

Harmful effects

Minnesota's drug laws, which designate the possession or sale of marijuana as felonies punishable by up to twenty years in prison, are generally conceded to be unnecessarily severe. There is good reason to believe that the legislature, recognizing the harshness of the law, may quietly reduce the penalties, at least for possession.

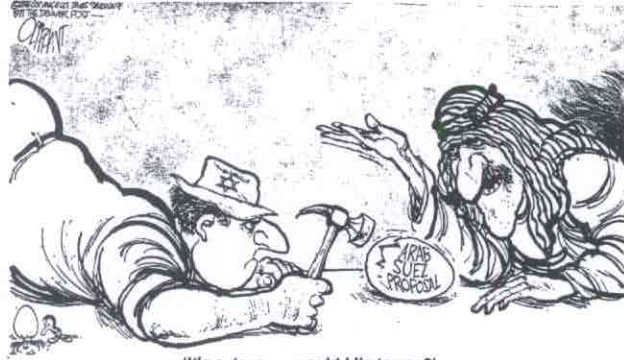
Two recent events, however, indicate that the legislature would be wise to review both the enforcement and application of the marijuana laws. The first is the tragic death of Mark Salzer, a 19-year-old resident of the West Bank who was fatally shot by an undercover Hennepin County deputy sheriff attempting to arrest him for selling marijuana. While leaving a full investigation of the incident to the Hennepin County Grand Jury, it may still be said that proper police behavior may have averted Salzer's death.

The deputy involved in the shooting claims Salzer struck him from behind and that he was forced to shoot in self-defense. That may be true. But three other were waiting outside and conceivably could have offered their assistance and prevented the shooting. And one wonders why the deputy didn't first leave the apartment and return later with his colleagues to identify himself and conduct the arrest. Such a forceful police presence most likely would have reduced the possibility

of resistance by Salzer and the other persons arrested in the raid.

The second event involves a State Supreme Court ruling and brings the application of the law under question. The court has upheld the sentencing of an 18-year-old to a twenty year prison term, ruling that the discovery of 1/2800 of an ounce of marijuana in the youth's clothing was sufficient evidence to convict him of possession. By contrast, the Army, not known for its fair administration of justice, has ruled that possession of such an infinitesimal amount of any drug does not constitute a crime.

As the citizens committee urging an investigation of the Salzer incident suggests, a full-scale examination of police methods of dealing with drug suspects is in order. Likewise, an intensive reappraisal should be made of the laws themselves.



'It's a dove . . . would I lie to you?'

Pigs in the Press

By DOUG STONE

Two years ago, during the sit-in at Morrill Hall, I tried to get some film from a Daily photographer who had been inside the building when 100 white students joined black students in an occupation. One of the white demonstrators would not let me take the film back to the Daily to be processed because he feared any pictures might be used against the demonstrators by the FBI or local police. At the time, I could not understand his fears so we proceeded to smuggle the film out and printed a picture in the next day's paper.

Today that demonstrator's apprehensions are entirely justified, for in the past two years there has been a gradual blurring of the supposedly clear lines between the role of the police and the role of the press. To some members of these two institutions there is no longer a distinction. And worse, to members of the minority community, students, and other activist groups, the press has lost much of its credibility as an independent agency (A Chicago Daily News reporter was recently thrown out of a meeting of black people in Washington, D.C. because he was suspected of being an FBI informer.) When that happens, and ideas are no longer being communicated between polarized elements of society, the society has lost a vital ingredient. What follows when what little exchange of ideas we now have ends?

In some cases cops have posed as newsmen or photographers at press conferences or demonstrations. In other cases, newsmen have coopted themselves as cops or informers. Entire stations or news organizations have, in some instances, sold part of their corporate souls by providing services they have no business providing to police organizations. And to run the full circle, there have been a couple cases of police or military spying on the newsmen. A few specifics:

In November 1968, according to the New York Times, Tampa policemen posed as newsmen and students in covering a draft resistance demonstration. Police Chief J.C.

Littleton asked newsmen not to expose his men to the demonstrators. "You're either with us or with them," Littleton told reporters.

Last November, a Wichita, Kansas cop used press credentials when he posed as a photographer during Vice President Agnew's visit to that city. Presidential media coordinator Herb Klein, once an editor himself, has since apologized to local newsmen, but the damage had been done.

The January issue of the Chicago Journalism Review, published by a group of activist reporters, exposed the impersonation of TV newsmen for a non-existent station by two state police agents at a student protest. The director of the Illinois Bureau of Investigation (coincidentally, a former TV newsmen) said he would halt the practice. He added, however, "If the only way to successfully get evidence was to impersonate a newsmen, I'd have my agents go ahead and do it."

On the now famous NBC "First Tuesday" last month in which the military intelligence network was discussed, one former agent explained how he posed as a newsmen for a Richmond, Va. paper and attended a Poor People's Campaign press conference in Washington, D.C. Chicago Journalism Review also reports that a Washington newsmen received a tip that Army Intelligence had purchased equipment for agents to use while posing as a TV crew. The Pentagon, of course, denied the charge.

