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**EMERGING NEWS MEDIA COMMUNICATION  
TECHNOLOGIES IN FUTURE MILITARY CONFLICTS**

by

John E. Boyle



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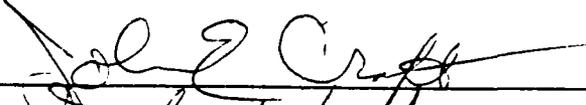
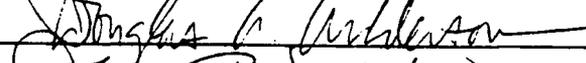
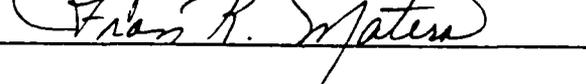
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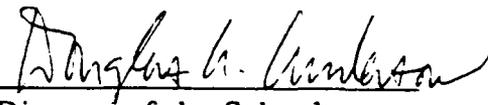
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## ABSTRACT

Recent advances in communications technology enable almost any event to be seen as it is happening throughout the world. No longer do audiences have to settle for delayed video taped or pictureless telephone reports from distant areas. A new generation of portable satellite-based communications equipment enables correspondents to broadcast live from wherever events occur. This capability has transformed the news industry as well as the way in which people witness distant events. This technology has the potential to bring audiences closer to the events, and with the advent of satellite-transmitted global programming, it also promises to create a level of shared experiences worldwide. While this promises to have a significant impact in many areas of news and information programming, perhaps the greatest impact will be felt in the coverage of warfare.

The Persian Gulf War of January and February 1991, marked the first time in which live television reports enabled a worldwide audience to see military events as they were happening. Viewers saw Iraqi missiles slam into cities and military bases which perhaps housed a friend or family member. Satellite images were used by both sides to help win the hearts and minds of viewers in a global battle for public opinion.

This study examines how the U.S. military public affairs community can cope with the expanded communications capability in

future military conflicts. It looks at the history of advances in long distance communications and the sometimes friendly, sometimes antagonistic history of the U.S. military and the news media. The Persian Gulf War is closely examined as an example of what the coverage of future wars may be like in the age of instant communications. Military concerns over the safety of troops and the media's for unimpeded access to events point to the primary conflict both side must address; how the military will accommodate the media and its new technology in future conflicts.

To gather views and opinions on that question, a number of senior military public affairs officers and media representatives were questioned on their concerns about live media coverage in wartime. Also, they were interviewed as to their thoughts on how the media might be accommodated in future conflicts as well as their advice on ways to improve the media/military relationship.

This study found that the greatest concern for the military is the inadvertent release of information that could endanger troops in combat, while the media was concerned about the accuracy of live coverage that may lack the proper information or context to be of value to viewers. Future conflicts, military interviewees believe, may have to be covered by media pools and a security review system would probably have to be in place to safeguard information from release to the enemy. The media members agree that pooling might be a necessity, but are strongly against security review or censorship procedures. On the question of how both groups can work to improve their relationship, all agree that a greater understanding by both parties of one another would build trust between the two.

Also expressed was the feeling that the media and military should begin to work together now so that they can both meet the information needs of the public in future conflicts.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Lt. Col. Michael Warden of the office of Secretary of the Air Force for Public Affairs helping me find the direction of this project as well as the Air Force Institute of Technology for giving me the opportunity to work towards a Master's Degree. Also deserving thanks are the many faculty members of the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Telecommunications for making my studies here both beneficial and enjoyable.

I would also like to specially thank Dr. John Craft for his support, advise and friendship over the course of this project and my tenure at Arizona State.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION, THE PROBLEM AND METHODOLOGY

### Introduction

A lone reporter stands facing a camera on a rooftop, his image beamed to a network control room half a world away. Suddenly, the sky is lit up with the exhaust plumes of missiles. Waving a gas mask at the camera, he shouts, "This is Saudi Arabia...this is not a drill. We have incoming SCUDS, and they are launching Patriots. There goes one!", he says pointing to an arc of light tracing into the dark sky. "Debris is now falling." The camera's unblinking eye follows the remnants of the enemy missile to earth. Seconds later, a grow of light flashes in the distance, and a muffled explosion is heard.<sup>1</sup>

The first live television war had begun.

Not since the reporting by Edward R. Murrow on the Luftwaffe's blitz on London fifty years before had a nation been so captivated by wartime reporting.

But now, instead of a disembodied voice, the audience was treated to live color video. Viewers watching from their own living rooms could see enemy missiles slam into the area around a military base. A base that might house a spouse, son or daughter.

Viewers were seeing not only the start of a war, but also the beginning of a new era in war reporting. The sights and sounds of combat were now shared live with an international audience.

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<sup>1</sup> NBC, "NBC News Special Report," 17 January 1991, "America at War," Arthur Kent.

The world had become the "global village" of shared experiences and instant communications predicted nearly a quarter-century ago by media theorist Marshall McLuhan.<sup>2</sup>

The arrival of new technologies promises to change forever how the world sees war, both literally and figuratively. Events and information once privy only to commanders and troops in the field, and later (if at all) to the public, could now be seen live around the world.

In our open democratic society, the creation and maintenance of public support is vital to ensure the eventual success of any military action. Therefore, commanders must attempt to foster positive relations with journalists. However, the desire of journalists for open access to information and combat areas may clash with military objectives which often require secrecy. The security concerns become more urgent when it is remembered that with the new instant communications technologies, the potential exists that the enemy could have access to any information reported by the media.

This project will assess the impact and concerns of the new technologies on the coverage of combat and military public affairs policies. The capability and responsibilities of the media coverage present a series of new problems to military officials and reporters alike. The history and growth of instant communications as well as the long-standing relationship between the media and the U.S. military will be examined. This relationship will be viewed in the

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<sup>2</sup> Marshall McLuhan and Q. Fiore, The Medium is the Message ( New York: Bantam, 1967), p. 63.

context of recent war in the Persian Gulf, in an attempt to see how the military and media coped with the demands of live coverage.

Finally, experts representing both the media and military will present their views on the future of live media coverage and how the relationship between the press and military can be balanced in the future...despite their often competing concerns and priorities.

The resolution of this issue will have repercussions not only for military public affairs practitioners and the news media professionals, but also in the context of the broader issues of the public's right to know and the media's right of access.

#### Statement of the Problem

Today's new high technology communications, with its rapidity of relaying information around the world, makes it possible for the public to gain instant access to virtually any event...including war.

But unlike most news events of interest to the public, media coverage of war, or a potential war, might endanger lives. Where the media might see a legitimate news story, the military establishment might envision a potentially dangerous security leak.

To alleviate any concerns, a policy must be agreed upon that protects the media's freedoms as well as recognizing the military's need to protect its troops and operations by restricting the immediate dissemination of information that could prove valuable to the enemy.

## Description

This study will examine how the use of new communications technology might affect the American military public affairs policies, activities and relations with the news media in future armed conflicts.

To accomplish that, the technological history of the equipment currently in use is examined, as well as advances in technology that may play a significant role in the news media's capabilities to report from distant battle fields.

The sometimes turbulent history of the American military's relationship with the media will also be explored. From the anti-Union Civil War "copperhead" editors who caused so much grief for President Lincoln to the initially favorable and ultimately critical reporting and opinion of the news media during the Vietnam war, the history of the military press relationship has been one marked by criticism or cooperation. The recent war in the Persian Gulf was similar to past conflicts in the levels of both agreement and disagreement as to how the military conducted its information campaign. If Vietnam was the first television war, then the Persian Gulf conflict was the first live satellite television war. The information war became not only a battle for the hearts and minds of the American public, but in a true sense, for the public opinion of the world.

Along with the historical perspective, the media/military relationship is highlighted through interviews with leading members of the military public affairs efforts at home and abroad, and media

representatives who have had long-term experience in working with the military.

Finally, conclusions will be drawn as to how the military and the media can best accommodate their respective needs and provide the public with the information it demands in any future conflicts.

### Purpose

The purpose of this project is to determine how advances in communications technologies may affect public information policies of the U.S. military forces in future conflicts.

The topic was encouraged by the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Public Affairs who sought a review of the technologies and an analysis of their implications. During the period in which this document was prepared, American military forces entered into combat in the Middle East and the questions regarding media coverage (especially television) became a topic of considerable interest. The study was expanded to include the media relations history of the event as well as the thoughts of those who were involved in its coverage from both the military and media perspectives.

### Significance

The importance of this topic goes far beyond the relatively few individuals, both military and civilian, who will eventually decide and implement whatever media access policy is established in the future.

Instead, it will affect what the public sees and hears from battlefields.

Probably no other government endeavor is as dependant upon the support of the people as is war. In each successive war, the public as been informed faster and in greater detail than it predecessor. The crude photographs by Matthew Brady and telegraph dispatches of the Civil War have given way to live television coverage by satellite. With technology that currently exists, or will exist shortly, it's possible that viewing audiences will have a front row seat for front line tank battles and fire fights by infantry squads.

The only major limitation to this technological progress may come from military policies that may limit media access and live coverage of the battle area in an effort to prevent inadvertently releasing sensitive information that could be used by the enemy for intelligence purposes. This reasoning would have sounded farfetched a generation ago, but the same technology that broadcasts images to our homes sends the same images, at the same time, to distant and perhaps hostile capitals.

### Research Methodology

Due to the very specific nature of this topic and the recent conclusion of the conflict that provides much of the project's data, no related research literature of this topic was available to this researcher. However, numerous articles in the mass media were available and utilized in the portion of this project dealing with the

recent Persian Gulf conflict. These articles came from both popular media, including newspapers and news magazines, as well as publications for the news industry. Some specific information on communications equipment came from fact sheets provided by the manufacturers.

This report utilized the elite interview technique set out by L.A. Dexter in his 1970 volume Elite and Specialized Interviewing. This methodology allowed the interviewing of those individuals who are experts or uniquely equipped, (by experience and knowledge), to provide insight on a specialized issue or limited topic.<sup>3</sup> This is especially useful in cases such as this where no or limited literature exists on a topic. The subjects interviewed are experts in their fields and are in the position to influence future decisions on the media/military relationship.

"Elite" is defined by Dexter as allowing the person being interviewed "special, nonstandardized treatment" by the interviewer.<sup>4</sup> The relatively unstructured format allows the interviewee the opportunity to discuss what he or she regards as relevant, giving him considerable leeway in structuring the answers by letting him emphasize his own thoughts and definitions of the event. The interview in effect, becomes a "quasi-monologue."<sup>5</sup>

The methodology was also influenced by Lincoln and Guba in their 1985 work Naturalistic Inquiry.<sup>6</sup> This methodology was chosen

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<sup>3</sup> Louis A. Dexter, Elite and Specialized Interviews (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970), p.3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p.5.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>6</sup> Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, Naturalistic Inquiry (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage,1985), pp.193-194,

because of its flexibility and adaptability which allowed the collection of data from respondents on multiple levels. Also, the methodology's holistic emphasis permitted the researcher to examine both the specific topic (the impact of the new communications technology) as well as the broader question of how the media would be accommodated by the military in the future. This offered the respondents the opportunity to provide their expert opinions on war coverage and communications technology, in addition to making predictions on future policy. The naturalistic inquiry method's opportunity for clarification and summarization gave the researcher the valuable capability to summarize data during the interview and allowed the respondent to clarify, amplify or correct statements given. The interview schedule included six questions and was constructed relating to specific subject matter, namely the use of technology and the respondents' expert evaluations of war coverage. Care was taken to ensure the questions and the posing of them were "value free" or objective, to let the respondents speak for themselves without any impact from the values of the interviewer. Additional questions were posed to establish validity and reliability.<sup>7</sup> This was accomplished by asking similarly-phrased questions that allowed the respondent to clarify and restate his opinions.

The qualitative methods used were interviewing and the review of available mass media articles on the recent events. The sampling of the people involved in the recent conflict and future policy making was based on informational and not statistical considerations, with

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 298-300.

the view that those interviewed were representative of the people in both the media and military who will eventually be responsible for the decisions on future media policy in combat.<sup>8</sup>

Four of the five interviewees were initially suggested as sources by a liaison in the office at the Pentagon which proposed this research topic. The fifth interviewee was highly recommended by two of the interview subjects (one media member and one military officer) in the course of the interviews.

With the exception of the respondent recommended by the other two subjects, the interviewees were initially contacted by letter requesting the interview and provided background on the purpose of the research. The telephone interviews were recorded in the period of March 25-28, 1991. The interviews were transcribed in full, totaling 24 single-spaced typed pages. For clarity, answers were synthesised for their inclusion into Chapter V. Each interview was approximately 20-45 minutes in length.

The interviewees included:

Colonel Peter Alexandrakos, director of plans for the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs. In this position, Colonel Alexandrakos is responsible for drafting future policy on media coverage in wartime.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 199-202.

