

Newspapers in Western Europe

By the eighteenth century, newspapers had become firmly established as a means of spreading news of European and world affairs, as well as of local concerns, within European society. One of the first true newspapers was the Dutch paper *Nieuwe Tijdingen*. It began publication in the early seventeenth century at about the same time that the overseas trading company called the Dutch East India Company was formed. The same ships that brought goods back from abroad brought news of the world, too.

Dutch publishers had an advantage over many other publishers around Europe because the Netherlands' highly decentralized political system made its censorship laws very difficult to enforce. Throughout Europe in the seventeenth century, governments began recognizing the revolutionary potential of the free press and began requiring licenses of newspapers—to control who was able to publish news. Another tactic, in France and elsewhere on the continent from the 1630s onward, was for governments to sponsor official newspapers. These state publications met the increasing demand for news but always supported the government's views of the events of the day.

1. According to paragraph 1, what was true about the Dutch paper *Nieuwe Tijdingen*?
 - ☐ It reported news mainly about ships and trade goods.
 - ☐ It was established in the eighteenth century.
 - ☐ It was among the first real newspapers in Europe.
 - ☐ It was published by an overseas trading company.

2. Paragraph 2 suggests that the main reason why governments began to license newspapers was
 - ☐ to make sure that newspapers were of high quality
 - ☐ to provide their countries' publishers with an advantage over other European publishers
 - ☐ to reduce competition among government-supported newspapers
 - ☐ to help control the public's attitudes about the news

3. According to paragraph 2, what was true about official government newspapers?
- ☐ They made censorship laws more difficult to enforce.
 - ☐ They expanded the revolutionary potential of the press.
 - ☐ They appeared first in the Netherlands.
 - ☐ They always agreed with the government's opinion.

ANS: CDD