

DAILY NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF TWO 1956
MICHIGAN CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Douglas C. Kelley
1958



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DAILY NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF TWO 1956 MICHIGAN
CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

By
Douglas C. Kelley

AN ABSTRACT

Submitted to the College of Communication Arts
Michigan State University of Agriculture and
Applied Science in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

School of Journalism

1958

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The increasingly useful tools of content analysis have previously been used in analyzing newspaper coverage of only 1 congressional election campaign. Although over a dozen reasonably scholarly studies have been published of press coverage of presidential campaigns, when they have found disparity of coverage of the 2 candidates, there has generally been a virtually unanswerable reply that the disparity reflected differences in the newsworthiness of the candidates.

Closely-matched congressional campaigns are numerous enough that within a short time studies might be made of a fairly large number, under varying circumstances. If such studies were made in marginal districts, where the parties are fairly evenly matched, and if districts chosen included an equal number of incumbents of each party, findings could be of real significance. The effects of incumbency and non-incumbency upon press coverage might also be usefully examined.

Newspaper coverage of congressional campaigns is of no little interest per se. Both traditional democratic principles and the present world-wide responsibilities of members of Congress call for voters well-informed of the policy views of opposing congressional candidates. Yet we know very little of what voters learn, through the press or other media, about such candidates.

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The present study is limited to coverage by 6 daily papers, for the 6 weeks preceding the election, of the 1956 congressional campaigns in 2 marginal Michigan districts, the 6th (Lansing and Flint) and the 12th (western half of the Upper Peninsula). The 6th District incumbent was a Democrat, the 12th a Republican. Editorial policies of all 6 papers were pro-Republican, there being no pro-Democratic dailies in Michigan's 7 marginal congressional districts.

Our 6 hypotheses, taken together, advanced the proposition that among the major determinants of newspaper coverage are predispositions on the part of newspaper staff members to focus attention on personalities rather than policy issues, on incumbents rather than non-incumbents, and on candidates editorially supported by the paper; but that a fourth influence may be the relative strength of the 2 political parties in a paper's area of major circulation.

Major findings were as follows:

- 1) The 6 newspapers carried little information about local congressional candidates, and very little about their voting records and/or views on foreign and domestic policy issues. The average paper published fewer column inches on both local congressional candidates, in the entire 6 weeks, than it published on sports in a single, typical week-day issue. Mention of foreign policy issues was particularly rare.

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Douglas C. Kelley

2) Incumbency and at least tacit editorial support by the paper concerned were found to be apparent key factors in a congressional candidate's gaining an advantage in news coverage. Neither incumbency nor editorial support was consistently the more important of the 2 factors, although incumbency was more often of greater importance.

3) In their paid political advertising in the 6 papers, the 2 Democratic candidates stressed policy issues, as distinguished from non-policy issues, an average of twice as much as did their Republican opponents.

4) There was found to be no significant correlation between the relative strength of the 2 political parties in a paper's home county and the share of congressional campaign coverage given the candidates of the 2 parties.

Further study of press coverage of congressional campaigns in other marginal districts was recommended, and newspapers were urged to publish responses of opposing congressional candidates to periodic questionnaires concerning their views on important policy issues.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The understanding patience and helpful suggestions of Dr. Paul Deutschmann and of Cynthia Kelley, the writer's wife, have been greatly appreciated. Thanks are also due Mr. Elmer White, of the Michigan Press Association, for his assistance with the reliability check.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A member of a prominent American publishing family, formerly the U.S. Ambassador to Italy, has emphasized the increasing world-wide importance of the views and performance of U.S. Congressmen in these words, in a recent issue of Foreign Affairs (Luce, 36, pp. 111-112):

Every United States Senator and Congressman functions at one time or other -- and these days with increasing frequency -- in the field of foreign affairs. Legislators who set about, by voice or vote, to support, amend, cripple or destroy the foreign policy of any given administration are profoundly affecting the conduct of our relations with foreign countries. They are, in the true sense of the word, foreign policy-makers. One has only to consider the impact abroad of certain resolutions (i.e. Suez, Formosa), immigration and tariff bills, and the vast complex of foreign affairs legislation and appropriations, to realize that in the final analysis our amateurs in the Congress have more influence on the foreign affairs of the United States, and wield more 'diplomatic' power, than all the practitioners of 'organized diplomacy' put together.

The point which Mrs. Luce and others have made is one of the reasons for the present study. At a time when -- as Barbara Ward of the London Economist has put it -- "America's foreign policy is everybody's destiny," it seems appropriate for students of journalism to investigate the extent to which the press is objectively reporting the views of congressional candidates on foreign policy and other vital issues. Walter Lippman has argued (35, p. 50) that the executive branch of

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government in the western democracies "has lost both its material and its ethereal powers. The assemblies and the mass electorates have acquired the monopoly of effective powers." To what extent, then, is the press informing our mass electorate about what local candidates for the national assembly propose to do with those powers?

The importance of a well-informed electorate is of course as old as democracy itself, and has been lectured about through the years by a long procession of democratic theorists. Some forty years ago Lippman (34, p. 11) ably summed up the argument:

All that the sharpest critics of democracy have alleged is true, if there is no steady supply of trustworthy and relevant news. Incompetence and aimlessness, corruption and disloyalty, panic and ultimate disaster, must come to any people which is denied an assured access to the facts. No one can manage anything on pap. Neither can a people.

It may be argued that voters don't depend upon their newspapers or other mass media to furnish information on which they will make their voting booth choices. Indeed, Lazarsfeld, in his study of opinion formation in the 1944 presidential campaign (33, p. xxiii) concluded that "the majority of people acquired much of their information and many of their ideas through personal contacts with the opinion leaders in their groups." But Lazarsfeld continued: "These latter individuals, in turn exposed themselves relatively more than others to the mass media." Thus even though newspaper content about congressional candidates may be of real

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importance only for a small segment of the population, the opinions of members of that small group are of great significance. As the Commission on Freedom of the Press expressed it (13, p. 28):

We do not assume that all citizens at all times will actually use all the material they receive. By necessity or choice large numbers of people voluntarily delegate analysis and decision to leaders whom they trust. Such leadership does not alter the need for the wide distribution of news and opinion. The leaders are not identified; we can inform them only by making information available to everybody.

Perhaps it will be countered that people's voting habits aren't much influenced either by mass media content or by personal contacts, but almost wholly by predispositions dating from parental indoctrination. The Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan has found (55, p. 2) that 26 per cent of Michigan adults call themselves independent voters. Thus better than a fourth of our fellow citizens claim they are willing to assume the burden of decision-making in at least some political campaigns. The Survey Research Center also reports (3) that only 40 per cent of U.S. adults profess to believe in "straight ticket" voting. Many a congressional seat hangs on a margin of less than five per cent of the vote, so there would appear to be a good case that newspaper content about congressional candidates may have significant influence on congressional election results, at least in marginal districts.

Since 1932, and especially since 1952, there has been a considerable volume of charges that the nation's press is

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permitting its editorial page opinions to seep through to contaminate front-page news writing, selection and display. It is interesting to note, however, that there is evidence the percentage of newspaper readers who believed the press biased did not increase between 1940 and 1956. A 1940 Gallup Poll (21, pp. 115-119) reported that 27 per cent of regular readers of newspapers felt their paper unfair to F.D.R., and 9 per cent felt their paper unfair to Willkie. A 1956 University of Michigan Survey Research Center study (58, p. 1) reported that 24 per cent of the nation's newspaper readers felt the press was unfair (in its news coverage) to Stevenson, and that 3 per cent considered the press unfair to Eisenhower.

As a result of the controversy over the alleged "one-party press", there have been a number of studies published, since 1937 and particularly since 1952, which have attempted to assess the job daily newspapers have done in presenting news of presidential campaigns. There have also been two studies of press coverage of U.S. senatorial campaigns (in California, in 1950, and in Wisconsin and Connecticut, in 1952), and a study by a team of graduate students of coverage of a congressional and a gubernatorial race (in Wisconsin, in 1954). In chapter II we shall attempt to summarize the methodology and findings of these studies of campaign coverage.

Despite the attention given press coverage of presidential campaigns, and the more limited attention given

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senatorial campaign coverage, there have been no published studies of press performance in congressional campaigns.

Press coverage of congressional campaigns is important in and of itself, for the reasons cited above. But it is the writer's view that studies of press treatment of congressional candidate news can also shed needed light on the overall performance of the press in political campaigns. When it is found, in studies of presidential campaigns, that more space was given one candidate or the other, editors reply simply that space was allotted according to newsworthiness of candidate statements and activity. There is no wholly satisfactory rebuttal, and the result is an impasse in which both the critics and the defenders of the press maintain the righteousness of their position, but lack clinching arguments to prove it.

The writer knows of no evidence that congressional candidates of one political party are consistently, throughout the country, more "newsworthy" than congressional candidates of the other party. Thus, should studies of congressional campaign coverage indicate rather consistent favoring (in news space, photos and/or headlines) of candidates of the party editorially favored, critics of the role of the press in political campaigns would have weighty new evidence to buttress their position.

On the other hand, should a number of studies of congressional campaign coverage indicate an approximate over-

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all balance in news coverage given candidates of the two major parties (or, more realistically, an approximate balance between coverage given incumbent candidates of each of the two parties, and between non-incumbent candidates of each of the parties) then editors would be in a far better position to argue that what imbalance is found to exist in news coverage of presidential campaigns can be attributed almost entirely to differences in newsworthiness of the presidential candidates' statements and activities.

The writer is not suggesting that the results of the present study alone will perform the function outlined above, but rather that a series of studies of congressional campaign coverage might serve such a purpose. In any event, further research is needed in this too long neglected field.

In chapter II, as suggested above, we shall seek to summarize the methodology and findings of past content analyses of newspaper coverage of U.S. political campaigns.

Chapter III will report the scope and methodology of the present study, define terms used, and state hypotheses. We shall also briefly describe the nature of the two Michigan congressional districts with which we shall be concerned. Our findings will be reported in chapter IV, and discussed in chapter V. In chapter VI we shall state our major conclusions, and offer recommendations regarding further study and some possible remedial steps by the press.

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BACKGROUND

In 1952 Berelson wrote (6, p. 21) that

Content analysis techniques have been applied more and more in recent years. In fact, the output of content analysis studies has sharply increased in every five-year interval over the past thirty years. From about two studies a year in the early decades of the century, content analysis studies have increased to three a year, then four, eight, twelve, and in most recent years to an average of about 25 a year. Presumably the field is still expanding.

Interest in studies of newspaper coverage of political campaigns has likewise developed rapidly in the past few years. The first published study of newspaper coverage of a U.S. presidential election was made in 1936, and the second (by the same researcher) in 1944. There was one published study of 1948 presidential campaign coverage, and then developments came more rapidly.

In 1950 a study was made of campaign coverage of a U.S. senatorial election, and in 1952 coverage of two senatorial elections was studied. Charges of "one party press" resulted in seven relatively scholarly and several less elaborate studies of 1952 presidential campaign coverage, and to date there have been two studies published concerning 1956 presidential campaign coverage. More are to be expected, judging from the delay in publication of several of the earlier studies.

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The only study of congressional campaign coverage which has been made, to date, was an unpublished 1954 analysis, by four journalism graduate students, of coverage by two Milwaukee dailies of the Kersten-Reuss campaign. (Also studied was the two dailies' coverage of the gubernatorial campaign.) Because of this lack of material relating to congressional campaigns, it is worthwhile to review the scope, methods and findings of the published studies of presidential and senatorial campaigns. Problems of methodology were very much the same as are faced in a study of congressional campaign coverage, and many of the findings may reasonably be expected to be similar. (It should be noted that underlying all of these studies there is agreement that newspapers have every right to support, on their editorial pages, whom they please, but that democratic government is endangered when news coverage becomes significantly affected by editorial page preferences.)

1936: Presidential

E. O. Stene of the University of Kansas was the first to publish findings in the field of campaign coverage content analysis. He studied 1936 presidential campaign coverage by 21 dailies scattered over the United States. For the final month of the campaign he measured the number of column inches devoted to each of the candidates, the "attention value" (prominence of position and size of headlines)

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of relevant items, and whether they were favorable or unfavorable (with neutral items counted as favorable to the candidate mentioned). He used a point system to weight stories according to their position, and to weight headlines according to their size.

Stene found that 15 of the 21 papers studied gave more space and attention to Landon, 5 more to Roosevelt, and 1 divided its coverage almost 50-50. He reported (53, p. 214) that "all except one of the twenty-one dailies gave a majority of their political news space to the candidate who was supported through the editorial pages." (The one exception was a GOP daily in a strongly Democratic city which Roosevelt had visited.) Also of interest is Stene's finding (ibid.) that:

In most cases the attention value of news was nearer to a fifty per cent division than the number of column inches. On the other hand the division of picture space was much more favorable to the candidate supported through the editorial columns.

1940: Presidential

There was no scholarly study made of press coverage of the 1940 presidential campaign, but Harold Ickes reported (25, pp. 9-15) that during October, 1940, he had "checks made," on two days, of five "representative" dailies (the New York Times, Chicago Tribune, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Rochester Times and the Los Angeles Times). "The checks,"

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Ickes found, "showed that the news space assigned to the two presidential candidates varied from 60 per cent for one and 40 per cent for the other in the best of the newspapers, to 96 per cent for one and 4 per cent for the other in the case of the worst." (Ickes' "worst" was the Chicago Tribune.)

Ickes said the papers examined "were found to have given a total of 2,245½ inches of their news space to one candidate -- the one whom a minority of the people favored -- and 348 inches to the other." Thus the ratio was 86.6 per cent to 13.4 per cent. Ickes added that another check of Baltimore Sun coverage of a Willkie rally and a Roosevelt rally in Madison Square Garden in New York, within a few days of each other, revealed that the Willkie rally received three times as much space as the Roosevelt rally, and that five times as many Sun staff members were assigned to cover it.

Secretary Ickes concluded, however, that "despite dangerous exceptions and grave shortcomings, we have, by and large, the best press in the world."

In another essay in the same Ickes-edited volume (9, pp. 51-61) Irving Brandt, contributing editor for the St. Louis Star-Times, argued that the press in the 1940 campaign ignored much pro-Democratic and anti-Republican news, and played up anti-Democratic and pro-Republican news.

1944: Presidential

In 1945 Stene published his second study of presiden-

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tial campaign coverage, on the 1944 campaign. This time he studied 15 "prominent daily newspapers" (all in large cities), 4 of them for 4 weeks preceding the election, 10 for 12 days preceding the election, and 1 for 6 days. As in 1936, he noted space, attention value, and direction. This time, however, a single index figure was computed on the basis of all factors involved. Items dealing with the President in a non-candidate role were excluded, but Stene reported (54, p. 260) that "the number of items excluded because they dealt with the President rather than the presidential candidate was surprisingly small."

Of Stene's 15 dailies, 11 were pro-Dewey, 2 mildly pro-Roosevelt and 2 strongly pro-Roosevelt. He reported that all 15 gave more favorable news attention to the candidate editorially favored. "It might be argued," he added (ibid, p. 264), "that there is no intent to color news reports one way or the other, but that reporters and editors present news as they see it. So it would be said that the newspaper editors present what they, in their best judgment, consider important, and that news reports are favorable without purposeful discrimination. Even if that were true, it would not change the fact that the news attention varies according to the editorial policies of the papers."

