MILITARY/MEDIA DICHOTOMY AND ITS IMPACT
ON MILITARY OPERATIONS IN WEST AFRICA

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE
General Studies

by

JOHN DANSO-ANKRAH, MAJOR, GHANA ARMY
B.A., University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana, 2006
M.A., Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration, Accra, Ghana, 2010

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
2012-01

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

1. REPORT DATE *(DD-MM-YYYY)*	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED *(From - To)*
08-06-2011	Master's Thesis	AUG 2011 – JUN 2012

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE	5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
Military/Media Dichotomy and Its Impact on Military Operations in West Africa	5b. GRANT NUMBER
	5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER

6. AUTHOR(S)	5d. PROJECT NUMBER
MAJ John Danso-Ankrah	5e. TASK NUMBER
	5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	8. PERFORMING ORG REPORT NUMBER
U.S. Army Command and General Staff College ATTN: ATZL-SWD-GD Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2301	

9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
	11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Approved for Public Release; Distribution is Unlimited

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT
The military and the media are two important organizations critical to sustaining a democratic state. This study throws light on the media's perception of themselves as a neutral and powerful voice of the masses that often sees the military and her operations as an impediment to securing uncensored information. The study also highlights the military's chariness of the media which originates from frequent misrepresented information given without regard to security requirements, protection of life, and the future role and effectiveness of the military. The study offers sounds arguments to the military and the media as to why the strained relationship must change. The study reveals that years of the military's political repression led to a strain in the relationship between the military and the media. As the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) grapples with its role in the country's young democracy, the opportunity for reengaging the media and presenting the military as a unique establishment has never been better. One certainty is that the media will continuously have a great influence on the military and public opinion. The requirement for the military to collaborate and cooperate with the media in the midst of what will inexorably be complex and confusing situations is what will reduce the dichotomy.

15. SUBJECT TERMS
West Africa, Ghana, Media, Military, Freedom of Speech, Professionalism

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT	b. ABSTRACT	c. THIS PAGE			19b. PHONE NUMBER *(include area code)*
(U)	(U)	(U)	(U)	80	

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98)
Prescribed by ANSI Std. Z39.18

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

Name of Candidate: Major John Danso-Ankrah, Ghana Army

Thesis Title: Military/Media Dichotomy and Its Impact on Military Operations in West Africa

Approved by:

_____, Thesis Committee Chair
Sharon L. Scott, M.A.

_____, Member
Donald B. Connelly, Ph.D.

_____, Member
Dallas Eubanks, M.A.

Accepted this 8th day of June 2012 by:

_____, Director, Graduate Degree Programs
Robert F. Baumann, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

MILITARY/MEDIA DICHOTOMY AND ITS IMPACT ON MILITARY
OPERATIONS IN WEST AFRICA, by Major John Danso-Ankrah, 80 pages

The military and the media are two important organizations critical to sustaining a democratic state. This study throws light on the media's perception of themselves as a neutral and powerful voice of the masses that often sees the military and her operations as an impediment to securing uncensored information. The study also highlights the military's chariness of the media which originates from frequent misrepresented information given without regard to security requirements, protection of life, and the future role and effectiveness of the military. The study offers sounds arguments to the military and the media as to why the strained relationship must change. The study reveals that years of the military's political repression led to a strain in the relationship between the military and the media. As the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) grapples with its role in the country's young democracy, the opportunity for reengaging the media and presenting the military as a unique establishment has never been better. One certainty is that the media will continuously have a great influence on the military and public opinion. The requirement for the military to collaborate and cooperate with the media in the midst of what will inexorably be complex and confusing situations is what will reduce the dichotomy.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

AFNEWS   Armed Forces News

DPR   Department of Public Relations

GAF   Ghana Armed Forces

ILLUSTRATIONS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The military and the media are two institutions in West African countries that have gained prominence since West African states gained independence from the colonialists. They continue to impact greatly on governance in contemporary West African states as both institutions undergo profound change. West Africa is the western most region of the continent of Africa. Geopolitically, West Africa comprises 16 countries, namely: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

Figure 1.   Map of West Africa

*Source:*Google Maps, "Map of West Africa," http://www.google.com/search?q=west+africa+map&h (accessed 20 March 2012).

Most of these countries gained independence in the early 1960s, and had radical leadership that fought for and governed at independence. One unique feature of West Africa are the ethnic groups. Various ethnic groups cut across the newly created states after independence. For example, as shown in figure 2, the Wolof, Serer, and Tukolor occupy most of the territory between Senegal and Gambia. The Mende, or Madingoes, inhabit most of the region between the Atlantic and the Upper Niger. The Kur are found in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Akans are found in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire, and Ewes stretch across Ghana, Togo, and Benin. Those who speak Gur, like the Mossi and Dagomba, inhabit between Ghana, Burkina Faso, and Mali. Hausas are mostly in Northern Nigeria and Niger, while Fulani nomads spread widely across the entire area. This ethnic diversity had a significant bearing on the transfer of conflicts in the Sierra Leone-Liberia-Cote d'Ivoire Region in the 1990s.
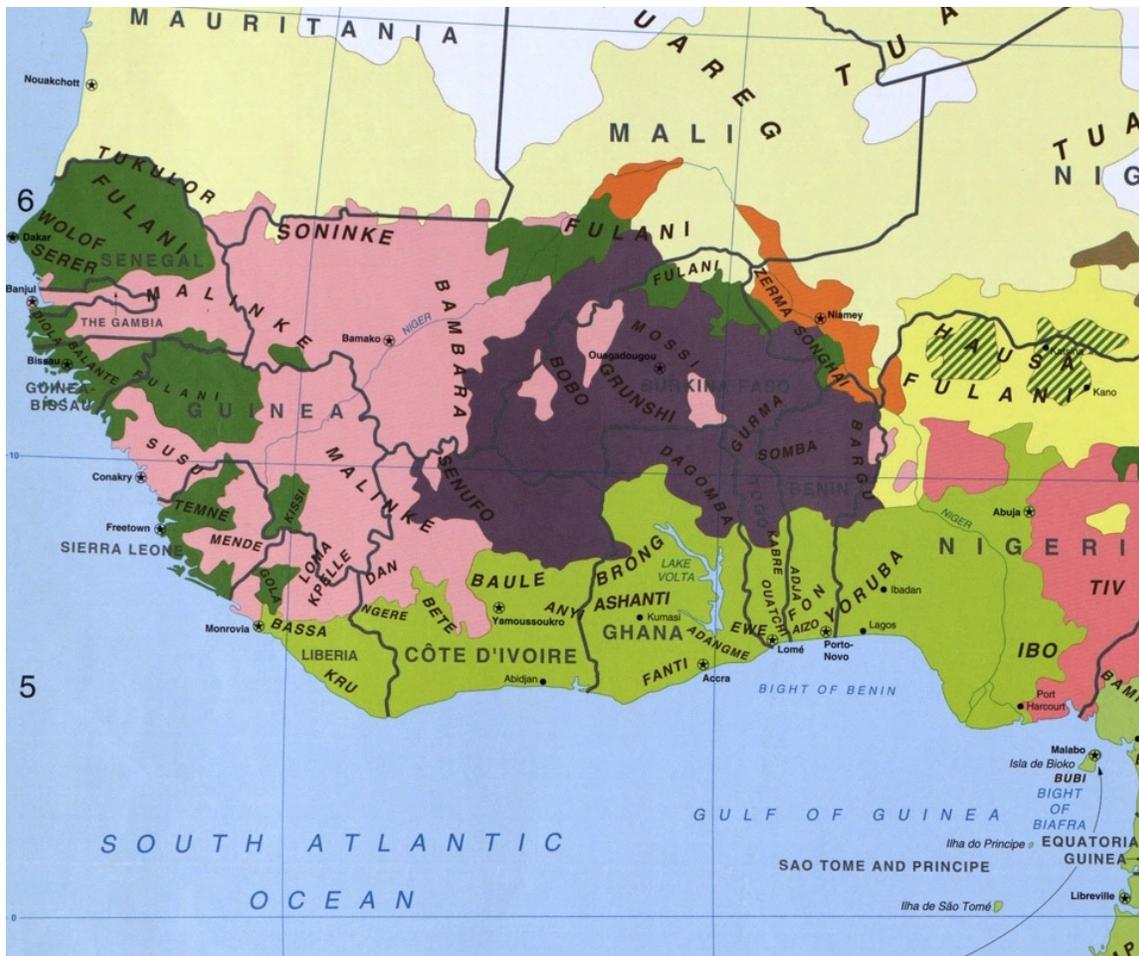
Figure 2.   West Africa Ethno-Linguistic Groups

*Source:*Google Maps, "West Africa Ethno-Linguistic Groups," http://www.google.com/
search?q=west+africa+map&h (accessed 20 March 2012).

The politicization of the military has had a deep impact on the structure of the

military and performance of its operations. Between 1958 and 1993, 93 military coups

took place on the continent, with only four in North Africa. The exception is Senegal,

which has never experienced a coup d'état in West Africa (Mwakikagile 2001, 17). It can

be said that the conditions conducive to military intervention in national politics were

directly and indirectly planted in the colonial period. For instance, recruitment purposes

were biased towards individual ethnic group(s) because they possessed so called warrior tendencies. Also, the process of politicization and socialization, introduced political ideas and social values that prescribed the main role of the army as a defender of the ruler rather than the ruled (Rukanshagiza 1995).Therefore, the military institutions lacked a clear definition of the state and what role they, as an institution, were supposed to play in it.

Like the military, "broadcasting in Black Africa[1] was created by the colonial powers chiefly for their own purposes. And broadcasting on the continent has [until recently] always been chiefly state-controlled, heavily government subsidized, and urban based usually emanating from the capital cities" (Bourgault 1995, 42). The history of broadcasting in West Africa can be traced back to the 1930s. In 1932, the "British Broadcasting Corporation established the Empire Service designed to serve the colonies [including those in] Africa. This service relayed the [news] from Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia and from Lagos, Nigeria" (Bourgault 1995, 42). For the French colonies in West Africa, "French broadcasting begun in earnest in Senegal with the establishment of Radio Dakar in 1939. Its mission was to provide radio coverage for the francophone countries in the region" (Gibbons 1974, 113).

In both French and British colonies, radio was used as a way to propagate the ideologies of the colonialists to the colonized. Between independence and the 1990s, most West African countries either had one-party states or were under a military regime. "National media were charged with disseminating this message of unity and with promoting the appearance of national consensus. To achieve these ends, governments

---

[1]African countries south of the Sahara desert.

kept broadcasting under tight control" (Bourgault 1995, 42). According to A.J. Tudesq, Africa inherited a double heritage. It adopted an European style of government complete with political parties and constitutions, while also embracing a penchant of secrecy necessitated either by clandestine activities launched against the colonialists, or against potential rivals for national power in the new states. "This double heritage forced new African governments to subjugate information policies to the political exigencies of the nation state" (Tudesq 1983, 92).

The political climate in West Africa is gradually changing. As of 2011,[2] there were no military regimes in the region. The option for elected governments has become the norm. The media has assumed more prominent roles of feeding the populace with information, which they assume to be relevant. The media reach has expanded greatly and its ability to reach a large percentage of the population makes it a great tool for disseminating information. Since information and communication are vital in building trust and ensuring the support of the local population for any military operation, the role of the media becomes very critical in soliciting both the local and international support for military operations.

The militaries are getting used to operating under civilian control while executing its operations that span the provision of both internal and external security. In contemporary times, the range of military operations can span internal security, peacekeeping, limited and general war. The Ghana Army, for instance, has previously distinguished itself in United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations in places such as the

_____

[2]In early 2012, coup d'eats took place in Mali and Guniea Bissau. This suggests that the probability for winding back the gains of democracy in other West African countries cannot be ruled out.

Congo, Kosovo, Rwanda, Lebanon, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, Sudan, among others. The Ghana Army is also deeply involved in assisting the Ghana Police in internal security operations in the country. These operations, particular the latter, brings the Ghana Army in direct contact with the civilian population. Whiles the Ghana Police are quite comfortable with dealing with the public and the media, the military are not. It is important for the Ghana Army to reach out to the citizens through public relations and sensitization campaigns about their role. This is where the military needs the media.

