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Seventy-fifth Year in the Nation's Capital

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Merlo Pusey of The Washington Post Wins Pulitzer Prize for Biography of Hughes

Three Washington newspapermen, one of them Merlo J. Pusey, associate editor of The Washington Post, were among the winners of the annual Pulitzer prizes announced yesterday.

Pusey's two-volume life of Charles Evans Hughes won the \$500 prize for "the best American biography teaching patriotic and unselfish service to the people." Six years of research went into the book, which Pusey began with the help of the late Chief Justice himself.



Merlo Pusey, retired Associate Editor of the Editorial page for the *Washington Post*, is the author of several biographies and political studies. His *Charles Evans Hughes* won the Pulitzer Prize and the Bancroft Prize in 1952.

MY FIFTY YEARS IN JOURNALISM

MERLO J. PUSEY

Can a Mormon boy from the cow country of the West reasonably aspire to a writing career in the mainstream of our national life? What roads are open to him? Must he sacrifice his faith en route? Is there a basic incompatibility between success in the writing field and adherence to the gospel of Christ? My experience may throw some light on the avenues that are open and the problems that may be encountered.

I grew up in the small ranching community of Woodruff on the Utah-Wyoming border where my father operated a store and the post office. At fifteen I began working on nearby ranches in the hope of financing a high school education in Salt Lake City. At seventeen I spent several weeks alone on a large Wyoming ranch, riding ten to fifteen miles a day on horseback to keep an eye on the cattle and to bury those that died of blackleg. It was a great comfort to carry a six-shooter on my hip. While riding the range, mowing hay or hauling wool to market, I dreamed of becoming a writer. The meager literature available at home and at school fascinated me. What a great adventure it would be to write poetry, novels, history or biography! My yearnings were nothing more than flights of fancy, though, for I knew of no way to earn a living by putting words together.

When I enrolled at the Latter-day Saints University in Salt Lake City, it was my good fortune to be assigned to a class in English composition taught by Herman J. Wells. Although Brother Wells seemed a little appalled at the wild rhetoric of my "themes," his thoughtful coaching gave me courage enough to show him a verse I had written. With his encouragement, I did some other special work, and at the end of my junior year he recommended me to the faculty as editor of the *Gold and Blue* newspaper to be published for the first time the following year. So, despite my total ignorance of newspapers, I plunged into a fascinating life.

The printing of our school paper at the *Deseret News* plant brought me into contact with some of the executives of that journal. Near the end of the school year, one of them asked if I could recommend a bright young man on my staff as a proofreader after graduation. "Wouldn't I do?" was my immediate response. So, the echo of my valedictory address to the class of 1922 had scarcely died away when I found myself reading proof for the *Deseret News*. A few months later the world of letters opened one of its tiny corridors and allowed me to enter as a cub reporter.

At first the city editor gave me only meager assignments, but I was later promoted to cover the Hotel Utah which involved tracking down and interviewing distinguished people who visited the city. Thus I met and wrote about William Jennings Bryan, Vilhjalmur Steffensson, Charles A. Lindbergh and many others. On the same beat was the Church Office Building where I came into contact with most of the general authorities of the Church. I was a devout Mormon and in 1923 won the church-wide M-Men's oratorical contest.

When I was assigned to cover the city and county governments, including the local and district courts, I began to study law at night because I felt lost in the courtrooms. As other gaps in my knowledge appeared, I began taking courses at the University of Utah. For several years I worked frantically at the *News* from seven A.M. to one P.M., then raced to the University in my Model T for whatever courses I could crowd into afternoons and evenings. My love of literature was thus intensified, my interests in political science and history broadened.

At the *News*, however, there was much hemming and hawing when I argued that my graduation with honors and election to Phi Kappa Phi, plus my resumption of a full eight-hour day, merited a raise. Finally my pay was increased by \$10 a month. That stiffened my growing resolve to seek greener pastures. For some months my fiancée, Dorothy Richards, and I had been talking of trying our luck in Washington, D.C., then emerging as a great news center. So after our marriage in September 1928, we honeymooned our way to Washington by way of Canada and New England. On the advice of friends who were doing well in the Capital, we rented a one-room apartment and began looking for work.

