NEWS: THE MYTHIC DIMENSION

(Fragments)

On a dull winter night six boys saunter up to a large prefabricated structure near Buttes-Chaumont Park in northeastern Paris. It is their school, not unlike many others built around France in response to agitation for school improvement and reform. The boys are petit-bourgeoisie "middle-French". As a columnist later put it, they are not "other people's children -- they are our own." One of them, identified as "P" by the police (he is only 14) is small, skinny, bright, the son of a house painter "very polite" and "kept in hand" by his parents (says the concierge); "a menace," and "sly and boastful" at school (say some of his classmates); full of resentment and thoughts of revenge "for being bullied" (says he, later). "P" climbs the fence. While his friends look on, he opens a window, pours a bottle of cleaning fluid into a nearby wastebasket, and tosses a lighted match.

None of them knows that for the first time ever music classes are held at the school that night. The prefab -- only two years old -- burns in minutes and collapses on 16 trapped children and 4 teachers who will be identified by their dental records. So much for the "facts."

In the context of French media and politics, the facts of the case took on a symbolic significance that, as Nan Robertson reported from Paris (New York Times, February 13, 1973) "gripped all of France and made her examine her conscience . . . far beyond the central event that set it off . . ."

> Virtually every element of French society has seized upon the case. With only three weeks to go before parliamentary elections, the Gaullist government and the centrist and leftist opposition are using the tragedy.
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> Depending on their political coloration and background, the politicians blame parental permissiveness, radical agitation among students since the 1968 disorders, disrespect for authority, the glorification of violence in films and

on television or the "scandalous neglect" of a Government that ignores safety hazards in its schools.

Christian Fouchet, a former Gaullist Minister of Education and now an independent member in parliament, said "In all my life, I have never experienced such an overwhelming feeling of sadness and shame. This is what the absence of a moral upbringing, the abdication of adults and the flood of violence and pornography has brought us to."

In the United States about 70,000 fires are set by children, many of them in schools (and another 85,000 by arsonists of all kinds). I remember seeing a wirephoto of laughing children in front of a burning building; the caption said "It's only their school." The annual fire death rate is about 12,000, but our symbolic environment links fire safety more with Smokey the Bear than with national policy, responsibility and morality.

Take, as another example, the affair of Gabrielle Russier.

A 31 year-old teacher in a Marselleille lycée falls in love -- in fact lives -- with one of her pupils, aged 16. Charged with "leading a minor astray," imprisoned without a trial, depressed and ill, given a suspended sentence, but finally disqualified from teaching on orders of the Minister, Gabrielle Russier turns on the gas, lies down on her bed, and dies. Now imagine that instead of an episode in a soap opera or perhaps

an obituary in the local paper, as Mavis Gallant (1971) has written,

> . . . this case could have such a hold on the public mind that all over America hardly anything else will be talked about; that anyone with access to a typewriter or a microphone -- journalists, welfare officers, churchmen, political activists of all persuasion, government officials, magistrates, lawyers, psychiatrists, sociologists, leaders of parents' associations and of student movements concerning the law, morality, hypocrisy, preventive detention, discrimination against women, the rights of minors, the need for prison reform, the absurdities of the criminal code, and the abuses of power.
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> The boy's parents are Communists. The boy is a Maoist. Imagine that major and minor doctrinaire differences on the left could become a subject of excited discussion in the American press, and that readers will know what it is all about and be deeply interested. There will be virtually no news of the case on television, which is government-owned and censored from Washington. However, the New York Times and the Washington Post will publish letters and even editorials expressing surprise that Communists could behave repressively, and reproaching the parents, both gently and violently, for having cooperated with the bourgeois police.
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> The teacher's death is an event of national importance. It is brought up at a televised Presidential press conference. The President (a Ph.D. in literature from Yale) will quote, from memory, a poem about a girl martyred by society because she loved the wrong person. The poem is the

> work of a celebrated American writer, patriot, and member of the Communist Party.
>
> Of course, it sounds hopelessly wrong; this is not an American tragedy.

Of course it isn't. The symbolic functions of the French schools as fountainheads of national culture and central authority contrast with the ambivalent images of schools and teachers in American mass culture. American media cults are largely centralized and homogenized, notwithstanding the appearance of local control. No sharp ideological differentiations are legitimized within the systems, as none has ever had a chance to develop (as in France after the revolution). Therefore, social and moral issues tend to be quickly defined and "operationalized" as technicalities and procedural problems.

Our case study of differential attention inquired into the coverage of a criminal event in the French press (for a full technical report, see Gerbner 1961). The French press is in the process of transformation from a "party press" to a commercially-sponsored press system. Both types of newspapers exist side-by-side. They differ mainly in their criteria of selection and editing. The party press selects news and views according to standards relevant to its political clients' ideological perspectives. In a multi-party system, it creates and cultivates publics of different -- and at times radically opposed -- political tendencies. The commercial press selects material according to standards relevant to its clients', the advertisers', need for broad mass appeal. Its "independence" is only of public organization, not private. The commercial press creates and cultivates a public perspective which cut across political party lines.

The event was the probably unintended (but not entirely accidental) fatal shooting of a student by a teacher. The underlying political dimension of the reporting of any event, and especially an event involving education in France, found expression in the news coverage.

The events and the times

Perpignan is a provincial town in the foothills of the Pyrenees, at the southwestern edge of the wine-growing region along France's Mediterranean coast.

Jean Amiel, 37, teaches English at the Arago lycée of his home town of Perpignan. His wife is also an English teacher at a local girl's school. They have a four year old daughter and lead a busy but quiet private life in their new house in the suburbs.