Military operations are often guided by certain principles of war and during planning, military commanders are diligent not to violate any principle in the conduct of their operations. Principles of war generally summarize all the principles of the various military operations. According to the Land Warfare Aide-Memoire, there are 10 principles of war, which are, "selection and maintenance of the aim, maintenance of morale, offensive action, security, surprise, concentration of force, economy of effort, flexibility, cooperation and sustainability" (Land Warfare Aide-Memoire 2008, 165).Gradually, a new fundamental principle of war has surfaced. This new principle of war, the author opines, is "dealing with the media."

This new principle resulted from "the rapid advancement in technology coupled with the proliferation and growth of television and radio news in the 1960s" (Felman 1992, v). Since the 1960s, "the gruesome reality of warfare has been brought to individuals in the comfort of their living rooms on daily and nightly newscasts" (Felman 1992, v). The media has now changed the delivery of government policy making, and it is now almost impossible to project the military instrument of national power without

reflecting on how it would be presented in the news media (Felman 1992, v). The media

today not only represents the voice of the people and presents their perceptions of

governance, but also informs them of the government's agenda and the role of the

populace in making it successful. "While 'freedom of the press'[3] gives journalists free

rein to criticize or provide alternative views to government activities, there is evidence

that reliance on official sources and competition censors the resultant news product"

(Kracke 2004, 23). The role of the media in transporting information from the battlefield

to the citizens cannot be overstated. Thus, there is the need to facilitate a cordial

relationship between the media and the military. This has, however, been a challenge for

the military.

       The military finds it difficult to come to terms with the fact that media scrutiny is

now part of governance enablers. Training the military for combat includes teaching and

understanding the principles of war. These principles, among other things, provide a

worksheet as well as a reference on which some vital decisions are made in combat.

"Communicating with the media during a crisis often creates a combat type environment

with distinct battlefield characteristics. The media can attack, put a spokesman on the

defensive and confuse the organization with misinformation creating an environment of

chaos and uncertainty" (Woodyard 1998, 22). Commanders who have had such

unpleasant experiences have inspired a number of practitioners to develop principles of

communication in crisis.

---

[3]The freedom of communication and expression through various mediums
including electronic and print.

There are eight principles of crisis communication. These are: "centralize information flow, develop a crisis team, define objectives, contain the problem, show concern, assume the worst will happen answer what happened and use direct communication" (Umansky 1994, 31). Since the military and media will continue to conflict because of a lack of understanding of the relevance of each other's roles, military personnel need to understand these principles of crisis communication and apply them effectively in their operations. Every military's training requires them to train using a set of techniques, tactics, and procedures to meet their mission essential tasks. In most West African countries, the roles of the military brings soldiers directly into contact with the local population, just like the police, and it is thus imperative that the military is adept at dealing with the media who would always seek to inquire about issues involving them.

As of October 2011, the military in Liberia and Sierra Leone are under reconstruction as a result of internal regime change. These militaries have been reformed to incorporate the former "rebels," and are being retrained to fit their role in the new democratic system. The military in Cote d'Ivoire is yet to reestablish its prominence after a bitter political struggle that brought in a new government in 2011. Recent revolutionary waves of demonstrations and protests in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya have brought into focus the varying roles of the military as well as public perception and expectation. The military, in all cases, strives not to be entangled in the political nuances of their country. Nonetheless, the recent Arab Spring saw the military deeply involved in an attempt to manage the crises and this, though debatable, made them very politically aligned.

The media, in their reporting, often tries to draw military leadership and their followers into partisan issues that have the potential of affecting their professional and

national integrity. Freedom of the press is highly valued in Ghana and is viewed as a necessary condition for an enlightened citizenry. The media tends to view military officials as doing what they can to avoid coverage of anything that will put the armed forces in a bad light, while the military view the media as a self-aggrandized group of journalists driven by market pressures, and only interested in their continuous survival through their vocation. There is more than a germ of truth to both sides. In Ghana, misrepresentation of military activities as well as restrictions of the media's access to information, has been a source of tension for a long time. "An examination of the relationship between the military and the media may provide a valuable perspective on how to capitalize on this relationship and provide greater input into framing the news that reaches the public and policy makers" (Kracke 2004, 23). Military commanders cannot afford to ignore the way their operations would be portrayed in the news media. This essential consideration constitutes an emerging principle of war that should be "dealing with the media."

Problem Statement

The West Africa sub-region has been notoriously popular because of the numerous political upheavals that followed states after attaining independence in the early 1960s. At independence, the militaries of these countries were in their formative years. The militaries' roles in the newly independent nation-states were still being forged internally and institutionally as of the 1970s. This notwithstanding, most of the newly independent states did not experience a smooth transition in political power, but were overthrown by military coup d'états. Ghana has, after half a century of independence, experienced intermittent military intervention, which brought in its wake restrictions on

the media in accessing military related information. Repeated military interventions and political instability in West Africa have resulted in an extended gap between the military and the media. Both parties have been unable to nurture a basic understanding of the role of each other, and hence forge a reasonable coexistence through realistic collaboration. The military in West Africa continues to deny the media access to military operations, and the media also continues to infringe on the security of military operations. Bridging the rift created is a necessity to positively enhance future military operations. The governance situation is no different in other West African countries like Nigeria and Togo. Countries like Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Cote d'Ivoire are still struggling to find their place in the new democratic political climate. There are several security sector reforms underway and press freedom is gradually developing. Since 1992, Ghana has been governed under a new constitution and had five smooth transitions of political power without any bloodshed. Most of the countries in West Africa look up to Ghana as a beacon of democracy and a shining example to follow. Nonetheless, Ghana also has problems in the area of military-media relationship that needs to be addressed.

Proposed Research Question

How can the military enhance its operations by developing a viable military–media relationship?

Secondary Research Questions

1. What are the missions and roles of armed forces?

2. What principles of war affect media relationships?

3. What is the role of the military in a democracy?

4. What is the role of the media in a democracy?

5. What is the current media landscape and how does it interact with the current military?

6. What are the contemporary challenges in military-media relationship in West Africa?

7. What are the lessons that could enhance a cordial and rewarding co-existence between the military and the media?

Significance of the Study

The military and the media are major power blocks of governance in some West African countries. Reduced antagonism towards each other, as well as a peaceful co-existence is likely to ensure a sustainable democracy. The study will contribute to existing knowledge and current discussions on military-media relations. It will also assist the GAF and the media in formulating policies on their interaction. It is hoped that the GAF will adopt training strategies that will help her influence her partners in the West African sub-region as Ghana contributes in peacekeeping operations and security sector reforms in other West African countries.

Assumptions

This thesis is based on the assumption that West African countries will continue to embrace liberal democracy as the accepted form of governance and that the military will continue to play a key role in the internal security of the states.

<u>Limitations</u>

The analysis of this research will be centered on Ghana and West Africa. This allows the focus of the thesis to be tightened within what is an extensive and far-reaching topic area. There are limited publications available on the media situation in West Africa. Some historical perspectives would thus not be available.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter combines various relevant literature on military and media in relation to their roles and inter-relations. The literature highlights the expectations of the populace of their armed forces as well as their media and how their relations have an effect on governance. Upon filtering the questions for each area of research, this study will address the literature and how it is grouped to offer both the media perspective and the military operations perspective.

Mission and Role of an Armed Force

Since time immemorial, the armed forces have served as a role model for other institutions because of its highly efficient organization and setup. The sole rationale of armed forces in a democracy is to keep the peace and guard the democracy. Edmunds in his book, *What are Armed Forces For: The Changing Nature of Military Roles in Europe*, states that the term "Armed Forces" broadly applied can incorporate a number of different institutions and organizations associated with application of coercive force, including for example, not only the military but also the police or private security companies (Edmunds 2006, 1). In this research however, the term applies to the Army only. Morgenthau mentions that "in realist traditions of international relations, the role of military power is clear. In an environment of international anarchy, states are forced to rely on their own resources in order to ensure their continued existence" (Morgenthau 1973, 129). Therefore, armed forces exist to defend the state against real or potential external threats, and as a coercive tool to promote and protect national interests abroad.

Edmunds thus asserts that, as "the principal, and frequently the sole, state agency responsible for the security of all citizens and national territory against external physical threats; other responsibilities, either external or internal, are purely contingent on their actions" (Edmunds 2006, 1). Edmunds further remarks that armed forces remain key actors in addressing national, global and regional insecurities:

> However, the rapidly changing nature of contemporary security issues has necessitated a need for a reassessment of the role that armed forces as traditionally constituted, can play in addressing them, and even whether they are the most appropriate organizations to do so. Armed forces in Europe in a response to this new challenge have taken on new roles. Many of these new roles though a loose association with the traditional core functional imperative of the defence of the state from external threat have also broadened the armed forces institutional remit to incorporate a number of new or at least re-emphasized tasks to include expeditionary missions for war-fighting and peacekeeping purposes, internal security and policing missions, and an increased emphasis on nation-building and domestic military assistance roles. (Edmunds 2006, 1)

Recently, armed forces are receiving a lot of attention because of their role not only in enabling political stability, but also in the economic development of states in post-authoritarian or war-torn societies. Restructuring of the armed forces to meet these challenges is what is now being pursued as "security sector reform" in countries like Liberia and Sierra Leone. In *The Military Transition: Democratic Reform of the Armed Forces*, Serra Narcis explains how the relationship between the armed forces and politicians can change from authoritarian regimes to democratic ones. She mentions that "the loyalty of the military to democratic government is a basic feature of a stable democracy" (Serra Narcis 2010, 30). This loyalty can be secured with the implementation of military ethos and professional profile. Narcis further states that it is the duty of the executive to determine the missions of the armed forces with the support of the legislature, whenever possible. "Missions linked to internal security should be short lived,

not permanent, supported by the police, carried out under civil control, and subject to civil legislation" (Serra Narcis 2010, 30). A no- go area in internal security missions is that of "under-taking actions requiring or justifying internal intelligence, surveillance or information of the citizenry (Serra Narcis 2010, 30). This implies that it is not the duty of the armed forces to do the work of the media in informing the people. Nonetheless, in military operations, it sometimes becomes necessary for the armed forces to take up this role too and they have the capability to do so.

There is no argument about the fact that the role of the armed forces in any country is to provide for external security. However, it is however often argued that "it is a serious mistake for the military to perform non-external security roles such as the provision of education, building of roads, providing for public health and public works" (National Research Council 1991, 45). "The consequences of using the military in domestic, social and political conflicts are a threat to the rule of law" (Millett 2009, 163). This is debunked by other arguments that the use of the military in civic action is appropriate in aiding internal security. "By taking an active part in promoting socio-economic progress, armies could help redress the causes of internal unrest and win popular approval for both themselves and their governments" (Birtle 2006, 160).The most important thing is that such actions should not be carried out for the benefit of special interest groups and should not exceed the capacity of the local society to absorb and maintain them.

Linda Alexander Rodríguez, on the other hand thinks, "the legitimate role of the military in contemporary society is expanding into areas such as technological research, and development, communication, search and rescue, fighting the narcotics traffic,

countering terrorism, arms control and peacekeeping" (Rodríguez 1994, 212). In *Rank and Privilege: The Military and Society in Latin America*, she states that this expanding role should be properly understood and welcomed rather than feared. Richard Millett states in his book, *Latin American Democracy: Emerging Reality or Endangered Species?* that "one of the pillars of a democratic state is the full, democratic control of the armed forces. [this control] implies a power relation that, under a democratic regime, obliges the armed forces to accept their subordination to the civilian government and its policies" (Millett 2009,163). There is no doubt that the military has a positive reinforcing effect on the establishment and maintenance of democratic values in a society. Clyde Wilcox in his book, *Political Science Fiction*, emphasizes that the military performs the roles of defense of the state from external threat and defense of the government from internal threat. The former he says is "conducive to liberty and democracy for it protects and nurtures society. Without a military force to protect it, democratic society will fall prey to neighboring expansionist authoritarian states. The later role is obviously not conducive to liberty and democracy" (Wilcox 1997, 203).

