The Origin and Development of Sunday Competition Between The Hartford Courant and The Hartford Times

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THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF SUNDAY COMPETITION
BETWEEN THE HARTFORD COURANT
AND THE HARTFORD TIMES

BY
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BETWEEN THE HARTFORD COURANT
AND THE HARTFORD TIMES

This thesis is approved as a creditable and independent investigation by a candidate for the degree Master of Arts and is acceptable as meeting the thesis requirements for this degree, but without implying that the conclusions reached by the candidate are necessarily the conclusions of the major department.

Thesis Adviser
Date

Head, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication
Date
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JMN
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Hartford, Connecticut, is situated on the Connecticut River halfway between Boston and New York, two and a half hours from Times Square by bus. In 1968 the Greater Hartford Chamber of Commerce could boast that Hartford was the capital of the nation's most affluent state. The region contained home offices for 27 insurance firms and was "famous for manufacture of aircraft engines, nuclear reactors, typewriters, machine tools and gauges, firearms, turbines, glass-making machinery, liquors and tobacco." It also had five television stations.¹

Hartford also had many of the ailments of urban America in the late 1960s. It had air pollution, traffic problems, drug traffic and a restless Negro ghetto which frequently erupted into firebombing sprees and rock-throwing clashes with police. It had a housing shortage and an urban renewal program which was doing nothing to help solve the problem of finding living space.

With its dense population, acknowledged affluence and economic activity, Hartford was a profitable field for its two competing daily newspapers. Yet at the beginning of 1968 Hartford had only one locally published Sunday newspaper. The Hartford

\textbf{Courant}, which had begun Sunday publication in 1913, had been alone in that field for 49 years, having bought out the last of three Sunday competitors in 1919.2

The \textit{Courant} still had ample competition. Published seven mornings a week, it had a daily circulation of 147,068 and a Sunday circulation of 193,944. The \textit{Hartford Times}, published six afternoons a week, had a daily circulation of 135,474.3 The two newspapers competed vigorously for advertising; and on the newsstands, both competed with newspapers from New York, Boston, New Haven and Springfield, Massachusetts. In addition, the Hartford area had its five television stations and several radio stations, and was ringed by small daily and weekly newspapers. It appeared saturated with communications media.

It was in this context of apparent saturation that the \textit{Times} began Sunday publication. On August 15, 1968, the \textit{Times} announced that it would start a Sunday edition September 15. The newsstand price was set at 15 cents, half the \textit{Courant}'s price, and the home delivery price of 55 cents a week remained unchanged. There was a catch, however: the Saturday \textit{Times} was not the usual slim edition which has been customary even for large metropolitan dailies. Although it hardly competed with the Sunday \textit{Courant} (well above

\begin{itemize}
\item[3] 1968 \textit{Editor & Publisher} International Year Book (New York: Editor & Publisher Co., Inc., 1968), p. 58.
\end{itemize}
200 pages and sometimes above 300), the Saturday Times was valued by its readers as a respectable weekend edition. Readers of the Times would still get only six editions a week, but the Sunday edition would be much larger than the Saturday edition it replaced. Besides, it would compete directly with the Courant in coverage of late Saturday night news, particularly sports events.

The Courant was at least partly prepared for the announcement. Local executives of the Times had been considering a Sunday edition ever since the mid-1950s, but the parent corporation, the Gannett Company, Inc., had chosen instead to expand the Saturday edition. The case for a Sunday Times had been strengthened when the Courant took the lead in daily circulation in 1964, the 200th anniversary of its founding. It was no secret that officers of the expanding Gannett organization were disturbed at being relegated to second position in Hartford. The Times was Gannett's largest property outside its home city of Rochester, New York, where the company had a two-newspaper monopoly. The case for a Sunday Times became still stronger in 1966, when the Courant's combined advertising linage, daily and Sunday, forged well ahead of the Times.

Expected or not, the announcement attracted national attention. Hartford in 1968 was one of the few cities in the United States that still had two highly successful competing daily newspapers. Gannett was one of the fastest growing media groups, comprising 32 daily newspapers and nine broadcasting stations in six states by the end of 1968. Gannett stock soon was to be listed on
the New York Stock Exchange. The president of Gannett, Paul Miller, also was the president of the Associated Press. Two recently retired top executives of the Courant were known internationally in journalistic circles, and the Courant was one of the nation's better known newspapers. In the newspaper publishing establishment, both the institutions and the personalities were names that made news. Further, the founding of a Sunday newspaper anywhere in the nation would have been important industry news in itself.

Several questions arose:

Could Hartford support two Sunday newspapers?

If so, why had Gannett waited so long?

If not, which newspaper would be the winner?

And why had the Times discontinued its Saturday edition? Would it be necessary to revive it? (It was, in fact, revived November 1, 1969, little more than a year after it was dropped).

At Gannett headquarters in Rochester, many more questions may have been pondered. Why had the Courant taken the lead? Was the reason merely that, as a morning publication, the Courant had only one direct competitor in its prime circulation territory, whereas the Times had more than a half dozen afternoon competitors? Had television, competing for the attention of the evening audience, created a trend that favored morning newspapers? Or had the Courant's daily circulation ballooned partly because of its Sunday paper?

Answers to most of these questions were not soon forthcoming, and it is not the purpose of this study to speculate. The purpose
is merely to chronicle the events leading to the beginning of the Sunday Times and record what happened during its first year.

Review of the Literature

Connecticut's interest in the expanded Hartford newspaper competition was first recognized publicly when it was featured as the cover story in the February, 1969, issue of Connecticut Life, a monthly newspaper supplement published in West Hartford. Five pages of text, photographs, maps and graphs were devoted to "TIMES VS COURANT."

The publisher of Connecticut Life, Bice Clemow, had family and financial connections which gave him access to information not easily obtained. Hartford newspapermen considered most of his story accurate and his overall assessment of the situation generally fair. Although the publishers of both the Times and the Courant voiced minor criticism of his depth report, they neither confirmed nor denied his figures for the newspapers' respective incomes. Nor did they deny Clemow's observation that both newspapers had difficulty achieving professional news coverage with reporters who mostly were young and inexperienced. Clemow's report can be considered authoritative but limited.

Academic historians of journalism have been interested in Hartford primarily because the Courant, founded as The Connecticut Courant in 1764, has been recognized generally as the oldest newspaper of continuous publication in the United States. As a weekly
in 1778, it had a circulation of 8,000, exceptionally large for that era, and it continued to have the largest circulation in the North for several years.\textsuperscript{4} For two centuries it had been a powerful voice in the Republican party. As Clemow says, "Jefferson had given the Courant mild apoplexy and it has stayed married to the Republicans ever since."\textsuperscript{5} From the era of General Joseph Hawley and Charles Dudley Warner in the late 1800s to the era of Herbert Brucker, William J. Foote and T. H. Parker in the middle 1900s, the Courant's editorial writers have been among the nation's most widely quoted. (In the summer of 1969, when the Associated Press produced a roundup of editorial comment about the death of Mary Jo Kopechne in a car owned by Sen. Edward Kennedy, a Courant editorial was among those quoted at relative length.)

Historians have paid far less attention to the Times. Frank Luther Mott's authoritative American Journalism doesn't even index the Times, and Edwin Emery's more recent The Press and America cites the Times only twice, the Courant four times. The Times celebrated its 150th anniversary in 1967 without ever having an entire volume devoted to its history. The greatest attention it has gained can be found in Carl E. Lindstrom's The Fading American Newspaper. Lindstrom, an executive editor of the Times who was forced to resign, wrote an admittedly partisan book, little of it flattering to the Times.


