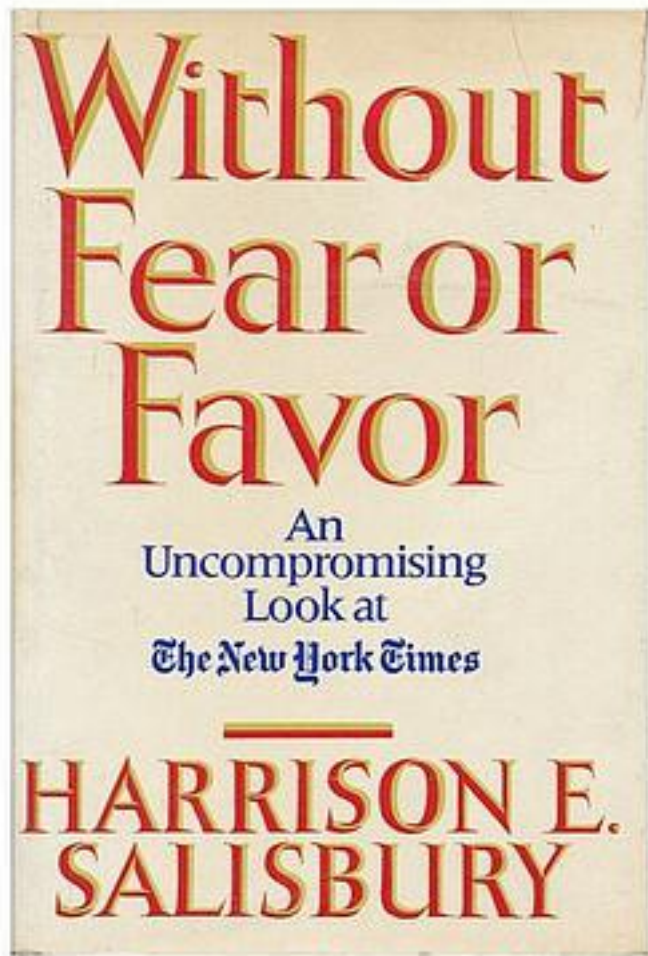


Without Fear or Favor



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THE PAST QUARTER OF a century the American Establishment has been shaken to its

foundations by what amounts to a new American Revolution. Power has flowed into different and not always steady hands. The country has been passing through (there is no sign that the process is yet complete) an epoch of change which begins to rival those surrealist dramas, Russia in 1917 and China in 1949. The totality of this metamorphosis lies beyond the scope of this book, but what I try here to document is the role of The New York Times, how it has participated in these new currents, affecting them and being, in turn, profoundly changed itself. We think of a newspaper, even a great newspaper like The Times, as holding up a looking glass to history. For many years The Times described itself as "newspaper of record." It is my thesis, to paraphrase McLuhan, that, in a sense, the mirror has become the message; that in showing us what we are and what we are doing; in reflecting the bloat, the complexity, the contradictions of the post-World War II society, The Times has come to fulfill a new function; it has quite literally become that Fourth Estate, that fourth coequal branch of government of which men like Thomas Carlyle spoke.

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