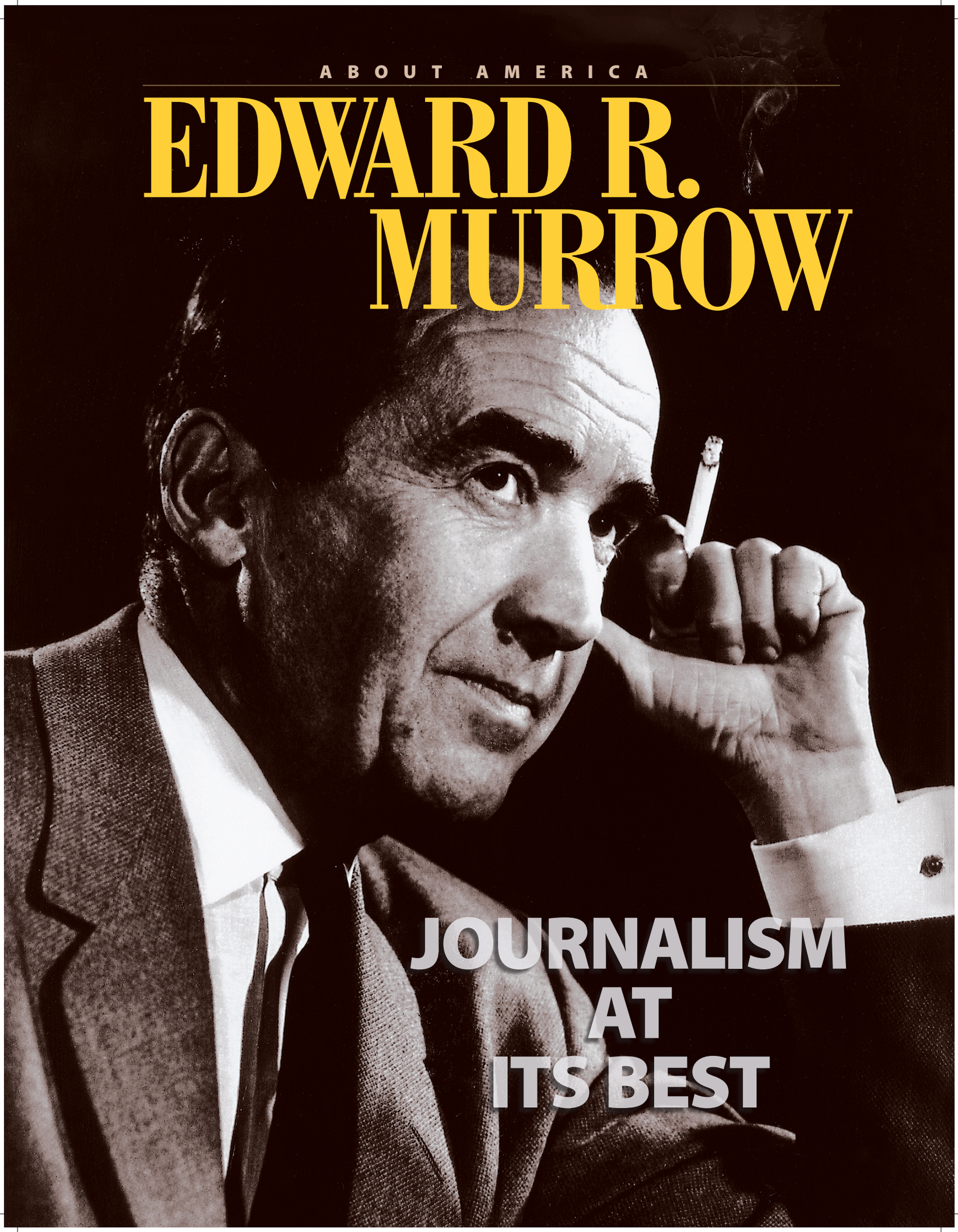
ABOUT AMERICA

EDWARD R. MURROW



JOURNALISM AT ITS BEST

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Executive Editor: *George Clack*
Managing Editor: *Mildred Solá Neely*
Art Director/Design: *Min-Chih Yao*
Contributing editors: *Chris Larson, Chandley McDonald*
Photo Research: *Ann Monroe Jacobs*
Reference Specialist: *Anita N. Green*

EDWARD R. MURROW: A LIFE

By MARK BETKA

On a cool September evening somewhere in America in 1940, a family gathers around a vacuum-tube radio. As someone adjusts the tuning knob, a distinct and serious voice cuts through the airwaves: "This … is London." And so begins a riveting first-hand account of the infamous "London Blitz," the wholesale bombing of that city by the German air force in World War II. Behind the microphone, sitting atop a London rooftop thousands of miles from the United States, sits a young journalist, Edward R. Murrow. With this and other wartime broadcasts, Murrow would spearhead the use of radio-based reporting and almost single-handedly create the concept of "broadcast journalism."

Edward R. Murrow's reputation as one of America's most celebrated journalists endures long after his life was ended by lung cancer at the age of 57. Murrow would bring to American radio listeners — and later television viewers — compelling stories that would come alive through words and pictures; he would describe the horrors of war both on and off the battlefield; he would challenge a powerful member of the U.S. Congress in the midst of the "Red Scare" of the 1950s; and, near the end of his life, he would be called on by the president of the United States to lead the nation's effort to "tell America's story to the world."

