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Robert Maxwell, 68: From Refugee to the Ruthless Builder of a Publishing Empire

By CRAIG R. WHITNEY NOV. 6, 1991



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Robert Maxwell, 68: From Refugee to the Ruthless Builder of a Publishing Empire

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Chengdu's New River Is a Mountain

1. Introduction: This is a brief overview of the project, its purpose, and the objectives. It sets the context for the entire report.

The research involved three strategies: first, some supporting the safety myth; the second, providing information on the risks involved with regulatory reform; and the third, presenting evidence on the benefits of reform. The results of the experiment are reported and discussed. Implications for regulatory and industry reform are discussed at the conclusion of the paper.

As is global contracting with other firms in terms of technology, big companies continue to be driven more by their own technology, standards and goals, rather than by the power of the government, and the government is having less say.

[illegible]

Chavez, described by British Airways as "one of the most successful managers in the world," has been on the front lines of the airline industry's restructuring efforts, and consequently, says a friend, "is being treated differently after being one of the most successful managers there ever to depart." The result is that some

Family Members Ties to Assassination

This complex figure also sought and captured tribute and gold from neighboring peoples in the Andes Basin. The Incas lived in the city of Cuzco in the Sacred Valley, just north of Lake Titicaca. From there, you can see the ruins of the city of Machu Picchu, a spectacular site in the Andes. The Incas were a powerful people, and their empire reached its greatest extent under the rule of Pachacuti, who lived in the 15th century. The Incas were a powerful people, and their empire reached its greatest extent under the rule of Pachacuti, who lived in the 15th century.

His secretary and three other members of the executive board died in the September 11 terrorist attacks. Another factor is believed to have been the recent loss of Henry Kissinger, the former chief of Mr. Bush's foreign policy staff.

Newspaper: Poyntell
Area: Bristol

[illegible]

He only was fifteen years, however, when, about 1810, Howard captured the country's young attention in 1810. Howard, he said, happened, reading more than a hundred letters and their great, strong, and very short, and that was what the world of letters was called at that time the morning after the war.

"I would like to see the kind of the [theater] that we have in the United States and the United Kingdom," says the director. "I would like to see the kind of the [theater] that we have in the United States and the United Kingdom." "I would like to see the kind of the [theater] that we have in the United States and the United Kingdom." "I would like to see the kind of the [theater] that we have in the United States and the United Kingdom."

Robert M. Weir, an ardent aviator fan, is a young, former student pilot in Detroit and lived, in 1927, when a young, Milwaukee, he made some of the observations of the Wichita Beacon Club in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

There are three other factors that might contribute to the results:

- The patients' social class. Lower social classes have a higher risk of being in contact with infectious agents. When I first tested the effect of social class on the results, I found that the effect was not significant.
- The patients' age. The effect of age was not significant.
- The patients' sex. The effect of sex was not significant.

A Weekly Paper
For All of America

The publisher, who at the end returned to the shop to assist in his duties, described a "strongman" type of fighter, under twenty years old, five foot six, in that of his age, looking very active and energetic and looking like the kind of fellow who, in the event of a fight, would go in for a "knock-out" but would not last after the first or two hits.

University has many more to come. The 1997-1998 National Report on Postsecondary Education Institutions, published by the National Center for Education Statistics, shows that the number of institutions offering the program, both at the public and private levels, has increased from 176 in 1990 to 206 in 1997. The program is more on a par with other health care professions such as nursing and physical therapy, which have been around for a long time. The program is also becoming more of a part of the education of health care professionals, with many schools offering the degree as a minor or as a part of a larger health care program. The program is also becoming more of a part of the education of health care professionals, with many schools offering the degree as a minor or as a part of a larger health care program.

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Major Interests:
the Western World

The magazine's editors have also made use of the growing importance of television in American business. They recently featured the 1986 National A-List University, listing America's 100 best business schools. America's Best Business and Trade Schools of 1986.

When they left, he presented me with a small and elegant notebook in which he had written a message in Spanish and Chinese characters, and then he turned to the little black cat and said: "You belong to the night, little cat." And then, with a small gesture, he said: "Good night, little cat."

