

While the so-called "social responsibility" theory of the press grew out of the 1947 report of the Hutchins Commission on Freedom of the Press in the United States,¹¹¹ American journalists have tended not to accept its basic premise which calls for government intervention when and if the media fail to act responsibly.¹¹² For the most part, they continue to subscribe to the more libertarian view and its imperative that the press be free from government control and influence. However, the most recent national survey of journalists in the United States reveals a shift in the perceived functions of journalism favoring some of the original recommendations of the Hutchins Commission. As Weaver and Wilhoit explain, "most journalists in 1992 appeared to have a 'belief system' that reflected the Commission's goal of investigating 'the truth about the fact[s]' and providing 'a context which gives them meaning.'"¹¹³

Concerning the appropriate role for government, journalists in English Canada, who share British traditions allowing for more government secrecy and control of information and the reporting of information,¹¹⁴ are more tolerant than their American counterparts of government intervention and control. And by further comparison, journalists on French-language media in Quebec subscribe even more to the tenants of the social responsibility theory and are willing to accept an even greater role for government involvement in media matters to assure the public's right to information.¹¹⁵

According to Fulford, English Canadian journalists have inherited most of their techniques from Britain and the United States,¹¹⁶ except for the extensive foreign correspondence of British journalism and the investigative reporting in the United States.¹¹⁷ Further, and perhaps more important, is his observation that English Canadian newspapers tend to mix elements of British and American heritage and share the ideal which involves truth, completeness and justice.¹¹⁸ Explaining that English Canadian journalists seek "to report the truth," Fulford quotes publisher Stuart Keate who wrote that "Any publisher, editor or reporter worth his salt recognized that he has only one basic duty to perform: to dig for the truth; to write it in language people can understand; and to resist all impediments to its publication."¹¹⁹

While changes in English Canadian journalism during this century have paralleled similar changes in the United States, journalism in Quebec has been more influenced by French models that include government distribution agencies, newspapers with more readily-identifiable

¹¹¹ Commission on Freedom of the Press, *A Free and Responsible Press* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947).

¹¹² Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm, *supra* note 110, at 5. "... the power and near monopoly of the media impose on them an obligation to be socially responsible, to see that all sides are fairly presented and that the public has enough information to decide; and if the media do not take on themselves such responsibility, it may be necessary for some other agency of the public to enforce it."

¹¹³ David H. Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit, *The American Journalist in the 1990s: U.S. Newspeople at the End of an Era* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1996) at 138.

¹¹⁴ Wilfred Kesterton, "Government Secrecy," an unpublished paper for students in his communication law classes at Carleton University in Ottawa. See also Wilfred Kesterton, "Secrecy and Openness in Three Canadian Media-Related Situations," a paper presented at the annual convention of the Canadian Communication Association, Halifax, Nova Scotia, May 1981.

¹¹⁵ Gagnon, 1981, *supra* note 109, at 32. See also Florian Sauvageau, "Auto-contrôle ou législation: de Charybde en Scylla?" in Florian Sauvageau, Gilles Lesage et Jean de Bonville, eds., *Les Journalistes: Dans les coulisses de l'information*. (Quebec/Amérique, 1980), at 337.

¹¹⁶ Robert Fulford, "A sort of reckless courage," in *The Journalists*, Volume 2, Royal Commission on Newspapers (Ottawa: Supply and Services, 1981), at 14.

¹¹⁷ *Id.* at 16.

¹¹⁸ *Id.* at 17.

¹¹⁹ *Id.* at 3.