

ShopTalk

Editor
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Extension 6803

New Presses, New Plant



The formal contract-signing ceremony between The Washington Post and Mitsubishi Lithographic Presses, U.S.A., Inc., (above) included a gift exchange. At right, Hiromi Hirata, managing director/general manager, Industrial Machinery Headquarters, holds The Post's gift to him, a Steuben crystal eagle.



presses that printed today's paper also printed newspapers during the Truman administration."

The contract signed last week with Mitsubishi Lithographic Presses, U.S.A., Inc., for eight new keyless

inking system offset presses, and the announcement of plans for construction of a new printing plant in Maryland mean an investment of \$250 million for The Post. "The project at both plants is expected to be completed around the end of 1998," said Post President **BO JONES**. "The

Maryland site has not been finalized, but an 18-acre parcel in College Park (near Greenbelt Road and Kenilworth Avenue) is the likely choice." When the new plant is completed, Jones added, "The Post will then close the press facilities in Northwest and Southeast, but the company has no

plans to move the rest of the operations from downtown."

Executive Editor **LEONARD DOWNIE JR.** said, "The Post's commitment to new presses and a new plant says that we believe we're here to stay for a very long time" in contrast to those who have "some doubt in the industry about the future of newspapers." Jones concurs. "What Len said is right. It is a statement of confidence in the future of the newspaper," he said, "that the board would approve a commitment of this size." Jones continued, "When this project is completed, The Post will have a better-looking product that will be more manageable for readers and more flexible for advertisers. These are important needs for the newspaper's future."

The new presses, said Vice President/Production **MIKE CLURMAN**, "will reduce waste, provide more consistent inking and be much less expensive to operate." Clurman said, "This is the biggest investment that the newspaper has ever made. The question might be asked, 'Why should we spend this money now when people are asking about the economics of the newspaper industry?'"

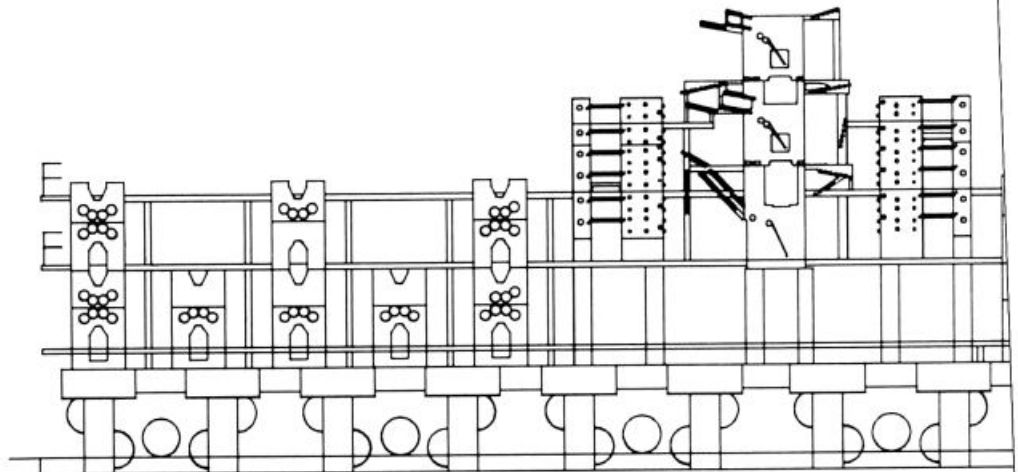
Last week, The Post announced the largest investment in the newspaper's history, a necessary replacement of some very old press equipment. **DONALD GRAHAM**, publisher of The Post and chairman of The Washington Post Co. said that "some of the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Clurman outlined the reasons presented to The Washington Post Company Board of Directors. "There are five key elements answering the question of why we should replace the presses. First is mechanical obsolescence. Although theoretically, we could make them run forever, the presses are wearing out. They are 'crankier,' more unreliable, more expensive to run and maintain."

"The second element," Clurman continued, "is there are more inherently poor printing characteristics with a letterpress than there are with off-set." In a word, dots. The letterpress technology requires the raised images on plates being printed—images created by thousands of ink dots—to be literally mashed against the newsprint. Offset technology, using lithography, produces smooth images that contain more ink dots per inch. Offset plates transfer the image to the blanket cylinder and, since they never touch the newsprint directly, the resulting images are crisper, with more detail. "Because we have to use different technologies," Clurman said, "we have to make up all of our specifications to the lowest common denominator. We can't even take full advantage of the offset presses we have now in Springfield." Why replace the relatively new presses in Springfield? Clurman said the new presses will produce a new page length, consistent with the size now used at most other large newspapers printing offset. When the Mitsubishi presses are installed, he said, "Our cutoff page length will change from 23-9/16 inches to 22 inches, which will save us millions of dollars in newsprint costs each year. We could not realize these savings without replacing the Springfield Plant presses."

