

PRESS & TELEVISION

actions per hour. On average, there were 1.06 victims for every violent person; women, the young, the poor, the nonwhite, and the "good" suffered the most.

One consequence, argue the Annenberg researchers, is a tendency among TV audiences to overestimate actual levels of violent crime in the United States. They found that most adult heavy viewers surveyed believe that 25 percent of all crimes are violent (real life: 10 percent; TV: 77 percent), that they have a 10 percent chance of being involved in a violent situation (real life: 0.41 percent; TV: 64 percent), and that most fatal crimes occur between strangers (real life: 16 percent; TV: 58 percent).

Pravda's View of Watergate

"Watergate and Détente: A Content Analysis of Five Communist Newspapers" by Leon Hurwitz, in *Studies in Comparative Communism* (Autumn 1976), School of Politics and International Relations, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, Calif. 90007.

Three Communist newspapers in the West—New York's *Daily World*, Paris's *l'Humanité*, and Rome's *l'Unità*—provided "reasonably accurate and complete" accounts of the Watergate affair in 1974. Indeed, their coverage compared favorably with that of local non-Communist newspapers during the three weeks preceding Nixon's resignation and the week following the Ford pardon. But the two "official" Soviet dailies, *Izvestiia* and *Pravda*, either ignored the story or ran accounts that were "incomplete, misleading, or both."

One inhibition on the behavior of the Soviet press, writes Hurwitz, a Cleveland State University political scientist, was the then blooming "détente" policy (and its political imperatives). Reports critical of the Kremlin's American partner in détente were to be avoided. *Pravda* persistently referred to the "so-called Watergate affair," commenting that "certain circles" in the United States wanted to use Watergate to "dampen" relations with Moscow. Both newspapers refrained from printing criticism of Nixon. At the time, Hurwitz recalls, the Soviets were trying to weaken support for the Jackson Amendment in Congress. Moscow's implicit suggestion: If the U.S.S.R. did not take sides in an American domestic controversy, the United States should behave in like fashion regarding Soviet treatment of dissident intellectuals and Jewish émigrés.

But the basic Soviet attitude, suggests Hurwitz, stems from the deeper meaning of Watergate as a victory for constitutionality, the rule of law, and the importance of the individual vis-à-vis the state. Such themes do not match Soviet notions of "state security" and jurisprudence. "Extended commentary and moralizing [on Watergate] by *Pravda* and *Izvestiia*," Hurwitz comments, might well "have led their readers to question Soviet political behavior."