1948: Presidential

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presidential campaign by four Baltimore, Maryland newspapers: the Morning Sun, Evening Sun, News-Post and Afro-American, all of which editorially favored Dewey. For the week preceding the election he measured space (including headlines, text and photos) devoted to the presidential campaign. All items were classified as favorable to one or the other candidate, or as neutral. Space devoted to editorials and to cartoons was separately measured.

Millsbaugh reported (40, p. 123) that the Morning Sun slightly favored Truman in news space, the Evening Sun gave equal news space to Truman and Dewey, and the News-Post and Afro-American heavily favored Dewey in news space. The News-Post devoted more space to pro-Dewey editorials and cartoons than to news of both sides; the 3 other papers devoted considerably less space to their pro-Dewey editorial material than to news.

1950: Senatorial

Next came the first study of coverage of a U.S. senatorial campaign -- the 1950 Nixon-Douglas campaign in California. The findings were reported by Galen Rarick in an unpublished Stanford University M.A. thesis (48) which the Stanford University Library reports is unavailable. Summaries of the study's methods and findings are available, however, in a Journalism Quarterly article by Chilton R. Bush (10) and in an Editor and Publisher article by Camp-

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The study, made by the Stanford University Institute for Journalistic Studies, covered all news items (including headlines and photo captions) in 12 representative California dailies (7 "independent," 2 Democratic and 3 Republican papers) from September 1 to November 7, 1950. Unfortunately, a press release announcing the study was issued prior to September 1, so publishers were alerted.

Relevant "statements" (expressions denoting a complete idea, and having a relevant referent) were coded as (for example) pro, neutral or anti-Nixon, pro, neutral or anti-Douglas. Six referents were used: 3 Republican (Nixon, Republican Party, Republican leaders) and 3 Democratic (Douglas, Democratic Party, Truman Administration and Democratic leaders).

Over 8,000 statements were coded. If the source of a statement was a candidate or his supporters, it was presumed to be "pro-him" or "anti-his opponent"; if the source was neutral or not stated, a judgment was made by the coder as to direction. Just under 35 per cent of the statements coded were neutral.

For each candidate, in each paper, percentages were computed to indicate the per cent of references to him/her which were favorable, neutral and unfavorable. A "favored index" was computed for each paper, by subtracting the net favorable or unfavorable score for the less-favored candi-

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date from the comparable figure for the more-favored candidate. Thus the conclusions offered were based not on how much space was given each of the candidates, but on the relative frequencies of favorable and unfavorable statements about each of them. The average "favored index;" for all 12 papers, was pro-Nixon 29.2.

Of the favorable statements, Douglas received 45.2 per cent and Nixon 54.8 per cent. Of unfavorable statements almost 70 per cent referred to Douglas, and 30 per cent to Nixon. Only 14 per cent of the statements coded were unattributed, and the unattributed statements gave Nixon a favored index of 5.8.

Of the 11 papers which editorially supported a candidate (2 for Douglas, 9 for Nixon), 9 gave a favored index to the candidate editorially supported. These 9 included the 2 Douglas papers and 7 of the Nixon papers. (Two Nixon papers and the neutral paper gave Douglas a favored index.)

Lionel Horwitz wrote an unpublished M.A. thesis on "Political Advertising in the 1950 Wisconsin Senatorial Campaign" (24), but the University of Wisconsin Library indicates the study is unavailable.

1952: Senatorial

A study of press coverage of 1952 Wisconsin and Connecticut senatorial campaigns (18) was published in 1954,

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by political scientists LeRoy Ferguson and Ralph Smuckler of Michigan State College. They were concerned with the candidates' use of policy and non-policy issue appeals as well as with press coverage of the campaign. In Wisconsin the study included 11 dailies (4 pro-McCarthy, 2 pro-Fairchild, 5 neutral; together, about 70 per cent of daily circulation in Wisconsin) and 30 weeklies. In Connecticut there were 9 dailies (none of them pro-Democratic; comprising over 65 per cent of daily circulation in Connecticut) and 13 weeklies included. About half the dailies were coded every second day, and the remainder of the papers were coded every issue, for the 6 weeks preceding the November 4, 1952 election. The papers were selected to be representative of the entire press of the two states.

An elaborate IBM card code covering the use of issues and the direction of items was used, and over 3,500 items coded (1369 in Wisconsin, and 2147 in Connecticut, where 2 Senate seats were at stake due to the death of an incumbent). "Any item which reported criticism of a candidate or indicated lack of support was counted as unfavorable. If an item indicated praise or support of a candidate it was considered favorable" (ibid., p. 61).

A number of the findings of the Ferguson and Smuckler study are relevant to our present concerns:

- 1) Policy issues (those "which have in recent years faced decision by government policy makers, particularly Congress") appeared "much less frequently than

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non-policy themes in the press in both states" (p. 28). (Of all appeal items, 28 per cent were policy issue appeals; of all candidate-originated appeal items, 46 per cent were policy issue appeals.)

2) "Analysis of the individual campaigns in the press of each state does not show the Democratic candidates to be consistently more policy issue oriented than their Republican opponents" (pp. 31-32).

3) "Domestic issues were used more frequently than foreign policy questions in the press of both states" (p. 32). (In Wisconsin, 36 per cent of references to policy issues were to foreign policy issues; in Connecticut, 48 per cent.)

4) "Only rarely were the same foreign or domestic policy issues emphasized by opposing candidates" (p. 45).

5) ". . . References to personal qualifications made up by far the largest portion of the non-policy appeal in the press" (p. 45).

6) In Wisconsin "Senator McCarthy's name appeared in three and one half times as many news items as the name of his opponent, Thomas Fairchild. . . McCarthy attention was at least three times as great as Fairchild attention in all but one of the dailies, and in some the ratio rose to as much as seven to one" (p. 60). "Separate analysis of front page items in the Wisconsin

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press revealed an even larger preponderance of attention to McCarthy. . .more than four to one. . .McCarthy dominance of news attention is most clearly evident in front page headlines where 85 per cent of candidate attention centered on McCarthy" (p. 61). "McCarthy received considerably less unfavorable attention in headlines than in news items. . .For example, while 50 per cent of the McCarthy front page attention items were unfavorable, only 26 per cent of the front page headlines mentioning McCarthy were unfavorable" (p. 62).

7) "While it does not appear possible to construct an absolute index of partiality, it is possible to compare the content of several individual newspapers in their coverage of a particular campaign and to draw conclusions as to their relative partiality" (p. 63). (Thus a "margin of favoritism" was computed for each paper, by subtracting the percentage of Democratic news from the percentage of Republican news.) "As was expected. . .the pro-McCarthy rank in news coverage was directly related to the editorial policy of the papers" (p. 64). "Furthermore, this relationship of editorial position to news coverage was [in Wisconsin] more consistently obvious in front page headlines than it was in news generally" (p. 66).

8) ". . .The Connecticut Democrats received more favorable references than their Republican opponents in

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what was an editorially Republican press" (p. 72). However, "analysis of the combined Connecticut dailies tends to support the Wisconsin finding that headlines reflect editorial policy more clearly than does general news coverage" (p. 74). Although both Democrats received more items than their Republican opponents, the Democratic incumbent Senator fared better (60-40 per cent) than the Democratic non-incumbent did against a second Republican non-incumbent (53-47 per cent). (Ferguson and Smuckler do not suggest the possibility, but in the writer's view the "non-incumbent" Democrat's 53-47 advantage over his non-incumbent Republican opponent was probably in large measure due to the fact that the Democrat was an incumbent Congressman, and thus had many of the advantages which normally accrue to an incumbent running for re-election. Neither of the two Republican candidates was holding public office at the time of the campaign nor had ever held office, to this writer's knowledge.

9) ". . . It seems reasonable to conclude that those elements which would contribute to the enlightened popular control of public policy were less than adequately presented in the press during the campaigns . . . The relatively small attention given policy issues and the almost complete lack of joining of issues by the candidates would not appear to contrib-

ute to the role of the election as an occasion for the exercise of popular control over broad policy questions. Furthermore, the findings in Wisconsin indicate that even those issues and themes that did receive emphasis in the press were presented in a manner which might not give the reader enough impartial information to make a free choice between alternatives. The content of the press appeal to the electorate would tend to turn the attention of the voter away from policy questions and toward non-policy themes, particularly the personalities of the candidates" (pp. 77-78).

1952: Presidential

The presidential campaign of 1952 marked the high point, to date, of charges and countercharges regarding press coverage. On October 24, 1952, 96 American authors, including 24 Pulitzer Prize-winners and a Nobel Prize-winner, in a joint statement (Editor and Publisher, 45, pp. 7 and 59) attacked the "unrelenting attempt by the majority of our country's newspapers and magazines to play down one of the candidates" for the presidency. "Partisanship has been allowed to soak through from its legitimate place on the editorial pages and in signed columns. It has been allowed to infect the very writing of the news and, even more, the way it is displayed. Even photographs have been used to mislead."

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The 96 authors' statement was based on a hurried study (by 4 of the authors: John Hersey, John Steinbeck, Herman Wouk and Cleveland Amory) of 26 newspapers in 6 politically doubtful states (Ohio, Massachusetts, Michigan, Illinois, Pennsylvania and California) for an unstated period of time. The public statement included no description of methodology. Only 4 of the 26 papers were found to be fair in their coverage. The others were charged (Blumberg, 8, p. 18) with "slanted writing of news stories, prejudiced use of photographs, unfavorable placement of stories concerning Democrats, inadequate volume of coverage of Democratic news, inadequate general coverage of Democratic news, omission of stories favorable to Democrats and use of headlines reflecting meaning of stories inaccurately."

Among other spokesmen for critics of the 1952 campaign role of the press were:

- 1) Jean Begeman, who in a New Republic article (5) reported the findings of a study of 21 representative dailies in large and small cities, from September 1 to the end of October. The study was concerned with headline and news play, photographs and editorial policy. The conclusions: there was bias toward the GOP (no figures were reported as to how much or in how many of the papers) in regard to number and prominence of items and headlines, headline editorializing, and use of photos.

2) Miss Begeman also reported (ibid.) that a survey by Frontier Magazine of 4 San Francisco dailies for 2 weeks early in the campaign revealed more coverage for the GOP.

3) Some months after the election, the prominent radio and television news analyst Eric Sevareid declared (52):

The truth must be faced: Dozens of excellent newspapers, with a record of honorable news handling, cheated in their allotment of news and picture space as between the two candidates. I do not believe the election result would have been any different, even had absolute fairness ruled, but that does not erase this blot on the record. . .

4) Erwin Canham, editor of the Christian Science Monitor, wrote (12, p. 111) that ". . . enough evidence is at hand to indicate that a considerable number of American newspapers did not adequately live up to their own precepts in the 1952 campaign." He reminded his readers, however, (ibid., p. 114), that "except in a few newspapers in a few countries reaching a few people, there are great news inadequacies throughout the world."

The first extensive reply to critics of the role of the press in the 1952 presidential campaign came in the form of a one-day study by the Associated Press of the front pages of 115 dailies. There were 52 morning papers, and 63 evening papers; the day chosen was October 10, a day when it is reported both major candidates as well as their chief cam-

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paingning supporters were in action. Stories on both the candidates and their active supporters were counted and their prominence noted. Editor & Publisher reported (45, p. 34) these findings:

Thirty-two per cent of the newspapers examined gave equal treatment to either Eisenhower and Stevenson or Eisenhower and Truman. Forty-seven per cent gave the Democrats the dominant coverage. Twenty-one per cent gave the edge to Eisenhower. . . . a majority of newspapers, which supposedly have been supporting the Republican candidate in their editorial columns, have been leaning over backwards so far to be fair in their news coverage that they have actually been giving 'the breaks' to the Democratic candidate.

In a November 15, 1952 "Post-Election Round-up", Editor & Publisher reported (46, p. 10):

Newspapers all over the country are toting up their political campaign news coverage with the same care accorded advertising lineage in order to disprove politicians' charges of news bias by a so-called 'one-party press.' Most of them are reporting their news stories about Eisenhower and Stevenson about equal, but when Truman's whistle-stop campaign stories are added to the Stevenson total, the news space was dominated by the Democrats.

Most interesting of the several examples cited in the Editor & Publisher article were these two (ibid.):

The Cincinnati (Ohio) Volunteers for Stevenson made a survey of the city's three newspapers. It reported each candidate received 50 per cent of the play in the Cincinnati Enquirer and the Cincinnati Post and that the Cincinnati Times-Star gave 56 per cent for Eisenhower and 44 per cent for Stevenson.

The Baltimore Sun reported that from October 1 to November 4, it printed 168 letters of which 121 dealt with election issues. It said 87 took definite sides in the presidential election, with 38 for the Stevenson-Sparkman ticket and 49 for Eisenhower-Nixon. 'The published Eisenhower-Nixon letters were 56.3 per cent of the total, and the figures show that Eisenhower-Nixon captured 55.8 per cent of Maryland votes,' the Sun said.

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In the May 25, 1953 New Leader, Irving Dilliard, editorial page editor for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, wrote (15, p. 17):

The votes were not yet fully counted when Editor & Publisher, the newspaper world's trade weekly, called in its November 15 issue for 'an impartial, extensive, scientific study to reveal the exact degree of fairness or lack of it in this Presidential campaign.' The demand for a survey spread quickly. A week later, Sigma Delta Chi, the national professional journalistic fraternity, adopted a resolution proposing that the fraternity sponsor a comprehensive survey with the help of one of the country's major foundations, the details of the 'thorough and objective analysis' to be worked out by a special committee. It looked as though we were getting action.

But now, six months later, we learn the special committee has reported that a survey would not be 'feasible'. . .

When another six months had passed, Dilliard was writing in the Nieman Reports (16, p. 14) that ". . .the press holds other institutions up to searching scrutiny, but is unwilling to have the same scrutiny applied to itself."

At the next (1953) convention of Sigma Delta Chi, a resolution urging that a study of press performance in the campaign be undertaken as soon as possible did not reach the floor of the convention. In the interval the American Society of Newspaper Editors and the American Newspaper Publishers Association had each turned deaf ears to pleas for an analysis of 1952 campaign coverage (American Society of Newspaper Editors, 2, pp. 184-185, and Blumberg, 8, p. 23). Although some members of these professional organizations took the attitude that what newspapers published was no one's

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business but the editors' and publishers', most of them apparently professed to agree with the report of the special Sigma Delta Chi committee (Dilliard, 15, p. 17), that: "Properly to weight. . .material objectively to arrive at a sound collective judgment of bias or lack of bias is a problem for which we have found no feasible solution."

Despite the demise of efforts for a thorough, nationwide study of press coverage of the 1952 campaign -- or perhaps in some cases because of that demise -- 7 more limited scholarly studies were made and published. Three were limited to a single city or state (Florida, Wisconsin, San Francisco) while 4 were nation-wide in scope (although 2 of them covered but 8 papers; the others covered 31 and 35 papers, respectively).

Sidney Kobre studied 34 of Florida's 37 dailies, from October 1 through November 3. (Eisenhower had the support of 21, Stevenson the backing of 8, and 5 were neutral). He noted, for each political party, in each paper, the number of news stories, column inches, headlines (and size of same), front page stories (and position of same), photos, editorials and articles by national and local columnists.

Kobre found (28) that although there was wide variation among the papers, an average of 51 per cent of the news stories were Democratic and 49 per cent Republican. Republicans were favored in size of headlines, number of editorials and number of articles by columnists. Democrats were

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Kobre found that about half the papers studied did not favor, news-wise, the candidate editorially favored. He advanced no possible explanations for this departure from the findings of most previous studies. Since Kobre's has been the only study of newspaper campaign performance in a solidly Democratic environment, however, it may be that the explanation lies in a hesitancy -- conscious or unconscious -- on the part of newspaper staff members to risk running counter to strongly held traditional views of a large majority of readers.

