

Portuguese press still faces many pressures



Advertising up
Circulation up
More paper consumed—
despite rise
in costs and
subscription
rates.
Carl Sandelin,
Finland

From page 3.

I agreed to act as chairman of that (trust) and we started publishing three papers in the three different languages of the country. They turned out to be a great success, particularly financially.

They are run on a very simple formula — publishing all the news the government wants to hide.

So far they have managed to carry on, though I don't know how permanent this structure is. By its very nature it has an element of fragility about it. It is something in the nature of a guerrilla activity rather than anything more substantial. It has so far lasted a year.

In practice much of the legislation against freedom of expression has been negated. But we have to play the situation by ear.

PORTUGAL

Nuno Rocha, Diaro de Lisboa, Lisbon.

HERE ARE definite signs that my country is reaching its democratic majority as far as the press is concerned and one ought to point out the recent appearance of two independent newspapers — a daily entitled *Journal Novo* and a weekly, *O Jornal*. I am myself just a few days away from finally seeing the publication of my independent newspaper, *Tempo*. (See IPI Report April / May, Page 14).

Portuguese journalists still face many pressures and they struggle in the middle of varied political plots, which make the press a field of obscure activities and strange coups. Nevertheless the situation improves, thanks to the efforts of the government... where it continues to be affirmed that the press must be free, independent and without control either from political power or from economic power.

Portuguese press still faces many pressures

Quiljano described its political effects on the country's people, his political opponents and on foreign State relations. On the press, he said:

PRESS CONTROL in the Philippines is more oppressive than in the other military dictatorships in South East Asia... To our knowledge there are no less than 83 secret decrees issued by Mr. Marcos, each with a notation which reads: "not available for general circulation." (See also IPI Report December 1974 pages 2 and 3 which Juan Quiljano refers to).

GERMANY

Brigitte Weyl, Sudkurier, Constance.

THE PRESS is suffering from the increase of important costs and a decrease in advertising revenue. Important rising costs are on postage, telex fees and newspaper postage.

To balance things publishers would have had to reduce editorial activity and lay-off employees. They did not do so to sufficient extent. The result is that, in the third quarter of 1974 more than half of the dailies had run into debt.

There have been newspaper shut-downs and mergers and partial co-operation moves have increased.

The newspaper companies had expected some support from the government, for example granting German newspapers the same tax privileges as in other countries — exemption of sales from value-added tax. Both the German Association of Newspaper Publishers and the Federal Union of Journalists expressed the idea of a solidarity fund to be fed by the amounts of the value-added tax not paid as VAT.

But our government is in no hurry to help the press, and one cannot help getting the impression that the press is not one of its beloved children.

In the field of media politics a law for press statistics was recently passed, compelling publishing companies to disclose certain economic data each year. Still under consideration are others concerning the press. One is a law controlling mergers. If passed mergers involving 80,000 copies will be supervised.

The Bill most discussed is one stating the rights of the press. It has not yet been finally drafted, but it is in ended to regulate the internal relationship within publishing houses, in particular relationship between newsroom and management.

The German Press Council (10 journalists and 10 editors) is going through a difficult phase. Firstly, for financial reasons; and secondly because its very existence has recently been questioned by the journalists' union. However, the Press Council has been

Continued page 11

We had better all answer 'yes!'

Is there a chance for the survival of a free press in the world?

Total panel attendance 140

CHAIRMAN:
Max Snijders (Netherlands)
Jose Mario Armero (Spain)
Esmond Wickremesinghe,
(Sri Lanka)

The answer to that is this:

An established newspaper has achieved both a position in society and a special relationship with its readers. It has an acceptable and traditional policy and the editor of such a paper is not exercising any kind of egotistical power. He is appointed by management as a custodian of these attitudes and these policies.

José Mario Armero, Europa Press, Spain.

SURVIVAL of a free press is possible. Theoretically, nothing prevents the free existence of an information enterprise in a capital economy. The difficulties some of the press enterprises are facing are not any different from the financial difficulties any other kind of corporation has to face.

However, there are specific conditioning aspects.

The atomization of information has brought with it the phenomenon of concentration for two reasons.

Firstly, the strengthening of the power to inform by limiting it to a few sources which even when private, means a curtailment of freedom, obstructing such institutions as the Press Council.

Secondly, the real reason of financial difficulties in small enterprises that can only be overcome when they are taken over by larger corporations.

Concentration through the second is preferable to State control. Concentration through the first must be avoided.

Another pretext raised against the existence of free communication media is the high cost of some of them and which calls for the setting up of only one such installation. But this argument has only been valid for television and has weighty objections. For example:

Official ownership of basic elements is compatible to private management.

The installation costs of the film industry were also high, but in spite of this the industry has been run by private enterprises.

William Block, Pittsburgh Post Gazette, U.S.

WE ought to go out more from the desk and appear before organisations and show that freedom of the press is not for publication.

Continued overleaf

IPI a candidate for Nobel Peace Prize in 1976



"We are treated as a messenger who tells his king the army has lost a great battle — and is beleaguered." — Max Snijders

Lord Ardwick (John Beavan)
The Daily Mirror, England.

We had better all answer your referendum question (the panel title) with a "yes", otherwise we must abandon all hope.

MOST of the national reports (special reports pages 1, 2, 3, 8) fell into two categories, with tales of political repression or financial anxiety. Unbearable financial losses may lead to concentration, to monopoly, or in a desire to live to desperate sensationalism which does great harm not only to our own journalism but to journalism in emerging countries.

The alternative — recourse to a government cash box.

But are there fates worse than government subsidies? Has any government anywhere found means of subsidising which rules out any possibility of reciprocal favours being exacted?

The situation in Britain has its profoundly sad aspects. The real conflict is not a healthy, natural one between government and press. It's a kind of civil war with editors on the one side and their journalistic colleagues — not so much as brothers of our craft but as trade unionists — on the other.

The conflict is between editors as bosses and journalists as trade unionists and not between journalists in their natural function of producing newspapers.

But the debate on the inner freedom of newspapers has not really begun in Britain. Nor has the debate on participation.

The danger is... that led by extremists, the ordinary non-political journalist could say: "Well, I don't see why we shouldn't all have a determining voice in the policy of the papers. Surely it is not democratic to leave it to one man."

Members of the Swedish parliament have proposed that the Nobel Peace Prize for 1976 be given to IPI in recognition of this organisation's work for 24 years for understanding and peace among nations. It is a great honour to have this candidacy.—Per Monsen, Norway.

(Below and left, IPI Zurich Assembly delegates hear the announcement).

