

'I Would Rather Be Dead Than Red'

The speech below was written by the president of The American Society of Newspaper Editors and delivered at a two-state convention of newsmen in California recently.

It is the answer to those who would say that the newspapers can't be trusted and would rather be Red than dead.

The State Port Pilot feels, as the author does, that "Never has there been greater need for honesty, integrity and respect for truth" than now. We are publishing the article for these and other reasons.

Editor,
The State Port Pilot

By FELIX R. McKNIGHT
The Dallas Times Herald
Executive Editor,

Today the American editor is on his most imperative mission.

We of the free world who have desperately improvised and struggled in the past generation to prevent the deterioration of mankind, now need new strength and meaningful ap-

proaches to this gravest of all threats.

It is a sorry package we are holding. It is soiled with man's distrust of man, a tragic weakening of the moral fiber that is our only hope, and with tarnished promises.

We live almost from hour to hour. No one knows what the next clatter of the newspaper teletype will bring. The talk of peace is almost drowned out by the ghastly overtones of survival and fall-out shelter programs.

I did not come all the way here to give up. I came to raise a little hell . . . and to hope that strong and vibrant hands will seize this thing we call the destiny of free peoples.

Fight To Survive
Somewhere, sometime we started drifting.

We gradually cut loose from spiritual moorings and blindly permitted godless elements to get their hands on our throats. Now we fight to survive.

We even hear faint cries that some would "rather be Red than Dead."

It is unthinkable that we would ever hear of such moral sickness in this country . . . even from the tiniest segment. We just don't surrender con-

cepts of living and freedom given to us by God to live the hollow life of the godless.

Or to quote Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, who recently said it with far more eloquence:

"Our nation's moral strength has slipped alarmingly. One cannot preach morality and practice immorality. National corruption is the sum total of individual corruption. We must follow the teachings of God if we are to heal this moral illness."

"We have in our midst some timid souls who have so little faith in the strength of Democracy that they would have our country yield to international threats and intimidation. I include those persons who urge appeasement at any price.

"Fear, apologies, defeatism and cowardice are alien to the thinking of true Americans. As for me, I would rather be dead than Red."

"We do not have to apologize to anyone. Certainly not to the arrogant shoe-pounding Khrushchev and his puppets—nor to those neutrals whose neutrality is but an evidence of moral weakness. We should keep our heads up, looking for honorable solutions and selling America, rather than keep our heads down looking for shelters and the compromise of human rights."

Split Into Groups
But almost as threatening to the security of this country is another group which, in good intention, has moved perilously close to destruction of one of the most precious of all American guarantees—the right of all to be heard.

In moments when unity has never been more urgent, we have split into sensitive, irrational groups that are as foreign to this nation as Communism itself.

Not even a full generation ago—16 or 17 years—we locked arms in war against evils that threatened free men. Every American was his brother's keeper . . . Men died for other men . . . no questions were asked in foxholes about social or political belief. The only prizes of that war? The right to worship, the right of all men to voice their opinions; the right of the press to present all sides of all questions. The freedoms saner men gave us by their blood and tears . . . men

who would tremble to see us today as we point at our brothers in emotional frenzy and brand them traitors simply because they do not believe, to the letter, as we do.

The American newspaper has its challenge.

No longer can the newspaperman pay mere lip service to his claim of objectivity. It has become more than the closing lines of a speech to the Rotary Club.

On The Defense
Irresponsibility in the slightest degree cannot be tolerated in these strange, but very real, days in which we find ourselves.

The American newspaperman is on the defense.

Once there was a cry from the left that we were a "one party press" snugly grouped together to do the bidding of Conservative political wings. It started in the middle of the New Deal and rose to crescendo heights during the Eisenhower wave.

But somehow the tune changed. Few newspaper patterns have shifted, but the shout from the far right now labels us as (quote) "the leftist press that distorts the nation's image."

It is not true . . . and it is about time the American press take off the gloves and try to bring sanity to the emotional binge that has this country dangerously off balance.

The American press is a patriotic press, dedicated more than any other agency to the absolute preservation of our freedoms and the rights of man.

We are not, as too many charge, Communist dupes because we attempt to follow moderate lines and call for a look at internal bickering. There is not a reputable newspaper in America that would not quickly and without equivocation expose and fight unceasingly any threat that endangers the security or welfare of this nation.

And I resent to the core these sudden patriots who aimlessly and broadly charge the American press with a lack of concern for the welfare of this country. We were here a long, long time before these groups appeared . . . selling a brand of Americanism they have distorted and molded to their particular purpose. We may

have newspapers that editorially embrace certain social and political views that are not to their liking, but we do not have newspapers that would sell out to the enemy.

I ask these people who hurl hollow and superficial charges: Just what other watching do they have?

How do they learn of the doings of governmental agencies and servants that they might voice their dissenting views?

How would they know if they had been completely hoodwinked out of all rights and shoved into tyrannical subjugation?

Where do they get information to build their own voice of opinion? A voice that has a right to be heard?

And how long would the United States last as a free nation if every newspaper, every radio and television station were exterminated or forced to print and broadcast identical "party line" philosophy?

'Agree Or Else'
These questions, and answers, are so elementary that one wonders why he must stand up and defend free institutions that are as old as the Constitution itself.

But, believe me, it must be done . . . and it must be done with conviction and with responsibility that cannot be challenged.

