A PROGRESSIVE PUBLISHER AND THE COLD WAR: J. W. GITT AND THE GAZETTE AND DAILY, YORK, PENNSYLVANIA, 1946-1956.

By

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A DISSERTATION

Submitted to

Michigan State University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of English

Program in American Studies

1980

ABSTRACT

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For over half a century, J. W. Gitt published his progressive newspaper, The Gazette and Daily, in the conservative Pennsylvania Dutch city of York. The town boasted about being the first capital of the United States. "Jess" Gitt took equal pride in upholding the ideals on which he believed this country was founded--freedom, justice, equality, for all. From 1915-1970, Gitt and his newspaper gained national prominence as one of the truly personal voices in American journalism. That status was at its peak during the post-World War II decade when The Gazette and Daily became the only commercial daily to fully support the Presidential candidacy of former Vice-President Henry A. Wallace on the Progressive Party ticket.

His newspaper was not the only forum through which Gitt expressed his opinions. On a more private level, but one which compounded his national recognition, was the York publisher's correspondence with leaders in many of the

political and social reform movements of his time. Those letters, and other personal papers, were made available by Gitt's widow, Elizabeth Moul Gitt. The correspondence became the basis for this dissertation after it was sorted and categorized by this writer. It proved J. W. Gitt to be an activist publisher far beyond the boundaries of his newspaper's circulation. (Photocopies of the most important material, spanning five decades, are on deposit in the Historical Collections of Pattee Library at the Pennsylvania State University.)

Letters between Gitt and Wallace, for example, illustrate the relationship between them to be one of mutual respect. The politician thought of the publisher as advisor and ally, not just as media supporter. Gitt had been influential in persuading Wallace to accept the Progressive Party's nomination. The two men resigned from the Party in the summer of 1950 in disagreement with the executive committee's criticism of the United Nations call for armed resistance in Korea. The correspondence shows their concern about Communist influence in the Progressive Party, an issue which both had skirted on the grounds of freedom during the 1948 campaign.

Letters between Gitt and Albert Einstein, again based on mutual respect and friendship, show their concern for educating the public about atomic energy. Gitt attempted to set up a York committee to work with Einstein's

Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists. The effort was a prelude to The Gazette and Daily's battle against the construction of nuclear power plants in Pennsylvania, such as the one at Three Mile Island.

Throughout the McCarthy era, Gitt supported those groups and individuals who fell prey to the red-baiting hysteria. His paper's second-editorial page ("op. ed." in today's terminology) became the outlet for many journalists blacklisted elsewhere. That page also provided the blueprint for the National Gazette Weekly, a tabloid published once by Gitt in August, 1948, which that fall led to the founding of the National Guardian. Gitt withdrew from that venture, however, because he thought that the tabloid newsweekly was too leftist.

Throughout the post-World War II decade, The Gazette and Daily won several N. W. Ayer awards for the general excellence of its make-up. It had gone to tabloid size during World War II to save newsprint. The awards brought the paper and its owner another kind of national distinction.

The dissertation concludes with interviews with former reporters and editors of The Gazette and Daily during the Cold War era. Many of them came from other parts of the country to work on what they considered to be a free newspaper. Their recollections provide insights into "Jess Gitt and the York Gazette."

Dedicated to:

Elizabeth Moul (Mrs. J. W.) Gitt,
who made it possible;
and my parents,
Daniel and Allienne Ward Hamilton,
who would have been proudest of all.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Along with Mrs. Gitt, I would like to thank in particular: Ronald L. Filippelli, archivist for the Historical Collections of the Pennsylvania State University's Pattee Library, who allowed me easy access to the photocopies of J. W. Gitt's correspondence (see Introduction); David Reddick, now of Western Michigan University, and Professor John Murray, of Michigan State University, for their moral support and good counsel over the years; Sylvia Greenwood Collier of London and Jim Higgins of Boston, former colleagues on The Gazette and Daily who remained friends, for long talks which helped shape this dissertation. Others who offered encouragement during five years of doctoral work are remembered affectionately, especially Judy Austermiller of New York City.

A special thanks also must go to all those former reporters of The Gazette and Daily who gave freely and openly of their time and memories, either through interviews or in letters (see Appendix). One of them, Gene Gilmore, had introduced me to that remarkable newspaper while I was his graduate assistant at Syracuse University, from 1960 to 1961.

My dissertation advisor, Professor Henry Silverman, chairman of American Thought and Language at Michigan State University, deserves gratitude beyond measure for his clear and concise guidance. In addition, he permitted me to exercise that spirit of independence I came to expect from my time as a reporter on "the York Gazette." And finally, it was Professor Maurice R. Cullen Jr. of Michigan State's School of Journalism who arranged for the graduate teaching assistantship which enabled me to begin this study.

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INTRODUCTION

The "Press" section of Newsweek magazine dated January 11, 1965, featured a small morning newspaper in south-central Pennsylvania celebrating its fiftieth anniversary under one ownership. The story was titled "Pride of York County," but the first paragraph should have made readers wonder if the headline writer were not exercising a bit of sarcasm:

> Everything about the York (Pa.) Gazette and Daily seems wrong. It irritates advertisers and angers city officials. It prints neither cheesecake nor lurid descriptions of crime or violence. It is casually, almost amateurishly, put together by a few, overly harassed staffers who never get a by-line. And, in an area proud of its conservative traditions, it refuses to recognize a single sacred cow. 'By all logic,' says assistant editor James Higgins who runs the editorial show, 'we should have folded many times by now.' Instead, the Gazette has been financially solvent ever since local lawyer Josiah W. (Jess) Gitt bought it 50 years ago this week.[1]

The article then described The Gazette and Daily's news-laden, easy-to-read, tabloid format which had won it several N. W. Ayer awards for graphic excellence. Publisher Gitt's policy of maintaining an editorial-advertising ratio of 60-40 was praised by Newsweek, which compared that with "the average U.S. daily's ratio: 39-61." The magazine also pointed out that the newspaper's circulation of

40,000 in the York County area was increased by another 3,000 outside the state of Pennsylvania because of its "unique" editorial content, guided by the motto: "the news all the time without fear or favor, bias or prejudice." Newsweek explained that many of the paper's local readers "resent such strong stuff," but it also quoted a York businessman who called The Gazette and Daily "absolutely fearless, one of America's greatest papers."[2]

After a brief presentation of the owner's political ideology, and an outline of the roles played by his son, Charles M. Gitt, and Higgins, the article concluded by quoting a member of the editorial staff well into her second year on the paper. "'After working on the Gazette,' says general assignment reporter Mary Hamilton, 27, 'I can't see myself working for any other paper.'"[3] Indeed, after leaving The Gazette and Daily the following January to move to New York City, this reporter felt that the paper and its staff had left an indelibly positive mark on her life's experiences.

When I began doctoral work at Michigan State University in the fall of 1975, I knew that my dissertation would involve some aspect of The Gazette and Daily. Originally, it was my intent to write about the newspaper from the point of view of the reporters who had come from all over the country to work on a liberal daily newspaper. However, I soon realized I had neither the time nor the financial means to track down and interview so many

ex-staffers. I knew that the newspaper and its publisher enjoyed a highly respected reputation, in liberal circles at least, far outside its immediate circulation area. Therefore, I began to wonder what personal papers and correspondence of J. W. Gitt might remain after his death in the fall of 1973. I believed that such material would clarify this progressive publisher's status outside the confines of conservative York County.

In late summer 1976, a friend in the city of York, Polly Meisenhelder (then Martin), introduced me to Gitt's widow, Elizabeth Moul Gitt, whom I had met only briefly at the newspaper's fiftieth anniversary banquet. At the family home outside Hanover, Pa., southwest of York, Mrs. Gitt received us in her late husband's book-lined study. Then she showed me several large boxes filled with her husband's personal correspondence and other documents from the half-century of publishing The Gazette and Daily. The material had been stored in closets at the newspaper since Gitt had sold the building and its printing equipment in October, 1970, and the new owners began publishing the York Daily Record.[4] A few years later that paper moved into a new plant outside of York proper. On April 30, 1976, the town property was deeded to nearby Christ Lutheran Church, which wanted to use the land for a parking lot. Razing equipment was moved in, and the old grey stone building at 35-37 East King Street, with "The Gazette" embossed in large letters across its front, was gone without a trace by the

end of the year. It had first been occupied on April 1, 1901.

Without the concern of a couple of Gitt's employees who had stayed on to work for the Daily Record, all those manila folders of correspondence and other memorabilia might have landed in the dump truck. But Ed Schaeberle and Walt Partymiller rescued Gitt's personal files and took them down to his widow. They remained untouched until that August day in 1976, and several subsequent visits, proved the material to be a researcher's dream come true.

At least half a dozen large grocery cartons had been filled with manila folders stuffed with what seemed to be all the letters ever received by Gitt along with carbons of those he wrote. The folders were marked simply with the year. The letters within each folder were in chronological order; no other system was used to categorize them, except that sometimes a folder would be marked "personal" (family), or "business." (The latter category applied to Gitt's position on the boards of various local businesses, such as the York Corporation, an air-conditioning manufacturer, rather than newspaper business.) Upon reading through the correspondence, I found, for instance, letters requesting hotel reservations for Gitt's numerous golfing vacations alongside letters from such personages as Henry Wallace, Albert Einstein and George Seldes. Special credit for saving everything, however, must be given to Muriel Binder, Gitt's personal secretary from 1936 to 1970.

Other material included articles about The Gazette and Daily and its publisher which had appeared in newspapers and magazines. There were also framed N. W. Ayer awards, photos of Gitt and Wallace at the 1948 Progressive Party convention, and a long history of The Gazette and Daily tracing part of its roots to 1795, written by C. M. Gitt. Another box contained J. W. Gitt's editorials from the late 1940s through the 1950s, clipped and categorized by topic by Partymiller, the paper's cartoonist.

Beginning in December, 1976, and continuing over the next two years, I made at least half a dozen visits to Mrs. Gitt's home in order to sort, categorize and catalogue the correspondence. I stayed for a few days to a week at a time and soon came to know Mrs. Gitt as a friend. After I had sorted through all the correspondence twice, she permitted me to take for photocopying what I considered to be the most important letters. These photocopies have been deposited in the Historical Collections of the Pennsylvania State University's Pattee Library, under the direction of Ronald L. Filippelli, archivist. (Mrs. Gitt retains the original letters.) The material consists of two large boxes (11" x 13" x 16") containing a total of 49 files -- 38 being "personal correspondences" arranged chronologically and others, such as articles and speeches, arranged by type. Other than a few letters which pre-date 1943 and post-date 1970, the majority of the correspondence falls between the years 1943 and 1970, with the bulk of that from the early

third, or 1943 through 1950. A large part of the correspondence for 1944 deals with J. W. Gitt's candidacy for the United States Congress on the Democratic Party ticket. No correspondence was ever found for these years: 1952, 1957, 1958, 1959, and 1960. One can speculate that it was not saved from the dump truck soon enough.

It was 1948 and the years directly flanking it in which I was most interested. I knew that the candidacy of Henry A. Wallace for President on the Progressive Party ticket had propelled J. W. Gitt into the national spotlight as the former Vice-President's only constant supporter in the news media. Naturally, I was elated to find so much supporting evidence concerning that topic. Letters between Gitt and Wallace showed a friendship that went beyond mutual respect on political issues, although the politician sometimes sought the newspaper publisher's views on such matters. The correspondence lent credence beyond a doubt to the observation by Curtis D. MacDougall in Gideon's Army, his detailed work on the 1948 Progressive Party campaign, that "the insistent urging of Josiah Gitt was a strong factor in causing Wallace to decide to run."[5]

Gitt was chairman of the Progressive Party of Pennsylvania, which organized the Party's national convention in Philadelphia in July, 1948. Not only did The Gazette and Daily carry many speeches by the Progressive candidate, as well as news stories, its publisher also printed a briefer tabloid devoted to Party issues

throughout 1948, titled Common Sense. In the summer of 1950, Gitt and Wallace both resigned from the Progressive Party, ostensibly over the executive committee's condemnation of the UN-U.S. call for armed resistence in Korea. Correspondence between the two men several years later, however, showed they were far more concerned about Communist influence within the Progressive Party than they were willing to admit in public at the time. Thus, the importance of a small town newspaper publisher to one of the major third party movements in twentieth century American politics became the theme of the pivotal chapter around which this dissertation developed. Other topics evolved from the hundreds of letters in J. W. Gitt's personal files.

As I read through the correspondence, I sorted and made notes topically within each year, such as "Progressive Party," "Freedom Organizations" and "Press Associates." It became clear to me that this dissertation should center on J. W. Gitt's role as an activist publisher outside the realm of his own newspaper. This owner of a small city daily had attempted to influence public policy not only locally through his editorials and news coverage but also nationally through correspondence with key figures in most of the political and social reform movements of his time. His prominence in this sphere can be illustrated most notably during the post-World War II decade. The issues in which Gitt concentrated his concern will be

presented in this dissertation through the viewpoints expressed in his own letters and in the replies. He will be shown to be a newspaper publisher who sought to "labor on behalf of that public which it serves" on a far grander scale than mere circulation figures of The Gazette and Daily would indicate.[6]

NOTES

[1] "Pride of York County," Newsweek, 11 January 1965, p. 56.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., p. 57.

[4] When he sold the newspaper, Gitt insisted on retiring the "Gazette" portion of the title because that was the name of the first newspaper he had bought in 1915. The Gazette and Daily had been published since 1918, when he acquired the second paper, by the York Gazette Co. "It is like retiring the number of a star baseball player," said his son, Charles M. Gitt, president of the company, in an interview. (Donald Janson, "Paper's Sale Stills Editor's Liberal Voice in Conservative York," The New York Times, 25 October 1970, p. 74.)

[5] Curtis D. MacDougall, Gideon's Army (New York: Marzani & Munsell, 1965), vol. 1, p. 244.

[6] From "The Gazette and Daily, June 24th, 1918, Our Purposes," JWG, Box 1, File 8. ("JWG" will be used throughout this dissertation as the designation for correspondence deposited in Pattee Library's Historical Collections. Whenever a letter is noted, either by or to Gitt, the footnote will state simply that designation plus the date of the letter. If the footnote refers to other material, box and file number will be given.)

Chapter I

"A Voice in the Wilderness": J. W. Gitt and The Gazette and Daily

A letter from Josiah W. Gitt to Henry A. Wallace was singled out by Richard J. Walton for his book, Henry Wallace, Harry Truman, and the Cold War, as an example of the many messages received by the former Vice-President in March, 1947, after his speech criticizing the declaration of the "Truman Doctrine."[1] Former journalist Walton further went on to describe Gitt as "publisher of The York Gazette, probably the only daily paper in the United States that consistently opposed postwar American foreign policy. If ever American journalism had a hero it was he, but, alas, his brave newspaper was published in a small Pennsylvania city and not Washington or one of the metropolitan centers. Literally, and sadly, a voice in the wilderness."[2]

That phrase, "a voice in the wilderness," often carries negative connotations, as it does in Walton's usage wherein it evokes a sense of despair, as though Gitt and his newspaper were a voice crying in vain. Actually, however, the phrase is a corruption of a verse from the Book of Isaiah in the Old Testament, also generally

presented in the negative sense as: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness."[3] Yet the original source (Isaiah, XL,3) reads:

> There is a voice that cries:
> Prepare a road for the Lord through the wilderness,
> clear a highway across the desert for our God.[4]

That passage evokes a positive image of a voice preparing for the return of the Jews from exile back to their homeland. It is not just a single voice crying in the wilderness, where no one will be able to heed it, but rather a public cry of triumph and hope.[5] In that regard, J. W. Gitt and his newspaper were the essence of a positive voice, especially in post-World War II America.

In geographic terms the "wilderness" setting for Gitt's newspaper, The Gazette and Daily, was the largely rural county of York in the rolling hills of south-central Pennsylvania. The area is fringed on the east by the Susquehanna River, on the west by Gettysburg, and on the north by the state capital of Harrisburg. In the more relevant political sense, however, "wilderness" meant the conservative atmosphere of the paper's home base, the third-class city of York, located just eighteen miles above the Mason-Dixon Line and reckoned by some raconteurs of colonial history as the first capital of the United States.[6]

York, both county and town, had been settled mostly by immigrants from the south of Germany who treasured the isolation their language and customs ensured long after the

area had become the hub of a distribution center for industries located in the nearby corridor of Washington-Baltimore-Philadelphia. These Pennsylvania "Dutch" (from Deutsche) were distrustful of outsiders, especially those who, after World War II, came from all over the country to work as reporters and editors on their liberal morning newspaper.[7] Although they might not approve of the way "Jess" Gitt ran his newspaper, the last thing they could call him was an "outsider." His family ties to the area dated back to the mid-eighteenth century.

Around 1740, a Scotsman from the north of Ireland, James Kidd, emigrated to Pennsylvania and settled near the present borough of Hanover, about fifteen miles southwest of York and only six miles above the Maryland line. (At that time, the area was part of Lancaster County, but was later added to York County.) Kidd married an immigrant from Germany and they had one child, William, born in 1746 and buried ninety-eight years later as William Gitt. Sometime prior to the Revolutionary War the name was changed from Kidd to Kitt, apparently to make the spelling conform to the German pronunciation. During the early 1800s, Gitt became the accepted spelling and was retained by most subsequent members of the family. Thus, when William Gitt's partial namesake, the twentieth century newspaper publisher Josiah William Gitt, chose to label himself "a stubborn Dutchman," he was recalling only one side of his ancestry.[8]

Upon William Gitt's death in 1844, the following tribute appeared in a local newspaper: "His memory was a most attentive one and to him his descendants are indebted for many reminiscences."[9] Those who knew "Jess" Gitt personally will attest to his prodigious memory and story-telling abilities. Therefore, it is fitting that his great-great-grandfather's tombstone was moved from a Hanover churchyard to the Gitt property overlooking the Maryland hills. It was placed in the woods alongside a large fieldstone bearing the simple notation: "Josiah William Gitt, born March 28, 1884, died October 7, 1973."[10]

Tributes published at the time of J. W. Gitt's death often characterized him as "one of the last of the personal journalists." His fellow journalists mourned the passing of an era as well as the man. James Higgins, assistant editor of The Gazette and Daily from 1950 to 1970 (Gitt retained title of editor for himself), wrote in an "op. ed." piece for The New York Times that the paper was considered by its owner "not only as 'his' newspaper but as an alter ego."[11] Higgins, who taught future journalists at Boston University throughout the 1970s, explained what he meant:

> . . . Perhaps there are publishers whose sense of identity with their newspapers is as strong as Gitt's was. But I don't know of any, either liberal like Gitt or conservative like, say, Colonel Bertie McCormick during his command tenure at the Chicago Tribune. However exasperating such publishers might have been to some of those who worked for them, or to any number of subscribers . . . their newspapers had

> the saving grace of character stamped all over their pages. I don't know about The Tribune but readers of The Gazette and Daily felt that they were not just dealing with printed words but with a human being, Jess Gitt. [12]

Like many other turn-of-the-century Progressives with rural or small-town roots, Gitt was steeped in a life-long belief that Jeffersonian democracy could be made to work for all of society. Yet why did this man turn out so differently from others of his generation who also could trace pre-Revolution American heritage and could boast a staunch religious upbringing, independent financial security, and a solid secular education? "I don't know what made me different," Gitt once told an interviewer. "Probably my mother and Charles Dickens' novels of social injustice."[13] His mother, Emma Koplin Gitt, was the daughter of a liberal minister in the German Reformed Church and a college graduate, no small distinction for a woman in the 1880s. She encouraged her two children, the other a daughter, to read whenever they had the chance, including at the breakfast table.

Gitt's father, Clinton Jacob Gitt, had been educated at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pa. Instead of going on to study law as he had planned to do, he went to work in the Gitt hardware store in Hanover. He died an alchololic when his son was only twelve. After the son was graduated from Franklin and Marshall in 1904, his paternal grandfather made sure he did not also enter the family

business by sending him to the University of Pennsylvania Law School. After a year, J. W. Gitt returned to York, entered the law firm of Allen C. Weist, and was admitted to the Pennsylvania bar in 1908.[14]

As a young lawyer, Gitt found the courtroom restrictive. For one thing, he did not relish defending clients he knew to be guilty; he did not feel the truth would always win out in the court of law.[15] He began to fill in as a court reporter on The York Gazette, the town's morning newspaper purchased in 1909 by his uncle, Harry N. Gitt. The paper traced its lineage to 1795 and the founding of a German weekly, Die York Gazette. The elder Gitt was not a businessman and the paper went to the edge of bankruptcy: he even had to dismiss his nephew because he could not afford his salary. After a receivership was set up for the paper, a Philadelphia lawyer, Owen J. Roberts, later Supreme Court Justice, suggested that the ex-court reporter buy the paper.[16] J. W. Gitt took his superior's advice and, along with his senior law partner, purchased The York Gazette on January 1, 1915. Allen C. Wiest became president of the York Gazette Company. In June, 1918, they purchased The York Daily, the morning paper of The York Dispatch Company, and the two newspapers were combined to form The Gazette and Daily. By then, Gitt had controlling interest in the business.[17]

The statement of purpose for the new paper, set forth in its first issue, June 24, 1918, stressed that the owners

would "strive to publish all the news all the time, without fear or favor, bias or prejudice." During the next half-century, the motto of The Gazette and Daily, printed on the front page above its nameplate, remained: "The news all the time, without fear or favor, bias or prejudice." The statement of purpose also said:

> . . . We shall stand fearlessly for right and justice, under all circumstances and toward all persons, no matter how powerful the forces on the other side may be.
>
> It is our belief that a newspaper is a public servant and that to be permanently successful it must be faithful to the interests of the public it serves. It dare not be selfish. It dare not be mercenary. For its continued success, if for no other reason, must it persistently and sincerely labor on behalf of that public which it serves.[18]

Gitt later became a member of the American Judicature Society and sat on the Pennsylvania advisory board of the Commission on Law and Social Action. He also counted "among my very good friends" such a prominent law professor as Thomas I. Emerson of Yale University. But he never returned to the practice of law. "I got to writing editorials, and I never did go back," he explained.[19] As publisher and editor of The Gazette and Daily, Gitt wrote all his own editorials until Higgins joined the staff and began to partially relieve him of the six weekly columns. (The paper had no Sunday edition.) He continued to express his editorial voice until the paper's last year, 1970, when he was eighty-six years old. One of those editorials summarizing J. W. Gitt's beliefs as a progressive thinker,

was published in the January 30, 1970, edition:

> It is free enterprise which is responsible for the continued use of the internal gasoline combustion automobile which is fast making our cities unfit to live in or near. It is free enterprise which permits other manufacturers to belch forth from their chimneys fumes polluted with dangerous sulphur and other poisonous chemicals.
>
> It is free enterprise that cut down our trees and destroyed so much of our lumber and paper mill requirements. Regardless of the future. It is free enterprise that overgrazes our grass lands. And it is free enterprise that stops disarmament efforts or did to protect the profits of armament manufacturers.
>
> Some of us have realized for sometime what a blight free enterprise has been. Others of us are just commencing to realize it. It is becoming too late to call those who want an end to it Communists or something similar thereto. It just doesn't work any longer.[20]

Gitt obviously was distressed that free enterprise had endured more as "private" enterprise rather than "free" to allow the fair and equal participation of all in its production and profits. He was opposed to what he called "free enterprise monopoly"; in fact, he was against monopoly control of all types, whether by private business or by the state. Like other progressives, he felt that government should regulate large corporations and make them work in the public interest, but not abolish them entirely. In his editorials, Gitt continually warned about the dangers inherent in the growth of monopolies.

Undoubtedly, Gitt had long thought of himself as a progressive capitalist. He did not begin to define that term in public until the 1948 Presidential campaign when he

wrote several editorials to explain its meaning. In some aspects at least, he probably could be called a "radical capitalist," although that term does not appear to exist in current political phraseology.[21] At any rate, Gitt shared common values with other progressive thinkers in the early part of the twentieth century. He was ahead of them in some areas, such as his internationalist viewpoint. For instance, long before 1916 when Woodrow Wilson began to openly support the League of Nations, Gitt had joined a group of other men, among them William Howard Taft, promoting the concept of a League of Nations to Enforce Peace.[22] Wilson was Gitt's first Presidential endorsement when The York Gazette supported him in 1916. According to McKinley Olson, Gitt "voted along with the Bull Moosers for Teddy Roosevelt in 1912 . . . he did support Republicans."[23] The first Roosevelt's views probably were too nationalistic for Gitt, but his friend and fellow Pennsylvanian, Gifford Pinchot, had helped to found the Bull Moose Party. Gitt supported the Republican Pinchot in his gubernatorial bids. In 1924, The Gazette and Daily endorsed Progressive Party candidate Robert LaFollette, Sr.[24]

Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., surveyed the backgrounds and careers of 260 leaders of the Progressive Party of 1912 throughout the country and noted that many of them were urban and middle-class--except in the West and the rural areas where editors and lawyers dominated the leadership of the party.[25] Gitt certainly fulfilled both of those

occupational categories. In many other ways, too, he conformed to a profile which could be drawn of early twentieth century progressives. "The right to think for oneself is one of the most precious of human privileges," began one of Gitt's editorials setting forth his ideas on progressivism in 1947.[26] The values held by progressives stemmed from the supremacy of the individual, that is, individual self-worth and self-reliance in the best Jeffersonian tradition. Free education should be available to everyone. Once the masses were educated, they would understand the rationale behind the necessity for an equitable society for all and would work peacefully toward that end. ("Peaceful" is a key word in progressive thought; they abhored the use of violence to create social change.) Gitt certainly thought of his newspaper as an educational tool, not simply a medium of information.

The progressives' dislike of big business went hand in hand with their distrust of the cities. Many of them had grown up in rural America but later operated from urban centers in their professional lives. Gitt, however, refused to move The Gazette and Daily from a less conservative environment, although he was asked to do so many times by those who wanted to see the paper and its publisher assume more national prominence. At one time, for instance, Gitt was offered the opportunity of running the liberal daily PM in New York. He responded by informing the publisher, Marshall Field, that he did not want to live in "that damn

big city."[27] Clinging stubbornly to the right to express one's ideas no matter what the political climate of the area or the times was another characteristic of the progressives.

Many progressives also were raised in deeply religious families, though some did not continue to practice religion as adults. Gitt had been raised in the German Reformed Church in which his maternal grandfather was a minister, albeit a liberal one. In later life he became interested in the Unitarian Church. He frequently said that the editorial policy of The Gazette and Daily was based on the Sermon on the Mount, as well as the Bill of Rights and the Declaration of Independence. Hence, the proselytizing zeal of many progressives was a natural out-growth of their religious backgrounds. It is little wonder that they were able to see themselves as "voice in the wilderness" in the most positive sense.

The fourth cornerstone for the editorial policy of Gitt's newspaper was "an international peace-keeping organization to abolish war and substitute arbitration and negotiation and justice." Besides being an ardent supporter of the League of Nations and, later, the United Nations, Gitt believed that the foreign policy of the United States should encourage peace and good will. He insisted on peaceful co-existence with Russia long before detente became a household word. In line with his internationalism, Gitt wanted a more equitable distribution

of wealth in other countries as well as at home.

As much as progressives preferred peace to war, they were not above believing in the use of "just force" to bring about internationalism when cooperation had failed. Hence, most of them, Gitt included, were able to support World War I, although they hoped it would be "the war to end all wars." World War II, of course, was more justifiable as "the fight against fascism." However, Gitt, for one, did not believe in imperialism as an acceptable means of extending capitalism, whether progressive or not, to other parts of the world. He was one of the first newspaper publishers in the United States to warn that this country should not get involved in the war in Indochina. Even in the early 1940s he prophesied that such a war would be inevitable unless American foreign policy changed drastically.

Progressives stressed the necessity of having a strong national leader to guide the people and the nation on an international scale. Woodrow Wilson and Franklin D. Roosevelt especially fulfilled that role. Henry A. Wallace was seen as the last hope for the extension of progressive ideals. No Presidential candidate after him has ever quite captured the progressive mind and heart.[28] Those three men, along with Jefferson and Lincoln, were J. W. Gitt's "heroes," as photos and sketches in his study will attest.

To some extent, then, Gitt and his newspaper were a mirror of the progressive mind.[29] And yet, Josiah William

Gitt was above all else an independent thinker, a trait which cast The Gazette and Daily many cuts above the establishment press of its time. Because of its consistency and longevity, Gitt's paper could be placed above other "liberal" newspapers as well. In the first chapter of his book, The Press and the Cold War, James Aronson stated that "the press of the United States has to a large degree become a voluntary arm of established power." He mentioned a few exceptions--The Gazette and Daily was one of them.[30]

In the statement of purpose for the first issue of The Gazette and Daily, dated June 24, 1918, the owner of the newly combined morning newspapers told the citizens of York, Pa.: "We shall stand fearlessly for right and justice, under all circumstances and toward all persons, no matter how powerful the forces on the other side may be."[31] Gitt did not confine his fearlessness to the boundaries determined by column rules. A prolific letter writer, he let his voice be heard across the land through correspondence with every sort of person, from chief politicians to "the common man." As a personal journalist, it is impossible to separate Gitt from his newspaper. Yet his correspondence, along with The Gazette and Daily, proved that he was not a "voice in the wilderness" in the negative sense of crying in vain. Instead, the letters of J. W. Gitt presented the positive force of one using all his powers in the hope of creating peace and equality for

all. The York publisher set forth to create such a world in the heightening tensions of post-World War II America. He believed that the United States government was headed down a path which would lead the country into another war and that only a return to its democratic ideals would prevent such a collision. The chief guide, Gitt thought, should be a leader who espoused those ideals--Henry A. Wallace. The York publisher's correspondence yields his ideas on turning that political dream into reality. Thus, the letters provide access to his innermost voice.

NOTES:

[1] Richard J. Walton, Henry Wallace, Harry Truman, and the Cold War (New York: The Viking Press, 1976), pp. 149-150.

[2] Ibid., p. 149.

[3] Henry Davidoff, ed., The Pocket Book of Quotations (New York: Pocket Books, Inc., 1952), p. 410.

[4] The New English Bible (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 860.

[5] Interpreted in consultation with Deborah Shaw, professor of Latin and Biblical Hebrew, Pennsylvania State University.

[6] The Continental Congress sat in York, Pa., from 30 September 1777 to 21 June 1778.

[7] The town's afternoon newspaper, The York Dispatch, more nearly suited the natives' political views. To this day, it retains a front-page make-up in a style popular a century ago--i.e., small-type headlines and no photos--and traditionally relegates local news to the back page. However, York remains one of the few cities in the United States, certainly for its population, to boast of two separately own newspapers.

[8] The Gitt Family (a three-page, family-printed pamphlet, n.d.), p. 1.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Personal observation by this researcher.

[11] James Higgins, "Good-by, Mr. Gitt," The New York Times, 22 December 1973, p. 25.

[12] Ibid.

[13] McKinley C. Olson, ed., J. W. Gitt's Sweet Land of Liberty (New York: Jerome S. Ozer, Publisher Inc., 1975), p. 11.

[14] Ibid., pp. 9-10.

[15] From conversation with Elizabeth Moul Gitt, another native Hanoverian who married J. W. Gitt on 12 June 1913.

[16] Saul Miller, "150 Years Old and Still Fighting," PM Sunday Magazine, 7 July 1946, p. 7.

[17] "The Men of Nineteen Four of Franklin and Marshall College, compiled for their 25th anniversary," a pamphlet, 1929.

[18] "The Gazette and Daily, June 24th, 1918, Our Purposes," JWG, Box 1, File 8. (Josiah W. Gitt Papers, Pattee Library, Historical Collections, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pa. Henceforth, simply "JWG" with date if a letter, with box and file numbers if other material.)

[19] Olson, p. 9.

[20] Ibid., p. 224. (In general, editorials will not be used in this dissertation unless they are referred to specifically in Gitt's correspondence.)

[21] An attempt will be made here to define political terms as used in this dissertation. In general, both "liberals" and "progressives" were defenders of capitalism, saying that the problems of society must have social solutions, rather than advocating a change in the economic system as "socialists" would. Progressives wanted more government regulation, especially of big business, to avoid monopolies. But the major area in which they differed during the post-World War II period was over U.S. foreign policy. Liberals were far less questioning and generally supported President Truman's policy against the Soviet Union. Many liberals were members of Americans for Democratic Action. Progressives did not support Truman's foreign policy because they wanted peaceful co-existence with Russia, as did Henry Wallace whom they chose as their Presidential candidate in 1948. Of course, there were some members of the Progressive Party who were either socialists or communists. And some progressives voted for Truman. It should be understood that "Progressive" means any member of that party whose politics could be any shade left of center. Someone who held those progressive beliefs outlined in Chapter I would be called simply "progressive." (In general, a capital letter denotes membership in a particular party, as Democrat, Socialist, Communist.) By using a term such as "liberal press" I mean those members of the press who were more questioning of government handouts and declarations, and who editorially and in news coverage supported equality and justice for all. Again,

there were many levels of effort put into this ideal by the news media.

[22] Olson, p. 21.

[23] Letter from Olson, Chicago, Ill., 21 August 1979.

[24] Olson, p. 12.

[25] Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform (New York: Vintage Books, 1955), pp. 144-145.

[26] "Crossing T's, Dotting I's," The Gazette and Daily, 30 April 1947, p. 16.

[27] From conversation with Mrs. Gitt.

