
From: Paul Stevens [stevenspl@live.com]
Sent: Friday, December 26, 2014 9:01 AM
To: stevenspl@live.com
Subject: Connecting - December 26, 2014

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Connecting

December 26, 2014

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Colleagues,

Good Friday morning.

Here's hoping your Christmas was a happy one.

Here are stories of interest.

Paul

AP denies Pyongyang bureau under North Korean control

By HADAS GOLD, Politico

The Associated Press is pushing back on a report its bureau in North Korea is nearly completely controlled by the North Korean government.

In a lengthy article for NKNews.org, Nate Thayer, a former AP stringer, reports that an internal draft agreement between the AP and North Korea's state media outlet the Korea Central News Agency, more or less gives KCNA complete power over the bureau, its staff and its work.

Anonymous staff members in the bureau, established by the AP in 2012, told Thayer that "AP tries not to be a mouthpiece of North Korea, but it is basically impossible under the terms the bureau operates." Certain staff members in the bureau are "hand-picked" by the North Koreans. Thayer also notes that no stories about the Sony hack, or the six-week disappearance of Kim Jong Un were written from the Pyongyang bureau.

Additionally, ex-North Korean prisoners interviewed by Thayer say AP representatives cooperated in "coached and coerced statements," interviewing them multiple times without ever publishing a story.

AP spokesperson Paul Colford vehemently denied the allegations made in the article, calling them "laughable."

"No serious news organization would hand over the kind of business agreements, salary information and other payment documentation that Mr. Thayer sought. His latest articles from Dec. 24 are full of errors, inaccuracies and baseless innuendo," Colford said in a statement. "The 'draft agreement' between AP and North Korea's KCNA news agency that he cites is remote from the final document."

Colford also noted that Thayer, had once become "disgruntled over a distribution agreement with AP covering video he had shot in Cambodia" and that the editor of NKNews.org, Chad O'Carroll, told an AP news leader several days ago that he would not publish Thayer's article.

"It is regrettable that the website decided to reverse course on Dec. 24 because of a newly found 'draft agreement,'" Colford said.

As for not publishing certain stories about North Korea from Pyongyang, Colford said it depends on where their bureau chief may be.

"To stipulate that our robust coverage must at all times be datelined in Pyongyang is ridiculous," Colford said. "When our bureau chief is not in Pyongyang, as is sometimes the case, then the dateline shifts to Seoul, for example, where the bureau chief may be, or to Tokyo or elsewhere, as the reporting dictates."

"AP does not submit to censorship. We do not run stories by KCNA or

any government official before we publish them. At the same time, officials are free to grant or deny access or interviews," he added.

NKNews.org Director Chad O'Carroll said in a statement that the AP is ignoring the content of Thayer's piece.

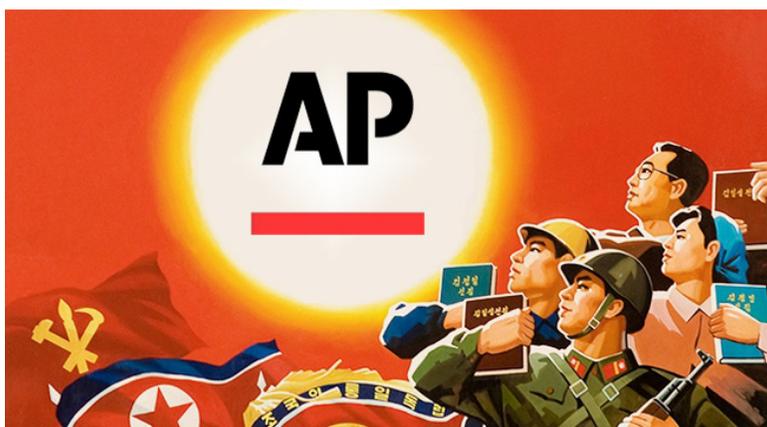
"It is unfortunate that the AP are ignoring to address the content of Mr. Thayer's story and instead focusing on separate issues. If, as Mr. Colford suggests, there are differences between the draft agreement and what was actually signed, AP should clarify those differences publicly," O'Carroll said. "NK News has requested clarity on details of operations from AP several times, but received no substantive responses."

