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# Seeking media reform in Eastern Europe: Marvin Stone and the International Media Fund in Croatia

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**SEEKING MEDIA REFORM IN EASTERN EUROPE:  
MARVIN STONE AND THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA FUND IN CROATIA**

A thesis submitted to  
The Graduate College of  
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the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts in Journalism  
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W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications  
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Marshall University  
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## **DEDICATION**

To Janet Dooley for giving me a job while I wrote this thing.

To my soon-to-be husband, Dr. Steven Nakano. I'm so thankful for you.

And to three of the most inspiring educators I know: Paul Martin who encouraged me to write, Dan Hollis who has always cheered me on, and Dr. Rob Rabe who kindly and patiently steered me through graduate school and this thesis. Your support, advice and guidance have been instrumental.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This research would not have been possible without the meticulous note taking and report writing of Mr. Marvin Stone, a man who dedicated his life to journalism and the spread of free press throughout the world. I am grateful to have attended the University to which his life's work was so graciously donated.

“In the end, press freedom  
is what anchors every other freedom.”

–Marvin L. Stone

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Copyright	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Table of Contents	v
Abstract	vi
Introduction	1
Literature Review & Methods	2
Marvin Stone and the International Media Fund	5
Conclusion	34
Letter of IRB Approval	37
Bibliography	38
Vita	40

## **ABSTRACT**

In the months after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the International Media Fund was formed. Lead by journalist Marvin L. Stone, the organization was designed to help establish independent media in the former Communist bloc. Though the International Media Fund worked throughout Eastern Europe, this historical research focuses on the organization's efforts in Croatia. This thesis offers the first unearthing of Stone's role in the International Media Fund and details about the work the man and the organization did in attempting to establish a free and unfettered press in Croatia.

## INTRODUCTION

On the edge of war-torn Croatia, with the sound of gunfire in the distance, an American journalist lay in his hotel bed staring at the stars. Just days before, his hotel in Osijek had been the site of a bombing; the ceiling now had a literal skylight.<sup>1</sup> It was 1991 and the journalist had found himself in the middle of the Battle of Osijek. Heavy artillery and air strikes were rampant as the Yugoslav People's Army attacked the cities across the region.<sup>2</sup> The journalist was on a mission – not to report on the unrest, but to help bring democracy, through freedom of the press, to the people of Croatia. In Communist Croatia, the media, like everything else, were run by the state. Democracy and peace, journalist Marvin Stone believed, were only truly attainable under the conditions of a free press.<sup>3</sup> If Stone survived the night, he would head to a small university in Osijek first thing in the morning to speak in secret with a small group of journalists about what he and the newly formed International Media Fund could do to help liberate the press, and therefore the people, in Croatia.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sherry Ricchiardi, telephone interview by author. March 25, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Chuck Sudetic, "Yugoslav Battles Rage on Eve of Talks," *The New York Times*, November 4, 1991.

<sup>3</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 9: Zagreb.

<sup>4</sup> Sherry Ricchardi, telephone interview by author. March 25, 2014.



## **LITERATURE REVIEW & METHODS**

Though much has been written about the reformation of media in Eastern Europe after the demise of the Soviet Union, very little has been written about the work of the International Media Fund and even less about the specifics of Marvin Stone's role. What has been published suggests that American efforts to shape media in Eastern Europe have been limited in range and in success.

This paper offers the first unearthing of Marvin Stone and the International Media Fund's role in attempting to establish free press in Eastern Europe, specifically Croatia, after the fall of the Berlin Wall. This work explores the conditions of the press in Croatia before Stone and the International Media Fund entered the country and details the achievements and failures of the organization throughout the years it operated in the country, 1992-1995. The International Media Fund went beyond simply infusing Croatian media with the funds to exist; Stone and his team sought to give journalists the tools they needed to prosper. This thesis aims to explore the ways in which the International Media Fund succeeded where other programs failed in attempting to instill ideals of press freedom into both student and working journalists. Specifically, this paper hopes to illuminate exactly what the International Media Fund did in Croatia. This research does more than simply mention workshops hosted; it also examines the topics discussed and who led the conversations. The work also defines why Marvin Stone was the right person to lead this charge. While this paper does not attempt to quantify the total change over time of press freedom in Croatia, it does articulate some of the progress made during the International Media Fund's time in the country.

In her book *Exporting the First Amendment: The Press-Government Crusade of 1945-1952*, Margaret Blanchard explains the first attempts by American journalists to spread First Amendment ideals throughout the world. During the middle of World War II, American journalists advocated the exportation of the First Amendment for many of the same reasons Stone deemed important fifty years later: "If other nations adopted the American press system at war's end," Blanchard wrote, "the media of these countries would then be equipped to inform their audiences about their own governments and the rest of the world in much the same way that the press in America did."<sup>5</sup> According to Blanchard, American journalists believed one reason their country wasn't taken over by a dictator like Hitler was because of its free press. In the minds of American journalists, if they were able to share the way journalists in their country covered politics and national events, other countries would be able to prosper like America. Attempts to spread First Amendment press freedom detailed in Blanchard's text were greatly unsuccessful. In essence, American journalists were self-centered and shortsighted in their attempts to gain entry into these Soviet occupied lands. They wanted to be able to report from the east side of the Iron Curtain, under the guise of spreading press freedom. They got their wish, but it came at a price that many American journalists weren't willing to pay. After the murder of CBS correspondent George Polk in Greece and the nearly two-year imprisonment of William Oatis in Czechoslovakia, many American journalists stepped away from the front lines.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Margaret Blanchard, *Exporting the First Amendment: The Press-Government Crusade of 1945-1952* (White Plains, NY: Longman Inc.): 186.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

The International Media Fund was not alone in making moves beyond the Iron Curtain at this time. The *New York Times* funded a program called the Independent Journalism Foundation, which opened training centers in Prague, Bratislava, and Bucharest. Additionally, a program called the Eurasia Foundation was formed with the mission of giving small, emergency grants to media in the former Soviet Union.<sup>7</sup> The programs were generally short-lived grants designed for emergency resuscitation to mediums, but did not necessarily aid in their long-term success.

More broad programs were also making moves in Eastern Europe, including the Soros Foundation, which was established in the 1980s with the purpose of providing sponsorship for programs that supported an open society and encouraging a transparent government. The Soros Foundation was and continues to be particularly active in the former Soviet bloc of Eastern Europe.<sup>8</sup>

Source material for this historical research was found primarily in the Marvin L. Stone Papers at Morrow Library on the campus of Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia. Stone passed away in 2000. In his absence, the author relied heavily on the Stone Papers, which contains extensive notes and executive reports written by Stone, in addition to International Media Fund newsletters, transcripts from U.S. Senate briefings, and a selection of Stone's personal correspondence. The author also conducted interviews by telephone with Dr. Sherry Ricchiardi, an American journalist, journalism professor, and member of the International Media Fund who worked in Croatia, and by email with Dr.