Recent events in Cote d'Ivoire, Tunisia, and Egypt have put the role of the military in the internal affairs in a country into focus. The military are not politicians as they are an appendage of the executive arm of government for protecting the territorial integrity of a country as well as instruments for external aggression. The military complement the work of other state security agents such as the police, the secret service, customs, immigration and the prisons. Basically, the military are trained to fight wars to safeguard the territorial integrity and sovereignty.

Principles of War Affecting Military-Media Relationship

Alberts and Hayes in *Command Arrangements for Peace Operations*, note that "no single list of principles of war has gained universal acceptance due to a variety of reasons (ranging from the genuine complexity of military operations and the diversity of cultures within which the military art is practiced to simple egotism and the idiosyncrasies of leading authors)" (Alberts and Hayes 2012). Alberts and Hayes put forward a fairly standard list found in the US Army's basic field manual of 1945, which identifies seven principles as:

Objective: All military activities must be focused on accomplishing the assigned mission or objective, which must, therefore, be clearly stated and understood by military leaders, staff, and personnel at all levels.

Simplicity: Because of the "friction" and "fog" of war as well as the difficulty of coordinating actions across time and space, military plans should be as simple as possible and must be within the capability of the forces involved. When coalition forces are involved, this also includes transparency; making sure all elements of the force understand the plans fully.

Unity of Command: Divided command arrangements multiply the likelihood of confusion about the objective and the synchronization of forces as well as inviting multiple agendas in military councils.

Offensive: Passive military operations allow the adversary to select the time, place, and terms of combat; permitting him to maximize his force's potential. Gaining control of selected aspects of the situation or accomplishing missions are both more

likely and more efficient when the initiative is seized and the terms of battle are dictated to the enemy.

Concentration of Superior Force (sometimes termed Economy of Force): No military organization can expect to have adequate forces to overwhelm the enemy in all places at all times. Superior command and control uses a variety of techniques to focus military pressure at critical times and places on the battlefield or within the campaign. This requires the ability to understand terrain, to know or infer from doctrine the disposition and activity of enemy forces, and to maneuver effectively.

Surprise: However achieved, surprise confers massive advantage. Whether it consists of attacking along an unexpected axis, using weapons unknown to the enemy, adopting tactics that are unfamiliar, employing feints, deception operations, or psychological warfare mission accomplishment is enhanced when surprise is achieved.

Security: Commanders must also prevent their own forces from being surprised and take calculated risks rather than gambling their forces. Hence, security is vital. It ranges from counterintelligence to protect battle plans, and communications security to surveillance plans and flank security elements.

"Security" thus becomes the most vital principle of war insofar as the military-media relationship is concerned. This is the reason the military would shield its battle plans from the media before determining a time that it seems fit for dissemination. The media on the other hand, thinks the timing of dissemination is at their calling and this is where the tensions arise. Security is often times interpreted as secrecy and Morse notes this in his book, *Methods of Operations Research*. He states that "the problem of secrecy, encompassed in the military term "security" will always nearly obtrude in operations

research in any field and the worker must be prepared to cope with them intelligently and not emotionally" (Morse 2003, 7). Anglesi also mentions that:

> There is nothing of greater importance in military operations than secrecy. [The military should] never suffer the exultation in the hoped-for success, nor apprehension, nor familiarity, nor affection, to induce [them] to communicate a knowledge of your design, or of the enterprise with which you are entrusted, to persons who ought not to be made acquainted with it. (Anglesi 1804, 202)

Killenberg states in *Public Affairs Reporting Now: News of, by and for the People*, that "the need for secrecy led to several journalists being turned back during the operations in Granada. Complaints by the press about lack of access so that they could judge for themselves what they wanted to know, led to the formation of a commission that recommended a rotation pool of reporters to cover future military operations. The press was to be sworn to secrecy until the military lifted any news embargo" (Killenberg 2007).

Foch's book, *The Principles of War*, is an excellent starting point when reviewing what factors and guidelines that men in arms must take into consideration when planning for and executing military operations. Foch, who was a Commander of the Allied Armies on the Western Front during the final campaigns of World War I, presents the picture that War is so important that it must be studied in detail, and it is for this reason that nations have "War Colleges." Foch emphasizes the theories that one needs to understand and execute in order to be victorious in war. These include having large numbers, better armament, bases of supplies, and the advantage of terrain. Foch enumerated a number of principles such as economy of power, freedom of action, protection, intellectual discipline, strategic surprise and strategic discipline. These, he stated, must not be violated in order to be successful. Foch related his principles mostly to the Napoleonic

wars in the organization and disposition of forces. In modern battles, Foch opined that "the decisive attack in the battle of today is not to be sought indifferently on any point yet it can be imposed on us, or as an opportunity suddenly arise, in spite of all that theory may teach" (Foch 1970, 372). Foch's principles, amongst others, have over time been reframed into modern day principles of war as is contained in present day military manuals and aide memoires. Foch, however, fails to highlight the fluidity of the operational environment as directed by political interference and the demands of accountability by the people through the media. These are very relevant and do actually affect the modern day battle environment. This study takes advantage of Foch's principles of war as it relates to contemporary times and the relevance of other factors of the modern day battle environment. It is important to consider that the media reinforces social values, beliefs, and behaviors that become internalized by the viewers and listeners. It is expected that GAF and other militaries in West Africa would shape their activities by the demands of the population as expressed through the media.

Carl von Clausewitz's, *Principles of War*, is based almost entirely on the experience of Frederick the Great and the wars with revolutionary France and Napoleon prior to 1812. Clausewitz emphasizes general principles for defense, offense, principles governing the use of troops, principles of the use of terrain, and the principles of strategy among which is to gain public opinion. Clausewitz asserts that to achieve gaining public opinion, one must never waste time. Unless important advantages are to be gained from hesitation, it is necessary to set to work at once. With this speed, a hundred enemy measures are nipped in the bud, and public opinion is won most rapidly. Though Clausewitz never mentions anything about relations with the media, it is important to

note that in contemporary times, public opinion is gained or lost by the activities of the media. Thus, it is important that military commanders be "audacious and cunning in [their] plans, firm and persevering in their execution, determined to find a glorious end, [for fate to] crown [their] brow with a shining glory" (Clausewitz 2003, 69).

<center>Role of the Media in a Democracy</center>

The media refers to various means of mass communication considered as a whole, including television, radio, magazines, and newspapers, together with the people involved in their production such as editorialists, columnists, and reporters. Although the media may still be assessed as relatively weak in some West African countries, since independence they have come to play a much more important role than ever before. The media is still in the process of demonstrating sufficient effectiveness as public watchdogs and agenda setters, and have succeeded in creating new communication arenas for people who have previously felt intimidated or silent. New democracies in West Africa are often quick to want to compare press freedoms and the role of the press with advanced democracies in Europe and the US. These states have evolved over time and endured democracy for well over 200 years. Pickard, for instance, notes that "the US media system did not result from a series of checks and balances. Rather, the system developed from elite driven policies, often against the will of broad swaths of Americans" (Pickard 2008, 10). About radio, Pickard states that "future of [the United States] democracy–the only form of government in which free radio can survive, depends on an educated and well informed America. Radio can be used to enable an educated and well informed people because it has the power and the audience, but it remains to be seen if it has the will" (Pickard 2008, 10). The media in West Africa is gaining audience, will, and power.

With a very high illiteracy rate (of the 10 countries with the world's lowest recorded adult (15 and older) literacy rates, seven are in West Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Sierra Leone) (Mohammed 2009). It remains to be seen how discerning and informed the people can be.

Communication shapes democratization, and the extent to which political actors allow freedom of expression will influence the behaviour of the media personnel. Hydén and Leslie state that "the emergence of privately owned newspapers in recent years puts forth two important aspects in the democratization process (probing government policies and behaviour, and fostering a discursive public realm, in which issues of national or local concern are ventilated in an open and free fashion).In previous decades, West African governments had the notion their actions and activities were beyond public scrutiny. Thus, all necessary precautions were taken to ensure that government files were not accessible to members of the public, least of all researches or journalist" (Hydén and Leslie 2003, 12).

There is no doubt that modern information technology is shaping both media ownership patterns and cultural tastes, and at the same time being subject to political manipulation by either state or societal actors. "Similarly, an expansion may enhance the confidence of citizens to participate in the political process, but it may also create its own backlash resulting in politically more repressive measures. The anticipated causal links, therefore, do not just go one direction but several" (Hydén and Leslie 2003, 12).

In Megan Boler's, *Digital Media and Democracy: Tactics in Hard Times*, he attempts to define who has the power to define reality. He notes that the world wide web epitomized by blogs, viral videos, and YouTube, creates new pathways for truths to

emerge and makes possible new tactics for media activism. He further states that

"democracy needs the media to report the news, without fear or favor. Citizens need to

know what the government is doing and the press needs the freedom to tell them. No

respectable news organization has any interest in endangering soldiers or intelligence

agents, much less compromising national security. Only a news organization that bravely

reports what it knows rather than what it is told is acceptable to say, can act as a check on

government"(Boler 2008,173). However, it must be noted that technology goes as far as

those who understand it and use it, and this unfortunately allows for agenda setting by

government functionaries, mainstream media, and other citizens who have access to

technology and have turned themselves into citizen-journalist.

> The problem in many new democracies is that journalists who once had to toe the single-party line now equates independence with opposition. Because they speak out against the government they say they are independent. In a free market democracy, the people, that is, the vote buying public ultimately decide as to how their press should act. If at least a semblance of truth in the public service does not remain a motivating source for the mass media of the future, neither free journalism nor true democracy has much hope. (A Free Press 1997)

> Public attitudes will be hard to turn around, and perhaps impossible if the media

themselves do not reexamine their behavior. The issue of media integrity is one of great

concern to the military because of perceived incorrect reporting. Cheema, in his book,

Building Democratic Institutions: Governance Reform in Developing Countries, which

brings together a wide variety of recent scholarship on democratization processes

mentions that:

> the press and the mass media are the most important instruments to ensure the transparency of government actions. Citizens' understanding of government's policies and programs is enhanced through reporting by the press about executive decisions, parliamentary debates, and discussions in various political parties. Governments need the press and the mass media to enhance their legitimacy

among citizens, to gauge the concerns and demand of the people. (Cheema 2005, 230)

<u>Media Landscape and Their Interactions with the Military</u>

In the book, *Distorting Defense: Network News and National Security*, Aubin arouses one's interest in the media's coverage of defense issues. Even though Aubin's book does not address the military-media relationship specifically, it delves into how the media has covered defense-related issues. Aubin presents an analysis of the content of evening broadcasts of major media networks, such as NBC and CBS. His analysis covers defense related issues during the Reagan, Bush, and Clinton administrations. He posits that since colonial times, the American people and their media have been very suspicious and even to some extent, hostile to defense related issues. Aubin's analysis revealed that about 32 percent of the evening news coverage on defense issues was problematic. Aubin defined problematic coverage as "over emphasis on drama or bad news at the expense of substance and context, lack of knowledge on the part of the correspondent, lack of context as a result of brevity, general lack of balance or context, loaded labeling or advocacy; and bad news judgment" (Aubin 1998, 31). Juxtaposing his historical review with the content analysis on problematic coverage of defense issues, one observes that the US military public affairs needs to do a lot to tell the military story the right way. This is not limited to the US alone. Hurdles permeate wider societies, especially young democracies such as Ghana. The media will continue to be very critical of military operations because they are the agents of collecting, interpreting, and transmitting information to worldwide audiences and, therefore, have tremendous power to affect the outcome of military operations. Aubin, however, was unable to capture this vital relationship between the media and the military. This is the aspect that this study seeks to

reveal by drawing on some of the characteristics of the media environment as put forth by Aubin.