Colonel R.T. Sconyers, director of Public Affairs for the Tactical Air Command and CENTAF (rear), the Air Force elements of the Central Command, the American military force in the Persian Gulf War. In his position, he represented both the combat forces abroad as well as the Tactical Air Command which provided the majority of U.S. Air Force units deployed to the region. In that capacity, Col. Sconyers and his staff were responsible for the media relations regarding Air Force units and operations.

Lieutenant Colonel Larry Icenogle, who served as the public affairs media pool coordinator at the Joint Information Bureau at Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. In that role, he was in a unique position to observe existing policy firsthand and form opinions on directions future policy should take.

Bill Headline, bureau chief of the Washington, D.C. Bureau of the Cable News Network. In that position, Headline has worked with the military on forming media access policy and was actively involved in the network's policy decisions during the conflict.

Fred Francis, Pentagon correspondent for NBC News. Francis is highly regarded both inside and out of the Pentagon for his coverage of military affairs. Despite several requests from news organizations and requests for articles as to his views on

the recent war, this is his first interview on the Persian Gulf conflict.

The telephone interviews were conducted "on the record," confidentiality was not requested by any of the subjects. In each instance, the person's positions and views would be known through the establishment of policy or in the case of media members, through public remarks.

This project got underway shortly before Iraq invaded Kuwait on August 2, 1990. However, as the conflict would provide a valuable, real world demonstration of the new communications technologies and illustrate how the military and media would work together covering a major conflict, it was decided to postpone a major portion of the research until after the war concluded. This enabled the researcher recent experiences and reports on which to base conclusions.

One limitation of the interviews should be noted. Because they were conducted so soon after the end of the conflict, the interviewees may still have been formulating their final opinions.

### Research Questions

This report gathered the opinions of those individuals who are experts and responsible for formulating future military/media policy as well as those (both in the military and media) who had extensive experience observing the existing policy during the most recent Middle East crisis.

To better understand how future communication technologies can be accommodated and the associated broader question of how the media/military relationship can be improved, three major research questions were posed to the interview subjects:

1. What are the concerns of the military towards live coverage from theaters of combat operations?
2. How will the media coverage of future conflicts be facilitated?
3. How can the existing relationship be improved?

The answers to these questions will provide data necessary to identify areas of common ground and will help form a basis for further discussion between government policy makers and the media industry.

In conclusion, this research method was valuable in that it allowed recently formed specific data and opinions to be collected from a variety of individuals representing both sides of the media/military spectrum. To understand how the media coverage of the Persian Gulf conflict was perceived by those involved is vital since it will likely be the basis upon which decisions will be made regarding the type and extent of media coverage of future conflicts.

To fully appreciate the rapid technological progress of the communications industry, it's important to take a look at how the current state of the art has evolved. In less than 40 years long distance communications has evolved from shortwave radio and transoceanic telegraph to communications satellites that enable live media coverage from virtually anywhere in the world. And the future developments promise to be no less important.

## CHAPTER II: THE NEW COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

### Long Distance News Transmission

Since its birth in the 1920s, the electronic journalism industry has seen a series of technical revolutions. However, the one that perhaps has had the most effect on the medium as a information tool is its ability to present information live from distant locations. This capability has been brought about by satellite transmissions of television signals and the associated use of electronic cameras and other communication devices.

While short wave radio service provided North American audiences with live verbal accounts of events in Europe before World War II, there was no technological system to transmit pictures over long distances. In the early years of television news, distant events could reach audiences only after considerable delays. News events were often recorded on film which had to be developed and edited before broadcast. However, when great geographic distances between the television station or network origination point were involved, the main delay in the pictures reaching the public was the transportation of the film to distant broadcast facilities. In the case of a significant event such as the coronation of Britain's Queen Elizabeth II, this meant that American television networks (CBS and NBC) chartered airliners, which they outfitted with film developing laboratories and film editing equipment. Thus, precious time could

be saved as the raw film of the coronation was developed and edited during the long flight across the Atlantic. In addition, the networks leased even faster British Canberra jet bombers to rush kinescope highlights of the event to Goose Bay, Labrador where they could be transmitted to American television networks.<sup>9</sup> While the processed film was ready for broadcast when the aircraft landed, obviously, the physical transportation of film had its limitations.

What was needed was a system to relay TV signals over the great distances not yet spanned by coaxial cable. Indeed, coast-to-coast television network interconnection by microwave and cable was not a reality until 1951.<sup>10</sup>

It had long been recognized that television transmission through the airwaves could be extended by transmitting the signal from antennas located at greater heights. In the late 1940s, Westinghouse introduced a system called Stratovision where TV signals were sent 250 miles by relaying signals from a Lockheed Constellation flying at 25,000 feet.<sup>11</sup> This type of airborne relay was used briefly before being replaced in this country by an extensive system of ground-based microwave relay stations. Similar airborne systems have been used throughout the history of television, a notable example was the use of converted airliners to beam two UHF channels of educational

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<sup>9</sup> "Networks Vie for 'First' Honors as TV Cover the Coronation." Broadcasting, 8 June 1953, pp. 56-58.

<sup>10</sup> C.H. Sterling and J.M. Kittross, Stay Tuned: A Concise History of American Broadcasting (Belmont CA: Wadsworth, 1978), p.8.

<sup>11</sup> Robert N. Wold, "How New is SNG?" Satellite Communications, January 1988, p.35.

television to schools in six Midwestern states.<sup>12</sup> Thirty years later, broadcasters returned to using aircraft to help them transmit material from distant places. By the late 1970s, news departments in major markets began using helicopters for local microwave relays in areas where distances or obstructions prevented using truck-based relay units.

### Satellites and News

The aerial relay platforms were useful but had obvious limitations. The eventual future of long-range communications was predicted by an English writer, Arthur C. Clarke, in 1945. Clarke, in a magazine article, suggested that three man-made satellites equally positioned over the equator in a geosynchronous orbit of 22,300 miles above the earth would enable radio transmissions to be instantly relayed to anywhere in the world.<sup>13</sup> The long predicted era of satellite communications began in 1962 with the launch of the first communications satellite, Telstar I. The American Telephone and Telegraph-owned satellite operated by the Communications Satellite Corporation under the rules of the Satellite Communications Act of 1962, promised broadcasters immediate access to virtually anywhere in the world.<sup>14</sup> This great step forward in capability provided the public with its first real-time pictures of global news events such as the funerals of President John F. Kennedy, Pope John

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<sup>12</sup> The Ford Foundation and the Fund for the Advancement of Education, Teaching by Television (2d). (New York: Ford Foundation, 1961), p.15.

<sup>13</sup> Arthur C. Clarke, "Extra-Terrestrial Relays," Wireless World, October 1945, pp. 305-308.

<sup>14</sup> E. Barnouw, The Image Empire: A history of Broadcasting in the United States (Vol III--From 1953). (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), p.209.

XXIII, and Winston Churchill, as well as the 1964 Olympic Games from Tokyo. However, Telstar I was limited in the amount of transmission time available.<sup>15</sup> Since Telstar I was not in an orbit high enough above the earth to be geosynchronous, ground stations had to track the satellite as it passed above until it eventually fell below the earth's horizon. Thus, its usability was limited to the short window of exposure when it was above ground stations during each orbit.

Telstar I was followed into orbit on April 6, 1965 by Early Bird, the first geosynchronous communications relay satellite. The satellite was in a higher orbit above the equator that gave it the speed and trajectory that matched the earth's rotation; so it appeared to "hang in space," providing constant access to less expensive non-tracking ground stations. All communication satellites launched since then have been positioned in geosynchronous orbits.<sup>16</sup>

In a major feature article in the April 12, 1965 issue of Broadcasting magazine entitled "The New Age of Transoceanic TV," the satellite was heralded as bringing "the prospect of worldwide television news coverage on a virtually 'instant basis'." Network news personnel were already looking beyond the period of tests and special broadcasts to the time when technology would allow "feeds from London, Paris, Bonn, Johannesburg, Sydney or Tokyo to be as commonplace on evening newscasts as one from Washington, New York or Selma, Alabama." CBS News president Fred Friendly

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<sup>15</sup> "The New Age of Transoceanic TV," Broadcasting, 12 April 1965, pp. 23-26.

<sup>16</sup> Lynne Schafer Gross, The New Television Technologies, 2d ed. (Dubuque: Wm. C. Brown, 1986), p. 28.

expressed his desires when he said, "I want to be able to press a button and have a TV circuit to London up in four minutes the same way I can get a radio circuit today."<sup>17</sup>

Newspeople were not alone in realizing the implications of instant worldwide communications. On June 28, 1965, Early Bird relayed a telephone call from President Lyndon Johnson to the leaders of six European nations, saying, "This moment marks a milestone in the history of communications between people and nations."<sup>18</sup>

A demonstration of the new communications capability took the form of a special international broadcast on all three American commercial networks and was viewed by an estimated 300 million persons in Europe and the Americas on May 2, 1965. The program featured "news reports from the Dominican Republic, heart surgery in progress from Houston, Pope Paul from the Vatican and the Reverend Martin Luther King from Philadelphia, a cricket match in Great Britain, part of a bullfight in Spain, the Astrodome in Houston, a new tunnel under Mont Blanc in Italy, the manned spacecraft center in Texas, an electric power project in France and the exchange of pictures of 'most wanted men' by officers of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and New Scotland Yard."<sup>19</sup> The next day, American networks continued with an international theme as NBC broadcast the "Today Show" from five European cities and CBS presented a "Town Meeting of the World"

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17 "The New Age," *ibid.*

18 M. Long, The KU-Band Satellite Handbook (Indianapolis, IN: Howard W. Sams, 1990). p.1.

19 "Early Bird is off and Winging." Broadcasting, 10 May 1965, p.68.

linking American, British and French political leaders discussing world events.<sup>20</sup>

Soon, even local stations were using the satellite for special programs, such as a Minnesota station which arranged for Vice President Hubert Humphrey to be interviewed by foreign journalists,<sup>21</sup> and a network of Pacific Northwest stations which dispatched correspondents to Washington, D.C., London, and Paris to interview foreign observers on the Vietnam war for a program entitled "Vietnam: World Opinion."<sup>22</sup>

As the new technology opened a new era in journalism, perhaps the first major event to be covered by satellite was the visit to China by President Richard Nixon in early 1972. To cover the week-long visit, the three American television networks pooled their resources and dispatched a portable ground relay station and several mobile satellite trucks to provide the necessary transmission facilities. The facilities were staffed by more than 100 network correspondents, executives, and technicians. Such coverage didn't come cheaply, as the total bill for the pool coverage was estimated to exceed \$3 million.<sup>23</sup>

The coverage was extensive, with the networks using 32 satellite feeds the first day alone with a total transmission time of nearly 12 hours. Despite the 13-hour time difference between Peking, and

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20 Ibid, p.69.

21 "WCCO-TV Does Encore on Satellite." Broadcasting, 31 May 1965, p.50.

22 "Crown on Early Bird." Broadcasting, 31 May 1965, p.52.

23 "Live by Satellite from Peking." Broadcasting, 14 February 1972, pp.45-46.

New York, many events, including the arrival of President Nixon in Peking were shown live during primetime viewing hours.<sup>24</sup>

The satellites were accessed through large ground stations that were required at both ends of the the transmission. Ground uplink and downlink stations then in use were portable but complex, expensive, and required a great deal of advance preparation to setup. In an effort to achieve greater flexibility and ease of use, Rockwell International developed an earth station on wheels in the 1970s. The unit was eventually purchased by Western Telecommunications Inc. of Denver and in August 1978 was used by the three U.S. networks for pool coverage of President Carter's vacation in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Although the system was for uplink only, it is credited as being the first satellite newsgathering vehicle. It was later used for ABC's coverage of college football games and the 1980 Winter Olympics from Lake Placid New York.<sup>25</sup>

With rapid technological developments that reduced the price and complexity of satellite uplinks, and with the increased number of satellites available, news departments of local television stations were capable of bringing the world into the home of the viewer without the aid of a television network. Competitive forces in local television news demanded that local stations offer something new and dramatic in news coverage in order to attract larger audiences. Thus, a new term...SNG--Satellite News Gathering--entered the vocabulary of television journalists.

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<sup>24</sup> "Another Communications Barrier Down." Broadcasting, 28 February 1972, pp.19-20.

<sup>25</sup> Wold, p.36.