[28] There has been some discussion in liberal-leftist circles that the Citizens' Party with Barry Commoner as its Presidential candidate in 1980 comes the closest to being an extension of the 1948 Progressive movement. For opposing viewpoints, see: Derek Shearer, "Citizens' Party: Wrong Time, Wrong Race," and Richard J. Walton, "Rejoinder: Now Is the Time...," The Nation, 10 May 1980, pp. 554-557. (Walton, a member of the Citizens' Party national committee, states: ". . . the 1948 Progressive Party campaign simply is not relevant. Henry Wallace, for all his enormous political appeal, ran at precisely the wrong historical moment. The progressives were smashed by the anti-Communist hysteria that was to disfigure American politics for at least a decade and a half.") Also see: Marcus G. Raskin, "Progressive Liberalism for the '80s," The Nation, 17 May 1980, p. 577.

[29] The preceding profile of a progressive was drawn from reading these books: Charles Forcey, The Crossroads of Liberalism: Croly, Weyl, Lippmann and the Progressive Era, 1900-1925 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961); Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform; Christopher Lasch, The New Radicalism in America, 1889-1963 (New York: Vintage Books, 1965); David W. Noble, The Paradox of Progressive Thought (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1958); and Morton White, Social Thought in America, The Revolt Against Formalism (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957).

[30] James Aronson, The Press and the Cold War (Indianapolis-New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1970), p. 24.

[31] "The Gazette and Daily, June 24th, 1918, Our Purposes," JWG, Box 1, File 8.

Chapter II

"Always Liberal and Thoroughly Independent": Gitt's Ideology, Bedrock of Gazette Policy

J. W. Gitt's letters, like his editorials, had a homespun quality about them. He wanted to present his views in a straight-forward manner he thought the reader would understand.[1] "J. W. was one of the smartest people I've known, 'cause he could make everything 'simple' and 'clear'," McKinley C. Olson said. Olson taped many hours of interviews with the York publisher for the introductory sections of his book of editorials, J. W. Gitt's Sweet Land of Liberty. True progressive that he was, Gitt believed that education was the key to creating a better world. He told Olson:

> Ignorance reigns supreme, then and now. The only hope for the world is that we keep educating people, teaching them to be good citizens, so they're able to be sovereign people of these United States. And you've got to have knowledge for that. Therefore, a lot of these rich birds--the establishment--don't want to educate the poor kids. Afraid they'll be too independent. Education--that's the hope. A man or woman who has knowledge and is honest won't be anything but a liberal--a person who puts human rights above property rights. He or she has got to see how terrible it is to steal all the time, to kill, to cheat, to do those things. But you've got to have knowledge. We're now educating too many of our children to suit the rich and greedy; they're no longer willing to pay for public education. But education,

knowledge, and the milk of human kindness--they're the hope.[2]

In general, Gitt supported Democratic candidates whom he thought would provide that public education for all. "I'm a Jeffersonian Democrat as were all the Gitts, rich or poor, from way back. But I wasn't so interested in the Democratic Party as I was in the good of the country," Gitt said.[3] He would support candidates of other parties whom he thought would give their constituents a better deal. For instance, he wrote a letter to a Republican Congressional candidate in 1950 saying he agreed with his definition of "democrat." Gitt told Dr. Franklin Menges, Pennsylvania soil specialist: "I was particularly impressed with your statement that a democrat is a man who does not work for anything he is unwilling his fellow man should enjoy. That is pretty much, of course, my philosophy, as you know."[4]

In 1928 Gitt voted for Norman Thomas for President, largely because he thought Democrat Alfred E. Smith was running on a "wet" ticket and Gitt was a life-long tee-totaler who never allowed liquor advertising in his newspaper. Gitt also was the only member in York of the League for Industrial Democracy,[5] whose co-director from 1922 to 1937 was "Mr. Socialist," as Thomas was called. The League was founded in 1905 as the Intercollegiate Socialist Society and was not officially connected with the Socialist Party though many of its prominent members were.

The League's statement of purpose said it was "a membership society engaged in education for a new social order based on production for use and not profit."[6] Asked how he thought Gitt could vote for Thomas and be a member of the League and yet remain an avowed non-socialist, James Higgins replied: "Gitt was a man of many contradictions."[7]

In 1945 a Philadelphia man doing a story on the influence of small town papers on national opinion sent Gitt several questions, one of which asked if The Gazette and Daily had "always championed the same political party?" Gitt wrote:

> The Gazette and Daily is Democratic at present - liberally Democratic. It has always been liberal and generally has supported the Democratic Party, but not always, particularly prior to the Roosevelt administration. There has been no change whatever since the present ownership has been in control. It has always been liberal and thoroughly independent. The times at which we did not consider Democratic policy as liberal we did not support it.[8]

Gitt's support of Progressive Party candidates in 1924 and 1948 has already been mentioned. By 1932 when Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the New Deal came along, Gitt and a few Washington political figures were trying to start a third party. The Gazette and Daily did not endorse a candidate in 1932, and there is some speculation that Gitt himself did not vote for Roosevelt but instead wrote in the name of a personal choice.[9] By 1936, Gitt and his newspaper were supporting Roosevelt, and Democratic endorsements continued until the 1948 campaign. Then, as chairman of the Pennsylvania chapter of the Progressive

Party, he often spelled out his ideological beliefs in correspondence with readers of The Gazette and Daily. Some of them insisted he must be a "Communist" because he freely criticized the policies of the United States government. Many of those readers lived in York; sometimes, however, a Yorker would write and ask Gitt to explain what constituted communism. "Perhaps if people were better informed on these subjects, they could reach a more proper conclusion as to whether they are for or against communism," wrote W. S. Bond in the summer of 1948.[10] In his answer, Gitt explained his position of progressive capitalism, and warned against the "trap" that reactionaries were trying to label Progressives "Communists." He wrote:

> I have personally never been a Marxist, nor have I believed that dialectical materialism was a sound philosophy. Certainly to get into a discussion of whether or not Communism is a good thing would seem to me to be beclouding the issues and falling into the trap that reactionary politicians are laying for us Progressives.
>
> We do not want Communism and we do not intend to be forced to make the choice between reaction and Communism. We want a progressive capitalism, based upon taking care of the peace needs of our people, with such necessary decentralized government planning as the case may require; in short, high prosperity based upon peace objectives.
>
> Merely because we differ with Russia about a social setup does not necessarily mean that we should have to go to war with them. We propose to do everything we possibly can to come to some sort of an honorable arrangement with them by which peace can be maintained--at least to make a sincere and honest effort along that line.[11]

The line of distinction between progressive capitalism and socialism, as Gitt saw it, lay in each system's mandate about who should control the means of production. Gitt, as a capitalist, albeit a progressive one, believed in private ownership, but opposed private monopoly control. Since he often wrote about the growth of monopolies in his editorials, he was once asked during the Wallace campaign to make a speech against monopoly control. The publisher joked, ". . . it happens that I am a complete monopolist, in one respect at least: I am the only daily newspaper in the United States supporting Henry Wallace."[12]

In the aftermath of the severe Wallace defeat at the polls,[13] Gitt still firmly held to his belief in progressive capitalism. He outlined his position on monopoly most clearly in a letter just one year after the 1948 Progressive Party convention. A physician living in Rensselaerville, N.Y., wrote to ask, "How are we going to abolish private monopoly?" Gitt replied to L. A. Eldridge, Jr.:

> What I have never been able to understand is why it is not as easy to abolish private monopoly as it is to go into government ownership of production. Personally I am convinced that one is about as easy as the other. Whether or not either can be accomplished within a reasonable period of time is the real question.
>
> . . . I am not convinced that there is anything like a historical necessity or compulsion toward any particular solution of our economic problems. Not being a socialist, I prefer a system of progressive capitalism pretty much as outlined in the Progressive Party platform of 1948.

> Frankly, I believe that it would be far easier to do away with private monopoly in this country than it would be to go into government ownership. The people can do anything they wish, if they take matters into their own hands. They can pass laws that will do away with private monopoly just as they can pass laws creating government ownership.
>
> It all gets back to a rather fundamental difference of opinion between what I call progressive liberals and socialists. We progressive liberals believe that there must be an end of monopoly and that natural monopolies must be under government operation pretty generally speaking. Business can exist on a really free basis, subject of course to reasonable regulations and rules which will prevent it from being self-destructive.[14]

Gitt so abhorred monopolies that he found even those protected by copyright law highly distasteful. In late 1949 he wanted to reprint in installments a pamphlet titled The United States and the Soviet Union, Some Quaker Proposals for Peace. Though the pamphlet came from the American Friends Service Committee in Philadelphia (AFSC), it had been published by Yale University Press which held the copyright and would not let it be reproduced in any fashion. In a protest letter to Clarence Pickett, executive secretary of the AFSC, Gitt complained, "Certainly if matters of such extreme importance to the world are going to be prevented from being disseminated by insistence upon copyrights the purpose back of the production of the pamphlet can hardly be realized."[15] Yale insisted on protecting sales of its pamphlet at $1.00 a copy which they said gave little financial return but greater attention than if the AFSC had released it.[16]

Still irritated, Gitt wrote again to the AFSC saying that since it must be "interested in the widest possible circulation of studies of this kind, which could be of vital importance in preventing a shooting war, "..... it should "if at all possible avoid the creation of a monopoly through copyright." He noted, "I am in almost complete sympathy with the Friends' position generally, but having been in the publishing game all my life, I dislike to think that the Friends are only interested in having information like this reach people who can afford to pay a dollar for it." Gitt insisted on openness in publishing as well as in thought. "May I also say that I have never copyrighted The Gazette and Daily for that very reason. If there is anything in it that ever appeals to someone who thinks it worthwhile reprinting I am only too happy for them to do so, for the good that might be done."[17]

The freedom Gitt wanted to maintain toward other print media for reprint rights he also applied to his staff in writing copy for The Gazette and Daily. Higgins related a story about the time Gitt handed him the job of writing most of the paper's daily column-length editorials. It was 1950 and Higgins had been on staff only a year when the editor-publisher gave him the title of assistant editor and told him he could be the active editor. Unsure about procedure, with both father and son above him, Higgins asked his employer what to do:

> Should I consult him or his son, who under the title of Executive Editor filled the function of a general manager, about subject matter and editorial approach? No, he said, I was to be on my own, since he assumed that I had read, understood, and subscribed to the principles contained in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution--chiefly its Preamble and the Bill of Rights and, most chiefly, the First Amendment--and the Sermon on the Mount. Was he correct in so assuming? I said he was. 'Well, then,' said Gitt, 'there's no problem. Those are the fundamentals on which my editorial policy is based. Go ahead and write whatever you have a mind to.'[18]

Higgins said that for the next twenty years "he may have made four or five comments or recommendations to me on editorials. Surely no more than that."[19] That story illustrates the trust Gitt had in employees to use their minds; the policy applied to reporters as well as editors. He reserved the right to run his newspaper in his own way, such as hiring reporters and editors whose political philosophies coincided with his own (see Appendix). Because of that, Gitt did not feel the necessity of having the support of professional organizations in order to publish his newspaper. For instance, he never became a member of the Pennsylvania Newspaper Publishers Association.[20]

The independence with which Gitt maintained his editorial policy was also reflected in The Gazette and Daily's advertising policies. From the beginning of Gitt's ownership of the York Gazette in 1915, he would not accept the advertising of alcoholic beverages. Gitt explained why in answer to a question in 1948 from J. A. Buckwalter, the editor of Listen, journal of the American Temperance

Society. He wrote:

> Our reason for so doing was that we were of the opinion that use of alcohol as a beverage did great harm to a great many people, and that since all advertising necessarily was for the purpose of boosting sales we would not permit our columns to be used to induce our readers to increase the use of something we felt was harmful to them. By the way, we do not accept patent medicine advertising for the same reason.[21]

As early as 1946, Gitt was inquiring of Science Service in Washington, D.C., about an article linking tobacco and cancer. "It seems to me that since The Gazette and Daily accepts cigarette advertising that we owe the duty of informing our readers of the bad effects of tobacco if there are such."[22] In September, 1948, A. J. R. Schumaker, a subscriber at Storer College in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, wrote Gitt, "I think too much of The Gazette and Daily to let its tobacco advertisements pass without protest."[23] Gitt's reply showed how uncomfortable he felt with "compromise":

> . . . During all my experience in the newspaper field I have found it was necessary to draw a line of some kind somewhere to keep in business. I realize, of course, that that is rationalization, and that if I were as consistent as I ought to be I would pursue a course that would refuse all advertising that was in the least questionable and put myself out of business. Then I would be able to think more of myself than I do by having to make compromises.
>
> The fact that The Gazette and Daily is the cleanest newspaper from an advertising standpoint of all which have come to my notice, of course, is no excuse for not coming one hundred percent clean. This is a problem that has given me more concern than anything that I have encountered in my publishing

> experience. I am not too happy about the way I have handled it. Sometimes I think that I would feel better personally if I had refused to compromise at all and be forced to cease publication.[24]

About six years after that letter and a decade before the U.S. Surgeon General announced in 1964 findings linking cigarette smoking and cancer, Gitt decided not to accept advertising from the tobacco industry. Throughout the decade of the 1950s, the campaign against tobacco was covered for The Gazette and Daily by George Seldes, who was forced to suspend publication of his newsletter In Fact in 1950. "I named names, brands, tobacco companies, advertising agencies, newspapers, and magazines which were dishonest and corrupt and venal, and I was never censored or omitted by this newspaper," Seldes wrote in a book later.[25]

Gitt's position that the owner of a newspaper had the right to accept or reject the advertising which went into it angered some people who tried to make a freedom of the press issue out of the matter. The York publisher received publicity for refusing to accept campaign ads from the Goldwater for President Committee in 1964 because he simply did not believe the Arizona Senator was "fit to be President." Yet it was Gitt's insistence on printing the rulings of the Federal Trade Commission since the mid-1940s which cost his newspaper a considerable amount of advertising. In September, 1947, for instance, The Gazette and Daily printed in a column by Marty Solow of Federated

Press that Swift and Company was among four meat packers to have been convicted a total of forty-three times for anti-trust violations. Swift and Company sent a letter of protest to Gitt, which was answered in the editor's absence by Harry E. Sharkey, then assistant editor. Apparently Swift and Company already had cancelled its advertising contract with The Gazette and Daily, but Sharkey replied: "Veiled threats such as you include in your letter are an old story for The Gazette and Daily. Of course we usually extend the courtesy of a reply but we don't run for cover."[26]

Two other major companies which withdrew advertising from the paper because of news stories printed about them were the A & P grocery store chain and Robert Hall clothing stores. Gene Gilmore, wire editor at The Gazette and Daily in the early 1950s when that happened, remembered:

> A & P got slapped with a $100,000 fine about 1950 for anti-trust [violations] and we put it on page one, where it belonged. A & P quit advertising and didn't resume for six years, when a second store was opened [in York]. Then we had an ad from Robert Hall but we ran a story that the FTC had cited the firm for misbranding. Out came the ad.[27]

Gitt's insistence on printing "the news all the time, without fear or favor" cost him advertising dollars. This situation did not go unnoticed locally. In early 1947 the president of the York Bridge Club offered to write a weekly column to help The Gazette and Daily's circulation because "the story you appear to be telling must be expensive."[28]

However, the paper carried considerable local and county advertising which was not directly connected to big business. Also, the paper had excellent county news coverage and, being a morning paper, its county circulation was higher than the competition, the afternoon York Dispatch.

Yet, it was not only Gitt's rigorous advertising policies which made advertising sales more difficult. In December, 1950, when circulation had reached about 32,000, Gitt received a letter from A. W. Howland, representing advertising sales for Pennsylvania Dailies in New York City. He said it was still difficult to sell for The Gazette and Daily, even with its lead in circulation, because "some of the national advertisers are still entrenched in the old idea that they like city circulation best."[29] However, he was offering a reduction in fees because of this circulation lead and the expected increase in ad sales. Gitt replied he had known for some time that his payments were higher but "I was hoping that sooner or later, on your own volition, you would meet the competition. Now that you have I can only hope that you will not experience too much grief in the future in attempting to sell a paper of the caliber of The Gazette and Daily."[30] Gitt knew the quality of the newspaper he was publishing and never hesitated to point out that fact.

As the publishing field grew more aware of The Gazette and Daily, both as a sound business and as an unusual

newspaper editorially speaking, Gitt sometimes received offers to buy the paper. Such an offer arrived in late 1953 from a New York man who said he had "a friend ready to pay an enormous price for the property promptly."[31] Gitt replied pointedly: "There are some things in this world that money cannot buy. The Gazette and Daily is one of them."[32]

Gitt did not sell his newspaper until seventeen years later, when he was eighty-six years old and had been putting his progressive voice into print for almost two-thirds of his life.[33] Through his newspaper and through his correspondence as its publisher Gitt had established himself as the epitome of progressive thought, exercising individual freedom from an individual conscience. He took upon himself an immense sense of personal responsibility for society, but through newsprint and his pen he set forth his belief that society could, and would, change itself for its own good if only it understood all its ills and were given options for improvement. To fully appreciate the unique place in American journalism held by J. W. Gitt, especially during the years immediately after World War II, it is necessary to contrast his activities as a publisher with his contemporaries who also were members of the liberal press during that era.

NOTES

[1] Reporters for The Gazette and Daily always were told to keep in mind when writing news stories that many of the paper's readers in York County had not advanced beyond the eighth grade.

[2] Olson, pp. 145-146.

[3] Olson, p. 141.

[4] JWG, 24 July 1950.

[5] JWG, 3 May 1946.

[6] Murray B. Seidler, Norman Thomas, Respectable Rebel (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1967), p. 73.

[7] Conversation with Higgins, Martha's Vineyard, August 1979.

[8] JWG, 3 and 8 March 1945.

[9] Mrs. Gitt said her husband wrote in the name of "Huston Thompson," a Washington attorney and friend with whom Gitt and some others were trying to start a third party (see Chapter V).

[10] JWG, 14 August 1948.

[11] JWG, 18 August 1948.

[12] Olson, p. 141.

[13] Wallace garnered only 2.38 percent of the national vote, a fraction less than the 2.40 percent won by Dixiecrat candidate James Strom Thurmond.

[14] JWG, 11 July 1949.

[15] JWG, 28 November 1949.

[16] JWG, 7 December 1949.

[17] JWG, 12 December 1949.

[18] James Higgins, "A Reporter Reflects: The York Gazette and Daily," Nieman Reports, vol. xxviii, 3, Autumn 1974, p. 19.

[19] Ibid.

[20] JWG, 28 April 1956. (Charles M. Gitt to Henry L. Wilder, publisher, Lebanon Daily News.)

[21] JWG, 29 September 1948.

[22] JWG, 12 July 1946.

[23] JWG, 13 September 1948.

[24] JWG, 16 September 1948.

[25] George Seldes, Never Tire of Protesting (New York: Lyle Stewart Inc., 1968), p. 70.

[26] JWG, 16 and 18 September 1947.

[27] Letter from Gene Gilmore, Urbana, Ill., 3 March 1977.

[28] JWG, undated, January 1947.

[29] JWG, 26 December 1950.

[30] JWG, 28 December 1950.

[31] JWG, 7 December 1953.

[32] JWG, 22 December 1953.

[33] The Gazette and Daily had been losing money steadily through the 1960s. Some said it was due to the paper's strident anti-war and pro-civil rights stance, which decreased advertising revenues; others said it was simply due to poor business management. When the typographers' union went on strike in early fall of 1970, most members of the editorial staff honored their picket line. It was during that time that Gitt sold his paper, but not before he had asked all employees to take a ten percent salary cut, which was refused, because, as he said, "The York Gazette Company is dead broke." (JWG, 2 October 1970) How bad the financial situation really was, and how much of his own money Gitt had been using to finance the paper, was revealed in an exchange with George Seldes in the summer of 1973, just a few months before Gitt's own death (see 4 and 25 July 1973 from Seldes; undated, typed original draft reply from Gitt--JWG, Box 2, File 19). Gitt rather bitterly wrote his old friend: ". . . a lot of my employees

. . . refused to accept the proposition I made which might have kept us going, and forced me to do the only thing that I could think of to do, sell the paper to someone, without, of course, allowing them to use the name Gazette and Daily, which to my mind was precious and should never be dirtied by being used by someone who did not understand the things it stood for."

Chapter III

Gitt's Press Associates: In a Class by Himself

George Seldes, whose credentials as a press critic were established in 1938 with Lords of the Press, liked to publish lists of what he considered to be "great small-town newspapers." The Gazette and Daily was always included and often headed that list.[1] In particular, Gitt's newspaper had reached Seldes' honor roll because it published exposés about false advertising.[2]

From 1940 to 1950 Seldes himself published a weekly newsletter for the press out of New York called In Fact. One of his major criticisms of the press expressed in the newsletter was its failure to publish Federal Trade Commission cease and desist orders against false and misleading advertising. He included publication of such FTC orders as number three in his "ten tests of a free press" in Lords of the Press.[3] Occasionally, daily newspapers such as the New York Times, the Christian Science Monitor, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, and the short-lived PM published the orders as "space permitted" but not on the daily basis on which they were released. (On request, the FTC sent free to newspapers daily fraud orders, weekly lists of trials,

and monthly summaries.) In response to Gitt's inquiry about how to obtain the orders, Seldes replied: "If you are going to run them daily let me know and I will put you on a special honor roll!"[4]

Gitt said he had been trying for years to obtain such daily releases from the FTC, but never received any. So he had relied on the Federal Register which was always incomplete and out-of-date. "The lack of space alibi is poppycock," said Gitt, referring to other newspapers' main reason for not printing them. He felt the press was under a "moral obligation" to do so.[5] Seldes wrote to Gitt that his letter made him "feel very good as it is the only confirmation of my standpoint I have ever received." He asked permission to reprint the letter in his newsletter, hoping to open a "symposium reply" on the issue.[6] Gitt slightly revised and amplified his views in another letter[7] which Seldes published in his October 8, 1945, issue.[8]

That example illustrates Gitt's relationship and cooperation with other members of the liberal press. The exchange of information between newsletters such as In Fact and The Gazette and Daily proved beneficial to both. In Fact continuously pointed out in its columns that the York Gazette would often be the only newspaper to print news which cast the government or big business in a bad light. One case in point was noted in the September 29, 1947, issue of In Fact. It named The Gazette and Daily as "the only newspaper in the entire country" to print the last

paragraph of an Associated Press dispatch from Nuremberg dated September 10, 1947, which noted that President Herbert Hoover had played host at the White House to a group of I. G. Farben officials later on trial for war crimes. The significance, according to In Fact, lay in Hoover's "advice on foreign policy . . . now being followed by President Truman."[9]

Victor Weingarten, In Fact's associate editor, wrote to Gitt, "our frequent praise of the Gazette & Daily must be getting monotonous to our readers, but we do note with some satisfaction how frequently others are beginning to refer to it as a truly honest newspaper."[10] Gitt's response was equally complimentary, in light of what he felt to be a real lack on the part of the country's three leading news services (Associated Press, United Press, and International News Service):

> It surely is a difficult task to print the kind of stuff a fellow would like to when he has to depend upon news services as at present operated. Comparatively speaking we do a good job, no doubt, but it is not nearly so good as we would like to do, and I do not suppose ever will be until at least some sort of liberal news service is set up that has sufficient financial resources to do a good job of coverage.[11]

When Seldes had to cease publishing his newsletter in October, 1950, Gitt wrote an appropriately appreciative editorial about it. Weingarten sent him a letter of thanks, adding his "warmest regards to your entire staff. Day in and day out, they do what is probably the best job of reporting in the democratic spirit in the land, and you can

be justifiably proud of the paper they put out."[12]

Several smaller newsletters critical of U.S. foreign policy were published during the post-World War II era. Articles from them were often re-printed on The Gazette and Daily's "second editorial page" (the forerunner of today's "op. ed. page"). Out of Philadelphia came one of the smallest, World Events, Analyzed and Interpreted by Scott Nearing. Another one, published in New York, was The Johannes Steel Report on World Affairs. Steel, a German political exile, was the American Labor Party's candidate for Congress in New York's 19th Congressional District in 1946. He was publicly endorsed by Henry Wallace, U.S. Secretary of Commerce, who had been introduced at the tenth anniversary dinner of the ALP on May 24, 1946, as the "symbol of the people's movement for the common man."[13]

Steel was a New York radio broadcaster who managed to get press credentials from The Gazette and Daily whenever he went to Europe to visit countries "behind the iron curtain." For a time during 1948 he was helping with plans to start a radio station in York (WRZE-FM, White Rose Broadcasting Co.), with mostly news, music, and sports. Involved in the business were Gitt's son, Charles M. Gitt, and sons-in-law, Michael Rebert and George Taylor. The station was closed in 1953 with the growth in popularity of television news shows.[14]

A newsletter which used material from all three of the above was Trends & Tides--A Paper of Information and

Opinion. It was started in 1945 and published out of the Milford, N.J., home of its editor, the Yugoslav-American writer Louis Adamic.[15] He reprinted editorials from liberal newspapers, including The Gazette and Daily, his own speeches (often made on cross-country lecture tours), and supported journalists who sometimes got into trouble because of their outspoken views on government and big business.

Adamic was an ardent supporter of Wallace for President, and through his work in the Progressive Party he became a close friend of J. W. Gitt. The York publisher also provided him with press accreditation as European correspondent in 1949. In writing to a friend in Tel Aviv to request hospitality for Adamic, Gitt said, "He is very much of a liberal and thinks about as close to my thinking as anybody I know."[16]

As a result of that trip abroad, Adamic wrote several articles praising President Tito. By the next year, he had become a major target of the McCarthy witch hunts, harassed continually by the FBI at his home and wherever he went. In September, 1951, he apparently succumbed to the pressures, and committed suicide.[17]

"There are only four other men besides yourself who know what is going on in the world and have the courage to tell the truth--Scott Nearing, George Seldes, Johannes Steel and Louis Adamic," a bank president in St. Louis, Mo., wrote to Gitt in September, 1948. "I consider it a great service that you all are rendering to the human race," said

F. R. von Windegger. He sent Gitt a check "as a token of the continued respect of an old subscriber."[18]

Amongst the liberal magazines of the time, Gitt was most closely affiliated with The Nation; he was a member of the advisory council of The National Associates. This relationship developed during the editorship of Freda Kirchwey, the organizer in 1945 of the Friends of the Spanish Republic whose goal was to end the Franco regime. The chairman was William L. Shirer, foreign correspondent and radio commentator in New York. Also active in New York, where he had lived since 1937, was J. Alvarez del Vayo, foreign minister of the Spanish Republican government-in-exile. (He was foreign editor of The Nation, and beginning in 1949 wrote articles for The Gazette and Daily's second-editorial page.)[19] J. W. Gitt was a member of the executive committee of the Friends of the Spanish Republic.

The San Francisco Conference inaugurating the United Nations in the spring of 1945 voted to bar Franco Spain from membership. (Bartley Crum, who in 1946 became vice-chairman of the Progressive Citizens of America, headed a San Francisco committee for the effort.) In February, 1946, the General Assembly of the United Nations reaffirmed the decision. At the same time the Friends of the Spanish Republic presented a Memorandum to President Truman in an attempt to pressure the United States to "break relations with Franco Spain and create conditions favorable to a return of the Republic." The issue went to

the Security Council of the United Nations which, after prolonged debate, agreed to "keep the situation in Spain under continuous observation"[20]

In January, 1946, The Nation Associates had submitted a Memorandum to the UN General Assembly asking for the suspension of Argentina on grounds that it was a fascist state and had "violated the principles of the United Nations Charter and the Chapultepec Agreement."[21] At Kirchwey's urging, Gitt wrote an editorial on the matter and sent a letter to President Truman saying "the continuance of Argentina as a member of the United Nations is fraught with dire danger to the future of that organization and to world peace."[22]

Gitt did not have success gaining mutual support from Kirchwey in 1948, however, when he urged The Nation to support Wallace instead of Truman. None of the major liberal magazines supported the former Vice-President for his bid to the highest office, not even The New Republic (of which he had been editor from December, 1946, to July, 1948). As The Nation editorialized: ". . . the only result can be to confuse enough Progressives to assure a Republican victory without establishing a mass base for a future third party movement."[23]

In 1949 an independent socialist magazine, Monthly Review, was co-founded by Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy. Gitt subscribed and the next year got into a good-natured letter exchange with Huberman after he was sent an advance

proof of an article by the editors titled "Cooperation on the Left." Huberman asked Gitt if he could be of financial assistance to MR.[24]

"There are a lot of things I would like to do in this life but only some of them are possible," Gitt replied. "You must understand, also, that I am not a socialist, as you probably know."[25]

Huberman replied, "There's no reason why you should do more for MR than you have done. Though of course if you read The Truth About Socialism and are still not a socialist, then I will have to journey to York one day to have a talk with you!"[26]

Gitt's tolerance for those further to the left than he showed up in his reply: "I have read The Truth About Socialism by Leo Huberman and I am still not a Socialist. And I doubt very much whether the situation could be changed by a talk with you. However, I will be delighted to have you come down some time and make the attempt."[27] Over the years Gitt often wrote letters and editorials explaining that he was a "progressive capitalist" and not a socialist (neither with a small "s" nor with a capital "S").

But he did respect those who were seeking another solution of "our economic problems" which he saw as founded in private monopoly control. In a letter to a Maryland doctor in July, 1949, he said: "I have been reading the thoughtful articles on these matters in the new Monthly Review gotten out by Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy. I have

a very high regard for both Leo and Paul, but they are socialists and naturally approach problems from the socialist viewpoint."[28]

As far as newspapers of the time were concerned, The Gazette and Daily stood alone. There were other daily newspapers which were liberal at certain periods in their lives (usually under specific editors), but none as consistently progressive as The Gazette and Daily during the fifty-five years under Gitt's direction (1915-1970). One of those liberal dailies was The Capital Times in Madison, Wisconsin, while William T. Evjue was the editor and publisher. In 1954 Evjue wrote Gitt to renew his Gazette subscription and noted, "We find much in your newspaper of value to us. We hope that you find the same in The Capital Times."[29] On December 12, 1955, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch published an editorial titled "Two Free Men" in tribute to Evjue's fiftieth year and Gitt's fortieth as editor and publisher of their respective newspapers.[30]

The decade of the 1940s saw a great flurry of activity in establishing liberal dailies in New York. The experimental newspaper without advertising, PM, was described as "a classic example of the difficulties facing a maverick newspaper in modern competition" by James Aronson in his book The Press and the Cold War. Ralph Ingersoll resigned as publisher of Life to launch PM in June 1940 on a stock issue of $1,500,000. There were 11,000 applicants for the 150 jobs. "PM was not radical; it was more nearly

left-liberal," said Aronson.

Marshall Field III, owner of the Chicago Sun, "poured $5 million into the paper, but PM never achieved the 225,000 daily circulation it needed to break even (it averaged about 165,000). Although in 1946 it began to take advertising, the big advertisers looked the other way," according to Aronson. He also claimed that the other newspapers and the trade journals, such as Editor & Publisher, treated it with a great deal of hostility. ". . . it is remarkable that PM survived for as long as it did," said Aronson.[31] In 1948 PM was sold to Bartley Crum and Joseph Barnes. It became the New York Star and lasted one year.

About a year or so before the sale of PM, Field had approached Gitt and urged him to take charge of the newspaper. Apparently, Field did not want Gitt to put any money into PM, but simply wanted him to take it over because of his and the Gazette's ideals. Luther Kohr, a former Gazette city editor then living in New York, revealed that Gitt told him he would be his "right-hand man" if he were to go along with Field. The York publisher did not want to spend much time in New York City. About ten days later, however, Gitt phoned Kohr and said, "Forget it, Field wants me to agree to be in New York three days every week and I just won't do that for anyone."[32]

If Gitt had been in control of PM, one thing is certain--the paper would have supported Henry Wallace when he announced his candidacy for the Presidency in December,

1947. Instead, it openly opposed Wallace and the editors received a long letter from Gitt chastising them for becoming "so saturated with expediency as to put it before principle."[33] The New York Star endorsed Truman.