\textsuperscript{5} Connecticut Life, February, 1969, p. 5.
Yet for more than three decades, the Times led the Courant in both circulation and advertising. The liberal, Democratically oriented Times, all but ignored by historians, was Hartford's favorite newspaper from the 1920s until 1964. The Courant, like the proverbial prophet, had less honor at home than abroad.

In the 1950s, under the direction of Col. John R. Reitemeyer, the Courant began the long climb back to an economic position consistent with its place in history. Reitemeyer's career from 1947 until 1964 is treated in John Bard McNulty's Older Than the Nation. Although McNulty offers a wealth of detail about the Courant, he ignores other institutions, events and personalities involved in the Hartford competition. One of the purposes of this study is to examine factors that McNulty overlooked.

Although the study deals primarily with Sunday competition, it is impossible to divorce either newspaper from its weekday counterpart; therefore, it has been necessary to consider daily as well as Sunday circulation and advertising.

6 Connecticut Life.
CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

The author had the good fortune in September of 1962 to become acquainted with several news executives who already were involved, or soon would be, in the Hartford competition. The occasion was the annual convention of the Associated Press Managing Editors Association in Minneapolis, which the author attended as chairman of the South Dakota APME. As later events demonstrated, 1962 was a pivotal year for the Associated Press, The Hartford Courant and the Gannett Company, and several of the participants were present in Minneapolis. These included Allen H. Neuharth, Richard J. Hartford, Bob Eddy and William J. Foote. Neuharth, then assistant executive editor of The Detroit Free Press, was on the verge of leaving the Knight organization to join Gannett. Eddy, managing editor of The St. Paul Dispatch, had just accepted the position of assistant to the publisher of the Courant. Foote was then managing editor of the Courant, and Hartford was managing editor of the Times. Personal knowledge of the events of 1962 helped direct later research, and acquaintance with Eddy made the study possible.

In the summer of 1969, the author spent two and a half months in Hartford, working as a copy editor for the Courant from May 1 until August 15. In addition, he visited Rochester for a brief inspection of the headquarters operation of Gannett.
Historical background came from library research, the clipping files of both the *Times* and the *Courant*, and personal interviews. The author interviewed news executives and employees of both newspapers, former news executives of the *Times*, the director of an advertising agency, the publisher of *Connecticut Life* and the *West Hartford News* and officials at City Hall. Both the *Times* and the *Courant* were read daily. A large part of Hartford, from the Wadsworth Atheneum and Constitution Plaza to the Negro ghetto in the North End, was covered afoot. The basic techniques were those of a reporter: to look, ask questions and listen.

Employment at the *Courant* opened several avenues of information, but also closed a few. Eddy, by then publisher of the *Courant*, supplied detailed reports on circulation and advertising linage, plus helpful suggestions for further investigation. Managing Editor William J. Clew and his staff cooperated, returning all but one of the questionnaires that were circulated to *Courant* news executives. And by working on the copydesk, the author could observe first-hand how the *Courant* covered the first moon landing, the investigation of the death of Mary Jo Kopechne, firebombings in Hartford's North End and other major stories of the season.

At the *Times*, Publisher Robert R. Eckert and his staff tended to deal cautiously with anyone connected with the *Courant*. Questionnaires circulated at the *Times* were not returned, but Eckert granted as a substitute a two-hour interview which yielded most of the desired information. In addition, the author spoke with Don Noel,
assistant managing editor, and members of the Promotion Department. Other facts about the Times were obtained from published sources.

A trip to Chicago in February of 1970 completed the research. At Audit Bureau of Circulations headquarters, R. W. Roberts, director of marketing services, opened his firm's library on a Saturday to make statistics available. The Chicago office of Media Records, Inc., which compiles reports on advertising linage, had no figures on Hartford, but manager Ladious Siwak suggested a letter to New York. Alfred J. Stansfield, president of Media Records, supplied the requested figures. All figures not otherwise footnoted came either from the Audit Bureau of Circulations or Media Records, Inc.

A more balanced study might have been possible if the author had divided his summer employment, working for each newspaper. On the other hand, this might have led to distrust in both camps.
CHAPTER III

FINDINGS

The history of Hartford journalism from the end of World War II until 1970 was more than just a local story. Personalities and events in distant places influenced the struggle between the Times and the Courant—and vice versa. And in some respects, Hartford itself was typical of what was happening all over the United States: unprecedented prosperity, a population shift to the suburbs and (after a peak in 1950) a decline in the population of the core city. (See Fig. 1)

In 1930, the city of Hartford had a population of 164,072—larger than either the 1960 census or the 1967 estimate. The core city reached a peak of 177,397 in 1950, then lost 15,219 or 8.6 percent in the next decade. In the same decade, the standard metropolitan statistical area grew from 406,534 to 525,207, an increase of 118,673 or 29.2 percent. To newspaper executives, the population shift was significant: since the city had stopped growing, any future circulation growth would have to come from the suburbs.

Reitemeyer, Brucker and Miller

The Courant was the first to take advantage of this trend, apparently as early as 1946, which is when the modern history of Hartford journalism properly begins.
FIGURE 1: POPULATION OF HARTFORD

- Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area
- City of Hartford

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Census, Connecticut State Health Department (July, 1967, estimate)
It was in 1946 that Col. John R. Reitemeyer rejoined the Courant after military service in World War II. Reitemeyer, who had risen from cub reporter to city editor before the war, was urged to return as a future successor to Publisher Maurice Sherman. Sherman immediately assigned him to a study of the circulation department. With this background, Reitemeyer became publisher on July 16, 1947, after Sherman's death.

The year that Reitemeyer took over the management of the Courant was also a turning point for Gannett, and perhaps for the Associated Press. Paul Miller, a veteran Associated Press executive and former chief of AP's Washington bureau, left the newsgathering cooperative to join the executive staff of Gannett in Rochester. As one of two assistant general managers of the AP, Miller had been a potential candidate to succeed general manager Kent Cooper. The year after Miller departed, the general manager's position went to Cooper's other assistant, Frank J. Starzel.

A native of Missouri and a graduate of Oklahoma A&M, Miller had worked as a reporter or editor for several Oklahoma newspapers in his youth. He was the first of several westerners who later would influence events in Hartford.

At the Courant, one of Reitemeyer's first moves was to elevate Herbert Brucker to the position of editor. Brucker, who had joined the staff as associate editor in 1944, already was

7 McNulty, p. 193.
nationally known as a newsman, educator, author and editorial writer. He had been a reporter on the old New York World, the winner of a Pulitzer fellowship and a professor of journalism at Columbia University. His editorship helped strengthen the Courant's reputation as one of the nation's more respected newspapers.

Despite the Courant's national reputation, however, the Times still had a 3-2 lead in daily circulation. The biggest gap numerically came in 1950, when the Courant had only 60,000 and the Times had more than 95,000. The Sunday Courant, however, already had passed the evening Times and had reached a circulation of 100,000. And after 1950, the Courant began to narrow the gap between the dailies.8

Political, economic and social conditions seemed to favor the Courant. The mid-1950s were the years of Eisenhower Republicanism and Eisenhower prosperity, as well as the era of unprecedented growth in suburbia. And the Courant was a Republican newspaper directing its circulation efforts toward the suburbanite. Because the Courant's daily circulation growth in the 1950s paralleled its Sunday growth, it seemed reasonable for Times executives to speculate that the Sunday edition was a major selling point for the daily. If the reader wanted a Sunday newspaper published in Hartford, he had to take the Courant, and it seemed only logical to subscribe to the same daily newspaper that he received on Sunday.