Click [here](#) for a link to the story.

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The story in NKNews.org:

The Associated Press in North Korea: A Potemkin news bureau?



Despite trumpeting itself as the "first independent Western news bureau" in North Korea, top executives of the Associated Press (AP) in 2011 agreed to distribute state-produced North Korean propaganda through the AP name, a confidential document and interviews with current and former AP staff indicates.

An internal draft agreement between the AP and North Korea's state media outlet the Korea Central News Agency (KCNA) dated December 2011, obtained by NK News from sources inside the AP, suggests that - far from being a bastion of the free press - AP's Pyongyang bureau serves primarily to distribute news approved and censored by the North Korean state.

The document says the AP will "serve the purpose of the coverage and worldwide distribution of policies of the Worker's Party of Korea and the DPRK government," that changes to state-produced content would have to be made with "full consultation between the two sides," that the "KCNA shall nominate" the full time staff the AP would hire for their Pyongyang bureau, and that "the average \$12,000 per month" for salaries and office rental fees be paid by a "method requested by (the) KCNA."

Click [here](#) to read more.

And the full AP statement:

Statement from AP on our North Korea bureau

In the late 1990s, Nate Thayer, a former AP stringer, became disgruntled over a distribution agreement with AP covering video he had shot in Cambodia. More recently, he dismissed the value of AP's North Korea bureau shortly before he sought from AP detailed proprietary information about the bureau for further articles that were published on Dec. 24 by NKnews.org.

No serious news organization would hand over the kind of business agreements, salary information and other payment documentation that Mr. Thayer sought. His latest articles from Dec. 24 are full of errors, inaccuracies and baseless innuendo. The "draft agreement" between AP and North Korea's KCNA news agency that he cites is remote from the final document. Among other inaccuracies, AP does not distribute outright KCNA stories, as Mr. Thayer concludes, but at times AP cites KCNA reports, as do most other news organizations, including his publisher. Because of his reliance on this "draft agreement," he makes the laughable assertion that AP's Pyongyang bureau submits to censorship by the North Korean government.

It is unlikely that Mr. Thayer spoke to as many AP sources as he claims. Indeed, Chad O'Carroll, the editor of NKnews.org, told an AP news leader several days ago that he would not publish Mr. Thayer's latest attack against AP after all. It is regrettable that the website decided to reverse course on Dec. 24 because of a newly found "draft agreement."

To Mr. O'Carroll, we had provided this statement last month:

"We recognize the unique challenges in reporting from North Korea. We are proud of our work in all formats and will continue to provide robust coverage going forward that will widen still further the world's view of this little-known state.

"Regarding AP interviews with the three American prisoners and coverage of court proceedings: In accordance with normal practice, AP editorial decisions were made about the news value of very similar material available from three different interviews in short order from a captive individual. When we felt the material was newsworthy, we filed stories; when we felt it offered nothing new, we passed.

"Journalistically, our local staffers in Pyongyang are supervised and in regular contact with their supervisors. We rely on our international staff for our journalism and the local employees do not ever file or transmit stories on their own, independent of supervision. AP work is not submitted for any kind of review by North Korean authorities.

"AP does not submit to censorship. We do not run stories by KCNA or any government official before we publish them. At the same time, officials are free to grant or deny access or interviews."

Paul Colford
Director of AP Media Relations

Click [here](#) for link to the statement. (Shared by Bob Daugherty)

Connecting mailbox

Clocks from old AP parts



Larry Hamlin ([Email](#)) - Glad to see I'm not the only one making clocks from old AP equipment parts. The platter in this one is one of the two being used in the Oklahoma City Mouse when it was taken out of service and the circuit board in the center is from a Datamax.

