

H A R V A R D U N I V E R S I T Y
JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT
JOAN SHORENSTEIN CENTER ON THE
PRESS, POLITICS AND PUBLIC POLICY

THE GOLDSMITH AWARDS

Tuesday
March 11, 2003

ARCO Forum
Littauer Building
Kennedy School of Government
Cambridge, Massachusetts

BEFORE: ALEX JONES
Director
Joan Shorenstein Center on Press
Politics and Public Policy
Kennedy School of Government

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(8:10 p.m.)

1
2
3 MR. NYE: I'm Joe Nye the dean of the
4 Kennedy School and it's a pleasure every year at this
5 time to welcome you to the annual Goldsmith Awards,
6 which recognize excellence in political journalism.

7 The Goldsmith Awards were designed to
8 promote strong investigative reporting, and now it's
9 grown into a recognition of terrific books in the field
10 as well, the awards for research and an award
11 recognizing outstanding careers in political
12 journalism.

13 Over the last 11 years, the various
14 Goldsmith Awards have been given to journalists whose
15 work has not only piqued widespread public interest,
16 but has contributed to larger public discourse. And as
17 such, they recognize one of the crucial missions of the
18 Kennedy School, which is to bring together
19 practitioners and scholars to serve the public
20 interest.

21 These awards are named for Berda
22 Goldsmith, a woman who was passionately interested in
23 the relationship between the press and politics and an

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1 avid newspaper reader. A faithful follower of
2 investigative reporting, she especially loved programs
3 like "60 Minutes" and "Washington Week in Review" and
4 her legacy is reflected in these awards.

5 A number of people combined their efforts
6 to establish the awards, including Bob Greenfield,
7 President of the Goldsmith-Greenfield Foundation, who
8 worked together with the Shorenstein Center on Press
9 and Politics. We're very grateful to have members of
10 the Greenfield family here tonight.

11 We're also delighted to have Walter
12 Shorenstein, whose foresight really was the origin of
13 the Center, which saw the importance of the role of
14 press and politics. So thank you, Walter, for your
15 valuable contribution.

16 (Applause)

17 MR. NYE: And now it's my pleasure to
18 introduce Alex Jones, who is the director of the
19 Shorenstein Center, who will take over from here. Alex
20 is a distinguished journalist and scholar, a prominent
21 voice through National Public Radio, *The New York*
22 *Times*, a recipient of the Pulitzer Prize, and we're
23 lucky to have him here at the Kennedy School.

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1 Alex?

2 (Applause)

3 MR. JONES: Thank you.

4 This is a very happy night for the
5 Shorenstein Center. This year marks the twelfth
6 anniversary of the Goldsmith Awards Program and each
7 year this night is one of the high moments for the
8 Shorenstein Center, and if I may say so immodestly,
9 also for American journalism.

10 You heard Joe's account of how the award
11 was created, now let me tell you what really happened.

12 Gary Orren, who is on the faculty here, is a friend of
13 the Shorenstein Center, was on a beach in Florida. He
14 struck up a conversation with Robert Greenfield, who
15 happened to be there. He was a Philadelphia lawyer,
16 and a man of quite remarkable character.

17 Bob had a client named Berda Marks
18 Goldsmith, who had just died, and thought so much of
19 her lawyer, Bob, that she had left him her entire
20 estate. He declined to accept it. Let me repeat.
21 This is a lawyer who declined to accept it.

22 (Laughter)

23 MR. JONES: I think that if you're a

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1 journalist, you've got to get a dig in at somebody
2 somewhere. And he was searching for a good way to
3 spend the money, a good place to put it.

4 Berda, as Joe Nye said, was passionately
5 interested in government. She was very much a follower
6 of the news. She was particularly outraged by
7 misconduct. And when Gary heard this, he said, do I
8 have the right place for you, and made a beeline for
9 Marvin Kalb, the Center's founding director and the man
10 that I'm proud to have succeeded.

11 Marvin and Bob Greenfield worked out the
12 details and the result was the Goldsmith Awards in
13 political journalism, which include the investigative
14 reporting prize, book prizes, fellowships and the
15 career award. This all came about through the
16 generosity of what has become known, as Joe said, as
17 the Goldsmith-Greenfield Foundation, of which Bob is
18 president. The Greenfield family is most remarkable
19 and I'm very glad to say that some of them are here
20 tonight, Bob, his wife Louise, their grandchildren
21 Michael, Lauren and Jill. Also with us is Deborah
22 Jacobs, the Foundation's administrator.

23 For many years Bob has been the family's

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1 representative on the Goldsmith selection committee and
2 he told me recently that Michael will succeed him.
3 Without the Greenfield's continued support and good
4 faith, this night would not be possible. And I ask
5 that you join me in saluting Bob Greenfield and the
6 Goldsmith-Greenfield Foundation.

7 (Applause)

8 MR. JONES: I also want to take the
9 opportunity to thank publicly the man who has made my
10 job possible. As Joe said, Walter Shorenstein is the
11 visionary whose generosity and instinct for public
12 service was the reason for the creation of the Joan
13 Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public
14 Policy. Walter is 88, he thinks he's 58 and he has the
15 drive and energy of someone 38. It was that drive that
16 led him to start as a guy with a thousand dollars after
17 World War II and turn it into a fortune in real estate
18 in San Francisco. But it was his keen and passionate
19 engagement with the world that led him to endow the
20 Shorenstein Center as a memorial to his daughter Joan,
21 a highly respected journalist at CBS who died far too
22 young of breast cancer. As Joe said, Walter, thank you
23 very much.

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1 (Applause)

2 MR. JONES: The first Goldsmith Awards are
3 the book prizes and making those presentations is my
4 colleague Tom Patterson, the Bradlee Professor of
5 Government and the Press at the Kennedy School.

6 Tom?

7 (Applause)

8 MR. PATTERSON: Thank you.

9 Every once in a while there's a happy
10 intersection between one's past and one's present, for
11 me, tonight is one of those happy moments. Three
12 decades ago when I did my first media effects study, it
13 was a period in which the dominant theory was the
14 theory of limited effects, in which the idea was that
15 the media didn't have much impact, because we filtered
16 these messages through our personal predispositions.

17 Just as I was digging into my work, I ran
18 across the work of someone else who was thinking about
19 the issue more clearly than I was and was doing it
20 better, and that was Doris Graber. And as it turned
21 out, I picked the right role model, Doris Graber is the
22 best mentor in the field of political communication.
23 She was the founding editor of our premiere journal,

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1 *Political Communication*. She was the organizing force
2 between the American Political Science Association and
3 the International Communication Association for
4 creating the political communication sectors and she's
5 been advisor to at least two generations of media
6 scholars.

7 I should say also she's a dedicated scuba
8 diver, and if this was next week, she wouldn't be here.
9 She's going to be in the Virgin Islands scuba diving
10 next week.

11 So tonight it's a real personal pleasure
12 and professional pleasure for me to award Doris Graber
13 the Goldsmith Book Prize for the best scholarly book in
14 the field of Press, Politics and Public Policy
15 published within the last two years. The award is for
16 her 2001 book, *Processing Politics: Learning From*
17 *Television in the Internet Age*.

18 In it Doris challenges the conventional
19 assumption shared by scholars and practitioners alike
20 that television is inferior to print as an information
21 source. She argues that television's audio-visual
22 dimension gives it an informing capacity that we tend
23 to underestimate, largely because we persist in

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1 defining an informed citizenry by people's ability to
2 recite specific policies, places on the map and leaders
3 rather than by their ability to navigate the political
4 world in which they live. Graber shows that television
5 as a medium can be quite effective by the standard and
6 it would be even more so if broadcasters fully
7 understood the civic potential of their medium.

8 Doris, please come up to receive the
9 Goldsmith Book Prize for the best academic book in the
10 field of Press, Politics and Public Policy.

11 (Applause)

12 MS. GRABER: I want to thank the
13 Shorenstein Center and my colleagues in political
14 communication for this award, which means a great deal
15 to me, because it's for a book which unlike a lot of
16 other books doesn't necessarily bash the media. It's,
17 I think, a real pleasure to be here tonight in the
18 presence of so many people who represent the finest in
19 the media and show that it is a wonderful, very
20 essential calling.

21 So I'd like to accept this prize for
22 myself, but also for all of you who are toiling in this
23 field, which is so essential to our democracy. Thank

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1 you.