Alain Rolland, 16, is a good student at the Arago lycée. He has never had Amiel for a teacher. He divides his time between the Boy Scouts, his studies, and his family. The Rollands are recent arrivals in Perpignan. Alain's father is director of a local branch of a bank, the Algerian Credit Society.

It is the night of St. Joan, June 23. Bonfires and dancing on the streets celebrate the longest day of the year in the tradition of Catalonian youth. A group of boys, including Alain, heads toward the suburbs to engage in a familiar prank: lighting firecrackers in the mailboxes of the quiet and dignified residential district.

This is the third night the same prank (although not the same pranksters) plague the Amiel house. Mme. Amiel does not feel well. The children cannot sleep. Jean Amiel has obtained a police permit for a gun to "scare off the vandals." Now he grabs the old revolver and fires three shots into the darkness from the second story window.

Alain falls to the ground. "He's hurt, he's bleeding," a friend cries out. Amiel drives the wounded boy to the police station, then to the hospital. The intern pronounces him dead on arrival. "Le coup du lapin," he says; a fatal blow to the spine, suffered in the fall.

Amiel drives the dead boy to his parents. He says he is responsible. But, despite their sorrow, the Rollands insist that only fate is responsible; a bad fall, "le coup du lapin." Amiel says nothing about the shots.

He arrives home pale, drawn, and still silent. His wife does not question him. Soon it's morning. Amiel calls his high school principal, says he will not meet his classes that day. He waits for the police. They arrive. The coroner has repudiated the intern's diagnosis. There is a small bullethole in the back of Alain's neck.

Public emotion runs high in Perpignan. A crowd of 3,000 gathers around the Amiel house. The police delay the usual reconstruction of events at the scene of the crime to avoid a riot. Nearly a year goes by before the case comes to trial. There is no denial of guilt. The defense pleads merely an accident, "un cruel hazard." The jury's verdict: two years in prison, two and a half million (old) francs damages.

The events took place at a time of national crisis marking the end of the Fourth Republic. It was a time of war and revolt in Algeria, the establishment of rebellious Committees of Public Safety, rumors of impending paratroop landings in Paris. There were fears of rightwing dictatorship and civil war. A "legal coup d'etat" brought De Gaulle to power in May. Labor unions, Left parties, many other organizations demonstrated in protest. Teachers called a one-day strike throughout France on May 30. They continued to demonstrate (and suffer government sanctions) throughout the period of the trial.

A new constitution reduced the power of the elected Deputies and changed the basis of representation to the detriment of the Left. The strife over Algeria erupted in shocking terrorism and deepened the national trauma. Headlines of Alain's murder competed for attention with those of "L'affair Jaccoud" in which a famous Geneva lawyer killed the lover of his mistress; of the kidnapping of actress Michele Morgan's son by her ex-husband; and of the Tour de France bicycle race. During Amiel's trial, there was continuing coverage of the much longer Guillaume-Lacaze and the "Ballets Roses" affairs, implicating former Ministers or other important personalities in corruption, extortion, and prostitution.

It was in this general context that the crime and trial of Jean Amiel

stirred a sensation in the French press.

Our analysis included nine newspapers in three general groups: the Left press, the Right press, and the commercial press.

Two Paris dailies and one provincial daily comprised each group. The titles of individual papers can be seen on Figure , below.

FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE

A procedure we call proposition analysis was developed to provide a measure of the differential selections and tendencies in the presentation of the same events by the three press groups. The stories are screened sentence by sentence to develop a list of all basic propositions advanced by each source. Identical propositions contained in differently worded statements are considered the same. A master list of propositions includes all essentially different propositions advanced in all statements of each source. These propositions are sorted into "balanced" and "differential" categories, and further grouped into "balanced" and "differential" passages. The passages in which each source(in this case, press group) has about the same share of propositions are the "balanced" versions. Those in which some sources are represented more than others are the "differential" versions; they indicate the composition of differential selections and tendencies.

A total of 642 separate propositions were listed as having been advanced in the statements of one or more of the newspapers studied. More than two-thirds of these propositions were "balanced" (advanced by papers of all three groups in about equal proportion), or were not strictly relevant to the events themselves, or both. (For example, there was much discussion about the general characteristics of modern youth in France and elsewhere.) About one-third of all propositions represented the differential

aspects and versions.

These propositions were grouped into 11 passages. Each passage dealt with a certain aspect or version of the events. The grouping of the propositions was done without reference to the stories themselves. The passages represent sets of proposition abstracted from the total coverage.

The focus and complexion of the account
changes from passage to passage
as the balance of representation shifts
from one side of the political spectrum to the other.

We shall paraphrase each passage, and indicate each press group's share of representation in the propositions of each passage. In this way we can reconstruct the "dialogue" of ideological perspectives implicit in the differentia attention of the press coverage. Later we shall discuss the passages in the order of the shifting ideological perspectives.

Good man, terrible accident. The first passage is a relatively balanced version, recounting the story of a terrible accident that kills an innocent boy and ruins the life of a good man. The Left press leads in the number of propositions, but the differences are not very great and the individual papers rank in almost random order.

Happy childhood, easy life. The second passage delves into Jean Amiel's past. Its propositions paint a picture of happy childhood and easy life. The Right press is followed by the Commercial press in advancing these propositions. They provide a psychological rather than social context for the crime; the Left press takes scant notice of these propositions.

