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KANSAS CITY, Mo., Sept. 18--Following is the text of a speech prepared for delivery by Vice President Walter F. Mondale at the KANSAS CITY STAR's Centennial Luncheon at the Radisson Muehlebach Hotel here.

Today we celebrate not just the founding of a remarkable newspaper. We celebrate the values of a great people.

One hundred years ago, when William Rockhill Nelson arrived in Kansas City and set up his printing press, he found a cowboy town with streets of mud. He discovered a society that was wide open; a land that was raw and wild; a people restless and impatient.

William Nelson set out to tame this city, and over the years he succeeded. He built your beautiful parks and broad boulevards. He called for street lights and paved thoroughfares. He struck at monopoly in business and corruption in government.

But even as the citizens of Kansas City rounded the rough edges of frontier life, they preserved and strengthened the heartland values of America. They took the independent spirit of the settlers, and built with it one of the most vigorous, most probing, most respected newspapers in the country. They took the faith of Samuel Clemens and forever committed this city to civil rights for all. They stayed true to the honest, stubborn and proud habits of their forebears -- and gave America one of our most decent and courageous Presidents ever, Harry Truman.

One of your Congressmen put it this way nearly a century ago: "Frothy eloquence neither convinces nor satisfies me. I am from Missouri. You have got to show me."

Before a citizen here trusts his government, government has to earn that trust. Before he believes anything you tell him, you must show him why it is so.

That proud skepticism describes the Missouri character. It is priceless. It is why people here have insisted on their right to a newspaper as open and informative and free as the Kansas City Star.

William Nelson wanted to build the best paper in the world. It should cost so little that everyone could afford to buy it. It should probe so well that government would fear its wrath. It should be so committed to good writing that William Allen White and Ernest Hemingway could learn the art of their craft in these newsrooms. And they did.

Nelson worked at getting his newspaper out every day as if his life depended on it. He presided over the lay-out. He chose the illustrations. He leaned against the type-cases and watched as the pages were put together. He controlled every single thing about his paper except one -- the liberty of his newsmen and women.

As William Allen White said:

Every man on the paper -- in the advertising department, the circulation department, the news department, the editorial room -- was convinced in his own absolute freedom, the right to express himself unhampered, except by the truth as he saw it.

That freedom is what matters. It is what we celebrate today. It is what the values of Missouri are all about. No reporter, no editor, no paper, no people, no nation can ever afford to lose it -- the freedom to think as we want and speak as we think.

For one hundred years, the Kansas City Star has upheld the freedom of a vigorous, probing press. We must preserve that heritage. We must protect that first freedom of our Bill of Rights. For I believe that no right is more basic to free and democratic government than the right we have to an unintimidated, untrammelled, free, and independent press.

I believe that that is exactly what our Founders intended.

For they had a marvelous suspicion about human nature. They believed that if men and women were endowed with the love of freedom -- and we are -- we are too often, and unfortunately, endowed with the desire to chase after power, to hold it, to expand it,

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and to abuse it.

This suspicion permeates what must be the wisest, most effective and profound public document in the history of literature, the Constitution of the United States. In that document, our Founders said first of all, let's create a strong, powerful government. And second they said, let's not trust it. Let's divide it. Let's split up the powers. Let's check its grasp. Let's have an independent judiciary, a separation of powers, a federal dispersion of authority, a Bill of Rights, a free and active press. As James Reston once said, "They wanted enough power to lead, but they wanted to divide power enough to assure liberty."

James Madison put it this way in Federalist #51:

What is government itself, but the greatest of all reflections on human nature?

If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself. A dependence on the people is, no doubt, the primary control on the government; but experience has taught mankind the necessity of auxiliary precautions.

Our history has shown that one of the best and irreplaceable precautions is a strong and free press. One cannot imagine what America would be like today if John Peter Zenger had not asserted and won the right to speak out against the tyrannous rule of colonial government. One cannot picture what our society would resemble if Elijah Lovejoy and the other brave abolitionists and not stood their ground, and given their lives, for the cause of emancipation. One shudders to think of what our future would be like if the New York Times had not exposed a policy of mistakes and misdeeds and published the Pentagon Papers. One must rejoice today that the Kansas City Star and countless other papers across this country were brave enough to liberate an idea others thought too dangerous to speak out loud -- the idea of civil rights for all. Two hundred and fifty years after Zenger said that his was the "Best Cause, the cause of liberty" -- you have proved him right again and again.

