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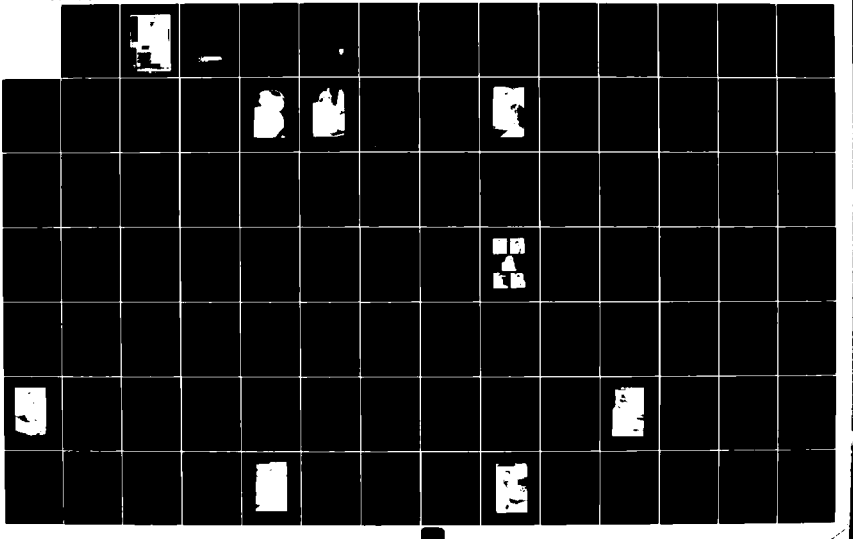

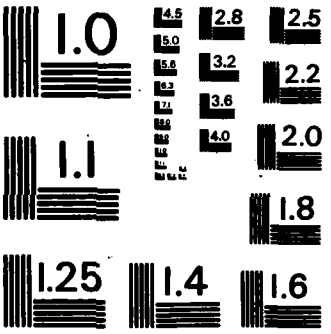

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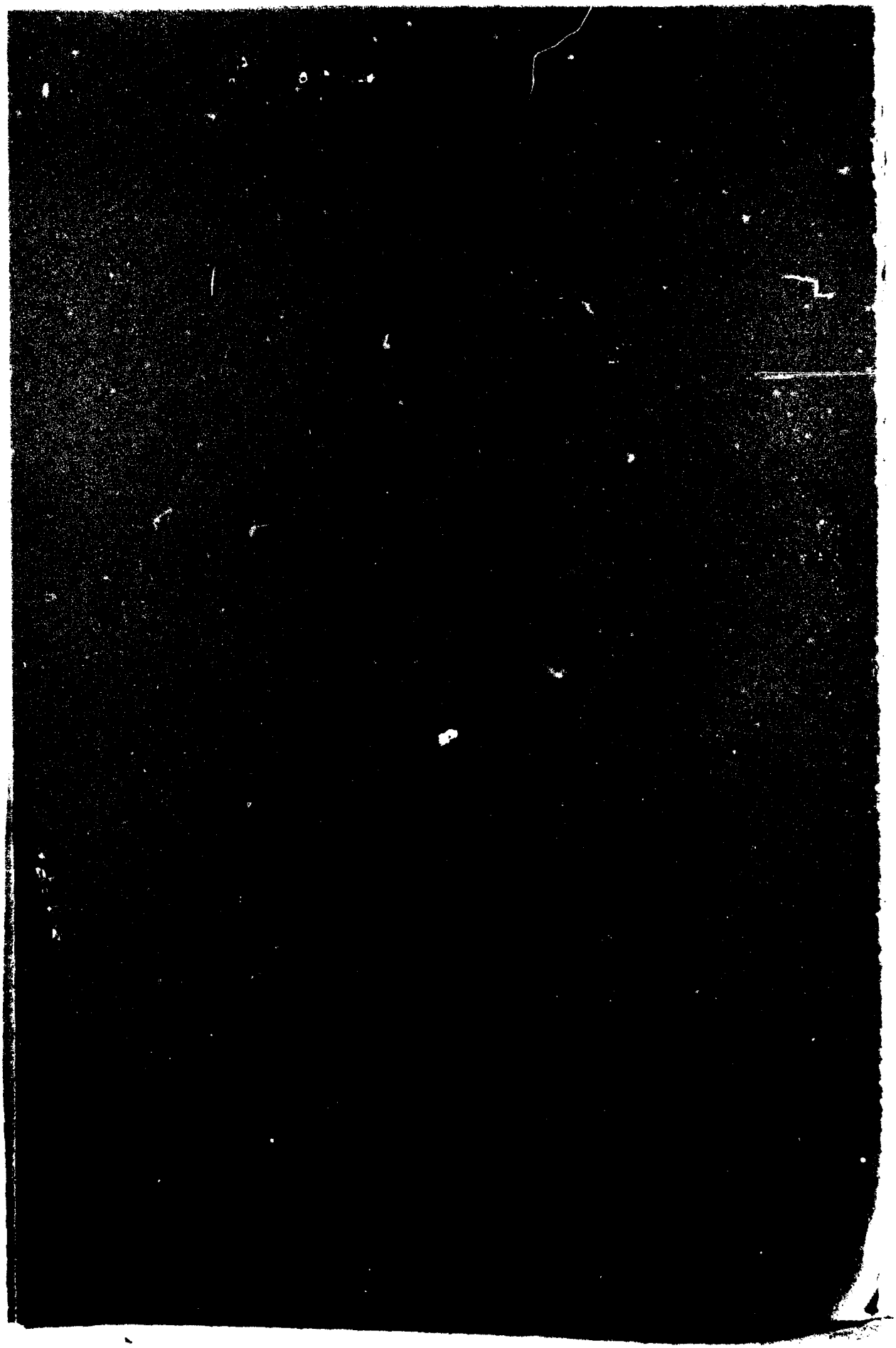
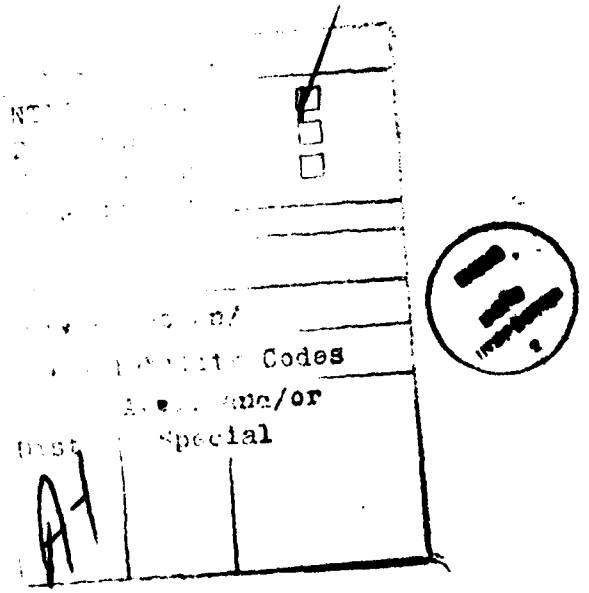


THE PENTAGON REPORTERS

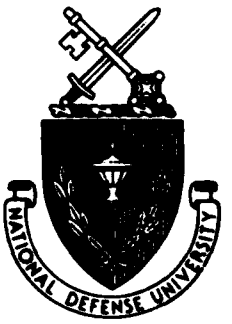


THE PENTAGON REPORTERS

by

Robert B. Sims

1983



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FOREWORD

Recent history reminds us that broad public support is essential to attaining US national security objectives. To elicit that support, national defense policymakers must not only be conversant with the issues, but able to deal effectively with a skeptical, even adversarial, news media.