The first SNG vehicles designed for use by local stations appeared in early 1984. Developed by HubCom, Inc., of St. Petersburg, Florida, the trucks used the Ku-band and carried 2.4 meter dishes. Today, several firms make satellite newsgathering vehicles (SNVs) that range in price from \$175,000 to more than \$400,000. The National Association of Broadcasters estimates the average cost of a fully equipped unit to be \$440,000.<sup>26</sup> Vans are typically 28-30 feet long and are fitted with their own power generators and have full editing capability. Most vans use the Ku-band, because it is more powerful, allowing the use of smaller antenna dishes. More than 120 vehicles are in use today by stations in nearly every size of market. The growth came quickly. In 1986, just 61 stations had mobile Ku-band SNGs.<sup>27</sup> A year later the number had swelled to 92.<sup>28</sup>

SNG gear isn't limited to trucks. Today, firms advertise small trailers that can be transported in a standard aircraft cargo container, and even smaller "flyaway" units consisting of transmission equipment capable of being transported as baggage.<sup>29</sup>

For telephone and data transmissions, terminals the size of a suitcases are available to serve as an uplink unit. Late the Persian Gulf War, after its telephone link had been severed, CNN's reports from Baghdad were made possible by a suitcase-sized satellite unit powered by a small gasoline generator. More than 150 of the

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<sup>26</sup> Guy M. Stephens, "An SNG Slowdown?" Satellite Communications, Sept. 1987, p.15.

<sup>27</sup> "The Satellite Newsgathers," Broadcasting, 14 July 1986, p. 50..

<sup>28</sup> "The Satellite Newsgathers," Broadcasting, 20 July 1987, p. 48.

<sup>29</sup> BAF 2.4 AT Fact Sheet (Peabody, MA: BAF Communications Corp.), 1991.

\$55,000 units were being used in the region by news organizations and the military, with transmission costs ranging between \$7 to \$10 a minute.<sup>30</sup>

### Minicams

A key factor in the rapid acceptance of SNG technology can be attributed to the availability of small, lightweight cameras.

Television broadcasters had been producing live "remote" programming since the beginning of the industry. Often, standard size studio cameras would be employed in conjunction with a mobile vehicle. While this arrangement produced satisfactory results, its basic lack of portability restricted it to special events planned in advance.<sup>31</sup> What was needed was a small portable video camera that would eliminate the time necessary to process film (and with the use of reusable videotape the need to buy film) .

By the early 1960s, technology had been able to produce the first in a series of small black and white cameras. Bearing names like "Newschief" and the "Walking TV Station" the cameras were beginning to make their presence felt in 1964 at political conventions and the Winter Olympics. Portable videotape recorders were also under development.<sup>32</sup>

By 1968, the units were capable of transmitting color pictures. The networks recognized the potential of portable cameras in news as well as their promotional value. "From an equipment point of view,

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<sup>30</sup> Scott Chase, "Pressures for Change: Satellite Television and the War in the Middle East." Via Satellite, April 1991, p.24.

<sup>31</sup> Richard D. Yoakam and Charles F. Cremer, ENG: Television News and the New Technology (New York:Random House, 1985), p.1.

<sup>32</sup> "GOP Stage-Center for Radio-TV," Broadcasting, 13 July, 1964. p.33.

the three TV networks will be playing with and undoubtedly ballyhooing--if technical bugs don't suddenly appear--their new miniature color cameras."<sup>33</sup> The portable cameras available at the time were a vast improvement over their predecessors, but still large. The camera itself weighed 18 pounds, and a 30 pound backpack was required to provide power for 90 minutes of operation.<sup>34</sup> By the mid 1970s, the portable cameras and matching videotape recorders and remote microwave trucks were in daily use at stations in the larger cities. Now, virtually any event could be covered live, with a minimal amount of advance preparation.<sup>35</sup>

#### Satellite Mobile Telephone

Technological advances available to the news media aren't limited to broadcasters. In June 1990, Motorola Inc. announced a new satellite based global telephone system that would work on land, at sea or even in aircraft. When completed in 1996, the network will have 77 small satellites in a low earth orbit providing a switching system. Users "will not need the location of the person being called; they will simply dial that person's number to be connected instantly."<sup>36</sup>

The hand-held units, similar in size to existing cellular telephones, will cost approximately \$3,500 and will cost between \$1 and \$3 a

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<sup>33</sup> "Broadcasters Ready in Florida," Broadcasting, 5 August, 1968. p.42.

<sup>34</sup> "Lighter, Better Color Cameras Coming Out this Year," Broadcasting, 15 April 1968. p.61.

<sup>35</sup> Jordan Goodman, "The Minicam Revolution," in TV Book, The Ultimate Television Book, ed. Judy Fireman (New York: Work Man, 1977), pp.246-249.

<sup>36</sup> Iridium News Release (Scottsdale, AZ: Motorola Satellite Communications), 26 June 1990.

minute to operate.<sup>37</sup> This system will enable print and radio correspondents to file stories from any location where facilities may not exist or give journalists the ability to bypass local telephone networks that may be controlled or monitored. This system, when fully operational and matured, might bring the era of instant portable international communications to virtually anyone.

With these tools, instant communications are capable from virtually anywhere in the world. Under normal circumstances that instant access would be seen as an asset. However in times of war, the instant access capabilities of may very well create problems relating to security and intelligence gathering efforts. Thus, the capabilities have significance for not only journalists and news organizations, but the military itself. Chapter III will examine the history of the relationship between the news media and the American military.

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<sup>37</sup> "Always on Call," Time, 9 July 1990, p.51.

### CHAPTER III: THE MEDIA AND THE MILITARY: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

In having a free press it is inevitable that at some point its freedoms will conflict with other requirements in the public interest. One such conflict is the need of a free press, and the needs of a military establishment that has the dual responsibilities of being accountable to the public while at the same time keeping some information away from the scrutiny of potential adversaries.

On the surface, the institutions should have much in common: both exist for the public good, and the freedom of the media has been secured and defended by military action. Military personnel swear an oath to defend the Constitution, while the same document guarantees the protection of the news media.

Unfortunately, the relationship has often been turbulent. The Vietnam conflict brought new pressures and suspicions to members of both professions. This feeling of distrust continues despite the efforts on the part of both parties to better understand the needs and positions of the other. The introduction of advanced communications technology enabling instant worldwide communications may spark a new chapter in the relationship as military authorities will learn to cope with...and possibly limit, the ability of the media to transmit information during times of conflict for reasons of security.

### From the Crimea to the Cold War

In ancient times, the people would know of a nation's battles and wars only through what government and army leaders (often the same people) told them. Since this usually occurred where there was no independent media, and long before there were any theories on press freedoms, no one seemed to care.

The advent of democracies and a free press brought about the public examination of the purpose and goals of armed conflicts. That would change forever how nations entered wars, how those conflicts were conducted, and how they ended. As a key player in a democracy (by serving as the eyes and ears of the people) the press would play a large part in when and how a nation engaged in war. This watchdog function would inevitably bring the media and military into conflict along with the possibility that press freedoms might be curbed by security or unity requirements in time of war.

One of the first examples of an independent and free (from government control and the fear of sedition laws) press was the English press reporting on the Crimean War of 1854-6. In that conflict, Sir William H. Russell of The Times (London) became known as the "father" of modern war correspondents through his vivid reporting from the battlefield. At first, Russell supported the war and wrote only of the battles, including the famous charge of the Light Brigade, but as the war became a stalemate, he began to write critically of the action and the military establishment.<sup>38</sup> Never before

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<sup>38</sup> Harry G. Summers Jr., "Western Media and Recent Wars," Military Review, 66:5 (May 1986): 7.

had press dispatches revealed the extent of the horrors and waste of war, and they led his paper to criticize the conduct of the war. Russell's dispatches were often rewritten with inflammatory headlines by editors who believed that the best way to stop the military mismanagement was to publicize it.<sup>39</sup>

The resulting public furor led to a House of Commons committee investigation of the charges, and eventually the government fell. What is not recorded is whether the articles were rewritten into their more spectacular form because of honest outrage by the press, as an attempt to sell more newspapers, or to pursue some other hidden agenda. What is not disputed is that for the first time, "...that public emotion and furor were so greatly stirred by the forerunner of today's mass media."<sup>40</sup> Despite strong criticism of the paper by some officials, England's attitude on press freedom insured that the paper wasn't punished for its views.

A decade later, the American Civil War brought similar pressures upon both military and civilian leaders. Despite attacks on President Abraham Lincoln and severe criticism of Northern policy, "copperhead" editors were remarkably free to print what they wished. However, a few military commanders were less reluctant than the President to take action against the critical newspapers. Some shut down offending papers or barred them from being mailed into their military districts. When General Ambrose Burnside ordered the Chicago Times closed and restricted the distribution of

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>40</sup> D. W. Scott-Barrett, "The Media and the Armed Services," Military Review, 52:4 (April 1972): 62.

another critical newspaper, President Lincoln immediately directed that Burnside's orders be revoked.<sup>41</sup>

One of the reasons behind President Lincoln's restraint may have come from the fact that he discovered he needed the press in order to insure continued public support for the war. Such popular support would be vital if the North hoped to defeat the South. To help with the dissemination of "good" news about the Army and its war effort, Lincoln appointed a former editor, Charles A. Dana, to work with the press and report on the combat accomplishments of Union forces. Such media contacts were vital as newspapers were distributed to more of the population than ever before, and a new aggressive newsgathering style combined with technical advances in photography and telegraph transmission made news more rapidly available than ever before. Nelson reports that the press was at first,

...insensitive to the damage that battle plans and armies might suffer from news reports that got into print within hours or days after dispatch. The government, its armies dependent as in no previous war upon the efforts and support of the whole people, was insensitive to the people's need for maximum information about the war. <sup>42</sup>

Nelson wrote that by the end of the war, such conflicts were resolved and had given both the government officials and the media a better understanding of each others needs.<sup>43</sup> Such understanding would be a necessity to insure that each side realized that they were working for a common good...the defense of the the public's liberty (which includes a unrestrained press) in wartime.

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41 Ibid., 230.

42 Ibid., xxvii.

43 Ibid.

In World War I, the threat of anti-war expressions prompted the passage of the Espionage and Sedition Acts. These laws sharply controlled personal speech on the war but the question remained on how to deal with the mainstream media. The Committee on Public Information, headed by George Creel was formed for two purposes; to provide the media with voluntary censorship guidelines and to use public relations techniques in gaining and keeping the support of the American public for the war effort. One member of that commission, Edward Bernays, later said that it "...was the first time in our history that information was used as a weapon of war."<sup>44</sup>

Overall, while there were 2000 prosecutions of individuals who spoke out, wrote, or distributed items critical of the war effort, the press largely complied with the suggested guidelines. The cooperation of the press and government worked, the media survived an emotionally charged wartime atmosphere without being subjected to strict mandatory military censorship.

In 1916, the Army itself created its first public relations office, and relations were very cordial with press representatives. The relationship was so friendly that when its "chief censor" was assigned overseas, 29 journalists wrote to the Secretary of War that Major Douglas MacArthur had been "wise and liberal" in his functions and that through his excellent work he had "...influenced national thought on military matters."<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Fraser P. Seitel, The Practice of Public Relations, 4th ed., (Columbus: Bell & Howell, 1989), p.24.

<sup>45</sup> Summers, :5.

After the war good relations continued to evolve between the media and military services. Much of the activity was done to promote the use of aircraft by the armed forces in an attempt to influence Congress to make more money available for the Air Corps. Others (such as Colonel Billy Mitchell), used publicity stunts and the press to lobby for the creation of an independent air service. Army aircraft patrolled against forest fires, sprayed crops for farmers, flew serum to areas hit with epidemics, searched for lost children, flew in air races, and developed new radio and navigation techniques. All of these actions were enthusiastically reported by the press. When reports surfaced during the winter of 1923 that people were stranded on a remote island in Lake Michigan, two Army planes were sent to the area with relief supplies. Each included, along with its pilot, a reporter from a Detroit newspaper to publicize the event.<sup>46</sup>

Such actions ensured that good media relations were maintained throughout the pre-World War II period. This favorable relationship helped set the stage for cooperation in the next decade.

World War II is remembered as a high point in media/military relations. History professor Richard Steele attributes the mutually beneficial relationship that developed between the military and media as being a result not of journalistic patriotism, but rather "...the Roosevelt administration's skillful management of both the war and the press that ensured its overwhelming positive image."<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Maurer Maurer, Aviation in the U.S. Army 1919-1939, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Air Force, 1987), p.145.

<sup>47</sup> Richard W. Steele, "News of the 'Good War': World War II News Management," Journalism Quarterly, 62:4 (Winter 1985):707.

To assist the media,...and to help control them, the Office of War Information was established 12 days after America entered World War II. The office, the military, and the administration used three methods to ensure that its versions of events were the only ones available: 1) due to the nature of combat (remote locations, naval and air warfare) much of the information could come only from government sources, 2) by limiting media access to certain events and areas, and 3) by censorship.

Not having the media along on some military campaigns enabled the administration to limit the flow of bad news, and occasionally to create victories and heroes where none actually existed. This was extremely important in the early stages of the Pacific war, where defeat followed defeat. Losses from the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor were suppressed as was news of atrocities against captured servicemen. While the American people were outraged by the Japanese attack, Roosevelt believed the public could not accept a steady diet of bad news.<sup>48</sup> Towards the end of the war, the release of some bad news was encouraged to prevent the public from getting overconfident following the surrender of Germany. To fill the void created by the lack of independent media sources in combat, the military had its own reporters, public relations staffs, and photographers in the field.