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Putting a human face on anonymous punchers

George Krimsky ([Email](#)) - I very much liked the story on teletype holiday greetings. mostly for one reason:

It put a human face on the anonymous "punchers" in our business. It

helped us see them as people. That may sound patronizing, but in fact, like every industry and profession, we had a class system, and the operators were low in the pecking order. Okay, over the water cooler or coffee pot, they became people, but on the job, they were there to get OUR stuff right and do it quick.

What those Christmas images did for me was to demonstrate that these often anonymous colleagues could create something beautiful without us, using their considerable skills.

When I saw those images on the Christmas overnight shift in Los Angeles some four decades ago, I gained a new appreciation for the likes of Clay and Woody and all the others who otherwise seemed simply to be there at our beck and call. They kept their dignity and their humanity through it all. And, in fact, one of them saved my job, if not my career, but I will not bore you with that.

Suffice it to say they have place in my journalistic heaven. God bless them and their lost art.

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Transmitter was Toho, not a 6000

Richard Horwitz ([Email](#)) - The pictured photo transmitter at the Houston bureau isn't a model 6000. It's a Toho. A lot lighter. I can still feel my back ache from carrying a model 6000 and its power unit from one end of the St. Louis airport to catch a flight at the other end; no baggage cart to be found and we couldn't risk checking it as luggage.

AP's definition of "portable" is to take the heaviest piece of equipment available and put a handle on it.

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Christmas artwork and fitting staff names

Michael Weinfeld ([Email](#)) - In reference to the Christmas artwork on the teletypes, I used to love to try to fit the names of the staffers in such a way as to make a Christmas tree. When we used the old Delta word processors that let us flip through 8 screens, Mike Hammer, a racing enthusiast, created racing horses that would move when you switched from screen to screen.

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Classic photo of Relmin Morin

Joe McKnight ([Email](#)) - Robert Shaw's addendum to his first AP work in today's "Connecting" column calls to mind a classic picture of an AP reporter.

Relmin Morin was in Little Rock for the integration of Central High School in 1957 and someone made a picture of Morin sitting on a street curb with his typewriter in the street and him pounding away at writing his story. I think the picture appeared in one of the quarterly issues of "AP World" in 1958. Dunno if someone in Valerie Komor's department can resurrect it, but it was classic.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



to

Darrell Christian ([Email](#))

and

Christmas Day birthday celebrants:

Ed Bell ([Email](#))

Mike Cochran ([Email](#))

Chris Connell ([Email](#))

Anita Snow ([Email](#))

Stories of interest

[From the archives On a long ago Christmas Eve, an editor understood what we were supposed to do](#) (Shared by Linda Deutsch)

It happened one Christmas Eve a long time ago in a place called Oakland on a newspaper called the Tribune with a city editor named [Alfred P. Reck](#).



I was working swing shift on general assignment, writing the story of a boy who was dying of leukemia and whose greatest wish was for fresh peaches.

It was a story which, in the tradition of 1950s journalism, would be milked for every sob we could squeeze from it, because everyone loved a good cry on Christmas.

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[Lyons: 'The Interview' has really bad message](#) (Shared by George Arfield)

My family has a holiday tradition of going out to a movie together. At an actual theater, where we pay and sit in a room with strangers and eat popcorn. Archaic, but fun to do once in a while.

It is now fairly clear that one movie option we will not have this year, despite all the trailers I saw promoting it, is the comedy about a plan to assassinate North Korea's god-like but internationally unpopular president.

No loss for me. I was only a little less irritated by that movie's plot than was Kim Jong-un himself, it seems. But for different reasons.

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[Q&A: German journalist on surviving ISIL](#)

German journalist Jurgen Todenhofer, 74, embedded with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant and spent 10 days in Mosul in northern Iraq with its fighters.

Todenhofer is the first western reporter to do so and live to tell about it.

ISIL has vowed to kill anyone who does not convert to Islam and has not welcomed foreign journalists. So how did Todenhofer survive travelling through ISIL-controlled areas?

