

Newsprobe: Halifax's Sunday paper

by D. Moulton

Saturday night marked a new step in the Halifax media movement. 30,000 newspapers hit the streets, newspapers designed for the whole family. The newspaper in question is Newsprobe-metro's first Sunday paper.

In an interview Ms. Jonni Turner said that the objective of the paper is to "reach the whole range of the population." To achieve this aim the newspaper will carry in-depth articles, cartoons, sports, as well as general features. There are three requisites necessary to succeed in this plan and Ms. Turner feels she has them all. Newsprobe will have only the best of Maritime writers, such as Ron MacDonald, Dorothy Grant, plus articles from journalists like Harry Bruce. In combination with this writing ability, will be objective reporting-both sides of a story will be exposed. Finally, and perhaps the major appeal Newsprobe will have for many, the stories covered are not going to be solely parallel to a fact sheet-they are going to contain the facts about and from the people who make the story.

Ms. Turner says the idea for a Sunday paper came out of the blue but the more it was discussed the more appealing the idea became, especially when one compares Halifax to other urban areas such as Toronto and Montreal both of which have a Sunday paper. Although the plans had not been publicized until recently, concrete planning has been underway for the last six months.

Newsprobe is run and financed by four people who form a Board of Directors. Ron Ford is President as well as publisher of the paper, Bob Bullock is a Director, Dave Snow is secretary and advertising director for the paper and Ms. Turner, besides being editor, is also treasurer. Newsprobe has the finances to run for a year and will definitely remain on the market for

that length of time. The first three months will see the paper a standard 24 pages after which time extension will occur as needed.


Newsprobe is located on South St. in the same building as Ford Publishing and is planning to stay there. In three months the basement of the building will be made available to the paper at which time they are planning to make use of the space.

Besides the editor and the advertising manager there are 2 full time reporters- Fred Armstrong and Ron MacDonald- plus one layout person. All the typing and other little requirements are done by the staff and the printing of the paper is done at the Kentville Publishers in Kentville (where the Gazette is done). The paper intends to make full use of freelancers as well as press releases. Editing will be done by Ms. Turner and Ron MacDonald. Press releases will receive special attention as Ms. Turner does not believe in printing verbatim any press releases.

Also included in the paper will be a consumer column by Dorothy Grant, a theatre piece by Dorothy Perkins, Sports by Doug Saunders, books by Ann Tulloch, plus a financial column.

This is Ms. Turner's first job as an editor, her past newspaper experience having been in production under the employ of both Fillmore newspapers. But she is confident of success explaining that women in the role of editors are doing a great job. "Women are intuitive, they have an aptitude for this kind of work. They are more ready to accept new ideas."

Response to the paper has been overwhelming. It is being advertised as a "personalized newspaper" one of "human interest". As for the writers, Ms. Turner says that other Halifax journalists have "all been churned in the same mill." "Our writers are writers who



ATLANTIC FOOTBALL CONFERENCE DOOMED?

By RON MACDONALD

The Atlantic Intercollegiate Football League is looking on the verge of collapse and the Atlantic Coast Conference may be a thing of the past.

The four member teams in the league, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, University of Prince Edward Island and University of New Brunswick, are carefully reviewing their proposals with a view to spring and to their own changes in the schedule structure.

An interim meeting of the league at Dalhousie to discuss the final status of the conference is being held with representatives of the other three schools. The league also has a meeting in Halifax to discuss their contracts for next year.

The four teams have not yet agreed on a new schedule and it is possible that the league will not be reformed.

There is a strong possibility that the league will be pulling out of the league as it is now constituted.

There is a strong possibility that we can set up a league with a seasonal status, Dr. Snow, in this league would be the two New Brunswick teams, that is, UNB. There is also a chance the University of Montreal might decide to get into the league, rather than leaving the league organization of the Atlantic Conference.

Football conference - Page 2

NEWSPROBE

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N.S. teachers could strike in early 1976

Some 20,000 teachers could be on strike in the first six weeks of 1976 if they fail to negotiate the provincial government's offer for a new contract. The offer, which includes a cost-of-living increase and a 3 per cent raise, is being rejected by the teachers' union.

The offer of 3 per cent raises, a starting salary of \$10,000 a year and a 10 per cent increase in the pension plan, is being rejected by the teachers' union. However, the N.S. Teachers' Union, which is in this province, is a contract which came into effect on Aug. 1, 1975.

This contract is to take into account the cost of living, which has risen 20 per cent in the last year. It is a 10 per cent raise for teachers in a 10 per cent raise with a 10 per cent raise in the pension plan. The offer is being rejected by the teachers' union.

