

---

## Without Fear or Favor

Exactly 100 years ago today, Adolph S. Ochs, the founding father of the modern Times, published a declaration of principles in these pages setting forth his goals for the respectable but failing newspaper he had just taken over. The 38-year-old publisher, who had already rescued a dying paper in Chattanooga, Tenn., now found himself pitted in New York against powerful, sensationalistic competitors in the heyday of yellow journalism. His statement envisioned a dignified and responsible alternative that would provide trustworthy news and opinion. One especially elegant and inspirational goal — “to give the news impartially, without fear or favor, regardless of party, sect, or interests involved” — has held a place of honor at The Times ever since. Ochs’s statement, reprinted below, was widely quoted at the time and remains a worthy credo for journalists everywhere, however difficult to fulfill.

To undertake the management of The New-York Times, with its great history for right doing, and to attempt to keep bright the lustre which Henry J. Raymond and George Jones [the paper’s founding publishers] have given it is an extraordinary task. But if a sincere desire to conduct a high-standard newspaper, clean, dignified, and trustworthy, requires honesty, watchfulness, earnestness, industry, and practical knowledge applied with common sense, I entertain the hope that I can succeed in maintaining the high estimate that thoughtful, pure-minded people have ever had of The New-York Times.

It will be my earnest aim that The New-York Times give the news, all the news, in concise and attractive form, in language that is parliamentary in good society, and give it as early, if not earlier, than it can be learned through any other reliable medium; to give the news impartially, without fear or favor, regardless of party, sect, or interests involved; to make of the columns of The New-York

Times a forum for the consideration of all questions of public importance, and to that end to invite intelligent discussion from all shades of opinion.

There will be no radical changes in the personnel of the present efficient staff. Mr. Charles R. Miller, who has so ably for many years presided over the editorial pages, will continue to be the editor; nor will there be a departure from the general tone and character and policies pursued with relation to public questions that have distinguished The New-York Times as a non-partisan newspaper — unless it be, if possible, to intensify its devotion to the cause of sound money and tariff reform, opposition to wastefulness and speculation in administering public affairs, and in its advocacy of the lowest tax consistent with good government, and no more government than is absolutely necessary to protect society, maintain individual and vested rights, and assure the free exercise of a sound conscience.

ADOLPH S. OCHS, New-York, Aug. 18, 1896

8/19/96