STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Defense or any of its agencies. This document may not be released for open publication until it has been cleared by the appropriate military service or government agency.

THE MILITARY AND THE MEDIA IN COMBAT: WINNING THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL MURRELL F. STINNETTE
United States Air Force

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A:
Approved for Public Release.
Distribution is Unlimited.

USAWC CLASS OF 2000

U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE, CARLISLE BARRACKS, PA 17013-5050

20000420 120

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

THE MILITARY AND THE MEDIA IN COMBAT:

WINNING THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC

by

Lieutenant Colonel Murrell F. Stinnette
United States Air Force

Lieutenant Colonel James G. MacNeil
Project Advisor

The views expressed in this academic research paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or any of its agencies.

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A:
Approved for public release.
Distribution is unlimited.

U.S. Army War College
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Murrell F. Stinnette

TITLE: The Military and The Media in Combat: Winning the Hearts and Minds of the American Public

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 10 April 2000 PAGES: 28 CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

The military needs to redress its relationship with the media in combat operations with an eye toward change. While advances in media technology have precipitated this need for change the root problem is a lack of professional understanding between the military and the media. This paper seeks to frame the current relationship between the military and media by examining past operations in Grenada, Panama, and Iraq in terms of evolving media access and military control since Vietnam. This examination will focus on the intended and unintended consequences of the military's handling of the media and the resulting lessons learned. It will then look at the nature of more recent peacekeeping operations and suggest that the past is not necessarily a benchmark for the future. The paper will conclude with suggestions for improving the relationship between the military and the media in combat operations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ..... **III**

THE MILITARY AND THE MEDIA IN COMBAT: WINNING THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC **1**

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE MEDIA AND MILITARY RELATIONSHIP **1**

ACCESS AND THE FIRST AMENDMENT 2

CONTROL AND OPERATIONS SECURITY 2

VIETNAM TO GRENADA **3**

MEDIA PLANNING AND HANDLING 4

LESSONS LEARNED 5

PANAMA **6**

MEDIA PLANNING AND HANDLING 6

LESSONS LEARNED 7

IRAQ **8**

MEDIA PLANNING AND HANDLING 9

LESSONS LEARNED 9

MILITARY OPERATIONS OTHER THAN WAR **10**

OPEN SYSTEM COMMUNICATIONS 10

LESSONS FORWARD 11

FUTURE STRATEGIES **11**

ACCESS AND CONTROL 11

EDUCATION 13

CONCLUSION **14**

ENDNOTES **17**

BIBLIOGRAPHY **21**

THE MILITARY AND THE MEDIA IN COMBAT: WINNING THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC

The military needs to redress its relationship with the media in combat operations with an eye toward change. The changes in the nature of conflict and the growth of limited coalition peacekeeping operations underscore the priority that must be placed on securing public opinion and realizing that the front of winning the hearts and minds of the American public is expanding to the world forum. While advances in media technology have precipitated this need for change, the root problem is a lack of professional understanding between the military and the media.

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE MEDIA AND MILITARY RELATIONSHIP

The central division between the military and the media revolves around the issue of censorship, either indirectly through restricted access or directly through security review. The extent and sophistication of censorship has evolved since World War II. An argument can be made that this evolution has paralleled the changes in the nature of conflicts as well as in information technology. Vietnam offered essentially unfettered media access with few ground rules, due in large part to the fragmented nature of the conflict consisting mainly of small-unit actions that usually were short in duration as well as notice. This was obviously not the case against Iraq some 20 years later, as Central Command had troops deployed along a 300-mile front at the outset of the ground campaign.

The issue of security review focuses on information security. The military's desire for secure operations and the media's desire for access to all aspects of military operations tend to create a divergence of goals and attitudes. When put into the context of emerging communications and information technologies, such as "tele-everything and neuroinformatics at nano-speeds,"[1] the tension between the military and the media increases exponentially and hits a zenith during a conflict or crisis. This is not to say that neither the military nor the media are wholly unsympathetic to each other's concerns. In fact, a vast number of military officers surveyed in a public opinion poll clearly show an appreciation for the role of a free press in America.[2] However, the poll also underscores the divisiveness over access and control, as 73 percent of the polled media believe they should have the freedom to visit any place they choose within the war zone. At the same time, a clear majority of officers are fearful that potential enemies will learn information that may damage U.S. security.[3]

In 1992 the media and military got together to formulate an agreement to address the media's concerns over the lack of access and too much military control, as well as the military's concern over operational security. Nine principles were agreed upon, but the release was accompanied by a Pentagon statement that security reviews would continue to be conducted on a limited basis.[4] The news organizations released the following statement in reply.

> The news organizations are convinced that journalists covering U.S. forces in combat must be mindful at all times of operational security and the safety of American lives. News organizations strongly believe that journalists will abide by clear operational security ground rules. Prior security review is unwarranted and unnecessary.

> We believe that the record in Operation Desert Storm, Vietnam and other wars support the conclusion that journalists in the battlefield can be trusted to act responsibly.
>
> We will challenge prior security review in the event the Pentagon attempts to impose it in some future military operation.[5]

The conflict centers on the degree to which First Amendment principles can be sacrificed in order to protect national security, and more specifically operational security.

ACCESS AND THE FIRST AMENDMENT

The First Amendment states that "Congress shall make no law abridging freedom of speech or of the press." The media guard this right vigorously with a passionate belief in their mission of supplying information to the American public. The media believe that they guard the intent of the founding fathers by making legislators accountable for the decision to go to war and by holding the military accountable for the conduct of war.

