Press Freedom with Press Accountability: Indonesian Experience

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Abstract
Freedom of the press is another side of press accountability. The press must obey the ethics of the press profession regulated by the press organization. Meanwhile, journalistic work is within the corridor of laws and regulations governing the press. On the one hand, the press works in the spirit of freedom, on the other hand, the press also demands accountability. This study shows that the Indonesian press was free after the end of the Soeharto Authoritarian Government. However, the gift of press freedom was also faced with various violations of the ethics of the press profession, which led to legal problems. The researcher used a normative legal research methodology. This study uses a normative research methodology. This study concludes that in addition to "freedom of the press", journalistic work is also required to obey the ethics of the journalistic profession regulated by the press organization.

Keywords :
freedom of the press; press ethics; journalist; media

1. Introduction

Freedom of the press is a fundamental right in the life of society and state in today's democracy, so it is stated that "The Press is the Fourth Pillar of Democracy". The press as the fourth pillar of democracy was initiated by Edmund Burke in the late 18th century, that the press has political power equal to the other three pillars of power in the UK, namely *Lord*, *Church*, and *Commons*.[1] For the modern era, the media has a role to complement the existing pillars of democracy (executive, legislative and judiciary) as a supervisory institution, defender, and enforcer of democracy.[2]

[1] Denis McQuail, *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory* , Fifth (London: SAGE Publication, 2005), http://docshare04.docshare.tips/files/28943/289430369.pdf.

[2] Arak Saati, "The Fourth Estate? The Experiences of Cape Verdean Journalists," *Island Studies Journal* 19, no. 1 (2024): 1–18, https://doi.org/10.24043/001c.88131.

Freedom of the press is internationally recognized as a fundamental right for every citizen in every country as stated in the 1948 United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.[3] The first sentence of the preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,1 adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 1948 as Resolution 217A, states: "*Recalling that recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world*." This includes the right to seek information and ideas through any media. This is a very important statement for the press and media because it makes it clear that newspapers, radio, television and the internet are all included in this right.

Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) ratified by Law Number 12 of 2005 concerning the Ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, outlines several provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The article states: 1. Everyone has the right to hold opinions without interference. 2. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression; this right includes freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.

The fundamental pillar in this journalistic practice is independence. Independence should be the main key for journalists to have ethics, which are not under the control or influence of interest groups, businesses, political parties or the government. [4]However, in the practice of journalists in making news that refers to ethics and norms, there can still be distortion in the information presented. Moreover, if it is associated with the increasingly sharp clash between the interests of the press and the interests of the press business, then the issue of independence is threatened to no longer be able to be neutral, objective, and critical in carrying out journalistic duties. If so, the media is no longer responsible to the public as stakeholders, but completely follows the wishes of its owner.

Such a situation is very dangerous because the media is badly edited. Moreover, currently the public complains about media content or broadcasts that are too vulgar, bombastic, and sensational. In addition, editorial policies are oriented towards how to gain maximum profit without paying attention to ethical and legal norms that should be used as a reference. For example, rating orientation (advertising) makes the media compete to present mystical, supernatural, pornographic, sadistic, and other things that attract the interest of readers or viewers.

[3] Justine Limpitlaw, *The Role of the Media in Society Generally* , *Media Law Handbook for Southern Africa* , vol. 1, 2021.

[4] Eric Wishart, "Journalism Ethics," in *21 Essentials from Wars to Artificial Intelligence* (Hong Kong University Press, 2024), 33–43, https://doi.org/doi:10.1515/9789888842568-007.

Based on complaint data collected by the Press Council, there has been a very significant increase in the number of public complaints to the Press Council regarding news that is considered detrimental to other parties. In 2022, the number of complaints against news was 691 cases, this number increased sharply to 813 cases in 2023. Of the total number mentioned, it turns out that more than 90 percent of the total complaints came from cyber/digital media reporting.[5] The 90 percent increase in cases apparently came from cyber media, which is large in number and difficult to control.

Professionalism is the main pillar of journalism. Journalists who behave professionally carry out values by combining public service missions with objective ideas, accuracy (validity), and fairness.[6] Although the press has referred to ethical and legal norms and has been independent, it does not necessarily meet the requirements as a healthy and professional press. Based on practical experience, there is often distortion of information presented even though it has been packaged in accordance with ethical norms, legal norms, and editorial independence. It turns out that the skill factor or ability to package professionally is very important and determines whether the information presented can be digested and accepted by the audience clearly and is not contaminated by the opinions of news makers.

The press cannot be denied in realizing freedom of speech and the right to communicate. The strong relationship between freedom of the press and freedom of thought is described as the destruction of freedom of the press, which implies the destruction of freedom of speech.[7] Freedom of the press refers to the freedom to convey information impartially. The impartiality of the press is very important because if the press takes sides, the first victim is the public. Therefore, freedom of the press is then limited by professional ethics, laws, and regulations governing the press. This regulation of the press is a phenomenon that exists in almost every country, including countries that glorify individual freedom, such as England through the Licensing Art of 1662.[8] Regulations related to the press in the country are also stipulated through laws that do not specifically regulate the press, such as the Defamation Act of 1952.

The press has become very important for the development of democracy as an instrument for implementing freedom of speech. Because of the importance of the role of the press, the press is placed in a noble position, namely as the fourth pillar of democracy.

[5] Press Council, "Complaints Increase," *Ethics Bulletin* (Jakarta, 2024).

[6] Will Mari, "An Enduring Ethos: Journalism Textbooks and Public Service," *Journalism Practice* 9, no. 5 (2015): 687–703, https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2014.972078.

[7] Alexis De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* , ed. Alan Ryan, *Everyman's Library* (London: Everyman's Library, 1994).

[8] ECS Wade and G Godfrey Phillips, "Constitutional Law, an Outline of the Law and the Constitution, Including Central and Local Government and the Constitutional Relations of the British Commonwealth" (London: Longmans, Green and Co, fith edition, 1957).

The importance of the press was described by a journalist who wrote that "Journalism is present for democracy".[9] The role of the press is shown through its function of providing government activities and thoughts that develop in society about a policy or government activity that affects public life in general. The role of the press is again described as "journalism is present to fulfill the rights of citizens."

