

Panel advises great changes for newspapers

CALGARY (Staff) — Canadian newspapers must make drastic changes if they are to fill their role in modern society, Canadian University Press delegates were told here.

Three Canadian journalists spoke to 200 university students from across Canada representing 31 Canadian university newspapers.

The role of the mass media in Canada was discussed by a panel of three;

- Peter Gzowski, a freelance writer and CBC personality
- Robert Fulford, a Toronto Star columnist and editor of Canadian Forum
- Donald Gordon, a UAC professor

of political science and a columnist for Saturday Night Magazine. Gzowski cited three groups who, in his opinion, control today's press;

- the publisher
- the advertiser
- the establishment

"There is a publisher's club in Canada, and I suggest their motto is an extension of a motto that comes from academe—publish according to the club's rules, or perish," said Gzowski.

NO ROBBING PACT

According to Gzowski publishers of Canadian papers have a pact not to rob each other of their respective writers.

There are staffers on the Toronto

Telegram who are working for less money than they could be getting at a recently established Canadian periodical simply because of this pact, says Gzowski.

Gzowski presented delegates with the question of why certain editorials, profiles, and news stories are never written.

He maintained that certain opinions are withheld because the paper is aware that it may lose its biggest advertiser if it prints those opinions.

"Some of Canada's most admirable journalists have become such intimates of the establishment that they have built themselves a barrier between what they know and what they can print," Gzowski said.

Gzowski did not speak of "the establishment" as any particular political party.

LEGITIMIZING POWER

He suggested rather that political reporters during any administration are not "conveying information" but "legitimizing power".

Gzowski further maintains that the changes from such control must come from within the ranks of

journalists and that material for such a change lies within the present generation of student journalists.

"I think there's a great space between the limits of what the journalists of today are exerting and the limits of what either that dumb public of those villainous publishers will allow," said Gzowski.

Robert Fulford said despite suggestion of an end of the daily paper, newspapers will prevail.

Newspapermen, he said, have tried unsuccessfully to make themselves irrelevant. Papers have been designed so as to make reading them nearly impossible. Still the tradition persists.

Mr. Fulford outlined two environments of society: 1. a dull cultural environment of unexamined beliefs. 2. an environment of freedom and potency. The newspaper has been a part of the first environment, said Mr. Fulford. However, he predicted changes towards making newspapers more radical and politically diversified.

AN UN-SQUARE WORLD

"Newspapers are being pushed over to the un-square world," he

said.

Mr. Fulford told the delegates there are two social goals which the newspaper must meet: the public goal and the private goal. The newspaper tends to work against the public goal by setting standards too low, by baffling, confusing, and boring. The paper opposes its private goal by making light of the development of a rich inner life.

"Everything is being standardized and built for comfort," he said.

The newspaper is an enemy of values, he said. "We can't make all realities comprehensible but we can diminish our failures."

The solution to current problems will be found in the newspapers of the future, said Mr. Fulford.

Prof. Gordon told the delegates the mass media, especially newspapers, were failing to adjust to the social revolution that Canadian society is experiencing.

GENERATION GAP

Rapid changes in Canadian society are creating a "generation gap" which causes severe communication problems between the older "pre-revolutionary" group and the younger "evolved" generation.

Prof. Gordon told the students he felt he was a "transitional" man with intermediary values between the two generations.

The UAC professor explained the young generation has a value system oriented toward social activism and gradualism in social change has become much too frustrating for the new generation.

He said this inter-generation split is aggravated by the older generation's tendency to ignore or belittle the opinions of the students and other voices speaking for the "evolved" generation.

Relating the role of the mass media to the role of education Prof. Gordon said the social changes of the last few years have created a need for a redefinition of the purpose of education.

"We cannot see education only in terms of preparation for a job—our values must change with technological change," he told the students.

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