Modest means, heavy burdens. The Left press leads in suggesting a very different context for the crime. This passage points to the modest means and heavy financial burdens of the Amiel family. It notes the insufficiency of even two teachers' incomes to pay for the cost of a suburban house. The significance of the house for Jean Amiel, and his generosity and good humor amidst difficult circumstances receive emphasis in this version.

A defective personality. The fourth passage depicts Jean Amiel as a defective personality: pedantic, irascible, vindictive, provoking the wrath and revenge of students. The commercial France Soir and the rightist Aurore take the lead in presenting or citing these statements.

A "knight with a sad face". The next passage paints yet another portrait: a pitiful, harrassed teacher in a state of near collapse from worry and overwork, yet inspiring respect (though not a deserved promotion); a kind of "chevalier a la triste figure" - knight with a sad face. The Left press leads with nearly a half of all statements advancing such propositions.

A contemptible wretch. The propositions brought together in this passage counter the "knight" image with a start extension of the theme of defective personality: Amiel is a contemptible mental and physical wretch, a liar and a coward. He is indifferent to his (possibly intentional) crime, and is perhaps more concerned about bloodstains in his car than about the life of his innocent victim. The right wing Aurore is in the lead in citing these propositions, again followed by France Soir.

A heart-rending affair. Counterpointing that hostile version is a heart-rending story of despair, pathos, and family devotion, advanced mainly in the Left press. The propositions of this passage relate that Amiel sobs when his parents enter the court and that he displays tender

affection for his wife. They depict Mme. Amiel as a beautiful woman who resembles tragic Antigone, pathetic in her attempt to defend her husband.

A national disgrace. A totally different version presents Mme Amiel a shrew, the family in discord, the trial unfair, Amiel's promotion while in prison a scandal. The whole affair is regarded a national disgrace. The Right press reported nearly two-thirds of all such statements.

Unjust conditions. The next version, favored by the Left, is very different. It dwells on conditions that frustrate the efforts and try the patience of teachers and other "intellectuals." No one, it is claimed, can judge or punish such a crime more than the teacher's own remorse. It is not the verdict that is seen as "disgraceful"; it is the catastrophic situation in secondary education."

Not a political case. All papers reported that the Amiels (as most teachers in France) had leftist political leanings. But only the press of the Right carried allegations that they really had no political convictions and did not take part, or at least not willingly, in the teachers' strike of May 30, 1958. These propositions claim that neither politics nor conditions help explain the crime; the right, as usual, attempts to depoliticize the case and to present it as a simple but heinous crime, best dealt with outside of or "above" politics.

Politics has much to do with it. In contrast with "non-political" explanations, the socio-political background is most explicitly invoked in the left press. The propositions of this passage specifically expose the bitter conflict which beset France during this period and suggest its relevance to the tragic accident on the eve of St. Jean.

Figure 1 illustrates the order and magnitude of shifting perspectives from Left to Right. The chart on the top indicates the

FIGURE ABOUT HERE

percentages advanced by each out of the total number of propositions advanced by all papers in each passage.

The Left press, as a whole, advances the most overtly "political" version of the case. It seizes the opportunity to make common cause with the left-leaning teachers of France in this "heart-rending affair." It views the crime and personality of Jean Amiel against the background of "unjust conditions." Education itself is seen as the victim of the greater crimes of reactionary subversion, harassment, neglect. Amiel himself is a victim; a modest man bearing heavy burdens, a "knight with a sad face," a symbol of the intellectual in a society ruled by wealth and privilege. Although the crime and the trial are fully reported, the differential accounts of the Left stress social injustice as the root of personal tragedy.

With the theme of "defective personality," the balance of perspectives shifts to the Right. Hints of "abnormalities" and unknown "true causes" counter suggestions of mitigating circumstance. The accounts merely observe Amiel's "contemptible" character and his dastardly deeds. After a "happy childhood" and "easy life," the crime must be outside the scope of social causation, or even reason. The right-wing perspective limits the scope of public discussion to a carefully circumscribed area. The crime is a personal rather than social aberration. Politics has nothing to do with it. The threat is not to liberty, learning, or justice, but to law and order. It is a national disgrace.

The strength of the French Left lies in the arena of grass-roots political struggle. The Right tries to limit that arena and to rely more on "law and order," the army, the police, and on moral (and financial power outside or "above" politics. The commercially dependent press occupied a position between the two groups of politically dependent newspapers, but, as we shall see, not quite in the middle.

The only passage in which the commercial press itself had the highest share of representation was the theme of the "defective personality." The order of representations of the commercial press, all following the lead of the Right, were in passages disclaiming political relevance, describing the Amiels' "easy life" and observing their "contemptible" conduct.

The commercial press shares more of the differential accounts of Left and Right than the two share of each others'. But the commercial press also shares more of the passages favored by the Right than it does of the versions advanced primarily on the Left. Furthermore, the greater the Left leadership in advancing the propositions of a passage, the closer the commercial press is to the Right press.

While the commercial press paves the way for certain types of propositions favored by the Right, and follows the lead of the Right in others, its most striking characteristic is a strong reaction <u>against</u> the perspective of the Left. Across all passages the commercial press is an average of 26 percentage points distant from the Left, and 12 percentage points distant from the Right.

The percent of different propositions each newspaper advanced out of all propositions contained in each passage was used to compute correlations between pairs of newspapers across all passages and thus to determine the relative position of each paper on the continuum of perspectives.

The lower section of Figure 1 is a graphic representation based on correlations for each paper. The two highest positive correlations between each paper and two others are shown by lines leading from the former to the latter. The length of the lines represents the relative magnitudes of these correlations. It can be seen, for example, that the provincial L'Indépendant was the only commercial newspaper whose two highest correlations included one with an organ of the left, the Provencal. It can also be noted that the commercial press interlocks with the press of the Right, while the Left press forms a fairly tight group of its own.

