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THE APPLICATION OF RESOLUTION 306 F (XI) OF THE
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF 9 AUGUST 1950

In accordance with the ruling made by the Chairman at the 100th meeting of the Sub-Commission on Freedom of Information and of the Press (E/CN.4/Sub.1/SR.100), the following "Semi-Annual World Survey of Censorship", compiled by the Associated Press (United States of America) and received by the Secretary-General under resolution 306 F (XI) of the Economic and Social Council, is hereby transmitted to the Members of the Sub-Commission:

"The Associated Press has just completed its semi-annual world survey of censorship and other conditions that are barriers to the coverage and publication of news in the freedom known to the United States. The survey shows that the task of reporting the news fully has become more difficult in the last six months.

For the first time an American correspondent was jailed in iron curtain Europe, and the flow of news from Czechoslovakia, once the child of liberty, narrowed to a trickle. William N. Oatis, who headed the Associated Press Bureau in Prague, was ordered to trial - charged with activities hostile to the communist government. At the end of June there were no American correspondents left in Prague.

The past six months saw the death of one of the world's great newspapers - La Prensa of Buenos Aires. It was closed down by a strike of the Government-supported News Vendors Union. Its properties were ordered confiscated by the congress, dominated by supporters of President Juan D. Peron. Other newspapers outside the capital have been closed for violating the law of "Desacato", which fixes penalties for anyone found guilty of making disrespectful statements about the government or its officials.

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/One bright spot
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One bright spot in the Latin American picture is Panama. The overthrow of the regime of President Arnulfo Arias has brought freedom for local newspapermen. Under Arias, newsmen who wrote against the administration were jailed or told to watch their step.

In general, it can be said that the western democracies, despite the war in Korea, and increasing national emergency, have placed no bars on freedom of information. In the communist countries the pattern of a rigidly controlled press and iron censorship is unchanged.

In some countries where independence is a new experience - such as Burma and India - the press has suffered. India has adopted a constitutional amendment limiting free speech. Some of her editors cried out vigorously against this, but Prime Minister Nehru insisted that the amendment was needed in these times of international stress and local unrest. Foreign correspondents in Burma have noted increased unfriendliness on the part of the government.

Double censorship over Korean war news ended on June 15. This did not relax censorship in any way. All war copy is now passed upon by General Headquarters Censors in Korea, then transmitted abroad. The Eighth Army gave up its censorship activities which were in addition to those by General Headquarters.

In detail, here is what the latest AP survey showed:

Iron Curtain Countries

Russia maintains its strict censorship over outgoing news. The few western correspondents in Moscow must submit their copy to censors, who may delay or delete as they please.

Romania, Bulgaria, and Albania are virtually sealed off from the western world. Little direct news comes from them, except via government-approved radio broadcasts. There is some direct news from Hungary and Poland, but the former has expelled western correspondents. All the Soviet satellites follow Russia's example of a controlled domestic press.

Czechoslovakia has increased pressure steadily on all western correspondents. The AP's one remaining representative in Prague, a Czech national, is practically limited to the relaying of official press and radio announcements.

/Western

Western Europe

Western Germany - There is no censorship on foreign correspondents or the local press. The Allied High Commission and West German authorities, from time to time, have banned communist newspapers for carrying anti-west editorial campaigns. For security reasons, Allied commanders withhold information on troop dispositions and related military activities.

Eastern Germany - Here the rigid communist pattern of strict control over the press is maintained by the Soviet Control Commission and the communist-led government. Only communists can be foreign correspondents. Arrests continue of Germans who work for western German newspapers.

Denmark - There is no censorship but the acute shortage of newsprint due to high prices threatens the existence of a free press. In the past six months four Danish dailies have been put out of business because they could not meet increasing costs. Other newspapers have been forced to curtail the number of pages.

Norway and Sweden - No censorship.

France - Neither the local press nor foreign correspondents are under censorship. The government-owned posts, telephone and telegraph reserves the right to monitor and censor dispatches. Some political censorship prevails in French Morocco, Tunisia and the island of Martinique.

Spain - Censorship increased drastically after the Barcelona general strike of May 12. Foreign correspondents encountered many difficulties. This was due to the Ministry of Interior and not the foreign or national education ministries which are nominally in charge of regulations affecting foreign newsmen. The interior ministry halted or cut dispatches, acting under the Atlantic City Telecommunications Convention of 1947 which authorizes governments to stop messages they deem dangerous to state security.

Copies of press dispatches go to the Foreign and Education Ministries, correspondents are held responsible for what they send. The press credentials of a New York Times correspondent were cancelled April 17 but were restored June 4 as a "personal favor" to U.S. Ambassador Stanton Griffis. The domestic press remains under control.

