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GOVERNOR DONALD G. NUTTER AND THE
MONTANA DAILY PRESS

by

JUDITH B. ROLLINS

B.A. Montana State University, 1962

Presented in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of


Master of Arts

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1963

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CHAPTER I

THE PRESS AS A CRITIC OF STATE GOVERNMENT

Montana's fifteenth governor, Donald G. Nutter, took office on January 3, 1961. During his fourteen-month term of office before his death in a plane crash on January 25, 1962, Governor Nutter was an unusually controversial public figure. Much of the comment which followed his activity was covered by the 14 daily newspapers of Montana.

The study of the press in any state entails an examination of the ability of newspapers to fulfill their functions as a forum for the exchange of opinion and ideas, as a check on state government, as a critic of the governor and his administration, and as a watchdog for the citizen. The press is expected to report the news impartially, good or bad. The governor prefers to accentuate positive factors and to eliminate negative factors in what he believes to be the best public interest. This is further illustrated by the conflict between the president and the press which has plagued John F. Kennedy and his administration at the national level during the same period.

It would seem that any governor finds a favorable press to be an advantage. By studying the relationship

of a governor with the press in his state during his term in office it should be possible to determine how successful he was in utilizing the press as a vehicle for building favorable public opinion. By studying how the press reported the issues concerning the governor, it is possible to estimate how well the press is acting in its capacity as a check on state government, as a critic of the governor, and as a watchdog for the citizen. Therefore an examination of the press during the period from December, 1960, until January, 1962, should indicate how well the press and Governor Nutter performed their respective functions as subsequently defined.

The need for communication between the state's chief executive and the citizenry through the press has long been recognized. A portion of the report from the Commission on Freedom of the Press on the government as a party to communication said:

In the past writers have thought of government as standing outside the process of communication. Usually they were concerned lest government interfere with the talk and writings of citizens. Sometimes they saw how government might enable citizens to talk and write more and better perhaps. Now it is evident that the government must itself talk and write and even listen. The subject has become important for the increase of government functions and in the number of officials, accompanied by a growing popular ignorance and bewilderment as to what these officials are doing. One of our members described the situation: "The fact that, with the passage of years, the government itself has become an even greater participant in social and economic affairs has created a necessity for better intercommunication between it and

the public in the interests of both." . . . The point that this is "in the interests of both" is worth remembering, for one is naturally inclined to think that the only profit is on the part of government, or (more cynically) of government officials. Yet the citizen gains too. He has just cause for complaint if he is left uninformed and baffled in the face of a mysterious network of departments and bureaus clothed with vast powers over his property, his work, his recreations, and in wartime over his very existence.¹

By projecting the concept of government publicity against the larger screen of contemporary representative government, one author justifies this form of communication as not giving undue power to the executive branch of government in the formation of policy and as serving the public with information that is useful in deciding public policy. Under this theory as applied specifically to government publicity agents, high ideals and moral standards would protect the citizen from the misuse of publicity for antipublic ends. In addition, a government publicity agent is part of the machinery which provides the citizen with facts and opinions constituting news.²

A second opinion on the function of government as a source of information for the citizen said:

The changed concept and consequence of government hammered out by the economic, social, and

¹Zachariah Chafee, Government and Mass Communications (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947), p. 723.

²James L. McCamy, Government Publicity (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), p. 16.

political forces of the twentieth century clearly demonstrate the necessity for the public relations function. As the impact and extent of government controls increase, the need for adequate communication between public official and citizen becomes more urgent. Yet inescapable forces tend to drive them farther and farther apart. This problem is being met, in a small way, by the growth of public relations at all levels of government, particularly in the federal government.³

It seems implicit in representative government that citizens have a right to know the conduct and the public records of the state executive department. Equally as implicit in this system and deeply imbedded in tradition is the right of the executive to decide which records will be withheld and which will be made available in the absence of express provisions to the contrary. The legal situation regarding governors is similar to the president's:

In the present state of the law the people and their organs of information must trust primarily to official grace as affected by reason, courtesy, the impact of public opinion, and other non-legal considerations and, in the longer view, to remedial legislation by Congress. As of now, in the matter of right to inspect such records, the public and the press have but changed their kings.⁴

Douglass Cater, Washington editor of Reporter magazine, classifies the press as the fourth branch of government. He believes that the reporter is not only

³Scott M. Cutlip and Allen H. Center, Effective Public Relations (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1952), p. 370.

⁴Harold Cross, The People's Right To Know (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953), p. 197.

the recorder of government but also a participant. In the process of deciding what to describe and what to ignore among the "myriad events" in government, the reporter "can illumine policy and notably assist in giving it [news] sharpness and clarity."⁵

Cater said it is "strange that the political scientist has so long neglected the study of the interaction between government and the press. The American Fourth Estate operates as a de facto, quasiofficial fourth branch of government, its institutions no less important because they have been developed informally and, indeed, haphazardly."⁶

However, Cater points out that a basic conflict of interests exists between government and the press at the national level which pertains to the state level. He said that

the official and the reporter are moved by fundamentally different compulsions. The official's first response to a newsworthy event is assimilative. He attempts to relate it to the broad body of record on which he precariously builds his policies. The reporter's first impulse, on the other hand, is distributive: he seeks to communicate the newsworthy event as speedily and widely as possible.⁷

⁵Douglass Cater, The Fourth Branch of Government (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1959), p. 7.

⁶Ibid., p. 13.

⁷Ibid., p. 17.

This basic conflict of interests is further emphasized by Cater:

The official must think in terms of finding the lowest common denominator of agreement. For him the business of policy making is a matter of accommodation. Particularly as it reaches the topmost levels of government, there is need to fuzz over disagreements in the quest for a sense of unanimity. Regular participants at meetings of the National Security Council, the nation's highest strategic body, testify that the problem frequently reduces itself to finding the phrase of appropriate subtlety to bridge unnecessary conflicts. The official, as Dean Acheson has remarked, remembers the words of Justice Holmes: "Some things have got to be stated obscurely before they can be stated clearly."

For the reporter, the basic quest is to discover and highlight traces of disunity. As a government official once complained, the reporter is Hegelian. He thinks in terms of thesis and antithesis. It is his premise that progress comes through controversy and that truth, as has been said, is generated by encounter as fire is made by rubbing together two sticks.

The official acts on the premise that premature publicity can be a destructive force if it undermines the effort to reconcile diverse interests and causes the hardening of fixed positions. The reporter believes in the purifying power of publicity. He is the sworn enemy of secrecy. He holds firm in the faith that "public opinion" must have an opportunity to express itself while policy is still malleable and has not been molded into unchangeable dogma.⁸

Cater quotes Arthur Krock, columnist of the New York Times, as having said:

Our obligations are merely these in deciding whether to go into print with information: Is it true? Has it been legitimately acquired? Is it

⁸Ibid., p. 18.

fit to print--public property or a private matter? These satisfactorily settled, the facts are ready for their bath in printer's ink.

But the statesman has other considerations. Is it premature? Will publication make the going more difficult? Will publication tend to confuse, rather than to clarify, the popular mind? These are some of the problems before him, particularly if he is President of the United States in a catastrophic hour, forcing the innermost fibers of his body and the full resources of his spirit into his colossal task.⁹

Thus is demonstrated the dilemma of government and the press in society. The ends of government are often best served by guarding the sources of information, thereby protecting what officials consider to be the best interests of the people. The press, on the other hand, believes that the free flow of information between the government and its constituents is necessary for the best interests of the citizens. It is clear, however, that if a cloud of secrecy covers the operations of the executive department on a national or state level, there is suspicion that perhaps the president or governor is doing something which he does not wish to reveal.

Perhaps the background for the whole struggle between the press and the government is revealed in the observation of Rebecca West:

It is the preservation of the facts that matter, the facts that put together are the face of the age; the rise in the price of coal, the new ballet, the woman found dead in a kimono on the golf links,

⁹Ibid., p. 19.

the latest sermon of the Archbishop of York, the marriage of the Prime Minister's daughter. For if people do not have the face of the age set clear before them they begin to imagine it; and if it is not disciplined by the intellectual and kept in facts with reality by the instinct of art, develops among the wishes and fears of childhood, and so sees life either as simply answering any prayer or as endlessly emitting nightmare monsters from a womb-like cave.¹⁰

The power for good which the press can exercise by criticism of government is illustrated by Alan Barth's statement:

Nothing expresses more clearly the essential differences between a totalitarian society and a free society than the relationship in each of the press to the government. Among the totalitarians, the press, like every other institution, is an instrumentality of the state; it is used to propagate support for official policies and to promote official doctrines. In a free society, however, the function of the press is, rather, to oppose the government, to scrutinize its activities and to keep its authority within appropriate bounds.¹¹

¹⁰ Rebecca West, The Meaning of Treason (New York, 1947), p. 36.

¹¹ Alan Barth, "The Press as Censor of Government" (Lucius W. Nieman Chair Lecture, Marquette University, Feb. 22, 1962).

CHAPTER II

GROWTH OF THE GOVERNOR AND HIS POWER

The need for an examination of the press coverage of Governor Nutter has become more necessary as the governor's position as a policy leader has enlarged. The governor's office is the center of public attention at the state level and his actions and speeches are influential in molding public opinion. It is important for the state party to elect its gubernatorial candidate and of concern to the national party as well.

However, the position of the governor has not always stood at the level it enjoys now. Americans have argued since colonial times about how much power the governor of a state should have. In the colonies the governor was the representative of the English king and the executive head of the colony. The American settlers complained that their interests were subordinate to the wishes of foreign royalty as relayed through the governor. In exercising his legal powers from the king, the governor was not responsible to those he governed. As an outgrowth to the opposition to the king's governor, the colonists elected their own representatives to limit the governor's power. When the colonists set up their own government to conduct war against the English king and to achieve

independence it was natural to distrust the executive power and to place their faith in legislatures. Early state constitutions exhibit a prevailing tone of confidence in legislatures and a distrust of executives.¹²

Legislative supremacy was the keynote of the early constitutions in the 13 colonies. The legislature appointed the governor in all states but Massachusetts and New York. The governor had little positive influence over the legislature. The story is told of colonial government that, "when William Hooper went home from the North Carolina Convention and was asked how much power they had given the governor, he answered: 'Just enough to sign the receipt for his salary.'¹³ The framers of the first constitutions had reacted too strongly to executive power and, in their attempt to insure legislative supremacy, had excessively weakened the powers of governors.

After learning that the majority can be as tyrannical as one man and that it is risky to concentrate too much power in either the legislature or the executive, the executive office in each state was strengthened as a counterbalance. The adoption of the federal Constitution

¹²Leslie Lipson, The American Governor from Figurehead to Leader (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), p. 13.

¹³Ibid., p. 14.

provided a model for the granting of executive powers which the states could follow. But even as late as 1831, Alexis De Tocqueville expressed the view on a governor's power: "In America the legislature of each state is supreme; nothing can impede its authority. . . . In juxtaposition to it, and under its immediate control, is the representative of the executive power."¹⁴

In 1830, a new concept, Jacksonian democracy, provided a solution to the problem of curbing the power of the state executive. The governor was becoming more independent of the legislature, but his power was weakened by diffusion. Legislatures began to lose popular confidence and were subjected to constitutional restrictions. The executive in the state was rendered almost powerless by the distribution of power among too many persons. The new maxim of democracy seemed to be: "Divide your government, and it cannot rule you."¹⁵ The chief executive in the state not only was unable to harm the people, but he was unable to serve them. The solution savored of mistrust. The executive still was suspect and the legislature had fallen under the same cloud.

