

OPC Urges Obama to End Excessive Secrecy

by Susan Kille, Larry Martz and
Aimee Vitrak

The OPC's Freedom of the Press Committee has written hundreds of letters to foreign governments protesting abuses of the press. It is testimony to the success of democracy in America that relatively few such letters have been needed at home.

In the past ten years, however, the Committee has written 18 letters complaining of press freedom abuses by the Bush and Obama administrations. A year ago, the Committee organized a panel in Washington D.C., co-sponsored with the National Press Club, calling attention to President Obama's prosecution of six government whistle-blowers under the Espionage Act – more than all such cases put together since the Act was passed in 1917. But the May 13 disclosure that the Department of Justice has subpoenaed two months of records from 2012 of more than 20 telephone lines used by AP reporters triggered outrage among defenders of press freedom and this Committee. And if only the news of the federal government overstepping



President Obama announced a review of press freedom guidelines during a major speech on defense and security on May 23. He set a deadline of 12 July for a response.

its reach with journalists had stopped there, but on the heels of the AP report arrived news of a Fox News reporter. **James Rosen** broke the news that North Korea was planning missile launches in fierce defiance of the U.N. Security Council's 2009 condemnation of Pyongyang's nuclear program.

The DOJ searched Rosen's personal e-mails and spied on his movements in an investigation that led to the indictment of State Department security adviser Stephen Jin-Woo Kim on charges of disclosing national defense information.

Between these two disclosures came conflicting messages from President Obama. On May 16, Obama said he had "no apologies" for launching investigations into national security threats and offered "complete confidence" in Attorney General Eric Holder. He declined to comment on the case, but defended the seizure of records in broad terms: "U.S. national security is depen-

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OPC Letter to Obama

May 28, 2013

Dear Mr. President:

The Overseas Press Club of America thanks you for your acknowledgement that "journalists should not be at legal risk for doing their jobs," which we believe should be the standard for the United States and every other nation. Recent leak investigations, particularly the probes into Fox News and the Associated Press, have indeed overstepped the customary boundaries that have safeguarded reporters pursuing legitimate stories on what the government is doing, and we are gratified that you have called for reconsideration of these policies.

We remain troubled, however, that you have entrusted this rethinking to Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr., in effect asking him to investigate himself and his own

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dent on those folks being able to operate with confidence that folks back home have their backs, so they're not just left out there high and dry, and potentially put in even more danger than they may already be. And so I make no apologies, and I don't think the American people would expect me as Commander-in-Chief not to be concerned about information that might compromise their missions or might get them killed.

"Now, the flip side of it is we also live in a democracy where a free press, free expression and the open flow of information helps hold me accountable, helps hold our government accountable, and helps our democracy function. And the whole reason I got involved in politics is because I believe so deeply in that democracy and that process."

Obama channeled both sides of the argument in the Rose Garden that day but left many in the media uneasy with the "no apologies" statement, which became the headline of his speech. Then, on May 23, Obama delivered his first major speech on counterterrorism and it included his parameters, for now, for journalists:

"I believe we must keep information secret that protects our operations and our people in the field. To do so, we must enforce consequences for those who break the law and breach their commitment to protect classified information. But a free press is also essential for our democracy. That's who we are. And I'm troubled by the possibility that leak investigations may chill the investigative journalism that holds government accountable.

"Journalists should not be at legal risk for doing their jobs. Our focus must be on those who break the law. And that's why I've called on Congress to pass a media

shield law to guard against government overreach. And I've raised these issues with the Attorney General, who shares my concerns. So he has agreed to review existing Department of Justice guidelines governing investigations that involve reporters, and he'll convene a group of media organizations to hear their concerns as part of that review. And I've directed the Attorney General to report back to me by July 12th."

The troubling aspects of this statement are how the DOJ leaks will be investigated, the limits of a shield law and the person charged with leading the investigation.

To aid the DOJ investigation, phone records were seized that could have assisted in ascertaining where security leaks might have originated. Record seizure is an effective tool in rooting out the broad term "national security," so there's no reason the government would refuse to invoke a resource to protect vague "national interests."

Shield laws only protect a reporter's privilege from revealing sources and documents. The Privacy Protection Act of 1980 and the present Free Flow of Information Act — similar to shield laws in most states that Charles Schumer is working to reintroduce to Congress — do not prevent a phone company or Internet service provider from handing over data on its customers; this information is technically third-party information and can be had with a subpoena. In the AP case, the subpoena was issued in secret without the AP's knowledge; in the Fox News case, the DOJ said notification of the subpoena was sent three years ago to News Corp., the parent company of Fox News, but News Corp. has refuted this claim.

Finally, the very person who oversees the DOJ has

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Photojournalists Come Out to Support Kamber's Book

EVENT RECAP: MAY 15

by Aimee Vitrak

There was a palpable “wow” factor happening in the 25CPW Gallery on May 15 as **Michael Kamber**’s five-year project had been finalized in his book, *Photojournalists on War*. The gallery space was large and allowed for series of photos from various journalists featured in the book to be displayed along with quotes from the photojournalists on what it’s like to cover war.

