

does k.c. own the news

the publisher. If you could not get to them, you held the story no matter how serious the incident. It was unbelievable the way the paper protected Irving.

"I admire Mr. Irving very much," says Richardson, "but that does not matter. What matters is whether the dissemination of news is impartial. And in New Brunswick it is not." And that is not just Richardson's opinion, but that of three former editorial employees of the paper, a former city editor, a former provincial editor, a former news editor.

The real problem was not that Irving kept his finger in the papers, but that Irving executives kept looking over the shoulders of the journalists and the editors kept trying to anticipate Irving and please him. "It's not Irving," says broadcaster Bob Lockhart, manager of the competing station CFBC, "but his fatheads at the secondary level in both his businesses and media interests."

This attitude of loyal servility is reflected in the attention given Fredericton commentator Dick Wilbur who doesn't work for an Irving organ, but feels the Irving influence. "If I go on the air and say something about a political figure," says Wilbur, "it's okay. But not Mr. Irving. If I mention his name, the CBC is called by one of his lawyers and asked for a copy of the script. And the CBC producers grow cautious about calling upon me. It is an act of intimidation and as a person who makes his living commenting on the affairs of New Brunswick I resent it. I don't particularly want to confine my commentary to the United Church women. I'm interested in politics and Irving touches every aspect of this province's politics."

Some of the journalists are content with this climate others dislike it but accept it, but all work within it, which

means they publicly hallow the name of K.C. Irving and all his enterprises. For example, during mid winter the CBC in Fredericton carried a local panel show on control of the press in New Brunswick. Since McElman had already made some of his views apparent, — there was no doubt in the public's mind just who Mr. Big really was. The program lasted a half hour, but it was four minutes from the conclusion before someone even mentioned the name Irving. "We are talking round the subject," said Angus MacDonald of the Moncton Daily Times. "It's the Irving interests in New Brunswick." But does the Irving presence influence, directly or indirectly, what gets in the papers? No one said, and that was the only time the word Irving was mentioned by the people of the press.

Dave Folster, a local freelance writer also has an opinion of N.B.'s newspapers. "Generally speaking," says Folster, "the province has appalling newspapers foisted upon it. My objection to the sale of the Gleaner is that the last hope for an independent paper and an improved paper has now gone. Irving certainly has no interest in seeing it improved. Why would he try to improve it merely to compete with the other papers he owns?" He added that though Irving said there was nothing secret about his purchase of the Gleaner (reportedly around September 1968) no one on the staff knew it until McElman mentioned it in Ottawa March 11, and no other Irving paper had reported the sale, a matter one might have supposed would be of public interest.

It is doubtful if the sale of the Gleaner by Wardell to Irving will make the slightest difference in editorial emphasis. Wardell was a great admirer of Irving, and in an interesting editorial once

saluted the way Irving used his papers to get his way on a civic development project in Saint John.

In all the papers there is a general absence of feature articles on not just politics, but social issues, education, the law and a range of issues that justify a paper's attention. Perhaps the lack is due to budget problems, or lack of talent, or laziness. But here again, there are certain subjects which seem to be avoided because they are disliked by the Irving interests.

Despite its hostility to Louis Robichaud's government on its editorial page, the Saint John Telegraph-Journal on its news pages sometimes allows the Liberals (and the Tories) to write the news often exactly as they please. "If we send out 100 news releases," says a government source, "they'll print 100." For a time the government press was scandalously attached to the Premier's office so that he had almost an indirect hand in much of what entered the news pages of the papers. Now no longer part of his office, the bureau operates as a separate entity with 14 employees, but is still a Liberal organization, striving to put the government in the best light possible.

Thus, on Saturday, May 3, the major story in the Telegraph-Journal reported under a bold red headline that Saint John was to be the site of a new industrial complex. The story said that the night before the Premier was in Fredericton though the Premier had been in New York.

The newspaper had not written the story at all. It was a government news release, printed exactly the way the Liberal government had written it.