The N.S. Teachers' Union expects to begin negotiations with the provincial government early in October. There is a 60-day period within which these negotiations are to be completed. So far, the work of negotiating the provincial government has dragged its feet making its negotiations available for a two-day period. However, both sides have imposed a new block on proceedings, saying they would rather see the issues fought at the table than in the headlines.

N.S. teachers - Page 2

How Santa gets around... Page 4

COLORED COMIC SECTION INSIDE

INSIDE NEWSPROBE

- Hockey pre-empto Tories 5
- Financial column 7
- Halifax City Mounted Police 8,9
- John Howard Society 10
- Sports 12, 13
- Consumer column: Dorothy Grant 15
- Interior decorating 16
- TV Movies 19
- Coloring contest 20
- Books 21
- Music 22

Volume 1, number 1 of Halifax's new Sunday newspaper - it even has color comics.

would not write for the Chronicle Herald or the Mail Star." Newsprobe is depicted as "a new kind of newspaper in an old tradition" and Ms. Turner says that: "I am confident of it."

5th Estate crossing country for views

by Mary Pat MacKenzie

In an effort to continue providing their viewer's with public reaction to their shows CBC's "5th Estate" has taken to the road. Normally viewer's are asked to write in to the Toronto studio but the mail strike has effectively destroyed this method of communication so the show's executive producer, Glenn Sarty, is travelling across the country polling viewers. Halifax was chosen as the first city to visit and last Friday Mr. Sarty was in the Green Room of the Dalhousie Student Union with a replay of last week's show and cameras to tape audience reaction (by the time the Gazette goes to press the tapes done in Halifax will have been aired on the Nov. 18 edition of the "5th Estate").

Though it is an expensive way to get viewer feedback it is quite possible that the 5th Estate may continue to use the new methods even after the postal strike ends according to Mr. Sarty. Normally the show's producers would not choose such a loose, unstructured way to get public reaction but Mr. Sarty said if they strike a few sparks with this method they may incorporate it into the show's format.

He pointed out that taping audience reaction adds another element to the show which may prove difficult to control. As a producer Mr. Sarty likes to control every element of the show and has never been a believer in the idea of "studio as theatre"- it tends to turn into a free-for-all.

Further, Mr. Sarty believes that when viewers write in to a show they are more likely to carefully think out what it is they want to say rather than spouting off whatever comes into their heads in front of a camera.

A short while ago there was an article in McLeans's magazine comparing CBC's 5th Estate with the 60's public affairs program "This Hour Has 7 Days". According to McLean's the 5th Estate is the CBC's last attempt at public affairs programming and if this show fails it is unlikely they will try another one. Mr. Sarty says this just isn't true. He pointed out that since last April the critics have been sharpening their pencils but as of the first airing of the show on Sept. 16 they have put them away. The show is completely professional and has been compared favourably with CBS's "60 Minutes", high praise

indeed.

If "60 Minutes" is the show to compare 5th Estate to what is the difference between the budgets for the two shows? Mr. Sarty says it compares the same way all Canadian television shows compare with their American counterparts. The American shows spend far more than the Canadian though it does not cost the CBC any less to send Adrienne Clarkson to the mid-east to do a story than it costs CBS to send Mike Wallace.

Again comparing the new CBC show with the old "7 Days" Sarty pointed out a difference in attitude between the two, as well as differences in technique. "7 Days" was a live show and actually only one third of the researched stories got on the air. 5th Estate is done on film and all the material is aired. The attitude of the research staff is also totally different. Ten years ago the research staffs were large, intense and emotional about issues. Today they are small units, with effective and unemotional staff.

A show like "7 Days" could not be done today, Mr. Sarty said, because today's politicians are far too sophisticated in their dealings with the media. The politicians of the

early '60's were unable to deal with the media effectively so could be made to look foolish in front of a camera. Sarty says that today the media have met their match in dealing with politicians. The people on Parliament Hill now are totally professional and know how to use the media as opposed to having it use them.

The difference between television and print media is simply that with television "what you see is what you get," said Mr. Sarty. Television news shows can't quote from "informed sources" - they have to show the informed sources. In some ways this is a handicap but in other ways it means television news reporting can be that much more effective. Sarty says the 5th Estate will undoubtedly make a few mistakes but so far one can't argue with the product they are producing. Mention of the 5th Estate in print does not come in the entertainment section - perhaps the best indicator of the show's success to date is that it is mentioned on the front page of newspapers like the Globe and Mail, Le Devor and La Presse.