

Pulitzers Given for Reporting on Vesco And Nixon Tax; No Play or Novel Cited

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By PETER KIHSS

Exposures of questionable contribution's to President Nixon's re-election campaign and of his relatively small income-tax payments won Pulitzer Prizes for national reporting yesterday. The awards were announced for the 58th year in a row.

Prizes of \$1,000 each went to James R. Polk, of The Washington Star-News, for stories that, among other things, disclosed a secret \$200,000 campaign contribution by the financier, Robert L. Vesco, and to Jack White, of The Providence Journal-Bulletin, who disclosed President Nixon's 1970 and 1971 tax returns; the disclosures led eventually to back tax

payments by the President.

For the second time in the last three years, there was no Pulitzer Prize for drama, reflecting a unanimous view of drama jurors, as was the case also in 1972. There was also no award for fiction, the second time in four years. Drama has been bypassed 12 times, and fiction nine—but this was only the second year when the two creative-writing awards were bypassed simultaneously, the other occasion being in 1964.

The gold medal for merited newspaper went to Newsday, of Garden City, L.I., for a six-month study that led to a 32-part series tracing the heroin traffic from Turkey to France to the New York metropolitan area.

The prize for international reporting was awarded to Hed-

rick Smith of The New York Times for his coverage of the Soviet Union and Eastern European nations last year—the 40th Pulitzer Prize won by The Times or a member of its staff.

For investigative local reporting, the Pulitzer Prize was given to William Sherman of The New York Daily News, for a series of articles on abuses in the Medicaid program here.

The prizes were announced by Dr. William J. McGill, president of Columbia University, as an action of the university's board of trustees on recommendations of a 14-member Advisory Board on the Pulitzer Prizes.

The announcement was pre-

Continued on Page 46, Column 3



Jack White
National Reporting

Had been manager of Newport (R.I.) office of The Providence Journal-Bulletin when he came on story of President Nixon's taxes—he won't say how. . . . Member of Local 57 of the International Union of Operating Engineers, had worked on heavy construction jobs including building of Newport Bridge over Narragansett Bay. . . . Born Sept. 16, 1942, in Providence, attended LaSalle Academy and Boston University, leaving in 1967 after five years, six credits short of a degree. . . . Played hockey at B.U. . . . Took off across the country with his wife, Elizabeth, in a car and trailer, then returned to Rhode Island looking for "something interesting" to do. . . . Began work for radio station WADK in Newport, won a job on The Newport Daily News after a 30-day tryout, moved in 1969 to The Journal-Bulletin, where he now works on special assignments on the city staff. . . . Lives with wife and three small sons in Newport.

Continued From Page 1, Col. 3

ceded, it was learned, by a considerable discussion among the trustees, meeting at Low Library on the Columbia campus, about the prize for the Nixon income-tax disclosures as well as the lack of fiction or drama awards.

After this was learned from several trustees, Dr. McGill confirmed that there had been a debate in an eight-member group in executive session and then a vote of probably 20 to 5 to accept all the advisory board's recommendations.

Dr. McGill said that "a very substantial number of trustees feel very strongly about the problem of approving a prize which seems to convey that the university is approving illegal acts" such as the disclosure of Mr. Nixon's income-tax returns, which the Internal Revenue Service is supposed to keep confidential.

1972 Similarities Noted

"The feeling is not that the reporter is at fault here but that the award is significant only because of the misdemeanor, and that seems to us to be Xerox journalism," Dr. McGill said. "It seems to involve little reportorial initiative."

Another trustee said the discussion was similar to the distaste of some trustees for the 1972 Pulitzer Prize awards to The New York Times for disclosure of the so-called Pentagon Papers on the United States role in the Vietnam war and to the columnist Jack Anderson for revelation of White House discussions in favor of tilting

toward Pakistan in the India-Pakistan war.

Part of the discussion also involved the lack of recognition for drama or fiction works, in which it was noted that the fiction jury had recommended Thomas Pynchon's controversial "Gravity's Rainbow" and perhaps two others—only to have the advisory board decide against any prize.

Once again some of the trustees raised questions as to whether the Columbia trustees should have any role at all in the prizes, which were set up under the will of the first Joseph Pulitzer, publisher of The New York World.

The other prizes announced yesterday were as follows:

History—"The Americans: The Democratic Experience," by Daniel J. Boorstein, the third volume of a series.

Biography—"O'Neill, Son and Artist," by Louis Sheaffer, who has worked 16 years on the life of the playwright, Eugene O'Neill, of which the first volume was published in 1968 and the final volume last year.

Poetry—"The Dolphin," by Robert Lowell, a collection of poems which won him his second Pulitzer Prize in poetry.

General Nonfiction—"The Denial of Death," by Ernest Becker, a work contending that fear of life and fear of death were "the mainsprings of human activity," completed a year before the anthropologist-author died on March 6, 1974.