There is little doubt that any press reacts most sharply against perspectives which threaten its principal client-patron relationships. When that challenge is not represented by competing mass publications in the same system, the dominant press may be free to ignore that perspective altogether, or to present it not only as a hostile but also as an "outside" and alien view.

I find no support for the assumption that the commercial (or any) press system is free of ideological controls and political tendencies. The basic ideological choices are inherent not in party-partisanship but in the total operation of "news values" and of standards of reporting. These choices are evident in press systems where ideological plurality is maintained through more than one type of client-patron relationship and source of press support.

The choices are not so apparent,

but they are made, nevertheless,

without public debate, vote, and even often in the name of "freedom"

where either a commercial or a one-party press preempts the field of journalism.

Our next case study compares two such contrasting systems.

This is a comparative examination of major headline content and news emphasis between The New York Times and the Hungarian Socialist Workers (Communist) party central daily, Népszabadság, dealing with the United Nations 15th General Assembly session in the fall of 1960.

The distinctive roles of national media are products of their social system's conditions for industrial investment and popular support. Patterns of institutional decision-making develop in response to needs of stockholders, advertisers, parties, governments or other sources of support for large-scale mass production in the communications field. Theories and standards emerge--each with its own conception of "freedom," "objectivity," "news values," etc.--to codify, rationalize and perpetuate these patterns of decision-making. When measured by categories of analysis based on a nation's own theories of the press and conventions of journalism, that nation's media usually come out on top in any comparison. But self-justifying standards, reflecting internal needs and pressures, are hardly adequate yardsticks of relative communication roles outside their own systems.

This is a case study in the application of two contrasting approaches as major categories of analysis. Each has its own conception of standards and definition of realities, priorities and perspectives. The two dimensions are relevant to crucial differences in press performance and sensitive to differential bases of communication around the world.

The first approach is along the dimension of the cold-war power-contest. From this point of view, strategy and counter-strategy, threats and counter-threats, yardage gained or lost, and keeping the scoreboard up to date become the most significant aspects of newsworthy events. What the game is about is assumed to be known. The important items on the agenda concern matters of technique and of procedure: how gains already made can be defended, on what or whom losses can be blamed, how rules can be kept to maximize gains and minimize losses, how new points might be scored. We call this dimension procedural and conflict-oriented.

The other dimension cuts the pie differently. The substance and promise of specific issues occupy the center of the stage. The "power game" with its rules, scores, gains and losses has a secondary place on the agenda, except as it affects the possibility of agreement on the substantive ends to be achieved. These ends are issues with direct significance in everyday reality. Coexistence, disarmament, colonial liquidation, nuclear test ban, etc., are seen not mainly as aspects of big-power strategy but as bread and butter for tomorrow's table, a school for the children, appliances in the store, a freer and more secure life for everyone. From this perspective, conflict is seen as delaying, agreement as hastening, the realization of all that really matters. We call this dimension substantive and agreement-oriented.

These questions were explored in two ways.

The first part of the study compares emphases through the analysis of major headlines in the two papers. The second part examines broader aspects of the general context of selection and emphasis.

The line was the unit of analysis. Each line of every major relevant headline was classified in two ways. First, we asked whether the line was "procedural" or "substantive." Secondly, we had to decide whether the tendency of the line was "agreement," "neutral" or "conflict."

Substantive was the term assigned to lines which focused upon the substance of issues pending before the Assembly. Such lines as EISENHOWER CALLS FOR PEACE or SOLVE GENERAL DISARMAMENT were considered "substantive" in emphasis. Procedural was the term given to emphases pointing to U.N. organization, Assembly procedure, agenda strategy, parliamentary moves, contacts among the powers and circumstances surrounding the meetings.

Agreement direction was defined as emphasis on matters (either "substantive: or "procedural") generally accepted or desired (at least in principle) by most of those who would agree with the basic purposes of the United Nations. Peace, freedom, disarmament, summit meeting independence of colo-

nial countries fall into the "agreement" category.

Neutral denotes the direction of statements which are non-controversial or do not raise any cold-war issues. Simple statements of who met whom, "U.N. ASSEMBLY BEGINS," and the like, were classified "neutral."

Conflict was defined as either "substantive" or "procedural" emphasis on the power struggle, on disapproval or support for either side, on outstanding divisive issues in the cold war or on threats or warnings of conflict.

The following are examples of the five actual headline classifications used (the sixth, substantive-neutral, never occurred):

TITO URGES IMMEDIATE STEPS TO CUT ARMS (substantive-agreement from the Times.

LEADERS EXPOSE COLONIALISM (substantive-conflict from Népszabadság).

NEUTRALS ASK U.S.-SOVIET TALK (procedural-agreement from the Times).

BALTIKA ARRIVES IN NEW YORK (procedural-neutral from Népszabadság).

U.N. REBUFFS KHRUSHCHEV 54 to 13 (Procedural-conflict from the Times).

The near mirror-image of the two papers' perspectives is reflected in the comparison between categories of opposite value in terms of the analytical dimensions employed.

The largest single concentration of lines in the Times -- 45 percent of the total -- was in both "procedural" and "conflict" categories. Only 5 percent of all the lines in Népszabadság fell into both of these categories. Conversely, almost one-third (30 percent) of all lines in Népzabadság classified both "substantive" and "agreement," while the Times devoted as many lines to "substantive - agreement" as Népszabadság did to "procedural - conflict" -- 5 percent.