The Constitutional guarantees of the rights of freedom of speech and of the press are not self-defining but are rather built upon a history of judicial interpretations that have changed over the years. Constitutional law specialists point to the framers' intent of supporting self-government as one of the principle reasons behind the First Amendment. Key to this tenet is an informed populace that has access to all ideas and information.[6] While the specific meaning of the First Amendment is not fixed and interpretations have changed with the courts, there are four points that seem to remain clear with respect to the military and the media. First, the military may regulate how its members relate to the media. Second, the media do not have a constitutional right of access. If the public does not have access then the media are not afforded any special or unique access. Third, if the media obtain information, they have the right to publish it free of censorship provided that it does not threaten national security. And fourth, while the media do not necessarily have right of access, they do have the power to bring public opinion to bear in order to obtain access.[7]

A fundamental belief of the press in pursuing access is the belief that the press was originally designed as a defender of the people against the state. In defending the citizens, the press was to operate as a watchdog of the three branches of government and to ensure competing ideas received a voice in order for the truth to prevail.[8] It is from these roots that the media perceive that military control infringes on the fundamental rights prescribed by the First Amendment.

CONTROL AND OPERATIONS SECURITY

A commander's primary concern is the security and safety of his operation and troops. Paramount is the commander's responsibility to win while incurring minimum casualties. General Norman Schwarzkopf best expresses the tribulations of a commander on the eve of the ground invasion of Iraq.

> The most difficult decisions are the ones that involve human life. I agonize over it. I wake up several times a night, and my brain is just in turmoil over these difficult decisions I have to make. Every waking and sleeping moment, my nightmare is the fact that I will give an order that will cause countless number of human beings to lose their lives. I don't

> want my troops to die. I don't want my troops to be maimed. It's an intensely personal, emotional thing for me.[9]

This is the crucial reason behind a commander's reticence to divulge information to the media. It is not the commander's fear of the purposeful release of damaging information but rather the fear of inadvertent disclosure of facts valued by the enemy that motivates many commanders' decisions in dealing with the media. The issue of controlling the media for the military boils down to minimizing operational security risk as well as the potential negative impact on troop morale. This concern presents today's commanders with a unique conundrum because they are well aware of General (Colin) Powell's admonishment, "Once you've got all the forces moving and everything being taken care of by the commanders...turn your attention to television, because you can win the battle or lose the war if you don't handle the story right."[10] It is the intuitive understanding of the significance and potential of effective media control that has turned the military toward exploring ways to convert public affairs into an information operations weapon.[11] And it is the fear of exploitation that causes the media to be distrustful of military control.

Clearly there are competing motivations in the relationship between the military and media; and one would be remiss not to mention that the media is, after all, a bottom-line, profit-driven commercial venture. In a recent Gallup survey, more than a third of the reporters polled said that their editors are more interested in sales or ratings, compared with informing the public.[12] Motivations aside, we cannot neglect the basic fact that the military is dependent upon the media to win the hearts and minds of the American public and to garner support for the military of the future.[13]

Military dependency on media support requires that the military reexamine its relationship with the media. The following case studies of past operations are instructive and begin to point the way toward improving the military/media relationship.

VIETNAM TO GRENADA

It is instructive to frame Grenada against the backdrop of military and media relations in Vietnam. The conflict in Vietnam was the first near real-time television war to be broadcast directly into the living rooms of the American public. Because of the open "limited" nature of Vietnam, it allowed the media to apply its full weight without significant restrictions. As an undeclared war, Vietnam did not have the benefits of wide popular support. In point of fact, there were few American journalists in South Vietnam during the advisor phase buildup of the early '60s. Most of the coverage came from reporters representing AP, United Press International, Reuters, and Agence France Presse.[14] This was essentially due to the perceived lack of strategic value to the U.S., few American servicemen deaths, and lack of Administration discussion on the matter. The buildup of troops following the Gulf of Tonkin resolution was accompanied by an increase in media coverage. Accreditation procedures were lax,[15] and the control was difficult due to the fragmented area of operations. The media began to sense that progress was not being made, and the Administration was without a plan to suppress negative war coverage. The Johnson administration, in response to growing negative media coverage, launched an all-out public relations

campaign in an attempt to shore up public support for the war. The Tet campaign was the decisive turning point in the war for the hearts and minds of the American public as the media beamed near real-time footage of a less then defeated North Vietnamese insurgency into American living-rooms revealing the administration's estimates as being significantly over stated. Public opinion turned against the conflict, and senior military officers perceived that television coverage was either too sensational or out of context.[16] In the forthcoming years, during the course of review and study of the conflict, "many military officers concluded that the frequently critical coverage of the war effort had been an important factor in bringing about the U.S. defeat."[17] This perception framed the military and media relationship going into the invasion of the Caribbean Island nation of Grenada in 1983.

MEDIA PLANNING AND HANDLING

The invasion of Grenada was hastily organized, expeditionary in nature, and conducted in a relatively remote area without significant communications infrastructure. These factors gave the military a high degree of advantage and control over the media. This control came in terms of military planning that excluded media coverage until the area of operations was secured. Defense Secretary (Casper) Weinberger stated that the Joint Chiefs of Staff were "...not able to guarantee any kind of safety to anyone. We just didn't have the conditions under which we would be able to detach enough people to protect all of the newsmen, cameramen, gripmen and all that."[18] Admiral Metcalf, the operational commander for the invasion, in the following quote, perhaps best illustrates the lack of planning for media involvement.