I visited all five of the daily newspapers, but centered my hopes in the *Washington Post* because I liked its style and appearance. Obtaining directions to the office of Managing Editor Norman Baxter in the old *Post* Building at E Street and Pennsylvania, I introduced myself, recounted my experience and said I was looking for a job as a reporter. An elderly gentleman looked up from his desk.

"You must be looking for Mr. Baxter," he said. "I'm Ira Bennett, the editor."

Embarrassed at having invaded the wrong office, I apologized and started to leave. "Wait," he said. "Can you write editorials?"

Now that possibility really excited me. I said that I had studied political science, history and economics; I had written a few editorials for the *Deseret News*. Bennett explained that one member of his staff was not doing well and he was looking for a more experienced and competent writer.

"In that case," I said, "why don't you let me try writing some editorials as an experiment?"

Bennett agreed, and I was soon racking my brain for editorial subjects. Some of the editorials I submitted were published, with extensive editing, and in November 1928, I succeeded in convincing Bennett that I should become a full-fledged member of his staff. Having thus a foot in the door of a daily newspaper in the nation's Capital, I gave up plans for graduate studies and began digging into local and national problems. I read extensively, attended numerous press conferences and chewed over current events and public issues.

The work was heavy and sometimes bewildering. As Bennett was often pre-occupied with administration, the burden of filling the editorial columns fell heavily on Donald Wiley and myself, with occasional contributions from the news staff. I was shocked to discover that my share of the load amounted to

three editorials a day, with more on Saturday when we had to fill a full page in ten-point type for Sunday and three columns for Monday. At first I could not keep up, but I soon fell into the pattern.

As the months rolled by, I became aware of a troublesome skeleton in the *Post's* closet. The paper had won a reputation for fairness, reliability and vigor under the late John R. McLean, but when he was succeeded by a playboy son, Edward Beale (Ned), husband of Evelyn McLean, owner of the ill-fated Hope Diamond, the paper's revenues were diverted to support his indulgences in wine, women and horse racing. Fortunately, McLean, usually an absentee owner, seemed to exert little influence on the policy of the paper. Bennett insisted on keeping the paper free from McLean's disrepute. "We have to lean backward to keep this paper respectable," he told me, "because our publisher himself is such an S.O.B."

As an active Mormon I was very sensitive to any reflection on my integrity. But I was never asked to write anything in violation of my convictions. When there were disagreements, my editorials sometimes went into the wastebasket, but there was never any suggestion that challenged my conscience. Bennett succeeded in keeping the paper respectable, and for several years he was able to fight off McLean's inclination to sell it to William Randolph Hearst. But when the Great Depression worsened in the early thirties, the *Post* went from bad to worse and was finally sold at auction in June 1933, for failure to pay its paper bill.

That event posed a serious threat to the security of my family, for I had previously lost a part-time job on Capitol Hill. To supplement my *Post* salary I had been researching and "ghosting" for members of the Senate Finance Committee which involved attending hot debates behind closed doors and writing speeches for Senator Reed Smoot and occasionally for Majority Leader James Watson. Smoot once ordered a speech which he began to deliver on the Senate floor before I had finished writing it. The staff, in a dither, rushed the unfinished portion to him page by page as it emerged from my steaming typewriter. I even wrote articles for the *Saturday Evening Post* under the names of Senators Smoot and David A. Reed. But the ghosting and the job came to an end with the defeat of Smoot and the coming of Franklin D. Roosevelt in March 1933, about the time of the *Post's* collapse.

The auction was a dramatic affair. Among the bidders were Hearst and Evelyn Walsh McLean, flashing her diamond. But the star of the show was a little known attorney, George Hamilton, who took the prize with a bid of \$825,000. I was overjoyed to learn two weeks later that Hamilton had acted for Eugene Meyer, wealthy New York financier and former chairman of the Federal Reserve System. During the boom year of 1929, Meyer had offered \$5 million for the *Post*, only to have it rejected. He had plenty of money to build a great newspaper, and I respected what I knew of his spunk and determination.