Thomas Jefferson once said this:

The basis of our government being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter.

Thank goodness we'll never have to make that impossible choice. And the reason is this: We'll keep our government. We'll keep it strong yet just, powerful yet safe for our rights -- because we have a good, solid, active and free press.

For that reason, everytime the press feels a threat to its basic independence, every American stands threatened in his rights. And few recent events were more threatening to us all than when, two years ago, the Supreme Court upheld a local prosecutor who had searched the newsroom of the Stanford Daily.

Let me state as emphatically as I can, this Administration opposes the search of newsrooms by any law enforcement agency for evidence of a crime committed by others. We believe with Justice Hugo Black that the point of a free press is to censor the government -- not the other way around.

Within days of the Stanford decision, I announced on behalf of the President that we were beginning the preparation of new legislation. To my knowledge, the federal government has never sought a warrant to search a newsroom. But we wanted to make sure that no government, at any level, could do so. And I am pleased to report that the Senate has passed our bill, the House is working on it right now, and we expect Congress to enact it soon -- so that newsmen everywhere can be free of fear, free of searches, free to do the job we need them to do.

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3. And not just searches. We must be wary of the flood of subpoenas that threaten to drown the very editorial process. The distinguished Reporters' Committee has found that in recent years about two-thirds of the litigated subpoenas which resulted in court opinions were litigated in state courts -- only one-third in federal courts. And by far the majority were issued at the request of defense counsel, not the prosecution. Still subpoenas that pry into the records of reporters, that invade the editorial process, that compel reporters to testify about their sources, have a chilling and menacing effect, no matter who makes the request or which court you're hauled into.

And I am proud that we have an Attorney General who follows strict and elaborate subpoena guidelines to protect press rights. And because of that, he has established an unprecedented relationship of respect and harmony with the American press. Reporters should not be turned into bailiffs or detective agencies. Their job is gathering news. And that is the way this Administration thinks they should be treated.

But it's only as witnesses that you should be kept out of courts. As reporters, you must have access to open trials and open pre-trial proceedings. It was not the closed proceedings of the Star Chamber that made Anglo-American law the most democratic in the world. It was open and free trials that let the public know that justice was done. For that reason, several trial closings have had a chilling effect on all of us concerned with fair trials. And in the last few weeks the Attorney General has proposed new federal guidelines which will regulate the authority of government attorneys to ask for and even to agree to closing any criminal or civil proceeding. Because of the vital public interest in open judicial proceedings, we have taken the position that in all but extreme cases trials must be open. They should be open. And if this Administration has its way, they will stay open.

Because we are an open society, because we are a free people, one of the most difficult and challenging tasks we face is to frame the institutions of secrecy that we need.

Everyone in this room will agree that we must have the best, most capable FBI we can get. We must have the most sophisticated intelligence community in the world. And today we have them. Led by two of the finest, most dedicated chiefs we've ever had -- Bill Webster and Stansfield Turner; run by brave men and women of dedication and patriotism; our FBI and CIA and other intelligence agencies deserve the respect, and admiration, and the thanks of the American people.

And everyone in this room will agree that to make these institutions compatible with a free society, we must put them firmly under the rule of law. If we do not -- if they were to run wild -- they would not only threaten our freedom, but in the process undermine the public trust and respect so crucial to their strength.

I have heard it said from time to time that our government needs extraordinary powers; that our Constitution fails to provide all the instruments necessary to protect our country. I don't believe that. Everything that must be done to uphold our laws, to protect our people, to maintain our freedom, can be done within the Constitution of the United States. There's no need to transgress our Constitution. And if you do so, you undermine the very principles that have protected our beloved nation for two hundred years.

Four years ago, I came to Kansas City and said that we had just passed through one of the most shameful periods of American history. For not only had some officials of these agencies operated outside the laws, even some elected leaders had authorized these officials to deliberately break the law. We need not recount the sad story of the illegal bugging and tapping of reporters; the harassing of Americans who had never committed a crime; the violating of the constitutional rights of American citizens. For thankfully, those who run our agencies today are not responsible for those misdeeds. It is a chapter that is closed and behind us.

Four years ago, I pledged to you that our Administration would both vigorously enforce and uphold the rule of law. We pledged that we would fulfill to the best of our ability our constitutional oath to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States.