> The lapse of time between notification that I was to lead the Grenada operation to the first landing of the troops was 39 hours. In this brief period before combat, the only consideration I gave to the media occurred at about six hours into the thirty-nine. A Lieutenant Commander, a CINCLANT (Commander-in-Chief Atlantic) public affairs officer (PAO) came to me and said, '...there will be no press, do you have a problem with this?' I said I did not. My answer came from attention to urgent operational matters rather than a thought out position on the press. Was this formulation of media policy by acquisition or did I have an option? I suspect the policy was defacto, but the truth is I do not know.[19]

This lack of planning essentially excluded press coverage and was endorsed by Defense Secretary Weinberger, effectively resulting in a news blackout of the initial assault.[20] The issue of media exclusion until the area of operations was secured came to a head when three American and one British journalist chartered a fishing boat and landed on the island. They were quickly picked up and detained on Metcalf's flagship.[21]

On the third day of the invasion the official pool of the three networks was flown into Grenada. The journalists were delayed on their return flight and were unable to make the evening news deadline. The networks then were forced to use military footage in their evening broadcasts. This began the media outcry against a perception of military manipulation of the media. The Managing Editor of the Washington Post was quoted in the New York Times as saying, "I'm screaming about it because writing letters takes

too long. I think a secret war like a secret government is antithetical to an open society. It's absolutely outrageous."[22]

LESSONS LEARNED

While initial public response to military restrictions of the media was favorable, a clear majority in a poll conducted two weeks later thought the military controlled news reports more than it should have.[23] Against the backdrop of media complaints, the Chairman of The Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John Vesey, appointed a panel of military officers and journalists to review media-military relations in conflict operations. The head of the panel was Major General (ret) Winant Sidle. The specific charge to the panel was to make recommendations for future operations. The Sidle report contained the following eight recommendations:

1. Public affairs planning should be conducted concurrently with military operational planning.
2. A pool system should be employed where it is the only way to accommodate the media.
3. DoD should create a pre-established and constantly updated accreditation or notification list of correspondents.
4. Voluntary compliance with security guidelines should be a basic tenet governing media access to military operations.
5. Public affairs planning should include sufficient equipment and qualified military personnel to allow adequate coverage.
6. Planners should consider the communications requirements necessary for media coverage on a non-interference basis.
7. Planners should make provisions for the transportation needs of media representatives.
8. DoD should take steps to improve communications and mutual understanding between the media and the military.[24]

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the Sidle report was its recommendation that a pool system be created to cover operations that otherwise prohibited full media coverage. The Secretary of Defense accepted the report and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs formulated a pool comprised of:

- One news agency correspondent.
- One news agency photographer.
- One network television correspondent.
- Two television technicians.

- One network radio correspondent.
- One national newsmagazine correspondent.
- One national newsmagazine photographer.
- Three newspaper correspondents.[25]

The national media pool was to function according to the following principles:

- It was to be noncompetitive. News organizations participating in the pool agree to share all information and products with the rest of the media industry.
- Reporters must obey escorts' orders. They cannot break away from the pool.
- They cannot directly communicate with their organizations and can file only via military equipment.
- They must follow ground rules and guidelines.
- They are subject to security review.
- They are expected to ask for media opportunities.[26]

The Sidle Commission included fourteen journalists and leaned toward media privilege and public right-to-know.[27] The report was generally well received by the media and was considered to be equitable and workable.[28] Perhaps the most glaring omission in the DoD's implementation of the Sidle panel recommendations was the failure to create a system of accreditation beyond the pool system and inaction in institutionalizing arrangements to facilitate media coverage.[29]

These deficiencies became evident in December 1989 when the national media pool was activated for its first combat test in Panama.

PANAMA

The Sidle panel's second recommendation was to only use media pools when there was no other means of affording media access to the operation. In the case of Panama, the media were part of the normal infrastructure, and the area of operations was fairly well defined. Despite the Sidle panel recommendations and the fact that in-country media were well established, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney reportedly felt that the news media could not be granted open access in the chaotic first day of the operation.[30] About four hours after the invasion began the media pool arrived at Howard Air Force Base in Panama.[31]

MEDIA PLANNING AND HANDLING

Because of security, planning for the operation and media involvement was confined to the highest levels. General Powell informed his chief public affairs aide, Colonel Bill Smullen, of the decision to invade Panama, but swore him to secrecy,[32] and Secretary Cheney directed that the pool not be

activated until six hours before H-Hour.[33] The late notification of the pool and the lack of downward coordination were to become points of debate following the operation. In spite of the late pool activation, media conjecture about a possible invasion was aired by CBS and NBC. "On CBS, Dan Rather led off the news saying, 'U.S. military transport planes have left Fort Bragg...the Pentagon declines to say whether or not they are bound for Panama."[34] When the pool arrived in country, it ran into a series of logistical problems due to the lack of coordination between the close-hold planners at the Pentagon and the field commanders. The Southern Command PAO had little success in getting the media pool to the remaining newsworthy actions due to a lack of transportation.[35] PAO's tried to suggest story ideas but many of them turned out to be dry holes.[36] This merely fed growing dissatisfaction with the pool process. Several pool members joked that the pool's motto should be *semper tardis* (always late).[37]