PM's second successor was the New York Compass, launched in 1949 by Ted O. Thackrey as an independent progressive daily. Before that he had been co-editor and co-publisher of the New York Post Home News along with his wife, Dorothy Schiff. Thackrey supported Wallace in a series of signed columns called "Appeal to Reason." His wife opposed both Wallace and her husband in their newspaper, openly supporting Truman instead. That was grounds for divorce, both from each other and Thackrey from the Post, leaving Dorothy Schiff in complete control.[34]

"And now Ted has been fired by his wife--so there are only two liberal dailies left," wrote the man who, as Wisconsin manager for the United Press in 1913, had hired Thackrey as Madison correspondent. Harold Duane Jacobs, later editor of the Pittsburgh Press, told Gitt he was taking out a six months' trial subscription to The Gazette and Daily. "This is something I had intended to do for a long time, as I realized there were only three honest-to-God liberal dailies left in the country--yours, Bill Evjue's Madison Capital-Times and Ted Thackrey's New York Post Home News."[35]

On April 29, 1949, Thackrey received a founding commitment of $600,000 for the New York Daily Compass from

Mrs. Anita McCormick Blaine, daughter of Cyrus H. McCormick.[36] Already past eighty, the Chicago millionairess had spent considerable amounts of her money supporting what she considered to be progressive projects, undoubtedly much to the chagrin of "Cousin Bertie" McCormick, conservative publisher of the Chicago Tribune. Just before Mrs. Blaine made that commitment to Thackrey, Mrs. Elinor S. Gimbel, widow of a scion of the New York department store family, had approached Gitt about helping Thackrey with his new paper. Gitt's reply, on April 19, showed sympathy but little else:

> While I recognize the great necessity for a liberal paper in New York, I am not willing to help to finance it or to give it any particular attention. I have about all I can do to keep myself from getting annihilated down here and I am getting too darned old to take on anything more.[37]

The Compass expired in 1952, but on December 20, 1950, progressives in New York had gathered to honor Thackrey's contribution to their movement. Gitt was unable to attend the event although he allowed his name to be used as one of the six sponsors, along with W. E. B. DuBois, Thomas I. Emerson, Elinor S. Gimbel, Lillian Hellman, and Corliss Lamont. "Ted in my opinion is doing a wonderful job, particularly in connection with this peace business," Gitt wrote to Abe Zeitz of the Compass.[38]

In spite of Gitt's high opinion of Thackrey, he did not want to share a writer with him. Albert Kahn, a

Wallace supporter and president of the Jewish Peoples Fraternal Order, planned a trip to Italy and Israel "to report on labor and agricultural conditions." He wanted press credentials from the Gazette to send along to the passport division of the U.S. State Department. In his letter to Gitt requesting same, he mentioned he also had assignments from the Compass, the National Guardian, and Allied Labor News Service of Federated Press.[39]

Gitt's reply showed his independent stand when sharing writers with other publications (or at least some writers with some other publications):

> I have reluctantly come to the considered conclusion that I must withdraw my offer to have you do some articles for The Gazette and Daily, provided Ted Thackrey had you do the same for The Compass.
>
> In making this decision I have had in mind only the best interests of The Gazette and Daily which I spent a lifetime in building. And which it is my desire to continue as an effective instrument of independent thinking and honest, unbiased reporting, in spite of any pressures of any kind that may be put upon us.
>
> The fight is a very difficult one, as you must realize. We must maintain our independence at any price, but we ought not to become involved unnecessarily.
>
> I am sorry, but that is the way I feel about it.[40]

If Kahn had not included the National Guardian in his list, Gitt might have allowed him to send articles from Italy as they apparently had discussed when Kahn earlier visited York. Gitt's one unwritten, but unbreakable, law

about the re-print of articles for the Gazette's second-editorial page was that they must not be taken from the National Guardian.[41]

The irony of that rule lies in the fact that Gitt was one of the founders of the National Guardian--or, rather, he printed a preview issue of the National Gazette on the presses of The Gazette and Daily in York on August 1, 1948, soon after the Progressive Party convention in Philadelphia. Long before the convention, admirers of Gitt and his newspaper had been suggesting that he begin a national news supplement--to be published weekly and distributed nationally. Now the Wallaceites wanted a national newspaper which would support the principles of the Progressive Party, yet be independent. A tabloid-sized flier heralded the projected National Gazette at the July convention.[42] (The Gazette and Daily was itself a tabloid, having gone that size in 1943 to save newsprint.)

In the beginning, Gitt was chairman of National Gazette Inc. He would act as publisher only and was to have no editorial influence.[43] The newspaper had been planned for some months by journalists and Wallace supporters who decided their politics dictated that they start their own newspaper. They were: Cedric Belfrage, once the leading film and theater critic of the London Daily Express and author of several books, and James Aronson, from the New York Herald Tribune, the New York Post, and the New York Times. They were wondering how to get started when,

"Suddenly that summer Jess Gitt spoke sweet music from York," Belfrage recalled. "He would come in as publisher of a weekly National Gazette and underwrite a 70,000-copy preview issue. In addition to separate sales, the paper would be a weekend supplement to The Gazette and Daily."[44]

In the fall of 1948, Belfrage and Aronson went to see Gitt in York to ask for more money. "He admitted our political complexion was a bit too red for him," said Aronson, explaining that Gitt wanted out. He gave the list of subscriber names and addresses to Belfrage and Aronson, thus turning the paper over to them and outvoting two other men who had helped start the paper but wanted to tone down its radicalism.[45] "We believed that weakening before the anti-Wallace barrage had decisively contributed to the death of PM," Belfrage said.[46]

"Jess Gitt was magnificent," Aronson said. "He agreed to be responsible for any outstanding debts of National Gazette Inc., and to circularize all preview subscribers at his expense announcing our continuation of the project as National Guardian."[47] The first issue of the National Guardian, a tabloid-sized weekly, was printed in New York on October 18, 1948.

Gitt kept his word. Two years after the preview issues were run, a bill for $2,519 was sent to "National Gazette, 17 Murray St., New York, N.Y."[48] Gitt assured Belfrage when he wrote questioning it, "The bill you received was sent out without my knowledge."[49] Belfrage

had noted:

> It has been a hard struggle and it is so long now since we had any substantial cash in the till that we have almost forgotten it. Putting out the paper has, however, become a habit of which we cannot cure ourselves and we begin to feel that somehow or other, though we don't know how, we shall stay in the ring as long as the people feel and express the need.[50]

If Gitt had any hard feelings about the untimely demise of the National Gazette, he did not disclose them in his letters. One of his closest confidantes was Louis Adamic, who wrote about the Progressive Party convention in the preview issue of the new weekly. Just a couple of weeks later, he wrote Gitt three letters about continuing the National Gazette. One of them said, "I think you should start a weekly paper--as soon as possible. Very important. I think I could take charge of it editorially and make something unique and exciting." He suggested the paper should be located at Valley Forge or Gettysburg and it should be called Liberty Bell or The American Way.[51]

If Gitt replied, there is no record of it, but he did confide to Adamic's close friend, Don C. Matchan, maverick publisher-editor of the Valley City, N. D., Times-Record:

> For some time I have had the idea that we might issue a weekly edition of The Gazette and Daily, and that is what Louie and I were thinking about when this National Gazette business came along. For the present I would prefer to give those fellows a chance to get going, although confidentially I don't believe that they can make success of it.[52]

Matchan had commented that the preview issue of the

National Gazette was "too high-brow. Good stuff, yes, but too much at one crack, written to too few."[53]

One of those subscribers to The Gazette and Daily who wanted to subscribe to the National Gazette was Col. Raymond Robins, who had headed an American Red Cross mission to Russia after World War I. Gitt wrote he was turning the subscription over to the National Guardian "because I believe that they will make an effort to publish a really liberal weekly. I am very sorry that circumstances made it impractical for me to go ahead with the National Gazette."[54]

Several other letters indicate that Gitt realized the necessity for a national weekly, especially in light of the sound defeat of the Progressive Party at the polls. He hoped the National Guardian would succeed but recognized its need for "very considerable financial support." A Connecticut man subscribed to both papers and liked them both but wanted to know if the National Guardian had Gitt's blessing. Gitt replied simply, "They have my good will, of course, but I am no longer associated with them."[55]

Two years after that preview issue, a man who had been working in the National Guardian's office on a readership analysis, Barney Conal, again approached Gitt about publishing a weekly political digest and round-up which would have a broader-based circulation than the National Guardian.[56] Gitt's reply establishes him as a man of principle, one who wants to let the other fellow publisher get a fair chance:

> What you have in mind is pretty much what I was thinking about when I first became involved in what was then the National Gazette, now the Guardian (sic). I soon discovered that either the Guardian's editors were not able to do a job like that or did not want to do it. I never quite decided which.
>
> Later I had in mind doing something about a weekly political digest, using our own editorials and what I call the second editorial page stuff, but I hesitated to do so for fear the Guardian would accuse me of acting in bad faith after I had withdrawn from their project and wished them success.
>
> At present my own thinking is so confused and I have so many other things on my shoulders that I have no desire to reach out. I have plenty of trouble keeping my own boat sailing.[57]

Thus, J. W. Gitt had to abandon his ideas about publishing a weekly national "political digest," as well as a local radio station, both of which he intended would present more in-depth news coverage and analysis than the news media generally provided. Of course, he continued for two decades after that letter to Barney Conal to publish The Gazette and Daily in York. As noted earlier, the paper had several thousand subscribers outside its home territory, including a few in Europe. They obviously appreciated three things about the paper: reprints on the second editorial page of articles from most of the progressive news media; news which they were not likely to find elsewhere, such as the FTC rulings; and certianly the editorials written from a consistently progressive viewpoint by both Gitt and Higgins.

It was that consistency which made The Gazette and Daily unique, and which placed J. W. Gitt in a class by

himself when measured against all the other news media of his time, even within that group of progressive media discussed here. For a daily newspaper to continue an editorial policy based on peace among nations and equal opportunities for all human beings over more than half a century is unmatched in the annals of American journalism. The following chapters will explore how Gitt projected his strong beliefs from the pages of his newspaper into an even more public, and certainly more national, sphere during an era when an increasing number of Americans were willing to accept "the lesser of two evils."

NOTES

[1] George Seldes, Never Tire of Protesting, pp. 276-277. (Others on the list were: Milford Times, Milford, Conn.; Capital Press, Salem, Ore.; Malden Press, Malden, Mass.; Capital Times, Madison, Wis.; Dothan Eagle, Dothan, Ala.; and Emporia Gazette, Emporia, Kansas)

[2] Ibid., p. 147.

[3] George Seldes, Lords of the Press (New York: J. Messner, Inc., 1938), p. 387.

[4] JWG, 28 July and 1 August 1945.

[5] JWG, 4 August 1945.

[6] JWG, 7 August 1945.

[7] JWG, 8 August 1945.

[8] "1 Editor in the U.S. Refused to Suppress the News," In Fact, 8 October 1945, p. 3. (See JWG, 12 July 1946, response from FTC saying Gitt's name had been placed on mailing list to receive daily press release.)

[9] "Hoover Feted Farben Leaders in White House, War Crimes Trial Shows; Only 1 Paper Uses Story," In Fact, 29 September 1947, p. 1. (Much of the material on the Farben trials came from Howard W. Ambruster, author of Treason's Peace, who according to In Fact "warned that efforts were being made to sabotage the Farben war crimes trial, and that the U.S. press was suppressing or underplaying important news linking high-ranking Americans to the Farben defendants." [For a complete account of the Farben scandal, and the role played by U.S. business in it, see: Joseph Borkin, The Crime and Punishment of I. G. Farben (New York: The Free Press, 1979)]

[10] JWG, 23 September 1947.

[11] JWG, 30 September 1947. (See 3 December 1947, Gitt to Seldes: "I particularly value your autograph. To have you as an admirer is something of which I am very proud.")

[12] JWG, 9 October 1950.

[13] Curtis D. MacDougall, Gideon's Army (New York: Marzani & Munsell, 1965), vol. 1, pp. 58-59.

[14] JWG, 1948 files, several letters. (Also conversation with Marian Rebert, Hanover, Pa., Gitt's daughter.)

[15] Dinner at the White House (a study of Churchill, Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt), Two-Way Passage, A Nation of Nations, My Native Land, The Native's Return, From Many Lands, My America, What's Your Name?, and Laughing in the Jungle. (Profit from book sales was used by Adamic to support Trends & Tides.)

[16] JWG, 12 January 1949.

[17] Conversation with Walt Partymiller, cartoonist of The Gazette and Daily for 25 years, at his home in York, Pa. June 16, 1978.

[18] JWG, 2 September 1948.

[19] "Del Vayo in Europe," The Gazette and Daily, 18 April 1950, p. 18 (editorial).

[20] "The Fight Against Spain, Report on the Activities of The Nation Associates at the Security Council of the United Nations," JWG, 25 July 1946, from Kirchwey.

[21] JWG, 24 January 1946.

[22] JWG, 25 January 1946.

[23] Karl M. Schmidt, Henry A. Wallace, Quixotic Crusade 1948 (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1960), p. 40.

[24] JWG, 24 February and 5 May 1950.

[25] JWG, 10 May 1950.

[26] JWG, 22 June 1950.

[27] JWG, 26 June 1950.

[28] JWG, 11 July 1949.

[29] JWG, 1 February 1954.

[30] JWG, 12 December 1955.

[31] Aronson, The Press and the Cold War, pp. 22-23.

[32] Letter from Luther Kohr, Orlando, Fla., 16 January 1979. Kohr worked on the Gazette's editorial staff from 1923-1942; became sports editor in 1934 and city editor in 1940. After serving in WW II, he worked in New York for the Certified Milk movement, putting out their publication. (Also see JWG, 30 March 1948, from Charles M. Gitt to Attorney Osmond F. Fraenkel.)

[33] JWG, 23 December 1947.

[34] MacDougall, vol. 3, p. 845.

[35] JWG, 22 April 1949.

[36] MacDougall, vol. 1, p. 296.

[37] JWG, 19 April 1949. (Gimbel's letter to Gitt is not available.)

[38] JWG, 5 December 1950.

[39] JWG, 22 September 1950.

[40] JWG, 2 October 1950.

[41] Known from the author's professional experience on both papers.

[42] MacDougall, vol. 2, p. 505. (A copy of the August 1, 1948, issue of the National Gazette is on file at the Historical Society of York County, 250 E. Market St., York, Pa.)

[43] Interview with James Aronson, Martha's Vineyard, Mass., 20 August 1978.

[44] Cedric Belfrage and James Aronson, Something to Guard, The Stormy Life of the National Guardian 1948-1967 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), p. 14.

[45] Aronson interview. (They were Mel Bernstein, cartoonist from PM who came onto the paper as art editor, and his business friend, Peter Hodgeson, who later made a lot of money as the inventor of "Silly Putty.")

[46] Belfrage and Aronson, p. 16.

[47] Ibid., p. 21. (Financial aid for the National Guardian arrived in February, 1949, from Anita McCormick Blaine.)

[48] JWG, 10 August 1950.

[49] JWG, 31 August 1950.

[50] JWG, 22 August 1950.

[51] JWG, 16 August 1948.

[52] JWG, 18 September 1948.

[53] JWG, 9 September 1948.

[54] JWG, 29 September 1948.

[55] JWG, 6 December 1948.

[56] JWG, 2 May 1950. (Conal had established the Voters Research Institute of America for the Democratic Party, but then became political analyst for the Progressives.)

[57] JWG, 4 May 1950.

Chapter IV

". . . if Mankind Is to Survive": Gitt and Einstein

On Monday, April 2, 1979, just five days after the nuclear power plant accident at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania, a special exhibit opened at a town library about twenty-five miles to the southwest. It commemorated the centenary of the birth of the most famous scientist in the field of nuclear fission, Albert Einstein. The display of letters, editorials and cartoons at Hanover Public Library also honored a native son, J. W. Gitt. The two men, both pacifists and internationalists, had carried on a correspondence for about eighteen months (from mid-1946 through 1947). They were attempting to establish a York committee to work with the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists in Princeton on educating the public about nuclear energy.

The correspondence began on May 24, 1946, when the York newspaper publisher addressed a note simply to "Dr. Albert Einstein, Princeton, N.J." It read: "Enclosed you will find my check for $200, a contribution from Mrs. Gitt and myself to a fund for a nation-wide campaign to let the people know that a new type of thinking is essential if mankind is to survive."[1]

The Gitts' contribution was acknowledged in a form letter dated June 11, 1946, from the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists and signed by "A. Einstein" as chairman. Other members, listed on the letterhead, of the "provisional committee" in Princeton were Hans A. Bethe, Edward U. Condon, Leo Szilard and Harold C. Urey. The letter noted that the five scientists had chosen the National Committee on Atomic Information, "a clearing house for 60 national church, business, labor, civic, farm, and women's organizations," as the outlet for its educational program. "From this time on, we will work with all our means to ensure complete public understanding of the scientific facts of atomic energy and their implications for society," the letter said.[2]

The Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists had been formed in 1945, with Einstein as its chairman.[3] In the fall of that year, an article appeared in The Atlantic Monthly in which Einstein set forth his proposal for a "World Government" to be founded by the United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain, as "the only three powers with great military strength." To this World Government would be committed "the secret of the bomb." Einstein further stated:

> Since the United States and Great Britain have the secret of the atomic bomb and the Soviet Union does not, they should invite the Soviet Union to prepare and present the first draft of a Constitution for the proposed World Government. That action should help to dispel the distrust which the Russians already

> feel because the bomb is being kept a secret, chiefly to prevent their having it. Obviously the first draft should not be the final one, but the Russians should be made to feel that the World Government would assure them their security.

Einstein did not believe that the secret should be given to the Soviet Union nor to the United Nations. He felt that such a World Government should have "power over all military matters and need have only one further power: the power to intervene in countries where a minority is oppressing a majority and creating the kind of instability that leads to war."[4]

In the fall of 1946, Gitt wrote to the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists to request a speaker who could address The People's Forum of York on atomic energy. The Forum had been in existence for a number of years to bring speakers on relevant issues to the community. Gitt said, "I personally have insisted that we have one lecture on atomic energy in the coming season."[5] His letter was referred to A. E. Casgrain, acting director of the National Committee on Atomic Information, who in turn sent the request on to Alfred Douty of the Association of Philadelphia Scientists.

A series of letters between Gitt and Douty finally lined up Prof. Park H. Miller Jr. of the Department of Physics, University of Pennsylvania, to address the Forum on January 6, 1947. Gitt arranged to pay Miller a $50 honorarium plus expenses, which went to the Association of

Philadelphia Scientists, headquartered in Miller's department.[6] In reply to a thank-you note from the Association, Gitt said that $25 of the honorarium was contributed by "a very good friend of mine, Mr. A. D. Cohn," of York.[7]

After the Forum address, he wrote to the speaker: "While the crowd that heard you was not too large it was composed pretty much of people who think and who are likely to circulate their thoughts. I think it was the first time that a lot of them realized that atomic energy had any real uses other than killing people."[8]

A few months later, Einstein sent Gitt a copy of the book Explaining the Atom by Dr. Selig Hecht, professor of biophysics at Columbia University. Gitt felt the book so clearly explained atomic energy that he wanted to serialize it in his newspaper. Hecht gave Gitt permission to do so because he had been so impressed with a column Gitt had written about his book, and because "in the case of atomic energy people must know the history and the possibilities."[9]

Gitt continued to seek permission to reprint material he felt necessary for an understanding of the issues arising out of the new atomic age. One such piece was the "letter" by Einstein appearing in "The Reader Replies" section of the summer 1947 issue of The American Scholar. The letter was in answer to a previous debate in the quarterly on the question, "Should the Scientists Resist Military Intrusion?" Einstein said he felt that

"institutions for learning and research will more and more have to be supported by grants from the state, since, for various reasons, private sources will not suffice." He insisted, however, that the "most beneficent distribution" of these funds, raised from the taxpayer, should not be entrusted to the military but to "people whose training and life's work give proof that they know something about science and scholarship."[10]

Reprint of the letter in The Gazette and Daily was granted by the magazine and its author. Einstein also included in a note to Gitt his "thank you for your efforts to bring to the American people a sense of individual responsibility in formulating national policies on atomic energy control."[11] The letter was signed by Mary E. Ray, secretary for the Emergency Committee.

Gitt sent Einstein another check for $200 "to further the work of the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists." He said he was "tremendously impressed with the necessity for educating the American people to an understanding of the implications of atomic energy and of the necessity of making the 'reciprocal sacrifices to achieve great ends.'" He was "happy to know," Gitt said, that Einstein believed that "mankind is capable of reason, restraint and courage and will choose this path of peace." But he quickly added, "I wish I could be so optimistic. If I were I would probably have sent you half or a quarter as much."[12]

This time Gitt received a personal letter from "A. Einstein." The scientist thanked the publisher for his "continued help in our campaign to arouse the American people to an understanding of the present very serious situation. . . . We all appreciate the steady attention this work receives in the columns of your newspaper." He said the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists was calling for "effective international control of atomic energy."[13]

In a month's time, Einstein was writing to Gitt to ask him for special help because "you have shown such generous interest in this work." He said some of his "colleagues" on the Committee "would very much like an opportunity to confer with leaders in your community" as part of its educational campaign. "Our purpose in meeting such a group would be to bring to their attention the extremely serious nature of the present crisis as regards the need for effective international control of energy."[14] Gitt's reply reflected his doubts about community support but reaffirmed his own interest:

> I would certainly be willing to help in forming a committee to sponsor a meeting in York. Whether or not we could get enough people interested I do not know. I believe it would be worthwhile, however, to send a representative of your committee to talk with me.[15]

There followed a series of letters between Gitt and Eileen A. Fry, assistant to Professor Einstein, about

lining up a speaker for the York meeting and developing local contacts. Gitt wrote her on October 17, 1947:

> The thing I have in my mind is that it should be somebody who will not hold back their punches and who will maintain the position of the Emergency Committee that there is no secret to the atomic bomb and that there is no defense against it and that the situation is very serious.[16]

Among the few residents in York already supportive of the Committee's work was Francis Farquhar, a wealthy property owner in the city who often backed liberal causes. A copy of Einstein's letter to Farquhar was sent to Gitt. Dated October 31, 1947, the letter explained that the Committee's purpose in meeting with a group in York would be to alert them to "the present crisis" as well as "to enlist the help and financial support of your community in extending the essential educational campaign we have undertaken."[17]

By December, however, nothing had happened to indicate that organizing such a group in York was possible. On December 12, Gitt wrote to Mrs. Fry:

> I don't know when I have been so nonplussed. The only explanation I have is that this hysteria which apparently has so impressed Dr. Szilard, has gone to such extremes that 'respectable people' like Mr. Farquhar and Mr. Schmidt are unwilling to be associated with me in any public way. You remember that Mr. Sharkey was a lot more pessimistic about York's willingness to do something for the Atomic Scientists than I was, and it begins to look as though he was too nearly right. I just simply cannot understand people.

> Nothing would please me better than to be able to raise a considerable sum in this community for the use of the Atomic Scientists, but I am very much afraid that the fact that I had a hand in it would make it impossible. So far as any connection I might have with it is concerned, I think that the best thing to do is to forget it for a while until some of this crazy business blows over.
>
> While I personally applaud Dr. Szilard's recent suggestions, most everybody I know thinks that he has proved himself to be a naive, long-whiskered infant, so far as public affairs is concerned. Of course, that is not helping what we have in mind any.[18]

Fry replied that Henry Schmidt, another Yorker, had written Einstein saying it was "impossible for him to take any action in the matter." Farquhar, however, had agreed to find interested parties in York but wrote Einstein in early December: "I am having a difficult time getting enough people interested to make a good report. This indifference is the strongest kind of an argument in favor of just what you are asking the American people to do. I will keep on." She went on to stress the importance of such a meeting in York:

> Professor Einstein and some of the other trustees are particularly anxious that this meeting in York should not fall through. They feel that they have in you a good and reliable friend; if you and Mr. Farquhar will continue to go along with them, they would like to hold a meeting. They do not expect large financial returns from York but feel that there has been enough interest and discussion down there so that it would be bad to call the meeting off now.[19]

She suggested the end of January as the possible date for the meeting in York, with Dr. Lyle Borst of Brookhaven National Laboratory and Dr. Frederick Seitz of the

Carnegie Institute of Technology as the guest speakers representing the Committee.

In an immediate reply, Gitt indicated his willingness to go along with such a meeting. But he added, "What was bothering me was that it seemed so impossible to stir up much interest, or as much as I would like." Again, he reiterated his faith in the scientists rather than in the politicians as the ones more adept at handling the problems of the atomic age:

> Do not misunderstand me. I did not mean to criticize Dr. Szilard, who is a man after my own heart. I personally think his suggestion was very practical and, pursued, would likely have resulted in a great deal more good than anything that our so-called statesmen have so far pulled out of the hat.
>
> However, I hope that you will go ahead with Mr. Farquhar and I assure you that I will do everything I possibly can to help him in any way possible, but I would like to get a lot of money too, because I think the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists is doing a very, very necessary job and doing it very well, and that a couple of million dollars invested with them would give far greater results than all the money that has been thrown away in Turkey, Greece and China, etc.[20]

A meeting in York was set for February 3, 1948, with Borst and Seitz as speakers. In making the arrangements, Gitt chose to allow Farquhar to take charge, writing Mrs. Fry; "I sense that Mr. Farquhar has an idea that it is better to leave me out and I am inclined to think he is right. I suggest that you let him go ahead with the meeting without putting any pressure on him about me."

He further explained in concluding the letter:

> One of the troubles may be that since we talked things over I have come out definitely in favor of Henry Wallace's third party candidacy and still further 'degraded' myself in the eyes of many of the moneyed people of the community. Please understand that I have no feeling whatever about being by-passed; that I am interested only in doing everything possible to help Dr. Einstein and his committee. What happens to me in the process is of no importance whatever, so long as we get some results.[21]

Farquhar sent Gitt a copy of the letter he wrote to Mary E. Ray, secretary of the Emergency Committee, on January 12. Its concluding paragraph clearly showed his position:

> It is curious (if it were not semi-tragic) how little realization there is amongst so-called intelligent business and professional men, outside of scientists of course, of the true world situation. If our Congressmen depend on their constituents for advice they are in a bad way, as indeed we may all be if we don't wake up.

Other than that letter, Gitt told Miss Ray he had had no further communication with Farquhar on the meeting, and explained his position on the matter:

> My thought is to let them go ahead and hold this meeting and conduct it as they see the best interests of the cause, and then after they have done what they can I will see to it that further action is taken. . . . Personally I am convinced that this matter of providing the atomic scientists with sufficient funds to enable them to function properly in their endeavor to educate the American people about atomic energy, or whatever you call it, is almost a life and death matter, and that nothing should be allowed to interfere with the scientists obtaining the maximum amount from this or any other community. . . . I do not feel in the least hurt.[23]

The above recounting of the difficulties in setting up the York meeting is a prime example of Gitt's efforts to bring matters of universal importance down to the local level. Through his newspaper and the power position it granted him, he was privileged to have access to many of the superior minds of his day. But Gitt always tried to use that access as a means of educating community leaders and hence the local citizenry. Sometimes he had to step behind the scenes and let others take over the spotlight. In a letter to Richard Grumbacher, another Yorker who had supported the Emergency Committee for Atomic Scientists, Einstein noted that the "arrangements for this meeting are in the hands of Mr. Francis Farquhar." But he immediately gave the supreme compliment by saying: "My friend Mr. J. W. Gitt has also promised to try to see that the time of our scientists is put to good use."[24]

The meeting was held in York on February 3, 1948, with Borst and Seitz as speakers. It was a closed meeting of the Past Presidents' Association of Engineers attended by fifty-five "local mercantile, civic and scientific leaders."[25] The chairman of the engineers' group, H. A. Delano, said the meeting was "exploratory." But the page-one story then noted: "However, an official spokesman, who wished to remain anonymous, stated that the committee [on atomic energy] 'probably would be established and take up local problems sometime next week.'" It would be a safe bet that the name of the anonymous spokesman was

J. W. Gitt. His correspondence does not yield any evidence about the establishment in York of such a committee. Gitt did not often find many prominent Yorkers as willing as Francis Farquhar to support his causes.

In an exchange of letters in the summer of 1951, Gitt and Farquhar demonstrated their respect for one another as community leaders. Farquhar wrote to thank Gitt for public remarks about him at a gathering at the Hotel Yorktowne, but declined any possible column written in his honor. "You have so many things to occupy your mind that forgetting this little thing won't be hard," said Farquhar. "The American People are sadly in need of guidance and on the whole I consider your editorials and your Paper are doing a better job for them than (but of course on a much smaller scale) even the great New York Times is doing; most of whose editorials are valueless." [sic][26]

"Your wishes will be respected," Gitt immediately wrote to Farquhar. His letter set forth lines of delineation between what he expected to obtain personally for himself and what he hoped to maintain for his public voice, The Gazette and Daily:

> . . . However I do think that people like you, who do stand for the best interests of the American people as well as, I hope, those of the rest of the world, should have some recognition for their good deeds. I would personally very much prefer myself that nothing of that kind were done for me, so I can understand how you feel about it.

> Thank you very much for what you have to say about the paper. As you know, I am only interested in trying to do what little I can to make this a better country for us all to live in. While a lot of people interpret that as meaning I am a leftist, more or less extreme varying with the self-interests of those who so express themselves, you know better. It gives me great satisfaction to know that somebody like you does understand that I have been wedded to the American ideal and I do not propose to be separated from it by denunciations from those who have no real conception of what that means.[27]

After the meeting in York to boost support for the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists, the year 1948 saw Gitt totally immersed in the campaign to elect former Vice-President Henry A. Wallace to the Presidency on the Progressive Party ticket. When the one man Gitt had hoped would bring a more internationalist view to American foreign policy was soundly defeated at the polls, the York publisher continued to support organizations with world government and world peace as their goals. He was invited to join with Einstein and others in Washington, D.C., the weekend of May 20-21, 1949, "to find common ground upon which to make our stand for real and lasting peace." The gathering of leaders of civic, church, labor and community organizations was organized because they had become "profoundly disturbed at the dangerous direction of American foreign policy, particularly the North Atlantic Pact."[28]

Later that year, Gitt also supported the Writers Board For World Government in New York City. Its membership included Norman Cousins, Russel Crouse, Clifton Fadiman,

Oscar Hammerstein 2nd, John Hersey, Christopher LaFarge, Margaret Leech, and Robert Sherwood. The chairman was Rex Stout, who wrote Gitt:

> We are glad indeed to have your name on our National Register; and, considering the state of our treasury, I must confess that we are just as glad to have your generous contribution of twenty-five dollars. Thanks very much.
>
> I note your comment that nothing except death is inevitable, and that therefore war is merely likely, but I am not that optimistic -- unless we do get world government in time.[29]

In the next couple of years, as worry increased that the Korean conflict might turn into another world war, many peace organizations sought Gitt's personal support or publicity in his newspaper. Among these groups were: Foundation for World Government, New York City, with Stringfellow Barr as president;[30] Promoting Enduring Peace, A Religious and Educational Foundation, West Haven, Conn., with Jerome Davis as director (Anita McCormick Blaine was an honorary president);[31] The Fellowship of Reconciliation, New York City, with A. J. Muste as secretary;[32] Commission to Study the Organization of Peace, the research affiliate of the American Association for the United Nations, New York City, signed by James T. Shotwell, professor emeritus at Columbia University;[33] the American Friends Service Committee, Philadelphia, signed by John H. Hobart;[34] and the Commission on World Peace of The Methodist Church, Chicago, signed by Rev. Carl D. Soule, secretary for

district and sub-district conferences. Soule wrote that he recently had seen a copy of Gitt's newspaper when he held a few peace meetings in the Central Pennsylvania Conference and recalled their "common interest in the candidacy of Henry Wallace" three years previous. He stated his praise for The Gazette and Daily in Biblical terms:

> I should like to tell you how happy I am to see a paper such as the Gazette, one which has a sense of proportion and places upon the front page news that is significant. I thought that you did your readers a great service by placing upon the front page the recent proposal of Senator Johnson concerning a Korean armistice. In my mind this would correspond to a Jerusalem newspaper in the year 30 giving emphasis to the ministry of Jesus Christ. That is, you have a sense of what is significant in our own time that is far superior to that of most papers.[35]

Whether Gitt joined any of these organizations or supported them financially cannot be determined through his correspondence files. But if these or similar organizations created any "news," such stories would appear on the first two or three pages of the paper. After the Wallace campaign of 1948, however, the York publisher would never again assume such a personal role in attempting to influence the outcome of American politics, either foreign or domestic.

Gitt's correspondence with the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists reflect his desire to form a core of civic leaders in York who would be involved in one of his own major concerns at the dawning of the Atomic Age. He was not content just to write letters and hold memberships

in national political action groups, such as The Nation Associates, nor to reply on his newspaper as the only educational tool in the community. Through his influence in the People's Forum of York, Gitt sought to bring in experts on atomic energy, a topic which would become a pivot of controversy in the decades to come.

"J. W. Gitt always was ahead of his time. His paper was the first to come out against the war in Vietnam, and the first to launch an all-out editorial fight against the construction and use of nuclear power plants to generate electricity," said McKinley C. Olson.[36] His article appeared in The Sunday Sun (Baltimore) shortly after the accident at Three Mile Island on March 28, 1979. Olson recalled that on January 1, 1959, as a reporter for The Gazette and Daily "fresh out of Northwestern University's Graduate School of Journalism," he was assigned to cover the development of nuclear power in York County along its west bank of the Susquehanna River. Metropolitan Edison Company was then contemplating building a nuclear power reactor station at Three Mile Island near Harrisburg. Philadelphia Electric Company was spearheading plans to build a nuclear power plant in a rural area called Peach Bottom just above the Maryland line. The city of York was caught in the middle and Gitt knew it.

Olson recalled his employer's reaction: "So get the facts, J. W. Gitt told me, and let the chips fall where they may. I did. We did. And most people thought we

were either Communists, or crazy, or both."[37] After a discussion of his research on the dangers of nuclear power plants, Olson concluded:

> Were Josiah Gitt alive today, he would have been shaken and saddened, as we all should be by Three Mile Island, but he would not have been at all surprised, for he always said that 'any damn fool would know that these things aren't perfect, and if they're not perfect, they can't be safe.'[38]

Both Josiah Gitt and Albert Einstein would have been shaken by the TMI accident which occurred three decades after their effort to educate the people of York about nuclear energy. A spokesperson at Hanover Public Library said the display of letters between Gitt and Einstein had generated only "moderate interest." The two men would have been saddened to realize that those whose lives were disrupted by the accident seemed to care only about present "news" rather than allowing themselves to be educated by the past.

NOTES

[1] JWG, 24 May 1946.

[2] JWG, 11 June 1946.

[3] "Einstein," Nova, PBS-TV (WGBH-Boston), 23 July 1979, 8 p.m.

