October 2017 Editor: Mike Peters

SCRIBBLINGS....

News & Comment for, about and from members and friends of the military media operations community

Former Defence Minister and PPS to Margaret Thatcher is October guest speaker

Former Conservative Party Member of Parliament and Defence Minister responsible for International Security Strategy, Sir Gerald Howarth is the club's guest speaker on Tuesday October 10 at the Cavalry & Guards Club.

Sir Gerald is a graduate of the University of Southampton where he read English and also served with the University Air Squadron. He was commissioned into the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in 1968.

His career included international banking and he worked for Bank of America International Ltd (1971-1977), the European Arab Bank (1977-81) and in 1981 he was appointed Manager, Loan Syndications at Standard Chartered Bank, responsible for arranging major international loans.

His first official political appointment was as Parliamentary Private Secretary to Michael Spicer MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department of Energy (1987-90), then Minister of State for the Department of the Environment (1990-91). He became PPS to Margaret Thatcher from December 1991 to April 1992. Between 1983 and 1992 he was an officer of the Conservative Parliamentary Aviation Committee and was a Founder Member of the No Turning Back group.

In 1993, a year after losing his seat in Staffordshire, Sir Gerald was selected as the candidate for Aldershot where he succeeded Sir Julian Critchley in 1997. He has served on the Home Affairs Select Committee (1997-2001) and as Vice-Chairman of the Defence Select Committee (2001-03). For a while he was a member of the Executive of the 1922 Committee of Conservative backbenchers.

In 2002, he was appointed as a Shadow Defence Minister with responsibility for defence procurement and the Royal Air Force. In addition to his frontbench duties he was also Convenor (Chairman) of the all-party RAF Group, an officer of the All-Party Parliamentary Aerospace Group, Chairman of the 92 Group of Conservative MPs, and an active member of the All-Party Parliamentary Kashmir Group.

Burning questions: hard talk, secrecy, media disquiet, information operations, press criticisms, more defence cuts and fake news…. What a month!

September has been a month filled with burning questions and disquiet about just what is happening within the UK Ministry of Defence - and the future of its information strategy. Among the talk in Pen & Sword Club gatherings has been the growth and scope of British and NATO information operations. With the formation of a British Information Manoeuvre Headquarters and the first deployment of an IM team on exercise to Canada, *Scribblings* uses this edition to examine recent comment and opinions on the role, composition and development of non-kinetic warfare in United Kingdom Armed Forces. And, to ask where is the media campaign to tell the public, the tax payers, just how well the Services are contributing and managing in difficult times, writes Editor Mike Peters.

In this era of instant communication, social media, citizen journalism and, above all, fake news our armed forces must be well equipped to fight and survive in cyber space: there is a need to expand and develop psychological operations to counter the threat. But there is also a concern that media operations have fallen by the wayside and is playing second fiddle. Is this by choice or is there a political directive? Certainly, the mainstream media is unhappy and I hear, on the grapevine, that the defence and aviation technical press is feeling ignored.

Ministry policy documents state clearly that media operations is part of the information strategy and stress that the interaction of media and psy ops must be managed with no opportunity for journalists to become confused between the two. Yet these documents also emphasise that all communication with journalists must be authorised. It would appear that this latter instruction is being rigidly applied.

The month produced a startling headline in The Times about a secretive MoD and the attempted banning of journalists from a Chatham House event plus a surprise request for journalists to pay £850 to attend a military briefing at the Defence Systems & Equipment International event in London. On top of this was a pointed plea from Times defence editor Deborah Haynes about why her requests for interviews with senior officers have been ignored for months.

While we are conditioned to expect, certainly in the UK, that there will always be a tension between military and media this should be a healthy and manageable scenario. Sadly, this does not appear to be the case in current times.

The media is grumbling and without briefings is airing hostility; it would seem the Services are being restricted in what they might say to the press: media operations is sending teams to cover the aftermath of the Caribbean hurricanes but little appears in the national news although social media carries photos and a limited amount of information from the coal face.

On social media itself ex-service people are questioning and complaining about why there is no good news especially about the hard work of sailors, soldiers and air personnel in the national media.

Is it time that the Ministry started to defend its corner? For more effort to be made to brief journalists; to include them and to educate those who have little experience of the military. If this is not done then we all know the vacuum will be filled….and not to our liking.

What is obvious at the club's meetings is that there are some under-currents which questions the apparently diminished role of media operations and the highlighting of psychological operations which is increasingly coupled with the perceived proliferation of fake news on social media sites.

It was not so long ago that club member and military historian, Stephen Badsey, right, a respected international commentator and Professor of Conflict studies at Wolverhampton University, was quoted in *Media for Justice and Peace* by American journalist, Don North.

Stephen said: "The NATO case and argument is that NATO's approach to psy-ops is to treat it as an essentially open, truthful and benign activity and that, plus the elimination of any meaningful distinctions between domestic and foreign media institutions and social media, means that psy-ops and public affairs have effectively fused."

Stephen added that NATO has largely abandoned the notion that there should be a clear distinction between psy-ops and public affairs, although NATO officially rules out the dissemination of "black propaganda," knowingly false information designed to discredit an adversary.

"The long argument as to whether a firewall should be maintained between psy-ops and information activities and public affairs has now largely ended, and in my view the wrong side won."

This is a complex story - a phrase we have heard much of in the last few weeks – *Scribblings* will keep its eyes and ears tuned and hopes to hear better and more positive news from media operations across the media spectrum.

We must stop pretending: It's time to be honest about defence!

Club member and international defence and aviation commentator Howard Wheeldon hits out at a negative media…and takes the Government to task. Sept 19, 2017

With the mainstream press high on negative articles in respect of Royal Navy capacity over the past few days and various former First Sea Lord's questioning the navy's ability to conduct the many roles asked of it by the nation, I would in mitigation like to remind all of the speed with which Royal Navy and other allied ships tasked with the humanitarian role in the Caribbean deployed, following the huge damage caused by recent Category 5 Hurricane Irma. And, of what the Royal Navy has been able to do with RFA Mounts Bay, a sizable and well-equipped vessel that was already in the region, which is part designed and equipped to support dreadful humanitarian scenarios such as this. Plus, of course, how this has received scant attention in the press.

Articles alleging that the Royal Navy is suffering acute shortage of capital ships, manpower and supplies and talk of the UK military being little more than 'Third World' in terms of what they are able to offer are in my view absolute nonsense.

Yes, of course I would like to see more surface ships in the fleet and yes, further increases in Royal Navy manpower particularly of skilled engineers and those required to support both surface and sub-surface vessels. Yes, I agree that we need to spend a lot more on defence if we are to maintain our full ambitions.

But whatever I might want and believe and whatever those that failed to raise voices of concern or resign when they were in-office, I am afraid the reality is that the nation just cannot afford it. That defence and national security should be the nations' number one priority has no place in the world of those who now believe the priority of Government is health, welfare and education. The choice for an elected Government is I am afraid, as simple as it is stark.

We well know that the Royal Navy faces challenges aplenty just as do the Royal Air Force and Army as well but the important point to make is that while we may no longer be able to offer our NATO allies the all-embracing capability support that we used to be able to do or to potentially deploy our armed forces to more than one international conflict zone at any one time, our armed forces, including the Royal Navy continue to do and to be able to do all that is asked of them.

In a Sunday Times article over the weekend the immediate past First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir George Zambellas and who had 'retired' from the military in April 2016 spoke of the Royal Navy having been hollowed out over the years; of the Royal Navy having reached the bottom of what it can do in respect of raising efficiency and the lowering of costs. He suggested in the interview that the Royal Navy's 19 combat surface frigates and destroyers and its seven planned 'Astute' class hunter killer submarines were just not enough.

Presumably freed of his MOD shackles and now able to speak freely and having, as far as I am aware, no formal involvement with any of the large defence companies, Admiral Zambellas chose to stick the knife in during the run up period to completion of the NSCR review process.

Now I would be the last person in the world to claim that we have enough military ship, submarine, fast jet and ISTAR capability, that the Army has sufficient fighting and support vehicles or that the words ‘hollowed out’ in respect of our armed forces today compared to what we had 20 years ago when the 1997 defence review was published, are not true. Yes, the Royal Navy has been significantly weakened and ‘hollowed out’ in recent years and the claim by Ministers of the Crown that ‘we are growing the Navy’ is, apart from maybe in tonnage terms, distinctly lacks credibility.

Of course, I am bound to ask the question that if Admiral Zambellas feels as he does now in respect of his view of our having a ‘third-world military’ and ‘hollowed out’ navy and armed forces, why did he not believe this a couple of years ago and if so, why did he fail to venture similar views two years ago when SDSR 2015 was published. Indeed, if the issue is of that much importance to him, why on earth didn’t he resign back then?

Interestingly, in the Sunday Times article a MOD source is quoted as saying “many of the challenges the Royal Navy faces today can be traced back to decisions of the First Sea Lord” and that “his criticisms come from someone who lives in a glasshouse.” Ouch!

So be it, but where I take particular exception is to his remarks and criticism of our having to rely on a Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship, Mounts Bay being in position in the Caribbean when Hurricane Irma struck, a reference I assume to his belief that it should have been a Royal Navy frigate or destroyer that should have been on station in the Caribbean instead.

RFA Mounts Bay is a Bay class Landing Ship Auxiliary Dock. It has a displacement of 16,160 tonnes, a crew of 69, 1 x Wildcat Helicopter (it can also support a CH-47) 2 x Rigid Hull inflatable boats, 2 x Inflatable Raiding Craft, 1 x MEXEFLOTE ship to shore raft, 1 x Combat Support Boat, HADR detachment including 20 heavy and light vehicles and operators, a very high stores capacity and personnel capacity for 356 troops.

Other ships sent by allied nations to the devastated area include a Halifax Class guided missile frigate which has a displacement of 4,770 tonnes, a crew of 225 and just one ageing Sea King Helicopter and very limited troop and stores capacity, two French Floreal Class Coastal Surveillance

Frigates with a displacement of just 2,600 tonnes, a crew of 88, 2 x Rigid Hull inflatable boats, 1 x Panther Helicopter (unconfirmed whether this is currently on-board) and very limited troop and stores capability. Finally, the Royal Netherlands Navy has a Pelikaan Class Logistics Vessel in the area – the vessel has a displacement of just 1,150 tonnes, a crew of 15, 2 x Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats, Medium stores capability.

My point is that even ahead of the arrival of HMS Ocean from Gibraltar, RFA Mounts Bay is significantly larger than any other allied vessel that has yet been sent to the area. With a ships company of 163 personnel, the Wildcat Helicopter, medical facilities, stores, 14 tonnes of DfID shelter kits on board and the vessel already on-site in readiness for hurricane and other humanitarian requirements what is there to criticise?

In fact, the opposite is true and in this case the Royal Navy and the MOD is to be congratulated for ensuring that it has in place a ship that is well suited to the task. I have been fortunate enough to sail on a Type 23 frigate and to conduct training exercises in relation to humanitarian events. Type 23's carries a vast range of kit but they don't carry the level of additional equipment requirement carried by Mounts Bay.

HMS Ocean will soon be on site and with a crew of 650, 2 x CH-47 Chinook, 3 x EH101 Merlin Mk 3, 1 x Merlin Mk 1 and 3 x Wildcat helicopters on board together with high stores capacity (she reloaded in Gibraltar) including medical facilities, HADR stores, 60 tonnes of DfID stores plus capacity for carrying 830 troops and 40 vehicles, when she arrives on 22nd/23rd September RFA Mounts Bay will, I understand, redeploy to the British Virgin Islands.

In total, the UK has or very soon will have a total of 1,300 military and 124 civilian personnel in the various UK overseas territories that have been devastated by Hurricane Irma or that may be impacted by Hurricane Maria. Compared to some of our allies, with a ship the size of RAF Mounts Bay that is, in part, designed for such tasks, the UK and the Royal Navy appear to have been very well prepared when Irma struck. To suggest otherwise or to criticise that HMS Ocean has taken far too long to reach the Caribbean and that lacks sufficient speed are as regrettable as they are unnecessary.

As I have said many times before, defence is a political choice and sadly we it seems have decided that it should no longer be as higher priority as it once was. I regret that too and believe it to be a huge mistake and one that we will live to regret. But there here and now is not about to change whatever I or others might think. Having been allowed to fall far too low, numbers of Royal Navy

personnel are now rising but that does not excuse the fact that the Royal Navy has, according to IISS, seen its numbers shrink form 80,000 personnel in 1982 to just 29,500 today.
Neither does it excuse the fact that the number of destroyers has dropped from 17 in 1982 to just 6 today, that the number of frigates has declined from 38 in 2017 to just 13 today or that the number of submarines has dropped for a figure of 26 then to just 10 today. Of course, over that time requirement has quite definitely shrunk and Britain is less alone than it once was in regard of commitment to NATO and the sharing of capability requirement from other European NATO allies.

We do. of course, need to strengthen the Royal Navy just as we do the Royal Air Force. We perhaps need to regenerate the Army too but that requires some more radical thinking in respect of size, scope, system and process change. For me personally, to have strength in air and maritime arena's is essential and I do not argue that we have allowed our defence capability and thus also, our ability to play out defence diplomacy and presence as we might otherwise need to do.

We kid ourselves sometimes that we can do more than we can and I am quite sure that former CGS, Lord Richards is quite right to suggest that Britain does not have the capacity to engage in a conflict with North Korea should that arise although I note that only three weeks ago he also suggested that Britain should increase the number of troops it has in Afghanistan – a point that I completely agree.

Former military chiefs are of course a nightmare to those that serve today and George Zambellas is joining a list of those choosing to speak out in an independent capacity. Neither he nor Lord Richards has shown party political allegiance and that in my view provides them with credibility that others do not have. But, none of them voiced objection to what they had been asked to do out of SDSR 2010. Just as Admiral Zambellas and his predecessor, Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope had done during their time as ISL's, so too did Lord Richards, then General Sir David Richards, oversee the removal of 20,000 Army personnel during his time as CGS. He didn't voice that much objection either.

As a former First Sea Lord during the period 2002 to 2006 and a former member of Gordon Brown's Labour Government as Minister for Security and Counter Terrorism between 2007 and 2010 the Lord West of Spithead, right, has been the public voice of discontent over cuts in defence and his view that the Royal Navy has been hollowed out and left on its knees, the shortage of capital ships and his view that the Royal Navy can barely protect the UK.