Andrea Bruce’s photos were displayed with this quote: “I started to divide my life into two different realms. I have a bulletproof vest and I travel with ten thousand dollars in my sock. I wear an abaya half the time and my helmet the other half, like some sort of deranged superhero or something.” This exhibition was the rare instance where placards felt as heavy and meaningful as the images on the wall.

Even with the large space, the crowd assembled were elbow-to-elbow vying for a place to listen to speeches from speakers who stood on a low riser. *New York Times* media reporter **David Carr** was a surprise guest and introduced his friend’s book. “I’m privileged to be in a space among great work that immortalizes an important point of American history,” Carr began. “Everybody brags about their friend’s book, but this is a book that will stand a long time to come. These [photojournalists] are silent witnesses, they’re not talkers. In this book, we get access into a kind of priesthood.” Carr recommended that everyone take a good look at the photos as the “business model that supported these photos is changing fast” and a book like Kamber’s “won’t happen again.”

Kamber was up next and said that the book began unintentionally when he got together with **Yuri Kozzyrev** one night in Brooklyn and they began to talk about work and Kamber turned on a tape recorder and let it roll. “It’s the work of incredible people,” Kamber said of the 75 people he interviewed for the book, only half made it into the final edit. “Photographers didn’t charge me [for the photos in the book], but the news organizations did,” Kamber said to knowing laughs among the crowd. He spoke about two photographers in Baghdad who had died and took a moment to compose himself as the crowd settled, seeing vestiges of the emotional toll of covering the Iraq War.

Dexter Filkins spoke last and played the crowd up and down like a conductor, at once being humorous, then serious. “Photographer’s brains are black boxes,” he said. “You don’t know what goes in or comes out but look at these photos. Nobody asks them what they think. They’re the ones finding the human condition in this rubble and they don’t say a thing but that’s the genius of this book. I had no idea they were thinking so hard.

“The amazing thing about this book is that when the



Michael Kamber, center, rests a hand on David Carr, media reporter for *The New York Times*, who introduced Kamber and spoke about the book.



Andrea Bruce's photos accompanied a quote from her on how difficult it can be to cover war.



From left: Lynsey Addario, Dexter Filkins and Michael Kamber stand before photographs at the exhibit taken by Christoph Bangert.

Iraq War was going on, it was so polarizing. But you don't hear 'traitor' anymore [for photographers covering the war]. No one would argue now that the Iraq War was great. Why? Because these guys did their work.”

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been placed in charge of investigating his own department. The veracity of the findings will be, on its face, called into question. If journalists must strive for fair and balanced reporting, it is not too grandiose a hope for the federal government to do the same and issue an independent investigation into why and how the DOJ has so consistently impeded free speech in the hunt for leaks and given convenient explanations of “national security.”

The New York Times wrote on May 25 that the fallout from the government investigations has created a chilling effect on sources: “Some officials are now declining to take calls from certain reporters, concerned that any contact may lead to investigation...and the government officials typically must pay for lawyers themselves, unlike reporters for large news organizations whose companies provide legal representation.”

Jack Shafer of Reuters issued a strong note of dissent with journalists who feel under attack in a column titled: “What was James Rosen thinking?” Shafer takes Rosen to task for not protecting his sources better. He writes: “...reporters should never depend on the law alone to protect them and their sources from exposure. By observing sound tradecraft in the reporting of such delicate stories, they can keep themselves and their sources from getting buried when digging for a story.

“Rosen’s journalistic technique, if the *Post* story is

accurate, leaves much to be desired. He would have been less conspicuous had he walked into the State Department wearing a sandwich board lettered with his intentions to obtain classified information and then blasted an air horn to further alert authorities to his business.”

Jane Mayer, a staff writer with *The New Yorker*, echoed Shafer’s notions in *The New York Times* May 24 article saying that during the Bush Administration, she had to remind herself that “the ‘e’ in e-mail stands for “evidence” and instead, met people in person to talk about topics that are touchy.”

Still, the AP case is difficult to fathom because its reporters and editors behaved responsibly in reporting its story. Not only did it notify all concerned in the investigation, it delayed publishing the story until the CIA said publication would pose no threat to national security.

The OPC Freedom of the Press Committee is now chaired by Board Member **Howard Chua-Eoan** who will oversee the committee and continue to write and edit letters to President Obama and seek press freedom coalitions that urge for greater protections for journalists.

In outlining the OPC’s argument with the Obama Administration’s sliding position on press freedom, OPC President **Michael Serrill** closed his letter: “We urge you to take concrete action, not only to curb the most recent excesses and excuses of the Justice Department, but to rethink the need for secrecy at all levels of your government.”

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department. And we fear that this limited review will not get to the underlying problem: the excessive secrecy that causes officials at all levels automatically to classify any information that might embarrass someone in the government or cause any conceivable problem.

For just one example, consider the recent AP leak investigation. The wire service, having learned that the CIA had foiled an al Qaeda plot in Yemen to place a bomb on an airliner bound for the United States, at first held the story when told it would pose a security risk. Then, having been officially assured that the risk had passed, the AP decided to publish on May 12, 2012. We understand that the White House did ask that the story be held until the CIA’s success was officially announced – in effect, a request to sacrifice the hard-won exclusive story

in order to gratify official dignity. Quite properly, the AP went ahead and published.