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<sup>7</sup> Everette Dennis and Robert Snyder, *Media & Democracy* (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1998), 88.

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Carothers, "Aiding Post-Communist Societies: A Better Way?" *Problems of Post-Communism* 43, no. 5 (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 1996), 15-25.

Stepjan Malovic, a Croatian journalist and journalism professor who was a beneficiary of the International Media Fund's work. Additional source material came in the form of books focusing on Communist-controlled media in Eastern Europe, attempts by other American journalist groups to spread First Amendment press freedom overseas, and texts which reference the International Media Fund.

### **STONE AND THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA FUND**

Marvin Stone's passion for journalism was evident from an early age. In the late 1930s when newspapers were just gaining ground in America, Stone was a reporter for his high school's paper in Burlington, Vermont. He continued to demonstrate his love for journalism throughout college, enrolling in the journalism school at Marshall College (now University) in Huntington, West Virginia in 1941. He worked as a reporter for the school's newspaper, *The Parthenon*, and as a reporter and a rewrite man at the local paper, the *Huntington Herald-Dispatch*. World War II interrupted Stone's education in 1943. He served on the *USS Osage* and came under enemy fire at Okinawa. He was discharged three years later. From there, he completed his degree at Marshall and moved to New York City where he earned a Master's Degree in journalism from Columbia University. Upon graduation from Columbia, Stone was awarded a Pulitzer Travelling Fellowship. The prestigious award allowed him to spend a year abroad, studying foreign press and political conditions in a location of his choosing.<sup>9</sup> Stone chose Europe. Unbeknownst to him at the time, his choice began a relationship with the nations of Eastern Europe that would come to define his legacy as a purveyor of press freedom.

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<sup>9</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Biography.

Stone's career as a working journalist in America afforded him many opportunities to spend time over seas. The International News Service, a precursor to United Press International, hired Stone to work out of the company's headquarters in New York City in 1949, but his experience and knowledge of Europe quickly got him reassigned. While in Europe, he worked from London, Vienna, and Paris. During this time, Stone broke the story that the Soviet Union had developed the H-bomb. Fortuitously, he was also assigned to cover the Communist takeover of Eastern Europe. *U.S. News & World Report* hired Stone as a reporter in 1960. In 1976, he became the magazine's third editor-in-chief, establishing himself as one of the most prominent journalists in America. While at the magazine, Stone oversaw the introduction of personal computers into the newsroom and expanded opportunities for minorities. As editor-in-chief Stone was invited to be a panelist at the Jimmy Carter-Ronald Reagan presidential debate in 1980, where Stone asked a question that led Carter to say he had just that morning discussed nuclear defense policy with his daughter, Amy. Carter received heavy criticism for the statement. In 1985 Stone resigned to accept the deputy director position at the United States Information Agency, for which President Reagan handpicked him.<sup>10</sup>

The United States Information Agency was a product of the Cold War. Established in 1953, the program is most commonly known for radio shows like Voice of American and Radio Free Europe, that aimed to disseminate American news and ideas to countries throughout the world. The United States Information Agency claimed it was designed to "further national interest by improving United States relations with other countries and peoples through the broadest possible sharing of ideas, information, and educational and

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<sup>10</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Biography.

cultural activities.”<sup>11</sup> In actuality, this was done by explaining and advocating American policies to foreign countries, and by bringing foreign information to American decision makers. The United States ran a giant public relations organization, the largest in the world, spending some \$2 billion annually to make America look good in the global community. The largest branch of this was the United States Information Agency, which at the end of its tenure was spending \$820 million a year;<sup>12</sup> a lot of that money was spent in Eastern Europe to aid in the fight against Communism. A large part of the Information Agency’s purpose was to “counter Communist ideology and communicate American ideals and culture to foreign publics.”<sup>13</sup> The United States Information Agency had a long history of being led by esteemed journalists. From 1961-1964, Edward R. Murrow was director of the program. The organization was also quite progressive in terms of leadership. In 1964, African American journalist Carl T. Rowan was selected to serve as director. During his time as deputy-director of the United States Information Agency, Stone worked under director Leonard H. Marks, whom he would later work with to form the International Media Fund.

Working with the United States Information Agency helped Stone prepare for his next role – one that would bring his dedication to journalism and passion for Eastern Europe together. During his time with the United States Information Agency, the eyes of the world were on Eastern Europe, a section of the world in which Stone spent extensive time. The Berlin Wall, which had been in place since 1961, cutting West Berlin off from the outside world, was about to fall. Yugoslavia would soon be divided into half a dozen

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<sup>11</sup> Mission of the United States Information Agency. 22 U.S.C. § 1461–1.

<sup>12</sup> Alvin A Snyder. *Warriors of Disinformation: American Propaganda, Soviet Lies, and the Winning of the Cold War : An Insider's Account* (New York: Arcade Pub., 1995), xi-xiii.

<sup>13</sup> Kathy Fitzpatrick, "Telling America's Story." Lecture, Institute of World Affairs from University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI, March 16, 2004.

independent nations. While involved with the United States Information Agency, Stone was exposed to tactics used by the American government to spread free press that some scholars have found fault with. Critics of the agency argue that policy makers within the Information Agency were not always sensitive to the attitudes and opinions of foreign people, that policies and missions were enacted without considering how they would be viewed by the people they were intended to influence.<sup>14</sup> Stone's position with the agency, coupled with his long history of reporting from this part of the world gave him a unique perspective that would prove to be beneficial later. He was able to become familiar with the problems facing journalists and civilians in Eastern Europe and gain first hand experience with missions and techniques that failed to substantiate media reform, like those short term grant programs. Stone served as deputy director through the remainder of President Reagan's time in office.<sup>15</sup>

In 1989, Stone left the United States Information Agency to form the International Media Fund. Created by Stone and United States Secretary of State James Baker, and founded by prominent communications lawyer and former director of the United States Information Agency Leonard H. Marks, the International Media Fund was designed to help establish free press in Eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall.<sup>16</sup> As chairman of the organization, Stone spent an extensive amount of time in the countries of the former Communist bloc and gained a "deep respect for the people of Eastern Europe."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Biography.

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Special State Department Briefing: The International Media Fund Initiative* (News Transcripts, Inc., 1990): 2.

<sup>17</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Biography.