That despite the plan to replace Type 23 Frigates on a one for one basis with a mix of eight Type 26 anti-submarine warfare frigates and five 'General Purpose' Type 31(e) Frigates and the standing up of 'Carrier Strike' capability in the early 2020's with the two new Queen Elizabeth class aircraft carriers, I agree that we have gone far too far down a ladder of cuts but what I do not believe is that the Navy could not adequately defend the UK and its dependent territories right now or that it does not have sufficient capability to conduct its many other NATO and international roles.

That said, the Government must accept that if it wants to be credible in defence and seen by its allies as having sufficient air, maritime and land capability to engage and properly deploy in international conflict zones the present structure of defence is insufficient to do this. It must also accept that harping on about the fact that we are raising the defence budget by £500 million in each year between now and 2021 is, given the increased threats that we face, just not enough. For 2% of GDP

being spent on defence we need to be talking about a minimum of 3% without any other non-defence aspects being added in.

That is a hard choice to make – one that I believe we should make and make very soon even if I have to always remind that defence is a political choice. Whatever, we have to stop pretending – it is a time to be honest about defence and what we need to do.

As Messrs Michael Flanders and Donald Swann wrote a very long time ago in a song about an Ostrich….
"Peek-a-boo, I can't see you;
Everything must be grand.
Book-ka-Pee, you can't see me,
As long as I've got my head in the sand".

We'll stick to spending limit says Defence Chief

From Deborah Haynes, Defence Editor, September 27, 2017, The Times

The head of the military yesterday refused to say whether the cash-strapped armed forces needed more money despite warning that "the security landscape has darkened".

In his first media briefing after more than a year in office, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach, right, was asked repeatedly whether a government pledge to spend 2 per cent of GDP on defence was sufficient, given funding pressures and the security risks posed by North Korea, Russia and Islamist terrorism.

The chief of the defence staff said: "Two per cent is what we are given by the government and we work for the government, next [question]." His comments came after Woody Johnson, US ambassador to London, asked whether Britain was committing sufficient resources to its military.

The Times has laid bare over recent months the pressures facing Britain's armed forces. A plan set out in 2015 for their future shape is underfunded by between £20 billion to £30 billion over the next decade despite a commitment by the Treasury to increase the £36 billion annual defence budget by 0.5 per cent each year of the parliament.

General Sir Christopher Deverell, another top commander, said in a comment on Twitter that military chiefs were looking at a "range of options" to balance the books. This is understood to include the possible reduction of the Royal Marines by 1,000, scrapping an amphibious assault ship and slowing the purchase of F-35 fast jets.

Air Chief Marshal Peach said that a mini defence review of national security capability that began in July would lead to "adjustments rather than cuts" within defence. He indicated that this could include more integration between the army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force. "We have to adapt the force structure to the times we are in," he said.

Secretive MoD cancels meeting after dispute over media access

From Deborah Haynes, Defence Editor July 15, 2017, The Times

It was billed as the first sea lord's maritime conference as his new aircraft carrier set sail for the first time, a high point in what the government claims is the "year of the Royal Navy". Two days before the event at Chatham House in London, however, an email was dispatched to say that the gathering on July 7 had been "postponed by the Royal Navy".

What was not explained — possibly to save blushes — was that the trigger for the move was a request from the navy that journalists be uninvited to the get-together and dinner the night before, and a refusal by Chatham House to comply.

Two sources said that they thought naval officers advising Admiral Sir Philip Jones got cold feet about discussing issues in front of journalists and made the request. "The system does not want the press," one of the sources said.

However, asked about the postponement, a spokesman for the navy said: "The Royal Navy is prioritising the Defence and Security Equipment International 2017 exhibition as a better opportunity for discussion about the new era of maritime power."

A spokeswoman for Chatham House said: "We were sorry to disappoint all of the participants, but the event was unable to go ahead as planned."

The desire to keep the press away from what was supposed to be a frank discussion — a lot of it off the record anyway — is a reflection of an unhealthy culture of control and secrecy within defence, two sources involved with the military said. "The MoD's real problem is that it forgets it is a department of state, funded by the taxpayer," one said. "In the 21st century we demand a higher standard of transparency than we get from the department."

Sir Michael Fallon, the defence secretary, and his advisers have a keen interest in what is being reported by newspapers and broadcasters, with negative stories — such as articles about the overstretched defence budget — not seen as helpful, sources said. "It is like an episode of *The Thick of It* only shorter because it is real life," said a former defence insider who had experience of the MoD's press office.

It is not possible to have an interview with a military chief without permission from the press office, something that will require the green light from the defence secretary's office.

The Times has in the past year requested interviews with Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach, the head of the armed forces; General Sir Nicholas Carter, chief of the general staff; Tony Douglas, in charge of equipment and procuring kit, and Stephen Lovegrove, the permanent secretary at the MoD. None has yet been approved.

Attempts at media control were evident at the Royal Air Force's conference this week. Initially media were only given access if they bought a ticket for £850 or acted as a sponsor. On the eve of the event the RAF said journalists not buying a ticket could attend for a half-hour speech by Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier, chief of the air staff, and another by Sir Michael, before being escorted out.

It was not until the morning of the conference that, after an intervention by senior officials, the barriers were lifted and accredited journalists allowed to attend for free.

A spokesman for the MoD said: "The military regularly undertake media engagements as we saw last week when the chief of the general staff conducted interviews with a number of [two] national newspapers. We also regularly facilitate media access to operations and deployments such as embedding a *Times* journalist on a navy destroyer next week."

The US/NATO Embrace of Psy-ops and Info-War

The U.S. government and NATO have entered the Brave New World of "strategic communications," merging Psy-ops, propaganda and public relations in order to manage the perceptions of Americans and the world's public, claims veteran war correspondent Don North in Consortium News

Don, a Professor of journalism, is the Director of Northstar Productions Inc., Virginia, USA, a communications expert, teacher, writer, documentary film - maker and above all a veteran war correspondent having covered the conflicts in Vietnam, Borneo, Cambodia, Afghanistan, El-Salvador, Egypt, Israel, the Gulf, Bosnia, Kosovo and Iraq.

He has worked for ABC News and NBC News. *Don is pictured right as a war correspondent in Vietnam for ABC News, crossing a stream in the Mekong Delta, 1968

As reflected in a NATO conference in Latvia and in the Pentagon's "Law of War" manual, the U.S. government has come to view the control and manipulation of information as a "soft power" weapon, merging psychological operations, propaganda and public affairs under the catch phrase "strategic communications."

This attitude has led to treating Psy-ops – manipulative techniques for influencing a target population's state of mind and surreptitiously shaping people's perceptions – as just a normal part of U.S. and NATO's information policy.

And, as part of this Brave New World of “strategic communications,” the U.S. military and NATO have now gone on the offensive against news organizations that present journalism which is deemed to undermine the perceptions that the U.S. government seeks to convey to the world.

That attitude led to the Pentagon’s “Law of War” manual which suggests journalists in wartime may be considered “spies” or “unprivileged belligerents,” creating the possibility that reporters could be subject to indefinite incarceration, military tribunals and extrajudicial execution – the same treatment applied to Al Qaeda terrorists who are also called “unprivileged belligerents.

The revised “Law of War” manual has come under sharp criticism from representatives of both mainstream and independent media, including The New York Times’ editors and the Committee to Protect Journalists, as well as academics like Professor Stephen Badsey.

“The attitude toward the media expressed in the 2015 Pentagon manual is a violation of the international laws of war to which the USA is a signatory, going back to the 1907 Hague Convention, and including the Geneva Conventions,” said Professor Badsey, a professor of conflict studies at Wolverhampton University in the United Kingdom and a long-time contact of mine who is often critical of U.S. military information tactics.

“But [the manual] is a reflection of the attitude fully displayed more than a decade ago in Iraq where the Pentagon decided that some media outlets, notably Al Jazeera, were enemies to be destroyed rather than legitimate news sources.”

The Vietnam Debate

The Pentagon’s hostility toward journalists whose reporting undermines U.S. government propaganda goes back even further, becoming a tendentious issue during the Vietnam War in the 1960s and 1970s when the war’s supporters accused American journalists of behaving treasonously by reporting critically about the U.S. military’s strategies and tactics, including exposure of atrocities the 1980s, conservatives in the Reagan administration – embracing as an article of faith that “liberal” reporters contributed to the U.S. defeat in Vietnam – moved aggressively to discredit journalists who wrote about human rights violations by U.S.-backed forces in Central America.

In line with those hostile attitudes, news coverage of President Ronald Reagan's invasion of Grenada in 1983 was barred, and in 1990-91, President George H.W. Bush tightly controlled journalists trying to report on the Persian Gulf War. By keeping out – or keeping a close eye on – reporters, the U.S. military acted with fewer constraints and abuses went largely unreported.

In the 1980s, conservatives in the Reagan administration – embracing as an article of faith that "liberal" reporters contributed to the U.S. defeat in Vietnam – moved aggressively to discredit journalists who wrote about human rights violations by U.S.-backed forces in Central America. In line with those hostile attitudes, news coverage of President Ronald Reagan's invasion of Grenada in 1983 was barred, and in 1990-91, President George H.W. Bush tightly controlled journalists trying to report on the Persian Gulf War. By keeping out – or keeping a close eye on – reporters, the U.S. military acted with fewer constraints and abuses went largely unreported.

This so-called "weaponizing of information" turned even more lethal during the presidency of Bill Clinton and the war over Kosovo when NATO identified Serb TV as an enemy "propaganda centre" and dispatched warplanes to destroy its studios in Belgrade. In April 1999, acting under orders from U.S. Army General Wesley Clark, American bombers fired two cruise missiles that reduced Radio Televizija Sibiya to a pile of rubble and killed 16 civilian Serb journalists working for the government station.

Despite this wilful slaughter of unarmed journalists, the reaction from most U.S. news organizations was muted. However, an independent association of electronic media in Yugoslavia condemned the attack.

"History has shown that no form of repression, particularly the organized and premeditated murder of journalists, can prevent the flow of information, nor can it prevent the public from choosing its own sources of information," the group said.

The (London) Independent's Robert Fisk remarked at the time, "once you kill people because you don't like what they say, you change the rules of war." Now, the Pentagon is doing exactly that, literally rewriting its "Law of War" manual to allow for the no-holds-barred treatment of "enemy" journalists as "unprivileged belligerents."

Despite the 1999 targeting of a news outlet to silence its reporting, a case for war crimes was never pursued against the U.S. and NATO officials responsible, and retired General Clark is still a frequent guest on CNN and other American news programs.

Targeting Al Jazeera

During the presidency of George W. Bush, the Arab network Al Jazeera was depicted as “enemy media” deserving of destruction rather than being respected as a legitimate news organization – and the news network’s offices were struck by American bombs. On Nov. 13, 2001, during the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, a U.S. missile hit Al Jazeera’s office in Kabul, destroying the building and damaging the homes of some employees.

On April 8, 2003, during the U.S. invasion of Iraq, a U.S. missile hit an electricity generator at Al Jazeera’s Baghdad office, touching off a fire that killed reporter Tareq Ayyoub and wounding a colleague. The Bush administration insisted that the attacks on Al Jazeera offices were “accidents.”

However, in 2004, as the U.S. occupation of Iraq encountered increased resistance and U.S. forces mounted a major offensive in the city of Fallujah, Al Jazeera’s video of the assault graphically depicted the devastation – and on April 15, 2004, Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld decried Al Jazeera’s coverage as “vicious, inaccurate and inexcusable.”

According to a British published report on the minutes of a meeting the next day between President Bush and UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, Bush suggested bombing Al Jazeera’s headquarters in Qatar but was talked out of the idea by Blair who said it would provoke a worldwide backlash.

During the Iraq War, Professor Badsey wrote the following observation which I cited in my book on military/media relations, Inappropriate Conduct: “The claim that in 2004 at the first battle of Fallujah the U.S. Marine Corps ‘weren’t beaten by the terrorists and insurgents, they were beaten by Al Jazeera television’ rather than that they [U.S. forces] employed inappropriate tactics for the political environment of their mission, is recognizable as yet another variant on the long-discredited claim that the Vietnam War was lost on the television screens of America.”

Although the notion of Vietnam-era journalists for U.S. media acting as a fifth column rather than a Fourth Estate is widely accepted among conservatives, the reality was always much different, with

most of the early Vietnam War coverage largely favourable, even flattering, before journalists became more sceptical as the war dragged on.

In a recent interview on NPR radio, Charles Adams, a senior editor of the “Law of War” manual, was unable to cite examples of journalists jeopardizing operations in the last five wars – and that may be because there were so few examples of journalistic misconduct and the handful of cases involved either confusion about rules or resistance to news embargoes that were considered unreasonable.

Examining the history of reporters dis-accredited during the Vietnam War, William Hammond, author of a two-volume history of U.S. Army relations with the media in Vietnam, found only eight dis-accreditations, according to military files.

Arguably the most serious case involved the Baltimore Sun’s John Carroll, an Army veteran himself who believed strongly that it was important that the American people be as thoroughly informed about the controversial war as possible. He got in trouble for reporting that the U.S. Marines were about to abandon their base at Khe Sahn. He was accused of violating an embargo and was stripped of his credentials, though he argued that the North Vietnamese surrounding the base were aware of the troop movement.

Toward the end of the war, some reporters also considered the South Vietnamese government so penetrated by the communists that there were no secrets anyway. Prime Minister Nguyen van Thieu’s principal aide was a spy and everyone knew it except the American people. During his long career, which included the editorship of the Los Angeles Times, Carroll came to view journalists “almost as public servants and a free press as essential to a self-governing nation,” according to his obituary in The New York Times after his death on June 14, 2015.

Strategic Communication

During the Obama administration, the concept of “strategic communication” – managing the perceptions of the world’s public – grew more and more expansive and the crackdown on the flow of information unprecedented. More than any of his predecessors, President Barack Obama authorized harsh legal action against government “leakers” who have exposed inconvenient truths about U.S. foreign policy and intelligence practices.

And Obama's State Department mounted a fierce public campaign against the Russian network, RT, that is reminiscent of the Clinton administration's hostility toward Serb TV and Bush-43's anger toward Al Jazeera.

Since RT doesn't use the State Department's preferred language regarding the Ukraine crisis and doesn't show the requisite respect for the U.S.-backed regime in Kiev, the network is denounced for its "propaganda," but this finger-pointing is just part of the playbook for "information warfare," raising doubts about the information coming from your adversary while creating a more favourable environment for your own propaganda.