Since all media members had to be accredited to travel to war zones, it was a simple matter to deny access to those reporters whose attitudes might be suspect, or who might prove troublesome. With

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48 Ibid., 709.

this screening, the government could have some control over press representatives without being open to charges of outright censorship. Without the availability of independent transmission sources for their reports back to their employers, the information could easily be reviewed by the military for security and public relations value while still providing some war news to the public.

When it suited political or military purposes, media members were encouraged to travel with the military to help get a message across to the public or Congress. One example occurred in early 1943 during the first days of the American bomber offensive against Germany. General Ira Eaker, the new commander of the England-based Eighth Air Force found his command short on the resources necessary to continue operations. The idea of daylight precision bombing was still very controversial, so Eaker knew his fight for more men and aircraft wouldn't be easy. So he turned to the media.

Eaker believed that one way to get a larger force was to let the people back home, especially public officials, know exactly what the Eighth was doing to Germany, and how important it was to continue doing it. He had therefore invited six war correspondents to accompany his bombers on a mission...Feb.26, 1943.<sup>49</sup>

The reporters invited along on the mission included Walter Cronkite of the United Press and Paul Manning of CBS. One journalist, Robert Post of the New York Times was aboard one Flying Fortress that was shot down and was killed. The resulting publicity on the

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<sup>49</sup> Thomas M. Coffey, Iron Eagle: The Turbulent Life of General Curtis LeMay (New York: Avon, 1988), p.52.

efforts and value of the bombing campaign helped ensure Eaker eventually received the personnel and aircraft he needed.

Knowing that a rigid system of censorship would prove unpopular, a voluntary system relying on self-restraint was initiated in the Office of Censorship. A statement by President Franklin Roosevelt explained the need for the restrictions:

All Americans abhor censorship, just as they abhor war. But the experience of this and of all other nations has demonstrated that some degree of censorship is essential in war time...It is necessary to the national security that military information which might be of aid to the enemy be scrupulously withheld at the source.<sup>50</sup>

The office, headed by Byron Price, a respected editor with the Associated Press, soon published a small set (12 pages) of voluntary guidelines on what subjects could or could not be covered. The guidelines suggested that the reporters seek out officials when in doubt about the status of information. To assist reporters, a Washington office was staffed by experienced newsmen on a 24-hour basis. While the office had no power to legally enforce the guidelines, violators were reprimanded, and complaints were made to publishers and media owners when repeated violations were found. In some cases, the violations were made public so the reporter could be publicly condemned as unpatriotic. The overall cooperation was at a very high level, perhaps because of the national solidarity brought about by the war. As Eberhard stated..."The press

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<sup>50</sup> Patrick S. Washburn, "The Office of Censorship's Attempt to Control Press Coverage of the Atomic Bomb During World War II." Journalism Monographs, no.120, (April 1990):2.

was willing to do its part in order to ensure victory and protect those in the armed forces, even if it meant delaying or missing a story."<sup>51</sup>

The press did cooperate with the military in keeping some major stories under wraps. When Japanese balloon bombs began reaching the West Coast, the military asked the media for help in keeping the threat a secret. Because of the voluntary press blackout, the Japanese never knew if their plan was a success and eventually discontinued the balloon launchings.<sup>52</sup>

The office played a key role in preserving what was perhaps the greatest secret of the war, the atomic bomb project. Although more than one hundred indirect references were made in the media about atomic research during the war:

The press revealed virtually no technical details about the bomb. What was run on almost every occasion was simply that the That, of course, was no secret...But the Office on Censorship operated on the premise that it was better to say less for one pecific reason--neither side knew...how close the other was to perfecting an atom bomb.<sup>53</sup>

However, even the relaxed censorship policies were considered less than ideal by the media when they saw it going beyond genuine military concerns (troop and ship locations, status of weapons development), instead becoming a way to hide mistakes and to be free of press scrutiny. As long as America remained at war, instances of press criticism were unavoidable.

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<sup>51</sup> Wallace B. Eberhard, "From Balloon Bombs to H-Bombs: Mass Media and National Security."

Military Review, 61:2 (Feb. 1981):2-8.

<sup>52</sup> Shirley Kennedy, "Ruby Beach: The Loneliest Battle," Military Review, 68:1 (January 1988): 83.

<sup>53</sup> Washburn, 33.

Perhaps the best known of these cases are muckraking columnist Drew Pearson's attacks on how the war was being conducted (and was especially critical about Pearl Harbor losses), and his beliefs that President Roosevelt was being overly affected by "outside" influences and that he was beginning an anti-Soviet foreign policy. Roosevelt responded by describing Pearson as a "chronic liar." To get back at the President, Steele suggests that Pearson decided to publicize the now famous incident when General George S. Patton slapped a soldier hospitalized for battle fatigue.<sup>54</sup>

But throughout the war, such incidents were the exception rather than the norm regarding media coverage.

In a postwar report to President Harry Truman, Price wrote of the voluntary censorship plan:

Experience has shown that a voluntary censorship with all its undeniable weaknesses, can be fully as effective as such compulsory systems as those of Britain and Canada, where many flagrant violations have gone unpublished because of public sentiment would not support punishment.<sup>55</sup>

America had survived its greatest war without resorting to strict censorship or limiting press freedoms. Price and his office were praised by a number of journalists for the measured and common sense approach taken by the office during the war.

The government (and military) may have used some questionable techniques in dealing with the media (such as purposely misleading them), but serious charges of First Amendment violations did not materialize.

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54 Steele, 716.

55 Eberhard, 5.

Following the war, the military was somewhat forgotten in the excitement of demobilization, but the services kept their public relations offices busy in fighting for the reduced postwar defense budget dollars.<sup>56</sup>

### Vietnam: The Relationship Changes

The century that separated the Crimean War from American involvement in Vietnam was marked by public attitude changes that became equal in importance to the generals (and politicians) as the advances in military technology that evolved during the same time span.

In the 18th century, a war was for the most part a concern of the government fighting it. The people, often without the benefits of an elected government or a free press, simply had to go along with whatever actions were taken by their rulers. In the 20th century, with the concepts of democracy and free press in full bloom, waging a war required a country to form an alliance among the government, people and the army. As might be expected, the media became the people's representative in this alliance. Eventually, the freedom of the media to criticize political and military efforts, and the military's resentment of that criticism, caused mutual distrust between the factions. Just as press coverage (and the resulting public outrage) of the Crimean War brought down a government, press coverage of the Vietnam war and the many protests at home and around the world,

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<sup>56</sup> Juergen A. Heise, Minimum Disclosure: How the Pentagon Manipulates the News (New York: W.W. Norton, 1979), p.74.

helped to convince most Americans that the military effort in Vietnam was a mistake.

There was popular support for President Johnson's Vietnam policy in the early stages of American involvement. In August 1965, 61 percent of those people polled believed that America was correct in sending troops to Vietnam. However by March 1968, that number had fallen to only 41 percent. In the same time period, the percentage of those opposed to the war doubled from 24 to 49 percent.<sup>57</sup>

Several theories have been put forward for the erosion of public support, many having to do with the effects of media reporting.

One theory is that in being the first "television war," the inherent impact of color newsfilm turned a growing portion of the population away from supporting the conflict. The nightly newscast perhaps had the same effect on the American population that Russell's dispatches from the Crimean battle front had on England. Some argue that had television cameras recorded the violence of the Civil War or World War II, the American public would have been so sickened by the violence and bloodshed, that it would not have pursued those wars.<sup>58</sup>

Because of the political pressures placed upon both the military and the administration to show results in Vietnam, the credibility of government spokespersons was significantly lessened. Thus, when field commanders attempted to brief higher ranking Pentagon

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<sup>57</sup> Alexander Angelle, "Public Affairs Roles in Low-Intensity Conflict," Military Review, 70:1 (January 1990):52.

<sup>58</sup> Summers, :7-8.

officials about the war, they were told by administration officials to put a positive slant on all information. That policy produced its greatest failures when the government and Army were slow in acknowledging war crimes such as the shooting of civilians at My Lia. Reporters resented the fact that the information had to come from other sources, and that even after the facts had become known, the Army still was slow in investigating the incident.<sup>59</sup>

By not trusting the political administration or the Army, media was left to analyze events on their own.

When the North Vietnamese launched their Tet offensive in early 1968, the speed, size, and success of the initial attacks surprised many Americans...reporters and military alike. What went largely unreported was the ensuing American victory. When the battles were over, the North Vietnamese had failed in their efforts to hold onto their objectives, and had lost a significant amount of men and material. But the media saw things differently, and labeled the Tet offensive as an important enemy victory. The U.S. military saw the offensive as a major Allied victory. This disagreement over who really won prompted a General to remark that the enemy "...took the battle down around the Caravelle Hotel (where the press stayed) and so from the standpoint of the average reporter over there, it was like the acorn that fell on the chicken's head and it said 'The sky is falling!'"<sup>60</sup>

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59 Scott-Barrett, :66.

60 Cass D. Howell, "War, Television and Public Opinion," Military Review, 67:2 (February 1987):74.

Some of the media's problems could be traced to the media themselves. Many of the reporters were on six-month "tours" and many stayed for much shorter periods. Most did not speak Vietnamese or French, and had only a limited knowledge of the history or politics of the region, or an understanding of the complex military operations.<sup>61</sup>

Another factor that influenced public opinion in America and the rest of the world was propaganda coming from Hanoi. Some of the most effective pieces were reported by neutral countries such as Sweden, or from visiting peace groups which gave the material a more objective look. As English author Scott-Barrett wrote:

An efficient Communist propaganda machine exploited the sympathies of many well-meaning liberals and leftwing sympathizers to publicize the suffering of North Vietnam, depicted as part of a David and Goliath struggle.<sup>62</sup>

Some believe the real reason the administration and the military lost the war of public opinion, in the words of former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs Phil Goulding, there was: "not once a significant organized effort by the Executive Branch of the government to put across its side of a major policy issue...to the American people."<sup>63</sup>

Summers states the problem in a military context by referring to the theory by German military theorist, Karl von Clausewitz, that a value must be placed on any political objectives that leads to a war:

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61 Scott-Barrett, :66.

62 Scott-Barrett, :64.

63 Angelle.:53.

The problem was not that the Vietnam-era media, by vividly portraying the 'price' of war, destroyed the people-Army-government trinity. The problem was that the trinity did not exist. The Army played its part as the instrument of war. The...people initially were in support of the war. But, by its failure to establish the political object, the government failed to established the 'value' of the war.<sup>64</sup>

In retrospect, neither the military nor the media were responsible for the outcome of the Vietnam War. In the end, it was political uncertainty and public opinion that forced the withdrawal of U.S. troops. Could the lack of public opinion in favor of the war be traced to what the media reported? Perhaps, but what I believe happened is that by receiving even the most objective of news reports (the financial and human costs), the weekly toll of the war dead and the inability of the Johnson and Nixon administrations to successfully communicate to the American people exactly why the country was at war, the people determined that the cost of future involvement was unacceptable .

Instead of the military and press acknowledging that they both did their best in Vietnam, both sides blamed each other for the stalemate.

#### Grenada and the Sidle Commission

A decade after American troops left Vietnam, the military was called into action on the small Caribbean island of Grenada. On October 25, 1983, American troops, supported by attack aircraft and helicopter gunships, landed on the island after a junta assassinated

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<sup>64</sup> Summers, :12

the prime minister and threatened to throw the island into chaos. Reacting to a request from the leaders of nearby islands, and out of fear that 400 American medical students might be taken captive, President Reagan sent in troops to restore stability. They were met with resistance not only from members of the island's pro-Cuban government, but by 2,000 heavily-armed Cuban "construction workers" and military advisors.

Within a matter of hours most of the fighting was over, but the media were not allowed on the island for another two days. The media were outraged for being denied access to the operation.

While the media saw the exclusion as a clear violation of their First Amendment rights, administration officials insisted reporters were not invited because of security and time limitations.

Michael I. Burch, assistant secretary of defense for public affairs, insisted that the operation was a unique occurrence, and should not be interpreted by reports as a policy for the future. He said, "If we were presented with exactly the same circumstances--the need for surprise, and the need to finish the rescue operation before beginning the military operation,...I'm not really sure we'd do it much differently."<sup>65</sup>

However many believed that the military, still mindful of press criticisms during Vietnam, and aware of the success of the British in limiting media access during the 1982 Falkland Islands conflict, weren't overly anxious to have the media along on a controversial operation.

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<sup>65</sup> Lyle Denniston, "Planning for Future Grenadas," The Quill, January 1984, p.11.

After the White House press corps accused acting press secretary Larry Speakes of intentionally misleading them about the invasion plans, Speakes reportedly threatened to resign for not being told about the operation in advance.<sup>66</sup>

The press was very angry, and some threatened to take the government into court demanding assured access. Eventually, only Larry Flynt, publisher of Hustler magazine sent attorneys into U.S. District Court with a claim of unconstitutional denial of access.