The subject of the book, *Media at War: The Iraq Crisis*, by Tumber and Palmer is the media and their coverage of the Gulf War. The media coverage was both an integral part of the crisis and public opinion. For instance, even television news organizations did not agree on the title for their coverage. As BBC called it "Iraq War;" CNN, "War in Iraq;" ITN, "War on Saddam;" Sky, "War on Iraq;" and Fox News, "Operation Iraqi Freedom;" which was the official military name of the operation (Tumber and Palmer 2004, 1). The book reveals that more than 3,000 journalists were assigned to Iraq with more than 500 embedded with various military units, and they were thus the most significant aspects of the communication scenario of Gulf War II (which in fact is another media connotation of the war in Iraq). The requirement for embedded journalists had roots in the Second World War as well as the Vietnam War and the Falklands War. Tumber and Palmer note that the roles of propaganda in these wars were so great that the media could not longer be sidelined in combat situations. The embedded journalists in the Gulf War were given special rules by which to operate. However, because of lack of trust, the US Department of Defence, for instance, suspicious of journalists revealing tactical military ploys, introduced "arbitrary and capricious" reporting windows (Tumber and Palmer 2004,1). The book throws light on how journalists worked to gain an insight into the news gathering process in time of war. The book analyzes the pattern of media attention to the various elements of the unfolding crisis, seeking to determine which elements of the crisis were seen as relevant for news purposes, and which were excluded or marginalized. This book also examines the controversy about the existence or non-

existence of weapons of mass destruction, and the subsequent row that developed

between the British government and British Broadcasting Company (BBC) over the

reporting of this (Tumber and Palmer 2004, 1). This issue assumed enormous importance

because it struck the heart of the government's rationale for going to war. This book

tickles our minds as to whether the "embedded" media truly reflects the eyes and ears of

the military, or merely the puppets of the executive. It also lends credence to the fact that

the media, through their actions become participants in both the military and political

war. This paper seeks to present the need to exploit the inevitable relationship between

the military and the media to make them project the military and her operations in the

right light.

<center>Challenges of Media–Military Relations</center>

Tim Allen and Jean Seaton's, *The Media of Conflict*, sheds light on how the

international media's coverage of recent wars, more often than not, brings about

misconceptions of situations and thereby makes them complex. Allen and Seaton are

concerned with ethnic stereotyping and its effects which make one not think of the static,

primordial, or natural phenomenon of ethnicity. This book highlights the fact that media

reporting on ethnicity can lead an armed force into an uprising. Allen and Seaton state

that "ethnicity seems to be the air we breathe so that it becomes increasingly difficult to

decide whether news reporters cover the global phenomenon of ethnicity or whether

ethnicity is the covering in which events are globally wrapped"(Allen and Seaton 1999,

65). In recent times, ethnicity is becoming deeply entrenched and made more relevant in

the Ghanaian military. If unchecked, the growing prominence of the media in Liberia,

<center>26</center>

Sierra Leone, and Cote d' Ivoire could lead to the same developments. This has the potential for propagating danger and it is necessary that the media be wary of this.

Kemal Kurspahic in assessing media-military relations in, *Prime Time Crime: Balkan Media in War and Peace*, offers a convincing insight into how power, control, threat, and an outnumbered few fought to preserve journalistic integrity during the bloody Balkan conflicts. A few journalists in West Africa braced threats of military dictators to aid in the fight for a comeback to democracy. Closely examining Slobodan Milosevic's stranglehold on the media and his callous use of it to churn out favorable propaganda for his murderous and genocidal expansionism, *Prime Time Crime: Balkan Media in War and Peace*, is a combination of modern history and real-life cautionary tale, which brings to light the fact that the media can be controlled by the government or military to present information to suit a particular purpose, whether in or out of war.

The Gulf War of 1991 was the highest profile media war in history. Never before had so many journalists attempted to cover a war from both sides of the conflict. Taylor in his book, *War and the Media: Propaganda and Persuasion in the Gulf War*, traces the role of the media in the Gulf War and examines the attempts by both the coalition and Iraq to influence public opinion through propaganda and persuasion. Taylor is particularly concerned about how much information reaches the public and how much is deliberately shelved. Analyzing the key news stories of the conflict, he examines the efforts of the American-led coalition to persuade television audiences and newspaper readers to take the right view of what was happening, and of the Iraqi government's propaganda campaigns concerning civilian damage and the "Mother of all Battles." Taylor states that "in the Gulf War, both sides appreciated the importance of propaganda,

devoted considerable time and effort in conducting it and revealed contrasting styles and methods in their employment of it. The whole truth [became] a casualty" (Taylor 1992, 29). Though war is fought literally on a battlefield, it is also fought in the minds of the propagators of the war, as well as their supporters, via propaganda bred by the media. Through the media, the belligerents can, impact the minds of the populace through misrepresentation, embellishments, lack of objectivity, inconsistencies, and sometimes to some extent untruths, all in order to gain support and a sense of legitimacy. The media is thus a double-edged sword, and the nature of their relationship with the military will determine their presentation of it.

A Century of Media, a Century of War, by Robin Andersen establishes how the selection of media representation helps justify past battles and ensure future wars. He makes it known that the management of information, often referred to as censorship and propaganda, has changed to match developments in information technologies to the extent that information technology is now transforming the weapons of war and is itself becoming a weapon of war. Anderson notes that "war is understood and interpreted, justified and judged through the images and narratives that tell the stories of war. Most civilians experience civilian conflicts through the signs and symbols of its depiction, their impressions derived not from the battles in the distant lands but from the manner they are represented at home" (Anderson 2006, xvi). There is no doubt that the military would like to shape the impressions of civilians and the wider populace to interpret positively the purposes of their operations. In the midst of the rapid change and accessibility of information technology, this becomes a herculean task, but nonetheless is achievable.

Summary and Conclusion

The review of the literature in this chapter established a list of references and data that serves as the building blocks for this thesis. The literature reviewed the role of an armed force, the principles of war affecting military media relationship, the role of the media in a democracy, the media landscape and its interaction with the military as well as media–military relationship. The expanding roles of the military has brought it closer to the people and thus closer to media scrutiny. The media represents the people and their worldview, and the military being part of the wider society cannot escape this scrutiny. In the present global environment and technological age, the media is ubiquitous. The dogged relationship between the media and the military will not be in the best interest of the military. It behooves the military to ensure that they are well presented and represented. This literature review can help tackle the broader and more abstract secondary questions, and make a stronger case for a conclusion while using a more diverse methodological approach to confirm that a good media-military relationship is vital for a sustainable democracy.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the research design method used in the conduct of this thesis. It details how the sources in the preceding chapters and other sources were used to develop an analysis of the media-military dichotomy using Ghana as a case study. This chapter also discusses the type of study conducted, the sampling technique used in conducting the study, the research instrument, and the analytical procedure used. The first part of this research method was to gather information from various sources, including both primary and secondary materials. The materials were then analyzed to ascertain the relevance of the information in view of the paper's thesis statement. The information contained in the materials will be evaluated later in a broader context to arrive at a wider conclusion.

Type of Study

The study is primarily a qualitative one using Ghana as a case study. This research method offers a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social problem like the military–media dichotomy. This method is preferred because of the researcher's experience, and because the researcher is more oriented and temperamentally suited to this type of work. This is adopted to explain the relationship between the variables in the thesis. In this research, the empirical investigation is based on the personal experiences of the researcher. The final written report is of a flexible structure.

Sources of Data

A combination of primary and secondary sources of data collection is used in the study. However, the focus is on the secondary data. A comprehensive analysis of relevant literature, and the ongoing changes in the military and media landscape will be undertaken in an attempt to clarify the appropriate role the military and the media play insofar as military operations are concerned. The secondary data is from books, journals, official government documents, conference papers, news-magazines, newspapers, and personal diaries. This is where the bulk of the research is centered on. Using Patton's 2002 model of qualitative research, the data also consists of fieldwork descriptions of activities, behaviors, actions, conversations, interpersonal interactions, and other aspects of observable human experience. The data consists of field notes including the context from which the observations were made. Through the research, this thesis aims at identifying and analyzing answers to the secondary questions that will facilitate the answer of the primary question.

Sampling

This research is based on a purposeful sampling method. The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selective information-rich cases for an indepth study. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research (Talbot 1995). The goal is not to obtain a large and representative sample. The goal is to select persons, places, or literature that can provide the richest and most detailed information to help answer the research question. The research combines typical case, extreme case, maximum variation,

homogeneous, and opportunistic samplings as explained by (Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle 2010).

Method of Analysis

The collected data is analyzed qualitatively using thematic coding techniques to establish patterns and trends, logical arguments, and sequential presentation of points. The thesis presents descriptions that embody well-constructed themes/categories as well as the development of context and explanation of process or change over time. The researcher uses indepth analysis likely to generate new knowledge and deeper understanding, and tries to keep a balance between conceptualizing and description. In analyzing the dichotomy in military-media relations in Ghana, the analysis will be limited to six areas: mission and role of GAF; media environment in Ghana; historical perspective of military-media relationship; media direction in dealing with the military; military direction in dealing with the media; and challenges of military-media relations in Ghana.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

Mission and Role of the Ghana Armed Forces

The GAF comprises an army, a navy and an air force. The army, formally known
as the Gold Coast Regiment, traces its origins from military units organized in the 19th
century by European Trading Companies to safeguard their sociopolitical and economic
interests in the "Gold Coast." It all began in 1865 when the Corps of Hausas was formed
for service in Nigeria (Aboagye 1999, 345-349). The Corps of Hausas were the
foundation of the West African Frontier Force, a multi-battalion field force, formed by
the British Colonial Office in 1900 to garrison the West African colonies
of Nigeria, Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, and Gambia. The West African Frontier Force later
became known as the Royal West African Frontier Force. After Ghana's independence in
1957, the Gold Coast Regiment was withdrawn from the Royal West African Frontier
Force in 1959. The focus of the formation of the West African Frontier Force was the
Army. It was in May and June of 1959 that the Ghana Air Force and Ghana Navy
respectively were formed (Aboagye 1999, 345-349).

The size, role, and mission of the GAF were derived from the country's defense
policy, which was mainly focused on preservation of territorial integrity and national
sovereignty. The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana stipulates that the Armed
Forces shall be equipped and maintained to perform their role of defense of Ghana as
well as other functions for the development of Ghana as the President determines. The
expanded mission and roles of the Armed Forces include: defending Ghana against
external aggression, assisting the civil authorities to maintain law and order in the

country, and providing troops for UN, Commonwealth, African Union, and sub-regional peacekeeping operations. Additionally, they assist the civil authority in providing humanitarian assistance to victims during periods of national disasters and other emergencies, and participate in productive activities in support of national development.

Ghana has yet to militarily defend her territorial integrity against any external aggression. Though formed to protect the territorial integrity of the country, the military has been more involved in national development, external peace support operations, and internal security operations.

The Ghanaian military makes an important contribution to national development, yet the majority of Ghanaians are oblivious of this aspect of military operations more because the media has not routinely reported the good deeds. Over the years, the GAF has performed a more supportive role in the political, social, and economic spheres of national development as much as the country's manpower and material resources will permit. The GAF is endowed with manpower and material resources that make them the most complete, self-sustaining, and self-supporting institution for their role. Compared to other state institutions, the GAF is the most organized bureaucratic institution, and in addition to their professional officers and men from the Services, they have highly skilled medical practitioners, nurses, and para-medical personnel. There are also well-qualified civil, mechanical, electrical, electronic, architectural and geodetic engineers, quantity surveyors, and technicians of all types. Other manpower resources include lawyers, veterinarians, agriculturalists, accountants, pilots, air traffic controllers, navigators, and sports coaches, all of international repute. There are professional educators, experts in procurement, storage and supply, transport and communication, rangers and paratroopers,

military police, artisans of all types, and lastly, semi-skilled labor from all the ethnic groups of Ghana.

The concentration of skills immediately paints a picture of the material resources that the GAF possesses. These include hospitals, workshops of all types with tools, veterinarian clinics, and training schools of various types. Others are aircrafts and aviation equipment, boats and other marine equipment, warehouses and stores, transport, fire service, construction equipment of various types, and sporting and recreational facilities. Imbued with precision of time, consistency of work, discipline, training, and above all unity and esprit de corps even in the face of ethnic diversity, the GAF is the most readily available institution for any national emergency duty. These attributes have assisted the GAF in undertaking a lot of extra roles aimed at national development.