8 Connecticut Life.
Strained Relations

Local executives of the Times proposed a Sunday edition in 1953 or 1954, but were vetoed by Gannett headquarters. A simplified statement of the situation is contained in Connecticut Life:

In the mid-50s, the local management of the Times surveyed the prospects and concluded that one way to keep being top dog was to launch a Sunday paper.... The Gannett headquarters temporized, beefed up the Saturday paper with more features. The summonses from Rochester became more frequent and imperative, sometimes ending in quick disapproval of ideas which the Hartford teams flew to present. Decisions from GHQ drifted down, at times, to minor personnel matters. Though the figures were at all-time highs, it was the trends which bothered Rochester most and it was the boasting "now the biggest" circulation ads of the Courant that needled them into top to bottom staff shifts of the Hartford Times.

Strained relations between the Times and Rochester had been developing for more than two decades. Frank Gannett, an active Republican, had bought the Times for $5.5 million in 1928, acquiring an editorial staff that was politically Democratic and journalistically independent. According to Carl Lindstrom, the Hartford executives did not intend to be dictated to by Rochester when the ownership changed. Many of these holdover executives were still members of the staff in the 1950s.

Lindstrom said that Frank Gannett "thoroughly believed that his local autonomy was genuine," but "When Francis J. Murphy retired as editor and publisher in 1953, the last vestiges of local decision-making disappeared. The telephone bills between Rochester and

Hartford skyrocketed. Semi-annual meetings were cut to one a year, that being sufficient to get meanings across.  

Lindstrom may have overstated the situation. At any rate, it would be a mistake to infer that the old guard was swept out entirely with Murphy's retirement. Murphy, who had been with the Times 55 years, was succeeded by David R. Daniel, who had joined the staff as an office boy in 1916 and worked up to general manager. Lindstrom, a member of the staff since the 1920s, was given the newly created position of executive editor. His immediate superior was Ward E. Duffy, a member of the staff since 1920, who was promoted to editor.

In the 1953 shuffle at the Times, Richard J. Hartford became assistant city editor. Soon afterward, he was relieved of his desk routine for several weeks and assigned to study the entire operation of the Times, but particularly the prospects of a Sunday newspaper. As a result of his study, he recommended a Sunday publication on the principle that "you can't whip the Courant unless you're in the ring." The Sunday field, with its heavy advertising, seemed to him to be the ring. His recommendation was rejected, but Rochester executives agreed to improve the Saturday Times.

In 1953, the daily Courant still lagged the Times in circulation, 75,000 to slightly more than 100,000. But the Sunday Courant already had a circulation of 115,000. To compete indirectly with the

10 Lindstrom, p. 97.
Sunday paper, the Times added color comics and a national magazine supplement to its Saturday newspaper. (This expanded edition later was cut back by Rochester.)

During the mid-1950s, the Courant was building its circulation in the suburbs and more distant towns by widespread distribution of sample copies. Gannett executives were reluctant to sample, arguing that the Times, which was still far the larger newspaper, couldn't afford the necessary newsprint. The validity of this argument has been challenged.

One reason for delaying action on a Sunday edition of the Times may have been the advancing age and failing health of the Gannett Company's founder. Frank Gannett became ill in 1955 and lay in critical condition for nearly two years until his death December 3, 1957, at the age of 81.

Tripp and Lindstrom

During Gannett's long illness, executive control was exercised almost solely by Frank E. Tripp, who had become chairman of the board in 1952. The year that Gannett died, Paul Miller, the former AP assistant general manager, became president, but Tripp continued to wield authority despite his advancing years.

Tripp was one of Gannett's earliest associates. Educated in the public schools of Elmira, New York, he entered journalism as a reporter there in 1901. He rose to editor, switched to advertising manager of the Elmira Star-Gazette in 1917, and in 1922 he became
one of the owners of all three Elmira newspapers. This was the beginning of his association with Gannett. Later, in *Who's Who in America*, Tripp listed the Hartford *Times* as his second business address—second to Gannett headquarters in Rochester. His frequent presence in Hartford, however, was no indication that he shared the views of local executives of the *Times*, especially those of Carl Lindstrom.

As executive editor, Lindstrom was responsible primarily for the editorial page. He was one of the founders of the New England Newspaper Editors Association and a vice president of the American Newspaper Editors Association, an organization dedicated to criticism of its own profession. Lindstrom had become increasingly disenchanted with what he viewed as lack of editorial courage throughout American journalism. Newspaper business offices, he argued, often dictated editorial policy, and many publishers were playing safe to protect their investment. He implied that chains, with their greater investment, were the least courageous of all.

*By Tripp's definition, the Gannett Company was not a chain. "Nobody, he declared, must ever use the word 'chain' in regard to Gannett newspaper properties,"* Lindstrom wrote.11

Although Lindstrom appeared more critical of big journalism, it was an editorial attacking small dailies that led to his ouster. The editorial was written for the April, 1958, issue of *The American*

11 Lindstrom, p. 90.
Editor, published by the New England Society of Newspaper Editors.

Given national circulation when it was reprinted in Editor & Publisher, it said in part:

While some of the best metropolitan papers are having a struggle to keep their heads above water, many small dailies seem to prosper on mis- mal- and nonfeasance in their obligations to the community. Can it be that the climate is healthier for second-rate papers than for first-rate ones, depending upon geography?

Tripp, then 76, wrote a letter to Editor & Publisher, disassociating the Hartford Times, its publishers and owners from any connection or agreement with the editorial. Then, Lindstrom wrote, "Soon a letter followed from Rochester saying that the time had come to stop writing and talking as I had or else retire from the Times."\(^{12}\)

Lindstrom left the Times at the end of 1958 to become a professor of journalism at the University of Michigan. Frank Tripp died in 1964 at the age of 82, and Lindstrom died soon afterward. After both left the scene, however, conflicts between Hartford and Rochester continued.

Lindstrom's ouster was the first move in a slow housecleaning of the Times' executive suites. When the transition was over and a measure of stability was achieved in 1962, neither the publisher nor the editor was a longtime employee of the Times. Tripp and Miller brought in both from outside.

\(^{12}\) Lindstrom, p. 102.
Burke and Lucas

The first outsider was Robert W. Lucas, a native of Oregon, who joined the Times in 1960. Lucas came from The Denver Post, where he had been editor of the editorial page from 1951 to 1958 and managing editor from 1958 to 1960. He first took over the editorial page of the Times, but when Ward Duffy retired as editor in 1961, Lucas assumed control of the entire news-editorial operation.

Kenneth K. Burke, a native of Rochester and a veteran Gannett executive, also arrived in 1960 as general manager. Burke had served on several Gannett papers and was general manager of the Niagara Falls Gazette before going to Hartford. When David R. Daniel retired in 1962 after 45 years with the Times, Burke succeeded him as publisher.

During the years of turmoil at the Times, the Courant had steadily decreased the circulation gap. Reitemeyer had developed a highly efficient statewide circulation system. The number of carrier-salesman routes increased from 930 in 1952 to 2,600 in 1963. The state news-collection system had grown to include 100 correspondents, 13 bureaus and 19 staff men. The Courant was producing seven editions of each daily newspaper, each carrying up to 22 columns of local news pertinent to the specific area in which it circulated. While the Times dominated the immediate metropolitan area, the Courant was gaining readers rapidly in the suburbs and

13 McNulty, p. 201.

14 McNulty, pp. 196-197.
By 1962 the Sunday Courant was approaching 160,000, with the daily circulation about 110,000. The evening Times had about 120,000.