[4] Albert Einstein as told to Raymond Swing, "Einstein on the Atomic Bonb," The Atlantic Monthly, 176, No. 5, November 1945, p. 43.

[5] JWG, 14 October 1946.

[6] JWG, 23, 25, 30 October; 15, 19, 21 November; 2, 3, 4, 12 December 1946.

[7] JWG, 16 January 1947.

[8] JWG, 18 January 1947.

[9] JWG, 12 May 1947. (Also see 8, 14 May.)

[10] Albert Einstein, "The Military Mentality," The American Scholar 16, No. 3, Summer 1947, p. 353.

[11] JWG, 5 August 1947. (Also see 21, 31 July and 2, 7 August.)

[12] JWG, 7 August 1947.

[13] JWG, 21 August 1947.

[14] JWG, 23 September 1947.

[15] JWG, 30 September 1947.

[16] JWG, 17 October 1947.

[17] JWG, 31 October 1947.

[18] JWG, 12 December 1947. (Harry Sharkey was city editor of The Gazette and Daily. Mrs. Fry apparently had gone to York to visit Gitt about a meeting in York. Gitt's reference to Dr. Leo Szilard was the physicist's "Open

Letter to Stalin" which appeared in the Bulletin of the American Association of Atomic Scientists. (December 1947, p. 347.) It suggested that the Soviet premier make a series of addresses to the American people in the interest of world peace. Attorney General Tom Clark refused to allow him to send the letter to Stalin. MacDougall, vol. 2, p. 359.)

[19] JWG, 15 December 1947.

[20] JWG, 18 December 1947.

[21] JWG, 10 January 1948.

[22] JWG, 13 January 1948.

[23] JWG, 15 January 1948.

[24] JWG, 13 January 1948.

[25] "Bomb Scientists Request Local Engineers Spread Atom Era Understanding," The Gazette and Daily, 4 February 1948, p. 1.

[26] JWG, 10 July 1951.

[27] JWG, 12 July 1951.

[28] JWG, 1 May (telegram) and 3 May (letter) 1949.

[29] JWG, 14 September 1949. (The next year the Writers Board for World Government was urging support of a House bill, HCR 64, which would put Congress on record as supporting and strengthening the United Nations "to seek its development into a world federation open to all nations with defined and limited powers adequate to preserve peace and prevent aggression through the enactment, interpretation and enforcement of world law." JWG, 22 June 1950.)

[30] JWG, 3 January; 24, 29, 30 November; 12, 27 December 1950.

[31] JWG, 22, 27 April; 1, 19 May; 17 September 1949 and 21 April 1951.

[32] 7 March 1950.

[33] 11 July 1951.

[34] 1 June 1951.

[35] 8 June 1951.

[36] McKinley C. Olsen [sic], "Greening of a Nuclear Critic," The Sunday Sun, Baltimore, Md., 8 April 1979, p. K-1.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid., p. K-2. (Olson's 1976 book on the nuclear power plant controversy, Unacceptable Risk, was published in a revised edition by Bantam Books in 1979 after TMI. He also has had several articles in The Nation and The Progressive on that topic.)

Chapter V

Gitt: The Captain of "Gideon's Army"

For two years, from March 1948 to July 1950, J. W. Gitt was state chairman of the Progressive Party of Pennsylvania, and for at least a year before that, he was active in the party's forerunner, the Progressive Citizens of America. His was one of the most influential voices used to convince former Secretary of Agriculture and Vice-President Henry Agard Wallace to wage a battle for the United States Presidency on the Progressive Party ticket in 1948.

Gitt poured a considerable amount of time and energy--to say nothing of money and the newspaper's columns and printshop--into promoting Wallace and the Progressive Party. The Gazette and Daily was the only commercial (non-party) newspaper in the United States to completely support Wallace's candidacy, to the admiration of many and the chagrin of others, both on and off the staff. As always, however, Gitt exercised his prerogative as an independent newspaper owner, listening only to the voice of his own conscience.

* * * * *

"Progressive sentiment is rising throughout the country," Secretary of Commerce Henry A. Wallace told a reporter for The Gazette and Daily on April 27, 1946. The former Vice-President, who was on a cross-country speaking tour, had come to town to address the fifty-fourth annual Jefferson-Jackson Day dinner of the Men's Democratic Society of York. "The American people are always progressive, but sometimes when they get a bit of money they get fat and lazy," said Wallace.[1]

J. W. Gitt was probably at that dinner, although the news account did not mention it. Notably present, however, was Pennsylvania's senior senator, Joseph F. Guffey, to whom Gitt had written In July, 1944: "May I sincerely congratulate you on the fine fight you put up for Henry Wallace. I believe that it is one of the things that you will always have the satisfaction of looking back upon as having been really worthwhile."[2]

Senator Guffey replied, with more than a touch of prophecy: "Needless to say, I am happy to know that you agree with the position taken by me when I backed the renomination of Henry A. Wallace for the Vice-Presidency. While he was not renominated, it is my opinion that he came out of the convention a much bigger man than when he went in. I am also of the opinion that he will be the leader of liberalism during the immediate years to come."[3]

Precisely when Wallace became "the leader of liberalism" is unclear, according to Curtis MacDougall in

Gideon's Army, his three-volume document of the Progressive Party and its Presidential candidate in the 1948 campaign. In later years, MacDougall said, Wallace recalled that when he was forced to resign from Truman's cabinet on September 20, 1946, he felt that "peace was the overpowering issue of the times and that he intended to take part in the 1948 campaign." Although he was not able to find those words in print, MacDougall said he did not doubt Wallace. Nor did Gitt have any doubt about Wallace's intentions, as he quoted to MacDougall from the New Dealer's speech in York five months earlier: ". . . certain people who represent the narrow sectional interest as against the national interest are doing their utmost to wreck the economic stability of the whole nation."[4]

Wallace had served longer than any other member of Roosevelt's original New Deal Cabinet, thirteen and a half years. Only the nomination of a new Vice-President in 1944 kept him from acceding to the highest office the next year upon Roosevelt's death. As the President's political power and physical health had waned, Wallace's progressive ideas saw no protection from those who had made enormous profits during the war's industrial boom and wanted to continue doing so after the war's end. Wallace was not opposed to capitalism, per se, but like Gitt he wanted "progressive capitalism" which, he thought, would allow more people to share in the wealth. Achieving peace through the United Nations and prosperity through the government's control of

big business were his goals.[5] His ideas and those of the York newspaper publisher so finely meshed that Gitt became the most ardent Wallace supporter in the mass media--in fact, so much so that he was sometimes criticized, and not just by his political opponents, for allowing his newspaper to become "a house organ of the Progressive Party and its candidate."[6]

It is true that for about four years, from 1946 through the summer of 1950 when both Gitt and Wallace resigned from the Progressive Party, The Gazette and Daily carried news stories on all the doings of the party and its Presidential candidate. Sometimes the paper reprinted Wallace's speeches in full, either as news stories if they were carried over the Associated Press wire, or as separate features if Gitt deemed them important enough. In the latter category, for instance, was Wallace's "Madison Square Garden Speech" delivered on September 12, 1946, which resulted in President Truman's request for his resignation as Secretary of Commerce eight days later.[7]

Properly titled "The Way to Peace," the speech triggered a controversy when Truman claimed he had never approved it but Wallace insisted the President had. Deemed to be too pro-Russian by Wallace's detractors, the speech originally had contained several criticisms of the Soviet Union which Wallace softened when he realized how pro-Russian was the crowd in Madison Square Garden.[8] Wallace struck at Truman's "get tough" policy by stating,

"The tougher we get, the tougher the Russians will get." He proposed that each nation respect the other's sphere of influence--the United States in the Western Hemisphere and Russia in Eastern Europe--while working for a lasting peace through the United Nations, which would control all atomic weapons and all the world's air bases.[9] J. W. Gitt also shared Wallace's world view and refused to cease considering Russia as an ally in spite of a trend toward that stance on the part of the United States government once World War II was over.

Wallace spoke again in York on March 7, 1948, giving the keynote address for the "Pennsylvania People's Convention." "An historic independent party for Pennsylvania" was formed at the convention, according to Common Sense, a four-page tabloid published by The Gazette and Daily. The reference was to the Progressive Party of Pennsylvania, headquartered in Harrisburg. The nameplate of Common Sense listed J. W. Gitt as the party's chairman. A news story said that Gitt had been named chairman "by acclamation" by the more than 2,500 delegates from all over the state. At the time, he was chairman of the temporary Pennsylvania Progressives for Wallace committee.[10] And he was to become, according to MacDougall, "the heaviest donor to the Progressive coffers."[11]

Whether Gitt's election came before or after Wallace's speech at that convention is not discernible from the news account, but the former Vice-President spoke about Gitt's

influence on his decision to run for the Presidency. Wallace's words of praise for the York publisher are important in understanding the uncompromising quality of Gitt's character. Wallace began the fourth paragraph of his speech with that praise, and continued with a story:

> While we are started on this subject of the poisoned channels of communication, I want to take a minute to pay tribute to an exception--to the York Gazette & Daily and its publisher. Josiah Gitt is my idea of a truly fine American.
>
> I would like to tell you a little story about Jess Gitt and the kind of American he is. You have all read in your newspapers, unless you confine yourselves to the York Gazette--you have all read that in making this fight I was responding to the pleas of some allegedly 'shady characters.'
>
> Well, of all the allegedly unsavory characters who urged this course upon me, none made such an impression as that fine American Jess Gitt. Early last December I talked with Jess Gitt in New York. He was with some other folks who came to ask me to run as an independent candidate. They wanted me to help in building a new political party. Some of these people put the proposition in a purely personal sense. Maybe they thought it was flattering. They said it was up to me whether or not we would have a new party.
>
> But not Jess Gitt. He put it differently. He said: 'Look here, I'd like you to run. I think it would help, <u>but</u>, whether <u>you</u> run or not, there's going to be a new party. The times and conditions demand it.'
>
> With Jess Gitt this was no question of personalities. He knew the facts. They added up to the need for a new political alignment in America. He was determined to help get that new alignment, whether Henry Wallace said 'yes' or Henry Wallace said 'no.'
>
> I like Jess Gitt. And I think that Jess and you and I are getting that new alignment.[12]

The necessity for a "new party" did not come as a new idea to Jess Gitt in 1947 or 1948, but rather was an alternative he had been thinking about since the early 1930s. On June 1, 1948, shortly before the nomination of Wallace as the new party's Presidential candidate, Gitt wrote to W. D. Jamieson, an old friend in Washington, author of an opinion column called "The Window Seat":

> In view of our past associations, particularly in connection with the discussion of a third party in 1931, I cannot understand how you could be doing the nasty things you are against the present third party, which is certainly the spiritual offspring of that 1931 meeting. I just can't understand what has happened to my old liberal friend.[13]

Because very little of Gitt's existing correspondence pre-dates 1943, nothing else could be found out about that 1931 meeting. It undoubtedly was an informal gathering of Gitt and his Washington friends. Gitt never gave his unqualified support to Franklin D. Roosevelt and his "New Deal." While some people criticized the President's program as being to radical, for Gitt it was sometimes too conservative. He told McKinley Olson:

> "Franklin Roosevelt stopped too short. He didn't go far enough. If I had been him, I would have at least taken over the public utilities; it would have been a cinch at the time. F. D. R. was very severely criticized later by some people for having saved the capitalistic system. He did save it, for the monopolists, but the big shots were too dumb to know it. They crucified him, called him all kinds of names.[14]

Gitt expressed his deep concern about what he considered to be the reign of the monopolists in two long letters to another old friend in Washington, Attorney Huston Thompson,[15] undoubtedly also present at that 1931 meeting. The York publisher began his letter of February 5, 1943:

> I have been sick about the whole situation for a long time. It seemed to me that the President pretty much sold us down the river when he turned over War Production to the monopolists and vested interests. . . . I have been consoling myself that Cordell [Hull],[16] who I have always looked upon as a real liberal, was in such a position that he could not be himself.[17]

Thompson, whose law firm often represented the government's side in cases, defended the Secretary of State in a "confidential reply" which concluded:

> Today he is regarded as the soundest man in Washington and nobody questions his honesty. All have admiration for his patience. . . . In the long run I think that he has accomplished a great deal more than you or I would have done by resigning. There is a cabal formed here which you and I never could go along with that is doing everything in the world to try to get him out of the job.[18]

Gitt conceded that he had "the very highest possible regard" for Hull "as a man and as a public official." But he worried about the "illiberal carry-ons of the State Department" which he felt would jeopardize Hull's policies, especially his trade agreements. This letter, dated February 10, 1948, is basic to an understanding of why Gitt would soon support for the Presidency the one national politician he thought espoused an equal distrust of

business monopolies. He wrote to Thompson, "I cannot say on paper what I would like to," but then continued:

> I am convinced, however, that we are losing the real fight and that we are losing it because we are becoming blind to the real issues involved. If this is only a war to 'lick' Hitler and Mussolini and Tojo and their cliques then we might as well resign ourselves to the certainty of another war within another comparatively few years. Our thinking as a nation is far more beclouded and confused than it was when Wilson was our leader. The reactionary elements are far nearer control now than they were at the same period in the last war. In defeating fascists we are acquiring fascism. The whole trouble is that we liberals have lost sight of the ultimate ends. We have been too well satisfied with present results which in themselves are useless or nearly so from the long term standpoint. We are further from a League of Nations or any other type of collective security than in 1918. What the big business shots want, of course, is world monopoly and unless there is a decided change for the better we are more than likely to come out of this war with that kind of fascism in control.[19]

Gitt's ideas about the control of United States foreign policy by the international business interests were also held by the ousted member of the Truman Administration. By 1947, Wallace was calling for the election of progressive candidates the next year. In a speech in Boston at the convention of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, a CIO affiliate, on September 22, 1947, Wallace sounded a warning. He charged that United States foreign policy was based on "support of reaction, heavy armaments and plans for universal military training, and interference with the internal affairs of almost every nation in the world."[20]

"The date of the opening of the Cold War is most commonly set in 1946, early in the post-World War II Truman Administration, when the wartime alliance between the United States and the Soviet Union was being dismantled," wrote James Aronson in his book, The Press and the Cold War.[21] There were people both in and outside government circles who thought that Russia and the United States should continue as allies. Many of them were members of the two popular-front groups, the National Citizens Political Action Committee (NC-PAC) and the Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences, and Profession (ICCASP).[22] At a joint convention in December, 1946, the two groups merged to form the Progressive Citizens of America (PCA). Wallace appeared as a featured speaker at the new organization's first meeting. Already he was being talked about as a possible third party Presidential candidate in the 1948 election.[23]

In a letter dated January 7, 1947, J. W. Gitt was informed that he had been elected by the joint convention as a member of the PCA's national board of directors. Signed by co-chairmen Jo Davidson and Frank Kingdon, the letter said, "The independent progressives must close ranks if the principles of democracy are to be translated into constructive national policy." It called for "progressive victory in the 1948 elections."[24] Gitt replied, "I am glad to learn that fact."[25] In the previous year he had contributed at least $100 to the NC-PAC,[26] but more importantly the PCA officers certainly knew of his long-time support

for Henry Wallace.

Apparently Gitt assumed that Wallace already was affiliated with the PCA and included mention of it in an editorial published January 7, 1947. He discussed the Progressive Citizens of America and the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), which had been formed in early January, 1947, only a week after the PCA was formed.[27] The PCA and the ADA had one basic difference which became one of the reasons why the PCA went out of existence as the Cold War hysteria heightened but the ADA did not. The PCA felt it could use Communist Party members to its advantage in organizing drives and it refused to capitulate to red-baiting pressure. The ADA, however, stated in its first policy paper:

> We reject any association with Communists or sympathizers with Communism in the United States as completely as we reject any association with Fascists or their sympathizers. Both are hostile to the principles of freedom and democracy on which the Republic has grown great.[28]

In a few years time, both Gitt and Wallace came to believe what the red-baiters had been saying all along--that the Communists were destroying the Progressive Party movement.

Wallace wanted the two organizations to be one and wrote the York publisher on January 21, 1947, in response to Gitt's editorial:

> My cure for these two organizations is to add them together and divide by two in order to secure a name. Both of them have the word 'American'; one has the word 'Democratic'; and the other the word

> 'Progressive'. In other words, why not call a united organization 'Progressive Democrats of America,' or PDA?[29]

In a reply, Gitt agreed that the two groups "should be added together and should be a united front in a militant fight for progressivism." He apologized to Wallace for stating that he was affiliated with the PCA. "I assure you I meant nothing except the greatest of goodwill toward you, who, I am convinced, are the hope of the future." In an attempt to persuade Wallace that he should become a part of the PCA, and undoubtedly with an eye toward the 1948 election, Gitt sent Wallace a copy of his January 22, 1947, editorial, "What Progressives Can Do." In his letter Gitt also commented on the liberals who had fallen prey to red-baiting and indicated that he would be cautious about joining forces with them:

> I am still of the opinion that very many of the liberals have succumbed to the anti-Russian poison put out by reactionaries and disgruntled leftists and that they are making jackanapes of themselves and using up far too much of their effort in hunting down communists and fellow travelers and near-communists and all sorts of individuals who are not ready to join their 'holy crusade.'
>
> Certainly I would not do anything knowingly that might prevent a union of the progressive forces, but on the other hand, I am not going to sit back and keep entirely quiet about a lot of people who ought to know better being made tools of by fascists and neo-fascists.[30]

The editorial Gitt sent Wallace spelled out what he thought progressives could do provided "they refused to be

diverted or divided by the enemy drawing Red herring across the trail." The fourth paragraph outlines "What Progressives Can Do," according to J. W. Gitt, who in six months time would be sitting on the platform committee of the Progressive Party's national convention in Philadelphia:

> Stand for and fight for a more equitable distribution of the products of the soil and the factory; a foreign policy which will encourage peace and goodwill and not act as a partner of reaction in protecting itself against a better distribution of wealth and income abroad; protect labor in its right to bargain on equal terms with capital and toward that end preserve and continue the Wagner Labor Relations Act without amendment or emasculation; put into practice the American ideal of the equality of man; destroy monopoly and put an end to restraint of trade and the maintenance of high prices by either open or tacit agreement; secure full employment and make it a national policy; do the planning necessary to make full employment continuous, with minimum wages high enough to enable those who labor to secure for themselves and their families a high standard of living; provide at government expense an education for every one who desires it in proportion to the individual's capacity to absorb and not in accord with ability to pay; provide medical attention to all based upon need and not ability to pay; provide old age pensions high enough to enable those too old to work to live a happy life in their declining years; and to see to it that unemployables for physical reasons have enough to maintain them in good circumstances.[31]

Gitt warned that progressives could stop the depression he saw rapidly approaching "only by acting together and refusing to be dupes of reaction."[32]

Obviously, the editorial made an impression on Wallace because he wrote a letter praising Gitt to George Seldes from his editor's office at the New Republic on February 27, 1947, in which he, too, expressed the concern that a

diversionary tactic was being used against the progressives. Wallace wrote to the publisher of In Fact:

> I have long been impressed by the courage and intelligence of J. W. Gitt. He is a real asset to the progressive cause. The reactionaries are trying to conduct a preventive war against the progressives by calling them communists. This causes them to fight among themselves, and thus the reactionaries are able to win without furnishing any constructive program of their own whatsoever.[33]

Gitt's growing involvement with the Progressive Party movement began the serious red-baiting of him and his newspaper. He was respected on the golf course and in the board rooms as the skilled golfer and businessman he was. As the publisher of The Gazette and Daily, however, he was often slandered by those who could not understand that to give Communists (or communists) their right to exist and freely express their ideas did not mean that one had to be a member of the Communist Party. This red-baiting continued throughout the Cold War era, and on through the 1960s as the newspaper unfailingly took its stand against the war in Vietnam and for the rights of black Americans. Not only were Gitt and his newspaper red-baited, but also those members of the staff who were known, or suspected, to hold beliefs similar to the newspaper's editorial policies.[34]

In their book about the National Guardian, Cedric Belfrage and James Aronson talk about the precious few who had the courage to withstand the assaults on intellectual

freedom which were getting into full swing by 1948. "Josiah Gitt was among the few Americans of some stature who stood up with Wallace in defiance of red-baiting," Belfrage noted. "In each geographical and occupational area there was one or a handful of these--ranging politically from loyal Rooseveltian to socialist--though all wouldn't stay the course."[35]

If the American liberal-left had ever hoped to build a united front, that dream was set adrift forever in the aftermath of reactions to President Truman's urgent address to Congress on March 12, 1947. He set forth a series of proposals, which became known as the Truman Doctrine, which would offer long-range economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey. He had described a growing Soviet threat to those two countries which Britain had said it could no longer afford to aid. The Doctrine especially upset those who saw the necessity of cooperating with the Soviet Union in order to maintain world peace. "Unabashed imperialism" is how the U.S. Communist Party viewed the Truman Doctrine. The PCA saw the proposal as heading the United States toward war, but it hoped a popular front would grow as more people criticized the administration's foreign policy. Some liberals on the left saw cooperation with Russia as naive but feared worldwide military involvement on the part of the United States government. The ADA was at first silent, but the majority who supported the Truman Doctrine finally was able to win an ADA endorsement on March 30,

thus aligning the organization with Truman's foreign policy.[36]

Liberals and left-liberals within Congress expressed some opposition, most notably Democratic Senators Claude A. Pepper of Florida and Glen Taylor of Idaho, both strong Wallace supporters. (Taylor would become Wallace's running-mate in the 1948 campaign.) Even some conservatives saw it as the beginning of long-range American military support that could only grow not lessen.[37] All in all, however, as noted by historian Mary Sperling McAuliffe, "Anti-Communist liberalism was emerging quickly and already was strongly challenging the popular front for leadership of the postwar American left."[38]

On the day after Truman's speech before Congress, Henry Wallace addressed the nation on NBC Radio and dubbed his former boss's speech as "a turning point in American history." Wallace explained, "It is not a Greek crisis that we face, it is an American crisis. It is a crisis in the American spirit."[39] He condemned the Doctrine's support of a reactionary regime, expansion of United States military aid, and its by-passing of the United Nations. "We must give the common man all over the world something better than communism," Wallace said. "I believe we have something better than communism here in America. But President Truman has not spoken for the American ideal."[40]

Many Americans agreed with the former Vice-President and his office was flooded with letters. Some of the

letter writers complained that their local press did not give his speech adequate coverage. One newspaper which gave the speech full front-page coverage was The Gazette and Daily and its publisher was one of those to write to Wallace, congratulating him for "speaking out against Truman's tragic error in United States foreign policy." The letter is worth quoting in full since it provided a platform for Gitt to share his views with the man he would soon be urging to campaign as Truman's replacement:

> While one had every reason to anticipate what the President did, nevertheless it came as a great shock to me. I just can not believe that we can be led into offering up our human resources as well as our material ones in erecting a Chinese wall around communism. And that of course is what Truman was proposing.
>
> It seems to me that the whole future of humanity is hanging in the balance and that a resort to force by reaction to beat off communism will sooner or later put an end to civilization as we know it.
>
> Lining up with reaction can come to no good. Personally I am so firmly convinced that reaction is attempting to commit suicide and carry us with it, that it seems imperative to me that all of us who do know better must speak out fearlessly and regardless of possible present political results. Somehow or other we have got to head off this ignorant and dangerous international policy.
>
> And may I say that like you I am certainly not a communist or fellow traveler or anything of the kind.[41]

Throughout the ensuing years Gitt in his letters frequently expressed denial of being a communist or fellow traveler. Although he had the courage of the truly independent thinker, he seemed to feel the necessity of denying those charges used to red-bait him even when writing to

those who would not think of doing so. For instance, at the end of April, 1947, he received a form letter signed by Eleanor Roosevelt, on letterhead stationery from the American Association for the United Nations with which she was long involved. She requested Gitt's signature on "A Reaffirmation of Faith in the United Nations," to be presented to President Truman and the 80th Congress, which skirted around direct criticism of the Truman Doctrine but suggested that the United Nations would be the best conduit for aiding other countries "to guarantee peace."[42] Gitt wrote Mrs. Roosevelt that he was "profoundly sorry" he could not comply with her request and returned the pledge card unsigned. After explaining why he could not sign the reaffirmation pledge, he reassured her that he was not a Communist:

> It is my studied and considered conclusion that approval of the Truman policy regarding Greece and Turkey, with or without the Senate amendment, is inconsistent and hypocritical in connection with a reaffirmation of faith in the United Nations and that were I to join in that reaffirmation of faith which included approval of that policy I would be stultifying myself.
>
> And may I say in view of your close association with the A. D. A. -- which seems to be using up a great deal of its energy in chasing reds and fellow travelers--that I personally am no more of a Communist or fellow traveler than Thomas Jefferson or Abraham Lincoln or Franklin Delano Roosevelt or many other less liberal humanitarians.[43]

Gitt had also received a letter that April from Montgomery Ostrander, executive director of the Eastern

Pennsylvania Chapter, PCA, requesting him to address PCA members in State College, Pa., in early May.[44] Gitt replied: "I am very much in sympathy with PCA and I am willing to do anything that I reasonably can to further its purposes. Except to make public speeches or devote a whole lot of time to it." He said the newspaper took "all the time" and that he believed he could "do more good through the paper than by attempting to do something that I am less well fitted to do."[45]

"The paper" was often used as an excuse by Gitt to avoid making public speeches, but those who knew him well said the more probable reason was his basic shyness. Writing letters and editorials was the route with which Gitt felt most comfortable in expressing his views and attempting to create social and political changes. Nevertheless, he was soon to find out that his publicly expressed political beliefs would force him to spend more and more time with the Progressive Citizens of America.

The year 1947 was a party-building one for Progressives, who could be counted all over the country throughout the wide range of left-liberal political thought. Specifically, they were voters who saw Truman's foreign policies leading to a tightening of tensions on the world scene which could lead to another war. Assuredly, there would be a long, drawn-out "cold" one if not a "hot" one like the devastating world war just over. They were looking for a candidate they felt would work toward maintaining

peace on the world scene, rather than escalating a "get tough" stance with Russia. Henry Wallace was becoming more and more the favored candidate, especially after his speaking tour of European nations that April in which he openly opposed Truman's program of aid to Greece and Turkey. Upon his return to the United States, Wallace reported that the Europeans greeted the Truman Doctrine "with fear because they regard it as a step leading toward war."[46]

Certainly J. W. Gitt was stumping for Wallace, both through his newspaper and through contacts with highly-placed friends he knew to be Wallace supporters. In mid-May, 1947, Gitt wrote to Senator Guffey: "It is good to know that you feel the way you do about Wallace and I certainly hope that somehow or other we may be able to bring about his nomination and thus guarantee a Democratic victory in 1948."[47]

Sometime between April and the summer of 1947, Gitt was named honorary chairman of the York branch, PCA. In that capacity he wrote to Wallace in early June to ask the probable candidate to speak in York at a rally before Labor Day. "They think they can get a big crowd and that it might do a lot of good in this section of Pennsylvania, which has possibilities of a real liberal uprising," Gitt concluded optimistically.[48] Wallace did not accept the invitation. Instead, he sent a message of greeting and support to the York branch through the Eastern Pennsylvania chapter. Ostrander, the chapter's executive director, also

sent to the Gazette envelopes addressed with the chapter's mailing list of Philadelphia names. He promised that other names would be "forthcoming from Pittsburgh and other parts of the state."[49] Thus, Gitt was beginning to allow The Gazette and Daily's facilities to be used for Proggressive Party purposes, a function for which he was heavily criticized by members of his own staff who did not support Wallace.[50]

Wallace made many speeches throughout the country in the autumn of 1947. The stumping seemed like a campaign tour, though he had not yet announced his independent candidacy or affiliated with the new party. Several old friends and supporters--such as Michael Straight, New Republic publisher, and Frank Kingdon, who had resigned from the PCA to run for the United States Senate on the Democratic ticket in New Jersey--tried to warn him against making a third-party campaign. "You won't have a Gideon's army to support you," Kingdon told Wallace in early December, thus providing the catch-phrase for the Wallace campaign.[51]

According to Curtis MacDougall, Wallace "definitely made up his mind to run for the Presidency on a third party ticket" at a small gathering in the studio of New York sculptor Jo Davidson on December 2, 1947, at which J. W. Gitt was not present.[52] However, the York publisher was present on December 17 when a subcommittee of the PCA's executive committee (including C. B. Baldwin, Harold Young,

John Abt, Mrs. Elinor Gimbel, Lillian Hellman, Michael Nisselson and James Imbrie) called on Wallace in his New York hotel headquarters to tell him about the executive committee's formal vote of December 15 to request him to run. Several members of the subcommittee did not know about the December 2 meeting, so for them this gathering represented the first chance Wallace had to declare his definite willingness to run. Only Imbrie felt that Wallace did not have a chance at victory, according to MacDougall. The group urged Wallace to announce his candidacy before the year was over and to do it from Chicago, in the middle of the nation. MacDougall succinctly spelled out Gitt's closeness to the new candidate:

> When Wallace raised the question of the possible vote he would receive, Gitt replied, 'It makes no difference how many votes you get. You are in honor bound to run.' In the opinion of many who were 'close to the top' at the time--and I know of none who dissents from this view--the insistent urging of Josiah Gitt was a strong factor in causing Wallace to decide to run. It was Gitt whom Wallace asked to walk back to the New Republic office with him, at the conclusion of the meeting, for further conversation on the important decision he had made.[53]

Wallace finally announced his candidacy for the Presidency on the Progressive Party ticket in a nation-wide broadcast from Chicago on December 29, 1947. In an editorial for the New Republic, later re-printed in pamphlet form, he explained "Why I Choose to Run" and tried to answer those who feared an involvement in the campaign from the far left:

> Many of my friends who have supported my decision argued in advance that it was dangerous, because the Communists wanted it. But I have never believed in turning from a principled position because it happened to win the support of others with whom you have important disagreements.[54]

Wallace would lose a lot of potential liberal support over the Communist issue. For instance, the ADA's national leadership issued a statement that a third party "would mean a retreat from American responsibility abroad, directly serving the world-wide interests of the Communist party."[55] Obviously it would take a publisher with an equally independent streak to throw his newspaper's whole-hearted support into the new party's Presidential campaign.

According to Cedric Belfrage in his book, The American Inquisition 1945-1960, "out of some 1,800 commercial dailies, two and a quarter published Wallace's viewpoints fully and without distortion." The two were the New York Star, even though it finally endorsed Truman, and the York Gazette and Daily. The one-quarter was Ted Thackrey in the New York Post, "whose wife . . . allowed him to write positively about Wallace in an otherwise hostile setting."[56] All other major New York daily newspapers were pro-Dewey. The Communist Daily Worker in New York and the independent Gazette and Daily in York, Pa., became the only two newspapers in the country to completely support Wallace throughout his entire campaign--another factor which led to the red-baiting of Gitt and his newspaper.

Naturally, Gitt had hoped that he would not be alone amongst the liberal press in his backing of Wallace as a Presidential candidate. He was especially upset when the New York newspaper PM took an editorial stand on December 18, 1947, totally opposed to a Wallace candidacy. Their position "very much distressed" the York publisher and he wrote them a letter to say so, about half of which read:

> Certainly PM cannot find itself comfortable on the side of the Truman administration in its foreign policy or enthusiastic about the feeble efforts made by that administration to secure legislation to control inflation, provide adequate housing, medical attention for the needy as well as for the rich, and so forth. And surely PM cannot view with composure the loyalty probes and the action of the Attorney General of the United States in making public that long list of 'subversive' organizations and the resultant smear on their members.
>
> Since when has PM become so saturated with expediency as to put it before principle and refuse to follow a leader who stands foursquare for those very ideals in which I am convinced you still believe.
>
> Is it because you fear his candidacy might be pleasing to communists and fingers may be pointed at those who support him? Or do you really fear the defeat of a Truman whose policies have brought us nearer and nearer to war and whose lack of stamina and courage closer and closer to economic reaction and depression?
>
> It is no doubt presumptuous of me to say these things to you. I have learned much from you about them.
>
> But I cannot bring myself to do other than everything I can to give the people of the United States the opportunity to vote for what I believe in and what I thought you did, and that whether or not it is expedient and whatever names I may be called.[57]

As the year 1948 progressed toward the summer's national political conventions, Gitt received more and more letters from readers of The Gazette and Daily asking why they should vote for Henry Wallace. In his reply to Mrs. S. Nevas of Ocean Gate, N.J., the publisher insisted that Wallace's election was "not beyond the realm of possibility." But he also saw support for Wallace at the polls as "a protest against the bi-partisan policy which is leading us to war and depression." Whether Gitt actually believed Wallace had any chance of winning but only said so to boost voter support is arguable. At least he hoped for "a large vote" for Wallace because, as he told Mrs. Nevas, "even if he does not win, it will scare the older parties very badly and have a very good and wholesome restraining effect upon their undemocratic actions."[58]

The Progressive Party of Pennsylvania became the host group as Philadelphia was chosen for the site of the new party's founding convention, which convened on Friday, July 23, 1948. As chairman of the host group, Josiah W. Gitt officially welcomed the 3,240 delegates and alternates, plus over 8,000 visitors.[59] Gitt set the tone for brief speeches as he delivered one of five minutes during which he received the greatest applause when he said:

> We are not going to be diverted from our historically necessary task by fear or timidity because of hysteria whipped up by reaction, or smoke screens or loud whispers created or circulated by unscrupulous influences which would have one believe that love of peace and liberty and following the dictates of one's

conscience is not in the American tradition.[60]

The press covering the convention had looked for an excuse to scream "red" and found it when the convention, after half an hour of loud debate, rejected an amendment to the party platform submitted by three delegates from Vermont. The resolution, if passed, would have helped stop those rumors that the platform committee was controlled by Communists or fellow travelers. It read: "Although we are critical of the present foreign policy of the United States, it is not our intention to give blanket endorsement to the foreign policy of any nation."[61] Gitt told MacDougall that he had sat on the platform committee throughout the discussion on the Vermont resolution, hoping it would pass but doing nothing about it. "I guess I lost my nerve," Gitt said. Wallace himself told MacDougall, "I thought nothing of it at the time. It became important later in the newspapers."[62]

The issue of Communist support in the Wallace for President movement remained the major controversial issue both within and without the Progressive Party. Wallace himself never went further in repudiating it than his statement at Center Sandwich, New Hampshire, on June 28, 1948:

> I'm never going to say anything in the nature of Red-baiting. But I must say this: if the Communists would run a ticket of their own this year, we might lose 100,000 votes but we would gain 3 million. I know if the Communists really wanted to help us, they

> would run their own ticket this year and let us get those extra votes."