Kobre concluded (ibid., p. 169):

It would be practically impossible for many papers to strike an exact equal balance in news treatment and give a 50-50 play. The news just doesn't break that way, and certain stories may have more significance and human interest than others. But a range such as 52-48 per cent, can be established. . . Beyond these upper and lower limits, in all fairness to the public, the paper should not deviate.

Charles E. Higbie studied the front pages of 14 Wisconsin evening dailies for the 8 weeks immediately preceding the election. He does not report (23) his criteria for choosing those 14 papers, nor how many were independent politically; he mentions that only one was Democratic. He counted, for each party (and each particular leader) the number of items, column inches, and photos, noted the page position of each item and analyzed headlines and news story

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Higbie found (ibid., pp. 56-57) that ". . . although major Democratic and Republican national figures were accorded very nearly the same amount of front page space, the GOP presidential candidates appeared more often in the major headlines and in the news pictures of the campaign. . . Eisenhower and Nixon subject matter heads in top position held a revealing 63 to 37 per cent lead" over Stevenson-Sparkman heads. He added (ibid., p. 60) that "when presidential and senatorial candidates were all counted together, it was found that Republican likenesses appeared 152 times compared to 81 times for Democratic candidates. Eisenhower's likeness appeared in 75 cuts to 49 for Stevenson."

Higbie commented that his finding that headlines are more closely related than is total news coverage to editorial policy "conforms in general" with the findings of Kobre's Florida study.

In the first hard-cover book in the field of presidential campaign news coverage analysis (8), Nathan B. Blumberg reported the findings of his study of 35 representative U.S. dailies for the 30 days preceding the election. Editorially, 26 of the papers were pro-Eisenhower, 7 were pro-Stevenson and 2 were neutral. Front pages were studied for all 30 days, and inside pages on 3 days chosen "because they are well-spaced and represent days on which there were no especially important political developments which would favor one party."

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Blumberg explained (ibid., pp. 34-35):

To arrive at the conclusions in this study, evaluation first was made of the categories of the statistical table: number of stories, column-inches of photograph space, number of multi-column headlines and total column-inches of space. Then the statistical results of inside page coverage in three issues, including the same categories, were examined to see whether there were any significant differences between front page and inside page treatment. Display (primarily banner headlines or top play headlines), position of stories and examples of partiality [partiality is never defined] were then appraised. Finally, consideration was given to special circumstances (for example, the visit to a newspaper's city by only one of the presidential candidates) which would justify a subjective judgment altering the statistical findings.

He added (ibid., p. 38):

Many subjective decisions, some of them made only after months of pondering the problems, were necessary before the conclusion of this survey.

After Blumberg had made both quantitative and qualitative judgments, he concluded that of the 26 pro-Eisenhower papers, 15 showed no partiality, 4 did show partiality in favor of their candidate, and 7 showed only inconclusive evidence of partiality. Of the 7 pro-Stevenson papers, Blumberg determined that 2 showed no partiality, 2 showed partiality in favor of their candidate, and 3 showed only inconclusive evidence of partiality. Of the 2 papers which were editorially neutral, one showed no partiality and one gave insufficient evidence to warrant a conclusion of partiality.

Thus Blumberg concluded that only 6 of the 35 newspapers examined provided evidence of partiality in their

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news columns. In thereby "clearing" most of the press of charges of bias, he minimized the importance of such statements as this (ibid, p. 45): "Of the 33 newspapers which took an editorial stand on the campaign, 22 gave a greater amount of front page coverage to the candidate they supported, another factor which appears significant."

Blumberg's decisions that certain papers gave "inconclusive" evidence of partiality seem open to question when one notes that classified with such papers was one which not only gave the Republicans twice as much space as the Democrats (Ike visited the city, says Blumberg) but published the following eight-column skyline over its name plate on page one: "Ike Will Arrive at Montgomery Stadium At 9:25 Tomorrow Morning; Let's Be There To Say 'Howdy.'" If doubt about such a paper existed, it would appear it might well have disappeared when it was found the paper also ran a three-column photo of Eisenhower with the caption: "The friendly, down-to-earth personality that has endeared Dwight D. Eisenhower to all America is reflected in this portrait. . ." (ibid, p. 48).

Robert Batlin, advancing the dual hypothesis that news bias did exist in 1952 campaign coverage but was not as great as in earlier campaigns (4), studied 3 San Francisco dailies from October 1 to election day, 1896, and for the same period in 1952. He chose, in each case, 3 papers with the largest circulations. Two of the 3 papers

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studied in 1896 -- the 2 which were Republican -- were still among the top 3 in 1952. The third, which supported Democratic nominee William Jennings Bryan in 1896, was replaced, by 1952, by a third GOP paper.

The method employed was that of analyzing "statements," as was used in the 1950 California Senate campaign study summarized above. The study also: covered all photos and their length in column inches, evaluated display, and included a qualitative analysis.

Batlin's hypothesis was supported by his findings. In 1896 the news coverage imbalance indexes ranged from 39.3 to 58.2, for the party editorially favored. In 1952 the imbalance index (average of the 3 papers) was down to 21.4. (In each case, in 1952, it was pro-GOP.) The 1950 California senatorial campaign's pro-Nixon index of imbalance (average of 12 papers), it is interesting to recall, was 29.2.

Batlin found that photo coverage in 1952 was 1,731 column inches for the GOP, and 825 column inches for the Democrats, but points out that this was less extreme than in 1896. The same is true of display favoritism.

Although Batlin found that the 1952 papers devoted less space than had the 1896 papers to campaign news and to campaign photos, there were indications that the quality of coverage improved. In 1896 41 per cent of all statements were favorable or unfavorable, and 59 per cent neutral; in

1952 84 per cent were neutral. In 1896 reporters and editors were the sources for 37.1 per cent of directional statements; in 1952 the figure was 12.6 per cent.

Also of interest (ibid., p. 303): foreign policy and national security, the second-ranking theme in 1952, accounted for almost 22 per cent of all directional material, but in 1896 it embraced only 6.11 per cent.

Malcolm W. Klein and Nathan MacCoby studied 8 dailies in 4 cities (a Republican and a Democratic paper in each city) for from October 1 through November 3, 1952. They examined only the front pages and inside page continuations of front page stories; only stories on the presidential candidates themselves were considered, and only photos referring to news stories already included. The analysis was both quantitative and qualitative. "Bias" was defined (27, p. 289) as "a differential, larger than could be expected by chance alone, between the proportional front-page coverage allotted the two candidates by the two sets of papers."

Klein and MacCoby found that 1) the 2 sets of papers gave the editorially supported candidate more coverage than the opposed candidate; 2) placement of stories and numbers of photos both reflected bias, although captions and cutlines were unbiased; and 3) in the total of 371 items included in the study, 519 biased remarks were found -- more often applying to the favored than to the opposed candidate. They added, however (ibid., p. 295), that "it should be care-

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fully noted that it has not been stated which set of papers was subject to more bias, nor what degree of bias exists. The type of analysis used does not permit the determination of such facts."

Granville Price studied campaign coverage by 8 dailies judged by a panel to include: 1 paper strongly GOP in news treatment, 2 mildly GOP, 3 balanced and 2 mildly Democratic. Their content was analyzed during a 2 week period chosen for its lack of any sensational political news on either side.

Price has reported (47) chiefly his method rather than his findings. He rejected equality of space, as an unrealistic ideal in the light of the varying newsworthiness of candidates, and advocated, instead, comparing different papers' handling of political campaign news. He sought to compare the reporting or non-reporting of 35 "events" (judged by an expert panel to be 11 Democratic and 24 Republican), by the 8 papers studied.

Price did not report in the article cited his findings regarding coverage or non-coverage of the 35 events, but did indicate (ibid., p. 456):

Partisan direction was assigned to 247 pictures: 93 Democratic and 154 Republican. This was a heavier Republican proportion than was found in news stories. Only one paper carried more Democratic than Republican pictures. The paper which readers had called strongly Republican had nearly four times as many Republican pictures as it did Democratic.

Arthur E. Rowse, a copy editor for the Boston Traveler, studied the way 31 of the largest U.S. dailies handled the story of Richard Nixon's year-'round political fund when that

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story broke during the 1952 campaign. Editor & Publisher called it the "biggest news break in the 1952 election campaign," and it was listed by Associated Press editors as one of the top 10 stories of 1952.

In a book entitled Slanted News (49), Rowse reported his findings of press bias. The 31 papers he studied (from September 18, the day the Nixon story broke, through September 28, the day a second story on the Stevenson fund disclosure reached its close) represented 27 per cent of total daily circulation in the U.S. The 31 were among the 37 top-circulation dailies; 6 of the 37 had been excluded because their publishers were already represented in the study, through other papers.

Rowse reported that the United Press distributed the Nixon story in time for most Thursday afternoon (September 18) papers to carry it. By early Thursday evening all press associations were carrying it. Rowse found, however, that only 4 of the 13 evening papers he studied put the story on page 1 that Thursday. One was the Chicago Daily News, carrying the Peter Edson column which broke the story (along with the New York Post and Los Angeles Daily News); the other 3 were the only 3 pro-Stevenson papers of the 31 studied. Four other papers ran the story inside Thursday afternoon, and 5 waited until Friday to pick it up. (All but 1 of the 13 papers had United Press service, and several had received Edson's column, according to Rowse.)

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Of the 18 morning papers studied, 8 ran the story Friday on page 1; 7 ran it Friday on an inside page, and 3 omitted the story altogether, 2 of them not running it on page 1 until Sunday.

In contrast, Rowse found that 26 of the 31 papers found the later Stevenson fund disclosure worthy of page 1 placement the same day that story broke. Rowse emphasized that papers which waited until the second day to carry the Nixon story tended to stress Republican rebuttals rather than the original charge. He concluded that of the 31 papers studied, only the New York Times was fair in its treatment of the 2 stories. In then proceeding to generalize about press bias, on the basis of his limited findings, Rowse left the realm of objective research.

1954: Congressional and Gubernatorial

Four Marquette University journalism graduate students studied coverage by the Milwaukee Journal and the Milwaukee Sentinel of the 1954 Kersten-Reuss race for Congress in the 5th District (in Milwaukee), and the Kohler-Proxmire race for the Governorship of Wisconsin, the same year. All 4 students planned Master's theses, and 3 of the theses (14, 59, 60) are summarized below. The fourth thesis, in which Thomas W. Brennan was to have analyzed the 2 papers' editorials relating to the 2 campaigns, is not available from the Marquette University Library.

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Robert H. Weber used a column inch method of analyzing coverage of both campaigns by both papers. For the period from September 15 (the day after the primary) to November 2, Weber studied the source (Democratic, Republican, neutral or editorial), the direction and the referents of news story column inches, news story leads and heads; he studied the positioning of stories (noting positions of stories on the first pages of the first and second sections of the 2 papers); and he noted pictures published. Coverage of a special congressional investigating committee bearing the name of the incumbent Republican Congressman (Kersten) was noted separately, as were the source and direction of "single source" stories (those in which all material was attributed to 1 source). Finally, he studied the reporting or non-reporting of events, noting stories appearing in one paper but not in the other.

In the gubernatorial race no stories regarding Governor Kohler's official activities were included; in the congressional race most stories relating to the incumbent Congressman's official activities were connected with the congressional committee mentioned above, and were tabulated separately. No stories about future speeches or events of any kind were included in the study -- an exclusion which the present writer feels was unjustified.

Weber reported (62) he found that in both races both papers gave more news coverage to the candidate editorially

avored. The Milwaukee Journal was pro-Democratic in most of Weber's numerous categories and sub-categories of coverage, and the Milwaukee Sentinel was pro-Republican in all of them. In 15 of 16 categories, the Sentinel was more strongly pro-Republican than the Journal was pro-Democratic.

For example: in the congressional race, 76.5 per cent of the Sentinel's relevant column inches were pro-Republican or anti-Democratic, and 15.5 per cent pro-Democratic or anti-Republican. Corresponding figures for the Journal were 52 per cent pro-Democratic or anti-Republican, and 38 per cent pro-Republican or anti-Democratic. Of the "single source" stories on the congressional race, 49 per cent of the Sentinel's were from GOP sources, and 15 per cent from Democratic sources; 32.5 per cent of the Journal's were from Democratic sources, and 29 per cent from GOP sources.

The one category in which the Democratic Journal's coverage was more lop-sided than that of the Republican Sentinel was reporting or non-reporting of events. The Journal omitted 19 GOP-source stories the Sentinel published (and only 6 of Democratic-source), whereas the Sentinel omitted only 18 Democratic-source stories the Journal published (and 6 of GOP-source).

Weber concluded that since the papers' coverage of the same events differed so consistently, both could not have been unbiased. He added (ibid., p. 79) that "it's

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possible both were wrong. The theoretical ideal of equal treatment was at least approached by the Journal in several ways. The Sentinel's coverage never approached equality."

John H. Crowley did a Bush type statement analysis (14) of the Journal's coverage of the 2 campaigns, and Richard J. Voelkel did the same type of study (59) of the Sentinel's coverage. Both studies included stories on the official (non-campaign) activity of the incumbent Congressman and incumbent Governor. Both students noted the sources, referents and direction of all statements.

The findings of the 2 statement analysis studies supported Weber's finding that the Sentinel gave the Republican candidates an even better break than the Journal gave the Democratic candidates. Crowley reported, for example, that in the Journal, 36.7 per cent of all relevant statements were pro-Democratic or anti-Republican, whereas 23.4 per cent were pro-Republican or anti-Democratic. Voelkel reported that of all relevant statements in the Sentinel, 47.6 per cent were pro-Republican or anti-Democratic, whereas but 12.7 per cent were pro-Democratic or anti-Republican. Crowley and Voelkel found that in virtually all categories of coverage, each paper's news coverage favored the candidates editorially favored.

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Robert Lasch, editorial writer for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, wrote in the November, 1956 issue of The Progressive magazine (30):

In the seven papers I read, Stevenson and the Democrats received top position on Page One **thirty** times during a two-week test period. Eisenhower and the Republicans received top position on Page One **forty-four** times. On the inside pages, Stevenson and the Democrats received top position **forty-eight** times during the same period. Eisenhower and the Republicans got it **ninety-five** times.

Was it coincidence, political bias, or the natural result of the 'ins' making more news? I leave it to you.

In addition to the rather hasty study reported above, there have been two more ambitious studies of 1956 campaign coverage published thus far.

James W. Markham and Guido H. Stempel, III, of the Pennsylvania State University School of Journalism, studied the October 1 to November 7 presidential campaign coverage of 24 representative Pennsylvania dailies. (Sunday issues were not included in the study.) The 24 papers included 18 which were pro-Eisenhower, 2 pro-Stevenson, and 4 neutral. Stories dealing with "non-campaign activities" of the President were not included. The campaign news output of the wire services reaching the 24 papers was also analyzed.

The number of column inches for each party, size and direction of headlines, issue frequency (22 issues were coded) and the number and size of pictures were noted.