It was suggested that I was expecting too much from the New Brunswick press, that I was comparing it to big city papers and that I should place it more fairly against small town dailies in Ontario. But I was not comparing the Saint John Telegraph-Journal to the Montreal Star or the Fredericton Gleaner to The Spectator.

I was comparing the New Brunswick papers to papers of comparable circulation, or smaller, in small cities and towns in Ontario, to The Chatham News, the Galt Reporter and the St. Catharines Standard. And I still find the small dailies of Ontario are more vigorous in their research of local and provincial issues.

In New Brunswick, they are

bigger on obituaries, though, and they insist that every obituary, every one, get in the paper. John Jones, the former provincial editor, says he often had 20 columns of obituaries, and with all the women's notes and the IODE, that left little room for real journalism.

There is a substantial view that Irving wants to expand his press holdings throughout the Maritimes. There are claims he already has a stake in the Chronicle Herald (circulation 72,000), The Mail Star (46,000) and the CHNS, all of Halifax. The three properties are owned by Halifax interests.

A senior member of the board of directors of the Halifax papers is lawyer L.F. Daley. Daley happens to be one of Irving's main legal advisors, and until recently was president of New Brunswick Broadcasting, operators of Irving's CHSJ radio and TV in Saint John. To many observers, the ties between Irving and the Halifax group, through Daley, are too obvious to be innocent. (Daley just chuckled when questioned about the connection.)

"I suspect," says a prominent Maritime politician, that the Halifax editors would not differ with Mr. Irving even if Mr. Daley were not on the board. They respect Mr. Irving greatly."

In addition, Irving is reportedly interested in purchasing The Cape Breton Post (circulation 27,150) published in Sydney, Nova Scotia. "I have heard from a very high political source," says Halifax freelancer and public relations man Frank Fillmore, "that Mr. Irving has made a specific offer to buy the Cape Breton paper."

The view is that since the federal government has shown through the CRTC that it intends to really regulate broadcasting outlets and more in print media, where thus far at least government control is absent. The newspapers to him are the last outpost of unfettered free enterprise in communications.

Before I left the province, I spent an evening with an old college friend, a man of considerable social conscience, but of growing if gentle cynicism. We talked long of Irving, for you do not converse in New Brunswick without mentioning Irving.

When the food was gone and evening all but slipped away, my friend laughed and said that really, after all, Irving is one of History's supreme capitalists and it is natural he would not take kindly to the

kind of government interference he senses in the CRTC and now in the Senate inquiry into the press.

"After all," he said, "all Mr. Irving wants is a monopoly, but a monopoly with adequate protection."

Uniwat Admin. Refuses Delegates

WATERLOO (CUP) — When the University of Waterloo administration said it wanted student delegates to attend the annual conference of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, it didn't mean just any old student delegates.

But the administration didn't make that clear to Waterloo student federation president Tom Patterson before three student representatives — all members of the Waterloo Radical Student Movement — were appointed to the administrative gathering, held in Ottawa Monday (November 3) through Thursday.

And now, no students are going to the conference.

Administration president Howard Petch recently rejected the three representatives named by the Waterloo student council on the grounds they were "unrepresentative" of the campus: all three—Ron Golemba, Cyril Levitt and Mavis Homes — are undergraduates in arts programs at Waterloo.

Patterson says Petch made no mention of an administrative veto over candidates, and added that the three were chosen after positions were openly advertised in the student newspaper.

The Waterloo student council has since passed a motion barring selection of student representatives to any function when the administration retains a veto over appointments.

This Conference is of special importance to the local students, since the President of the A.U.C.C. is the ex-president of U.N.B. Dr. Colin B. MacKay.

Attending the conference from U.N.B. this week are acting president Dineen, and Mike Start, president of the S.R.C.

POTPOURRI

... ON ONE OF THE INFREQUENT INTERVIEWS WITH OUR VERY OWN ROBBER-BARON...