Captain Robert B. Sims, US Navy, reasons that defense officials could improve their relationships with the media if they better understood the ethos of national security correspondents. To that end, he profiles the Pentagon press corps, creating an empathetic view of journalists as interpreters of national security news and of their roles in the highly competitive news industry. In an appeal to both policymakers and reporters, Captain Sims calls for the mutual respect necessary for the presentation of a balanced and accurate national defense story.

National security managers and the media share a grave responsibility for informing and educating the public on issues which bear on national survival. Former National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger put it well: "If both the makers of policy and its interpreters respect each other's vital function, the resulting relationship can be one of the strongest guarantees of a free society."

JOHN S. PUSTAY
Lieutenant General, USAF
President, National Defense University

THE AUTHOR

Captain Robert B. Sims, US Navy, wrote this book while a Senior Research Fellow with the National Defense University and concurrently a student at the National War College. A career public affairs officer, he is a former Deputy Chief of Information for the Navy Department. His present assignment is with the National Security Council.

Captain Sims has two master's degrees from the University of Wisconsin, in journalism and in political science. A graduate of Union University, he was a Rotary Foundation Fellow at the University of Sydney, Australia, before entering the Navy. His military assignments have included service with three of the four numbered US fleets, including the Seventh Fleet's detachment in Saigon. He was press briefer for three Chiefs of Naval Operations, the Navy's network television liaison officer, part of the fleet ballistic missile special projects office, and the public affairs officer for the American community in Naples, Italy. He was special assistant to Navy Secretaries J. William Middendorf II and W. Graham Claytor.

Captain Sims is an associate member of the US Naval Academy Alumni Association, a member of the Society of Professional Journalists, the National Newspaper Association, the Tennessee Press Association, and the US Naval Institute, which has published his writings. His awards include the Legion of Merit and gold stars in lieu of second and third awards.

INTRODUCTION

Those who make national security decisions in the United States inevitably meet the press. Hardened though a government civilian or military officer may be toward television or newspapers, he will nonetheless eventually be required to do business with reporters—or to decide how best to avoid them. Sometimes good fortune with the press spells victory for a policy or program. Failure in dealings with the media can doom the best efforts of the brightest people. Clearly, those who would be successful defense advocates and managers need to know about reporters and the flow of news.

This study looks at national security news by examining the small band of reporters who are considered the Pentagon press corps. It introduces those who regularly cover military stories. It presents reporters largely as they see themselves, in the context of their working environment. It tells us what they say about their work, their colleagues, their organizations, and their sources. As a result, the study tilts toward being an occasionally sympathetic examination of why reporters do what they do—especially why they do things that often irritate leaders in the Defense Establishment. → to p. 2

This approach—from the reporter's viewpoint—has a purpose. National security decisionmakers sometimes view unrestrained news coverage of military subjects as baggage the democratic system carries, baggage so weighty it may some day sink the ship of state. Some regard reporters as alarmists, as people who are inaccurate, intentionally biased, and opposed to the military. To them, reporters are out to sell newspapers, to be seen on the television tube, to make a name for themselves regardless of the cost to the nation. In certain cases, these critics may be right. It really does not matter. Officials must—barring a change in the Constitution—contend with reporters anyway. They should study journalists carefully, see them as they see themselves, know their capabilities and weaknesses, and develop sensible methods for working with them. It's part of the job.

from 8'

INTRODUCTION

After a brief overview of the historical roots of reporting about national ~~defense~~, the following pages are organized by media categories: Wire services, the part of the news system that reports developments rapidly to other news organizations, are described first. Then come chapters about the suppliers of the printed word—daily newspapers, news services, weekly news magazines, and technical and policy publications. Television, perhaps the most troublesome of all the media covering the military, is discussed in a chapter on broadcasting. Another chapter considers the international and internal publics, noting the interaction between Pentagon reporters and the Government's overseas and employee information programs. The final section focuses on Pentagon correspondents as a group, and includes some general observations for those who want to understand defense news coverage better, or to become better communicators themselves.

wire services;
daily newspapers;
news services;
weekly news magazines;
technical and policy publications;
television; and
broadcasting.

1
FROM WAR CORRESPONDENTS TO DEFENSE REPORTERS

The Press is ubiquitous. More than a hundred years ago, William Makepeace Thackeray called the Fourth Estate "a great engine" that never sleeps: "Her officers march along with armies and her envoys walk into statesmen's cabinets." Being everywhere, and marching with armies, journalists have reported war after war. Yet reporters' intimacy with war and their influence on war preparations have never been as pronounced anywhere as in America in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In the United States, the Mexican War introduced the field correspondent system of enterprise journalism. This type of reporting involved going out for the news, in situations that repeatedly involved violence—one of war's best known by-products. George Kendall, editor-publisher of the *New Orleans Picayune* in the 1840s and on the scene in Mexico, assigned other reporters to the front and helped them and his other US colleagues form a newspaper tradition of dispatching people to cover the action, especially military action.

War correspondents were not always popular. Thomas Wallace Knox, a reporter for the *New York Herald* during the Civil War and a volunteer aide with the rank of lieutenant colonel, was court-martialed after an altercation with General W. T. Sherman and banned from the Army. Solomon Buckley, another journalist, was captured by the Confederates and jailed in Richmond for months.

Early correspondents were often flamboyant: John Howland, an artist correspondent for *Harper's Weekly*, donned buckskins, wore revolvers, and joined Indian dances while covering US military actions

in the West. Those early war correspondents were anything but well paid, and some were not well respected, but they were significant in the development of American journalism. Moreover, their reports influenced the public's perception of what its military units were doing in battle. Reports from the front also influenced public attitudes toward war readiness and diplomacy associated with war—subjects that later came to be known as the national security aspects of US foreign policy.

In modern American wars—World Wars I and II, Korea, and Vietnam—correspondents were even more commonplace. No one epitomized the war correspondent better than Ernie Pyle, whose columns in the Second World War brought to the home front the drama and the daily life of the US soldier. Pyle covered the war in Europe and died, a sniper's victim, on Ie Shima in the Pacific in 1945 during the Okinawa campaign. With the military they cover, war correspondents share danger, at times even death. Sixty of them are memorialized on a plaque in a quiet alcove near the Pentagon's news room as Americans who lost their lives in military theaters of operations in World War II, Korea, and Southeast Asia. Many others remain missing and unaccounted for.