¹⁴Alexis De Tocqueville, Democracy in America (Vol. I, trans. Henry Reeve. 2 vols. Cambridge: Sever and Francis, 1864), p. 101.

¹⁵Lipson, op. cit., p. 23.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, the people came to realize that the philosophy of "the least governed are the best governed" could not work. The image of the governor was to profit from the analogy with the executive in the federal government and with corporate organizations. The governor was to be the apex toward which all the lines of the hierarchy of government in the state moved.¹⁶ The governor would represent the executive branch and the agencies would answer to him.

After President Taft appointed his Commission on Economy and Efficiency in 1910 to investigate government activity and efficiency, similar investigations in the states were begun. As a result, the need for a strong state executive was better understood.

As Leslie Lipson said:

Undoubtedly, the governor is at last becoming an officer worthy of the name. The executive budget, perhaps more than any other single factor, has strengthened his executive authority. It gives him control over the operations of all government agencies, it enables him to present a coherent program to the legislature, and it throws definitely on him the responsibility for proposing expansion or contraction of services. . . . Not only can the people more fairly hold the governor responsible, but he in turn knows where to give orders in his administration and where to allot praise or blame. . . . One can truly say that the governor's responsibility is everywhere insured to a far greater

¹⁶Ibid., p. 69.

degree than heretofore.¹⁷

Another writer on the position of the governor in state government, Coleman B. Ransone, Jr., has said of the increasing influence of the governor:

The American state has not been displaced as a unit of government. Its role has been somewhat altered by increasing federal participation in fields formerly thought to be reserved for the states, but the status of the states has actually grown rather than been diminished by the programs of co-operative federalism as they are carried out in practice. While it is undeniable that the federal government has assumed new powers and functions, this is also true of the states. The governor, as the chief figure on the state political scene, has assumed increased importance as a result of these federally-financed, state-administered programs.¹⁸

As the power of the governor grows in a state, the press in that state finds it imperative to cover the activity of the executive branch in more detail in its capacity as intermediary between the citizen and his government.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 243.

¹⁸Coleman B. Ransone, Jr., The Office of Governor in the United States (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1956), p. 3.

CHAPTER III

THE GOVERNOR IN MONTANA

Governor Nutter took office in January, 1961, with the advantage of the largest vote in Montana in the 1960 general election with 154,122 as opposed to 125,438 for the Democratic candidate, Paul Cannon. The governor had received 14,000 more votes than Richard Nixon received at 140,896 in Montana over John F. Kennedy's 133,641.¹⁹

Despite the favorable impression which the election cast on Governor Nutter, he was beset by difficulties from the time he took office. A clue to his relationship

¹⁹Final Montana election returns compiled by the Associated Press for all precincts:

U.S. Senate: Lee Metcalf, D, 141,367; Orvin B. Fjare, R, 136,027.
U.S. House, First District: Arnold Olsen, D, 62,770; George Sarsfield, R, 55,720.
U.S. House, Second District: James Battin, R, 79,031; Leo Graybill Jr., D, 74,189.
Lieutenant Governor: Tim Babcock, R, 145,432; Henry Anderson, D, 129,509.
Secretary of State: Frank Murray, D, 149,487; Albert Leuthold, R, 107,446.
Attorney General: Forrest Anderson, D, 156,820; Bruce Sheldon, R, 113,965.
Treasurer: Edna Hinman, R, 137,461; H.L. O'Neal, D, 124,309.
Auditor: John J. Holmes, D, 210,585 (unopposed).
Railroad Commissioner: Lou Boedecker, D, 151,515; David Middlemas, R, 118,793.
Superintendent of Schools: Harriet Miller, R, 141,041; John Cushman, D, 120,250.
Supreme Court: John Harrison, 118,768; James Freebourn, 116,303.

with the press during his term is found in a Montana Chamber of Commerce publication on the executive department of Montana and specifically on the governor. The pamphlet says:

A political humorist has quipped that Montana is a state where the governor doesn't govern and the treasurer doesn't have much to treasure. This is an exaggeration, but it is true that the average Montanan has an unrealistic concept of the limited powers of the governor.

The governor is vested by the constitution with the supreme executive power in the state, but there are a number of limitations and qualifications of his power. It is also true that citizens sometimes confuse his power with those of the judicial or legislative departments of government.²⁰

The pamphlet explains that the constitution gives power to the governor to require offices in the executive department to provide him with information in writing and to appoint committees to investigate and report on executive offices or state institutions. Offices in the executive department must keep accounts and make semi-annual reports of receipts and disbursements to the governor.

The governor's salary in Montana is \$14,000 which is lower than in 39 other states and which is lower than some Montana officials. Gubernatorial salary was \$7,500 as late as 1952.

²⁰ Montana Chamber of Commerce, Montana Practical Politics Handbook (Helena), p. 5.

Although the governor has no direct control over or connection with all departments, boards, or commissions, his office is strengthened by the number of appointments he makes to boards and commissions. His appointments to the state tax board, state education board, and state highway commission, as well as controller, budget director, and examiner, administer many departments of state government.

As the Montana Legislative Council pointed out, executive authority has been dispersed among more than 100 state agencies, only a few of which are responsible to the governor. While the governor exerts strong personal or political influence on a state executive who he believes is too aggressive in his acts, he may be confined by boards and commissions.

Furthermore the Chamber of Commerce pamphlet reports that one school of thought holds that the state's "real chief executive" is the board of examiners composed of the governor, attorney general, and the secretary of state.

The pamphlet concludes:

More than forty years ago, a state report recommended that the governor be relieved "so far as practicable from the performance of any duty not directly connected with the office of the chief executive." Little has been done in such a direction since that day. Many state departments and agencies continue to operate as "little kingdoms."²¹

²¹ Ibid.

The Montana constitution has made the office of governor weak by limiting the power of the executive branch. Much of the dissatisfaction which Governor Nutter may have found in the executive office is inherent in the Montana system of government.

Governor Nutter was not the first man to find fault with the executive office or to question his capacity in the state. As early as 1939, one political writer said:

Another western state, Montana, has a similar board (of control) for curbing the governor. This state, vast in area, has a paucity of inhabitants and wealth. Since it cannot afford a large budget, it must needs throw additional work on its few officers.²²

He further pointed to the board of examiners as the real chief executive in Montana, but that the governor did not rule the board. By a system of "trading" and "logrolling" the governor may be overruled. A governor of Montana had complained to this man that he had to sit on too many boards and therefore could not keep abreast of their meetings. In conclusion he said of the governor in Montana:

Such requirements that the governor himself directly participate in administrative minutia are of manifest futility. They defeat their own ends. The governor has so much to do that he cannot give time to all the boards. If, however, he does attend, either he is frittering away his energy on henhouses and piggeries or he has to secure a majority vote on important matters by

²²Lipson, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

"trading" with the other members. In neither case can there be effective over-all supervision of the general administrative policy.²³

Another political fault which former governors criticized in Montana is inherent in the state and its citizens. The same political writer said of the inexperience of legislators hampering the action of the governor as compared with more experienced legislators in other states:

In Massachusetts, New York, and Illinois, the legislature convenes every January and is quite likely to remain in session for five or six months. During this period there are continued contacts between the legislators and the governor and the department heads. Indeed in one of these states a department head complained the members of the legislature come to his office far too much, inquiring and probing. There is thus a chance in some states that legislating may be a full-time profession, especially if the member has independent means. It is doubtful whether this can ever become the case in certain states of the West. In Montana, for instance, the writer was told by the governor who had previously served in the state senate that many legislators are poorly informed both about state problems and about legislative procedure. Their occupation may be that of cowboy, farmer, or stockman, and "they don't know what it's all about." Some have never even read the state constitution and cannot propose a motion in the proper way.²⁴

Although this image may not be accurate or unique in Montana, if true it does have a detrimental effect on the smooth functioning of the state legislature.

According to a recent analysis of the power of the

²³Lipson, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

²⁴Lipson, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

Montana governor, the executive-administrative branch is extremely complex. Several factors contribute to the complexity of the political situation and to Montana's administrative organization. The principal factors are the existence of several elected executive officials in addition to the governor, the reliance on boards and commissions for administrative purposes, and the growth in number of unrelated administrative units. A thesis prepared at Montana State University was

predicated on the basic assumption that the present executive-administrative structure in Montana is far inferior to structures found in other states and to systems advocated by both students and practitioners of state government. Underlying this basic assumption is the writer's belief that executive authority must be commensurate with executive responsibility. In state government the governor should have authority to administer the laws and he should be commensurably accountable to the people for that administration. Authority and responsibility for executive action should be centered in the governor.

Montana's executive is characterized by the diffusion of executive authority and responsibility among several elected executive officials and among many boards and commissions. This diffusion is a result of the historical period during which the state of Montana became a political reality.²⁵

The executive branch of government in Montana was conceived as a department. Within this department the executive power was to be diffused between seven elected

²⁵Clinton E. Grises, "Reorganization in the Executive-Administrative Branch of Montana Government" (unpublished Master's thesis, Montana State University, Missoula, 1959), p. 2.

officials: a governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, secretary of state, treasurer, a superintendent of public instruction, and a state auditor, all of whom were to be elected by the people to four-year terms.

This dispersal of executive power has left Montana's governor in an anomalous position. The adopted constitution had guaranteed that the "supreme executive power of the state shall be vested in the governor, who shall see that the laws are faithfully executed."²⁶

The framers of the Montana constitution erected the principle of the multiple executive and charged the governor with the responsibility of executing and administering the laws of the state. The authority for that execution was placed on the heads of the seven members of the executive department. These early Montanans believed that state services should be administered by boards and commissions. Some boards were to be presided over by the elected members of the executive department. Other boards were to be appointed by the governor. As state functions increased, there was a corresponding growth in the number of boards and commissions to administer these services.

A compilation of Montana boards and offices in 1953 revealed a total of 135. As Dr. Roland R. Henne pointed

²⁶Montana, Constitution, Article 7, Section 5.

out, "The state administrative machinery is far from a simple structure and the chief executive or governor of this state has a difficult job working out a smoothly functioning and well-coordinated administration."²⁷

Another study of the development and growth of state administration in Montana pointed out that there are numerous ex officio boards on which members of the executive department and specifically the governor serve. The number of these boards has increased as new services are added. In 1890 there were five ex officio boards; in 1953 there were 14. In addition to ex officio boards, combination ex officio and appointive boards have increased from none in 1890 to 27 in 1953.²⁸

Two years before Governor Nutter took office, a House resolution of the 36th legislative assembly directed the study, the legislature pointed out that the governor is by constitutional mandate vested "with the supreme executive power in the state" but that the laws do not explicitly provide a means by which such executive authority is to be asserted. Because of the independent nature

²⁷ Roland R. Renne, The Government and Administration of Montana, American Commonwealth Series, ed. W. Brooks Graves (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1958), p. 89.

²⁸ David Smith, "An Outline of the Development and Growth of State Administration in Montana, 1890-1953" (unpublished Master's thesis, Montana State University, Missoula, 1953), p. 4.

of many state agencies, the governor was not required to play an active and interested role in the administration of the state government. Therefore the legislature argued that a responsible executive branch operating under a governor vested with adequate authority would strengthen the legislative branch. This strengthening process would provide some insurance that legislative policies would be carried out and by freeing the legislature from concern with details that should be left to administrators. The legislature thought that because state government necessarily centers around the chief executive of the state, an analysis of the office of governor could provide a general critique of state government.