Marvin Stone and the International Media Fund had their work cut out for them, as the press of Eastern Europe faced many problems in the post-Soviet era. In one classic study, Wilbur Schramm analyzed the Soviet media model and determined there were four prominent characteristics that posed problems for journalists: the media are controlled by the state, the media are incorporated with other instruments of power, the media are solely used to convey the message of the party, and the media is strictly overseen by the state.<sup>18</sup>

The severe lack of training and education, coupled with the fact that the area had no tradition free press put major roadblocks in the way of media reform. Press censorship in the region can be traced back to 1719, when some of the first newspapers in the region were printed.<sup>19</sup> Government propaganda, not journalism, was being published.

Newspaper editors and publisher were harassed by numerous rules: only articles from the appropriate government bureaus might be published; those by private authors had to be approved. Only printers were allowed to see the censored proof-sheets; articles for the following day had to be submitted for censorship by noon the previous day.<sup>20</sup>

To put this information into global context, many of the same rules were in place for presses in America. The First Amendment, which promised press freedom in the United States, was not enacted until 1791, but the beginning of a long tradition of press freedom in the United States had taken root decades earlier.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Fred Seibert, Theodore Peterson, and Wilbur Schramm. *Four Theories of the Press: The Authoritarian, Libertarian, Social Responsibility and Soviet Communist Concepts of What the Press Should Be and Do*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1956), 121.

<sup>19</sup> Alan Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire 1815-1918*. (White Plains, NY: Longman Inc., 1986), 47.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Richard Buel, "Freedom of the Press in Revolutionary America: The Evolution of Libertarianism, 1760-1820," in *The Press and the American Revolution*, ed. Bernard Bailyn and John B. Hench (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1980).



By the 1900s, working for the press was a fairly popular occupation in Eastern Europe, but it had little to do with the desire to be a journalist. Many young writers made their living as reporters until they could break into writing literature or politics.<sup>22</sup> But, there was no spirit of journalism, no ethical or moral obligations to do right by the public. Further, the printed page was hard to come by, and even more difficult for residents to find useful. In the early 1900s in Slovakia, the educational and economic conditions made it impossible to even consider printing. It is estimated more than 80% of children did not even attend school.<sup>23</sup> Further, in Croatia specifically, the literacy rate was 8.2% in the early 1970s<sup>24</sup>, rendering printed news nearly worthless.

When it comes to training, there has been a stark difference in the way the United States views journalism education as opposed to the views of both Western and Eastern Europe. Though the hands-on, learn-by-doing technique is employed across the board, journalism education is polarized. Colleges in the United States have taught journalism since the nineteenth century, however in the former Yugoslavia where the International Media Fund was most active, journalism not considered a traditional college course until at least the 1980s. If taught at the university level at all, journalism education was tacked on to other courses focusing on political science or sociology. In the United States, nearly half of all college students have some form of journalism education, while that number was at just eight percent in Eastern Europe before the fall of the Berlin Wall.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Jerome Aumente, et al., *Eastern European Journalism: Before, During and After Communism*. (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 1999.), 9.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Gertrude Joch Robinson, *Tito's Maverick Media: The Politics of Mass Communication in Yugoslavia*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977), 7.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 101.

Communist rule is credited with the financial infusion that was able to establish mass circulation press in Southeastern Europe, but by that time censorship in news media was such a deep-rooted concept, journalists in Eastern Europe knew no other way of working.<sup>26</sup> Just like in early American printing, Eastern European political parties were the primary source of funding for newspapers, and the low prices they were able to offer kept private competitors away who may have leveled the journalist playing field away.

A visitor in these Eastern Bloc Communist countries during the Cold War, would have found a sliding scale of freedom, from countries facing total governmental control to others which experienced occasional periods of freedom.

A westerner whose only visit to a Communist country was to Poland would have noticed the censorship; would have been aware that some subjects were only discussed away from the prying ears of people and secret microphones... would have come across a wide range of underground publications (including postage stamps); and would have found some journalists in prison.<sup>27</sup>

Yugoslavia, however, experienced some of the most media freedom in the Communist bloc, though still not as much autonomy as the United States. Journalism Historian Gertrude Robinson argues this is because media control in most of Yugoslavia was not overt. In many cases, the parties did not outright own the media, though they did exercise strict control.<sup>28</sup> In fact, nearly every form of technology was highly regulated by the party. From paper and ink to satellite antennas, even telephones, if someone could get their hands on a working one, were heavily supervised.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Robinson, *Tito's Maverick Media: The Politics of Mass Communication in Yugoslavia*, 12.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 119-120.

<sup>29</sup> Aumente, Gross, Hiebert, Johnson, and Mills. *Eastern European Journalism: Before, During and After Communism*, 70.

During this time, the Baltic States saw journalists and civilians protest government control of the media with the use of the underground press. According to media scholar Ray Hiebert, these underground papers and magazines were published in the Baltics between 1972 and 1988. Soviet dissidents began practicing what is known as *samizdat*: publishing their own media and passing it out in their communities. At the time “the entire population became astute at reading between the media lines for the true meaning”<sup>30</sup> with above ground media. With *samizdat*, readers did not have to infer; journalists were able to write freely, as long as the party didn’t find out. When the *samizdat* was discovered, however, journalists faced steep punishment. A leading underground newspaper contributor in Lithuania, Algirdas Statkevicius, for example, was found out by the regime. He was arrested and held in a psychiatric ward for years.<sup>31</sup> In other areas of the Balkins, Poland specifically, the Roman Catholic Church became a safe haven for journalists and engaged citizens to share information. Additionally, in many cases, Catholic priests would produce their own *samizdat* publications to distribute within the church.<sup>32</sup>

In 1991, a year before Stone and the International Media Fund began their work in Croatia, Yugoslavia fell and split into six independent republics: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia. According to working journalist and journalism professor Dr. Stepjan Malovic, Croatia found itself somewhere in the middle on this freedom scale. Malovic says press freedom in the area that is now known as Croatia was in flux during the Cold War: “It was, without doubts, a typical Soviet media model...

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 70.

You know it from the theory, but I went through this unpleasant experience.”<sup>33</sup> After gaining independence, Croatia was lead by authoritarian President Franjo Tudjman, who exercised strict control over all media in the country. President Tudjman and the Yugoslav National Army were untouchable by the media, according to Malovic. Still, in his view, Croatian journalists were occasionally able to produce quality journalism, experiencing what he calls limited freedom. Possibly, this was the case because of the large media concentration in what is now known as Croatia. Before the fall of Yugoslavia, 20 percent of the media in the country were based in what is now Croatia. Many factors, including economic expansion, ethnic differences, and the mountainous topography of Yugoslavia had a hand in funneling those journalists into Croatia, specifically into what would soon be the capital of Zagreb.<sup>34</sup> “Press was under control with some periods and some areas of media freedom,” according to Dr. Malovic. “We were very happy to practice this limited freedom.”