This growing fascination with "strategic communication" has given rise to NATO's new temple to information technology, called "The NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence" or STRATCOM, located in Latvia, a former Soviet republic that is now on the front lines of the tensions with Russia.

Some of the most influential minds from the world of "strategic communications" gathered in Latvia's capital of Riga for a two-day conference entitled "Perception Matters." A quotation headlined in all its communications read: "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed" – noble sentiments perhaps but not always reflected in the remarks by more than 200 defines and communications experts, many of whom viewed information not as some neutral factor necessary for enlightening the public and nourishing democracy, but as a "soft power" weapon to be wielded against an adversary.

Hawkish Sen. John McCain, R-Arizona, led a delegation of U.S. senators and said STRATCOM was needed to combat Russia and its President Vladimir Putin. "This Centre will help spread the truth," said McCain – although "the truth" in the world of "strategic communications" can be a matter of perception.

UK deploys info manoeuvre teams on first exercise

Tim Ripley - IHS Jane's Defence Weekly
21 September 2017

An integrated British Army information manoeuvre team has deployed on its first major exercise to support troops training in Canada in future warfare concepts.

The team, which brings together cyber, electronic warfare, media, civil affairs, intelligence and military communications specialists, is a result of the June decision by the British Army to group its intelligence, signals, media operations, and other "soft power" capabilities under a single "information manoeuvre" two-star or divisional headquarters.

In August the British Army enhanced its work in this arena by setting up what it termed the Information Manoeuvre Project Team "to explore the synergies to be achieved by increased integration of the army's information-centric brigades [1 & 11 Signals, 1 Intelligence Surveillance Reconnaissance, and 77 Brigade.

PRWEEK

'Don't mislead the public' - GCS unveils its five golden rules for modern media operations

by Jonathan Owen, PR Week, July 27

Five non-negotiable golden rules for government comms professionals have been outlined in the first ever guide on modern media operations for government departments, published by the Government Communication Service. The GCS guide contains its five golden rules for modern media operations.

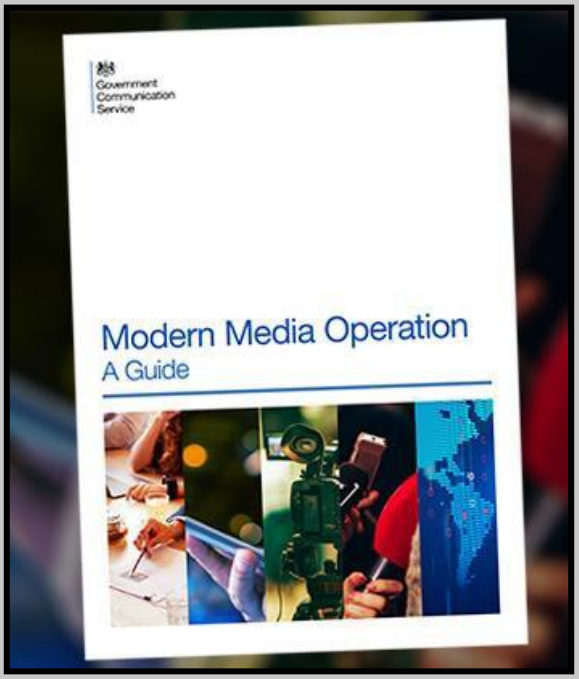
Backed by the heads of news at government departments across Whitehall, the new resource is now being promoted to comms teams across government and the public-sector bodies it works with.

The guide outlines: "key principles of structure and practice which are essential to demonstrating the baseline capability of the media relations function." It identifies five "core functional aspects" expected of government comms staff. These include proactive and reactive media handling, relationship management, digital/content creation, and insight and evaluation.

In terms of media handling, comms teams should take the initiative in strategic story placement and "consider the use of trailing and embargoes to maximise impact and coverage and/or to de-conflict with other expected news."

When faced with difficult situations, preparedness is the key. Comms practitioners should "anticipate possible criticism and risk and prepare responses beforehand." In addition, carefully evaluating news coverage can help "to understand and pre-empt the direction of stories."

Relationships are another important area, including the maintenance of "productive relationships with ministers through regular engagement and informed advice." Comms professionals should seek to "build professional relationships with journalists, based on honesty, authority and credibility."



When it comes to the digital realm, people should be "digital by default" and use "online tools to reach specific audiences, engage with people and assess the impact of your work." They should also produce "high-quality content in-house for use by media outlets" and "repurpose content for different digital channels and audiences."

As for insight and evaluation, comms teams are urged to research their audiences and "identify clear and SMART communications objectives around outputs, outtakes and outcomes, including deciding 'success' measurements and how data will be collected."

The new guide states that while the use of "social and digital channels" is increasingly important, traditional media remain in the ascendancy.

It remarks: "The reality is that established media outlets – print, online and broadcast – remain powerful actors in shaping society and how the public thinks and feels about government policy, and what people do as a result."

Media consumption

National media

Daily press titles*	Circulation	TV programmes	Audience	Radio station	Breakfast audience	Total reach***
The Sun	1,672,000	BBC 1: News at Six	4,600,000	BBC Radio 2	9,742,000	15,144,000
Daily Mail	1,510,000	BBC 1: News at Ten	4,400,000	BBC Radio 4	7,384,000	11,227,000
Metro	1,480,000	ITV: ITV Evening News	2,700,000	BBC Radio 1	5,433,000	9,873,000
London Evening Standard	899,000	BBC1: Panorama	2,300,000	BBC Radio 5 Live	2,398,000	5,502,000
Daily Mirror	756,000	BBC1: The Andrew Marr Show	1,600,000	BBC Radio 3	751,000	1,997,000
Daily Star	462,000	BBC2: Horizon	1,300,000	% of all who use radio for breakfast news		
The Daily Telegraph	457,000	Channel 4: Dispatches	850,000	BBC Radio 4		26%
The Times	437,000	BBC1: Newsnight	544,000	BBC Radio 2		25%
Daily Express	397,000	ITV: Peston on Sunday	170,000	BBC Radio 1		14%
i	279,000			Heart FM		10%
Financial Times	194,000			Capital		8%
The Guardian	157,000			Other local commercial		5%
Sunday press titles*						
Sun on Sunday	1,437,000					
Sunday Times	781,000					
Sunday Mirror	680,000					

Source: *Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) – 28.11.16, www.newsworks.org.uk
**Gorkana, December 2016 ***www.rajar.co.uk – September 2016

The guide adds: "The capacity of government departments and agencies to deliver their mandates still depends to a large extent on their reputation in the media, whether national, regional or international."

A whole page of the new resource is dedicated to how comms professionals are expected to behave. GCS members should not "oversell policies, re-announce achievements or investments, or otherwise mislead the public." They are expected to show integrity, honesty, objectivity, and impartiality.

Alex Aiken, executive director, Government Communications, commented: "The media has a duty to hold government to account and our media teams should promote, explain and justify the policies of the government accurately."

Comms professionals "must be prepared to speak with honesty and based on professional expertise and evidence to advise ministers and officials on the best approach to meet the needs of the media and achieve the objectives of the government."

Writing in the foreword to the new guide, Mr. Aiken stated: "The most important set of skills that media relations teams need to have is that aimed at building trustful relationships – with ministers, with policy and operational colleagues in the Civil Service and, of course, with journalists and commentators."

Russian Information Warfare: A Reality That Needs a Response

By Bruce H. McClintock: an adjunct policy analyst at the non-profit, non-partisan RAND Corporation and a former U.S. Defense Attaché in Moscow This commentary originally appeared on U.S. News & World Report on July 17, 2017

Americans became acutely aware of Russian information warfare after the 2016 presidential election, but Russia's actions are anything but new. For more than a century, Russia has relied on disinformation, propaganda and other similar measures to achieve its objectives. For the last three decades, it has exploited its growing capabilities in cyberspace to spy on, influence and punish others.

In June, Russian President Vladimir Putin practically boasted that his country's “patriots” may have led the efforts that upset the U.S. political process, and last week President Donald Trump and Putin spoke of establishing a joint cybersecurity unit — an idea the U.S. president quickly backed away from.

As Russian aggression in the cyberworld expands, the West will continue to struggle to hold Moscow accountable, in part because international law falls far short of fully defining the rules or resolving conflicts. There is much that Western nations can do to address the challenge of modern information warfare, but there is little question that Russia, by its long engagement in this arena, currently has the advantage.

Early Russian information warfare focused on traditional espionage — stealing information from adversaries. One of the first documented cases of Russian government hacking of U.S. sites to collect intelligence occurred in 1998. Putin, who took office the next year, prioritized broader information operations and institutionalized those operations within Russian policy, government organizational structure and doctrine. For instance, he approved a national security policy that explicitly described

“information warfare” and the potential disruptive threat to information, telecommunications and data-storage systems.

The Russian information operations system, combined with the Russian form of centralized government control, allows it to launch cyber-operations with greater speed, agility and brazenness than most analysts believe is possible in the West. The unprecedented 2007 cyberattacks on Estonia illustrate the growing sophistication of Russia's unrelenting focus on cyber-operations. In an attempt to prevent Estonia's removal of a Soviet-era war memorial in the capital of Tallinn, Russia unleashed a digital firestorm that crippled essential computer networks across the tiny Baltic nation.

Now the United States finds itself in Russia's crosshairs and needs to develop a strategy to respond — and a universal cyberwarfare lexicon.

Develop a Mutual Understanding of the Problem

Without clear consensus on what constitutes a cyber violation, Russia will likely continue to maneuver unfettered in the vast gray area of international law.

As NATO's Cooperative Cyber Defense Center of Excellence, formally established in Tallinn in 2008, noted: “There are no common definitions for cyber terms — they are understood to mean different things by different nations/organizations, despite prevalence in mainstream media and in national and international organizational statements.” For example, there are almost 20 different definitions of “cyberattack,” with the meaning varying from country to country.

Within the United States and internationally, the lack of clarity has impeded progress on the creation of national policies and international standards that deal with cyber warfare.

In fact, the international community spent nearly 20 years debating if existing international law even applies to cyberspace. Without clear consensus on what constitutes a cyber violation, Russia will likely continue to maneuver unfettered in the vast gray area of international law.

In February, the NATO research center took a step toward clarity when it published the “Tallinn Manual 2.0 (PDF),” a second-edition guide to international laws that apply to cyber operations. Although a useful resource, it is mainly an expression of the views of 19 international law experts, mostly from NATO countries, and does not represent the position of NATO or any other entity. Another shortcoming: The authors were not able to agree on how international law applies in specific situations, such as to the hack of the 2016 Democratic National Committee and the subsequent release of the stolen information.

The United States is capable of advancing the debate on state behavior in cyberspace by more clearly establishing its own national definitions and interpretations for information and cyber warfare. Agreeing on uniform definitions and standards would help the West take the next necessary step: deciding how existing international law applies.

Define How Existing Law Applies to Cyberspace

The United Nations Group of Governmental Experts declared in 2013 that existing international law applies to cyberspace. Two years later it followed up with a consensus report on norms, rules or principles of the responsible behavior of states in the cyberspace that includes a commitment to “non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States.”

These agreements ended a nearly two-decade debate by deciding that existing obligations under international law are applicable to state use of cyberspace. There is still a need to define *how* existing international law applies to cyberspace — how should Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. election be legally dealt with? After that, the international community should work to make binding the recently agreed-upon norms.

Only when norms and laws are binding will there be legal and tangible consequences for cyber actions against others. Tangible costs, such as sanctions, are important because without them history has shown that malicious actors will continue or intensify their behaviors in pursuit of their objectives. The editor of the “Tallinn Manual 2.0” may have said it best: “The Russians are masters at playing the 'gray area' in the law, as they know that this will make it difficult to claim they are violating international law and justifying responses such as countermeasures.”

Warships and battlefield training to be axed in defence cuts

Defence Editor Deborah Haynes, September 7, 2017,

The number of Sandown and Hunt class minehunter ships will be reduced from 15 to 13. Two Royal Navy ships and battlefield training for thousands of troops will be cut to save money from the defence budget, *The Times* has learnt.

A slowdown in the purchase of next-generation F-35 Lightning II warplanes from the United States is under consideration as military chiefs and mandarins struggle to find up to £30 billion in savings over the next decade. Twelve helicopters used by special forces will also be taken out of service. Defence sources said the cuts risk damaging morale. The armed forces are several thousand short of their personnel target and struggling to retain talent.

The cost savings come at a time of global crises including a nuclear stand-off between North Korea and the United States and as Russia prepares to conduct a military exercise along NATO's eastern flank next week.

General Sir Richard Barrons, a former commander, said Britain was taking a risk with defence because the public has lived through a period of relative peace in western Europe, a status quo that is not guaranteed.

There are potential risks to our homeland and our vital interests abroad that we cannot address with our capability," he said, adding that the top brass, ministers and parliament should be making a national debate of whether the country wants the military to be in this state.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) is trying to close the funding gap that emerged when a defence review in 2015 included the purchase of jets and ships part-funded by unspecified "efficiency savings". Underestimating the cost of new kit and a drop in the value of the pound have added to the shortfall.

One push is focused on balancing the in-year budget, which has a hole of about £2 billion. Another strand forms part of a capability review led by the Cabinet Office. There are also proposals to save money by improving internal structures across defence.

Royal Navy minehunters are being targeted. The fleet of Hunt-class and Sandown-class ships will be cut from 15 to 13 in the coming year, freeing sailors to man the rest of the fleet. The number of armoured battle groups, each comprising about 1,000 soldiers, deploying to British Army Training Unit Suffield in Canada for training this year will be reduced from four to three. Over the same period light infantry battlegroups sent to British Army Training Unit Kenya will be cut from five to three.

The temporary move, expected to save about £20 million, will reduce the army's overall readiness, although soldiers bound for Iraq, Afghanistan, Estonia and a high-readiness brigade in the UK will not be affected. In another move, 12 Lynx helicopters operated by 657 Squadron of the Army Air Corps and used by special forces will be taken out of service. The aircraft were being funded by the Treasury but that money runs out in March.

The MoD source said that this was because the special forces said they wanted a better aircraft. A detachment of Puma helicopters would fill the gap until a new aircraft is bought so the SAS and SBS would not lose capability, he said. Another source said the reason was likely to be financial: "I find it hard to believe that special forces would do away with any capability that has been proven in theatre."