2 MR. PATTERSON: There's a second Goldsmith
3 Book Prize, one for the best trade book in Press,
4 Politics and Public Policy published in the last two
5 years. And I should say that the winner in both cases
6 is chosen by a committee, which this year consisted of
7 Alex Jones, David King, Michael Waldman, Tami Buhr and
8 myself. The winner in the trade category is entitled,
9 *The News about the News: American Journalism in Peril*,
10 by Leonard Downie, Jr., and Robert G. Kaiser.

11 We need to know what good journalism is
12 and Alex Jones, in a few minutes, will give us about
13 six prime examples of good journalism. We also need to
14 know what bad journalism is. As Downie and Kaiser sort
15 of describe it, it is journalism that fails to report
16 important news, that reports the news inaccurately or
17 unfairly, that leads us to believe the world is a
18 different place than it actually is, Oz not Kansas.
19 The news about the news is the story of how
20 market-driven journalism and the bottom line thinking
21 of media conglomerates are impairing good journalism.

22 The authors' argument, of course, is not a
23 new one. Three years ago we awarded a Goldsmith Book

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1 Award to Robert McChesney's *Rich Media, Poor Democracy*.

2 But the Downie and Kaiser book is distinguished by the
3 nuanced observations that stem from their experience.

4 Both men have been in journalism as
5 reporters and editors for the better part of four
6 decades. As they note in their book, not every
7 reduction in news staffing hurts the news products, not
8 every soft news story erodes audience understanding,
9 not every grant to management undermines journalistic
10 integrity. But some concessions do imperil the news
11 and it is these bows to the marketplace that must be
12 contested, if good journalism is to prevail; to take
13 one of their cases, the sharp cutbacks for
14 profit making reasons in foreign news gathering and
15 reporting in the several years preceding 9/11.

16 Len and Bob, please step up to receive
17 your Goldsmith Book Prize award.

18 (Applause)

19 MR. DOWNIE: Thank you very much.

20 I want to thank the judges first of all
21 and Walter Shorenstein and the Shorenstein Center and
22 the Goldsmith and Greenfield families for this award.
23 But I also want to thank those same people for

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1 something I think is more important, which is
2 encouraging the kind of journalism that will be
3 rewarded here tonight, all the finalists as well as the
4 eventual winner. It will encourage the news
5 organizations that these people work for to continue to
6 fund this kind of journalism, which is so important to
7 the future of this country.

8 Thanks.

9 (Applause)

10 MR. KAISER: Very briefly by way of a plug
11 that Professor Graber may be proud that she did not
12 bash the media, we are quite proud that we did bash the
13 media.

14 (Laughter)

15 MR. KAISER: But only the part that
16 deserved bashing.

17 Thank you very much.

18 MR. JONES: It's now my pleasure to
19 present the six finalists for the Goldsmith Prize for
20 Investigative Reporting and also to present a special
21 citation.

22 The Goldsmith Prize is for a special kind
23 of investigative reporting, in that it honors

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1 journalism which, like the Shorenstein Center itself,
2 is focused on politics and public policy. In creating
3 the prize, the Greenfields wanted it to be an award
4 that had a profound impact on the public and on public
5 institutions, if you will, on the common wheel.

6 The civic aspect of the award is
7 emphasized in our selection of judges, who come not
8 just from journalism, but also from the worlds of
9 politics and policy. This year's judges were Dan
10 Glickman, Director of the Institute of Politics, the
11 Kennedy School; Terry Smith of "The News Hour"; Elaine
12 Kamarck, lecturer in public policy at the Kennedy
13 School and an experienced political hand; Susan Smith,
14 a columnist at *The Austin American Statesman* and a
15 Nieman Fellow at Harvard; Jack Nelson, former
16 Washington Bureau Chief of *The Los Angeles Times*; and
17 Robert Greenfield, representing the family and the
18 Foundation.

19 That judging process is something that is
20 taken with utmost seriousness and involves a huge
21 amount of work, and I want to thank our judges for
22 their willingness to undertake such a task. Each year
23 the judges choose up to six finalists, which are

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1 immediately announced. They also choose an overall
2 winner, which is not announced until tonight. Our
3 purpose is to honor the superb work of each of the
4 finalists, to give each of them a chance to be
5 recognized individually before we announce the overall
6 winner, because, as you will see, they have all done
7 great work. I shall present the finalists in
8 alphabetical order based on the name of their news
9 organization.

10 The first finalist is *The Boston Globe*,
11 the stories they dubbed: "Crisis in the Catholic
12 Church."

13 Like many of you I picked up *The Boston*
14 *Globe* on a Sunday in January, fourteen months ago, and
15 was stunned to see a six-column headline over one of
16 the most shocking stories I'd ever read. *The Boston*
17 *Globe* Searchlight Team under the direction of Martin
18 Baron, the paper's editor, and Walter Robinson, the
19 Searchlight Team boss, had pulled back the curtain on
20 years of systematic denial and irresponsibility by the
21 Catholic Church when it came to protecting children
22 from predatory priests.

23 The story the *Globe* began to tell on that

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1 Sunday, and has continued to tell in dozens of
2 carefully researched and sensitively written articles,
3 has sent shockwaves all over the nation and the world.

4 Its impact has been profound and the painful truth it
5 has told has prompted a revolution in the way the
6 Catholic Church understands its responsibility to its
7 weakest and most vulnerable members, its children.

8 In addition to Walter Robinson and Marty
9 Baron, I ask you to salute the other members of the
10 *Globe's* team, Matthew Carrol, Kevin Cullen, Thomas
11 Farragher, Stephen Kurkjian, Michael Paulson, Ben
12 Bradlee, Jr., Sacha Pfeiffer and Michael Rezendes.
13 Would you all please stand.

14 (Applause)

15 MR. JONES: Thank you.

16 The next finalist is *The Dayton Daily*
17 *News*. You've heard the expression down on the farm,
18 well, *The Dayton Daily News* called its entry: "Down on
19 the Factory." And it tells its story in compelling and
20 frightening detail of the dangerous impact of so-called
21 megafarms. They are much more a factory than farm.

22 Megafarming is now commonplace, and when
23 those megafarms are focused on pigs, chicken and other

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1 livestock, the impact on the environment from their
2 waste can be appalling. We're not talking about some
3 manure for the rosebushes, but tons of waste that is
4 handled in ways that *The Dayton Daily News* showed in
5 harrowing detail is almost entirely unregulated or
6 ineffectively regulated.

7 The paper's reporters traveled to eleven
8 states and also abroad gathering information about
9 contamination linked to livestock megafarms. They
10 found pollution on a massive scale and the enforcement
11 of environmental laws so lax as to be laughable. In
12 Ohio they found that the state's largest cattle farm
13 had been operating three years before state officials
14 even knew it was in business. Two days after their
15 series concluded, legislation was announced that
16 promises to put powerful controls on the megafarms and
17 to monitor far more closely their environmental impact.

18 Representing *The Dayton Daily News* team
19 are Mike Wagner and Ben Sutherly and I ask them now to
20 stand.

21 (Applause)

22 MR. JONES: If there is one man in the
23 United States who is truly hated by the tax cheats of

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1 this world, it is David Cay Johnston of *The New York*
2 *Times*.

3 David Johnston is the kind of reporter who
4 patiently, calmly, dispassionately, relentlessly tears
5 apart the boilerplate in the obfuscation of tax
6 avoidance schemes and lays out for all of us to see how
7 some of us are trying to get a grotesquely free ride
8 tax-wise.

9 His articles on illegal methods used by
10 corporations and by some very wealthy Americans to
11 avoid taxes have struck home, even in an administration
12 that does not seem particularly sympathetic. In early
13 February, the Bush administration increased by a third
14 the number of auditors for people suspected of hiding
15 income tax through tax shelters and other means.

16 There can be very little doubt that this
17 action was prompted by the fallout from the articles
18 David Johnston did last year on how the IRS looks for
19 tax cheating by wage earners more carefully than it
20 looks for cheating by people whose money comes from
21 their own businesses, investments, partnerships and
22 trusts.

23 It was also David Johnston who blew the

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1 whistle on American companies that moved to Bermuda to
2 avoid taxes. As a result of the uproar, shareholders
3 of many of these companies are demanding that they
4 reincorporate in the United States. Similarly, a tax
5 gimmick that Johnston described in detail, which
6 enabled two top Sprint executives to save more than
7 \$100 million on taxes, is being investigated by the
8 IRS. The list could go on. As taxpayers, we owe a
9 debt of gratitude to David Cay Johnston and to Glenn
10 Kramen, the business editor of *The New York Times*.