Many journalists in Croatia had by this time internalized Soviet norms and began censoring themselves to produce stories that would be acceptable by the party in power. Marvin Stone and the International Media Fund, however, had set in motion a plan to liberate the media, and hopefully the people, of Eastern Europe. After it’s establishment in 1989, the organization spent the next six years on the ground in Eastern Europe. Even after the work by the International Media Fund came to an end, Stone remained and worked tirelessly in Croatia, fighting to establish a strong and free press.

The United States government supported the International Media Fund’s mission both ideologically and financially. The U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations has a

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<sup>33</sup> Stjepan Malovic, Email interview by author. June 19, 2014.

<sup>34</sup> Robinson, *Tito’s Maverick Media: The Politics of Mass Communication in Yugoslavia*, 95-97.

long history engaging in the “promotion of independent media abroad through several foreign policy agencies.”<sup>35</sup> Most notably, the United States Agency for International Development, the government program responsible for distributing foreign aid to benefit civilians. When the Soviet Union collapsed in the early 1990s, USAID “launched a major effort to develop and strengthen independent media in Eastern Europe and Eurasia,” spending more than \$264 million dollars on media reform from 1985 to 2001. USAID boasts major success in relation to the money they allocated to media in Eastern Europe: establishing media outlets and helping others become more viable, reforming legal jargon in regard to media, and improving professional standards for journalism.<sup>36</sup> Further, the United States government was invested in establishing, “independent, non-governmental media across the former Communist bloc.”<sup>37</sup> Secretary of State James Baker put his seal of approval on plans for the International Media Fund, helping secure \$10 million in financing from the United States Agency for International Development. The program was supplemented with additional funds from the National Endowment for Democracy.<sup>38</sup>

Although the program was backed with government money, Stone and other board members were adamant that the government have no hand in the working of the International Media Fund: “it had a fiercely independent Board of Directors and an army of volunteer American editors, publishers, broadcasters and academics willing to join in our effort. From the start it was understood that the U.S. government would not interfere with

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<sup>35</sup> U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations. 2004. *International Free Press and Open Media Act*, 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> sess. March 14, 2004.

<sup>36</sup> Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination; “USAID’s Media Assistance: Policy and Programmatic Lessons.” (January, 2004), 1.

<sup>37</sup> Ellen Hume, *American Support for International Journalism: A Report for the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation*. May, 2002.

<sup>38</sup> Dennis and Snyder, *Media & Democracy*, 88.

policy decisions of the board.”<sup>39</sup> Possibly, their desire for such an independent board stemmed from the perceived failings of the United States Information Agency. Years after the agency was dissolved, high ranking leaders discovered much of the information they had been disseminating abroad on behalf of the United States was falsified to make the United States look better. “We became unknowing warriors of disinformation,”<sup>40</sup> the agency’s former television and film director Alvin Snyder wrote.

Funded by the United States government and lead by one of the most prolific American journalists of the time, the hope was that the International Media Fund would succeed where other efforts failed. In *Exporting the First Amendment*, Blanchard notes why previous attempts to spread press freedom in Eastern Europe did not succeed. In essence, American journalists were self-centered and shortsighted in their attempts to gain entry into these Soviet occupied lands. They wanted to be able to report from the east side of the Iron Curtain, under the guise of spreading press freedom.<sup>41</sup> They got their wish, but it came at a price that many American journalists weren’t willing to pay. After the murder of CBS correspondent George Polk in Greece and the nearly two-year imprisonment of William Oatis in Czechoslovakia, many American journalists stepped away from the front lines. Many major news outlets pulled reporters from places that were considered too dangerous.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 2: Magazines & reports.

<sup>40</sup> Snyder. *Warriors of Disinformation: American Propaganda, Soviet Lies, and the Winning of the Cold War : An Insider's Account*, xiv

<sup>41</sup> Blanchard. *Exporting the First Amendment: The Press-Government Crusade of 1945-1952*, 186.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 354-355

Places considered dangerous, however, were target areas for Stone and the International Media Fund. In the early 1990s, the countries of the former Soviet bloc were a warzone. The Berlin Wall had just fallen and Yugoslavia had split into six independent nations. There were revolutions everywhere and the people who lived in the region were focused on survival, not the news. “Never mind the printing press,” one journalist in Eastern Europe told Stone. “We are scrounging for wood to burn to keep warm this winter. Send us heating oil.”<sup>43</sup> To Stone, there couldn’t have been a time that a free and balanced media was more necessary. “A free and unfettered press is the cornerstone of a democratic society,” Stone declared. “Politically, press freedom is complex. In emerging democracies, it is often fragile. But in the end, press freedom is what anchors every other freedom.”<sup>44</sup> Fifty years after the failed attempt to spread press freedom described by Blanchard, tensions in Eastern Europe had reached a boiling point. This time, it was Marvin Stone and members of the International Media Fund who would effort the spread of First Amendment press freedom.

American editors and publishers in this country have fought, and each one fights all during his career, to protect the First Amendment; to protect an unfettered and unregulated press. And these same editors and publishers, I think, feel a psychic need to export this First Amendment desire.<sup>45</sup>

The International Media Fund was formally introduced at a special State Department briefing on August 30, 1990. During this briefing, Stone laid out plans for how the program would work to establish press freedom in Eastern Europe. First, the program was intended to act as a clearinghouse, collecting and distributing information about the

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<sup>43</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 2: A Strategy for Independet Press.

<sup>44</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 9: Zagreb.

<sup>45</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Special State Department Briefing*. August 30, 1990.

countries in which it worked. Second, program directors aimed to help set government policy in relation to media and journalistic endeavors. They hoped to be able to give guidance to policy setting organizations in the nations of Eastern Europe. Stone was a fierce believer that the best media law was no media law. To him, the First Amendment was the gold standard: "Congress shall make no law... abridging the freedom... of the press."<sup>46</sup> Third, the program planned to give grants to help fund journalistic efforts – newspapers, radio stations, education, workshops – in the region. Finally, Stone explained the program would seek government help to expand the broadcast news medium in Eastern Europe. Radio and television stations need licenses to broadcast, and those licenses were often hard to obtain. "The problems are across the board, in every sense," Stone said of the media situation in Eastern Europe. Providing financial assistance, equipment, and training for journalists would come to be the primary function of the International Media Fund throughout its years in operation.

Stone's mission with the International Media Fund was to facilitate change in Eastern Europe, not just in the immediate future, but deep and lasting change in the minds and ideals of lawmakers and journalists in the region. Providing money for equipment was a cut and dried operation, but the program's goal was to be more than just a checkbook for countries in need<sup>47</sup>. The International Media Fund was tasked with the difficult job of teaching journalists who had a long and rich history of being fearful of their government, to report as if in a free press world. At a special United States Department of State briefing

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<sup>46</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 3: International Media Fund Publications.

