secretary of labor about the possibility of a strike, and to make his remarks when "the particular labor controversy was at its height." 64

Then, Black brought the two cases together, manifesting both his firm belief in the breadth of the First Amendment and his background as an advocate for working people. "The observations we have previously made here upon the timeliness and importance of utterances as emphasizing, rather than diminishing, the value of constitutional protection, and upon the breadth and seriousness of the censorial effect of punishing publications in the manner followed below, are certainly no less applicable to a leading spokesman for labor than to a powerful newspaper taking another point of view." 65

In the nearly 80 years since the Bridges decision, it has been widely, if quietly, praised, unlike the acclaim for another First Amendment opinion, authored by Black, *New York Times v. United States*. 66 That 1971 ruling permitted newspapers to write about a secret history of the Vietnam War known as "The Pentagon Papers" — a case of such notoriety and prominence that it became the subject of a movie starring Tom Hanks and Meryl Streep. There has been no movie about the Bridges case, but Benno C. Schmidt, Jr., a First Amendment scholar who served as dean of Columbia Law School in the mid-1980s, described Black’s opinion in that matter as a "Judicial Declaration of Independence for the First Amendment, freeing it from English law."

In addition to its monumental impact on free speech, the Bridges decision marked the first step toward changing the reputation of the *Los Angeles Times*. Although it was the largest newspaper in California, the *Times* was considered a laughingstock by serious journalists because it was so partisan. Its reputation in that era was perhaps best characterized by a story told by humorist S.J. Perelman, who had been traveling west by train and asked a porter to bring him a newspaper. "Unfortunately," Perelman said, "the poor man, hard of hearing, brought me a *Los Angeles Times.*" 67

Five months after the Supreme Court decision, Columbia University awarded the *Times* its first Pulitzer Prize: the gold medal in the Public Service category “for the most . . . meritorious service of any American newspaper in 1941 for its successful fight” in a freedom of the press case that went all the way to the Supreme Court. The Pulitzer judges said the *Times*’ campaign “resulted in the clarification and confirmation for all American newspapers of the right of free press as guaranteed under the Constitution.” 68

Henry Weinstein is a Professor of the Practice of Law at U.C. Irvine School of Law. A graduate of U.C. Berkeley Law School, Weinstein worked as a journalist for 40 years, including 30 years at the *Los Angeles Times*, where he covered law, labor and politics.

64. Id. at 277.
65. Id. at 278.
66. 403 U.S. 713.