Greece - There is no censorship of outgoing dispatches or domestic copy. Premier Sophocles Venizelos acted when the military sought to withhold radio
/broadcast of

broadcast of Gen. Papagos' resignation.

Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg - No censorship. In the Belgian Congo the governor has power to suppress publications considered a danger to public security. A Belgian magazine, Europe-Amerique, was suppressed for carrying an article on social conditions for natives. The governor was overruled, however, by the Minister of Colonies.

Austria - Foreign correspondents are not subject to censorship if they are accredited to the Austrian Government or the occupying powers and their names are on file with censorship authorities. The U.S., Britain, France and Russia cooperate in four-power censorship agencies that scan all international mail, telephone, telegraph and radio communications. Private citizens find deletions of matters criticizing allied powers. Several Austrian newspapers have been banned by the occupation powers for printing Nazi-type propaganda.

Switzerland and Italy - No censorship.

Yugoslavia - Marshal Tito's communist government maintains its tight control over the press. There is no opposition newspaper. There has been a slight relaxation - newspapers are permitted to defend reporters against charges of inaccuracy made by government officials. Outgoing copy is not censored but is subject to threat of government fault-finding. The copy is scrutinized by the Information Ministry. Foreign correspondents are permitted to travel freely and talk with news sources, but considerable red tape is involved in getting an interview with a public official.

Portugal - The Portuguese press is government-controlled. There is no direct censorship of foreign correspondents but they are held responsible for what they write.

Britain and the Commonwealth

Censorship does not exist in the United Kingdom or the Commonwealth nations of Australia, New Zealand and Canada. But British Newspapers are subject to strict libel laws.

India has no censorship of outgoing dispatches, but Parliament approved last month an amendment to the constitution restricting freedom of speech and the press. India's editors bitterly opposed the amendment, but Prime Minister Nehru said it was needed to maintain order in a period of international tension. Other officials said the curb was aimed at communists and others inciting against the government.

/India and

India and Pakistan have agreed to curb propaganda which might incite Hindu-Moslem violence. There is no censorship in the British colonies but the authorities can impose controls over the press to preserve order.

Southeast Asia

Indo-China - Outgoing dispatches are subject to French military and political censorship. Official pledges barring political censorship have not been kept. Government control of information has stiffened. Correspondents are given more facilities than previously for war front tours. The local press is under rigorous political and military censorship exercised by both Viet Nam and the French. In the large zone administered by the communist-led Vietminh, the usual totalitarian controls prevail.

Indonesia, Thailand, Malaya, Singapore - No censorship. In Singapore and Malaya there are occasional requests to withhold information which the government feels might be against public interest.

Burma - Foreign correspondents are under increasing scrutiny. Their dispatches are read by a government official who may seek verification from another official on any questioned material. No correspondent can leave Rangoon without governmental permission. The frontier is banned. A special branch of the criminal investigation department, virtually a secret police force, rechecks stories filed by newsmen and receives clippings of items published abroad. Correspondents may be questioned regarding the source of their information. Hostility to foreign correspondents, especially those who arrive for a visit, is increasing. The local press has accused foreign correspondents of being present solely to make trouble for the Burmese.

The Far East

Red China - Rigid communist control exists over all publications. Occasionally a foreign correspondent from one of the countries which recognize Peiping gets into the Red capital. Only rarely does this produce anything not known from Red broadcasts or news that "leaks" out of the country. Expelled missionaries have been a source of information, and officers aboard merchant vessels which touch Red China ports contribute information. Chinese papers in Hong Kong have reporters in South China despite the fact about a dozen have been discovered and shot.

/Formosa - No

Formosa - No censorship, but there are restraints and efforts to dissuade correspondents from digging up unpleasant facts. If a correspondent can get the news he can write it and send it.

South Korea - Martial law prevails and all newspapers are censored.

Japan - All Korean war copy is censored by General Headquarters Censors in Korea and transmitted by army teletype or telephone by the Army Press Advisory Division to Tokyo for transmission abroad by news agencies and newspapers. War copy originating in Japan is censored by GHQ censors in Tokyo. TASS correspondents are accredited to GHQ through their Tokyo mission, but none has been permitted in South Korea and none file through censorship.

Japanese newspapers are not censored but their editors apply a rigid self-censorship on stories that might offend occupation authorities. A rigid press code stresses accuracy.

The Philippines - No censorship. Military intelligence agents have seized large quantities of allegedly subversive literature in the drive against the communist Huks.