The statement was not reported in the press until five days later, at which time Gitt wrote to Wallace: "You seem to have handled the matter about as I thought it should be handled."[63]

If Wallace seemed generally unperturbed about Communist influence on his campaign and within the Progressive Party movement itself, there were those who did worry about it, although not publicly. In September, 1948, Gitt and Louis Adamic went to see Wallace at his Farvue Farm in South Salem, N.Y. The Progressive candidate told a Chicago Daily News reporter two and a half years later: "They said they had it from British sources that the Communists actually wanted to keep the vote for me as low as possible to show the world a reactionary influence in America. I couldn't believe it at the time."[64]

Nearly five years later, at the beginning of 1956, Wallace wrote to Gitt and asked him to "write out your recollections of the visit of yourself and Louis Adamic to me in the late summer or early fall of 1948." Wallace wanted to know "just what Adamic felt were the real sentiments of the Communists vis a vis the Progressive Party and me personally in the 1948 campaign." He described Adamic as "a strangely gifted man." And he had begun the letter with high praise for the York publisher: "A man like you is so rare in times like these that the only strain on my

conscience is that I did not speak strongly enough about your contributions to genuine, old-fashioned Americanism."[65]

Gitt wrote his recollections of that meeting in a letter dated January 24, 1956, but he did not mail it to Wallace until more than five months later when he enclosed it with a shorter letter. That one of July 6, 1956, opened:

> In view of the very nice letter which you wrote me in January I feel terrible that I have not answered it as yet. As a matter of fact, I started to do so at least a dozen times and I have always wound up coming to the conclusion that it is a long story that is practically impossible to reduce to writing. So I put it off, started again, give up again.

He suggested that instead of a letter he would rather talk with Wallace in person about "the visit Louis Adamic and I paid to you in the fall of 1948.[66] Louis felt that the Communists were cutting your throat politically. He was very much upset about it, as was I."

"On second thought," Gitt did enclose his letter of January 24, although he said, "I am not sure, however, that it covers all the ground. That is why I did not send it."[67] What ground the letter does cover is basic to an understanding of the Communist controversy within the Wallace movement, therefore most of it is quoted below:

> As nearly as I can remember, Louis was much distressed about the manner in which your campaign was being run. He had the feeling that there had been a tremendous sentiment in your favor earlier in the

campaign, which was not being properly developed, because the Communists' real aim was to use you for their purposes which did not include any particular desire to have you successful.

Louis thought they were far more anxious to control the party after the election than to see you get a big vote. He was constantly 'needling' me to induce you to make a change in the management of the Progressive party for that reason.

His theory was that Russia was willing to have Dewey win on the theory that it would be easier to deal with the big business crowd backing Dewey, as well as sure to bring on a depression which they thought was inevitable if reaction came into control in the United States.

What he sensed was that the Communists were not really for you, were sabotaging the movement on the lower levels at least, and were not cooperating with the people like him and me who were all for Wallace irrespective of all other political considerations.

He felt that we had a chance to build a real liberal party if the Communists could be gotten rid of. He knew I was having my troubles with those who were constantly trying to undermine me. I personally could never find out just who they were but Louis thought he knew.

Louis felt that what the Communists really wanted was to use the Progressive party as a front and also as a means to build up the Communist party by using the rolls to solicit party membership.

I am not so sure history will not prove Louis to have been right, and that we would have been better off had we listened more sympathetically to him.

The Communists no doubt had it in for Louis. I have never been able to understand why I could never get in touch with his wife after his death and why she so quickly and positively declared it a suicide. She no doubt knew a lot more about him than the rest of us, however, and I would hesitate to question her judgment.[68]

Wallace promptly answered Gitt in a note dated July 10, 1956. He disclosed the deep personal bitterness he had

come to feel about an issue which many people felt he had refused to deal with satisfactorily while the 1948 campaign was in progress. His note, dated July 10, 1956, said, in part:

> Your recollections agree with mine and also with the events which took place after the prediction. (sic) What a shambles the Communists made out of a movement which would have been a strong and helpful influence in American life! . . .
>
> Like you I very much wondered about the prompt declaration of Mrs. Adamic. I never knew her and so I could do no more than wonder. . . .[69]

Thus, both Gitt and Wallace in the years after the Progressive Party's stinging defeat at the polls in 1948 came to believe that one of the major reasons for that defeat was the Communist support they received at the time. However, they had refused to cave in to the red-baiting when that tactic was used so forcefully against them. Besides, the Progressives needed the Communists' organizational expertise to launch their new party. Although Wallace had criticized the "excesses of local Communists" in the new party's formation, he did little about it. According to historian Norman Markowitz, "organization and purely administrative questions were, as always, of no interest to him." Markowitz also presents two strategic reasons for allowing the Communists to remain, and work, in the Progressive Party:

> Given the crucial role of the Communists in the creation of the Progressive party, an anti-Communist

> purge in any case would probably have killed the party in its womb. Such a purge also would have been an abject surrender to the cold-war liberals and would have removed a major reason for the party's existence.[70]

Perhaps another reason why Wallace consistently refused to confront the question of Communist support was implanted in his own character. Curtis MacDougall observed: "One of the firmest opinions I have regarding Henry A. Wallace [is] that throughout his entire public life, he never weighed carefully the political consequences of any important decision or act."[71] Whether Wallace could have come to any decision other than to allow the Communists to continue working within his Presidential campaign is doubtful--even if their motive might have been to deflect votes from the Democratic ticket. Although Wallace and his party were badly smeared by organizations such as the ADA and the CIO for being Communist dupes,[72] to have relented to these pressures would have meant a capitulation to the red-baiting the Progressives saw as weakening the democratic process.

After Wallace's defeat--he garnered only 2.38 percent of the national vote, and 1.48 percent of Pennsylvania's vote[73]--Gitt was besieged with letters asking what went wrong. One of his most succinct replies was written at the end of 1948 to Sabi Tabachnik, a young man who had worked briefly for The Gazette and Daily before returning to his native Israel:

> What I make out of the last election is that Wallace raised a lot of issues that enabled Truman to win. People were not ready to vote as liberal as Wallace was, but went for Truman in spite of his bad handling of foreign policy, which, it seems to me, the people did not understand. Wallace's bad showing was due to red baiting, mishandling of news on the part of most of the press, and lack of knowledge of just what our foreign policy was.[74]

Gitt also received many letters lauding him for his work in the Wallace campaign. Most of the letters tried to look to the future with optimism--such as one written just nine days after the November 2, 1948, election by Reba and Frank Lincoln of Philadelphia:

> Through your own great personal effort and that of your paper, we have created a new Progressive Party recognized in 45 states [except Illinois, Nebraska, Oklahoma] and very favorably looked upon by war torn Europe and Asia. Our party has provoked Mr. Truman to come out for Civil Rights and against the Taft Hartley Act. We hope that promises made will lead to accomplishment. We have stymied Republican reaction.
>
> We have all felt it a great privilege and honor to be guided by your honesty and sincerity, and we are deeply grateful to you. With hope that our third party may yet become the first party . . .[75]

Gitt's reply to Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln combined both modesty and hope:

> As a matter of fact, while, of course I did my best, I made so many mistakes that I very much dislike to look back over the record.
>
> Personally I am not discouraged. Our party stands for certain definite principles which have my own hearty approval and for which I must continue to work, and that however small the group with whom it may become my privilege to be able to continue to work.[76]

The year 1949 was one of trying to hold together the pieces of a new party. When Wallace said in 1956 that the Communists had made "a shambles" out of the Progressive movement, he probably also was thinking that the presence of Communists had made the party's members more open to harassment by governmental authorities. Many persons of left-of-center political persuasion, not just known Communists, suffered job losses and intimidation throughout 1948. MacDougall noted in his conclusion to Gideon's Army: "The longer a person stuck to his Progressivism, the more likelihood there was that the price he would ultimately pay would be greater." He partially blamed "the post-election attitude on the part of the Truman Administration" for leaving many highly-placed Progressives "penniless for years . . . as the result of blacklisting. . . . Whereas the Dixiecrats of 1948 [whose candidate was South Carolina Senator James Strom Thurmond] were welcomed back into the Democratic fold with everything forgiven, no such generous attitude prevailed toward the Progressives."[77]

It is known that many Progressives voted for Truman and not Wallace, while remaining members of the Progressive Party. The estimated number was set at seven to ten million by Rexford Guy Tugwell, an original New Dealer who also was active on the Wallace for President Committee.[78] The Gazette and Daily's own staff at the time was an excellent case in point. The reporter who represented the newspaper at the 1948 Progressive Party convention, David Lachenbruch,

recalled: "Most Gazette and Daily staffers, at least among the outsiders, were for Wallace, but many of them got cold feet and voted for Truman because they were afraid of Dewey. The election taught me that it doesn't work to vote for the lesser of two evils."[79] Other Progressives who thought Dewey had a good chance of winning followed suit, and probably many later regretted their vote for Truman.

There is no doubt, however, about whom J. W. Gitt cast his ballot for in the 1948 election. He also maintained his membership in the Progressive Party for more than a year and a half after that election. When requested for information for inclusion in Who's Who in the Democratic Party, he replied rather righteously: "I am afraid I no longer qualify for any such honor. If you had checked a little further you would have discovered, no doubt, that I have been chairman of the Progressive Party of Pennsylvania for almost a year."[80] Gitt also became annoyed when others of prominence in politics did not recognize his association with the Progressive Party and what it meant. In January, 1949, he shot off a brief letter to Senator Hubert Humphrey:

> I was amazed to receive your letter of January 18th, asking me to contribute to the A. D. A. In view of the insults hurled at me, along with others when the A. D. A. appeared before the Progressive Party platform committee last summer I expected to be relieved of any pleas for funds from your organization.[81]

Humphrey, as acting chairman, answered even more briefly: "Thank you for your letter of January 20. I can understand

your protest, and I appreciate your communicating it directly to me."[82]

Gitt continued to run news items and speeches of Henry Wallace in his paper, especially those addresses made by the Progressive candidate at peace rallies throughout the country in the spring of 1949. James Higgins, later to become The Gazette and Daily's assistant editor, was along on the Wallace tour as a reporter and cabled stories back to the Gazette. Wallace also was accompanied on his speaking tour by Italian Senator Michele Giua, a left socialist, and H. Lester Hutchinson, British Labor Party member of the House of Commons. Higgins cabled from Minneapolis: "Four other distinguished Europeans, none of them communist, invited here by Wallace to tell Americans of the desire for peace animating foreign peoples, were denied visas by the U.S. State Department."[83] From Los Angeles Higgins wrote to Charles M. Gitt in a letter dated May 12:

> The meetings of what I consider to be the great people of America are moving beyond belief. I have not let myself go in my dispatches on the various rallies because there are so many facts to report that, rushing to file on time, I don't dare waste space on color. Too much of that anyway in American papers. But some time, maybe after I return, I'll have to explode in some way. When this short, alert Giua with his bristling goatee, his eyes asparkle, having, as he does, the precise gestures of a professor, says--and I can understand the Italian now: 'I must say to you - don't get scared - don't let them divide you - follow your great leader Henry Wallace to save peace and civilization for all humanity'--well, the hope of the world is in the cheers that respond to him.[84]

The defeated third party candidate must have been cheered by the public's reaction to his speeches, but the division of which Giua warned was not far away. Before starting out on his speaking tour, Wallace had testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (on May 5, 1949) against the North Atlantic Treaty Organization pact. "Two years ago when President Truman announced the Truman Doctrine of containing Russia and Communism at every point, I predicted that it would cause us to bleed from every pore."[85] Within little more than a year the outbreak of the Korean War would necessitate that statement to be taken literally as well as figuratively.

After his nation-wide speaking tour, Wallace retired to his Farvue Farm at South Salem, N.Y. When Robert Wagner retired from the Senate on June 27, 1949, some undaunted Wallace supporters attempted to convince him he should make a bid for that seat. But Wallace refused to enter the New York senatorial race between Herbert Lehman and John Foster Dulles. According to Markowitz, "Wallace felt increasingly isolated in the third party and remained in it only out of a sense of loyalty to the surviving non-Communist Progressives."[86] At the Progressive Party's second annual convention in February, 1950, Wallace called for a stronger stand on the Communist issue, and stressed the need for the delegates, only half the number as in 1948, to spread the word that the party membership was largely non-Communist.[87] In half a year's time, Wallace was presented with an issue

which probably provided him with the most respectable way out of the party--as it did for J. W. Gitt.

The issue was the Korean War, which split American liberals and radicals even further apart. Fighting broke in Korea between the North and the South on June 25, 1950. The United Nations Security Council two days later labeled North Korea as the aggressor and called for meeting the "attack" with armed resistance. Members of the United Nations were to "furnish such assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security in the area."[88] I. F. Stone wrote in his book The Hidden History of the Korean War, first published in 1952 a year before the truce was signed: "Whether on June 25 the North attacked without provocation or went over to the offensive after an attack from the South, the attempt to pick that tempting plum solved many political problems on the anti-Communist side."[89] It certainly presented a solution to one of Henry Wallace's political problems, no matter how heart-breaking the decision must have been on his part. According to Markowitz, "The Korean crisis permitted him to directly challenge the Communists within the party over an issue of foreign policy."[90]

The Progressive Party's executive committee called an emergency session for July 6, 1950, at which Wallace became even more estranged from the other party leaders. He objected to the committee's resolution which criticized the

UN Security Council's call for armed resistance in Korea and opposed any UN action until the Russian delegation returned to the Security Council. (The Russians had been boycotting the Council to protest UN refusal to seat the People's Republic of China in place of Nationalist China.) After much negotiating the two sides remained stale-mated and on July 15, along with the Progressive party's official resolution, Wallace issued his own statement[91] (reprinted in full in The Gazette and Daily of July 18, 1950), part of which read:

> With the world divided as it has been since 1945 I have long believed and often publicly stated that the U. S. should fight if Russian troops moved in strength into Turkey. Further Russian expansion in the Near East would over-balance the world and I have made my views known to press conferences and to the State Committee on Foreign Relations. With world affairs having reached their present pass, I believe the only safety for the U. S. and the U. N. is to continue their efforts to push the North Koreans north of the 38th parallel.
>
> I say this fully realizing how many times even the conservative press of the U. S. has called attention to the dictatorial and corrupt methods used by Syngman Rhee's South Korean government. But the U. S. has been forced by unwise actions on the part of both Russia and the U. S. to take a stand. The U. N. also, because Korea is peculiarly a creation of the U. N., has been forced to take a stand. Again I say that under such conditions I stand by my country and the U. N.[92]

Wallace resigned from the Progressive Party on August 8, 1950,[93] when it became clear to him that the executive committee would stand behind its resolution. Many of the remaining non-Communist members within the

national leadership also resigned. J. W. Gitt had resigned a couple of weeks before Wallace,[94] although his letter of resignation could not be found. There are several references to his resignation in Gitt's correspondence, most specifically in answer to Dr. Marion Hathaway of Silver Lake, N.H., who apparently had written Gitt about also resigning. In a letter dated August 14, 1950, Gitt replied:

> You will no doubt be surprised to learn that I beat you to it by several weeks. My resignation went in about a week or two before Wallace's. Frankly, with a pretty certain knowledge of what Wallace was likely to do.
>
> I thoroughly agree with your letter in general and do hope that something will arise to take the place of the Progressive Party and that we will be found working together again.
>
> I am turning your letter over to what remains of the Pennsylvania Progressive state organization.[95]

Chances are Wallace himself had resigned from the party closer to the July 15 date of his statement on Korea, rather than the August 8 date officially recorded. On July 11 Gitt wrote to Mrs. Alice F. Liveright of Philadelphia in reply to her July 7 letter, which inquired of him, "What's this that I hear? You aren't deserting me, holding the bag? . . . I'd be much happier if we'd stick together."[96] Gitt replied:

> I had a long talk with Zal Garfield [state director of the party] at my home last Sunday afternoon [July 9] and if you will talk with him I think he can tell you better than I can in a letter exactly

why I felt compelled to resign as chairman of the Progressive Party.

May I say that I have never done anything that I can remember that was more difficult than this.

Of course I have always had very definite opinions of my own. I have never found it possible to associate myself with others and let them do my thinking for me. I have just got to be myself, however painful it may be at times, and however much I might be misunderstood by others.

I hope you understand that I am still as much of a liberal as I ever was. I am not the kind of liberal who can set aside his principles when it becomes apparent to him that someone else is attempting to use him.[97]

Perhaps Gitt never wrote a formal letter of resignation but only did it orally in his talk with Garfield. But Gitt must have written a personal letter to Wallace about his feelings (also not to be found) because Wallace replied in a letter dated July 11, which also sheds insight on the former candidate's position:

I have your letter telling about your resignations. I know exactly how you feel. So far I have been busy putting all my pressure on the boys here not to issue any statement on the Korean matter until they had the facts and then not to include in their statement anything blaming the US government or the UN. I told them I would put out a statement of my own if they did. I said it was perfectly alright to call the Syngman Rhee government everything which it is. I said it was perfectly alright [sic] to call attention to the rightness of our stand in the past but that when our boys are dying in Korea as a result of a well planned attack I could not be party to any statement which blames the US government or the UN.

I have made it clear that I agree with Trygve Lie and Nehru that the New China should be seated. Finally the boys agreed on a statement which I think you would approve. Probably under cover of

> this statement the extremists will go ahead and do things which I cannot approve at all. I shall then have to issue a statement of my own.
>
> The boys want me to urge you to withdraw your resignation. Jim Imbrie especially wants you back in the fold. Jim doesn't realize how temporary the present truce is between the PP leaders and myself. They are sincere and I am sincere but we just don't believe the same things now that our country has blundered into war. I am for my country and the UN.[98]

At the core of both Gitt and Wallace's resignations from the Progressive Party was fear of Communist domination of the party. It was a factor Gitt did not like to acknowledge publicly, but he did so in reply to Miss Rebecca P. Elliott, a Progressive Party ward organizer in Philadelphia, who pointedly asked him if he had resigned as state chairman for that reason and wondered if she should.[99] Gitt's reply revealed his main reason for resigning:

> I am still very much upset that I found it necessary to sever myself from the party which I did only after I had mulled the matter over in my mind for many months and had come to the conclusson that there was no longer any outside chance that it could be kept free of communist domination.
>
> I think that answers your question. Mr. Wallace understands my position. You are the only other person to whom I have put the matter so plainly and I am doing it in your case because you have been so frank with me. Under the circumstances as I saw them the only thing I could conscientiously do was to resign, much as I regretted the necessity.[100]

The Gazette and Daily continued to carry articles about Henry Wallace. The request for a copy of the paper containing such an article was made in September, 1950, by

C. B. ("Beanie") Baldwin, secretary and campaign manager of the Progressive Party. He took the opportunity to send along words of praise for Gitt:

> We all miss you very much and I hope that before long I can have a good visit with you. I am sure that I do not have to tell you of the high respect and affection all members of the staff and National Committee have for you.[101]

A member of the Gazette's editorial staff that summer, John T. Hough, (now editor-publisher of the Falmouth Enterprise on Cape Cod) recalled:

> JW hated to be called a Communist dupe, because it suggested he was stupid. But he refused to panic and stubbornly refused to disavow Communist sympathy at a time when this took courage. A few Communists hung around. Maybe he didn't know they were--or care; but in the news room we knew them. He finally jumped the Communist line when the Korean war broke out, writing an editorial which his staff greeted with relief and delight.[102]

Gitt wrote several editorials about the "Korean crisis," as the first one on June 28, 1950, was titled. By then many of the editorials were being written by James Higgins, who said he refused to write any about Korea because he did not hold the position that North Korea and Russia were responsible for the outbreak of fighting.[103] Gitt's faith in the United Nations as a peace-keeping organization and his anguish that Russia had done something to upset world peace was clearly stated in his editorials. "We sincerely hope that the United States, whatever any other nation may do, will firmly stand back of the United

Nations and insist that the dispute be adjusted through United Nations offices," he wrote in the June 28 editorial.[104]

Two days later an editorial specifically placing the blame on the Russians appeared in the paper:

> Only naive or gullible individuals will believe for an instant that North Korea would be acting without the consent of Russia. It goes without saying that North Korea would not be in South Korea without the approval of the Russians. . . .
>
> Can it be that after all those who hoped that honorable arrangements could be made with the Russians in the interests of peace were utterly wrong and that the Russians were only attempting to use peace propaganda as a smoke screen behind which to resort to force to bring communism to other peoples? And intend to rely upon force as the instrument through which to extend their power and influence? . . .
>
> One can only hope that out of this crisis all of us may learn enough to do the things, including the support of the United Nations, that are so imperative if we humans are to avoid chaos and worse.[105]

Although Gitt's belief in the United Nations as a keeper of world peace was total, and though he believed the aggressor to be Russia-North Korea, he knew that the government of South Korea was hardly blameless in other matters. The opening and closing paragraphs of his editorial published July 5, 1950, were:

> We may as well face the facts, unpleasant as they may be. The South Korean government on behalf of which American troops are in combat is no more a government of the people, by the people and for the people than was the China government of Chiang Kai-shek.

> The spirit of change is sweeping the Eastern world. The colonial peoples are determined once and for all to get rid of their oppressors and to create a new kind of life for themselves. Up to now, the United States government has offered them nothing new, nothing at all resembling government by, for and of the people. The situation in Korea indicates the consequences of our failure to encourage real democracy in the Far East, while it also shows that there is still time, even if only a very little, to start doing so.[106]

Whether Gitt ever read I. F. Stone's The Hidden History of the Korean War and re-evaluated his opinion about who was the aggressor in Korea is not known. Surely, however, his disassociation from the Progressive Party took a lot out of him emotionally. In 1950 he was sixty-six years old and could have retired, but he took too much pride in his newspaper for that. Yet, his personal correspondence diminished dramatically after that year. He also began to leave more of the editorial-writing to Higgins. But with his newspaper to present his voice to the public, Gitt retired less from public life than did his political idol. Wallace spent more and more time on his farm and ventured out infrequently to make statements in front of boards and commissions. He died far from the public eye on November 18, 1965, eight years before one of his most unswervable supporters.

The similarity in backgrounds of these two men, who admired each other so much should be noted. Wallace will be used as the prime example, since Gitt's background was presented in Chapter I. Each man had rural roots--Gitt in

Pennsylvania and Wallace in Iowa, where he was born October 7, 1888, four and a half years after Gitt. Each was descended from Scottish Protestants who had settled in northern Ireland--Wallace's family in 1690, part of which arrived penniless in western Pennsylvania in 1823. Wallace's grandfather was Henry Wallace (later known as "Uncle Henry"), the first son of the immigrant Wallace. Uncle Henry studied for the Presbyterian ministry and took his first pastorate in Davenport, Iowa. When ill health forced him to leave the ministry, he became a prosperous farmer-landlord who wrote for local farm newspapers. Thus, both Gitt and Wallace had grandfathers who were ministers, a family occupation not uncommon amongst early progressives. Uncle Henry eventually settled in Des Moines with his two sons--one of them Wallace's father, Henry C.--and started a farm newspaper. Assuming the name of Wallace's Farmer in 1896, the paper became the most influential farm journal in the Mid-west.

Henry Agard Wallace took over as editor in 1921 when his father became Secretary of Agriculture in President Harding's cabinet. Wallace's bachelor of science degree from Iowa State University in 1910 and his continuing interest in solving agricultural problems, especially his experiments with the hybridization of corn, kept him attached to his rural roots. Unlike Gitt's long line of family Democrats, however, Wallace's family remained progressive Republicans until Henry Agard switched his

registration to Democrat in the 1936 Presidential campaign--four years after he was sworn in as Roosevelt's Secretary of Agriculture.[107]

NOTES

[1] "Defeat Reaction or Suffer Chaos, Wallace Warns Here," The Gazette and Daily, 29 April 1946, p. 1. (No by-lines were ever used on the newspaper's news stories.)

[2] JWG, 25 July 1944.

[3] JWG, 1 August 1944. (Guffey also added: "I hope your own campaign is coming along in good shape. If, and when, you think I can be helpful in any way, please let me know. I am looking forward to your joining me down here next January." Gitt was waging his one and only personal political campaign--as a Democratic candidate for U.S. Congress from the 21st Congressional District. The farmer vote did him in, although he ran a little ahead of Roosevelt in the more rural Adams and Franklin counties. He carried York county by more than a 2,100 majority, mainly because of York city. Gitt had agreed to run only after much prodding by area politicians who wanted a liberal in Congress. He confided in a letter to Huston Thompson, dated 9 November 1944: "As far as I am personally concerned I am very much relieved. As you know, I detest publicity and viewed with alarm being in the limelight in Washington. I only agreed to run because I was impressed with the seriousness of the times and was ready to do what I could to help to solve the problems confronting the American people wisely and well.")

[4] MacDougall, vol. 1, p. 81. (Also see JWG, Box 2, file 20, for complete speech.)

[5] The Story of Henry Wallace, pamphlet (New York: National Wallace for President Committee, n.d.)

[6] Conversation with Walt Partymiller, op. cit.

[7] "War-With-Russia Talk Is 'Criminal'," The Gazette and Daily, 14 September 1946. (JWG, box 1, file 2).

[8] Norman D. Markowitz, The Rise and Fall of the People's Century: Henry A. Wallace and American Liberalism, 1941-1948 (New York: The Free Press, 1973), pp. 181-193.

[9] Ibid., pp. 184-185.

[10] "New Pennsylvania Progressive Party Is Formed in York," Common Sense, n.d., p. 1. (JWG, box 1, file 1.) (The Historical Society of York County has on file the March through September, 1948, monthly issues of Common Sense, all published by The Gazette and Daily.

[11] MacDougall, vol. 3, p. 831. (According to MacDougall, it was Gitt's idea to establish the state headquarters in Harrisburg.)

[12] "Text of Wallace Talk Before Pa. Progressive Party," Common Sense, n.d., p. 2. (Also the full text is in JWG, Box 2, File 20.)

[13] JWG, 1 June 1948.

[14] Olson, p. 59.

[15] Thompson was assistant attorney general of the U.S., 1913-1918, then was appointed by Wilson in 1918 to the Federal Trade Commission for a seven-year term and served twice as its chairman. His law firm of Bright, Thompson and Mast represented the government on many cases. It is Mrs. Gitt's recollection that her husband met Thompson during World War I "when he went to Washington to find out why so many boys were being drafted from the Hanover area" in comparison with the rest of Pennsylvania.

[16] Secretary of State Cordell Hull had been a friend of Gitt since the 1920s. As a member of Congress from Tennessee, he went to York to speak at the second annual observance of Wilson's birthday, on December 28, 1926. Gitt sat at the speaker's table, along with other prominent York County Democrats, who also were honoring Hull as the former chairman of the Democratic National Committee. (In 1946 Hull wrote Gitt asking for copies of that address or a news account thereof. See JWG, 1946, July 15, July 26, July 29, and August 1.) Gitt and Hull corresponded rather frequently throughout the 1940s. Gitt sometimes visited him in Washington and wrote editorials whenever he agreed with Hull's policies. But Gitt obviously was disturbed that Hull had become less liberal, he thought.

[17] JWG, 5 February 1943.

[18] JWG, 6 February 1943.

[19] JWG, 10 February 1943.

[20] Let's Come Out Fighting! pamphlet (New York: United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers of America, 1947), p. 5.

[21] Aronson, The Press and the Cold War, p. 25.

[22] Markowitz, p. 5. (The NC-PAC was created by the CIO in June, 1944 in a response to conservative attempts to restrict the activities of the CIO-Political Action Committee. It raised funds for the national Democratic campaign. The Independent Voters Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions was reorganized after the campaign as the ICCASP. "Although both organizations contained important administrative officers with close connections to the Communist party, the leading journals of liberal opinion all agreed that the activities of the citizens committees and the CIO-PAC represented the most encouraging development in American politics since the rise of the New Deal.")

[23] Mary Sperling McAuliffe, Crisis on the Left, Cold War Politics and American Liberals, 1947-1954. (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1978), p. 5.

[24] JWG, 7 January 1947.

[25] JWG, 11 January 1947.

[26] JWG, 3 June 1946.

[27] See McAuliffe, pp. 5-7. (Prominent New Dealers, trade unionists and political liberals met in Washington, D.C., at the request of the Union for Democratic Action, founded in 1941 by liberals and former Socialists who went against their party's reluctance to support the war against Hitler. Protestant theologian Reinhold Niebuhr was the UDA's chairman. The 1946 elections, a disaster for the Democratic Party, showed conservatives to be hunting for "Communist influence." The UDA saw the necessity of building post-war liberalism with a strong anti-Communist base and the newly formed Americans for Democratic Action, as it was re-named, passed a provision barring Fascists and Communists from membership.) Also see: John S. Rosenberg, "The A.D.A.'s Long Shadow," The Nation, 23 February 1980, p. 208.

[28] McAuliffe, p. 7.

[29] JWG, 21 January 1947.

[30] JWG, 27 January 1947.

[31] "What Progressives Can Do," The Gazette and Daily, 22 January 1947, editorial page.

[32] Ibid.

[33] JWG, 27 February 1947.

[34] Known from personal experience of the researcher, talks with other editorial staffers, and from reading letters by readers who did not agree with the newspaper's politics.

[35] Cedric Belfrage and James Aronson, p. 13. (Each author opens what he has written with his own initials so the reader knows who is speaking.)

[36] McAuliffe, pp. 22-30.

[37] Ibid., pp. 30-31.

[38] Ibid., p. 32.

[39] Walton, p. 145. (For substantial quotation from speech, see pp. 145-148.)

[40] Ibid., p. 148.

[41] Ibid., pp. 149-150. (Also, the Henry A. Wallace Papers, the University of Iowa Libraries, 15 March 1947, Ia 43-524. Hereinafter, this reference will be designated as "HAW".)

[42] JWG, 29 April 1947. (For Eleanor Roosevelt's position on the Truman Doctrine, the ADA, and Henry Wallace, see: Joseph P. Lash, Eleanor: The Years Alone (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972), especially Chap. IV, "Reluctant Cold-Warrior," pp. 82-107. Mrs. Roosevelt had been a firm supporter of Wallace, admiring his integrity and thinking him to be the one person from her husband's Cabinet best equipped to carry out New Deal policies. But she worried about Communist Party influence in the growing Progressive movement. She was present at the founding meeting of the ADA on 4 January 1947 and became its honorary chairperson in 1953.)

[43] JWG, 3 May 1947.

[44] JWG, 21 April 1947.

[45] JWG, 22 April 1947.

[46] "Europeans Fear Truman Doctrine, Wallace Declares," The Gazette and Daily, 1 May 1947, p. 1.

[47] JWG, 15 May 1947.

[48] JWG, 3 July 1947.

[49] JWG, 13 August 1947.

[50] Letter from Luther Kohr, 16 January 1979.

[51] Markowitz, pp. 257-258. (Also see "The Story of Gideon," MacDougall, vol. 1, p. 3; and the Book of Judges, chapters 6-8 inclusive.)

[52] MacDougall, vol. 1, p. 224.

[53] Ibid., pp. 243-244. (See entire Chapter 12, "The Decision to Run.")

[54] Henry Wallace, Stand Up and Be Counted! Why I Choose to Run, pamphlet (New York: the New Republic, 1947).

[55] Markowitz, pp. 258-259.

[56] Cedric Belfrage, The American Inquisition 1945-1960 (Indianapolis-New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1973), p. 80.

[57] JWG, 23 December 1947.

[58] JWG, 16 July 1948.

[59] MacDougall, vol. 2, p. 506.

[60] Ibid., p. 509.

[61] Ibid., p. 571.

[62] Ibid., p. 578.

[63] Ibid., p. 427.

[64] MacDougall, vol. 1, p. 280. (MacDougall insists, p. 281, that the meeting of Gitt and Adamic with Wallace took place "the last week of June, not in September." However, according to the exchange of letters about the meeting between Gitt and Wallace in 1956, September seems the more likely month. Perhaps there were two meetings.)

[65] JWG, 2 January 1955. [sic] (Obviously a new-year's mistake and should be dated 2 January 1956--see Gitt's two letters, footnotes 67 and 68.)

[66] The exact time of the meeting is important because MacDougall says Wallace made his Center Sandwich statement after Gitt and Adamic visited him to warn him about Communist influence (MacDougall, vol. 2, p. 427).