Ethics is understood as a system of principles, morality, or professional code of conduct related to issues of good or bad values, which develop according to culture and society.[10] Professional ethics relate to the accountability of the implementation of a profession, which is generally carried out by professional organizations or institutions. Since the 1980s, the term social responsibility theory in mass communication has been known as part of the development of classical press theory known as the Four Theories of the Press.[11] This new theory recognizes the role of mass communication as a tool of social control and public order.[12]

Immanuel Kant[13] also put forward an important view on professional ethics. According to him, professional ethics related to what should be done or professional ethics are something that has imperative value. Therefore, Kant stated that the code of ethics and morals must come from the conscious mind and apply universally to all social environments at all ages.[14] In the context of the journalism profession, the ethics of the press profession are closely related to the standardization of the journalism profession and the credibility of the media. Compliance with the ethics of the press profession can make journalists widely aware of their honesty in presenting news. By following professional ethics, journalists use professional techniques to obtain news and consider whether a news story has been published. Professional journalists must consider aspects of fair and balanced news writing.

According to Ishwara,[15] there are three categories of responsibility that can be applied to the press, including: First, responsibility related to assignments (assigned *responsibility*), in this context, the press is not free. It must work based on assignments from superiors, not because of voluntary principles, because the editor who gave the assignment will ask for accountability from the journalist. Second, contractual responsibility. society promises the press freedom to carry out its duties based on the assumption that the press will serve the

[9] Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, *The Elements of Journalism, Revised and Updated 4th Edition: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect* (Crown, 2021).

[10] C Fink, "Conrad. Media in the Newsroom and Beyond" (New York: McGraw-Hills Series, 1988).

[11] Kusumaningrat Hikmat and Kusumaningrat Purnama, "Journalism Theory & Practice" (Bandung: Rosdakarya, 2005).

[12] William L Rivers, *Mass Media and Modern Society* (Prenadamedia Group, 2004).

[13] Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* , ed. Mary Gregor, *Cambridge University Press* , 11th ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315849201-22.

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] Luwi Ishwara, *Basic Journalism Notes* , vol. 1 (Kompas Book Publisher, 2005).

public's need for information and opinion. Third, self-imposed responsibility, the work of a journalist is more of a calling than just a matter of survival.

Compliance with professional ethics will be reflected through journalistic work that is based on the principle of freedom and responsibility. The principle of freedom in journalistic work also applies to the freedom of journalists. The principle of press freedom can be practically expressed in professional journalistic work, with two prerequisites. First, the nature of journalists' work requires special training. Second, the norms that regulate journalists' behavior are focused on the interests of their readers.

To achieve professional journalistic work, journalists must comply with the following two norms simultaneously as guidelines for their work. First, technical norms revolve around gathering news quickly and accurately through writing and editing skills. Second, ethical norms revolve around the obligation of readers to account for the work of journalists with an attitude of impartiality, care, fairness, and objectivity. Professional journalistic work must be recognized as time-consuming work so that journalists are ideally considered professional and ethical.

In line with journalistic professionalism, the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression implies that recognition of freedom of expression is a basic right of every citizen.[16]The provisions in the constitution indicate the importance of guaranteeing freedom of expression both verbally and in writing. Freedom of opinion itself has broad aspects because it is not limited to expressing opinions verbally or in writing, but also the right to communicate, both receiving and conveying thoughts, criticisms, and differences of opinion.[17]

Many studies related to press freedom and social responsibility in Indonesia have been conducted, such as the study conducted by Gautama and Purwanto[18] analyzing the regulation of press restrictions and their legal consequences in the dissemination of information in Indonesia. Kaligis'[19] study focuses on the social responsibility of Television of the Republic of Indonesia (TVRI) amidst the onslaught of private television and online media. Likewise, the study of press freedom after the reformation was also discussed by

[16] L Henkin, *Human Rights*, Human Rights/by Louis Henkin. (Foundation Press, 1999), https://books.google.co.id/books?id=SplkQgAACAAJ.

[17] Todung Mulya Lubis, *In Search of Human Rights: Legal-Political Dilemmas of Indonesia's New Order, 1966-1990* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 1993).

[18] I Dewa Gede Agung Mahendra Gautama and I Wayan Novy Purwanto, "Regulation of Restrictions on Press Freedom in the Dissemination of Information in Indonesia," *Kertha Semaya: Journal of Legal Studies* 8, no. 10 (2020): 1618, https://doi.org/10.24843/ks.2020.v08.i10.p12.

[19] Rhetor Aquinaldo Wirabuanaputera Kaligis, Nada Sofiyani, and Cindy Clara, "Implementation of the Mission of the Republic of Indonesia Television: Between Social Responsibility and Media Competition," *Journal of Journalism Studies* 5, no. 1 (2021): 64, https://doi.org/10.24198/jkj.v5i1.31893.

Suwarman and Wardhani.[20] Meanwhile, Hijriani and Nur[21] analyzed the polemic of press freedom and journalists' responsibility for online media reporting and highlighted journalistic ethics in the online world environment. However, the studies that have been conducted have not comprehensively highlighted the development of press freedom and the enforcement of professional ethics from time to time. This study offers the development of press freedom and the enforcement of journalistic professional ethics seen from a historical perspective, which will differentiate the policies of each government regime in making policies related to the press.

2. Research Methods

Legal research is "the process of discovering the laws that govern activities in human society". Legal research involves the use of a variety of print and electronic sources. Print sources include court decisions, statutes, administrative documents, and scholarly commentaries. Electronic sources are obtained from computer databases.[22] This research is based on a study of laws and regulations, government policies and their implementation related to the field of journalism as well as perceptions among journalists and journalist professional organizations, the press industry, communication and legal experts, and government circles.

This type of research is normative legal research. This research uses a descriptive-qualitative approach by collecting and studying a number of written materials or documents. The materials processed are obtained through literature in the form of laws and regulations, program policies, books and articles, newspaper clippings, and other secondary data related to this research. Normative legal research is based on the problems studied and the selection of data sources. As understood in legal literature, this method examines legal norms contained in laws and court decisions. Literature research is conducted to obtain data from primary, secondary, and tertiary legal materials, such as concepts, legal methods, and laws and regulations.[23]

There are two major categories of legal literature: a) primary legal materials and b) secondary legal materials. Primary legal sources are written rules enforced by the state, such as Law Number 11 of 1966 concerning the Press, Law Number 21 of 1982 concerning the Main Provisions of the Press, Law Number 40 of 1999 concerning the Press, the United

[20] Untung Sumarwan and Lita Tyesta Addy Listya Wardhani, "The Manifestation of Pancasila Values in Post-Reform Press Freedom in Indonesia," *Journal of Indonesian Legal Development* 5, no. 3 (2023): 484–509, https://ejournal2.undip.ac.id/index.php/jphi/article/view/18118.