11 Would you both please rise.

12 (Applause)

13 MR. JONES: Our fourth finalist is Steve
14 Inskeep of National Public Radio.

15 On the night of January 24, 2002, U.S.
16 Special Operations Forces conducted their largest raid
17 to date in Afghanistan, attacking two buildings in the
18 village of Oruzgan. U.S. military officials said that
19 more than a dozen senior Taliban figures were killed
20 and twenty-seven captured and taken away.

21 When journalists got to Oruzgan, however,
22 villagers told them that the men killed and captured
23 had nothing to do with the Taliban or al-Qaeda. With

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1 no hard evidence, however, the Pentagon simply
2 dismissed the villagers' assertions.

3 Steve Inskip was in Kandahar and unlike
4 many other journalists, he did not let the matter drop.

5 He went to Oruzgan himself and stayed there
6 interviewing and probing, and ultimately coming up with
7 evidence so convincing that the military released all
8 the prisoners taken in what had been revealed as an
9 ill-conceived and misguided attack in which there were
10 innocent civilian casualties.

11 Steve is, as you might expect, in the
12 Persian Gulf waiting. I ask you in his absence to join
13 me in honoring his exemplary work.

14 (Applause)

15 MR. JONES: Our fifth finalist is WFAA-TV,
16 a local television station in Dallas.

17 The drug bust looked like an open and shut
18 case, an informant led police to drug dealers who were
19 based on a quantity of white powder found in their car.

20 But the team of Brett Shipp and producer Mark Smith
21 smelled a rat.

22 In nearly fifty separate reports they
23 slowly uncovered a genuine police conspiracy, in which

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1 former drug felons turned professional informants had
2 fingered innocent people, usually illegal immigrants,
3 who were arrested on trumped-up charges. The white
4 powder often turned out to be ground-up wallboard or
5 billiard chalk, but the damage to those arrested was
6 devastating.

7 In a particularly powerful segment of
8 their coverage, they showed something that television
9 can do that no other medium can, they showed some
10 hapless immigrants in the company of a paid informant
11 going into a restaurant and theoretically leaving
12 hundreds of thousands of dollars in drugs in an
13 unlocked car. The dazed immigrants were then arrested
14 as they emerged from the restaurant in a clearly
15 contrived scam. Ultimately, WFAA's work contributed to
16 a major investigation, which went all the way to the
17 police chief and the district attorney general.

18 Brett Shipp and Mark Smith, please stand
19 up.

20 (Applause)

21 MR. JONES: Few journalistic
22 investigations have had more impact locally than that
23 of our last finalist, *The Wisconsin State Journal* of

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1 Madison, Wisconsin., when it probed the corruption of
2 its state legislature.

3 Now please listen to this list. A
4 powerful state senator who was considered a shoo-in to
5 become the state's attorney general was charged with
6 eighteen felonies, including illegally soliciting
7 contributions from lobbyists and altering subpoenaed
8 records. The senate majority leader was charged with
9 twenty felonies, including extortion. The assembly
10 speaker was charged with three felonies, the assembly
11 majority leader with one. In all, forty-three felony
12 charges were made and new legislative leadership
13 pledged, of course, reform.

14 This all came from the work of Dee J. Hall
15 and Phil Brinkman, who conducted scores of interviews
16 and pored over hundreds of documents in a seven-month
17 investigation. As often happens, the project sprang
18 from the small moment when Dee Hall found that the
19 candidate's campaign spokesman seemed to working on
20 state time, from that thread all the rest unraveled.
21 *The Wisconsin State Journal* is not a huge paper, but it
22 took on some of the most powerful political powers in
23 the state.

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1 Please join me in saluting Dee Hall and
2 Phil Brinkman.

3 (Applause)

4 MR. JONES: Before I announce the winner
5 of the Goldsmith Prize I have a special citation to
6 present. In the course of their deliberations, the
7 judges were struck by a remarkable entry from *The San*
8 *Francisco Chronicle* by reporter Seth Rosenfeld. Seth
9 had been a journalism student at the University of
10 California at Berkeley, and seventeen years ago he got
11 a line on an intriguing story of how Ronald Reagan and
12 J. Edgar Hoover's FBI had abused their power at
13 Berkeley through unlawful covert intelligence
14 operations.

15 He pursued the story for seventeen years,
16 fighting for access to documents through the Freedom of
17 Information Act and he won. The final story was
18 published by the Chronicle as "The Campus Files:
19 Reagan, Hoover and the University of California Red
20 Scare." It was the judges' wish that Seth's work be
21 honored and, thanks to the Goldsmith-Greenfield
22 Foundation, he will also receive the \$2,000 award that
23 goes to all finalists.

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1 The citation is as follows: "In a
2 seventeen year pursuit of truth, Seth Rosenfeld fought
3 a marathon legal battle to win the right to tell the
4 embarrassing and frightening story of how the Federal
5 Bureau of Investigation had misused its power. While
6 the story he sought to tell took place in 1967, its
7 relevance is clear. The perseverance and courage of
8 Mr. Rosenfeld and *The San Francisco Chronicle* are
9 inspiration to those who cherish a free press."

10 Mr. Rosenfeld, please come forward and
11 accept your citation.

12 (Applause)

13 MR. ROSENFELD: Thank you very much.

14 I'd like to say on behalf of myself and
15 the *Chronicle* that this is a great honor to share the
16 stage with so many terrific journalists. And it's real
17 encouragement to keep pressing in the face of official
18 resistance, even during a turbulent time, to find out
19 what some of the nation's most powerful intelligence
20 law enforcement agencies are doing with tax dollars and
21 civil liberties.

22 So in that spirit I'd like to thank the
23 Shorenstein Center and Walter Shorenstein and the

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1 Greenfield and Goldsmith families very much for this
2 award.

3 MR. JONES: We now come to the moment when
4 the winner of the 2003 Goldsmith Prize for
5 Investigative Reporting is named. The award this year
6 goes to *The Boston Globe* for "Church in Crisis." Would
7 all members of the team please come forward.

8 (Applause)

9 MR. JONES: I'd like to make a correction.
10 I'm the former editor of small newspaper in Tennessee
11 that had a Searchlight Team. This is the Spotlight
12 Team.

13 Which of you would like to say something?
14 Robbie?

15 MR. ROBINSON: Thank you. Thank you all
16 very much. Thank you, Walter Shorenstein. Thank you
17 to the Greenfield family. Thank you very much for this
18 honor for the *Globe*.

19 These remarks, as you might anticipate,
20 are impromptu, but speaking on behalf of my colleagues
21 and myself, after what we now believe is somewhere in
22 the vicinity of 900 news articles since January 6th of
23 2002, this has been for all of us quite a roller

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1 coaster ride. The demographics tell us half the people
2 in the Greater Boston area are Catholic, at least
3 nominally, and this has been very upsetting to
4 everybody, Catholic and non-Catholic. We all hope that
5 some change will result from this, much already has.

6 In the end, for all of us you have worked
7 on this, this comes down to the kind of journalism that
8 we all do in the business every day in one way or
9 another. Much of what we do focuses on the children
10 and issues that we cover and this is for the children.

11 Thank you very much.

12 UNIDENTIFIED: Like Robbie, I didn't
13 prepare for this either and that's because we knew we
14 were up against some really extraordinary competition.

15 I don't want to talk about our work, which Robbie
16 addressed, but I really want to pay tribute to all of
17 the others who were finalists for this award. The work
18 is enormously impressive and we're proud, all of us, to
19 work together with each other, but also to be part of
20 this extraordinary group of journalists who are here
21 today, so we want to pay tribute to you as well.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. JONES: There will be a plaque for

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1 everyone, don't worry.

2 (Laughter)

3 MR. JONES: Let me tell you what it's like
4 to have Sy Hersh as the recipient of your annual Career
5 Award. On Friday, Sy sent us an e-mail which said in
6 part, "Tell Alex that I have a pretty wild piece coming
7 out this weekend in *The New Yorker*. The piece was
8 entitled "Lunch with the Chairman" and it was a
9 painstakingly sourced and devastating account of the
10 financial conflicts of interest that Richard Pearl has
11 regarding a war with Iraq.

12 As most of you know, Pearl is the chairman
13 of the Defense Policy Board, which is a group of
14 civilians who advise the Defense Department on all
15 manner of defense issues. As its chairman, Richard
16 Pearl has been hugely influential in pushing for
17 invasion of Iraq, something he has been advocating
18 since before 9/11.

19 Well, it turns out that Mr. Pearl is also
20 the managing partner in a venture capital company
21 called Trirene Partners, LP, which was chartered in
22 Delaware November of 2001 and whose main business,
23 according to a letter that Sy Hersh managed to get his

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1 hands on, is to invest in companies dealing in
2 technology, goods and services that are of value to
3 homeland security and defense.