With the establishment of the US Department of Defense and the continued existence of a large standing military force in peacetime following World War II, a new journalistic phenomenon emerged. Peacetime defense activities—including interservice conflicts over roles and missions and budgets—made news. Much of that news emanated from a single building: the Pentagon, completed during the Second World War to house the headquarters of the Defense Establishment in Washington. Reporters were naturally assigned to cover the Pentagon. The location became one of the four geographic cornerstones of Washington journalism, the others being the White House, Congress, and the Department of State.

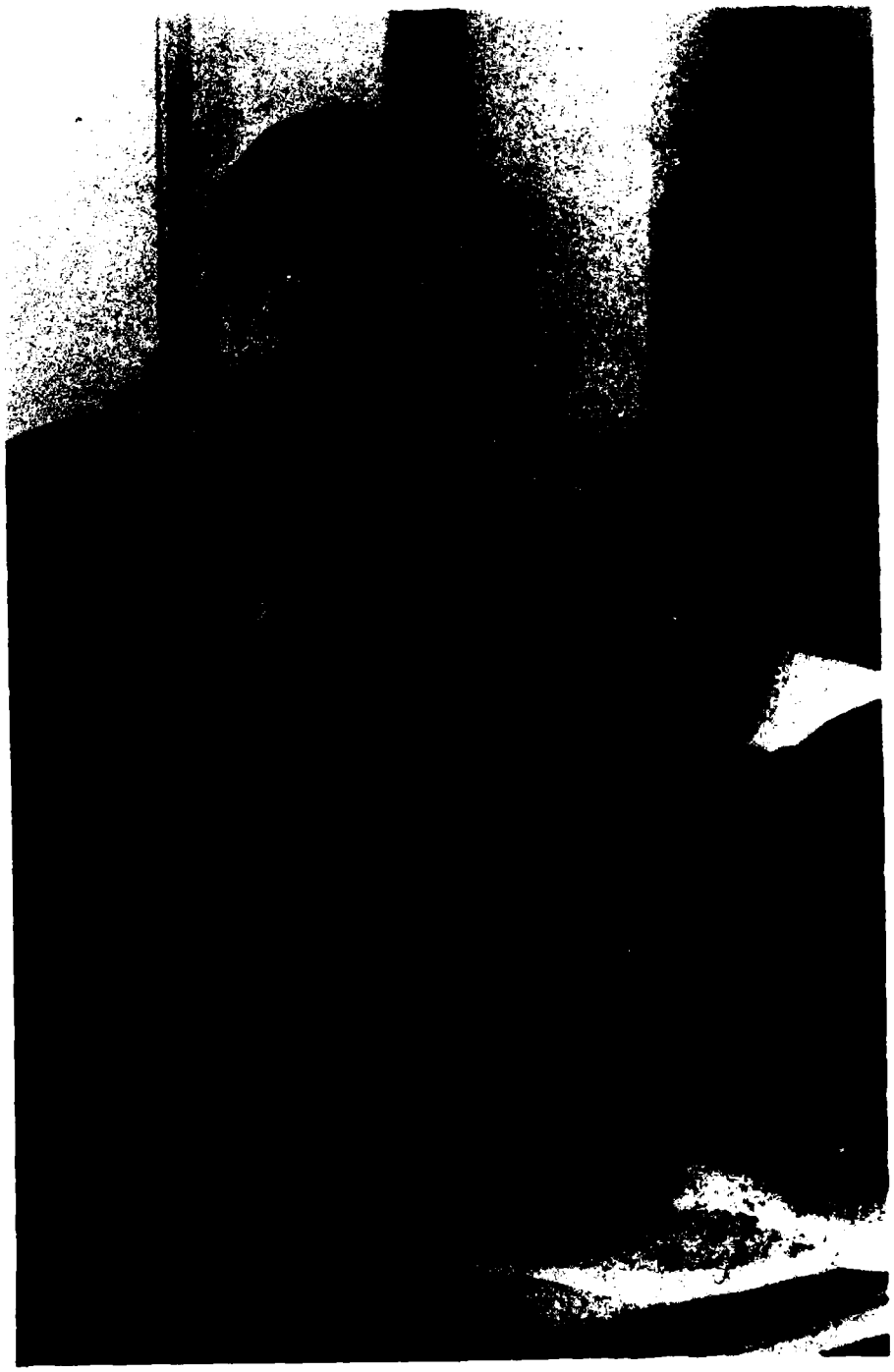
Even though reporters covering the Department of Defense never agreed upon an organization among themselves—unlike the State Department's group, which formed an association—they became known generically as the Pentagon press corps. Others called these reporters by such titles as defense correspondent, or defense reporter, or military analyst. Whatever their proper title, the correspondents who covered national security news after World War II were reporting on a highly specialized and very difficult beat—many said the toughest in Washington. None of them felt totally restricted to covering activities in a single building; many ranged far from the Pentagon for their information. Some members of this new reporting group were war correspondents in

the field, others were not. Some did well in ferreting out news about national defense; others poorly. No matter. They were something new in American journalism. And like the story they were covering, which revolved around a defense budget that accounts for an enormous part of the national government's expenditures but is not widely examined, these reporters have not received much attention.

Describing the Pentagon press corps after completion of an assignment as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, Major General Jerry R. Curry said:

> As I see it, the reporters working the Pentagon beat fall into three categories. First, there are the professional, honest reporters who do a competent, forthright job of covering events and who thoroughly, accurately, and fairly report on them. In my opinion, they comprise about 70 percent of those reporting on Department of Defense activities, and I say, "Thank God for them!"
>
> Fortunately, those at the other end of the spectrum comprise less than 1 percent. They are those who are essentially disreputable, lack professional integrity, and print whatever captures their fancy without regard to fact.
>
> In between those two groups are the 30 or so percent that are competent craftsmen though their stories are sometimes unreliable. This may be because of editorial policy constraints or because they have selectively omitted a fact that would contribute to the balance of the story. It could be because they have added a dramatic or unusual fact that seems related to the story but really isn't. These impart an unusual spin or twist to a story that may garner high consumer interest, but at the same time they are misleading and misinforming the public. These reporters cannot be trusted, and the damage their stories cause to the nation, the press as an institution, and the government is incalculable.[1]

Ernie Pyle, war correspondent



Mark Watson, Pulitzer prize-winning defense correspondent memorialized in the Pentagon newsroom

2
WIRE SERVICES

It was late in the Yom Kippur war. Israeli troops had surrounded the Egyptian Third Army in Suez City. The United Nations called two cease-fires, each quickly broken by both sides. In Washington and in Moscow things were happening. Soviet leader Brezhnev dispatched a letter to President Nixon accusing the Israelis of deliberately violating the understanding reached by the United States and the Soviet Union, and proposing that American and Soviet military forces jointly impose a cease-fire and final settlement in the Middle East, presumably on terms the United States had repeatedly rejected. Brezhnev indicated that in the event the United States turned down the proposal, the Russians would have to consider unilateral action. After a late-night White House meeting, US military forces were alerted.