Ten leading media organizations issued a statement calling on the administration to "recognize the right" of the media to cover military actions. Noting that the press had always been allowed to cover troops in the past, the journalists criticized the reasons given by the military in leaving the reporters behind. The group said the reasons cited by the administration; the need for surprise, and the safety of troops and journalists, could have been accommodated by a small pool of journalists.<sup>67</sup>

The government's assertion that the press was not invited because of the lack of time before the operation was quickly challenged by the press that reported that "everyone knew but us...Cuba knew about it...and other Caribbean nations (knew) of the invasion plan 36 hours before it took place."<sup>68</sup>

To help sooth feelings, and less than two weeks after the invasion, the Pentagon announced a special joint commission to

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<sup>66</sup> James E. Roper, "D.C. press corps 'brawls' with White House." Editor & Publisher, 5 November 1983, p.11.

<sup>67</sup> "Media Organizations Take a Stand," Editor & Publisher, 14 January 1984, p.18-19.

<sup>68</sup> "Everyone Knew But Us," Editor & Publisher, 12 November 1983, p.6.

propose new arrangements for the inclusion of media representatives in future military operations. The chairman of the panel was retired military spokesman Major General Winant Sidle.

The panel, made up of high ranking military public affairs officers and media representatives, held hearings in which media and military members gave their views on how press pool arrangements could be handled in the future. The panel stated its belief that it was essential for the media to cover military operations whenever possible.

The main recommendation of the panel was the formation of a "quick response" 11-member media pool to cover future military operations. Reporters from the major wire services and television networks and the major weekly news magazines, a pair of TV technicians, a still photographer and radio reporter were to make up the pool members. Secretary of Defense Weinberger said he was pleased with the panel's recommendations and ordered them to be implemented immediately.<sup>69</sup>

Six months after the adoption of the report, the first in a series of tests were conducted to see if the press pool would work smoothly. In one test, the pool was flown to California to cover a major exercise involving 35,000 troops. Media members were happy with the test, with one female reporter saying that the military was "much less sexist" than the media about having a woman cover combat, while

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<sup>69</sup> "Pentagon Announces Combat Press Coverage Plan," Editor & Publisher, 13 October, 1984, p.17.

another said the the Defense Department is "taking this (the press pool) seriously."<sup>70</sup>

The first combat test of the pool came during the American escort of oil tankers in the Persian Gulf in July 1987. Once aboard Navy ships in the gulf, the reporters praised the freedom they had to wander around the ships, but were less happy with the idea of having their copy reviewed (censored) by the public affairs escort officer and the ship's captain.<sup>71</sup>

Again, as was found in earlier wars, the media and the military found that a voluntary system of censorship was workable, and a good (if not always ideal) compromise for the two camps.

#### Panama: The Media Pool in Action

On December 20, 1989, the press pool established by the Sidle Commission accompanied American Forces as they invaded Panama. The pool was somewhat of a formality since many reporters were already in the country covering the escalating tensions between the governments.

The pool didn't get off to a good start, with the 16 reporters, photographers and technicians arriving in Panama five hours after the invasion began. The journalists were then kept at the American

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<sup>70</sup> Andrew Radolf, "Military Media Pool Tests Works," Editor & Publisher, 27 September 1986, p.13.

<sup>71</sup> Tim Ahern, "White Smoke in the Persian Gulf," Washington Journalism Review, October 1987, pp.16-18.

air base for another five hours before being flown by helicopter to witness an artillery group in action. One pool member said, "We were always one step behind what was going on." <sup>72</sup>

Other serious complaints were that some of the places shown to the pool members seemed to be included for propaganda rather than news value.

On the positive side, pool members were complimentary about the facilities provided for their use, and the fact that there was no censorship problems encountered. Overall, the general pool reaction seemed to be one of some disappointment. The Washington bureau chief for the Associated Press Jonathan Wolman, compared the pool to a sports reporter "missing the game but getting great access to the locker room afterward."<sup>73</sup>

Later, a Pentagon-commissioned study found that "Defense Secretary Dick Cheney's 'excessive concern for secrecy' during the...invasion...caused the 16-member media pool to miss crucial early battles and made it tough for journalists to cover later action." <sup>74</sup>

The author of the report, Fred Hoffman, a former Pentagon spokesman and correspondent defended the media's professionalism in the pools:

Over the five-year history of Pentagon sponsored pools, including a year long series in the Persian Gulf, hundreds of

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<sup>72</sup> George Gameau, "Military Press Pool Misses Most of the Action," Editor & Publisher, 6 January 1990, pp.4-5.

<sup>73</sup> Steven Komarow, "Pooling Around in Panama," Washington Journalism Review, March 1990, p. 52.

<sup>74</sup> Lisa Stein, "Coming to Defense of News," TV Guide, Phoenix ed., 31 March 1990, p.36.

newsmen and newswomen demonstrated they could be trusted to respect essential ground rules, including operational security.<sup>75</sup>

Instead of criticizing the government policy and officials for any shortcomings in the pool concept, the pools would be viewed by some as an extra effort by the military to improve their relationship with the media. Others, however, would see them as an attempt by the military to control or restrict the media.

However, less than a year after the initial combat test of the pool system in Panama, that system and the entire issue of media/military relations would be examined because of events half a world away in the deserts of the Middle East. And unlike any previous war, this time the world would be watching live on television.

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER IV: THE PERSIAN GULF WAR

### The Promise and the Controversy

If Vietnam is remembered as the "television war," the six-week 1991 war in the Persian Gulf will be recalled as "the satellite television war." For the first time, instant communication capabilities enabled reports to reach millions live from the area of a major conflict.

This capability presented new opportunities but also a new set of problems and questions for the military and media alike. Concerns quickly emerged regarding media access to the combat zone, ground rules on military information review policies, and resulting questions on the media's right of access and censorship issues.

While these issues have been expressed in past conflicts, new communications technologies and the capability for instant transmission of information...information that the enemy might gain access to, gave the issues a greater sense of urgency.

Members of the media sensed their responsibilities, as Time magazine noted:

The problem has been made even tougher by the advent of live, satellite-fed TV communication. While U.S. viewers are watching air raid alerts and SCUD attacks as they happen, so are the Iraqis, via CNN. One ill-advised sentence or too revealing a picture could put troops in danger.<sup>76</sup>

This concern for operational security and the need to accommodate a large number of media representatives led to the

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<sup>76</sup> Richard Zoglin, "Volleys on the Information Front." Time, 4 February 1991, p.44.

reformation of the media pools as recommended by the Sidle Commission and implemented in the 1989 Panama invasion.

The pools were made up of a small number of representatives from different news organizations, and were under constant escort by military public affairs officers. The first pools were organized and in the field within weeks of the deployment of American troops to the Persian Gulf following the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq.<sup>77</sup>

It would be the first test of the pools in a major conflict. One magazine noted: "The invasions of Panama and Grenada were over too quickly, and conducted too secretly, for TV to be much of a factor."<sup>78</sup>

Along with the requirements for frontline journalists to be in a pool (after passing a basic physical fitness test), military officials also released a set of security guidelines that it requested all journalists follow. Some of the information that was asked not to be reported included: the specific number of troops, and weapons, specific locations of military units and details of troop movements, security precautions taken by military forces, comments on Allied intelligence activities and the effectiveness of enemy intelligence, specific information on rescue missions in progress, and specific details on Allied losses. Only the descriptions of "light," "heavy" or "moderate" would be allowed. Also, photographing allied casualties would be

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<sup>77</sup> Chet Lunner, "Military battens hatches as press floods Persian Gulf." The Quill, November/December 1990, p.10.

<sup>78</sup> Richard Zoglin, "Live from the Middle East!" Time, 28 January 1991, p.71.

restricted.<sup>79</sup> Copy would also undergo a security review before release.

Before the war began, news organizations registered complaints about the suggested restrictions. In a joint letter to Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney, the leaders of the four major television news organizations; ABC's Roone Arledge, Eric Ober of CBS, CNN's Tom Johnson, and Michael Gartner of NBC--said they believed that the ground rules went beyond what would be required to protect the military operation. They were also critical of the security review provision for the media pools which they said, "...set up cumbersome barriers to timely and responsible reporting and raise the specter of government censorship of a free press." They also said that while the security review procedure was not "...censorship in its purest form, ...it compromises the free flow of information with official intrusion and government oversight."<sup>80</sup>

The Radio-Television News Directors Association also protested by saying: "We cannot condone any attempt by the military to use the guidelines to limit coverage, distort the news or hide embarrassing information that the American people have a right to know."<sup>81</sup>

The American Society of Newspaper Editors also protested the security review of outgoing stories, noting in a letter to Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs Pete Williams, "there was no such prior review in Vietnam, and there were few security breaches

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<sup>79</sup> Debra Gersh, "Pentagon prepares press for war." Editor & Publisher, 12 January 1991, p.9.

<sup>80</sup> "Washington Lays Down the Rules of War." Broadcasting, 14 January 1991, p.52.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

of any consequence." The Association urged that the media pools be done away with as soon as logistically possible.<sup>82</sup>

The organizations' fears were echoed by many field reporters who were concerned that military officers screening media dispatches might delete any information thought to be unfavorable to the military. Jack Wolman, of the Associated Press said of the guidelines that he didn't "...like it philosophically and I don't think it will work...I'm concerned that someone in the heat of battle will squelch a report about a battle that does not go the American way."<sup>83</sup> Another journalist, Max Frankel of the New York Times criticized both the pool concept and the security review requirement by saying, "both imply that correspondents cannot be trusted, as in the past, to safeguard military operations against disclosures that endanger lives."<sup>84</sup>

Time magazine reported, that despite journalists' fears of the military deleting unfavorable comments, the practice was not widespread. "Despite a few incidents of tampering, that has not happened."<sup>85</sup>

Nonetheless, some military officers did attempt to make minor changes in reporters copy. In one case a reporter's description of pilots returning from a combat mission was changed from "giddy" to "proud."<sup>86</sup>

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82 Gersh, "Pentagon prepares for war." p.9.

83 Ibid.

84 Ibid.

85 Richard Zoglin, "Jumping Out of the Pool." Time, 18 January 1991, p.39.

86 "Newsmen sight the enemy: Censors." Phoenix The Arizona Republic, 25 January 1991, p. A4.

Not all the military/media contacts were antagonistic. One Air Force colonel provided pool reporters from the Chicago Tribune and the Associated Press access to a "secret phone" at an airbase allowing them to send out the first official word that the air war had begun.<sup>87</sup>

The review system also had an appeal process for those reporters who disagreed with the judgments of local military officials. In those cases, higher officials at the Pentagon would review the story. When that happened, the media prevailed.<sup>88</sup>

However, as the war progressed, complaints from correspondents began to surface. Pool reporters said their military public affairs escorts took them to areas without any news value and allegedly picked the military personnel to be interviewed.<sup>89</sup> Other pool members complained about the delays in the release of their reports by military authorities and that reporters with less skill or expertise were writing some of the pool reports.<sup>90</sup>

Some journalists, frustrated by the restrictions of the pools avoided them and set out to cover the war on their own looking for exclusive stories or ones which would be free of the delays resulting from the military security review process. Called "unilaterals" by military officials, they drove rented cars throughout the front,

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87 Edith Lederer, "Getting the word out the first night." Editor & Publisher, 2 February, 1991, p.9.

88 M.L. Stein, "Persian Gulf coverage and the 'Vietnam Hangover' ." Editor & Publisher 23 February 1991, P18.

89 "Journalists in a war of strict press rules." Broadcasting, 28 January 1991, p.22.

90 Debra Gersh, "Press pools on the verge of collapse?" Editor & Publisher, 2 February 1991, p.7.

16 Zoglin, "Jumping Out of the pool." p.39.

gathering stories from the various allied military units encountered. The rewards weren't without some risks, as CBS reporter Bob Simon and his crew were captured by Iraqi troops and imprisoned for the duration of the war.<sup>91</sup>

Criticism of the military press policy became so vocal that the U.S. Senate Governmental Affairs Committee held hearings on the media coverage.

Some journalists including Paul McMasters of USA Today and Sydney H. Schanberg of Newsday charged the military's motive being based more on maintaining public and political support than security grounds. The restrictions, according to McMasters, have "little to do with military security and much to do with political insecurity." Similar sentiments were echoed by Schanberg who said, "it is an act of political security done out of fear that a free flow of information about the war could change public opinion."<sup>92</sup>

Walter Cronkite, former CBS news anchorman said in the Senate hearings the arrangements were filled with "an arrogance foreign to the democratic system." In their place he suggested a system similar to that used in World War II where reporters would be free to go where they wanted, but their film, tape and reports would still undergo a security review by military officials.<sup>93</sup> With such a system he said, "the press would still be free to go where it wants, to see, hear and photograph what it believes is in the public interest."<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> "Press, Politicians Weigh Coverage Restrictions." Broadcasting, 25 February 1991, p.52.