FIGURE -- ABOUT HERE

Comparing emphasis alone, Népszabadság featured nearly three times as many "substantive" lines as did The Times. Conversely, The Times headlines were "procedural" compared to 68% of Népszabadság's. Comparing tendency alone, Népszabadság had three times as many "agreement" lines as did The Times. The Times had over seven times as many "conflict" lines as did Népszabadság. Over half of the lines in Népszabadság and over one-third of the lines in The Times were "neutral."

The headwriting styles reflected in these findings play a part in directing as well as in expressing emphases. These styles -- as other tools and conventions of the journalists's craft -- serve not only to communicate his perspectives but also to guide his attention to those aspects of events which fit them best. Our penchant for stark, terse, active, and pungent headlines tends to direct attention to procedure -- who does what to whom -- rather than to the substance. With a verb in nearly every line, The Times -- noted for its relatively subdued headlines -- pinpointed strategy with "admits," "meets," "joins," "confers," etc. It emphasized tension between antagonists with such verbs as "quit," "wins," "snub," "insists," "rebuffs," "defies," "charges," "bars" (used twice), and "warns" (used three times). Dynamic terms such as "buffer bloc," "arms impasse," "war peril," and "rocket power," were used to add punch to the lines. Modifiers "coldly," "noisy," and "angry" (always applied to an opponent) supplied color to the drama of highly personalized encounter and clash. There were 36 names in the 60 lines.

With only one verb in every three lines, Népszabadság heads were short on what we would consider "hard facts" content and long on declarations of intent. Two out of the four tension verbs used -- "expose," and "hate," --

pointed at imperialism and war; only two -- "reject," and "demand" -- dealt with people. "Greet," "solve," and "live" (used three times) denoted mutuality; "peace," "freedom," "independence," and "disarmament" (used seven times) denoted the aims. Only one line in eight named individuals.

Differences in perspective go deeper than style.

Let us now follow the course of the Assembly

as highlighted in the two papers.

Russian dignitaries were still on the high seas aboard the Baltika when the Security Council received a strong Soviet protest over the role of the Secretary General as Commander-in-Chief of the U.N. army in the Congo. (This was the time when pro-Soviet Congo leader Lumumba was deposed while U.N. troops held Leopoldville airport, and eventually assassinated). But The Times kept the spotlight on Hammarskjold. Its first headline for the period was U.N. CHIEF WARNS / HE MAY QUIT POST / OVER CONGO ROLE. This was followed by the reassuring top line the next day that ASIAN-AFRICAN BLOC AIDS U.N. CHIEF. Companion front-page headlines asked for "restraint" in Khrushchev's TV coverage related the hope of the State Department that the Assembly will not become Khrushchev's "propaganda platform" and reported that 2,000 DENOUNCE PREMIER before his arrival.

The generally procedural and combative aspects spotlighted in The Times cast only a partial shadow on the back pages of Népszabadság. On page five of the September 18 issue, Népszabadság headlined its U.N. story ILLEGAL ATTEMPT BY U.S./ TO HAVE EXTRAORDINARY U.N. SESSION / SANCTION AGGRESSION AGAINST CONGO. A companion piece claimed that COLONIALIST'S

AGENTS / GRAB POWER IN LEOPOLDVILLE / WITH U.N. ASSISTANCE.

Front-page emphasis, however, was on peace, hope, and good wishes. MAY SUCCESS FOLLOW YOUR WORK the two-column headline cited one of reportedly "hundreds of telegrams" pouring in from "workers, peasants, intelligentsia" to the passengers of the Baltika on their way to New York. The major three-column spread was headlined REPRESENTING PEACE. It was a long editorial sounding the keynote of the coverage for days to come. "Representing peace" were the socialist delegations soon to arrive at the world forum to battle for the overriding concern of all humanity, declared the editorial, and to engage in (what The Times warned about on its front page) propaganda for disarmament. The key portions of the lengthy piece are paraphrased below because they are useful for an understanding of the communist press perspective:

> The West has defeated 40 disarmament proposals advanced by the socialist camp in the last 15 years. It has opposed, then scuttled the Summit. But the diplomacy of imperialism has suffered a setback; disarmament is on the Assembly agenda again and even a Summit is being realized. The world must listen now not only to our proposals but also to concrete unilateral steps that have been taken. In five years the Soviet Union reduced its armed forces from 5,763,000 to 2,423,000, and the Warsaw pact countries followed suit...
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> And what does all this mean to mankind? Consider a few facts...Every single day a hundred million people spend almost a billion hours not to build houses, not to produce clothes and food and drugs and school implements but means of destruction! . . .Every year the world spends

> twice as much on armaments as on food for all mankind. . . Obviously, the success of disarmament cannot depend on those who profit from armaments. They are afraid; they say all our talk is propaganda. So be it; it is propaganda in the interest of humanity and of life itself!

An elated Népszabadság devoted most of the front page to Khrushchev's arrival message. WE MUST AGREE ON STRICTLY CONTROLLED DISARMAMENT said the headline, alongside a smiling picture of the Soviet Premier surrounded by friendly faces, captioned "Warm Reception." The message itself sounded some of the key motifs: "All thoughts turn to peace . . . We must agree on the strictest international controls for disarmament . . . Unfortunately, those who pay lip-service to strengthening the U.N. actually oppose its work for disarmament . . . They call our proposals propaganda . . . I am proud to conduct such propaganda until the last ounce of my strength."