Markham and Stempel reported (38) that the GOP was given 55 per cent of space, 56 per cent of headlines and that Democrats had 51 per cent of issue references. They added (ibid., p. 16): "For none of these three measures can we be sure that the State's [129] papers were not divided 50-50. The differences obtained from the sample may merely reflect normal fluctuations of a sample from its universe." Of photo space, they reported, Republicans had 65 per cent, and of front page space, 70 per cent. Also, a table included in their report (ibid., Table II, p. 19) reveals that of front page headlines wider than 2 columns, Republicans had 65 per cent.

Markham and Stempel concluded (ibid., p. 37) that: "The evidence, therefore, provided no [sic] basis for the hypothesis that the papers slanted and displayed the news in the direction of the political leanings of their editorial pages." They stated there was no significant difference between the two Stevenson papers' coverage and the 18 Eisenhower papers' coverage of the campaign, but also reported that the Stevenson papers gave the Democrats 49 per cent of space and the Eisenhower papers gave them but 45 per cent. (No such comparative totals of photo space in Stevenson and Eisenhower papers are given.) The findings for each of the 24 papers studied are listed, but the editorial preferences of the individual papers are not stated, so the reader may not see for himself what differences existed.

It should also be noted that Markham and Stempel reported (ibid., p. 30) that the output of the wire services was as a whole slightly Democratic in both space and issues. No suggestion is offered as to how or why that ratio became changed to 45 per cent Democratic space versus 55 per cent Republican space, in the 18 pro-Eisenhower papers studied.

The poor design of the Markham and Stempel study made almost inevitable their conclusion that there was no evidence that papers' editorial views affected news coverage. Disparity of coverage would have had to have been very great indeed before findings regarding a sample of 24 papers would have offered conclusive evidence that Pennsylvania's 129 dailies weighted their news coverage in the direction of editorial preferences. It can also be argued that -- even if the study design is accepted -- the authors' conclusion was unjustified when their own figures had revealed that in nearly every category of coverage the number of papers favoring the Republicans was much larger than the number favoring the Democrats. There is little likelihood that these repeated evidences of disparity of coverage reflected simply "normal fluctuations of a sample" from a universe characterized by parity of coverage.

Finally, Markham and Stempel's findings seem particularly questionable as a result of an article in Journalism Quarterly (37) in which they summarized the methodology of their study. Despite the fact that the pamphlet report of

their findings had clearly stated (38, p. 9) that "four measures of coverage were used" (column inches, display, frequency of themes, and size and direction of pictures), in the Journalism Quarterly article Markham and Stempel reported (37, p. 187) that "three measures of coverage were used."

"Results of the three content measures correspond closely despite some difference in the averages," they added (ibid., p. 189), completely ignoring the fact that there had been a fourth measure, and that it did not correspond closely. The fourth measure had indicated that Republican photo space was nearly double Democratic photo space (65 per cent Republican, 35 per cent Democratic).

Markham and Stempel found (38, p. 24) that "the defense issue. . . turned out to be the major issue of the campaign, getting almost exactly 25 per cent of the issue references for the papers studied. Foreign policy was second, getting almost 11 per cent, plus the 4 per cent that went to the Suez issue. . ."

William H. Taft, of the journalism faculty of the University of Missouri, studied October 1 through November 7 coverage by 5 Missouri dailies of the 1956 presidential campaign. His findings were reported in The Missouri Press News (56).

The 5 papers Taft studied included all 3 of the "independent" Missouri dailies, 1 of the 16 which supported

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Eisenhower, and 1 of the 13 which backed Stevenson. (It can thus be argued that the study was "loaded" in favor of parity of coverage, assuming that independent papers are ~~more~~ likely than editorially committed papers to offer evenly balanced campaign news coverage.)

Stories dealing with the 2 presidential and 2 vice-presidential candidates were measured and headlines noted. Photos, cartoons, editorials and letters to editors were also recorded -- and it was found that only 1 of the 5 papers studied published any letters concerning the campaign!

Taft's conclusion (ibid, p. 16) that "if these five newspapers are representative of the publications in Missouri, the 'one-party press' charge would have little place in our journalistic picture" is difficult to understand in the light of his own statement of findings. He found that the 3 independent papers and the pro-Eisenhower paper all published more Republican than Democratic news, and that the pro-Stevenson paper published more Democratic than Republican news. Of total column inches of campaign news in the 5 papers, 44 per cent dealt with both parties, 31.4 per cent with the Republicans, and 24.4 per cent with the Democrats. No headline figures were reported.

There will probably be additional studies of coverage of the 1956 campaign published within the coming year or two. One such possibility died aborning, however, when a proposal (26) by a group of researchers under the sponsor-

ship of Sigma Delta Chi and the Council on Communications Research (of the American Association for Education in Journalism) failed to elicit desired support from a selected group of publishers and editors. The proposal outlined an extensive study of press coverage of the 1956 presidential campaign.

Two other studies should be at least briefly mentioned. Charles Zuegner of the Elgin, Illinois Daily Courier-News reported (65) he found "political bias was definitely present in the coverage of the first 100 days of the Eisenhower Administration" in both a Democratic and a Republican paper (the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and the Kansas City Star). "Where the Star was sympathetic, the Post-Dispatch was critical." The staff of the Columbia University Bureau of Applied Social Research similarly found (57) considerable variation in the coverage of 9 New York City papers of the 1948 Edward U. Condon security case. Strongly Republican papers published a much higher percentage of statements critical of Condon, in their news stories on the case, than did Democratic and independent papers.

A review of the foregoing indicates that of some 17 reasonably scholarly studies of campaign coverage, 12 found that well over half the papers studied gave more news coverage to the candidate or party editorially favored. Thus the bulk of the findings of the "experts" would appear to support the 27 per cent of the nation's newspaper readers

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who feel (according to the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center) their newspapers do not give candidates of both parties a fair shake in the news columns (58, p. 1).

Most of the students whose work we have attempted to summarize agree that a 50-50 division of news space between opposing political candidates is an unrealistic ideal. An imbalance in space and/or number of stories, photos or headlines suggests the possibility of press bias, but does not prove its existence. Two approaches have therefore been used in attempting to escape the pitfalls of simply "counting inches." They have been the comparing of coverage statistics of papers of varying political points of view, and the use of the Bush method of comparing the percentages of favorable and unfavorable statements published about each of the candidates.

Despite increased use of these 2 criteria for the existence or nonexistence of "bias," however, there does seem to be a continuing assumption that an unhealthy situation arises when candidates of one political party are consistently given more news space, items, headlines and prominence than candidates of the other party.

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CHAPTER III

METHODS

Scope of the Study

Content analysis of hundreds of issues of newspapers, or of any other extensive communication material, is so time-consuming a task that rather severe limitations must be placed on the scope of a study such as the present one, if it is to be feasible for a single part-time researcher. In delineating the scope of the present study, it was first determined that it should be concerned with coverage of congressional rather than presidential or senatorial campaigns. Coverage of only one congressional campaign had been the subject of content analysis, and as suggested in chapter I, the very number of congressional campaigns means there are greater possibilities for comparison of newspaper performance under varying circumstances than is the case in regard to coverage of presidential campaigns.

The writer's greater familiarity with Michigan journalism and politics led to the choice of congressional districts in this rather than another state. It was felt desirable to choose "marginal" districts (districts in which the winning candidate has -- in at least one recent election -- won 55 per cent or less of the total vote), and to

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choose such districts outside the area of major circulation of the Detroit dailies.

In "safe" districts, of which each of the major parties have several in Michigan, press performance in the campaign presumably can have no decisive effect on the outcome of the election, and thus editors may have less incentive to slant their news coverage. In marginal districts, on the other hand, press performance might well affect the outcome.

For reasons stated below it was decided to code all issues of the papers to be studied, during the 6 week period selected. Thus it was concluded that congressional districts within the area of major circulation of the Detroit dailies should not be included in the study. (Within a given amount of time, more newspapers could be studied if the bulky Detroit dailies were excluded.) This decision knocked out 3 of the state's 7 marginal congressional districts (the 7th, north of Detroit, the 17th, in suburban Wayne County, and the 18th, Oakland County, to the west of Detroit). The 4 remaining marginal districts included 3 with Republican incumbents (the 9th, extending up the western edge of the Lower Peninsula, the 11th, comprising the eastern half of the Upper Peninsula and the northern tip of the Lower Peninsula, and the 12th, the western half of the Upper Peninsula), and 1 with a Democratic incumbent (the 6th, near the center of the Lower Peninsula). In order to include an incumbent of each party, the 12th and 6th congress-

sional districts were chosen for study. Neither district has a pro-Democratic daily newspaper, but neither do any of the other marginal districts in Michigan; the state's sole pro-Democratic daily, the Marshall Evening Chronicle, is located in a safely Republican congressional district.

Since we did not use a sampling procedure, we will not be justified in generalizing about the performance of all Michigan dailies on the basis of our findings. It was felt, however, that detailed description of press coverage of the campaigns in the 2 districts chosen would be more fruitful than a less detailed description of press coverage in a larger number of Michigan's 18 congressional districts. As the Markham and Stempel study (38) of 1956 campaign coverage by a sample of 24 of Pennsylvania's 129 dailies demonstrated (see above, pp. 35-38), there are inherent and apparently unavoidable pitfalls when sampling techniques are used in selecting papers for content analysis of campaign coverage. Disparity of coverage of Republican and Democratic candidates must be found to be very great, in a sample of papers, before the researcher can be reasonably assured that it accurately reflects coverage by the entire group of papers.

The 6th and 12th Congressional Districts

The three-county 6th district is one of the largest

in the state in terms of population (over 470,000, according to the 1950 census); the 12th district, which includes 8 counties, is one of the largest in area, but is the smallest by population (about 178,000, the 1950 census reported).

The 6th district is the home of more auto workers than any other congressional district in the country; General Motors plants are the backbone of industry in both Flint and Lansing, the district's 2 largest cities. About three-fourths of the population of the district lives in the Flint and Lansing metropolitan areas (roughly one-fourth in and around Lansing and about one-half in and around Flint). Lansing is located in Ingham County, which is still fairly safely Republican despite a rising Democratic vote in Lansing. Flint's large Democratic vote dominates Genesee County. The third, still predominately agricultural county, Livingston, is Republican by nearly 2 to 1.

The 6th District's incumbent congressman, in 1956, was Democrat Don Hayworth, a former Michigan State University (East Lansing) speech professor. He had been the Democratic nominee in 1952, but had lost to Republican Kit Clardy, who served in Congress during 1953-'54 in a manner which most observers felt helped elect Hayworth in 1954. In 1956 the Republican nominee was Charles E. Chamberlain, the young first-term prosecuting attorney in Ingham County.

- The "Catholic" and "Protestant" churches, which are
 very different, and which are not only different
 in their doctrines, but also in their practices, and
 in their organization, and in their history, and in
 their influence on the world, and in their relation
 to the state, and in their relation to the people, and
 in their relation to the future.

Hayworth had support from the leadership of the United Auto Workers, despite a widely publicized disagreement with the union over farm policy, and Chamberlain had quiet but effective support from corporation and bank officials.

The 6th district's 2 dailies are the Lansing State Journal (66,254 circulation), one of the 3 Federated Publications papers in Michigan and Indiana, and the Flint Journal (94,568 circulation), one of the Booth chain of 9 Michigan dailies. Each is read throughout its own county, and each is read in parts of Livingston County, where Detroit and Ann Arbor dailies also have considerable circulation.

The 12th district, part of Michigan's "North Woods," has in recent years had a chronic unemployment problem and a declining population as a result of the depletion of its best copper, iron and timber resources, which in earlier years afforded dependable employment for the Danish, Finnish, Cornish and Italian immigrants who populated the area in the 1890's and after. Mining, lumbering and the tourist trade are still the chief industries, for although the area is largely rural, agriculture is limited to dairying, potatoes and hay, and is of minor importance. Efforts to promote the economic development of the area are the focus for considerable political discussion within the district.

The 12th district's 4 dailies are located in the 3

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largest cities, Marquette (population 17,000), Ironwood (11,500), and Iron Mountain (9,700) and one of the largest villages, Houghton (3,800). The papers are the Marquette Mining Journal (14,527 circulation), the Ironwood Daily Globe (8,998), the Iron Mountain News (10,241), and the Houghton Daily Mining Gazette (10,317).

The district's Republican incumbent congressman, John Bennett, an Ontonagon attorney, was first elected in 1942, and has since then only once (in 1944) been defeated. His defeat was by his predecessor in Congress, Democrat Frank Hook, who was also the Democratic nominee against Bennett in 1946 and 1954. The Democratic candidate in 1956 was a young auto salesman from Ironwood, Joseph S. Mack, who had not had prior experience in government.

Definitions of Terms

Certain terms used in ensuing chapters are intended to have these definitions:

Item: a complete news or feature story, separate photo, editorial, cartoon, letter to the editor or advertisement which mentioned a local congressional candidate in more than 1 sentence, or which otherwise qualified for inclusion in this study (see coding instructions, page 118).

Pro-candidate item or headline: an item or headline which indicated praise or support for a local congressional candidate, without doing likewise for the candidate's opponent.

Neutral item or headline: an item or headline classified either to the Democratic or the Republican candidate but which indicated neither praise or support for him nor criticism or lack of support for him.

Anti-candidate item or headline: an item or headline which indicated criticism or lack of support for a local congressional candidate, without doing likewise for the candidate's opponent.

Balanced item or headline: an item or headline which contained "neutral" mention of both local congressional candidates, or "pro" mention of both of them, or "anti" mention of both of them; or a headline which mentioned neither local congressional candidate, by name or title, but appeared over an item included in this study. (In coding, such headlines mentioning neither candidate were designated as not directly relevant to a local congressional candidate nor to the congressional race.)

Headline: the entire heading over an item, including the secondary or sub-headline, if any, but not including any "article dividing line" headlines between paragraphs or sections of the item.

Multi-column headline: a headline at least part of which was more than 1 newspaper column in width.

Separate photo: a photo and caption published separately, and not as part of an adjoining news, feature or other item.

Single-candidate advertisement: a paid advertisement for

a local congressional candidate, or for such a candidate and the presidential candidate of his party, but which mentioned no other candidate of that party.

Multi-candidate advertisement: a paid advertisement which mentioned a local congressional candidate, but also listed various other candidates of his party.

Reference to an issue: mention (by word, phrase, or sentence) of an issue, in any item included in this study. The recording unit¹ was the complete item; thus any number of mentions of a single issue, in a single item, were recorded as 1 reference.

Policy issues: campaign appeals concerning specific questions which have been in recent years (or are now expected to be) subject to decision by government policy makers, particularly Congress. (Examples: social security benefits, foreign aid, farm price supports, civil rights legislation.) In coding, policy issues are classified as domestic policy issues or foreign policy issues.

Non-policy issues: campaign appeals other than policy issues; appeals based on personal attributes of candidates, identification with special interest groups or with other political figures, support for or opposition to certain

¹"The recording unit may be defined as the range of text for which the occurrence of a symbol is tabulated with the unit weight of 1, even if it occurs more than once in the specified text." Geller, Kaplan and Lasswell, 22, p. 362.

ideals, etc. (Examples: honesty, deception by opponent, support of or association with presidential or vice-presidential nominee of own party, support of farmer's interests.)

Hypotheses

The following 6 hypotheses were decided upon after a review of the findings of other studies of campaign coverage by daily newspapers. In addition, it was decided that data descriptive of the extent of congressional campaign coverage by 6th and 12th district dailies should be gathered and reported.

