The national scene . . .

Newsmen hear Carter but form own opinion

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — If President Jimmy Carter and some of his top staff members believed they could sway the opinions of 22 editors and seven photographers in their seminar and news conference a week ago at the White House they could be in for a surprise.

The editors are all veterans in the game of journalism and are willing to listen and study the facts but they are extermely wary of propaganda. By and large, Carter and the White House staff people were generally objective, rather than persuasive.

Most of the newsmen were editors, managing editors, executive editors and even one publisher of newspaper ranging from one weekly, to small dailies and others considered middle sized dailies, such as The Post-Register. There were even two representatives of a radio-network.

There were also editors from larger papers, such as Indianapolis Star, Hartford Courant, Minneapolis Star, New York Post, Buffalo Courier Express, Dayton Journal-Herald, Akron Beacon-Journal, Oklahoma City Daily Oklahoman, Pittsburgh Post Gazette and Houston Post.

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President Jimmy Carter's sincerity, candidness and fourthrightness are readily apparent. He answered questions headon, even those which were hostile in nature.

His outline of foreign and domestic policy was extremely clear whether one cared to believe them or not.

Most of the editors, of course, view with natural suspicion any move they believe to be propaganda. In fairness, however, they are willing to listen, study the topics and then draw their own conclusions.

President Carter and most of the senior White House staff members talking at the seminar were well versed and well received.

Perhaps the lone exception was Reginald Bartholomew, of the National Security Affairs, Department of State, who evaded answers. In view of the sensitive nature of questions on foreign policies this is understandable but not appreciated.

In addition, the editors were given many papers and booklets outling the President's position on Panama Canal, energy, [illegible] tical time, he never left any doubt where he stood on any question, took merciless abuse from political opponents; but more important, he was a common as an old shoe. It was like talking to your next door neighbor — that is, if you talk to your next door neighbor.

Talking to other newsmen, however, President Eisenhower was one of the most unpopular, ranking near the bottom with the now deposed Richard Nixon. This was due mainly to his army training that made him resent criticism and he showed it.

Nixon can be pretty well summed up in Truman's observation that Nixon would tell a lie even when it wasn't necessary, except Truman put it in more salty terms.

It's well to listen to these nations leaders but most editors will judge for themselves as to their performance, truthfulness and capabilities. In this regards there is little doubt that Carter is the brainiest President to ever sit in the White House.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The comely Jane Frank, deputy secretary of the Cabinet, was one of the key speakers at the White House seminar for 27 invited newsmen. She talked about her duties, mainly to keep cabinet members from fighting among themselves. (Post-Register photo).