4 I won't go into the details of the piece
5 which I strongly commend to you, but I think you can
6 imagine that it was not likely to please Mr. Pearl. So
7 yesterday we get a second e-mail from Sy, saying, "Tell
8 Alex that Richard Pearl called me a terrorist yesterday
9 on one of the Sunday morning talk shows. You might
10 want to be sure to have your security people frisk me
11 before I'm allowed a drink." Being called a terrorist
12 by a powerful political figure may, in fact, be the
13 worst thing Sy Hersh has been called.

14 Henry Kissinger, for instance, is not a
15 member of the Hersh fan club. You see, it was Sy Hersh
16 who reported that then-Secretary of State Kissinger had
17 authorized wiretaps on seventeen National Security
18 Council aides. You were known to write a devastating
19 book called *Henry A. Kissinger: The Price of Power*,
20 which depicted Kissinger as double-dealing,
21 unscrupulous, self-serving and worse. Kissinger said
22 parts of the book were, and I quote, "a slimy lie".
23 But others disagreed, it won a National Book Critics

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1 Circle Award in 1984, the same award that our colleague
2 Samantha Power has just won for her book on genocide.

3 Indeed Sy Hersh has won many fans and many
4 awards with his work, but maybe not so many friends.
5 In *The Nation*, Eric Alterman compared Sy to Bob
6 Woodward, Washington's other famous investigative
7 reporter. He said, "Woodward was the nice one. He
8 felt your pain and flattered your ego and maybe even
9 came to your dinner party. Sy Hersh," he said, "he was
10 the nasty one. He didn't feel your pain, he caused
11 it."

12 (Laughter)

13 MR. JONES: But look at what he's done in
14 his remarkable career. Sy will be sixty-six next month
15 and he's been a reporter for nearly forty-five years.
16 He learned his craft as a wire service reporter and
17 specialized in some very early probes into biological
18 and chemical weapons. When the Associated Press, his
19 then employer, butchered a major piece, he quit and
20 became a freelance investigative reporter.

21 In 1969, he got a line on the secret
22 courts martial of an Army lieutenant named Calley, who
23 had been responsible for killing civilians in Vietnam

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1 at a place called My Lai. The Hersh form of reporting
2 is relentless and it took that to shake loose what
3 happened. But the result was a series of stunning
4 stories about the murder of more than 450 people, which
5 won Sy just about every award in journalism, including
6 a Pulitzer Prize.

7 He's been at it ever since, doing it much
8 the same way. Phone calls, digging, going back,
9 bullying, bluffing, suggesting he knows more than he
10 knows, twisting arms, it isn't necessarily pretty. His
11 work is very often controversial. He's made mistakes,
12 even some bad ones. He's also, it should be said, had
13 as one of his targets John F. Kennedy, which may mean
14 that the spirits around the Kennedy School are unquiet
15 tonight.

16 But throughout his career his passion has
17 been to reveal what has been hidden, to tell secrets
18 that needed to be told and to let the people know the
19 truth about the world, especially about the government.

20 It is very much in the tradition of the
21 Goldsmith Award for Investigative Reporting that this
22 year's Career Award should go to the man who, for my
23 money, is the best investigative reporter ever, Seymour

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1 M. Hersh.

2 (Applause)

3 MR. HERSH: So much for e-mails. I'm
4 also really happy, I've got to tell you, that this
5 procedure tonight didn't begin with a prayer. It's
6 great. We are not a theocracy, folks, believe it or
7 not. And unfortunately, we may end up in a holy war,
8 but tell it to the White House. So I thought what I'd
9 do is tell you, it's ten to 9:00 and talk a few minutes
10 just about -- like everybody I'm enormously impressed
11 by the awards. I heard about the people who won and
12 didn't win and it's remarkable we have such good
13 reporting.

14 It's also so interesting to me that none
15 of the stories really are out of Washington, because I
16 think it's a very tough time for us in Washington.
17 I've been around thirty-five or so years, since '64, in
18 Washington. I make the joke and the joke is, I've
19 never been so afraid since I watched the *Wizard of Oz*
20 with my six-year-old daughter. These guys scare me.
21 They're insulated. They're tough to get to.

22 The Pearl story, his counterattack is
23 beyond belief. He's been calling me a terrorist as you

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1 heard and worse, and it's just because I wrote a story
2 well within the bounds of what we do for a living. Is
3 there anybody who doesn't think Richard Pearl meeting
4 with Adnan Khashoggi, the middleman in Iran Contra, in
5 a secret lunch in Paris or in Marseilles in France,
6 it's a story and that's what we do for a living.

7 But these guys are really special. I'm
8 serious. This is a crowd that's going to put us into
9 something. I don't know what information the President
10 has. I have a lot of friends in the government. I've
11 never seen my peers, and even I've been around a long
12 time as you heard, as frightened as they are. It's
13 almost a waste to be a line officer in the State
14 Department or certainly an I&R. And many of the
15 bureaucracies there's just despair about the inability
16 of people to get meetings, to have an impact on
17 meetings.

18 It's very hard for the press. In
19 Washington they try hard. I was sort of mortified by
20 the news conference, a program president. There were
21 some very good questions. Just to show you what an
22 awful, one of the things that interested me, the
23 president had his, he turned sort of the press corps

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1 into puppets, because he read from a list and he
2 bypassed an excellent reporter for *The Washington Post*,
3 Dana Millbank, who got the president mad. I know what
4 I would have done if I'd been there. I would have
5 stood up and said, I give my question over to Dana, and
6 see what happened.

7 But you can't do that. That's why I'm a
8 little crazy, I guess, because I would have done that.
9 But somebody should at some point. We can't let them
10 get away with orchestrating us like he did, the
11 president. We're not seals. I don't know what we can
12 do about it. Mendacity passes for daily occurrences
13 with the press secretary. There is no real standard
14 anymore of integrity or truth, because the White House
15 doesn't have any. So we're all left on our own to sort
16 of stagger around and try and figure out what's going
17 on. He is the president and he does have the power to
18 send our children to commit murder in the name of
19 democracy, and we respect that, we have to and we do.

20 But we've got a real crisis coming. But I
21 can tell you I wish there was better reporting out of
22 Washington. I know how hard it is, I know how tough it
23 is. I also know that we will survive this, even if we

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1 end up in a hundred year religious war. I don't get
2 any of this is a White House that deals in a lot of
3 self-introspection, a lot of thinking. I don't think
4 the president after 9/11 asked for a briefing on the
5 Koran and what do we have here, what's really going on
6 here.

7 And we can talk to politics and I'm going
8 to only speak for a few moments, but I'll just sort of
9 tell you where I come off and what I think about the
10 few little standards I have and the reason why Richard
11 Pearl can just -- I don't care, he can call me names,
12 but he's got to answer the question of what was he
13 doing, that's the ultimate thing.

14 It is a sense that I think particularly at
15 moments like this and having gone through the Vietnam
16 War, having seen what we can do wrongly and for good
17 reasons, for honest reasons, there was no attempt to
18 take oil or something. We just did it, misguided, Cold
19 War, etcetera, and the not learning is sort of scary.
20 But I think the only job of a reporter is to hold
21 people in public life to the highest possible standard
22 and that's the simple way of looking at it. You simply
23 have to do it. You can't compromise. We can't say,

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1 Ari Fleischer just told another one. It's not funny.
2 It's not funny anymore.

3 We're getting down into a question of
4 there's been serious questions raised about some of the
5 probity of some of the statements Mr. Powell made, the
6 Secretary of State, who we all know is an honorable
7 man. So one of the stories I'm looking at is how did
8 he get some of the information he gave out, who briefed
9 him, who told him, who told him it was okay, what does
10 he feel about it now, because he's smart enough to know
11 that some of the stuff he put out wasn't good. I'm
12 sure he was told it was. Who's spinning the Secretary
13 of State? And why? So these are horrible stories I
14 try and report.

15 I guess one of the things I always think
16 about and just to show you how hard it is right now,
17 I'll tell you a couple of stories. One of the stories
18 I did that I really liked a lot was a story about the
19 CIA and domestic spying. I was at *The New York Times* a
20 lot of years, with Alex, different cities. I don't
21 know how you can stand working in New York, Alex.

22 But anyway, I was in Washington and one of
23 the stories I did was about the CIA spying on American

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1 citizens and other things, domestic spying. And I
2 wrote it in December of 1974 and it led to Church
3 Hearings indirectly, pretty much led to it I think, and
4 there were a lot of investigations, sort of famous
5 hearings that Senator Frank Church, the late Frank
6 Church, did in an attempt, that failed ultimately, to
7 put some caps on the CIA and what they could do, what's
8 legal, what isn't legal.

