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EVACUATION OF the Press ONE NEWS AS POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL ACTIVISM WHAT DO WE MEAN BY A FREE PRESS, press, or freedom of the press? What is the purpose of a free press? Is it to report information? What kind of information? Is it interpreting or analyzing information? What is the news? How are decisions made about what is newsworthy and what not? What is a news organization? One person (a blogger), a group of people (a weekly newspaper), a corporate conglomerate (a television network)? What is a journalist? What does someone qualify as a journalist? Experience, education, position, self-identification? What is the work of a journalist? Is journalism appealing? Are there standards? Are journalists able to be fair or objective? What is the purpose of reporting? To strengthen the establishment and fundamental principles of the republic? To challenge public officials and authority? To give voice to certain individuals, groups, and causes? To influence politics and policy? To change the status quo of a society? To promote the common good of the community? What is the general good? Who decides? What is the difference between freedom of the press and free speech? And is the current media revolution, jumped on by technological advances such as the Internet and social media, changes any of these? Do these questions matter even more for news outlets? The questions are rarely asked today. They are irrel the subject of open or public media caution or focused and sustained national debate. The media seems to be lazy to investigate or explore the media. But when the behaviour of the media is questioned as biased, politically partisan, or otherwise irresponsible, they insist they are of one mission: faithfulness to the news and everything that arises from it — protecting society against autocratic government, defending freedom of the press, and contributing to society's civility and justice. Moreover, they typically claim to pursue and report the news free of any personal or political agenda. Is this true of modern media? More than seventy years ago, there was a serious self-examination of the media. The Commission for Freedom of the Press (also known as the Hutchins Commission) was organised by Henry Luce in 1942 to investigate whether freedom of the press was in danger and the proper function of the media in modern democracy. The report was issued and concluded in 1947, in part, that freedom of the press was indeed in danger, and for three basic reasons: First, the importance of the press to the people increased greatly with the development of the press as an instrument of mass communication. At the same time, developing the press as a tool of mass communication has the relationship of the people who can express their opinions and ideas through the press. Reduce. Secondly, the pair who are able to use the machinery of the press as a tool too Mass communication does not have a service sufficient for the needs of society. Thirdly, those who direct the machinery of the press have come from time to time in practice that condemn society and who, if continued, will inevitably undertake to regulate or control. 1 The commission warned: The modern press itself is a new phenomenon. Its typical unit is the large agency of mass communication. These agencies can facilitate thinking and discussion. They can make it tight. They can promote the progress of civilization or they can stop it. They can debasate and vulgize humanity. They can endate the peace of the world; they can accidentally do so, in a suitable absence of mind. They can play up or down the news and its meaning, commit and feed emotions, create cover placers and blind spots, abuse the big words, and maintain empty slogans. Their scope and strength increases every day to new instruments to become available to them. These instruments can spread lies faster and beyond what our forefathers dreamed when they enshrined the freedom of the press in the First Amendment of our Constitution. 2 The commission warned that [w]hile the means of self-descendation now at their disposal, people must live, if they must live at all, through self-restraint, moderation and mutual understanding. They get their image from each other through the press. The press can be inflammatory, sensational and irresponsible. If that is, it and its freedom will go down into the universal catastrophe. On the other hand, the press can do its duty through the new world struggling to be born. This can help create a world community by giving men all over the world and of each other by promoting understanding and appreciation for the objectives of a free society that will embrace all people. 3 Is this how modern media execute themselves? Self-restricted, measured and moderate? Are the media providing knowledge and insight useful to the public and a free society, or are they obsessed with their own personal, political, and progressive holes and piques? Did the media aim the respect and esteem of their readers, viewers and listeners as fair and trustworthy bursaries of information, or are large numbers of citizenship suspicious and distrustful of their reporting? Is the media on a trajectory of self-rejection, an officially identified with one political party (Democratic Party) about the other (Republican Party)? In fact, most newsrooms and journalists did a very poor job of maintaining the nets of their profession and ultimately did serious harm to freedom. Any millions of Americans don't respect them or trust them as credible, fair and unbiased news sources. For example, on October 12, 2018, Gallup reported: Republicans typically have less confidence in the media than independents and Democrats placed, but the gap between Republicans and Democrats has grown. The current current gap is one of the largest to date, along with last year's 58-point gap. President Donald Trump's attacks on the 'mainstream media' are likely to be a factor in the increasingly polarized views of the media. Republicans agree with his claims that the media unfairly covers his administration, while Democrats can see the media as the institution that primarily checks the president's power. 