[illegible]

The authors suggest that the assessment of these diseases and drugs on a regular basis will increasingly assist in more accurate risk-benefit analysis. The authors also note in the concluding remarks that "the growing number of published data on the toxicity of drugs is 'compared with the 10 to 20 percent' [sic] of published data on their efficacy and safety."

The University's response to the new state laws could have been different. Instead of the 1990s, says Eugene F. Scott, University of North Carolina President, the school did not demonstrate the institutional courage to defend students and teachers in the 1980s, and instead to take a stand, then to take recent legislation as a challenge to the school.

More information appears on following pages.

O.M. La Beet, Bank Officer, 66;
Vice President for Urban Affairs

Chapters 22-24. These three chapters provide an excellent overview of the history of the United States, from the early colonial period to the present. The chapters are written in a clear, concise, and engaging style, making them an excellent resource for students and teachers alike.

[illegible]

Shaw, who presides over the nation's 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, said that the "most serious threat to health care is the loss of the medical workforce and the resulting reduction in the quality of care that patients receive. I strongly encourage you to work together to develop strategies to address this."

On the basis of the above, the authors conclude that the use of the proposed method for the analysis of the data obtained from the experiments on the effect of the concentration of the solution on the rate of the reaction is quite effective. The results of the analysis of the data obtained from the experiments on the effect of the concentration of the solution on the rate of the reaction are presented in Table 1.

SAVE ENERGY...

Figure 1

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Robert Maxwell, who died today after going overboard from his yacht off the Canary Islands, fled the collapse of Czechoslovakia in 1939 to become one of the most powerful publishers in Britain and the world, presiding over a multibillion-dollar empire he assembled with brass and bravura over 40 years.

An avowed socialist whose newspapers here supported the Labor Party, the 68-year-old publisher ran his businesses with legendary ruthlessness and attention to earnings, paring by the hundreds the staffs of the companies he acquired and instantly dismissing editors of his newspapers when they disagreed with him.

As a global businessman with interests in scores of countries, he borrowed money on a heroic scale, but kept his bankers, executives and staffs toeing the line by the power of his physical presence and his insistence on having his way.

Despite his physical size -- he was about 6 feet tall and weighed about 290 pounds -- Mr. Maxwell was compulsively active. With his beetling black eyebrows and his booming baritone, he had a talent for self-dramatization and knew how to skirt the edge of scandal. Even after taking large parts of his empire public this year, he kept his own financial affairs well hidden in a multinational web of holding companies, the most closely guarded of them a private family trust in Liechtenstein.

Once described by British Government fraud investigators as unsuited to run a public company, he lost his seat on the board of his first company, Pergamon Press, but eventually won it back. "I have never worried about what the Establishment believes about me or doesn't," he said a few years ago. "I don't give a damn." 5 Family Members Die in Auschwitz

This complex figure who sought and cultivated political and government connections in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and Israel as well as in the United States, was born on June 10, 1923, into a Hasidic family called Hoch in the Ruthenian village of Slatinske Doly, then part of Czechoslovakia and now in the Soviet Union, and was given the name Ludvik. He was selling trinkets on the streets of Bratislava in March 1939 when Hitler's allies in Hungary occupied his homeland as the Nazis marched into western Czechoslovakia.

His mother and four other members of his immediate family died in the Auschwitz concentration camp, and his father is believed to have been shot either there or during transport to the camp. Only two of Mr. Maxwell's sisters survived it.

Though Mr. Maxwell never made much of his religion, he was an outspoken supporter of Israel all his life. He escaped the Holocaust by making his way to France and joining a group of Czechoslovak volunteers in the French Foreign Legion in March 1940.

After the French defeat that year, he escaped again, being evacuated with other Czechoslovak troops to Britain. He later claimed he learned English in only six weeks. Soon after his arrival he joined the British Army as a volunteer and earned a battlefield commission as lieutenant. His talent for languages then led him into intelligence work.

It was on such an assignment to Paris, just after its liberation in July of 1944, that he met the woman who would become his wife, a French Huguenot named Elisabeth Meynard. Proposing to her in December, he promised that he would win a Military Cross, re-create a family, make a fortune, and become Prime Minister of England. "And I shall make you happy until the end of my days," he said.