Eddy and Neuharth

The team that engineered this success was starting to age. In 1962, with Reitemeyer and Brucker each 64, the Courant's board of directors began looking for a new high executive. After a nationwide search through an executive recruiting agency, the board chose Bob Eddy, managing editor of The St. Paul Dispatch, as Reitemeyer's assistant and potential successor.

Eddy, then 45, was experienced as an editorial writer and deskman as well as an executive. A summa cum laude graduate of the University of Minnesota in 1939, he had returned after military service in World War II to take a master's degree in 1948 and teach journalism. During his rise at the Dispatch, he had spent a year at Harvard as a Nieman fellow in 1951, and in 1956 he spent eight months in Europe as an Ogden Reid fellow. He brought to the Courant a combination of executive experience and scholarship, qualifications similar to both Reitemeyer's and Brucker's. One difference was that he was a native of Lake Benton, Minnesota. With his arrival, another westerner had entered the picture.

Eddy's move to the Courant was one of the prime topics of conversation at the annual meeting of the Associated Press Managing Editors Association in Minneapolis in September, 1962. The biggest
news at the meeting, however, concerned the president of Gannett and the top management of the AP. Paul Miller recently had been elected president of the Associated Press, whose president and directors are elected from member newspapers. Shortly after Miller's election, rumors circulated that Frank Starzel soon would retire as general manager of the AP, although he was not yet 60. In a few months, the rumors came true: Starzel retired and was succeeded by Wes Gallagher, a former war correspondent who had risen rapidly as an executive.

At almost the same time, Miller hired a South Dakotan, Allen H. Neuharth, as a Gannett executive. Another westerner soon would be involved in the struggle at Hartford.

Neuharth, a native of Eureka, was 39 when he joined Gannett in 1963 as general manager of the Rochester Times-Union and Democrat-Chronicle. A 1950 graduate cum laude of the University of South Dakota, he had worked briefly for the Rapid City Journal and the Mitchell Republic, then spent two years as a staff writer for the Associated Press in Sioux Falls. He left the AP in 1952 to publish a South Dakota sports weekly which failed after two years. He joined the Miami Herald in 1954, rose to assistant managing editor, then went to another newspaper in the Knight group, the Detroit Free Press, as assistant executive editor in 1960. From his entry into metropolitan journalism, he had risen to general manager in only nine years.
At the beginning, Neuharth appeared to have little personal impact on the Hartford situation. The focus in the early 1960s was largely on the continued growth of the Courant.

A Double Celebration

Two years after Eddy joined the staff, the Courant had a double reason for celebration. The staff celebrated the 200th anniversary of the paper's founding in 1964, and in the third quarter of that year, the daily Courant's circulation passed that of the Times, 131,420 to 130,674. The Times regained the lead temporarily in the first quarter of 1965, but it was only temporary.

While the Courant continued to move ahead in 1965 and early 1966, Gannett executives--particularly Neuharth--were concentrating their attention elsewhere. Gannett had moved into the Cape Kennedy area, buying small afternoon dailies at Cocoa and Titusville, Florida, and consolidating their production in a single plant through a big new morning and Sunday paper, Today. Neuharth, familiar with Florida from his years with the Miami Herald, was named president of Gannett Florida Corporation.

In its first year of operation, Today lost $2.1 million, counting starting costs.\(^{15}\) Obviously, Today was a more immediate problem that the Hartford Times, which still was highly profitable despite its No. 2 position in circulation. With only six papers a

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week, the Times still had more advertising than the Courant carried in all seven days. The Times had 25,862,275 agate lines of advertising for 1965, compared with 25,414,985 for the Courant, both daily and Sunday.

**Brucker's Retirement**

Both newspapers underwent executive changes in 1966. Herbert Brucker retired as editor of the Courant at the age of 67. Bob Eddy was named to succeed him, meanwhile retaining his position as assistant to the publisher. William J. Foote, a former editorial writer who had been Courant managing editor since 1949, became editor of the editorial page. The new managing editor was William J. Clew, who had risen by the city desk route.

At the Times, Editor Robert W. Lucas was reassigned to head the Gannett News Service's Washington bureau. Gannett also sent Robert R. Eckert, a Yale graduate and a former student at Hartford's Trinity College, to the Times as general manager in one of the early moves of a sequence that was to become a major shakeup. Like many Gannett executives, Eckert had been a reporter before he entered advertising and administration.

The Courant took undisputed economic leadership in 1966 for the first time in several decades. By the end of the year, advertising had jumped from 25,414,985 agate lines to 30,502,174, an increase of nearly 17 percent. Times advertising had risen from 25,862,275 to 27,890,010, about 7.3 percent. By the end of September, 1966, annual
circulation figures showed a gain of 5,640 for the morning Courant and 5,718 for the Sunday editions. The Times had lost 19 during the same period.

Eckert and Dunham

Gannett reacted in 1967 first by sending Stuart A. Dunham, a Gannett newsman since 1943, to succeed Lucas as editor of the Times. Dunham was brought in from the Camden, New Jersey, Courier-Post over Richard J. Hartford, who had been managing editor of the Times about nine years.

Publisher Kenneth Burke was offered reassignment to Rochester as advertising director of the two newspapers there, but declined. Instead, Burke announced his resignation at a dinner celebrating the Times' 150th anniversary, and left to become publisher of the Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Herald. The new publisher of the Times was Robert Eckert, who had been general manager for the last several months.

The shakeup of 1967 brought no immediate improvement in the Times' competitive position. Circulation rose, but only by 769—less than one-fourth of the morning Courant's increase of 3,629. And the Courant's total advertising lineage was up 1,216,926, while the Times' lineage dropped 866,354. On a six-day basis, the Times still led in advertising, and it continued to lead in core-area circulation, but the trend to the Courant was beginning to hurt.
Promotions for Neuharth, Eddy, Downes

This--1967--was the year that Allen Neuharth became executive vice president of Gannett. He still was concerned primarily with operations at Cocoa, Florida, but by the end of 1968, Gannett was able to announce that Today and its affiliates were making a profit. They had been expected to lose money for five years, but in 1967, losses were cut to $1.1 million, and in August, 1968, Today had its first break-even month. Neuharth and the young, aggressive team he had been building since 1963 had cut the Florida timetable in half.

Today's break-even month also was the month that Reitemeyer, then 70, retired as president and publisher of the Courant, becoming chairman of the board. The voting trust of the Courant (about 40 percent of the stock was owned by employees) split Reitemeyer's former duties between his recently acquired assistant and a man who had devoted his entire career to the Courant. Bob Eddy became editor and publisher. The new president was Edmund W. Downes, a native of Hartford who had joined the Courant as an office boy after graduation from high school in 1938. Downes had become controller in 1952, treasurer in 1959, and vice president and business manager in 1962. Of all Hartford's leading newspaper executives, Downes had the most intimate knowledge of the community and the longest experience in the contest for supremacy.

On August 2, Richard J. Hartford resigned as managing editor of the Times, rather than accept reassignment. Hartford, who had

been a member of the staff since 1937, later joined the Connecticut Manufacturers Association as a lobbyist. The new managing editor was Nat Sestero, who had been Hartford’s assistant.