Things have gotten so bad in Washington that 28 reporters from the Washington Star threatened to expose any cops caught posing as journalists, a position that all newsmen with any integrity should take.

These are only a few instances of cops posing as newsmen as part of their effort to keep track of political activists. Anyone involved in the Movement can probably provide a dozen more examples. The distinction between police and the press disappears completely, however, when journalists or their organizations prostitute themselves for police.

The most outrageous cases were revealed during the Chicago 8 trial in 1969. Louis Salzberg, a New York photographer and since 1968 the head of a photo agency that dealt largely with radical activities, testified at the trial that he had been a paid informer of the FBI since 1967. In 1968 the FBI helped him set up the New York Press Service and paid him \$10,000 to keep them well stocked with photos of the radical move-

ment. In an interview with Time magazine, Salzberg was surprised that no editors had "called me up to congratulate me." Ironically, a former aide to former Sen. Eugene McCarthy, Sheldon Ramsdell, was an unknowing accomplice of Salzberg when Ramsdell went to work for the photo agency after the 1968 Democratic Convention.

Also at the "8" trial, Carl Gillman, a reporter-photographer for a San Diego TV station, testified that he too had kept the FBI informed of what he considered "subversive" activities. In a "Time" interview, he said he did try to keep his police and news work separate. What integrity!

The Columbia Journalism Review reported in its fall issue that Houston radio reporter Howard Dupress, recently accompanied police on a raid. He was carrying a shotgun and acted as a spotter. Similarly, reporters for the Philadelphia Evening and Sunday Bulletin joined police in a raid on Black Panther headquarters.

The Sacramento Union has a policy of turning over news film to the FBI, according to the Guild Reporter, the paper published by the journalists' union.

Many papers and TV stations put up rewards for the capture of criminals or sponsor secret witness plans. The Detroit News has had such programs since 1967. Our own patriotic KSTP initiated such a plan after the bombings this summer.

The media often provides niceties for police which are not considered unethical, but good public relations. Last summer one local TV station used its camera and sound equipment to record pictures and names of several young people arrested at a marijuana bust. WCCO-TV has let police view its films of demonstrations as part of a police training program.

In considering the problem I have discussed, it is important to note that police do not care and do not understand the constitutional division between government and the press. As a retiring university police chief once told me, "Reporters are some of our best investigators," meaning that much information reporters gather is useful to cops.

There are indications that police and FBI aren't about to give up their undercover operations whether agents are posing as students or newsmen or the local milkman. Therefore, it is incumbent on the press to make the distinction between the media and police clear. This includes putting pressure on the government to stop using its agents to impersonate newsmen and insist further

that pervasive clandestine activities of undercover agents be curtailed altogether. The Chicago Journalism Review points out that the press has failed to comprehend the broader implications of police surveillance of its citizens. Police as press and vice versa is only one aspect of a larger attack on our fundamental liberties and our right to privacy.

Newsmen cannot on the one hand scream about government intimidation (remember the outcry after Agnew's attack on the media in November 1969), seek protection of confidential sources, and ask for special access to news events, and on the other hand pussyfoot with the cops or FBI. If the press is to be independent and distinct from the government, it has a responsibility to hold up its end of the agreement.

To date there have been only mild protests against the types of abuses I've discussed here. Any one of the examples I've cited should infuriate any hard-working journalists, particularly those whose job it is to develop close contacts with the minority or activist communities. Good reporting depends on some sort of mutual trust and confidence. There can't be much trust when some reporters and news organizations work part-time for the local stations or paper and part-time for Police Gazette.

What I have written is not intended to make the already difficult job of reporting impossible for the working press. There are many honest, reputable, and fair reporters in the country and in the Twin Cities. I am simply pointing out some glaring wrongs that have occurred recently and which are marring the reputations of those who are trying to do a decent job.

When the press subverts itself, how long will it be before the government lends a hand. Can the press be an effective watchdog of the government when some of its members and organizations, if not on the government payroll, are at least a subtle extension of the government. Can a supposedly independent press allow itself to be infiltrated without raising its collective voice? Finally, can a theoretically free press be considered free and open if a large segment of citizens have no access to it for fear they are being spied upon? These are the questions journalists must consider in 1971 and beyond.

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Laosed up

"This limited operation is not an enlargement of the war." — State Department policy statement.

"We'll probably be coming in after you." — American GI at the border shouting to South Vietnamese troops entering Laos.

Meanwhile, out in space, Apollo astronaut Alan Shepard said Sunday:

"It is our wish tonight that we can in some way contribute through our space program to better understanding and peace throughout the world and help rectify these situations."

We are expecting Shepard to land in North Vietnam and offer his moon rocks in exchange for a cease-fire.