[21] Hijriani and Muhammad Nadzirin Anshari Nur, "Press Freedom, Responsibility and Journalistic Ethics in a Competitive Online Media Environment," *Journal of Indonesian Legal Development* 6, no. 2 (2024).

[22] Morris L Cohen and Kent C Olson, "Legal Research," *St. Paul, Minnesota: West Publishing Company* , 1992.

[23] Soerjono Soekanto and Sri Mamudji, *Normative Legal Research: A Brief Review* , *Rajawali Pers, Jakarta* , 2014.

Nations Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966, and the Press Code of Ethics.

Secondary materials include agreements, manuals, practice manuals, and legal writings in law journals. Secondary sources can help analyze problems and provide research references for primary sources and other secondary materials related to press freedom and social responsibility. Data analysis was carried out using descriptive analysis techniques that aim to collect facts accompanied by data interpretation. The data obtained will be processed qualitatively from literature studies and analyzed using a normative legal approach, to be presented in descriptive form to obtain conclusions.

3. Literature Review

The responsibility of the press is one of the fundamental principles in the world of journalism and mass media. The press has a very important role in providing information, shaping public opinion, and maintaining the course of democracy. As the fourth pillar of democracy, the press is required not only to convey news, but also to do so with high ethics, professionalism, and responsibility. Overall, the theory of journalistic responsibility covers broad ethical aspects and obligations that must be applied in the work of a journalist. On the side of social responsibility, the press not only maintains the final product in the form of accurate and unbiased reports, but also the existence of other ethical factors, such as the product of the relationship with readers, the source of ideas, and its direct influence on society.

In the context of communication theory, the responsibility of the press is often explained through the theory of social responsibility as outlined by Peterson in his book "*Four Theories of the Press* ", that the press is not only free to convey information, but the press has an obligation to ensure that the information conveyed is correct, useful, and does not harm the community.[24] The social responsibility of the press cannot be separated from the existence of journalism ethics in carrying it out, as stated by Ward [25]that journalism ethics is defined as a form of ethics applied to their role in society including independent editorials, accuracy and verification of data, anonymous sources, use of graphic or modified images, and norms for new media forms.

[24] Fred S Siebert, Theodore Peterson, and Wilbur Schramm, *Four Theories of the Press* (University of Illinois Press, 1984), https://doi.org/10.5406/j.ctv1nhr0v.

[25] Stephen Ward, *Journalism Ethics. In The Handbook of Journalism Studies* , ed. Wahl-Jorgensen Karin and Thomas Hanitzsch (London: Routledge, 2008).

The press has a responsibility to serve the public interest and to carry out its duties with integrity, openness, and honesty. According to Craft,[26] ethics help define the professional status of the press, where commitment to truth and the need to reveal the truth and transparency are important principles of various journalistic works. The press must have a commitment to speak the truth and convey it objectively and have accuracy in whatever they report.[27] For this reason, the press is required to not only carry the news, but to do so in a way that pays attention to the rights and confidentiality of each individual in carrying out their duties.[28]

Media ownership and advertising are ethical challenges faced by the press today, external influences can interfere with the objectivity of reporting. Research conducted by Uzima[29] that the influence of advertising (advertorial practices) can interfere with objectivity and damage editorial integrity. The study conducted by Spence[30] discusses the conflict between government secrecy and the public's right to know information, this makes the press's task complex and a dilemma in the context of gaining freedom of information. Thus, the press still has a responsibility to protect government sources with secrecy, but it is important for the public to know the information, these two things are significant ethical challenges.[31]

The development of technology and subsequent digitalization also pose new challenges faced by journalists in carrying out their duties. For this reason, the Press needs to adapt to new norms and practices in reporting news, the digitalization of information has changed the way journalists work and their relationships with news sources and audiences.[32] The press must remain governed by their professional code of ethics regarding

[26] Stephanie Craft, "Distinguishing Features: Reconsidering the Link Between Journalism's Professional Status and Ethics," *Journalism & Communication Monographs* 19, no. 4 (November 2017): 260–301, https://doi.org/10.1177/1522637917734213.

[27] Dan Berkowitz., Yehiel Limor., and Jane Singer., "A Cross-Cultural Look at Serving the Public Interest," *Journalism* 5, no. 2 (January 2004): 159–81, https://doi.org/10.1177/146488490452001.

[28] Omar Al-Zoubi, Normahfuzah Ahmad, and Norsiah Abdul Hamid, "Artificial Intelligence in Newsrooms: Ethical Challenges Facing Journalists," *Studies in Media and Communication* 12, no. 1 (2023): 401–9, https://doi.org/10.11114/smc.v12i1.6587.

[29] Innocent Bora Uzima, "Advertising and Journalistic Objectivity: An Issue of Ethics in Africa's Media in a Case of the Democratic Republic of Congo," *Advances in Journalism and Communication* 12, no. 01 (2024): 73–91, https://doi.org/10.4236/ajc.2024.121004.

[30] Edward H Spence, "Government Secrecy, the Ethics of Wikileaks, and the Fifth Estate," *The International Review of Information Ethics* 17 (2012): 37–45, https://doi.org/10.29173/irie214.

[31] Linda Bīriņa, "PROTECTION OF JOURNALISTS ' S INFORMATION SOURCES – RIGHT OR DUTY?," *TIESĪBAS UN TIESISKĀ VIDE MAINĪGOS APSTĀKĻOS* , no. 30002 (2012): 88–96.

[32] Andi Fadli, "Journalists' Ethics and Responsibilities (A Study of Hoax News Reporting Through Online Media in Makassar City)," *Jurnalisa Journal* 4, no. 2 (2018): 181–95, https://doi.org/10.24252/jurnalisa.v4i2.6893.

compliance standards and ideal practices, despite the pressure of performance to produce news quickly and interestingly.[33]

Another thing to note is the role of education and training. Education can influence the ethical decision-making stage of journalists, so that good training can influence the level of journalists' activeness in forming ethical awareness and professional responsibility. In a democratic country, the existence of press freedom is never guaranteed when faced with the commercialization of the media industry, it is important to educate a journalist to achieve professional standards and uphold high ethical standards.[34] The development of a curriculum that focuses on journalistic ethics is important in preparing prospective journalists to work.

The theory of press responsibility encompasses a very broad ethical perspective that journalists must consider when carrying out their duties. The obligation to provide services to the public, maintain integrity in reporting, adapt to changes in society and technology are some of the key aspects that shape ethically responsible journalistic practices. Therefore, ethics education and training for journalists are important as provisions in carrying out their duties.