Other contributions to national development are the roles of the combat and civil engineers of the Army who have been involved in the construction of bailey bridges throughout the country. The 48th Engineer Regiment has constructed roads to some previously inaccessible parts of the Afram Plains and the Sefwi area in the Western Region. They also play an important role in times of natural disasters. For example, they provided temporary shelter, rescue, and evacuation of those trapped by the floodwater anytime there were floods in the city of Accra. The military hospital in the capital city of Accra, apart from being designated as a national emergency hospital, plays a major role anytime medical personnel in the country go on industrial strikes. Additionally, the numerous military medical research stations dotted around the country in the various garrisons, provide good medical care for a lot of Ghanaians. The military is able to chalk up successes both in and out of war insofar as the guiding principles of their techniques,

35

tactics, and procedures are adhered to. It is strongly believed that with the training, human skills, material resources and the discipline in the GAF, a lot more support could be provided to the socio-economic and political development of the country.

The military has been actively engaged in assisting the police to restore law and order in the country. This has become more relevant in contemporary times where the face of internal security threats is fast changing into situations that are more complex. The GAF has been involved in local peacekeeping in the Dagbon/Konkomba/Nanumba areas of the Northern Region and the upper fringes of the Volta Region of Ghana in the wake of the violent ethnic clashes between the Dagombas, Gonjas, and Konkombas in 1994. While doing this, they are also still keeping peace in Bawku in the Upper East region of the country, assisting the Kusasis and Mamprusis in finding peace. Joint military/police patrols to fight armed robbery, span all the major cities and towns. There are also operations in support of the Ministry of Lands and Forestry to check illegal lumbering. In all these operations, the military has been guided by key principles in their techniques, tactics, and procedures in the execution of assignments.

In addition to its traditional roles, the GAF have carved an enviable reputation for themselves and the country as global peacemakers and keepers. This is evidenced by the number of GAF personnel spread throughout troubled areas in the world. As of April 2012, the GAF has four battalions of about 400 men each deployed in four different countries. In addition, there are a large number of military observers and staff officers deployed on all other UN missions.

One unique feature of United Nation peacekeeping missions is the provision for a public affairs officer on the order of battle of participating contingents. Each UN mission

has a public information office. Among other things, the public information office is responsible for developing and managing the communications strategy, assisting the media, and ensuring that the local population is informed about the mandate and the peace process. The public information office can operate its own radio station or broadcast on local stations, produce video material for television, and publish informational brochures, posters, and pamphlets, all in a number of local languages. Additionally, the public information office employs local staff, usually journalists, who have good knowledge and understanding of local customs and traditions. They also credential journalists to have access to the UN and will issue reporters ID cards which can be checked by contingents in the field.

The public information office also works closely with the military public information structures,the military spokesman and the military public information officers attached to contingents, implementing the communications strategy. They are a resource that military observers and peacekeepers can draw on for all sorts of useful information about the mandate, the peace process, and the mission.The public information office helps contingents manage their media relations, and promote the positive image of contingents that engage in activities that assist the local community (UN Military Observers 2006, 212).This makes it possible for the information messages to be well-crafted and presented to the public.

In Ghana, the average citizen knows of the achievements of the military in peace support operations with the UN better than the contributions of the army to national development. This is due to the fact that the achievements of the GAF are often made

public by the international media, and the GAF is also proud to showcase these achievements.

From the numerous roles mentioned, it is obvious that the GAF have contributed significantly towards the public administration in the political life of the country. This is evidenced by the numbers of members of the military, serving and retired, who are appointed to political leadership since independence. Most of them brought their leadership qualities to their jobs, and thus enhanced the living standards of the people. Thus the successful performance of the GAF in accomplishing its role is a collective responsibility and requires cooperation of the government and the people. The success story of the military is best told by the media, but this is not wholly the case as seen in our media history. Could it be that the media are just not interested in military matters and projecting the military in a good light, or could the military be failing in allowing the media to do that reporting? Could it also be that the media's profit oriented nature causes them to take no interest in some stories about the GAF which could be of interest to their readers, viewers, and advertisers?

The Media Environment in Ghana

The media, as an important estate of the society, has the enviable task of being the harbinger of news and information essential to Ghana's democracy. The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana states that "the freedom and independence of the media are hereby guaranteed" (Republic of Ghana 1992).The constitution further states that "there shall be no inpediments to the establishment of private press or media;and in particular, there shall be no law requiring any person to obtain a license as a prerequisite to the establishment or operation of a newspaper, journal or other media for mass

communication or information. Editors and publishers of newspapers and other institutions of the mass media shall not be subject to control or interference by government, nor shall they be penalized or harassed for their editorial opinions and views, or the content of their publications" (Republic of Ghana 1992).

Since independence, the state broadcaster, as a public service institution, has traditionally performed a political propagandist and developmental role and served the interest of competing elites (Karikari 1993, 55-66). However, the focus of the media has changed after most states in the West African sub-region abandoned dictatorship and resorted to liberal democracies. They introduced several civil and security sector reforms to include the liberalization of the media, leading to a growth in private and independent media, particularly radio, and ending decades of state media monopoly. Though the focus of the media from independence to the mid-1990s and 2000s was development focused. It was only in the mid-1990s, when struggles on the streets put democracy on the political agenda, that the concept of civil society and media's role in the country and the West Africa sub-continent began to register significantly in scholarly writings (Makumbe 1998, 305-318).

As a result of their vibrancy, the free and independent media seems to be at the forefront of championing a lot of political, economic, and social reforms in Ghana. As a result of their activities, the previously "silenced" civil society have now become more active with increased interest in both civil and state matters. One of the most critical civil society institutions is a media that allows for communication between groups, builds relationship between social groups, and supports the development of organizations articulating public needs and opinions (Taylor 2000, 1-14). Critics have often questioned

the contributions of the Ghanaian media to the development of civil society. However, it must be noted that until the liberalization and privatization of the media in the early 1990s, the media had always operated under some kind of censorship and tight control thereby limiting their impact.

To a large extent, multi-party democracy has positively impacted the media and as a result civil society development. In Ghana, "the National Communications Authority, as of the last quarter of 2011, had authorized operation of 247 FM radio stations and 28 TV stations. Out of the 247 authorized radio stations, 34 are public radio stations, 37 are community radio stations, 11 are university campus radio stations, and 166 are commercial radio stations. Of those, 217 are operational and the remaining 30 have not yet started operations" (Ghanaweb 2012).

According to the Media Foundation for West Africa, the media is generally showing signs of progress. The pluralistic media environment has created and maintained a diverse media culture in Ghana. There are more than 450 newspapers and magazines published and sold in Ghana (Media Foundation for West Africa 2009). The two state-owned newspapers, the *Daily Graphic* and *Ghanaian Times*, have tended to move away from the conservative line of promoting and encouraging support for government policies. The role played by the biggest state media, Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, has been transformed since the introduction of private television stations. There is also a growing number using the internet with self-made journalists taking advantage of YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter to spread their news. "A 1985 study by Obeng-Quaidoo reported that Ghanaians spent on the average only two-and-a- half hours per day listening to the state radio, Ghana Broadcasting Corporation Radio.

The lack of participation in state governance and in the media was a result of decades of political instability, public disappointments with governments, and decades of state control of the media and free speech" (Ansah 1994, 15-29). As the independent media, particularly radio, assume center stage in the democratic and civil society building process, the focus on exposing wrongs in the society, especially mismanagement by government and public officials has increased. The citizenry are now free to express divergent or dissenting views on civic and political matters without fear of government arrests. In particular, pivately owned radio stations have been unafraid to play the assumed civic role of encouraging and empowering other civil society groups to shed of the culture of silence that has characterized them after decades of state control and suppression of press freedom and free speech (Blankson 2002). These reforms in the media landscape have increased the public's curiosity in governance issues. Particularly so is the public's interest in military matters, which had been shrouded in secrecy during authoritarian regimes.

Despite the media reforms in Ghana, the quality of the content of news delivery does not appear to match with the proliferation. There are several complaints against the media on ethical breaches. A study conducted by Ghana Anti-Corruption, a local affiliate of Transparency International, to assess and review the role of the Ghanaian media in the fight against corruption, found that the Ghanaian media is replete with "he said" or straight news reports from workshops, speech events, and pronouncements by prominent individuals rather than investigative pieces (Media Foundation for West Africa 2009). The media still suffers the challenge of incorrect and inappropriate language use, and

41

constantly faces a lot of criticisms by the government, public sector, private sector,

religious bodies, academics and the military.

<u>The Historical Perspective of the Relationship</u>
<u>between the Military and the Media</u>

From independence until the mid-1990s, the relationship between the military and

the media can best be described as rocky. The independence constitution of Ghana did

not include elaborate human rights provisions. The passage of the Deportation Act in

1957 and Preventive Detention Act in 1958,[4] stifled debate, intimidated the opposition,

and threw scores of innocent people into jail. In 1964, the county was declared a de jury

one party state after a referendum. This very idea abrogated the freedoms of speech,

conscience, and assembly (Saffu 2007, 8).

The history of political repression, and governmental and administrative

incompetence in Ghana largely stems from a history of governmental control and

restriction of the press, and the failure of journalists to perform their duties with the

requisite degree of integrity, courage and dedication. It is also a history of lamentable

failure on the part of the people of Ghana as a whole to insist on the right to free,

uncensored, and undoctored information, and to give sufficient support and

encouragement to the members of the press when they were subjected to governmental

persecution and victimization as a result of their courage and determination to do their

duty to their nation and profession (Amagatcher 1998, 160).

---

[4]The Preventive Detention Act, passed in 1958, gave power to the prime minister
to detain certain persons for up to five years without trial. The first victims of this law
included Timothy Bankole, a Sierra Leonean, the editor of the *Daily Graphic*. Bankole's
crime was that he ridiculed Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana's first President) when he asserted
that Ghanaians would only appreciate that they had won independence if he moved to
reside in the Castle and had his portraits on postage stamps and the currency.

The regime of the National Liberation Council (NLC) military junta (1966-1969), inherited the instrument of authoritarian rule such as the monopolistic, controlled state media, and made use of them in the same way as the previous regime. Successive military regimes of the National Redemption Council (1972-1974), Supreme Military Council I and II (1975-1979), Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (June–September 1979) and the Provisional National Defence Council (1981-1992), were no different from the NLC. The role of the media in propagating liberalism was continuously shelved as the military juntas used the state media to propagate acceptance of their rule (Saffu 2007. 8). These developments made the media strike out particularly against the military when there was a return to democracy in 1992. One of the most important results of Ghana's movement for democratization is the reemergence of mass media pluralism.

The 1992 constitution which outlawed censorship and the liberalization of the airwaves means that people can now actively participate in discussions on national affairs, and thereby contribute to the development of democratic governance (Dodoo 2000). Nonetheless, the excitement aroused by these conditions for popular participation has come up against the dangers of judiciary and executive laws which criminalize speech and are sometimes perceived not to be particularly media-friendly. All of these have been nurtured by a long history of state repression of the right to free expression (Dodoo 2000).

Freedom of expression is often times misconstrued to mean freedom of information. While the concept of free expression is a fundamental human right, that of freedom of information is not. As a concept, freedom of information is not synonymous with that of free expression in the sense that even an individual could deem it a

fundamental right, under privacy laws, to withhold information and refuse to communicate on particular issues at a particular time. Freedom of information could also be a right, but with some contrasting and competing attributes. This raises complex and sensitive issues for decision makers, legislators, war fighters and media practitioners. (Dodoo 2000). Therefore, it is not surprising that two decades after transition to democratic rule, a right to information bill (deemed as the key element required for accessing information) has been stalled in Ghana's Parliament since 2003, putting Ghana behind regional neighbors like Nigeria and Liberia, and well in the rear of continental cousins like South Africa where the freedom of information is couched in law. The nature and attributes of freedom of information and associated concerns are not peculiar to Ghana, and for that matter the military, since they are likely to affect the smooth execution of military operations. It is in this light that the military has most often found it expedient to sideline the media from its activities or operations.

