

# philippine studies

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## **The Muzzled Press: The Press in Authoritarian Countries**

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Among the remaining stories, the best written seem to be those by Andres Cristobal Cruz ("The Quarrel"), Gilda Cordero Fernando ("The Morning Before Us"), and Bienvenido Santos ("Not Even Purple Hearts"). This latter story seems the best written in the entire collection from the point of view of technique. It suffers from the lack of a moral dimension which would have enriched the narrative, and afforded a critical perspective. The story is about an otherwise beautiful love-affair, which was destroyed in the very act of consummating it without benefit of wedlock.

Gilda Cordero Fernando's story, like her other stories, is told with sprightly vivacity. Mrs. Fernando is a charming writer, and this reviewer hopes that she will find time to collect her stories together into a single volume.

The first story in the book, Mr. Juan Gatbonton's "Clay," deserves special mention, although it is not among the most technically perfect in the collection. It was awarded first prize in 1950-51, the first year of the Palanca Awards. The story is told from the point of view of a barrio boy, who strikes up a friendship with an American soldier called Clay. The soldier's coarse language and even coarser thoughts do not affect the boy, until they are directed towards the boy's idol, his lady teacher. The boy's disillusionment, and his repudiation of his coarse soldier-friend is well told.

Some other stories in the collection are competently written. Their number and their quality are a justification of the Palanca Memorial Awards.

The Tagalog stories raise critical questions quite different from those of the stories in English, and therefore merit a separate discussion.

MIGUEL A. BERNAD

## THE MUZZLED PRESS

THE PRESS IN AUTHORITARIAN COUNTRIES. IPI Survey No. 5. Zurich: The International Press Institute, 1959.

In 1955, the International Press Institute issued a study bearing the title, GOVERNMENT PRESSURES ON THE PRESS (IPI Survey No. 4). While generally welcomed by serious students of journalism, the work left an immense area unexplored—for nothing was said about conditions in authoritarian countries. For this omission, no apology was necessary: the editors of the study had deliberately centered atten-

tion upon the many kinds of restriction, mild as well as serious, imposed upon the press by governments subscribing to the traditional concepts of press freedom. Nevertheless, there remained the need for an authoritative and comprehensive survey of contemporary conditions affecting press freedom in authoritarian countries—a need hardly satisfied by the annual AP reports which merely assess the difficulties encountered by foreign correspondents in such countries.

With the publication of the book under review, this need is answered. At least, until such time as significant changes render the study obsolete, the journalism student now has a more or less satisfying panorama of the press situation in just about every corner of the world. As the new survey complements the earlier volume, the two together constitute a reference work indispensable to any researcher in the area governing relations between government and the press.

Two separate sections make up the present book: one analyzes "the position of the press in countries whose governments are inspired by Marxist-Leninist ideology" (missing from the study, however, are notes on Albania, North Korea, Outer Mongolia, and North Vietnam); the other deals with the press under other authoritarian governments (*authoritarian government* being defined as one with a "permanent censorship or a constant and general control of the press"). The governments that fall under the second classification, according to the editors, are those of Spain and Portugal in Europe; Argentina, Colombia, Venezuela, Paraguay, Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, and Nicaragua in Latin America; Egypt in Africa; and Nationalist China and South Vietnam in the Far East.

There is one thing that immediately recommends the book to the serious reader, and that is the absence of polemics in the text. However, the authors (it is assumed that there are several) of the study hide anonymously behind the prestigious name of the International Press Institute. It is quite possible that in doing this, they may have lessened the weight of authority borne separately by their individual reputations. Be that as it may, the book has already begun to demonstrate its use. In the Winter 1960 issue of *JOURNALISM QUARTERLY*, no less a scholar than Prof. Raymond B. Nixon of the University of Minnesota used the IPI study to substantiate the Lerner theory that "mass media" play a dynamic role in the emergence and maintenance of modern society. In connection with the study on the Lerner theory, Kenneth A. Gompertz drew on the IPI survey for his as yet unpublished paper, "A Method for Determining a Typology of Government Control of the Press."

The layman, on the other hand, will probably find the book interesting in that it describes the conception of the role of the press in Communist countries, as it also examines how, in Red China, news-

papers are utilized to indoctrinate a nation of 600 million people. It will also probably be the layman, precisely because he is not particularly concerned with the calipers of scholarship, who will pose the type of open-faced question that may eventually urge the editors to bring their study up-to-date every now and then.

Many laymen will remember, for instance, that because his government had assigned him an area of somewhat limited movement, Mochtar Lubis of the RAYA was not able to come to Manila and claim the Magsaysay Award for Journalism in 1958. This—along with current reports that newspapers in Lubis's part of the world are now subject to scrutiny by the Ministry of Education—would seem, to the layman, ample grounds for reclassifying a country of which the IPI survey gives this brief report: "...it is only on occasion that the freedom of the press has been suppressed."

But one such oddity will not render the present volume without value, especially since the survey meticulously owns to having data for this and one other country only up to 1956. Until such time, therefore, as appropriate revisions can be made, IPI Survey No. 5 will continue to be, within limitations it is quick to recognize, a most valuable source book for studies concerning the freedom of the press.

ANTONIO G. MANUUD

## A HANDBOOK ON GOVERNMENT

MODERN FORMS OF GOVERNMENT, a Comparative Study. By Michael Stewart. New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1959. 284p.

This is No. 4 in the Minerva Series of Students' Handbooks. The author begins with an introductory chapter on the "how" and "why" of comparative government. Similarities and dissimilarities in the form and operation of governments are studied and their explanation sought—this is the "how". Thus the "why": 1) to enable the student to interpret the course of events in other countries; 2) to help him understand, even improve, his own; 3) to answer the question "what is politics for?"

To achieve this threefold purpose Mr. Stewart analyzes the governments of Great Britain, the British Commonwealth, the United States, the German Federal Republic, Switzerland, the Fourth and Fifth French Republics, Scandinavia, Italy and the USSR. All these governments are studied under the following headings: origin and