4 Furthermore, Democrats' confidence rose last year and is now at 76%, the highest in Gallup's trend by the party, based on available data since 1997. Independents' confidence in the media is now at 42%, the highest for that group since 2005. Republicans continue to laugh well behind the other party groups - just 21% trust the media, but that's up from 14% in 2016 and last year. 5 Another way to look at these statistics is that nearly 80 percent of Republicans trust the media, while nearly 80 percent of Democrats trust the media. It seems that the close ideological and political association and shell between the Democrats and the press seem to be underscored. Lara Logan, who was a CBS News journalist and war correspondent from 2002 to 2018, spoke honestly in a February 15, 2019, podcast interview about the media's professional downfall, preference for the Democratic Party and progressive advocacy, and intolerance of independent and diverse perspectives in reporting. Visually - anyone who has ever been to Israel and was on the Dwindling Wall saw the women have this little piece in front of the wall to pray and the rest of the wall is for the men. For me it's a great representation of American media, is that, you know, in these small small holdings where the women pray, you've got Breitbart and Fox News and, you know, some others. And then from there you have CBS, ABC, NBC, 'Huffington Post', 'Politics, whatever, right, all of them. And that's a problem for me. Because even if it was reversed, if it were, you know, largely - mostly, you know, right - on the right and a little bit, it would also be a problem for me. What I - my experience was that the more - the more opinions you have, the more ways you look at everything in life, everything in life is complicated, everything is gray, right. Nothing is black and white. I Logan continued that it was not about politics or partisanship. It's not about pro-Trump or anti-Trump. It's about news reporting. It has nothing to do with whether I like Trump or I don't like Trump. Right? Whether I believe him or identify with him. What I don't even want that conversation because I approach in the same way I approach anything. I find it's not a popular way that you read the media today because, although the media has always been historically left-leaning, we have left our pretense or at least the attempt to be objective today. . . . The former executive editor of the New York Times who comes out, Jill Abramson. And she said: 'We'll do, you know, dozens of stories about Trump single day and each of them was negative. Abramson said, 'We've become the anti-Trump paper today.' 'Well, that's not our job. This is a political position. This means that our political activists have become in a sense. And some could argue, propagandists, right?' And there are some merit for it. We have some conventions - because they're not really rules - but you need at least two first-hand sources for something, right? Those things help keep your job at a certain standard. Those standards are out of the window. I mean, you read one story or another and hear it and it's all based on one anonymous administration officer, former administration official. It's not journalism. . . . 7 When a journalist breaks from the rest of the media suit, which is very rare, their careers are typically threatened or ruined by the rest of the press. Indeed, after the Logan interview went viral, she was pushed or worse, personally attacked by individuals in her own profession. In a subsequent interview on Fox's Hannity, Logan related that if there were any independent votes out there, any journalists who do not beat the same drum and give the same talking points, then we pay the price. What's interesting . . . they can't decrease the dust from what you say. They can't go after the things that matter. So you're smearing you personally. They go after your integrity. They tear to your reputation as a person and a professional. They will stop at nothing. I'm not the only one. And I'm fair. I'm doing right, I'm tired of it. And they no longer get to write my story. They don't get to talk to me. I want to say loud and clear to anyone who listens - I'm not possessed. Nobody owns me. I'm not in possession of the left or right. 8 Indeed, the Commission on Freedom of the Press specifically stresses that the media should pay special attention to the difference between fact and opinion. Of equal importance with reporter accuracy is identifying facts and opinion as opinion, and their separation, so far as possible. It is necessary all the way from the reporter's file, up to the copy and makeup desks and editorial offices, to the final, published product. The distinction, of course, cannot be made absolutely. There is no fact without a context and no factual report that is not colored by the opinions of the reporter. 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impotent in the office of directing opinion on matters of concern to the public as long as they are remotely applicable in the daily and unprotective meeting and interpretation of 'news'. On the other hand, the tools of social examination will be fickle as long as they are forged in place and are remote from contemporary events under conditions. 