

not heckle his screen, but, as one of Senator McCarthy's critics found out in the courts, a man in the hall may not heckle the speaker. To heckle was once the privilege of dissent; it is now becoming a punishable offense, like shouting in church.

The Printed Word

As debate declines in public and on the air, a heavier responsibility than ever rests upon the press to keep it alive. Here is a medium which, in theory, the individual orator or publicity man cannot control. Here the candidate's words appear in a setting which is not of his contriving, reaching his public through cold print rather than through electronic vibrations. Here, too, there is a tradi-

tion of objective reporting, of facts being sacred even if comment is biased. It is an inadequate tradition from many points of view; it is an oft-flouted tradition. But it does have the virtue of being a freely and publicly accepted tradition—in the way, for example, that an FCC regulation is not—and it does derive some strength and vitality from that.

But in the circumstances of mid-twentieth-century campaigning the press has to accept much greater responsibilities than this tradition has hitherto envisaged. To counteract and limit the emotional ravages of broadcasting and television, it ought to combine real liveliness and popularity of appeal with real fairness and penetration in its reporting. It

ought to remind candidates and public alike that an election is not the extension of two parallel lines that can ignore each other indefinitely. When Election Day comes around they are bound to meet—at the ballot box—and, if no one else will do it, the press must persuade and bully the rival candidates into acknowledging each other's existence sooner, according each other's arguments the dignity of an occasional reply, and reviving the concept of the voter as a *homo sapiens*.

In 1952 the press can hardly be said to have risen to this role. I suspect that the character of the 1956 election will depend very greatly on whether it has come any nearer to assuming it by then.

VIEWS & REVIEWS

Sun and Shadow

A Short Story

RAY BRADBURY

THE CAMERA clicked like an insect. It was blue and metallic, like a great fat beetle held in the man's precious and tenderly exploiting hands. It winked in the flashing sunlight.

"Hsst, Ricardo, come away!"

"You down there!" cried Ricardo out the window.

"Ricardo, stop!"

He turned to his wife. "Don't tell me to stop, tell them to stop. Go down and tell them, or are you afraid?"

"They aren't hurting anything," said his wife, patiently.

He shook her off and leaned out the window and looked down into the alley. "You there!" he cried.

The man in the alley with the camera glanced up, then went on focusing his machine at the lady in

the salt-white beach pants, the white brassière, and the green checkered scarf. She leaned against the cracked plaster of the building. Behind her a dark boy smiled, his hand to his mouth.

"Tomás!" yelled Ricardo. He turned to his wife. "O Jesus the Blessed, Tomás is in the street, my own son laughing there!" Ricardo started out the door.

"Don't do anything!" said his wife.

"I'll cut off their heads," said Ricardo, and was gone.

In the street the lazy woman was lounging now against the peeling blue paint of a banister. Ricardo emerged in time to see her doing this. "That's my banister!" he said.

The cameraman hurried up. "No, no, we're taking pictures. Every-

thing's all right. We'll be moving on."

"Everything is not all right," said Ricardo, his brown eyes flashing. He waved a wrinkled hand. "She's on my house."

"We're taking fashion pictures," said the photographer, smiling.

"Now what am I to do?" said Ricardo to the blue sky. "Go mad with this news? Dance around like an epileptic saint?"

"If it's money, well, here's a five-peso bill," said the photographer.

Ricardo pushed the hand away. "I work for my money. You don't understand. Please go."

The photographer was bewildered. "Wait . . ."

"Tomás, get in the house!"

"But, Papa, . . ."

"Gahh!" bellowed Ricardo.

The boy vanished.

"This has *never* happened before," said the photographer.

"It is long past time! What *are* we? Cowards?" Ricardo asked the world.

A CROWD was gathering. They murmured and smiled and nudged each other's elbows. The photographer with irritable good will snapped his camera shut and said, over his shoulder, to the model: "All right, we'll use that other street. There was a nice cracked wall there and oblique shadows. If we hurry—"

The girl, who had stood during this exchange, nervously twisting her scarf, now seized her make-up kit and darted by Ricardo, but not before he touched her arm. "Do not misunderstand," he said quickly. She stopped, blinked at him. He went on. "It is not you I am mad at. Or you—" he addressed the photographer.

"Then why—" said the photographer.

Ricardo waved his hand. "You are employed, I am employed. We are all people employed. We must understand each other. But when you come to my house with your camera, then the understanding is over. I will not have my alley used because of its pretty shadows, or my sky used because of its sun, or my house used because there is an interesting crack in the wall, here! You *see*! Ah, how beautiful! Lean here! Stand there! Sit here! Crouch there! Hold it! Oh, I *heard* you. Do you think I am stupid? I have books up in my room. You see that window? María!"

His wife's head popped out. "Show them my books!" he cried.

She fussed and muttered, but a moment later she held out one, then two, then half a dozen books, her head turned away as if they were old fish.

