in Austin he will meet Monday with about 30 state agency heads to outline his plans for curtailing state spending in 1979. Hill said he invited the executive directors of 30 of the largest state agencies to the luncheon meeting.

### Montoya to be buried

Former Sen. Joseph M. Montoya, the son of a gold miner who grew up to become one of New Mexico's most powerful political figures, will be buried Thursday in Santa Fe near where his public service career began four decades ago. Montoya, a Democrat who gained national attention as a member of the Senate Watergate Committee, died Monday at the age of 62.

### Warning issued on fryers

More than a quarter-million Great American Frying Machines have faulty wiring and should be returned to the manufacturer, says the Consumer Product Safety Commission. It said the deep-fat fryers may pose a potential shock hazard because wiring inside them could move during use and make contact with the metal housing. So far two shock injuries have been reported, it said. Neither were serious.

### Cattle shipment restricted

Shipment of cattle into Texas from Arizona and New Mexico is being restricted because of an outbreak of screwworm in the two states, officials reported Monday. There were 73 confirmed cases of the screwworm in seven New Mexico counties during the first five months of this year, marking the worst outbreak in 15 years. There were another 559 cases reported in Arizona and 19 in California.

### Governor vetoes Laetrile bill

New York's Gov. Hugh Carey Tuesday vetoed a bill that would have permitted the use of Laetrile in treating cancer patients. Carey, who vetoed a similar bill in 1977, said there is presently no greater justification for legalizing the use of Laetrile than there was a year ago.

### Carter to speak on policy

President Carter is expected to enunciate U.S. policy of cooperation and competition with the Soviet Union in a commencement address Wednesday at the U.S. Naval Academy. Press secretary Jody Powell said Carter has completed the draft of the speech, which will sum up his view of East-West relations and reaffirm his current policies.

### Search on for chimpanzees

Authorities Tuesday searched a forest in Bisenti, Italy, for two chimpanzees that mauled five children in this central Italian village. Officials said the animals escaped from a traveling circus camped outside Bisenti Monday and attacked the children, biting and scratching them over most of their bodies. One of them, 11-year-old Graziano Modesti, was severely scratched in the face and was hospitalized.

### Terrorists bomb installation

Terrorists made a bomb attack on a U.S. Army installation last week in Bonn, West Germany, but it misfired and no one was injured, an Army spokesman said Tuesday. An explosives device went off May 31 at the American Arms Hotel, a transient billet for soldiers in Wiesbaden, the spokesman said. Damage was slight.

Slight chance of thunder showers this morning with decreasing cloudiness this afternoon. Partly cloudy tonight & Thursday. High today mid 80s, low tonight upper 60s. High tomorrow mid 80s. Winds from the east-southeast at 5-10 mph. 20% chance of rain today.

## THE BATTALION

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