56 Again we become reminds that actual news is information that has been intertwined with progressive social theory. Michael McCarthy or not, assistant professor and former journalist Matthew Pressman makes a more nuanced case for leaving fact-based journalism for social activism. He claims that [t]o some observers, the dominant feature of American journalism is liberal bias. But it is inaccurate because it indicates either a deliberate effect to shelter the news or a complete unawareness of the political implications of news coverage. What really defines contemporary American journalism is a set of values that determine news outages. Some are political values: distrust of the rich and powerful, sympathy for the available, belief in government's responsibility to address social sick. Others are journalistic values: the beliefs that journalists should analyze the news should serve their readers, should try to even reveal. These values are not designed to serve any ideological agenda, but they help to create a news product more satisfying for the center than for those who are right of center. 57 Pressman argues that due to certain horrific events in the 1960s and 1970s, journalists can simply report news as objective news without interpretation influenced by progressive values. In other words, journalists should not seek and report facts as news, but their news gathering priorities and the facts themselves through a progressive ideology to give them meaning and purpose. Of course, the meaning or purpose happens to promote the progressive policy and political agenda. As far as this approach mostly excludes the moral and political values of a large population of Americans, it cannot be reached in a small-handed manner, as Pressman insists. It can simply be said to even be handled when, in fact, such an assertion is preposterous and impossible as a matter of fact. This helps explain the contemporary near monopoly of ideologically diagonal news reports. Too often it is biased. Too often, it's policy-driven. And it is therefore more satisfying for the left. Pressman explains what was, in his view, the grieving state of the press a century ago. Since major American newspapers began to adopt the ideal of objectivity in the 1910s and 1920s, they have allowed only a few journalists to interpret the news: editorial writers, opinion columnists and those who write for special divisions in the Sunday edition. . . . However, workday reporters had to stick to the four W's and one H: who, when, where, and how. The 'why' question was beyond their view. With interpretation reporting, which began to change. 58 Consequently, the pursuit of objective truth as news is no longer the journalists' actual purpose or goal, but instead interpretation reporting by progressive lenses. The move to interpretation, explains Pressman, began in the 1950s and today, and it had far-reaching implications. This caused journalists to redefine objectivity, contributing to the public's distrust of the media, and shifted the balance of power in news organizations from editors to reporters. But at the beginning it was – like most profound changes in major, established institutions – simply an attempt to keep up with the competition [that is, radio, then television and now the internet]. 59 From there, when the news consumer reads, hears, or sees progressive bias or even political partisanship in the press that seems to be aligned with the statements and policies of the Democratic Party and Democratic officials, given his progressive ideological scheme, he does not imagine things. A decade before Pressman's writing, former Washington Post reporter Thomas Edsall was even more blunt and took the argument even further. Edsall declared that journalism must possess its liberalism – then manage it, challenge it and account for it. The mainstreamers are liberal. Once, before 1965, reporters were a mixture of working tight scoured by ne'er-do-well college grads uncomplicated for corporate headquarters or divinity school. Since the civil rights and women's movements, the cultural wars and Watergate, the press corps at institutions such as The Washington Post, ABC-NBC-CBS News, the NYT, The Wall Street Journal, Time, Newsweek, the Los Angeles Times, The Boston Globe, etc. are composed in large part of 'new' or 'creative' class members of the liberal elite – well-educated men and women who, civil rights and gay rights. Most importantly, they find such figures as Bill O'Reilly, Glenn Beck, Sean Hannity, Pat Robertson, or Jerry Falwell under timing. 60 of course, Edsall is correct about thinking the modern press went for conservatives in general. But it's more than that. It bleeds in open hostility for conservative media institutions, such as conservative talk radio and the Fox News Channel, whose latter doesn't even claim to be a conservative news outlet, but rather a non-conforming media network that justifies and balances the moniker. Furthermore, the media's progressive mindset and interpretative approach to the press profession leads virtually every cultural, traditional and institutional norm, as one can expect. After all, it now functions as an outgrowth of the broader progressive ideological and political project. This also leads to a more myopian view of society and the clear increasing contempt and intolerance newsrooms and journalists openly displayed for fellow citizens who cannot share their ideological attitudes, especially nowadays supporters of President Trump. Once again, it helps to explain the synergy between the press and the Democratic Party. Therefore, it follows logically that the Democratic Party mostly benefits from the media's interpretation of the news. As Gallup reported on April 5, 2017, [s]ixty-two percent of American adults say the media has a [political party], of about 50% in recent years. Just 27% now say the media doesn't benefit big party. . . . Currently of Republicans saying the media favors one party over the other; in 2003, 59% of Republicans said the same. By comparison, 44% of Democrats now say the media is playing favorites, unchanged from the 44% it said in 2003. . . . Gallup asked those who apprehive political bias in the news media to say which party benefits the news media. Nearly two thirds (64%) of those who believe that the media benefits a political party, it says it is the Democratic Party. Only about a third of as many (22%) believe that the media benefits Republicans. It's not new. Americans who persevere media bias have always said the direction of that bias has leaned in favor of the Democrats, although the percentage likes that view has changed. 