4. Discussion

4.1. Development of Press Freedom in Indonesia

Freedom of the press to seek and convey information is protected by the constitution in many countries, including Indonesia. Freedom of the press is framed as the freedom to express thoughts and opinions as stated in the 1945 Constitution. In relation to the spirit of press independence as a manifestation of people's sovereignty and a basic element in community, national and state life, the Republic of Indonesia Law Number 40 of 1999 concerning the Press (Press Law) was established. Article 3 Paragraph (1) of the Press Law explains that the press functions as a medium for information, education, entertainment and social control.

The National Press as a medium for mass communication, information dissemination, and opinion formation must be able to carry out its principles, functions, rights, obligations, and roles as well as possible based on professional press independence, so that it must receive legal guarantees and protection, and be free from interference and coercion from anywhere. The press as a social institution is also not free from the inevitability of

[33] Muhammad Yoserizal Saragih, "Ethics of Journalistic Communication in Conducting Investigations for Public Information," *Cognizance Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies* 3, no. 6 (2023): 80–86, https://doi.org/10.47760/cognizance.2023.v03i06.005.

[34] Jan Servaes, "Beyond Modernization and the Four Theories of the Press," *Internationalizing International Communication* , 2014, 66–89, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv65sxh2.6.

reorganizing its role in the post-reform era as an antithesis to the limitations of work in the previous era.

Political reforms carried out after the end of Soeharto's authoritarian rule in 1998 have brought significant progress in press freedom in Indonesia. Press freedom is part of freedom of speech as guaranteed in the 1945 Constitution. President BJ Habibie as Soeharto's successor helped develop the press and press freedom through various government regulations and policies. The development of press freedom also demands strengthening press accountability amidst the euphoria of freedom due to the soaring number of press publications. Press accountability through its ethics and regulations is another side of press freedom itself.

After the 1998 Political Reform, the Press experienced development with the increasing proliferation of media companies and in the form of press freedom guaranteed by the 1945 Constitution and laws and regulations. Journalists lived in an atmosphere of euphoria. The press seemed to be free from Soeharto's authoritarian power. The development of the press was not followed by a strengthening of compliance with press ethics.

Due to the rapid development of the press after the 1998 Political Reform, journalists must educate their members to obey the journalistic code of ethics. In addition to being made by professional organizations, groups of professional organizations, or groups of professional organizations, press publishers also create a press code of ethics. The substance of the journalistic code of ethics made by press publishing companies is not much different from the press code of ethics made by press organizations. However, in practice, journalists understand and obey the journalistic code of ethics made by press publishing companies better. Sanctions for violators of the company's code of ethics vary widely, from transfer to a non-editorial desk to suspension and permanent dismissal. There are even indications that violations of professional ethics are a form of journalists' ignorance of the press code of ethics made by press organizations or the rules on the press code of ethics regulated in the 1999 Press Law. The Indonesian Press Council noted that around 70 percent of Indonesian journalists do not understand the journalistic code of ethics.[35]

One form of violation of press ethics that often occurs is when the news delivered is not balanced *(cover both sides)* or without cross-checking (*check and check). Recheck* with the parties concerned with the news. Therefore, if interests are violated due to a news item, legal problems will arise, such as defamation. The settlement of legal channels for a news item is

[35] Muhammad Zulfikar, "Press Council Says Journalists' Understanding of Code of Ethics is Still Low," ANTARA, 2022, https://www.antaranews.com/berita/2693289/dewan-pers-sebut-pemahaman-wartawan-terhadap-kode-etik-masih-rendah#:~:text=%22Don't be tempted by the speed of social media, said the General Chairperson of LKBN ANTARA.&text=Tags:,journalistic code of ethics.

considered a detrimental signal that the resolution of *violations* of professional ethics does not satisfy the public. This last fact has become a phenomenon of press life in Indonesia since 1999, where entering 2002, press life was cynically said to have exceeded the limits of press freedom itself. The indications are diverse, namely from writing news that is considered provocative to the practice of blackmailing journalists who are nicknamed journalists without media.

Another problem in press reporting is balanced reporting and protection of sources. Currently, information media such as entertainment information often enters the personal realm. The results of complaints recorded by the Press Council in 2023 reached 813 cases, if presented as much as 60 percent from unprofessional media and the rest from professional media, namely 40 percent.[36] The types of violations reported were *hoax news*, sexual provocation, no information testing, no verification of news sources, and not using valid sources.[37] There are still dirty practices that can pollute the role of the press as the fourth pillar of democracy, which in fact are mostly carried out by unprofessional media. This development is not beneficial because it lowers the value of journalists, balanced news can maintain the independence of the press.

The phenomenon of violations of press professional ethics that have so far resulted in lawsuits is the antithesis of press freedom that has been fought for by press figures and human rights activists. A press observer considers violations of professional ethics as a form of anomaly in the practice of press freedom as a signal of unequal interaction with the power of the press that has so far argued as inferiority of the public.[38] This picture is in contrast to the quality of news that is considered distorted by news corrections or the inclusion of the right of reply. Such conditions can trigger a sense of public distrust of "press arbitrariness" in journalistic work.

Based on the 2024 Press Freedom Index report, it shows that the Press Freedom Index is still in the "fairly free" category. However, press professionalism currently faces challenges, namely the press's dependence on groups that have funds and interests in the content of the news. Thus, this powerful group (fund owners) can influence the independence of the news. Current journalism practices still tend to be *commercial journalism* and have not become *public journalism.* Close relations with capital owners will provide commercial benefits rather than defending public interests.[39]

During the Soeharto era, government institutions and security forces were very strict in controlling journalistic life. Government control of the press began with the requirement

[36] Press Council, “Complaints Increase.”, Ethics Bulletin (Jakarta:2024)
[37] *Ibid* .
[38] Ali Novel, "Press Freedom in the SBY-Kalla Era," *Wacana Bulletin* , September 2004.
[39] Press Council, “Executive Summary Book: Press Freedom Index 2024 (In the Vortex of Consolidation of the 2024 Political Year),” *Press Council* (Jakarta, 2024).

to have a press publishing business license as stipulated in Law Number 11 of 1966 concerning the Press to the requirement to have a Press Publishing Business License as stipulated in Law Number 21 of 1982 concerning the Press as a replacement for Law Number 11 of 1966. The Ministry of Information controlled press freedom. Security forces could also terrorize news publications by directly summoning news editors through the "summon editor" mechanism. The practice of strict media censorship was said by human rights activist Mulya Lubis to be a loss of the right to freedom of speech guaranteed by the 1945 Constitution.[40] The absence of news censorship resulted in media bans. Media blocking due to news that criticized the government occurred in the weekly magazine Tempo Magazine and Tabloid Detik in 1994.