As early as 1941 a committee of the Montana Legislative Assembly analyzed the executive grant of power:

The Governor is vested with the supreme executive power of the state and it is his duty to see to it that the laws are faithfully executed. Yet, a number of departments, boards and commissions have little or no direct connection with the Governor, and in other instances, the lines of authority are not set up clearly. Even if the Governor had the authority with which he is nominally vested, it would be impossible for him to keep in touch with all the boards, commissions, and offices that at the present exist let alone supervise and coordinate their activities.²⁹

This same committee decided that the four deterrents to a strong executive in Montana are the long ballot, long

²⁹"Report of Joint Committee on State Governmental Organization," House Journal of the 27th Legislative Assembly of the State of Montana, 1941, p. 399.

overlapping terms of administrative officers with no power of removal in the chief executive, too much detail assigned to the governor, and the lack of response of executive agencies to gubernatorial leadership.

As recently as November, 1962, the Montana Legislative Council recommended:

--Increased gubernatorial authority over the executive branch by eliminating most elective administrative officials. "Most" would mean at least four of the seven elected positions would be eliminated.

--With such exceptions as the Board of Education, the governor should have powers of appointment over administrative department heads and governing bodies, subject to State Senate confirmation in most cases.

--A merit system which incorporates some form of protection against political discharge of career employes.

--Elimination of the use of boards and commissions for administrative work so far as possible.³⁰

The Council admitted that since Montana was created there had been an increase in the scope and complexity of state government, but little thought had been given to the design and utility of the governmental structure that had gradually evolved. The potential gains of reorganiza-

³⁰Executive Reorganization, A Report to the Thirty-Eighth Legislative Assembly by the Montana Legislative Council (Great Falls: Tribune Printing, 1962), p. 10.

tion of Montana government, as seen by the Council, were economy, efficiency, a government more responsible and responsive to the desires of the people it serves, and the strengthening of the state in the federal system. Therefore, the Council did not endorse change for changes' sake, nor did it believe that successful re-organization movements in other states are necessarily valid patterns for Montana to adopt.³¹

These were some of the problems facing Governor Nutter which were inherent in the Montana government system. Since 1889, Montana governors had been plagued by the limitations of office written into the constitution. Each governor was faced with an increase in duties in addition to the specific political problems of their respective terms.

To overcome some of these problems, Governor Nutter apparently thought it necessary to use the daily press to carry his fight for more power to the people. The press could work in his favor or as a check on his political aspirations.

³¹Ibid., p. 9.

CHAPTER IV

THE POLITICAL CLIMATE OF THE NUTTER REGIME

Donald G. Nutter announced his candidacy in the Republican party race for governor on January 21, 1960, with a statement that he favored a healthy business climate including economy in government, a broadened tax base, and fairness to all segments of Montana economy.³²

His opponent for the Republican nomination for governor, Wesley A. D'Ewart, ex-eastern district congressman from Wilsall and onetime assistant secretary of the interior, announced his candidacy on April 23, 1960. His platform included encouraging and promoting the welfare of labor and industry, stopping unnecessary expenditures, maintaining friendly and equitable relations with the federal agencies doing business with the state and promoting the growth and development of natural and recreational resources as a sound basis for the growth of Montana.³³

Nutter, 44, faced an opponent with experience and

³²Great Falls Tribune, January 21, 1960.

³³Associated Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, April 23, 1960.

background in state politics. Nutter presented an image of boldness with his background as a B24 pilot with 62 combat missions and as a state basketball referee for 13 years. He was the image of a man in a hurry with his eagerness to announce his candidacy for the primaries some four months before his opponent.

On the Democratic primary election ticket were six candidates: Paul Cannon, Willard E. Fraser, Mike Kuchera, John M. Nickey, Merrill K. Riddick, and Jack Toole. The results of the primary election on June 7, 1960, focused political attention in the state on Nutter and his opponent Paul Cannon, 62, retired Butte businessman and ex-lieutenant governor. Nutter had defeated Wesley D'Ewart by a vote of 33,099 to 32,538. Paul Cannon's nearest opponent, Jack Toole, received a vote of 40,537 to his vote of 44,690.³⁴

An editorial in the Daily Missoulian on October 18, 1960, "Strong Home Support for Nutter," commented:

In the primary of last June 7, Nutter received 1,525 of the 3,076 Richland County votes cast for governor on both the Democratic and Republican tickets. In his five elections to Congress, Wesley A. D'Ewart always ran strong in Richland. But in his bid for the governorship against the Sidney man, he was swamped in Richland by a margin of 13 to 1. Even more surprising is that Nutter's total is 93 more than the combined primary strength of the six Democratic aspirants, Cannon, Fraser,

³⁴ Report of official canvass of the vote cast at the primary election June 7, 1960, Montana Secretary of State.

Kuchera, Nickey, Riddick, and Toole.³⁵

Thus began a vigorous and decisive campaign by Donald G. Nutter for the office of governor of Montana. On the other hand, Paul Cannon presented the image of a man of inconsistency and was accused of being the "poppun of Montana politics."³⁶

In an editorial on October 2, 1960, the Daily Missoulian endorsed Nutter for governor

on his merits, as well as because of the vacillating indecisiveness of his opponent. . . . The record of his opponent, Paul Cannon, is barren of constructive proposals during his nearly eight years as lieutenant governor and three terms in the legislature from Silver Bow County. Could more be expected from him as governor? Nothing that he has said so far during the campaign so indicates.

We believe that the dynamic, personable and persuasive former senator from Richland County has both the determination and capacity to accomplish much along these lines. We doubt that Mr. Cannon possesses either the will or ability to even try. We believe that Montana's interests will be best served if energetic 43-year-old Donald Nutter becomes our next governor.³⁷

The Daily Missoulian ran an editorial broadcast from radio station KQVO by president and general manager Dale Moore on October 18, 1960:

He is not only more qualified, but perhaps more importantly, because he reflects a sincere interest

³⁵Editorial in the Daily Missoulian, October 18, 1960.

³⁶Editorial in the Hayra Daily News, April 7, 1960.

³⁷Editorial in the Daily Missoulian, October 2, 1960.

in the people--all of the people--and their problems in the state of Montana. He offers no panacea, but Donald Nutter offers an approach--a method of dealing with the problems facing Montana. His opponent--Paul Cannon--has offered no approach, no method--and even a lack of real understanding of what the true problems are.³⁸

The editorial quoted the broadcast as having accused Cannon of being tied to special interests and personal publicity, of being more interested in personal feuds than questions, of being so small in stature as to criticize the incumbent governor for leaving the state to accompany his wife to the Mayo Clinic for surgery, and of refusing to discuss specific questions through the press, radio, and television.³⁹

Nutter, a younger, more energetic and dynamic man, beat his opponent, an older, more hesitant and less certain man, by 14,000 votes. But with his election victory, he faced the particular problem of a Democratic-controlled state Senate and a Republican-controlled House of Representatives. In the 55-member Senate were 38 Democrats and 17 Republicans and of the 94 Representatives, 53 were Republicans and 41 Democrats.⁴⁰

³⁸ Editorial broadcast from radio station KQVO, Missoula, by president and general manager Dale Moore in the Daily Missoulian, October 18, 1960.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Harry Hansen, The 1961 World Almanac and Book of Facts (76th ed.), p. 134. See States of the U.S.A., Legislatures, Montana.

An indication of the measures which Nutter would call for and the changes which he wished to accomplish in the state was presented to the state legislature in his State of the State message on January 3, 1961, inauguration day. In complying with a state constitutional requirement that the governor inform the legislature of the condition of the state and then recommend a program for the future conduct of state government, he laid a background of information and then called for specific action.

In calling for a fiscal retrenchment program with a reduction in the number of state employes, Nutter called to the attention of the legislators state finances:

That your task as Senators and Representatives is difficult is evidenced by the fact that we have carried on a program of deficit spending since June 30, 1949. On that date we had a surplus of \$14,736,025.14 in the General Fund. As of June 30, 1960 we were in the red by approximately \$4,981,000. By June 30, 1961, the end of this fiscal biennium, it is estimated we will have a General Fund deficit of \$6,634,459. In twelve years we have overspent our income by more than twenty-one million dollars, not to mention levies imposed upon the taxpayers for repayment of special bond issues. You and I must, and will, put an end to deficit spending.⁴¹

To take the state out of the red, Governor Nutter called for a \$4.8 million state budget cut:

You will note that the aggregate of the budget is \$70,927,694. This represents a substantial

⁴¹Donald G. Nutter, "State of the State Message" (Delivered to the 37th Legislative Assembly of Montana, Helena, January 3, 1961), p. 3.

reduction in the \$74,682,322 appropriation from the general fund by the 1959 legislature.⁴²

In addition to certain budget cuts, the governor called upon the legislature to broaden the tax base by encouraging Montana businesses and industries to expand into new areas, and by attracting outside industries into the state.

To further limit state expenditures, Nutter called for a two year moratorium on state building programs:

During the past few years we have had under way, in one department or another, a building program of considerable magnitude. Many of these buildings were necessary; others were nice to have, but I believe it is time the Legislature assumed complete control over all State building programs. I believe that in the interest of a more intelligent approach to our housing problem authorized buildings presently under construction should be completed but a moratorium should be declared on all new building starts until a master plan for building construction, can be developed which will give consideration to real, not imagined; necessary, and not desired, construction programs.⁴³

In his list of recommendations in the field of education, Governor Nutter said:

You will note a sharp cut in the budgets for the six units of the University system. The maximum student load at the six units has increased approximately 81% in the years 1951 through 1959. The per student appropriation in 1951 was \$770.00; in 1959 it was \$1,873.00. While enrollments were increasing by 81%, appropriations to the six units

⁴²Ibid., p. 4.

⁴³Ibid., p. 7.

were 317% higher in 1959 than in 1951.⁴⁴

In addition, the governor's plans in education included:

The budget has provided salary increases as requested by the unit presidents. Such allocation of funds has been on the more realistic student-faculty ratios of 15 students to one faculty member at the School of Mines. 17 to 1 at the two large units; and a ratio of 20 to 1 at the other three schools. Buildings under construction will be completed but future building programs on each campus will be placed on a priority, based on real need and not desire.⁴⁵

One of the solutions of the deficit in the state as proposed by the governor was to enact legislation necessary to transfer certain departmental reserve funds to the general fund to be used in retirement of the state debt. He proposed to take the state out of the hail insurance business and to transfer hail insurance reserve funds to the state general fund because

today the justification of a tax-free state business which furnishes insurance at cost to a relatively small number of subscribers is questionable. Private insurance companies provide hail coverage and if this is not satisfactory in certain areas the federal crop insurance program offers some hail loss protection. . . . If this fund is applied toward reduction of our indebtedness, no additional taxes will be needed under the budget as proposed.⁴⁶

In hopes of becoming the chief executive in Montana in fact as well as in title, Governor Nutter pointed out the report by the Legislative Council on government

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 13-14.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 14.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 16.

reorganization and called on the legislature to give him control over state boards and commissions. He said that since sound governmental operations can be achieved by placing authority where responsibility lies:

I, therefore, request you to enact legislation which will repeal all term appointments and provide that all persons on the state government payroll, except those appointed by elective officers other than the Governor, tenure and longevity notwithstanding. It is not my intention to eliminate tenure and longevity, but I believe it desirable to provide for the removal of incompetent personnel without court action to determine if cause for the removal exists.⁴⁷

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 19.

CHAPTER V

THE RESEARCH

In any study of the press and the governor in a state, the research seems to fall into three divisions-- the ability of the press to act as a check on government, the ability of the press to report the activities of the government, and the ability of the governor to utilize the press to build public opinion.