The increase in military readiness took place with no immediate public announcement by the White House or the Pentagon. Officials soon learned that the United States does not go to Defense Condition Three world-wide in secret. As alerts went out to US European forces, the Strategic Air Command's B-52 bombers, the Atlantic Command, the Pacific Command, the Air Defense Command, and the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, news organizations began to receive fragmentary indications that something big was going on.

The Washington bureau of the Associated Press (AP) awakened its defense correspondent, Fred Hoffman, at his home in Fairfax County, Virginia. The AP had messages from various bureaus around the country, and wanted Hoffman's opinion. At first Hoffman thought it was a Strategic Air Command (SAC) alert. The SAC has a lot of them, and such an alert would be unremarkable from a newsman's viewpoint.

But the names of the outfits and the places did not click as routine with Hoffman. A dozen years covering the Pentagon told him there was more to it. By telephone, Hoffman roused a number of acquaintances. He determined that the alert was widespread. None of the civilians he reached would officially confirm the alert, nor would anyone explain the alert except that it was related to the Middle East. Hoffman, from his home, filed a story about what he knew, without nailing down the cause. He then hurried to the Pentagon.

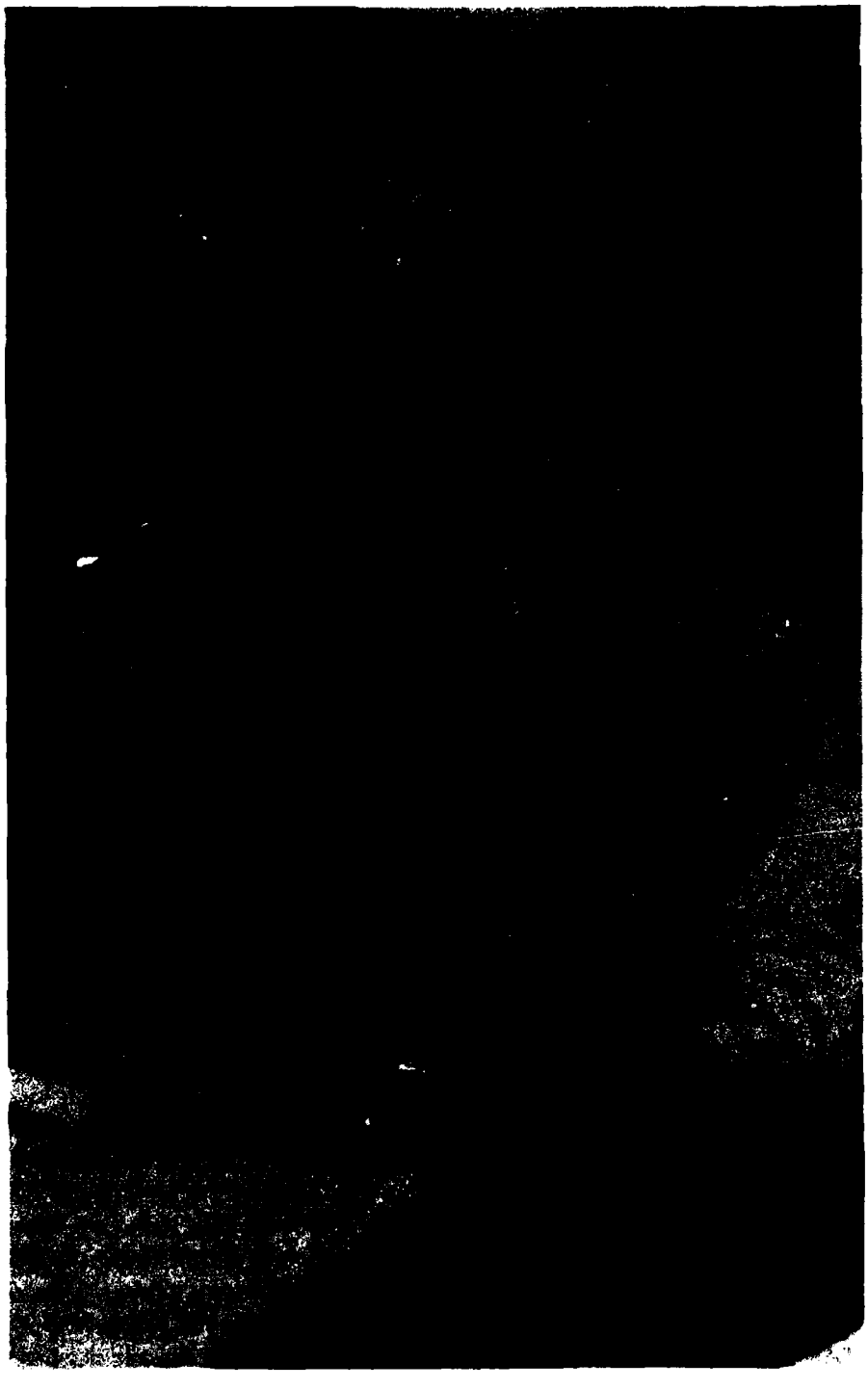
Fred Hoffman does not normally arrive at the Pentagon as early as five in the morning. When he got there, rather than head toward the desk the Department of Defense provides him in the far right-hand corner of its news room, he strolled in the direction of the National Military Command Center (NMCC)—nerve center for military operations directed from Washington. It was a hunch. He had no hope of entering the confines of the NMCC, off limits not only to reporters but to almost everyone else who works in the Pentagon. Then came one of those lucky breaks that reporters dream about. Hoffman met a senior official—to this day he will not say who—and asked what was going on. The official, knowing and trusting Hoffman, told him of Brezhnev's nasty message to Nixon. Furthermore, the official revealed, US intelligence had learned that Soviet airborne divisions seemed to be preparing to move. Hoffman trusted the official and vice versa. Confident that his source knew what was happening, Hoffman made a few checks on details and then wrote a story that other reporters could not fully confirm until Secretary of State Henry Kissinger permitted a grudging acknowledgment a day and a half later. Fred Hoffman had beaten the competition, and he had been right.

Hoffman says he was lucky. His admirers say he got the story as a result of years of reliable reporting from the Pentagon during which he amassed a lot of good confidential sources.

Beating the Competition

The magic of beating the competition: that is the lifeblood of reporting for a wire service. Speed. Accuracy. Speed. Getting it before the other reporter, and getting it right. These things are important almost everywhere in journalism. They are crucial in wire service competition.

The Associated Press is one of three wire services with a full-time reporter at the Pentagon to cover US national defense issues. With



Fred Hoffman, Associated Press

some 1,200 newspapers and additional broadcast outlets, AP, a nonprofit organization owned by its members, is solidly entrenched in the news world.