Yet the Justice Department, in seeking the source of the leak, seized the records of more than 20 office and personal phones of AP reporters and editors. As we have previously protested, this was far from a targeted action based on well-grounded suspicion; instead, it was an obvious fishing expedition for any information that might turn up, and the department has produced no evidence that it had exhausted all other possible sources of the information needed. And on May 14, despite the White House’s willingness a year ago to announce the story, Attorney General Holder asserted that this breach of secrecy was the worst security violation he had ever seen, one that “put the American people at risk.”

Mr. President, your Administration is far from the first to engage

in reflexive over-classification of information. It is a time-honored bureaucratic instinct. But it has gone too far, and it is long past time to rein it in. When this excessive “security” was invoked to call James Rosen of Fox News a “co-conspirator” in violating the Espionage Act, it had a chilling effect on reporters and editors everywhere. Rosen’s tactics in breaking the story of North Korea’s plans for a missile launch were completely legitimate reporting, and have been accepted for generations by journalists and investigators alike. We urge you to take concrete action, not only to curb the most recent excesses and excuses of the Justice Department, but to rethink the need for secrecy at all levels of your government.

Respectfully,

Michael Serrill

President

Overseas Press Club of America

OPC SCHOLARS

Anders Melin, the 2013 recipient of the OPC Foundation's Reuters Scholarship, also won a scholarship in May from the Foreign Press Association. Melin, a graduate student in New York University's Business & Economics Reporting program, has already begun his OPC Foundation internship in the Reuters bureau in Brussels: a nice fit for his aspiration to cover the European Union's economic and fiscal policy and global financial markets.

WINNERS

Marie Colvin and **Mika Yamamoto** posthumously shared the International Press Institute's (IPI) 2013 World Press Freedom Hero award.

The women, who died last year while reporting in Syria, were honored in May for bravery and professionalism while covering conflicts. Colvin, an American who worked for the *Sunday Times*



Colvin



Yamamoto

of London specialized in reporting from the world's most dangerous places and was killed in a shelling attack on a makeshift press center in Homs. She lost her left eye from a shrapnel wound while reporting in Sri Lanka in 2001. Yamamoto, a Japanese photojournalist who had covered wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, was working for The Japan Press, an independent TV news provider specializing in covering conflicts, when she was killed in Aleppo. Witnesses said government soldiers appeared to target her and other press members. Also, Malaysia's Radio Free Sarawak won IPI's 2013 Free Media Pioneer Award, which is given to a news organiza-

tion for work in its home country to improve press freedom.

Tomás Munita, a Chilean photographer with a primary interest in social issues, has won the second annual Getty Images and Chris Hondros Fund Award. The award is a memorial to **Chris Hon-**



Munita

dros, who was killed two years ago by mortar fire while working in Libya. Munita will receive \$20,000. **Bryan Denton**, a freelancer based in Beirut, was named a finalist and will receive \$5,000. The awards will be presented June 7 at a reception at the New York Public Library, which will include a fund-raising silent auction of photographs by **Slim Aarons, Dave Burnett, Andrea Bruce, Milton Greene Ernst Haas, Todd Heisler, John Moore, Randy Olson, Brent Stirton, Mario Tama, Scout Tufankjian** and dozens of other award-winning photojournalists.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf, Yemen, chief editor of *The Yemen Times*, received a Business for Peace Award, considered the world's highest honor given to business leaders for fostering peace and stability. It was awarded May 14 in Oslo, Norway.

She was one of five recipients chosen by a process that includes the U.N. Development Program, the International Chamber of Commerce and past Nobel laureates in Peace and Economics. Under Al-Sakkaf, who was part of a 2011 OPC program called "Women Leaders in Middle East Media," *The Ye-*



Al-Sakkaf

men Times established Yemen's first community radio station and publications to advocate for women's participation in politics. Al-Sakkaf's father, Abdulaziz, founded *The Yemen Times* in 1991 as the country's first independent English-language newspaper.

PRESS FREEDOM

It remains unclear why Pakistan's Interior Ministry expelled **Declan Walsh**, Islamabad bureau chief for *The New York Times*, on May 11, the night of national elections. Walsh has reported from Pakistan for nine years, covering violent political convulsions, Islamist insurgents and uneasy relations with the United States. He was hired by *The Times* in January 2012 and previously worked *The Guardian*. In a letter of protest to Pakistan's interior minister, **Jill Abramson**, executive editor of *The Times*, described Walsh as a "reporter of integrity who has at all times offered balanced, nuanced and factual reporting on Pakistan" and asked that Walsh's visa be reinstated. Walsh, now based in London, continues to cover Pakistan.



From left: *Daily Monitor* editors Henry Ochieng and Daniel Kalinaki with their lawyer.

