

PRESS & TELEVISION

orator Ben Hill wrote in the *Atlanta Constitution*. "Of course we mean no intimidation," declared an editorialist in the *Mobile Daily Advertiser and Register*. Blacks "are free—free to vote, free to starve." White editors advanced their views through "sensible negroes" who were tolerated as long as they preached black subservience. But even these "loyal" blacks reaped only ridicule (see illustration on facing page) from the press.

Reconstruction, Logue concludes, made it inevitable that whites would have to "talk to" Southern blacks. But "the voice of the press," one editor noted, could help keep blacks from talking back.

A Free Press and the Third World

"Mass News Media and the Third World Challenge" by Leonard Sussman, in *The Washington Papers* (1977), Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University, 1800 K St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

Third World governments are increasingly embittered by Western news services—such as Associated Press, United Press International, Reuters, and Agence France-Presse—that emphasize natural and manmade disasters in underdeveloped nations while ignoring local economic gains. And they view the flow of largely Western information into their countries (in the form of books, movies, newsmagazines, and wire service reports) as "cultural imperialism." Sussman, executive director of New York's Freedom House, warns that "an information revolution of historical proportions lies just ahead" as Third World nations seek drastic revisions in their information exchanges with the West.

The main arena for Third World complaints has been the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Government control of mass media and hostility to visiting Western newsmen has spread rapidly through Africa, Asia, and Latin America (often with UNESCO support). The UNESCO-backed Third World press pool, formed in 1976 and dominated by the Yugoslav news agency, Tanjug, reports 62 "nonaligned" nations now participating. Last March, Libya announced the formation, with UNESCO backing, of a far-flung Arab-African news agency with "anti-imperialist" political goals.

The Third World challenge, writes Sussman, involves a choice between government and nongovernment control of the news—an issue on which there can be no adequate compromise. For their part, ethnocentric Western media managers must begin to portray the complexity and diversity of the Third World (whose leaders they often describe simply as "pro-Moscow," "pro-West," or "pro-Peking"). At the same time, Third World leaders must realize that Western politicians and businessmen are not likely to assist regimes that obstruct access to the news. Moreover, Sussman believes, government news monopolies will not be popular; ordinary Third World citizens want to hear "competing voices," even if their rulers demur.