The first promise, at least, he kept in 1945, winning the Military Cross for "heroism in the face of enemy action" at the Dutch-German border. When the war ended, he was discharged as captain, a title he insisted on using in civilian life for 20 years afterward. He also acquired his name, Ian Robert Maxwell, at the suggestion of a Scottish officer friend. Company Is Lost In a Scandal

For the next two years he served in occupied Germany with the British Foreign Office as head of the press section in war-ravaged Berlin. There he would make business contacts that led to the purchase of his first company, a publisher of scientific journals and textbooks that he bought from its German and British owners and renamed Pergamon Press.

With a bank loan and money borrowed from his wife's family and from relatives in America, Mr. Maxwell built it into a thriving company by 1964, when he took a step toward fulfilling his political ambitions by winning a seat as a Labor Party Member of Parliament for the rural constituency of Buckingham, north of London.

His political and business fortunes took a turn for the worse in 1969, when he lost Pergamon in a financial scandal after trying to sell it to Saul P. Steinberg, the New York financier. Mr. Steinberg contended that Mr. Maxwell had misled him about the company's worth, and pulled out of the deal.

The principal shareholders then angrily ousted Mr. Maxwell from Pergamon's board. The next year, Labor lost the elections to the Conservatives, and, embroiled in the scandal, Mr. Maxwell lost his seat.

A protracted British Government investigation concluded in mid-1971 "that, notwithstanding Mr. Maxwell's acknowledged abilities and energy, he is not in our opinion a person who can be relied on to exercise proper stewardship of a publicly quoted company."

"Not true," Mr. Maxwell responded with fury. Ultimately he recovered, going heavily into debt to buy back Pergamon privately in 1974 after reaching an out-of-court financial settlement with Mr. Steinberg and his investment partners. He sold the company again to a Dutch publisher, Elseviers, last March for \$440 million (\$770 million).

He would never again run for public office, but as a newspaper publisher --- one of the few, in the past decade, to back the Labor Party instead of the Conservatives -- he exercised another kind of political influence. He also helped revolutionize the newspaper business in Britain, ruthlessly eliminating the ancient practices of overstaffing and the overlapping jurisdictions that had given Fleet Street unions a stranglehold over management and allowing Conservative publishing rivals like Rupert Murdoch to follow his example. Newspaper Payrolls Are Slashed

When Mr. Maxwell bought the British Printing and Communication Corporation in London in 1980, it was nearly bankrupt. He told the unions that the only way to save any jobs at all was to cut the payroll from 13,000 to 7,000 workers. Later, as Maxwell Communications Corporation, the company came to be regarded as a model of efficiency.

So, too, was Mirror Group Newspapers, which Mr. Maxwell acquired as a

privately owned company in 1984. There he found typesetters earning more than assistant editors and many people working four-hour days and four-day weeks. His arrival as chairman came at 3 A.M. the morning after the sale.

Told that the entire staff of The Daily Mail and The Sunday Record in Glasgow was holding a meeting to decide whether to work for him, Mr. Maxwell replied, "If they don't return to work I will close down their papers and they won't open again."

"Forward with Britain," the Mirror proclaimed under his leadership, and it and its sister papers in Scotland increased their circulation from three million to nearly four million last year, though it fell this year by about 300,000. Mr. Maxwell sold 49 percent of Mirror Group Newspapers to the public this year for \$245.5 million (\$421.8 million), more than twice what he had originally paid for them.

His editors would soon learn that having him as publisher was an entirely new experience. "When I fire someone it is like a thunderclap," he told Sebastian Faulks of The Independent, not one of the newspapers he owns, last year. "My primary duty is to hire and fire editors. I treat them like a field marshal."

Magnus Linklater, one editor who worked for him, said, "Balance is not something usually associated with Robert Maxwell." He had a habit, Mr. Linklater said, "of suddenly appearing out of the blue, and woe betide the person who is not at his desk and doing what he's expecting them to be doing."

Mr. Linklater was hired to run a new afternoon tabloid, The London Daily News, that Mr. Maxwell launched in 1987. Asked at the time by a reporter from another newspaper whether he would dismiss Mr. Linklater if he wrote editorials supporting the Conservative Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, instead of Labor's leader, Neil Kinnock, Mr. Maxwell paused briefly and then answered:

"He would have my permission to do so. I would have him certified. But he would certainly be able to do it."