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[Island in the Storm](#)

In Cuba, it's called "D-Day"-that hypothetical future date on which the Castro regime falls. D-Day is a date long-awaited by broad sectors of the population, the Cuban diaspora, media outlets around the world, and foreign correspondents based on the island, who want to be there to report the story firsthand.



However, given government controls and the lack of laws that protect freedom of the press, reporting on any story on the island, let alone D-Day, is complicated. In Cuba, there are at least four species of journalists: foreign correspondents based on the island, official journalists, independent journalists, and citizen journalists. Each occupies a unique niche in Cuba's journalism ecosystem, and each faces a slightly different set of challenges.

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[Albuquerque Journal, on ISIS headline: There was no data breach](#)

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. -A radical group's Christmas threat reportedly shut down the Albuquerque Journal's website Wednesday.

The attack on the newspaper's homepage claimed it began its "Cyber Jihad" in Albuquerque.

When the paper's online readers visited the website Wednesday morning, a story about the slaying of a state police officer in Cuba was altered, and a different story took its place. That new story had a picture with text reading, "I love you ISIS."

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[Drones become popular holiday gifts](#)

NEW YORK (AP) - Santa's sleigh isn't the only thing flying this holiday season.

Drones - flying devices that often carry cameras and can be navigated remotely by smartphones or controllers - have "taken off" as popular gifts as novices have become just as interested in the devices as serious hobbyists. The demand has grown as the industry and government are working together to address safety concerns.

AP Beat of the Week

The lede was astonishing, in at least two ways: "The United States is planning to open an embassy in Cuba as part of its plan to open talks and normalize relations with the island nation, the Associated Press reported on Wednesday, citing U.S. officials."

The news, of course, was monumental -- so big that Reuters, unable to confirm an AP scoop, merely picked it up. Yes, that's right: That's the lede on a Reuters' story.

Diplomatic Correspondent Matthew Lee and White House Correspondent Julie Pace broke one of the year's biggest stories, the Obama administration's restoration of ties with Cuba after five decades of isolation. By dint of source development, close coordination of their reporting and dogged determination, they left competitors far behind with this week's Beat of the Week. <http://bit.ly/1r98jdD>

The team work that produced the beat by Lee and Pace set the tone for a series of AP scoops on the intensely competitive Cuba story. The most dramatic came from correspondent Andrea Rodriguez and cameraman Osvaldo Angulo who obtained an exclusive all-formats interview in Havana with the parents of Rolando Sarraff, the Cuban spy released and sent to the United States after nearly two decades in prison for aiding U.S. intelligence.

That scoop was the outcome of strenuous efforts by AP staffers in three countries: Miami reporter Curt Anderson learned from a former CIA operative that the spy was probably Sarraff (sources would confirm this to Ken Dilanian in Washington); he may have relatives in Spain, the source said. Madrid COB Alan Clendenning found online evidence of two women with that last name.

Madrid reporter Jorge Sainz reached one of the women through a Spain-based Cuban dissident, and she turned out to be the spy's sister. Sainz interviewed her, got photos of her brother _ and their parents' Havana

phone number.

From beginning to end, The Cuba story was a triumph for the AP. And it began with the Washington team of Lee and Pace.

On Tuesday night, Pace was awakened by a source who said the White House would announce something big on Cuba on Wednesday. She reached out to Lee and other reporters, and they worked into the night, trying unsuccessfully to determine what was about to happen.

The next morning, Lee started making calls around 6:15. By 7 a.m., he had learned from an official that American contractor Alan Gross was being released, that he would arrive in the U.S. later that morning, that there was a swap for the three remaining Cuban 5 members imprisoned in the U.S., and that the White House would announce "some" economic, diplomatic and political steps aimed at improving relations.

Good -- but not quite good enough to go with.

Pace went to the White House early to pursue sources; she also prepared background on Gross and the Cuban 5. Meanwhile, Lee reached a second official who was willing to confirm the Gross release and spy swap. This source said the other steps were far more significant but refused to say more.