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We have worked hard to fulfill that pledge. We passed the Electronic Surveillance Act so that no reporter or any other citizen need fear illegal eavesdropping on his conversations.

We have tried to remove the cloud that hung over the independence of American journalists. President Carter has declared that the CIA can recruit reporters only in the most extreme circumstances -- and only with his personal approval. Not once during this Administration has the CIA used an American reporter.

By Executive Order, we reformed procedures so that every important decision, though secret, would be made at the highest levels of the agencies, by officials accountable for their actions.

For the first time in perhaps any nation's history, we have proposed and worked to establish legislative charters for our intelligence community.

And after three years of intensive work we are nearing enactment of legislation that will provide congressional oversight of U.S. intelligence activities. The Justice Department supports this legislation. The agencies support it. A bi-partisan coalition in both the House and the Senate have recommended it. And today I am pleased to announce that the President of the United States will sign that bill when it comes to his desk.

But the problem of secrecy in a free society is never fully resolved. And today we face a new challenge. It is: How do you protect the identities of our intelligence agents -- and protect therefore their lives and the work they do -- and still not deprive Americans of their First Amendment rights?

In the last few years, a handful of people have disclosed about 1,600 names of alleged agents. After one disclosure, one American was murdered on his front lawn in Athens. After another -- only a few weeks ago -- an American barely escaped an assassination attempt in Jamaica, this obviously a deliberate assault on our intelligence agencies.

Right now we're working on legislation that will both prohibit the deliberate disclosure of agents' identities -- and do it in a way that protects the freedom of the American press. We believe this can be done and we're working with Congress on legislation that meets both these objectives.

As we work toward that goal, be assured that your government opposes the adoption of legislation generally referred to as an Official Secrets Act -- by which the government would be empowered to impose censorship, and thereby be permitted to hide from the public its own mistakes and failures. A society that permits its government to censor the news is not only broadly undermining freedom. Surely it is destroying the basic trust and respect upon which government must depend.

Unfortunately, too many people in the world today have precisely that kind of government. And I am proud that America has taken a stand in the United Nations against government control of journalists. We'll go back again and again -- in Helsinki, Belgrade, Madrid, or anywhere else -- until every people have secured the basic human right of free expression.

That battle will not be won in the next few months, nor even in the next few years. For every tyrant fears most of all the freedom of thought.

The greatest threat to tyranny today is not an opposing army -- for you can fight an army and defeat it. It is a printing press, the possession of which by private citizens is outlawed by dictatorships around the world. It is not the palace that rebels may take -- for that you can take back. It is the radio station that feeds news to your people. It is not guns -- for these you can capture. It is not dissidents -- for these you can imprison. It is radio signals, and leaflets, and books, and newspapers, and television. It is what you in this room devote your lives to -- the spreading of free ideas.

That is the greatest threat because, however many dissidents you imprison, you cannot lock up an idea. However many books you burn, you cannot destroy their purpose. When Stalin hounded the greatest Russian poet of this century and sent him to the Gulag, his manuscripts of poetry were also seized and forbidden to be published. But through his poems disappeared, his wife and family and friends did not let them die. They memorized the tens of thousands of lines he had written. For years each night they recited the poems to themselves. And when the official climate changed, and the ban on

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his works was eased, they wrote his words on paper once more -- and gave them their freedom again.

We are blessed that we've never had to do anything like that. Let us be proud that here in the heartland of America we have always been free. For we have worked at it. The fact of it is, democracy takes guts. It is not for the faint-hearted. It survives on the good sense and courage and faith of the American people.

From the beginning of history some people ^{have} said that security rests on censorship. But in two hundred years, not once have we permitted government to protect itself from Americans. History shows that for all the risks that freedom entails, we have built the most prosperous, the most secure, the most humane, and the freest nation on earth. And that's good enough for me.

A wise man once said this:

When our nation was founded, there was a Holy Roman Emperor, Venice was a Republic, France was ruled by a King, China and Japan by an Emperor, Russia by a czar and Great Britain had only the barest beginnings of a democracy. All of these proud regimes and scores of others have long since passed into history, and among the world's powers, the only government that stands essentially unchanged is the Federal Union put together in the 1780s by 13 states on the east coast of North America.

And if you want to know why, it's because of this: Our freedom.

Thank you very much.

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