In Montana the best chronicle of gubernatorial activity is presented in the state's 14 dailies. These papers range in circulation from 1,944 for the Dillon Daily Tribune to 44,676 for the Great Falls Tribune. In addition, the dailies include the Anaconda Standard, the Billings Gazette, the Bozeman Daily Chronicle, the Montana Standard and Butte Daily Post,⁴⁸ the Hamilton Daily Ravalli Republican, the Hayre Daily News, the Helena Independent Record, the Kalispell Daily Inter Lake, the Lewistown Daily News, the Livingston Enterprise, the Miles City Star, and the Kisacoulian and Sentinel.⁴⁹ A fifteenth

⁴⁸The Montana Standard and Butte Daily Post were owned by the Lee Newspapers of Montana in 1961. The Montana Standard was published in the morning and the Butte Daily Post in the evening except Sunday.

⁴⁹Montana State Press Association, Newspaper Directory and Sale Book (Montana State University, 1961), p. 8.

newspaper, the Glendive Daily Banner, changed from a daily to a semi-weekly on April 1, 1961, and was not included in a consideration of the daily press.

In a study of Governor Nutter's relationship with the press in Montana, the fourteen state dailies were examined for the period beginning December 1, 1960, and ending January 31, 1962. This period of 14 months included more than a month of material published prior to Nutter's inauguration on January 3, 1961, and a week following his death on January 25, 1962. The fourteen dailies were chosen in the belief that they would furnish the most continuous and complete record of the governor's term in office that was available in the state. A study of the weeklies was not included because the volume of work involved would provide a minimum of information.

The research on the 14 dailies included a day-by-day, page-by-page inventory of the stories, editorials, and photographs included in each paper which contained material on Governor Nutter. The purpose of the research was to develop a quantitative and qualitative conclusion concerning the coverage given the governor by Montana dailies. The quantitative study includes statistics on the amount of news, editorial, and picture space devoted to the governor during the 14-month period. The qualitative study is an evaluation of this space and its favorable or un-

favorable effect on the image which Governor Nutter wished to present to the Montana voter.

In a quantitative analysis of the material on Governor Nutter, the column-inch, a standard space unit, was used. The column-inch is a unit one column wide and one inch deep and has been defined as "a space unit common to all newspapers and affords a fair method by which to measure the amount--but not the content--of material."⁵⁰ However, certain limitations in the use of the column-inch as a standard for measurement have been noted:

Unfortunately, however, the space unit has not been correctly applied in some studies which have assumed that the opinion-influencing value of an item is a function of its length. This assumption leads to the conclusion that a longer article is per se more effective than a shorter one, a conclusion which anyone who has ever served on a copy desk knows is not necessarily the case.⁵¹

Quantitative evaluations were made on both the news and editorial levels including: total stories and editorials, total news and editorial copy, total headline space in news and editorial coverage, photographic coverage, page one stories, wire service stories, and whether the tone of the story or editorial was favorable or unfavorable to Governor Nutter.

⁵⁰Nathan B. Blumberg, One Party Press? (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1954), p. 34.

⁵¹Ibid.

In the statistical analysis of both news and editorials, the total article was measured as were articles not completed on one page but continued to another page. This measurement to the nearest half-inch included headlines and white space for each article. Then the news copy itself was measured to determine how much of the article was headline area when statistics were compiled. Therefore a story of 10 column-inches with eight column-inches of copy meant that two column-inches were devoted to headlines. The measurement of photographs included captions and outlines.

Every article in the fourteen dailies with any reference to Governor Nutter in the headlines or copy was included in the statistics. There was no attempt to analyze the statistics minutely or to indicate what portion of the total inches referred specifically to Nutter or includes his name directly. The entire article was measured since there was no method of determining where the reader would stop reading if the governor was mentioned in the headline and then only in the first paragraph.

Perhaps the most difficult single task in a qualitative analysis of news and editorial coverage was the determination of the impression the material would have on the picture which the Montana citizen had of Governor Nutter. If an article was not definitely unfavorable toward the governor's personality or action, for the purposes of

studying the interaction of government and the press, the article was regarded as favorable.

In the case of editorials, the lines of favor and disfavor toward the governor and his policy were more clearly drawn. Since editorials are vehicles of opinion, the reader is presented with a subjective view of government and of the way in which the individual papers reacted. Whereas the lines were not often so clearly drawn in news coverage, most editorials usually clearly favored or opposed Nutter. In determining what was favorable or unfavorable toward Nutter the purposes of this investigation were kept in mind. Since the purpose of this research was to determine how well the press was functioning as a check on government, it was necessary to decide the degree to which each paper used its prerogative to criticize. Therefore each article or editorial was judged either favorable or unfavorable in an evaluation of the governor and his action.

Anaconda Standard

News coverage of Governor Nutter from December 1, 1960-
January 31, 1962

Total news stories...9
Front page news stories...4
Total inches...67
News copy inches...49½
Headline inches...14½
Photo coverage...1 photograph, 3 inches
Wire Service Stories...0
Favorable stories...9
Unfavorable stories...0

No editorial coverage of Governor Nutter

The Anaconda Standard with a total paid circulation of 4,274, in 1961, serves some 12,054 persons in Anaconda with local news coverage.⁵² This paper is published five mornings a week except Tuesday and Sunday and is circulated to Anaconda citizens as an insert in the Butte Montana Standard. The Anaconda Standard does not subscribe to either of the wire services since the Butte Montana Standard furnishes news outside Anaconda.

⁵²Montana State Press Association, Newspaper Directory and Rate Book (Montana State University, 1961), p. 8.

During the 14-month period studied, the Standard published nine stories pertaining to Governor Nutter, five of which ran on March 1, 15, 17, 22, and 23. These nine stories all pertained to news of the governor connecting him with the Anaconda area such as: "Governor Lists Anaconda Eligible for/Federal Projects to Up Employment," "Governor Urges/Optimism for/Future of State," "Governor Nutter Has/ Proclaimed Oct. 1-6/Business Women's Week," and "Jamboree Hopes/Relayed to/Governor Nutter." None of the nine stories presented an unfavorable impression of the governor.

Billings Gazette

News coverage of Governor Nutter from December 1, 1960-
January 31, 1962

Total news stories...218
Front page news stories...77
Total inches...2,950
News copy inches...1,928
Headline inches...734
Photo coverage...15 photographs, 288 inches
Wire Service Stories...48 (UPI), 133 (AP)
Favorable stories...182
Unfavorable stories...36

Editorial coverage

Total editorials...7
Total editorial inches...70
Editorial copy inches...63
Editorial headline inches...7
Favorable editorials...4
Unfavorable editorials...3

The Billings Gazette, the Montana daily with the second largest total paid circulation in 1961,⁵³ ranked fourth among the fourteen papers in the number of stories

⁵³ Ibid., p. 6.

on Governor Nutter as well as the total news inches. The Gazette depended for a large part of its coverage of the governor on releases from the two wire services. Much of the interest of the Billings Gazette in state government was related to comments on Eastern Montana College and industry in Billings. The Gazette's coverage of Nutter's views on education and on the education budget was especially extensive. As early as January 9, 1961, the Gazette ran the article, "Nutter Takes No Stand on EMCE," which set the stage for more complete coverage of Nutter's ideas on education.

In June the Gazette began a five-part series on the Nutter-Henne feud which included two articles favorable toward Nutter and two favorable toward Henne. The titles of two of the articles in this series were: "Nutter-Henne Feud Felt/On-Off 'Big M' Campus" and "MSC Students Say: 'Henne's Straight Shooter.'" "

News stories in the Gazette not emanating from the wire services were a coverage of Nutter's visits to the city for talks and meetings. One story from Billings was "Nutter Outlines Plans for Conduct of Governorship" on December 1, 1961, in which Nutter said, "I may be governor for only four years but by the time I'm out, people are going to know I've been up there."

A story from Billings on January 4, "Billings Mayor/ Praises Nutter" said, "Mayor Clavadetscher, a Democrat,

termed the Republican governor's message as 'what people have been waiting for.' . . . If the legislature will go along with him, he'll have the state in good shape in two years.'" Another story from Billings "Governor Declines/Statement on EMCE" which ran on January 24 said that "Gov. Nutter said Monday night he would make no comment regarding a 4-year liberal arts program at EMC until a governors' committee studies the state university system." The Gazette covered the governor's speech to the Billings Press Club with the story on March 9 "Governor Raps/Demos, 'Politics'" which said

State Democrats, Dr. R.R. Renne, and "petty politics" came in for some strong criticism from Gov. Nutter at the Billings Press Club Wednesday night. . . . Gov. Nutter attacked the Democrats in the state senate as representatives of "special interests," not of the "people who elected them." . . . Nutter said frankly, "I hope sincerely some changes are made in the state senate next year."

One-third of the Gazette's news coverage of the governor was on the front page. Thirty-six of a total of 218 news stories in the Gazette were unfavorable toward the governor.

The Gazette's editorial coverage of the governor and state government was almost evenly divided in its praise and blame. Of a total of seven editorials over the 14 months, four were favorable and three were unfavorable. Whereas the Gazette was fourth in the quantity of stories and in total news inches among the daily papers in news

coverage, it was fifth in the number of editorials and total editorial inches.

Editorial coverage began on December 18 with "It's a Tough Job, Governor" which said

Yes, Gov. Nutter has his task cut out for him. He can't do it alone. He is going to need help from department heads, both appointive and elective. He is going to need help from the Legislature.

He is also going to need help from the people of Montana, the voters who gave him one of the largest majorities received by a Treasure State governor in many years.

The January 5 editorial, "Gov. Nutter Submits His Program," said

In tackling the problems of efficiency and sound fiscal management in state government, Gov. Nutter has already shown himself dedicated to principle ahead of expediencies of politics.

Although his proposals to increase salaries of state employes will find favor with many, the reduction of personnel in the interest of efficiency will find opponents with all on whom the axe may fall.

Tapping surplus funds to pay off state debts seems logical, but the units which have built up the reserves by good management may object. A two-year moratorium on starting new buildings will disappoint those who are looking for new and more spacious quarters. Nor will a reduction in funds for equipment of all types be popular.

But Gov. Nutter has a strong argument in advocating repeal of term appointments of those on the state payroll except appointees named by elective officers other than the governor. In his address to the legislature he pointed out that since the governor is responsible for the operation of the various departments, his hands are tied without authority to control them through the boards or committees.

The main objection to giving the governor a free rein is that there is no third party such as a court of justice to hear the removed employe's defense against a chief executive's claim of inefficiency. For that reason the Legislature will be reluctant to grant such sweeping authority. . . .

In advising deferment of authority to raise county millage limits until after the reclassification and re-appraisal program is completed, the governor showed good judgment because the tax base may be raised by the new values and a higher levy ceiling would not be necessary.

Gov. Nutter cannot be accused of avoiding issues and dealing in generalities. He has proposed a legislative program of wide scope, and the House and Senate members will find much in it to consider for enactment in the next 60 days.

In the editorial, "Nutter Aims to Cut the Frosting," which ran on January 27, the Gazette criticized Nutter for action which he threatened against Eastern Montana College in Billings. The editorial said:

It is unfortunate, however, that the proposal to allow Eastern Montana College to grant a liberal arts degree is being challenged on the claim that it will add to the cost of operating the university system. Those who advance the argument are unaware of or would rather ignore the fact that subjects required for a liberal arts degree are already being taught at Eastern in its four-year courses.

Thus, granting a liberal arts degree here, largely a matter of terminology, definitely would not be a "frosting" function. Even though Eastern's budget may be trimmed along with those of other units of the university system, and it is forced to get along with less, the school should have the right to grant this degree.

