
SOCIETY

former colonies are abandoning English as an official language because it tends to perpetuate the notion of educated, cosmopolitan elites and impedes vertical integration of economic classes. In Tanzania, for example, use of Swahili is spreading at the expense of both lesser local dialects and English; the same is happening in Nigeria with Hausa.

Meanwhile, America's growing dependence on foreign raw materials and markets provides an economic incentive for foreign language study in this country. American businessmen abroad already find it profitable to use local languages even when their hosts have a nominal command of English.

It is difficult to predict where and how much the use of English will decline, says Starr. But Americans should prepare now for a world of linguistic egalitarianism.

PRESS & TELEVISION

Was Agnew Right?

"What the *Times* and *Post* Are Missing,"
by Nick Kotz, in *The Washington Monthly*
(Mar. 1977), 1028 Connecticut Ave. N.W.,
Washington, D.C.

More than 1,200 newspaper reporters are accredited to cover the activities of Congress and the federal government in Washington, but only a small fraction of them work for newspapers that are read regularly in Washington or New York. To a remarkable degree, says Kotz, a prize-winning former Washington reporter, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* dominate the treatment of news. They shape the agenda, not only for the Manhattan-based television networks and weekly newsmagazines, but also for the hundreds of papers that subscribe to the *Times* or *Post-Los Angeles Times* news services.

According to Kotz, Washington correspondents for the so-called "provincial press" complain that their reporting, some of it exclusive and worthy of national attention, "seldom becomes a major part of the political chemistry that occurs in the interaction between the federal government and the press."

Even their important exposés, such as a 1975 *Des Moines Register* series on abuses in the nation's multi-billion dollar commodity exchanges, have trouble getting broad visibility. The local-minded regional bureaus of the AP and UPI wire services seldom pick up such stories to send back to Washington and New York so politicians and other newsmen can read them and react.

Without better monitoring of the provincial press by all the news media, says Kotz, there will continue to be some truth in former Vice President Spiro Agnew's charge that the newsworthiness of a given event is determined by a few eastern newspapers.