Police in Uganda raided the offices of the *Daily Monitor*, the country's leading private newspaper, and the *Red Pepper* on May 20 following reports that President Yoweri Museveni, who has been in power since 1986 and is due to step down

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in 2016, is preparing his son to succeed him. The papers had published a confidential letter, purportedly written by an army general, about plans to assassinate officers opposed to the succession. **Henry Ochieng**, the *Daily Monitor's* political editor, said about 50 plainclothes police entered the paper's offices in Kampala to search for evidence against the general.

Colombian authorities on May 14 said they uncovered a plot for a hit man to kill freelance investigative journalist **Gonzalo Guillén**, who has written for the Miami-based Spanish language newspaper *El Nuevo Herald*, as well as columnist **León Valencia** and political analyst **Ariel Ávila**. It is believed the hits were ordered to retaliate for a 2011 investigation linking armed groups and politicians that led to more than 100 mayoral and gubernatorial candidates being disqualified. The announcement came two weeks after **Ricardo Calderón**, chief investigative reporter for the newsweekly *Semana*, escaped a mafia-style hit. Calderón was working on a story about how soldiers serving time on a military base after being convicted of human rights abuses were given special privileges that included shopping trips to Bogotá. Government officials said some 90 Colombian journalists live and work under government protection.

On World Press Freedom Day, May 3, Reporters Without Borders released an updated list of 39 Predators of Freedom of Information — “presidents, politicians, religious leaders, militias and criminal organizations that censor, imprison, kid-

nap, torture and kill journalists and other news providers.” Five names were added: Xi Jinping, the new Chinese president; the Jihadi group Jabhat Al-Nosra from Syria; members and supporters of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood; Pakistan's Baloch armed groups; and Maldives' religious extremists. Four past predators were dropped: former Somali information and communications minister Abdulkadir Hussein Mohamed, Burmese President Thein Sein, whose country is experiencing unprecedented reforms despite ethnic violence, the Basque armed separatist group ETA, and the Hamas and Palestinian Authority security forces.

Two Australian journalists, **Nick McKenzie** and **Richard Baker** of *The Age*, will not be ordered to give evidence in a bribery case that developed from their reporting. Last December, a magistrate issued a summons that would have compelled the two to reveal their confidential sources. Fairfax Media appealed the magistrate's decision to Victoria's Supreme Court and lost but pressed on to the Court of Appeal, which in April said the magistrate did not have jurisdiction to issue the summons. While welcoming the decision, the IPI urged the Australian government to introduce extensive and uniform shield laws.

MURDERS

Yara Abbas, a prominent Syrian reporter for a state-owned Al-Ikhbariyah TV, was killed by sniper fire May 27 in Homs province near Dabaa airport, which forces loyal to President Bashar al-Assad want to recapture from rebels. Rebels am-

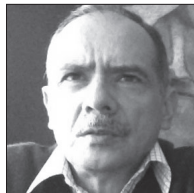


bushed a car carrying Abbas and her crew near Dabaa, the Syrian Information Ministry said in a statement. A cameraman and his assistant were wounded, the report said.

Nineteen days after his family reported him missing, the body of radio journalist **Mohammad Mohsin Hashimi** was discovered May 19 in a well near his home in the northeast of Afghanistan province of Kapisa. A local official told reporters that Hashimi's body had stab wounds. His wife told police that he had received threats before his disappearance.

Three employees of a Bengali daily in Agartala, the capital of the northeastern Indian state of Tripura, died May 19 after multiple stabs. Police said two men stormed the offices of *Dainik Ganadoot* around 3 p.m., stabbed proofreader Sujit Bhattacharya and driver Balaram Ghosh before going upstairs and killing office manager Ranjit Chowdhury, who police said bore a resemblance to **Sushil Chowdhury**, the editor and owner who lived upstairs. The assailants escaped. The deaths and lack of arrests were condemned in India and throughout the world; Tripura was crippled May 21 by a dawn-to-dusk protest strike. Sushil Chowdhury, believed to be the target of the assailants, told reporters he was not aware of a motive for the attack.

Twelve days after **Guylain Chanjabo**, a Congolese journalist, disappeared, his body was found May 17 on the bank of the Ngezi River near the provincial capital of



Guillén



Valencia



McKenzie



Baker

Bunia, where Chanjabo worked at Radio Canal Révélation. His badly decomposed body showed signs of strangulation.

Turkey's Supreme Court of Appeals ruled May 15 that a "criminal gang" planned the 2007 murder **Hrant Dink**, an ethnic Armenian journalist who was murdered outside the offices of *Agos*, the newspaper he founded in Istanbul. The ruling, which is expected to bring a retrial, overturned a lower court's judgment that only two people, now serving prison sentences, were behind the murder. Dink's family and friends say the state has protected the masterminds of a conspiracy behind the death. Supporters also say state agents bear responsibility for neglecting threats against Dink. His death prompted large street rallies and the case has brought criticism from the European Union, which Turkey hopes to join, over the country's treatment of minorities.