<sup>93</sup> Debra Gersh, "War information hearings." Editor & Publisher, 2 March, 1991, p.10

<sup>94</sup> "Press, Politicians Weigh Coverage Restrictions." p. 52.

Cronkite said he recognized legitimate reasons for delaying the publication or broadcast of stories in wartime (by submitting them for security review), but it was not necessary to delay the actual reporting of the news.<sup>95</sup>

Retired Major General Winant Sidle, chairman of the group which recommended the pool system following criticism of the press exclusion of the Grenada invasion, defended the pool system as being the only way large numbers of journalists could be handled. "The fact is that security, safety and operational considerations preclude absolutely providing the press full coverage," Sidle said. However, once the final ground phase of the war had begun and the number of reporters wanting to go into the field were known, he would then support dropping the pool system.<sup>96</sup>

Fred Hoffman, a former assistant secretary of defense for public affairs who headed a review of the military policy towards the media during the 1989 invasion of Panama, called for both the dropping of the security review requirement and the earliest disbandment of the pools, "as a matter of policy," he explained, "it was always our intention to move away from pool coverage (to) open coverage of a military operation as soon as possible and where possible."<sup>97</sup>

Pete Williams, the senior Pentagon spokesperson, defended the Pentagon policies on both security and logistical grounds. In the Senate hearings. Williams said the restrictions were designed to "...get as much information as possible to the American people about

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95 Ibid., p.52

96 Gersh, "War information hearings." p.11.

97 Ibid., p.38.

their military without jeopardizing...a military operation or endanger(ing) the lives of the troops who must carry it out."

Defending the system as necessary purely from a logistical standpoint, he said that there are "...more (reporters) than we can possibly accommodate...if a ground war begins...the battlefield will be chaotic and the action will be violent...our front line units simply will not have the capacity to accommodate large number of reporters."<sup>98</sup>

William's concern about the sheer numbers of media representatives was well-founded. The number of media representatives rose quickly in the war from 300-350 in mid-January,<sup>99</sup> to 757 in early February,<sup>100</sup> to more than 800 in mid-February,<sup>101</sup> to over 1,400 by early March.<sup>102</sup> By contrast, this compared to approximately 300 media members in Vietnam<sup>103</sup> and 700 American correspondents who covered the many combat theaters of World War II.<sup>104</sup>

Senators (from both political parties) agreed with Williams and the military feeling that military security concerns outweighed whatever inconvenience the press faced. Senator Joseph Lieberman said, "The rights of a free press do not transcend the rights of our soldiers to survive." Another, Delaware Senator William V, Roth Jr. expressed concern that in their haste to get information on the air

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98 "Press, Politicians Weigh Coverage Restrictions." pp. 52.-53.

99 "The Storm and the Eye." Broadcasting, 14 January, 1991, p.52.

100 Debra Gersh, "Trouble among the press ranks." Editor & Publisher, 9 February, 1991, p.46.

101 Stein, "Persian Gulf coverage..." p.18.

102 Gersh, "War information hearings." p.10.

103 Stein, "Persian Gulf coverage..." p.18.

104 C.L. Sulzberger, World War II, (New York: McGraw Hill, 1970), p.228.

first, broadcasters might report something they shouldn't. Senator Herb Kohl of Wisconsin stated he felt the Pentagon was doing an "honest and...effective job of making sure that the American people have the information they need to make an informed judgment about the conduct and status of the war." <sup>105</sup>

Polls showed support for the Pentagon procedures. A Times Mirror survey conducted nearly two weeks into the war found that while 76 percent of those questioned felt the media was being censored, 79 percent believed the restrictions to be a good idea. Seventy eight percent said they were satisfied that the military was not hiding bad news, and 57 percent said the Pentagon should exert more control over reporting of the war. <sup>106</sup> In a Time/CNN poll conducted in January 1991 (the month the war began), "88% supported some censorship of the press under the circumstances."<sup>107</sup> A poll conducted by Newsweek on January 24-25, 1991 reported that while 73 percent said the media coverage was "fair and reliable", 64 percent said the coverage made "it harder for U.S. officials to conduct the war." Thirty-two percent said the coverage was "too controlled by the Pentagon."<sup>108</sup>

Despite the differences of opinion, the system remained in effect until the end of the fighting. Correspondents learned to accept the restrictions. Bob McFarland, NBC deputy news director, commented

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<sup>105</sup> Gersh, "War information hearings." p.10.

<sup>106</sup> "The people, The Press and the War in the Gulf." The Quill, March 1991, p.16.

<sup>107</sup> Richard Zoglin, "Just Whose Side Are They On?" Time, 25 February, 1991, p.53.

<sup>108</sup> Jonathan Alter, "Showdown at 'Fact Gap'," Newsweek, 4 February 1991, p.61.

that while they did not like the guidelines, "even tight controls are better than nothing at all, which is what we ran into in Grenada."<sup>109</sup> George Watson, ABC News bureau chief in Washington, said of the restrictions: "It's a policy of prior review and restraint, but it's not censorship in the sense of a guy with a green eyeshade saying, 'You can't say this.'" <sup>110</sup> Although in at least one case, however, a reporter was ordered to leave a pool in the "best interests" of the military after officials complained about a (cleared) story he had written.<sup>111</sup> However, in many cases broadcasters were live on the air without scripts that could be reviewed.<sup>112</sup>

Journalists came to realize that there were no formal or criminal penalties for violating the guidelines, the only punishment might be the "revocation of press credentials by the Saudi government."<sup>113</sup> However, such events proved to be the exception rather than the rule for correspondents.

Despite their opposition to the coverage restrictions, media organizations appear to have been self-policing (as they told the military and Senate they would be). On August 15, soon after the arrival of the first U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia, ABC correspondent Sam Donaldson appearing on "Nightline" inadvertently disclosed the location of a major military base. The next evening when the report was broadcast on "PrimeTime Live," ABC voluntarily edited that

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<sup>109</sup> "Washington Lays Down the Rules of War." p.53.

<sup>110</sup> "Journalists in a War of Strict Press Rules." p.22.

<sup>111</sup> Zoglin, "Jumping Out of the Pool." p.39.

<sup>112</sup> Debra Gersh, "Where's the beef?" Editor & Publisher, 26 January 26, 1991, p.9.

<sup>113</sup> Debra Gersh, "Protesting the Gulf ground rules." Editor & Publisher, 19 January 1991, p.7.

portion of the broadcast. ABC News vice president Robert Murphy said the government did not complain about the incident.<sup>114</sup>

The only publicized case of a broadcast reporter being censored by a cut off of satellite transmission, happened in Israel, on January 22, when NBC correspondent Martin Fletcher's live report was cut by the government after he began giving unauthorized casualty figures following a missile attack. The satellite link was restored after Fletcher apologized and NBC agreed to read an apology on its nightly newscast.<sup>115</sup>

Although the tension between the media and military was billed as "one of the most publicized sideshows of the Gulf War,"<sup>116</sup> many of the problems anticipated by both the media and the military either didn't materialize or were worked out with apparently little harm done to either side's efforts.

### The Technology

The coverage, no matter how controversial, would not have been possible without the latest array of communications equipment as sophisticated as the weapons being used on the front lines. Satellite-based communications were the key, allowing television, radio, and even still photographs to be transmitted from not only major cities involved in the conflict but the frontlines as well.

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114 Douglas J. Keating, "Network bleeps Sam Donaldson." Spokane (Wash.) Spokesman-Review, 21 August 1990, p. F7

115 "Journalists in a War of Strict Press Rules," p.23.

116 Richard Zoglin, "It Was a Public Relations Rout Too." Time, 11 March 1991, p.56.

Portable "flyaway" satellite uplinks were instrumental in bringing pictures of airstrikes being launched from military bases in Saudi Arabia, of missile attacks on Tel Aviv,<sup>117</sup> and the eventual entry of Allied forces into Kuwait City.<sup>118</sup> The units, which fit into four cases and weigh under 350 pounds,<sup>119</sup> served with correspondent teams operating from fixed locations as well as alongside frontline troops.<sup>120</sup> Costing between \$200,000 and \$340,000, the units are capable for transmitting voice, data or full video capability.<sup>121</sup>

To transmit the signals to the U.S., the networks retained a three-month, full-time lease on the Intelsat 338 satellite positioned over the Atlantic Ocean.<sup>122</sup>

To lessen the burden of field photographers already encumbered with a 40 pound chemical warfare suit and gas mask, the network pools replaced their larger minicam units with inexpensive and lightweight professional model Sony Hi8 camcorders. The small cameras also played a part in the security review controversy, as the 8-millimeter tape could not be viewed by VCRs in the field.<sup>123</sup> Some units also were equipped with special night vision lenses to facilitate night photography without requiring lights.<sup>124</sup> NBC reported that its equipment held up well in the harsh desert environment, where at

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117 "Flyaway Satellite Systems Show Star Potential." Broadcasting, 18 February 1991, p.62.

118 "Going Live From the Front Lines." Broadcasting, 4 March 1991, p.28.

119 "Mantis Portable KU Band Satellite System Factsheet." (Chelsham, England: Advent Communications Ltd.) 1990.

120 "Going Live from the Frontlines." p.28.

121 "Flyaway Satellite Systems Show Star Potential." p.62.

122 "The (Logistical) Horrors of War." Broadcasting, 14 January 1991, p.54.

123 Gersh, "Where's the beef?" p.28.

124 "Going Live from the Frontlines." p.28.

one point temperatures rose to the extent that cables melted during the taping of the "Today" show. To protect tape recorders from the ever present dust, technicians stretched pantyhose over the equipment.<sup>125</sup>

The Cable News Network was able to report from Baghdad in the early days of the air war by an exclusive "four-wire" overseas telephone system that required no operators or switching systems and can continue to operate even after electrical power had been cut. The \$16,000 a month fee for the line allowed CNN to keep communications links after the other networks had their telephone links cut.<sup>126</sup>

Such capability didn't come cheap for the television networks. It's estimated that covering the news developments for the seven months of the crisis cost the four major television networks more than \$145 million. At the height of each network's coverage, costs were estimated at an additional \$1.5 million a week on top of their regular news budgets. Lost commercial time also cost the networks an estimated \$125 million.<sup>127</sup>

### The Aftermath

"Certainly this is the most important story of a generation," said Ed Turner, executive vice president of CNN.<sup>128</sup>

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125 "The Storm and the Eye." p.54.

126 "How CNN Phoned Home." Time, 28 January 1991, p. 71.

127 "War Takes its Toll on Networks." Broadcasting, 4 March 1991, p.27.

128 "The Storm and the Eye."p.51.

To cover the story, the media had at their disposal the latest in communications equipment. The significance and the capability of the news media weren't lost on observers or participants.

Television carried the start of the war live, with audio reports on both ABC and CNN coming from correspondents witnessing the air attack on Baghdad from their hotel rooms.<sup>129</sup>

In the first days of the war, Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney answered a question in a press briefing by saying that "based upon the comments that were coming from the CNN crew in...Baghdad, that the operation was successful..." The next day General Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, answered a question by saying: "The best source of how careful we have been is listening to the CNN reporters who are watching it unfold."<sup>130</sup>

Equally dramatic was the live coverage of the end of the war, the liberation of Kuwait City by allied troops. As ground forces crossed into Kuwait, news crews with flyaway satellite units broke from the Pentagon press pools and joined with Saudi and Egyptian units as they crossed the border. A CBS crew led by correspondent Bob McKeown actually arrived in Kuwait City before the the main group of allied forces. An ABC crew followed less than two hours later, "ahead of all but a few coalition reconnaissance units."<sup>131</sup>

The worldwide war coverage turned satellite-relayed television (particularly the Cable News Network) into "an entirely new kind of global information system--an intelligence network that serves not

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129 "Television's War, and CNN'S." Broadcasting, 21 January 1991, p.24.

130 Ibid.

131 "Going Live from the Frontlines." p.28.

only 70 million households but also world leaders."<sup>132</sup> Following reports that Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein had his command post televisions tuned to CNN, Peter Tarnoff, president of the Council on Foreign Relations said that the network had become "the most efficient way for one government to speak to another during a crisis."<sup>133</sup> For a network begun a little more than a decade earlier it was publicity and legitimacy that could not be purchased at any price.

The war had another benefit for CNN and the cable systems that offer it to subscribers. Following the publicity on the quality of CNN's war coverage, cable operators cited a significant increase in orders for cable installations.<sup>134</sup>

If television can be used as a source for positive information, it also has the potential to spread erroneous information. The wide viewership and the trust in usually reliable sources can lead to confusion or terror, depending upon the seriousness of the error being broadcast. At one point, a CNN correspondent announced that his location in Saudi Arabia had come under a poison gas attack,<sup>135</sup> and NBC's Martin Fletcher put on a gas mask while reporting that Tel Aviv might be under a chemical attack.<sup>136</sup>

ABC's television and media analyst Jeff Greenfield, said that the broadcast mistakes are "the most significant, most troublesome

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<sup>132</sup> Matthew Cooper, "The very nervy win of CNN." U.S. News and World Report, 28 January 1991, p.44.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> "C.N.N.'s Place in History." Broadcasting, 4 March 1991. p.29.