Objectivity? Never has it been more important in this business. We have rather suddenly become suspect in the eyes of too many Americans and nothing but complete honesty and intelligent reporting can erase this suspicion . . . unfounded though it may be.

It is a strange but supportable fact in this new "agree with me or else" atmosphere that critics of newspapers, on both sides, never complain, never criticize when column

space is given to their leader or their group . . . unless they twist the slightest gap in your story into "biased reporting."

But if a newspaper editorially disagrees with their leader or group on certain issues, it is quickly tattooed with "Pinko" and "Red" tags. Or, if the shoe happens to be on the right foot, it becomes a fat, capitalistic reactionary with no regard for the welfare of the common man.

I don't know—I could be wrong—but I cannot recall one single instance in modern history of an American newspaper editor or publisher being charged with subversion or a treasonable act.

But there we stand in the eyes of far too many as "the leftist press" selling this nation down the river.

On Side Of Law
In one way or another, the past 33 years of my life have been spent serving my fellow man, my country. It is inevitable that an American newspaperman, dedicated to the well-being of his family, his community, his nation will live that kind of life. It is our life. Yet, in very recent years I

have been subjected to indignities, to vile threats, to the venom of cowardly anonymous telephone calls. I have been called a Communist. Worse, these things have happened to my family.

Why? I happen to be the editor of a newspaper that printed both sides of the problems that trouble our society these days. My newspaper has editorially hewn, without exception, to the 100 per cent American viewpoint; to the side of law and order, whether we

like it or not. We have disagreed with Supreme Court decisions, and we have said so in unmistakable clarity . . . but in the finality of such decisions, after all litigation has been resolved—such as integration of the public schools—we have called for orderly acceptance and peace among our own people.

Violence leads only to chaos, . . . and chaos is the target of our enemies.

Now I understand, to a de-


Continued On Page 3

ALIGNMENT SPECIAL
FOR WEEK OF JAN. 22-27
Front End Alignment
\$4.50
CAPE FEAR MOTOR SALES BODY SHOP
16th & WOOSTER ST.—WILMINGTON, N. C.



CAPE FEAR MOTOR SALES
"Your Friendly Ford Dealer"
SERVICE DEPARTMENT
215 Market — Wilmington, N. C. — RO 3-6221

Telephone Talk
by
H. F. KINCAID
Your Telephone Manager

When Prince O'Brien retired recently as cashier of the Waccamaw Bank & Trust Co. in Southport, this community not only lost the services of a banker, but we at Southern Bell lost the services of a man who for the past twenty years has served as our agent at Southport.

We all know Prince O'Brien as a friendly, helpful fellow, whether our problems happened to be financial or something connected with the telephone company. Through the years we have felt that Southern Bell was fortunate to have a man of his character and ability as its local representative in Southport.

We are happy to announce that W. B. Gerald, the new cashier of the Waccamaw Bank & Trust Co. at Southport, has agreed to serve as the Southern Bell agent and the affairs pertaining to local telephone service formerly handled by Prince O'Brien will be taken over by this young man.

We are proud of our system in Southport and surrounding area, and we appreciate the assistance these men who have helped to render the high standard of communications service for which Southport is famous.

Crush
Distributed In This Area By
Electric Bottling Co., Inc.
WILMINGTON, N. C.

ELLIS' SHOE CENTER
House Of Famous Brand Shoes
Red Cross, Cobbies, Socialite, Joyce, Tweedies,
Coach & Four, DeLano—and Ladies' Fashion Hats.
"Columbus County's Only Exclusive Ladies' Shoe Store"
America's Most Talked About & Walked About Shoes

Comfort, Value, Prestige and Convenience is yours when you buy a Huski-Bilt Home
(and at a low, low price, too!)

COMPLETELY FINISHED ON YOUR LOT

Including

- FORCED AIR HEAT (Wall or Floor Furnace)
- KITCHEN CABINETS
- FINISHED HARDWOOD FLOORS
- BATH, SINK AND WATER HEATER
- CHOICE OF INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR COLORS
- FULL FOUNDATIONS

• Built Anywhere in North & South Carolina



LOW PRICED
For the first time since World War II you can have a COMPLETELY FINISHED (not a shell), professionally designed home for as low as \$4,975 to a high of \$9,995.

NO DOWN PAYMENTS—(No Closing Costs)—Low Monthly Payments

PHONE, WRITE, or VISIT
BLAKE BUILDERS SUPPLY
SOUTHPORT, N. C.

Monthly News
MARCH, 1962

Children Must Be Protected.
Too often, medicines which are perfectly safe in proper dosage are left exposed, where little children can play with them. If a large amount is taken, any medicine can be fatal.

Household Cleaners Are Dangerous.
If not used properly, they can cause great harm and many children have been injured by being exposed to them.

March 18th Begins Poison Prevention Week.
If you have children, or any visit your home, please do these things now.

1. Store all medicines and household products in a place impossible for them to reach.
2. Throw away everything that has no label to positively identify the contents.
3. And, after you have used any medicine or household product, don't leave it around carelessly, but immediately store it properly out of reach of children.

Always Read The Label
Never give or take any product without being certain it is the correct one. When pharmacists compound a prescription, we check the label at least three times.

1. When we take it off the shelf.
2. As we weigh or count the number.
3. After compounding we again check label before we replace bottle on shelf.

Follow our example and you will avoid trouble.

HALL'S DRUG STORE
Prescription Chemists
Phone RO 2-5265 For Dependable Deliveries
421 CASTLE ST. WILMINGTON