The Gazette ran a second unfavorable editorial on the governor on April 16 with the headline "3-Year Con-

tracts Provide Incentive." The editorial said:

Gov. Nutter's claim that the Board of Regents has surrendered control of the greater University units by giving the presidents 3-year contracts is debatable and we hope in error.

Apparently the governor assumes that with extended contracts in their pockets assuring tenure of at least three years, the heads of different units in the University system will act without regard for the desires of the regents.

This, we don't think will happen. Moreover with the security of the extended tenure, we might expect better performance from the institution presidents, their attention centered upon their jobs rather than looking elsewhere for one that has a more certain future.

The presidents have been with their schools long enough to enable the regents and the governor to appraise their abilities and to decide whether they should be retained. If one of them is not doing his job satisfactorily, the time to act was when the contract issue was raised the other day rather than postponing the question for even a year.

The governor is right in his statement that the regents must keep control particularly in this period when adjustments are being made to keep the unit operations in line with income. We think that with the incentive of 3-year contracts administrators will do their best to make these changes and to maintain as well as possible a high standard of service. If they drag their feet in carrying out these policies, they should be censured. But first give them a chance.

The Gazette ran the editorial, "They Ought to See Billings," on June 25 which was mildly critical of the governor for not including Billings in a tour of the state which he had proposed for a group of bankers and investors. The Gazette solicited support for Nutter's

plan to draw new industry into the state with the editorial, "Many States Vie for New Industries," which ran on July 12. The final Gazette editorial on the governor was written on January 28 after his death.

None of the Billings Gazette's editorials on the governor was analytical of the man or of his policies in an over-all view of state government. Most of them dealt with specific problems concerning the Billings area.

Bozeman Daily Chronicle

News coverage of Governor Nutter from December 1, 1960-January 31, 1962

Total news stories...144
Front page news stories...89
Total inches...1,481½
News copy inches...1,165½
Headline inches...267
Photo coverage...3 photographs, 49 inches
Wire Service Stories...124 (AP)
Favorable stories...115
Unfavorable stories...29

Editorial coverage

Total editorials...3
Total editorial inches...28½
Editorial copy inches...24
Editorial headline inches...4½
Favorable editorials...2
Unfavorable editorials...1

The Bozeman Daily Chronicle, with a total paid circulation of 5,004 in 1961,⁵⁴ ranked sixth among Montana

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 8.

dailies as to quantity of news coverage of the governor. News coverage was almost exclusively favorable to the governor with little or no criticism. Almost eighty per cent of the 144 stories on the governor was favorable. Topics of some of the unfavorable stories were: "Trouble Indicated for Nutter's Economy Drive Plan," "Nutter's Educational Retrenchment/Plan Under Fire from Board of Regents," "Nutter Budget/ Slashes Under/More Fire," "Nutter Privately/Spanking College/Heads Says Daniels," and "Heart Torn Out of/Nutter Fiscal Plan."

Some of the stories originating with the Bozeman newspaper were: "'I'm Not Interested In/Hamstringing Education,'/Nutter Tells Group Here;" "Education Changes/ Desired by Nutter;" "MSC Staff,/Gov. Nutter/Meet Here;" and "Students Rib/Nutter Over/UN Stand."

As the home of Montana State College and Roland E. Henne, its president, the Bozeman newspaper made no comment other than wire service news on the controversy between the governor and Henne. Over half of the total news stories in the Chronicle on the governor were on page one.

For the 14-month period studied, the Chronicle ran three editorials which pertained to the governor. The first one on January 22, 1961, "As We See It," said that

citizens in the state should not become "too excited about budget cuts because the legislature has the final say." This editorial cited the "real need for economy in this state."

The Chronicle's unfavorable editorial on the governor was from the Butte Montana Standard and ran on May 10. This editorial "Nutter and Renne: May the People Rest" said:

What has been achieved by their wrangling? What's gained by the pull-and-haul in public? It seems unthinkable that a public controversy of this temper should go on and on. Schools can be too easily hurt.

The third editorial on the governor was written after his death.

The Chronicle's editorial coverage of the governor did not seem adequate for a town the size and in the position of Bozeman in the spectrum of events surrounding the governor. It seems significant that the unfavorable editorial on the governor was from another daily newspaper in the state which included Renne in the scope of its criticism. Renne was one of Nutter's most vociferous critics in the state on his budget cuts. The Chronicle covered the interaction between Nutter and Renne with a story on April 28 from the Associated Press in Billings "Nutter-Renne/'Battle Lines'/Being Drawn." A story from the Associated Press in Helena "Gov. Nutter Levels/Salvo at Dr. Renne" ran on May 1. The last story "Nutter,

Bonne/In Conference;/'No Comment'" from the Associated Press in Helena ran in the Chronicle on May 5 with no comment.

Dillon Daily Tribune

News coverage of Governor Nutter from December 1, 1960-January 31, 1962

Total news stories...6
Front page news stories...6
Total inches...61
News copy inches...36½
Headline inches...6
Photo coverage...6 photographs, 18½ inches
Wire Service Stories...0
Favorable stories...6
Unfavorable stories...0

No editorial coverage

It does not seem surprising that the Montana daily with the least circulation,⁵⁵ the Dillon Daily Tribune, should carry the least amount of news on the governor and on state government. The Daily Tribune is not served by either of the wire services and limits its coverage to local Dillon news. In the 14-month period the Tribune ran six stories on the governor with 61 total column-inches. Five of the six were concerned with gubernatorial

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 8.

action which had a direct bearing on Dillon or on Beaverhead County. The five stories were: "Governor Nutter/Will Talk at/Vigilante Meet," "Governor to Address Meeting at 2:15/In HS Auditorium--Electric/Fair in Vigilante Bldg.--Other Highlights," "Our Governor Is/Speaker at Boys/State on Friday," "Congressmen and Governor Coming to Dam Ceremony," and "Gov. Nutter Names/Stanley Davison to/School Committee." The sixth story was a report of the governor's death. All of the six stories were favorable to the governor.

There was no editorial coverage in the Dillon daily of the governor.

Great Falls Tribune

News coverage of Governor Nutter from December 1, 1960-
January 31, 1962

Total news stories...244
Front page news stories...80
Total inches...3,487
News copy inches...2,224½
Headline inches...675½
Photo coverage...26 photographs, 587 inches
Wire Service Stories...74 (UPI), 117 (AP)
Favorable stories...213
Unfavorable stories...31

Editorial coverage

Total editorials...6
Total editorial inches...68
Editorial copy inches...55
Editorial headline inches...13
Favorable editorials...6
Unfavorable editorials...0

The Great Falls Tribune has the largest total paid circulation of any daily newspaper in Montana. As the main source of news for some 42,203 subscribers,⁵⁶ the

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 8.

volume of news coverage in the Tribune ranked third behind the Helena Independent Record and the Missoulian and Missoula Sentinel. Of the news coverage on Nutter in this daily, about 80 per cent was from wire service sources with 30 per cent of the total news coverage running on the front page.

Most of the Tribune's coverage of the governor not provided by the wire services was from the Tribune's capitol bureau reporter Luke Wright. Wright predicted on December 8, 1960, that the Nutter regime would not resemble the Arenson administration which had been in charge of state government for the past eight years. Most of the information which Wright furnished to readers through the Tribune was not critical of the governor. The headlines on his articles helped to build the impression of the governor as a strong, willful man trying to put his ideas through the legislature. A January 17, 1961, article with the headline, "Nutter Remains Firm/On New Building Starts," introduced the story with the lead paragraph:

Gov. Nutter's proposed moratorium on new state building starts still was intact Monday at the conclusion of his first session as chairman of the State Board of Education, but he must have concluded the pressure against holding the line until a long range plan can be put into effect was greater than ever he anticipated when he delivered his inaugural address a couple of weeks ago.

Two days later, a Tribune article by Luke Wright, "Nutter Holds Top Ace/In Blocking Building," ran as did

subsequent articles on February 6, "Gov. Nutter Shatters/ Appointment Tradition," and on March 1, "Nutter Veto/ Interests/Attorneys." In a March 9 story by Luke Wright he said that a "background of friction existed between the 1961 Legislature and Gov. Nutter." The headline was "Governor's Defiance of Tradition/Takes Courage, Wright Tells Notarians."

There was no coverage by the Tribune except through the wire services of the Great Falls Young Democrats Club's pledge to investigate the effects of the "Republican-blamed budgetary cuts in the state's university system." The Tribune ran an Associated Press story "Young Demos to Probe/Nutter's Budget Cuts" on September 1.

When Governor Nutter refused to endorse United Nations Day in Montana in October, the chairman of the Montana Young Democrats who lived in Great Falls said, "Gov. Nutter contradicts himself and his current statement that he is not anti-United Nations will deceive nobody, including his radical supporters in the John Birch Society." The Tribune ran a story with the headline "Engles, Gabriel Speak/On Nutter's U.N. Stand" on October 21 which originated in Great Falls.

The remainder of the Tribune's news coverage on the Governor which was not from the wire services or from Luke Wright was of Nutter's action which directly affected

the people of Great Falls such as visits to the city or the appointment of local citizens to state jobs. The Tribune's photography coverage of the governor was second in the daily papers to that of the Helena Independent Record.

In the 14-month period of Nutter's office there were six editorials on the governor in the Tribune. Before the governor took office the Tribune ran a guest editorial from the Daily Missoulian "Nutter Says Montana/Must Stay in Budget" which said that "Governor-elect Donald Nutter indicated he expects the 1961 legislature to accomplish the 'monumental' task of wiping out the \$6.6 million debt in the state's general fund."

On January 4 the Tribune ran the editorial "A Time Comes for Reckoning!/Gov. Nutter Says It's Now!" which said of the governor's State of the State message: "We fully agree, however, with the basic objective which is to put Montana's financial house in order. And we believe his proposal to do this without increasing the over-all tax burden will have the support of a majority of Montana's citizens." "Many Legal Factors Limit/Governor's Spending Control" ran on January 6 and listed the restrictions which Nutter had to face in trying to put his campaign promises and hopes into practice.

A February 5 editorial "Gov. Nutter's Proposals Have/

Spotlighted Sound Economy" said:

In the face of much criticism and many cries of anguish from agencies fearing the pruning knife, the governor has held firm in his position that considerable savings can be made without harm to essential services involved.

Credit is due to the governor for presenting a program geared for corrective action toward sound economy in our state government, and for being willing to fight for it. This is heartening to the suffering citizenry of a debt-ridden commonwealth.

The last editorial that the Tribuna ran on Governor Nutter before his death was "Governor Nutter Urges Indian/Work Projects--Not Handouts" on August 17. The editorial quoted Nutter as charging "conference delegates with the responsibility of seeking out additional industrial development and more jobs for Indians on or near the reservations." The last paragraph said, "Development of work opportunities is certainly a more desirable objective than handouts or a permanent dole. We agree with Gov. Nutter that more emphasis should be put on employment projects for Indians, both on and off the reservations."

Both in news and editorial coverage the Tribuna was favorable in its comment on the governor. Editorial coverage was entirely favorable with all of the six total editorials offering no criticism of the governor. More than 85 per cent of the Tribuna's news coverage of the governor was favorable with headlines emphasizing the

strength and determination of the governor to eliminate what he termed waste spending and to put government finances on a sound footing.