<sup>135</sup> Atler, "Showdown at 'Fact Gap'." p.62.

<sup>136</sup> Zoglin, "Live From the Middle East!", p.70.

aspects of television's first 'real-time' war: the uneasy blend of instant, immediate, round-the-world, round-the-clock access to information that is inherently incomplete."<sup>137</sup>

The mistakes that inevitably occur during live coverage can usually be easily corrected when later information becomes available. However, what might be more serious is the absence of the context normally provided in the editorial process. Live reports can include rumors or unsubstantiated stories coming from vague sources normally weeded out.

In retrospect, the war was a success not only as a military operation but from a media standpoint as well. The media (especially television) could claim a stunning success and greater influence, while the military officials could claim that the restrictions imposed on the news media resulted in virtually unimpeded coverage and gained public support.

However, the real recipient of the media/military information efforts was the public who, for the first time ever, was able to experience the tension, horror, excitement and tragedy of war through the marvel of instant worldwide communications.

How do military public affairs officials and media members view their experiences in the context for setting the stage for the next live television war? Elite interviews were conducted with policy makers and those who participated in the media coverage of the conflict. In the following chapter, they discuss their concerns about live coverage, how changes might be made to facilitate coverage of future

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<sup>137</sup> Jeff Greenfield, "America Rallies 'Round the TV Set." TV Guide, 16 February 1991, p.5.

wars, and finally how the media/military relationship can be improved. While the war proved to be a valuable lesson for both parties on how they would work together in the future, it also made clear that there was a great deal of work, discussion, and compromise to be done.

## CHAPTER V: PERSPECTIVES: EXPERIENCE AND EXPECTATIONS

The war in the Persian Gulf was the first opportunity for the media and military to work together in an environment largely shaped around the possibility of extensive live news coverage. And for the first time representatives from both camps had to recognize the promises and concerns brought about by the capability of instant communications.

To assemble the views of senior military officials and policy makers, as well as members of the media, representing both management and correspondent levels, the respondents to this study were asked for their thoughts on live coverage of the Persian Gulf and future military actions.

**Question: 1. What are the concerns and problems of live war coverage?**

Colonel Peter Alexandrakos, director of plans for Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs replied that the concerns of the military about live coverage are limited in scope. "The only two things we are concerned about are maintaining the security of military operations and about information being reported that might endanger the lives of American or Allied troops," Colonel Alexandrakos said.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Telephone interview with Colonel Peter Alexandrakos, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, Pentagon, Washington D.C., 25 March 1991. Tape recording.

That meant in the Persian Gulf, there would be a system of security review that applied to reports generated from the media pools. "Additionally, there was a set of printed ground rules that media members had to sign before being accredited by a Joint Information Bureau," Alexandrakos added.<sup>139</sup>

Colonel R.T. Sconyers, director of Public Affairs for the Tactical Air Command and the Air Force element of the Central Command of the Persian Gulf War agreed with Alexandrakos that commanders were concerned about information aiding the enemy. "Clearly the most important concern is for the safety of the troops. Anytime there is a compromise of operational security it might have an impact on the possibility of lives being lost," Colonel Sconyers said.<sup>140</sup>

He stated that the presence of the media has an impact on the way wars are fought and decisions are made. "In Operation Desert Storm, the leaders were always concerned about what was being transmitted via CNN and the other media outlets and wanted to ensure the enemy did not use that information as a source of intelligence," Sconyers added.<sup>141</sup>

Lieutenant Colonel Larry Icenogle served as the Combat Media Pool coordinator at the Joint Information Bureau in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. He believed that live coverage wouldn't necessarily increase the danger to military operations if two conditions were met. "We have a question of some sort of electromagnetic signature (which

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139 Ibid.

140 Telephone interview with Colonel R.T. Sconyers, Director of Public Affairs for the Tactical Air Command and Central Command Air Forces (rear), Langley Air Force Base, VA, 28 March 1991. Tape recording.

141 Ibid.

could be pinpointed by enemy electronics) which could divulge your location (and be homed in on by a 'smart' weapon). If you get around that, I don't feel that most commanders would have any objection to live coverage if there was some sort of security review." Lieutenant Colonel Icenogle said.<sup>142</sup>

Bill Headline, the Washington, D.C. bureau chief for the Cable News Network, said the question of concerns over and problems with live coverage was moot. "It seems to me that present day satellite transmitting capabilities are somewhat limited. Logistically, it's almost impossible to transmit from a battlefield situation. Down the line, I think that will change in terms of portability and low power requirements," Headline said.<sup>143</sup>

Fred Francis, Pentagon correspondent for NBC, said that live broadcasting of actual combat was never considered for the Persian Gulf War. "There were never any requests by the American networks to the Pentagon to allow live transmissions from the battle area, nor did the networks ever consider to do it on their own," Francis said.<sup>144</sup>

The main concerns of live combat broadcasting for journalists, Francis said is the pressure it would place on the correspondents.

"I can pick up a new telephone in the year 1995 and with a satellite dish I can get on the air almost immediately. But is what I

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<sup>142</sup> Telephone interview with Lieutenant Colonel Larry, Icenogle, Public Affairs Director for the Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Penn., 28 March 1991. Tape recording.

<sup>143</sup> Telephone interview with Bill Headline, CNN bureau chief, Washington, D.C., 27 March 1991. Tape recording.

<sup>144</sup> Telephone interview with Fred Francis, NBC News Pentagon correspondent, Washington, D.C., 27 March 1991. Tape recording.

see totally accurate?" Francis wonders. "Is it a picture of the way the whole battle is going, or just what I can see in my area around me? Sometimes the ability to go live instantly by phone or satellite really conflicts with that basic responsibility of presenting the facts in a responsible way."<sup>145</sup>

The concerns about satellite coverage can be viewed with the broader question of overall media access to battle fields.

**Question 2. How will the media coverage be accommodated in future wars?**

Colonel Alexandrakos felt because of the demands for live coverage as well as the sheer numbers of media wanting to cover a conflict, media pools may have to be continued. But the pool concept is far from an ideal solution for either the media or military. "The media hates pooling and we hate pooling. They hate it because they don't have the freedom to work the way they normally do. We don't like pools because it places a very heavy burden on the public affairs community as well as the theater commander," Colonel Alexandrakos said.<sup>146</sup>

The number of media wanting to cover a conflict results in concerns for the safety of the media as well as logistical concerns. Colonel Alexandrakos notes that there were more than 1,600 media members in Saudi Arabia by the end of the war. "Given the nature of the geography and the dangers of the conflict, you could not turn that number of people loose and say 'Do your own thing,'" he

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Alexandrakos interview.

continued. While recognizing that people might prefer to have independent reporting but that may not always be possible. "You must consider other factors...the nature of the conflict, the topography of the battlefield, the number of media and the ease of media access before you make the decision on whether or not you are going to have pooling," Colonel Alexandrakos said.<sup>147</sup> In the final analysis, he said that the decision will have to be made on a case-by-case basis.

Colonel Alexandrakos stated that the speed of the dissemination of the final media product might play a factor in the amount of security review necessary. The key difference may lie in the ability of the enemy to receive that information in a timely enough manner to use it to an advantage on the battlefield. He suggests that security review procedures may be necessary only with "...selected types of media, like television, radio and possibly the wire services. With newspapers and magazines at least you have some sort of time delay before publication."<sup>148</sup>

Colonel Sconyers agreed that media access in future conflicts will be dependent on the situation at that time. "I think Desert Storm was a unique wartime environment, just as Panama and Grenada were unique," Colonel Sconyers said. "You have to evaluate each battlefield as it comes along and decide what the ground rules are. I don't think there will be any one set of continuing ground rules that can be applied to every situation," he said. <sup>149</sup>

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147 Ibid.

148 Ibid.

149 Sconyers interview.

Lieutenant Colonel Icenogle, stated that a firm policy should be set down as soon as possible, to alleviate the media/military problems experienced in Operation Desert Storm. Specifically, he called for a pre-agreed upon system of security review. "There are some people in the media, Walter Cronkite comes to mind, that agree. I could go along with the idea that the media would be allowed freer access in return for censorship," Icenogle said. He continued, "I've had many journalists tell me the same thing. They say, 'Look, I don't care if you out and out censor me, just give me access and guarantee you will get my product out and back to my bureau chief'." <sup>150</sup>

Lieutenant Colonel Icenogle stated a system could be worked out where the review process wouldn't delay the transmission of media dispatches. "I see no reason why the decision couldn't be made right there on what information is sensitive and what isn't. That way the information could be 'blessed' and sent right out on the bird," he said. And if there is a brief delay, little information of consequence would be lost. "I still agree with Mr. Cronkite that too much is being made of the live 'instant analysis' and on the spot reporting in war." <sup>151</sup>

CNN's Bill Headline agrees with those who believe that media pools may be necessary in the future, but he expressed reservations about their use. "I don't rule out pools totally, but pools are clearly not the answer to covering something in any depth," Headline said. <sup>152</sup>

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150 Icenogle interview.

151 Ibid.

152 Headline interview.

However, he is strongly against a security review policy and calls it censorship. "A policy of censorship is not needed and the administration of it becomes ludicrous," he said. Headline believes a review procedure would delay reporting. "Having a security review process can bottle something up. Something can be pristine, without flaws and by the time you break it out of the security review process it's so old that it's no longer news."<sup>153</sup>

Fred Francis believes that military censorship would not be compatible in the American society with its heritage of press freedoms.

What is the difference between that and what was done with Peter Arnett in Baghdad? How much confidence did the American people have in his reporting? How much confidence would they then have in our reporting? This democracy of ours functions best and has always functioned best in a free flow of information and ideas leaving the American people to make up their own minds. I'm greatly concerned that having a censor or minder with me would circumvent that which has worked so well for the free republic for so long.<sup>154</sup>

Francis expressed an opinion that security reviews aren't necessary because reporters will voluntarily accept security guidelines. "The media can be trusted. For example, we knew about the 'end run' (into Iraq) weeks before the ground war began," Francis said. "The fact we never reported that shows there is a certain amount of self-censorship...It's just common sense."<sup>155</sup>

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153 Ibid.

154 Francis interview.

155 Ibid.

However, Francis recognizes the value of pools. "I think pooling was the way to go. I say that because I've been to that part of the world and covered that type of war." But he believes there is room for improvement. "I do think they could have doubled the number of pools and gotten out more reporters and had better overall coverage," Francis said. But he recognizes that the system was agreed to before hand. "I think they (the military) could have done a better job but we too could have done a better job because it was the network news executives and big newspaper bureau chiefs who agreed to the system in the first place."<sup>156</sup>

**Question 3. How can the media/military relationship be improved?**

Colonel Alexandrakos called for a formal, preexisting policy on how the new technology will be accommodated. Along with the other media/military questions, is a necessary first step to insure a good working relationship in the future. "I'd love to see that the DoD (Department of Defense) has a policy, something where as soon as a deployment begins, we know exactly what we are going to do and how we are going to do it," Alexandrakos said.

And he believes that the recent experience will aid in the formulation of a future policy. "I think having Desert Storm behind us gives us a better stab at doing it better than we would have been able to before August of last year."<sup>157</sup>

Colonel Sconyers feels that increased understanding between the media and military would go a long way to increase the successful

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<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Alexandrakos interview.

implementation of whatever policy is formulated. "You need to establish a relationship before you go to war," Sconyers said. "One of the places to start is to form a better understanding on the part of commanders on the role and mission of the media, and conversely a better understanding on the part of the media of the requirements of a military commander," he said.<sup>158</sup> Sconyers said one suggestion is to "...send the media to the National Military Training Center and let them live in the field with the troops and watch the battlefield in a training environment unfold so when they go to a real battlefield they are more prepared."<sup>159</sup>

Lieutenant Colonel Icenogle believes the continuing education of military commanders on media requirements and methods will play a key role in helping future media/military relations. "If we have a solid doctrine in existence and every commander knows that from day one public affairs will be a key player (in combat), then and only then, will be be able to make the system work to everyone's satisfaction."<sup>160</sup>

Lieutenant Colonel Icenogle recognized that compromises may have to be made. "If we have a previously agreed upon system of field press censorship, we must have a mechanism guaranteeing that we can get the media's products back to their bureaus," he said.<sup>161</sup>

Bill Headline agreed that education in the form of both sides clearly understanding any ground rules is essential for both the military and the media members in a combat situation. "The military

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158 Sconyers interview.

