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A letter from the PUBLISHER

James R. Shepley

THE day was long with politics at Sea Girt, N.J., and the night was long with parties. In the morning, Presidential Candidate Hubert Humphrey was up early, relaxing by wading in the surf. When he spotted a clutch of reporters straggling in his wake, he called out: "Come on, fellows, let's do a little jogging." Only TIME's Hays Gorey took off his shoes and accepted the challenge. "Let's make it a race," Humphrey said. So Gorey took off in a 20-yd. sprint. He edged out Humphrey.

In a repeat performance for the photographers, Gorey finished in front once more. Loyally, Dr. Edgar Berman, Humphrey's personal physician, declared the Vice President the winner. "This is the first time he ever got the better of TIME Magazine," Berman insisted. But Gorey is sticking to his claim of victory, and he has the picture to prove it.

In the wake of the "Battle of Chicago," the press is being subjected to a great deal of criticism about its coverage. As is customary and proper in such a situation, editors and newsmen are also subjecting themselves to much self-scrutiny and self-criticism (see THE PRESS). The discussions generally center on the question of objectivity. Was the press "objective" in its reporting? Or was it slanted, trying to document its own sense of outrage. The moment offers us a welcome opportunity to restate TIME's own views about objectivity.

We don't believe in it. We never have. As TIME's founding prospectus put it: "The editors recognize that complete neutrality on public questions and important news is probably as undesirable as it is impossible." The events in Chicago offer particularly striking support of this idea. Who struck first, and why, and with what motives, and who offered the provocation and who allowed himself to be provoked—these and a thousand other questions cannot be an-



GOREY BEATING H.H.H.

swered with machine-like neutrality by the reporter's eye and mind; the proper recording of each fact requires a dozen judgments and thus opinions. To pretend that journalism can be otherwise, to create an artificial air of just-the-facts, can be more deeply misleading than the most inflammatory polemic.

We are interested to note that during the present soul-searching, a number of other publications have reached the same conclusion. *Newsweek*, for example, in a thoughtful article entitled "Is the Press Biased?" observes: "Newsmen should be willing to dismiss the illusion that there is such a thing as 'pure objectivity' in reporting." In support of which the magazine quotes Bill Moyers to the effect that "of all the myths of journalism, objectivity is the greatest." Just so.

What TIME strives for is not objectivity but fairness. We know that the truth is based on an interplay between fact and opinion, and that the two are inextricable. We always try to see to it that our facts are selected through balanced judgment, that our judgments are supported by reliable facts: to this we bend all the efforts of our reporters and researchers, writers and editors. It is a fallible process; but it is open, and always subject to inspection, correction and improvement. We think it is the best process available not only for describing events but for making clear their meaning.

INDEX

Cover Story 20

Art	74	Letters	10	People	48
Books	108	Listings	4	Press	51
Business	93	Medicine	71	Religion	66
Cinema	107	Milestones	102	Sport	82
Education	60	Music	86	Television	79
Law	54	Nation	18	World	32

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