United Press International (UPI), the other US wire service, has consistently assigned experienced reporters to cover the Department of Defense. But its turnover rate has been extraordinarily high. Beset with financial troubles, UPI has been unprofitable for the past 25 years, experiencing in 1981, for example, an after-tax loss of about $4 million. Richard Gross, following a tour as UPI bureau chief in Israel, came to the Pentagon in 1981. His predecessor, Nicholas Daniloff, left UPI to work for *US News and World Report* magazine in Moscow. Robert Kaylor, whom Daniloff had succeeded at the Pentagon, moved on to be UPI's bureau chief in Paris. Others who covered the military story for UPI in recent years left after relatively brief stays at the Pentagon: John Milne went to work for a Miami daily newspaper, Warren Nelson left for Capitol Hill to assist Congressman Les Aspin. In fact, UPI has not had a man in place at the Department of Defense for an extended tour since Charles Corddry switched to the *Baltimore Sun* in 1967. This turnover rate has affected UPI's coverage, despite the overall talent of its Pentagon journeymen and the fact that conditions, including pay, at both American wire services were about equal. Personnel changes have, on the other hand, often given UPI a fresh approach to defense stories.[2]

Reuters, Ltd., the expanding London-based news service, has shown vigorous interest in Pentagon news. Both in the United States and overseas, Reuters customers seek information about US national defense, including particularly its business aspects. Reuters began full-time reporting from the Pentagon in the 1970s, and in 1981 assigned Robert Trautman, one of its most competent reporters, to the beat. Not only does Reuters reach an important worldwide readership, it is financially strong enough to have expressed interest in acquiring UPI—a business initiative Reuters gave up in late 1981.

The French wire service, Agence France Presse (AFP), also covers the Pentagon. Didier Fauqueux made a concerted effort to follow US defense matters after he was assigned to the beat by AFP in 1980, but he has other assignments and is not an everyday regular at the Pentagon. Japanese news organizations and other foreign agencies are likely to show up at the Department of Defense when stories of special interest to them are up for discussion. The Soviet News Agency TASS is also on hand from time to time. Its "reporter" usually confines his activities to listening at scheduled news conferences and collecting news handouts from the Department of Defense press office.

All Stories—Great and Small

It is easy for Pentagon officials to underestimate the impact AP, UPI, and Reuters have on national security matters. For one thing, most defense officials are not aware of the huge volume of copy filed by the wire service reporters, or of its catalytic impact on the overall flow of news. Wire services provide the basic diet of news from which other news organizations feed. Their material may be used straight as written, or it may prompt a daily newspaper or television network to go after a story. A report that the Soviet Union has sent Cuba a squadron of heavily armed ground-attack helicopters, written by AP's Pentagon correspondent, may appear in the *Chicago Tribune* or the *San Antonio Light,* but not be followed up on television because it is difficult for the networks to cover activities in Cuba. Another wire story, about high-grade uranium missing from a plant in Tennessee that processes fuel for American nuclear submarines, may bring out the network news people in droves.

Some newsmen consider wire services too limiting. Richard Fryklund, as a reporter covering the Defense Establishment for the *Washington Star* in the 1960s, gave this analysis:

> Anything defense officials believe can be legitimately told is given to the public in the form of handouts, speeches, and press conferences. The wire services cover this legitimate news very well. But there is a great deal the wire reporters cannot do, either because they do not have the time or because it involves interpretive writing and comment of the kind they tend to steer away from.[3]

Wire service reporters would not necessarily agree with Fryklund's assessment. They realize their lot is to cover what the government says, and they do that. But they do other things, too.

As a result of their mission, no group of reporters spends as much time physically in the Pentagon newsroom as do wire service people. Fred Hoffman is in place from around ten in the morning until six or seven in the evening on a normal day. Richard Gross works similar hours. Bob Trautman is around from about nine in the morning until six in the evening. Much of their work *is* limiting. They deal with frustrating trivia, especially in tracking down the details wanted by a home-town paper. Charles Corddry recalls that when a big disarmament conference was going on in Europe during his time with UPI, he was asked—along with all his other tasks on a busy day—to produce a story on what might happen to Camp Lejeune in North Carolina if the world should disarm. He did, of course.[4]

Reporters understand that in writing for a wire service, as Richard Gross notes, their material must be "straight down the middle, with no slant." Hoffman, who says writing for the AP is a craft, not an art, observes that what he writes is mainly driven by events. About the year-long formulation of the budget, he observes, "a good deal of what we do around here as reporters pivots on that developing situation." In general, comments Hoffman, "we ride the crest of the breaking news."

Richard Gross calls the basic wire service subjects "stories of the moment." The wires must report Pentagon information on such a wide range of items as aircraft accidents, military exercises, ship collisions, enlistment and re-enlistment statistics, defense contracts (which are released in bunches in late afternoon on weekdays to avoid effect on the stock market) and significant personnel changes (all the military services put out lists of where their flag and general officers are going for their next assignments; even Pentagon reporters are unexcited by them).

Policy statements and congressional testimony by defense officials are also grist for the wire reporter's mill. Prepared testimony is released in the Pentagon on the day it is given on Capitol Hill. Wire services also report from the text of speeches that are "blue-topped" (i.e., cleared by the Defense Department's security and policy review office and released in printed form under the blue Department of Defense press release masthead). The speech may be set for delivery in Minot, North Dakota, but if it contains new information about Soviet strategic missiles, it will be reported from the Pentagon's news room by the wire services.[5]

In time left after they have covered this mishmash of information—about everything from crashes to speeches—wire service reporters try to work on features that have not come to light before. "That is among the most stimulating aspects of what I do, when I can determine on my own what is going on and use my judgment as to what is of interest to my readers," Hoffman says. Again, being first counts: "If I come out ahead with a major story, it is a source of considerable satisfaction."

The Associated Press

Being first with the exclusive story is Fred Hoffman's specialty. He has cultivated particularly useful sources in the intelligence community. Other newsmen look for the Hoffman "intelligence report," usually written for the weekend. Quoting always unnamed "Pentagon sources"

or "defense sources" or "intelligence sources," Hoffman seems to have direct access to the pouch of information circulated to a few officials with elevated security clearances and a need to know. Whether they are about Soviet missile tests, new and exotic weapons, or orders of battle, his reports almost invariably go unchallenged.

Hoffman, born in 1922, grew up in Boston during the depression. He later attended Boston University, leaving after his junior year to serve as a rifleman on the Italian front in 1943 and 1944. He still remembers his serial number, 11079971, and can tell you that the digits signified he was enlisted, a volunteer, and from the First Corps (New England) area. Wounded, he was medically discharged under protest—"Being a young civilian on the home front in those days was not at all popular," he explains. Back in Boston, he began work as a reporter for United Press at $18.75 a week. After a year and a half as copy boy and "gopher" (go for coffee, go for this, go for that), he landed a job in Washington, covering the New England congressional delegation for the Yankee Radio Network. In Washington, he became news director for radio station WWDC. But upon hearing his broadcast voice, Hoffman decided to return to print journalism. He still declines to do radio spots, even though AP pays extra for them.