These hypotheses, taken together, advance the proposition that among the major determinants of newspaper coverage of political campaigns are predispositions on the part of newspaper staff members to focus attention on: 1) personalities and other, related "non-policy" matters, 2) incumbent candidates, who already have community status, and 3) candidates editorially supported by the paper. A fourth influence may also be at work, however, and may sometimes run counter to numbers 2 and 3: newspaper staff members may also -- consciously or otherwise -- want to avoid seriously offending the generally held political sentiments of the paper's readers.

Hypothesis 1

In daily newspaper non-advertising items less atten-

tion is devoted to congressional candidates' views (and in the case of incumbents, their voting records) on specific policy issues, than to non-policy issues of the campaign.

In The Art of Plain Talk, Rudolph Flesch reported (19, p. 48) that "Time magazine prides itself that 'our subscribers can understand the event in terms of the personality who caused it.'" Flesch expressed doubt that personalities really cause events but added (ibid.) that "there is no doubt about one thing: human interest makes for easier reading. Scientific tests have shown that people are better at reading about other people than about anything else." According to Flesch (ibid., p. 56), Time style contains about 8 personal references per 100 words. Thus it seems reasonable to hypothesize that daily newspapers too, like Time, tend to stress personalities. As 2 students of political communication have recently written (Lang and Lang, 29, p. 109):

In political life, the complexities of issues, the contests between conflicting messages, and such projective distrust as may result, place an undue premium on familiar qualities that can be directly experienced. 'Sincerity' and 'personal warmth' are among the traits. . .

This hypothesis is also advanced on the basis of the findings of the Ferguson and Smuckler study of newspaper coverage of 1952 senatorial campaigns in Wisconsin and Connecticut. Ferguson and Smuckler reported (18, p. 28) that policy issues appeared "much less frequently than non-policy themes in the press in both states." Only 28

per cent of all appeal items, Ferguson and Smuckler found, were policy issue appeals, although the percentage was higher (46 per cent) among candidate-originated appeal items. This is a matter of considerable importance, especially to those who believe independent voters should and to some extent do make their choices on the basis of candidates' views "on the issues." If but a small share of the content of newspaper coverage of congressional campaigns concerns candidates' views on important issues, then democratic theory may be quite remote from democratic practice.

Hypothesis 2

There is a relationship between the editorially expressed political preferences of daily newspapers and the extent of non-editorial,¹ non-advertising coverage given Democratic and Republican candidates for Congress by such newspapers, and this relationship is more pronounced in numbers of headlines, photographs and front-page items, than it is in total numbers of items, or in column inches.

As stated above, most past studies of political coverage have found that well over half the papers studied gave greater coverage to the political party editorially favored than to the party not favored.

A number of studies have found that disparity of

¹"Editorial" here refers only to newspaper editorials, and is not intended in the broader sense.

treatment is more pronounced in headlines, photographs and front-page items. Higbie, for example, in his study of front-page coverage of the 1952 presidential campaign by 14 Wisconsin dailies (of which only 1 was editorially pro-Democratic) found (23, p. 56) that ". . . although major Democratic and Republican national figures were accorded very nearly the same amount of front page space. . . when the top heads in size and placement were surveyed as to candidate preference based on this nearly equal balance, Eisenhower and Nixon subject matter heads in top position held a revealing 63 to 37 per cent lead."

To cite another example, in the 1956 Markham and Stempel study of the performance of 24 Pennsylvania dailies (only 2 of them pro-Democratic) it was found (37, p. 16) that the greatest disparity of coverage was in photo space, of which the GOP was given 65 per cent. The same study found that although the GOP was given but 56 per cent of all headlines, it had 65 per cent of all front page directional heads wider than 2 columns, and 70 per cent of front page photo space. Thus it is felt to be of interest and significance to seek data on whether coverage of congressional campaigns is weighted for the side editorially favored, and most heavily weighted in terms of headlines, photos and front-page items.

Hypothesis 3

There is a positive relationship between congressional

al incumbency and the extent of coverage given congressional candidates in daily newspapers.

This hypothesis is based on general knowledge of the news-making advantages of being "in". Also, Ferguson and Smuckler found (18, p. 72) that ". . .the Connecticut Democrats received more favorable references than their Republican opponents in what was an editorially Republican press." The Democratic candidates for the 2 Connecticut Senate seats were both incumbents in a sense: one was an incumbent senator, and the other an incumbent congressman, with many of the advantages of an incumbent senator's status. As we have suggested above, the Ferguson and Smuckler Connecticut findings clearly point to the greater coverage which can generally be expected to be given an incumbent over a non-incumbent, party affiliations aside. It is felt to be worthwhile to test whether this incumbency advantage applies at the congressional candidate level, and what effect it has when the incumbent is not editorially favored.

Hypothesis 4

There is a relationship between the editorially expressed political preferences of daily newspapers and the direction of opinion regarding Democratic and Republican congressional candidates expressed in letters to the editor columns of such newspapers.

Only 1 of the published reports of campaign coverage

studies has offered data on this point; thus it seems desirable to investigate whether there is a tendency in selection of letters, as reportedly there is in selection of news, to favor the party favored editorially. The one report of a break-down by political direction of letters to the editors has been quoted above (Editor & Publisher, 46, p. 10); the Baltimore Sun reported having published Republican and Democratic letters in almost exactly the same ratio as the people of Maryland cast their votes in the presidential campaign of 1952 (Eisenhower-Nixon letters were 56.3 per cent of the total published, and their votes were 55.8 per cent of the Maryland total). The Sun editors did not indicate whether they attributed the close parallel to their own intuitive selection of letters or simply to the ratio of Republican to Democratic letters received.

Hypothesis 5

There is a relationship between Michigan congressional candidates' party affiliations and the extent to which, in their paid advertising, references are made to specific policy issues.

Ferguson and Smuckler reported (18, pp. 31-32) that "analysis of the individual senatorial campaigns in the press of each state [Wisconsin and Connecticut] does not show the Democratic candidates to be consistently more policy issue oriented than their Republican opponents." Nevertheless in 3 of 4 cases they reported, Democratic can-

didate advertisements did stress policy issues considerably more than did Republican candidate advertisements. (And in news items, in 2 of 3 cases the Democrats stressed policy issues more than did the Republicans.) It is the writer's belief, based on personal observation, that the Democratic Party in Michigan is considerably more policy issue-oriented than are either of the parties nationally, or in most other states. The hypothesis is thus intended to test the assertion by many leading Michigan Democrats that they and their candidates are more concerned than are their opponents with policy issues.

Hypothesis 6

There is a relationship between the relative local strength of the Democratic and Republican parties and the extent of coverage given Democratic and Republican candidates for Congress in daily newspapers: the greater the local strength of the party of a candidate who is editorially opposed, the more nearly equally divided is the coverage.

The earliest indication of possible support for this hypothesis was in the report of Stene's study of 1936 presidential campaign coverage by 21 dailies. Stene found (53, p. 214) that all but 1 of the 21 papers gave a majority of news space to the candidate supported editorially. The one exception was a pro-Republican paper in a strongly Democratic city.

More recently, Kobre found (28), in his study of 34 Florida dailies' coverage of the 1952 presidential campaign, that although 21 of them were pro-Eisenhower, most of the pro-Eisenhower papers did not give Eisenhower more news space than Stevenson. Kobre's findings might be interpreted as supporting this hypothesis; clearly, more evidence pro or con would be of interest.

Methodology

It was determined that all the content of all issues of the 6 papers during the 6 weeks should be examined, lest a few lengthy or important articles be missed. This was felt to be especially important in connection with Hypothesis 1, concerning the amount of attention given candidates' views on policy issues. A paper might have given lengthy coverage to candidates' views on policy issues in a single feature story, and such an item might have been missed if only a sampling of issues of the paper had been examined.

Specially prepared punch cards similar to McBee Key-Sort cards were used in recording data; 1 card was used for each item coded. (A sample card may be found in the appendix.) The date of the item and its length in column inches was written on the card. Punches recorded the remainder of the desired data, with the exception of the details of certain issues, which were also written on the card. The code and coding instructions are included in

the appendix.

The writer did all the coding, thus limiting possible biases to his own. He followed as closely as possible the coding instructions which are included in the appendix. All newspaper items which might include mention of a congressional candidate were scanned, even though the headline did not suggest relevancy. An item was coded if it included mention of a local congressional candidate in more than 1 sentence, or if it qualified in certain other ways listed in the coding instructions. A reliability check was run on the entire contents of 5 per cent of the newspaper issues; results are reported below.

The basic coding unit was the item, or complete news or feature story, separate photo, editorial, cartoon, letter to the editor or advertisement. A statement analysis along the lines of the Bush method employed in the 1950 California senatorial campaign coverage study might also have been desirable, but was not used on grounds of economy of time and effort. Waples and Berelson (60, p. 17), and more recently several others, have advised that the close parallel between the direction of sentences and the direction of whole articles "suggests the greater economy of classifying content in the large, rather than in detail."

In coding of issues, however, the coding unit was the reference to an issue: the mention, by word, phrase, or sentence, of a policy or non-policy issue. Within a single

newspaper item, repeated references to the same issue were not counted again; thus either a bare mention of social security or 3 paragraphs on it was counted as a single reference to social security (a policy issue).

Reliability

A reliability check was run on the entire contents of 12 newspaper issues, 5 per cent of the total of 228 newspaper issues examined in the study. The 12 issues were completely re-examined by a journalism graduate student (Coder B) who favors the political party not favored by the writer (Coder A).

Inclusion of items

Coders A and B were in agreement on inclusion or non-inclusion of 99.99 per cent of the content (measured in column inches) of the 12 issues.

TABLE 1

INCLUSION AND NON-INCLUSION, BY CODERS A AND B,
OF THE CONTENT OF 12 NEWSPAPER ISSUES

Per cent of content coded as relevant by both A and B	.47
Per cent of content coded as relevant by neither A nor B	99.52
Per cent of content coded as relevant by A but not by B	.00
Per cent of content coded as relevant by B but not by A	.01
Total:	100.00

Coder B coded as relevant 13 items which had been similarly coded by Coder A. He also coded as relevant, however, 2 items (both of them Republican candidate advertisements) totalling $3\frac{1}{2}$ column inches, which had escaped notice by Coder A. (Advertisements are more easily missed than other items, in the writer's opinion, because -- since congressional candidate ads seem consistently crowded and lacking in white space -- advertisement headlines are less readily noticed than news, feature and other headlines.)

If Coder A missed a proportionate number of column inches of advertising in the 216 issues not re-examined by Coder B, then a total of 70 column inches of advertising (both single-candidate and multi-candidate) was missed by Coder A. Seventy inches constitutes less than 3 per cent

of the total of 2,705 column inches of advertising coded by Coder A.

Coder A's measurement of the 13 items coded as relevant by both coders totalled $245 \frac{5}{8}$ column inches; Coder B's total for the 13 items was $245 \frac{1}{2}$.

Direction

Berelson (6, p. 173) attributes to Albert Reiss the suggestion that a distinction can be made between "gross reliability," applying to all the coded categories, and "net reliability," applying only to those categories, often cumulations, used in the report of a content analysis.

The "net reliability" figure for directional coding of the 13 items coded by both coders in the present study is 100 per cent. The "gross reliability" figure is 88 per cent. (In coding the 13 items there were 26 decisions to be made as to direction: the direction of the body of each of the 13 items, and the direction of the headline of each of them. On 23 of these decisions the coders were in agreement. Twice the coders disagreed as to whether an advertisement headline should be coded as "pro-Republican" or "neutral Republican," and there was a third case of such disagreement over a Democratic advertisement headline. The pro-Republican, neutral Republican and anti-Democratic figures have been combined in our report of findings, and likewise the pro-Democratic, neutral Democratic and anti-

Republican figures. Thus "net reliability" of directional coding remains 100 per cent.)

Issues

There was 100 per cent agreement between coders as to whether references to issues were to policy or to non-policy issues (i.e. no issue reference was coded as "policy" by one coder and as "non-policy" by the other), and 79 per cent agreement as to the words, phrases and sentences to be coded as references to particular issues. Of 52 references to issues coded by one or both coders, 41 were identically coded by coders A and B.

TABLE 2

CODING OF CAMPAIGN ISSUES
BY CODERS A AND B

	Policy issues		Non-policy issues		All is- sues
	Domestic policy	Foreign policy	Personal	Others	
Identically Coded by A and B	8	3	14	16	41
Coded only by A	0	2	2	1	5
Coded only by B	1	0	5	0	6
Totals	9	5	21	17	52
Per cent of issues iden- tically cod- ed by A & B	89	60	67	94	79

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The 6 newspapers studied devoted an average of 199.5 column inches each to all non-advertising items about either (or both) local congressional candidates, during the 6 weeks ending with election day. This is roughly equivalent to one and one-eighth eight-column newspaper pages, or 9 full length columns.

In addition, the 6 papers published an average of 274 column inches each of advertising for the Republican candidate, and an average of 176.9 column inches each of advertising for the Democratic candidate.

There was a wide variation between papers in the number of news stories published, with less variation in the numbers of feature stories and of photographs published. In 5 of the papers news stories were the most numerous items; an average of 12.6 were published in each of the 6 papers during the 6 weeks. Feature stories averaged 4.3 per paper during the 6 weeks, and separate photos, 3.8. Photos accompanying news or feature stories averaged 1.8 per paper during the 6 weeks.

Three of the 6 papers ran no editorials on the local congressional candidates, and 4 papers ran no letters to

the editor pertaining to such candidates. The average paper published 22.6 non-advertising items of all kinds about local congressional candidates (not including 1.8 photos accompanying news or feature stories).

TABLE 3

NON-ADVERTISING ITEMS PUBLISHED ABOUT
LOCAL CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES^a

	News Stories	Feature Stories	Separate Photos	Editorials	Letters to Editors	Total of Non-Adv. Items	Photos Accompanying News or Feature Stories ^b
<u>Lansing State Journal</u>	29	4	5	0	0	38	5
<u>Flint Journal</u>	19	4	2	0	3	28	4
<u>Houghton Daily Mining Gazette</u>	9	3	1	0	0	13	0
<u>Iron Mountain News</u>	4	3	2	2	0	11	0
<u>Marquette Mining Journal</u>	7	8	7	3	1	26	1
<u>Ironwood Daily Globe</u>	8	4	6	2	0	20	1
Average of all 6 newspapers	12.6	4.3	3.8	1.1	.6	22.6	1.8

^aIncluding 13 items not directly related to the campaign, 12 of which dealt with incumbent congressmen's activities as congressmen.

^bSuch photos are not counted as separate items, but their number is nevertheless significant.

Four of the 6 papers devoted more non-advertising space to sports, in a typical weekday issue, than to both local congressional candidates during the entire 6 weeks. (Typical issue sports content was computed by averaging, for each paper, the sports content column inch totals for 3 issues chosen at random from among the 30 weekday issues studied.) The average paper devoted 236.9 column inches to sports, in a typical weekday issue, and 199.5 column inches to the 2 congressional candidates during the entire 6 weeks.

TABLE 4

NON-ADVERTISING COLUMN INCHES DEVOTED TO LOCAL
CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES,^a AND TO SPORTS

	Column inches, non-adv. coverage of both cong'l candidates, entire 6 weeks	Column inches, non-adv. coverage of sports, one typical weekday
<u>Lansing State Journal</u>	<u>295.7</u>	259.4
<u>Flint Journal</u>	192.9	<u>317.6</u>
<u>Houghton Daily Mining Gazette</u>	87.6	<u>132.0</u>
<u>Iron Mountain News</u>	124.1	<u>211.7</u>
<u>Marquette Mining Journal</u>	<u>243.0</u>	219.0
<u>Ironwood Daily Globe</u>	253.6	282.0
Average of all 6 papers	199.5	<u>236.9</u>

^aIncluding items not directly related to the campaign.