More significant cuts are being looked at as part of the Cabinet Office-led review including the possible slowdown in F-35 purchases, four sources said. A plan to buy 48 of the jets by 2025 — at a cost of at least £100 million each — could be slowed to 38 over the same period. The total purchase of 138 over the programme's lifetime is unchanged. The MoD said: "In the face of intensifying threats we are looking at how we best spend a rising defence budget to support our national security."

Armed Forces "Running to Stand Still" as Recruitment Targets Missed

Forces News: Mon, 04/09/2017

A study by former armed forces minister Mark Francois says the Army, RAF and Royal Navy are "running to stand still" as they struggle to replace the numbers leaving. Mr. Francois said in the year to April 2017 12,950 recruits joined the regular armed forces, but 14,970 service personnel left in the same period.

The army faces the biggest challenge as it needs to recruit 10,000 people a year to maintain its strength, but only managed to attract 7,000 entrants last year. The report states: "The Royal Navy and the RAF are now running at around 10% short of their annual recruitment target, whilst for the Army the shortfall is over 30%. Constant pressure on recruiting budgets has only compounded the difficulty."

The study expressed concern about the army's outsourced recruiting contract with Capita which it says is "performing badly". The report states the Ministry of Defence needs to do "far better" at recruiting people from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds as they currently make up only 7% of the armed forces,

Mr. Francois pointed out there is no BAME officer of two-star rank, major general level, or above, in the military. With women making up just 10% of the armed forces, more effort needs to be put into attracting female applicants, the report says.

The MoD's health assessments need to be externally reviewed as more than 14,000 candidates for the army were rejected on medical grounds in the year to February 2017, the study said. Mr. Francois called for schoolchildren to be educated about the importance of the armed forces as part of the national curriculum.

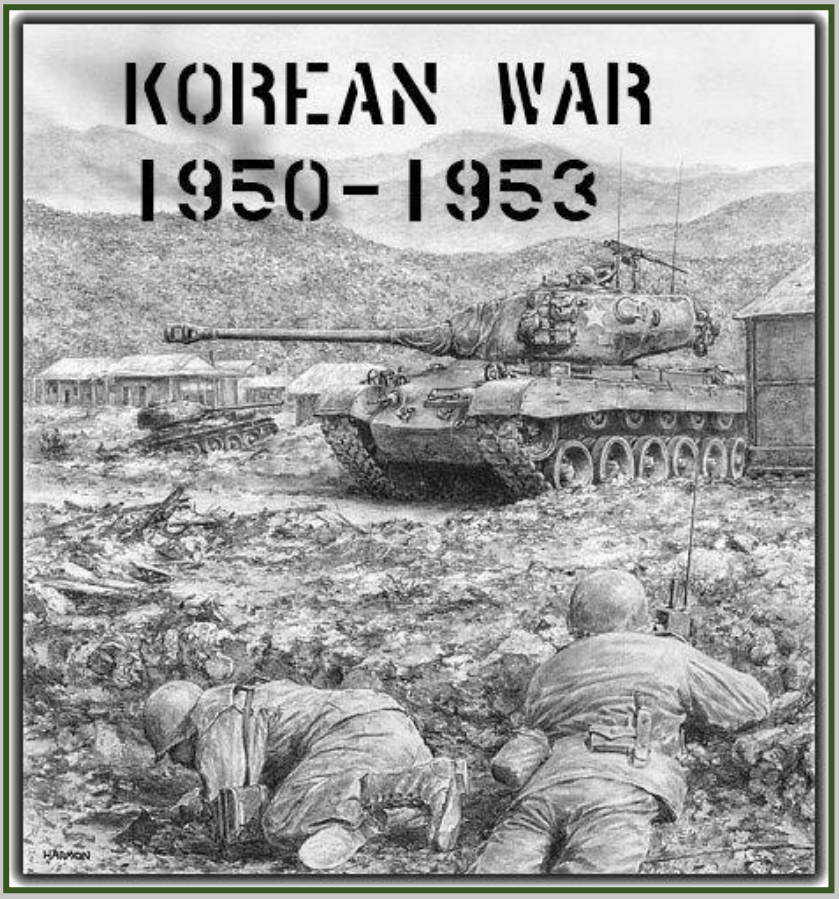
The MoD responded to the report saying: "We thank Mr. Francois for his report and agree that recruitment is one of the MOD’s top priorities. Joining the military offers the opportunity for a great career, learning new skills and gaining unique experiences not available in civilian life. We’re aware of and working on the issues outlined in the report, including investing in recruiting the next generation of talent, diversifying our workforce and increasing our reserve numbers."

A Recruiting Group spokesperson said: “Applications to join the British Army remain strong and have increased significantly in recent years due to ongoing campaigns, including the recent ‘This is Belonging’ campaign. We have also made substantial improvements to the recruitment process which make it quicker and easier for people to join. These changes include the use of virtual reality technology, launching a popular fitness app, and creating a more streamlined application process.”

With North Korea occupying top of the news slots throughout September S*cribblings* looks back at the 1950s and the Korean War- through the scope of a Canadian report - when dealing with the media should have been well practised by the veterans who had been through the Second World war.

News of War in a Distant Land: The News Media and the Korean War

Andrew Fraser, of the University of Windsor and The University of Detroit Mercy School of Law examines the arduous saga of the news reporters who covered the Korean War. The war was often presented to American audiences in terms that were generally uncritical of American actions.



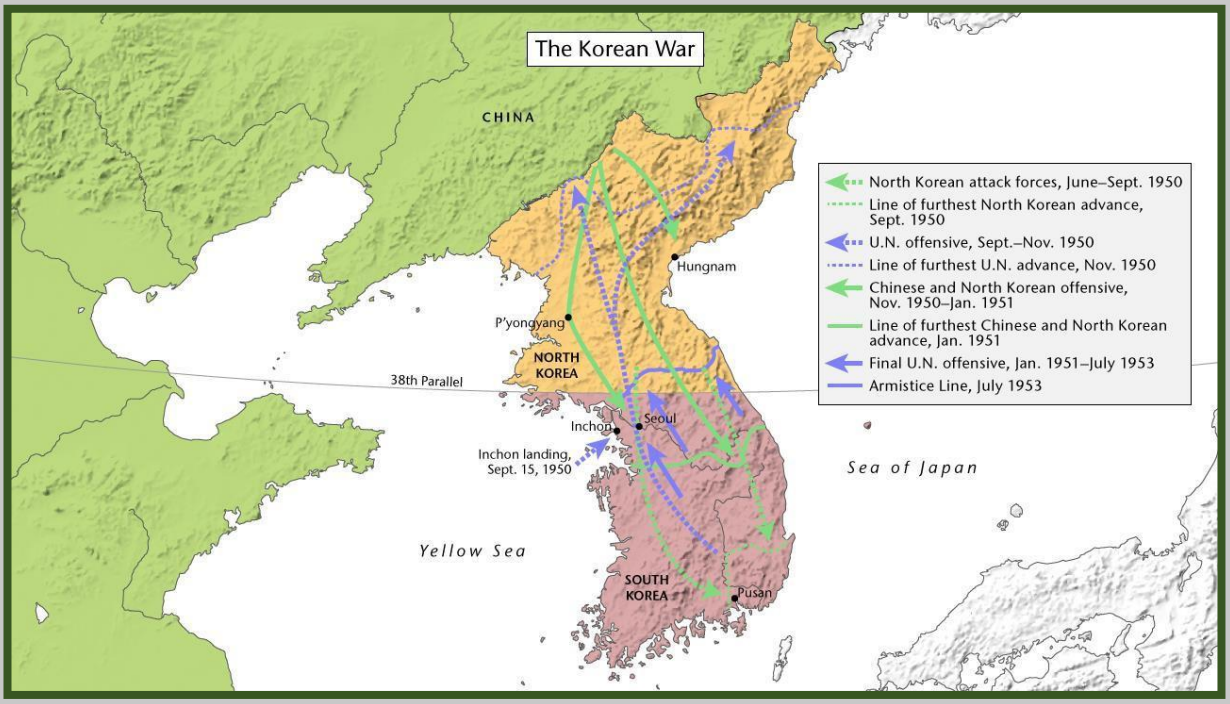
This can partly be traced to the fact that the onerous conditions in the field caused reporters to rely heavily on information from government sources. Beyond this, attitudes on the home front were being shaped by fears brought on by an intensifying Cold War and audiences desired a view of an America that was standing firm against the communist world.

It is often pondered what influence the news media exerts over public opinion, however sometimes the most important question of all is what impact opinion on the home front exerts on the journalist.

In spite of its reputation as a war that inspires only the faintest of memories in the modern popular consciousness, the Korean War occupies a unique place in the expansive canvas of post-war international relations. It was the first protracted military conflict to be fought in the tense atmosphere of the Cold War. It was a war where the western world made a critical decision, to draw a line when faced with an advancing communist army.

As the war raged on, the menacing spectre of a broader global conflict between nuclear powers lurked ominously in the background.

The news media in the United States presented the war to the public in a frame that was often uncritical of American actions, both at the military and the political levels. Setbacks were frequently downplayed, progress was often emphasized and official information, even when it was of questionable veracity, was frequently accepted in the American press unchallenged.



Two principal factors shaped the contours of this frame. First, covering the war was fraught with massive logistical challenges and journalists came to rely on American military and government sources for news because acquiring information otherwise was often difficult. Second, and more importantly, much of the reporting reflected the prevailing political culture and audience expectations in the United States. The public was immersed in a climate of anxiety.

There was a general feeling that the United States was threatened by a seemingly monolithic communist adversary. Many on the home front desired a portrait of a confident and robust America challenging the malicious ambitions of the communist enemy. This was reflected strongly in the coverage of the Korean War in the American news media.

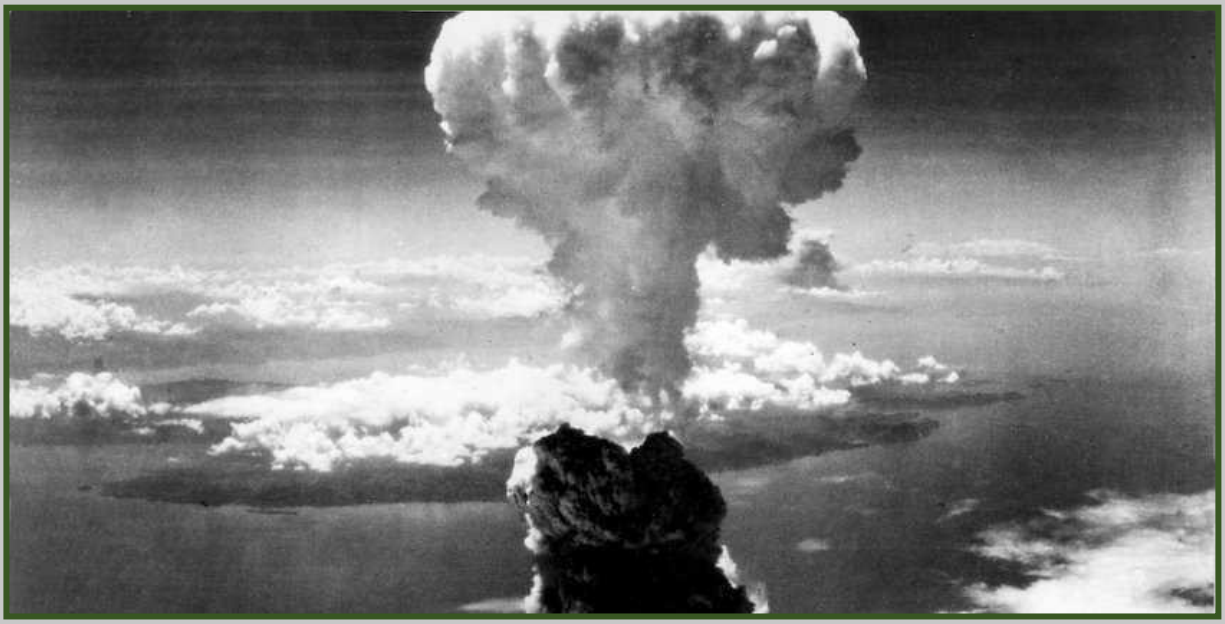
There was frequently little criticism of American policies or actions. Reporters who offered an assertively dissenting opinion often found that there was only limited tolerance for their views. Ultimately, these two factors shaped the style of war reporting in the United States that cast an often-uncritical eye on Washington's war against the communist enemy.

On the grey and rainy morning of June 25, 1950, the North Korean army thundered across the 38th Parallel in a lightening assault that stunned much of the world. When the peninsula's previous ruler, Japan, was vanquished in 1945, Korea was placed under the stewardship of a four-nation trusteeship. The Soviet Union dominated the North while the United States took control in the South. They installed pliant regimes in their respective halves of the peninsula.

Korea, however, had long faded as a major concern by the time war broke out. In fact, South Korea was considered so marginal in American geo-strategic thinking that in January of 1950, it had not even been listed among the states protected by the American defensive perimeter in Asia. The invasion took place at a time when the Cold War was intensifying. The previous year, the Soviet Union had tested the atomic bomb, ending the American monopoly over the world's most terrifying weapon. Political rhetoric across the widening Cold War divide was escalating.

However, the American administration saw Europe, not Asia, and most especially not Korea, as the likely flashpoint for a major confrontation with the communist world.

Some in the administration saw Korea as expendable and were prepared to let the south fall into the hands of communist North Korea. For President Harry Truman, however, there could be no compromise. In the 1930s, he reasoned, the world had backed down in the face of Nazi Germany's drive for territory and power, this time the free world would draw a line. The American intervention would eventually take the form of a "limited war" carried out under the auspices of the United Nations, striving to counter North Korean aggression, while at the same time avoiding a larger global conflagration.



When the invasion began, the only western reporters on the scene were a handful of correspondents in Seoul. The first American journalist to report on the invasion was *United Press* correspondent Jack James, who came upon the most important scoop of his career in a chance conversation with a nervous American military officer in Seoul.

James cabled an urgent message to Tokyo reporting the invasion. When a reporter at the Washington bureau of *The United Press* telephoned the Pentagon, and asked for a comment on the unfolding situation they found that the senior press officer on duty was unaware of the invasion. The first American newspaper accounts of the attack appeared on June 25. They reflected the confusion and uncertainty that characterized the early phase of the war.

The New York Times and *The Boston Daily Globe* initially published American wire service reports from the region that reported fighting, but claimed that the invasion had been ground to a halt.

