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# Reed Irvine takes AIM at liberals in the media

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WASHINGTON TIMES STAFF

**K**atharine Graham stared out from the podium with a weary expression. It had been a long stockholders' meeting, and out there on the floor there was a riot going on. First these people had demanded that she fire Ben Bradlee, her newspaper's executive editor. Then they wanted the head of Bob Woodward, her metropolitan editor, who not so long ago had won a Pulitzer prize for exposing Watergate. And now — now they were demanding to know the identity of the mysterious Deep Throat, the Washington Post's master Watergate source.

Mrs. Graham looked squarely at her chief tormentor, a graying 59-year-old retired economist named Reed Irvine. "I discussed your letter two or three years back, I remember, with one of the editors," she said. "And they said, 'Irvine doesn't want an answer. He wants to machine-gun our feet and watch us dance.' And that is what you do want.

"And," she added, "I am calling an end to this meeting."

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The bullets were bouncing all around William S. Paley's feet. The chairman of America's most watched television network was trying to explain why TV cameras were banned from a CBS stockholders' meeting in New Orleans. A few years before, he said, cameras caused "a very bad experience...It did something very strange to the audience itself. It was very disruptive...."

Reed Irvine took the microphone. Would CBS, he wondered, be recommending to Congress and other organizations that TV cameras be banned because of their disruptive effect?

"No. I would not," Paley answered.

"Just CBS," Irvine retorted.

What Paley didn't say was that he had heard a report that Reed Irvine might try to bring his own camera crew to the meeting. That was when CBS suddenly realized that television cameras can cause trouble.

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Sydney Gruson, the vice chairman of the New York Times Co., wanted to make sure the reporter had the quote right. "Now what did I just say about Irvine?" he asked. "Read it back."

"I find Reed an extremely difficult adversary," the reporter read from his notes.

"Oh, no," Gruson said reprovingly. "You left out intelligent. I said, an extremely intelligent difficult adversary. Be sure you get that right. Life's difficult enough without dropping 'intelligent' from that description."

Gruson paused. "And that," he declared, "is all I'm going to say."

*If communism is cancer to Irvine, then there are a host of other diseases that infect liberalism, perhaps not so lethal, but dangerous nevertheless. The AIM Report offers prescriptions. . .*

Reed Irvine, as he will be happy to tell you in exquisite detail, lives in a world very different than the one you read in most newspapers or see on the evening news. In Irvine's world, we won the Vietnam War on the battlefields and lost it on the television screens. In Irvine's world, the Washington Post was responsible for the deaths of several million innocent Vietnamese and Cambodians by running its stories on Watergate. In Irvine's world newsrooms may be populated by communist agents and — more commonly — their well-intentioned but hopelessly dumb dupes, the liberals. In Irvine's world, we would be wondering just why it is that Walter Cronkite hardly ever says anything bad about Russia.

Irvine runs Accuracy in Media, which grew from little more than a post office box and a few sheets of stationery in 1969 to a bustling organization with a dozen or so employees and a budget of something over \$1 million today. About 30,000 readers, many of them fervid letter-writers, subscribe to the twice-a-month AIM Report. It is fair to say that the stories in AIM Report ("The Soviet Line in Our Media," "U.S. Media Push Foreign Propaganda," "You Can't Trust Dan Rather") are not likely to be found in most newspapers. At the end of every newsletter, under the heading, "What You Can Do," Irvine gives his readers the names and addresses of this month's target: perhaps a recalcitrant managing editor, perhaps a corporation that stubbornly keeps advertising on CBS documentaries. A raging torrent of letters is sure to follow.

Irvine drives a lot of journalists crazy — so much so that most of them refuse to even discuss him. Dan Rather, Walter Cronkite, Harry Reasoner and Mike Wallace all refused to take phone calls about this story. So did nearly everyone at the Washington Post. "Reed has made a lot of money flogging this newspaper," explained one Post official who declined to talk. "The dumbest thing I could possibly do would be to give him more ammunition."

Some Post editors have made their feelings known elsewhere. In 1978, the paper's editor, Ben Bradlee, sent Irvine a note. "You have revealed yourself as a miserable, carping, retromingent vigilante," Bradlee wrote, "and I for one am sick of wasting my time in communication with you." (Webster's defines "retromingent" as "discharging the urine backwards." As William F. Buckley mused in print, "it isn't immediately clear how this is biologically possible, and not at all clear why it is disparaging.") The delighted Irvine immediately had the letter blown up to poster size and hung it on his wall. Later, Bradlee became less prolix in his criticism of AIM. When informed that, in the wake of the scandal over Janet Cooke's Pulitzer prize-winning fake story about an 8-year-old junkie, AIM

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