The average paper thus devoted over 17 per cent more non-advertising space, in 1 typical weekday issue, to coverage of sports than it devoted to coverage of both local candidates for Congress during the 6 final weeks of the campaign.

During the 6 weeks the 6 papers ran a total of 138 headlines (counting a head and sub-head as 1) over non-advertising items about 1 or both of the congressional candidates. (The apparent discrepancy between the total of 138 headlines and the total of 136 non-advertising items is due to 2 inside page continuation headlines.) Of those 138 headlines, only 75, or 54 per cent, included (in either the head or sub-head) a direct reference to either of the candidates, by name or title, or to the congressional campaign. Thus nearly half of the items published were not at first glance recognizable as dealing (at least partially) with congressional candidates.

In both districts the Republican candidate ran more advertising than the Democrat, and single candidate ads were far more numerous, and larger, than multi-candidate ads. The 12th District candidates, with 4 dailies in which to advertise, ran about 4 times as much advertising as the 6th District candidates (who had but 2 dailies in which to advertise).

and the other two are in the same line as the first one.
The first one is in the same line as the first one.
The second one is in the same line as the first one.
The third one is in the same line as the first one.
The fourth one is in the same line as the first one.
The fifth one is in the same line as the first one.
The sixth one is in the same line as the first one.
The seventh one is in the same line as the first one.
The eighth one is in the same line as the first one.
The ninth one is in the same line as the first one.
The tenth one is in the same line as the first one.

(continued)

TABLE 5
CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATE ADVERTISEMENTS

	Democratic				Republican			
	Single Cand.		Multi-Cand.		Single Cand.		Multi-Cand.	
	Number of ads	Column inches	Number of ads	Column inches ^a	Number of ads	Column inches	Number of ads	Column inches ^a
<u>Lansing State Journal</u>	0	0	2	1.5	5	94	3	15.7
<u>Flint Journal</u>	13	199.8	4	18.7	9	130	0	0
Total, 6th District	13	199.8	6	20.2	14	224	3	15.7
<u>Houghton Daily Mining Gazette</u>	6	188	4	2.7	6	317	7	13.6
<u>Iron Mountain News</u>	8	211.3	1	.5	6	312	1	7.2
<u>Marquette Mining Journal</u>	7	218.5	2	2.2	5	317.5	3	17.2
<u>Ironwood Daily Globe</u>	5	216.5	1	1.8	7	409	2	11.1
Total, 12th District	26	834.3	8	7.2	24	1355.5	13	49.1

^aColumn inches of only those portions of multi-candidate advertisements which dealt with the congressional candidate exclusively.

In the following 6 sections are reported our findings relevant to each of the 6 hypotheses first stated in chapter III.

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Hypothesis 1

In daily newspaper non-advertising items less attention is devoted to congressional candidates' views (and in the case of incumbents, their voting records) on specific policy issues, than to non-policy issues of the campaign.

The hypothesis is supported by our findings regarding 5 of the 6 papers, as indicated in Table 6. Five of the 6 papers published more items in which only non-policy issues were referred to than items in which policy issues were referred to. The average paper published 5 policy issue items, 12 non-policy issue items, and 5.6 items in which no issues were referred to. (Such items often simply announced future speeches or party meetings.) It is noteworthy that in the case of the one exception, the Lansing State Journal, the total of items in which no issues were referred to exceeded the total of items in which references were made either to policy or non-policy issues.

TABLE 6

NON-ADVERTISING ITEMS^a REFERRING TO POLICY,
TO NON-POLICY AND TO NO ISSUES

	Items re- ferring to policy issues	Items re- ferring to non-policy issues only	Items referring to no issues
<u>Lansing State Journal</u>	13	5	20
<u>Flint Journal</u>	6	12	10
<u>Houghton Daily Mining Gazette</u>	1	11	1
<u>Iron Mountain News</u>	1	10	0
<u>Marquette Mining Journal</u>	3	21	2
<u>Ironwood Daily Globe</u>	6	13	1
Average of all 6 newspapers	5	12	5.6

^aIncluding items not directly related to the campaign.

Table 6 might conceal the fact that a newspaper gave lengthy coverage to candidates' views on a wide range of national policy issues, in but a few items, despite the fact that most items did not contain references to such views. Table 7 has been compiled, therefore, in order to explore that possibility. The unit in Table 7 is the reference to an issue rather than the entire newspaper item, which is the unit in Table 6.

The data presented in Table 7 support the hypothesis even more strongly than that presented in Table 6. Here

all 6 of the papers are seen to have published fewer references to policy issues than to non-policy issues. The average paper published nearly 5 times as many references to non-policy issues as to policy issues.

Table 7, it will be noted, indicates that only 4 references were made, in all 136 non-advertising items coded, to foreign policy issues. These 4 were very brief, sloganized references to support for Eisenhower's foreign policy (2 references), support for his Middle East policies, and support for a strong U.S. defense.

TABLE 7

REFERENCES TO POLICY AND NON-POLICY ISSUES
IN NON-ADVERTISING ITEMS^a

	References to policy issues		References to non-policy issues
	Foreign Policy	Domestic Policy	
<u>Lansing State Journal</u>	3	22	44
<u>Flint Journal</u>	1	7	39
<u>Houghton Daily Mining Gazette</u>	0	5	28
<u>Iron Mountain News</u>	0	5	51
<u>Marquette Mining Journal</u>	0	7	79
<u>Ironwood Daily Globe</u>	1	12	64
Average of all 6 papers	.8	9.7	50.8

^aIncluding items not directly related to the campaign.

Hypothesis 2

There is a relationship between the editorially expressed political preferences of daily newspapers and the extent of non-editorial,¹ non-advertising coverage given Democratic and Republican candidates for Congress by such newspapers, and this relationship is more pronounced in numbers of headlines, photographs and front-page items, than it is in total numbers of items, or in column inches.

In compiling the data relevant to this hypothesis, the following items were omitted from consideration: a) all items classified as balanced, since they could not readily be objectively judged to favor either candidate (the numbers of balanced items have nevertheless been listed in Table 8, for whatever light they may shed on overall press campaign performance); b) all items not directly related to the campaign, all but 1 of which were reports of "non-partisan" announcements or actions by the 2 incumbent congressmen, and thus were presumably published as part of the newspapers' coverage of government rather than as part of campaign coverage; and c) obviously, all editorials and all advertisements. As stated in chapter III, anti-Democratic items are counted as Republican, and anti-Republican, as Democratic.

¹"Editorial" here refers only to newspaper editorials, and is not intended in the broader sense.

No distinction is made between the political preferences of the 6 newspapers, for it was found that 5 of them gave outright or tacit endorsements to both Eisenhower and the Republican candidate for Congress (there were 4 outright endorsements of Eisenhower and 2 outright endorsements of GOP congressional candidates¹). The sixth paper, the Houghton Daily Mining Gazette, editorially favored, just short of tacit endorsement, both Eisenhower and the GOP candidate for Congress, even though it gave an outright endorsement only to the GOP candidate for the State Senate. Thus all 6 newspapers are classified as pro-Republican in editorial policy.

Our findings support to a considerable extent the first portion of the hypothesis. The 6 papers published 52 items on the 2 Republican candidates for Congress, and 37 items on the 2 Democratic candidates²; thus the Republicans were favored over the Democrats by 58 per cent to

¹One of the papers which gave what must be termed an outright endorsement to the Republican candidate for Congress was the Lansing State Journal, which we have not reported as having published an editorial on either congressional candidate. On November 4 the State Journal called for the election of "a congress containing a majority of Republicans in both the house of representatives and the senate," but made no reference to either of the local congressional candidates, by name or title. Thus the editorial was not counted as an item for the purposes of this study. The Ironwood Daily Globe was the second paper which made an outright endorsement of a congressional candidate; it specifically endorsed the Republican candidate.

²Excluding balanced items, items not directly related to the campaign, editorials and advertisements.

42 per cent. Five of the 6 papers published more items on the Republican candidate than on the Democratic candidate; the sixth paper (the Iron Mountain News) published 2 items on each of the candidates. The ratio varied from 15 items (Republican) to 14 items (Democratic) in the Lansing State Journal, to 6 (R) to 1 (D) in the Houghton Daily Mining Gazette. The average ratio, for all 6 papers, was 8.6 (Republican) to 6.1 (Democratic).

(It should be noted in passing that of items not directly related to the campaign, the average 12th District paper published 2.7 about the incumbent Republican Congressman, whereas the average 6th District paper published but .5 about the incumbent Democratic Congressman.)

The 6 papers published 447.6 column inches on the 2 Republican candidates, and 297.8 column inches on the 2 Democratic candidates¹; thus the Republicans were favored over the Democrats by 60 per cent to 40 per cent. Three of the 6 papers published from nearly twice as many to over 10 times as many column inches on the Republican as on the Democrat; the column inch totals of the other 3 papers favored the Democrats by much smaller margins. The average ratio, for all 6 papers, was 74.6 column inches (Republican) to 50.7 column inches (Democratic).

¹Excluding balanced items, items not directly related to the campaign, editorials and advertisements.

Data presented in Table 10 (p. 83) is also highly relevant here. By comparing treatment accorded Democratic and Republican incumbents, and Democratic and Republican non-incumbents, it was found that in 4 of 5 categories the Republicans fared better regardless of incumbency or non-incumbency. In items, column inches, headlines and photos, the Republicans received higher percentages of total coverage than the Democrats. Only in percentages of front page items did the Democratic incumbent lead the Republican incumbent, and the Democratic non-incumbent the Republican non-incumbent.

TABLE 8

TREATMENT ACCORDED LOCAL DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN
CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES

	Dem. & anti-GOP items	Balanced items	GOP & anti-Dem. items	Dem. & anti-GOP column inches	Balanced column inches	GOP & anti-Dem. column inches	Dem. & anti-GOP headlines ^b	Balanced headlines	GOP & anti-Dem. headlines	Dem. & anti-GOP photos ^c	Balanced photos ^c	GOP & anti-Dem. photos ^c	Dem. & anti-GOP front page items	Balanced front page items	GOP & anti-Dem. front page items	
<u>Leasing State Journal</u>	14	7	15	113.9	56	113.5	10	21	6	5	0	5	4	1	0	8
<u>Flint Journal</u>	10	7	11	70	55.2	67.4	3	22	3	4	0	3	1	0	0	15
<u>Houghton Daily Mining Gazette</u>	1	2	6	2.5	26.3	27.7	0	3	6	0	0	1	0	0	2	29
<u>Iron Mountain News</u>	2	3	2	25.3	44.2	10	2	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	39
<u>Marquette Mining Journal</u>	8	6	9	60.6	52.5	114.6	1	12	6	3	0	5	1	1	1	49
<u>Ironwood Daily Globe</u>	2	2	9	25.2	24.5	114.4	0	10	3	2	0	4	0	0	2	59
Average of all 6 newspapers	6.1	4.5	8.6	50.7	43.3	74.6	2.6	12.5	4.3	2.6	0	3	1	.3	.8	
Per cent of category, total of 6 papers	22	25	45	70	26	44	13	63	22	47	0	53	46	15	39	

(See next page for Table 8 footnotes.)

^aThis table excludes items not directly related to the campaign, editorials and advertisements.

^bApparent discrepancies between totals of items and totals of headlines are due to inside page continuation headlines.

^cBoth separate photos and those accompanying other items (news or feature stories).

TABLE 9

TREATMENT ACCORDED LOCAL DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN
CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES, EXCLUDING
BALANCED ITEMS^a

	Dem. & anti-GOP items		GOP & anti-Dem. items		Dem. & anti-GOP col. inches		GOP & anti-Dem. col. inches		Dem. & anti-GOP headlines		GOP & anti-Dem. headlines		Dem. & anti-GOP photos ^b		GOP & anti-Dem. photos ^b		Dem. & anti-GOP front page items		GOP & anti-Dem. front page items	
Per cent of category, total of all 6 papers	42	58	40	60	36	64	47	53	55	45										
Per cent of category, total of 26th Dist. papers ^c	48	52	50	50	59	41	53	47	100	0										
Per cent of category, total of 412th Dist. papers	33	67	30	70	15	85	41	59	17	83										

^aThis table also excludes items not directly related to the campaign, editorials and advertisements.

^bBoth separate photos and those accompanying other items (news or feature stories).

^cThe Lansing State Journal and the Flint Journal.

It will be noted that the 2 larger circulation papers (the Lansing State Journal and the Flint Journal), in the Democratic-incumbent 6th Congressional District, published nearly exactly the same number of items and column inches about each of the candidates, in contrast to the 4 smaller circulation papers in the Republican-incumbent 12th Congressional District. (In front page items, headlines and photographs, the 6th District papers favored the Democrat somewhat, although the Republican was slightly favored in total items; the column inches were almost exactly evenly divided.) Despite the fact that Ironwood was the home of the 12th District Democratic candidate, the Ironwood Daily Globe did not publish a single news story about him. It published 2 items (both separate photos) about him, and 9 items about his incumbent Republican opponent. (It should be remembered that the latter figure does not include those "not directly related to the campaign" items about the Republican -- there were 5 of them -- which are attributable to his incumbency). The Houghton Daily Mining Gazette published but 1 item about the Democratic candidate (a 2.5 inch news story) and 6 about the Republican. The Iron Mountain News, on the other hand, published 2 items about each of the candidates, and in column inches favored the Democrat by better than 2½ to 1.

As the percentage figures at the bottom of Table 8 and in Table 9 indicate, our findings do not support the

second part of the hypothesis, concerning greater disparity of treatment of the 2 candidates in numbers of headlines, photographs, and front-page items. Although the 12th District papers did favor the Republican more strongly in number of front page items and number of headlines than they did in number of items and number of column inches, their photo coverage favored the Republican less strongly than their item and column inch totals. And in the 6th District, the Democratic candidate was given a 5 to 0 advantage in front page coverage, and slight advantages in numbers of headlines and photos, despite the very slight advantage given the Republican in total number of items published.

It is noteworthy that the numbers and the column inch totals of balanced items were, on the whole, far smaller than the numbers and column inch totals of directional items. Of the total of 27 balanced items (in all 6 papers), 18 were feature stories and 9 were news stories. Of the 9 balanced news stories, 5 appeared in the Lansing State Journal and 4 in the Flint Journal; none were published in the 4 12th District papers, which largely relied, for their balanced items, upon feature stories reprinted from the 3 Detroit dailies, each of which sent a political reporter to the 12th District to report on the congressional race there.

It may appear, from the figures in Table 8, that

both candidates were mentioned in most of the headlines, for the average paper ran 12.5 balanced headlines in contrast to 2.6 Dem. & anti-GOP headlines, and 4.3 GOP & anti-Dem. headlines. Of that average of 12.5 balanced headlines, however, an average of 9.5 were balanced simply because they directly referred to neither candidate, by name or title, nor to the congressional race (in either the head or sub-head).

Hypothesis 3

There is a positive relationship between congressional incumbency and the extent of coverage given congressional candidates in daily newspapers.

Our findings fully support the hypothesis with respect to every category of coverage. The scope of the study included an incumbent of each party and a non-incumbent of each party. As indicated in Table 10, the incumbent Republican fared better than the non-incumbent Republican in percentage of items¹, percentage of column inches, percentage of headlines, percentage of photos and percentage of front page items. Similarly, the incumbent Democrat fared better than the non-incumbent Democrat in each of these respects.