<sup>47</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Special State Department Briefing*



introducing the International Media Fund, United States Ambassador to Bulgaria Robert Barry explained:

...trying to inculcate in them the concepts of what an independent and free inquiring press means, and what the qualities of an independent, free, and inquiring press are, which of course are traditions which are not known, are not practiced, haven't been for at least over the past 40 years in that area.<sup>48</sup>

Of all the nations in which the International Media Fund operated, Stone was perhaps most fond of Croatia despite his initial belief that no work could be done in the country. In fact, for the first two years of the International Media Fund's existence, members did not even visit Croatia. "This new nation has no tradition of free and independent media and no immediate prospects due to the authoritarian grip of the present government," Stone wrote in a 1992 International Media Fund report. Eager to find a way in to Croatia, Stone was introduced to Indiana University journalism professor and working journalist Dr. Sherry Ricchiardi. Ricchiardi proved to be a priceless addition to Stone's team. She had been reporting on the war from Croatia and had familial ties to the country. Additionally, as a journalist and a media scholar, she shared Stone's passion for establishing independent media throughout Eastern Europe. Their partnership was a natural fit that gave the International Media Fund an in to a country that was all but cut off from the rest of the world. According to Ricchiardi, Croatia is where Stone found he could "get the most bang for the taxpayer's buck."<sup>49</sup> Ricchiardi makes special note of Stone's understanding of where the International Media Fund's money was coming from.

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<sup>48</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Special State Department Briefing*

<sup>49</sup> Sherry Ricchiardi, telephone interview by author. March 25, 2014.

She said Stone wanted to spend the American taxpayer's money wisely and quickly found the ability to do so in Croatia.

In the early 1990s, fighting was a daily occurrence in Croatia. The Croatian War of Independence was in full swing as the Croatian loyalists who had declared independence from Yugoslavia fought against the Yugoslav People's Army, which was controlled by the ethnic Serbians who did not want to become part of Croatia. Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic agreed to end the fighting if Croatia would redraw the country's border so all Serbs would be within the same state, but Croatia stood to lose a great deal of land and would not concede.<sup>50</sup> Gunfire was rampant on nearly all of the country's borders and bombings in the capital of Zagreb were commonplace, including one that damaged the U.S. Embassy.<sup>51</sup> An edition of the Weissmann Travel Reports warned travelers considering this area that unless the U.N. or NATO imposed peace, an all-out war was possible at any moment.<sup>52</sup> The war raged on from 1991-1995, taking the lives of 20,000 people.<sup>53</sup>

Getting inside Croatia proved to difficult for the International Media Fund. Because of Serbian control, some parts of Croatia were impossible to enter. Additionally, heavy fighting had caused power outages in many parts of the country for most of the day.<sup>54</sup> Despite the danger and lack of basic utilities, Stone "wanted to

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<sup>50</sup> Chuck Sudetic, "Serbs Refuse to Negotiate in Croatia." *The New York Times*, August 5, 1991.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 7: Croatia.

<sup>53</sup> "Presidents Apologise over Croatian War." BBC News. September 10, 2003. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3095774.stm>.

<sup>54</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 7: Croatia.

get started right away,” Dr. Ricchiardi recalled. “The war was still on and bombs were falling, snipers were taking aim, and we were going out in the countryside to work with journalists.”

The state of the media was in just as bad of a position as the country itself. Authoritarian President Franjo Tudjman controlled all media in the country. “It is not only that the State (Tudjman) still owns the major printing presses, controls distribution, owns both television channels, State radio and subsidizes a good share of the only news agency, but the State shows little inclination to relinquish its controls,” Stone wrote in an International Media Fund executive report after the organization’s first visit to Croatia in 1992.<sup>55</sup> Upon that initial visit, Stone found that Tudjman’s regime didn’t just own Croatian media, he ruled it. One example of Tudjman’s fierce control of the media is illuminated in Stone’s 1992 executive report. According to the report, because President Tudjman was looking to Germany for economic aid, television was forbidden to air any World War II movies that presented Germany in a negative light. In essence, the Holocaust was ignored. While there were no direct laws about censorship for journalists in Croatia, Stone recorded the account of several journalists who privately admitted to using self-censorship, writing only what was considered safe in the eyes of the government.<sup>56</sup>

After the 1992 visit by the International Media Fund’s survey team to assess the issues that needed the most attention, Stone laid out recommendations for future work in Croatia. First and foremost, the survey team hoped to develop a

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<sup>55</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 6: Croatia.

<sup>56</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 6: Croatia.

partnership between Indiana University and the University of Zagreb School of Communication, to provide a foothold in the country and establish a stronger curriculum for future journalists. The International Media Fund planned to form that partnership with the establishment of a resource center at the University of Zagreb to work with the school's 400 journalism students and journalists already in the work force.<sup>57</sup> Although the school had enough room to host educational workshops, it did not have room for publishing equipment. The International Media Fund planned to create an off-campus publishing center that could be used by students and working journalists, with the help of the Soros Foundation. Additionally, the University of Zagreb did not have a sufficient library. It was in need of books, computers, and radio and television training equipment. The fund also hoped to secure broadcasting licenses for potential radio stations and provide computers and cameras for a Croatian magazine called *Danas*, which was shut down by Tudjman's government just days after the initial International Media Fund visit. Finally, Stone hoped to bring instructors from America to introduce the ideals of press freedom and journalism ethics, through both short courses and long seminars. Stone's sentiment remained: providing the checkbook was the easy part, but he hoped to bring American journalists to Croatia to open a dialog not only about what independent press could be, but what it should be.

Dr. Sherry Ricchiardi proved to be his biggest help in these training endeavors, by establishing a partnership between the University of Zagreb and Indiana University. Just a few months later, a newsletter from the International

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<sup>57</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 6: Croatia.

Media Fund confirms many of those plans were in action.<sup>58</sup> Though media in Croatia desperately needed an infusion of funds and newer equipment, new equipment does not make a responsible press. A grant provided money for books for the library at the University of Zagreb and for new desktop publishing equipment, but new equipment was not a Band-Aid that could be stuck on this country. What they needed, according to the International Media Fund, was a new way of thinking. That new way of thinking started in academia. A grant to Indiana University allowed American professors and journalists to help expand the journalism curriculum at the University of Zagreb. The goal was not just to learn the mechanics of how to produce a newspaper; rather, conversations about what should be printed in the papers were now being initiated.<sup>59</sup> The International Media Fund hoped to leave a lasting impact in the countries it visited – a welcomed venture in Croatia. “Where Marvin couldn’t get a foot in the door in some countries, Pavao Novosel [Director of journalism studies at the University of Zagreb] was saying we want you, we want your help not only the money but you’re knowledge,” Ricchiardi said. “We want to build a better curriculum.”

