

Communications Editor:

RICHARD L. TOBIN

SR Communications

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SR/DECEMBER 13, 1969

The Mirror of the News and Big Brother

Since last we communicated through this column, a perfectly amazing number of incidents have exploded in headlines having to do with the right of communicators to express themselves and, on the other hand, warnings by those in authority that press censorship is very much alive in this world. Most dramatic has been Vice President Agnew's controversial but long overdue case against monopoly press and monopoly broadcasting. But there have been others, too; so let's take them in the order in which they occurred.

First, a drastic new press law in Greece gives any editor convicted of inciting through print a prison term of five years to life. The trouble is, of course, that sedition, as the Greek junta defines it, is just about anything that disagrees with the ruling colonels, who have handed the Greek press a long list of forbidden subjects. Even a cartoon or small article believed to have relighted political controversy in Athens can now mean prison and a heavy fine, while a news story judged to jolt public confidence in the economy can bring an editor, or writer, a fine of \$3,000 and six months in jail. Restoration of democracy and freedom, not to say an unfettered press, is apparently as far from reality now as it was during the military coup of 1967 in the unhappy land that first spawned the idea of freedom of speech 2,500 years ago.

In Rome a few days later, the Vatican threatened to withdraw accreditation of any reporter showing an "incorrect attitude" toward Pope Paul VI, the Holy See, or the Roman Catholic Church. This threat against newsmen declares that credentials of all journalists covering the Vatican can be withdrawn by the "unchallengeable decision of Vatican authorities." Monsignor Fausto Vallainc, official spokesman for the Vatican and its chief press officer, says that a threat

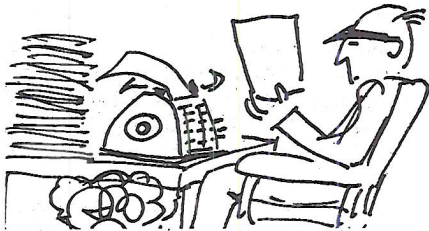
to withhold accreditation applies only against those who "might use expressions contrary to the truth." It is perfectly obvious who shall decide what truth is, as is the case in Athens.

The third and most prominent attack on the right of a people to hear criticism against authority came, of course, from the Vice President, and the best thing we've read on this subject was written by Fred Friendly, the former CBS news boss and now a professor at the Pulitzer School at Columbia. We are printing Mr. Friendly's words in full in this month's Communications Supplement (see index). At the same time, Herbert Brucker, who also taught at Columbia as well as Stanford, recently having been editor of the *Hartford Courant* and once president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, says of Agnew's outburst: "This is just Big Brother wired for sound, and Big Brother has been around a long time. Kings and prime ministers and priests and potentates of all kinds have from the beginning sought to have only their word reach the public." Where history departs from the Vice President, Mr. Brucker says, and indeed from the President himself, is on the need of a system for reporting that is independent of government, and upon occasion hostile to it. That the administration has not read its American history, or its Constitution, any more than have the authoritarians in Rome or in Athens, is to belabor the point.

After Mr. Agnew's two speeches, James Reston wrote in *The New York Times*: "Watchful commentators from the beginning of the republic have tended to be critical of the party in power, and the greater the power of the Presidency, particularly the power to make war, the greater the skepticism and the harder the criticism." On the other hand, Mr. Agnew is dead right when he said that journalists tend to play up the unusual

and the contentious, which, as Scotty Reston adds, is why Agnew is being played up now. He is probably already the most controversial Vice President in our history, and, let's face it, much of what he says about network commentators and stuffy monopoly newspapers is on target. We think it is a good thing for journalism that he said what he said a couple of weeks ago and that the public generally is shaken out of its torpor. Taking freedom of the press and speech for granted is the only certain way to lose our democracy, and, though the method was odd, the Vice President has given the more conservative element of this country a voice it has not had in this century.

The case against the networks and giant press monopolies is largely a case of geography and background. Newsmen come from all over the United States to New York and Washington, the centers of journalism in this country, electronic and print, and within a few months they begin to write, think, and expound just like every other journalist in New York or Washington. Unfortunately, though, New York and Washington are not the United States. They can be as provincial as the smallest Kansas township, and they can be as biased. They simply do not reflect the whole American people in the daily mirror of the news. Yet all U.S. network broadcasting is headquartered in New York or



Washington and so are the great press services. Most of the magazines published in this country and almost all of the books are seeded in Manhattan. Two of the truly great newspapers of the nation, with tremendous influence far beyond their constituencies, the *Washington Post* and *The New York Times*, are first of all local, as all good newspapers must be. The result of this concentration of journalistic power between two Eastern Seaboard communities is an inevitable distortion of news values, and the Atlantic cliché that anything west of the Hudson and the Potomac doesn't really matter is probably nearer the truth in the area of news and comment than in any other component of the American democracy. This is, in translation, what the Vice President tried clumsily to say when you cut through the Big Brother threats and overtones of his two controversial speeches. —R. L. T.