[67] HAW, 6 July 1956, Ia51-343.

[68] HAW, 24 January 1956, IA51-344.

[69] JWG, 10 July 1956. (Louis Adamic was mysteriously shot to death on 5 September 1951, in his burning farmhouse at Riegelsville, N.J., a few days before his book, The Eagle and the Roots, was published by Doubleday, [MacDougall, vol. 1, p. 281.] There were some, like Gitt and Wallace, who questioned whether his death was indeed a suicide. Walt Partymiller, a friend of Adamic's, assured this researcher that it was and gave as the reason the Yugoslav author's "constant and total harassment by the FBI.")

[70] Markowitz, p. 270.

[71] MacDougall, vol. 1, pp. 81-82.

[72] Markowitz, p. 266.

[73] MacDougall, vol. 3, inside front and back covers.

[74] JWG, 29 December 1948.

[75] JWG, 11 November 1948.

[76] JWG, 17 November 1948.

[77] MacDougall, vol. 3, p. 865.

[78] Ibid. (Tugwell had been Wallace's Undersecretary of Agriculture. His article, "Progressives and the Presidency," was published in the April, 1949, Progressive, which endorsed Norman Thomas, the Socialist candidate, in the 1948 election and whose editor, Morris Rubin, often explained that his magazine grew out of the LaFollette movement and was not connected with Wallace's party. MacDougall, vol. 1, pp. 291-292.)

[79] Interview, New York City, 20 November 1978.

[80] JWG, 2 February 1949.

[81] JWG, 20 January 1949.

[82] JWG, 27 January 1949.

[83] Western Union Cable, signed Jim Higgins, from Minneapolis, Minn., 9 May 1949, p. 4.

[84] JWG, 12 May 1949.

[85] Markowitz, p. 306.

[86] Ibid.

[87] Ibid., p. 308.

[88] I. F. Stone, The Hidden History of the Korean War (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1952), Second Modern Reader Paperback Edition, 1971, p. 133.

[89] Ibid., p. 43. (When the fighting in Korea began, Stone was writing for the New York Daily Compass, "The next step is up to the Russians." [Belfrage, The American Inquisition, p. 126.] But during the winter of 1950-1951 he was reporting from Paris where he could analyze accounts other than those issued from General MacArthur's headquarters in Tokyo. The discrepancies he found led to his reassessment of the war. [Stone, p. xv.])

[90] Markowitz, p. 310.

[91] Ibid., pp. 310-311.

[92] Henry A. Wallace, "Personal Statement on the Korean Crisis," The Gazette and Daily, 18 July 1950, p. 17.

[93] Guide to a Microfilm Edition of the Henry A. Wallace Papers at The University of Iowa (Iowa City: University of Libraries, 1974), pamphlet, p. 8. (Also, "Wallace Leaves Progressive Party Over Korea Issue," The Gazette and Daily, 9 August 1950, p. 1. [JWG, box 1, file 2])

[94] MacDougall wrote to this researcher 10 August 1978: "Jess Gitt turned over absolutely everything that was left of the Pennsylvania organization, including the keys to the offices. Much of it was mimeographed releases and correspondence, coming and going. I weeded out the completely nonessential and gave all the rest to the University of Iowa special libraries. I went over everything and nowhere was there any hint of resignations. In 1950 Gitt could have been on the national executive committee which had several hectic meetings on the Korean matter. I spent some time researching all of that, interviewing Hallinan [Vincent, Progressive Party Presidential candidate in 1952, a San Francisco lawyer] and others to carry through the 1952 campaign and beyond. Because I had so much trouble getting 3 vols. published I abandoned plans for Vol. 4 which would have carried on the story. So, not having actually used the material my memory may be hazy. . . . My guess is: Wallace quit everything but Gitt did not." This researcher was unable to find a copy of Gitt's resignation in his personal correspondence. Higgins said he recalled a brief notice of it being printed "at the bottom of page two or three" of The Gazette and Daily. But a check of the microfilm of the paper for the summer months of 1950 did not turn up such a story.

[95] JWG, 14 August 1950. (Hathaway's letter was sent to Zalmon H. Garfield, state director, Progressive Party of Pennsylvania, 1215 Walnut St., Philadelphia. Presumably that also is where Gitt's own letter of resignation was sent, if indeed he ever wrote one. According to a letter from Robert A. McCown, manuscripts librarian, The University of Iowa, dated 31 July 1979: "The C. B. Baldwin Papers and the Progressive Party Records of Curtis MacDougall are both large manuscript collections. Both are arranged by subject and not in chronological order." He and a colleague conducted a search for this researcher but could not turn up Gitt's letter of resignation.)

[96] JWG, 7 July 1950.

[97] JWG, 11 July 1950.

[98] HAW, 11 July 1950, Ia46-626. (Imbrie had been chairman of the New Jersey Independent Citizens Committee, a PCA affiliate. [MacDougall, vol. 1, p. 231] It should be pointed out that the word "resignations" in the first line of the letter would seem to indicate both state and national.)

[99] JWG, 19 August 1950.

[100] JWG, 31 August 1950. (Gitt is never precise in spelling "communism" and "communist" with a small "c" or a capital "C".)

[101] JWG, 28 September 1950.

[102] Letter from John T. Hough, Falmouth, Mass., 29 September 1977.

[103] Interview, Martha's Vineyard, Mass., 6 August 1979.

[104] "The Korean Crisis," The Gazette and Daily, editorial, 28 June 1950. (JWG, box 1, file 4).

[105] "The Peace of the World," The Gazette and Daily, editorial, 30 June 1950. (JWG, box 1, file 4).

[106] "The Korean Conflict," The Gazette and Daily, editorial, 5 July 1950. (JWG, box 1, file 4).

[107] Markowitz, pp. 9-11.

Chapter VI

"We Left People Understand That We Intended to be Entirely Free" [sic]: The McCarthy Era

Red-baiting had come into full swing before the Progressive Party campaign of 1948 and it gave isolationist and imperialist alike a single target for their fears. The Republicans had used the "soft on communism" line, blaming the New Deal and the Democrats, to gain control of Congress in the 1946 elections. Truman realized he could not maintain Presidential authority if he did not fall into a hard-line stance. "By one bold all-embracing stroke Truman had made himself the world's leading anti-communist," said D. F. Fleming in The Cold War and Its Origins.[1] That stroke of course was the proclamation to be known as the Truman Doctrine.

Only eleven days after announcing the program of foreign aid, President Truman issued the Loyalty Order (Executive Order 9835), on March 23, 1947. It was designed to test the loyalty of more than two million federal employees, "from topflight executives to janitors in small-town post offices," as Aronson pointed out in The Press and the Cold War.[2] Most members of the American

press went along with the President, helping to stir up the "red menace" cauldron with editorials, cartoons, and scare headlines. For instance, the 1947 Pulitzer Prize went to Frederick Woltman of the New York World-Telegram for his articles on "the infiltration of communism in the United States."[3]

This atmosphere of suspicion and distrust created a pre-war mood in a post-war period. In response to the question of whether the American public expected another world war within twenty-five years, the National Opinion Research Center found increasing percentages answering in the affirmative at year's end: 1945, 32 percent; 1946, 41 percent; 1947, 63 percent. Within three months, by March 1948, the total who believed in the inevitability of a third world war had jumped to 73 percent, according to the Gallup Poll.[4]

During this period there were certainly some members of the press who refused to accept the government's posture of fear as a necessary part of American life. Three weeks after the Loyalty Order was issued, J. W. Gitt wrote in an editorial:

> No calling of names, no witch hunts, can alter the facts. The United States started as a radical democracy and its great leaders ever since that time have been radicals in the political sense of the word.
>
> Why then this fear, these days of such extraordinary importance, of being called a radical or something that is intended to convey the same meaning? Why this scampering for cover by so many

> professional liberals when some reactionary calls them radical or worse?[5]

Earlier in the editorial he had defined "radical" as a belief in "the equality of mankind . . . all just government derives its powers from the consent of the governed . . . human rights are superior, greatly superior, to property rights." He concluded the editorial by calling on the "high ideals" of Jefferson, Lincoln, and Roosevelt.

Gitt had been protesting the federal government's encroachment on citizens' rights for more than a year prior to the Loyalty Order. On January 8, 1946, he wrote a letter to the Hon. Samuel Rayburn to "protest most vigorously" the announced intention to summon the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee to appear before the Un-American Activities Committee of the House. (The refugee committee was an officially approved wartime relief agency.) Gitt wrote to the Speaker of the House of Representatives:

> To investigate anti-fascists at the same time that such well known enemies of democracy as Gerald Smith are permitted to continue their activities without any pretense of investigation, is to do a great injustice to the better thinking people of this nation as well as to put a seal of approval upon fascist tendencies while by implication at least severely criticizing those honestly and sincerely opposed to fascism, who have the temerity to back up their idealism with works. P.S. I've been a Democrat all my life.[6]

The York publisher sometimes requested reprint rights for the testimony of individuals summoned to appear before the Un-American Activities Committee. In the summer of 1947, he wrote to Professor Clyde R. Miller, educational director of The League for Fair Play in New York City, and asked for a copy of "the affidavit you made in connection with a visit to the 'Un-American Committee' which appeared recently in The Churchman."[7] Miller promptly replied:

> I am proud to have it appear in The Gazette and Daily, one of the truly great and humane newspapers of this or any other country. If 90 per cent of our American newspapers had your honesty, intelligence, humanity and courage this nation would be free from the blight of such un-American things as the Thomas-Rankin Committee.[8]

The Gazette and Daily received similar praise from Dr. R. B. Stone of Canoga Park, California, who had learned about the newspaper through Don C. Matchan, publisher-editor of the progressive Valley City, N.D., Times-Record. After subscribing to the York paper and reading it for three weeks, Stone wrote to inquire:

> How come all your advertisers haven't boycotted you as they did Don Matchan? [In 1947 an advertisers' boycott forced Matchan's paper out of business.] To anyone over 65 years of age who can visualize and hark back to the days of 1880-1900, and think of such editors as Dana, Pulitzer, H. L. Mencken and the early Brisbane, and such papers as the New York Sun, World, Press and the American Mercury and their like throughout the United States, it is beyond my comprehension that you have the audacity to publish such a paper as you do, in the year of 1947 in competition with such giants as Hearst, McCormick and Patterson running riot in preaching and practicing the spewing of venom all over the land.

Stone noted that Gitt's paper had become "number three on my priority list of 'must reading' among the thirty-one periodicals that I already subscribe to."[9]

Gitt's answer to Stone re-stated his insistence on being an independent publisher, in spite of the political climate of the time:

> . . . Since The Gazette and Daily has insisted upon maintaining its liberalism in spite of the present hysteria, etc., we have been asked by a number of like-minded people how we do it.
>
> Our answer is that we just do it. So far, in spite of several gestures, there has been no real effort to punish us.
>
> Our own theory is that early in our career we left [sic] people understand that we intended to be entirely free from pressure groups and demonstrated to their satisfaction that we meant what we said, and as the years have gone on we have had less and less trouble with individuals and groups of people who had ideas that they could dictate what should be printed. So much so that I cannot remember any incident within the last few years in which anybody tried to pressure us into anything.[10]

In mid-March, 1948, Rep. Karl E. Mundt of South Dakota introduced to the full House a bill "to combat un-American activities by requiring the registration of Communist-front organizations. . . ." The short title provided was the "Subversive Activities Control Act, 1948." The bill was referred to the House Committee on Un-American Activities, where the title was amended to read: "a bill to protect the United States against un-American and subversive activities."[11]

At about the same time, another Republican member of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, Richard M. Nixon of California, introduced a similar bill, hence creating the commonly known title,"the Mundt-Nixon bill." On May 6, 1948, as chairman of the House sub-committee on legislation, Nixon sent out a form letter under the letter-head of the House Committee on Un-American Activities. It doubtlessly went to many members of the press because the publisher of The Gazette and Daily received a copy. The letter stated that on April 30 the full committee had approved unanimously H.R. 5852, a revised version of a bill originally sponsored by Mundt. "For the first time in our history as a whole," Nixon wrote, "Congress is attempting through legislation to cope with the subversive activities of a foreign directed political movement." He concluded, " . . . the bill is not directed at communism in theory but at communism in action as a foreign directed conspiratorial movement dedicated to subverting the interests of the United States to that of a foreign totalitarian power."[12]

The York publisher never was one to allow a mere form letter to deter him from answering with a personal reply. Thus, he answered "Congressman Nixon" on May 8:

> I agree with you that this is one of the most significant pieces of legislation to come before the 80th Congress, if 'significant' is a good word. It is certainly a very important proposed piece of legislation.
>
> My position on the matter, which necessarily is the position of The Gazette and Daily, is set forth

> better than I can do so in the statement of the Committee of One Thousand which has been submitted to your committee, to which statement I have subscribed my name.
>
> May I add that I consider this proposed legislation to be tragically un-American; at least as bad from that viewpoint as the Sedition Bill of the pre-Jeffersonian era, and would be a return to something of which only a short time ago most of us were heartily ashamed.[13]

The Committee of One Thousand (To Abolish the House Committee on Un-American Activities) invited Gitt to a meeting to be held in New York City May 20, 1948, to discuss the Mundt Bill. "We are seriously disturbed by this legislative proposal of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, because we believe it violates the traditional concept of free speech, press and assembly, and disregards the principles which have guided our country to greatness--the encouragement of criticism and the toleration of dissent," the letter stated. The meeting was limited to "members of the Committee of One Thousand and [their] invited guests," so one can assume that Gitt was a member. There is no indication in his correspondence of whether he attended the meeting. Among the "initiating sponsors" of the Committee listed on the letterhead were: Van Wyck Brooks, Henry Seidel Canby, Olin Downes, Deanna Durbin, Albert Einstein, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Helen Keller, Fredric March, Harlow Shapley, and Rexford Guy Tugwell. The meeting was chaired by Downes, music critic for The New York Times.[14]

"In 1948, a great deal of the leadership in fighting the bill came from active participants in the Progressive party," said Curtis MacDougall, "directly and through the Committee to Defeat the Mundt Bill, whose executive secretary was former Rep. Jerry O'Connell of Montana."[15] On May 11, 1948, Henry Wallace in his Madison Square Garden speech described the Mundt-Nixon bill as "monstrous." He went on to explain why:

> . . . Its objective is to frighten all the American people into conformity or silence. It would provide the power to destroy any organization which has a single liberal thought. It is the greatest threat to free trade unions, academic freedoms, scientific development and the progress of mankind which the enemies of progress in the United States have ever conceived.
>
> While the Mundt-Nixon bill is posed as an anti-Communist bill, its real purposes have been openly proclaimed by the men who sponsor it--by the men of the un-American committee to whom everything democratic is 'communistic.'
>
> But if Rep. Nixon, or any of the others, think that this legislation--that the threats of ten years imprisonment--will stop me or millions of others from fighting to preserve American democracy and build a stable, peaceful world, they are utterly wrong.
>
> These threats, harassments and incitements to violence can't stop the fight for peace.
>
> The Mundt-Nixon bill would be a serious blow to American democracy. Every American who believes in democracy must raise his voice in opposition to the bill. It would be a serious blow to the fight of people the world over for peace and justice. But it will not stop that fight.[16]

Nine days later, on May 20, the House passed the Mundt-Nixon bill by a vote of 319 to 58. The Senate Judiciary Committee began hearings on the bill within a week. Wallace interrupted his speaking tour in the West to testify against the bill before the committee on May 29. He called the bill "the most subversive legislation ever to be seriously sponsored in the United States Congress" and said its sponsors were "war mongers, fearmongers and hatemongers."[17]

Refusal of the Senate Judiciary Committee to continue its hearings prompted a telegram from O'Connell. It said that the discontinuance of hearings "heightens danger of speedy reporting of bill to the floor." He urged protest against the bill's passage, as well as financial support of his committee.[18] On June 17, 1948, however, the Senate decided there was not enough time left to consider the Mundt-Nixon bill during that Congressional session.[19]

By the spring of 1949, Karl E. Mundt was a Senator and his bill against subversives was still before Congress. Gitt received another telegram from O'Connell, this one asking him to become a sponsor of the National Committee to Defeat the Mundt Bill which was opening headquarters in Washington. Former Congressman O'Connell said, "Success of last year's fight against Mundt bill can be achieved this year only by similar strong protest from all sections of country." Senator James O. Eastland, chairman of the Internal Security Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary

Committee, was to re-open hearings on the bill.[20]

Among sponsors of the National Committee to Defeat the Mundt Bill, listed on the letterhead of a June 8, 1949, letter from O'Connell to Gitt, were: Elmer Benson, Zachariah Chaffee Jr., Clifford J. Durr, Paul J. Kern, Curtis D. MacDougall, and O. John Rogge.[21] Those names were included on a "partial list" of sponsors; the entire list included Louis Untermeyer, I. F. Stone, Harlow Shapley, F. O. Matthiessen, James Imbrie, Clark Foreman, Thomas I. Emmerson, Algernon Black, Stringfellow Barr, and Thurman Arnold.[22] J. W. Gitt wrote to McConnell on June 10, 1949, that he was "certainly . . . willing" to accept sponsorship.[23] The Committee's secretary, Edith Pratt, wrote to thank Gitt and added: "I hear good reports of the work of the Progressive Party in Pennsylvania and look back with pride and satisfaction on my association with you in last year's campaign."[24]

Protests against the bill helped delay Senatorial action, but on September 9, 1950, Gitt received a telegram from McConnell which said: "Senate votes Tuesday on McCarran bill and Kilgore concentration camp substitute, incorporating worst features of Mundt-Ferguson and other thought control legislation. Climaxes three-year fight against police state in our country. But even at this late hour bill can be blocked."[25]

This time, however, protests against the bill had little effect and on September 13 Congress overwhelmingly

passed the McCarran Internal Security Act which required communist and so-called communist groups to register with the government. The act established a full-time Subversive Activities Control Board, with its five members (not Congressmen) to be appointed by the President. The board set up concentration camps in which it authorized the government to detain communists and suspected subversives of any sort whenever a national emergency was proclaimed.[26]

"The atmosphere in the early 1950s was one of loyalty oaths and tapped telephones, suspicion and timidity engendered by inquisitors and images of Bolshevik hordes fanning out from Europe to Asia," said Aronson in The Press and the Cold War. He explained the role of the press in keeping alive this atmosphere:

> . . . Yet while there can be no excuse for the role of the press in the McCarthy Era, there ought to be no surprise. The newspaper industry, as part of the establishment complex, simply played its accustomed role even as, in accustomed fashion, it wrapped itself in the protective parchment of the First Amendment to ward off the slings and arrows of at least a small, outraged part of society.[27]

It was early 1950 when the junior senator from Wisconsin whose name would become synonymous with repression first gained notoriety by announcing publicly that he had a list of names of Communists working in the government. In reality, the sheet of paper was an old laundry list held by Joseph R. McCarthy as he spoke to the Women's Republican Club in Wheeling, West Va., on February

9, 1950. "I have here in my hand a list of 205 that were known to the Secretary of State as being members of the Communist party and who, nevertheless, are still working and shaping policy in the State Department." The next day, speaking in Salt Lake City, McCarthy said he had a list of "57 Communists" working in the government.[28] This discrepancy in figures alone should have warned the public and the press that the Senator stood on shaky ground, but instead that ground had solidified with a growing fear of Russian influence since the end of World War II.

For the most part the press was pro-McCarthy. There were individual exceptions, such as New York Post columnist James Wechsler and syndicated columnist Drew Pearson.[29] Some newspapers across the country, even in the Senator's home state, ran editorials condemning not only McCarthy's tactics but his basic defilement of the Bill of Rights. The Gazette and Daily was in the forefront of those papers and when the Senator was finally up for censure before the governmental body of which he was a member, Gitt received a letter of thanks from the Senator who had introduced the original censure legislation on July 30, 1954. Ralph E. Flanders of Vermont wrote:

> May I thank you for your outspoken, lucid editorial comment on the effort to bring the McCarthy issue to a Senate show-down. This effort has, I believe, been well begun, thanks to aroused public opinion, but it is not yet won. A fair determination will result if papers such as yours continue to focus public attention on the broad issues involved in McCarthyism as well as the specific misconduct of the

junior Senator from Wisconsin.[30]

The vote was 67 to 22 when the actual censure motion came on December 2, 1954.[31]

In the six years between Henry Wallace's defeat for the Presidency and the censure of Joseph McCarthy by his peers, the publisher of The Gazette and Daily received press releases and invitations for sponsorship from all sorts of civil rights and freedom organizations. One of those was a national conference "to protest these present infringements on the Bill of Rights and reaffirm our traditional liberties of speech, press, pulpit and political advocacy," organized for mid-July, 1949, in New York City. Paul J. Kern, former Civil Service Commissioner of New York and one of the initiators of the conference, wrote to Gitt asking him to join the "draft call" as a sponsor.[32] Gitt immediately wired back, "I will be glad to join you in the call for a civil rights conference."[33]

Kern's reply pointed out several reasons for the necessity of such a conference. It included the recommendation by the National Educational Association Commission on the firings of teachers whom it regarded as "Communists."[34] A letter from Kern two days later requested that Gitt speak at the conference, "particularly with reference to the effect on organized labor of the present invasion of our civil rights."[35]

The executive director of that Bill of Rights Conference was Clark Foreman, who had been national treasurer of the Progressive Party.[36] Gitt had talked with Foreman in New York about making a speech at the conference, and agreed to do so before he received Kern's letter of invitation. After returning to York, however, he had second thoughts about speaking on the rights of labor as an employer. The publisher's letter to Kern expressed the dichotomy in which Gitt often found himself as both a supporter of unions and a negotiator of union contracts on the management side. His letter to Kern of June 22, 1949, with a copy sent to Foreman, read:

> Since coming home and thinking the thing over, however, I think it would be a very great mistake for me, an employer, who in spite of my good labor reputation, I hope, after all am an employer and thus sit each year, on the other side of the table negotiating contracts. A speech on that subject coming from me, however well I may be thought of by certain labor leaders, would not be as effective as every speech at the conference should be.
>
> I agree with you that somebody should talk on the effect on organized labor of the present invasion of civil rights but it should not be an employer and in the final analysis I am an employer. Certainly you can get somebody from labor's ranks to talk on this subject far more effectively than I could.
>
> While I dislike refusing to co-operate I am quite sure that in this instance I am correct and I will stand on my refusal.[37]

Foreman tried to persuade Gitt to speak "on any aspect that you do think is suitable," adding he was not convinced that the York publisher should not speak on the rights of

labor. ". . . I am responsible for the feeling that an outsider, even an employer, can look at the situation with more detachment and get a calmer hearing even from organized labor, than a representative of either one faction or the other," Foreman wrote. He noted that the conference would deal with "the work of our secret police . . . academic freedom . . . the question of trials for political advocacy, and a relation of the present trial of the communist leaders to all of us who dissent from the current bi-partisan foreign policy."[38] The "clinical analysis" of the Federal Bureau of Investigation was to be presented by the Hon. Clifford J. Durr, former member of the Federal Communications Commission.

Foreman's letter did not convince Gitt of the rightness of speaking about organized labor, thus the reply:

> I still think that I ought not to make a speech in which I criticize leaders of organized labor on any subject. It is difficult for those of you who think of me as being decidedly pro-labor to understand that labor leaders frequently shoot at me, the right-wing ones, of course.
>
> I will come to the conference and speak briefly if you wish me to do so. If you can give me any idea of anything you would like to have me discuss, other than this labor business I will appreciate it.[39]

Gitt did not hear from Foreman with the suggestion of another speech topic, and in the end, he sent a wire two days before the conference was to begin: "Regret unable attend conference Saturday. Must go out of town."[40] But

a few weeks afterwards, Gitt wrote a note to Kern requesting a copy of the report made on the FBI at the conference, presumably with the intent of publishing some of it in The Gazette and Daily.[41]

In May, 1950, Gitt received a letter from Foreman to say he was looking for a job and adding, "I have given up being choosy." At that time, both men were still members of the Progressive Party. Foreman noted that:

> . . . with the exception of the Progressive Party convention which on the whole I thought very good, everything considered, there have been few bright spots. . . . Nobody seems to take McCarthy seriously but nevertheless people are more afraid than ever. . . . Sorry to be writing such a gloomy letter. Your paper is one of the few bright spots and we read it regularly. I am really calling out for some hope and cheer from you.[42]

Gitt's reply did not offer much optimism, either about the future of one man who had been one of the strongest supporters of the Progressive Party or about the future of the country:

> . . . I am very sorry but I know of nothing in the way of a job. If I hear of anything I certainly will let you know.
>
> My own personal opinion is that things have not improved at all and that the convention itself was not encouraging. Of course I was not there and have no rights to be critical. It seems to me there was too much pussy-footing.
>
> If I have any time on my hands the next time I get to New York I certainly will call you up. I am dreadfully sorry. It is a darn shame that a man like you, who are ready to fight for principles, have to pay so severely for that ccurage. Yet I guess we could not live with ourselves if we did not do what we

thought was right.[43]

By the next year, Foreman had become the director of the newly-formed Emergency Civil Liberties Committee. Its founders, according to McAuliffe, "believed a new organization was needed 'to augment the American Civil Liberties Union, but with guts enough to fight the evils of McCarthyism without fear of being bullied by the label of "pro-Communist".'"[44]

Name-calling in the form of red-baiting picked up momentum as Senator Joseph R. McCarthy led investigations into the minds of Americans. Even before the McCarthy hearings, the publisher of The Gazette and Daily had been labeled "pinko," "red," or "communist" because of his progressive views. Gitt did not often take those derogatorily intended names without arguing back, however. One such insult he heard about in the summer of 1951 seemed to particularly offend him, and he wrote a letter to Rev. John Sando of Reading, Pa., explaining why:

> I have been informed that you have been spreading the "news" in Reading that I am a pro-Communist as well as an unpleasant and disagreeable individual.
>
> I am amazed.
>
> As to the unpleasant and disagreeable business, that is an opinion to which, of course, you are entitled, although it does seem to me to be harsh judgment, in view of the very slight personal acquaintanceship you have ever had with me.
>
> As far as the pro-Communist business goes, that is different. In the present situation in which the

> hysteria about that kind of thing causes such accusations to be slanderous reflections upon one's patriotism, it would seem to me that even a preacher should be very careful when he uses such language about any individual.
>
> For your information, may I say that I am not a pro-Communist; that I am completely wedded to the American ideal. And I do not propose to sit quiet and permit any materialistic conceptions of the right or of the left to destroy the glorious heritage which came to me by right of birth, if I can possibly do anything to hand that heritage down to those who come after me.[45]

Gitt insisted that every individual had the duty to think, and following that, the right to speak what was on his mind. Naturally, he hoped that every individual would arrive at his own position of being a "radical democrat," that is, with a belief in "the equality of mankind." Gitt did not equate "equality" with "conformity," however. He opposed any attempt to stamp out an individual's freedom of thought and expression. Therefore, he actively opposed the Loyalty Order, the Mundt-Nixon Bill, the McCarran Internal Security Act, the Subversive Activities Control Board, and, of course, the Un-American Activities Committee of the House. It could almost go without saying that Gitt actively supported such groups as The League for Fair Play, the Committee of One Thousand, the National Committee to Defeat the Mundt Bill, and the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee.

The York publisher continued to fight for the rights in which he so strongly believed as the "McCarthy Era" continued on through the early half of the 1950s. Some who

had had high hopes for the winds of change in 1948 got caught up in the maelstrom. Others who held onto their constitutional right of freedom of expression searched for sympathetic outlets. For those progressive journalists, more often than not that outlet meant the "second-editorial page" of The Gazette and Daily. J. W. Gitt sought out writers and news services he felt would exercise the same fearless, inquiring brand of journalism as his own. The page's reputation for progressive political journalism further cast that small newspaper in York, Pa., into the national, and international, arena.

NOTES

[1] D. F. Fleming, The Cold War and Its Origins, 1917-1960, Volume One 1917-1950 (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1961), p. 46.

[2] Aronson, p. 36.

[3] Ibid., p. 37.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Olson, J. W. Gitt's Sweet Land of Liberty, p. 156.

[6] JWG, 8 January 1946.

[7] JWG, 1 July 1947. (The affidavit appeared in the March 15, 1947 issue of The Churchman.)

[8] JWG, 2 July 1947. (Professor Miller, originator of the Springfield plan of interracial education, was discharged from Teachers' College of Columbia University after he became a member of the 700-man national Wallace for President Committee. [MacDougall, vol. 2, p. 400.] In July 1948, Miller became the head of a Bureau on Academic Freedom, established by 60 educators under the auspices of the National Council of the Arts, Sciences and Professions, which had been organized at a national conference in June as an independent group supporting Wallace. Harlow Shapley, the Harvard astronomer, was national chairman. [MacDougall, vol. 3, pp. 639-640.])

[9] JWG, 8 October 1947. (For a story on the closing of Matchan's paper see "Squeeze Play," The New Republic, 5 May 1947, p. 9.)

[10] JWG, 15 October 1947. ("Left" in this instance is a Pennsylvania Dutch expression meaning "let".)

[11] JWG, Box 1, File 6.

[12] JWG, 6 May 1948.

[13] JWG, 8 May 1948.

[14] JWG, 14 May 1948.

[15] MacDougall, vol. 2, p. 410.

[16] Ibid., p. 411.

[17] Ibid., pp. 411-412.

[18] JWG, 5 June 1948.

[19] MacDougall, vol. 2, p. 412.

[20] JWG, 15 May 1949.

[21] JWG, 8 June 1949.

[22] JWG, 8 June 1949 (list).

[23] JWG, 10 June 1949.

[24] JWG, 14 June 1949.

[25] JWG, 9 September 1950.

[26] Douglas T. Miller and Marion Nowak, The Fifties: The Way We Really Were (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1977), pp. 35 and 402. (Also, see Belfrage, The American Inquisition, pp. xiii-xiv.)

[27] Aronson, The Press and the Cold War, pp. 78-79.

[28] Miller and Nowak, pp. 29 and 401.

[29] See Chapter 6, "A Tale of Two Editors," in Aronson's The Press and the Cold War (about the different treatment accorded in the press when two of their own were called to testify before McCarthy hearings; the two being James Wechsler, editor of the New York Post which was both anti-McCarthy and anti-Communist, and Cedric Belfrage, editor of the leftist National Guardian).

[30] JWG, 6 September 1954.

[31] Aronson, p. 84.

[32] JWG, 30 May 1949.

[33] JWG, 31 May 1949.

[34] JWG, 14 June 1949.

[35] JWG, 16 June 1949.

[36] Foreman was a white Southerner from Atlanta, where he had been secretary of the Georgia Commission on

Interracial Cooperation before New Deal days. In 1933, he became advisor on race relations to Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior. He was president of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare from 1945 until it suspended operations in 1948, when its educational activities were continued by the Southern Conference Educational Fund. He became vice-chairman of Progressive Citizens of America in 1947. Throughout the 1948 campaign, he often traveled with Paul Robeson and with Henry Wallace during his Southern speaking tour, where their insistence on integrated audiences sometimes led to unpleasant incidents, all recorded in MacDougall's Gideon's Army. (vol. 3, pp. 668-669, for background.)

[37] JWG, 22 June 1949.

[38] JWG, 23 June 1949.

[39] JWG, 1 July 1949.

[40] JWG, 14 July 1949.

[41] JWG, 10 August 1949.

[42] JWG, 8 May 1950.

[43] JWG, 19 May 1950.

[44] McAuliffe, p. 106. (McAuliffe continued: "In the interest of this goal, the ECLC intended to provide free legal counsel from the lowest to the highest courts. Non-Communist rather than anti-Communist, the ECLC sought to appeal to non-Communist liberals and radicals. The ACLU kept a watchful and, on the whole, wary eye on the new organization.") In 1959 the ECLC presented its Tom Paine Award to J. W. Gitt, Linus Pauling, and Willard Uphaus.

[45] JWG, 19 July 1951.

Chapter VII

"An Invaluable Source of Information": The Second-Editorial Page

"Until its publisher, J. W. Gitt, sold The Gazette and Daily a couple of years ago, that paper's centerfold was an invaluable source of information . . . to me and many other journalists," wrote Nat Hentoff in a column in the Village Voice in 1973.[1] Hentoff surely was alluding to the right-hand side of the centerfold--the "second-editorial page," or what is known today as the "op. ed." (opposite editorial) page in most papers.

