



# FEATURE

*A monthly features service on scientific, technical, and educational subjects pertinent to development.*

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## WORLD PAPER:

### NEWS FOR THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY

by MARK GERZON

*While Unesco's international commission for the study of communication problems — the MacBride Commission — studies measures to reduce the domination of international news exchanges by the Western news media, some concrete steps are being taken to reach that objective. One of them, WorldPaper, is here described by its managing editor.*

The idea of a world newspaper came to him "out of the blue" as he was gazing out on the Atlantic Ocean one September morning in 1976, remembers Harry Hollins, founder of *WorldPaper*. Now, three years later, *WorldPaper* is being distributed to more than one million people on six continents. "Still far from the goal," says Harry candidly, "but a good beginning."

Harry wants *WorldPaper* to be a "global community newspaper" in which the voices of the world can speak for themselves and be heard worldwide. Publisher Crocker Snow and I, who have worked with Harry from the beginning, are committed to this same goal.

*WorldPaper* is unique in that its eleven Associate Editors, in all corners of the world, are outstanding journalists who report from their regions. They are not correspondents or stringers who have been parachuted into a specific location to cover newsworthy events. They are experienced resident journalists who have witnessed and participated in the struggles and achievements of their countries — the processes of development. They do not

write the homogenized prose of the multinational news magazines. Their writing is marked by the clear and unmistakable authenticity of their own cultures.

In addition to writing for *WorldPaper*, these editors assign stories within their regions, contribute to the "Global Editorial" page, and select the major topics to be covered. Through constant correspondence as well as regular meetings, they work with those of us at the Boston headquarters to make *WorldPaper* a forum for unbiased discussion of international issues.

The journalists have been attracted to *WorldPaper* because in it their work can appear alongside that of writers from any other nation. Their ideas will not be screened or rejected because of any single nation's political or cultural biases. In particular, Third World journalists are offered an opportunity to be read in the developed world, not by a small select group of scholars or foreign policy specialists, but by millions of regular newspaper subscribers. We hope this will help to reverse the one-way, North-South flow of news. Finally, we offer journalists everywhere a professional challenge: to write on subjects of global relevance for a worldwide audience.

*WorldPaper's* readership is also international. With the cooperation of innovative and farsighted metropolitan newspapers on six continents, we have devised a decentralized and efficient distribution method. In these papers we appear as a bimonthly magazine supplement. More than 1.5 million readers thus have access to *WorldPaper* through home delivery or newstands.

No one, including our editors and our readers, is foolish enough to believe that we have found a magic formula for a world paper. "We haven't reached our goal yet by any means," one of our Associate Editors said recently, "but it is such a difficult goal that we must be patient." In a "Letter to the Editor" published in our second issue, a reader from Australia agreed: "*WorldPaper* is a major and welcome step forward," he wrote. "Nothing is easier than to knock it and its self-evident imperfections and present limitations. But it is there, where a few years ago the very idea of such an enterprise would have been utopian."

To make this contribution to world journalism last, progress is still needed on four major fronts.

First are investors: we want *WorldPaper* to be owned by individual investors from as many regions of the world as possible. This will ensure that our stockholders and board of directors represent a variety of global constituencies and strengthen the paper's independence.

Second, we want to find many more newspapers around the world that recognize the need to broaden their global news coverage. We intend to increase our readership in the continents where we already appear, and are now extending into Europe and the Middle East. *WorldPaper* provides the complete page negatives to host newspapers, which print the supplement at their own expense and insert and distribute it. There is no exchange of currency.

Our revenue comes from the sale of advertising — our third need. Both multinational corporations and international organizations are finding our pages to be especially useful for reaching a global audience. The *WorldPaper* staff generates corporate advertising and global classified ads. A host paper can replace several designated editorial pages with locally generated ads and keep that revenue to help defray its own production costs.

Finally, we believe that ultimately, our readers will write *WorldPaper*. We seek out and encourage reports, photographs, experiences, etc., from nonprofessional writers. Short articles are particularly welcome as is any information our readers feel to be particularly newsworthy and deserving of greater global attention. We encourage criticism and suggestions for future articles from anyone concerned about global issues.

For years people throughout the world have recognized that we can no longer afford to have issues of global significance defined and debated in news media dominated by single nations or regions. Both North and South, journalists are trying to develop news structures to make the currents in the global news flow represent genuinely the diversity and richness of world opinion. In this spirit, *WorldPaper* was conceived.

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