The major Times headline of the same day was "U.N. CHIEF WINS 70-0 CONGO VOTE / KHRUSHCHEV RECEIVED COLDLY/ANGRY CASTRO SWITCHES HOTELS . The lead of the arrival story set a somber mood, noting that "The red carpet . . . was soggy, and rain streamed through the leaky roof of dilapidated Pier 73 . . ." The picture showed, according to the caption, "A well isolated Soviet Premier" stepping off the gangplank with head bowed.

The General Assembly opened the next day.

The deck over The Times lead story noted that IRELAND'S BOLAND WINS PRESIDENCY CONTEST -- DEFEATS CZECH. Népszabadság gave the vote midway in its nearly full-page account of the session.

The pictorial spotlight in both papers went to Khrushchev and Castro. The Times depicted the "Bear Hug" on the Assembly floor, while Népszabadság showed the two men in "Warm, Friendly Meeting" in Harlem. Accounts of the Assembly "bear-hug" itself differed slightly but significantly. ". . . Mr. Krushchev appeared for the first time on the floor . . ." said The Times

story. "He joined Dr. Castro in a massive bear-hug." Népszabadság was more dignified:

> A member of the Cuban delegation stepped to the Soviet delegation and requested Khrushchev to visit Castro at his table on the other side of the floor. In the company of members of his delegation, Khrushchev passed by the presidential rostrum to go to Castro. The Soviet and Cuban Premiers were surrounded by a great crowd. Hundreds of delegates and reporters crowded around them as they shook hands smilingly.

Preliminary contacts between delegations occupied next day's major headlines in both papers. Népszabadság stressed the socialist countries' greeting new member states, and The Times highlighted Eisenhower's plan to visit Tito and Latin-American delegates "but snub Castro." The Assembly session itself received little attention. The Times' lead noted African leaders' "high praise for France." Népszabadság reported a Lebanese delegate denounce "imperialist exploitation of Africa and Asia."

On Friday, September 23, The Times carried its first banner headline. In Népszabadság it was the first day the U.N. Assembly shared the front page with another event -- the Hungarian harvest. Eisenhower spoke to the Assembly. He arrived, according to Népszabadság, "through a back door, avoiding all contact with delegates." This remark came after the lead noted that Khrushchev had greeted delegates in the lounge, chatted with Tito, and introduced members of his delegation to Castro.

The Times' top headline featured Eisenhower's call "for peace through U.N.," and "plans for Africa and for disarmament." The lead stressed the President's support of Hammarskjold. But as paraphrased by Tass on the front page of Népszabadság, the Eisenhower speech story began: "The President greeted new member states and declared that the striving for indepen-

dence creates a new world in Africa. In a reference to the Congo, he asserted that provocations against world opinion, peace, and orderly development can now be observed in Africa. At the same time he was deeply silent about the efforts of Belgian colonialists to rob this new nation of its independence." The key paragraph of the speech story stated:

> The American President spoke in vague generalities about the desirability of disarmament in some distant, unspecified future. But again he placed the emphasis not upon disarmament but upon armaments inspection . . . With this he returned to the same old proposals which are designed -- as has often been proven -- not to secure the peace but to legalize expionage.

The next day it was Népszabadság's turn to run its largest type across the front page: FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE / TO ALL COLONIAL PEOPLES' / SOLVE GENERAL DISARMAMENT! "Significant Speech of Comrade Khrushchev on Burning Problems of Our Age," the deck declared. The six and a half page account of the speech was dotted with such ecstatic subheads as "All the Beauty of the World Could Flower," and "The Exalted Tasks of the U.N."

Khrushchev's proposal for reforming the Secretariat came to an end of the long speech in which he argued that if the world was to disarm, the international force should not be under the command of any one man attached to any one power bloc.

In contrast to this jubilant mood and emphasis on disarmament hopes, the Times banner headline was KHRUSHCHEV ASK HAMMARSKOJOLD OUSTER; / WOULD SUBSTITUTE A 3-BLOC DIRECTORATE:/ HERTER SEES 'DECLARATION OF WAR' ON U.N. The decks, on two sides of the speech photo, drew a neat balance of intransigence: PREMIER IS HARSH and AMERICAN IS ANGRY.

The next day the Soviet Premier said that in the light of U.S. Secretary of State Herter's remarks he wished to clarify his U.N. reform proposal. In an impromptu press conference in the driveway of the Soviet's Glen Cove mansion, Khrushchev repeated the reasons given for his plan, and said (obviously tongue-in-cheek) that while Marshal Malinovsky is a great leader, the Soviets would not insist on his heading a world police force if they really wanted general disarmament. The Times headlined its top news story of the informal press conference KHRUSHCHEV INSISTS U.N. REVISION / MUST PRECEDE DISARMAMENT PLAN. Népszabadság noted the remarks in a roundup story on page four, and again interpreted them as moves to strengthen a more representative U.N. for the tasks of the future.

While in the Times' major headline Khrushchev put U.N. procedure before disarmament, Népszabadság's banner headline of the same day insisted that DISARMAMENT IS THE / CENTRAL ISSUE OF OUR AGE / FOUNDATION OF SECURE PEACE. The Hungarian paper's first three and one-half pages were devoted to the Soviet disarmament proposal submitted along with the Khrushchev speech the day before. The account included such large front-page subheads as "One Year's Military Costs Could Pay for Africa's Complete Technical and Economic Reconstruction;" "Life Itself Demands Discussion of Disarmament" and "Another Year Lost Because of Behavior of the West." The Times did not carry the disarmament proposal.