Dink

UPDATES

BOSTON: Azmat Khan, an OPC board member, is leaving PBS's *Frontline* for a senior role as a digital producer with the flagship news program of Al Jazeera America. She wrote in her blog: "Relentless, fiercely objective journalism has always been paramount to my work, and I see in AJA's new channel a bold, radical opportunity to raise the bar in cable news: to do it differently and more seriously, with integrity, fairness, respect, transparency and independence." Since joining *Frontline* in 2010, she has reported hundreds of digital investigative stories



Khan

and produced dozens of interactive projects under some of the highest editorial standards in journalism. She will move to Washington and begin the new job in June.

NEW YORK: OPC's former headquarters overlooking Bryant Park at 54 West 40 Street in midtown Manhattan was recently purchased for \$32 million by the same buyer who in 2010 agreed to pay \$26.5 million, according to *The New York Times*. OPC bought the 11-story clubhouse from the Republican Club in 1961 and sold it in 1973 to Daytop Village, a rehabilitation group. Eric Hader, a real estate developer, agreed to buy it from Daytop in 2010, but the deal ended when Daytop declared bankruptcy. Hader, who owns the abutting 50 W. 40th St., successfully bid again. Hader is renovating No. 54 but there is talk of tearing down No. 54 and all but the facade of No. 50 for an apartment and hotel tower of more than 40 stories.

Insiders were surprised by the May 20 announcement naming **Deborah Turness**, editor of Britain's ITV News, as president of NBC News. The surprise was not because she will be the first woman in the job but because NBC went outside the company and outside the country, although ITV and NBC News have a content-sharing relationship. Turness will succeed **Steve Capus**, who stepped down in February after nearly eight years in the job. The *London Evening Standard* has described Turness, who starts her new job in August, as a "tough but fair livewire." *The Guardian* said she is "renowned



Turness



Capus

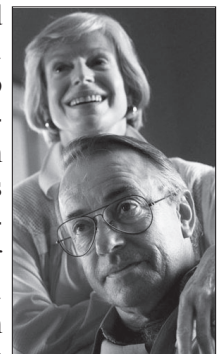
for ripping up the rule book."

Matthew Winkler, editor-in-chief of Bloomberg News, apologized in May after it was revealed that Bloomberg reporters used the company's financial data terminals to view subscribers' contact information and, in some cases, monitor login activity. Those functions were promptly turned off after Goldman Sachs complained that a reporter knew that a partner had not logged onto his Bloomberg terminal lately. "Our client is right," Winkler, an OPC member, wrote in an online apology. "Our reporters should not have access to any data considered proprietary. I am sorry they did. The error is inexcusable."



Winkler

Friends of the late CBS correspondent **Richard Threlkeld** raised money to endow OPC's Cornelius Ryan Award prize in his honor. Threlkeld, who died in a car accident in 2012, won six OPC awards during his 30-plus year career at CBS and ABC. The first Ryan award, which is for the best non-fiction book on international affairs, endowed in Threlkeld's honor was presented in April. Further donations can be sent to the Threlkeld Fund, 147-16 16th Road, Whitestone, NY 11357. For information, contact OPC member **Beth Knobel** at bethknobel@gmail.com.



Threlkeld and his wife, former CNN correspondent Betsy Aaron in 1999.

Five months after his kidnapping in Syria, NBC News Chief Foreign

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Correspondent **Richard Engel** and his production team returned to Syria on May 6 to investigate the reported use of chemical weapons. In April, Engel stepped in at the last moment to be an award presenter at this year's OPC Awards Dinner.

AMMAN, Jordan: Palestinian journalist **Daoud Kuttab** and *Miami Herald* World Editor **John Yearwood** were elected May 21 to the IPI Executive Board during the group's 62nd General Assembly here. Kuttab, who runs the Amman-based Community Media Network an Arab Ngo, became the first Arab elected to IPI's board. Yearwood was also elected a vice-chair, replacing **Simon Li**, former assistant managing editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, who had served two terms as vice-chair. **Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul**, editor-in-chief and CEO of Boishakhi TV in Bangladesh, and **Pavol Múdry**, founder and former general manager of SI-TA-Slovak News Agency, will remain as vice-chairs. **Galina Sidorova**, an investigative journalist and special correspondent of the Russian monthly *Sovershenno Secretno*, will remain IPI's chair for the next two years.

PEOPLE REMEMBERED

Kennett Love, a correspondent in the Middle East for *The New York Times* in the early days of the cold war, died May 14 of respiratory failure in Southampton, New York. He was 88. Love, an OPC member, covered the 1953 overthrow of Mohammed Mossadegh, Iran's democratically elected prime minister; the 1954 discovery of a 50-foot

boat near the Great Pyramid at Giza intended to convey the spirit of the pharaoh Cheops to the underworld; and the 1956 Suez Canal crisis, which he revisited in a 1969 book, *Suez: The Twice-Fought War*. He joined *The Times* in 1948, working in the morgue before becoming a reporter in 1950. He attended Princeton University and was a pilot in the Navy Air Corps during World War II. Love left *The Times* in 1962 to cover culture and foreign affairs for *USA1*, a magazine that went out of business after five issues. He later taught journalism at the American University in Cairo and worked for the Peace Corps.