On that page The Gazette and Daily published articles from journalists written specifically for the paper, stories from wire services with a more liberal viewpoint than the Associated Press (of which the Gazette was a member), and material reprinted from the progressive journals, periodicals and newsletters. In 1945 a Philadelphia man wrote Gitt, at George Seldes' suggestion, and said he was "doing a story on the influence of small town papers on national opinion."[2] In answer to his question, "What syndicated columnists do you use? Why?", Gitt replied:

> We use Drew Pearson and Edgar A. Mowrer and Max Werner. We also buy from PM the rights to use any of the articles which appear in that paper that are PM's exclusively. This includes most of the news and Max Lerner, I. F. Stone, etc. The correspondents who belong primarily to The Chicago Sun we cannot use. We also use Press Research.
>
> We use Pearson because on the whole he is liberal and interesting and entertaining. Of course we do not always approve of everything he says but we consider him worthwhile on the whole. Mowrer we use because we consider him a real liberal, although we do not, of course, approve of everything he writes. We use Werner because of his extraordinary ability as a war commentator. We buy the PM rights in order to make up the lack of liberal news over the large wire services.[3]

Gitt constantly was seeking sources for news which would not normally be carried by the regular news media. A few specialized news services had been established for that specific purpose. In August, 1946, the York publisher received a letter from Marc Stone, Eastern bureau manager of the Federated Press. Although Federated Press did not admit commercial newspapers to membership (reserved for the labor press), its daily news file could be subscribed to on a non-membership basis by any newspaper.[4] Gitt's reply showed his interest in obtaining labor news: "We are sorry that Federated Press does not admit commercial papers to membership. It is a service that some of us would find useful in view of the fact that commercial news services certainly do not go out of their way to give labor a break."[5]

Stone then explained the origin of, and reasons for restriction of membership in, Federated Press's news

service:

> We appreciate the friendly-to-labor tone of your letter. We have known for some time of your liberal position and had long planned to write concerning our service, which I am confident you will want to continue after the month's trial.
>
> Federated Press was organized by the labor movement following the steel strike in 1919 and began operation the following year. Membership is restricted to labor papers to protect control and policy against any possible attempt to pervert its original purpose. FP policy is avowedly pro-labor in its overall position and impartial in handling controversies within the labor movement. FP's more than 200 member papers are about evenly divided between AFL and CIO.
>
> As a subscriber, you are entitled to all the rights of membership except that of a vote for positions to the Board of Directors. . . .[6]

Gitt answered, "I do not blame you in the least for not permitting other than labor press to have a vote. So long as we have use of the copy we are entirely satisfied." He added that he was not too much interested in their picture service because "we have a good cartoonist ourselves,"[7] referring to Walt Partymiller.

The Gazette and Daily continued to subscribe to Federated Press for several years, being about the only non-labor newspaper to do so. The news service suffered severe financial losses following the 1948 Presidential campaign, however, when more than one hundred newspapers cancelled because of Federated Press's support for Henry Wallace. In January, 1949, Gitt wrote to a staunch Wallace supporter in California, Mrs. Elliot (Nina C.) Dexter,

telling her:

> The Federated Press is desperately in need of help. . . . Their losses came from the right-wing labor papers, some of which they hope to get back now that the campaign is over. They have always received some help from outstanding progressives who could afford it. I believe that it is worthwhile -- more worthwhile than some of the other things you and I have done.[8]

Apparently, Mrs. Dexter sent Gitt a telegram (which he mailed to Stone) saying she was not able to help out at this time.[9]

By September, 1949, J. J. Joseph had replaced Stone as Eastern bureau manager, and he wrote to Gitt to remind him of "a personal pledge forthcoming from you."[10] By mid-1951, Federated Press was really "struggling to keep going" and the acting bureau manager, Miss Julie Seibel, had to refuse The Gazette and Daily a proposed rate reduction from $50 a week to $100 a month. She told Gitt that such a reduction would be "a very serious, perhaps crucial, blow to us."[11] No reply from Gitt is available.

The publisher of "Detroit's largest community newspaper," the East Side Shopper, who also was a subscriber to The Gazette and Daily, wrote to the York publisher in 1950 to inquire "just how expensive it is to be able to have so many good columnists at your disposal." Ben Nathanson, publisher of the 15,000 circulation weekly, said, "I want to provide my readers with the side of the news that they couldn't find in the dailies here. Can you

help me?"[12] Gitt's reply outlined precisely where he obtained his columnists, but he was not as precise in telling Nathanson how much they cost him. He only hinted: "The whole thing comes to quite a sum of money which is more or less of a financial burden to us, in fact would not be indulged in by the ordinary business man." But he told how the columnists could be obtained:

> We have what you call so many good columnists because we subscribe to the Overseas News Agency, 101 Park Avenue, New York 13, N.Y., buy Max Werner from the George Matthew Adams Features, 444 Madison Avenue, New York 22, N.Y., I. F. Stone, c/o The Daily Compass, New York, and Del Vayo, c/o The Nation, 20 Vesey St., New York 3, N.Y. We subscribe to the Federated Press, 401 Broadway, New York 13, N.Y., buy Bob Allen from the Post-Hall Syndicate, 295 Madison Ave., New York 17, N.Y., and Drew Pearson from Associated Newspapers, 229 W. 43rd St., New York 18, N.Y.
>
> I should think you could buy Max Werner, Stone and Lowell Mellett (Globe Syndicate, Box 97, Saugatuck, Conn.) and some of those fellows pretty cheaply. One of the reasons we have Stone is that his brother is our managing editor.[13]

A student from Swarthmore College, Jerry Ravetz, had written to Gitt in early 1949 to inquire about Overseas News Agency. He noted that the agency's columnists in The Gazette and Daily had resulted in a successful "little circulation drive" for the York paper on campus and enclosed money for five new subscribers. "None of us have [sic] ever seen its columns in a large metropolitan daily. We all wonder where they are printed, since an agency of that sort cannot run on good will."[14] Gitt replied:

> The Overseas News Agency is the creation of Herbert Bayard Swope, who was the publisher of the old New York World when it was still owned by the Pulitzers. We have taken its 'stuff' for a long time. . . . We are particularly pleased with Owen Lattimore, Theodore White and at times, Harold Laski, not to mention several of the other correspondents who seem to be doing a good job of objective reporting.[15]

Sometimes Gitt made arrangements with individual employees of the alternative news services to send him articles when they traveled abroad. For instance, the Washington bureau manager of the Federated Press, Richard Sasuly, suggested that Gitt pay him $15 per article from a trip he was planning to England, France, and Germany in late 1949.[16] The following spring, another member of the Washington bureau, Alden Todd, wrote saying he would like to supply The Gazette and Daily with stories from his projected stay in Europe for a year, mostly in France where he had been an interpreter during the war. He requested, and received, press credentials from the York newspaper for presentation to the French embassy in Washington.[17]

Todd outlined his ideas for stories, noting that he had already made arrangements with nearly a dozen labor papers. His suggestions for "possible subjects" included: the effect of the Marshall Plan on a farming village; the national election campaign in a specific locale; and the audience of the Voice of America. "My idea was to write the sort of thing which would give balance to the AP and perhaps even the ONA dispatches which you use," Todd wrote.

"But I want to emphasize my belief that I would want to stick to that which I see and hear, in preference to that which I conclude or think."[18]

That last sentence annoyed Gitt. It triggered a rather lengthy discourse on what he perceived to be the difference between "objective" reporting and "editorial" writing. His reply sets forth how he saw the material on the centerfold in contrast to the news pages:

> If, in my opinion, The Gazette and Daily has ever stood for anything it was to print the news as accurately as possible, without fear or favor, bias or prejudice. We do, of course, devote two pages to editorial comment where opinions are set forth; where we attempt to present a liberal viewpoint and to interpret the news in accordance with our honest opinions. There we put articles which we consider to be editorial in content.
>
> I am certain that you are pretty much in sympathy with the things that we stand for and it rather peeves me that you should attempt to emphasize that in reporting for us you would want to do an objective job instead of an editorial one. If you sent us matters of opinion we would probably put the material on the editorial page. Any other reporting which you send would be used in the news columns and we would expect it to be completely objective.
>
> My own idea about The Gazette and Daily has always been that it is liberal because it is willing to print the news regardless. I realize, of course, that is probably a standard that is impossible to completely achieve, in view of the human equation, but I do insist that an honest newspaper does not have to resort to coloring the news in order to be liberal, at least in the sense that I think of liberalism.
>
> I would like to have objective reporting from you from time to time. The articles ought not to be longer than 500 words. The Gazette and Daily is a small newspaper, as you know, and we must hold down the size of news items as much as possible. I will be very glad to talk the matter over further with you, if you wish.

> What you said rather makes me wonder if a lot of the stuff we use from FP might not be opinion rather than straight reporting. As a matter of fact, the reactionaries have been accusing me of that for some time and it is exactly what I do not want to do. To my mind, the facts are devastating enough and there is no necessity of resorting to opinion in connection with them, in news articles.[19]

Todd wrote an immediate apology to Gitt in which he tried to straighten out what he meant to send from Europe, and also to ease any misgivings Gitt might have about Federated Press:

> What I was trying to say was that I intend to report facts rather than opinions -- as opposed to what many journalists in Paris and other European capitals are doing these days. I did NOT mean as opposed to what The Gazette and Daily has been carrying, for as you know I have a very high opinion of your paper's objectivity and liberal views. That is the reason I thought you would be interested in articles I might write.
>
> I agree with you 100% on your statement that news stories should be based on fact, and that editorial articles belong on the editorial pages. In no way did I intend to suggest that The Gazette and Daily follows any other practice. . . .
>
> I am particularly sorry that my letter could have caused you to raise any questions about FP. FP's tradition of 30 years of straight reporting was stressed to me by Carl Haessler when I first came to work here. I can say from my own experience that everyone with whom I have been connected in the organization has followed the same principle scrupulously. As a matter of fact, in the face of the same reactionary pressures you mentioned, we have only been able to keep afloat by being able to back up our facts on all occasions.[20]

In July, 1950, Todd wrote from Paris to suggest that Gitt pay him $15 per article.[21] Gitt halved that amount by replying: "If we can make a choice and use what appeals

to us at $7.50 it will be satisfactory to us. Otherwise we will have to forego the luxury."[22] Todd accepted the $7.50 and also suggested that he try finding "a few scattered subscriptions in Paris (I think I could)."[23]

Gitt often negotiated for the serialization rights to a book which he thought should appear on the second-editorial page. In mid-1950, he worked out an arrangement to publish in thirteen articles the book Ordeal by Slander by Owen Lattimore. The book recounted what happened to the professor and his family when he was accused by Senator McCarthy of being the top Russian espionage agent in the country. Serialization rights were held by Press Features in New York, which originally offered the series to The Gazette and Daily for $100.[24] Gitt countered, "We are sorry but we are not The New York Times. We cannot possibly afford such a fee."[25] He offered a fee of $5 per article and it was accepted by Press Features' general manager, H. R. Wishengrad, because they wanted "maximum distribution" for Lattimore's book.[26]

The McCarthy era brought several writers to the second-editorial page of The Gazette and Daily who otherwise had difficulty finding outlets for their material. One of them was Andrew Roth, an American who has lived in England since the early 1950s. For many years he has been a Parliamentarian correspondent for the Manchester Evening News, as well as the biographer of several prominent British politicians. In an interview in London, Roth

said he was in Tunisia when McCarthyism began. Being "a protege of Owen Lattimore," he decided not to return home but to continue as a free-lance writer instead. Since leaving the United States in 1946 with the contract for a book, Imperialism in Transition, he had built up a chain of free-lance outlets, among them The Nation, the Denver Post and the Louisville Courier-Journal. J. Alvarez del Vayo told him about The Gazette and Daily, to which he began sending articles and continued to do so for almost twenty years. He said the York paper "used about one of every two or three sent."[27]

Del Vayo, last foreign minister of Republican Spain, wrote regularly for The Nation and began sending articles to The Gazette and Daily in 1949. Freda Kirchwey, The Nation's editor, suggested that del Vayo write articles for the York paper whenever he went to Europe, thus helping to finance his trips. She also suggested that he be paid $50 an article, reminding Gitt that del Vayo had to have the articles translated.[28]

"I will see to it that he is paid $50 an article," Gitt wrote to her. "The Gazette and Daily would be pleased to publish anything that Mr. del Vayo writes, at least until he changes his outlook upon life very materially." He said he wanted an article weekly or fortnightly, but added, "It all gets down to a matter of costs." Gitt reminded Kirchwey that the Gazette was "only a small newspaper in a small community . . . having plenty of trouble

keeping our own head above water." His next statement stressed the importance he relegated to the contents of the second-editorial page, in publishing writers there who would be an extension of his own voice:

> However, I think so well of Mr. del Vayo that I am willing to do what I have done in the past - go into my own personal resources to relieve The Gazette and Daily of an expense it can hardly afford on its own.
>
> If you will give me some idea of what you think we ought to pay for this, I will let you know definitely whether or not it is a luxury which we can afford between us - The Gazette and Daily and J. W. Gitt.[29]

A payment of $30 per article was finally settled on between Gitt and Kirchwey, with Gitt noting: "I would prefer to have them short. On that basis once a week would be preferable."[30] The Spanish minister-in-exile continued writing for The Gazette and Daily for the next twenty years, long after he had moved his home from New York to Paris.[31]

Another writer who received recognition because she wrote about the total change of government within a country was Anna Louise Strong, a Seattle clergyman's daughter who had gone to Russia for the Quakers during the post-revolutionary famine. She stayed on and became the country's staunchest defender writing in English. Strong was ousted as an American spy in early 1949, a charge for which the Soviets would apologize six years later.[32] She also had spent years in China and became a friend of

Mao Tse-tung. In 1949 she was in the United States promoting that changing nation's recognition by the United Nations through speaking engagements and articles. She sent a copy of her new book, The Chinese Conquer China, to Gitt and asked him to set up a lecture for her in York.[33] There is no record of Gitt's response.

By the summer of 1950 Strong was writing to him about her new pamphlet, Inside North Korea, "covering my trip in 1947 as the only American correspondent who visited the northern zone since the defeat of Japan."[34] Gitt replied, "I would like a few articles on Korea from you."[35] He said nothing about payment so Strong reminded him in a letter just two weeks later, after sending him five articles from her forthcoming pamphlet (to be syndicated internationally by Reuters): "Do you pay anything for these? You once said $15 an article, I believe. Use them anyway but I really am earning almost nothing now."[36] Again, there is no record of a reply. In his book on the National Guardian, for which Strong wrote for twenty years, Aronson described her as "a formidable, dedicated woman who commanded everyone to drop what he was doing and concentrate on what Anna Louise was doing."[37]

Sometimes Gitt received letters from American journalists abroad wanting to send him stories they felt would be unacceptable elsewhere. Stanley Karnow, a year out of Harvard and writing for a Connecticut paper, wrote to Gitt in September, 1948, saying he had run into Don Matchan in

Paris and learned about The Gazette and Daily. "I feel very strongly that the small independent newspaper, the only place where real press freedom exists, should be strengthened to counteract the overwhelming stereotype of opinion that is fostered and fattened by the modern big business of journalism."[38] Gitt's reply agreed with that statement, but again cautioned that he could not pay much "for the special stuff that you offer."[39] Subsequent letters from Karnow cut his fee per article from $10 to $5 and noted that he also was writing for the National Guardian.[40]

Earlier in 1948, a subscription to The Gazette and Daily was accepted as payment for articles by the Reuters' correspondent in Belgrade, who also had been told about the Gazette by Matchan. Peter Furst said he was writing Gitt in an attempt "to get rid of the frustrations inherent in a correspondent's work these days. . . . What I have been looking for for some time is an outlet for those stories which I must today pass by, or cut down to a couple of cabled lines, for obvious reasons." He offered "volunteer coverage" of "the kind of stories PM once used to run in the good old days." (Furst, an American, was on PM in 1942-43, before going into the Army and joining Stars and Stripes.)[41]

The owner of The Gazette and Daily also wrote letters to be used as press credentials for American journalists traveling to Europe. One of the most detailed was a letter

for Louis Adamic, written by Gitt in November, 1948, just after the Presidential election. Addressed "to whom it may concern," a copy of the letter was sent to the U.S. Department of State's passport division. It read:

> This is to certify that during his forthcoming trip to Europe Mr. Louis Adamic is accredited as a correspondent of The Gazette and Daily.
>
> As editor-publisher of The Gazette and Daily I wish Mr. Adamic to visit several countries and western and eastern Europe and, if he can manage, the new State of Israel. I am personally eager to publish his articles from these countries, and most particularly from eastern Europe.
>
> I expect that his articles will be a contribution to our understanding of the aspiration of the peoples and governments of countries like Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Albania, Rumania and Bulgaria. I hope Mr. Adamic's pieces will help us gain an insight into the Cominform-Yugoslav dispute.
>
> I hope Mr. Adamic will be able to get into the Soviet Union. I am most anxious to get material for our paper which will become part of the influence toward peace, and I feel Mr. Adamic will send us such material.
>
> I have known Mr. Adamic for some years and have every confidence in his ability, his integrity and his Americanism.[42]

Earlier in 1948, Gitt had issued press credentials for Johannes Steel, saying he was "authorized to act as special correspondent for The Gazette and Daily during his European trip in 1948."[43] In the summer of 1950 Gitt wrote a letter to the press attache of the Russian Embassy in Washington for I. F. Stone, who was going to Europe to attend several peace meetings. "In the course of his trip it would be

invaluable at this time for him to spend three or four weeks in the Soviet Union," Gitt said, noting that Stone would be writing for The Gazette and Daily and The New York Daily Compass.[44]

Because of The Gazette and Daily's reputation as a progressive newspaper, it remains speculative how much the press credentials issued by Gitt added to the acceptance of those journalists in countries closely allied with United States foreign policy. That the letters did aid their bearers in countries considered "behind the iron curtain" by the American government, however, is indisputable. A thank-you letter Gitt received in late 1949 upheld that position. Mark P. Hyde, active in the National Wallace for President Committee's Washington office, returned the press credentials Gitt had issued him for a trip to Europe (Poland, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, France and Russia) in connection with his program for Progressive Party work with church bodies.[45] Hyde reported: "This served me well in the East-Europe Peoples' Republics - although I fear it did not enhance my respectability in the U.S. embassies and legations of those countries (that and the National Guardian and Churchman)."[46]

J. W. Gitt continually made the effort to obtain material for his newspaper's second-editorial page which more than likely would not be accepted by many other commercial newspapers. As noted in his letter to Alden Todd, he saw the centerfold as two pages of "editorial

comment where opinions are set forth; where we attempt to present a liberal viewpoint and to interpret the news." Articles on the second-editorial page, in contrast to news stories, always were by-lined because Gitt considered them to be "editorial in content." For these articles he paid as high as $30 to the individual writer (double that in the paper's last decade). For the articles from the liberal wire services, such as Federated Press, he paid a weekly or monthly fee. It is not discernible from Gitt's correspondence how much the second-editorial page cost him. What is clear is that he felt it was worth the effort and money to build it up and keep it going. Also, it is not known how many York Countians read those articles. But enough of them sent in "Letters to the Editor," a column appearing on the same page, which often expressed viewpoints in direct opposition to the material printed above.

The left-hand page of the centerfold contained two column-length editorials. The one on the far left under the masthead was written by Gitt, or later Higgins, and usually commented on national or international issues. The editorial on the far right was locally oriented, written by the city editor or, later, Charles M. Gitt. The top half of the middle two columns was devoted to Drew Pearson's nationally syndicated column "Washington Merry-Go-Round." The centerfold had four columns per page instead of the five on the news pages. Underneath Pearson was "News from the Past," a locally oriented round-up of

"old news" devised to draw York County readers to the editorial pages. Those two pages, except the two local features, were the ones Gitt was often asked to reproduce and distribute nationally as a weekly. They were the original idea behind the National Gazette.

NOTES

[1] Nat Hentoff, "The Father of Some of Us All," The Village Voice, 29 March 1973, p. 27. (The column was a tribute to George Seldes.)

[2] JWG, 3 March 1945.

[3] JWG, 8 March 1945.

[4] JWG, 1 August 1946.

[5] JWG, 7 August 1946.

[6] JWG, 8 August 1946.

[7] JWG, 10 August 1946.

[8] JWG, 27 January 1949.

[9] JWG, 1 and 7 February 1949.

[10] JWG, 14 September 1949.

[11] JWG, 2 May 1951.

[12] JWG, 7 December 1950.

[13] JWG, 19 December 1950.

[14] JWG, 12 January 1949.

[15] JWG, 18 January 1949.

[16] JWG, 18 November 1949.

[17] JWG, 15 and 23 March, 13 and 14 April 1950.

[18] JWG, 18 April 1950.

[19] JWG, 19 April 1950.

[20] JWG, 20 April 1950.

[21] JWG, 6 July 1950.

[22] JWG, 11 July 1950.

[23] JWG, 23 July 1950.

[24] JWG, 10, 11, 12 July 1950. (Lattimore, a professor at Johns Hopkins University, was in Afghanistan on a mission for the United Nations when charges were made against him.)

[25] JWG, 15 July 1950.

[26] JWG, 17, 24, 25 July 1950.

[27] Interview, London, England, 15 July 1976.

[28] JWG, 2 December 1949.

[29] JWG, 6 December 1949.

[30] JWG, 19 December 1949.

[31] JWG, 29 December 1949. (Del Vayo's autobiography, The Last Optimist: A Spanish Diplomat Tells His Story was published in 1950.)

[32] See several references to Strong in Belfrage and Aronson, Something to Guard; also Strong's autobiography, I Change Worlds, first published in 1934 and reprinted in 1979 by The Seal Press in Seattle. Strong continued to write until her death in 1970 at age 89.

[33] JWG, 14 December 1949.

[34] JWG, undated but undoubtedly July 1950.

[35] JWG, 28 August 1950.

[36] JWG, 12 August 1950. (Also see 1 and 28 August, 6 November 1950.)

[37] Belfrage and Aronson, Something to Guard, p. 87. (In the summer of 1948, Strong tried to talk Gitt into printing a condensation of her China book in pamphlet form on the Gazette's presses. She even visited him in Hanover about the matter. Gitt kept insisting, "We do not have the machine capacity for putting it out with The Gazette and Daily and a number of other things we are committed to this summer." He meant, of course, material for the Wallace campaign and the National Gazette, about which Strong commented, "People in New York are crazy to get that paper and can't find it anywhere. The Wallace Committee never heard of it." [See JWG, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16 August 1948.] By

fall she was back in Moscow and writing to Gitt, "Drop me a line at above address to confirm your wish for about one story per week." [JWG, 24 October 1948.])

[38] JWG, 8 September 1948.

[39] JWG, 16 September 1948.

[40] JWG, 18 and 29 September, 27 and 30 October 1948.

[41] JWG, 19 March 1948.

[42] JWG, 11 November 1948.

[43] JWG, 22 April 1948. (Also see 13, 15, 19, 20 April.)

[44] JWG, 10 July 1950.

[45] JWG, 19 January 1949. (Also see 25 and 28 January.)

[46] JWG, 26 November 1949.

Chapter VIII

No Competition for "Wonder Bread Journalism"

So intertwined were Josiah W. Gitt's political beliefs with the nature of the man that he often felt compelled to express his concerns in the public arena far outside the rather limited confines of York County. He set forth those beliefs in his correspondence with both public figures and "the common man," hoping that social change for the good of all would result. Yet it was J. W. Gitt's newspaper from which he was inseparable; The Gazette and Daily was indeed his "voice," his "alter ego," as Higgins described it. The publisher's avowed modesty might cause him to decline speaking invitations, but he always was quick to ensure recognition for his newspaper whenever he thought it was due.

"I understand, of course, that The Gazette and Daily is only a little paper in a small community and we cannot expect to be noticed much. Our influence is too limited for that," Gitt wrote in January, 1949, to Victor Weingarten, the associate editor of In Fact.[1] Weingarten had apologized to Gitt for omitting the name of The Gazette and Daily from a list of papers which supported national

health legislation,[2] after receiving a letter from the York publisher pointing out the omission. Gitt said that his paper had "agitated for it [national health] consistently and persistently." He concluded his letter almost apologetically, yet with the self-assurance that comes from a profound belief in one's own point of view: "I can hardly imagine myself writing this letter, since I assure you that we have never tried to seek publicity, but it hurts a little bit that In Fact omitted us from a list of decent newspapers in respect to the national health program, in view of our long record."[3]

It cannot be disputed that throughout Gitt's ownership of The Gazette and Daily, the newspaper had an admirable record of publishing information which he felt would benefit its readers. The degree to which Gitt and his newspaper were actually influential in making changes in public policy remains debatable, although some laudable results are directly traceable to Gazette "campaigns." A former city editor of the paper, Fred Stabley, recalled that the newspaper was instrumental in promoting the adoption of a system of one-way streets for the colonial town of narrow thoroughfares.[4] Editorials and news stories in the Gazette also helped to integrate the city's public swimming pool in the late 1950s, after the city had closed it to avoid integration. The paper also acted as the watchdog of local governing officials and the police department. And, it kept its readers informed about policies made in Washington

which would eventually affect their lives.

Gitt himself had definite views about the influence of The Gazette and Daily, which he always considered to be a small town newspaper. At the same time he realized its uniqueness. An informal questionnaire from Ernest Pendrell of Philadelphia in 1945, asked for a statement on "the role of small town papers in their own communities--with any examples you think important."[5] Gitt replied:

> Just what you mean by this question is not too clear to me. If you mean what influence do we have locally, my answer would be that it is considerable, and that we have built up a strong liberal sentiment in the territory through which we circulate. The local Democratic party is quite liberal and it is the dominant party in this community. Without the influence of The Gazette and Daily I do not believe the local Democratic party would be really liberal.[6]

Pendrell also asked Gitt: "Is it true that small town newspapers influence national opinion? Or is it true that small papers follow in the wake of the large wire services and the big city dailies? Could you give concrete examples to illustrate whichever is your viewpoint?"[7] Gitt replied:

> I do not believe that small town newspapers have any considerable influence on national opinion. For lack of better facilities we are compelled to depend upon the large wire services pretty much and even the most liberal of us are handicapped very much by our inability to obtain what I would call thoroughly unbiased news. I can give you no concrete examples to illustrate my viewpoint. The Gazette and Daily has been a liberal newspaper for many years and has made an honest effort to print all the news but I do not believe we have had any influence that amounts to anything on national opinion. In fact, George Seldes and Selden Menefee, in his book Assignment U. S. A.,

> are about the only two persons outside of this community who ever seemed to realize that The Gazette and Daily exists.[8]

Gitt wrote that statement in March, 1945, about four months after his unsuccessful bid for election to the United States Congress on the Democratic ticket. The next year he was to become active in the Progressive Citizens of America. It could be concluded that Gitt's belief in the limitations of newspapers the size and location of The Gazette and Daily led him to take a more active role in national affairs than he might have done had he been the publisher of a large metropolitan daily.

The Gazette and Daily really began receiving national attention outside liberal journalistic circles, however, when it won the N. W. Ayer award as the best looking tabloid newspaper in the United States, regardless of circulation. It won that award, called "honorable mention" because it was in the tabloid-only category, four years in a row, 1946-1949, and in 1960. Moreover, The Gazette and Daily's edition published on March 12, 1958, won the Ayer Cup, the all-class first prize for "excellence in typography, make-up and printing." It was the only tabloid ever to win that distinction. Gitt received many requests from newspaper publishers all over the country wanting to see a copy of his paper so they could get some ideas from it.[9]

Sometimes these requests for sample copies must have given the York publisher a chuckle. In 1949, for example, he received a congratulatory letter from The News, "New York's Picture Newspaper." George E. Donnelly, assistant business manager, said, "Our production men at The News are constantly striving to improve the appearance of our paper and it occurred to me that perhaps we could learn a great deal by studying your paper."[10] Gitt always complied with these requests, but he rarely received any comments afterwards about his paper's editorial content, which must have shocked some of the congratulators. Others who sent him congratulations for the Ayer awards did so because they agreed with his editorial philosophy and felt the trophies provided the York paper with well-deserved national recognition.

In 1948, The Gazette and Daily's third consecutive Ayer award for tabloids took second place as a subject of publicity to its endorsement of Henry Wallace for President. The trade magazine Editor & Publisher carried an article in its October 9, 1948, issue titled, "Gitt Ignores 'Radical' Label, Backs Wallace," with the tagline, "Sentimentalist in York, Pa." The author, Carle Hodge, wrote Gitt that he had "never . . . enjoyed more the doing of a story."[11] Gitt returned the compliment with "I think you did a swell job" and added, "I am rather amazed that Editor & Publisher printed it."[12]

Gitt was correct in his assumption that the more conservative press usually ignored his progressive newspaper, unless forced to take note of it because of some newsworthy event. Sometimes even then the conservative media would not be interested in giving publicity to The Gazette and Daily. Such turned out to be the case with a story on the York paper approved by The American Mercury in the fall of 1948. It was to be written by Sidney Feldman, free-lance writer and editor of Safety, a publication of the Greater New York Safety Council. He wrote to Gitt on October 24, 1948, that the magazine had given approval to his query about an article on The Gazette and Daily.[13] Again, Gitt expressed his surprise:

> I am rather amazed that The American Mercury okayed an article about me and the York Gazette and Daily, unless they want me torn apart. All of which, of course, is part of the game, to which I do not particularly object. At any rate I will do everything I can to co-operate with you. [14]

Gitt was right, for by the following March he had a letter from Feldman saying: "As you may well have gathered by now, The American Mercury nixed the piece I wrote about you. That, after holding on to the thing for about two months and stalling me from time to time."[15] A month later, Feldman sent Gitt congratulations on his fourth Ayer award and noted that his article also had been turned down by two other magazines, Harper's and American Monthly.[16] Gitt's reply expressed his attitude toward publicity: "Sorry that

you have not been able to sell your article, not so much for my sake as for yours. Publicity never did particularly interest me, and that is correct."[17]

In April, 1948, when the Ayer awards were announced, Newsweek ran a two-column story in its "Press" section titled "Gazette With an Ayer." The opening was similar to the one on Newsweek's 1965 story about The Gazette and Daily (see "Introduction"):

> By plenty of journalistic precedent, The York (Pa.) Gazette and Daily should be a flop. Scrappily independent, (once it supported Herbert Hoover; now it is backing Henry Wallace for President), The Gazette and Daily currently leans to the left of most of its readers. Yet in normally Republican York, it leads the Republican afternoon Dispatch by about 2,000 in circulation (29,684 to 27,268). A tabloid, it stoops to none of the tricks on which other tabloids have grown fat and saucy; it prints few comics, no cheesecake, and not many other pictures, goes lightly on crime and sex, doesn't whoop up local trivia at the expense of national and world news, and won't write down to its readers.[18]

Then the Newsweek article gave a run-down on how that award-winning newspaper got put together for decades:

> Six mornings a week The Gazette and Daily goes to press in a neat two-story plant on East King Street, with little or no attention paid to the shibboleths of make-up. Composing Room Foreman Paul Zarfoss rarely has a page dummy to tell him where stories go. Under tidy two- and three-line headlines, Gazette and Daily stories carry a bank (sub-headlines in smaller type) which must summarize the story: hence, a Gazette and Daily bank may run four lines deep, or it may run ten. In the back room, the paper sort of falls into page forms like a Chinese puzzle.[19]

Obviously impressed, Newsweek rounded out its praise: "It is as crammed with news as The New York Times. But the Gazette and Daily is a tighter-edited, sprightlier package." As well as news on the front page, The Gazette and Daily printed an editorial cartoon by its crusading cartoonist, Walt Partymiller--also a unique feature for a newspaper of that size.