Letters to the Communications Editor

Newspaper Antitrust & Dirty Pool

WALTER B. KERR indulges in dirty pool in "Price-Fixing, Profit-Pooling, and the Newspaper Business" [SR, Nov. 8]. Mr. Kerr writes about the Tucson antitrust case and the proposal for special legislation arising out of it as if it were all recent history. He writes about "facts" that he says "are quite well known," but he omits the one most important pertinent fact: The agreement for the joint operation of two newspapers in Tucson was made in 1940, and there were similar agreements made in other cities prior to that. Tucson was not the first. It was because the agreements in those cities apparently had the tacit approval of the Justice Department that similar agreements in other cities were reached.

On the basis of its victory in the Tucson case, the Justice Department would thus break up similar joint operating agreements in twenty-one other cities. The proposed legislation is designed to prevent this, because for more than thirty years these agreements were thought to be legal, and there is practically no way to restore them to their former status.

ROBERT U. BROWN,
Publisher and Editor,
Editor & Publisher,
New York, N.Y.

WALTER KERR's analysis of the behind-scenes forces pushing for enactment of the so-called Newspaper Preservation Bill (formerly Failing Newspaper Bill) is both interesting and helpful. It should be noted, however, that there are not twenty-three cities involved, but twenty-two, as Mr. Kerr himself testified before the Hart subcommittee in the Senate. Apparently he includes St. Louis, which has never been considered a petitioner for the antitrust exemption, since the joint arrangement there is entirely mechanical, with no price-fixing or profit-pooling involved.

Although the spectacle of the Commerce Department backing the exemptive legislation in the face of the Justice Department's opposition would seem ludicrous, it is actually symptomatic of the entire issue. The administration's schizophrenia reflects that of the industry, which hates to see papers die, but cannot quite bear to admit that the daily newspaper has become what economists call a "natural monopoly." Of course, if only one can survive (as is the case in 96 per cent of the cities' dailies), then the other must die—unless it is saved by special legislation such as that now under consideration. The dilemma has only two horns.

The proposed legislation is unwise for reasons other than its technical defects, alleged avarice of publishers, mythical "new competitors," and other "irrelevancies." It should be defeated, because its essential justification is its fatal flaw: preserving a "second voice" of editorial opinion in the affected communities. The

agency agreements under which the "Desperate Twenty-two" now operate usually do preserve that second voice remarkably well.

But if the corrective law is predicated on that premise, it must eventually look to enforcement of the principle. The law, therefore, would give Congress the precedent necessary to inquire into whether conditions of the mandate preserving the second voice are being fairly carried out. Congress would have to examine the substance of editorial opinion, in the manner of recent FCC regulations in the television and radio fields. Giving Congress a wedge to move into this traditionally sacrosanct area would not be in the long-range best interests of the newspaper industry. Nor would granting these powers, in the present context, seem to be in the best interest of freedom generally.

VICTOR JOSE,
Editor & Publisher,
Richmond, Ind.

Madison Avenue Banana Peel?

THE CORRESPONDENCE pertaining to Fairfax M. Cone's article "Memo to Tomorrow's Madison Avenue" [SR, Oct. 11] reminded me of a story related by David Frost and Antony Jay in their book *The English*. After suggesting that "advertising men use statistics rather like a drunk uses a lamppost—for support rather than illumination," they relate the story of one Squadron Leader Barclay. Complaining about advertising ruses in a letter to a newspaper, he wrote: "Why do advertisers continually announce a '17 per cent more' without adding 'than what'? A few months ago I wrote to a well-known tire company whose advertisements announced 'twice the grip, twice the mileage.' I asked, 'The grip and mileage of what?' and added that I had invented a rubber with 847 times the grip and 943 times the mileage, but as my basic test piece was a banana, I doubted whether I had a commercial proposition."

GEOFFREY J. D. HEWINGS,
Seattle, Wash.