As the fighting raged, the North Korean military made astounding gains. They conquered Seoul and chased the South Korean army down the peninsula. Within two days, correspondents were arriving in Korea to cover the war. The situation was in such a state of flux that the American military contingent in Korea lacked the time and the resources to enforce a code of censorship. In an initial attempt at media management American military officials took a recently arrived group of correspondents on a visit to the town of Suwon, near the front line.

In an oversight that hints at the confusion that reigned behind the allied lines only a single American officer mentioned to both the reporters and the enlisted men who accompanied them that the town was in danger of being overrun. They quickly fled for their lives as the North Korean army stormed the town. *New York Herald Tribune* correspondent Marguerite Higgins, below, later claimed that it was the most appalling act of disorganization she had ever seen.

Several remarkable reports from American field correspondents that were highly critical of the unfolding situation emerged in the early stages of the conflict. One of the most extraordinary involved *New York Times* correspondent Burton Crane. Shortly after the fall of Seoul he found himself in the middle of a desperate retreat by the South Korean military. Their commanders blew up a bridge as hundreds of soldiers, along with Crane himself, were still on it. Crane reported that he had almost finished crossing the bridge when the explosive charges detonated. A truck packed with South Korean soldiers that was immediately behind him absorbed the full force of the blast, killing everyone on board.

Crane wrote an account of the incident, noting that South Korean commanders had prematurely dynamited a series of bridges, killing hundreds of their own soldiers and leaving two South Korean divisions on the other side of the river to face certain annihilation at the hands of the advancing North Koreans.

The tragedy was also chronicled in *Time* and *The New York Herald Tribune*. In his article, Crane cynically commented that “the Korean war situation is, to use a conveniently evasive military term, fluid, which means that nobody knows much about anything.” It was an implicit criticism of the American Ambassador to South Korea and other senior American officials in Korea whom, when asked by Crane, characterized the situation on the peninsula as “fluid” When newly-deployed American ground forces went into action for the first time against the North Korean military in early July, suffering considerable losses, a handful of American correspondents wrote of “whipped and frightened” American soldiers retreating from the front line.

In her accounts of American forces suffering battlefield defeats at the hands of the North Koreans, Marguerite Higgins wrote of “a series of seemingly endless retreats” by the American forces. She reported on the gallantry of many enlisted soldiers and junior officers, but conveyed the hopelessness of the predicament they found themselves in, outnumbered and outgunned by the North Koreans. *The New York Times* offered a more sedate interpretation of such engagements, “United States troops fighting their first major engagement in the Korean War successfully stood off the initial attacks of massive tank-led North Korean force.”

Moreover, “(t)he thinly manned defence line held in fierce fighting...the Americans fought for seven hours before running out of ammunition and were compelled to destroy their guns and evacuate.”

Although the critical reports written by the likes of Higgins and Crane represented some of the most dramatic eye witness accounts of the fighting, the tone and content of their reporting ran against the preponderance of the emerging reportage on the war. Already, a dominant frame in the American news media's coverage of the Korean War was taking shape. The majority opinion was far less critical then the dissenting point of view. As would be expected given the times, the war was portrayed in stark "us" against "them" terms. The "reds" were cast as an enemy who at times was presented as being only marginally human.

In the early period of the war, as South Korean and American forces fell back in the face a devastating onslaught, many articles carried in major American newspapers spoke of the "rallying" South Korean army and repeatedly alluded to how the advancing North Koreans had been virtually halted by the intervention of the American military. Reports generally downplayed American and South Korean casualties, referring instead to massive losses on the North Korean side. During the summer of 1950, when American forces were under siege there was often a reassuring emphasis on the American reinforcements that would soon be joining the battle.

The more critical reports at times seemed lost in a larger body of articles that stressed progress on the part of the American war effort, even at times when there was little or no progress to speak of. The near-death experience on the bridge over the Han River that suggested significant disorganization in the allied response to the invasion, ran on page three, alongside an article that enthusiastically trumpeted the success of the American air force in trouncing their communist adversaries in the skies over Korea.

Nonetheless there were critical reports that vividly chronicled setbacks, such as a remarkable piece in *The New York Times,* which quoted an unnamed American General as saying in reference to a failed American attempt to hold the town of Chinju, "the Reds beat the beat the Hell out of us". Other reportage, notably by Homer Biggart raised serious questions about the quality of American equipment.

in mid-July, reporter Richard Johnson commented in *The New York Times*, "in the last few bloody days of fighting the bravado and self-assurance have given way to the sober realization that at best the United States troops face a long and costly campaign to drive the invaders from South Korea and

that at worst, we are facing a military disaster in which the American troops, committed of necessity in small numbers and piecemeal, can either be driven into the sea or bottled into rugged mountain passes and soggy rice fields for annihilation."

There was an acknowledgement of defeats and setbacks but there was also a tendency downplay them, frequently choosing not to focus on the fact that the American forces in Korea were effectively under siege. "Indications are king here and opinion is growing that the back of the invasion has been broken" professed a piece in *The New York Times* in August in recognition of the fact that American forces were having some success in defending the perimeter around Pusan where they were locked in on the south-eastern tip of the peninsula.

Although relatively limited, critical accounts of the war were dramatic and they raised concern in the higher echelons of government. Furthermore, despite the tone of the dominant frame it was impossible to escape the fact that the war was not going well. Senior officials, along with various commentators scoffed at the more critical frontline reports. Many government officials were concerned that such reporting would sap morale on the home front.

A remarkable exchange of letters between President Truman and former first lady Eleanor Roosevelt illustrates this concern and offers insight into just how seriously it was taken at the highest levels of the American administration. Roosevelt wrote Truman in August 1950, expressing her distress that media coverage of the war would have a detrimental effect on morale in the United States.

She specifically made reference to a piece written by long serving *New York Herald Tribune* correspondent Homer Bigart which stated that some of the weapons and equipment he had seen being used by American soldiers were antiquated and defective. Truman responded that he certainly shared her concerns and that he had raised the subject with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and been assured that Bigart's observations were unfounded.

After the initial discontent from the Pentagon regarding the early coverage of the war, the American military moved to achieve greater control over what was being reported. They imposed a voluntary code of censorship; however, they stopped short of the formal imposition of censorship that many in the press had expected. The legendary allied commander, General Douglas MacArthur had reason to have at least some confidence in the press.

Among his admirers were many of the reporters who had come to know him when he was a press officer and later a Brigadier General during the First World War. Some of those reporters were now senior editors at various American news outlets, such as Roy Howard of Scripps-Howard. MacArthur proposed a voluntary code, requesting that journalists refrain from criticizing the actions of allied soldiers and their commanders. Many of the correspondents covering the war were ready to accept censorship, but under the voluntary code they were left confused about exactly what they were permitted to report.

To improve media management, senior American press officers suggested a pooling system for the reporters who were accredited to the war zone, both in the interests of the American military and for the safety of the correspondents themselves. The environment in Korea was so arduous that Hal Boyle of the *Associated Press* commented that no conflict since the American Civil War had been so difficult to cover.

Homer Bigart, left, well known for his reportage from the front lines of the Second World War, wrote a letter to his wife saying that covering the war in Korea was the most arduous experience of his life. Conditions for the soldier and the journalist alike were fraught with danger and brutality; over the course of the Korean War, 11 accredited correspondents were killed.

Beyond this, the basic tools of the news media craft were grossly lacking. Communications lines were so limited that many reporters could not file their dispatches until they flew back to Tokyo. *United Press* correspondent Rutherford Poats attempted to resolve the problem by employing messenger pigeons to fly his reports back to Tokyo. However, he reportedly abandoned the idea when the pigeons took eleven days to arrive in Japan

Due to the enormous logistical challenges of covering the war, as well as the terrible dangers, reporters in the field came to rely on the American military for information. Dispatches from press officers became more detailed and they came to feature prominently as sources of information for reporters who rarely challenged what they were being told. Transmitting reports out of Korea that the military disapproved of was difficult given the way reporters were housed and managed by the American military.

The growing contingent of reporters arriving in Korea were housed by the military in a crumbling government building in the city of Taegu - it was also use as a POW camp, see below - It was roundly described by those who were there as filthy and rat-infested. The correspondents were required to work and sleep in a single room. They were permitted to use a military communications line to Tokyo for one hour each night. The reporters would line up to use it in the middle of the night. Given the poor quality of the signal, they were required to shout their dispatches to be heard on the other end of the line.

This created an environment where no one could report anything that was unknown to their competitors or the American military. Reporters were, however, given a relatively substantial degree of latitude regarding where they were permitted to go. Some, such as Higgins and Biggart, would even accompany soldiers on patrol near the front line. Editors and writers outside the war zone also often shied away from questioning official news releases, even when they contained information that was highly suspect.

When General MacArthur's office began releasing impossibly detailed enemy casualty reports, questions were seldom raised by the media outlets who quoted them, save for the rare acknowledgment that although likely imprecise, the official casualty reports were the best numbers that were available. From a very early stage, the daily releases issued by the American military offering an official summary of the fighting took a place of prominence in *The New York Times.* They were printed verbatim, usually occupying most of the newspaper's second page.

The enormous logistical challenges of covering the war account for why the press came to rely so heavily on the military. There is a broader and more overarching reason for the position taken in the preponderance of the Korean War coverage.

American audiences desired the view of a robust and confident United States confronting the communist world. At the time of the Korean War, a new political culture was solidifying in the United States.

A mentality was emerging that reflected the fears and ambitions of a nation that was beginning to confront the Cold War. For the United States, aspirations of an idyllic post-war world had given way to a global climate where much of international and domestic politics were dominated by the pervasive fear of communism.

In the eyes of Americans, the world was becoming a much more terrifying place. On September 24, 1949, it was confirmed that the Soviet Union had tested its first atomic bomb. The American monopoly on nuclear weapons was over; the world's most dreaded weapon was now being wielded by the enemy. That same year, China's Nationalist government was swept away in a communist revolution. Broad swaths of Asia were now under communist control.

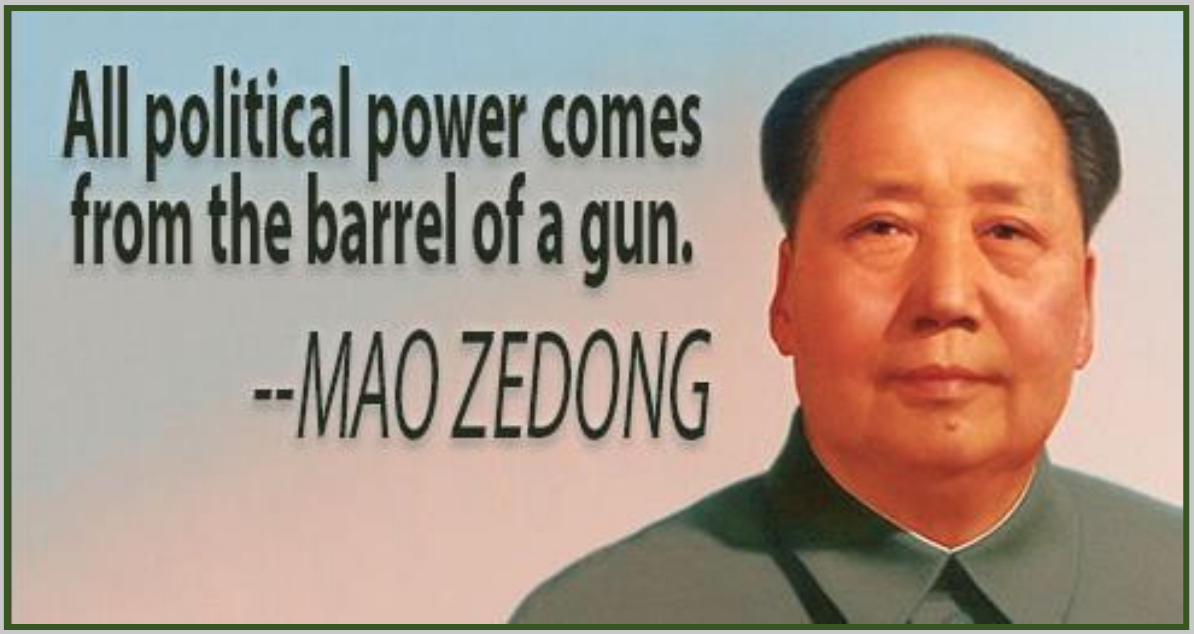
Former American allies were now avowed enemies. Such developments served to generate the feeling of an advancing communist menace that was creeping ever closer to the United States.

The invasion of South Korea was only the latest in a series of events which drove it home to Americans that the Cold War was becoming very hot and very dangerous. This feeling of tension and unease in the United States was accentuated by the fact that in the year leading up to the outbreak of the Korean War, the dominant line of American thought regarding the communist world was going through a transformation.

In the years immediately following the Second World War there was a general acceptance by both the American public and the government that communist movements throughout the world operated independently and were not presumed automatically to be loyal to the Soviet Union.

However, as the relationship between Washington and Moscow grew increasingly tense and as Communist movements, such as the one led by Mao Zedong in China, gained power and prominence, the United States began to see the communist world as a monolithic bloc, taking its directions from Moscow. Local communist parties in Asia and Latin America, which heretofore had been independent from one and other, came to be Soviet pawns, heightening the sense of imminent danger.

The fear of an encroaching communist menace permeated the American news media's coverage of international events. As the Korean War was beginning, *The New York Times* ran exposés warning that communist parties in Latin America were gaining influence and if one of them were to get into power Moscow would have a foothold on the very doorstep of the United States. Articles alerting the reader to the terrible dangers emanating from behind the iron curtain were commonplace; from the growing communist influence in southern Europe to the attempts by the Soviet Union to entice the youth of the world into their ideological grip.



In a celebrated editorial that appeared in *The New York Times* on Christmas Day 1949, famed columnist Arthur Krock commented that in the span of less than half a century the nation now known as the Soviet Union had evolved from a distant backwater that barely registered in American thought to a frightening colossus that exerted a menacing influence on virtually every facet of American political life: "It has come to pass that in less than 50 years, however, that virtually every governmental policy, act and though of Washington is based on that nation and people." "The American mind", Krock continued, "has reached such an acute awareness of the danger of the situation that loyal citizens known to have been friendly at any time to the professed aims of the Kremlin find themselves suspect."

Given this context of fear, especially the fear that the United States was losing ground in the global arena to communism, it is hardly surprising that the media presented the war in a manner that was so accepting of American actions, so long as they seemed to be challenging the ambitions of an expanding communist world.