After the 1998 Political Reform, press freedom was better compared to the Soeharto era (1966-1998). Law Number 40 of 1999 no longer required the press to have a Press Publishing Business License for Mass Media (SIUPP). Press companies, like Limited Liability Companies, are legal entities. Article 4 paragraph (2) of the 1999 Press Law also guarantees that there will be no censorship, dissolution, or prohibition of broadcasting. Better regulations bring a breath of fresh air to the institutionalization of democracy, especially regarding access to information conveyed by the press.

The 1999 Press Law has provided a solid foundation for the realization of press freedom in Indonesia. However, in practice, press freedom has not been realized substantially due to the lack of appreciation of press personnel for their profession.[41] Many violations of journalistic ethics and professionalism are counterproductive to the essence of press freedom. Ironically, in the era of Political Reform in 1998, there were several incidents of occupation of press offices. Physical attacks on journalists show the low appreciation of the public for press freedom, which is also caused by the low appreciation of the press for its independence. People who are dissatisfied with a news report are encouraged to protest, clarify or correct the news report even though the public can respect their right to sue in court.

In the United States (US), journalists also go to trial because of news issues. For example, the New York Times versus Sullivan case reached the US Supreme Court.[42] The trial process shows that news issues can also reach the court and journalists are not immune from the law. However, there is also a positive side to the protection of press freedom in the punishment of journalists for writing news must be proven through the trial process. The US Supreme Court decision ultimately became a crucial jurisprudential milestone in press

[40] Lubis, *In Search of Human Rights: Legal-Political Dilemmas of Indonesia's New Order, 1966-1990* . (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 1993).

[41] Amir Syamsuddin, "Press Freedom and Legal Threats," *Suara Pembaruan Daily* , 2005, http://library.stik-ptik.ac.id/detail?id=24683&lokasi=lokal.

[42] Victor Menayang, "Protecting Public Interests, Defense of Press Freedom," *Kompas* , 2005.

freedom in the US. Before the 1964 case, the US Supreme Court had always allowed decisions in state courts that sometimes failed to protect the press under the constitution .[43]The decision became very important and was studied by all media students in the US because it significantly changed the position of the press in dealing with public officials and public figures.

The political reforms of 1998 also influenced the development of the Indonesian press. The changes and developments that emerged included a freer press, more balanced reporting, and a critical attitude of the public towards press reporting. Freedom of speech, which had been restricted, relatively improved after the fall of Soeharto.[44] Post-Soeharto, government officials were relatively free to report all events, news about corruption, collusion and nepotism among officials, as well as news about violence committed by those in power.[45]

This is different from journalistic practices before the 1998 Political Reform Era, especially during the New Order government which generally did not support the development of the press, including the national press . Including guarantees for freedom of opinion and freedom of expression . On the other hand, press freedom in the 1998 Political Reform Era has the potential to give rise to the dominance of a particular press, and there are differences in the meaning of press freedom itself. The press is also often sacrificed with threats of physical violence and lawsuits by parties who feel aggrieved by news reports without first using the "right of reply". Like two sides of the same coin, press freedom is also accompanied by the responsibility to respect the rights of others and complete its reporting with accurate facts, data, and evidence which are the main requirements for journalistic work. Thus, press freedom is very important to implement so as not to violate human rights or the principle of the presumption of innocence of news sources.

The openness of access to information that characterizes the current era has placed the press in an extraordinary role in presenting information from a business perspective and democratic development. In line with the demands of the development of the dynamics of national life, public and business interests must remain in the management of journalistic activities. So far, there has been no common perception of the press, idealism, and professionalism of the press. These differences have an impact on the way the press is run. Each has its own perception in interpreting press freedom. The government has its own

[43] Wayne Overbeck, *Major Principles of Media Law* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 2001), https://books.google.co.id/books?id=19yQAAAAMAAJ.

[44] Agus Purwanto, "Freedom of the Press in the Perspective of Human Rights and the Principle of the Presumption of Innocence: A Case Study of Tempo Magazine and the Jawa Pos Newspaper" (University of Indonesia, 2005), https://lib.ui.ac.id/detail?id=98559&lokasi=lokal.

[45] Metalianda, "Press Freedom in Legal Perspective in Indonesia," *The Juris* 1, no. 1 (2017): 71–86, http://ejurnal.stih-awanglong.ac.id/index.php/juris.

views that are different from those of the public and academics. Likewise, the press itself has a different understanding. These differences in meaning have an impact on different views on the need for the government's role in fostering the press and protecting the public's rights to press reporting.

Two basic things that are often forgotten by various parties are the definition of the press, journalists, and those referred to as press practitioners and journalists. Normatively, the definition of the press is contained in the provisions of Article 1 Number 1 of Law Number 40 of 1999. The provisions of Article 1 Number 1 state that the press is a social institution and a means of mass communication that carries out journalistic activities including seeking, obtaining, possessing, storing, managing, and conveying information, both in the form of writing, sound, images, data, and graphics or in other forms using print media, electronic media, and through any channel. The definition of journalism is contained in Article 1 Number 4 of Law Number 40 of 1999 which refers to the provisions of Article 1 Number 1. Article 1 Number 4 states that journalists regularly carry out journalistic activities.

The provisions of Article 1 Number 4, especially the phrase "carrying out journalistic activities" cannot be separated and must refer to the provisions of Article 1 Number 1, namely seeking, obtaining, possessing, storing, managing, and conveying information, whether in the form of writing, sound, images, data, and graphics, or in other forms using print media, electronic media, and all types of available channels. This definition distinguishes journalists from other professions and activities.