Edward R. Murrow broadcasts election results for CBS-TV on election night, November 7, 1956. Murrow, born in a family of poor farmers, rose to become one of the United States' most famous journalists.

From Polecat Creek to London

Born in 1908 in Polecat Creek, North Carolina, Murrow was raised in a family of farmers who were Quakers — a Christian religious denomination formally known as the Religious Society of Friends. When he was a boy, the family moved to Washington State, where he grew up and eventually attended Washington State College, where he majored in speech. He moved after graduation in 1930 to New York City to run the national office of the National

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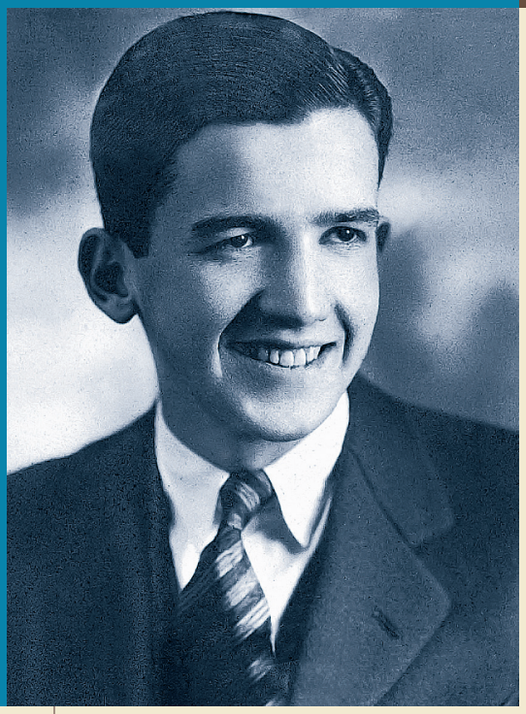
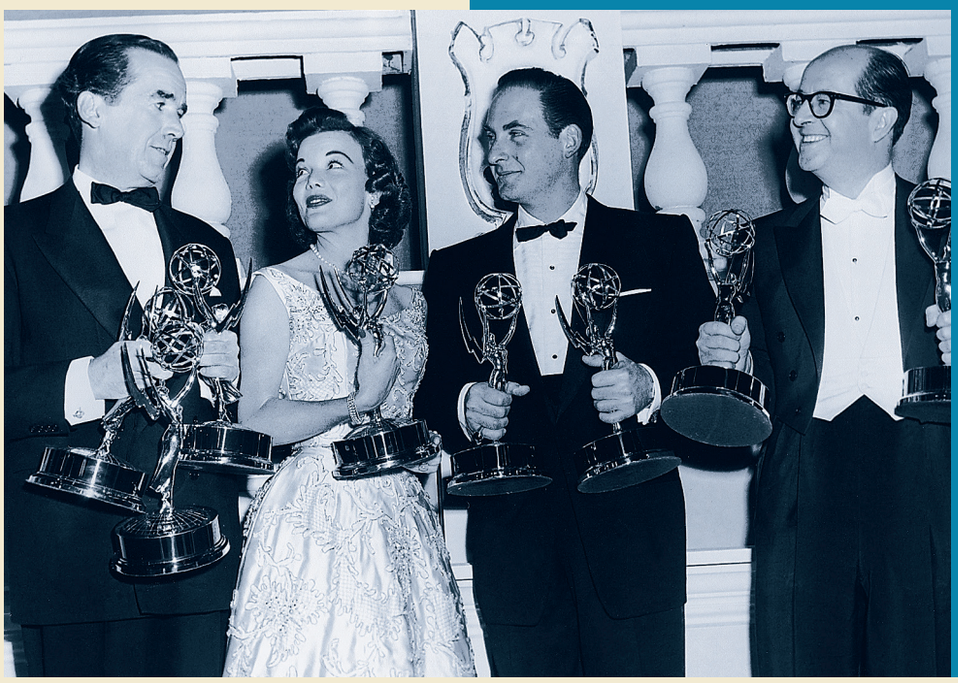
"It has always seemed to me the real art in this business is not so much moving information or guidance or policy five or 10,000 miles. That is an electronic problem. The real art is to move it the last three feet in face to face conversation."

— Edward R. Murrow, ABC TV's "Issues and Answers," August 4, 1963

This was Murrow's portrait as a member of the 1930 graduating class of Washington State College.



President John F. Kennedy (center) welcomes Murrow, Murrow's son Charles Casey, and his wife, Janet, on the day the CBS broadcaster was sworn in as head of the U.S. Information Agency.



Murrow, left, won the 1956 Emmy for Best News Commentary. With him are fellow winners Nanette Fabray, Sid Caesar, and Phil Silvers. In addition to nine Emmys for his broadcasting achievements, Murrow received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1964.

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Student Federation of America. In 1932, he became assistant director of the Institute for International Education, a nonprofit group that organized student conferences around the world. He married Janet Huntington Brewster in 1934 and they had one son. In 1935, the Columbia Broadcasting Company (CBS) hired him as director of "talks and education."