9 You know, the truth of the matter is the
10 way it works in America is the president can call the
11 CIA director in and take a walk in the Rose Garden and
12 something bad can happen and it's never connected to
13 him and that bothers me. It shouldn't happen that way,
14 that's not what democracy is.

15 Just like I don't make light of the fact
16 that we all know in Washington that some of the people
17 who are arrested now, the al-Qaeda people, we know
18 where they're going. They're going to Thailand,
19 they're going to Diego Garcia. They're going to lose
20 a quarter of a finger a day. We know what's happening.

21 We don't really talk about it, because we know. We
22 know what they're doing, we're doing torture. We don't
23 do it directly, we pass it off to third parties.

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1 That's wrong, that's not what we're about. And we
2 shouldn't be doing that. We all tolerate it, because
3 what else can you do? How much can you put your nose
4 into it?

5 So in any case, I learned a lot. The CIA
6 is an operation that's designed to go overseas.
7 They're here in America. They were put on to it by
8 Johnson anti-war people. I never could write it,
9 because I could never prove it, but the real drive was
10 to go after some of the black radicals, Stokely
11 Carmichael, etcetera. I know a lot of papers were
12 destroyed about it -- when I got into it I knew that's
13 what it was about, eventually morphed into something
14 more. They kept dossiers on anti-war people. They
15 opened mail. They broke into houses. They did all
16 sorts of stuff, everything you would expect an out of
17 control intelligence agency to do.

18 So some of the people who were talking to
19 me I ended up getting mad at them, because, you know,
20 expiation, you know, talk to me, you can get rid of it.

21 Sometimes I feel now I'm getting a lot of stuff, I've
22 got to tell you, lot of stuff from inside.

23 For some of you who remember Nathaniel

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1 West, who wrote a wonderful novel called *Miss Lonely*
2 *Hearts*. It's about a guy who writes a gossip column
3 and one of the letters he gets is from, the way he sets
4 it up it's a sixteen-year-old girl and says she writes
5 this to the lovelorn column at *The San Francisco*
6 *Chronicle*, I guess, one of the papers in San Francisco.
7 This is a circa 1938-`37 setting. And she writes,
8 Dear Miss Lonely Hearts, I'm sixteen years old and
9 people tell me I have a wonderful figure and long blond
10 hair and great legs and I've never had a date. Do you
11 think it's because I have no nose?

12 So I feel like Miss Lonely Hearts a lot.
13 Just in the last week since I did Pearl, you can't
14 believe some of the stuff I'm hearing about from
15 inside. But it's not just enough to tell me, you have
16 to do more on the inside. I don't advocate people
17 breaking the law, but we're going to have to have
18 something break loose soon from inside. There are too
19 many people that know how vile it is on the inside
20 right now, how narrow it is, how a few people have a
21 lot of control over policy, they simply don't want to
22 hear anything outside.

23 The reason Richard Pearl can call me a

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1 terrorist is because he represents a point of view
2 that's very closely held at the top of this government,
3 that if you're with us you're great, if you're against
4 us you're really against us. You're an absolute enemy
5 of the state. There's no such thing as loyal dissents
6 up close. I know there's some exaggeration, you might
7 think, but I don't think it is. I think it's closer to
8 the truth.

9 Anyway, back in `74 I got mad at one of my
10 guys one day, one of the CIA guys that was talking to
11 me, sort of F-U dumping this stuff on me. Why didn't
12 you do something about it? It's one of my favorite
13 stories. And he said to me, this is apocryphal. And
14 he said it was apocryphal. He said, let me tell you a
15 story, Hersh. This is literally how he did it.

16 In `56 there was a famous Party Congress
17 in Moscow where Khrushchev made Stalin a non-person and
18 he was just carrying on before all the party delegates.
19 Bam! Stalin this, Stalin that. All of a sudden,
20 somebody stood up in the middle of his speech from the
21 auditorium and said, hey, Comrade Khrushchev, where
22 were you when the trains were rolling east every night,
23 when our grandmothers and grandfathers who thought

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1 thoughts that they shouldn't think we're going to
2 Siberia? Where were you when you couldn't publish
3 anything, any dissent? Where were you when it was to
4 be a Jew in Russia was to be put in the hands of the
5 NKPD intelligence service? Where were you? And
6 Khrushchev said, who said that? Who said that? My
7 friend waited. After thirty seconds Khrushchev said --
8 no, total silence. He said, that's where I was. Okay?

9 So where are we? So one of the things we
10 have to deal with in the press corps, nothing to do
11 with editors, I've always hated editors as just a
12 matter of practice. I've never known an editor who
13 didn't like a good story. I've never known an editor
14 who said to me, oh, my God, it's a great story, but you
15 can't do it. With the Pearl story, it was like, you
16 know, it's not everybody's, you don't want that story,
17 some editors and some lawyers, because it's problems.
18 He's probably going to sue, he says he is, in England
19 anyway.

20 (Laughter)

21 MR. HERSH: Gimme a break. He can't sue
22 here. One nice thing about America is, I mean maybe
23 they'll get to this. We shouldn't talk about it,

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1 though. Patriot Act part three, get rid of *New York*
2 *Times* versus Sullivan.

3 Anyway, I'm there on the way, by the way,
4 this second act of the Patriot Act that Chuck Lewis's
5 operation got its hands on. It's unbelievable.
6 They're backing off from it. But what can I tell you
7 about John Ashcroft? He confuses his personal
8 definition of God with the Constitution. So you've got
9 really, probably without question, the least
10 knowledgeable and the most dangerous Attorney General
11 we've ever had. If we get any more arrests, Bin al
12 Sheeb and Khalid Shiek, they're all important, but if
13 you go back and read what they said, this is it, we've
14 broken the back of al-Qaeda. The answer is there's a
15 lot of answers we don't have.

16 Anyway, the point of all this is to give
17 you some idea of where we're at. So here I am, Mr.
18 Tough Guy, and last fall I do a story of Massoueh.
19 Massoueh's this sort of poor schlepp. Actually, the
20 *Russian Post* ran a couple of stories that nobody picked
21 up on about him. There's testimony the government now
22 has that Massoueh was not the twentieth. He wasn't
23 picked. Bin al Sheeb, Bin Sheeba, rather, al Bin

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1 Sheeba. I'm mangling it, but I assure you he's Arab.
2 How do you pronounce it? Bin al-Sheeba. But you guys
3 would know. You've done stories about it nobody's
4 touched. I've noticed it.

5 He has actually sung and said that we
6 didn't touch Massoueh. He wasn't going to be the
7 twentieth guy. He's too crazy. And the story I wrote
8 was out of a lot of guys I knew in the FBI and one guy
9 higher up in the community who told me that they got a
10 lot of problems with Massoueh, because they knew very
11 early he wasn't a big player. They had some
12 information from, I didn't write it, from British
13 intercepts, British monitoring, he was living in a
14 mosque and connected to a mosque and the British had
15 something on him.

16 He was sort of a self-starter. He comes
17 here, he's a crazy guy. I'm telling you the story for
18 a reason. He's a crazy guy who comes here and wants to
19 get into the act. He knows there's going to be a bomb,
20 a lot of people flying planes into buildings. He wants
21 to be one of the players with the big boys. He's far
22 too fanatical, too religious. The nineteen guys who
23 did it were very cool. One of them reported a small

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1 crime. He had his car broken into a month before 9/11
2 and reported it, gave a police report. I mean, they
3 were cool. That doesn't mean there's a million of
4 them.

5 I noticed again in the paper the other
6 day, in the Post, Khalid Sheik Mohammed said, there's
7 are dozens of us ready to take, I noticed the word
8 dozens. I don't know, maybe it's a bad translation,
9 but it isn't thousands. And the issue of whether we've
10 been sold too much down the river on al-Qaeda or not is
11 a tough issue, because the day you write that story
12 something will happen. That's what every editor
13 thinks, but I tend to think we're way overboard on the
14 threat. Not that they're not bad guys, but I don't
15 think they're in every major city waiting to strike us.

16 That doesn't mean there's not an issue, but it's just
17 a question of how much we take these alerts to heart.

18 In any case, what I learned is that the
19 intel boys know he's no good. He's not one of the
20 twenty, but they also know he's in al-Qaeda. And here
21 Ashcroft's got him on a death penalty. And some very
22 senior guys in the FBI along with the guy in the CIA
23 make a pitch to Ashcroft. Drop the death penalty,

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1 let's talk to this guy. He knows al-Qaeda. We have
2 nothing on al-Qaeda. It's been six months since 9/11 -
3 - this is the spring of 2002 -- let's go talk to the
4 guy. Ashcroft won't drop it, he wants to hang him.