Mr. Linklater survived, but the newspaper did not, and the flop cost Mr. Maxwell the equivalent of \$50 million. Later, he said, "I made certain that never again would I launch a paper and leave it in the hands of the professionals." A Weekly Paper For All of Europe

The publisher, who at the end claimed to be able to speak 11 languages, launched a European-wide English-language color weekly newspaper, The European, in May of last year. Visiting its offices one weekend and finding that he had no office in the newsroom, he took the nameplate off the door of the one used by its first editor, Ian Watson, and took over that room on the spot.

Last winter, he replaced Mr. Watson as editor, easing him upstairs to the board of directors. The weekly has reportedly lost money since its inception, and Mr. Maxwell kept it as part of his private business operations.

In recent years, he turned his business eye toward the United States, acquiring the publishing house of Macmillan in 1989 for \$2.6 billion and Official Airline Guides for \$750 million. The acquisitions came at a price of a heavy debt load that later forced him to sell Pergamon and part of the Mirror

Group, but Mr. Maxwell's real interest soon became The Daily News in New York City, which he acquired from the Tribune Company of Chicago last spring, ending a long and costly strike from which the tabloid has not yet recovered.

Mr. Maxwell always insisted that The Daily News was "in danger of becoming profitable" by early next year, and promised to spend most of his time running it. At first, he did, parking the yacht that took him on his last voyage, the Lady Ghislaine, named after a daughter, in the East River off 30th Street and holding court. Hailed at first for saving two-thirds of the paper's jobs, he was made an honorary Grand Marshal at the Salute to Israel Parade on Fifth Avenue. But later he seemed to fade from public view and to spend more of his time in London.

To the members of the sedate British Establishment he said he despised, Mr. Maxwell was regarded as an upstart outsider, the piratical financier the satirical press weekly Private Eye called "Captain Bob." An American author, Seymour M. Hersh, contended in a recent book, "The Samson Option," that he had close ties with Israel's top leadership, and that Nicholas Davies, the foreign editor of The Daily Mirror, was buying and selling arms in partnership with an Israeli intelligence operative.

Mr. Davies denied the charge last month, but later, confronted with evidence that he had met an arms dealer in Ohio despite his denials, he acknowledged that he had not told the truth about the trip and The Mirror dismissed him. But Mr. Maxwell maintained his lawsuit against Mr. Hersh, who has filed a countersuit. New Interests In Eastern Europe

Mr. Maxwell's critics have often made fun of the fawning biographies he published of Eastern European Communist leaders like Erich Honecker of East Germany, Nicolae Ceausescu of Romania and Todor Zhivkov of Bulgaria.

After they fell, he pirouetted neatly around and acquired interests in newly democratic newspapers in Hungary and Eastern Germany, and last year formed a \$250 million fund to invest in joint ventures in the region. Prime Minister John Major, paying tribute to him today, said he had offered useful advice at the time of the failed coup in Moscow last August.

Mr. Maxwell never took a car when a helicopter would do, and roared in and out of his London headquarters --called, naturally, Maxwell House -- by helicopter every day from the Headington Hill Hall estate he rented from the city authorities in Oxford.

An ardent soccer fan, he owned clubs in both Britain and Israel at various times, but controversy attended his every attempt to buy another one. Last year, he was said to be growing disillusioned with the sport in Britain, saying it "could not be in a sorrier state," and put his interests in four clubs on the market.

Mr. Maxwell is survived by his wife, three sons and four daughters. Two of the sons, Ian Robert Charles Maxwell, 35, and Kevin Francis Herbert Maxwell, 32, are directors of the publishing company. Another daughter died of leukemia in infancy, and another son, the eldest, died in 1968, seven years after an automobile accident.

Correction: November 8, 1991

The obituary of Robert Maxwell on Wednesday misidentified the afternoon newspaper he began in 1987. It was The London Evening News, not The London Daily News.

A version of this biography; obituary appears in print on November 6, 1991, on Page D00023 of theNational edition with the headline: Robert Maxwell, 68: From Refugee to the Ruthless Builder of a Publishing Empire.
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