<p style="text-align:center"><u>The Military Direction in Dealing with the Media</u></p>

Military activities aimed at communicating with the media and the civil population at large are often referred to as "media operations." Media operations as defined by the Joint Warfare Publication 0-01.1 are, "that line of activity developed to ensure timely, accurate, and effective provision of public information and implementation of public relations policy within the operational environment, whilst maintaining operational security" (JWP 0-01.1 2006, M-7). Media operations, though directed from the highest level, are implemented or conducted at the appropriate lowest levels, are always based on absolute truth, and are supposed to be consistent with the making the military more proactive than reactive (JWP 3-45 2001, 1-2 and 1-3). The aim of media

operations is to promote widespread understanding and support for military operations while maintaining operational security (JWP 3-45 2001, 1-2 and 1-3). The military usually operates within a political context. In Ghana, as part of internal security operations, the military most often operates with the police in support of police-led operations. In such instances, it is not only necessary to maintain a common media line, but it is also equally important to ensure cohesion and to present a unified front in order to meet the intent of the combined force. Media operations are a key facet of any operation and require close personal engagement by commanders and senior staff. However, any Service personnel who encounter the media on operations should be aware of the principles of media operations and should be trained to ensure their success.

Principles of military media operations include: an end state, truth, credibility, security, timeliness, and preparation (JWP 3-45 2001, 1-2 and 1-3). The main effort of media operations is to communicate the principal themes and messages in pursuit of the end-state, while remaining sensitive to the media focus and areas of interest. All communication with the media must be honest, transparent, and accurate. There is the need for commanders and staffs to ensure the integrity of the information that they pass to the media. Information must be withheld only when disclosure would adversely affect operational security, force safety, or individual privacy. Deliberately misleading the media must be avoided, no matter how tempting or tactically advantageous it may seem. Media operations staff must be credible with both the military and the media (JWP 3-45 2001, 1-2 and 1-3).

The Directorate of Public Relations (DPR) is the GAF establishment mandated to deal with and handle matters with the media. The DPR was established in 1961 and was

first known as the Public Relations Cell. This cell was established for the purposes of propaganda when Ghana took part in peacekeeping operations in Congo in 1960. Civilians performed the public relation duties in the UN operational headquarters. The Public Relation Cell was redesignated the Forces Publicity Unit in December 1963. Military personnel then started to play the role of the civilians. Initially, the unit was only responsible for press relations, photo/film work, and protocol. The first Armed Forces News magazine (AFNEWS) was published in 1967. Today the unit has grown into a big directorate and assumes all the roles of a public relations outfit.

In stability and support operations, as well as in internal security operations, providing accurate and timely information about the military and its operation will contribute to mission accomplishment. This information communicates restraint, indicates perseverance, and can serve as a deterrent. The active release of complete and accurate information influences the perception of events, clarifies public understanding, and frames the public debate. It preempts attempts misrepresentation of situations. When intentional misinformation or disinformation efforts are made by adversaries, providing open access and independent media coverage is the most effective defense (FM 46-1 1997, 18).

Today, DPR is assigned the dual responsibility of projecting public relations within the GAF and of seeking and maintaining good relations with the public. The roles of DPR are advisory and executive. Among other advisory roles, the DPR is to assist the public communications media in educating the society about the GAF with a view to maintaining a good image of the forces at all times (DPR Charter 2002).

The present organization of DPR allocates service public relation officers at the various Service headquarters (Army, Navy, Air Force), and public relation officers at the headquarters of the two major division headquarters (Southern Command and Northern Command). The responsibilities of these public relation officers include: provision of material and features about their respective services for the AFNEWS, advising their respective Service headquarters on the public relations aspects and implications of their policies and activities, and ensuring that information gets down to units in their Services (DPR Charter 2002).

At present, there is no public relations policy or guidelines of the GAF. The local commander usually has discretion over what type of information is sent out and what mode of communication is used with the media. The exception is occasional directives on specific operations that are more often responsive to private media reporting. For instance, the Ghana Police have a policy on public information that establishes guidelines for the release of official Police Service information to the public in accordance with the policies and procedures delineated in Police administrative directives. This detailed document, which encompasses types of information to be released, procedures, responsibilities, and news media access, is easily available at all Police Stations. What is basic to the Ghana military is that the State Secrets Act of 1962 applies to military personnel also. The State Secrets Act 101 of 1962, section 3, sub sections 1-4, deals with matters of "wrongful communication of information." Under the act, it is an offense to communicate a code, word, password, sketch, article, mode, document or information to any person other than a person to whom one is authorized to communicate with or a person to whom it is in the interest of the Republic.

Secrecy of operations and the necessity of bringing into public domain only that which is desirable for the continuous success of an operation, often demands that only designated people must talk to the civil media. For instance, during the 1994 Kokomba/Nanumba war in the Northern Region of Ghana, the government of Ghana censored the reports on the war. The information flow on the war was restricted by the government's refusal to allow private news reporters to entering the war zone. The government's control of information was to enable the government to give out only information it thought would not escalate the war or frighten the citizens of Ghana (Nyarko 1994). Though this had the advantage of censoring information to the advantage of the military in operations, it had the disadvantage of propagating speculation and sensational media headlines. More so, the proliferation of the media in the mid-1990s had not reached the level at which it is in 2012. Also, one can not forget the influx and extensive use of uncontrolled social media networks.

The present organization of the DPR has no representation at the unit[5] level, whereas it is at unit and sub-unit level that most internal security operations are organized. DPR representation at unit level is only visible during international peace support operations. Thus it is not surprising that during internal operations, commanders and sub-unit commanders at the unit level often find it difficult to communicate with the media.

As part of its civil media outreach and coordination programs, the DPR once in a great while organizes workshops for representatives of units to equip selected officers with skills to be able to handle media related issues. However this is highly irregular.

---

[5]In Ghana, a unit refers to a Battalion.

Coupled with the non–provision of such appointments in the units' order of battle, such training often goes unnoticed. Hence personnel are not trained or effectively employed. Occasionally, the DPR also conducts workshops for selected personnel of the civil media organizations. This drive is aimed at educating and updating the civil media of the military's activities. Interestingly, however, these programs are attended by ordinary reporters instead of the editors of the media houses who direct affairs and on whom the workshop focuses. These workshops are probably not well marketed, and editors do not see what is in it for them.

There are no civilian media desks at the DPR. On all occasions, the DPR has to invite the civil media organizations to attend and cover programs involving the military. "These invitations often go with a parting 'envelope' by the host unit for which there is no budget. Meanwhile, the military wants its good stories to be aired so they have no option but to yield. The civil media's response to future invitations to cover military programs is often guided by the weight of 'envelopes' received" (Nibo 2009).

<center>The Media Direction in Dealing with the Military</center>

Media interest in military operations is usually intense and cannot be ignored or avoided because the media are everywhere. Even though the media can be denied access to military bases and facilities, they cannot be denied access to the operational environment. By default, they are part of the population, and part of the operational environment. An understanding of the characteristics of the media is important for everyone involved in military operations. It is necessary for all military personnel to recognize that the media will always be part of operations whether invited or not.

The media can easily shape public perceptions, and this could have a short-term influence. "Public opinion tends to respond to what the public sees and hears on its television and radio sets. That can be very dangerous, or it can be very helpful. The world, to some extent, was driven into Somalia because of the media coverage." (MacNeil 1993). The media influences response time, where, how, and how long militaries react or respond to crisis. It is worthy to note that the media influences world politics and responses. In the Spanish-American War for instance, a sensational style of reporting and often biased opinion masquerading as facts, ignited the war fever in Americans. In media operations, it is important to maintain public support for the military, and to ensure that the public clearly understands the military's commitment, the legitimacy of the military's actions, the military's overwhelming determination to prevail (JWP 3-45 2001, 1-2 and 1-3).

The lens through which the media views events or situations is more often than not different from the lens of the military. Various media organizations operate in competition for audiences, and therefore their primary focus and motivation is to produce newsworthy coverage and to produce it fast. Putting themselves under pressure to meet tight deadlines, the media would work very quickly with the overriding imperative to be the first with the news sometimes at the expense of quality, depth, and accuracy. "Furthermore, since profit drives most major news media, they tend to provide whatever sells; this [may] include spectacular, titillating, eye catching, or sensational stories, where the truth, accuracy, or context can sometimes become a secondary consideration" (Johnson 1994, 1). Nonetheless, some media organizations are very concerned about getting the story right, and these are organizations that enjoy some credibility among the

populace. In an attempt to catch attention and shape perception, the media often relies on pictures as defining images. They tend to take risks and sometimes even break rules in order to catch the best image of an event. This often brings them into direct conflict with the military on the ground. Information vacuums should be avoided, as they tend to hand over the initiative to the media, and this may lead to highlighting negative aspects of a military operation. Commanders should be particularly wary of assuming, even in times of conflict, that any media are automatically "on their side" (even when embedded). They may appear to be sympathetic, but their bottom line is the production of information, which is commercially attractive (JWP 3-45 2001, 1-2 and 1-3).

In Ghana, there are a few self-proclaimed "defense correspondents" but their understanding of the military is limited and shallow. Therefore, it is always important to be wary of their limited level of knowledge and take time to explain issues simply and in clear detail. Almost all the media organizations in Ghana have no 'experts' in defense reporting. With the exception of the *Daily Graphic* and Ghana News Agency, there is no military desk at any media organization. Invariably, any reporter could be assigned to report on a military event, and it is not uncommon to see incorrect reporting of rank designation, units, type of military operations, and even incorrect reporting on the purpose of a military event. The lack of public affairs officers at the unit level could also be a contributing factor to incorrect reporting. One characteristic of the media in Ghana is its tendency to avoid or neglect procedure in obtaining information, but rather resort to short cuts which leads to the inability to obtain full details of their news requirements. It is worthy to note that untruths, half- truths and rumors can generate their own legitimacy simply through repetition. It is vital for the media operations staff to generate the

capability to quickly rebut and correct stories both at all levels of operations (JWP 3-45 2001, 1-2 and 1-3).

In Ghana, a large percentage of the population relies on the radio for news. Almost everyone has access to a radio. Television is limited to areas where there is electricity. More than TV, radio is opinion forming and agenda setting. The influence of the influx of radio stations in the country as well as the exaggerated vernacular translations to the rural communities, must not be underestimated. In Ghana, radio is the primary source of news and informatio Local radio is an excellent way of developing relationships between deployed service personnel and the local public in their home areas. The increase in mobile phones and digital TVs is gradually giving rise to more exposure and demand for round-the-clock news coverage. The internet is increasingly becoming a major source of news. However, Ghanaians living outside the country are more likely to access the web than Ghanaians at home. Online media is becoming important, particularly because some information posted on ghanaweb (the official web site for Ghana) is not controlled often making some information from this medium questionable. One cannot discount the fact that Ghanaians living outside the country have some interest and influence in activities in the country, and will be interested in news from Ghana. The print media in Ghana, when compared to TV and radio, is less likely to be patronized to access information. This is probably due to the low literacy rates, and of course, the fact that it is not free. The TV and radio broadcasts are aired for free. Nonetheless, these newspapers are more likely to influence principal decision-makers and opinion formers. For this reason, their content, which includes considerable commentary, as well as factual news reporting, is often critical to military operations. Dramatic

headlines are more likely to affect wider perceptions than the longer considered pieces in the broadsheets.

The media's dealings with the military are not too different from its dealings with other organizations. The main focus of the media's direction is to make news that will sell. In Ghana, the media's interest in military matters increased in 1992 when there was a change in democratic rule with its attendant press freedom. Given the fact the media had been somewhat "gagged," under previous military regimes, the quest to know what had been hidden from them increased. More so, the urge to make the military know and understand that they are subject to civilian control and accountable to the wider public has increased the civil media's reporting of the military. The normal cliché of "man bite dog is better news that dog bite man" is well applied in dealing with the military. The media more often than not seeks the news that exposes the bad side of the military so as to make better sales.