In 1937, CBS decided to send Murrow to Europe to monitor the increasing tension on the European continent. As war loomed, Murrow saw the need to assemble a cadre of qualified reporters to cover the stories as they unfolded — a group forever known as "Murrow's Boys." When World War II broke out in 1939, Murrow and his "boys" were ready to report on the biggest story the world had known.

War: A First-Hand Account

The broadcasts Murrow made from those rooftops in London during the raging air battles would make his name and his voice well known back in America. Murrow brought journalism to new heights when he rode along with U.S. flyers on several bombing missions over Europe, risking his life to give American listeners a better sense of what the war was really like and how U.S. soldiers were fighting it. But it was from the Buchenwald concentration camp in Germany where he painted his darkest picture, of the unspeakable horror of murder on an industrial scale:

> *There were two rows of bodies stacked up like cordwood. They were thin and very white. … Some of the bodies were terribly bruised, though there seemed to be little flesh to bruise. Some had been shot through the head, but they bled but little. All except two were naked. I tried to count them as best as I could and arrived at the conclusion that all that was mortal of more than 500 men and boys lay there in two neat piles.*

Years later, in a talk published by *Nieman Reports*, Murrow's friend and producer at CBS Fred W. Friendly, recalled the 24-minute account from the liberated Nazi camp: "Murrow … follows the Third Army into Buchenwald, sees what you know was seen there, was profoundly moved, depressed, angered. His anger was his greatest weapon, but he knew how to control it. … No adjectives, I don't think I ever heard him use an adjective. People piled up like cords of wood, 10 deep, and the smell. Without saying that he vomited, you knew that he had. … There was a quality in Murrow and intensity of purpose, a consciousness he was an American conscience."

Murrow and the Great TV Broadcasts

After the war, Murrow came back to the United States, working with Friendly in his radio program, "Hear It Now." In 1954, this program became the TV news and public affairs program "See It Now."

In one case Murrow used his program to highlight and dispute the U.S. Air Force's 1953 decision to dismiss from service an officer whose relatives were suspected of sympathies to Communist ideology or organizations. The Air Force would eventually reverse its decision. "See It Now," of course, also was the vehicle for Murrow's greatest confrontation, where he challenged Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy. (See article on page 13.) Another Murrow program, "CBS Reports," aired "Harvest of Shame," a report critical of the treatment of migrant workers in the United States. These and other programs earned him several Emmys, the U.S. awards for outstanding TV achievements.

Call to Duty: Public Diplomacy and the "Last Three Feet"

After CBS, weary of controversy, cancelled "See It Now," Murrow grew increasingly disillusioned with the medium. He continued at CBS until 1961, when President John F. Kennedy appointed him head of the U.S. Information Agency (USIA). Since 1953, USIA, the U.S. government agency waging the "war of ideas" against the Soviet Union, had been charged with "telling America's story to the world" through educational exchanges, books and publications, radio broadcasts through the Voice of America, and libraries and information centers run by U.S. Embassies around the world.

Murrow's goal was to make the agency more results-oriented, and he worked hard trying to reinvigorate USIA, secure adequate funding from Congress, and transform its officers into "persuaders" as well as disseminators of information.

Murrow's tenure at the helm of USIA coincided with important events of the early 1960s: Soviet resumption of nuclear testing, the Cuban missile crisis, and the Kennedy assassination. Not long after Kennedy's death, Murrow, ill following cancer surgery, left USIA. He died in New York, on April 27, 1965.

Mark Betka is a staff writer in the Bureau of International Information Programs of the U.S. Department of State.

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FREEDOM'S WATCHDOG: THE PRESS IN THE U.S.

By Vince Crawley

Original radio scripts written by Murrow and newspaper clippings about him form part of the Edward R. Murrow Center collection at Tufts University.

When Edward R. Murrow, in his landmark broadcast, highlighted notorious personal attacks by Senator Joseph McCarthy, the veteran CBS newsman was adding his own voice to two centuries of American tradition upholding freedom of the press. McCarthy's inquiries against people suspected of being Communists or supporting Communism — called "witch hunts" by opponents — were contributing to an atmosphere of fear and to what Murrow and others felt was a serious threat to cherished civil liberties. (See article on page 13).

The Precedent and the Law Protecting a Free Press

The John Peter Zenger case of 1735 set the precedent for American press freedom as a watchdog against oppressive government. In the case, a Colonial jury broke with the English legal tradition, which outlawed as "seditious libel" all published criticism of the government — including true and accurate criticism — that might cause public unrest. The jury decided that Zenger, a printer, could not be guilty of sedition because his newspaper's criticism of the British government was, in fact, true. This finding established truth as a legal defense for charges of libel, and would eventually become part of the foundation of U.S. libel law.

The American Revolutionary War was triggered in no small part by the Stamp Act of 1765, intended to tax independent newspapers out of existence. In an era when news traveled no faster than horses could run or ships could sail, when opinions could be broadcast only as loud as a man could shout, newspapers were the primary way for revolutionaries and royalists to get their messages to a wider audience.

"Congress shall make no law … abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press." The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution (1791), elegant in its simplicity, enshrined one of the most basic beliefs of the nation: the importance of the press in nurturing democratic government. To this day, in the United States and in all other free and democratic nations, these convictions continue to apply: a free and independent press provides people with the information they need to play an active role in the government and life of their country, and people must have the freedom to speak their mind and to publish criticism of their government.