Love



Kuttab



Yearwood

Richard Beeston, a foreign correspondent and later foreign editor of *The Times* of London, was just 50 years old when he died of cancer May 18. Beeston spent 30 years reporting from trouble spots across the globe, beginning his career at 21 covering South Africa and the Lebanese civil war. He served for a decade as *Times* correspondent in Jerusalem and then Moscow, where he reported on the conflict in Chechnya. He was one of the first reporters to arrive in the Iraqi Kurdish town of Halabja after Saddam Hussein launched a chemical gas attack in which 5,000 died. After many years as the *Time's* diplomatic editor, he became deputy foreign editor and in

2008, foreign editor. In 2007, he was diagnosed with aggressive prostate cancer. After treatment he was told the cancer was gone, but in 2010 it returned. As foreign editor, and after his diagnosis, Beeston continued to cover frontline assignments, including reporting from post-Saddam Iraq, Afghanistan and from behind rebel lines in Syria. He continued to oversee coverage while gravely ill, and was in the office three weeks before his death. *The Times* reported he died peacefully at his west London home after his wife, Natasha, read him four chapters of Evelyn Waugh's *Scoop*.

Wayne Miller, a pioneering photographer who took some of the first images of the destruction of Hiroshima, died May 22 at his home in Orinda, California. He was 94. Miller was among a small group of photographers recruited by Edward Steichen to join a Navy photography unit he had formed during World War II. In the role, Miller captured images of U.S. troops in battle from the Philippines to the south of France. After the war, Miller returned to his native Chicago, where, grants from the Guggenheim Foundation allowed him to spend three years producing a heralded collection of photographs of black life on the city's South Side. Miller worked as a freelance photographer for *Life*, *Ebony*, *National Geographic* and other publications. From 1962 to 1968, he was president of the Magnum Photos collective.

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Longtime Affinity for News Keeps Bookman Going

by Myron Kandel

This profile originally appeared in the March 2013 edition of the Silurian News and has been edited for the OPC. George Bookman is the oldest member of the Silurians and one of the OPC's long-time member, although not its oldest.

George B. Bookman, who turned 98 this past December, has had a remarkable career in news, wartime service, public relations and a commitment to improving journalism.

His taste for journalism began as a teen when he wrote a social column for a newspaper on the Jersey shore, but his professional career started when as a student at Haverford College he obtained a paid summer internship in the financial department of the *New York World-Telegram* during the Great Depression.

Following graduation from Haverford as a member of Phi Beta Kappa in 1936, George sold a lengthy magazine article titled "Life Begins at Graduation" to the *Ladies Home Journal*. It appeared while he working at *The Villager*, a Greenwich Village weekly, where, in addition to writing and editing news, he sold ads. After a year there, he created, together with two equally young friends, an "ultra-progressive" newsletter for students and then started a newspaper feature service, which ran out of money after a few months.

His big break came in 1939 when **David Lawrence**, the columnist and magazine publisher, hired him as a cub reporter for *U.S. News* to cover a number of New Deal government agencies, particularly those involved with the economy. He then moved to *The Washington Post*, where he covered the White House among other assignments. With World War II looming, he joined what later became the Office of War Information, with a recommendation from President Roosevelt's press secretary Steve Early that supported his desire to be sent overseas.

Utilizing the language he perfected while spending his junior college year in Paris, he was assigned to a post in Brazzaville, in what was then French Equatorial Africa, the only territory in the western world that flew the Free French flag. Among other duties, he made broadcasts in French and English that were short-waved to North Africa and Southern France. After spending time in Beirut, Lebanon, George moved to Italy, following behind American troops as they liberated that country. He was responsible for all the news and propaganda in the forward area as the Allied troops advanced and the Germans retreated.

After two and a half years overseas, he was granted home leave, the highlight of which was his marriage in December 1944 to Janet Schrank Madison. They were married for 57 years until her death in 2002. Janet had a



stint as a Washington reporter for United Press. They had two children and George now has four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

The Post offered George his old job back — but only at his old salary even though he now had a family and it was four years later. So he went back to David Lawrence's magazine and later moved to *Time*'s Washington bureau. Next came *Fortune*'s board of editors in New York, and when that proved a bit dull, he went to Wall Street in 1962 as public relations chief of the New York Stock Exchange.

At the NYSE, George won the respect of a bunch of often-cynical Wall Street reporters, who found him trustworthy and knowledgeable. He helped the exchange President Keith Funston popularize the slogan "Own Your Share of American Business," which attracted a new generation of investors to the stock market.

After he and Janet bought a Revolutionary-era house in Millbrook, New York, adjoining a sprawling arboretum owned by the New York Botanical Garden, George received a job offer he couldn't refuse: heading public affairs at the Garden, which involved spending two days a week at the arboretum. Among other achievements there, he broadcast a program on gardening that ran on WCBS radio for two years.

Then in 1979, the NYSE asked him to help out again, and George decided to create his own consulting business, with other clients, including the Dreyfus Corp., Time Inc., the Business Roundtable and the U.S. Department of Energy. He remained busier than ever, at an age when many of his contemporaries were retiring, and he continued working until he was nearly 86.