On Harry Truman's inauguration day, in January 1949, Hoffman started work at the Washington bureau of the Associated Press. After covering various beats around the city, he became, in 1961, the junior partner in AP's then two-man team at the Pentagon, working with Elton Fay until Fay's retirement in 1966. Hoffman has been a one-man show for AP at the Pentagon ever since, except during the Vietnam War when the wire service went back to a two-person operation for a while.

Hoffman feels that the Department of Defense has been "too lightly covered for too long." He recognizes the ups and downs in interest in the defense story, but says he has produced about the same amount of copy year in and year out. What happens after he produces it is someone else's decision, but almost everything is likely to be printed, somewhere. One of the minor rewards of working for a wire service is the knowledge that with hundreds of editors looking at your copy, someone is likely to find a news hole for it. The wire service reporter does not have to wheedle space for a story from his editor, and once he writes a story he can—indeed must—move on to something else. He doesn't have to worry about editorial conferences, what the managing editor wants, who the publisher voted for, or the rest of the office politics common within many news organizations.

To Fred Hoffman "pack" journalism is a serious problem in

Washington. He enjoys telling a story about Washington reporters being like blackbirds on a fence—when one takes off they all take off. Hoffman explains:

> People, reporters and otherwise, are comfortable with a subject which is currently fashionable in terms of news interest. They're not comfortable with something that's entirely new. . . For example, in 1968 at about the time of the Tet offensive, when all the attention understandably was focused on what was happening in Vietnam, I was told by some people in the Navy to take a look at a Russian naval task force that was bound for the Indian Ocean. It was the first time the Russians had ever sent a naval force into the Indian Ocean. It followed by several months the British decision to pull out east of Suez. The Indian Ocean was then a vacuum, and the Russians were coming in. I wrote that story. I don't think it ever got printed anywhere, because people were bemused by Tet and Vietnam, and because the Indian Ocean wasn't a familiar subject. Ten years later it became a hot article! So I was too far out in front.

The fact that news organizations travel in a pack with regard to what they print or broadcast causes reporters to seek stories that the rest of the pack is after:

> Generally editors tend to be comfortable with what they've heard about. For example, the SALT story ran for years. Editors were aware that SALT was important. They may not have understood it very much or read much of the copy that tried to discuss the esoteric points. They printed it because it was a subject the White House was putting a lot of emphasis on, and the State Department. It was on the upper edge of their news perception.

Hoffman tries to resist "going along with the pack":

> During Tet, I was reporting from the Pentagon that it was a North Vietnamese disaster militarily. I couldn't get that in anybody's paper. I was hearing that from people on the basis of battlefield reports. With the credibility gap, as it became known, it became almost automatic that if the Pentagon said something, the perception of the country was that it was a lie. So if they denied something, that was taken almost as a confirmation of the report.

An exhaustive after-the-fact analysis of news coverage of Tet by Peter Braestrup indicates that Hoffman, not the pack, was right about the military aspects of that story.[6]

Another case of Hoffman versus the pack related to the early

stages of the Soviet Union's problems with Poland and the Solidarity labor movement. A story by another news organization said the Russians would "probably" invade Poland in about two weeks. Because the story ran in a major news outlet, AP wanted Hoffman to check. (One of the banes of a wire service reporter's existence is the matcher. While editors in the downtown bureau may rarely come up with original story ideas for their Pentagon man, they are sure to ask him to match a story that appears in the *New York Times, Washington Post,* a competing wire service, or some other illustrious outlet.) Hoffman checked the Soviet invasion story. None of his sources agreed with it. He declined to speculate:

> The most that could be said, as I told my people, was that the Russians had the wherewithal, that there was a military capability, but unless you sat next to Brezhnev in the Kremlin, nobody with any real assurance could make such a prediction. So I told my people, I will never report that. On the basis of what I know I can only say it's a possibility, and I sure as hell wouldn't put a time frame on it.
>
> As it turned out, of course, it didn't happen then. I'm not being particularly heroic about this, but it's a standard I've set for myself. I write what I know; I don't write what I think must be true. I don't go by the "where there's smoke there's fire" rule.

Having to explain why someone else's story is wrong can waste a lot of time for a wire service reporter. In recent years, Hoffman has gained a reputation for being helpful at Department of Defense press briefings. If the official spokesman is off base, or doesn't remember the finer points of a subject under discussion, Hoffman may come to his rescue. Some people wonder why Hoffman, who can on occasion lose his temper and berate those who toil in the information field, is so helpful. He discounts altruism: "It's self-defense. If some idiot writes it wrong, I may have to spend all day unscrewing it for my editors."

If Fred Hoffman has become a legend in the Pentagon news room, he has done so in an Associated Press tradition. He overlapped with and eventually replaced a classic, old-line, wire service reporter. A man of impeccable integrity, Elton Fay was an extraordinary journalist. Fay's career spanned major military events. He reported details of the attack on Pearl Harbor after covering a press conference by Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox. He was one of a small group of reporters who were called in well in advance and told about plans for the Doolittle raid on Japan. The scenario was laid out under a tight embargo to Fay and his counterparts. Even though the plan was delayed, there was no security

breach in the press. Later, Fay reported the birth of nuclear weapons as an observer of the Bikini tests. As a Pentagon regular, he gained his reputation in the same manner as Mark Watson of the *Baltimore Sun*—by never breaking a confidence, and by consistently getting the story right. When USS *Nautilus* made the first submarine voyage to the North Pole in 1958, under tight security of the sort only submariners can create, Fay got the story. He broke it, but after the achievement was history.

United Press International

Wire services by their nature seem to attract reporters who value integrity. Perhaps it is because of the wire services' emphasis on balance and accuracy as well as speed. To Richard Gross of United Press International, the role of Pentagon reporter in general, and his personal goal, is "to understand and to be able to interpret national defense issues as they affect not only the United States but countries elsewhere, including our allies, and to establish a reputation within the Pentagon as an accurate reporter who knows what he is talking about."

Gross takes himself and his work seriously. He fully recognizes the challenge a new reporter finds in an obscure world like the Pentagon, especially when the competition is someone like Fred Hoffman. As a newcomer to the building, but an experienced newsman, Gross found the work of the entire Pentagon press corps very good. He feels the press is "tolerated" by most defense officials, and is sure that, contrary to some speculation, the Pentagon can keep secrets.

Gross, 41 years old at the outset of his military reporting in Washington, worked his way up in the UPI organization. A native New Yorker, he earned a bachelor of arts degree in English from American International College at Springfield, Massachusetts, before beginning coursework toward a master's at Boston University's School of Public Communications. He never finished that advanced degree and became convinced that the relationship between good reporting and schools of journalism is marginal, at best.

Starting in 1966 for the *Boston Traveler* as an education reporter, Gross soon went with UPI in Boston, later moving to New York for UPI and then overseas. He was a staffer for UPI in Israel, served in Yugoslavia, then returned to Israel to be bureau chief. From that post, he moved on to Washington. Gross believes UPI rates the Pentagon post third in importance, only after the State and White House beats. He

points to the professional experience of the reporters who have passed through the Pentagon for UPI as the main common denominator in his organization's coverage of national security news in Washington.