MUSIC—"Notturmo," by Donald Martino, a chamber-music piece by a member of the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston on commission from

the Walter W. Naumburg Foundation.

SPECIAL CITATION IN MUSIC—Roger Sessions, 77 years old, for his life's work as a distinguished composer.

Journalism Awards

The journalism awards were as follows:

GENERAL LOCAL REPORTING—Arthur M. Petacque and Hugh F. Hough, of The Chicago Sun-Times, for breaking a story charging that the 1966 murder of the daughter of Senator Charles H. Percy was committed by a man now serving a penitentiary sentence, leading to reopening of the murder case.

EDITORIAL WRITING—F. Gilman Spencer, editor of The Trenton Trentonian, for a campaign attacking scandals in New Jersey State Government, which led to his nomination for the prize by Acting United States Attorney Jonathan L. Goldstein.

EDITORIAL CARTOONING—Paul Szep, of The Boston Globe, for his entire work during 1973, appearing five times a week.

SPOT NEWS PHOTOGRAPHY—Anthony K. Roberts, a 33-year-old freelance photographer, for the first news pictures he ever took—a series on a kidnapping attempt in Hollywood, Calif., last Nov. 23, distributed by The Associated Press, which nominated him for the prize.

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY—Slava Veder, of The Associated Press, for a picture of a joyful reunion of a former prisoner of war and his family after re-

patriation from North Vietnam.

COMMENTARY—Edwin A. Roberts Jr., of The National Observer, for his weekly column, "Mainstreams," for which he roams the country.

CRITICISM—Emily Genauer, art critic for the Newsday Syndicate.

Prizes of \$1,000

All the prizes carry \$1,000 honorariums, except for the public service gold medal and the citation to Mr. Sessions.

William Attwod, publisher of Newsday, said the idea for the prize-winning series on "The Heroin Trail" started in May, 1972, after reports of many deaths from heroin overdoses.

In the stories published from Feb. 1 through March 4, 1973, which won for Newsday its third Pulitzer Prize, the newspaper published names of 54 Turkish citizens as allegedly among leaders in the illegal export of opium.

The series also identified members of a French heroin ring, charging connections with members of the French Government and secret service. Alleged dealers in New York City and Long Island were also named, and some later were arrested.

The Newsday team was headed by Robert W. Greene, senior editor, working abroad with Knut Royce, Leslie Payne, Pucci Meyer and Christopher Cook, reporters. The United States part of the team was led by Anthony Marro, a Washington correspondent, with Joseph Demma, James W. Sullivan and David Behrens, reporters, and Mitchell Turner, photographer.

Other reporters on the project were William Van Haintze, Anthony Schaeffer, Peter Bowles and James O'Neill. The entire effort was directed by David Laventhol, the editor, and Donald Forst, the Managing Editor.

The jurors who recommended unanimously against any award for drama for the season between April 1, 1973 and last March 31 were Clive Barnes, of The New York Times; Douglas Watt, of The New York Daily News, and Glenna Syse, of The Chicago Sun-Times.

Both "The Hot 1 Baltimore" and "The River Niger," which might have been strong candidates, opened before the eligibility date last year.

Among plays reportedly considered were "Short Eyes," "Boom Boom Room," the "Ravenswood" half of "Bad Habits" (the other half had been presented earlier as an off-off-Broadway show), "Raisin," "When You Comin' Back, Red Ryder?", "What the Wine-Sellers Buy" and "Clarence Darrow."

Royster's Comment

Jury recommendations go to the advisory board, which met at Columbia last April 11. One board member, Vermont C. Royster, contributing editor of The Wall Street Journal and now teaching at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, said that none of the few fiction possibilities offered by the fiction jury could muster more than one board member's support.

"I don't know whether it reflects on the quality of the fiction or the quality of the judges," Mr. Royster said.

The Columbia trustees, in a formal statement, said that under the Pulitzer will, their board lacked authority to substitute trustees' judgment for the judgment of the advisory board.

The trustees said they could either accept or reject the advisory group's recommendations, and were without power to make an award in any category left vacant by the advisory group.

The Advisory Board

For the 1974 prizes, the advisory board consisted of Dr. McGill; Benjamin C. Bradlee, executive editor, The Washington Post; John Cowles Jr., chairman, The Minneapolis Star and Tribune; Price Day, editor in chief, The Baltimore Sun; Robert J. Donovan, associate editor, The Los Angeles Times; Lee Hills, chairman, Knight Newspapers; Sylvan Meyer, former editor, The Miami News.

Also Newbold Noyes Jr., editor, The Washington Star-News; Eugene C. Patterson, editor and president, The St. Petersburg (Fla.) Times; Joseph Pulitzer Jr., editor and publisher, The St. Louis Post-Dispatch; James Reston, vice president, The New York Times; Thomas Dinship, editor, The Boston Globe; John Hohenberg, professor, Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, and Mr. Royster.