The reform era brought many shifts in the role of the press with a very large role that cannot be separated from the shift from an authoritarian to a democratic political format. Law enforcement against the life and development of the press no longer occurs as in the New Order era through Law Number 40 of 1999 concerning the Press, the press has again gained its crown of freedom. The importance of press freedom has been discussed in the sessions of the Investigative Body for Preparatory Efforts for Independence[46] Liem Koen Hian argued for the inclusion of press freedom in the draft provisions of Article 28 of the 1945 Constitution, arguing that “press freedom is necessary to combat the corruption of society and government.” Supomo rejected this idea, stating that Liem’s ideas were individualistic and liberal.[47]

The issue of press freedom has been a long journey since it was discussed in the sessions of the Investigative Committee for Preparatory Efforts for Independence. This press freedom has also experienced a period of "ups and downs" along with the spirit of democracy in Indonesia and the regulation of the press that has developed from one era to

[46] Wikrama Iryans Abidin, *Legal Politics of the Indonesian Press* (Jakarta: Gramedia Widiasarana Indonesia, 2005).
[47] *Ibid* .

another (Faculty of Law, University of Indonesia, 2004). The regulations made in the Dutch colonial era were often associated with the provisions of the articles on the spread of hatred (*hatzaai artikelen*) regulated in the Criminal Code (KUHP), press crimes were formulated as crimes committed with the press (*misdrijven door middle van de drukpers gepleegd)* and other press crimes were incitement, insults, or defamation committed with printed materials.[48]

The dark era of the press continued when the Guided Democracy era arrived, anti-press actions became stronger in the Soekarno era which received support from the Indonesian Communist Party and the Indonesian National Army. [49]Mahfud [50]said that there were 244 anti-press actions (detention, imprisonment, and banning) that took place from 1957 to 1965, not so with the press that supported or was a channel for political streams that accepted the guided democracy system along with the political concept of Nasakom (Nationalism, Religion, and Communism) and Manipol USDEK (Political Manifesto of the '45 Constitution, Indonesian Socialism, Guided Democracy, Guided Economy, and Indonesian Personality).

In the period leading up to the end of Guided Democracy, the Government issued Law Number 11 of 1966 concerning the Basic Provisions of the Press. However, the provisions in Law Number 11 of 1966 did not restore press freedom in its entirety, because the press was used as a tool of revolution through its function as "active, dynamic, creative, educational mass media, and fostering critical and progressive thinking in the lives of Indonesian society." Soekarno's progressive attitude was reflected in the softening towards the press at the end of his reign, namely with the freedom of the press guaranteed in Law Number 11 of 1966 due to the provisions on the absence of censorship and suppression of the press, as well as the absence of a permit for press publications.

The history of the journey of the Indonesian press later recorded that in implementing the spirit of press freedom, it was not uncommon to face legal proceedings when a writer or journalist was charged with the *Hatzaai Artikelen article* as regulated in the Dutch Colonial Criminal Code. For example, what happened during Sukarno's Old Order, namely the trial of the editor-in-chief of the daily Masyarakat Terompet in Surakarta on charges of violating Article 154 of the Criminal Code until the arrest of a number of figures in Jakarta. Two other examples that can be mentioned related to the shackles of press freedom that occurred during the New Order were the trial of the editor-in-chief of the Nusantara Daily and the banning of Tempo magazine. The editor-in-chief of the Nusantara Daily TD Hafas was tried on charges of spreading hatred against the authorities in 1971. Tempo magazine's Press

[48] Aziz Noor M, "Legal Assessment Report on Inventorying the Whole Scope of Issues in the Press Sector," *BPHN* (Jakarta, 2010), http://landing.adobe.com/en/sea/products/acrobat/69210-may-prospects.html?trackingid=KTKAA.

[49] Moh Mahfud, *Legal Politics in Indonesia* (Jakarta: Pustaka LP3ES Indonesia, 1998).

[50] *Ibid* .

Publishing Business License (SIUPP) was revoked in 1994 because it exposed corruption in the process of purchasing used East German warships.

The restrictions on the press during the New Order era were not much different from previous eras. The model of press freedom in the early New Order was only temporary, the authoritarian model with the banning of the press began to occur after the formation of a new political format in 1969.[51] Press regulations also changed in line with the development of political dynamics. The enactment of Law Number 21 of 1982 concerning Amendments to Law Number 11 of 1966 concerning the Main Provisions of the Press as Amended by Law 4 of 1967, did not immediately become a breath of fresh air for press freedom. The government is still the main actor in controlling press practices in Indonesia. This can be seen from the change in the wording of Law No. 11 of 1966 from "The Government together with the Press Council" to "The Government after hearing the considerations of the Press Council", the implication is that the Press Council is no longer an equal partner with the Government in fostering the national press, but as an element to provide considerations.

Law Number 21 of 1982 also revoked the provisions requiring an Emission Permit and the provisions requiring an Emission Permit (SIT) as regulated in the Regulation of the Minister of Information Number 03 of 1969. However, Law Number 21 of 1982 introduced a new form of press publishing licensing which was technically regulated later in the Regulation of the Minister of Information Number 01 of 1984 concerning SIUPP.

After the enactment of Law Number 40 of 1999, the government no longer had the opportunity to inhibit the press, because it was no longer subject to sanctions for eradication, censorship, and broadcasting bans. The guarantee of press freedom provides hope that the role of the press will run well. The role of the press can be more optimal, not only as a conveyor and disseminator of objective and balanced information, but also more intensely carrying out social and educational control functions. Its function as an entertainment media developed rapidly in the post-Soeharto New Order era.

In the current era of openness, the press plays an important role in realizing democracy through education and social control. The press is one of the pillars of democracy that plays a role as a supervisor, but the press also carries out a critical function and as an alternative choice of ideas in determining policy.[52] This is by assessing the press as the fourth pillar of democracy after the legislative, executive, and judiciary. The press absorbs and reports the aspirations of the community related to the implementation of legislative, executive, and judicial functions. Press control over the implementation of the three functions of the state is very strict. Through this role of social control, the press has carried itself out as a supervisor and critic of the government, society, and the press institution itself. This

[51] *Ibid* .
[52] T. P. O'Mahony, "The Press and Democracy," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 63, no. 249 (1974): 47–58.

function of the press must remain within the corridor of laws and regulations and professional journalistic ethics. The press makes a great contribution to the development of the country and society. The press makes its own sovereignty meaningful, as a form of expression of society which is ultimately manifested in public policy.[53]

4.2. Between Freedom and Professionalism of the Press: A Dilemma

Such great freedom of the press seems to cause the press to develop rapidly as if out of control. Media reporting is often complained about because it is considered to have gone beyond the corridor of journalistic professional ethics. The public and government often complain about violations of journalistic professional ethics. Freedom of the press is an instrumental and conditional good, if media practices have misled the public (manipulating the public or seeking financial gain), then the instrumental argument for recognizing the right to freedom of expression is lost, thus the right must be limited.[54] Eric R. Boot [55] said that deception and misinformation will lead the public to make inappropriate decisions to channel their opinions, so this is a major threat to democracy. In addition, the correction of news or reporting by the public and the rights of third parties are very quantitatively and qualitatively unbalanced compared to the news that is published. This unbalanced reporting leads the press towards the pendulum of unlimited freedom. The issue of violations of professional ethics seems to be the antithesis of the development of press freedom.