The new management had scarcely been installed, however, when my high hopes came crashing down. Though Meyer restored the salaries that had previously been slashed, he seemed to assume that the entire editorial staff was fit only for the skids. While he was searching for a new editor, we were reduced to filling space without saying anything. That state of frustration ended only after he had hired Felix Morley of the *Baltimore Sun* as editor. Anna Youngman, an able economist from the *Journal of Commerce*, and Mark Ethridge, who later be-

came editor of the Louisville *Courier-Journal*, had previously been added to the staff. I was allowed to stay, since I had been only a junior helmsman on the sinking ship, but I was clearly in the doghouse. One morning Meyer called his staff into his office and said:

"Mr. Ethridge, I certainly like your editorial 'Art for Art's Sake.' It has the touch we want in this paper."

"Thank you, Mr. Meyer," Ethridge replied, "but it was not my piece. It was Mr. Pusey's."

"Oh well," he retreated, "It was good anyway."

Despite my lowly status, I wanted to stay at the *Post* because of my confidence that Meyer would build a great newspaper and that his distrust of me would wear off. He was a stickler for accuracy, as all good journalists are. Whenever a reporter or an editor made a mistake, he insisted that it be corrected promptly without quibble. If a public official complained of a misquotation, he insisted that the writer visit the official. One day he sent me to see Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace who had complained of inaccuracy in an editorial I had written. The Secretary chatted about many unrelated things. When I brought up the editorial, he said that my cotton import figures were askew. I expressed surprise, for I had obtained the figures from his own department. Wallace said this could not be so, but soon after I had left to do further checking, he summoned me back. "You were right," he said, with disarming candor, "and I was cock-eyed." The incident gave my stock at the *Post* a considerable boost.

Meyer never got around to apologizing for his prejudice against me, but one day after the outbreak of World War II, when I was temporarily in charge of the page, he asked me to ride to the airport with him. We talked about how wartime demands might affect various members of the staff. Suddenly he fixed me with his penetrating eyes and asked, "They're not likely to take you, are they?"

"No, Mr. Meyer," I replied. "If the draft board should get down to me, it would be scraping the bottom of the barrel. I'm thirty-nine and I have three children."

His eyes twinkled. "You were only thirty-one when I bought the paper. Why didn't you tell me? You looked like a man and I didn't realize you were only a boy."

My first great opportunity as an editorial writer came in 1937 when President Roosevelt tried to pack the Supreme Court. His bill was designed to add six new justices if the sitting justices over seventy did not retire. This shocked the country, but it was widely assumed that Congress would do whatever Roosevelt asked because of his overwhelming victory at the polls only a few months before. From the press and the people, however, came a tidal wave of opposition. Since I had made the Supreme Court one of my main interests, it was my lot to lead the fight against the President's bill in the editorial columns of the *Post*.

Day after day I exposed the phony trappings of reform in which FDR had wrapped the court-packing aspects of the bill and denounced the concept that the Court should take its orders from the White House. These editorials were widely read in Congress and elsewhere, and the *Post* was credited with leading the fight to save the Supreme Court from humiliation. Meyer was delighted, for he too was deeply troubled by the threat to our constitutional system of government.

Having delved into the history of the Court and into the events leading to the court-packing venture, I now had far more data than I could squeeze into brief pieces. Without consulting anyone, I began to write what I hoped would become a pamphlet reminiscent of Tom Paine's *Common Sense*. By this time the Senate Judiciary Committee had taken up the fight to defeat the President's bill, and I was keeping in touch with the leaders of the committee. Working far into the night and on my days off, I finished the manuscript in 22 days. After an all-night grind, I caught the 5:30 A.M. train to New York where I showed the manuscript to what I hoped were eager publishers.

The result was disappointing. However interested they might be in the subject, they were all afraid that the fight to save the Court would be finished before they could publish and recoup their costs. Returning to Washington, I showed the manuscript to Senator Edward R. Burke of Nebraska, the recognized leader of the fight. His warm endorsement became a foreword for the book. With this support, I tried again, but with the same results. Finally, Senator Burke talked the American Bar Association into underwriting the book, and the Macmillan Company came out with 17,000 copies of *The Supreme Court Crisis* in June 1937. So it was that my book became another element in the overwhelming defeat of the court-packing bill.

The book was favorably reviewed; Meyer was enthusiastic; my standing in the journalistic world was dramatically elevated. The resulting exhilaration led me to discover that "authoritis" is a disease for which there is no known cure.