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> "We proclaim ourselves — as indeed we are — the defenders of freedom abroad. …But we cannot defend freedom abroad by deserting it at home."
>
> — Edward R. Murrow, CBS TV's "See It Now," March 9, 1954

This hand-colored half-tone depicts prominent Colonial lawyer Andrew Hamilton's defense of printer John Peter Zenger in 1735.

In the United States, television networks owned by ABC, CBS, and NBC began regular operation in 1948. The networks controlled about 90 percent of those watching television for several decades after that, but have lost audience share to newer technologies — including the Internet — in the past 20 years.

The First Amendment itself was the result of a lengthy political debate conducted through newspapers, and its authors knew exactly what kind of freedom they were letting loose. The press of their day was highly opinionated, partisan, and filled with vicious personal attacks.

Political Polarization, From Washington to Lincoln

"He that is not for us is against us," bannered the *Gazette of the United States*, backing the government of the first president, George Washington (1789-97). The *Gazette* proclaimed that its mission was to oppose the "raging madness" of those who criticized administration policies, including "politicians" such as Thomas Jefferson.

The opposition printed lively newspapers of its own, writing that President Washington was "reveling in neo-monarchical ceremony" and accusing him of "incompetent soldiering,"

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according to University of Chicago First Amendment law professor Geoffrey R. Stone, whose 2004 book *Perilous Times* details the history of American free speech in time of war.

Thomas Jefferson strongly supported press freedom, but he also had few kind words for the newspapers themselves and repeatedly called for press reforms and balanced reporting. "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government," Jefferson once wrote, "I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter." Yet, he also said, "I deplore … the putrid state into which our newspapers have passed and the malignity, the vulgarity, and mendacious spirit of those who write for them."

Decades later, political polarization during the Civil War resulted in a barrage of press criticism against President Abraham Lincoln. In 1863, an editorial in the *Chicago Times* said Union soldiers were "indignant at the imbecility that has devoted them to slaughter for purposes with which they have no sympathy." When an angry Union general closed down the newspaper, Lincoln ordered it reopened.

The Government and the Press

U.S. law twice has sought formally to limit freedom of the press. The Sedition Act of 1798 was passed during the presidency of John Adams, when the nation was on the brink of war with France. It was aimed at opposition newspapers but had a built-in expiration date that elapsed when Jefferson was elected in 1800. Passed during World War I, the Sedition Act of 1918 prohibited "false, scandalous, and malicious writing" against the U.S. government or Congress. The act was repealed in 1921. An accompanying law, the Espionage Act of 1917, remains in force and makes it illegal to interfere with the armed forces or to aid an enemy of the United States. During World War I, the U.S. postmaster general interpreted the provision broadly to prohibit anti-war newspapers from being delivered through the mail.

In 1971, during the Vietnam War, the U.S. government obtained on national security grounds a federal court order to halt the *New York Times* from its ongoing publication of the *Pentagon Papers*. These documents, prepared by the Department of Defense, analyzed the history of U.S. involvement in Vietnam and had been classified as top secret. When the *Washington Post* then began publishing the same material, a judge in a different federal district refused to halt their publication. Within days the case reached the Supreme Court, which ruled in favor of the newspapers. The Court found that the First Amendment's guarantee of free speech meant that the government could not exercise "prior restraint" on the content newspapers chose to publish.

Today, while government officials sometimes seek to prevent sensitive information from being discovered by the press, there are no legal restraints on newspapers or broadcasters on national security grounds. Foreign visitors often are surprised to discover that more than 100 accredited journalists freely roam the corridors of the Pentagon in search of news, unescorted even in time of war.

Modern broadcast journalism began in the 1920s and 1930s and came of age in the 1950s, when television began to take over from printed papers as the primary source of news for most Americans. Government broadcast licenses at that time required fair and balanced reporting through the so-called Fairness Doctrine. Murrow's March 9, 1954, report on McCarthy carried such impact because it broke the standard format of telling both sides of a story in the same broadcast and instead highlighted McCarthy's tactics. McCarthy responded at a later date on the Murrow program. Those who saw it thought he looked ill at ease and did not help his cause. The broadcast also displayed the new power of television. Many newspapers had been reporting and questioning McCarthy's tactics, but it was Murrow's "See It Now" March 9 broadcast that brought McCarthy's actions into America's living rooms.

"It is well to remember that freedom through the press is the thing that comes first," Murrow told the *New York Herald Tribune* in 1958, stressing his own belief in a great democratic institution. "Most of us probably feel we couldn't be free without newspapers, and that is the real reason we want the newspapers to be free."

Vince Crawley is a staff writer in the Bureau of International Information Programs of the U.S. Department of State.

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MURROW: FOUNDER OF AMERICAN BROADCAST JOURNALISM

By Bob Edwards

On the day Ed Murrow died, Eric Sevareid (CBS correspondent and one of "Murrow's Boys") eulogized his old friend and colleague on "The CBS Evening News." Sevareid said of Murrow, "He was a shooting star and we shall not see his like again." It was both a tribute and a safe prediction.