On August 15, the day that Reitemeyer retired as president and publisher of the Courant, the Times announced that it would begin Sunday publication a month later.

It was a busy month at several levels in both camps.

Situation at the Start of Sunday Competition

The Times began Sunday publication just four years after the Courant had taken the lead in daily circulation. Quarterly circulation figures showed 153,885 for the morning Courant, 202,601 for the Sunday Courant (a figure that was to be the highest for some time) and 139,730 for the Times. In four years of leadership, the Courant had increased its daily circulation 15.4 percent and its Sunday sales 15.3 percent, while the Times had grown only 2.8 percent.

In the core area, the city zone as defined by the Audit Bureau of Circulations, the Times still led with 75,283. But the Sunday Courant had 64,360 and the daily Courant had 51,817—and both were growing in the city zone while the Times was slipping. The city zone performance is illustrated in Table 1.

The advertising story was similar. The combined daily and Sunday advertising in the Courant had grown from 23,146,847 agate lines in 1964 to 31,719,100 in 1967, an increase of 37 percent. In the same period, the Times had grown from 24,857,484 to 27,023,657, a gain of only 8.7 percent.
TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF CITY ZONE CIRCULATION IN SEPTEMBER, 1964, AND SEPTEMBER, 1968

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>1964 circulation</th>
<th>1968 circulation</th>
<th>net change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evening Times</td>
<td>77,014</td>
<td>75,283</td>
<td>-1,731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning Courant</td>
<td>48,469</td>
<td>51,817</td>
<td>3,348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Courant</td>
<td>61,627</td>
<td>64,360</td>
<td>2,733</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On a six-day basis, the Times still had far more advertising than the daily Courant, leading 19,454,279 agate lines to 15,021,697 at the end of the third quarter of 1968. The Sunday Courant, with 9,265,912 agate lines at the end of the third quarter, made the big difference, accounting for nearly 32 percent of the Courant's total advertising. As Dick Hartford had observed nearly 15 years earlier, the Sunday field seemed to be the only ring in which to fight the Courant. If the Times could do only half as well as the Courant with a Sunday publication—if it could increase its advertising only 16 percent—it could regain the lead.

Based on past performance, any such spectacular increase in advertising seemed an improbable dream. According to Standard and Poor's, newspaper advertising increased 6 percent nationally in 1968. Neither Hartford newspaper had shown an increase this large since 1966, and at the end of 1968—despite the addition of a Sunday
newspaper—the Times actually had less advertising than it had carried in the peak year of 1966.

To summarize the situation, the Times had (1) declined in total circulation in 1966; (2) lost ground in city-zone circulation, its stronghold, since 1964, and (3) lost advertising in 1967. The advertising situation is illustrated in Table 2.

**TABLE 2**

**COMPARISON OF TOTAL ADVERTISING ANNUALLY FROM 1964 THROUGH 1968, INCLUDING THE SUNDAY TIMES AFTER SEPTEMBER 15, 1968**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Courant Agate Lines</th>
<th>Net Change</th>
<th>Percentage Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>23,146,847</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>25,414,985</td>
<td>+2,268,138</td>
<td>+8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>30,502,174</td>
<td>+5,087,189</td>
<td>+16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>31,719,100</td>
<td>+1,216,926</td>
<td>+3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>32,897,306</td>
<td>+1,178,206</td>
<td>+3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Times Agate Lines</th>
<th>Net Change</th>
<th>Percentage Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>24,857,484</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>25,862,275</td>
<td>+1,004,791</td>
<td>+3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>27,890,010</td>
<td>+2,027,735</td>
<td>+7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>27,023,657</td>
<td>-866,353</td>
<td>-3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>27,605,093</td>
<td>+581,436</td>
<td>+2.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What Hartford Meant to Gannett**

The Times was the third largest of Gannett's 32 daily newspapers, ranking behind only the two headquarters publications in Rochester. According to the Gannett annual report for 1968, the
corporation's consolidated revenues amounted to $123.7 million. Of this, $115,182,193—or 93.2 percent—came from newspaper operations. And according to *Connecticut Life* (February, 1969), the revenue of the Times for 1968 was "well above $10,000,000 volume" while the Courant was approaching $15 million. (Standard and Poor's placed the Times in the $9-11-million range, but gave no figure for the Courant.) If these figures are accepted as reasonably accurate, the Times accounted for nearly 10 percent of Gannett's newspaper income. Its revenue, in fact, was greater than Gannett's entire income from broadcasting and other non-newspaper operations, $8,556,495.

In any normal daily newspaper operation, the major revenue comes from advertising. Gannett's 1968 report is illustrative: Its 32 newspapers had advertising revenue of $82.2 million and circulation revenue of $30.9 million. Advertising accounted for 73 percent of the total.

To attract this advertising, however, a newspaper first must have paid-in-advance readers. The Times already had 139,730 daily sales. If it could produce a big, bright Sunday package at no increase in price to the reader, it should start with a Sunday circulation equal to its daily circulation. The Sunday newspaper would cost more to produce, of course, but part of this increased cost could be offset by discontinuing the Saturday edition. The reader still would get only six papers a week, but Gannett was betting that it could convince him that the Sunday Times would be a much more desirable product than the Saturday paper.
The Competitive Context

The Times had far more competition than the Courant had during the week. Nine afternoon dailies were published in the area that Times executives would like to have considered their own; whereas the Courant had only one morning competitor, at Meriden. Further, the afternoon competition had increased throughout the state in 1968, with five weeklies starting five-day publication.

In the Sunday field, the two Hartford newspapers faced seven competitors. The strongest was the New York Daily News, which sold 19,738 Sunday papers in Hartford and Tolland counties. The New York Times ranked second with 12,012. Sunday newspapers from Boston, New Haven, and Springfield, Massachusetts, also circulated in the two-county area, for a total of 41,421 "all other" circulation.

Locally Produced Supplements

One selling point of the Sunday Times was that it would include a local magazine section, printed by the offset process. A new company, Community Offset, was organized in Hartford primarily to print the magazine, entitled Accent.

The Courant's magazine at that time was being printed by letterpress and was not noted for high-quality reproduction. The Times' announcement, however, gave the Courant a month to improve its product. At first the Courant went to the offset process, then changed to rotogravure, sending the copy for its supplement, Sunday, to a printing firm in Providence, Rhode Island. The Courant also added manpower to its magazine staff.
Although the offset process was superior to the letterpress operation, the rotogravure gave even better reproduction. By early 1969 the Courant had the more attractive magazine, but the Times had one important advantage: Accent could be delivered only three weeks after the copy deadline, whereas Sunday had a four-week lag. Neither magazine could work close to the news, but Accent had the lesser time handicap.

In addition to the locally edited Sunday magazines, each newspaper carried a national supplement, Parade in the Courant and This Week in the Times. Each Sunday package also included a television supplement and the traditional color comics. In short, the Sunday editions were alike in all the basic ways that Sunday newspapers all over the United States were alike. At first inspection, the casual reader might notice only two clear distinctions: The Sunday Times had boxes in color above the nameplate to promote its inside features, whereas the Courant seldom used color. The Courant, on the other hand, weighed quite a bit more. It had more pages, more advertising and more news.