Challenges of Military/Media Relationship in Ghana

"The newsman and the military officer consider many of the same qualities to be important in their respective professions: initiative, responsibility, professionalism, dedication, efficiency, team-work, delegation of authority, self-discipline, forward planning, and flexibility" (Hooper 1982, 211). The media consists of many elements, each with different requirements and agendas. Some journalists naturally like the military while others are openly hostile. It is therefore important to appreciate the range and diversity of the media with which the military must engage.

As the principal influence on public opinion, the media are able to make a significant impact on the direction of a crisis. Indeed, media reporting may precipitate

military intervention in the first place. Thus, the proper resourcing of media operations can do much to influence the successful outcome of a crisis control of information (JWP 3-45 2001, 1-2 and 1-3).

In Ghana, some media often places pressure on service personnel to provide information directly to them, bypassing the chain of command, even to the extent that some media have their own "reporters" among the ranks of the military. It is important that information is sifted through the chain of command during operations to ensure that security is not compromised.

The level of professionalism differs in the two organizations. While the military has ways to develop and enforce professional conduct effectively, the media has no such capacity. The Ghana Media Commission, the agency mandated with the responsibility of registering, regulating, and monitoring the activities of media houses in Ghana, serves as a purely policy advisory commission, and has no powers to enforce professional standards of the media. In order to work successfully with the media, the military should understand the key characteristics of the media, both in terms of philosophy and outlook. Evolving technology and the spread of mobile telephones and the Internet make control of information an essential element of planning by commanders and their media operations staff (JWP 3-45 2001, 1-2 and 1-3). On the other hand, it is also important to note that one cannot control the media or information. One can only tell the truth, help the public understand a given context, and protect operations security as necessary.

Ghana is an excellent example of the challenge of media-military relations in West Africa. Not only did the incessant coups in the past frustrate the popular desire for democratic development in the country, the abysmal record of military governance also

deflated previous military claims of superior ability to rule. Military/media relations in

Ghana have suffered partially as a result of the incessant military interventions in national

politics. Twenty of the country's 50 years of independence have been under military rule.

This was characterized by abuses of human rights and unorthodox military deployments.

Subsequently, over the years, the civilian population has viewed the military with

extreme suspicion and distrust.

The ultimate objective of all public affairs is to canvas goodwill for an

organization by cultivating its various "publics" in a manner that predisposes them

favorably towards the organization. This goodwill is based on attitudes that the various

publics form about the organization or institution. In this context, "public" refers to a

group of individuals bound together by some common bond of interest who share a sense

of togetherness. The military's major "public" is the civil population, and therefore, a

civil-military relation becomes a major issue in improving mutual understanding and

cooperation between the two. The GAF, having overthrown elected governments on three

occasions (1966, 1972, and 1981), and having established varying forms of dictatorship,

has had bad relationships with civilians. With a return to democratic rule in 1992, the

time for a relationship change between the civil population and the military is not

debatable.

One challenge of military/media relationship is the lack of understanding of each

other's objectives. The military loves to take its time, go through its bureaucracies, and

deal with issues accurately. The media, on the other hand, though having their own

bureaucracies, seek to hit the airwaves and affect society at the earliest possible time with

whatever they perceive to be news. "The military and the media will inevitably conflict

and the conflicts will not be settled in any fully satisfactory way to either side. The military tends to view the media as driven by market pressures and self-aggrandizement of journalists. The press, though often portrayed as cynical, also have a high regard for their vocation" (Moskos and Ricks 1996). Understanding each other's practices, and drawing a common meeting point can bridge the gap between the military and the media.

The most worrying challenge in military/media relationship is incorrect reporting and its effect on military operations. The media is often seen as always looking for scandalous information, and would waste no time in putting it forward. In November 2009, in the heat of conflict in Bawku in the Upper West region of Ghana, the military detachment in Bawku had to take certain disciplinary actions to establish control. These actions received a barrage of criticisms in the news media. Front page headlines such as "Bawku Strip-Naked Show" (Daily Guide 2009, 3) sent the wrong signals and had the potential of eroding the gains that the military was making in its peace enforcement role. Proper liaison and briefing by the military commander on the spot could have averted this.

The media often seeks all kinds of information that is restricted by the military for security reasons. The media for instance, want to have access to the military budget, want to visit all parts of the military barracks, and take pictures at places of interest. Security of certain military information is vital, and until the freedom of information bill is passed by parliament, such restrictions will continue to persist. The recent high spate development in information technology, manifested in sophisticated mobile phones with cameras, infra-red devices, blue tooth, multi - media messaging, recorders, Ipads, etc., has made the task of passing information from one point on the globe to the other, easyand without

restrictions. Censorship of the media in crisis areas would even be a difficult task because agents of the press with modern communication gadgets can easily circumvent this. The requirement for proper dialogue and presentation of correct and desired information to the media by the military cannot be overstated.

There is no doubt that since the return of democratic rule in 1992, Ghanaians have become polarized into being sympathizers of one of the major political parties, National Democratic Congress or New Patriotic Party.[6] Polarization of the Ghanaian media along such lines is a fact that can be difficult to dismiss. The danger of infiltration of party politics into the military is becoming rife in recent years with political parties using the media to recruit agents in the military and feed sensational information into the public domain. Some headlines have the potential for polarizing the military and sowing seeds of discontent with dangerous future ramifications. For example, "Ewe Soldiers Destroying the Army" (Free Express 2010) is a story that alleged that Ewe officers affiliated with the NDC had been strategically positioned at influential offices to ensure that more Ewes were recruited into the GAF). "Soldiers Angry over Unfair Enlistment into The Armed Forces" (Daily Searchlight 2010, 2) alleged that recent recruitment into the Army was skewed in favor of NDC cronies.

One of the most challenging responsibilities of being a commander is keeping open lines of communication. During a crisis, the commander is obligated to communicate because he has a duty to explain the facts, causes, impact, and corrective

---

[6]The National Democratic Congress is a political party that wields a lot of support among the Ewe speaking people in the eastern part of Ghana. The Ewe speaking people stretch from Ghana through Togo and Benin. The New Patriotic Party wields a lot of support in Akan speaking areas, particularly the Ashanti region of Ghana, which is the most populous region and also endowed with a lot of resources.

actions of his operation. Members of the local community and the media most often

expect and demand to hear timely and accurate information about an event on the spot

from the senior member of the military (Woodyard 1998, 22). Therefore, it becomes

imperative in today's world of instant communication for commanders at all levels to be

able to effectively engage the media, tell the GAF story to the public accurately, and to

quickly maintain public support. However, the skill in doing this is lacking. For instance,

in the GAF routine training circulars and operations directives on notes to service

personnel deployed in aid to civil power, mention inter alia that if service personnel are

approached by a member of the press or by any other member of the public, they should

politely explain that they are not permitted to discuss the job they are doing. They should

refer any questions to their commanding officer, whose location or headquarters they

may divulge. The commanding officer will normally be authorized to make statements of

fact about any incident, but he should always seek authorized guidance from his superiors

before making any statement.

This makes it difficult to develop communication skills on the job. It is only at

the GAF Command and Staff College that officers are trained and are practiced on how

to handle the media. More so, the present establishment of DPR (the military

spokesperson), is supposed to have a manpower capacity of 23 officers; 49 men and 59

civilian employees (DPR Charter 1977). The manpower capability is still in the range of

its establishment in 1977, with about 50 percent always deployed on international peace

support operations. The current organization of GAF expands beyond what existed in

1977, as is the Ghanaian population and civil interest in military matters. The low

strength levels of DRP impacts negatively on getting the required expertise during certain

operations to sell the military story the right way. Media training down to platoon level is essential to ensure that the military is projected in the right way to the public.

Summary

The GAF, though established to safeguard the territorial integrity of the country, contributes a great deal to national development through its diverse versatile organization and composition. The GAF also participates in external peace support operations under the auspices of the UN, African Union and Economic Community of West African States. Additionally, the GAF is a major player in ensuring the internal security of the country. Despite all these roles, the average Ghanaian is unaware of the GAF contributions, especially to national development. This is due to the fact that the harbinger of the news, the media, have had a strained relationship with the military dating as far back as the 1960s when the press freedom was stifled. A return to democratic rule in 1992, which brought press freedom in its wake, gave the media the leverage to dictate and set the agenda. The military and its activities are not newsworthy for the business oriented media hence the military get minimum attention. A return to democratic rule gave the hither to stifled media an opportunity to get back at the former dictators and they thus tended to often focus on the negatives of the military which made better news. The GAF seem not to have fully embraced the power and capability of the media and thereby incorporate the media in its operations. The importance of the two organizations to the development of a democratic institution cannot be overstated. A good understanding and peaceful co-existence will minimize the existing dichotomy.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

This study examined the dichotomy between the military and the media, and its impact on military operations in West Africa. The purpose was to identify some important issues that are critical for improving the relationship to ensure a sustained democracy in Ghana, and particularly to offer considerations to new democracies like Liberia, Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire. The study recognizes that state monopoly of the airwaves in the early years of Ghana's independence stagnated journalistic development. The press was hitherto used as a tool for government propaganda and ideological indoctrination. The checkered government-press relationship resulted in a timid press who were unable to champion the cause of the people. The return to democratic governance after 20 years of military rule, with its attendant press freedom and decriminalization of libel, has proliferated the media in print radio, television and World Wide Web.

Contemporary developments associated with the democracy are transforming civil institutions and their role in the society. The nature and role of the media as a civil society institution, has evolved from being a state control propaganda tool to a more vibrant and free media. This independent media is gradually emerging as the center of the democratic process and ultimately developing the potential to strengthen civil society institutions in Ghana. The media, in exercising their new found freedom of expression, have often times negatively impacted the military through their reporting. The military, now subservient to civilian control, needs to find new ways of undertaking their

operations and impacting society without being oblivious of the ubiquitous nature of the media.

Since its establishment, the GAF has excelled in all endeavors, both in and out of the country. Nonetheless, long years of its interference in governance and establishing varying forms of dictatorship, resulted in gradually developing bad relationships with civilians. The greater and better success stories of the Armed Forces have not been well presented to the wider Ghanaian society. The media's presentation of the GAF have imprinted more negatives than positives. This needs to be corrected by the military to improve the confidence of the average Ghanaian in the Armed Forces. In contemporary times, there is no longer a question of whether the media will cover military operations or not. Regardless of mission, the media will inevitably be interested in the drama, uncertainty, and emotion. Journalists will likely precede the military into an area of operation, and they will transmit images of events as they happen. Thus the military commander's operational task, among other things needs to be how to develop a well-resourced and responsive structure to conduct news media relations. Failure to do so will limit the military's ability to communicate effectively and risk distorting the public's perception of the military's effectiveness. In the face of such challenges, it is not beneficial to react with an attempt to control the situation. Today's news media environment has generated a new necessity. For every operation, commanders and their subordinates must also know how to communicate. While the media and the military both attempt to gain credibility in particular events, the need for mutual understanding and accommodation are more useful than evasion or angry confrontation.

The military can best prepare for their encounters with media by understanding the roles and capabilities of the journalists who cover military operations. The military must also accept the inevitably and desirability of the media's access to the force, and appreciate the importance of technology and its impact on operational security. The military need to identify and provide the resources necessary for timely support for the media relations mission, and recognize the necessity for appropriate education and training. Comprehensively addressing these facts can form the basis for cooperation and minimize the dichotomy between the military and the media.

Recommendations

To ensure a harmonious relationship between the military and the media, this study proposes the following recommendations.

Media

The media should look at strategies and partnership between them and the military, as a means of enhancing understanding on the part of the media. Such partnership could also help in building strategies for disseminating targeted messages.

The media needs to create journalists who are experts in various fields of endeavor, including the military. The media should partner the military to help develop this expertise. The media should provide fair-minded and balance reporting when covering military issues. Additionally, the media should allocate time and resources to get the right story and provide correct context on military matters. The media should emphasize the importance of evidence, and should not take information at face value. Journalists need to be engaged and when not given all information, they need to know

why. The media should take advantage of the expertise and knowledge of military officers and seek clarifications before turning out a report.