By 1950, the Soviet Union had the atomic bomb and communism appeared to be on the rise. Communist ideologues often billed their movement as the way of the future; there were fears in many quarters in the United States that perhaps they were right. The American public was jittery.
When hostilities erupted in Korea and the American military went into action there was a strong public expectation of a firm and robust performance by the United States to challenge the threat posed by the communist monolith.

A week after the invasion, a Gallup poll found that 80% of Americans supported military intervention on the peninsula to fight the communists. Further Gallup polling found that even during the harshest days of the war prior to the Inchon landings, 65% of respondents still voiced support for the war. In another survey of Americans taken by Gallup at the beginning of the Korean War found that 28% of respondents favoured the use of atomic weapons on military targets to win in Korea. When China intervened in the war in November of that year, *US News and World Report* noted a "wave of demand" on the part of the public for a nuclear assault against the enemy, something which the publication suggested was a viable option so long as the bomb was used "sparingly".

A poll taken by Gallup at that time found that support for the use of atomic weapons against military targets to win the war had climbed to 50%. Another Gallup poll taken in the United States in November 1950 revealed that nearly 50% of respondents identified war with the communist bloc as the gravest threat facing the United States; an additional 29% alluded to international communism in general as the most significant threat. A further 15% identified communism inside the United States as the greatest threat facing the nation. When American journalists covered the war, they were presenting the news to an audience that was anxious about the emerging global climate and hoped for an inspiring performance from the American administration and the military as they took on the red enemy.

There is a further dimension to the Cold War mentality that influenced the way the American news media covered the war. The threat to the United States from communism was not only seen as external, but internal as well. Communism as an ideology had found a following in the United States that predated the Cold War. Some Americans saw communism as a pathway to an egalitarian society. A number of them sympathised with the Soviet Union. This was the genesis of a seemingly endless litany of red scares in the United States.

In 1947, the House Committee on Un-American Activities held a wave of hearings in which various figures in the entertainment industry were accused of being communists; several of them who were reluctant to testify were jailed.

In 1948, Alger Hiss, the president of the Carnegie Endowment for Peace, who had previously served as a senior official at the State Department, was accused of being a communist and a spy. In January 1950, after his second trial, he was convicted of perjury charges relating to the allegation. The reverberations rippled through the nation. Combined with the growing feeling of a dire threat from the communist world, the scandal created a media sensation and added to the considerable national concern about communist infiltration of the government.

The Hiss case fed the growing impression that anyone in government could be a communist and that every one of those communists was a possible traitor. In 1951, the House Committee on Un-American Activities was taken over by Senator Joseph McCarthy who used it as a venue to launch his infamous crusade targeting supposed communists who were apparently everywhere. The arrests of American communists Julius and Ethel Rosenberg in 1950, on charges of conspiring to commit espionage on behalf of the Soviet Union, caused yet another sensation over the issue of domestic penetration by the communist empire in the United States.

The couple's tumultuous odyssey through the American judicial system; their arrests, trial and eventual execution in June 1953, ran in a chronological arc that, with some sense of irony, largely paralleled the duration of the Korean War.

Fear of communism was filtering down to the local level. An enlightening example of this can be found in a roundup of events around the nation that appeared in *Time* on July 31, 1950. The article announced that Americans were fed up with communists, both domestic and international varieties. It

was noted that in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, city council passed a municipal ordinance requiring the "registration" of all those accused of promoting communism and ordered that they be fined $100 or jailed for 30 days. In Columbus, Ohio, police juvenile officers warned local clubs run by teenagers to be on the lookout for "communist agitators" and cautioned them against admitting any new members whose backgrounds were not an "open book".

In Birmingham, Alabama, the city's "big, blustery" police Commissioner Eugene "Bull" Connor, who had been rounding up suspected communists and charging them with vagrancy, called on city hall to pass an ordinance banning communists from the city. His definition of a communist included anyone caught speaking to a communist in a non-public place, as well anyone "passing out literature that can be traced to a communist hand." In suburban Los Angeles, a fired-up war veteran assembled a posse to carry out a "crusade against communism".

The first order of business for the gang was to mete out rough justice on a group of suspected communist undesirables. They pounced on six unfortunate Chrysler assembly plant workers with supposed communist affiliations as they were leaving the factory at the end of their shift. *Time* reported that three of the workers were "badly mauled" in the attack. For the vigilantes, triumph turned to disappointment the next day when it was revealed that the victims of the Chrysler plant beating included fellow war veterans, prompting their leader to conclude that perhaps they should not have taken the law into their own hands. The article does not mention if charges were filed against the group.

The general feeling of an internal threat accentuated the fear of the communist menace even further. Raymond Fosdick, the former Undersecretary of State for the long defunct League of Nations, described the climate of fear that had crystallized in American society in an essay in *The New York Times Magazine* just after the Korean War began.

Writing on the American fear of communist expansion, he declared that "not since the Black Death swept medieval Europe in the 14th Century has so real a cause of terror been alive in the world as that which stalks the 20th Century." The United Sates, he argued, was responding to the challenge with "panicky witch hunts" instead of resolve.

He lamented that if his hero Woodrow Wilson were still alive he would be stunned by what was taking place in the United States. Wilson, according Fosdick, would "scarcely be able to breathe in the anxiety saturated atmosphere that has descended over our country."

It was from a nation gripped by this pervasive climate of fear that came the journalists who would cover the Korean War, America's first war against the communists. On September 15, 1950, the United States launched an ambitious counterattack in the form of an amphibious landing at Inchon, near Seoul. The operation was a brilliant success. In a bold masterstroke, the United States seized a foothold behind the North Korean battle lines and took the initiative. The allies quickly retook Seoul and the North Korean lines crumbled.

The American press articulated a sense of relief and satisfaction with the sudden turn of events. *Newsweek* effused that the situation was “almost too good to be true”. The following issue of *The New York Times Magazine* ran an image of a North Korean soldier with his hands in the air captioned with a single word: “Surrender”. “Since it became apparent that their Korean satellite was lost, the Russians talked more loudly than ever about peace” snickered *Newsweek*. Shortly after the landings, the liberal-minded magazine *The Reporter* ran a front-page headline, “An Ex-Soviet Officer Tells: How Russia Built the North Korean Army”. The acerbically-worded report that accompanied the splashy headline was later unmasked as a CIA plant.

American victories were celebrated in the news media and as noted by historian Lisle Rose, a certain hubris emerged in media discussions of the war. “Korea had looked like a sure thing and it had blown up in Stalin’s face” professed a jubilant commentary in *Time*. As the allied thrust pushed beyond Pyongyang, various publications offered a rather blissful listing of Korean industrial areas that were of importance to China and the Soviet Union and were now directly in the cross-hairs of the American advance.

Little acknowledgement was paid to the possibility that China might intervene. *Newsweek* noted that the communists had reluctantly given up the key rail city of Chonju, not far from Shinuiju, the “Japanese built industrial city” of more than 60,000 people that contained Korea’s largest lumber plant, in addition its airfield was the nearest on the peninsula to the Russian-occupied harbours of Dairen and Port Arthur. “Shinuiju is a particularly sensitive spot for the Chinese” noted *Newsweek*, “Its power plants-carefully spared so far by the American planes, supply electricity to much of Manchuria, including the Russian-held Port Arthur.”

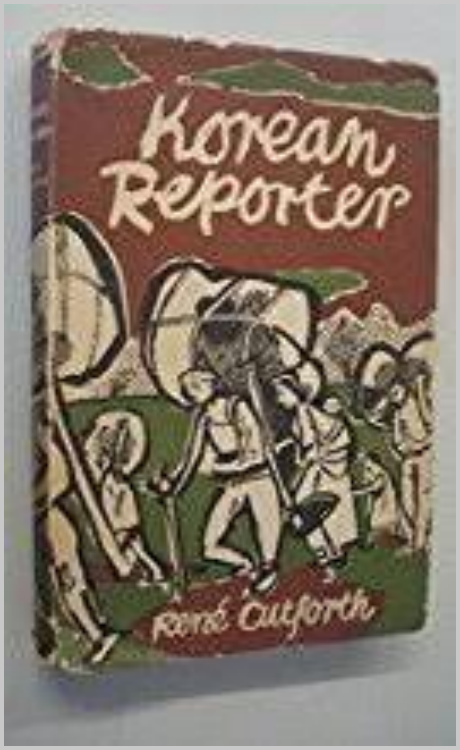
In late October, it was reported that South Korean army reconnaissance units had reached the vitally important city of Sakchu, home to Korea’s largest hydroelectric plant that also supplied power to the industrial centres in Manchuria. On October 23, *Time* commented on the triumphal fall of the industrial city of Wonson, a “strategic seaport” and “communications hub for railways and highways

running west to Pyongyang and northeast to Siberia." By the time of the Inchon landings the number of accredited correspondents who were covering the war in either Korea itself or in Japan had reached 330.

The style in which the news was presented by the American news media was reflected in the outlook of many American correspondents in Korea. Some British reporters complained that many of them subscribed to entrenched and immutable viewpoints which would inevitably colour their coverage of the war. The British press coverage of the war was often more critical of the American position, especially in the early stages of the fighting.

Questions regarding the accuracy of official American information were more common. In the wake of the invasion, accounts in the British press painted a vivid portrait that cast the South Korean military as disorganized, inadequately equipped, and prone to blundering. British media accounts also took a more sobering view of the American military predicament on the Korean Peninsula. A greater proportion of the British correspondents who covered the conflict were veterans of covering the Second World War and tended to take a more cynical view of warfare.

Rene Cutforth, covering the war for the *British Broadcasting Corporation*, later wrote about colleagues from the United States who were often suited up in what he described as the "the full panoply of the American war correspondent" which included an automatic weapon and belts of ammunition. Firearms were not an uncommon accessory for the American war correspondents in the Korean War.



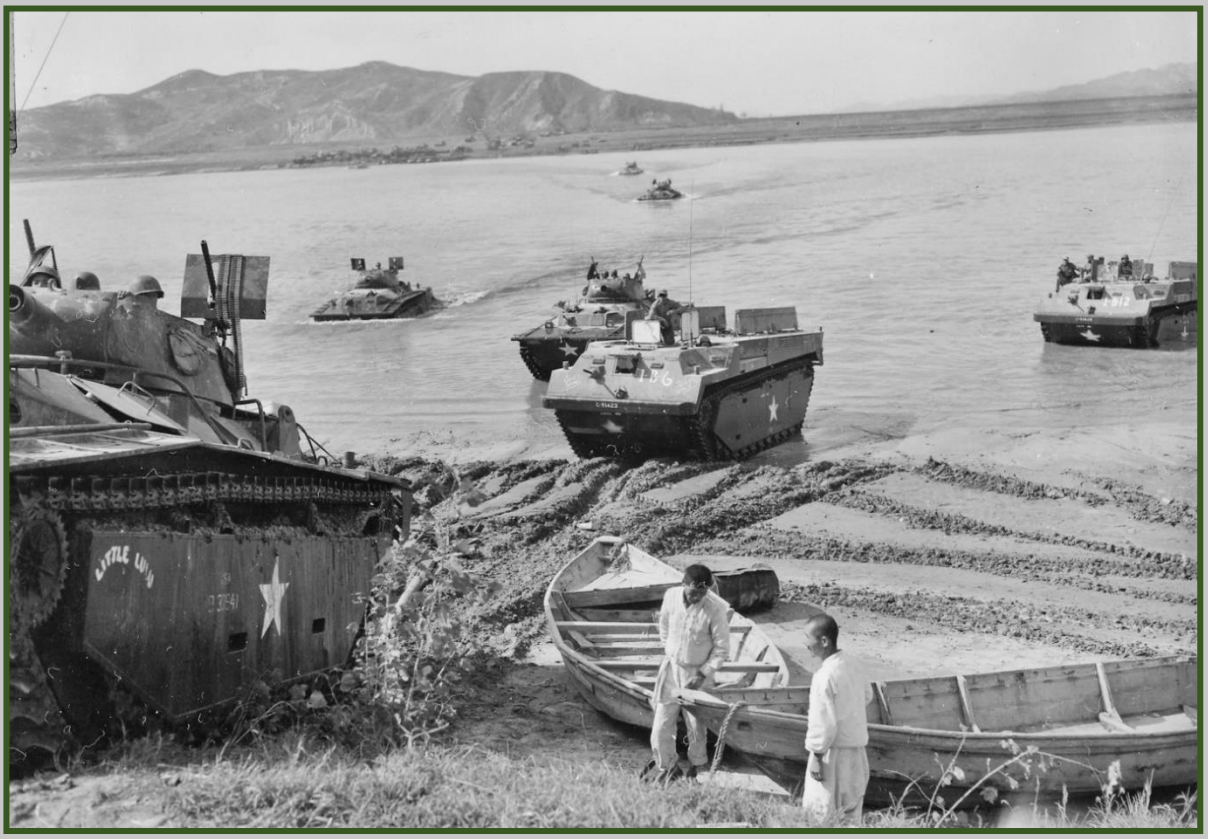
One reporter summed up his reason carrying a gun: "Suppose a gook suddenly jumps into my foxhole. What do I do then? Say to him, 'C*hicago Daily Tribune*?'" And the dangers they exposed themselves to were very real; as stated, 11 accredited correspondents were killed during the war. British war correspondent Reginald Thompson alleged that some correspondents from the United States had far more sinister motives for traveling armed. He later lamented that, "The dearest wish of a lot of them was to kill a Korean. They'd cradle their arms and say, 'Today I'll get me a gook'."

Even bearing in mind the *caveat emptor* that the latter statement comes from a source who was committed in his opposition to the war, such testimonials reveal something else about at least some of the correspondents who helped shape the dominant frame in the America media's portrayal of the war. They brought with them not only strong political views shaped by the Cold War, but in some instances, deeply prejudiced racial biases as well. This provides at least some insight into media portrayals of the enemy, both Korean and Chinese, as marginally human. However, it should be noted that characterizations of Soviet society in the American press were often equally disparaging. Not surprisingly the suffering of the Koreans themselves during the war was usually not a major theme in the American coverage of the war.

The editors of the media outlets in the United States inevitably played a vital role in shaping the dominant frame in the coverage of the Korean War. In some instances, correspondents who had prepared critical pieces on the war were overruled by their producers or editors. Famed journalist Edward R. Murrow, a giant in the press coverage of the Second World War, travelled to Korea and filmed a news segment for CBS which raised questions about the war's overall aims. Murrow's Korea was a "flea-bitten" land where devastating American firepower had left "dead villages" scattered throughout the countryside. The producers back in New York deemed it excessively controversial and opted not to air it on the grounds that it might damage the war effort. Analogously, when Rene Cutforth submitted a piece offering a chilling description of the effects of napalm bombing by the American forces, the BBC refused to air it.