5 So they never do talk to the guy, which is
6 amazing. And the guys are very pissed off about it,
7 because it's stupid, it's counterproductive and they've
8 got a narrow-minded, crazy Attorney General that they
9 can't deal with. So a lot of guys quit. Not because
10 of this, but it was one of a series of things. Some
11 very senior guys quit sort of quietly last summer.
12 Three or four top guys in the FBI who knew a lot about
13 terrorism just disappeared. One went to home cooking
14 school, seriously, went to be a cook, wanted to cook.
15 Interesting guy, though. Very interesting.

16 Anyway, the point of all this, so I write
17 this story about Massoueh saying, hey, you know, it's
18 more complicated than we think. He may not have been
19 the world's worst guy, he's not a good guy. He would
20 have done what they asked him, but they didn't ask him.

21 He wasn't invited to the party. There was a lot of
22 problems with it.

23 I'm sorry to tell you, that lady, Raleigh,

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1 out in Minneapolis is a loon, all that stuff about the
2 FBI out there. There was a lot of problems with Pfizer
3 once. I give them all this stuff and I'm going to get
4 the series published and I'm going in the morning to
5 sort of pimp it for *The New Yorker* on television, which
6 is what I do, sometimes.

7 And I'm going down to CNN in the morning,
8 I'm thinking to myself, Jesus, maybe I'd better roll
9 back on this and just start off by saying, hey, by the
10 way, folks, I don't like Massoueh, I don't like what he
11 stands for, al-Qaeda's dangerous, but let me tell you
12 the problems with the story. In other words, Mr. Tough
13 Guy, My Lai, you've heard about all these tough
14 stories, looking Kissinger in the eye and Richard Pearl
15 and all that stuff, I was scared. I was nervous about
16 getting out in front, self-censorship. It got to me
17 and I can imagine how much it gets to a lot of other
18 reporters. It got to me big time, I was really worried
19 about this story. Because I was out there I felt I was
20 going to get exposed, I was going to look like a guy
21 who really didn't appreciate it.

22 I did whatever I did. The story was
23 ignored, because the story's always ignored. *The New*

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1 *Yorker* had a great story the other week on John
2 WalkerLindh, just last week, on some of the misdoings
3 in the Justice Department. That was pretty much
4 ignored, too, because it doesn't fly in the face of
5 where we're going. In a funny way, we're driven a
6 little bit by a frenzy about the war. It's very hard
7 to take a deep breath and go the other way. John
8 Walker Lindh, there's a lot of aspects to that story,
9 but in any case it's worth reading.

10 So there we are. It's sort of scary. I
11 wish I could give you something optimistic to say. I
12 think this guy will do what he wants to do. If he
13 wants to go to war, he will. The only thing keeping
14 him back now is Blair. I can tell you right now the
15 military, despite all that talk you think, get down
16 deep, get below the chairman's level, they don't like
17 it. Smart officers don't like it, there's an awful lot
18 of dissent. But a few stories about it in the press.

19 Actually, at *The Post* Tom Ricks has done
20 some stuff and it's totally right on. It's tremendous.

21 I've never seen such disaffection. I know a lot of
22 three and four stars. I mean, it's very profound.
23 Nobody's going to talk about it. I can't write about

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1 it, because I don't want to burn anybody. It's not a
2 popular war in the military among certain officers in
3 certain services, particularly the Marines.

4 And so there you are. I don't know what
5 we can do about it. We do our best. There's something
6 that makes Washington and going up against the flag and
7 the president I guess I would think it's no harder than
8 going up against the church or going up against the
9 cops in Dallas, believe me, I can imagine what that was
10 like for those guys down there.

11 But there's something about it that just
12 stops us. It's not from lack of trying. It's not the
13 fault of editors, there's no great censorship by the
14 publishers, but a lot of stories just don't get done.
15 And I don't know what to do about it. Nothing. Just
16 sit there and duck and wait, maybe buy a house in
17 Europe somewhere.

18 So let's do some questions. This is a
19 totally uncheerful account. Here we are celebrating
20 all this great journalism and I tell you folks we're
21 sort of stuck. We have a basically undemocratic
22 presidency and government that doesn't really believe
23 very much in what we do for a living, that thinks the

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1 only way to deal with us is to manipulate us. And if
2 we get out of line or we get in trouble, we don't get
3 called on at speeches or press conferences and worse.
4 So there we are. It's always been part of it. I just
5 think it's so much worse now and so much more
6 frightening. And there we are.

7 Let's do some questions. Somebody must
8 have some questions.

9 MR. JONES: Before we go to questions.

10 (Applause)

11 MR. JONES: In addition to the prize that
12 we give Sy, we have another traditional present that we
13 give to the winner of this Career Award, so that you
14 can really aggravate George W. Bush even more than you
15 already do. The thought of you doing your work while
16 sitting in a Harvard chair with your name on it I'm
17 sure will really antagonize him. This is yours, and as
18 you can see it has your name on it.

19 (Applause)

20 MR. HERSH: is going to take a few
21 questions. We've got a microphone here, there and up
22 here. I would encourage you to line up at the mics,
23 and those of you who are journalists in the room, you

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1 should feel welcome to step up and participate in this.

2 Yes, sir.

3 MR. HARRINGTON: Yes. First, Mr. Hersh, I
4 want to congratulate you on the award you received this
5 evening.

6 MR. HERSH: Thank you.

7 MR. HARRINGTON: My name is John
8 Harrington and I'm a mid-career student here at the
9 Kennedy School.

10 You mentioned earlier in your speech and I
11 want to quote, "There's no truth and integrity coming
12 out of the White House." Do you think it's these broad
13 and absolute statements that sometime give rise to
14 mistrust of the press when you paint a very broad and
15 absolute picture?

16 MR. HERSH: I'll make it little truth.

17 (Laughter)

18 MR. HARRINGTON: Okay, so you did adjust
19 your statement then; huh? That's all I wanted. I'm
20 happy.

21 MR. HERSH: Let me say this. On the
22 notion I do believe that the president believes what he
23 says, if that's what you mean. I think he believes

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1 what he says. I think much of the evidence he
2 presented we now -- we've had case after case of things
3 falling apart. The story on al-Qaeda, they won't give
4 up on the al-Qaeda story, they won't give up on the al-
5 Qaeda connection to Iraq. They keep on pushing that
6 issue. I have friends in the CIA that tell me if they
7 hear one more story about weapons of mass destruction,
8 of nuclear weapons in Iraq, they're going to become
9 democrats. It's just not there on the inside. So
10 there are some serious problems.

11 Let me roll back, let me protect myself a
12 little bit. Obviously, there are an awful lot of
13 tremendous people in the government, particularly in
14 the intelligence service and the military. I just
15 happen to think that some of the people in the higher
16 levels of the White House and the little cluster that
17 works close to the president, I think they see the
18 press as something to be handled and they handle us. I
19 don't think they see it even in terms of an obligation.

20 I don't think they see a sense of obligation to be
21 candid with us. We're just something to be handled.

22 This is always true in all White Houses.
23 Everybody wants to sell the story the best they can,

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1 but I've never seen a White House in which it has been
2 harder to get behind the facade. It's just very tough.

3 And they punish people. There's a tremendous amount
4 of withholding of access, etcetera. You either tell
5 the story their way or you don't have to tell it.

6 We had a story the other day in *The New*
7 *York Times*, with great fanfare told us that the
8 president actually sat through a movie two weeks ago,
9 just to show how calm he is, sat through a whole movie.

10 It's that kind of nonsense that gets published,
11 because people want to position themselves in such a
12 way that they can continue to have access. For
13 reporters on a beat it's very tough.

14 To refine what I said and to be a little
15 more serious about it, and I'm serious all the way
16 along, I'm dead serious about what I'm telling you,
17 we're in for a ride with these guys, I don't know where
18 it's going to take us. My belief is that their
19 attitude towards the press is that if it's a question
20 of any particular imbalance or anything that could be
21 upsetting to their policy or causes some embarrassment,
22 you withhold or you manipulate or you distort. And
23 that's what I mean. That's pretty serious. That's

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1 very serious. I don't trust very much what the press
2 secretary says, because he's been demonstrated to say
3 falsehoods. But then, he's just a press secretary.