When the operation was opened up for coverage by correspondents outside the pool, Southern Command was overwhelmed and lacked the facilities and communications to support the 300-plus media. The initial invasion received wide public support; but once the media was unleashed, prior to the capture of General Noriega, coverage turned negative and proved particularly embarrassing, as the collected U.S. Forces out in front of the Papal Nunciature where Noriega was holed up was beamed back to American homes. This situation was further exacerbated by pictures that were flashed around the world of the Vatican's ambassador being forced to stand by at gunpoint while U.S. Special Forces searched his car.[38]

LESSONS LEARNED

The necessity of the pool, delay in getting media to the action, and the lack of media logistical support were the major bones of contention in the after-action review of the operation. The pool was so unsuccessful that members labeled themselves "The Last Pool," thinking that the system would be abandoned for future operations based upon its poor showing.[39] There were no provisions made to link the pool with combat units, and field commanders received conflicting guidance on how to treat media. The Public Affairs Annex, that was suppose to be drafted concurrently along side operational planning, never made it into the Operations Plan due to security compartmentalization and problems with coordination.[40] The decision to use a stateside pool and notification timing was attributed to Secretary of Defense Cheney. His overriding concern seemed to be maintaining the security of the operation. Cheney also said that he had a "sense of special loyalty to people who cover the Pentagon," and that "it was important that there be that kind of coverage" (the only Pentagon "regular" that flew to Panama was NBC's Fred Francis).[41]

Again a review was conducted by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs. The focus was on the apparent failure of the pool concept. The review put much of the blame on Cheney's excessive concern over secrecy and made 17 recommendations to avoid a repeat failure.[42] Several of the points underscored recommendation from the Sidle panel, such as the inclusion of Public Affairs personnel early on in the planning process. In March of 1990 the Joint Chiefs of Staff issued new

planning guidance (JCS Pub 5-02.2) for Public Affairs. This guidance essentially clarified command relationships concerning public affairs issues and delegated guidance, instructions, and logistical concerns for media to the regional commanders. The failure of the military/media relationship in Panama was best articulated by General Powell, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in a message to the regional commanders:

> Commanders are reminded that military actions in Grenada and Panama demonstrated that otherwise successful operations are not total successes unless media aspects are properly handled. Both operations, although successful, produced some unfavorable and often incorrect news stories, which detracted from the operation.[43]

Secretary Cheney, in response to the review commissioned by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, seemed less conciliatory: "Again, I come back to the proposition that I'm eager to work with the press to find a way to make the pool as efficient as possible. I'm sure we can improve upon what happened in Panama, but in the final analysis my priorities are clear, and nobody should be under any illusions about that."[44] Five months later the pool would be activated in response to the invasion of Kuwait.

IRAQ

On the second of August 1990 Iraq invaded Kuwait. On 13 August, a pool of seventeen reporters accompanied by six media escorts was authorized. As the operation continued, the U.S. media team set up the Joint Information Bureau (JIB) to handle the media from the centralized location of Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. Journalists were then formed into Media Reporting Teams or mini pools. By the 30-day mark, media presence in the theater had swelled to 800 and, on the eve of the ground war, had grown to over 1,600; those actually assigned to pools totaled 131.[45] Non-pool media were severely restricted in means of travel and access and were, for the most part, dependent upon pool reports.

> Those not assigned to pools would have access to several military briefings held in Riyadh, one by CENTCOM and two others by British and Saudi commanders. In addition, unaired background briefings were provided to the media. *Otherwise, travel within the theater of operations by media reps was prohibited.* (Emphasis added)[46]

As would be expected, many conflicts occurred within the media over selection criteria for the pools. The fact that the journalist largely set up their own mechanism for selecting pool reporters created a tension within the community, as smaller publications claimed that major news outlets took the majority of key pool slots.[47] The larger pools were assigned to the Army and Marines, and the smaller pools covered the Air Force, Navy, and other events. Despite this arrangement, the media claimed wide gaps of coverage and severely restricted access to frontline units. The animosity between the military and media remnant from Vietnam seemed to be still present among several of the key commanders, as the following quote attests:

> "I'm not a great fan of the media" began one operational commander in a Dhahran pool briefing, 'and I want you to know where we stand with each other. I suppose the press

> has its purpose. But one thing is certain; you can't do me any good, and you sure as hell can do me harm.[48]

Once again, the war with Iraq presented the familiar concerns over access and control and seemed to be rooted in a mutual distrust between the media and the military.

MEDIA PLANNING AND HANDLING

For the initial deployment and the weeks following, the pool system seemed to operate to both the satisfaction of the media and the military. The media had access to a situation that it would not otherwise be able to cover (no western reporters in Saudi Arabia),[49] and the military was able to control coverage to ensure a positive spin on the deployment, despite concerns over the deployment's ability to repel an Iraqi invasion of Saudi Arabia. As media interest increased when they sensed a shift from a military defensive to offensive posture, dissatisfaction with the pool system and access began to grow. Only about 10 percent of the reporters enrolled with the JIB ever made it to the front lines.[50] A perception by the media developed that the military was controlling the press through access. Many reporters were assigned to units they did not want to cover and were distrustful of military motivations.