"We now have three generations of presses," said Northwest Plant Manager **BOB McLANE**, "the 'Truman Ad-



ministration' presses and others nearly that old in Northwest, the presses in the Southeast Plant that we purchased from the Washington Star when it closed and the four presses at Springfield. Even there we have different types." One Springfield press is a TKS, and the others are Goss. "Now we have to ask, 'Can this run on every press we have?'" McLane added. "With the new presses, those issues will be gone. It will be great!"

A third factor in the press purchase decision is more and better color reproduction. "In assessing this issue, all of our research suggests that color is not as important to readers or advertisers as we intuitively think it is," Clurman said. "But,

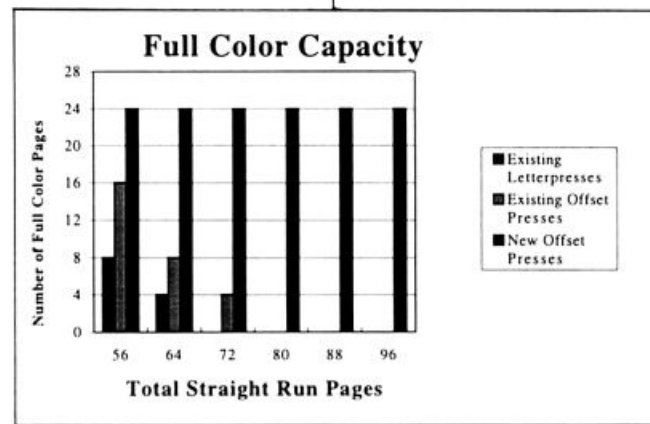
as I heard Mrs. Graham [Chairman of The Washington Post-Co. Executive Committee **KATHARINE GRAHAM**] say many times, 'You don't need research to know color is an important part of the future.'"

"When the new presses are installed, "We'll be able to run 16 consecutive color pages at night rather than early run," said **HUGH PRICE**, manager of Production planning and operations research. "Also, black and white reproduction will be improved enormously."

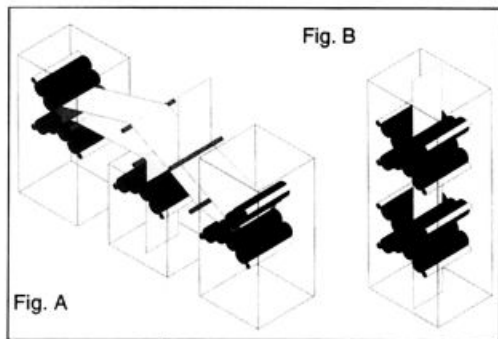
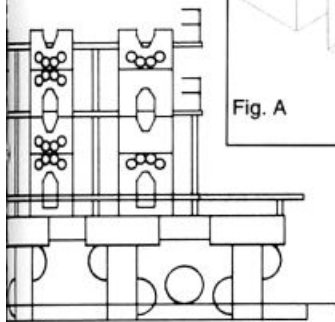
Publisher Graham said, "Our production and maintenance people will have new, high-quality machines that will allow them to display better the excellence of their work." The

location of the printing cylinders allows four-color printing as the web goes up through the four-unit tower and will improve color registration dramatically. Production Special Projects manager **RODDY MacPHERSON** added, "For the first time in 25 years, we will have the same press configuration and the same press for every newspaper produced by The Washington Post." The current system of designing press runs might be compared to assembling a giant jigsaw puzzle with pieces that don't quite fit anymore. The new presses will still be a jigsaw puzzle but shiny, new and compatible.

The improved color reproduction and color page capacity is extremely important to News. "We are really, really excited in the Newsroom," Downie said. "We look forward to being able to utilize these new presses to print both color photos and graphics to increase the impact of our journalism, and we look forward to being able to organize the paper in an easier-to-use, predictable way for readers so that all of our features are easier to



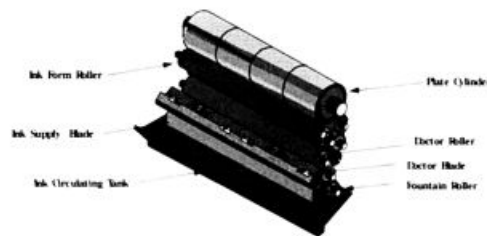
A dramatic increase in four-color straight-run printing capacity is a feature of the new presses that should please both readers and advertisers.



(Fig. A): Current offset web printing requires threading through multiple printing units at various points on the press.