REGARDING the pro and con of dishonest advertising, give me retail advertising any day in preference to the Madison Avenue type of advertising. He who is without sin, throw the first stone! The truth of the matter is we are forced to be honest whether one desires to be or not! On one side we have the Better Business Bureau with its eagle eyes, and on the other side we have the customer—usually a woman—with the ad in her hot little hand. If it ain't what it should be, the irate customer is back in the store at the exchange window with fire in her eye and the merchandise in her hand. Once she's burned, you are through, brother! The illustration sells them, they look for the bare facts of life (size, color), and if the price is right, the cash registers ring steadily. Methinks, as a retail copywriter, many products sold

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Some Sober Second Thoughts on Vice President Agnew

by FRED W. FRIENDLY

In defending Vice President Spiro Agnew, one of the most fair-minded men in the United States Senate said, "It is the pig that is caught under the fence that squeals." The analogy may be partly accurate, but the question is who is stuck under the fence—the broadcast journalist or the administration? Long ago, when broadcasting was fighting for its right to be responsible, Edward R. Murrow, then under attack, spoke words that might be paraphrased today: When the record is finally written it will answer the question, who helped the American people better understand the dilemma of Vietnam—the administration or the American journalist? History, of course, will decide that question. But I would suspect that in the struggle between the news media and the last two administrations, the record has been with the journalists.

The American people are worried about Vietnam, race, and youth, the three crucial stories of our time. What the Vice President of the United States is attempting to do is create doubts in the minds of the American public about the motivation and background of those charged with the responsibility of trying to understand and explain these complicated and sensitive controversies.

When Mr. Agnew asks, "Are we demanding enough of our television news presentations?" he is certainly asking a question that others, including many inside the profession, have asked for a generation. For some, the Vice President's question seemed to be about raised eyebrows, caustic remarks, and too much news analysis. For me, his speech was really about too little analysis. In fact, the Vice President may have provided a most valuable service in his Des Moines speech. He sharpened an issue that has been diffuse for too long, inviting us all to consider once again the state of broadcast journalism.

Agnew and I share the view that television journalism leaves something to be desired. We both fear the concentration of great power in a few individuals in the broadcasting industry. But we are apparently in profound disa-

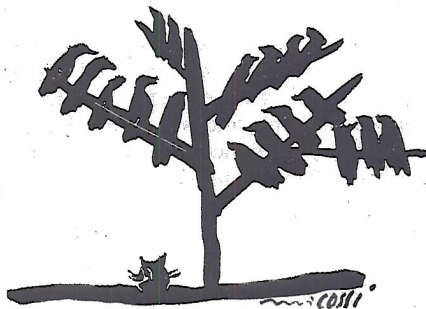
The above article is based on a speech delivered by Mr. Friendly at the California Institute of Technology.

reement on not only the nature of the networks' coverage of President Nixon's Vietnam address, but even more importantly, on our crying need for more, not less, interpretive reporting. We require bolder, not blander illumination of the issues that divide men of reason.

Where Agnew went astray, in my view, was in his suggestion that the media ought somehow to be a conduit for the views of the government, or merely a reflector of public opinion. He was not the first nor the last high official to equate fairness and the possession of great power with the obligation of conformity.

The Vice President has forgotten history when he criticizes ABC's journalistic enterprise in arranging for Ambassador Averell Harriman to participate in the broadcast that followed Mr. Nixon's speech of November 3. I don't think President Kennedy rejoiced in having the Republican Senator from Indiana, Homer Capehart, critique his Berlin crisis speech of 1961 nor in having Ladd Plumley, president of the National Chamber of Commerce, pursue him after his controversial 1962 speech on the state of the economy. How many times after a major address did President Johnson have to listen to the cutting remarks of Minority Leaders Everett Dirksen and Gerald Ford? It was all part of the democratic process. After all, the President had had prime time on all three networks, and a small measure of counter-fire from the loyal opposition was hardly stacking the deck. In the end of the day, perhaps ABC might not be faulted for having invited Ambassador Harriman, an experienced negotiator with the Hanoi government, but rather for not having asked him enough hard questions.

The Vice President doubts that President Kennedy, during the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, had his words



"chewed over by a round table of critics" immediately following his address to the nation. Would the Vice President believe Sander Vanocur, Ray Scherer, Frank McGee, David Schoenbrun, Roger Mudd, George Herman, Richard C. Hottelet, and Douglas Edwards? The date on that was October 22, 1962. The Vice President did not mention the Bay of Pigs, but certainly he must remember the news analyses and the GOP counter-briefings that followed. President Kennedy, who earlier had called upon broadcasters for self-censorship of the story in the national interest, later told the managing editor of *The New York Times* that revelation of the Bay of Pigs plan might have saved the nation "a colossal mistake."