The area of transportation, logistic, and communications support also proved to be a source of frustration for the media. On several occasions the pools were late arriving on the scene, as in the case of the battle for Khafji, or experienced significant delays in filing their stories. By one account, only 21 percent of the pool products arrived from the front lines to Dhahran in less than 12 hours and 69 percent arrived in less than 2 days. These delays made many of the stories obsolete before they made it back to the JIB.[51]

LESSONS LEARNED

In a letter to Secretary of Defense Cheney, an Ad Hoc Media Group stated:

> We believe that the Pentagon Pool arrangements during Operation Desert Storm made it impossible for reporters and photographers to tell the public the full story of the war in a timely fashion. We believe it is imperative that the Gulf War not serve as a model for future coverage.[52]

The group put forward ten principles for future operations and focused on defining when the pool should be used and for how long. Numerous forums and media advocacy groups supported these principles. However, on the public front the call for changes was all but nonexistent. In the Gulf conflict the public supported military censorship as being more important than the media's ability to report important news by a 2 to 1 majority.[53] This response may in part be attributed to a growing jaded perspective by the public toward media motivation and the commercial aspects of media coverage. The Department of Defense chose not to respond to the Ad Hoc Media Group's call for reform of the pool system. Secretary Cheney did issue a short statement that "If we had to do it tomorrow, I would start with what we have just done." The military response was more specific. Riyadh spokesman Brigadier General Neal said, "I can tell you, the pool system is here to stay."[54]

MILITARY OPERATIONS OTHER THAN WAR

Peace operations have proliferated since 1988. In the years from 1948 to 1988 the United Nations undertook 13 peacekeeping operations. Since 1988 the UN has been involved in 36 peacekeeping missions.[55] This is due in large part to ethnic demands for self-determination. This growth was largely unexpected by a previously bipolar world community. The United Nations was caught unprepared to adequately deal with the conflicts, and the United States assumed a large burden of the intervention. In response to the growth in peacekeeping operations, the UN created the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) in 1992. In 1993, DPKO managed more than 80,000 civilian and military peacekeepers from 77 nations deployed around the world on every continent. The demand for peacekeeping operations appears to show little signs of diminishing. In fact, in 1993 the U.S. Army established the Peacekeeping Institute at Carlisle Barracks focusing on education, training, doctrine development, interagency coordination, and dialogue with the international peacekeeping and humanitarian affairs communities.

OPEN SYSTEM COMMUNICATIONS

Most peace operations are dependent upon the volunteer expenditure of vast amounts of resources by UN member nations. It is for these reasons, as well as the advances in information technology, that the media play a crucial role in shaping the world response. The swift US withdrawal from Somalia is illustrative of the media influence.

> In the newspapers of the West there were pictures of the dead bodies of American servicemen being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu, and television footage of the helicopter pilot being questioned by his Somali captors. United States President Bill Clinton ordered a further 2,000 troops to Somalia, but gave an undertaking that all American forces would be withdrawn within six months. If the deteriorating situation had not sapped the will of the American people, the sight of their soldiers being beaten and spat upon in the streets of Mogadishu was the last straw.[56]

Unlike the Gulf War and the preceding conflicts, operations in Bosnia afforded journalists an open opportunity to cover the events without censorship or direct media control by the military (NATO). Due to the fact that Bosnia was considered a limited conflict and the administration wanted to avoid a repeat of the Somalia failure by advocating limited involvement, the media was encouraged to cover the atrocities in the Balkans.[57] It was this very coverage on a world scale that brought the atrocities into the homes of the American public and forced action by the administration. Despite ongoing diplomatic efforts, the U.S. initiated humanitarian airdrops into the area in an attempt to dissuade growing public concern. This opened a wide-ranging debate in the media.

> As early as February 1993, when the United States first approved involvement in food drops, editorials were warning of a 'Bosnia Quagmire' that would force the United States to be 'sucked into a no-win, escalating military involvement.' In April 1993 an Associated Press article combined the U.S.-is-doing-something propaganda tack with the we're-heading-for-a-quagmire propaganda tack for a conflicting message: While the headline and lead proclaimed 'Clinton Determined to Act on Bosnia,' further down in the story it was pointed out there was 'a growing concern in Congress that the use of American

> military forces would get the United States bogged down in a Vietnam-style entanglement.[58]

It would seem that the absence of military control and the resulting open accessibility on the ground created the unintended consequence of the media distrusting the motivation of both the administration and military.

LESSONS FORWARD

In the most recent NATO action in Kosovo, NATO took the lead in organizing the media effort and held daily media briefings. The U.S. media and many media critics complained about the heavy-handed attempt by NATO to "spin" control often resulting in misinformation (Jamie Shea's, NATO spokes-person, reporting of the refugee convoy bombing being the most egregious example). Tight control of information coming out of Brussels had a negative impact on the Pentagon briefings. This attempted control was contrasted with Belgrade's skill in taking the media to the scenes of alleged NATO atrocities.[59] Due to the nature of the action and absence of ground forces, media access on the front lines was not an issue. However, near real-time reporting offered unfiltered coverage of the Chinese Embassy errant bombing by NATO aircraft as well as questionable stories on collateral damage suffered by non-belligerents. The war of propaganda was ably employed by the Yugoslavian administration, and NATO was forced to take the defensive.

The key observation in this case is that military operations other than war are becoming more frequent and will likely increase in number in the future. The blurring of lines of sovereignty through coalition operations, as well as the growing world community because of advances in information technology, require a new strategy and the cultivation of the military and media relationship.

FUTURE STRATEGIES

There is little doubt that the evolution of a connected world community through advances in information technologies requires a reexamination of the relationship between the military and the media. The challenges of dealing with just the American media are increased exponentially with the emergence of a global media. Within a few years it will be possible to alter video images as they are being published. Commercial satellites will be capable of filming objects as small as an automobile anywhere on the Earth (commercial satellite imagery is quickly evolving to offering access to resolution capability approaching one meter). These images, altered or not, can easily be published on the Internet and distributed instantaneously around the globe.[60] It is in this setting that we must review past practices between the military and media with an eye toward the evolving nature of conflicts, technologies, and the future relationship between the military and the media.

