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For immediate release:

Pulitzer Prize-Winning Journalist Seymour Hersh To Speak at Mondavi Center

September 18, 2007; Davis, California—Pulitzer Prize-winning author **Seymour Hersh**, one of the great investigative reporters in the history of American journalism, will speak at the **Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts** Wednesday, October 17. A frequent contributor to *The New Yorker* and a winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award, Hersh will be interviewed onstage by Dr. **Kathryn Olmsted**, professor of history at **UC Davis**. Hersh will discuss his most recent bestseller, *Chain of Command: The Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib*, as well as the numerous stories he has covered over the years on subjects ranging from the My Lai incident during the Vietnam War to recent revelations regarding the Bush administration and the war in Iraq.

The event will begin at 8 pm on October 17 in the Mondavi Center's Jackson Hall on the UC Davis campus. Tickets are available from the Mondavi Center Ticket Office at 530.754.ARTS (2787) or online at MondaviArts.org. The event is presented as part of Mondavi Center's **Distinguished Speakers Series**.

If, as the saying goes, part of the role of good journalism is to "afflict the comfortable," Seymour Hersh is surely one of the best journalists America has produced, having afflicted the comfort of every presidential administration of the past 40 years with public revelations of information those in power would have preferred to keep secret. From wiretapping during the Nixon administration to arms sales during the Reagan years through the Clinton administration's bombing of the Al-Shifa pharmaceutical factory in Sudan to more recent reports of prisoner abuse at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, Hersh has broken several of the biggest political stories of our time.

Born in Chicago in 1937, Hersh came up through the journalistic ranks the hard way, starting as a police beat reporter at the City News Bureau of Chicago, then serving in the Army before going on to posts with United Press International and Associated Press. He joined the presidential campaign of Senator **Eugene J. McCarthy** as a speech writer and press secretary in 1967, and after the election returned to work as a journalist. In November 1969, he broke the story of what has become known as the "My Lai Massacre," an incident in March 1968 when U.S. soldiers killed hundreds of unarmed Vietnamese civilians. The story had a profound influence upon public opinion, fueling the anti-war movement, and won for Hersh the Pulitzer Prize in 1970.

Hersh worked as a reporter for *The New York Times* from 1972-79 and has been a freelance journalist since. He has published several award-winning works of nonfiction, including *The Price of Power: Kissinger in the*

Nixon White House, which won the National Book Critics Circle Award and the *Los Angeles Times* award for biography. Over the course of the past three decades, he has reported numerous major news stories, revealing secret U.S. bombing raids in Cambodia and Nixon-era wiretapping; the Central Intelligence Agency's efforts to unseat Chilean President **Salvador Allende**; the CIA's illicit sale of U.S. weapons to Libya; election fraud and other criminal activities by U.S.-backed Panamanian strongman **Manuel Noriega**; and several others. He has also written books on such varied subjects as the "dark side" of the **Kennedy** administration, Israel's nuclear arsenal and its relationship to U.S. foreign policy, the strange illness known as "Gulf War syndrome" that afflicted veterans of the first Gulf War.

In 2004, Hersh's stunning reports of the abuse of prisoners at Abu Ghraib caused international headlines. The prison at Abu Ghraib, about 20 miles west of Baghdad, had been known around the world as a place where captives were tortured during the rule of Iraqi dictator **Saddam Hussein**, and Hersh's revelations that prisoners were being tortured, humiliated, and abused there by U.S. military personnel had a substantial impact on public perception of the U.S. occupation of Iraq.

Hersh's recent book, *Chain of Command: The Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib*, explores how the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, prompted U.S. military action in the Middle East and ultimately resulted in America's involvement in the bitter and divisive long-term occupation of Iraq that has included the Abu Ghraib scandal. In Hersh's view, the story is a cautionary tale that shows what can happen when a government operates unhindered by the checks and balances of our constitutional system, and the book has once more made him a focus of controversy and international attention.

Kathryn Olmsted, who will interview Hersh, is the author of numerous books and articles on U.S. intelligence, including *Challenging the Secret Government: The Post-Watergate Investigations of the CIA and FBI and Red Spy Queen: A Biography of Elizabeth Bentley*. She is currently finishing a manuscript on conspiracy theories about the U.S. government from World War I to the War on Terror.

"For decades, Seymour Hersh's work has been controversial, provocative, and essential to our understanding of the key issues of our times," says **Don Roth**, the Mondavi Center's executive director. "We expect his presentation to be challenging, informative, and insightful."

What: **Seymour Hersh**
Chain of Command: How We Got from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib

When: Wednesday, October 17 • 8 pm

Where: Jackson Hall
Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts
University of California, Davis

Admission: \$40/\$34/\$29 Adults • \$20/\$17/\$14.50 Students & Children

Tickets/Info: 530.754.ARTS (2787)
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