The founder only passes by once. Murrow's accomplishments can't be duplicated because he was writing on a blank page. On a single day in 1938 he pioneered the overseas network reporting staff and the roundup news format while reinventing himself, transforming a junior executive into a foreign correspondent. Then in 1951, he moved television beyond its function as a headline service and established it as an original news source, not a medium that merely duplicated stories culled from newspapers. He also gave broadcast journalism a set of standards that matched those of the best newspapers in terms of what stories to cover and how to cover them. From two platforms of show business he carved out space for serious investigation and discussion of public affairs. Although he knew how to entertain, as shown by the success of "Person to Person" (his television show featuring celebrity interviews), he was adamant about keeping entertainment out of broadcast journalism.

"See It Now," in the person of Murrow, took to the trenches in 1953 to interview U.S. Marines fighting the Korean War.

If Sevareid meant we would not see the like of Murrow the individual, his prediction still holds. We all know people who possess one or more of Murrow's qualities, but no one has them all to the degree he did. He was the embodiment of the American Dream. Born among the hard-scrabble dirt farmers of Polecat Creek, North Carolina, and raised among the migrant laborers and lumberjacks of rural Washington, he never lost his working-class

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"This is London."

— Edward R. Murrow, beginning in 1940, the opening of CBS radio broadcasts from London

"Good night, and good luck."

— Edward R. Murrow, beginning in 1940, the closing of CBS radio broadcasts from London

Murrow's voice brought the havoc created by the German Blitz in London to American living rooms during the first stages of World War II. Here, children sit next to the remains of their home.

"This is London" circa 1940, a city under siege, and Murrow was there to chronicle its struggle against the Nazis.

Murrow reads a script during the era of the great documentaries on "See It Now" and "CBS Reports."

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values. Although comfortable in the company of janitors and diplomats, he could also be shy and awkward, sometimes even with close associates. Unable to make small talk and unwilling to fake it, he felt no guilt about subjecting people to long silences. He knew a wide range of remarkable people, gave away a great deal of money, and found jobs for dozens of acquaintances, yet believed he had no real friends.

Murrow was a good manager, leading by example rather than by meetings and memos, and he was a near-flawless judge of talent. He was smart but not brilliant, his mind working skillfully like the debater he was in college. His scripts presented his case in an orderly, lawyerlike manner. Education was his first profession and he truly was a teacher, ever anxious to learn something new and to pass it on in what he called the biggest classroom in the world. He had a moral code rooted in populism and justice, taking the side of the underdog and taking the starch out of the stuffed shirts.

Most of all, Murrow was absolutely fearless. His favorite commentator, Elmer Davis, used to say, "Don't let the b — scare you." Nothing scared Murrow — not bombs, dictators, generals, members of Congress, sponsors, corporate executives, or Joseph McCarthy. Murrow could not be muscled, bullied, bought, corrupted, or intimidated. He could, however, be flawed in judgment, as he was with Frank Stanton (CBS, Inc. president). It was convenient for Murrow to see Stanton as the enemy of the news. Six years after Murrow's death Stanton risked a prison sentence for contempt by refusing to give a congressional committee outtakes from a "CBS Reports" documentary called "The Selling of the Pentagon." Even Murrow would have had to concede that Stanton was a champion of journalism that day.

The real reason we'll not see Murrow's like again is that everything that allowed Murrow to be Murrow has changed dramatically. Murrow benefited from being the standard to whom all who follow should be compared. When you're the "first" at something you get to write a lot of your own rules. …

It's difficult to imagine Murrow lasting very long in broadcast journalism today because his programs would be required to make money. Nonbroadcasters acquired the networks in the 1980s when the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) no longer mandated public service programming. The new owners, principally concerned with profits and share prices, ordered the network news divisions to be profitable. They saw no reason why the news division should not be a profit center, just like the movie studio, publishing house, or other properties they owned. When news has to make money, the substance, character, and look of the news changes. In the public service era, the networks produced documentaries. In the profit era, documentaries have been replaced by magazine programs heavy on crime, items about celebrities, feel-good features, and the latest trendy disease. These programs have to compete with entertainment programs in prime time. The only way a news program can compete in prime time is to become an entertainment program. …

The fact is that we had Murrow when we needed him most — at the beginning of broadcast journalism, before there was a corrupting requirement that news make money. The profession looks so bad today, in part, because Murrow set the standard so high at its birth. We see a bit of his legacy every time there is an important story and broadcast journalism functions as it's supposed to. It's important to remember that once upon a time we turned to radio and television to entertain us and nothing more. If we expect the broadcast media to inform us, educate us, and enlighten us, it's because Edward R. Murrow led us to believe that they would.

Broadcast journalist Bob Edwards hosts "The Bob Edwards Show" on XM Satellite Radio. He was the popular host of National Public Radio's flagship program, "Morning Edition," for 25 years, beginning in its debut year of 1979. The segment above is excerpted with permission of the publisher John Wiley & Sons, Inc., from Edward R. Murrow and the Birth of Broadcast Journalism. *Copyright ©2004 by Bob Edwards. This book is available at all bookstores, online booksellers and from the Wiley web site at www.wiley.com, or call 1-800-CALL-WILEY.*

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HARNESSING "NEW" MEDIA FOR QUALITY REPORTING

By David Pitts

Former President Harry S Truman (left) talked to Murrow in 1957 on the popular TV program "Person to Person."