ACCESS AND CONTROL

The principle issue of debate between the military and media has been over access and control. To this point, this paper has gone to some length to present the military concern for maintaining

operations security and the deep abiding belief by the media that access is a fundamental right afforded by the First Amendment. The military can ensure a degree of operational security either by restricting access or controlling release through security review.

In terms of access, this paper advocates limited use of the pool system, a defined system of accreditation, and a commitment to complete military planning for media involvement. The Sidle Panel's recommendation to employ a pool system was based upon conflicts where pool management offered the only feasible means of affording the media access to the operation and stressed that it should be employed only when absolutely necessary. This seems to suggest a decision based upon logistical feasibility rather than a means of controlling the media. The sheer fact of an emerging global media is that containment through organized pools is temporary at best and presents a higher risk of accelerated, unintended consequences, once compromised in the rush to release a breaking story.

Development of an accreditation system was also a recommendation of the Sidle Panel. While the recommendation was never fully developed, it is clear that any time a pool system is employed, it likely will come under fire for exclusion of non-pool journalists. This is illustrated clearly by the group of nine news organizations and four journalists who challenged the system in the United States District Court of New York during the deployment of troops to the desert.[61] Accreditation would help create a perception of equity and fairness in pool assignments, offer a means of controlled transition to non-pool operations, and provide a screen for less scrupulous media. If managed effectively, the accreditation process could include training as a prerequisite. In a survey of news people, over 74 percent agreed that few members of the news media possessed the proper knowledge of equipment capabilities, military personnel, and the specifics of foreign military threats.[62]

Military planning for media involvement is also a recurring theme in the several series of recommendations put forth by the media since Grenada. The lack or insufficiency of planning repeatedly has borne itself out in the problems associated with logistical support once in the theater of conflict. The idea of assigning media to units and making the units responsible for logistical support seems to solve two problems and to address a third. Unit assignment of media would solve the media concern over access, solve the staff's problem of providing logistical support, and place security review at the source which, in most cases, is where the operational expertise resides.

The idea of security review smacks of censorship, which is anathema to the media. The review process can be timely and cumbersome, often resulting in missed deadlines for the media. With communications networks now spanning the globe that offer an almost tele-anything, anytime capability, censorship is neither practical nor worth the almost certain fallout to follow. In the recent peace operations of Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia, (all coalition efforts), censorship was not employed. The theory behind censorship at the source is that an educated military and media should be able to determine risks and the appropriateness of disclosing certain information. Escort officers would then serve merely a facilitator role for obtaining access and logistical support.

While the tools of access and security review remain the most obvious ways to control the media another means of control is the manipulation of both story and media, commonly referred to as 'spin" control. This type of control as the Vietnam and Kosovo cases suggest will normally occur at least one level above the combat operations level and is often obviated by media access to the front line. Never the less, "spin" is a very real type of control that erodes the very core of the military/media relationship and led to the dismal state of the relationship following the Vietnam conflict.

The issue of controlling the media through access and security review is not compatible with the speed of today's technologies. If there is a need to control the media, it should be accomplished through the concept of "security at the source," which stipulates development of a clear set of media ground rules prior to the operation. The inclusion of media in planning and clear articulation of security concerns will go a long way toward protecting operational details. In the case of the Haiti invasion, when the media was included in the invasion planning, the U.S. media did not report the obvious stream of C-130s taking troops out of Ft Bragg.[63] However, more than a checklist-approach for ensuring security is required to get at the core problem of improving the military and media relationship. A cultural change is needed. The following observation from Desert Storm is instructive in making this point.

> In retrospect, the Army suffered a self-inflicted wound because so many of its commanders were hostile to press coverage. On the other hand, the Marine Corps received more than its share of credit and glory because the Marine commander, Gen. Walt Boomer, had been the Corp's public affairs chief and knew how to deal with the media.
>
> The Marines were especially good at it' Former Defense Secretary Richard Cheney said. 'But the Marines always are. All of our senior commanders were Vietnam vets. I think a lot of them had attitudes toward the press that were shaped by those events...And the Army did not do as aggressive a job as, for example, somebody like Walt Boomer in the Marines. Boomer took Molly Moore of The Washington Post and got a great story out of it...He had her eating out of his hand.[64]

It is this very point that is at the crux of the necessary reform in the military and media relationship.

EDUCATION

An effective education program for both the military and media is crucial to evolving their relationship. For the military, this must begin at the earliest level of professional military education and be reinforced throughout career development. The creation of an exchange program at the various professional military education centers could, perhaps, yield the greatest impact. The selection process for these schools is competitive and would ensure development of interpersonal relationships that would span careers. The senior service schools would offer the greatest return, as the military screening process is highly selective at this level and often forecasts more senior positions for the attendees. While there is no "media-wide" organization to orchestrate selection of media candidates, there are plenty of avenues available to entreat into the media corps. One such avenue is the McCormick Tribune Foundation, which advocates development of the military/media relationship by conducting regular conferences with noted experts from both the media and military. As far as developing a program at the

Army War College, the most promising course of action appears to be the creation of a "media" academic chair at the college. This course of action takes a "foot-in-the-door" strategy by inviting a noted respected journalist to be part of the college staff. Once established, the chair could work toward development of a student exchange program. This idea may require some incentive, as the media are likely to assume that it is a Pentagon attempt to co-opt them. The easiest avenue at the moment is to tie media training to membership in the pool. Pool training presently consists of a briefing on what to bring and wear. Some of the news organizations are very cavalier about switching people if the pool actually is called up, as the following quote illustrates: "The last pool drill I went on, Newsweek assigned a woman reporter who had not had any of the required shots and whose passport had been turned in to the White House for an upcoming trip with Hillary."[65] Obviously, greater discipline needs to be invested into the pool process in terms of training and access.