The media should play a role in making sure the populace knows the roles, mission, and contribution of the military to national development. The media should play a role in increasing awareness with respect to the military's logistic limitations, and impress on the government to increase the military budget to enhance its operations.

A politically diverse and engaged media also needs professional standards. The Ghana media commission should step up its role and responsibilities to enforce professional journalistic standards.

Military

The GAF should have a "Policy on Public Information" document published and made available to all units to ease communication difficulties.

Units should have organic Public Relation Officers on their order of battle. Trained civilian journalists could be recruited and orientated for this purposem and be readily available to support any unit in its operations.

Units must ensure that incidents of a nature likely to attract press attention must be reported to DPR staff as soon as practical to ensure a coordinated effort. This needs to be incorporated in their standard operating procedures.

Units must also incorporate a media policy for each military operation indicating how much effort will be made to advertise military activity to the public. In support of this policy, it is vital for the operational chain of command to be kept informed of significant incidents ahead of, or in time with, the announcement.

The DPR should establish a "defense desk" in all the major media organizations for close liaison and cooperation in the dissemination of information. The DPR should also organize regular training workshops for all journalists credentialed to the Ministry of Defense. The DPR should emphasise to media organizations that there must be well trained and oriented "defense journalists" to report on military issues. The DPR should partner wuth the media to help them develop this expertise. Additionally, the DPR should organize regular press conferences to shed light on military related issuesm,particularly during military operations and in the heat of events.

The DPR should sell the GAF in the right direction. The AFNEWS should be sold outside the barracks which would make it available to more people. The DPR should also be resourced to produce the AFNEWS on monthly rather than quarterly as it is now.

To augment this, there should be adequate media training for commanders at all levels starting with the Ghana Military Academy. Officers will then be able to address media issues better without referring minor issues to higher headquarters. A media-training program that teaches communication techniques and skills is necessary to win on the media battlefield. In its officer development, the Ghana Military Academy must pay attention to developing civil-military competencies consistent with democratic principles that contribute to tactical success. Further studies in military schools at various stages of officer developmentm will result in an officer corps better shaped in the professionalism requisite for functioning effectively in a democratic state.

Recommended Areas for Further Study

This thesis has attempted to present the potential for minimizing the dichotomy between the military and the media. Certain indepth analysis was prevented by the

limited literature on specific military operations undertaken by the GAF and other

miliaties in West African.There is no gain in saying that the military needs to remain

subjugated to civilian control to foster democracy. However, future military adventurisim

in West Africa cannot be ruled out. Further research may be necessary on how the

military and the media have managed their differences to build democratic institutions in

West Africa. Additional research could focus on how countries like Ghana, Liberia,

Sierra Leone, and Cote d'Ivoire have strengthened their democratic institutions, and how

the impact of military reforms in tactics, techniques, and procedures affect their ability to

meet their mission and roles.

REFERENCE LIST

2010. Ewe soldiers destroying the army. *Free Express* 4, no. 6 (28 January).

Aboagye, F.B. 1999. *The Ghana Army.* Accra: Sedco Publishing Limited.

Alberts, David S., and Richard E. Hayes. 2012. Command arrangements for peace operations. CCRP Publication Series. http://www.dodccrp.org/files/Alberts_ Arrangements.pdf (accessed 7 February 2012).

Allen, Tim, and Jean Seaton. 1999. *The media of conflict.* New York: Zed Books Ltd.

Amegatcher, Andrew. 1998. *The law of the press, A Ghanian Perspective.* Omega Publishing.

Andersen, Robin.2006. *A century of media: A century of war.* New York: Peter Lang.

Anglesi, Baron D. *The Military Mentor.* R. Phillips, 1804.

Ansah, Paul A.V. 1994. Privatization of radio-implications and challenges. In *Independent Broadcasting in Ghana,* edited by K. Karikari. Accra: Ghana University Press.

Aubin, Stephen P. 1998. *Distorting defense: Network news and national security.*Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group.

Birtle, Andrew J. 2006. *US army counterinsurgency and contingency operations doctrine 1942-1976.* Washingtn, DC: CMH Publishers.

Blankson, I. A. 2002. Reexamining civil society in emerging Sub Sahara African democracies: The state, the media, and the public in Ghana. *Global Media Journal* 1, no. 1.

Boler, Megan. 2008. *Digital media and democracy: Tactics in hard times.* Massachusetts: MIT Press.

Bourgault, Louise Manon. 1995. *Mass media in Sub-Saharan Africa.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

British Land Warfare School. 2008. *British land warfare school aide Memoire.*

Cheema, Shabbir G. 2005. *Building democratic institutions: Governance reform in developing countries.* Connecticut: Kumarian Press.

Clausewitz, Carl von. 2003. *Principles of war.* Translated and Edited by W. Hans Gatzke. New York: Courier Dover Publications.

Directorate of Public Relations.2002. *Charter of Ghana Armed Forces.* Accra: Ghana
    Armed Forces.

Dodoo, Robert. 2000. *Freedom of information and civil service reforms.* Accra: Media
    Foundation for West Africa.

Edmunds, Timothy. 2006. *What are armed forces for? The changing nature of military
    roles in Europe*. London: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Felman, Mac. 1992. The militray/media clash and the new principle of war: Media spin.
    Thesis, Air University USAF, Maxwell AFB, AL.

Department of the Army. 1997. Field Manual 46-1*, Public affairs operations*.
    Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

Foch, Ferdinad. 1920. *The principles of war.* Translated by Hillaire Belloc. New York:
    Henry Holt and Company.

Free Press. 2012. Role of the media in democracy. Diane Publishing. 1428967729,
    9781428967724. http://books.google.com/books?id=oeW386bU6IIC&dq=
    role+of+the+media+in+democracy&source=gbs_navlinks_s (accessed 30 January
    2012).

Ghanaweb. 2012. NCA licenses 247 radio stations, 28 tv stations. Joyonline.
    http://ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=229552
    (accessed 13 Februbary 2012).

Gibbons, R Arnold. 1974. Francophone West and Equatorial Africa. In *Broadcasting in
    Africa: A Continental Survey of Radio and Television,* edited by Sydney Head.
    Philadelphia. PA: Temple University Press.

Google Maps. 2012a. Map of West Africa. http://www.google.com/search?q=
    west+africa+map&h (accessed 20 March 2012).

———. 2012b. West Africa ethno-linguistic groups. http://www.google.com/
    search?q=west+africa+map&h (accessed 20 March 2012).

Hooper, Alan. 1982. *The military and the media.* Al-dershot, Hants: Gower Publishing
    Company Limited.

Hydén Göran, Leslie Michael, and Ogundimu Folu Folarin.2003. *Media and democracy
    in Africa.* New Jersey: Transaction Publishers.

Johnson, Douglas V. II. 1994. The impact of the media on national security policy
    decision making. Report Strategic Studies Institute, Carlisle Barracks, PA, U.S.
    Army War College.

Karikari, K. 1993. Africa: The press and democracy. *Race and Class* 34, no. 3: 55-66.

Killenberg, George Michael. 2008. *Public affairs reporting now: News of, by and for the people.* Massachusetts: Focal Press.

Kracke, Tina. 2004. Mass media: The ether pervading the Clausewitzian trinity. Monograph, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth, KS.

Kurspahic, Kermal. 2003. *Prime time crime: Balkan media in war and peace.* Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace.

Lodico, Marguerite G. Dean, T. Spaulding, and Katherine H. Voegtle. 2010. *Methods in educational research: from theory to practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

MacNeil, Robert. 2012. Modern media and international affairs. Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada. http://www.international.gc.ca/odskelton/macneil. aspx?lang=eng&view=d (accessed on 18 February 2012).

Makumbe, J. M. 1998. Is there a civil society in Africa? *International Affairs* 74, no. 2: 305-318.

Media Foundation for West Africa. n.d.. Ghana 2009. http://www.mediafound.org/ index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=551&ltemid=47 (accessed 15 February 2012).

Millett, Richard. 2009. *Latin American demorcracy: Emerging reality or endangered species?* New York: Routledge.

Mohammed, Murtala Kamara. n.d. West Africa has the highest illiteracy rate. http://www.africanews.com/site/list_message/22166 (accessed 8 February 2012).

Morgenthau, Hans J. 1973. *Politics among nations: The struggle for power and peace*. 5th ed. New York: Alfred A Knoff.

Morse, Philip McCord, and George E. Kimball. 2003. *Methods of operations research.* New York: Courier Dover Publications.

Moskos, Charles S., and Thomas E. Ricks. 1996. *Reporting war when there is no war: The media and the military in peace and humanitarian operations*. The Cantigny Conference Series, Chicago, IL, Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation.

Mwakikagile, Godfrey. 2001. *Military coups in West Africa since the sixties.* Huntington, NY: Nova Science Publishers.

Nibo, E. W. K. Colonel. Director, Directorate of Public Relations (DPR). 2009. Interview at DPR Headquarters, 31 December.

Nyarko, Olivia. 1994. The media and awareness creation: A case study of the Ghana media coverage in the conflict in Northern Ghana. Dissertation, University of Ghana, Accra.

Patton, Michael. 2002. *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. California: Sage Publications.

Pickard, Victor. 2008. *Media democracy deferred: The postwar settlement for U.S. communications, 1945-1949.* Dissertation, University of Illinois.

Prah, Prince. 2010. Soldiers angry over unfair enlistment into the armed forces. *Daily Searchlight News* 7, no. 195 (18 March): 2.

Republic of Ghana. 1992. *Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, chapter seventeen.* Accra: Asempa Press of Ghana Publishing Corporation.

Rodríguez, Linda Alexander. 1994. *Rank and privilege: The military and society in Latin America.* Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Rukanshagiza, Joseph B. 1995. *African armies: Understanding the origin and continuation of their non-professionalism.* Imprint.

Saffu, Yaw. 2007. *Liberalism in Ghana since independence.* Accra: CDD-Ghana.

Serra, Narcis, and Peter R. Bush. 2010. *1946, The military transition: Democratic reform of the armed forces.* Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Talbot, Laura. 1995. *Principles and practice of nursing research.* Mosby.

Taylor, M. 2000. Media relations in Bosnia: A role for public relations in building civil society. *Public Relations Review* 26, no. 1:1-14.

Taylor, Philip. 1992. *War and the media.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Tudesq, Andre-Jean. 1983. *La Radio en Afrique Noire.* Paris: Editions A. Pedone.

Tumber, Howard, and Jerry Palmer. 2004. *Media at war: The Iraq crisis.* California: Sage Publications.

Umansky, David. 1994. Flow to survive and prosper when it hit the fan. *Public Relations Quarterly* (Winter 1993-1994): 31.

United Kingdom. 2006. *Joint warfare publication 0-01.1. United Kingdom glossary of joint and multinational terms and definitions*. UK: Joint Doctrine Publication.

———. 2001. *Joint warfare publication 3-45, media operations*. http://ids.nic.in/UK%20Doctrine/UK%20(9).pdf (accessed 16 February 2011).

United Nations Military Observers. 2006. *Methods and techniques for serving on a UN observer mission.* New York: UNITAR POCI.

U.S. National Research Council, Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. 1991. *The transition to democracy: Proceedings of a workshop.* Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Wilcox, Clyde. 1997. *Political science fiction.* Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press.

Woodyard, Tyrone. 1998. Crisis communication: A commander's guide to effective crisis communicataion. Dissertation, Maxwell Air Force Base, AL, Air Command and Staff College, Air University.

Zoure, Stephen. 2009. Bawku strip naked show. *Daily Guide*, no. 278/09 (23 November).

INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST

Combined Arms Research Library
U.S. Army Command and General Staff College
250 Gibbon Ave.
Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2314

Ms. Sharon L. Scott
Department of Joint Interagency and Multinational Organisation
USACGSC
100 Stimson Ave.
Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2301

Dr. Don Connelly
Department of Joint Interagency and Multinational Organization
USACGSC
100 Stimson Ave.
Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2301

Mr. Dallas Eubanks
Department of Army Tactics
USACGSC
100 Stimson Ave.
Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2301

Mr. Dave Gunn
Department of Army Tactics
USACGSC
100 Stimson Ave.
Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2301