The framing of the news from Korea extended beyond reporters and editors. When I.F. Stone, an investigative writer and columnist for the left-wing *New York Daily Compass* compared accounts of the war in the American press with those in several British and French newspapers he was stunned by the vast disparities in the coverage. He investigated the issue and authored a book that questioned the American position on the war.

No fewer than 28 publishers in the United States and Britain rejected the manuscript before it was finally accepted for publication in the United States in 1952. Reginald Thompson, for his part, wrote a manuscript entitled *Cry Korea* in 1951, which lamented the terrible loss of life and presented an unremittingly negative view of the American military in Korea. Although the book was also very critical of the communist side, it was unanimously rejected by every American publishing company he approached.



There were instances when the press cast a more harshly critical eye on the events in Korea, most notably in the aftermath of the Chinese intervention in November 1950. When allied forces fought their way up to the Yalu River, near the Chinese border they were subjected to a massive assault by the Chinese Army.

The American drive collapsed in the face of the unrelenting onslaught. With the war going badly, full censorship was imposed by the American military at the end of 1950. The Chinese advance gradually pushed the allies south of the 38th Parallel.

In January 1951, the communist forces were once again in control of Seoul. Some of the toughest questions from the news media about what was taking place in Korea were posed just as journalists were being hit with heavy restrictions on what they were permitted to say. Numerous American journalists wondered how MacArthur could possibly not have foreseen the Chinese intervention.

When Harry Truman fired MacArthur in April 1951 media reaction was split along partisan lines, with Democratic Party loyalists backing the President, and Republican-friendly press outlets excoriating him. The series of blunders authored by MacArthur and his increasing reputation for disregarding presidential authority led many independent media outlets to support his sacking.

When the allies pushed the communists back to the 38th Parallel midway through 1951 the battle lines froze and a two-year deadlock ensued. As negotiations to end the war continued at an agonizingly lethargic pace, grinding battles raged on at the front. With the situation stalemated the war started to slip from its position as the dominant news story. Although the tone of the coverage continued to be favourable to American actions, the war came to be portrayed as simply one facet of a much broader Cold War fight.

The theme of Cold War anxiety dominated the headlines as the war dragged on. The war was now sharing the news pages with articles on Joseph McCarthy's sensational accusations of rampant communist infiltration in the United States and other articles that warned of growing communist influence in other parts of Asia, as well as in Latin America. Although questions came up in the press about what was really being accomplished in Korea, it was hardly surprising that the dominant frame of the coverage spoke of staying the course and maintaining a strong posture not only in Korea but in the larger fight against communism world-wide.

Given that the coverage of the Korean War in the United States travelled in step with the government and reflected the political climate that was pervasive in the country, the coverage itself did not produce a change in public opinion or American foreign policy. When the war ended in July 1953, there was a general consensus in the news media that it was neither a victory nor a defeat. *The New York Times* made it very clear that the end of the Korean War was merely a stepping stone along the road to larger confrontations with the communist world. These battles, it was averred, would require even greater resolve.

By this point, public interest had shifted away from the war that two years earlier had descended into a seemingly unbreakable battlefield deadlock. Public concern turned toward the possibility of a nuclear confrontation with the Soviet Union. News outlets were now discussing ways for the average citizen to survive a nuclear attack. There was little sense of celebration or finality in the media writings on the end of the conflict, only an acceptance that it was only the first of many challenges in what would be a long Cold War.

The Korean War marked the first major war that was waged in the tension-laden context of the Cold War. The dominant frame that emerged in the American news media coverage of the war was frequently uncritical of American actions, portraying the war in terms of "us" verses "them", setbacks were often downplayed, while progress on the battlefield was emphasized. This frame quite often crowded out dissenting viewpoints. There were two main factors which shaped the dominant frame. The first was practical; covering the war was a logistical nightmare, information was often difficult to obtain. Consequently, the news media came to rely on official government and military information on what was transpiring.

The second reason relates to the overarching ideological context in which the war took place. It was a time of great public anxiety and expectation. The prevailing view in the United States, quite understandably, was that the western world was locked in an intractable standoff with a communist bloc whose ideology and aspirations ran diametrically opposed to everything the United States stood for.

In the year leading up to the war the Soviet Union had tested the atomic bomb and the Chinese government had fallen in a communist revolution. There was a general sense of fear that the United States was losing ground in the Cold War. There was a public expectation that the United States

would stand firm against the communist world and a great hope that it would succeed in its endeavour.

These aspirations were reflected in almost every facet of the American news media's coverage of the Korean War. In covering the war, the American media patrolled the boundaries of those expectations but often did not exceed them. In the past it has been pondered what influence the news media exercises over public opinion. However, in the case of the Korean War we see that sometimes the greatest impact of all is the one that the conditions on the home front have on the journalist.

We were soldiers once….and young! Well some were.

Editor Mike Peters delves into the post-World War 2 history of media operations and finds that even in 1991 journalists were grumbling about military press officers. Specialist defence correspondents are harder to find these days but he recalls when The Times fielded Henry Stanhope to keep TAPIOs and MOG (V) on their toes.

Topically as Britain plays a leading role in the disaster recovery operation in Caribbean *Scribblings* re- publishes a report from Lieutenant Colonel Spencer Gammond on the second of his visits to Jamaica as a TAPIO to help and guide media training for the local defence forces.

And for the record – a selection photographs when media ops training among reservists was often an example of joint operations. Pictured below, in 1991, on a map reading exercise during a summer training weekend at Cirencester Park and the Duke of Gloucester Barracks at South Cerney are Captain Anita Newcourt, AAC, and Major Willie Morrison, RCT.

Jointery in action: the late Lieutenant Colonel Patrick Gouldsbury, RGR, briefs Lieutenant Alison Hawes, Lieutenant Emma Thomas and Lieutenant Commander David Carpenter of the Royal Naval Reserve Public Affairs branch at Porton Down.

Getting acquainted during naval exercises in The Channel in 1991 TAPIO Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Colin Mason RRW and Captain Penny Studholme, AAC, on board the aircraft carrier HMS Invincible. At far left is Major Ian Proud RE and centre is Rear Admiral Peter Woodhead, Flag Officer Flotilla One.

Above left: Asking a policeman for directions. Captain Pat Pearson, RMP (a member of the Government Information Service) with Major Ian Proud RE (e-GIS) getting his bearings on Salisbury Plain. Above right: Hot foot from a disaster exercise, the late Major Roger Hudson, PWRR, the Editor of British Forces Broadcasting Network News, takes former Norfolk newspaper reporter, Second Lieutenant Tim Smith R Anglian, through the finer points of radio tape editing.

A journalist's view of Defence PR

By Henry Stanhope

Henry Stanhope was Defence Correspondent of The Times from 1970 to 1982 when he became Diplomatic Correspondent and then Defence and Foreign Leader Writer. He left the paper's full -time staff to concentrate on writing books.

His publications include The Soldiers: An Anatomy of the British Army and Old Threat: New Fears, an analysis of European security which he worked on during a fellowship at Harvard. He is a history graduate of University College London and a director of Brassey's, the defence publishers.

Jokingly, he adds, that he narrowly missed promotion to lance bombardier during two years national service with the Royal Artillery. And he admits: journalists are notorious grumblers.

Like the farmer and the cowboy in the 1950's song, the PRO and the journalist should be friends. The former owes his living to the latter and, while the reverse is not absolutely true, a holocaust which carried off all press officers would leave journalists with a sense of real loss. The relationship is essentially symbiotic.

It is also coloured, however, by mutual suspicion. Reporters often view the press officer as an obstacle, blocking the way in their eternal quest for truth, like a minder for his employers in the establishment. The press officer meanwhile suspects the whining hack of waiting for the slightest indiscretion, on which he might pounce like a spider from his lair - leaving the PR man to pick up the pieces of his own career.

Such suspicions are almost entirely justified. The PRO's view of news gathering is selective. Good news is good news and bad news is bad. His view of his responsibilities varies accordingly. Six column inches on page one delight their author, but not necessarily his hapless 'Whitehall source'. That the PRO may be a former journalist is irrelevant. One distinguished US correspondent in the '70s moved across to take up a senior PR job in the Pentagon and subsequently tried to breathe new life into it by reacting with total candour to press questions. His official career was interesting but brief. His masters, unlike George Washington, did not share his enthusiasm for the truth.

'Bryan 's in Public Relations -at the weekends he likes to unwind'

There is, however, as in everything else, a happy medium which the good press officer finds almost instinctively. He who takes the inquiring reporter into his confidence, is erring (if at all) on the right side. Those who do so encourage a sense of mutual trust which ultimately helps their own careers. A positive attitude usually brings its own reward.

Both journalism and public relations frequently suffer through being saddled with unnecessary mystique. Both jobs require a natural flair. But the other two most valuable commodities are experience and abundant common sense.

A reporter who is suddenly sent to Delhi to cover, say, an Indian election, needs to have some idea of how to set about it - instead of sitting in his hotel room crying 'Help'. He should understand the virtues of writing his first story in the plane, from cuttings photocopied from the office library, and then filing it within two hours of landing. He may not add much to the sum of human knowledge but his speed and efficiency will impress the foreign editor and ensure him a dateline in the next day's paper. He needs also to appreciate the value of establishing early contact with the Press Attache at the British High Commission and his counterparts in the U.S. and other embassies.

No college course or instruction manual can advise a young press officer how to cope when he finds himself on an exercise in Germany, in charge of a party of male and female journalists. The

helicopters detailed to lift them from Wildenrath to Bielefeld may have been grounded by fog and the motor pool has no other means of transport. Half the journalists are desperate for a story while the other half are desperate for a drink.

Meanwhile the 1st Corps briefing team at Bielefeld are complaining to Whitehall about their nonarrival and the officer commanding is fretting at his desk. The pig in the middle is the unfortunate PRO who stands alone in everyone's field of fire.

During the Indo-Pakistan war of '71, coverage of the Indian advance towards Dacca was handled by just one Indian PR colonel in Calcutta who had more than 300 journalists to deal with but little or no transport or liaison staff to help. He was so shouted at and abused by frantic reporters that he was on the verge of a breakdown when the war ended. The Israelis by contrast in 1973 deployed scores of PR officers (including the singer Topol) to ensure that their cause did not go unheard. The present President of Israel, Chaim Herzog, was one of a number of senior retired officers on stand-by to brief the international press on the military background.

Common sense is usually innate and God-given while experience comes only with experience. Organisation, however, can usually be improved and in any critique of military PR this is the area which deserves closest attention.

Most Fleet Street correspondents would agree that the best organised press facility in Whitehall is at the Foreign Office. That sounds like a hopelessly sweeping overstatement and in fact is not invariably true. The personnel change and the standard changes with them, according to each individual's aptitude. But reporters who have much to do with Whitehall tend to give the FCO grudging approval. This is not because the King Charles Street men leak like sieves. Diplomats tend to be economical with the truth and disclose only what they want the press to say - which is usually not very much. They even pass the time of day in nuances.

What distinguishes the FCO, however, is that all of its press officers are specialists. Each is a professional civil servant, posted for two or three years to the news department much as he or she could be sent to Paris or Peking. Each takes an area of the world, the Americas or Africa for instance, and thenceforth fields all media questions on it. He or she also takes on a second area, thus being able to double up for a colleague in his absence.

Not only does the Head of News Department brief leading correspondents twice a day (not always to great effect) but his team builds up a reservoir of knowledge which enables them to offer background guidance. Moreover, if they cannot add much themselves in the event of some news story suddenly breaking out they can tap the resources of desk officers upstairs or put these directly in touch with correspondents.

Some are better than others at handling their brief. Common sense and experience remain the most precious assets in PR. But the system, while it has its imperfections, works better than most others in Whitehall because it is based on knowledge and specialist expertise.

The MOD is similar up to a point, since the PR organisation is divided between the three Services and the central policy desk. The point at issue is whether the specialisation goes deeply enough. The organisation is encumbered by its size, which reflects that of the Services and the supporting establishment. It is also dictated by the variety of calls made on it, from the burgeoning broadcasting industry as much as from newspapers - from the provincial press as well as from Fleet Street. Defence PR is commonly divided into two categories, colloquially known as offensive and defensive. Offensive PR concerns what the Ministry sees as good news or at least the news which it wants to get into the papers. This can range from an Army Catering Corps cake competition to the order for a new kind of APC. The Press Office can seize the initiative itself.

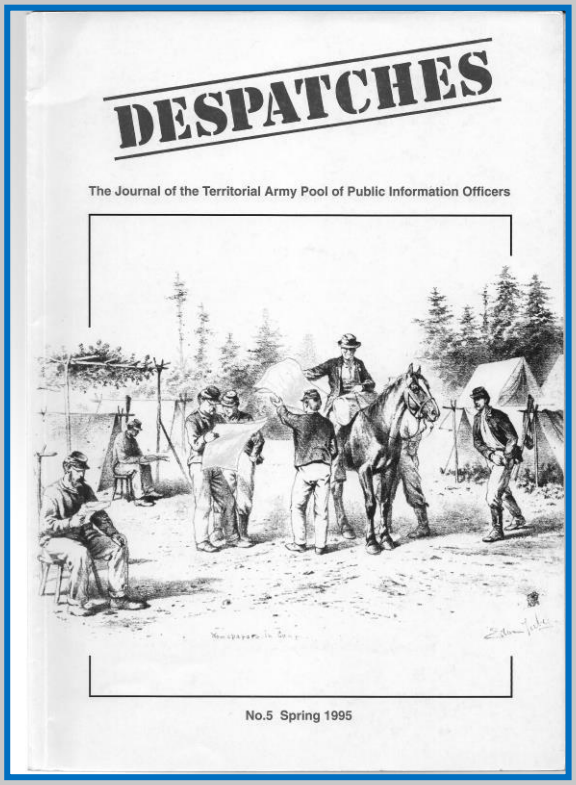
Defensive PR is about manning the earthworks, dealing with questions stimulated from outside, about some procurement fiasco for example. There is also, however, a wide band in the middle which consists of keeping journalists well informed on a range of important issues of the day: military reorganisation for example or the latest security sit-rep in Belize.