(Fig. B): The new presses are configured in a tower, approximately 22 ft. high; each tower contains four printing units. Newsprint webs will be fed vertically through the tower, and each side of the page is printed simultaneously as it passes through the tower.

In keyless inking (system diagram below), only the ink required is transferred to the web; the excess is scraped off with a blade. In letterpress printing, all ink is transferred to the web.



Mitsubishi - Keyless

The large diagram (page 2 and above) is the layout of The Post's future Mitsubishi presses.

find. I think the readers of the paper are going to love what they get from these presses."

No. 4 on the list is zoning capability. "The difference between straight press runs and our current collect runs will make zoning much more practical," Clurman said. The new presses will have two-arm adjustable reels, allowing paper rolls of different sizes to be loaded during the press run. Clurman explained, "We'll be able to have two different-sized rolls on the press at one time on one reel."

Finally, but maybe most importantly, "booking" was a key issue in the new press decision. Clurman said, "We will have the ability to independently make the section sizes anything we want. We could make the 'A' section as big as 48 pages—which is vitally important to our advertisers, he added. "Wholesale, multiple jumping of Classified advertising from section to section in the Sunday paper will go away."

"The 96-page straight run configuration will allow much more stability in newspaper

section placement," MacPherson said. A graph showing the increased color capacity is at the bottom of page 2.

The entire project of choosing the new plant site and new presses was long, arduous and meticulous.

"I think it's important to say how grateful we are," Downie said, "to Mike for his leadership in his area. This is a well-considered decision." Clurman expressed his appreciation for his team, an indefatigable group assigned to search out the very best presses for The Post. The teams totaled more than 30 Circulation, Systems & Engineering, Production and News staffers, as well as the project architect/engineer, an outside consultant. After the presses had been chosen, legal counsel **JANE GENSTER** worked countless hours, including more than 36 consecutive hours, finalizing the complex contract with Mitsubishi.

Teams for the new presses/new plant projects will include project manager **KELLY BENSON** and **CHUCK RHOADS** for the new Maryland Plant and **JENNY RYMARCSUK** heading the project at the Springfield plant.

Clurman cited "**BILL GARD** and the Production Engineering group," who, he said, "have been and continue to be an integral part of the project planning."

New presses and new color availability may change The Post's "look" but not its editorial content. "For this market," Downie said, "people define a quality newspaper as The Washington Post, and The Post they hold in their hand is mainly black and white. Some were afraid that we would have to change, that the journalism would be of less high quality or that to pay for the new presses we would have to cut down on something. I think those concerns will be allayed with the very first issue.

What they will see is the same Washington Post—but with color. It will make their reading experience richer, and then their definition of a high quality newspaper in our area will be a color and black-and-white Washington Post."

Clurman, a 24-year veteran of The Post who started his ca-

reer in the Composing Room, was asked if he'd miss the cranky, old Northwest Plant presses. He replied, "Walking into the building every day past the presses is something I really like. I do think people will miss that more than they know. I've been to newspapers all over the world. When you come in the door, there's that same smell that only newspapers have. It's an instant connection wherever you are. I'll miss that."



RODDY MacPHERSON, Production special projects manager (left) and Vice President/Production **MIKE CLURMAN** with one of the "Truman Administration" presses.

POST SCRIPTS

A REAL LIFESAVER

Participants in Super Sale, The Post's annual fundraiser to benefit breast cancer research, come away with more than great bargains purchased for a good cause. Every shopper also receives an instruction card, designed to be hung in the shower, diagramming breast self-examination. Last week, White House staffer Kate Clark called from First Lady Hillary Clinton's office to say a young woman, following the printed examination instructions on one of The Post's shower cards, had detected a lump in her breast. The woman called The White House to credit The Post and to tell Mrs. Clinton that early detection of the lump, which was malignant, had "given me my life back."

Public Relations Director **VIRGINIA RODRIGUEZ** said, "Every Post volunteer should feel good about their work at Super Sale. This is what it's all about."

Do it yourself

MONTHLY BREAST SELF-EXAM



1. IN THE SHOWER

Raise arm and start below collar bone. Fingers flat, glide over every part of breast, including underarm area. Feel for nodules, lumps, thickening, or any changes. Use left hand to check right breast, and right hand to check left breast.



2. BEFORE A MIRROR

Look at your breasts and nipples for changes in size, shape, skin texture, or color. Look for ridges, dimpling, or puckering. Use several poses: 1) arms at your sides, 2) arms in the air, 3) leaning forward while pressing hands on waist to flex chest muscles.



3. LYING DOWN

Put pillow under right shoulder and place right hand behind head. With fingers flat, press left hand gently in small circular motions over entire breast. Then move fingers in up-and-down rows.