From the beginning of our sojourn in Washington, my wife and I had been closely affiliated with the Washington Branch of the Mormon Church, consisting of 50-75 members, mainly young couples working for the government and going to school at night. The branch became the center of our social as well as our religious life. We met in the old Washington Auditorium at New York Avenue and E Street which was also used for dog shows and conventions. Dr. Edgar B. Brossard of the U.S. Tariff Commission was president of the branch, and I was pleased to serve as his second counselor for three years while the first LDS Washington chapel was being built. But as pressures at the *Post* increased and I was put in charge of the editorial page over weekends, my work in the Church was reduced to teaching, speaking and Boy Scout activities.

One day I was surprised by a visit from David O. McKay, then a member of the First Presidency, for whom I have always had great respect and affection. In the course of a pleasant chat, he asked if I would be interested in returning to the *Deseret News* as its editor. It was not an official "calling" but only a feeling-out. Though flattered and pleased, I replied that I thought I could do more good in Washington, the best city in the world for journalism. Before leaving, President McKay gave me the impression that he agreed with that view.

When Morley resigned as editor of the *Post* in 1940 because of disagreement with Meyer over foreign policy, there was some talk that I, being second in command, should succeed to the editorship, but I did not seek the job. I could think of plenty of reasons why Meyer would look elsewhere: I was still relatively young; I had only a limited background in foreign affairs, the field of greatest importance at the time; and I had demonstrated no special aptitude for management. I was always more interested in writing than in presiding over the writing of others. When Meyer found an able chief of staff in the person of

Herbert Elliston of the *Christian Science Monitor*, I was more relieved than disappointed. I have always agreed with Charles Evans Hughes's dictum that a man's measure is the work he does—not the title he holds.

If there was any prejudice against me at the *Post* on religious grounds, it was not apparent. Our staff included several Protestants, a Jew, a Catholic and an agnostic. Religious differences were the accepted norm. Yet religion was a factor in my limited and formal relation with the Meyers and some of my colleagues. Though Dorothy and I were occasional guests at the Meyer mansion in Crescent Place, we were never among the intimates. We drank gingerale while the hosts and other guests drank champagne and highballs. Differences in objectives, language and habits of thought seemed to be more apparent in the social milieu. Both social and professional relations might have been easier with more conformity on our part, but no man or woman worthy of the name tailors his or her convictions to popular standards to win economic advantage.

I am confident that, in general, my religious beliefs have been a great asset in my writing career. The concepts of fairness, honesty and pursuit of truth are deeply imbedded in the gospel of Christ. Mormonism also tends to inspire its adherents with a positive outlook on life, with faith in human progress and an awareness of the goodness of God. With due allowance for human frailties, the Mormon quest for eternal life and conformity to the will of God is a powerful impetus toward constructive achievement.

My editorial responsibility was to write about problems, issues and personalities as an independent observer serving no party, organization, faction or individual—not even the publisher of the paper. I always felt comfortable in striving for this objective because I believe it to be fully compatible with my duty as a conscientious Mormon—or Christian.

On Sunday, December 7, 1941, I was working at my desk as usual when a copy boy burst into the room screaming, "Japan has attacked Pearl Harbor." The war that followed quickened the tempo of life and changed many things. Within a few days Winston Churchill was within our reach as a source of news and understanding of the holocaust that had been unloosed upon mankind. He had flown to Washington to confer with Roosevelt on the coordination of British and American war plans and naturally drew a great crowd to the presidential press conference. After answering a few preliminary questions, FDR introduced his guest and allowed him to explain his own presence. Reporters in the back of the room complained that they could neither hear nor see him. The great statesman climbed onto a chair where he answered questions with candor, brilliance and range of vision that none of his contemporaries could match.

Throughout the war, I felt close to the centers of power where momentous policy was being made. A vital source of information was the luncheons Meyer gave in his office for Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles, Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy, Donald Nelson of the Office of War Production, Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes and many others. Meyer and his staff questioned them in great detail off the record. One day Henry Kaiser outlined his plans for a baby aircraft carrier, and Meyer was instrumental in getting him into the White House after the Navy had turned down the idea. The President overruled the Navy, and the baby aircraft carriers, manufactured quickly and in great numbers, helped win the war.

