

Saturday Review



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is a question of whether the press is going to be allowed to maintain its traditional right to print articles about dissenters and their ideas without governmental intimidation. To protect themselves, the radicals will be forced to refuse to speak to the press.

Item: Finally, there is the prosecution of the Chicago Eight. Many prominent jurists have said that the only important point about this case is not that the behavior of the defense, the prosecution, and the bench was reprehensible but that the case should never have been tried. They contend that the "Rap Brown Law" under which the defendants were tried is one of the most blatant attempts to intimidate dissenters since the Alien and Sedition Acts. The Nixon administration could have decided not to continue the prosecution; that it did not creates doubts about whether the administration was intent only on punishing people for what they think and say.

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The White House and Free Speech

Several recent actions by the White House and the Justice Department with regard to freedom of speech raise some fundamental questions about the use of the power of law enforcement for political ends.

Item: The Nixon administration last month attempted to impose a set of thirty-three restrictive regulations on groups that planned political protests in front of the White House. The regulations would have required a protest group to describe, two weeks before a demonstration, the arrest, indictment, conviction, and prison record of each person scheduled to participate in the demonstration. The regulations also would have required the listing of any previous demonstration in which a protester had participated, as well as statements describing the degree to which he had advocated the use of violence in previous demonstrations. In addition, the protest group would have been required to give a detailed description of the placards, banners, and signs to be used.

Several of the most restrictive regulations were struck down by a Federal District Court judge, and others are still being contested. The crucial point, however, is not that a judge overruled some poorly conceived administration proposals, but that the absurdity of the proposals (requiring self-incrimination, physical impossibilities, and prohibitive paperwork) raises the question whether the administration's intent was to regulate dissent or to make it impossible.

Item: There is some evidence that several Black Panthers have been murdered by local police. The situation is not one of only local concern, for the FBI has admitted giving local police information received from taps on Panther telephones. Moreover, the FBI is responsible for investigating possible violations of the law by state and local police. There is enough serious evidence and contradictory testimony concerning the deaths of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark in Chicago to warrant a thorough investigation by the FBI, but there has been no announcement that it will do so.

Item: The Justice Department has proposed to Congress a law that would permit federal authorities to fingerprint, photograph, and run other identification checks on persons against whom no criminal charge has been placed. Senator John McClellan of Arkansas, an original law and order man who advocates giving police more power to prosecute criminals, said the Justice Department proposals went beyond anything he would have proposed and were probably unconstitutional.

Item: The Justice Department has subpoenaed several journalists to force disclosure of their notes, unused tapes and films, and names of their radical sources and contacts. The question here is not one of whether a law enforcement agency has the right to obtain information to help it prevent and solve crimes, which can be done through traditional means—wiretaps, informers, surveillance, infiltrators. It

It's one thing to play politics with justice and law enforcement—to pick a Supreme Court candidate from the South to win votes, or to force the resignation of a federal district attorney, such as Robert Morgenthau, for stepping on too many Republican toes. But it's quite a different thing to use the power of law enforcement to discredit, frustrate, or repress dissent. It no longer is a game; it is breaking the rules. It is dangerous because the rules of the game are being broken not by a single Joe McCarthy or a HUAC, but by the White House and the Justice Department.

Again, it's one thing not to respond to the criticisms raised by dissenters. It's quite another to attempt to quash dissent. President Nixon's announcement that he would ignore the November Vietnam Moratorium and then his watching a football game while 300,000 people marched by the White House are not nearly as objectionable as the attempt to prevent their marching altogether.

The bedrock principle of this country is freedom of speech. It is sometimes abused. When that happens, *due* process should follow. To use *undue* process, especially in *anticipation* of an abuse of freedom of speech, is a gross violation of the principle and undoubtedly a violation of the letter of the law.

If President Nixon is going to call for law and order, he is obligated to enforce all the laws equitably and not equivocate on some. Above all, and it is frightening to have to say it, he is obligated to make policies that strengthen, not weaken, the law.

—WALLACE ROBERTS.

tural, political, and economic imperialism, and that resistance to English penetration is stiffening in many parts of the world. They also overlook the fact that even the rosier estimates of the spreading of English account for only one out of ten of the world's total population who can be reached through that language. Worst of all, they forget that acceptance of a fully foreign language for purposes of study and self-improvement is quite different from acceptance of that same language on an official basis. The Russian or French or Japanese student who laboriously follows a course in English for strategic or commercial or scientific purposes, the Arab or Indonesian who picks up enough English words to permit him to work for an American oil company, will rebel at the idea that the language he accepts and uses for immediate practical ends is destined to become the world's official tongue in preference to his own.

Esperanto, most popular and widely known of the constructed languages, has been in existence since the 1880s, when its creator, Dr. Lazarus Zamenhof, offered it to the world in the hope that it might reduce national antagonisms and promote human brotherhood. It arouses no national antipathies, and presents such notable features as ease of learning combined with a possibility of expressing nuances of meaning that make it second to none. That is why it has spread to the point where perhaps fifteen million people throughout the world are able to use it, in one fashion or another. But Esperanto runs into the charge of being artificial (this is a little like accusing an automobile of being artificial in comparison with a horse), as well as into the great stumbling block of bureaucratic governmental inertia. Were a few important governments to adopt it as a full-fledged national second language, it would probably spread far faster than it has so far.

The need for an international language is now growing at a much faster rate than ever before. It has been growing since the beginning of the nineteenth century, when new and rapid means of transportation—the steamship and the railroad—began to make travel easier, cheaper, and more comfortable.

It must be emphasized that the vast expansion of international travel and intermingling of people with different language backgrounds only in small part is of the pleasure tourist variety. The international travelers of the present and the foreseeable future include millions of migrant agricultural and industrial workers who seek employment outside their own countries, such as the Mexicans and Puerto Ricans in

of the Midwest, or the Italians, Spaniards, Greeks, and Portuguese who travel seasonally to work in industrial plants located in France, Germany, Belgium, and Switzerland. They include throngs of commercial and business representatives, scientists, engineers, technicians, members of the armed forces (not merely those of the U.S., of whom nearly three million are scattered throughout the world, but of all nations; consider also European NATO and Warsaw Pact forces); members of the various foreign services, government employees, students, professors and research workers, missionaries and other ministers of the various faiths.

Faced with the world's three thousand languages or even with the hundred that may be described as important, these people urgently feel the need. Left to themselves, they are tongue-tied and helpless, relying on sign language and on the possibility that someone in the group they want to communicate with may know one

of the languages with which they are acquainted.

The need is acute enough now, as witnessed by the response to popular polls, and the fact that fewer people than is normally the case with major issues of national policy. In the years to come, that need will become more acute, as international travel and international communications and relations of all kinds take on ever broader scope. Eventually, the need will force itself upon the consciousness of even the most unresponsive of government bureaucrats.

Perhaps, as we approach that point, popular awareness will be translated into action, as was and is the case with other long-felt needs. The mere fact that it hasn't happened yet does not mean it cannot happen soon. It would not be unwise for official bodies to devote some serious attention to the need now, while it is in its final academic stages, and before it reaches the point of popular action and the customary crash solution.



Smilgy

"Will I vote for Congressman Pickering?
Young man, I am Congressman Pickering."