These areas are almost equally important because defence is not always an easy subject to project. Visually it makes marvellous television, from tanks firing their guns on the Hohne ranges to the Guards Trooping the Colour on the Queen's birthday. But in peacetime people question the huge cost, while recruiting is a recurring forces' nightmare. Without PR men to maintain their image the Services would find their Whitehall battles that much fiercer. If all the above functions are to be fulfilled the organisation has to be substantial. This is all too easily forgotten by its critics.

None the less the present system has shortcomings, the chief one being insufficient specialisation - or so it seems to a user of the service. PROs are selected on the basis of their expertise in dealing with the press, not so much because of their military knowledge. Is this approach, right? In my submission it should at least be questioned. Correspondents inquiring about one or other of Britain's armed services are too often referred to the appropriate Director of PR. This not only over-burdens the DPR but works only when he happens to be in residence. If he is away in the more distant parts of his constituency he leaves a vacuum behind him.

What does the DPR have that others lack? He has two things: first, a professional's knowledge of his subject and, secondly, the authority to dispense it.

From the point of view of a national correspondent - whose requirements are by no means common to all - there are two priorities. One is that MOD PR officer knows his or her Service down to the last button - or at least the last bullet. This might involve an initial indoctrination, with briefings, reading homework and field visits before he or she begins the job. Each should then remain in that job for about two or three years by which time his/her knowledge should be encyclopaedic.



In times of tri-Service, functional organisation, such an objective might sound arcane. Ideally all should have a knowledge of all three Services. From a journalist's point of view, however, a small team of narrowly focussed specialists is more helpful than a large body of broadly-based generalists. By making this point in Despatches, a journal aimed at PROs in the TA, one is probably preaching to the converted, since its readers spend much of their spare time with the Army and thus are military professionals.

The second point concerns the authority they wield and the information that is handed down from on high. Details on policy issues for instance do not circulate freely enough around the system. The facts about a tank accident at Bovington or an aircraft crash on the moorlands of mid-Wales are efficiently gathered and made readily available. By contrast, the latest developments in the procurement of a new helicopter or frigate or, say, the composition of a mechanised brigade, remain more difficult to come by. Press officers have often to rely on briefing material consisting of little more than the last written answer in Parliament. Few below the rank of the DPR himself are prepared to talk around the subject in much detail
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The remedy lies largely with the Ministry. Press officers should be briefed daily in greater depth. The same arguments apply to the system used in wartime. PROs are often employed to open doors to other people. They could do more briefing on their own - if the Ministry gave them more freedom and authority, and streamlined the press relations organisation.

The system is unique neither to the MOD nor even to Whitehall. American service PRs work on similar lines. The US Navy, for instance, deploys specialist PR officers, some of whom are graduates in the subject. The same applies to the US State Department which uses the US Information Service to handle the PR throughout its embassies. The Freedom of Information Act in Washington means that the press officer can usually find someone 'upstairs' to field the question. But the Foreign Office system is a better one.

The biggest single weakness of British military PR is that the system is over bureaucratic. This is probably due to the influence of the Services with their hierarchical structures and mystique. But mystique is usually the enemy of efficiency and complicates what should be clear and straightforward. Classification is a problem on its own but is still far too often invoked as the reason for not disclosing some simple truth.

Does all this matter? Journalists are notorious grumblers. If defence information were laid out on a platter there would be no need for defence correspondents anyway. On the other hand, the Treasury and the other spending ministries are enviously eyeing the MOD's huge budget. If the Services feel they have a good case to project, they should ensure that their means of doing so are in good shape. The quality of Defence PR has vastly improved during the last two decades. In my submission, there is still room for improvement.

Underneath the mango tree

by Lieutenant Colonel Spencer Gammond Royal Dragoon Guards (V)

Spencer was commissioned into the 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards in 1971 and served with the regiment all over the world in his 20 years regular service. He was principal staff officer to the Director of Public Relations (Army) at the Ministry of Defence during the Gulf War. He served two short tours attached to the Jamaican Defence Force as a public information adviser and recalls below the setting up of the JDF's first unit press officers' course in Kingston where he lived and worked quite literally underneath the mango tree.

LIEUTENANT CHARLENE ROBINSON was on the tarmac at Kingston to welcome me back to Jamaica. I was returning to pick up where I had left off eleven months earlier. In June 1994 I spent a month in Jamaica assisting the Jamaican Defence Force (JDF) with the establishment of a public information cell. I had carried out a study of the relationship between the Jamaican media and the JDF and prepared an implementation plan for the establishment of a JDF cell. Now I was back in Jamaica to complete my task and conduct the first ever JDF unit press officers' course.

The Jamaica Defence Force is a fine service. It was formed in 1962 out of the old West Indian Regiment, but the real history of the JDF dates to 1879 when the first Jamaica Militia were raised. Since the British first raised units in the West Indies in 1692 there has been a long and proud tradition of Jamaican service in the British Army. In 1892 Jamaican Sergeant William Gordon won the Victoria Cross when serving with the West Indian Regiment and more recently Jamaicans served with distinction in two world wars. Since Independence in 1962 the two countries have maintained close defence links. The JDF have until now never had a public information organisation.

The JDF comprises three elements: first, the land component of two regular infantry battalions, an engineer battalion and a support and services battalion; second, the Air Wing and third, the Coastguard. The total force strength is about 5,500. There is also the National Reserve which provides one infantry battalion and augments the Air Wing and Coastguard. Force Headquarters is at Up Park Camp, Kingston.

The main tasks of the JDF are national defence, support of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) in the maintenance of law and order, maintenance of essential services, disaster relief, law enforcement, safety and environmental duties in Jamaica's territorial waters, search and rescue and ceremonial duties. Since Independence the JDF has maintained its links with British forces while at the same time expanding its contacts with the USA and Canada. All officers, however, are still trained initially at Sandhurst, Dartmouth or Cranwell and a four-week company-level exchange exercise takes place annually with the British Army - Exercise Red Stripe/ Calypso Hop.

Much of the funding is on a reciprocal basis, however, the Foreign Office makes a very significant contribution to the cost of the exercise and, in particular, to the funding of the training support provided to the JDF by the 20 specialist advisers who are attached to them annually as part of Exercise Red Stripe (the Jamaican end of the exchange). Each year the JDF puts forward a formal request for training assistance through the Defence Adviser in Kingston and for the second year in succession P Info assistance was on the shopping list.

The Public Information Officer of the Jamaica Defence Force, Lieutenant (now Captain) Charlene Robinson, with Lieutenant Colonel Spencer Gammond RDG of the TAPIO Pool, at Port Antonio, Jamaica.

It was against this background, in a country heavily dependent on tourism for its economic survival, that I arrived in 1994 with a remit to assist the JDF with the establishment of a public information cell. On arrival it became apparent that before I did anything I was going to have to learn about Jamaica. Only when I had gained a basic understanding of the society was I going to be of any use. With the help of the SO Ops & Plans, Lieutenant Colonel Alan Douglas, I spent a hectic but fascinating week visiting JDF units to get a basic overview of their structure and roles.

This was followed by a series of invaluable visits to the Jamaican media. As the days passed I found myself being called upon regularly to give advice on public information matters to Headquarters JDF. For those unfamiliar with Ian Fleming's Doctor No, the grand old man of the Jamaican media is the Daily Gleaner. Established in 1834, it enjoyed a near monopoly for many years, competitors came and went but the Gleaner remained supreme, the unchallenged Jamaican opinion-former. More recently it has had to resist serious competition from the Jamaica Herald and now the Jamaican Observer (printed in Miami and demonstrable proof of the changing nature of the Jamaican media).

At present there are three morning and one evening newspaper. Competition is hutting up and a year later the changes that I had sensed on my first visit were gathering momentum. The Jamaican media, faced with financial pressures and falling circulations, were becoming much more investigative and in some cases even predatory.

Jamaican television has two indigenous channels: Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation (JBC) and CVM. Satellite TV is widespread and large dishes can be seen pointing skywards from even the humblest shanty dwellings. Needless to say, the overwhelming majority are unlicensed. Rapid growth in cable TV is expected in the next few years.

Wherever you go in Jamaica you are always followed by music - reggae stalks you even in the most tranquil surroundings as a plantation worker cycles by, ghetto-blaster in hand. In Kingston and other large towns, it is often a withering assault on the senses. The average Jamaican citizen listens to radio for long periods daily, but not to the conservative RJR (Radio Jamaica & Rediffusion) but to IRIE FM, KLAS, LOVE FM, POWER 106 or one of half a dozen other commercial stations. Here news is limited to the 30 second soundbite, but this is where the youth of the nation is tuning its ears!

Reconnaissance for a press facility in the rain forest: 'What do you mean 'Why do we have to invite the media at all?"

After the chaotic Caribbean medley of sound, smell and random traffic manoeuvre that is Kingston, Up Park Camp, the Headquarters of the JDF, is an oasis of calm that has on the surface changed little since the last British regiment, the Royal Hampshire's, left over 30 years ago. It was here at the end of my first visit to Jamaica, under the majestic mango trees, overlooking the cricket pitch, that I made my recommendations for the establishment of the public information cell and a suggested course of action to implement it.

The report covered the establishment unit press officers (UPOs) and their training, equipment, chain of command, job descriptions, information policy and suggested themes, recommendations for further training, SOPs and senior officer interview training.

Among the recommendations was the need for a UPO course at the earliest opportunity, for without the support of UPOs the newly established public information cell would be seriously handicapped. The report was submitted to the Chief of Staff of the JDF, Rear Admiral Peter Brady, whose personal initiative following a visit to the Defence Information Division at MOD in London in 1993, was directly responsible for my presence. Admiral Brady took a particular interest in the development of the public information structure against a background of increasing public concern about the role of the JDF in support of the JCF, especially in the suburbs of Western Kingston - the so-called 'garrison areas'.

At his request I gave a presentation on public information at the JDF Officers' Study Day which provoked a lively discussion. I left Jamaica that year content in the knowledge that the foundations had been laid for the introduction of the cell and with memories of warm friendship and a beautiful and exciting island.

To my surprise and pleasure, I found myself back under the mango tree a year later. My remit remained fundamentally the same but prior discussions with the British Defence Adviser in Kingston, Colonel Jeremy Dumas, ensured that students were nominated for a unit press officers course, the aim of which was Ito teach JDF Officers to communicate confidently and effectively with the media,

both in barracks and on operations and thus improve public awareness and understanding of the role of the JDF'. The course had to be tailored to meet the particular circumstances of the JDF which by virtue of its longstanding impartial and apolitical nature occupies a unique and vital position in the fabric of Jamaican society.

Unit Press Officers from all the major regular units in the Jamaica Defence Force interviewing the only female officer in the Jamaican Coastguard, Lieutenant Antoinette Kong. The best 'local girl' story was subsequently published in the national press.

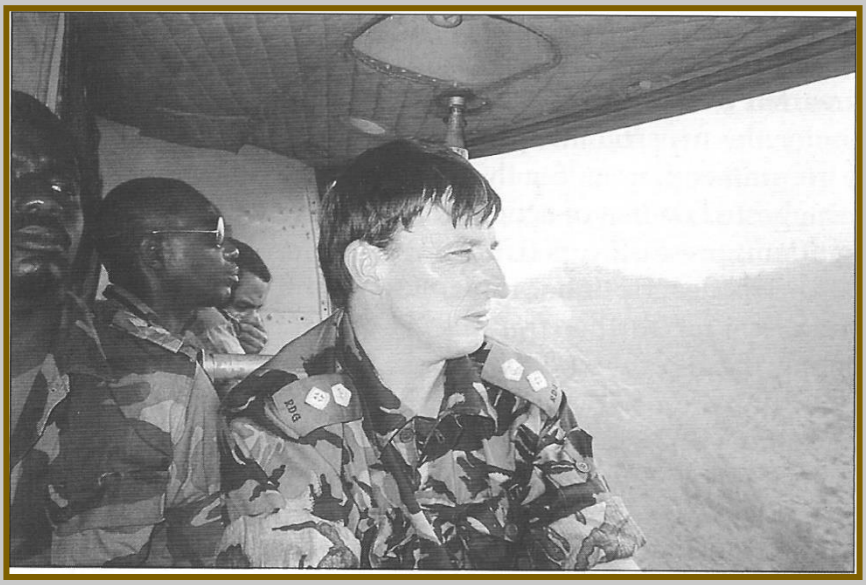
Due to the relatively unsophisticated media environment in Jamaica and the lack of media awareness in the JDF, the course was heavily loaded on the practical side. The course, in Up Park Camp, was attended by six officers and two warrant officers, representing all the major regular units in the JDF. Instruction took place over seven full working days, during which the students each wrote four news releases.

The best effort on the last exercise, an interview with the only female officer in the Jamaican Coastguard, was released and used by three newspapers! The course attended a real media facility as observers and planned a media visit to the Coastguard. Miss Jennifer Grant, the President of the Jamaica Press Association, gave the potential UPOs a highly informative talk on trends in the Jamaican media. In addition, visits were made to a cross-section of the media, including The Daily Herald, CVM Television, Radio Jamaica (RJR) and the Jamaica Information Service (J IS) the Government Information Service.

The media facility, which took place at J Battery 3 RHA's impressive FIBUA training exercise near Port Antonio, was an ideal teaching vehicle while at the same time generating positive prime time television and front-page print coverage of the exchange exercise. The author with students of the first JDF Unit Press Officers' Course at Port Antonio.

The Jamaican media is undergoing fundamental change. Rapid expansion has led to a dearth of experienced reporters in all fields and there are no defence correspondents and few specialist reporters of any nature. Supervision of inexperienced staff is minimal and the result is often misleading and inaccurate reporting.

Senior media managers freely acknowledge the difficulties but increased competition has led to circulation and advertising wars and financial pressures are great.



As a result, the media are becoming more questioning, aggressive and on occasion even predatory. This trend seems set to continue and the JDF are beginning to realise that they must live with it.

The author returning by helicopter over the Blue Mountains to Kingston after a training press facility in temperatures of over 100 degrees Fahrenheit

For the future, there are opportunities for further training advice and assistance, particularly in the specialist fields of television interview training and radio reporting. Captain Charlene Robinson has now taken up the new post of Public Information Officer for the JDF. The UPOs are with their units.

With a fourth roulement of Jamaican soldiers deployed on Operation Anvil as part of the United Nations Force in Haiti just completed, and disaster relief deployments as part of the regional emergency relief force in Antigua, Barbados and Anguilla currently underway, the JDF is firmly in the public eye. There will be no shortage of good material for the first JDF public information officer.

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