¹Both percentage of related items and percentage of items not directly related to the campaign.

TABLE 10

TREATMENT ACCORDED LOCAL INCUMBENT AND NON-
INCUMBENT CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES^a

	Democratic Candidates		Republican Candidates	
	Non-Incumbent (12th Dist.)	Incumbent (6th Dist.)	Non-Incumbent (6th Dist.)	Incumbent (12th Dist.)
Per cent of items, all papers in his District	33	48	52	67
Per cent of column inches, all papers in his District	30	50	50	70
Per cent of headlines, all papers in his District	15	59	41	85
Per cent of photos, ^b all papers in his District	41	53	47	59
Per cent of front page items, all papers in his District	17	100	0	83

^aThis table excludes balanced items, items not directly related to the campaign, editorials and advertisements.

^bBoth separate photos and those accompanying other items (news or feature stories).

It is also worthwhile to examine how items not directly related to the campaign were distributed among incumbent and non-incumbent candidates. Such items are of

considerable importance to the candidate, for they call his name to the attention of the voters in a more advantageous way than do items clearly connected with the campaign. Voters tend to build up resistance to claims and counterclaims obviously aimed at winning votes, but may be caught off-guard, and influenced, by items which appear to be "non-political," and thus more "reliable" indications of what the candidate is "really like."

Here, too, our findings support the hypothesis, for of the total of 13 items (in all 6 papers) which were not directly related to the campaign, 12 dealt with some aspect of the incumbent's conduct of his office. They reported his work in behalf of bringing natural gas to the district, or in furthering the district's industrial development, or his announcement of plans for a new post office building in the district, etc. In reality, of course, these items were not unrelated to the campaign; the incumbents may even have timed them so as to appear during the campaign period.

Of all items coded as not directly related to the campaign, the 2 incumbents had 110.7 column inches to their opponents' 7.7 column inches, 5 front page items to their opponents' 0 of same, and 8 headlines to their opponents' 1. The sole "not directly related" item about a non-incumbent candidate described remodelling of his office (the Ingham County Prosecutor's office in Lansing).

Hypothesis 4

There is a relationship between the editorially expressed political preferences of daily newspapers and the direction of opinion regarding Democratic and Republican congressional candidates expressed in letters to the editor columns of such newspapers.

As noted in the statement of findings relevant to Hypothesis 2, above, all 6 of the papers editorially supported -- to varying degrees -- the Republican candidates. Thus if Hypothesis 5 is to be supported, our findings should indicate that published pro-Republican-candidate (and anti-Democratic-candidate) letters outnumbered published pro-Democratic-candidate (and anti-Republican-candidate) letters.

Our findings are inconclusive. Only 4 letters to the editor concerning the congressional candidates or campaign were run by the 6 papers, during the entire 6 weeks. The Flint Journal ran 1 pro-Republican-candidate letter, 1 anti-Democratic-candidate letter, and 1 from the Republican candidate himself. Thus the findings concerning 1 paper support the hypothesis. Of the other 5 newspapers, however, only the Marquette Mining Journal published a letter to the editor relevant to either of the local congressional candidates, and it, by implication, was mildly critical of the incumbent Republican.

Hypothesis 5

There is a relationship between Michigan congressional candidates' party affiliations and the extent to which, in their paid advertising, references are made to specific policy issues.

Our findings support the hypothesis. The 2 Democratic candidates made more references to policy issues, in their advertisements, and relatively fewer references to non-policy issues, than did the 2 Republican candidates. (Only single-candidate advertisements are held to be relevant here, inasmuch as multi-candidate advertisements are usually prepared and paid for by party committees rather than by the congressional candidates or their own campaign committees. Table 12, below, reports separately the numbers and references to issues of multi-candidate advertisements which mentioned a congressional candidate.)

In the 6th Congressional District, of references to issues in the Democratic candidate's advertisements, 42 per cent were to policy issues. Of references to issues in the 6th District Republican candidate's advertisements, only 11 per cent were to policy issues.

In the 12th Congressional District, of references to issues in the Democratic candidate's advertisements, 37 per cent were to policy issues; of references to issues in the Republican candidate's advertisements, 23 per cent were to policy issues.

It is noteworthy that foreign policy issues were almost wholly ignored in the candidate advertisements. Of the 173 single-candidate advertising references to policy issues, only 6 were to foreign policy issues, and of those 6, 4 were simple references to "peace" by the 6th District Republican candidate. Two were references to support for "funds to fight international Communism," by the 6th District Democratic candidate. Neither of the 12th District candidates ever mentioned foreign policy issues in their advertisements. The most frequently mentioned policy issue, in advertisements in both districts, was liberalization of social security benefits.

TABLE 11
SINGLE CANDIDATE ADVERTISEMENTS

	Democratic Candidate			Republican Candidate		
	Number of ads	Ref's to Pol. Issues	Ref's to Non-Policy Issues	Number of ads	Ref's to Policy Issues	Ref's to Non-Policy Issues
<u>Lansing State Journal</u>	0	0	0	5	2	12
<u>Flint Journal</u>	13	32	45	9	2	20
Total, 6th District	13	32	45	14	4	32
<u>Houghton Daily Mining Gazette</u>	6	23	32	6	14	40
<u>Iron Mountain News</u>	8	22	47	6	12	42
<u>Marquette Mining Journal</u>	7	21	32	5	12	41
<u>Ironwood Daily Globe</u>	5	23	43	7	12	38
Total, 12th District	26	89	154	24	50	161

TABLE 12
MULTI-CANDIDATE ADVERTISEMENTS

	Democratic			Republican		
	Number of Ads	Refs to Policy Issues	Refs to Non-Policy Issues	Number of Ads	Refs to Policy Issues	Refs to Non-Policy Issues
<u>Lansing State Journal</u>	2	0	0	3	1	10
<u>Flint Journal</u>	4	0	3	0	0	0
Total, 6th District	6	0	3	3	1	10
<u>Houghton Daily Mining Gazette</u>	4	0	0	7	0	5
<u>Iron Mountain News</u>	1	0	0	1	0	3
<u>Marquette Mining Journal</u>	2	0	0	3	1	10
<u>Ironwood Daily Globe</u>	1	0	0	2	2	8
Total, 12th District	8	0	0	13	3	26

^aReferences to issues anywhere in multi-candidate advertisements were counted if they seemed clearly intended to apply to the congressional candidate as well as to other candidates listed.

Hypothesis 6

There is a relationship between the relative local strength of the Democratic and Republican parties and the extent of coverage given Democratic and Republican candidates for Congress in daily newspapers: the greater the local strength of the party of a candidate who is editorially opposed, the more nearly equally divided is the coverage.

Our findings do not support the hypothesis. In Table 13 the 6 papers have been ranked, first according to the local strength of the Democratic Party, and secondly, according to percentage of campaign coverage space given the Democratic congressional candidate. A Spearmann rank order correlation coefficient has been computed, and found to be .20, not a significant degree of correlation.

TABLE 13

RANK ORDERS OF NEWSPAPERS ACCORDING TO
LOCAL DEMOCRATIC PERCENTAGE OF VOTE,
AND DEMOCRATIC PERCENTAGE OF SPACE

	Dem. % of vote ^a	Dem. % of space ^b	Difference in rank
<u>Ironwood Daily Globe</u>	1 (59%)	5 (18%)	4
<u>Iron Mountain News</u>	2 (55%)	1 (72%)	1
<u>Flint Journal</u>	3 (53%)	2 (51%)	1
<u>Marquette Mining Journal</u>	4 (52%)	4 (35%)	0
<u>Houghton Daily Mining Gazette</u>	5 (48%)	6 (8%)	1
<u>Lansing State Journal</u>	6 (43%)	3 (50%)	3

^aFor the Michigan Secretary of State, in the preceding election (1954), in the county in which the newspaper is published. The vote for Secretary of State is generally accepted as the best index of party strength, at least in Michigan at this time.

^bThe percentage is of total space given both Democratic and Republican Congressional candidates, excluding balanced items, items not directly related to the campaign, editorials and advertisements.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Perhaps it is not surprising that we have found the average paper, among the 6 studied, to have published fewer column inches on the local congressional campaign, in the entire 6 weeks, than it published on sports in a single, typical week-day issue. The chief purpose of most newspapers, after all, is not adult education, or evangelism in behalf of the democratic process, but the making of profit. Thus we can reasonably attribute the lack of more adequate coverage of congressional campaigns to the absence of a public demand strong enough to impress editors with the desirability of expending the time, money and effort required to more fully cover such campaigns. Yet at the same time, the writer heartily concurs with the advice James Russell Wiggins, now managing editor of the Washington Post & Times-Herald, offered fellow editors in 1942 (64, p. 165):

I would not leave out the news that is 'interesting', but I confess that newspapers as a whole have not made anywhere near the effort which society has a right to require of them to make the important news (that often is dully treated) just as interesting as the news which has inherent reader-appeal. Why isn't this done? Primarily because it is easier to exploit a story with obvious reader appeal than it is to exploit a story that requires painstaking work, varied sources of information, imagination and

inventiveness. Probably most newspapers lack sufficient personnel to treat public affairs as they should be treated. Time, long hours of it, must be added to basic intelligence, imagination and ingenuity, if much news in the field of public affairs is to be made as exciting in print as it is in fact . . . I think editors owe it to readers to do a lot more digging for the drama in the news about public affairs than they have in the past.

Perhaps if they exploited the state-house run with staffs as big as those on the sports desk, they would, in the course of decades, find the interest in public affairs as great as the interest in football. There would be no need to worry about the fate of a democracy should that condition come to pass. Perhaps it never will, but newspapers, in my opinion, should exert themselves a lot more to lead public attitudes in that direction.

Hypothesis 1

It was found that references to non-policy issues were nearly 5 times as frequent as references to policy issues. By way of comparison, Ferguson and Smuckler, in their study of senatorial campaigns in 2 states in 1952, found (18, p. 29) that "over 72 per cent" -- or nearly 4 to 1 -- "of the total appeal references were to non-policy themes of various types." Thus there is a possibility candidates and/or newspapers may feel called upon to stress policy issues somewhat more strongly ~~in a~~ campaign for the U.S. Senate than they do in a race for a seat in the House of Representatives. This is apparently most strongly the case in regard to attention devoted to foreign policy issues, for although Ferguson and Smuckler found (ibid., p. 32) that over 42 per cent of all policy issue references were to

foreign policy, our own finding in the present study was that less than 2 per cent of non-advertising references to policy issues were to foreign policy issues, and that just over 4 per cent of single-candidate advertisement references to policy issues were to foreign policy issues.

Here again, as in the matter of the paucity of overall coverage given these 2 congressional campaigns, the "explanation" appears to be simply a lack of any conviction on the part of editors that their readers are interested in congressional candidates' views on policy issues. (Candidates themselves are no doubt also partially responsible for the lack of emphasis on policy issues, but if editors wanted to publish policy issue material, reporters could easily turn up the candidates' views, or lack of them.) It's easier to write about candidate A's handsome smile and what long hours he campaigns than about his views on foreign policy, or -- if he's an incumbent -- how he voted last year on tidelands oil. In the absence of compelling reasons for covering such items as the latter 2, they are apparently very likely to be ignored.

Hypothesis 2

Five of the 6 newspapers studied, it was found, published more items on the Republican than on the Democratic candidate; 3 of the papers gave the Republican candidate more column inches, (Items "not directly related to the

campaign" were excluded from these totals, it should be remembered.) In the 6th Congressional District, the Republican had 52 per cent of all directional (other than neutral) items; in the 12th District, the Republican had 67 per cent.

We cannot soundly conclude, on the basis of these findings, that there necessarily was political bias, on the part of any editor or editors. The case which most strongly suggested the presence of bias was that of the 12th District Democratic candidate's home town daily (the Ironwood Daily Globe), which failed to publish a single news story about him. In that case it would appear there was either strong bias, or an incredible lack of initiative in developing local news possibilities.

In general, however, our findings relative to this hypothesis might be simply the result of chance and, in the 12th District, the result of an active, effective incumbent Republican congressman, experienced in producing news releases, being pitted against an inexperienced Democratic candidate unaware of the likeliest ways of breaking into print. There is, however, undeniable support, in our findings, for the possibility of bias in the direction of the editorial leanings of the paper involved. As the number of studies of congressional campaigns under varying circumstances grows perhaps we will have more conclusive evidence.

The writer suspects that further studies of other

congressional campaigns will confirm the second portion of Hypothesis 2 (concerning greater disparity of treatment of the 2 candidates in numbers of headlines, photographs and front page items than in totals of items and of column inches), even though our findings do not support it. The 6th District Democratic candidate's good showing in numbers of headlines, photos and front page items is largely attributable to the fact that in support of his candidacy there were 5 visits to major cities in the district by major national figures; the corresponding figure for his Republican opponent was 3. (For the Democrat, Stevenson visited Lansing and Flint, Kefauver visited Flint, and Governor Clement visited Lansing and Flint; for the Republican, Nixon visited Lansing and Flint, and Governor Dewey visited Flint.) On the basis of our findings, it can be assumed that if each of the candidates had been favored with 5 such visits by national figures, press coverage would have been weighted more heavily in favor of the Republican candidate.

In the 12th District, the Democratic candidate's better showing in photo coverage (41 per cent of total published) than in item or column inch totals (33 and 30 per cent, respectively), was the result of 3 of the 4 papers in the district publishing 2 pictures the candidate distributed: 1 of Mrs. Roosevelt and himself at breakfast, and 1 of Senator McNamara and himself talking with a patient in a local veterans hospital. Both the pictures were taken in the

district; both were highly newsworthy. Thus, in both the 6th and 12th districts, unusual circumstances (which helped the Democrats) accounted for the nature of our findings relative to the second part of Hypothesis 2.

It should be noted that the methods employed in the present study have not enabled us to report all indications of bias observed in campaign news coverage by the 6 papers involved. Among a number of such indications of bias not reported thus far, the most disturbing was a tendency on the part of the Lansing State Journal to publish single-source stories reporting Republican attacks on Democratic candidates, but to incorporate Republican rebuttals into all stories reporting Democratic attacks on Republicans.

Hypothesis 3

We found that in every category of coverage, the incumbent Republican fared better than the non-incumbent Republican, and the incumbent Democrat better than the non-incumbent Democrat. The reasons for this being the case are generally understood among newspapermen, politicians and political scientists: the incumbent has ready access to facts and speech material (his own paid staff, plus the services of the Legislative Reference Service of the **Library of Congress**); he has certain official announcements to

make and can regularly take official actions that are newsworthy; in addition to his paid staff he has official office and office machine allowances which make the mechanical aspect of the production of news releases less of a problem; and he speaks from a position of prestige.

In the light of our findings relative to the first part of Hypothesis 2, it is interesting to compare the relative importance in terms of extent of coverage of a candidate's being an incumbent vs. his being editorially favored by the newspaper concerned. Neither factor was found to be consistently more important, no matter which of a variety of ways of compiling figures was used. In total number of items, the 2 Republican candidates led the 2 Democrats by a wider margin than the 2 incumbents led the 2 non-incumbents. In total column inches, the Republicans led the Democrats by almost exactly the same margin by which the incumbents led the non-incumbents. In numbers of headlines and of photos the incumbents led the non-incumbents by considerably **wider** margins than the Republicans led the Democrats, and in numbers of front-page items, by a considerably wider margin than the Democrats led the Republicans.