4. NIPPLE EXAM

Place fingers on nipple and press. Gently squeeze nipple. Check for any discharge.



Examine your breasts each month after your period. If you notice any unusual changes, report them to a physician.

The Washington Post

We Proudly Serve The Community

The Post distributes this breast self-examination card to every Super Sale attendee and, in an arrangement with Giant Food, distributed the shower cards last fall at that company's supermarkets.

Shower cards are available for all employees. Stop by the Public Relations department or call x7969 for a free, potentially lifesaving, shower card.

POSTPONEMENT

THE
EUGENE
MEYER
Awards

The Eugene Meyer Awards ceremony, scheduled for Monday, June 5, has been postponed and is rescheduled for Monday, October 2.

REC ASSOCIATION

The two-for-one sale continues at the Rec Store, open Wednesdays, 12:30 - 3 p.m. Look for featured items each week. Currently on sale: Silverplated bud vases, two for \$10; silverplated tankards, two for \$7; men's silk-blend neckties, two for \$25. New items include navy/green and navy/red duffel bags, \$24; zippered tote bags, \$20; toddler-size baseball caps, \$6.50, and several new styles in adult-size baseball caps, \$7 - \$9.

MARKETPLACE

FREE—Moving boxes, many sizes. Come and get them. Call Lance, x5045 or (301) 652-3324.

FOR SALE—Looking to upgrade your modem from 2400 bps? Zoon 9600 bps external modem, comes with serial cable, phone cord, power supply. \$50. Call Kevin, x4297 or (301) 681-8170.

HOUSECLEANING—My dependable cleaning lady is looking for work; drives. Call Cindy, x5072 or (202) 686-6156 (evenings).

MOVING SALE—Sofa bed, off-white roll-out, \$150; full-size bed, mattress, box springs, frame in good condition, \$100. Call Laurie, x6125 or (703) 931-8976.

FOR SALE—1987 Plymouth Turismo, 85K miles, new clutch, new timing belt, great second car. \$2,000. Call Aaron, x7652, 5 p.m. - midnight, or (703) 534-0419.

HOUSECLEANING—My good, reliable housecleaner has openings for half-day or full-day cleanings. Has own car. Call Sandy at x3013 or 7232, or at home at (703) 538-2783.

FOR SALE—NordicWalker less than six months old. Includes heart rate monitor to ensure you're working to your peak! Perfect condition. \$570. Call Jeannette, x7695 or (301) 587-6988.

FOR RENT—Beautiful, one-bedroom loft condo on top floor of restored brownstone. Only blocks from Dupont Circle. Large deck with trellis, brick fireplace, built-in bookshelves and desk, walk-in closet, wall-to-wall carpeting, long galley kitchen with gas stove, dishwasher, washer/dryer, CAC, original stained glass around front window. Call Tony Reid, x7297 or (202) 483-8559.

FOR SALE—Daybed frame only, good for two regular twin bed mattresses, only six months old. \$150. Call x7703, leave message for DeLap or TTY (301) 493-6610.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED—If you live in Charles, Anne Arundel, Howard or Loudoun counties, the Preprints department needs your help. We need volunteers to send us their junk mail for sales leads. You could win a \$100 gift certificate. Call x5132, or (202) 291-6852.

BLACK ANGUS ORGANIC BEEF—Wholesale prices, by the side or can be split. Available late May, early June. Cut to specifications; frozen in vacuum packages. Same price as last five years: \$1.99/lb. hanging weight, which works out to about \$2.40/lb. for steaks, roasts and hamburgers—lower than supermarket prices for non-organic beef. Call Paul Hodge, (703) 554-8624.

HOUSE TO SHARE—Three-bedroom house in upper Northwest D.C., private bath. Living room, dining room/TV room, large kitchen, large back yard. Close to Metro. \$700/month. Call (202) 333-8321.

WATERFRONT GETAWAY—Can't afford a summer/weekend house of your own? How about a room in mine? Charming, three-bedroom, two-bath house on Broadwater Creek and the Chesapeake Bay. Large deck, private pier, 2-5 ft. of water with immediate Bay access, swimming area, great crabbing. Five minutes from Deale, Herrington Harbour or Galesville, 50 minutes from The Post. \$360/mo. Available immediately. Call evenings, (301) 261-9226.

MARKETPLACE DEADLINE: Noon Fridays. Please include your name, extension and home phone number. **ADS ARE FOR POST EMPLOYEES ONLY.** Send ads to Shop Talk, 7th floor, or call x6803. To send ads via fax dial x5609; via e-mail send to shoptalk. Ads run two issues unless otherwise requested. One ad per employee, please.

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