The situation in Croatia had worsened dramatically by 1993. “The failing economy continues to deteriorate at a rapid pace, further contributing to an aura of cynicism, depression and low morale,” Stone wrote in an executive report.<sup>60</sup> Nearly every area of the country was seeing war first hand. The economic outlook was

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<sup>58</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 3: International Media Fund Publications.

<sup>59</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 3: International Media Fund Publications.

<sup>60</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 6: Croatia.

miserable. Croatians who were able to keep their jobs saw their salaries drop by as much as 80 percent and tourism to the country was almost nonexistent. The bleak economy meant consumers had no money for newspapers; at least a fourth of the Croatian newspaper market was lost, virtually leaving a government monopoly in existing print.<sup>61</sup> Not only was media shrinking in Croatia, the state of media that survived was very poor. "Croatia has the most controlled media we have experienced anywhere in the region," Stone wrote, "and the outlook for improvement is not encouraging."<sup>62</sup> Tudjman, who had won the last two elections by landslides, kept his grip strong on both print and broadcast news media.<sup>63</sup>

At this time, Eastern European regimes were going to great lengths to fight against independent media. In November of 1992, the United Nations Security Council gave special exemption to a Yugoslavian embargo to allow the television equipment purchased by the International Media Fund to be delivered to the independent Serbian television station ITV "Studio B". This allowance was made by the United Nations to do exactly what Marvin Stone set out to achieve – give a voice to the political party that opposed the regime of Slobodan Milosevic. Elections were just around the corner and the former Serbian president had total control of the television market in the country. "We think it's important for the people in Serbia to hear independent voices, to be able to get a fair picture of what's going on," State Department spokesman Richard A. Boucher said about the decision. "We think that

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<sup>61</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 6: Croatia.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

that is essential to any elections in the whole world.”<sup>64</sup> One kilometer after the delivery truck crossed the Yugoslav-Hungarian border, it was attacked. Unknown attackers drugged the drivers and stole the truck. Five days later, the drivers woke up in a cellar 60 kilometers outside of Belgrade. The equipment, \$236,000 worth of gear from Sony, was never recovered. After studying the event thoroughly, Yugoslavian criminologist Vladan Vasiljevic determined the government was responsible: “I think that this is the beginning of total lawlessness and that we will soon be faced with much more difficult cases.”<sup>65</sup> Several employees of “Studio B” had been threatened in the days leading up to the delivery truck hijack, according to Dragan Kojadinovic, the studio’s managing director. One evening, he returned home from work to find a funeral wreath nailed to his door. After that, he started carrying a 9mm pistol and wearing a flack jacket in the street.<sup>66</sup>

Taking a brave stance against the regime in 1993, editors at one news outlet in Croatia went fiercely against the grain, bucking self-censorship and calling for President Tudjman’s resignation from office. The quarterly news publication *Erasmus Journal* printed an open letter to the totalitarian leader at a time when his approval rating had dropped to 18 percent. “Democracy in Croatia is being stifled in its infancy,” the letter read. “The authority of Parliament and the Government is compromised, freedom of the media is restricted and the institutions of political

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<sup>64</sup> David Binder, "Exception by the U.N. to Belgrade Curbs." *The New York Times*, November 20, 1992.

<sup>65</sup> "Studio B Robbed: The Small Truck Robbery." *Transitions Online*: [Http://www.tol.org/client/article/14927-Robbery.html](http://www.tol.org/client/article/14927-Robbery.html) (accessed February 10, 2015).

<sup>66</sup> "Border Robbery Frustrates TV's Dissenting Voice." *The Independent*, December 29, 1992.

opposition and a multi-party system are degraded.”<sup>67</sup> In an act of defiance and independence letter was signed by the journal’s publisher and five other journalists. While journalists in Croatia praised the letter, President Tudjman contested all of its claims. Because of the bravery of the publication, the International Media Fund promised to try and help subsidize the publication’s financial needs until it was able to become self sufficient through subscriptions.<sup>68</sup> The fact that such a letter was written and published in the totalitarian state showed that conversations about government transparency were having an effect on the media.

Despite the unwelcoming outlook, the International Media Fund continued efforts in Croatia. In 1993, the fund provided radio and television equipment to the University of Zagreb. The fund also helped the school apply for a broadcast license, and in 1993 was awaiting a frequency assignment.<sup>69</sup> This was a pivotal time for broadcast media in post-Communist Eastern European countries. Television was becoming exceedingly popular for those who lived in cities, and became an important part of home life. And unlike newspapers, where consumers had to choose between purchasing the paper printed by the regime or the opposition, television brought everything right into the consumer’s living room. “Television was the most democratic of media because no matter what their economic, political, or educational status, all viewers saw the same programs.”<sup>70</sup> Additionally, after securing equipment and a broadcast license, television stations ran at relatively low cost compared to the cost of a newspaper or magazine.

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<sup>67</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 6: Croatia.

<sup>68</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 6: Croatia.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Aumente, et al., *Eastern European Journalism: Before, During and After Communism*, 23.



In terms of training, the International Media Fund made great strides by hosting seminars and training sessions in 1993, bringing American journalism professionals to the University of Zagreb to speak with both students and working journalists. Though the United States Agency for International Development has admitted failure on their part to aid in the spread of press freedom, confessing much of their training attempts were “conducted by expatriates, who had neither proficiency in the local language, more sufficient understand of the environment in which the trainees worked,”<sup>71</sup> – the exact opposite was the case in with the International Media Fund. The main speaker at many of these workshops was Marvin Stone himself. As president and chairman of the International Media Fund, Stone played a key administrative role, but his work with the organization went far beyond that of an office job. Croatian journalism scholars describe him as the ideal person to host these sessions: an eminent and respected journalist who was easy to talk to and taught with stories and examples. “His personal experiences and stories about big events coverage were like a fairytale. Comparing to some other visiting journalists who were ‘preaching’ about media freedom, Marvin was very realistic, having great understanding for the problems of Croatian journalists.”<sup>72</sup>

One notable conference hosted by the International Media Fund, in partnership with the United States Information Agency focused on the role of media in democracy. Prominent American journalists traveled to Croatia to speak with journalists there about their work. William Woo, the editor of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, spoke on journalism ethics. Christine Spolar of the *Washington Post* lead a

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<sup>71</sup> Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination; "USAID's Media Assistance: Policy and Programmatic Lessons." (January, 2004), 2.

<sup>72</sup> Stjepan Malovic. Email interview by author. June 19, 2014.

workshop on investigative reporting. The fund also contributed eight cameras for use in photography classes at the University<sup>73</sup> and students gained once in a lifetime experience lead by Frank Folwell and Paul Whyte of *USA Today*. The photographers held a weeklong photojournalism seminar that included a day of shooting at a nearby refugee camp. Additionally, faculty members from Indiana University led workshops on desktop publishing.<sup>74</sup> As a result of these workshops and seminars, the curriculum at the University of Zagreb's journalism school was updated to reflect the current needs of the students. Dr. Sherry Ricchiardi was able to coordinate with the director of journalism studies at the University to develop new areas of study including: investigative reporting, newsroom management, photojournalism and graphics. Finally, a mix of both theoretical and hands-on journalism were being introduced in the classroom.