If Edward Murrow were alive today, how would he harness the Internet to produce groundbreaking quality journalism? We cannot answer that question, but we can look to how Murrow revolutionized the new media of his time: first radio, and then television.

When Murrow joined CBS in 1935, network radio news did not exist aside from wire reports read by a studio announcer and occasional event coverage. But by the end of the decade, Murrow had assembled a team of correspondents who used radio as it had never been used before to bring the dramatic events leading to war in Europe into American homes. In the words of former CBS anchor Dan Rather, Murrow and the top-notch talent he hired — known as "Murrow's Boys" — "invented broadcast journalism."

The catalyst that created CBS Radio News was the Anschluss, Hitler's annexation of Austria in 1938, according to the Museum of Broadcast Communications. Murrow — along with William Shirer — spearheaded the "European News Roundup" (later "World News Roundup"), a broadcast featuring CBS correspondents from all over the continent. Their reports were delivered live to the audience back home via short wave.

"It not only had multiple points of origin, it also had included both reporting and analysis of breaking news, and was both a journalistic and a technological breakthrough for broadcasting," according to Bob Edwards, author of a book on Murrow. When World War II erupted in Europe in 1939, Murrow provided live radio coverage from England of the London Blitz. His sign-on, "This is London," became legendary.

In the early 1950s, Murrow moved to television, then emerging as the dominant medium. Rather than concentrating on general news coverage, however, Murrow pioneered television documentaries. The programs he anchored are still remembered today for their innovation and quality and are prominently cited in the histories of U.S. broadcast journalism. They were:

"*See It Now*" (1951-57). The first television news magazine. It set the standard for tackling controversial topics in depth. Most famous for the McCarthyism

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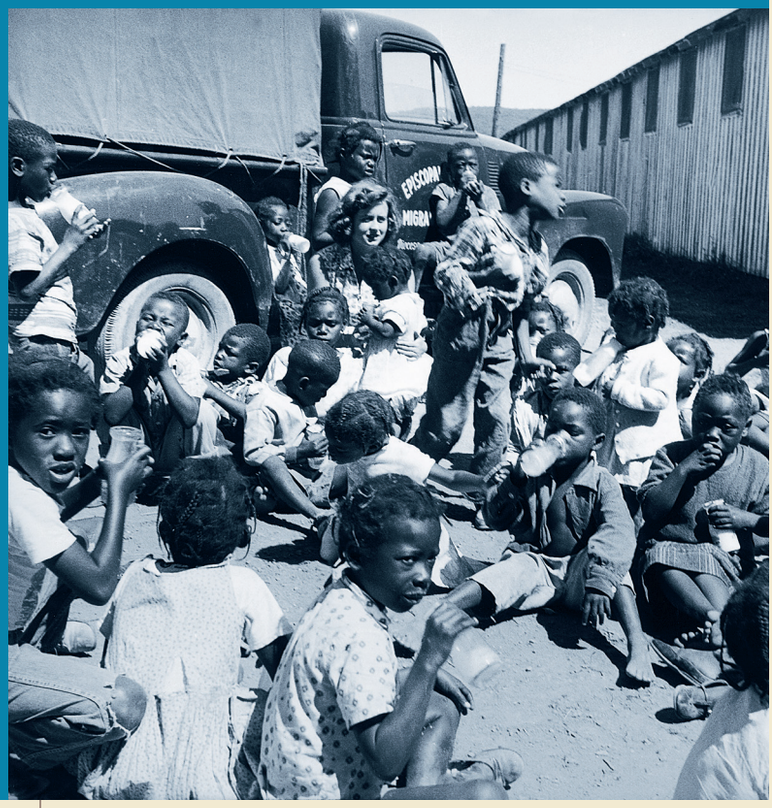
"Just once in a while let us exalt the importance of ideas and information."

— Edward R. Murrow, speech to the Radio and Television News Directors Association, October 15, 1958

A scene from "Harvest of Shame," the controversial documentary about migrant agricultural workers that the *New York Times* called a "muckraking masterpiece."



A "See It Now" broadcast team followed opera singer Marian Anderson in 1957 on a three-month goodwill tour of Southeast Asia for a program narrated by Murrow.

program (see page 13), the series also dealt with other tough issues of the time, such as racial segregation and the link between lung cancer and cigarettes. The premier broadcast featured the first, live simultaneous transmission from the East and West coasts of the United States.

"*Person To Person*" (1953-61). In this series, Murrow — in the studio — visited celebrities and newsmakers in their own homes through a remote hookup. The program featured guests as varied as movie star Marilyn Monroe, former President Harry S Truman, and author John Steinbeck. This was the first time that technology was regularly used in this way and it captivated viewers.

"*Small World*" (1958-59). This program was truly ahead of its time: a global hookup bringing together thinkers and newsmakers from around the world in an unrehearsed discussion

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moderated by Murrow. It was produced through transoceanic phone conversations matched to simultaneous filming.

"*CBS Reports*" (1960-1971 and irregularly). Murrow pioneered the hard-hitting, single-subject, one-hour documentary that became a staple of early network television. One of his broadcasts about the plight of migrant farm workers — "Harvest of Shame" — still is shown today in journalism schools as a brilliant example of investigative work on TV.