**Typographical Comparisons**

The Times, both daily and Sunday, projected a more modern image than that of the Courant, using a sans serif headline family in contrast to the Courant's oldstyle Century. The entire format of the Times had been changed in 1967, with a result that was strikingly similar to Gannett's Florida success, Today. (Gannett
publicity boasted that Today was the nation's most copied newspaper. Column rules were eliminated on most pages, with a resulting increase in white space and a cleaner look. The number of columns on the front page was reduced from eight to seven—a 14½-pica column at the left, plus six 11-pica columns. When Sunday publication began, each section cover (or split page) was kept clear of advertising and designed in the same seven-column format as the front. News in the Sunday Times was more departmentalized and better displayed than in the Courant.

While deskmen at the Courant envied the display potential of the Times' format, the Courant with its more traditional eight-column format was continuing to print more news as well as more advertising. In April, 1969, the Sunday Courant averaged 60.89 percent advertising, compared to 42.7 percent for the Times, yet the Courant published 52,011 column-inches of news-editorial matter, compared to 44,967 for the Times.17

In addition to basic format and headline type, the Times had other advantages in physical appearance. It was able to supply higher-quality photographs from the wire services than the Courant offered. The Times subscribed to Associated Press and United Press International automatic photo processes, which deliver glossy prints, whereas the Courant bought only AP Photofax, which is designed for speed and economy, not reproduction quality. The Times also had its

17 Bob Eddy, personal communication.
own zinc engraving plant, whereas the Courant sent its photographs to a commercial engraving firm. Comparisons between engraving quality would be difficult, but there was no doubt that the Times had superior reproduction for both photographs and type—so superior that the Courant had called in a consultant to help improve its presswork.

Geography, Manpower

In many ways, the newspapers appeared evenly matched. Each had advantages of location peculiar to its own needs. The Times, at 10 Prospect Street, was in the heart of the business district, a block from City Hall and conveniently close to the federal building and the offices of major advertisers. The Courant, as befits a morning paper with statewide circulation, was located at 285 Broad Street, conveniently near the Statehouse. The Courant also was on a railroad siding, an asset in the delivery of newsprint.

Each newspaper had more than 750 full-time employees. Payroll figures, however, were not necessarily comparable. The Courant's full-time employees included all its circulation drivers, whereas the Times used drivers who were independent contractors. Executives at the Courant were convinced that they were outmanned by the Times.

In one respect, however, the Courant had a decided labor advantage. The Times had to deal with three unions in its mechanical departments; the Courant had none.

Both newspapers added manpower in 1968 and 1969, but the extent to which the increase could be attributed to increased
competition could not be determined. The Times added a Sunday editor to produce Accent, but apparently attempted to absorb most of the increased workload in the newsroom with staffers already on hand. The magazine staff at the Courant also was increased, but again primarily by diverting talent from other jobs. The entire payroll of the Courant grew by only 46 persons in 1968-69, and news executives said that none of the increase was caused by attempts to counter the Sunday Times.

Reporting talent was a special problem for both newspapers. As Clemow wrote:

Young $100-a-week reporters from Northeastern and other colleges, who abound at the Courant, take a while to savvy the city and must be encouraged to report it without fear or favor. Old hands can become captives of their beats, protecting their "sources."

The Times' somewhat similar dilemma is framed by a former news executive: "Just as soon as one new outsider-editor starts to learn the area, a new man comes in. These editors are able men, but ... they have had to hire reporters who don't even know the towns and highways of the state. A reporter is free to report the news as he sees it, but the Times' men aren't experienced enough to see any deeper than the surface."  

Clemow catches the flavor of the situation, even though he is not entirely accurate. Starting pay for reporters at the Courant was then $105 a week, not $100, and relatively few were at the bottom of the scale. The Northeastern University students to whom he refers were interns, not full-time reporters. But in essence, Clemow is correct. Editors on both newspapers found themselves

18 Connecticut Life.
operating (involuntarily) farm schools for newspapers in New York and Washington, where a reporter with two year's experience might increase his salary nearly $100 a week. The problem was exceptionally low pay in an area of exceptionally high living cost. By comparison, beginning reporters were $140 a week at Gannett's headquarters papers in Rochester, where newsroom and other office workers were unionized by the American Newspaper Guild. In Sioux City, Iowa, a cheaper place to live than either Hartford or Rochester, reporters also were starting at $140 a week. But the Sioux City Journal also had a Guild contract.

To help recruit talented young reporters, Gannett hired a youthful former professor as campus recruiter in the summer of 1969. He was Malcolm Applegate, 33, former assistant dean of journalism at the University of Kansas. At the time of this study, he had been on the job too briefly to determine whether his efforts might help improve the situation at the Times. Rochester, with its higher pay, or Cocoa, with its more attractive climate, seemed likely to benefit more from Applegate's recruiting.

One development late in 1969 held out the possibility of reducing the turnover at the Times—but at considerable expense. The Guild moved an organizer into Hartford, with the Times as first target. And on a national level, the Guild was agitating for a groupwide contract with Gannett.

At the Courant, with a news-editorial staff of 106 full-time employees, the new publisher was his own chief recruiter. Eddy
frequently visited campuses to make speeches and participate in seminars, and at national Sigma Delta Chi conventions he sought out promising student members and administered tests in his hotel room. At the University of Hartford, he helped organize a journalism course, and persuaded the Connecticut chapter of Sigma Delta Chi to supply professional newsmen as instructors. Eddy's efforts, plus the reputation of the Courant, attracted far more talented young applicants than the number of jobs available. The Courant had no trouble getting able beginners, but holding them after they were trained was another matter. New York, Washington—even Louisville—continued to take some of the Courant's better young talent.

Advertising Deadlines

The two newspapers had another common problem which became more acute after the Times began its Sunday paper. This was a virtual inability to enforce advertising deadlines.

As Times Publisher Robert Eckert said, "The advertisers can whipsaw us. They know that if we won't accept a late ad, they can take it across town and the other fellow will. They can play one of us off against the other."

Eddy agreed. Even the big accounts were taking advantage of the stepped-up competition.

Rival Advertising Appeals

The Courant's basic sales pitch to advertisers was simply a substantial lead in total circulation, coupled with high readership.
To support the latter claim, the Courant offered readership studies conducted by Carl J. Nelson Research, Inc., of Chicago. And for a comparison, Eddy at one point even commissioned the Nelson firm to conduct a readership survey of the Times.

The Times countered the total circulation figures by pointing out that much of the Courant's readership lay in distant towns. Hartford merchants who advertised in the Courant were paying to reach readers who never shopped in Hartford, the Times argued. Merchants were told in effect that their money would be better spent with the Times, which still had the largest circulation in the city zone. To support this reasoning, the Times cited the Audit Bureau of Circulations' annual report. As of September 30, 1968, city-zone figures showed 75,283 for the evening Times, 51,817 for the daily Courant and 64,360 for the Sunday Courant. The Sunday Times, which had been in existence only two weeks, wasn't audited.

The Courant argued that city-zone figures by themselves were meaningless, since many readers drove more than 100 miles to shop in Hartford. And to support this argument, Courant employees checked license plates at Hartford shopping centers and parking lots. At the G. Fox department store's parking garage in downtown Hartford, 66 percent of the cars were from outside the Audit Bureau of Circulations city zone. Other reports were similar.19

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Despite the license-plate survey, the Times still defined the city zone best, and was still the best choice for certain kinds of strictly local advertising. As a result, the Sunday Times began its existence with an encouraging volume of advertising—not nearly as much as the Sunday Courant, but apparently enough to support publication. Later, as both Sunday advertising and circulation decreased, doubts began to rise. After a few months, the front page of the Sunday Times no longer announced the total number of pages. The Sunday Courant, which often reached 320 pages during the summer of 1969, was about twice the size of the Times.