He has also maintained his love for the news business, having been active in a number of journalistic organizations in addition to the Silurians. He served as president of the Deadline Club, headed the Admissions Committee of the OPC for many years, and appeared in the Financial Follies show of the New York Financial Writers' Association, among other activities. He continues an active schedule and often appears at club events with companion Ruth Bowman.

George wrote his autobiography, *Headlines, Deadlines and Lifelines*, largely at the urging of his children. It was published four years ago and is filled with personal letters to and from his wife dating back to his World War II days, and to his parents even before that. It's a fascinating account of a remarkable life.

"The book," he explained, "has been written for personal reasons, not to become a *New York Times* bestseller, but if that should happen, I could live with it."

Myron Kandel was Silurians president from 2012-13.

The AP Case and the Importance of the Fourth Estate

by William J. Holstein

In an era in which billionaires pillage major newspapers with impunity, it may be easy to forget that the media has traditionally played a vital role in American democracy — that of the Fourth Estate. The phrase means that the media is supposed to act as a check and balance on the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government. The media is supposed to prevent the emergence of a government that is so powerful that it can trample the rights of individual Americans.

This is what's at stake in the Justice Department's commandeering of phone records from The Associated Press. The Obama Administration is going further than even the Nixon Administration in seeking to muzzle the media. The right to break news stories without revealing the source is central to the ability of the media to fulfill a sacred obligation. Younger journalists today may not realize the importance of this fight because they didn't live through the Watergate scandal or *The New York Times'* decision to print the Pentagon Papers, which showed that the government had engaged in a pattern of deceit about the war in Vietnam. But the lessons remain the same: if the media do not put up a howl of protest every time an American administration crosses the line and seeks to prevent the media from printing or broadcasting news on the basis of leaked information, the government will continue to push until the media is defenestrated.

The Founding Fathers were wary of a king's control of the media, so much so that they made press freedom an element of the First Amendment, not the second or third. The amendment reads in part: "Congress shall

make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press." The framers of the Constitution believed that if new U.S. citizens did not enjoy a free media, they would be subjected to the same type of treatment to which King George had subjected them.

Today's corporate media owners are often not as aggressive in defending this freedom as their predecessors (usually families who were committed to a broad role for the media) because it does not seem relevant to their desire to earn profits from their journalistic assets and capture more eyeballs on their websites and their Facebook accounts. But in the few pockets of high-principled journalism that remain, it's clear that the Obama Administration has gone too far. If it can find out who told The AP about a failed terror operation in Yemen, then it can arrest and imprison that individual or those individuals, as it did the Army private who leaked the Wikileaks papers. That would create a chilling effect in which fewer people with access to sensitive information will be brave enough to come forward with it. Journalistic organizations will think twice, and a third and fourth time, about running with information that may be important but that will land them in hot water with prosecutors rather than courts, for whom catching bad guys is more important than press freedom. There will be a pernicious and corrosive impact on American society and American freedom if the administration does not pay a steep political and public relations price for what it has done to The AP.

Berlinica to Celebrate the Release of Two New Books at KGB Bar

OPC member **Eva Schweitzer** invites OPC members to attend the launch of two new books from her publishing company, Berlinica at the KGB bar, at 85 East 4th Street on Sunday, June 16 at 7 p.m.

Berlinica Publishing presents two new books by two acclaimed authors; **Mark Twain**, s, and Kurt Tucholsky's *Berlin! Berlin! Dispatches From the Weimar Republic*. There will be a reading by **David Henry Sterry**, a book author, performer, educator, activist, actor, screenwriter and muckraker. In an

reenactment of Tucholsky's own first book presentation, everybody who buys a book gets a free shot of vodka or whiskey.



A Tramp in Berlin tells how Twain spent the winter of 1891-92 in the German capital. America's foremost humorist conspired with diplomats, frequented the salons, had breakfast with duchesses, and dined with the emperor. He also suffered an "organized dog-choir club," picked a fight with the police, was abused by a porter, got lost on streetcars, and witnessed a proletarian uprising. Twain's

unpublished Berlin stories are assembled here for the first time, together with a riveting account of his adventures.

Berlin! Berlin! is a satirical selection from the man with the acid pen and the perfect pitch for hypocrisy, who was as much the voice of 1920s Berlin as Georg Grosz was its face. It shines a light on the Weimar Republic and the post-World War I struggle, which foreshadowed the Third Reich. This book collects Tucholsky's news articles, poems, and funny stories about his home town Berlin, never published in America before.

Director Discussed New Film at Member Preview

EVENT RECAP: MAY 8

At the end of the film “Fill the Void” both the Director Rama Burshtein and the lead actress Hadas Yaron came to the SONY screening room to talk with OPC members about the film.

Hadas won the best actress award at the Venice Film Festival, which was impressive since “Fill the Void” was her first film. Rama spoke about how she interviewed many actresses until she found Ms. Yaron.

Hadas, like many young Israelis, is in the Army so she had to keep getting permission to be away from her post in order to be in the movie. The director fielded many questions about her film that gave an interesting look at a Hasidic family living in modern Tel Aviv.