61 For Edsall, the problem is that there are very few good conservative reporters. There are many intellectually impressive conservative advocates and opinion leaders, but it doesn't seem like the ideology makes for good journalists. 62 Of course, as the studies show, there are very few conservative reporters in the first place, given the lack of diverse beliefs and attitudes in newsrooms. And the community of journalists is increasingly dressed in ideology and aography. But Edsall then makes the self-serving assertion that [i]n contrast, any investigation of the country's top reporters over the past half-century would show that liberals do make good journalists in the tradition of objective news coverage. The liberal tilt of the mainstream media is, in this view, a force, but one that has been misinterflect in recent years amid liberal bias controversy. 63 From there liberals far-fetched others in news organizations, liberals are better reporters anyway, and the problem with liberal bias in the media is actually a problem of brand and marketing. Edsall, like Pressman later, must reject both self-fulfilling and on coherent formulation of journalism's aim to justify liberal media bias and at the same time reject bias as criticism. While the staff tend to share an ideological worldview, Edsall writes, most have a personal and professional commitment to the objective presentation of information. Edsall's complaint is that [t]he refuses from mainstream media managers to acknowledge the ideological leanings of their staff, a dangerous form of media debt in which the press so far leans backwards to avoid the charge of left-wing bias that it is either nutmeg or leaning towards the right. 64 Furthermore, the media's progressive ideological prospects have in some ways been abducted in a moral campaign, such as in other societies that have been so administered with progressive sensibilities during the past century. Kovach and Rosenstiel claim that most journalists feel that journalism is a moral act and know that all their background and directly what they will do and do not do in producing it. . . . For many journalists, this moral dimension is particularly strong because of what they are attracted to the profession in first place. When they were initially interested in the news, often as adolescents or teenagers, many were drawn to the craft by its most basic elements-calling attention to inequalities in the system, connecting people, creating community. . . . These journalists feel strongly about the moral dimension of their profession because without it they have so little to help them navigate the gray spaces of ethical decisions. 65 A moral necessity for one's life, let alone career, is definitely not. It's not exclusive for journalism. This is something that individuals of all walks of life, in all occupations and working areas, must possess or strive for. But if and when morality is defined by or interpreted by a progressive ideology and related policy and political goals, the outcome is appealing whose members form a class or aristocracy of strict, pretentious, arrogant and self-righteous individuals, rarely able to form caution or improvement. It has revealed the most recent and especially revealed himself in the media's coverage of President Trump. Charles Kesler explains: President Trump exploits that vulnerability with his criticism of 'fake news'. He not only accuses them of making it up, that is, to get the facts wrong or 'facts' to fit their bias, but also to find out the many standards by which they hide and justify abuses: the false authority of 'objectivity,' non-partying, and progress. They are as partial as journalists were two centuries ago, but can't, or won't, admit it, meaning they can't start asking how to moderate themselves. The truth is, they may be as much self-deceived as deceived. 66 Thus, for many in the press, the president is challenging their moral important contingency. And herein lies a big part of the problem: what is the primary purpose of journalism? Is modern journalism supposed to be a project that is with a progressive mindset and value system still free of bias somehow, as Professor Pressman argues; whether modern journalism is supposed to be a reporter's pursuit of social activism and a social renovation, thus and necessarily an anti-Western reform, as Professor Rosen requires; or it is an exclusive club of wise men and women by whom the world must be explained to the pleasures; or is it supposed to be the collection and reporting of objective truth and facts, where interpretation and analysis are left to the readers, viewers and listeners; or is it an institution that must strengthen civil society by promoting the country's founding principles? The evidence suggests that when it comes to matters of politics and culture, among other things, journalism has become an overwhelming progressive enterprise, and the disunity with which it mostly denies, defends, or even often leads to a pack of mentality, groups, and even offered propaganda as news. It should be said, however, as demonstrated earlier, that the attitude of increasing numbers of influential media voices are less concerned about the veneration of objectivity and more open about the progressive ideological prospects that motivate their reporting. This is a project that has been going on for about a century. Therefore, the questions raised at the opening of this chapter are more or less answered by the values and mindset of the media's collective progressive ethos and attachment to social activism. Moreover, as foot soldiers for the Progressive Movement, newsrooms and journalists also traveled far from the substantive principles and beliefs that animated the early printers, leaflets, and newspaper publishers who gave birth to freedom and American independence. Independence.

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