As in England, the press does not work as a government watchdog regarding abuse of power, does not carry out its function as an actor to investigate various scandals, or does other good and honorable work, but solely to reap business profits.[56] For that, the Code of Ethics is a guideline, a rule that serves as a guide and direction about what journalists may and may not do in carrying out journalistic duties. The journalistic code of ethics is also the limit of press freedom. Because in practice so far it has often been questioned, what exactly is the limit of press freedom. The answer is none other than the code of ethics. The code of ethics is the corridor of press freedom. As long as everything runs within the corridor of the code of ethics, press freedom will be guaranteed. However, if it has violated the limits of the corridor, then it is clear that this is contrary to the nature of responsible and professional press freedom.

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[53] Craig LaMay, "Democratization and the Dilemmas of Media Independence," *Int'l J. Not-for-Profit L.* 8 (2005): 50.

[54] Eric R. Boot, "Leaks and the Limits of Press Freedom," *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 22, no. 2 (2019): 483–500, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10677-019-10006-w.

[55] *Ibid* .

[56] Andrew Calabrese and Colin Sparks, *Toward a Political Economy of Culture : Capitalism and Communication in the Twenty-First Century* (Lanham (Md.) : Rowman and Littlefield, 2004), http://lib.ugent.be/catalog/rug01:000845326.

Legal norms are the second pillar of journalism. In practice, journalistic code of ethics alone is not enough. Therefore, Law Number 14 of 1999 contains absolute legal norm arrangements. Even if news is made by following the journalistic code of ethics, there is no guarantee that journalists can avoid the clutches of the law. Ethics and legal norms are closely related. Logically, things that are prohibited by ethics are also prohibited by legal norms. Likewise, ethical norms prohibit things that are prohibited by legal norms. Ethics are not the same as legal norms. Enforcement of these legal norms is very important because people no longer hesitate to lie to the press. This is slightly different from a few decades ago. For example, in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, people were reluctant to speak to the press. If a news item was considered detrimental to someone's good name, or the facts conveyed did not correspond to the actual events, then efforts were always made to straighten out the news that was considered detrimental by contacting the editors to be corrected or aligned through the news.

However, people are now no longer hesitant to make statements to the press. If the news is considered detrimental, the person concerned will immediately file a civil and criminal lawsuit. Interestingly, the amount of compensation demanded in a civil lawsuit reaches hundreds of billions or even trillions of rupiah. If the lawsuit is granted by the judge, the media could go bankrupt because they are unable to pay the compensation. In addition, according to the Criminal Code, a legacy of the Dutch colonial government, around 37 articles can drag journalists to prison.

In Indonesia after the Soeharto government (1966-1998), the implementation of the press code of ethics refers to the Indonesian Journalist Code of Ethics which was established based on an agreement between 26 journalist organizations. The Code of Ethics contains guidelines for the journalist profession regarding the search, processing, writing, and broadcasting of news as well as obligations and etiquette in responding to public complaints about news given in the form of the right of reply. This Code of Ethics is shorter because it consists of seven articles without paragraphs compared to the PWI Press Code of Ethics which consists of six articles and 26 paragraphs. Therefore, the Indonesian Journalist Code of Ethics is relatively easier to understand.

There is another mechanism to enforce the press code of ethics, such as that carried out by the Fajar Daily in Makassar: If there is an error in writing the news, the Fajar editorial team will correct the news. If they are still not satisfied with the correction, the person concerned can report it to the Ombudsman Team. For example, there was news about the general accusation of being the mastermind behind the Bali bombing. He then revealed his intention to sue the Fajar Daily and other newspapers under the Jawa Pos Group. However, the Ombudsman finally reconciled the matter after uploading the news through a special

interview and apology. The injured party can also report it to the management. They are selected from all professions and various backgrounds, including academics and traders.

In addition to being made by professional organizations or groups of professional organizations, press publishing companies also make press codes of ethics. For example, we can mention here the journalist code of ethics made by Kompas Daily, Tempo Newspaper, and Media Indonesia Daily. The substance of the journalist code of ethics made by press publishing companies is not much different from the press code of ethics made by press organizations. However, in practice, journalists better understand and obey the prohibition on accepting "envelopes", meaning money, which is one of the provisions of the journalist code of ethics made by press publishing companies. The sanctions prepared to prohibit violators from accepting envelopes vary widely, from being transferred to a non-editorial desk to suspension and permanent dismissal. Ironically, incorrectly writing news is often considered not a violation of the code and not a minor offense, because of the right to respond for those who are harmed by the news.

In line with all the descriptions of press ethics above, it must be acknowledged that the application of the principle of press independence is not easy, because the press does not work in a vacuum. In addition, conflicts of interest sometimes occur when news concerns the interests of groups or business fields of advertising partners or press publishing subsidiaries. Ironically, press companies also have business networks outside the press publishing business. According to Herman and Chomsky,[57] the mass media in democratic countries such as the United States are not completely independent, the press only functions as a tool for the interests of political and economic elites. There are 5 factors that the media is only a tool for the interests of the elite, including: 1) large corporations that own media only for business interests; 2) the main source of income depends on advertising; 3) dependence on the government and large corporations; 4) there is pressure from capital providers; and 5) as a propaganda tool to combat ideological enemies, such as communism, terrorism, and external threats.[58]

The phenomenon of violations of press professional ethics that have so far resulted in lawsuits is the antithesis of press freedom that has been fought for by press figures and human rights activists. A press observer considers violations of professional ethics as a form of anomaly in the practice of press freedom as a signal of unequal interaction with the power of the press that suggests public inferiority.[59] This picture concerns the opposite of news quality, which is considered distorted by news corrections or the inclusion of the right of

[57] Edward S Herman and Noam Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* (Bodley Head, 2008), https://books.google.co.id/books?id=QFwqnp-0EDoC.

[58] *Ibid* .

[59] Ali, "Press Freedom in the SBY-Kalla Era." *Op.Cit* .

reply. Such conditions can trigger a sense of public helplessness against "press arbitrariness" in journalistic work.

Any violation of press ethics that ends in legal proceedings in court is a *counterproductive phenomenon* to press freedom that has developed under the umbrella of Law Number 40 of 1999. The 1999 Press Law has provided a strong foundation for the realization of press freedom in Indonesia. However, in practice, press freedom is not yet substantive due to the lack of respect for press personnel for their profession.[60] The many violations of journalistic ethics and professionalism are counterproductive to the essence of press freedom. On the contrary, several incidents involving the occupation of press offices; physical attacks on journalists show the occupation of press offices and physical attacks on journalists show the low public appreciation of press freedom, also caused by the low appreciation of press personnel for their freedom.