Middle East

Turkey - No censorship. On the statute books is a law making it an offense to harm the dignity of the nation or its leaders.

Egypt - Strict censorship continues on outgoing news concerning the royal family. The army also receives censorship protection. The law says that nothing may be published concerning the royal family without written permission, but this seems to be disregarded except for news which might be construed as objectionable.

Saudi Arabia - Correspondents have difficulty in entering the country and are only permitted in the oil center around Dharan.

Iran - Technically no censorship but two British correspondents were expelled because their stories on oil nationalization displeased the government. Travel is restricted within the country. Outgoing cables may be delayed, either deliberately or through lack of government cooperation.

Jordan - Very strict censorship on outgoing news and local publications. Nothing is permitted which would embarrass either King Abdullah or the Government. Jordanians who do this may be thrown in jail.

/Lebanon -

Lebanon - Little censorship except on local politics.

Iraq, Syria, Lybia, the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kuwait, Hahrein - No formal censorship. Correspondents are carefully screened before entry into Iraq. In these countries as elsewhere in the Middle East local residents representing foreign agencies are generally careful of what they write. Newspapers may be suspended for offending authorities. British or American correspondents can pretty well write as they wish.

Israel - The censorship enforced at the beginning of the Arab-Jewish war in 1948 has not been lifted. This applies to matters involving military security or vital economic subjects. There is no restraint on editorial criticism of the government. Local editors may appeal against censorship decisions to a court comprised of any army officer, a newspaperman and an attorney. All outgoing dispatches for publication abroad must be submitted to censorship.

Latin America and Caribbean

Mexico, Cuba, Chile, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, Haiti, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Ecuador - No censorship. In both Guatemala and El Salvador constitutional guarantees of a free press may be set aside when a state of siege is proclaimed. However in El Salvador President Oscar Osario did not impose censorship when a state of siege was declared following discovery of a subversive plot in March. Some of the countries have cracked down on communist publications under laws forbidding advocacy of overthrow of government by force. Cuba has returned the communist newspaper Hoy, closed last August, to its owners.

Argentina - There is no direct censorship of outgoing or incoming dispatches. Distribution of foreign news is unrestricted. Correspondents must register with the government press office. Some U.S. magazines fail to arrive by mail and are banned from bulk import because of foreign exchange restrictions. La Prensa, Latin America's largest and best known independent newspaper, was closed in January by a strike of news vendors and printers unions, both of which respond to government pressure. Later congress authorized the government to expropriate the newspaper. La Nacion, the other big independent newspaper, is still publishing. Several interior dailies, mostly anti-Peron, the communist

/press, and

press, and several weeklies have closed because of inability to get newsprint or mechanical help, or have never reopened since their closure by a congressional committee in 1950.

Venezuela - All local copy and incoming news agency dispatches involving local political news must be submitted to censorship before publication. There is no censorship of outgoing news except in times of political crisis. The cable companies watch outgoing political news carefully and are likely to submit messages to authorities for approval before transmission.

Panama - The revolution which overthrew the administration of Dr. Arnulfo Arias on May 10 brought complete freedom of the press. Under Arias, newsmen who wrote against the administration were frequently jailed or warned to watch their step. One opposition newspaper and a radio station were closed temporarily. But the new administration has not interfered with any opposition organs. In the Canal Zone, newspapers voluntarily observe a request not to publish military movements through the canal. The four major federal agencies - The Panama Canal, U.S. Army Caribbean, 15th Naval District and Caribbean Air Command - control news at their source through public information offices. No censorship is involved but information of military value is not released for publication.

Colombia - Censorship is in effect under a state of siege, proclaimed in November, 1949, and not yet lifted. The interior and justice ministers are studying a new press regulation which would dispense with censors and make editors liable to heavy fines and suspension of their newspapers if they are found guilty of slander or distributing information without prior approval of the foreign ministry or ministry of war. Similar penalties would be applied to those found guilty of conducting campaigns which the government feels hurts Colombia's "good name" abroad, affects the economy or preservation of public order. Radio newscasts would be subject to similar regulations with emphasis on betterment of language used. Radio stations would not be permitted to broadcast news items or texts published by the newspapers. This is a common practice now.

Bolivia - There has been no restriction on sending of news since the military junta assumed power on May 16. Police arrested two directors of the

/newspaper Ultima

newspaper Ultima Hora on that day but they were freed when the independent newspaper La Razon protested. In the waning days of the Memerto Urriolagoitia administration three newspapers were closed on charges of fomenting rebellion.

The Inter-American Press Association said it was informed that Demetrio Canelas, editor of Los Tiempos of Cochabamba, had been imprisoned by the junta without explanation."

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