I remember another red-letter day when General Dwight D. Eisenhower came to lunch at the *Post* shortly after his victory in Europe. Everyone seemed fascinated by his stories, his democratic manner and his grasp of world problems. One story in particular stayed with me. After the Battle of Anzio he had the grim task of restoring the morale of an army that had been cut to pieces. His praise of their fighting prowess and their patriotism left the men still glum and depressed, but when the General slipped and fell as he descended from the speaker's platform, the GI's roared with laughter. That broke the spell. Ike laughed with them and came away feeling that his fall on the seat of his pants in the mud was the best thing he could have done for those war-weary boys. Ordinarily it is a sound rule that military men be kept out of politics. But here was an exception. Ike was the antithesis of a brass hat. From that time forward I wrote about him with high respect and sincere hope that he would be drafted for further national service.

The disease I had contracted during the court-packing fight flared up again during the war years. The result was my second book, *Big Government: Can We Control It?*, devoted to the problems emerging from FDR's first three terms. Published by Harper and Brothers in 1945, with a foreword by Charles A. Beard, it drew a number of good reviews, thereby deepening my infection. I looked for another subject and soon found one in the person of Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes who had triumphantly retired four years after thwarting FDR's attempt to displace him. During this period he had led the Court into a new era of liberal decisions. His place in judicial history seemed second only to that of John Marshall.

It took some weeks to screw up my courage to approach Hughes. At last I called on his secretary and confessed what was on my mind. "It won't do any good to talk to him about that," the secretary said. "I already have a list of twenty people who want to write his biography and *some of them* are distinguished writers."

Nevertheless, I insisted on an appointment, and when I was ushered into the presence of the great man a few days later, he was in an expansive mood. He talked in fascinating detail about the Supreme Court and himself, as if I were already assembling material for the biography. At the end of an hour he said that he wanted me to meet his son who would be chiefly concerned about biographical questions because he (the father) did not wish anything published before his death. "I can understand that," I said, "but it would be of enormous help to have access to you while you are still in good health." He agreed with that.

A week later I was back again conferring with Hughes and his son. Young Hughes wanted to know what experience I had had in organizing such a vast amount of data as would necessarily go into a book about his father. I mentioned the books I had written, and the former Chief Justice asked for a copy of *The Supreme Court Crisis*, which he had never seen. After he read the book, he began turning over to me 500 pages of biographical notes he had written since his retirement. During subsequent visits he gave me exclusive access to these notes, to his papers in the Library of Congress and to himself in return for my pledge to write what he called "a thorough, scholarly and definitive biography." He agreed to leave the content to my judgment since the book was not to be published in his lifetime.

The arrangement was ideal. The Chief, as his associates called him, gave me a standing appointment, two hours every week. Using his notes, I spent two and a half years researching and asking questions about every phase of his career. Usually he replied with candor and detail. Occasionally he would remind me that what took place in the judicial conferences was confidential, but he would sometimes add, "You ought to know more than you can write." Then he would tell what happened—perhaps how Brandeis had reacted, what Butler had said. He always told these stories with gusto and a finely honed sense of humor.

I continued to wonder why, with all the "distinguished writers" clamoring to do his life, he had conferred the privilege on me. Then one day he told me that I got the nod because he thought I would write objectively, without personal prejudice, and that I understood better than some others what he was trying to do as Chief Justice. Needless to say, I was touched by his faith in me and couldn't help thinking it a tribute to my religion—a religion that gave me a high regard for truth and sincerity.

Though Hughes was not active in any church, he retained a basic faith and hope in the hereafter. One morning when he was Secretary of State he was awakened out of deep sleep by a brilliant idea for handling a critical problem. Arising at 4 A.M. he wrote a public statement that was promptly approved by the President. Explaining the incident to his associates, he said: "The voice of God spoke to me last night."

Hughes died in 1948 and was soon followed by his son, the victim of a brain tumor. I continued to work on the biography for another three years, making a total of six. *Charles Evans Hughes* was finally published in two volumes by Macmillan in 1951. About the same time I was invited to lunch by another great man of the law, Justice Felix Frankfurter. His purpose seemed to be to roast me for an editorial I had written about some Court opinion, but, with that out of the way he asked, "Would you like me to review your Hughes books for the *New York Times*?" Of course I was elated by that generous gesture which turned into a warm review, rich in judicial lore.