Although he has no military experience himself and sees the Pentagon post as a stepping stone, perhaps to covering foreign affairs, Gross is enthusiastic about the national defense story. He sees the "rearming of America" theme of the Reagan Administration as the main continuing story in defense. Because Secretary of Defense Weinberger apparently both reflects and influences President Reagan's thinking, Gross believes important news will continue to flow from the Department of Defense.

With regard to what he reports, Richard Gross has an almost fatalistic approach: "What a reporter finds out during the day is what others are willing to tell him. We only know what we are told. If you check it with someone else and it jibes, you go with it. But in essence, we only know what we are told."

Gross is told plenty by the Pentagon's information apparatus. He has deadlines all day, but tries to file his major stories prior to 4 p.m., so they will make the wire for morning newspapers. He also re-reports his stories for UPI's radio service. With a video display terminal (VDT) at his desk in the Pentagon news room, he works in concert with the Washington editor for UPI. ("Paperless" modern journalism relies on an electronic editing system. Writers and editors work at VDTs, which resemble television screens with typewriter-like keyboards attached. Stories may be written directly on the VDT or called out of computer memory and edited electronically.) On stories involving pieces of information being reported from other places—the White House, for example—Gross consults with his editor and sometimes works into his story material gathered across town by another UPI reporter. Gross, like Hoffman, is essentially left to his own devices as to what he will cover.

Reuters

No matter which wire service reporter you talk with about reporting from the Pentagon, one of his loudest complaints is sure to be about slow answers. Wire services live on speed. While they also live on accuracy, they want as much accurate information as they can get in the shortest possible time. As catalysts for the rest of the media and sources of information for the remainder of the hungry press corps, wires feel they should be fed first.

Robert Trautman of Reuters says there seems to be a "we'll get back to you" syndrome at the Pentagon: "Being a wire service you want the answer now. They think in terms of next week some time. Well, it's no good next week; I'm writing a story now." Trautman speaks well of his experience with one part of the Defense public affairs office: "Knowing we need an answer they will often give us their best guess, or get on the phone and call someone, or steer us to someone." Other parts of the Pentagon's bureaucracy often take days to answer routine questions, he says.

Trautman is another experienced reporter new to the military beat in the 1980s, but happy with it. Like Hoffman and Gross, Trautman decides for himself what to file, but in addition to providing stories to his Washington news desk he usually sends them to Reuters' financial wire in New York as well. As Reuters has increased its overall coverage, it has become more interested in American stories, both for customers in the United States and for those overseas. For example, a Secretary of Defense speech about NATO may be filed in three takes of 200 words each by Trautman. The US Reuters wire may carry the whole story. Reuters' desk in London will send all 600 words to Europe. They may then pare it down: 200 words for Latin America or the Far East, 100 for Africa. The main thing in writing for such a diverse worldwide readership, says Trautman, is simplicity. There is a danger in falling into the jargon trap in the Pentagon, he notes. His material must be readable to "the Pakistani camel driver," he says.

If there is a reporter in the Pentagon whose experience could help him communicate with the Pakistani camel driver, it's Bob Trautman. He actually spent a year in Afghanistan—for the United States Information Service—during a three-year break in his civilian journalism career just before he joined Reuters in 1968. Trautman first worked as a reporter in the Marines in Korea. They were looking for an enlisted man with a college degree to write for the base newspaper. Trautman, a Marine with a bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of Wisconsin, got the call. He wrote for the base paper, the First Marine Division paper, *Stars and Stripes*, *Navy Times*, anybody who would publish his stuff. Trautman's next assignment was with the Second Marine Air Wing at Cherry Point, North Carolina, where he was sports editor for the base paper. In the Marines at Cherry Point, that makes you almost as well known as the Commandant of the Corps.

Surviving his 1953–56 experience with the Marines, Trautman headed for the University of California at Berkeley with his GI Bill to study journalism. He got his master's degree quickly and went to work for

the *Toledo Blade* as a general assignment reporter. Three years later, in 1960, he was back in Madison, Wisconsin, working for the *Capital Times*. In 1963, he went to the highly respected *Louisville Courier-Journal* to cover labor and civil rights. Three years later, he became White House correspondent for the United States Information Agency's news service to US embassies abroad. Then came the Afghanistan assignment, then Reuters. He spent eight years in Washington covering such places as the White House and State Department before going to London for a four-year stint. At age 50 in 1981, Trautman began work in the Pentagon.

At the Pentagon, Bob Trautman sees his role as simply as he saw it in all those other places throughout his career: "To report to the average guy who is paying taxes how his money is being spent, and what he should be worrying about and what he should not be worrying about." Trautman believes that people releasing information usually have a point of view, and that reporters should bring in the opposing view if it is important. He does not think the reporter should go out of his way to report opposing views on basically noncontroversial stories. For example, in 1981 the Department of Defense released a report on Soviet military power, and Trautman filed on it. Reuters received a call from the Center for Defense Information, a group Trautman describes as "strictly anti-Pentagon, right down the line." The caller said a retired admiral and some others at the Center would be available to talk about the book. Trautman didn't call back. He did insert into his story, from his own research, some of the things that critics mentioned—such as a lack of recognition of the contribution of NATO to the US-Soviet balance. But he did not allow the significance of the report to be overwhelmed by arguments that were essentially peripheral to the story.[7]

Keeping the Government Honest

Wire service reporters, despite their role as reporters of what the government says for the record, are by no means in the government's pocket. For example, Associated Press's instructions always have been to balance the story. Sometimes it is difficult to do the first time around, on a breaking story. But the object is to keep the government honest. Fred Hoffman recalls an incident when he did that:

> During the campaign Reagan made a speech in Boston in which he came down on the Carter people for reducing the size of the fleet in a way that he said was dangerous for national security,

> and he used figures on the size of the fleet. One of Harold Brown's top aides then rushed out a statement accusing Reagan of playing fast and loose with figures. I looked at the figures Reagan used, referred back to Harold Brown's own Posture Statement (to Congress), and found that Reagan's figures were identical to Brown's own figures. So I wrote a story saying the Carter Administration had tripped over its own statistics, which it had.

Hoffman, Gross, and Trautman have a similar sense of the overall importance of the national defense story in the 1980s. Says Gross:

> The overriding story at the Pentagon is the Administration's emphasis on re-arming America. . . . It's the Administration's emphasis on defense as a matter of policy—as somebody put it recently, as *central* to American policy—that is the story at the Pentagon today. Everything else is of the moment.

Trautman says the story of the future is "defense spending, where it will go, what Congress will say." Hoffman puts the lead story of the future in simplest terms: "the budget."

