Hon. Whizze White clobbers the press

By Bob Wasserman

Four years ago during the Watergate investigations the American press attained an unprecedented influence on criminal justice, eventually helping to force the resignation of Richard M. Nixon. Now, thanks to Supreme Court Justice Byron "Whizzer" White, the newspapers have their most important tools in criminal investigation weakened.

White, a former professional football star and Kennedy aide, began his campaign against the press in 1972. In that year White wrote the main opinion when the Supreme Court ruled that reporters may be questioned by a grand jury about their confidential news sources. The Stanford Daily case was first filed in 1971 when Palo Alto police, aided by a search warrant, ransacked the daily's offices for photographs of demonstrations clashing with police. Since then, other search warrants have been obtained against newspapers and TV and radio stations to search for files and letters, increasing the significance of the Daily case. The Supreme Court's decision is also noteworthy in that it overturned an earlier decision in favor of the Daily by a Northern California Superior Court judge. White denounced Chief Judge Robert Peckham's ruling as a "sweeping revision" of the Fourth Amendment, which guarantees protection against unreasonable searches and seizures.

White has deliberately shunned public attention, both now and when press attained an unprecedented influence on criminal justice, eventually weakening the institution of the American press.

As far as his decisions on the Supreme Court go, White also has an interest in legislation concerning civil law. Like his successor in the Justice Department's Attorney General John Mitchell and Richard Kleindienst, White sides with law enforcement agents in any question by a grand jury about their confidential news sources.

In his first term on the Court White has deliberately shunned public attention, both now and when press attained an unprecedented influence on criminal justice, eventually weakening the institution of the American press.

White has the view that the press remains strong and healthy, but he has been slapped with fines totaling over $100,000, asked Justice White to intervene in the New Jersey decision. White refused to help the New York newspaper, his statement being that "There is no present authority in this court that a newspaper need not produce documents material to the prosecution or defense of a defendant."

This is the Supreme Court's decision last May against the Stanford Daily, ruling that law-enforcement officials had the right to obtain a warrant and search a newspaper for evidence of a crime. The Whizzer once again wrote the principal majority opinion, remaining consistent with his previous rulings against the media. White wrote: "The critical element in a reasonable search is... that there is a reasonable cause to believe that the specific 'things' to be searched for are..."

The Stanford Daily case was filed in 1971 when Palo Alto police, aided by a search warrant, ransacked the daily's offices for photographs of demonstrations clashing with police. Since then, other search warrants have been obtained against newspapers and TV and radio stations to search for files and letters, increasing the significance of the Daily case. The Supreme Court's decision is also noteworthy in that it overturned an earlier decision in favor of the Daily by a Northern California Superior Court judge. White denounced Chief Judge Robert Peckham's ruling as a "sweeping revision" of the Fourth Amendment, which guarantees protection against unreasonable searches and seizures.

White has deliberately shunned public attention, both now and when press attained an unprecedented influence on criminal justice, eventually weakening the institution of the American press.

As far as his decisions on the Supreme Court go, White also has an interest in legislation concerning civil law. Like his successor in the Justice Department's Attorney General John Mitchell and Richard Kleindienst, White sides with law enforcement agents in any question by a grand jury about their confidential news sources.

In his first term on the Court White has deliberately shunned public attention, both now and when press attained an unprecedented influence on criminal justice, eventually weakening the institution of the American press.

White has the view that the press remains strong and healthy, but he has been slapped with fines totaling over $100,000, asked Justice White to intervene in the New Jersey decision. White refused to help the New York newspaper, his statement being that "There is no present authority in this court that a newspaper need not produce documents material to the prosecution or defense of a defendant."

This is the Supreme Court's decision last May against the Stanford Daily, ruling that law-enforcement officials had the right to obtain a warrant and search a newspaper for evidence of a crime. The Whizzer once again wrote the principal majority opinion, remaining consistent with his previous rulings against the media. White wrote: "The critical element in a reasonable search is... that there is a reasonable cause to believe that the specific 'things' to be searched for are..."

The Stanford Daily case was filed in 1971 when Palo Alto police, aided by a search warrant, ransacked the daily's offices for photographs of demonstrations clashing with police. Since then, other search warrants have been obtained against newspapers and TV and radio stations to search for files and letters, increasing the significance of the Daily case. The Supreme Court's decision is also noteworthy in that it overturned an earlier decision in favor of the Daily by a Northern California Superior Court judge. White denounced Chief Judge Robert Peckham's ruling as a "sweeping revision" of the Fourth Amendment, which guarantees protection against unreasonable searches and seizures.

White has deliberately shunned public attention, both now and when press attained an unprecedented influence on criminal justice, eventually weakening the institution of the American press.

As far as his decisions on the Supreme Court go, White also has an interest in legislation concerning civil law. Like his successor in the Justice Department's Attorney General John Mitchell and Richard Kleindienst, White sides with law enforcement agents in any question by a grand jury about their confidential news sources.

In his first term on the Court White has deliberately shunned public attention, both now and when press attained an unprecedented influence on criminal justice, eventually weakening the institution of the American press.

White has the view that the press remains strong and healthy, but he has been slapped with fines totaling over $100,000, asked Justice White to intervene in the New Jersey decision. White refused to help the New York newspaper, his statement being that "There is no present authority in this court that a newspaper need not produce documents material to the prosecution or defense of a defendant."

This is the Supreme Court's decision last May against the Stanford Daily, ruling that law-enforcement officials had the right to obtain a warrant and search a newspaper for evidence of a crime. The Whizzer once again wrote the principal majority opinion, remaining consistent with his previous rulings against the media. White wrote: "The critical element in a reasonable search is... that there is a reasonable cause to believe that the specific 'things' to be searched for are..."

The Stanford Daily case was filed in 1971 when Palo Alto police, aided by a search warrant, ransacked the daily's offices for photographs of demonstrations clashing with police. Since then, other search warrants have been obtained against newspapers and TV and radio stations to search for files and letters, increasing the significance of the Daily case. The Supreme Court's decision is also noteworthy in that it overturned an earlier decision in favor of the Daily by a Northern California Superior Court judge. White denounced Chief Judge Robert Peckham's ruling as a "sweeping revision" of the Fourth Amendment, which guarantees protection against unreasonable searches and seizures.

White has deliberately shunned public attention, both now and when press attained an unprecedented influence on criminal justice, eventually weakening the institution of the American press.

As far as his decisions on the Supreme Court go, White also has an interest in legislation concerning civil law. Like his successor in the Justice Department's Attorney General John Mitchell and Richard Kleindienst, White sides with law enforcement agents in any question by a grand jury about their confidential news sources.

In his first term on the Court White has deliberately shunned public attention, both now and when press attained an unprecedented influence on criminal justice, eventually weakening the institution of the American press.

White has the view that the press remains strong and healthy, but he has been slapped with fines totaling over $100,000, asked Justice White to intervene in the New Jersey decision. White refused to help the New York newspaper, his statement being that "There is no present authority in this court that a newspaper need not produce documents material to the prosecution or defense of a defendant."

This is the Supreme Court's decision last May against the Stanford Daily, ruling that law-enforcement officials had the right to obtain a warrant and search a newspaper for evidence of a crime. The Whizzer once again wrote the principal majority opinion, remaining consistent with his previous rulings against the media. White wrote: "The critical element in a reasonable search is... that there is a reasonable cause to believe that the specific 'things' to be searched for are..."