The military should also seek internships with the media community where officers would be assigned to a media organization for an equal period of time. This should be pursued as part of a training-with-industry program at the service level. Sponsorship by a media group such as the McCormick Foundation or the Society of Professional Journalists would help to leverage the exchange. On the matter of Public Affairs Officers, the Army, as part of its personnel system overhaul (OPMS 21) is attempting to professionalize its PAO corps. The plan calls for tracking officers into the PA career field at mid career and to remain in that career field for the remainder of their time in the Army. The Air Force and the Navy have professionalized their PAO corps from the commissioning source. The Services' professionalization of the PAO corps seems to be unfortunate in terms of limiting experience with the media to select professionals rather than expanding experience within the combat arms corps.

The importance of the education of the military and media on each other's professions cannot be overstated. This is the root problem that must be repaired rather than merely addressing the symptoms of access and control. Education would also serve to build institutional memory, which is lacking in professions marked by frequent personnel changes.

CONCLUSION

A clear case can be made for the impact of advancing information technologies on the relationship between the military and the media. These advances point toward a shrinking world and evolving world community. The changes in the nature of conflict and the growth of limited coalition peacekeeping operations underscore the priority that must be placed on securing public opinion. The front of winning the hearts and minds of the American public is expanding to the world forum. It is for these reasons that the military and media must redress their relationship at the core level: an understanding of motivations and missions. The issues of access and control are only symptomatic of a lack of understanding between the two institutions. The lessons of the past, Vietnam, Grenada, Panama, and the desert, are instructive, but quickly losing their applicability in this changing environment. Recent peacekeeping operations offer a more realistic window on the future as the proliferation of media coverage expands beyond the lines of

national sovereignty. This makes the imperative for fundamental change in how the military relates to the media one of the most important tasks facing the Department of Defense in the 21st century.

> Commanders are reminded that the media aspects of military operations are important, will get national and international attention, and warrant your personal attention. General Colin Powell[66]

(WORD COUNT = 7,145)

ENDNOTES

[1]The ideas in this paragraph are based on remarks made by a speaker in the Commandant's Lecture Series.

[2]Frank Aukofer and William P. Lawerence, America's Team, the Odd Couple: A Report on the Relationship Between the Media and the Military (Nashville, TN: Freedom Forum First Amendment Center at Vanderbilt University, 1995), 29.

[3]Ibid., 32-33.

[4]"Pentagon Adopts Combat Coverage Principles," Department of Defense News Release (21 May 1992).

[5]Aukofer, 26.

[6]Nancy Ethiel, The Military and the Media: The Continuing Dialogue (Chicago, Illinois: Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation, 1993), 38.

[7]Ibid., 40.

[8]D'Val J. Westphal, From the Mai Lai Massacre to the Slaughter of Sarajevo: a Deconstruction of Media Coverage of Contemporary U.S. Military Involvements (University of New Mexico, 1995), 10.

[9]Aukofer, 24-25.

[10]Bob Woodward,. The Commanders (New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991), 155.

[11]W.C. Garrison, Information Operations and Counter-Propaganda: Making a Weapon of Public Affairs (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1999).

[12]Maj Gen John G. Meyer, <john.meyer@hqda.army.mil>, "McCormick Summary," electronic mail message to Lt Col James G. MacNeil <macneilj@awc.carlisle.army.mil>, 24 September 1999.

[13]James E Kent, Building and Maintaining Public Acceptance of and Political Support for the Military of the Future, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1999).

[14]Loren B. Thompson, Defense Beat: the Dilemmas of Defense Coverage, (New York: Lexington Books, 1991), 39.

[15]Ibid., 41.

[16]Ibid., 46.

[17]Ibid., 47.

[18]Peter Young and Peter Jesser, The Media and the Military: From the Crimea to Desert Strike, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 128.

[19]Ibid., 128-129.

[20]Ibid., 128.

[21]Ibid., 129.

[22]Ibid., 132.

[23]Ibid., 133.

[24]Thompson, 50-51.

[25]Thompson, 51.

[26]Dr. Pascale Combelles-Siegel, The Troubled Path to the Pentagon's Rules on Media Access to the Battlefield: Grenada to Today, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1996), 6.

[27]Thompson, 50.

[28]Young, 139.

[29]Thompson, 52.

[30]Westphal, 84.

[31]Ibid., 84.

[32]Woodward, 178.

[33]Young, 147.

[34]Woodward, 180.

[35]Philip W. Leon, The Military, the Media, and International Terrorism, (Carlisle Barraks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1986). Lloyd J. Matthews, Newsmen & National Defense: is Conflict Inevitable, (Washington: Brassey's, 1991), 92.

[36]Ibid., 92.

[37]Thompson, 52.

[38]Young, 153.

[39]Combelles-Siegel, 85.

[40]Leon, 95.

[41]Ibid., 97.

[42]Combelles-Siegel, 6.

[43]Aukofer, 194.

[44]Leon, 109.

[45]Young, 175.

[46]Ibid., 175.

[47]Robert E. Denton Jr., The Media and the Persian Gulf War, (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993), 14.