A generation ago the most savage denunciations against news analysis involved Senator Joseph McCarthy. In an inflammatory speech in Wheeling, West Virginia, in 1950 he declared there were 205 Communists in the State Department. Good news analysis, in fact, good reporting, would have required that the journalist not just hold up his mirror to that startling event, but that he report that the Senator had not one scrap of evidence to substantiate so extravagant a claim. It took broadcasting several years during the McCarthy period to learn that merely holding up a mirror could be deceptive, as in fact holding up a mirror to a riot or a peace march today can be deceptive. It took the shame of the McCarthy period and the courage of an Ed Murrow to elevate broadcast journalism to a point where it could give responsible insights to issues such as those raised by the junior Senator from Wisconsin.

For generations, editors and students of journalism have tried to define news analysis and interpretive reporting. The late Ed Klauber, one of the architects of broadcast news standards, offered the most durable description. I have always kept it in my wallet, and I provide copies to all my students at the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism:

What news analysts are entitled to do and should do is to elucidate and illuminate the news out of common knowledge, or special knowledge possessed by them or made available to them by this organization through its sources. They should point out the facts on both sides, show contradictions with the known record, and so on. They should bear in mind that in a democracy it is important that people not only should know but should understand, and it is the analysts' function to help the listener to understand, to weigh, and to judge, but not to do the judging for him.

If the Vice President would test the

brief analyses of November 3 against Mr. Klauber's criteria, I think he might agree that the correspondents did not cross the line in any attempt to make up the viewer's mind on a course of action. Agnew felt that the response to the President on November 3 was instant analysis. But it seems fair to remind the Vice President that the administration had provided correspondents with advance copies of the speech for study earlier that evening, and there had been a persuasive White House briefing on the content. While the comments of the correspondents were clearly appropriate, my own personal opinion is that only those of Eric Sevareid and Marvin Kalb were probing and thoughtful. Kalb conceivably erred in not quoting pertinent paragraphs from the Ho Chi Minh letter that he believed were subject to different interpretation from that of the President.

Part of our Vietnam dilemma is that during the fateful August of 1964, when the Tonkin Gulf Resolution escalated the war, there was little senatorial debate worthy of the name, and there was a dramatic shortage of news analysis. If I am inclined to give the networks an A for effort and a B for performance the night of November 3, 1969, let me tell you that I give CBS News and myself a D for effort and performance on the night of August 4, 1964, when President Johnson, in his Tonkin Gulf speech, asked for a blank check on Vietnam. In spite of the pleas of our Washington bureau, I made the decision to leave the air two minutes after the President had concluded his remarks. I shall always believe that, if journalism had done its job properly that night and in the days following, America might have been spared some of the agony that followed the Tonkin Gulf Resolution. I am not saying that we should have, in any way, opposed the President's recommendations. But, to quote Klauber's doctrine of news analysis, if we had "out of common knowledge or special knowledge . . . [pointed] out the facts on both sides, [shown] contradictions with the known record," we might have explained that after bombers would come bases, and after bases, troops to protect those bases, and after that hundreds of thousands of more troops. Perhaps it is part of the record to note that Murrow, who understood the value of interpretive journalism from his years as a practitioner, and from his experience as director of the U.S. Information Agency, called minutes after the Johnson speech to castigate me and CBS for not having provided essential analysis of the meaning of the event.

One key aspect of the Vice President's speech did strike me as relating

to the public interest as distinguished from the administration's political interest. This was his concern over the geographic and corporate concentration of power in broadcasting. Here he had the right target, but a misdirected aim. His criticism of broadcasters for centralization and conformity better describes the commercial system and its single-minded interest in maximum ratings and profits.

To some extent, it may be true that geography and working out of New York and Washington affect the views of Dan Rather of Wharton, Texas, Howard K. Smith of Ferriday, Louisiana, Chet Huntley of Cardwell, Montana, David Brinkley of Wilmington, North Carolina, Bill Lawrence of Lincoln, Nebraska, and Eric Sevareid of Velva, North Dakota. But I, for one, simply do not buy the Vice President's opinion that these responsible decision makers in news broadcasting and the professionals who work with them are single-minded in their views or unchecked in their performance. There is an independent, sometimes awkward complex of network executives, station managers, producers, and reporters whose joint production is the news we see. They represent a geographic, ethnic, and political profile nearly as far ranging as American society itself, with the tragic exception of blacks. The heads of the three major network news bureaus find their constituencies and their critics among the station managers they serve, the correspondents they employ, sponsors they lose, and in the wider public they please and occasionally disappoint. The news program emerges from a complicated system of argument, conflict, and compromise.