Hypothesis 4

There is little to discuss regarding our findings on Hypothesis 4. The rarity of published letters to the editor about congressional campaigns clearly suggests that

editors haven't stirred up much interest in the subject, through either their news or their editorial columns.

Hypothesis 5

It was found that in both districts the Democratic candidate's advertisements contained a higher percentage of references to policy issues (as distinguished from non-policy issues) than did the Republican candidate's. Leaders of the Democratic Party in Michigan pride themselves on what they term their Party's "programmatic" orientation -- its greater concern with program and principles, and its lesser preoccupation with patronage and personalities, compared with the Republican Party in Michigan and with both parties in most other states. Our findings may be interpreted as supporting that claim. On the other hand, it may simply be that in 1956 GOP congressional candidates felt they could win on Eisenhower and other "non-policy" issues, and had no need for discussion of policy issues, with all its attendant pitfalls. Further study of Michigan congressional campaigns under differing circumstances is needed for a more reliable conclusion.

It should be recalled that Ferguson and Smuckler found (13, p. 31) that Democratic candidates stressed policy issues more than did Republican candidates in 5 of 7 cases (including both advertisements and news stories). Thus

further study might possibly reveal a nationwide tendency for Democratic candidates to be more policy issue-oriented than Republican candidates.

Hypothesis 6

Regardless of our finding that the relative local strength of political parties does not appear to affect press coverage of congressional candidates, further study of this relationship would seem desirable. The findings of Stene (1936) and of Kobre (1952), summarized above, when considered together with our own findings, suggest that Hypothesis 6 might be supported if further studies were made of a group of newspapers including but not limited to papers in Southern states and in very large Northern cities. In both the latter situations the setting would be likely to be strongly Democratic; the findings of such a study might not coincide with our present finding.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Our major conclusions are as follows:

1) The 6 newspapers studied carried little information about local congressional candidates, and very little about their voting records and/or views on foreign and domestic policy issues. The average paper published fewer column inches on both local congressional candidates, in the 6 weeks preceding the election, than it published on sports in a single, typical week-day issue. During the entire 6 weeks the average paper published but 5 non-advertising items in which congressional campaign policy issues (foreign or domestic) were mentioned, and published nearly 5 times as many references to non-policy issues as to policy issues. Mention of foreign policy issues was particularly rare, occurring less than once (.8) in the average paper's total 6 week non-advertising coverage of the local congressional campaign.

2) Incumbency and (at least tacit) editorial support by the paper concerned were found to be the apparent key factors in a congressional candidate's gaining an advantage in news coverage, in the 6 papers studied. Each of

the incumbents was given a larger share of total coverage than the non-incumbent of his own party. In 4 of 5 categories of coverage the Republican incumbent fared better than the Democratic incumbent, and the Republican non-incumbent fared better than the Democratic non-incumbent in the same 4 out of 5 categories. Neither incumbency nor editorial support was consistently the more important of the two factors, although incumbency was more often of greater importance.

3) Throughout their paid political advertising in daily papers, the 2 Democratic candidates stressed policy issues, as distinguished from non-policy issues, an average of more than twice as much as did their Republican opponents.

4) There was found to be no significant correlation between the relative strength of the 2 political parties in a paper's home county and the share of congressional campaign coverage given the candidates of the 2 parties.

Recommendations for Newspaper Action

Self-righteous demands for exact parity of coverage for congressional candidates of each of the major parties appear to be fruitless. Not only is such an ideal unrealistic in terms of accepted standards of journalism, which stress newsworthiness rather than concern for political or other labels, but it is also unrealistic in terms of human

nature. Editors and publishers are human, and as Walter Lippman has observed (34, p. 21), "we are peculiarly inclined to suppress whatever impugns the security of that to which we have given our allegiance."

Lippman also wrote (ibid., p. 64) that it "may be bad to suppress a particular opinion, but the really deadly thing is to suppress the news," and there are many distinguished journalists who feel his concern is relevant today. Editor James A. Wechsler of the New York Post more recently wrote (63, p. 9):

What concerns me about the American press is not what most of these papers stand for, but what so many of them refuse to stand for. It is not what they say that seems to me most alarming; it is what they fail to say, and what they refuse to debate. And this, I think, goes to the heart of our modern disease, which is the reluctance to engage in 'controversy'. . .

In a recent philosophical piece for the Saturday Review (51, pp. 8, 30) Editor Louis B. Seltzer of the Cleveland Press wrote:

Newspapers, many of them built to greatness on the tradition of fearless reporting, are only going through the motions of covering beats or waiting for the news releases to be thrown through the transom . . . It's much easier to hire wire services. . .

We have seen that this lack of adequate news coverage is clearly evident in regard to congressional campaigns. There is no easy solution to the problem. Part of what is needed is simply more energetic, conscientious reporting -- and the stimulation, by opinion leaders, of

more public demand for it. But in addition, it is the writer's view that some variation of the "battle page" would be a highly desirable addition to daily newspaper coverage of congressional campaigns. A systematic, side-by-side presentation of opposing candidates' views on major policy issues would not be unprecedented, for George Seldes reported (50, p. 388) 20 years ago that in 1936 the New York Daily News "published both a 'Presidential battle page' in the Roosevelt-Landon campaign and an 'economic battle page' on labor."

In a recent syndicated column (41), Raymond Moley praised an organization in California which he reported is active in publicizing the voting records, views and activities of the state's Congressmen of both parties. Why can't daily newspapers do the job, and obviate the need for such organizations?

Specifically, the writer would have daily papers publish congressional candidates' responses to periodic questionnaires. The questionnaires, along the lines of similar forms used throughout the country by the League of Women Voters, would ask the candidates' views on various key policy issues.

As a public relations device, and as a means of protecting himself against charges of bias in "loading" the questionnaires, an editor might set up an advisory committee of respected local citizens not prominently identi-

fied with either political party, to assist in the preparation of the periodic sets of questions. Representatives of the clergy, of the bar association, the League of Women Voters and of a local college or university political science department might be invited to serve on such a committee. The committee might weed out defamatory and misleading questions, but would seek to stimulate honest controversy on basic issues.

It is the writer's view that such an effort to greatly enlarge the scope of newspaper coverage of congressional campaigns, along lines that would assure a reasonably fair division of coverage (as between the two candidates), would be far more fruitful than seeking only a more equal division of present, inadequate coverage.

Lippman has declared (34, p. 47) that "the task of selecting and ordering the news is one of the truly sacred and priestly offices in a democracy. For the newspaper is in all literalness the bible of democracy, the book out of which a people determines its conduct." Our not-so priestly editors will be failing their flocks if they do nothing to give the growing number of independent voters more information on the foreign and domestic policy views and records of candidates for the most powerful legislative body in the world.

Recommendations for Further Study

As we have suggested above, in chapter V, hypotheses 2, 4, 5 and 6 (stated on pp. 54-59) merit further study. Studies of newspaper coverage of other congressional races would provide more evidence as to whether the disparity in news coverage accorded candidates of the two parties is or is not generally greatest in numbers of headlines, photos and front page items. Further studies could turn up a sufficient number of relevant, published letters to editors to suggest the presence or absence of bias in their selection by editors. Studies of congressional campaign advertising in other states could confirm or deny, on a national scale, our Michigan finding that -- in 1956, at least -- Democratic congressional candidates stressed policy issues more than did the Republican candidates. Also, our finding that there appears to be no significant relationship between local party strength and press coverage accorded congressional candidates of the two parties -- this finding could be tested under varying circumstances.

Of greatest importance, however, is the possibility that objective appraisal of press coverage of a number of congressional campaigns could give us a reasonably conclusive answer to the question so heatedly discussed in recent years: do most daily newspapers slant their news coverage in favor of political candidates they support editorially?

As suggested in chapter I, there is no wholly satisfactory rebuttal when it is claimed that greater press coverage given presidential candidates of a certain party reflects not bias, but simply the greater newsworthiness of certain of the candidates. Coverage of a sufficient number of congressional campaigns could be studied to escape that difficulty. Presumably, congressional candidates of one party are not consistently, in dozens of districts, more newsworthy than their opponents in the other party -- especially in marginal districts where the 2 parties are of about equal strength.

There are fewer than 200 marginal congressional districts (districts in which the winning candidate generally gains 55 per cent or less of the total vote). If the journalism schools of several universities were to jointly undertake the task -- or if Sigma Delta Chi or the Council on Communications Research were to sponsor it -- a carefully planned study might be made of daily newspaper coverage of 1958 and/or 1960 congressional campaigns in a large sampling of the country's marginal congressional districts.

In the writer's view, such an undertaking would have far greater potential value than equal effort spent on study of presidential campaign coverage. Disparities in coverage given opposing presidential candidates are far more easily explained in terms other than editors' bias than would be disparities -- if such were found -- in cov-

erage given a dozen or more congressional candidates of each party (an equal number of incumbents of each party) running in closely contested districts. Conversely, if coverage accorded such congressional candidates were found to be roughly equal, defenders of the role of the press in political campaigns would have gained a greater point than would be represented by a finding of approximately equal coverage for opposing candidates in a single presidential race.

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APPENDIX

CODING CARD

57	56	55	54	53	52	51	50	49	48	47	46	45	44	43	42	41	40	39	38	37	36	35
85	65	60	19	62	63	64	65	66	67	68												
34	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24												
23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

CODE

Hole
Number

- 1 Lansing State Journal
 - 2 Flint Journal
 - 3 Houghton Daily Mining Gazette
 - 4 Iron Mountain News
 - 5 Marquette Mining Journal
 - 6 Ironwood Daily Globe
-

- 18 During first 5 weeks
 - 19 During last week (Oct. 31 or later)
-

- 20 Begins on front page
 - 21 Begins on other page
-

- 22 News story
 - 23 Feature story
 - 24 Photo accompanies news or feature story or advertisement
 - 25 Photo (separate)
 - 26 Editorial
 - 27 Cartoon
 - 28 Letter to editor
 - 29 Single-candidate advertisement
 - 30 Multi-candidate advertisement
-

- 31 Body of item refers to Dem. candidate, pro
 - 32 Body of item refers to Dem. candidate, neutral
 - 33 Body of item refers to Dem. candidate, anti
 - 34 Body of item is balanced
 - 35 Body of item refers to Rep. candidate, pro
 - 36 Body of item refers to Rep. candidate, neutral
 - 37 Body of item refers to Rep. candidate, anti
-

- 38 Multi-column headline
 - 39 Single-column headline
-

- 40 Headline mentions Dem. candidate, pro
- 41 Headline mentions Dem. candidate, neutral
- 42 Headline mentions Dem. candidate, anti
- 43 Headline is balanced
- 44 Headline mentions Rep. candidate, pro
- 45 Headline mentions Rep. candidate, neutral
- 46 Headline mentions Rep. candidate, anti

- 47 Domestic Policy issues (write specifics on card)
 - 48 Foreign Policy issues (write specifics on card)
 - 49 Personal issues (write specifics on card)
 - 50 Support of or association with presidential or vice-presidential nominee of own party
 - 51 Support of or association with national program of own party
 - 52 Support of or association with gubernatorial nominee or state program of own party
 - 53 Support of economy in government
 - 54 Support of free enterprise
 - 55 Support of small business' interests
 - 56 Support of farmers' interests
 - 57 Support of labor's interests
 - 58 Opposition to socialism
 - 59 Opposition to communism
 - 60 Opposition to big business domination of government
 - 61 Opposition to organized labor domination of government
 - 62 Promotion of congressional district's interests
 - 63 Other issues (write specifics on card)
-
- 64 No-issue advertisement, with picture of congressional candidate
 - 65 No-issue advertisement, without picture of congressional candidate
-
- 66 Item not directly related to the campaign
-
- 67 Neither the candidate nor a member of his family is in photo coded
-
- 68 Headline not directly relevant to a local congressional candidate nor to the congressional race (does not mention candidate by name or title, and does not refer to the campaign)
-

CODING INSTRUCTIONS

In the upper left corner of the card (with hole 1 at the lower right) write the date of newspaper issue, and, beneath the date, the column inch total for the item. (If the item begins on the front page but is continued on an inside page, the column inch totals for the two pages should be noted separately.)

I. Inclusion, non-inclusion:

- 1) Include an item if it mentions (by name or title) a local congressional candidate in more than one sentence, or if it:
 - mentions such a candidate in the first sentence,
 - mentions such a candidate in the headline,
 - is a photo in which a local congressional candidate is recognizable and is identified in the caption, or a photo which the caption specifically relates to a local congressional candidate,
 - is a letter to the editor signed by a local congressional candidate,
 - is a letter to the editor in which what is said about a local congressional candidate is the main point of the letter, or
 - is an advertisement in which a local congressional candidate's name is mentioned.
- 2) Include an item mentioning a local congressional candidate in only one sentence, if:
 - the mention of the candidate is "pro" or "anti",
or
 - the one sentence is at least one column inch in length and is wholly about the congressional candidate.
- 3) Include an item about a member of a local congressional candidate's family if it mentions the candidate's name or title and if it otherwise qualifies (according to these instructions) for inclusion. (So long as the candidate's name or title is mentioned once, mention of the relative's name is an acceptable substitute for further mention of the candidate's name or title.)
- 4) Do not classify an item as a front page item if the only mention of the congressional candidate is on an inside continuation page.
- 5) Do not include a photo accompanying an item unless it is specifically related by its caption to a local congressional candidate.

II. Column inches:

- 1) When a local congressional candidate is mentioned in an item chiefly about other subjects, measure only the paragraphs mentioning the congressional candidate.
- 2) In editorials and other items which may be printed in extra-wide columns, increase the column inch figure so as to account for the additional space.
- 3) Include headline and photo space in column inch figures.
- 4) In multi-candidate advertisements, measure only the congressional candidate's share of copy, photo and white space; don't include column inches of headlines which refer to other candidates as well as to the congressional candidate.

III. Direction:

- 1) When an item or headline is both anti-one candidate and pro-the other, make a judgement as to which is predominant.
- 2) When an item or headline is both neutral one candidate and pro or anti-the other, classify it to the latter candidate.
- 3) When an item or headline refers to only one local congressional candidate by name, classify it to him even though it may also refer to his opponent less directly.
- 4) Consider a prediction of election victory to be a pro-candidate statement.
- 5) When determining whether the body of a multi-candidate advertisement is neutral or pro the congressional candidate, consider all content which appears intended to apply to the congressional candidate.
- 6) When determining whether the headline in a multi-candidate advertisement is neutral or pro the congressional candidate, consider all headlines which appear intended to apply to the congressional candidate.

IV. Issues:

- 1) Don't include issues reported as mentioned by persons other than the congressional candidate, unless a specific connection between such issues and the candidate is made.

- 2) When references to domestic policy, foreign policy, personal or "other" (see code, hole 63) issues are found, each such issue should be listed on the card, beneath the column inch figure.
- 3) In multi-candidate advertisements include all issues which appear intended to apply to the congressional candidate.

V. Advertisements:

- 1) Classify advertisements mentioning a local congressional candidate and the presidential candidate of his party (but no other candidates of their party) as single-candidate rather than as multi-candidate advertisements.
- 2) When determining whether a multi-candidate advertisement headline is single or multi-column, consider only the widest headline which directly refers to the congressional candidate.

ROOM USE ONLY

circulation

FEB 10 59

~~JUL 14 1960~~

~~JUL 14 1960~~

~~JAN 8 1961~~

~~MAR 16 1961~~

~~MAY 20 1961~~

~~JUN 8 1963~~

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