The International Media Fund highlighted five further opportunities to help in Croatia in 1993. First, the organization hoped to continue the University of Indiana grant, guaranteeing further curriculum strengthening at the University of Zagreb. Then, they hoped to supply additional desktop publishing hardware and seed money to Zagreb's student newspaper. Establishing a low power student radio station, through the University of Indiana grant was next on the list. The school also requested a projector to be used in lectures and any videotape that could offer instruction in television broadcasting. Finally, Stone once again recommended the International Media Fund subsidize the cost of publishing *Erasmus*. Stone suggested

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<sup>73</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 6: Croatia.

<sup>74</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 6: Croatia.

an immediate \$20,000 infusion, plus an additional \$20,000 after a chance to evaluate the publication's stability.<sup>75</sup>

Though the International Media Fund continued its mission in Croatia, the following years brought even more crushing blows to the prospect of a free flow of information. Media independence had taken a step back, according to Stone. The government was flexing its strength by controlling the sale of newspapers, gasoline for delivery vans and equipment coming in from other countries. "Newspapers were being pushed to the brink of extinction," Stone wrote in an executive report.<sup>76</sup> Further, the government was tightening its already strong grip on every step in the print and broadcast communication business. Publishing houses, newsprint, book paper, and airwaves were all under lock and key. Management of journalists and media personal was especially guarded: "Their education, selection, and employment were used as means of control, reward or punishment."<sup>77</sup> Even the most innocent instruments of communication – paper, ink, and typewriters – were withheld. Newsprint had to be imported, places to print had to be located, and there were distribution problems to solve. "National news agencies are still under the control of parliaments," Marvin Stone told the *New York Times*, "and their directors are appointed by prime ministers."<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 6: Croatia.

<sup>76</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Paper. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 2: A Strategy for Independent Press.

<sup>77</sup> Aumente, et al., *Eastern European Journalism: Before, During and After Communism*, 70.

<sup>78</sup> Deirdre Carmody, "THE MEDIA BUSINESS; East Europe's Press Still Beckoning." *The New York Times*, June 17, 1991.

To continue the mission of the International Media Fund, members had to ramp up involvement from American journalists. The program continued to provide training and equipment to the University of Zagreb and news organizations. They were still working to reshape the curriculum at the University. But now, American journalists were making their way into Croatian newsrooms to start important conversations about ethics in reporting and setting a news agenda. Media under Communism acted in a very elementary way: printing the information they were giving and only interviewing top officials. Under the guidance of the International Media Fund, true journalism began to take shape, according to Dr. Ricchiardi. Journalists “started doing investigative reporting on corruption and key issues. Some of them got arrested. They got in trouble. They were doing really good journalism.”<sup>79</sup> The change in the state of media in Croatia during this revolutionary period can’t be quantified, but members of the International Media Fund say they saw changes in the journalism of the country. Dr. Ricchiardi said journalists were becoming decision makers, printing things they knew the regime would not approve of. Additionally, Stone made a number of suggestions and recommendations to ensure peace in Croatia. Stone asked Western leaders to insist that independent and free media must be a precondition in Croatia. Because most of what was going on in Croatia at this time was unknown to the rest of the world, Stone also pressured American journalists to act. He asked Americans to stand in solidarity with Croatians against violence toward journalists. “Strong appeals were made that

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<sup>79</sup> Sherry Ricchiardi. Telephone interview by author. March 25, 2014.

'outsiders' protest when journalists are abused or jailed."<sup>80</sup> Moreover, Stone wanted to eliminate legal obstacles that stood in the way of free press, establish legal framework for the free flow of information, and enact laws that guaranteed independence and pluralism of opinion.

Still, major problems plagued journalists of Croatia. As journalists became more brazen against the party, they were coming face-to-face with violence. Phone threats to journalists were frequent. Reporters were being attacked and beaten. Police in Croatia beat a female writer for an anti-war magazine with their hands, then with their guns because they didn't like what she was writing. Days before the 1995 election, a newspaper editor was severely beaten by police for criticizing Tudjman in print. The police faced no retribution; in fact, this behavior was encouraged by the Tudjman regime.<sup>81</sup> Stone recorded at least five attacks on independent journalists in 1994-1995. According to Stone, the violence was a "part of a journalist's life if he dares to be too bold in print" in Croatia. In addition to physical violence, journalists faced imprisonment. Two journalists from a weekly satirical paper were arrested and fined for "offending moral feelings of some readers in a public place." In many cases, Tudjman's party used questionable legal tactics to suffocate entire news organizations. After the state took control of "Slaboda Dalmacia," a highly respected independent paper, former editors created the "Feral Tribune." In just a matter of months, Tudjman made the paper nearly inoperable. The paper was threatened with a nearly 80% increase in printing costs,

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<sup>80</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 6: Croatia.

<sup>81</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 6: Croatia.

had 15 lawsuits pending against it, and was being fined with a “pornography tax.” According to Stone, the “pornography tax” was for showing Tudjman in an unflattering light. Still, Stone and members of the International Media Fund believed in the necessity of the work they were pursuing. “Support for Independent media is more needed than ever if there is to be any chance for democracy to take root,” Stone wrote.

On November 21, 1995, the Dayton Peace Agreement was signed, signaling a general framework for an agreement of peace between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Yugoslavia. This agreement, though lacking in enforceability, did provide the first framework of its kind in the region in terms of press freedom. One condition of the agreement was free and fair, internationally supervised elections. Part of that included a right to free press: “The parties must create conditions in which free and fair elections can be held by protecting the right to vote in secret and ensuring freedom of expression and the press.”<sup>82</sup>

The International Media Fund was officially dissolved by year’s end in 1995. “We are leaving the scene early only because our primary source of funding no longer allows us the freedom and flexibility to carry out the mission for which we were created,” Stone wrote in the program’s five-year report. The work of the International Media Fund was ending with the job not yet finished. In Croatia, the state of the media was worse by some measures in 1995 than it was when the International Media Fund was formed. There were fewer newspapers in 1995 than in 1990, journalists were being abused, and television and radio were under strict

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<sup>82</sup> “Dayton Peace Agreement,” December 11, 1995, Fact sheet from the Bureau of Public Affairs.