Hamilton Daily Ravalli Republican

News coverage of Governor Nutter from December 1, 1960-
January 31, 1962

Total news stories...10
Front page news stories...10
Total inches...95
News copy inches...74½
Headline inches...20½
Photo coverage...5 photographs, 46½ inches
Wire Service Stories...0
Favorable stories...10
Unfavorable stories...0

No editorial coverage

The circulation of the Hamilton daily was 2,114 in 1961.⁵⁷ The Daily Ravalli Republican was printed Monday through Friday during the period studied to serve Ravalli County. Of the three small dailies in the state, the Daily Ravalli Republican had more stories on the governor than the Anaconda or Dillon dailies. The Hamilton daily had a total of 10 stories which covered such topics as: "Governor's Budget \$4 Million Less Than/'59 Appropriations; Department Cuts;" "Governor Urges/CD Education;" "Nutter

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 8.

Commends Rehab Program/For Industrially Hurt; Funds Moved;"
"Nutter Proves Himself Rugged Individualist, Firm on
Berlin." None of the Daily Bayall Republican's coverage
of the governor was critical of state administration.
The Republican does not receive stories from either of
the wire services.

The Republican does carry some editorial coverage,
but did not have any editorial coverage of the governor.
Most of the editorials during the 14-month period dealt
with local matters.

Havre Daily News

News coverage of Governor Nutter from December 1, 1960-
January 31, 1962

Total news stories...84
Front page news stories...48
Total inches...1,035½
News copy inches...706
Headline inches...196
Photo coverage...12 photographs, 133½ inches
Wire Service Stories...74 (AP)
Favorable stories...73
Unfavorable stories...11

Editorial coverage

Total editorials...7
Total editorial inches...110½
Editorial copy inches...105
Editorial headline inches...5½
Favorable editorials...7
Unfavorable editorials...0

Among the 14 dailies included in this research, the Havre Daily News with a 1961 circulation of 4,597⁵⁸ ranked

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 8.

ninth in the volume of news coverage with a total of 84 stories with 1,035½ inches. Over half of the news coverage ran on the front page. Ten of the stories on the governor were not from the Associated Press. Over 80 per cent of the news coverage was favorable to the governor. Some of the headlines of unfavorable stories were: "House Demo Leader Says That He/Will Fight Gov.'s Proposal of/Transferring Hail Fund Reserves;" "Regents Show/Mixed Emotions/To Gov.'s Claim;" "Durkee Raps Statements of Governor;" and "Gov. Criticized/for Refusing to/Proclaim UN Day."

When Governor Nutter called for economy cuts in Montana's education system in his State of the State message in January, some persons in Montana and especially Havre residents suspected that Nutter was considering closing Northern Montana College. Students at Northern Montana College called a strike to protest the governor's plans to cut the university system budget. Dr. L. O. Brockman, president of Northern, was critical of the governor's program. In a statement to the Associated Press in Havre that appeared in the Daily Missoulian and other daily newspapers in the state, but not in the Havre Daily News, Brockman said, "Critical curtailment of the Northern Montana College educational program, staff, and services is implied in the recommended university system biennium budget of the state executive branch to the

Legislature." He said that the proposed cuts would "seriously handicap" regional teacher education and pre-professional functions and the statewide vocational-technical training responsibilities of the Havre college. There was no local coverage by the Havre daily newspaper of this controversy or of the effects which Nutter's program would have on the unit of the University system there.

The Havre Daily News ranked with the Billings Gazette and the Montana Standard and Butte Daily Post with seven editorials during the 14-month period. In total inches included in editorials, the Daily News had more editorial comment on the governor than either of the other two papers.

The first editorial on the governor "Governor Nutter Presented Hard-Hitting/Programs to State Legislature" was from the Phillips County News and ran on January 6, 1961. It said:

We feel that our new governor made it plain what he thinks the new legislature should accomplish this session. It is to be hoped that they will recognize their responsibility and do something about it.

A guest editorial from the Lewistown Daily News, "At Long Last!," ran on January 9 which praised the governor's State of the State message. A second guest editorial from the Lewistown daily, "The Crime of 'Sectional Pressure,'" which ran on February 2 in the Daily News said, "We think the governor has come up with the right answers in solving

the problems that face our antiquated and cumbersome university system." The Havre daily newspaper ran an editorial the next day, "Not Sectional Pressure But an Interest in Education," which quoted a letter from the governor who defended his program for economy in education with the statement that he wanted "to test economy measures."

An editorial on February 15, "Let's Get That Secondary Financing" said, "Nutter thinks that a lack of capitol by state financial institutions is the reason for the state being hampered concerning industrial expansion." This editorial explained that the governor would personally go to get financial assistance in the country's leading financial centers. In the editorial "Source of Satisfaction For Us as Well/As for the Governor" which ran on March 16, the Havre Daily News said that the governor should find satisfaction in the accomplishments of the state legislature "in the furtherance of the points in his program." The editorial explained that

If the legislature had not taken to heart the beliefs of the governor that we could have government at less cost, Montanans would have in about one year found themselves up the creek of heavy spending without a paddle. That would have meant that the favorable business climate we are trying to develop to attract new industry would have turned very frosty. . . . Gov. Nutter can find much satisfaction in that at least a good step has been made in the direction of operating state government within one's means. We feel pretty good about that.

The final editorial in the Havre Daily News before

the governor's death was "A Step in the Right Direction" which ran on August 29. The editorial said that Governor Nutter was deserving of a pat on the back for "the look-see trip by midwest financiers" and that even if new industry did not develop that "Gov. Nutter should be credited for sincere effort and the respect he has won."

All of the seven editorials on the governor were favorable. Three of the editorials were furnished by other papers in the state. None of the editorials were specifically written on the governor's action as it would affect Northern Montana College. One of the guest editorials endorsed the governor's "answers in solving the problems that face our antiquated and cumbersome university system." Another of the Havre newspaper's editorials defended the governor's economy program as being done in the "interest of education." There was no relation of the governor's action with Northern Montana College.

Helena Independent Record

News coverage of Governor Nutter from December 1, 1960-
January 31, 1962

Total news stories...253
Front page news stories...179
Total inches...4,261
News copy inches...2,555½
Headline inches...930½
Photo coverage...50 photographs, 775 inches
Wire Service Stories...41 (AP)
Favorable stories...214
Unfavorable stories...39

Editorial coverage

Total editorials...13
Total editorial inches...140
Editorial copy inches...121
Editorial headline inches...19
Favorable editorials...12
Unfavorable editorials...1

The Independent Record, with a circulation of
7,902,⁵⁹ serves Montana's capital city. It is also the

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 8.

center of Associated Press and United Press International coverage of the state. The Helena daily ranked first among dailies in the total amount of news coverage of the governor. The Independent Record ranked second behind the Daily Missoulian in total news stories, but it printed a total of 4,261 column-inches of news compared with the Missoulian's 3,514 column-inches. The Independent Record led state daily newspapers in photography coverage with 50 photographs with 775 column-inches. Most news of state government originates in Helena so 41 stories had a credit line from the wire services. Over 80 per cent of the news coverage was favorable to the governor and his program.

The Helena Independent Record was second in the quantity of editorial coverage after the Daily Missoulian. The Independent Record did have six more editorials than the daily newspapers in Billings, Butte, and Havre which had the third highest number of editorials.

The Independent Record's first editorial on Governor Nutter was "Meant What He Said" from the Billings Gazette that ran on December 6 and said that the governor would follow through on campaign promises to cut state expenses. The January 3 editorial "Governor Nutter's Program" was a review of the State of the State message explaining the governor's recommendations to the legislature. The January 5 Independent Record editorial "Back to Free

Enterprise" said that the governor had gone farther in his recommendations than did the legislative council and that "We think that Gov. Nutter has espoused a sound program." The January 8 editorial "It's Time to Tighten Belts" from station KOOK in Billings voiced approval for the State of the State message and the governor's fiscal plans. "Governor Nutter's Program" which ran on January 29 applauded his economy cuts.

The editorial on February 2 "The University's Academic Standing" said that "Gov. Nutter reported himself after interviewing the agitated gentlemen that all have admitted their institutions are not operated on a 100 per cent efficiency basis and that there is room for improvement in each case."

The Independent Record's unfavorable coverage of the governor in editorials was limited to a guest editorial from the Montana Kainin "Nutter's Interesting Confusion." This editorial that ran on May 6 said:

Donald G. Nutter has charged that the Board of Regents has abdicated its authority over Montana's University system by allowing the unit presidents to set their own contract terms.

That is to say the Board of Regents has asked the unit presidents how long they want their contracts to run; one, two or three years. This "abdication of powers" disturbed Gov. Nutter so much that after the vote was taken in favor of the extended-tenure option he relinquished the chairman's seat and left the room without adjourning the meeting.

Nutter termed this move of asking the presidents how long they wished to make their contracts

"unprecedented and ill-advised."

Just prior to adopting the extended-tenure option the board approved a \$500-a-year salary increase for each of the presidents.

This sets the stage for interesting confusion. Nutter will give each president a \$500 raise, but he doesn't want to offer them a two or three year contract.

Two things are suggested. The first is that one president is not in the governor's favor. However, this is the wrong time to do any firing since public opinion behind the university system's cause is rather strong and Nutter's whole program is so controversial that it would be impossible to accomplish such a move without rendering permanent damage to the remainder of his term and to his political career.

The second possibility is that Nutter doesn't like the way each university is run. By limiting terms to one year (or less?) Nutter could wield more power over the units by making each president answer to him more often.

The biggest sigh of relief over Nutter's defeat probably could have come from students themselves who had visions of classes of 70 or 80 (of which there are now a few) and nightmares of a second rate education.

The sigh could have come because it is now apparent that not everybody believes we literally burn taxpayer dollars in chem labs and spend study hours bowling on university alleys. What's more important is the discovery that there are persons in the higher echelons of Montana government who not only do not believe this, but also have the guts to stand up for what they do believe before a governor who is so strongly dedicated to balance the budget even at the expense of Montana's future generations.

The remainder of Independent Record editorials were:

"That Proposed Farm Bill;" "Wisconsin Likes Nutter;" "The Bishop and the Governor;" and "Governor Nutter Gets an

Ally." These editorials were favorable toward the governor. The last editorial was written after the governor's death.

Kalispell Daily Inter Lake

News coverage of Governor Nutter from December 1, 1960-
January 31, 1962

Total news stories...102
Front page news stories...46
Total inches...1,561
News copy inches...1,195
Headline inches...334½
Photo coverage...3 photographs, 31½ inches
Wire Service Stories...91 (UPI)
Favorable stories...86
Unfavorable stories...16

Editorial coverage

Total editorials...5
Total editorial inches...51
Editorial copy inches...44
Editorial headline inches...7
Favorable editorials...5
Unfavorable editorials...0

The Kalispell Daily Inter Lake had a circulation of 6,200 in 1961.⁶⁰ The Daily Inter Lake ranked eighth in

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 8.

total news stories on the governor, but it ranked sixth in total column-inches of news coverage. Less than half of the news stories were on page one and 11 of the stories did not come from wire service releases. The Daily Inter Lake's news coverage was almost 80 per cent favorable toward the governor. Stories originating in Kalispell included: "New Chair Lift/To Be Dedicated/By Don Nutter;" "Letter From Nutter;" "Nutter Warns/Against Pitfalls;" and "Murphy Raps MacDonald for/Jabbing at Governor Nutter."

The Daily Inter Lake ranked seventh in the quantity of editorial coverage on the governor with five editorials and a total of 51 column-inches. All five editorials were favorable. Editorial coverage began on January 25 with "Nutter's Budget Headache" which said, "That's Nutter's quandry. He's trying to keep the state from going broke. He thinks he can prevent it by cutting budgets. And when budgets are out it's generally fine with everyone unless the axe falls on your department or job."

The editorial "Custodial School Cuts" which ran on February 7 said:

Most thinking citizens believe Gov. Nutter's effort to balance the budget is commendable. He has encountered stiff opposition in some areas for using the pruning shears but when curtailment is necessary whether it is in government, in business, or in the home, someone has to feel the pinch.