Beyond that, the record suggests that the best professionals recognize and acknowledge their limitations. Walter Cronkite was the first to admit that he erred in some of his reporting at the 1968 Democratic convention. It was David Brinkley, admitting that no reporter could always be objective but could only strive for fairness, who gave the Vice President a high visibility target. In his commentary of November 3, Eric Sevareid clearly noted that his views were "only the horseback opinion of one man and I could be wrong." Yet, if the Vice President's aim was wild, his target of concentrated power is valid and endures. The "truth" of commercial broadcasting is that it maximizes audiences by maximizing profits. This system minimizes the presentation of hard news and analysis, leading the broadcast journalists into occasional oversimplification in the interest of time, overdramatization in the interest of impact.

If such distorting tendencies do exist, and I believe they sometimes do, the proper measure is not to subject the performance of professional journalists to governmental direction nor to majority approval. Rather, the task for government is to apply its leadership and authority to expand and diversify the broadcasting system and environment in which professional journalists work.

I do not see these public actions as inconsistent with or disruptive of the protections of the First Amendment. When Congress passed the Communications Act enabling the FCC to restrict a limited number of frequencies and channels to a limited amount of license-holders, everyone's freedom was slightly qualified because everyone cannot simultaneously broadcast over the same television channel. The Communications Act insisted that license-holders operate their franchise "in the public interest, convenience, and necessity." By every definition I have ever heard, that includes responsible news coverage. Selling cancer-giving cigarettes and not providing enough news and public affairs programming is certainly ample reason to reconsider a station's license, and doing so has nothing to do with the First Amendment. The FCC would be fulfilling longstanding national policy by demanding more, not less, public service broadcasting from the commercial systems, as well as by accelerating development of a publicly supported noncommercial alternative.

The Vice President quotes Walter Lippmann to make a case that the networks have hidden behind the First Amendment. He does not add that Mr. Lippmann's point was that this demonstrated the necessity for just such a competitive, alternate system that most commercial broadcasters today support. Lippmann has also said that "the theory of a free press is that the truth will emerge from free reporting and free discussion, not that it will be presented perfectly and instantly in any one account." Public television, with national interconnection due in part to a new ruling by the FCC, now has a chance to make that "free reporting and free discussion" 25 per cent more widespread and more effective.

In the days since the Vice President's speech, I have been jarred by the strange coalition of Americans who find an assortment of reasons for identifying with parts of the Vice President's remarks. The mobilizers for peace don't like the way the peace march was covered or, as they put it, left uncovered. My Democrat friends point to the Humphrey defeat, which they say happened at the hands of the

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Sober Thoughts

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television cameras in Chicago. My journalism students at Columbia feel that time after time broadcasters of my generation misjudge the youth movement and the black movement. In the end, I have had to plead with these students to believe in the integrity of a Cronkite, a Smith, a Brinkley, and in the professionalism of their producers—men such as Les Midgley of CBS, Av Westin of ABC, and Wally Westfeldt of NBC. My defense has been only partly successful, and this has been with an audience generally quite hostile to the main thrust of the Agnew attack. With sadness, I have painfully learned that the reservoir of good will that broadcast journalists could once rely on in time of crisis has now been partially dissipated.

Perhaps if the public knew that the broadcast newsman is fighting for longer news programs, fewer commercials, more investigative reporting, there might be a broader sense of identity.

The broadcast journalist knows how little news analysis appears on the air. Five or eight minutes after a major presidential address is not interpretive journalism as much as it is time to be filled to the nearest half-hour, or to the nearest commercial. He also knows that a half hour minus six commercials is just not enough air time to present and analyze the news properly. Perhaps the broadcast newsman of today can no longer afford the luxury of abdicating his role in a decision-making process that now so clearly affects his profession and his standards. He is a far better newsman than the public ever sees and he has far more power to change the system than he and the public imagine.

For a long time the broadcasting companies have relied on the prestige of their news organizations to enhance their own corporate prestige, in fact, their very survival. The reputation of these newsmen is now at stake. They need to do their best, not their worst. They need to be seen at their most courageous, not to slip into timidity. This is not a time for public relations experts, although there will be a frantic search for a corporate line that will once again salvage the good name of broadcasting.