"And two dozen more like them upstairs!" cried Ricardo. "You're not talking to some cow in the forest, you're talking to a man!"

"Look," said the photographer, packing his plates swiftly. "We're going. Thanks for nothing."

"Before you go, you must see what I am getting at," said Ricardo. "I am not a mean man. But I *can* be a very angry man. Do I look like a piece of cardboard?"

"Nobody said anybody looked like anything." The photographer hefted his case and started off.

"There is a photographer two blocks over," said Ricardo, pacing him. "They have pieces of cardboard there, with pictures on them. You stand in front of them. It says GRAND HOTEL. They take a picture of you and it looks like you are in the Grand Hotel. Do you see what I mean? My alley is my alley, my life is my life, my son is my son. My son is not cardboard! I saw you putting my son against the wall, so and thus, in the background. What do you call it—for the correct air? To make the whole attractive, and the pretty lady in front of him?"

"It's getting late," said the photographer, sweating. The model trotted along on the other side of him.

"We are poor people," said Ricardo. "Our doors peel paint, our walls are chipped and cracked, our gutters fume in the street, the alleys are all cobbles. But it fills me with a terrible rage when I see you make over these things as if I had *planned* it this way, as if I had, years ago, induced the wall to crack. Did you



think I knew you were coming, and aged the paint? Or that I knew you were coming and put my boy in his dirtiest clothes? We are *not* a studio! We are people and must be given attention as people. Have I made it clear?"

"With abundant detail," said the photographer, not looking at him, hurrying.

"Now that you know my wishes and my reasoning, you will do the friendly thing and go home?"

"You are a hilarious man," said the photographer. "Hey!" They had joined a group of five other models and a second photographer at the base of a vast stone stairway which in layers, like a bridal cake, led up to the white town square. "How you doing, Joe?"

"We got some beautiful shots near the Church of the Virgin, some statuary without any noses, lovely stuff," said Joe. "What's the commotion?"

"Pancho here got in an uproar. Seems we leaned against his house and knocked it down."

"My name is Ricardo. My house is completely intact."

"We'll shoot it *here*, dear," said the first photographer. "Stand by the archway of that store. There's a nice antique wall over there." He peered into the mysteries of his camera.

"So!" A dreadful quiet came upon Ricardo. He watched them prepare. When they were ready to take the picture he hurried forward, calling to a man in a doorway. "Jorge! What are you *doing*?"

"I'm just standing here," said the man.

"Well," said Ricardo, "isn't that *your* archway? Are you going to let them *use* it?"

"I'm not bothered," said Jorge.

Ricardo shook his arm. "They're treating your property like a movie actor's place. Aren't you insulted?"

"I haven't thought about it." Jorge picked his nose.

"Jesus upon earth, man, *think*!"

"I can't see any harm," said Jorge.

"Am I the *only* one in the world with a tongue in my mouth?" said Ricardo to his empty hands. "And taste on my tongue? Is this a town of false picture scenes? Won't *anyone* do something about this except me?"

THE CROWD had followed them down the street, gathering others to it as it came; now it was of a fair size and more were coming, drawn by Ricardo's bullish shouts. He stamped his feet. He made fists. He spat. The cameraman and the models watched him nervously. "Do you want a *picturesque* man in the background?" he said wildly to the



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cameraman. "I'll pose back here. Do you want me near this wall, my hat *so*, my feet *so*, the light *so* and thus on my sandals which I made myself? Do you want me to rip this hole in my shirt a bit larger, eh, like *this*? So! Is my face smeared with enough perspiration? Is my hair long enough, kind sir?"

"Stand there if you want," said the photographer.

"I won't look in the camera," Ricardo assured him.

The photographer smiled and lifted his machine. "Over to your left one step, dear." The model moved. "Now turn your right leg. That's fine. Fine, fine. *Hold it!*"

The model froze, chin tilted up.

Ricardo dropped his pants.

"Oh, my God!" said the photographer.

Some of the models squealed. The crowd laughed and pummeled each other a bit. Ricardo quietly raised his pants and leaned against the wall. "Was that picturesque enough?" he said.

"Oh, my God!" muttered the photographer.

"Let's go down to the docks," said his assistant.

"I think *I'll* go there, too." Ricardo smiled.

"Good God, what can we do with the idiot?" whispered the photographer.

"Buy him off."

"I *tried* that."

"You didn't try high enough."

"Listen, you run get a policeman. I'll put a stop to this."

The assistant ran. Everyone stood around smoking cigarettes nervously, eyeing Ricardo. A dog came by and briefly made water against the wall.

"Look at that!" cried Ricardo. "What art! What a pattern! Quick, before the sun dries it!"

The cameraman turned his back and looked out to sea.

THE assistant came rushing along the street. Behind him, a native policeman strolled quietly. The assistant had to stop and run back to urge the policeman to hurry. The policeman assured him with a gesture, at a distance, that the day was not yet over, and, in time, they would arrive at the scene of whatever disaster lay ahead.