— by Sonya K. Fry



From left: Director Rama Burshtein, actress Hadas Yaron and OPC President Michael Serrill.



state-sponsored six-week tour.

One day he was taken to what was described as the home of a “typical Chinese worker family,” an apartment with modern amenities in a Canton high-rise. The next morning on a walk without a minder, he came upon the man he had met in the apartment. The man invited Mirsky to his real home — “shabby, poorly painted, only two rooms, no private kitchen or bathroom” — and together they drank “white tea,” or boiling-hot water.

The essays relate other such telling incidents and gestures that revealed hidden truths, such as asking simple questions that can’t be answered or watching a mosquito



Liu

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

<p>Kimberly Adams Broadcast Journalist Giza, Egypt Active Overseas – Young</p>	<p>Peter Gwin Senior Writer <i>National Geographic Magazine</i> Washington, D.C. Active Non-Resident</p>
<p>Paul H. Anderson Retired UPI Foreign Correspondent Tulsa, Oklahoma Associate Non-Resident</p>	<p>Alex Perry Freelance Correspondent Cape Town, South Africa Active Overseas</p>
<p>Natalie Bailey Director of Communications Dysautonomia Foundation Associate Resident - Young</p>	<p>Jonathan Sanders Associate Professor Stony Brook University School of Journalism Stony Brook, NY Associate Resident</p>
<p>Kelly Bit Reporter Bloomberg News Active Resident - Young</p>	<p>ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE Linda Goetz Holmes, Chair George Bookman Felice Levin Robert Nickelsberg Charles Wallace</p>

while being told mosquitos have been eradicated.

Contributors include Morton Abramowitz, a former diplomat who is now a senior fellow of The Century Foundation; **Tom Gorman**, publisher of *Fortune China*; Andrew Nathan, a political science professor at Columbia University and co-chair of the board of Human Rights in China; W. J. F. Jenner, a historian who has translated many classics of

Chinese literature; **Orville Schell** of the Asia Society; and **Lois Wheeler Snow**, widow of **Edgar Snow**, author of *Red Star Over China*.

Liu has worked as columnist based in Washington writing for *The New York Sun* and for the *Hong Kong Economic Journal*. He is currently with the *South China Morning Post*.

— by Susan Kille

New Books

GLOBAL

TO MARK ITS FIFTIETH anniversary, *The New York Review of Books* has given us a present: *The New York Review Abroad: Fifty Years of International Reportage* [New York Review Book, June 2013].

The *NYRB* is not a foreign affairs magazine, but it has dispatched brilliant writers around the world to observe and write about international revolutions, scientific explorations and noteworthy movements. **Robert B. Silvers**, co-founder and editor of the magazine, selected the book's 28 eyewitness essays.

The collection has aged well. Perhaps that's because **Joan Didion**, **William Shawcross** and others did not have to conform to daily journalism's deadlines or newspaper

rules of objectivity. They analyzed what they saw and recorded a moment in history. Prologues written by either the original authors or by **Ian Buruma**, the author, journalist and frequent *NYRB* contributor, update facts and re-evaluate politics.

Susan Sontag writes about the staging of *Waiting for Godot* in war-torn Sarajevo while **Ryszard Kapuscinski** provides a terrifying description of being set on fire while running roadblocks in

1966 during Nigeria's first civil war. **Alma Guillermoprieto**'s report from inside Colombia's guerrilla headquarters includes a disturbing encounter with young female fighters. **Caroline Blackwood**'s coverage of the 1979 grave-diggers' strike in Liverpool is considered a noir masterpiece.

Timothy Garton Ash's essay on Václav Havel's Prague in 1989 presents an inside account as seen at the Magic Lantern theater, the headquarters for the Velvet Revolution.

Other bylines include **Christopher de Bellaigue**, **Mischa Berlinski**, **Mark Danner**, **Rosemary Dinnage**, **Amos Elon**, **Nadine Gordimer**, **Elizabeth Hardwick**,

Tim Judah, **V.S. Naipaul**, **Mary McCarthy**, **Jerzy Popieluszko** and **Stephen Spender**.

ASIA

DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR first time? Your first time to China, that is.

Kin-ming Liu, a veteran correspondent and former chairman of the Hong Kong Journalists Association, had the inspiration to ask 30 China experts to recount their first visit to the country. The result is the entertaining and illuminating *My First Trip to China: Scholars, Diplomats, and Journalists Reflect on their First Encounters with China* [East Slope Publishing Ltd., February 2013].

It wasn't so long ago that China was largely unknown territory to the West. Sinophiles studied it from afar. The visits recalled begin in 1942, during the Japanese occupation, and end in 1986, three years before Tiananmen Square. The essayists are now old China hands. While their writing is formed by their experiences watching China grow into a world power, it is clear that they had their eyes wide open from the beginning.

For example, **Jonathan Mirsky**, former East Asia editor of *The Times* of London and a regular contributor to *The New York Review of Books*, got into China for the first time in 1972 as a college professor on a

(Continued on Page 11)



Happy Summer!

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