This closeness to journalists occurs because the press acts as a detective. This is an important addition that helps the press become a public watchdog. The detective press plays a role in investigating irregularities in the implementation of public affairs. People who are dissatisfied with a news report are encouraged to protest, clarify or correct the news report, although the public can respect their right to sue in court. However, the Civil Defamation Law limits the media from freely reporting reported news.[61]

Civil defamation cases are more often associated with people who have a high profile in terms of economic and political power. When it comes to the interests of political figures or big businessmen, there will be great political pressure on the editors to ensure that information related to a case does not damage the name of the political or businessman's relatives. In Indonesia, Soeharto, the former President of Indonesia, sued Time Magazine in the Central Jakarta District Court over its coverage on May 24, 1999, Asia Edition Volume 153 Number 20, *"SUHARTO INC. How Indonesia's longtime boss built a family fortune"*. Soeharto felt aggrieved by the news in Time magazine, among other things, that " *Time has learned* That Suharto's *money amounting to 9 billion US dollars* was *transferred from Switzerland to a nominee bank account in Austria.* Therefore , Soeharto demanded compensation equal to the Plaintiff's claim of Rp 189 trillion or equivalent to US$ 27 billion. In May 2001, the Supreme Court sentenced Time Magazine to pay compensation to Soeharto of Rp 1 trillion or equivalent to US$ 27 billion. However, in 2007 the Supreme Court re-examined Soeharto's lawsuit and decided to overturn the previous Supreme Court decision.

Freedom of the press always produces excesses. Therefore, freedom must be associated with professionalism. Professionalism has its criteria. *First,* professionalism is related to

[60] Syamsuddin, "Press Freedom and Legal Threats." *Op.Cit* .

[61] Georgia Chapman, "Press Freedom in Singapore and Malaysia: Defamation," *Brawijaya Law Journal* 2, no. 1 (2015): 15–25, https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.blj.2016.002.01.02.

expertise, in the sense of expertise and skills. If he cannot write news well, he is not a journalist. Similar to other professions, such as doctors who also base themselves on expertise to diagnose diseases, the ability to write news is one of the important measures in measuring the expertise of journalists. Expertise and skills in the world of the press are obtained through education and experience. *Second,* professionalism is also related to responsibility. Working without responsibility is not perfect. And *third,* corporations are also an important element in professionalism. Partnerships are realized through professional organizations as a place for members to gather.

Discussion on journalist professionalism is currently in the public spotlight. The public has long felt the imbalance in the provision of some rights of reply. News that is cornering is published on page I, but the right of reply (in the form of a rebuttal) from the aggrieved party is placed on the inside page, which is usually in the Reader's Letter. If it is published on the same page but does not match the size of the news that has been published previously. So that in essence it becomes reduced or does not match the wishes of the maker of the right of reply (buffer). This unbalanced portion can lead to dissatisfaction of parties who feel disadvantaged by the news. If this dissatisfaction is reported to the Press Council, however, this council only has a role as a mediator. The Press Council does not have the authority to impose sanctions. The maximum the Press Council will give is a warning, which is more related to morals.

The Freedom of the Press Commission in 1949 formulated a theory of a socially responsible press that sought to address the conflict between press freedom and social responsibility. The commission, better known as the Hutchins Commission because it was chaired by Robert Hutchins, proposed five prerequisites for achieving a press that is responsible to the public:

a. The media must present reliable, complete, and intelligent news about everyday events in a meaningful context. This means that the media must be accurate, must not lie, must separate fact from opinion, must report in a way that is meaningful internationally, and must go deeper than simply presenting facts and reporting the truth.
b. The media must serve as a forum for the exchange of comments and criticism. That is, the media must be a public medium; must include all ideas "as a basis for objective reporting"; must include "all views and interests of importance" in the society it is intended to represent; The media must identify the sources of their information because it is "necessary to a free society."
c. The media must project a truly representative picture of the constituent groups in society. That is, when the picture presented by the media fails to represent a social group correctly, the opinion is misleading; the truth about any group must be truly

representative; the truth must include the values and aspirations of the group, but must not ignore its weaknesses and vices.

d. The media must present and explain the goals and values of society. That is, the media is an educational instrument; the media must bear the responsibility to express and explain the ideals that society strives for.
e. The media must provide full access to hidden information at some point. That is, there is a need for "broad attribution of news and opinion.[62]

Interesting developments occurred after the Commission published the report. Starting in 1956, the press in the United States, as an example of adherents to the free press theory (libertarian theory), shifted to following five guidelines for implementing the concept of a press that is responsible to the public to carry out the basic functions of mass communication in contemporary society. To achieve the ideal of a press that is responsible to the public, the press must carry out the following six functions: a. Serve the political system that allows information, discussion, and consideration of public issues to be accessible to the public; b. Provide information to the public so that people can act according to their own interests; c. Protect individual rights by acting as a watchdog over the government; d. Serve the economic system, by bringing together buyers and sellers through advertising media; e. Provide entertainment (only "good" entertainment, whatever the entertainment); and f. Maintain autonomy in the field of information so that it does not depend on certain interests and influences.

IV. Conclusion

In addition to having "press freedom", journalistic works are also required to comply with the ethics of the journalistic profession regulated by the press organization. Compliance with professional ethics makes a journalist respected in the eyes of the public. Although professional ethics are internally binding among members of a professional organization, the strength of professional ethics is a barometer of the extent to which a journalist maintains the honor of his profession.

Violations of professional ethics committed by a journalist, in addition to causing sanctions from internal professional organizations to the press, the most severe sanctions actually come from the public. The public can impose sanctions on journalists who violate professional ethics with penalties in the form of loss of trust both to the journalist concerned and to the media where the journalist works. For example, once a journalist lies about his

[62] The Commission On Freedom Of The Press, *A Free And Responsible Press* (Chichago, Illinois: The University Of Chicago Press, 1947).

news, the public will not deceive the journalist as long as he is still working as a journalist. That is a severe sanction. Compliance with professional ethics will be reflected through journalistic work that is based on the principle of freedom and at the same time responsibility.

Not to mention if we talk about legal sanctions, then journalists are news liars, such as the news source does not mention a sentence, but he "twists" it as if the sentence in the news came from the news source mentioned in the news. This is a public lie, or it could also be a crime of defamation or slander. In popular terms, journalists are prohibited from "frying" or "cooking" themselves. He must "cover both sides" and "recheck". That is the working principle of journalism. That is the ethics of the journalist profession.

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