As these examples indicate, Murrow was an innovator, but he also knew he was working in a commercial medium that required a large audience. He was always searching for new techniques to grab and hold the public's attention. Murrow would have regarded the narrowcasting of today made possible by cable, satellite, the Internet, and portable devices as an immense opportunity.

Murrow's legacy as a media innovator does not fully explain his unique status in American broadcast journalism. Most experts stress three other qualities that still matter in media, whether old or new, print, broadcast, or narrowcast — or even a blog: his willingness to take a stand so long as it was grounded in solid reporting; his unswerving belief in a free press dedicated to serious journalism; and his belief that words matter whether or not they are accompanied by pictures.

David Pitts is a journalist who has written for major U.S. newspapers, including the Washington Post *and the* Christian Science Monitor. *He also worked in radio news.*

Students head to class at the Edward R. Murrow School of Communication, Washington State University.

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"SEE IT NOW": MURROW VS. MCCARTHY

By Michael Jay Friedman

Radio days: Murrow (center) and his CBS producer, Fred W. Friendly, right, made the jump from radio to television and popularized the news documentary format.

Edward R. Murrow may not have scored the first blow against Joseph McCarthy, but he landed a decisive one. For that, he always will be linked inextricably with the Wisconsin senator, and remembered by Americans as a champion of liberty.

Opposing Communism while maintaining fundamental political liberties posed serious challenges in Cold War America. There were Americans who were members or supporters of the Communist Party of the United States, which owed its political allegiance to the Soviet Union and not to the United States. But there were other Americans falsely charged with being Communist supporters or sympathizers, and wrongly accused of treason against the United States. The U.S. government and other institutions — from employers to universities — found it difficult at times to distinguish between those who were real threats to the nation and those who were innocent.

Joseph McCarthy, the junior U.S. senator from Wisconsin, seized upon the public mood to launch a series of inquiries through public Senate committee hearings about possible Communist infiltration of prominent American institutions, particularly the government, the military, and the media. Individuals suspected of Communist ties were called before his subcommittee, aggressively questioned about their involvement in the Communist Party, and pressured to name Communists. While the archives of the former Soviet Union and U.S. intercepts of Soviet spy communications later proved some measure of infiltration, McCarthy's often savage efforts ruined careers and damaged lives. Always a controversial figure, McCarthy enjoyed considerable popularity for a time. Eventually, though, his campaign effectively discredited the anti-Communist investigations among many Americans.

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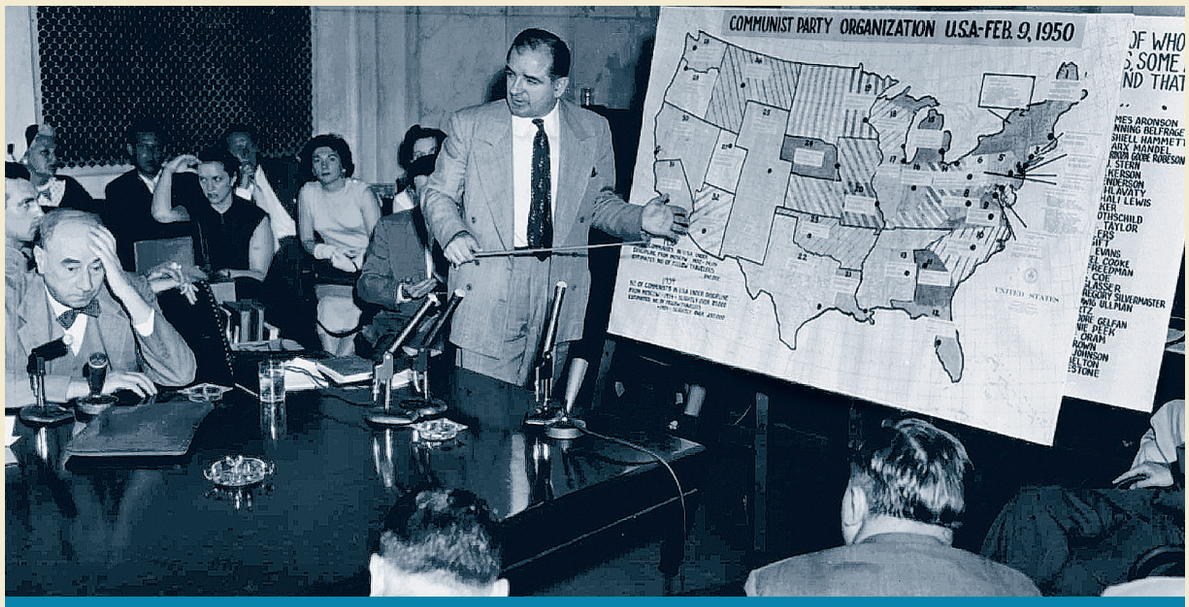
"We must not confuse dissent with disloyalty. We must remember always that accusation is not proof and that conviction depends upon evidence and due process of law.

— Edward R. Murrow, CBS TV's "See It Now" program on Senator Joe McCarthy, March 9, 1954

Left to right: investigator Francis Carr, Senator Joseph McCarthy, and Lawyer Roy Cohn during the May 1, 1954, Army-McCarthy hearings, sparked by convoluted charges brought by the senator against the U.S. Army. Television coverage of the event helped speed McCarthy's downfall.