government control.<sup>83</sup> However, it can be argued the work done by the Marvin Stone and the International Media Fund planted seeds that are still coming into fruition in terms of press freedom. In the five-year report, Stone detailed a catalogue of ways in which the International Media Fund left a lasting impression in Eastern Europe: 29 workshops were conducted for about 1,300 broadcasters, 22 journalism and business workshops were held for about 1,000 broadcast and newspaper participants, and the program established 14 university radio and television stations/training facilities and 16 university student newspapers. Additionally, the program established six resource centers, like the one at the University of Zagreb. These figures do not include the countless workshops held at those centers, or the copious amounts of training equipment supplied by the International Media Fund to those centers. Furthermore, the International Media Fund was able to leave a lasting impression in Croatia and other Eastern European countries in terms of equipment:

Our donations of technical equipment is equally impressive. In fact, the Media Fund is leaving behind a substantial presence – giant printing presses, computer units, radio stations, television companies, journalism center and university courses, none of which existed five years ago.<sup>84</sup>

Despite the strict government control broadcast media in Croatia faced, hope remains at the University of Zagreb radio station. The student radio station first saw the light of air in 1996, three years after the International Media Fund built the station. Despite grave setbacks from both the Tudjman regime and equipment issues while establishing the radio station, it was quickly proven as an important

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<sup>83</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 2: Magazines & reports.

<sup>84</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 2: Magazines & reports.

training facility for aspiring journalists and students at the University.<sup>85</sup> Each semester 80 students trained at the facility. The radio station was and continues to be a truly student-run entity. All programming – news, sports, traffic, and music – is handled by students. The student radio station received financial support from American radio expert Charles Wooden and from Dr. Sherry Ricchiardi. “The morale of the young people is striking and in future years will produce a great many trained radio journalists for Croatia,” reads an executive report from Marvin Stone dated 1996. The \$100,000 radio station is still in operation today.<sup>86</sup> By the end of the era of the International Media Fund, the lasting impression of the organization was clear. While bringing the checkbook was appreciated, it was the lessons that were most valuable. “Good journalists and good people such as Marvin Stone were much more important than the institutions,” Dr. Malovic wrote. “Marvin is much more in the memory of the Croatian journalists than the International Media Fund.”

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<sup>85</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 2: Correspondence.

<sup>86</sup> Stjepan Malovic. Email interview by author.



## CONCLUSION

Over the course of the five years the International Media Fund spent in Croatia, the state of the media did improve. When Marvin Stone and his group of First Amendment champions first surveyed media the situation in Croatia, it was dismal. There was no history of free press in the area. Nearly every medium was controlled entirely by the regime; true journalism did not yet exist. Throughout the time Stone spent in Croatia, however, the International Media Fund planted seeds and witnessed fruition. Journalists who were in Croatia at the time, both Croatian and American, say Marvin Stone's mission was not to establish American ideals abroad, rather, to instill a sense of democracy in a nation that was facing totalitarianism and cultural turmoil. Those journalists agree that the workshops, curriculum restructuring and infusion of funds that helped establish new publications, which were direct results of the International Media Fund's work in the country, were instrumental in media reformation. What the media was printing throughout these years can be used as a barometer of sorts, to determine the degree of freedom journalists were able to exercise. Croatian newspapers from the time show evidence those journalists had begun calling out the government and President Tudjman for what they believed to be wrongdoing. Even more showing, was that the Croatian journalists continued to exercise the normative style of journalism despite facing direct threats and violence.

Though the book was closed on the International Media Fund, Stone remained in Croatia as a Knight International Press Fellow and a member of the Professional Media Program through 1998. While involved in these programs, Stone

was based at the University of Zagreb. Stone spent his final years in the country giving lectures to groups of working and student journalists, holding seminars at the University, and updating information on whether government interference had become more or less severe. Stone's final years at the University of Zagreb illuminated his long-time belief that the future of free press in Croatia was held in the hands of future journalists. "Happily, the new generation is made up of quick-learners who will not be willing to return to what their parents had, who know much about complete freedom – including freedom of the press – and will not give up without a struggle."<sup>87</sup> The partnership between journalism programs at the University of Zagreb and Indiana University still exists today.

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<sup>87</sup> Marvin Lawrence Stone Papers. Accession number 2007/07.0761, Box 22, Folder 2: Magazines & reports.





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Institutional Review Board  
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IRB2 #00003206

March 20, 2015

Chris Swindell, PhD  
School of Journalism and Mass Communication

RE: IRBNet ID# 581624-2  
**At:** Marshall University Institutional Review Board #2 (Social/Behavioral)

Dear Dr. Swindell:

**Protocol Title:** [581624-2] Marvin Stone  
**Expiration Date:** March 25, 2016  
**Site Location:** MU  
**Submission Type:** Continuing Review/Progress Report      APPROVED  
**Review Type:** Exempt Review

The above study and informed consent were approved for an additional 12 months by the Marshall University Institutional Review Board #2 (Social/Behavioral) Designee. The approval will expire March 25, 2016. Since this approval is within 30 days of the expiration date, the fixed anniversary date of 03/25 was maintained. Continuing review materials should be submitted no later than 30 days prior to the expiration date.

This study is for student Hanna Francis.

If you have any questions, please contact the Marshall University Institutional Review Board #2 (Social/ Behavioral) Coordinator Bruce Day, ThD, CIP at 304-696-4303 or day50@marshall.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

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## VITA

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### *Education*

Master of Arts in Journalism  
Marshall University // Huntington, West Virginia  
To be completed in May 2015

Baccalaureate degree in Broadcast Journalism, Political Science  
Marshall University // Huntington, West Virginia  
May 2010

### *Research*

Graduate Documentary

- Behind the Makeup: Olivia Knowles (a short film on the journey of an African American female impersonator; advisor: Prof. Jennifer Sias)

### *Experience*

Marshall University // Huntington, West Virginia  
Adjunct professor, student newscast advisor, high school outreach coordinator  
August 2013 – present

- 2015 Grand Prize: Best Prerecorded Newscast // National Broadcaster's Society
- 2014: Student placed honorable mention in Hearst Journalism Awards

WPBF-TV // West Palm Beach, Florida

Newscast producer

May 2012 – June 2013

- Responsible for producing and overseeing 2.5 hours of live news on a daily basis, field producing, timing and boothing live shows, creating graphics, managing news staff, and producing web content.

WSAZ-TV // Huntington-Charleston, West Virginia

Reporter – Producer

January 2008 – April 2012

- As a reporter: responsible for shooting, producing and editing news packages, as well as presenting live on air and producing web content.
- As a producer: stacking, writing and creating graphics for live newscasts, field producing, timing and boothing live shows, managing news staff, and producing web content.

NBC News Channel // Washington, D.C.

### Capitol Hill Intern

- Assisted reporters and producers from the White House and Capitol Hill, booked and conducted interviews for NBC National News services, and field produced live news content.