The York publisher also received several queries from persons wanting to include his views in their surveys or to do content analyses of The Gazette and Daily. Often those requests came from graduate students writing theses or dissertations. One such letter was written by Warren Breen, who was completing a doctorate in sociology at Columbia University under Professor P. F. Lazersfeld, "a leading methodologist in communications research." Breen wanted Gitt's permission to interview "several members of your staff on matters relating to the production of the news columns." He assured Gitt that "the scientific method will be employed throughout, as far as I am able; in other words, this is not to be anything representing the 'muckraking' school."[20] Gitt told Breen he would be "treated with courtesy and given every opportunity to find out how The Gazette and Daily runs" on his visit to York. But the student's other comment made Gitt bristle:

> So far as your assurance against muck raking is concerned, it does not particularly interest me. We are rather on the muck raking side ourselves and are perfectly willing that you should take us apart if in your opinion the facts warrant it. We have nothing

to hide and we are not afraid of anything."[21]

As much as Gitt disavowed publicity, he must have been pleased whenever he received letters praising his newspaper from persons who understood and appreciated its political viewpoint. Some of those letters came from Europe, where progressives often learned about The Gazette and Daily from American journalists traveling abroad. In May, 1948, Gitt received a letter from a man in Copenhagen who wanted several copies of the York paper for a display he was organizing for "the biggest bookshop in Denmark." The display was to be an exhibition of periodicals, magazines and newspapers from "the other America." Knud Erik Svendsen took the initiative to set up the display, he said, because "the ordinary readers in Denmark only read the most reactionary American newspapers and magazines."[22] Gitt sent Svendsen several copies of his paper and offered to continue sending it to him "regularly for nothing if you wish." But he cautioned: "Remember that we print a comparatively small city daily, which must specialize on local news in order to succeed, as well as news of national and international significance." He also offered to send a list of other publications which he felt should be included in such an exhibition.[23] Svendsen replied that The Gazette and Daily "contains much information I do not get elsewhere. . . . Thanks for sending me your fine newspaper, which really lives up to its slogan."[24]

Often the letters of highest praise and sheer gratefulness for The Gazette and Daily were written to Gitt by those progressive Americans living in parts of the country fairly isolated from urban areas where more like-minded citizens could be found. One of the most detailed letters of appreciation arrived in September, 1948, postmarked "Valley City, N. D." A year after his own progressive newspaper had been closed down by that town's conservative business interests, Don C. Matchan wrote:

> I wonder if you know how much the G&D means to people, J. W.? It is a ritual at our house. Always after the dishes are done we stretch out in chair and studio couch, start from page one and get wise to what's been happening. It's a tonic, sir, and that's an understatement! So many stories that do not appear in other papers or on the air, important ones. And Walt's cartoons, wonderful. . . . Your punchy, meaty editorials, the special features on the inside pages (Gerry calls them the gem pages). It only takes two days for us to get it. It's the first time I've ever really had a chance to read it, and I think it's tops from every angle. The children's page is grand for the kids; your coverage of local events from a to zet, yes, you can be proud of it, J.W., and of your staff. I'm looking forward to Harry's column again, he writes some crackerjacks and no fooling.[25]

Not all letters of praise for J. W. Gitt and his newspaper came from afar. Some native Yorkers declared that reading The Gazette and Daily every morning was their political education and fostered a progressive viewpoint. In May, 1950, Gitt received a letter from Earl Kiehl, a long-time labor organizer in York, to say the newspaper had influenced him to vote for Wallace instead of Truman in the

1948 election.[26] However, a proportionately larger number of Yorkers disagreed vehemently with the politics of The Gazette and Daily but read it for all the local and county news it printed--and because it gave them something to argue about.[27]

When he sold the newspaper in 1970, Gitt received letters expressing sadness at its demise from readers from New York City to Los Angeles and many places in between. But only a couple of notes came from York residents who were not former employees of friends of the family. A woman whose husband was a former Dallastown, York County, resident wrote from Taunton, Mass.:

> We had hoped that the new York Record would carry on in your tradition, but as we should have realized, you and your Gazette and Daily can never be replaced. We used to save the center section and pass it around to our friends in college, and later on with friends at work. Well, the center section we admired so much is gone, and everything else in the new paper is just "OK" but a little colorless and not quite the same. We probably won't renew, even though we like to keep up with local news. [28]

Gitt would not let on that he was bothered by so few expressions of condolence from York County readers. He said, "I just tried to do my best. But I like what the Dutch baker said when the folks wouldn't eat his bread, 'Apparently, it was none too good.'"[29] That quote appearing in an article in The Nation was read by a New York writer who had been active in the Progressive Party campaign of 1948. Daniel S. Gillmor wrote Gitt in November, 1970:

> I have just read Jim Higgins' obit of The Gazette & Daily, including the last line quoting your story of the Dutch baker. Jess, the loaf you baked all these years was too rich for their blood, too whole the wheat, too lacking in fake additives, and assorted adulterants. How could you expect to compete with Wonder Bread journalism? Hell, you wouldn't have tried. [30]

Were J. W. Gitt and his newspaper "a voice in the wilderness"? No, not as long as they could draw forth a letter such as the one from M. Helen Gladfelter, of Hungerford, Pa., a small town south of York almost on the Maryland line. She wrote on October 26, 1970:

> May these few words of thankfulness and appreciation of your years of service and love to the people of York County reach you.
>
> Truly the "Pen is Mightier Than the Sword." That's what papers are for with editors to be at the helm.
>
> Thank you for your moral ethics and then the strength to abide by and follow through. The public rarely admires or condones one who has moral ethics and then follows through; they yearn for the one that follows the pack.
>
> However, one must live with themselves and it's a feeling of satisfaction to know in your heart you've done the right thing.
>
> May you bask in the feeling of having done a job sincerely and forthrightly.[31]

The York publisher's sincerity and forthrightness cannot be questioned, particularly during the years and concerning the issues in the post-World War II decade. An old friend of Gitt's, Abraham D. Cohn, wrote:

> J. W. Gitt was the answer to what ails this nation today. His was the spirit and inspiration that would keep America strong and healthy today. His code of living was only surpassed by his rugged individualism, always fighting for what he thought was right at a great cost to his personal fortune. Here was a man--a truly great American.[32]

J. W. Gitt did not operate his newspaper to make money. He ran it for the purpose of having a voice in the community of York and although he never specifically said so except in his desire for a National Gazette, in the country which he loved. For there can be no doubt about that, "Jess" Gitt did love the United States of America and the ideals on which it was founded--justice, equality, freedom. Freedom of speech and freedom of the press--Gitt was an absolutist as far as the First Amendment was concerned. "Congress shall make no law. . ." period.

In that decade which came to be known as "the fearful fifties," Gitt exercised his right to its fullest extent. For him, and for other astute Americans, that decade began as soon as World War II ended, with the United States having to adjust from a prosperous war-time economy to a continued position of power in a peaceful world. Thus began the "cold war" with the American government maintaining a foreign policy which would ensure dominance over its one obvious challenger, Russia. Americans like Gitt who interpreted the word "peace" to also mean an ending of hostilities worked to maintain a more hospitable co-existence with that nation whose political system

differed from our own.

J. W. Gitt exercised his right of free speech and free press throughout that cold war decade directly after World War II. The foundation for his belief in that right was his ideology as a progressive democrat. From that position he tried to influence public policy both in York through his newspaper and on a national scale through his correspondence with prominent leaders of the time. Through those two forces, Gitt declared his ideas about such topics as the dangers of atomic energy, the right to freedom of thought and association during the "McCarthy era," and the need for a progressive candidate to lead the country.

His was a positive "voice in the wilderness"--one full of hope and promise. Gitt hoped the public would hear his voice and return to what he believed to be the ideals of Jeffersonian democracy. That a relatively small number heeded his cry should be no reason for voices like Josiah William Gitt's to cease.

NOTES

[1] JWG, 13 January 1949.

[2] JWG, 10 January 1949.

[3] JWG, 4 January 1949.

[4] Interview with Fred Stabley, East Lansing, Mich., 9 August 1977. Stabley was city editor at the York paper from 1945 to 1947, when he went to Michigan State University where he has been the director of sports information.

[5] JWG, 3 March 1945.

[6] JWG, 8 March 1945.

[7] JWG, 3 March 1945.

[8] JWG, 8 March 1945.

[9] From the awards themselves in Gitt's personal papers, news stories about them in The Gazette and Daily, and a letter from F. Bradley Lynch, vice president, corporate communications, N. W. Ayer, 19 February 1980.

[10] JWG, 26 April 1949.

[11] JWG, 8 October 1948.

[12] JWG, 9 October 1948.

[13] JWG, 24 October 1948.

[14] JWG, 27 October 1948.

[15] JWG, 15 March 1949.

[16] JWG, 25 April 1949.

[17] JWG, 30 April 1949.

[18] "Gazette With an Ayer," Newsweek, 12 April 1948, p. 57. (The support of Hoover refers to the 1928 campaign when Gitt refused to endorse the Democrat Al Smith.)

[19] Ibid.

[20] JWG, 12 June 1949.

[21] JWG, 16 June 1949.

[22] JWG, 16 May 1948.

[23] JWG, 14 May 1948.

[24] JWG, 27 June 1948.

[25] JWG, 9 September 1948. (Harry Sharkey's column about local politics on the editorial page was titled "Fact & Fancy." Shortly after Matchan's letter, Sharkey and two Gazette reporters went to Jamestown, N.Y., to work on the union-owned Jamestown Sun--Sharkey as editor and publisher, Phil Gordon as managing editor, and Saul Miller as news editor.)

[26] JWG, 19 May 1950.

[27] A former carrier boy for The Gazette and Daily, now a student at Pennsylvania State University, told this researcher that his parents and their friends missed the paper because "it was a newspaper." On the other hand, the librarian at the Historical Society of York County, Landon Chas. Reisinger, when asked if he thought Yorkers missed the paper, replied, "No, they're glad to be rid of it." Then he began to rail against all the "outsiders" who came to work for the paper as reporters. Otherwise, he was quite helpful and even photocopied entire issues of the National Gazette and Common Sense at a small fee for this researcher.

[28] JWG, 17 November 1970.

[29] James Higgins, "Jess Gitt's Gazette," The Nation, 16 November 1970, p. 497.

[30] JWG, 17 November 1970.

[31] JWG, 26 October, 1970.

[32] Letter from Abraham D. Cohn, executive deputy for administration, Office of Attorney General, Harrisburg, Pa., 30 January 1979.

APPENDIX

Former Gazette Reporters Talk About "That Marvelous Voice"

"Probably I ought to add that representing The G and D is . . . what the hell, you know what I mean," concluded a letter from Jim Higgins to Josh, Charles M. Gitt, from Los Angeles while covering Henry Wallace's speaking tour in May, 1949.[1]

* * * * *

Journalists flocked from all over the United States to work on the editorial staff of The Gazette and Daily. Sometimes they came from more prestigious positions, even after the publisher had warned them about the limitations in working for a small-town newspaper. One of those was David Wesley, who relinquished his post as a United Nations correspondent after Gitt wrote to him in September, 1951:

> I still think you are wrong and that you ought not to bury yourself at The Gazette and Daily. In fact, I hereby seriously and earnestly and honestly advise you not to do it. I do not believe that the prospects here would make it wise for you to embark on this venture and I mean it. To become an ordinary reporter - to go through that grind for any considerable time - is something that I cannot conceive that you would be happy about doing, however you may feel about it at the moment.
>
> However, if you are determined to come and honestly believe that you would rather do that than

> find something else, you can have the job and report as soon as you desire.[2]

Wesley did come to York, but he did not remain "an ordinary reporter" for long. For over a dozen years, until his departure for California in 1965, he was the editor of The Gazette and Daily's second-editorial page. When Gitt sold his newspaper in 1970, Wesley wrote him:

> I am deeply saddened. The best and most productive years of my life were spent at 31 East King. The extinguishment of that light throws a long and ominous shadow across the land. I salute you for keeping it ablaze for so long. You know how sorry I was to leave its glow and warmth.[3]

Sometimes journalists came to the Gazette directly from journalism school, seeking professional experience. Gitt warned a young job applicant in 1947: "Ordinarily, we find that school of journalism graduates are not particularly desirable from our viewpoint. Manifestly, the schools of journalism are bound to train their students for the average newspaper. The Gazette and Daily is not an average newspaper."[4]

There was one school of journalism, however, which was considered by Gitt to be above average training for a future journalist. That was the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University. The chairman of the news-editorial sequence was Professor Curtis D. MacDougall. He also was chairman of the Progressive Party for the state of Illinois and its candidate for the United States Senate in

1948.[5] From that time on, a succession of Northwestern journalism graduates, especially those who had completed master's degrees under MacDougall's tutelage, went to work on the editorial staff of The Gazette and Daily. Of course, these were Medill graduates who also espoused political beliefs similar to those of their mentor and the York publisher.

The first Northwestern graduate to apply for a job on Gitt's newspaper, in April, 1948, was Robert H. Gildart. He had been an instructor for three years at Medill School of Journalism, after obtaining his master's degree there, but lacked sufficient professional newspaper experience. MacDougall's letter of reference to Gitt said: "The boy's political views are liberal. In fact, they're almost identical to mine. . . . Gildart has been active in our local chapter of the Progressive Citizens of America. . . . I gather that yours is one of the few papers in the country where such political views do not automatically operate against a person today."[6]

Gitt's reply to MacDougall stressed his desire to build up a staff of reporters and editors who would stay at the paper for several years. He also foresaw future financial problems because of The Gazette and Daily's political stance.[7] After being interviewed in York, Gildart wrote Gitt on May 5, 1948, that the $67 weekly salary for the six-week trial period would be "agreeable."[8] On May 10, Gitt wrote him: "You may have the job."[9]

Also on May 10, MacDougall wrote a letter to Gitt which made the York publisher wonder if he had made the right decision. The Northwestern professor said: "I am glad you have decided to take Gildart although today he threw a scare into me by 'wondering' whether we are all being 'used' by the Communists. When the red scare starts taking in persons like Gildart we really are in the final hour of fight."[10]

That comment provoked a response from Gitt, in a letter to Gildart, which is important because it underlines his knowledge of the red-baiting which he knew would increase once he began hiring staff members from the "outside" with similar ideas. Gitt's letter of May 12 read:

> I have been wondering since I wrote you offering you a job whether or not you thoroughly understand just what you are getting into.
>
> Do you know that I am the Chairman of the Progressive Party (Wallace party) in Pennsylvania? Do you realize that I am constantly accused of being a Communist, and of consorting with Communists and being used by them to further their ends? And that THE GAZETTE AND DAILY, of course, is put in the same category?
>
> Can you take it? Can you stand up under that kind of attack and still do a good job? Are you a hundred percent convinced that it is only a smoke screen for the purpose of blinding us to the realities of the situation?
>
> If your answer to these questions is not "yes" in your own mind without qualification you had better not come, both for your own sake and for ours, for you just simply could not do a good job on THE GAZETTE AND DAILY, however well you might be able to do on some other newspaper.

> I think you have a right to have this added. I am not a Communist or a Communist fronter; THE GAZETTE AND DAILY is not pro-Communist, Communist front or any other kind of Communist. We do our own thinking, come to our own conclusions, irrespective of pressure from the Right or Left or elsewhere, and we intend to continue to do this. We do not propose to be intimidated.
>
> I am merely writing you again so that you will understand exactly what the situation is. If you feel about these things like we do - all right - fine - come, the quicker the better.[11]

Gildart did go to The Gazette and Daily after writing to reassure his future employer: "I am sure I can take it, can stand up under the kind of attack you mention and do a good job, and I am 100 per cent convinced of the attack's smoke-screen characteristics." He also told Gitt, "I have a great deal of respect for your candor and courage."[12]

Gildart remained a reporter on the York paper until until early 1951 when he returned to his home state of Michigan and worked on a couple of small newspapers there. In the fall of 1956, he began teaching journalism at his alma mater, Albion College in Albion, Michigan, from whence he retired in 1980. In an interview, Gildart said he did vote for Henry Wallace in 1948. But he also resigned from the Progressive Party while living in Pennsylvania because he felt "it was being dominated by those too far left." He said the party in the East was "farther to the left" than the party he had known in Illinois.[13]

Another major problem in building The Gazette and Daily's editorial staff around out-of-towners was that they

probably would want to move on to a larger city newspaper, no matter how much their own beliefs politically coincided with The Gazette and Daily. Gitt was well aware of that and thus answered Ted Polumbaum, who inquired about a job shortly before his graduation from Yale University in the spring of 1948:

> I must be sure that you really want to work for us more than you want to do anything else, and that you intend to stay with us a reasonable time if we should take you on.
>
> Frankly, I would prefer to have someone who knows more about York County and this part of Pennsylvania. After all, we have to depend upon the local situation for our bread and butter. The little circulation that we have outside of York County is not enough to do more than flatter us a bit that there are people scattered throughout the nation who think our paper is worth reading.
>
> If you have an offer of a job in New York that appeals to you I would suggest that you take it. After all, you are a New York boy and might be a lot happier in that environment.
>
> However, we will be needing somebody pretty soon and if you really want to come here badly enough to make the sacrifices that might be necessary there will be an opening. Before we come to any definite decision, however, I would prefer to have another talk with you. I have been trying for a long time to build up an organization to carry on permanently and I ought to have some assurance that I am not picking up out-of-towners who may use us merely as a stepping stone to something better.[14]

Polumbaum remained at The Gazette and Daily for only sixteen months. He returned to Brooklyn in October, 1949, and wrote Gitt requesting a letter of reference be sent to Ted Thackrey, editor of the New York Compass. "All the

persons I've spoken to on that paper consider the Gazette to be a wonderful paper," Polumbaum said. "And I believe a recommendation from you would carry a great deal of weight with Thackrey, since you are the pacemaker and the most consistent figure in the field of honest and progressive journalism."[15]

Editorial staff build-up for The Gazette and Daily began in earnest after World War II. During the war the paper was run with a decreased staff, many of whom were young women from York and York County. Responsible for much of the hiring in those years directly after the war was the assistant editor, Harry E. Sharkey, a man of liberal political views but not as pro-Wallace as the paper's owner. Saul Miller, director of the department of publications at the AFL-CIO in Washington, D. C., was a reporter on the Gazette from October, 1945, through March, 1948. He described that time as "the formative period for the paper in its post-war years." And credited Sharkey with being "the key man in producing a magnificent newspaper."[16] Miller and Sharkey later worked together on the union-owned Jamestown, N.Y., Sun.

Another person to have a say in hiring reporters directly after the war was Fred W. Stabley, city editor from 1945-1947. He is now director of sports information at Michigan State University where he went after leaving The Gazette and Daily. Stabley had first worked at the

Gazette as a reporter from 1940-1942, leaving to work for the Associated Press in Baltimore. A 1937 graduate of Pennsylvania State University, Stabley said he was the first college graduate to be hired as a reporter on the Gazette. He also was from Dallastown, York County, so he understood the conservatism of most of the paper's readers. "I had a very high regard for J. W. Gitt," Stabley said in an interview. "He was a very sincere and intelligent man, a great scholar of socio-political matters. But part of the tradgedy was that he was in the worst milieu in which to spend his energy--old conservative, reactionary Pennsylvania Dutch York County."[17]

The Gitts did make an effort to build up the city-side staff with reporters who had roots in the community, or county. (The sports and county desks were generally composed of natives.) One Yorker they hired was Arthur W. Geiselman, Jr., who said, "When Josh hired me, [in 1951] there was an ad in the paper saying the Gazette wanted 'somebody local.' He never asked me any questions about ideology; he wanted local people."[18] For his reporting, Geiselman was awarded two national Heywood Broun Memorial Awards. He left The Gazette and Daily in 1964 to accept a Nieman Fellowship at Harvard. He later worked for the Baltimore Sun and now is with the Philadelphia Bulletin.

Carol Gable, a native of southern York County, Stewartstown, was one of the women hired on during World

War II to replace the men who had been drafted. She began at The Gazette and Daily in January, 1944, half a year out of college. She is still working for the York Daily Record, but wrote to this researcher: "The differences between then and now are vast, more like a century of change than the mere thirty-six I've been a newspaperwoman. The contrast between the Gitt operation and the current automation, with news treated like a packaged commodity, has to be experienced."[19]

Gable recalled her early reporting years on the Gazette: "It was strenuous, especially considering the pay, [her starting salary was $20 a week] but we were very much caught up in the paper's philosophy and anxious to do a good job in the face of the strong community disapproval of 'that man Gitt.' Officially, most police departments did not speak to us although some of us had a few friends within. The same situation prevailed with public officials: city hall was forever imposing news bans and ingenuity was needed then." She then went on to describe how working on The Gazette and Daily influenced her own political thinking:

> For me, it was the time of my real education in what makes the world go around. I have a conservative, if sometimes eccentric, family background and was from a small Methodist college which had done little to broaden my outlook. I am most grateful to have stumbled on that remarkable place and time.

> In course of time, I signed the Wallace petition and had my name published in the Dispatch. In McCarthy time, that branded one a dangerous radical. I remember sitting-in a restaurant at Duke and Princess to demand that blacks be served. This was before I had heard 'sit-in,' and certainly before blacks were so called. I was what you might call an amateur liberal, but enthusiastic.
>
> Everything in the paper was blamed by the public as the direct instigation of Mr. Gitt. This always amused me because he was so seldom with us, being either in Georgia or Arizona or Hanover, and when in residence at Hanover, around the paper only briefly and not every day. His views and wishes were relayed through the current favorite (that person changed over the years) and the rest of us tried to do what we thought he wanted. . . . Nevertheless, he achieved a remarkable degree of employee loyalty.
>
> It has been gratifying to have so many of our "campaigns" come to acceptance, and I will always arrive at my personal opinions in Gazette context. For instance, George Bush saying we can win a nuclear war lost me right there.[20]

Another native Yorker who began his journalistic career as a reporter at The Gazette and Daily was L. Dean Gladfelter, a copy editor on the national news desk of The New York Times for many years. "I developed as a news writer at the Gazette," Gladfelter said in an interview.[21] He said he went to the Gazette upon graduation from York High School in 1945 and stayed for ten years, taking time out to attend Pennsylvania State University. In 1955 he took a job with the Perth Amboy, N.J., News-Tribune, and a few years later went to the Times. He stressed the point that the Gazette's news stories were "not inaccurate," and elaborated what he meant. "The stories would be slanted,

but not colored. That simply meant there was a difference between what was emphasized and what was not."

Gladfelter also noted that he was a supporter of Henry Wallace. He believed, however, that most members of The Gazette and Daily's editorial staff who were native Yorkers or York Countians might have supported Wallace's right to be on the ballot but not his candidacy. Among the "outsiders" on staff it was a different story, Gladfelter said, but even then Wallace was not fully supported inside the voting booth.

"Most Gazette staffers among the outsiders were for Wallace, but a lot of them got cold feet and voted for Truman because they were afraid of Dewey," said David Lachenbruch, the reporter who covered the 1948 Progressive Party convention. "I don't know if Gitt really thought Wallace had a chance to win, but he kept saying so."[22] Lachenbruch went to the Gazette in November, 1947, from his post as public relations director of the Washington Committee of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare. He became assistant city editor and then wire editor before leaving in 1950. He is now editorial director of Television Digest in New York.

"It seems to me that the staff was no hotbed of Progressive Party people," said Louis F. Stone, I. F. Stone's brother, who worked on The Gazette and Daily from 1947 to 1953, as reporter, city editor, and managing

editor. Stone said he himself believed in Wallace and was a member of the Progressive Party "for its brief role in history." He was assigned by Gitt to cover the Republican national convention in 1948 but had little recollection of it thirty years later.[23]

"After the Wallace era came the McCarthy period," Stone continued. "The Gazette was firm in its liberalism and fought McCarthyism throughout--in all its vestiges--national and state. The paper drew adherents from all around the country. We were proud of our circulation outside of our marketing region." After leaving York, Stone worked on the Akron, Ohio, Beacon Journal and the Philadelphia Daily News. For the past twenty years he has worked in public relations in Philadelphia.

Another big political story in the early 1950s was recalled by the man Stone had assigned to be relief person in the wire-service room. "It was policy to give daily prominence to the war story from Korea," Robert J. Klein said. "The Gitts wished their readers to keep in mind that people, including Americans, were dying there. Editorial and op-ed columns tried to supply the unstated premise that they were dying in an unjust cause." Klein said his work in the wire room "consisted of making a careful selection of stories so that politically significant events sure to be back-paged in other papers would get proper play in ours, and stories we felt were being overplayed would get a

paragraph among the death notices and Christian Endeavor meetings."[24]

Now a senior editor at Money magazine in New York, Klein had gone to The Gazette and Daily in November, 1949, after a year of graduate work in modern history at the University of Chicago. He was a member of the American Newspaper Guild in New York and had read about the York paper in George Seldes' In Fact. He went to York for an interview with the new assistant editor, James Higgins, "who encouraged me but did not hire me," Klein recalled. After returning to New York, he sent Higgins dispatches from the second perjury trial of Alger Hiss then beginning at the federal courthouse in Foley Square. After a few weeks, Higgins hired Klein to fill the only vacancy, which turned out to be an unusual one for a non-York Countian of liberal persuasion. Klein was to be the Gazette's correspondent in Dillsburg, a small town about twenty miles northwest of York. He recalled his year-long county beat with affection:

> Dillsburg was a long way, culturally, from Foley Square. Instead of Alger Hiss, I wrote about pet flying squirrels, dead farmers, covered dish suppers and visiting evangelists. John Fortney, the county editor [for over twenty years], treated his correspondents with gentle kindness and respect. He fathered us and never failed to compliment us on our stories. While all around him reporters and editors dug for muck, John filled the paper day after day with the columns of his rural reporters. It was this vital trivia that kept the Gazette's loyal following in the county, where the paper outsold the afternoon Dispatch, maintaining a decent lead in the circulation

rivalry.[25]

The former Gazette reporters and editors were asked what influence they felt The Gazette and Daily had within its home circulation area. "The paper's influence was felt by stirring up the opinion of important people on city council," replied Lachenbruch.[26] Another former editorial staff member, from 1955 to 1958, agreed. "Public officials knew that they were being closely watched and could get by with nothing because the paper was looking over their shoulders," said Charles-Gene McDaniel. "Much of the paper's influence cannot be measured. It served as a super-ego, a conscience for the community (defined as county)."[27] McDaniel also noted that when he was on staff five of the fifteen city reporters held master's degrees from Medill School of Journalism, including himself. He left The Gazette and Daily after three years to go with the Associated Press in Chicago. Since summer 1979, he has been director of the journalism program at Roosevelt University in Chicago.

Comments from former Gazette staff members were not all praise, but even the criticism was tempered in the end with appreciation for the paper and its owner. For example, Stabley said that when he returned to the paper as city editor in 1945, "Gitt wanted constant coverage and hammering on the issues. I differed -- I believed in comprehensive news coverage, not just police, labor,

politics. I always felt the Gazette defeated itself by being so constantly negative, so anti-police for instance. What bothered me was there was not always an effort made to get both sides. But it was up to the reporters to get both sides, and when they did, the Gazette printed them." He labeled Gazette policy "the shotgun approach, especially in that conservative community." But then he went on to praise the paper's owner: "Gitt and the Gazette were far ahead of their time, especially with ecological issues."[28]

An area in which the Gazette always made it a point to print both sides of the issue, however, was labor news. "The paper was a particular anathema to corporate interests because of its pro-labor policies," said McDaniel, the Gazette's labor reporter. "The reason for the ire was that we always got both sides of the story during labor negotiations and strikes. Most often, the company spokesperson was unavailable for comment or unwilling to comment, so the stories always had a paragraph to that effect to demonstrate that we tried to present a balanced account. But that paragraph always made the company look bad, a lesson most did not learn."[29] McDaniel also pointed out that The Gazette and Daily was "pro-labor until it was taken to the bargaining table."

The topic of Guild negotiations brought out the strongest criticism of Gitt from his former reporters. Lachenbruch, who had been chairman of the American Newspaper Guild unit at the paper, said that every time

their contract came up for re-negotiation Gitt accused the Guild of "cash registeritis." He added, "There was never any sense to the negotiations until Higgins crossed over to the other side."[30] (That was when Higgins became assistant editor, a management position. After graduating from Harvard in 1938, he had worked as a shipyard sheetmetal worker and later joined the international staff of the CIO Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers of America.)

Although J. W. Gitt proved to be the "stubborn Dutchman" he proclaimed himself to be when it came to Guild negotiations, there is also evidence that he enjoyed them. Gene Gilmore, a reporter and wire editor at the Gazette from 1949 to 1957, and also chairman of the Gazette unit, recounted one negotiating session:

> I recall one year when the Guild contract expired October 1 and J. W., through Josh, refused to sign a contract. He wanted us to go out of business for three months and sign a contract dated January 1. The arrogance of this so incensed us that we voted to strike. Oh, yes, the Gitts had said the contract should be extended because we were going to get a nice Christmas bonus. It occurred to me that if the bonus were big enough maybe we could soothe everything. So I asked J. W. in a negotiating session if he could gurantee a minimum bonus. He grinned and said, 'Oh, $30.' Josh leaped from his seat and expressed outrage over this disclosure. We in the Guild figured the $30 would come to about a $3 raise for the remaining weeks of the year so we accepted. The bonus turned out to be $220, equal to about $500 today, and we were all giddy.[31]

Gilmore also noted, almost in defense of his employers, "The Gitts' claim that they made no money apparently was

true." He said one year they allowed a Guildsman from Philadelphia, on hand for the negotiations, to see the Gazette accounting books. He disclosed that the paper was making about $7,000 a year profit, which had been the average for the past several years.

Gilmore left The Gazette and Daily to teach journalism at Syracuse University and then at the University of Illinois, Urbana, where he is now. As much as he criticized Gitt's tough stance in Guild negotiations, he praised the freedom he was allowed to carry out his job on that paper:

> It is easy to recall the eccentricities of J. W. and be critical. There were exasperations, all right, but I know in that period I would have been miserable any other place. I edited the wire news for seven years and I never felt I had to compromise in any way. The night that AP filed a long, long Senate report on McCarthy Lou Stone jumped the paper four pages so we could get it all in. Except for The New York Times I'll bet no paper in the country ran it all. I have worked summers on a lot of papers since and generally have enjoyed the work--but I'm sure on most of them one summer is enough. I realize, however, that I'm more tolerant of compromise than I was twenty-five years ago.[32]

The freedom to practice one's profession to the fullest extent on The Gazette and Daily was mentioned by several of its former reporters. Lachenbruch described his three years there as "unquestioningly the most interesting job I ever had. It was by far the most fun I ever had in a job--and the most freedom. I completely enjoyed it, except for being assistant city editor because I wanted to report and

write." He said whenever he returns to the town to visit old friends, Yorkers remember the Gazette as "the Communist menace" but say they miss it because "it was a newspaper."[33] Stabley, too, mentioned returning to York to visit relatives and finding the paper missed. "They cussed it while it was there, but now it's gone it has left a void," he said.[34]

"J. W. was a great boss," said Stone. "He was very supportive of what we did in running the paper--and we in turn tried to be everything he wanted us to be in turning out his kind of paper. . . . He admonished me to call him anytime I had a problem where I wanted his advice. Funny thing, though, I can't recall a single situation where I had to call him. We always seemed to know what to do--and when we did it, he supported us."[35] Like many of the other people who had worked on the Gazette, Stone mentioned the problems of trying to raise a family while always working nights. (As managing editor, he worked until 3 a.m.) Gitt said more than once . . . that if he had had it to do over again, he would have made the Gazette an evening paper from the standpoint of holding staff."

Even with the rather difficult working hours that a morning newspaper demands (a typical shift is from 3 p.m. to midnight), former Gazette reporters usually pointed out the value of that experience in professional terms. "I immediately discovered that my training at the Gazette put

me ahead of most of my colleagues in speed, reporting skill and enthusiasm," said Klein, who returned to his New Jersey home in September, 1951, and went to work for the Newark News. "I was spotted quickly and given coveted assignments."[36] Klein said he also "won a bad name as politically undependable" which slowed his career. I. F. Stone once admonished him for having left The Gazette and Daily "in those deadly McCarthy days." After the Newark News, Klein spent eleven years as economics editor of Consumer Reports and for the past twelve years has been a consumer advisor to the Federal Reserve Board. "I wouldn't have missed working on the Gazette for anything," Klein said. "But the boat rocking I have done since in bigger and unsympathetic ponds has, I'd like to believe, served the reading public and the journalism fraternity better than if I had stayed years on end in York, where that marvelous voice eventually weakened and faded away."[37]

Of what lasting value is such a newspaper as the one J. W. Gitt published in York, Pa., for fifty-five years? Among the dozen former reporters and editors interviewed, McDaniel gave the most concrete answer when he said:

> The Gazette and Daily was what a newspaper should be and what none now is--and, alas, probably never will be again, since the bottom line now determines newspaper policies and not public interest. I am nostalgic about the paper and recall in particular the professionalism that characterized its staff as well as the considerable talent that was gathered on that paper and its primary concern for the public welfare. . . . Its alumni are scattered across

the country, many of them trying to continue individually to fight the battles The Gazette and Daily fought, fighting against even greater odds; so the paper has achieved a kind of immortality.[38]

NOTES

[1] JWG, 12 May 1949.

[2] JWG, 17 September 1951.

[3] JWG, December 1970 (New Year's greeting, n.d. The discrepancy between the address for The Gazette and Daily which Wesley remembered, 31 East King, and the address on the Editorial Department door when the building was razed, 37 East King, can be explained by re-numbering of the street through renovation. Letterhead stationery from the mid-1960s listed the address as "31 East King Street.")

[4] JWG, 19 May 1947.

[5] See Chapter 33 of Gideon's Army (vol. 3) about MacDougall's candidacy. The Progressive Party was not allowed on the ballot in the state of Illinois.

[6] JWG, 3 May 1948.

[7] JWG, 5 May 1948.

[8] JWG, 5 May 1948.

[9] JWG, 10 May 1948.

[10] JWG, 10 May 1948.

[11] JWG, 12 May 1948.

[12] JWG, 15 May 1948.

[13] Interview with Robert Gildart, East Lansing, MI, 8 March 1977.

[14] JWG, 16 April 1948. (Polumbaum was the brother-in-law of Gerry Schaflander, executive director of the Progressive Party of Pennsylvania.)

[15] JWG, 8 October 1949.

[16] Letter from Saul Miller, Washington, D.C., 26 October 1977.

[17] Interview with Fred Stabley, East Lansing, MI, 9 August 1977.

[18] Telephone interview with Arthur Geiselman, Philadelphia, Pa., 19 December 1977.

[19] Letter from Carol Gable, York, Pa., 30 January 1980.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Interview with L. Dean Gladfelter, New York, N.Y., 15 November 1977.

[22] Interview with David Lachenbruch, New York, N.Y., 11 November 1978.

[23] Letter from Lou Stone, Hatboro, Pa., 28 October 1979.

[24] Letter from Robert Klein, New York, N.Y., 28 March 1979. (Also interviewed in New York, 9 May 1979.)

[25] Klein's letter.

[26] Lachenbruch interview.

[27] Letter from Charles-Gene McDaniel, Blytheville, Ark. (on vacation), 12 April 1979.

[28] Stabley interview.

[29] McDaniel letter.

[30] Lachenbruch interview.

[31] Letter from Gene Gilmore, Urbana, Ill., 3 March 1977.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Lachenbruch interview.

[34] Stabley interview.

[35] Stone's letter.

[36] Klein's letter

[37] Ibid.

[38] McDaniel's letter.

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The majority of the J. W. Gitt Papers (henceforth referred to as JWG) are on deposit, in photocopy form, with the Historical Collections, Pattee Library, the Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania. The collection is stored in two large boxes: Box 1 with 28 files, of which Numbers 10-28 are "Personal Correspondences"; and Box 2, with 21 files, of which Numbers 1-19 are "Personal Correspondences." Except for two files marked "undated" and "miscellaneous," the letters are arranged in chronological order. The individual files are marked with the dates covered within. All correspondence used in this dissertation, either written or received by J. W. Gitt, has been footnoted simply "JWG" plus date of the letter. The other files contain clippings, speeches, pamphlets, etc., and are so designated. All original material is retained by Elizabeth Moul (Mrs. J. W.) Gitt. (See "Introduction.")

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