**Competition for News**

Executives of both newspapers attributed much of the Courant's circulation growth to its large network of state news bureaus and correspondents. In 1969, the Courant had 14 bureaus manned by 30 correspondents. Each bureau had its own single-party teletype feeding copy to the main office, except for one bureau which was experimenting with facsimile transmission. In addition, the Courant had 64 correspondents who were part-time employees. Many were paid 25 to 35 cents per column-inch of copy; others worked on an hourly basis.

In the Sunday Courant, three and a half pages each edition were devoted to state copy. And the Courant printed four editions Sunday, seven on weekdays. The volume of its state copy dwarfed that of the Times.
Much of the Courant's state copy, however, was branded "trivial and small-townish" by Times executives. At the Times, the emphasis was on quality, rather than quantity. Part-time correspondents were virtually eliminated in favor of professionally manned bureaus with as many as four staff members in some bureaus. "We have discontinued a tremendous amount of trivia," Eckert said. Among the stories he described as trivia in the Courant were the school lunch menus, published for nearly every town in the Courant's circulation territory.

Eckert described the Times as liberal, independent and Democratic. "We are looking toward the metropolitan concept of a newspaper," he said, "but we have to temper this with pragmatism."

At the Republican Courant, Eddy took a broader view of his newspaper's role. Asked what special kinds of readers his newspaper tried to appeal to, Eddy answered: "All kinds, generally."

While the Courant had the advantage in state coverage, the Times was ahead in facilities for national coverage. The Times had more and better national photo service, plus the syndicated columnists of the New York Times and the Los Angeles Times-Washington Post combine. Another major advantage was the Gannett News Service, which linked all Gannett papers and maintained a Washington bureau of about a dozen reporters. The Courant, by contrast, had only one man in Washington. The Washington situation, however, was not as lopsided as it might seem. Political writer Jack Zaiman of the Courant's home staff had such extensive contacts that he frequently was able to
cover Washington developments from Hartford.

The big stories in the summer of 1969 were a special tax session of the Connecticut Legislature, violence in Hartford's Negro and Puerto Rican districts, man's first walk on the moon, and the death of Mary Jo Kopechne in a car owned by Sen. Edward Kennedy. Most of these broke to the advantage of the daily Courant. Legislators worked until the early hours of the morning, rioters were active mostly after dark, and Neil Armstrong first set foot on the moon during the evening of Sunday, July 20.

The Times gained a temporary advantage at the start of the Kopechne story. A Times editorial writer was vacationing on Martha's Vineyard, near the scene of the death, and quickly phoned in a story. The Times sent another writer and a photographer to join him, and the Courant sent reporter David Offer. Each newspaper had its share of beats, with a net result which probably should be described as a draw.

To cover the moon adventure, the Courant sent science writer David Rhinelander to Cape Kennedy and later to Houston. The Times planned to rely on coverage by its sister paper, Today. Both Hartford newspapers, however, used more Associated Press than staff or "special" copy on the moon voyage.

Ethnic Coverage

The newspapers equipped reporters and photographers with helmets and gas masks to cover violence in the Negro North End. The Times, at a time disadvantage in being an afternoon publication, took
an interpretive approach, while the Courant leaned more toward spot news. Both newspapers cautiously avoided any phrasing which might be construed as inflammatory. No outburst was ever described as a "riot"; it was only a "disturbance." The first night the author was in Hartford, police were using tear gas on Negroes; the last night, on Puerto Ricans on the South Side. Sporadic violence occurred several times, and once young arsonists set fires in City Hall. The hottest weekend of the summer came in August, after the author left, with three nights of violence in the North End.

In the summer of 1969, the Connecticut Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated Hartford's nonwhite population as 47,870—more than one-fourth of the core city's population of approximately 163,000. Yet neither newspaper had a Negro as a full-time member of the news staff. The Courant had one Negro, a summer intern from Hampton Institute who was limited to writing obituaries.

An official at City Hall estimated that about 5,000 of the nonwhites were Puerto Ricans. In an attempt to serve this group, the Times published a weekly column in Spanish.

Editors at the Courant were keenly aware of the need to improve Negro coverage. Betty Barrett, women's editor, had a continuing beat on the inner city. Jean Tucker of the city editor's staff was sent to Mississippi to cover the convention of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the inauguration of Charles Evers as major of Fayette. Later she also covered the convention of the National Urban Coalition.
Sports Competition

One news area where the Courant had a particularly strong time advantage was in sports, since most games are played at night or end in the late afternoon. Sports Editor William J. Lee had a full-time staff of eight, which was supplemented by three part-time workers when activity was heavy. In addition, he had seven regular correspondents.

The Times' sports department had been geared to the slower (for sports) pace of afternoon publication. Authority was divided between Executive Sports Editor Craig Stolze and Sports Editor Arthur B. McGinley. McGinley was a Times institution: Stolze was a college classmate of Al Neuharth's who had been a member of the staff since about 1965, arriving indirectly from the Sioux Falls Argus-Leader. After a few months of direct competition with the Sunday Courant, Stolze was reassigned to Rochester as a sports columnist.

Today Man Joins Times

It became obvious that Neuharth was taking a strong personal role in news operations of the Times. He had first placed, then later removed, his own man as executive sports editor. Then the Times had been redesigned typographically to resemble Today. And in June, 1969, Neuharth placed one of his closest associates on the Times as executive editor, a position that had been vacant since Lindstrom's ouster 10 years earlier.
The man who became executive editor of the *Times* was James D. Head, whose most recent previous position was as a general executive of Gannett News Service in Rochester. Head, 43, had come to Rochester from Florida, where he was executive editor of Gannett operations, including *Today* at Cocoa. He had been, in fact, a member of the team that had helped Neuharth plan *Today* at its inception.

When Head joined the *Times*, Stuart Dunham retained the title of editor, but his function became ambiguous. Dunham had been in charge of both the news and editorial operations; it was not clear whether he had gained an assistant or whether he was being relieved of part of his duties. Unlike Lindstrom, the last executive editor, Head did not limit his activities to the editorial page. He took a desk in the main part of the newsroom, where he could be accessible to everyone involved in the news operation.

*Times* news strategy appeared increasingly to be directed from Rochester, where the head of Gannett's news operations happened to be a New Englander. He was John C. Quinn, who had risen to prominence first as managing editor of the Providence, Rhode Island, *Journal-Bulletin*. Neuharth had hired Quinn as news director of the Rochester papers in 1966. Quinn later added the duties of managing editor of Gannett News Service, working closely with both Neuharth and Head. Deskmen at the *Courant* considered Quinn an able and well-informed competitor.
Editorial Contrasts

The editorial pages of the Hartford newspapers differed markedly. The Times used at least one 3-column cartoon, sometimes two, with a format that called for large display type, horizontal makeup and lots of white space. This permitted only two tightly written local editorials most days. The Courant, using much smaller display type and restricting its cartoon to 2-column size, was able to publish as many as eight locally written editorials, each longer than any of the Times'. On Sundays, the Times usually had two editorial pages, the Courant three.

Much of the Times' editorial space was filled with syndicated copy from the New York Times and the Washington Post. The Courant used fewer syndicated columns, more columns that were written locally.