It is hoped, however, that the governor will take another look at the budget for the Montana

State Training School at Eoulder, home of that pitiful segment of our population, the retarded youngster, who is relegated to the obscurity of an institution through no fault of his own.

Digging up money for any state institution always is difficult. A custodial institution is nevertheless the forgotten operation because only those people with persons there really care. That's why we hope the governor will have a long, hard look at this one before he cuts very deep.

This editorial seemed closer to an appeal than to criticism.

An Inter Lake editorial on September 17 "Governor Makes a Point" referred to a news story in the same paper. The October 29 editorial "Governor Made Points" said that Nutter had put forth the following argument for coming to Montana when he advertised to industry around the nation that "we are holding the line against taxes." The editorial quoted the governor as listing a trained work force, transportation problems that are not insurmountable, cheap power, good water, a ready market, and a good business climate. The conclusion of the editorial was:

Gov. Nutter was red hot when he made his speech at the Chamber gathering. His address was excellent. It would be difficult to pick holes in his talk. It made plain sense all the way. We can't see why Democrats and Republicans alike wouldn't have been wholeheartedly in accord with it.

The last editorial on the governor was written after his death.

Lewistown Daily News

News coverage of Governor Nutter from December 1, 1960-
January 31, 1962

Total news stories...49
Front page news stories...41
Total inches...812½
News copy inches...608
Headline inches...188
Photo coverage...2 photographs, 16½ inches
Wire Service Stories...42 (UPI)
Favorable stories...47
Unfavorable stories...2

Editorial coverage

Total editorials...5
Total editorial inches...48
Editorial copy inches...36
Editorial headline inches...12
Favorable editorials...5
Unfavorable editorials...0

The Lewistown Daily News had a circulation in 1961
of 3,405.⁶¹ This daily ranked eleventh in the number of

⁶¹Ibid., p. 6.

news stories, but tenth in the total number of inches with 812½. The Daily News depended upon the wire services for all but seven stories. Of the 49 stories, 47 were favorable toward the governor. The two unfavorable stories were: "Episcopal Bishop/Criticizes Nutter/On U.N. Issue" and "Resistance Solid to/Nutter's Building Ban."

On the editorial side, the Leviatown Daily News ran five editorials with a total of 48 column-inches. The first editorial on January 6, "At Long Last!" said:

We could write editorials every day for the next five years on the merits of the Governor's State of the State message which has appeared in its entirety in the Daily News.

We feel that Gov. Nutter is one of the best things that has happened to Montana in a long, long time. Not only does he intelligently present the problems that face the state, but he has come up with some intelligent answers on what to do about them.

And we liked his approach to the question of what to do with the state's antiquated six-unit university system. . . . We particularly liked Gov. Nutter's approach to school consolidation, elimination of the maze of duplication in the offices of the state government, and his timely suggestions on the state's hail insurance program.

And we liked Gov. Nutter's urgent plea for our lawmakers to pass legislation which would "eliminate payment of benefits to the highly seasonal or occasional workers" covered under the unemployment compensation law.

The editorial "Who's running Montana?" which ran on January 25 pointed to the differences in opinion between the governor and the legislature and concluded, "We think

the governor has come up with the right answers in solving the problems that face our antiquated and cumbersome university system." "Luke Hits the Nail on the Head" ran on March 21 and said:

Luke Wright . . . says it took real courage for Gov. Nutter to make his stand on his "hold the line," "retrenchment" and "no new starts on buildings" proposal. . . . Gov. Nutter's unpopularity in some sections of the state comes from his desire to do things that have needed doing for such a long, long time.

Whether you are a Democrat or a Republican you must admit that Gov. Nutter jolted the peace and quiet of state government with some of his dynamite-loaded proposals. . . . Certainly we will agree that Gov. Nutter could not win a popularity contest in some areas of the state today. Some groups dislike anyone who stands up and fights for what he believes in.

Frankly, we think Gov. Nutter will eventually win out over the petty, pointed and selfish politics that have plagued him during his early months of office.

Although the Daily News editorials were favorable toward Nutter the paper did recognize that there was dislike for the governor and his program in the state. The final editorial on the governor before his death from the Cut Bank Pioneer Press, "Nutter's Mass Popularity/Stronger Than Ever," ran on April 30.

Livingston Enterprise

News coverage of Governor Nutter from December 1, 1960-
January 31, 1962

Total news stories...58
Front page news stories...41
Total inches...761½
News copy inches...509½
Headline inches...155½
Photo coverage...6 photographs, 96½ inches
Wire Service Stories...54 (AP)
Favorable stories...50
Unfavorable stories...8

Editorial coverage

Total editorials...5
Total editorial inches...53
Editorial copy inches...48
Editorial headline inches...5
Favorable editorials...2
Unfavorable editorials...3

The Livingston Enterprise, with a 1961 circulation of 2,933,⁶² ranked tenth in the number of news stories, but eleventh in total column-inches of news coverage. Almost

⁶²Ibid., p. 8.

80 per cent of the news coverage was from the Associated Press with four stories originating in Livingston. These stories were: "Message to N/Is Appreciated;" "Gov. Nutter's Appointments/Are Approved by Senators;" "ACC Measure/ Signed by/Gov. Nutter;" and "Governor to Make 3 Major/ Appointments During 1962."

Front-page coverage in the Livingston Enterprise was 70 per cent. Unfavorable stories were on topics such as the building moratorium, Democratic opposition in the Senate to gubernatorial recommendations, and the accusations that the governor was linked with the John Birch Society.

The Livingston Enterprise carried a total of five editorials on the governor, three unfavorable and two favorable. The first editorial, which was unfavorable, was from the Daily Missoulian "Deficiency in Nutter's Program" and ran on February 1. A May 10 editorial, "Nutter-Senne: May the People Rest," was from the Butte Montana Standard. A July 25 editorial, "Drastic Steps Necessary," agreed with the governor that drastic action was necessary to curb the highway slaughter in Montana. A second unfavorable editorial, "United Nations Day," ran on October 20 and pointed out to the governor that he was calling attention to Montana for what they believed was "unflattering reasons."

Miles City Star

News coverage of Governor Nutter from December 1, 1960-
January 31, 1962

Total news stories...121
Front page news stories...26
Total inches...1,335
News copy inches...1,069½
Headline inches...200½
Photo coverage...3 photographs, 65 inches
Wire Service Stories...116 (AP)
Favorable stories...106
Unfavorable stories...15

Editorial coverage

Total editorials...2
Total editorial inches..18½
Editorial copy inches...17
Editorial headline inches...1½
Favorable editorials...2
Unfavorable editorials...0

The Miles City Star with a circulation of 4,770⁶³
in 1961 ranked seventh in total stories and eighth in
total column inches of news coverage. Of 121 stories,

⁶³Ibid., p. 8.

116 were from the Associated Press. Almost 90 per cent of the Helena City Star's news coverage of the governor was favorable.

Both editorials in this daily were favorable toward the governor. One editorial was written after the governor's death and the other editorial "The Cost of Economy" said:

Nutter has given Montana something to think about--operating on economy.

Montana has gone from a \$14 million surplus to a \$6 million deficit. We have complained that taxes are too high and that something should be done. Someone is--Gov. Nutter.

Gov. Nutter is receiving both praise and criticism for his strong measures for economy in state government. Those who are critical should withhold that criticism until they can come up with a better solution to Montana's fiscal insecurity. Those who praise the governor for his economy will do well to let him know how they feel. Drop him a line at the state capitol, Helena. Let him know. One who receives much public attention always hears from his opponents and too often we forget to give him a pat on the back.

Missoulian-Sentinel

News coverage of Governor Nutter from December 1, 1960-
January 31, 1962

Total news stories...269
Front page news stories...122
Total inches...3,514
News copy inches...2,281
Headline inches...833
Photo coverage...20 photographs, 400 inches
Wire Service Stories...206 (AP)
Favorable stories...231
Unfavorable stories...38

Editorial coverage

Total editorials...16
Total editorial inches...215
Editorial copy inches...192
Editorial headline inches...23
Favorable editorials...14
Unfavorable editorials...2

Montana's fourth largest daily in 1961 with a cir-
culation of 20,055,⁶⁴ the Missoulian and Sentinel, was

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 8.

first among dailies in total news stories on the governor with 269 and was second after the Helena Independent Record in total column-inches. Less than half of the total number of stories were on the front page and 38 stories were not from the wire service. Of these 38, topics included: "U Faculty Concerned/Over 17-1 Ratio Plan;" "Committee, Newburn Agree/Cuts Would Damage MSU;" "Pilots Criticize Nutter;" "Solution to U Fund/Problem in Making;" "Students Probe Legislature;" "Governor's Dog/Object of Hunt/In Missoula Area;" and "Governor's Lost Dog/Is Believed Found." The Missoulian seemed concerned with the effects of the governor's budget cuts on the University system and especially on Montana State University.

The Missoulian led the state dailies in the number and total column-inches of editorial coverage with 16 editorials and 215 column-inches. Fourteen of the editorials were favorable and two were unfavorable. The unfavorable editorial "Deficiency in Nutter Program," which ran on January 29, 1961, said:

Is the University of Montana's purpose the education of youth or is it here to preside over the allocation of public funds throughout the state?

Distribution of tax money seems to have figured very strongly in past policy regarding the state's university system. Perhaps that's one reason its six units are scattered all over the map.

Gov. Nutter has adopted a somewhat overzealous

policy to correct, in a few months, a bad situation that has been years in building. Such a policy, without moderation could destroy, in those same few months, much of what is essential to the future education of our youth.

His policy of retrenchment is not enough. Such a drastic program does not answer the question: "Where do we go from here?"

The basic problem has not been honestly faced. We can no longer afford six institutions of higher education, all being prodded by their local Chamber of Commerce. We have enough money to do a good job in education with perhaps one or two institutions.

"Retrenchment" without a policy of consolidation only means a continued watering down in the quality of education we can offer our youth. The battle today is for man's mind, and in the front line are the institutions of higher learning. There is more at stake here than the allocation of public funds. We are fighting for our freedom.

Amid the hue and cry from various parts of the state regarding Gov. Nutter's program, we have heard no suggestions as to the source of needed additional funds.

It could be done the simple way. Put in a sales tax.

There's another simple method. Let Uncle Sam do it.

Neither of these approaches is very appealing because they merely do what has been done in the past, which is pour more money into an inefficient system.

Gov. Nutter's program with regard to the University problem has been too short-sighted to elicit the full support of those sincerely interested in giving our youth the best education possible.

The second unfavorable editorial, "By All Means, Observe U.N. Day," which ran on October 22 said that the governor had made an error in not proclaiming United Nations Day

because "the thinking and drive of a man of his capacity can and should do much to make the U.N. more effective."

The Missoulian's favorable editorial coverage of the governor began on December 31, 1960, with the editorial "The Task Confronting Montana" which explained that Governor Nutter had called on state departments, the legislature, and the people to join him in streamlining the executive establishment in the state to make it more effective with "an end to waste and extravagance." In an editorial the next day, "Looking Ahead With Confidence," The Missoulian said, "Gov. Nutter . . . made it clear that he is resolutely determined that Montana shall have 'good government' at a minimum of cost." The editorial explained that "Getting Montana back on a basis of operating within its income will not be easy. That is all the more reason for applauding and supporting the spunk that caused him Governor Nutter to say: 'With your help we will come out on top.'"