Television's battles will not be fought or won with the polemics of corporate handouts, First Amendment platitudes, or full-page ads. They will be won by what is on the air, and they will be lost by what is *not* on the air. It is later than many people think, and we all have Agnew to thank for reminding us.

Here we stand, with the image orthicon tube, the wired city, and the satellite the greatest tools of communication that civilization has ever known, while the second highest officeholder in the land implies that we use them less. Here we are in 1969, Mr. Vice President, with one leg on the moon and the other on earth, knee-deep in garbage. That's going to require some news analysis.

What the Vice President says is that he wants editorials (which network news divisions don't use) labeled for what they are. Certainly it is general custom to label news analysis and comment when it is taking place, and omission of that, even under the pressure of time, is a mistake.

But Agnew ought to have labeled his speech for what it was. Did he want to encourage responsible journalism, or did he wish to silence it?

The second salvo from the Agnew shotgun contained more buckshot and had even less precise aim. His facts were wobbly and subject to immediate rebuttal. He might have checked to see whether it was only the early out-of-town edition of *The New York Times* that missed the story of the 359 members of Congress who signed a letter endorsing the President's Vietnam policy. Making charges against the power of the *Times* and *The Washington Post* is the kind of anti-conglomerate philosophy usually identified with liberals. The Vice President jarred his own aim by being self-serving. His targets were only those organizations which he considered to be critical. The mighty complex that controls two of the largest newspapers in the nation—the *New York Daily News* and the *Chicago Tribune*, plus television and radio stations in those two cities and a lot more in other cities—was left unscathed, together with other media conglomerates that control huge circulations. Could the fact that hawks rather than doves fluttered atop those mastheads and transmitters have given them immunity?

Perhaps the journalist and the party in power are always destined to be on the outs. President Eisenhower was pretty sore with television news until he left office and became a big fan. President Kennedy was reading and watching more, and enjoying it less. President Johnson watched three sets and knew how to talk back to three talking heads at once, and the Nixon administration has let us know where it stands. It is my theory that, when the message from Des Moines or from the White House itself is always a valentine or a garland of flowers, television and radio will have failed their purpose.

Communications Letters

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via TV are sold in spite of commercials, many of which are created for the amusement and awards of the people involved. Cleverness per se does not sell, but if it is apropos—great. I prefer retail advertising because there is a warmth and an immediacy that no other type gives.

RUTH C. KLEES,
Chicago, Ill.

Japanese News at Sea

THERE'S A footnote to Margaret Weiss's fascinating "Front Page Afloat" article in your November 8 edition. Kyodo, the Japanese national news agency, for a number of years has sent a Japanese-language paper by radio to Japanese flag ships. It is received on the facsimile machine normally used by the ships to receive weather maps. Even on small Japanese fishing boats in Antarctic waters, the sailor has his daily newspaper at sea.

STANLEY M. SWINTON,
Assistant General Manager,
The Associated Press,
New York, N.Y.

Mathematics and Mars

IN HIS "Messages from Mars" [SR, Oct. 11], John Lear observes "the law of arithmetical progression works much faster than most non-mathematicians suppose." In the quickened steps that follow we are shown why the 1969 *Mariners* communicated more than 1,900 times as much information as *Mariner 4* in 1965. Surely other non-mathematicians will confirm that the "cumulative enhancement factor" resulting from the figures given is not 1,900 or beyond; it is 1,620 or beyond. I happen to think the *Mariner 6* and *Mariner 7* were about 2,000 times better than almost anything that had gone before, but not on the basis of your numbers.

PETER S. THACHER,
Counsellor for Disarmament,
Science, and Technology,
U.S. Mission to the U.N.,
New York, N.Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Several enhancement factors were listed in John Lear's report: $7.1 \times 5 \times 3.2 \times 2 \times 2.3 \times 1.74 \times 1.66 \times 1.25$. Mr. Thacher challenges the accuracy of the first factor, which was arrived at by comparing the square of the 85-foot diameter of the electronic "ear" through which Jet Propulsion Laboratory received the messages that *Mariner 4* sent from Mars with the 210-foot diameter of the "ear" that listened to *Mariners 6* and *7*. Two JPL engineers, working with a slide rule, came out with a factor of 7.1. Mr. Thacher correctly points out that $(210/85)^2$ does not work out to 7.1, but to 6.1. And $6.1 \times 5 \times 3.2 \times 2 \times 2.3 \times 1.74 \times 1.66 \times 1.25$ does come closer to 1,620 than to 1,900.

Answer to Wit Twister, page 73; prates, paters, repast, tapers.