While the Gross release and spy swap were big news, the steps toward normalization were even more intriguing. The exact measures the president had decided on were supposed to be closely held secrets -- known to only a handful of top aides -- until an embargoed White House conference call that was to be held later that morning. That call had not yet been announced when news of Gross' release broke, and Lee sat down with an official who was willing to share details of the normalization plan on a background basis.

In a huge shift that would effectively close another chapter of the Cold War, the official revealed that Obama would announce an immediate start to talks with Cuba on resuming full diplomatic ties, the re-opening of a U.S. embassy in Havana "within months," and significant changes to U.S. travel, financial and commercial restrictions on Cuba.

Lee called the Washington desk and dictated the NewsAlert. At the same moment, Pace got a call from Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, who confirmed the story on the record while harshly criticizing the administration's actions.

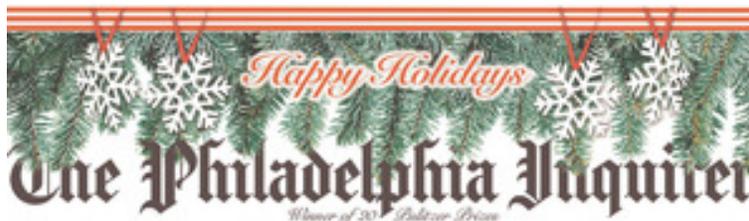
None of these details were available to the rest of the press corps until the White House conference call, which was still 20 minutes away when

the first AP stories hit the wire at 9:42 a.m. EST. Other organizations couldn't report the news until the background call was over. Their reports started moving at 11:03.

For an 81-minute beat on an epochal announcement, Matt Lee and Julie Pace win this week's \$500 prize.

(Shared by Valerie Komor)

The Final Word



A Philadelphia Inquirer staffer writes: "This is truly a brilliant piece of writing by our night editor, turning a recap of the night's events into a work of art."

From: Schwartz, Addam

Sent: Wednesday, December 24, 2014 11:25 PM

To: [Philadelphia Inquirer staffers]

Subject: night note for Christmas Eve

Good morning.

With apologies to Clement C. Moore and, well, pretty much everyone:

'Twas the note before Christmas, and all through the eve
Things were so sleepy you wouldn't believe.
The daybooks for Jersey and PA were bare
The area wire? There wasn't much there.

Bob Moran wrote a brief, though details were thin
On a partial collapse of a two-story twin.
For an obit, he got quotes from old Larry King,
And he wrote a few grafs for a holiday thing.

He tried to get details on this news report
But it surfaced so late that he came up just short
A woman had tased her attacker - the fink!
Additional info? Just click on the link.

A bus and a trash truck got into a crash
Philly dot com had it up in a flash.
In news that was breaking, not much else broke
As thugs were outnumbered by straight-minded folk.

The Flyers and Sixers and Iggles were idle
(Which may have kept fans from going homicidal)
Clearly there isn't much more left to say
Except: Merry Christmas, and to all, a great day.

Addam

Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, Dec. 26, the 360th day of 2014. There are five days left in the year. The seven-day African-American holiday Kwanzaa begins today. This is Boxing Day.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 26, 2004, more than 230,000 people, mostly in southern Asia, were killed by a 100-foot-high tsunami triggered by a 9.1-magnitude earthquake beneath the Indian Ocean.

On this date:

In 1776, the British suffered a major defeat in the Battle of Trenton during the Revolutionary War.

In 1799, former President George Washington was eulogized by Col. Henry Lee as "first in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

In 1908, Jack Johnson became the first African-American boxer to win the world heavyweight championship as he defeated Canadian Tommy Burns in Sydney, Australia.

In 1914, actor Richard Widmark was born in Sunrise Township, Minnesota.

In 1933, Nissan Motor Co. was founded in Yokohama, Japan, as the Automobile Manufacturing Co.