The January 2 editorial, "Transition Day at Helena," said:

Incoming Gov. Nutter favors belt tightening and restoring state financing to a sound basis. Commenting on the prevailing tendency of department heads to ask for more money, Mr. Nutter said in a guest editorial: "Department people had better get their feet back on ground. The state of Montana is in real financial trouble. We are not going to spend our way to a solution. Fiscal responsibility dictates that an increase in the budget allowance for any state department must

necessarily be accompanied by an increase in taxes."

That statement followed the observation that during the last dozen years state expenditures have exceeded income more than \$21 million, with the result that we face a general fund deficit of more than \$6½ million at the end of the current fiscal year next June 30.

Fiscal sanity should not be a basis for partisan jockeying. Making it again a reality in state affairs offers unbounded opportunity for every legislator to enhance the prestige of both himself and his party. There are, and will continue to be, honest differences of opinion as to details, but there should be no dissent from the statement of the man who today becomes governor: "We must and will provide good government at a minimum of cost." If the legislature today starts working with Gov. Nutter toward these ends, Jan. 2, 1961, will indeed go down in history as a glorious one for Montana.

In the editorial, "Getting State Out of the Red," which ran on January 4, the Missoulian reviewed the Governor's State of the State message and said, "There will, of course, be dissent from the governor's program on some details, but the overwhelming reaction will be that he has put forth a concrete outline of how the state can get down to business in a long overdue plan of living within its income."

"State Finances--Whiter Now" was the editorial which ran on February 28 and said:

This week is the one which will determine whether Nutter's goal of a balanced budget will be realized. He recommended one and without an increase in taxes. Appropriations for two years starting July 1 will be \$4½ million under the total approved by the 1959 legislative assembly.

If spending is not held down in accordance with the governor's program, will additional taxes be imposed to cover the difference between anticipated income and revenue or will we continue the deficit spending practice of recent years? There may be an alternative superior to the Nutter-House plans, but the latter are infinitely better than deficit spending. By simply failing to adopt another course, we are going to have some more of that? This is a week of decision.

In an editorial on March 7, "Nutter's Great Accomplishment," the Daily Missoulian said, "To Gov. Nutter goes unrestrained credit for pointing out the deficit spending--making a dream a reality stands out as a great accomplishment of the first two months of Don Nutter's governorship."

The editorials on April 23 and 24, "Better State Business Climate" and "Careless, Meaningless Gesture," defended the governor for trying to improve the business climate in the state and for his public relations trips to other states.

In August there were three editorials on Governor Nutter. The editorial on the 22, "Work as Solution to Problems," referred to the governor's speech at the Interstate Indian Conference where he said that "Indians have recognized that work is the solution to most of our problems in America today." "See the Light and Slow Down" was an editorial on the 29 which called for highway safety over Labor Day. The August 31 editorial, "Important Action for Montana," commended the governor for bringing 35

industrialists and financiers to the state.

The subject of the editorial on September 15, "Attracting Private Industry," was the governor's efforts to attract new industry to Montana. An editorial on October 25, "Nutter Puts Finger on Problem," said:

Gov. Nutter shows much political courage in focusing public attention on shameful waste that has existed for years among the various units of the University of Montana. . . . It is fortunate that we have a governor who has the stamina to tell us in blunt language obvious truths that many of us don't want to face. It remains to be seen whether we have a Board of Regents and legislature which will join him in taking corrective action. For the long pull advantage of higher education in Montana it should be done.

The last editorial that the Daily Missoulian ran on the governor before his death was a guest editorial from Nutter, "Montana Improvement Program," on December 31.

Montana Standard and Butte Daily Post

News coverage of Governor Nutter from December 1, 1960-
January 31, 1962

Total news stories...151
Front page news stories...66
Total inches...2,088
News copy inches...1,417
Headline inches...370
Photo coverage...11 photographs, 301 inches
Wire Service Stories...32 (UPI), 88 (AP)
Favorable stories...135
Unfavorable stories...16

Editorial coverage

Total editorials...7
Total editorial inches...86
Editorial copy inches...67
Editorial headline inches...19
Favorable editorials...5
Unfavorable editorials...2

The third largest Montana daily, the Montana Standard
and Butte Daily Post, had a circulation of 34,062 in 1961.⁶⁵

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 8.

This daily ranked fifth in the number of total news stories and total column inches on Governor Nutter. Of 151 stories, 120 were from the wire services and 66 ran on the front page. A total of 135 stories were favorable toward the governor and 16 were unfavorable.

This paper was fourth in the amount of editorial coverage on Governor Nutter with seven editorials and 86 column-inches.

A December 11 editorial "People of Montana/Ready for a Change" said:

Gov. Nutter tells the same thing after the election as before the election--that "we are going to live within our income in Montana. We have to." Any additional money for state government from any source must be from economic growth. Another way of saying there will be no more tax increases.

There is going to be some change in state government, but no "fumigation of the Capitol." There may be a possibility of eliminating some of the 117 boards, bureaus, and commissions with a corresponding saving of the taxpayer's money.

If this is a sample of what is to come when Nutter takes over the office of governor just after the first of the year, Montana is clearly in for some plain speaking. Montana is ready for a change.

The editorial on January 1, "Montana's Governor/Needs Our Help/To Advance State," said

We hope all Montanans will join our new governor, not in blind allegiance to his proposals, but in wholehearted support of the things he may offer which will advance Montana in the list of states.

A second editorial on January 4, "Nutter Requires Aid/To Carry Out Aims," encouraged Montanans to support the governor. An editorial on April 20, "Montana Needs Men to/Peddle State's Wares," said that the governor's job is salesmanship of his state and that citizens of Montana should help him boost Butte and the rest of the state. Several of the other daily newspapers in the state quoted the Montana Standard's editorial from May 5, "Nutter and Renne: May the People Rest." which was unfavorable in comment on the governor's disagreement with Roland B. Renne, president of Montana State College over the education budget. The second critical editorial, "Nutter Invites Criticism/In Not Proclaiming U.N. Day," ran on October 20 and was the last editorial on the governor before his death.

CHAPTER VI

THE RESULTS

Rank of Montana dailies in the total number
of stories on Governor Butler

<u>Dailies</u>	<u>Total Stories</u>
Missoula	269
Helena	253
Great Falls	244
Billings	216
Butte	151
Bozeman	144
Miles City	121
Kalispell	102
Havre	64
Livingston	58
Lewistown	49
Hamilton	10
Anaconda	9
Dillon	6

Rank of Montana dailies in the total column-
inches of news of Governor Nutter

<u>Dailies</u>	<u>Total column-inches</u>
Helena	4,261
Missoula	3,514
Great Falls	3,487
Billings	2,950
Butte	2,088
Kalispell	1,561
Bozeman	1,481½
Miles City	1,335
Havre	1,035½
Lewistown	812½
Livingston	761½
Hamilton	95
Anaconda	67
Dillon	61

Rank of Montana dailies in the total number and column-
inches of editorial coverage of Governor Nutter

<u>Dailies</u>	<u>Total editorials</u>	<u>Total column- inches</u>
Missoula	16	215
Helena	13	140
Havre	7	110½
Butte	7	86
Billings	7	70
Great Falls	6	68
Livingston	5	53
Kalispell	5	51
Lewistown	5	48
Bozeman	3	28½
Miles City	2	18½
<hr/>		
Anaconda		
Dillon		
Hamilton		

With almost 200,000 papers entering Montana homes every day,⁶⁶ the Montana daily press remains perhaps the most important single information instrument for state citizens. It would be difficult to imagine the

⁶⁶Total Montana daily newspaper circulation from circulation figures of the 14 state daily newspapers.

state without daily newspaper service to educate the public about the complex and exciting world in which they live.

The problem facing the Montana daily press as in other states is whether newspaper performance equals the challenge of the time. One press critic deploras the lack of really vigorous newspaper probing into local conditions which might involve treading on sensitive toes. Other responsible critics have pointed out that the press is frequently mousy, unimaginative, obsessed with trivia, crime and scandal, and--most grievous of journalistic crimes--indisposed to give its readers a sufficiently large amount of raw news on national, international, and state events to enable them to form intelligent opinions.⁶⁷

The Commission on Freedom of the Press defined the function and responsibility of the press in this way:

Today our society needs, first, a truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning; second, a forum for the exchange of comments and criticism; third, a means of projecting the opinions and attitudes of the groups in a society to one another; fourth, a method of presenting and clarifying the goals and values of the society; and, fifth, a way of reaching every member of the society by the currents of information, thought, and feeling which the press supplies.⁶⁸

⁶⁷Reo M. Christenson and Robert O. McWilliams, Voices of the People (New York: McGraw-Hill Co., Inc., 1962), p. 106.

⁶⁸Commission on Freedom of the Press, A Free and Responsible Press (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947), p. 22.

A previous examination into the Montana press pointed out areas in which newspapers need more concentration in fulfilling these two functions. One critic referred to the results of a survey of state legislators asked to comment on news coverage of state legislative events. On a point system listing comparisons between 48 states in 1957, Montana ranked 47 with Delaware last. He concluded that cost should not prohibit any Montana newspaper, weekly or daily, from giving its readers a year-round coverage of state government. He said, "For about \$100 each, Montana weekly editors could hire a correspondent to cover the capital and state institutions for all of them."⁶⁹

Although six years have elapsed since the survey, problems still exist in the quality and quantity of news and editorial coverage of Montana government, and particularly of the governor.

Although some individual newspapers did adequate, if not excellent, jobs of news and editorial coverage, it is difficult to judge the Montana daily press in toto. Statistics will bear out the fact that the 14 daily newspapers were overwhelmingly favorable in their comment of the governor and his administration. In the news

⁶⁹Vic Reineiser, "A Hard Look at Montana Journalism," Journalism Review (Missoula: Bureau of Press and Broadcasting Research, Spring, 1961), p. 14.

coverage, most papers relied heavily on the wire services to supply the information on state government. The critical articles in each newspaper usually originated with the wire services with little comment from the papers themselves. Even when an incident of interest to residents in a particular town took place, many times that town would cover the story with a wire service release. The Hayra Daily News and the Bozeman Daily Chronicle covered the interaction of Governor Nutter and the presidents of the units of the university in those towns with wire service releases. There was no local coverage of many of the individual stories which were of importance to citizens served by the 14 dailies.

Statistics show that of the 11 dailies which received wire service releases, more than half of the news stories was furnished by the Associated Press or the United Press International. In some individual cases, the wire services were furnishing up to 70 and 80 per cent of the news coverage. Only the Great Falls Tribune, in addition to the Helena daily newspaper, had a reporter assigned to covering state government news from Helena.

Still another fact which cannot be overlooked is the amount of favorable comment on the governor as contrasted with unfavorable criticism which the dailies ran. In all daily newspapers in the state, the prerogative to

criticize was not used to its fullest capacity. Even though many of the papers relied almost solely on wire service releases for news coverage, there was an opportunity for pertinent criticism of state administration through the editorial column. Nor were the editorial pages of the dailies used to indicate that although an individual paper was satisfied with the governor's performance there might be dissatisfaction elsewhere in the state and why. On the whole, the press presented an editorial and news view of the governor as having almost perfect accord in the state which would not seem possible in Montana or any other state and certainly was not justified by election returns. In both the news stories which were printed and in the comments and criticism which the daily papers did not run, the daily press relinquished its right to act as an important factor in molding public opinion on state politics.

If fault is to be found with the Montana dailies, it lies not in the quantity, but in the quality of news coverage and editorial comment. The papers reported on government business at the state level perhaps as best they could, but the editorial columns could have been more aggressive, more analytical and more perceptive. The Montana daily press did not function as a check on Governor Nutter; it chose rather to augment the impression which the governor presented of a dynamic, aggressive politician.

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