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TIME
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# The Ten Best American Dailies

*Nowhere else can one find so miscellaneous, so various an amount of knowledge as is contained in a good newspaper.*
—Henry Ward Beecher, 1887

Fair enough, but what is a good newspaper? It does not help to reverse Beecher's apothegm and define a good newspaper as one that prints a miscellaneous, various amount of knowledge. All papers do that. But if the knowledge is undigested, or simply wrong, more is not better. Journalistic quality is thornier matter. A newspaper in its variety may be superb and terrible at the same time, even on the same page.

Playwright Arthur Miller has a briefer definition: "A good newspaper is a nation talking to itself." But most American papers cannot speak that loudly. The sheer size of the U.S. has precluded the development of a truly national press like Britain's. The New York *Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* try to speak to the country at large, but almost all of the 1,760 dailies in the U.S. tailor themselves to the contours of their localities.

Ten years ago, TIME listed its choice of the ten best newspapers in the U.S. In alphabetical order, they were: the Baltimore *Sun*, Cleveland *Press*, Los Angeles *Times*, Louisville *Courier-Journal*, Milwaukee *Journal*, Minneapolis morning *Tribune*, New York *Daily News*, New York *Times*, St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, and the Washington *Post*. Reviewing the nation's major dailies today, TIME correspondents and editors found marked change; five of the 1964 selections have been replaced by other papers that have improved sharply.

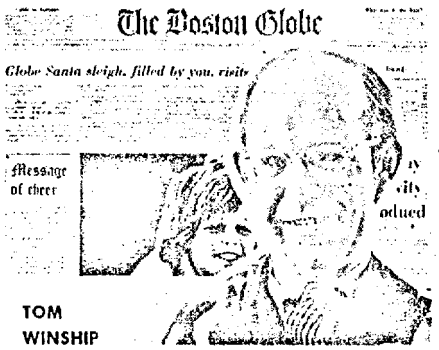
These ten papers stand out, in TIME's view, for several reasons. They make a conscientious effort to cover national and international news as well as to monitor their own communities. They can be brash and entertaining as well as informative. They are willing to risk money, time and manpower on extended investigations. Through "Op-Ed" pages and dissenting columns they offer a range of disparate opinion. TIME made its selections on the basis of editorial excellence rather than commercial success, but economically these papers range from the sound to the very prosperous.

### THE BOSTON GLOBE

*Morning (circ. 293,000), evening (185,000) and Sunday (625,000).*

Historically, Boston has been a bad newspaper town. The old saw used to run that the city's best newspaper was the New York *Times*. Some Bostonians might give that title to the widely respected *Christian Science Monitor*, though it is now largely a journal of commentary rather than of breaking news. For nearly a century, the *Globe* offered no competition, but it improved abruptly after Tom Winship, 53, became editor in 1965. The following year the *Globe* won a Pulitzer Prize for its campaign to block a federal judgeship for Francis X. Morrissey, a crony of Joseph P. Kennedy's. Its four-man "Spotlight" investigative team picked up another Pulitzer for a 1971 exposé of municipal scandals in neighboring Somerville. The *Globe*, which had not backed a presidential candidate since 1900, changed policy by declaring for Humphrey in '68 and McGovern in '72. It was the third U.S. daily (after the New York *Times* and the Washington *Post*) to publish excerpts from the Pentagon papers.

The *Globe* is known as "a writer's paper"—permissively edited, and allowing a variety of tone and approach. In George Frazier, whose columns are a continuing tirade against lapses in taste, morals and common sense, it has one of the few genuine eccentrics left in dai-



TOM WINSHIP

ly journalism. Music Critic Michael Steinberg's running quarrel with Erich Leinsdorf's direction of the Boston Symphony was a major factor in the maestro's departure in 1969. Sport Columnist Bud Collins is easily the best tennis reporter in the country.

With a five-man bureau in Washington, the *Globe's* national coverage is excellent. It is somewhat weaker in covering Boston's own sprawling suburbs. Overall, the *Globe* is one of the country's most improved papers during the past decade.

### THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE

*Morning (circ. 681,766) and Sunday (1,157,032).*

Gone from the front page are the old-fogyish editorial cartoons, as well as the proclamation that this is the "American Paper for Americans." The comic strip *Moon Mullins* no longer adorns the first page of the sports section, and most of the Shavian experiments in phonetic spelling (*frate* for *freight*) are a thing of the past. Thanks to its flamboyant long-

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