In 1944, during the World War II Battle of the Bulge, the embattled U.S. 101st Airborne Division in Bastogne, Belgium, was relieved by units of the 4th Armored Division. Tennessee Williams' play "The Glass Menagerie" was first performed at the Civic Theatre in Chicago.

In 1966, Kwanzaa was first celebrated.

In 1972, the 33rd president of the United States, Harry S. Truman, died in Kansas City, Missouri, at age 88.

In 1974, comedian Jack Benny died in Los Angeles at age 80.

In 1994, French commandos stormed a hijacked Air France jetliner on the ground in Marseille, killing four Algerian hijackers and freeing 170 hostages.

In 1996, 6-year-old beauty queen JonBenet Ramsey was found beaten and strangled in the basement of her family's home in Boulder, Colorado. (To date, the slaying remains unsolved.)

In 2006, former President Gerald R. Ford died in Rancho Mirage, California, at age 93.

Ten years ago: An unmanned Russian cargo ship docked at the international space station, ending a shortage that forced astronauts to ration supplies. Peyton Manning of the Indianapolis Colts broke Dan Marino's single-season touchdown pass record when he threw his 48th and 49th of the season against San Diego. (The Colts defeated San Diego in overtime, 34-31.) Hall of Famer Reggie White, one of the greatest defensive players in NFL history, died in North Carolina at age 43.

Five years ago: A 23-year-old Nigerian man, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab (OO'-mahr fah-ROOK' ahb-DOOL'-moo-TAH'-lahb), who claimed to have ties to al-Qaida, was charged with trying to destroy a Detroit-bound airliner on Christmas Day. Buddhist monks chanted on white-sanded beaches in Thailand and thousands prayed at mosques in Indonesia to mark the fifth anniversary of the Asian tsunami. Percy Sutton, the pioneering civil rights attorney who represented Malcolm X before launching successful careers as a political power broker and media mogul, died in New York at 89.

One year ago: Rounding out a tough and frustrating year, President Barack Obama signed a bipartisan budget deal easing spending cuts and a defense bill cracking down on sexual assault in the military. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe paid his respects at the Yasukuni Shrine honoring Japan's war dead in a move that drew sharp rebukes from China and South Korea, as well as disappointment from the United States. LeBron James of the Miami Heat was selected as The Associated Press' 2013 Male Athlete of the Year.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Donald Moffat is 84. Actor Carroll Spinney (Big Bird on TV's "Sesame Street") is 81. Rhythm-and-blues singer Abdul "Duke" Fakir (The Four Tops) is 79. Record producer Phil Spector is 75. "America's Most Wanted" host John Walsh is 69. Country musician Bob Carpenter (The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band) is 68. Baseball Hall of Fame catcher Carlton Fisk is 67. Retired MLB All-Star Chris Chambliss is 66. Baseball Hall of Famer Ozzie Smith is 60. Former Sen. Evan Bayh, D-Ind., is 59. Humorist David Sedaris is 58. Rock musician James Kottak (The Scorpions) is 52. Country musician Brian Westrum (Sons of the Desert) is 52. Rock musician Lars Ulrich (Metallica) is 51. Actress Nadia Dajani is 49. Rock musician J is 47. Country singer Audrey Wiggins is 47. Rock musician Peter Klett (Candlebox) is 45. Rock singer James Mercer (The

Shins; Flake) is 44. Actor-singer Jared Leto is 43. Actress Kendra C. Johnson (TV: "Love Thy Neighbor") is 38. Rock singer Chris Daughtry is 35. Actress Beth Behrs is 29. Actor Kit Harington (TV: "Game of Thrones") is 28. Actress Eden Sher is 23. Pop singer Jade Thirlwall (Little Mix Actor) is 22. Actor Zach Mills is 19.

***Thought for Today: "Time is the longest distance between two places."
- From "The Glass Menagerie" by Tennessee Williams (1911-1983).***

Paul Stevens
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stevenspl@live.com

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