On Monday and Tuesday, September 26-27, the Times was still dwelling upon the dangers of the U.N. reform plan, partly on the basis of further "clarifications" from Glen Cove over the weekend. Népszabadság headlined its Tass roundup of the weekend press conferences MUST LIVE TOGETHER.

CAN LIVE TOGETHER. It also gave the front-page banner headline SOVIET PLAN ON COLONIAL FREEDOM and two inside pages to a colonial declaration submitted along with the disarmament proposal. The Times gave news of the colonial declaration in five inside paragraphs noting that it was "tough" and dealing mostly with reactions to it.

The following exchange from an interview was included in Népszabadság but not in The Times.

> QUESTION: Our papers carried your speech in full, but your papers gave only 600 words of the Eisenhower speech. Where is freedom of information?
>
> KHRUSHCHEV: You talk but do not know the facts. Only The New York Times carried the full text of my speech, and even that without the attachments, without the colonial and disarmament proposals. Our Izvestia, which has many times the circulation of The New York Times, carried the full text of the Eisenhower speech. Now judge for yourself.

The U.N. story on the front page of Népszabadság on September 28 was SOCIALIST AND EX-COLONIAL / LEADERS EXPOSE IMPERIALISM / BEFORE U.N. ASSEMBLY FORUM. It was followed by a full-page account of Khrushchev's speech at Cyrus Eaton's dinner, headed LET US COMPETE IN RAISING PEOPLE'S STANDARD OF LIVING! The Times headlined an Eisenhower-Macmillan joint statement on disarmament procedure (reported but not headlined in Népszabadság)and Nasser's call for a summit, reported in Népszabadság but headlined NASSER: CONGO IS VICTIM OF IMPERIALIST MANEUVER.

On September 30, British Prime Minister Macmillan met Khrushchev and spoke in the Assembly. He was "Heckled by Russian During Speech" said a Times caption. The Assembly story was headlined MACMILLAN IN U.N. APPEAL /

KHRUSHCHEV SHOUTS PROTEST. The "heckling" incidents were reported in Nepszabadsag's account of the speech without headlines or emphasis. "Just don't send us any U-2's," said Khrushchev, according to Népszabadság, when Macmillan expressed hope that a summit meeting might be held; "Give us disarmament and we'll accept any kind of controls," remarked Khrushchev when Macmillan discussed the difficulties of finding an acceptable form of arms control inspection.

Khrushchev spoke again in the Assembly on October 2. He got top billing in The Times. KHRUSHCHEV WARNS / U.N. OF WAR PERIL / OVER CHINA ISSUE, was the head. The lower deck cited Wadsworth, the American delegate, as "'A Bit Shocked' at Outburst, Says it Dims Prospect of Peace Talk." (According to a companion headline, CAPITAL SEES NO POSSIBILITY / OF U.S. - SOVIET TALKS NOW, and a front-page story ten days before to the effect that Secretary Herter "saw no prospect of any private meeting between President Eisenhower and Premier Khrushchev at the United Nations," those prospects had been dim from the outset.) The next day's top Times. headline announced Eisenhower's rejection of the "peace talk."

Népszabadsag played up the prospect of U.S.-Soviet "peace talk" and played down Khrushchev's "warning," interpreting the latter as a move for disarmament rather than a threat of "war peril over China issue." The Khrushchev speech story, below the fold, carried the headline: CANNOT CONDUCT / SUCCESSFUL DISARMAMENT TALKS WITHOUT CHINA / SAYS COMRADE KHRUSHCHEV.

The last paragraph of that story referred to Wadsworth's "groundless distortion of the meaning of that speech as implying that there could be no serious peace talks at the U.N."

In its next issue Népszabadság devoted the first three pages to the speech of Hungarian First Secretary Janos Kadar under the banner headline OUR PEOPLE HATE WAR, IMPERIALISM / WANT TO LIVE IN PEACE WITH ALL. The Times' story of the Kádár speech on page 22 paraphrased his remarks and devoted ten paragraphs to the contents of a booklet on Hungary just released by an anti-communist organization called "Assembly of Captive European Nations."

On the same day, a Khrushchev-Hammarskjold exchange dominated The Times' coverage of the U.N. The Russian Premier had made another speech, again "clarifying" the Soviet stand on U.N. organizational reform. As reported in both papers, he claimed that only a reconstituted executive representing the three major blocs can guarantee the impartial use of U.N. armed forces necessary for colonial liberation and for disarmament. Hammarskjold, in reply, reaffirmed his determination to remain in his post "in the interests of all those other nations, as long as they wish me to do so."

The Times gave its major front-page headline to Hammarskjold's "defiance" of Soviet demand to Nehru's support of the U.N.'s record. Népszabadság carried Khrushchev's speech on pages four and five, under the five-column headline U.N.'S ENTIRE WORK / MUST BE BASED ON SECURING UNIVERSAL PEACE. This was followed by an account of Nehru's speech headlined NEED IS URGENT TO LIBERATE / COUNTRIES STILL UNDER COLONIAL RULE. Hammarskjold's reply to Khrushchev was noted in one paragraph of the U.N. roundup story on page six citing the Secretary General only as arguing that "if he resigned, the U.N. would fall apart."

With defeat of the Soviet U.N. reform proposal never in doubt, three key issues remained to be settled

They were (1) the five-power neutral move for a summit, (2) the disarmament proposal and (3) the colonial resolution.