[48]Young, 14.

[49]Combelles-Siegel, 9.

[50]Ibid., 9.

[51]Ibid., 11.

[52]Young, 186.

[53]Ibid., 189.

[54]Ibid., 188.

[55]Robert L. McClure and James H. Patton, "Is the UN Peacekeeping Role in Eclipse?" Parameters 3 (Autumn 1999): 96.

[56]Young, 219.

[57]Combelles-Siegel, 221.

[58]Ibid., 258.

[59]Otto Kreisher <otto.kreisher@copleydc.com> , "Paper," electronic mail message to Murrell F. Stinnette <tipnav@msn.com> , 3 December 1999.

[60]Nancy Ethiel, The Military and the Media: Facing the Future, (Chicago, Illinois: Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation, 1998), 8-9.

[61]Young, 174.

[62]Aukofer, 32.

[63]Keisher, email.

[64]Aukofer, 12.

[65]Otto Kreisher <otto.kreisher@copleydc.com> , "Cross Training," electronic mail message to Murrell F. Stinnette <tipnav@msn.com> , 5 December 1999.

[66]Aukofer, 194.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aukofer, Frank and William P. Lawerence. America's Team, the Odd Couple: A Report on the Relationship Between the Media and the Military. Nashville, TN: Freedom Forum First Amendment Center at Vanderbilt University, 1995.

Badsey, Stephen. Modern Military Operations and the Media. Camberley, Surrey: Strategic and Combat Studies Institute, 1994.

Braestrup, Peter. Battle Lines: Report of the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on the Military and the Media. New York: Priority Press Publications, 1985.

Campbell, Marlys M. Media Access to United States Military Operations: Grenada and Beyond. Manhattan, KA: School of Journalism and Mass Communications, Kansas State University, 1989.

Combelles-Siegel, Pascale Dr. The Troubled Path to the Pentagon's Rules on Media Access to the Battlefield: Grenada to Today. Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1996.

Cultice, William W. Thatcher Government Censorship of British News Media in the Falkland Islands Campaign: A Model for Future United States Military Employments? Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air War College, Air University, 1990.

Daniels, Dwight C. The Military and the Media: Historical Perspective and Prospective Study of the Relationship. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri-Columbia, 1985.

Denton, Robert E., Jr. The Media and the Persian Gulf War. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993.

Dolan, Raymond J. Crisis Decision-Making: the Impact of Commercial Satellites on the Media, Military and National Leaders. Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1989.

Ethiel, Nancy. The Military and the Media: The Continuing Dialogue. Chicago, Illinois: Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation, 1993.

_____. The Military and the Media: Facing the Future. Chicago, Illinois: Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation, 1998.

Felman, Marc D. The Military/Media Clash and the New Principles of War: Media Spin. Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 1993.

Garrison, W.C. Information Operations and Counter-Propaganda: Making a Weapon of Public Affairs. Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1999.

Hammond, William M. Military and the Media in Vietnam. Washington D.C.: Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, Dept of the Army, 1990.

Hammond, William M. Public Affairs: the Military and the Media, 1962-1968. Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1988.

Hammond, William M. Public Affairs: the Military and the Media, 1968-1973. Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1990.

Hooper, Alan. The Military and the Media. Aldershot, Hants, England: Gower, 1982.

Jeffords, Susan and Lauren Rabinovitz. Seeing Through the Media: the Persian Gulf War. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994.

Kennedy, William J. The Military and the Media: Why the Press Cannot be Trusted to Cover a War. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993.

Kent, James E. Building and Maintaining Public Acceptance of and Political Support for the Military of the Future. Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1999.

Leon, Philip W. The Military, the Media, and International Terrorism. Carlisle Barraks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1986. Matthews, Lloyd J. Newsmen & National Defense: is Conflict Inevitable. Washington: Brassey's, 1991.

Meyer, John G. Maj Gen <john.meyer@hqda.army.mil>. "McCormick Summary." Electronic mail message to Lt Col James G. MacNeil <macneilj@awc.carlisle.army.mil>. 24 September 1999.

McClure, Robert L. and James H. Patton. "Is the UN Peacekeeping Role in Eclipse?" Parameters 3 (Autumn 1999): 96-105.

McCracken, Charles M. Congressional and Media Influences on the Military: a Dilemma for the Peacetime Warrior. Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1987.

Kreisher, Otto. <otto.kreisher@copleydc.com> , "Paper," electronic mail message to Murrell F. Stinnette <tipnav@msn.com> , 3 December 1999.

_____. <otto.kreisher@copleydc.com> . "Cross Training," electronic mail message to Murrell F. Stinnette <tipnav@msn.com> . 5 December 1999.

Pentagon Adopts Combat Coverage Principles." Department of Defense News Release (21 May 1992).

Ricks, Charles W. The Military-News Media Relationship: Thinking Forward. Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1993.

Sidle, Winant. Report of the CJCS Media-Military Relations Panel. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Plant, 1984.

Thompson, Loren B. Defense Beat: the Dilemmas of Defense Coverage. New York: Lexington Books, 1991.

Westphal, D'Val J. From the Mai Lai Massacre to the Slaughter of Sarajevo: a Deconstruction of Media Coverage of Contemporary U.S. Military Involvements. University of New Mexico, 1995.

Wood, Ann. The Military and the Media. Washington D.C.: Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense, Public Affairs, American Forces Information Service, 1991.

Woodward, Bob. The Commanders. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991.

Young, Peter and Peter Jesser. The Media and the Military: From the Crimea to Desert Strike. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997.