The guiding policy of the Courant editorial page was to blend big-city viewpoints with those of Connecticut's small towns. To cover this spread, Herbert Brucker had established a policy of running six to eight editorials a day, or more than 40 a week.20 William J. Foote and T. H. Parker continued generally to follow the practice established by Brucker. The demand for editorials was so strong that reporters were offered extra pay for contributions.

Public Relations

Both newspapers advertised widely in other media, both tried to reach young readers through public school programs, and both operated summer camps for disadvantaged city youngsters. And yet their public relations programs differed considerably.

Camp Courant was a day camp which could accommodate thousands; the Times operated a live-in camp which could serve only a few hundred. The Courant had a separate public relations department under the direction of Mrs. Paula Clark; the Times integrated its public service program with circulation promotion. The Courant conducted a "newspaper in the classroom" program in cooperation with the American Newspaper Publishers Association; the Times offered a few filmstrips to schools.

One of Eddy's achievements was to turn Hartford's Independence Day celebration into a Courant promotion. The Courant claims to have been the first newspaper to publish the Declaration of Independence as news (on Page 2, several days after the signing), and Eddy conceived the idea of commemorating this event. Each July 4, a post rider in colonial garb clip-clops up to the Courant, halts his horse in front of a temporary reviewing stand, and hands a copy of the Declaration to the publisher. Prominent speakers and a military drill team in historic uniforms join the ceremony, which draws a crowd of several hundred persons. The goal is to tighten the link between the Courant and the nation's history.
Circulation and Advertising

In its first year, the Sunday Times never achieved the circulation of the daily edition, which had 136,232 as of September 30, 1968. Many readers of the daily Times refused to accept the Sunday edition (some because they already were subscribing to the Sunday Courant), despite the fact that they could save only five cents by refusing it. By March 31, 1969, the Sunday Times had 130,122, and by September 30, a little more than a year after its start, it had slipped to 127,845. The weekday circulation also had declined—to 129,700, a loss of 6,532 and the lowest figure in six years.

There was no doubt that the Times had cut into the Courant's Sunday circulation. From September, 1968, to September, 1969, the Sunday Courant dropped from 199,877 to 186,852, a loss of 13,025. The weekday Courant, however, continued to grow—from 151,239 to 160,933, an increase of 9,694. (See Fig. 2)

The Sunday edition increased the Times' total advertising slightly. For 1967, the last year without a Sunday edition, the Times had 27,023,657 agate lines. This grew to 28,301,672 for 1969, an increase of 4.7 percent. In the same period, the Courant's total linage grew from 31,719,100 to 36,022,286, an increase of 13 percent.

The Sunday Times had less than half the advertising of the Sunday Courant at mid-1969—Times 3,182,993, Courant 6,835,326. And much of the Sunday Times' advertising merely was diverted from its former Saturday edition. For the first nine months of 1968, the weekday Times had 19,454,279. A year later, with only five weekday
FIGURE 2. TOTAL CIRCULATION

(Source: Audit Bureau of Circulations)
papers, the lineage was 16,376,108. The Sunday paper had 4,641,637, making the total 21,017,745. This was a net gain of 1,563,466 that could be attributed to the Sunday newspaper.

Circulation Rate Increases

With the daily Courant's circulation growing while the Times was slipping, the Courant took a calculated risk on October 13, 1969, by increasing the price of its daily paper from 7 cents to 10 cents, both single copy and home delivery. The Sunday price remained at 30 cents, making the weekly rate for seven newspapers 90 cents. The Times, with only six papers a week, still was selling for 55 cents.

"Surprisingly, we gained circulation while the new price was going into effect," Eddy said.

On November 1, the Times reinstated its Saturday edition and increased the weekly price from 55 cents to 65 cents. If readers didn't want the Sunday paper, they could buy six papers a week for 60 cents.

Recognition for Neuharth

Despite the setback in Hartford, Gannett reported record earnings for the 13-week and 39-week periods ending September 28, 1969. For the 13 weeks, Gannett reported total revenue of $36,276,337 and net income of $2,142,166, or 30 cents a share, compared with revenues of $29,720,837 and net of $1,894,359, or 27
cents a share, a year earlier. Stock was split 3 for 2 effective October 6.

In February, 1970, Gannett President Paul Miller, then 63, announced that Allen Neuharth had been appointed general manager of the entire corporation. This was more a recognition than a promotion. As executive vice president of Gannett (besides being general manager of the Rochester Times-Union and Democrat-Chronicle and president of Gannett Florida), Neuharth had been functioning essentially as the group's general manager ever since 1967. However, on May 26, 1970, Miller moved up to chairman and chief executive and Neuharth was elected to succeed him as president of Gannett.

No matter what was happening in Hartford, Gannett and Neuharth were advancing.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Despite the fact that the Times was an afternoon paper and the Courant a morning paper, the two were more alike than they were different throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Each newspaper was increasingly influenced by persons not native to New England, but both retained executives with New England roots. They were closely balanced in manpower, they competed vigorously for the same kinds of news, and (after September, 1968) they presented similar Sunday packages.

Carl Lindstrom's charge that newspapers were increasingly dominated by the business offices could hardly be applied fairly to either newspaper in Hartford by 1970. The publishers of both newspapers—and the top two executives of Gannett—were news oriented; that is, they had been newsmen before they became managers. Both newspapers had the benefit of some of the nation's leading editorial thinkers.

With so many similarities, it becomes relatively easy to isolate the major ways in which the Courant and the Times differed: (1) The morning Courant had only one direct competitor in its prime circulation territory, whereas the evening Times had nine; (2) the Courant was first and most aggressive in its drive for circulation in the suburbs and beyond; (3) the Sunday Courant already had become
a habit with many readers long before the Times had a Sunday paper, and (4) top-level operations at the Courant followed a consistent pattern through orderly executive succession during a period when the Times was frustrated by internal conflict. (From 1948 to 1970, the Courant had one new publisher, the Times three.)

The failure to start a Sunday newspaper in the 1950s, when the Times was still far ahead in daily circulation, may have severely handicapped the Sunday paper that was begun in 1968. It would be rash, however, to write off the 1968 venture as a failure after only one year's performance. Any assessment of the situation must take into account Gannett's ample resources in both money and talent, which still might be sufficient to overcome the effects of the questionable strategy of the 1950s. No prognosis should be attempted on the basis of only one year's circulation and advertising.

Nevertheless, certain conclusions can be drawn safely from this study:

(1) Price was not an important consideration to Connecticut newspaper readers in 1969. The daily Courant's price increase indicated that readers were willing to pay more for a newspaper they liked, rather than accept a newspaper they viewed as less desirable in order to save money.

(2) City-zone circulation trends indicate that the Courant appealed increasingly to the metropolitan reader, as well as readers in the small towns and suburbs. Instead of being merely small-townish
as critics charged, the Courant progressed significantly toward Eddy's goal of appealing to all kinds of readers.

(3) The Times' acknowledged superiority in physical appearance and syndicated columns and features was not enough to counter the Courant's superiority in Connecticut news coverage and total volume of news.

In some respects, the Courant in 1969 seemed to be in closer tune than the Times with Connecticut readers. With the notable exception of Bob Eddy, the Courant's executives all were New Englanders who knew their readers intimately, and Eddy made up for any possible deficiency by close attention to readership studies. The Times, on the other hand, was influenced increasingly by men who had made their reputations in Florida, and the Times' format even bore a strong resemblance to that of Today.

But Connecticut is not Florida, and Hartford is not Cocoa, and Today's success formula failed to show any immediate benefit to the Times.
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