Senator McCarthy points to a map headed "Communist Party organization in the USA, Feb. 9, 1950," during testimony June 9, 1954.

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Murrow was himself an anti-Communist but a McCarthy skeptic. As early as 1950, Murrow observed on the air that "the weight of the public testimony has tended to show that so far, Senator McCarthy's charges are unproven." Unproven or not, those charges continued, and they contributed to an atmosphere in which many feared McCarthy and his Senate investigations subcommittee. On March 9, 1954, Murrow, then the most respected journalist in America, engaged in a tough exposé of the senator and his tactics.

Gradually, Murrow's fear that McCarthy posed a real threat to civil liberties developed into a determination to use his TV documentary series "See It Now" against the senator. At that time, U.S. broadcasters were covered by the "Fairness Doctrine," which required broadcast licensees to present contentious issues in an honest, equal, and balanced manner and to afford persons or groups criticized during such a broadcast the opportunity to respond on the air. Murrow and his producer, Fred Friendly, prepared a half-hour program focused only on McCarthy and his tactics. They understood that the CBS network would afford the senator a half-hour of prime time — in a separate broadcast — to rebut Murrow. They also realized that McCarthy likely would launch a personal attack on Murrow himself.

Even so, Murrow understood that on television a skilled journalist and his technology-savvy team of editors, writers, and producers enjoyed real advantages. They could select the least flattering video clips, juxtapose McCarthy's many contradictory statements and charges, and generally employ their skills to portray the senator in an unflattering light. Murrow feared that less scrupulous journalists might abuse these techniques, but he believed that McCarthy posed an immediate threat and that the American people, when confronted with the truth, would repudiate McCarthy.

Murrow's own broadcast featured excerpts from the senator's own speeches interspersed with Murrow's comments, which pointed out contradictions and deftly turned McCarthy's words against him. Nicholas Lemann, dean of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, described Murrow's demeanor as "a magnificent controlled fury, handsome and composed — an attitude all the more effective because the public knew that he could be genial and easygoing on-camera." Murrow's words reflected that controlled fury:

> *[T]he line between investigating and persecuting is a very fine one and the junior senator from Wisconsin has stepped over it repeatedly. … We must remember always that accusation is not proof and that conviction depends upon evidence and due process of law. We will not walk in fear, one of another. We will not be driven by fear into an age of unreason. … (W)e are not descended from fearful men— not from men who feared to write, to speak, to associate, and to defend causes that were, for the moment, unpopular. This is no time for men who oppose Senator McCarthy's methods to keep silent. …*

When the broadcast ended, CBS was flooded with telegrams, telephone calls, and letters. They ran 15 to 1 in Murrow's favor. By contrast, McCarthy's equal-time broadcast proved disastrous. He was obviously uncomfortable in the television studio, and, as Murrow suggested, prone to flinging wild charges, calling Murrow "the leader of the jackal pack." Millions of Americans watching at home had seen enough. McCarthy's political influence rapidly ebbed. On December 2, 1954, the U.S. Senate formally adopted a resolution censuring — formally reprimanding — McCarthy for conduct unbecoming to a senator.

Michael Jay Friedman is a staff writer in the Bureau of International Information Programs of the U.S. Department of State.

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MURROW'S LEGACY

Edward R. Murrow's ardent belief in American democracy, his courage and perseverance in searching for and reporting the truth, and his dedication to journalism as an essential tool in the democratic political process still are cherished and nurtured by many institutions. These values are also reflected in awards and programs that honor this great reporter throughout the United States and overseas. The following list is just a sample of Murrow's legacy, and of the esteem that his name still has today among many.

Committee of Concerned Journalists
http://www.journalism.org/who/ccj/default.asp

Edward R. Murrow Award for Best TV Interpretation or Documentary on Foreign Affairs, CBS, Overseas Press Club of America
http://www.opcofamerica.org/opc_awards/archive/byaward/award_murrow.php

Edward R. Murrow Award for Excellence in Public Diplomacy, U.S. Department of State/The Fletcher School
http://fletcher.tufts.edu/murrow/index.html

Edward R. Murrow Award for Outstanding Contributions to Public Radio, Corporation for Public Broadcasting
http://www.cpb.org/aboutpb/awards/murrow/

Edward R. Murrow Awards, Radio-Television News Directors Association
http://www.rtnda.org/asfi/index.asp

Edward R. Murrow Program for Journalists, U.S. Department of State
http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2006/63799.htm

The Edward R. Murrow Center of Public Diplomacy, The Fletcher School, Tufts University
http://fletcher.tufts.edu/murrow/index.html

Murrow School of Communication, Washington State University
http://murrow.wsu.edu/influence.html

Reporter's Committee for Freedom of the Press
http://www.rcfp.org/

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WEB SITES

Edward R. Murrow on American Masters, PBS
http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/database/murrow_e.html

Murrow on Press and the People
http://www.wgbh.org/article?item_id=2706452

Museum of Broadcast Communications, Edward R. Murrow
http://www.museum.tv/archives/etv/M/htmlM/murrowedwar/murrowedwar.htm

Radio News: Murrow audio clips
http://www.otr.com/murrow.html

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