

P. Graham, Katharine

Post Publisher Says IAPA Fails to Serve Latin Democracy

The Inter American Press Association is failing to achieve its aims of strengthening democracy and unity in the hemisphere, the publisher of The Washington Post said last night.

Mrs. Katharine Graham, who is also chairman of the host committee for the IAPA's annual meeting here, cited three symptoms of failure:

- The "steady retreat" from press freedom in most of Latin America, including Argentina, Brazil, Panama, Uruguay and even, briefly, Chile.
- The "joint journalistic failure" during the El Salvador-Honduras conflict last summer that saw the press of both countries "aggressively irresponsible—it printed rumor for fact, maligned its neighbor . . . and abdicated a free press's responsibility to seek and to tell the truth."

Meanwhile, Mrs. Graham said, the press of the United States "veered wildly from

first mocking the conflict as "the soccer war"—to grossly sensationalizing the battles when they did occur.

• The deployment of correspondents from North and South America, which has "poorly served" the unity of the Americas. She pointed out that only 10 correspondents for daily American newspapers are in Latin America, and four such Latin American correspondents are in the United States, none in Washington.

To improve this situation, she advocated a Latin American "common market of news" with an augmented press corps offering "coverage of United States life and politics untainted by any suspicion as may attach to our reportage on ourselves." She added that in this way Latin Americans could also "report news of themselves more fully to each other."

Mrs. Graham told the publishers of about 150 repre-

sented newspapers that the great need in Latin America is "a press that is not only intellectually but also financially independent."

"The highest democratic service of the kind of press we believe in, is to warn the people of menaces to freedom—not write obituaries on freedom," she said.

"Freedom of the press must be seen as something more than an idealistic abstraction: it means the practical, financial, everyday freedom of the individual journalist. So long as this journalist cannot support his family without supplementing his income with a non-journalistic job, neither the journalist nor his press is truly free."

Mrs. Graham addressed an IAPA dinner at the Sheraton Park Hotel, as did astronaut Frank Borman. The IAPA meeting will continue through Friday, closing with President Nixon's Latin American policy speech.