

vision news has seriously impaired the role of the newspaper. Certainly broadcasting has taken the edge off the impact that newspapers once had as the only daily news medium.

Now both radio and TV give us our news before the newspaper and often present it more graphically. And now the James Restons and Joseph Alsops have to compete as pundits with the Eric Sevareids and Howard K. Smiths.

But I think the newspaper continues to remain indispensable. We can complement it, but never replace it. That is a lesson those of us in broadcasting learned very well during several long newspaper strikes. For example, on many television stories, the kind of coverage we can give is limited by the medium.

Where we don't have film or other visual materials to illustrate a story, we can rarely have our anchorman tell it for more than about 45 seconds—about 100 words. Front page newspaper stories frequently run more than 500 words. So the newspapers often do a more thorough job.

I hasten to add that this is not always the case. The advent of the half-hour television news program has brought with it more complete coverage of daily stories, and what we call extended reports. These are in depth treatments of matters of news importance that can run anywhere from 3 to 10 minutes. Many do as good a job of depth reporting as does any newspaper.

So do television documentaries. How many newspapers provided as much coverage of the Warren report as did CBS news, with its four exhaustively researched hour-long programs? How many have provided coverage of the Vietnam war as penetrating as ABC Scope which, in the course of 107 weekly half-hour documentaries devoted solely to various aspects of the war, examined just about every conceivable aspect of it?

In the main, however, there is no question that newspapers still give more complete coverage of far more stories than we do. There is no question, either, that the papers and wire services, with their much larger reporting staffs, do a far more complete job of gathering the news than we in broadcasting do.

And if television often has a more dramatic impact on its audience, that of the newspaper is usually more permanent. On radio or television, a story once told literally disappears into thin air. A viewer cannot go back and check a fact, ponder something he doesn't understand, or look up what he may have missed. Nor can he cut out an item and file it away for future reference.

Incidentally, I would like to see us do something about this. There is enough good, original reportage on radio and television today that it deserves a permanent record—and the attention of people who just didn't happen to be tuned in to the ABC evening news at 7:18 last Monday night. Perhaps someday we could put out a weekly journal to include at least the verbal record of exclusive stories of importance.

Many of the points about newspapers apply as well to magazines. In addition, magazine editors have more time to prepare their material and more space in which to present it in greater depth. Some of the most distinguished reporting and commentary in the magazine field appears in the smaller, more specialized journals of low circulation.