The policeman took up a position behind the two cameramen. "What seems to be the trouble?"

"That man up there. We want him removed."

"That man up there seems only to be leaning against a wall," said the officer.

"No, no, it's not the leaning, he—oh, hell," said the cameraman. "The only way to explain is to show you. Take your pose, dear."

The girl posed. Ricardo posed, smiling casually.

"Hold it!"

The girl froze.

Ricardo dropped his pants.

Click went the camera.

"Ah," said the policeman.

"Got the evidence right in this old camera if you need it!" said the cameraman.

"Ah," said the policeman, not moving, hand to chin. "So." He surveyed the scene like an amateur photographer himself. He saw the model with the flushed, nervous marble face, the cobbles, the wall, and Ricardo. Ricardo magnificently smoking a cigarette there in the noon sunlight under the blue sky, his pants where a man's pants rarely are.

"Well, officer?" said the cameraman, waiting.

"Just what," said the policeman, taking off his cap and wiping his dark brow, "do you want me to do?"

"Arrest that man! Indecent exposure!"

"Ah," said the policeman.

"Well?" said the cameraman.

The crowd murmured. All the nice lady models were looking out at the seagulls and the ocean.

"That man up there against the wall," said the officer, "I know him. His name is Ricardo Reyes."

"Hello, Estebán!" called Ricardo.

The officer called back at him. "Hello, Ricardo."

They waved at each other.

"He's not doing anything I can see," said the officer.

"What do you mean?" asked the cameraman. "He's as naked as a rock. It's immoral!"

"That man is doing nothing immoral. He's just standing there," said the policeman. "Now if he were *doing* something, something terrible to view, I would act upon the instant. However, since he is simply leaning there, not moving a limb or muscle, I see nothing wrong."

"He's naked, *naked!*" screamed the cameraman.

"I don't understand." The officer blinked.

"You just don't go around naked, that's all!"

"There are naked people and naked people," said the officer. "Good and bad. Sober and with drink in them. I judge this one to be a man with no drink in him, a good man by reputation; naked, yes, but doing nothing with this nakedness in any way to offend the community."

"What *are* you, his *brother*? What are you, his confederate?" said the cameraman. It seemed that at any moment he might snap and bite and bark and woof and race around in circles under the blazing sun. "Where's the justice? What's going on here? Come on, girls, we'll go somewhere else!"

"France," said Ricardo.

"What!" The photographer whirled.

"I said France, or Spain," suggested Ricardo. "Or Sweden. I have seen some nice pictures of walls in Sweden. But not many cracks in them. Forgive my suggestion."

"We'll get pictures in spite of you!" The cameraman shook his camera, his fist.

"I will be there," said Ricardo. "Tomorrow, the next day, at the bullfights, at the market, anywhere, everywhere you go I go, quietly, with grace. With dignity, to perform my necessary task."

Looking at him, they knew it was true.

"Who are you—who in hell do you think you are?" cried the photographer.

"I have been waiting for you to ask me," said Ricardo. "Consider me. Go home and think of me. As long as there is one man like me in a town of ten thousand, the world will go on. Without me, all would be chaos."

"Good night, nurse!" said the photographer, and the entire swarm of ladies, hatboxes, cameras, and make-up kits retreated down the street toward the docks. "Time out for lunch, dears. We'll figure something later."

Ricardo watched them go, quietly. He had not moved from his position. The crowd still looked upon him and smiled.

Now, Ricardo thought, I will walk up the street to my house, which has paint peeling from the door where I have brushed it a thousand times in passing, and I shall walk over the stones I have worn down in forty-six years of walking, and I shall run my hand over the crack in the wall of my own house, which is the crack made by the earthquake in 1930. I remember well the night, us all in bed, Tomás as yet unborn, and María and I much in love, and thinking it was our love which moved the house, warm and great in the night; but it was the earth trembling, and in the morning

that crack in the wall. And I shall climb the steps to the lacework grille balcony of my father's house, which grillework he made with his own hands, and I shall eat the food my wife serves me on the balcony, with the books near at hand. And my son Tomás, whom I created out of whole cloth, yes, bedsheets, let us admit it, with my good wife. And we shall sit eating and talking, not photographs, not false cardboard, not paintings, not stage furniture, any of us. But actors, all of us, very fine actors indeed.

As if to second this last thought, a sound startled his ear. He was in the midst of solemnly, with great dignity and grace, lifting his pants to belt them around his waist, when he heard this lovely sound. It was like the winging of soft doves in the air. It was applause.

The small crowd, looking up at him, enacting the final scene of the play before the intermission for lunch, saw with what beauty and gentlemanly decorum he was elevating his trousers. The applause broke like a brief wave upon the shore of the nearby sea.

Ricardo gestured and smiled to them all. On his way home up the hill he shook hands with the dog that had watered the wall.