Neutral move for a summit. It was on October 6 that five neutral powers finally gave up their attempt to bring the Big Two face-to-face. NEUTRALS IN U.N. ABANDON / MOVE FOR BIG TWO TALKS / AS KEY POINT IS REJECTED, said the top Times headline. The debacle came after a simple majority voted to include Eisenhower and Khrushchev by name in the "peace talk" resolution, but Irish Assembly President Boland invoked the two-thirds rule. The rule was upheld, according to the New York Times' lead story, "after a procedural wrangle of an hour and a half"; whereupon the sponsors withdrew the resolution as pointless.

Népszabadság carried news of the defeat below the fold on page one. The story focused upon what the Times termed a "procedural wrangle." The headline said WESTERN VOTING MANEUVERS/BLOCK EFFECTIVE WORK BY U.N. A two-column subhead quoted the Ukrainian delegate as saying "It is Time to Prevent Use of U.N. as Tool of Western Bloc." The story asserted that the neutralist resolution was accepted and supported by the Soviet delegation as "a sincere effort . . . to end the cold war and to relax tensions." However, the story went on, the Western powers resorted to "desperate and unprecedented procedural tactics" to avoid having to discuss peace and disarmament.

Disarmament. Defeat of the disarmament proposal was recorded, along with the score and a threat, in the Times' top headline of October 11: U.N. REBUFFS KHRUSHCHEV 54 TO 13; / BARS ASSEMBLY ARMS DEBATE NOW; / PRE-

MIER WARNS OF ROCKET POWER. On the same day, Népszabadság's major headline insisted that THE QUESTION OF DISARMAMENT / BELONGS TO PLENARY SESSION / OF U.N. ASSEMBLY. The deck cited Khrushchev declaring that "If Present Session is Unable to Discuss Disarmament / Call Special Session in Spring with Heads of State." The vote itself was noted at the end of the long story. The rocket "threat" was part of the verbatim account on page two, under the three-column head WE INSIST ON PRIORITY FOR DISARMAMENT and the subhead "You Cannot Scare the Soviet People."

The major theme of unceasing effort on behalf of disarmament in the face of obstruction and provocation returned to Népszabadság's front page on October 13. WE SHALL NOT SLACKEN OUR EFFORTS / IN THE STRUGGLE FOR DISARMAMENT declared the top headline based on a Khrushchev press conference. A long frontpage editorial shared the spotlight with the lead story. It began in a sarcastic vein:

> We can safely say that in the recent history of imperialism there has rarely been a more dubious 'victory' than that won by the Western bloc on disarmament . . . Consider what has been achieved! American history books will now be able to say: 'Thanks to the firm stand of our government, we were able to keep the major question of disarmament off the Assembly floor and thus gain time for the arms race, hated by all peoples!'

The New York Times' major headline that day was NOISY U.N. SESSION / CUT SHORT TO END / HECKLING BY REDS. The colonial resolution had reached the Assembly floor.

The colonial resolution. While Népszabadság kept the spotlight on "the struggle for disarmament," the New York Times featured a memorable scene. The resolution on "speedy and unconditional" colonial liberation

was on the agenda. That was the day when the shaky decorum of Assembly procedure was shattered by table-pounding, shoe-banging communist delegates. Népszabadság carried the story of the meeting on page five, under a three-column headline: SERIES OF WESTERN PROVOCATIONS / MARK WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION. The "provocations" reported consisted mostly of the Assembly President's interruptions of various speakers urging passage of the colonial resolution. As the vote was about to be taken, related the story, the American delegate rose to inject irrelevant and slanderous remarks directed against the people of Eastern Europe. The Rumanian delegate objected to this delaying tactic but could not complete his remarks; in a "provocative maneuver" the Assembly President unexpectedly adjourned the meeting. (According to the Times, he also broke his gavel in the process.)

The next day the colonial resolution passed by acclamation. The United States, according to the Times' account, withdrew its opposition with a brief statement that the debate yesterday had shown "the intensity of feeling among nations around the world on the question of national independence and human freedom everywhere."

Népszabadság headlined the action, gave it most of page one, and termed it "Defeat of Colonialists." The Times, which had given precedence to the U.N. over the presidential election campaign throughout the Assembly session, now switched positions. The U.N. story headline was KHRUSHCHEV GOES HOME / AFTER A THREAT IN U.N./ TO BOYCOTT ARMS TALKS. "Premier Khrushchev," stated the lead, "bade an angry farewell to the General Assembly today after threatening to walk out on any future disarmament negotiations unless they were conducted on Soviet terms." In a front-page story the next day, Népszabadság gave its account of Khrushchev's last day in New York, citing him as follows: "We leave in a good mood as we believe there are signs of hope for a solution

of major international problems . . . We are especially satisfied over the decision on liquidating the colonial system . . .The Soviet Union will do everything in its power to achieve general and complete disarmament. . ."

Every newspaper presents a fragmented and synthetic image of the world. It highlights its own set of significant realities from its own social and cultural vantage point. The New York Times tended to highlight procedural moves, gains, threats and conflicts. It emphasized method rather than substance, and the tension-arousing rather than mutually acceptable or even neutral aspects of events. The standards we hold are most applicable to reporting a contest - business, political, athletic, personal - from a more or less detached vantage point, but with primary emphasis on the clash, the color and the score. The detachment is especially noticeable in skirting the substance of what is at stake. This perspective sells publics and serves interests vested in the rules of the game. Those whom the rules favor have nothing to gain from stressing the issues.

The communist press serves clients with a stake in the ends and not the rules of the game. The ends are defined clearly, emphasized daily, and espoused enthusiastically. They sweep aside the "game theory" of "objectivity" in preference to the claim that aspects of reality to be most emphatically "objective" about are the bread-and-butter promise and substance of the great issues of our time and the "objective requirements" of a radical transformation of life.