As I was cleaning the basement of our home in early May 1952, a telephone call from the *Post* informed me that the Hughes book had won the Pulitzer Prize for biography. It was an electrifying moment. Later the book also won the Bancroft Prize and the Tamiment Institute Book Award. Then the Brigham Young University gave me an honorary Doctor of Letters degree. For an amateur cowboy, it was an exhilarating harvest.

In the journalistic world, however, new problems emerged. At the *Post* Philip L. Graham had become publisher, succeeding his father-in-law, Meyer, who returned to the paper as chairman of the board after serving briefly as president of the World Bank. Elliston suffered a protracted illness in 1952, and the burden of managing the editorial page again fell largely on me. All went well during the period when Eisenhower was emerging as the Republican nominee for the presidency. The *Post* came out for him—its first formal endorsement of any presidential candidate during the Meyer regime. When the Democrats nominated Adlai Stevenson, however, Elliston and some other members of the staff argued for a switch. Despite the bombardments from Elliston's retreat in New Hampshire, I managed to hold the *Post* to its commitment, with the support of Graham and Meyer, until Eisenhower won an easy victory.

When Elliston resigned because of continued ill health, Graham, without consulting me, appointed the youngest member of our staff, Robert Estabrook, to be editor of the editorial page. I was not sure that I could work with him, a tremendously prolific writer of little flexibility whose greatest ambition seemed to be to fill the page with his own pieces. But Meyer's earnest arguments and the fact that I had just invested in a 400-acre farm on the Potomac River convinced me that I should stay on as associate editor, a title I had held since 1946.

About 1954, Justice William O. Douglas of the Supreme Court took sharp exception to an editorial I had written supporting a National Park Service plan to build a scenic parkway on the old C and O Canal towpath adjacent to the Potomac. "Come with me," challenged the Justice, "and I will show you the beauties of that country and convince you that it should be saved from motor traffic." The *Post* editors accepted this challenge for a 189-mile hike from Cumberland, Maryland to Washington.

The result was a historic trek in which I joined forty conservationists, journalists and others, walking from 20 to 27 miles a day, stopping for meals prepared by the Appalachian Trail Club and often sleeping under the stars. Out of this trek emerged the C and O Canal Association which finally persuaded Congress to convert the canal property into a national historic park. It was a victory for the redoubtable Justice in which the *Post* shared despite initial differences.

While continuing my regular work and overseeing the operation of my farm, I found time to write a book called *Eisenhower The President* in 1956. Some of my conclusions varied sharply from *Post* policy, but I never felt compunction about expressing independent views. Occasionally I wrote articles for *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Harper's*, the *Atlantic*, *Yale Review* and other magazines to air opinions that could not be cramped into editorials. Working relations at the *Post* became more pleasant when Graham sent Estabrook to London to head the *Post's* news bureau there. Executive Editor James Russell Wiggins became director of the editorial page. He proved to be a genial chief; I could argue with him for hours without arousing hostility.

Several other pleasant memories are worthy of mention. One of the University of Utah Alumni Association's first "Distinguished Alumni Awards" came my way in 1958 and the American Bar Association's gavel award "for distinguished editorials on the Supreme Court" in 1960. I also helped to amend the United States Constitution. For many years I had deplored the ambiguity of the original Constitution which prevented the President from asking the Vice President to sit in for him in case of incapacity. When illness disabled Eisenhower, I wrote an editorial suggesting that he sign an agreement with Vice President Nixon under which the latter would take control temporarily and return all the powers upon request from the President. This was done, and it ultimately led to adoption of the Twenty-fifth Amendment to the Constitution, including an arrangement for filling any presidential vacancy, the provision that took Gerald Ford to the White House.

During a visit to Salt Lake City, I was invited by the family of George Albert Smith, eighth president of the Church, to write his biography. Since I wanted to devote more time to church-related tasks, I began a long study of the careers of George Albert, his father John Henry Smith and his grandfather George A. Smith, each a member of the First Presidency, using the journals and surviving personal papers of these three men, supplemented by interviews and reading of

church history. Ultimately I wrote a three-in-one biography covering a lengthy period from the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith to the end of George Albert's presidency in 1951.