4 MR. WILSON: My name is Greg Wilson. I
5 work here at the Kennedy School.

6 Last week Ari Fleischer had a press
7 conference and it was sort of a classic moment in time
8 where what the press secretary says met with a burst of
9 laughter from the press corps because it was so absurd.
10 The video was on the internet, but it never made the
11 network broadcasts.

12 Basically, he said that the coalition of
13 the willing was a process that was being built and
14 developed, but countries weren't being bought or they
15 weren't being bribed. Right when he said that the
16 whole room exploded with laughter and he left the press
17 conference podium and walked away. But that video
18 never made the network news broadcasts. I was just
19 wondering if you had any comments, because often people
20 say it's tough to tell a story unless you have the
21 pictures.

22 MR. HERSH: Well, your story is the
23 comment. That's the same thing I'm talking about. The

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1 problem is this isn't just about some campaign horsing
2 around, this is about committing a quarter million
3 people to war.

4 Have some of you had a chance to read the
5 new book by this marine, *Jarhead*, the one that was
6 reviewed in *The New York Times*. What interested me
7 about the book was that he was describing, he went
8 through the same sort of training we're having in the
9 Gulf War. Before the Gulf War he was in a Marine
10 sniper squad. He was sort of an elite marine and he
11 went through months and months of special training
12 waiting for the war like our guys are doing, not as
13 long obviously, but they've been there some for three,
14 four, five weeks or more.

15 And this whole notion of we're going to do
16 everything we can to fight a humane war, minimize
17 casualties, he said, by the time the war began I wanted
18 to -- this is literally what he said. He said, all I
19 wanted to do is get out there and drink and dope and
20 rape and murder. It wasn't a judgment, it's just what
21 you're trained to do. He wanted to kill some Iraqis.
22 The point he was making was, what do you expect? And
23 so I don't quite know once we start a war how we can

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1 really be so sure that we're going to minimize, it has
2 a potential for killing an awful lot of non-combatants,
3 a little on our soldiers.

4 So I don't quite know how --. Is it
5 morality? Is it common sense? I don't quite know how
6 we're here. I don't know how we're here. I don't know
7 why we're here. I really don't know. And it's
8 stunning to me that we're here. And it's stunning to
9 me that so many of us in the press corps, it doesn't
10 matter, we're beat. We can't beat a system that's as
11 powerful as the White House and its apparatus.

12 So why would the networks not put it on?
13 I can give you a million reasons, but one of the major
14 ones has to do with continue to have good relationships
15 with the, they want to put people, they want to embed
16 their people, they want to be able to get the story.
17 As much as I think the internet is fantastic, it's an
18 incredible device that cuts across all ideologies,
19 cable television in terms of the war and what they're
20 doing to fan the war and with the vested interests in
21 the war is stunning to me.

22 And there are a lot of reporters I know
23 that already have contracts for books on the war and

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1 are covering the war. You can't begin to explain to
2 them, if you've got a contract for a book on the war
3 and you're covering the war, don't you think that might
4 impact how you would write about the war? No,
5 absolutely not. I don't know how we got here. All I
6 know is we're going to all be real sorry soon.

7 Eric?

8 MR. ALTERMAN: Sy, I think Alex probably
9 spoke for most of the room, I don't know, when he
10 called you the best investigative reporter of all time.
11 I certainly share that feeling.

12 MR. HERSH: You're not by brother-in-law,
13 right?

14 (Laughter)

15 MR. ALTERMAN: I wouldn't be surprised if
16 a lot of editors who you work with call you probably
17 the most difficult investigative reporter of all time.

18 But I think it's fair to say that you can almost
19 measure the health of the profession by whether or not
20 you're working steadily, whether or not your work is
21 being treated with respect.

22 I thought Bob Thompson wrote a beautiful
23 profile of you, one of the longest articles I read in

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1 my life in the *Washington Post Magazine*, where he
2 compared the period where you were published in *The New*
3 *York Times* in the early '70s, as if they were
4 publishing Izzy Stone's weekly every day in *The New*
5 *York Times*.

6 *The New York Times* is still the most
7 powerful journalistic institution we have, still the
8 most influential, despite the network, despite the
9 company in the room, I don't think we can argue that.
10 I'm wondering if you could reflect a little bit on your
11 history with that institution. In other words, here's
12 the most powerful journalistic institution we have and
13 the most influential. It loves you and it hates you.
14 It wants you and it doesn't want you. It doesn't know
15 what to do with you. Is there a place for someone
16 who's not as well known, who's not as powerful, doesn't
17 have the kind of cards you bring to the table to do
18 that kind of reporting in an institution like that,
19 where it's most necessary?

20 MR. HERSH: Do you somehow, Eric, think
21 I'm into self-immolation? Do you think I'm some bomb
22 from Vietnam, I'm going to burn myself in protest?

23 MR. ALTERMAN: Yeah, I do, actually.

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1 MR. HERSH: I'll pass. I'll pass on *The*
2 *New York Times*.

3 MR. ALTERMAN: That's an accomplishment of
4 some sort.

5 MR. HERSH: We should go a couple more.
6 Hello, Mr. Secretary.

7 MR. GLICKMAN: Thank you.

8 I'm just fascinated by you and I had the
9 privilege of serving both the legislative and executive
10 branch of government. I'm listening to all this stuff
11 and I'm thinking to myself, boy, do we only have one
12 branch of the government in the county? Is Article II
13 the only branch of government? And what strikes me
14 about this conversation is you've only talked about
15 Article II. There's been no mention of Article I. The
16 founding fathers kind of intentionally made Article I
17 the Congress, I think because they believed that one
18 branch of government was slightly more equal than the
19 other.

20 You haven't mentioned the Congress in
21 terms of your contacts, in terms of your sources, in
22 terms of who you deal with. Has the Congress become
23 irrelevant in all these stories?

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1 MR. HERSH: It's gotten so much dumber
2 it's embarrassing. That's the real problem, it's the
3 dumbing of Congress is one of the biggest problems we
4 have. We can all blame the Democrats, but I can tell
5 you right now there are a lot of wonderful conservative
6 Republicans with great ideology, Henry Hyde. People
7 who are really sticklers, who know there are a lot of
8 problems who aren't talking about it, who are just as
9 afraid as some of the Democrats who wonder what the
10 hell's going to happen if I go out against this guy,
11 will I win the nomination, etcetera, etcetera.

12 So of course there's been a collapse of
13 the Democratic party, but there's also been a collapse
14 of Congress. When I first got to Washington in the
15 `60s, we used to kvell when the annual Senate and House
16 Appropriations Hearings on defense spending came up,
17 because you knew in those classified hearings when the
18 intelligence community and the military community had
19 to go in and explain some of the more sensitive weapons
20 they were buying, you knew there was incredible
21 questioning. Even old man Stennis, the senator from
22 Mississippi, you knew there'd be great questioning. It
23 doesn't exist anymore. John Stennis is now replaced by

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1 John Warner. What, a 200-point swing? What can I tell
2 you? So it's not just that smart anymore. It's not
3 that smart. It's not that interesting.

4 In the `70s, when I was a kid at *The New*
5 *York Times*, every reporter will tell you you had a
6 relationship. You leak me this, I'll do this,
7 hearings. You had Harold Hughes of Iowa, who was on
8 the Armed Services Committee. There was some series of
9 articles I was running about a yeoman, something about
10 the Vietnam War, some guy that was just ratting out the
11 generals on bombing without authority. And Harold
12 Hughes wanted an investigation. And he said they beat
13 him up so badly in the committee, Thurman and Stennis
14 and Symington, he said he cried, he told me, but I got
15 the hearing and we had an investigation to do. He got
16 the hearing.

17 Jim Woolsey right now was one of the
18 people who was pretty active in it. He was then sort
19 of, he was actually a Joe McCarthy Democrat once in his
20 life, he'll probably sue me for it, in London, though.
21 (Laughter)

22 MR. HERSH: I just think it's appalling.
23 I do some of the stories. I did something Bill Moyers

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1 had me do. It was an old story, but I did it because
2 he's smart, Moyers is smart.

3 I did a story a year ago for *The New*
4 *Yorker*. It came from guys in Delta. I can tell you
5 that. And they're fighting the war. The war's two
6 weeks old. The war is real simple. Three or four
7 hundred special forces guys did amazing things in the
8 war with the help of bombs, etcetera. There was a lot
9 of deal-making, you go to the various tribal chiefs and
10 you cut a deal.

11 But basically, the war was won very
12 quickly, very early and it was a great coup, to their
13 everlasting credit. And they had a lot of bad guys
14 al-Qaeda captured in a town called Kanduz. This is
15 late November after the first battles. They won a
16 first early skirmish. And then they had them all
17 captured, they had six, eight, maybe ten thousand.

