



# The Season's GREETINGS

All of us here wish you a holiday as festive as the season's gay sights and sounds. A merry, merry Christmas to you and your dear ones.

**Jim Bomboy's Service**

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## Long, Bitter Fight Led To Nation's Press Freedom

The list is small. It begins with John T. Morris of the Baltimore Sun. It ends, for the moment with Marie Torre of the New York Herald Tribune.

It's a list of reporters who have this in common: they have gone to jail rather than name the source of information given them in confidence.

Their defense of what they considered a moral principle has sparked 12 states to place conversations between a reporter and a news source in the same privileged place as conversations between priest and penitent, doctor and patient, attorney and client.

However, the number of states giving legal approval to a reporter's privilege doesn't appear destined to increase. For while reporters are almost unanimously in favor of the so-called "shield laws," legal groups, the American Civil Liberties Union, and even many newspaper publishers oppose them.

Morris was responsible for the first one. In 1896, while a Maryland grand jury was considering an important case, he predicted the indictment so accurately that

the prosecutor declared Morris had a source in the jury room. Morris served four days in jail rather than name his source.

The Sun campaigned so heavily for a protective law that within two months the Maryland legislature extended the right of privilege to a reporter and his source.

Judicial groups raised so much furor, however, that it was 37 years before another state, New Jersey, passed a similar law.

In addition to Maryland and New Jersey, these states have shield laws: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Montana, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

Efforts have been made several times to have a federal shield law enacted. Bills "to protect confidential sources or information of newspapermen" died in House and Senate judiciary committees when the 86th Congress adjourned in mid-September.

It was a federal judge who sentenced Miss Torre, the Herald-Tribune's radio-television columnist, to 10 days in jail last January for refusing to disclose the name of the anonymous TV executive she quoted in a column about actress Judy Garland.

Miss Torre's attorneys argued that "forced divulgence would inflict upon the reporter permanent and irreparable harm" since her news sources might evaporate.

This is the reporter's main ar-

gument for shield laws—that disclosure of sources shuts off further news for them. But they also argue that unhealthy or illegal government situations and crimes are often brought to public attention if newspapers can guarantee their informants anonymity, that many sources for such news are reluctant to talk to proper authorities through fear of retaliation, and that libel laws provide adequate guarantees against publication of reckless statements or innuendoes.

Motivated by the Torre case, the World Congress of the International Federation of Journalists unanimously passed a resolution in May supporting the principle that newsmen have the right to protect their confidential sources of information. The American Newspaper Guild followed suit in June.

The American Newspaper Publishers Assn. has taken no stand on the shield laws. Cranston Williams, general manager of the ANPA, says he recently heard one newspaper executive say that no good reporter would write a story based on a confidential source without checking facts with other sources. And if he did that, the executive said, there would be no need to protect a confidential source.

Williams says another executive expressed the opinion that shield laws would be used by columnists more than others and would eventually have a bad effect on the newspaper business.

Unlike the legal and medical professions, the newspaper business has no standards of practice. To the ANPA's way of thinking, says Williams, this constitutes the free press that is necessary to the nation's welfare.

The American Civil Liberties Union says shield laws are neither necessary nor desirable.

Swedish King Eric XIV was poisoned by someone who slipped arsenic into his pea soup in 1578.



## O Holy Night

'Tis time to rejoice and honor the Nativity of our Saviour and to reflect and remember His teachings

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## JOY TO ALL AND BLESSINGS OF THE SEASON

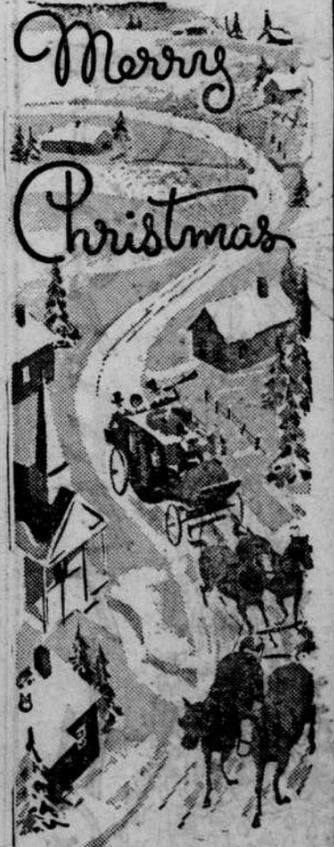


May you find peace, joy and happiness at Christmas time. These are our sincere wishes for all our friends who have made this Christmas such a wonderful one for us...

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Here's our cheery greeting for a Happy Holiday... wishes that great Yule joy may come your way.

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