By agreement with the family I wrote as a professional biographer, meaning that I sought to be objective, presenting the facts as I found them, lights and shadows, problems as well as achievements. When the first draft was completed, however, President Smith's eldest daughter was displeased because it did not reflect her perspective, particularly about the circumstances surrounding her dismissal from the Primary General Board. George Albert Smith, Jr., a professor at Harvard, thought I had dealt fairly with the incident. Some others urged that the incident be eliminated entirely because it was controversial. My publisher in Boston said the manuscript was competent and well written but thought it should be published in Salt Lake City where the chief demand for the book would be. The leading Salt Lake publishers told me they do not accept manuscripts about church leaders if they include "controversial" material.

This was a disappointment because initially the Smith family had been as cooperative as the Hughes family, and in both instances I had been given a free hand in dealing with the facts as I found them. The idea of deleting all potentially controversial incidents was especially unacceptable to me, not only because it would result in a slanted version, but also because it would detract from the stature that George Albert Smith attained as a man of God.

In the early sixties frustrations smothered another project. At the request of the University of Utah Press, I undertook the editing of the voluminous diaries of Senator Smoot covering most of his thirty years in the Senate. Some of the entries were mere jottings. After I had labored over the diaries for about three years, a controversy arose. A member of the family threatened to sue the Press if the diaries were published with entries which showed a conflict of interest on the part of the Senator during the Teapot Dome hearings over which he presided. I refused to permit use of my name as editor of the diaries if items of that type were eliminated. That ended the venture.

These disappointing results turned me again to less sensitive spheres. I had long brooded over the perilous practice of presidential war-making. The Founding Fathers had specifically granted the war power to Congress, but our recent presidents had fallen into the habit of usurping this power. Under Franklin Roosevelt the Navy had participated in World War II long before Pearl Harbor. President Harry S. Truman had initiated and carried on the Korean War without congressional sanction, and Lyndon Johnson had committed our sons to battle in Vietnam with nothing more than a self-effacing congressional resolution saying that he was free to do whatever he believed necessary. I feared that this dangerous transfer of power might lead to destruction of the whole American experiment in self-government. So I fought it persistently, and when the *Post* showed little interest, I turned again to an extended editorial in the form of a book, *The Way We Go To War*, published by Houghton Mifflin in 1969. Its plea fell on fertile soil. The country was awakening to the frightful error in Vietnam—a one-man war that cost us 55,000 lives and \$155 billion. Congress finally stopped it and then passed a War Powers Resolution, a step in the right direction but not the tough restrictions on presidential war-making for which I had pleaded. My next book was a survey of the United States military posture in the world, *The U.S.A. Astride the Globe*.

Meanwhile Katharine Meyer Graham had become publisher of the *Post* after the suicide of her husband in 1963. Late in 1970 she surprised me by asking me to write a biography of her father. The subject had never appealed to me because I knew how much difficulty Sidney Hyman had encountered in trying to write such a biography before Meyer's death in 1959. The manuscript grew into a mountain but was never finished. But when Kay Graham offered me relief from my editorial duties and complete freedom in telling her father's story, I began to see the project as an exciting opportunity.

For more than a year I buried myself in the Meyer papers and the Hyman manuscript, with time out for interviews. Then I wrote the book in the quiet atmosphere of my library at the farm. Meyer proved to be an interesting subject, and when the book was published by Knopf in 1974 it brought to light foibles and indiscretions along with achievements, without any murmuring from the Meyer family. The book won the Kappa Tau Alpha Frank Luther Mott Research Award, and at the same time the *Post* gave me a plaque commemorating "45 Years of Dedicated Service." In March, 1975, the University of Utah asked me to make its Founders Day speech and three months later presented me with an honorary LLD.

Rough calculations indicate that, in addition to seven books, I wrote 20,000 editorials in my 45 years at the *Post*. Some were inconsequential, but most represented serious thinking and research. Both my Mormon heritage and my American outlook impelled me to see our civilization as the brightest chapter in the history of mankind. I have an old-fashioned yearning to celebrate its achievements, but also to help correct its mistakes and to refine its methods. Yet my satisfactions from half a century of toil are singularly detached from any specific results that may or may not have flowed from my writing. It is enough to know that the comparative trickle I have added to the unprecedented flow of words in our time has been, to the best of my ability, aimed at the elusive target of human enlightenment.