159 Ibid.

160 Icenogle interview.

161 Ibid.

has to insure that the reasoning behind the ground rules is understood. And when someone does make a mistake, you have to act quickly, the offender's credentials ought to be pulled and he ought to be on his way home." Headline said.<sup>162</sup>

He stated that any remaining Vietnam era antagonisms may be fading as a new generation of officers become commanders. "There is still a latent desire by some people in the military to try and nail the media for Vietnam. Lately though, I've seen a change." He continues, "Senior officers now recognize that media coverage of their units and people is vital from a standpoint of troop morale as well as getting the word back home about what these folks are doing."

Fred Francis agreed with Icenogle that a key element of future cooperation will be the media and military learning more about each other and their respective operations. "The first time commanders meet reporters shouldn't be on the battlefield," he said. "Every time they have an exercise they ought to have reporters with them so the reporter can understand how the military works and the commander can learn about how reporters do their job."<sup>163</sup>

Francis agreed with Headline that the distrust generated during the Vietnam era continues. "There are still vestiges of Vietnam with us. I say that because three American division commanders did not want reporters with them in the Persian Gulf," he said.

Like Lieutenant Colonel Icenogle, Francis said that having a formal policy or doctrine regarding public affairs activities will be a

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162      Headline interview.

163      Francis interview.

key to insuring better cooperation between the media and military.

I firmly believe that the coverage of the American military ought to be set down in doctrine. In writing. I'm taking about a broad policy because we don't know where the next conflict will come from.

Panama? The Philippines? Korea?" Francis said.<sup>164</sup>

The interviews show a wide range of opinion on the part of members of both the media and military alike on how the overall problem of press access and censorship or review of materials should be handled. However, what is clear is that a consensus in the form of a formal policy, is needed to enable both institutions to prepare for coverage of future conflicts. Both sides should have their respective responsibilities known to and agreed upon by the other long before the two meet again in a potential combat situation. The media and military must identify common areas of agreement and work towards coming to terms about areas of disagreement.

Without an overall policy on the broader scope of media guidelines, the specific questions on how to deal with new communications technology cannot be adequately addressed.

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164 Ibid.

## CHAPTER VI: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

### Summary

This report has examined the recent developments of long-range communications technology and how that technology might affect the future relationships between the military and media in future conflicts.

Developments in the relay of telephone and television signals by satellite using portable uplinks have changed the way wars will be covered by the media, and seen by the public.

The history of the American media and military has also been examined. The relationship has been one marked with close cooperation and strong criticism. The period of cooperation during World War II eventually dissolved into the distrust of the Vietnam era, which was followed by the unprecedented exclusion of the press in the Grenada operation, and finally settled into a compromise agreement (which proved to be far from ideal) during the Panama invasion of December 1989.

The crisis and eventual war in the Persian Gulf showed the culmination of the development of communications equipment and of the media/military relationship. During seven months between August 2, 1990 and February 27, 1991 the media and military worked together to keep the American public informed. What resulted was a mixture of close supervision and the unprecedented ability to report a war live on television.

The military wanted reporters formed into pools and controlled their access to some units and regions and insisted on reviewing the pool copy for any information that might be a threat to security. Reporters not in the pools were free to report what they wanted, but were asked to stay within a set of security guidelines drawn up by Pentagon officials.

Although some in the media criticized the restrictions, polls found the American public to be well informed and supportive of the military precautions.<sup>165</sup>

To determine how media representatives and military public affairs officers felt about the impact and future trends of live broadcasting, three primary research questions and derivatives were asked of five interview subjects.

Question 1 asked "what are the concerns and problems for live war coverage?" Military officials expressed concern about the reporting of live material which might aid the enemy in intelligence gathering operations. However, one military respondent said that as long as there were some sort of security review system, he saw no military reason for live broadcasts to be limited. The media members based their concerns on the problems it would give journalists and media organizations. One expressed doubt over the large logistical demands extensive live broadcasting from the battlefield would entail, while the other, wondered if journalists could adequately report the complex and dynamic events on a

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<sup>165</sup> Alter, "Showdown at 'Fact Gap'", p.61.

modern battlefield live. He feared that the necessary perspective to cover a story accurately would not be there.

Question 2 asked the respondents their opinions on how the media should be accommodated in future wars.

Military members replied that while the pooling of media members was far from a ideal situation for both sides, the large numbers of media members wanting to cover future conflicts might make it necessary. Two of the three military officers surveyed stated that the details of future coverage will be at least in part dependent upon the details and environment of the conflict, while one urged that a firm policy be agreed upon as soon as possible between media and military officials on general policy guidelines. The media representatives both agreed that pools might be necessary in the future, but did not want to see a security review or censorship system used.

Question 3 asked the interview subjects their thoughts on how the media/military relationship could be improved.

A public affairs officer and a correspondent agreed that a formal policy between the press and military was the first step in insuring a satisfactory relationship. However, all agreed that a policy of mutual education of each other's roles and concerns would help future working relationships.

### Conclusions

The question of the use of advanced communications technologies to report war events was not settled in the brief war against Iraq.

Instead, live broadcasting and concerns that result from it, along with the larger issue of media/military relationships were brought to the forefront of public attention.

Since the possibility of live broadcasting and the other news communication technologies cannot be separated from the issue of security review or censorship (because of the possibility the material will be seen by enemy forces and used to their advantage), the topic will likely stir deep sentiments on the part of military and media leaders alike.

The issues presented here will not be solved quickly. But when they are, they will likely make some people unhappy with whatever compromises or agreements are reached. As the interviews have shown, a general consensus is far from being fixed in the minds of those on both sides of the issue.

Clearly what needs to be done is the putting aside of whatever suspicions each side may have of the other. The problem essentially is one of lack of trust, caused by a lack of understanding of the respective institutions.

Military commanders and public affairs officers alike must learn more about the media, its goals and needs. Additionally, any remnants of the Vietnam era distrust of the media must be permanently erased. This may mean that the military become less concerned about how it is perceived by some members of the public. The instances reported in Saudi Arabia where public affairs officers made minor changes in wording of reports in an attempt to

safeguard or preserve an image it has of itself must stop.<sup>166</sup> Somewhere, the strength must be found to rely on the professionalism of the media, and to be confident that the American public will not be swayed by an occasional unflattering report. In short, the military establishment must learn that occasional criticism is the price one pays when operating in a open society. Military commanders, just like business persons must understand that it is the nature of the media to be interested in "bad" news. The rigid system of military procedures is very different from the hectic world of journalism. As a public relations magazine noted, "It's little wonder the career service person has a difficult time accepting the freewheeling, inquisitive, and frequently disrespectful ways of the civilian news media."<sup>167</sup>

The media too, must take time to learn about the military. The recent trend of closer attention being paid to local military bases and affairs by media might produce a new generation of reporters who know and understand military procedures and operations. A Seattle reporter noted after being assigned as the "beat" correspondent for the areas military bases observed, "If they (military officials) perceive you as trying to understand them, then this (credibility) gap shrinks dramatically."<sup>168</sup>

Perhaps the extensive coverage of the Persian Gulf War might prompt journalists or students of journalism to become more

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<sup>166</sup> Alter, "Showdown at 'Fact Gap'." p.61.

<sup>167</sup> John Bitter, "Senior Military Leaders Should Listen to their Professional PR People," Public Relations Quarterly. 34:1 (Spring 1989):29.

<sup>168</sup> Jack Dorsey, "Assessing Hometown Coverage of the Military," Presstime, September 1987, p.25.

knowledgeable about military affairs, with an eye to becoming the next Fred Francis or Wolf Blitzer.

However, the key in the media gaining the trust of the military will come not from only a closer working relationship and understanding between the two, but from agreement on how legitimate military information can be kept from release and possibly reaching the enemy in wartime.

Obviously, the media has no desire to release information that might prove useful to the enemy. No one familiar with the conduct with the media during the recent conflict has suggested that the sensitive information that was noted and removed during the security review process of pool material was anything other than unintentional and minor in nature. Still, it can be assumed that during wartime when lives are at stake, military commanders will be completely comfortable with the media only when they are confident that no sensitive material will be reported.

That type of confidence can be achieved in the following ways: a policy of self-censorship by adhering to reporting guidelines; a two-tiered system of pools with security review and "free" non-pool reporters; and mandatory field censorship.

In a policy of self-censorship any guidelines on sensitive topics would have to be scrupulously adhered to by all correspondents. This would mean that journalists would have to clearly understand not only what topics or details are sensitive but why. Perhaps in this type of system only those who could demonstrate a practical knowledge of the guidelines might be allowed unaccompanied access to military troops and operations.

A two tiered system similar to the one used in the Persian Gulf might be necessary. To operate in forward battle areas, reporters would have to be assigned to a pool. Correspondents operating from the pools would be subject to a security review, while those outside the pools would not be bound by a review system but would be expected to stay within the general security guidelines.

Finally, a overall system of mandatory field press censorship might be employed. As advocated by Walter Cronkite and Lieutenant Colonel Icenogle, the pool concept would be abandoned, the media would be granted free access in return for the right of the military to review all out going material. This would allow a maximum amount of media access to stories while giving confidence to commanders that the information reported would not be providing intelligence information to the enemy. All these possible alternatives have merits and drawbacks.

For example, a system with a policy of self-censorship based on preset guidelines obviously is the most attractive in terms of journalistic freedoms. However, a commander's responsibility is to successfully conduct the war with a minimum of casualties. It would be uncomfortable for military commanders to provide virtually unlimited access in battle if there was the possibility, no matter how remote, that a carelessly worded dispatch might put troops in danger. Such a system might prove workable in a very limited scope, where a few known correspondents from major news organizations might be allowed to report. Another limitation might be the restriction of instant communications equipment and the delay of dispatches to ensure that if any sensitive material were to

be reported, it would be of little operational use by the enemy. This researcher feels these restrictions would unnecessarily hamper media operations.

The two-tiered system used in the Persian Gulf proved workable, although it did generate a number of complaints. The pool concept proved very controversial, with concerns over limited media access and even arguments between media organizations on the makeup and membership of pools. Also, the pool system tempted journalists to strike out on their own in an attempt to reach areas uncovered by the pools. As was shown in the case where several reporters and technicians were captured and detained by enemy forces, this system can prove dangerous to correspondents. However, the biggest drawback to keeping media representatives in pools is that it opens the military open to charges of trying to manipulate the news for military and political reasons. This resentment only increases the lack of trust between the media and military.

The concept of field press censorship combined with a open access policy deserves to be examined more closely. The advantages include freer access by the media to operational areas, similar to what the press enjoyed in Vietnam and past wars. Journalists would be provided better access to military units and battle areas as well as to military transportation and communication facilities. Commanders would be far more open and candid with journalists if they were confident there were no concerns about security guidelines. To gain the media's confidence in such a system, it would need to be confident that any censorship would involve only operational details. No changes in wording would be allowed and legitimate criticism or

reports of problems would not be blocked. A system of appeal to senior Pentagon officials would also be in place.

The censorship system does have drawbacks, primarily from the time delay such a system would inevitably result in. However, some correspondents (such as Walter Cronkite and Fred Francis) suggest that pure time factors are not as important to some members of the media as the question of open access. The concern expressed by Fred Francis in this interview about the instant communication capabilities limiting proper journalistic perspective are legitimate. As he noted, first reports are often incorrect and when instant (but erroneous) information is presented, the information needs of the public are not well-served. With the increasingly sophisticated communications technologies, any delay caused by a security review would be limited.

As Lieutenant Colonel Icenogle suggested, the military might even provide facilities for the transmission of media products. The facility could be co-located with the review site, and would be built to military specifications, possibly to include methods of limiting any electromagnetic signatures that could enable the enemy to pinpoint its location. Its power supply and support would be provided by the military as a regular part of its logistics efforts. Such a system would give broadcasters and print journalists equal access to advanced communications gear, giving journalists an equal footing on reporting as opposed to the current "anything goes" system where a news organization's financial and political clout can win it special privileges.

To come up with a comprehensive policy on future media/military relations, a committee consisting of respected journalists and military officials should be appointed to assist the Pentagon in preparation of its policy. Such a group could hopefully come to a consensus on future policies relating to communications technologies as well as press access or censorship issues.

The proper climate for such a meeting is now when the lessons and experiences...both good and bad...from the Persian Gulf conflict are still fresh in everybody's minds.

While freedom of the press issues are vital, only the most zealous advocate of the First Amendment would deny the necessity to control certain military information in wartime. The purpose of this project is not to rewrite or suggest press freedom issues, but rather to encourage cooperation between the media and military so future disagreements between them can be avoided or minimized.

The new satellite-based communications technologies promise to revolutionize the way future wars are reported, but the technology must be placed within the proper context of other journalistic concerns. That is only appropriate since the technology should be used to support good journalism. It cannot be relied upon to replace it.

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## APPENDIX

### Questionnaire

1. What are the primary concerns of live war coverage?
2. Based on recent experience in the Persian Gulf, are there security concerns that guidelines might be unintentionally violated while broadcasting live?
3. How will media coverage be accommodated in future wars?
4. Will it require closer supervision of the media during combat?
5. What form might the restrictions take? (pools?, active censorship?)
6. How can the media/military relationship be improved?