18 And we had the air. We were flying all
19 over. One night they got an order. There was a
20 channel cut out of the air pocket. They were denied a
21 channel. There was a ten-mile corridor they could not
22 operate in for a week, and the corridor went from
23 Kanduz about 150 miles or a little more, a couple of

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1 hundred kilometers, into Pakistan. And what it was
2 they later -- they went nuts, because their job, they
3 were going around happily killing people with the
4 choppers, all of a sudden they couldn't fly in the
5 zone. And every night planes started flying out,
6 Pakistani airplanes. Initially they were told the goal
7 was Musharraf who needed help. His intelligence
8 people, the Pakistani ISI, and by the way, the arrest
9 of the sheik the other day in Pakistan in a house owned
10 by ISI people. I mean, the real question -- I'm glad
11 he was arrested, but it does raise a lot of questions
12 still of how many al-Qaeda are there? How many Taliban
13 are there in Pakistan? What does the government really
14 know? Giving us that guy, was that his way of buying
15 us off so he can stay neutral in the U.N.? Who knows
16 what the game plan is.

17 But in any case, he had a few hundred or
18 more Pakistani military people who were training the
19 al-Qaeda, including two generals. And he had to get
20 them out. He had to get them out, we could not arrest
21 his people, because it would have been too humiliating
22 for him. He probably would have been overthrown. He
23 was in real worry. And it was a reasonable thing, he's

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1 our guy. So we flew him out. We lost control.

2 Every ISI guy took out as many al-Qaeda as
3 he could, so anywhere from 2,500 to 4,000 people got
4 out. And for the life of me -- and the best Rummie
5 could do on that story was to say -- and there had been
6 reports in the press. Guys in the field had said
7 there's planes going on, all that stuff, and Rummie
8 said, I don't know anything about it. News to me. He
9 didn't deny it. And it just slipped by, I don't
10 understand.

11 It's not the press that interests me,
12 where in the hell was Congress on a story like that?
13 They could get it. Call in hearings. The smart guy is
14 Levin and of course, Chris Dodd is smart, but he's
15 Chris Dodd. Much as I adore him, he's great and he's
16 wonderful, but ambivalent's a good word on a lot of
17 things. He's so smart and he knows it.

18 But Levin is great, Armed Services
19 Committee, he's the one guy I know they're afraid of in
20 the Republicans. I know the White House. It's the one
21 guy they don't like. When he starts a series of
22 questions, people have told me high up in this
23 administration, believe it or not I've got a couple,

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1 and they say he's the one guy we don't know where he's
2 going, because he's too smart. But he won't do it.
3 You can't get anybody to do it. It's an incredible
4 failure, I mean, it's a staggering failure. Does it
5 say something about money and politics? Does it say
6 something about -- I don't know about what.

7 But obviously it's a loaded question. You
8 don't disagree, do you? Or do you?

9 MR. GLICKMAN: No, but I'm more interested
10 in what you have to say.

11 (Laughter)

12 MR. JONES: We've got one more up here.

13 MR. HERSH: Yes, sir. Last one. It's
14 9:25.

15 FROM THE FLOOR: Could you please
16 elaborate on some of the instances of fabrication,
17 fraud, manipulation that you alluded to. To give you a
18 couple to possibly choose from, the February 5th Powell
19 speech where he called the U.K. intelligence document
20 fine, which turned out, well, you know the story.

21 MR. HERSH: Plagiarism.

22 FROM THE FLOOR: More than that, but also
23 inflated and altered. The recent Niger--

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1 MR. HERSH: Stop right there. That's
2 interesting. That's the most interesting right now.

3 FROM THE FLOOR: The aluminum tubes.

4 MR. HERSH: The tubes you can argue, you
5 can argue that any way you want. The Niger's really
6 interesting.

7 FROM THE FLOOR: And the spying. I don't
8 know if you believe that the e-mail that supposedly,
9 the NSA thing that ordered the surge in--

10 MR. HERSH: If the NSA wants a surge in
11 spying on the U.N., what else do you want them to do?
12 I'm glad they're doing it. I'm sorry somebody leaked
13 it, if it's true. But that seems to be, they're
14 talking about picking up e-mails, they're not talking
15 about breaking into offices in that memo, they're
16 talking about picking up e-mails and monitoring the
17 people in the, they're going to have a tough vote and
18 they want to know what the thinking is. They could
19 just as easily get it from reading the press.

20 In one way the American press corps has
21 been great, on the whole U.N. thing, they've been
22 terrific. You really can learn a lot. And that's
23 largely because, among other things, it's the U.N. We

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1 have foreign governments talking to us. We can get a
2 lot of informed comment from the French and the
3 Germans, although if I were those countries, I'd really
4 start investing in homeland security. Maybe Richard
5 can cut a deal. I withdraw that.

6 (Laughter)

7 MR. HERSH: in any case, the Niger is
8 interesting for this reason. Niger is the case where
9 there was an allegation that the Iraqis had been buying
10 uranium and there was some contact between Iraq and
11 Niger. There was some uranium ore shipped and there
12 were papers presented that turned out to be falsehoods.

13 They were made public and there was some embarrassment
14 in this government.

15 And I'll tell you what the people on the
16 inside say to me, it didn't come through normal
17 channels. There's a lot of intelligence that doesn't
18 get through George Tenant's hands that's getting to
19 people through the DOD and other places. There's
20 little special collection cells set up now. That's one
21 of the sort of incredible breakdowns in civilization
22 we've had. Because normally the CIA director would see
23 everything and vett it. And there's stuff going

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1 directly into the White House from groups in the
2 Pentagon and elsewhere, Doug Feiss, Sharpe and others.

3 It's been written about, but not to the extent that
4 probably it should be, but it's hard to get it. What
5 I'm telling you is just fragmentary, although I haven't
6 written it, but I'm telling you.

7 In any case, it wasn't a good fraud.
8 There was no way it wasn't caught. My friends on the
9 inside are very upset about it, because somebody passed
10 it on. Somebody said, it really doesn't matter that it
11 isn't good, it might work, and let the secretary drop
12 it off. I can tell you right now, from inside the
13 government people say to me, if there's nothing, I have
14 an e-mail from somebody, a station chief, who's very
15 involved and his answer is, there's nothing as
16 dangerous as allowing intelligence you know not to be
17 good to get to the national command authority leaders
18 and not stopping it when you know it's not good.
19 There's nothing as dangerous as perpetuating a lie on
20 an eve of a very dangerous war. And that kind of stuff
21 has gotten a lot of people very, very upset, if it's
22 so.

23 So Niger is the one that interests me the

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1 most right now. Sort of running it what they call in
2 the intelligence community is you white out, you try to
3 find out where it started, who said what, what the real
4 story is, who fabricated these pretty bad fabrications.

5 They were so bad that any good professional
6 intelligence officer with some skill in the area would
7 pick it up right away. Impossible that our
8 intelligence people did not pick it up, unless it
9 wasn't given to certain people to vett and it was
10 passed on into this private channel. If that's going
11 on, and what I'm telling you, obviously I think it is,
12 we're dealing with a very serious issue

13 When you have the major, major spokesman
14 for the government in the State Department being given
15 information he has no idea is not good, but there are
16 other people in the government who have a pretty good
17 idea it isn't and they're not sharing that information,
18 you're on the edge of sort of chaos and that's scary.

19 Goodbye.

20 (Applause)

21 MR. JONES: Sy, may you live a long life,
22 sincerely.

23 (Applause)

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1 MR. JONES: Let me remind you that the
2 finalists and winners of the Goldsmith Awards will take
3 part in a seminar tomorrow in the Malkin Penthouse,
4 which is on the top floor of this building. The
5 seminar will deal with the present and future of
6 investigative reporting. We've heard a lot about that
7 tonight. We'll be talking more about it tomorrow.
8 This is open to the public and all of you will be most,
9 most welcome. We start at 8:30 with a continental
10 breakfast, the seminar begins at 9:00.

11 Let me once again congratulate all of you
12 who are honored here tonight, all of you. Goodnight.

13 (Applause)

14 (Whereupon, at 9:28 p.m., the session
15 was adjourned.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the preceding transcript
is an accurate record based on the recordings of
the proceedings taken:

Before: ALEX JONES, Moderator

In the Matter of:

THE GOLDSMITH AWARDS

Date: March 11, 2003

Place: Cambridge, Massachusetts

Martin T. Farley
Advance Services

04/06/03
Date

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