Whatever the story, the wire services will cover it. Wire services and their reporters at the Department of Defense are the pool of information about national defense and provide pipelines from which vast outpourings of fact, thought, and opinion flow. The wire services reach almost every news organization in the United States and abroad, and through them most of the literate public. Their detailed reports help form opinions, and open avenues for exploration so that we can begin to see where we stand militarily, and why we stand there.

3
MAJOR DAILY NEWSPAPERS

For those who want to influence the debate on national defense, there is no substitute for the daily newspaper. Wire services are the basic conveyor of defense news, television the crisis medium with broad impact, but daily newspapers—especially a select few—are the engine rooms generating the steam that propels the discussion of military issues.

As of 1982, eight daily newspapers have reporters assigned to cover the Department of Defense: the *Baltimore Sun, Chicago Tribune,* Christian Science Monitor, Los Angeles Times, New York Daily News, New York Times, Wall Street Journal, and *Washington Post.*[1] Other daily newspapers and some news services have reporters in Washington who are nominally assigned to the defense beat, but whose time is largely spent covering other major areas, usually including foreign affairs.[2] Editors of most major daily newspapers may choose from a large menu of wire or news service materials or materials written for other newspapers and then syndicated.

What follows are profiles, in alphabetical order, of those eight daily newspapers. Discussion will include who their Pentagon correspondents are, how the newspapers and their reporters differ from one another, and, perhaps most important to understanding their demands, why they differ.

Baltimore Sun

One publishing company puts out three differently named newspapers. The *Sun,* popularly known as the *Baltimore Morning Sun* since it

comes out in the morning, is the company's flagship with a circulation of 178,987. The *Sun* and the *Evening Sun,* circulation 171,142, have separate and competing staffs, whereas the Sunday *Sun,* circulation 369,139, carries contributions from both. The coverage of most interest to military people is heaviest in the *Sun* and the *Sunday Sun.* Like most major newspapers, the *Sun* papers subscribe to several major news services; specifically, Associated Press, Reuters, Knight News Service, New York Times News Service, and Dow Jones.[3]

In May 1966, Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara unveiled a plaque in the Pentagon's news room above the desk Mark Watson had used for many years. Said McNamara about Watson: "His sense of personal integrity and very deep understanding of the will and desire and purpose of our people is a standard that will affect the actions of all of us, both his colleagues of the press and those of us in the department, for decades and decades to come."

Mark Watson was the quintessential defense correspondent. By the end of World War II, he had already earned plaudits for reporting during two world wars. His obituary in the *Sun* on 26 March 1966, the day after his death at age 78, summed things up: "Professionally, he was known over a great part of the world for his perceptive and accurate reporting. But beyond these things, he was the object of unusual esteem and affection among the men closest to him: sergeants and lieutenants, generals and admirals, and his fellow newspaper men."

Already working as a journalist when World War I began, Watson joined the Illinois National Guard to serve in the war. Commissioned as an officer, he went to Europe and for a time after the war was officer-in-charge of *Stars and Stripes,* the soldiers' newspaper. In 1920 he became the *Sun's* assistant managing editor, later its Sunday editor. He won a Pulitzer Prize in 1945 for his writing from the European theater, his best work being his description of Paris during that city's liberation from the Germans.

As a reporter for the *Sun* at the Pentagon after World War II, Watson had, as one military officer remarked, "keys to doors in this building that even he doesn't know about." He earned those keys through his integrity and his superb analysis of military issues. Reporters who covered the Pentagon with Watson were described as the "surliest crew in Washington," but that description didn't quite seem to fit him.[4] One information officer, often frustrated in his dealings with Pentagon reporters, said he knew that in heaven all reporters must be Mark Watsons. Once, Watson politely interrupted a Defense Secretary

who was talking about tank production rates and suggested that the subject was a military secret, not to be discussed in public. President Kennedy gave him the Medal of Freedom in 1963. At the time of Watson's death, a note from President Johnson to Watson's widow said the reporter's death brought sadness "not only to his family but to a nation that values truth and integrity."

At the ceremony in the Pentagon honoring Watson, Charles Corddry presided, saying that he and his collegues would "always remember, and never let the memory dim, the kindness, the merriment, the good advice and the gigantic example" set by Mark Watson. Corddry, then UPI's defense correspondent, would join the *Sun* in 1967 and remain that newspaper's military analyst into the 1980's, becoming the dean of the Pentagon's press corps.

Corddry, like Watson, provided distinguished representation for the *Sun*, which is itself a newspaper with a distinguished reputation. In the 1980s, the *Sun* not only had a strong Washington bureau with reporters like Corddry and diplomatic writer Henry Trewhitt, it also had a geographic closeness to the nation's capital that kept its interest in national and world events keen.

Many who follow defense, or participate in the evaluation of its policies, tend to think principally in terms of the influence of the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*. They discount the *Sun* as if it were the proverbial tree falling in an uninhabited forest, making no sound that anyone hears. They adopt this view because the *Sun* is not widely read in Washington and hardly read at all in New York, the two communications hubs most affecting US national security decisions. Others see things differently. Congressman Les Aspin, an eager participant in the national defense debate, listed Corddry among the half-dozen reporters who understand defense. Corddry is important, Aspin said, "because he influences people who are important."[5]

Charles Corddry certainly influences his fellow newsmen in the Pentagon. Almost all of them think of Corddry when asked which Pentagon reporters they respect most. His grasp of budget issues is particularly renowned. He covers national defense through a wide-ranging network of contacts in all parts of Washington, not just at the Pentagon.

Corddry's writing style, more analytical than most but still with the zing of the wire service man he was for many years, has a soundness that officials find difficult to criticize. Moreover, he has become something of a celebrity as a result of frequent appearances on public

television's *Washington Week in Review* and other programs. One *Washington Week* viewer in Canada named her baby after Corddry.

Corddry also has an avid readership among those key people who get the Pentagon's *Current News,* a twice-daily publication of the Department of Defense. With a circulation of about 5,000, this press clipping service puts Corddry's work before military and civilian managers at Defense and in other parts of Washington—including congressional offices.[6] Thus Corddry, as much as any other reporter, is a part of the 1980s dialogue about national defense.

Charles Corddry came to the Pentagon as a reporter for UPI in 1953. "Truman's last budget was the first defense budget I wrote about," he recalls.[7] The *Sun,* in hiring him, was able to give him credit for being a native of Maryland, although he graduated from American University in Washington, D.C. He was 60 years old when, in 1980, the Washington chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi, inducted him into its Hall of Fame—the only Pentagon reporter so honored. Corddry had no military service, but wrote about three wars involving the United States, as well as about numerous crises. He has watched every Secretary of Defense starting with Forrestal and found all these men forthcoming "in one way or the other." On the whole, he rates them as "capable men." That's the way it should be: "*You don't* take chances with that job." Corddry gives Assistant Secretaries of Defense for Public Affairs Jerry Friedheim and Thomas Ross highest marks: "Tom and Jerry were very closely wired to their bosses. They had their bosses' confidence—and *they* had confidence. Neither of them ever got the United States in trouble and they both talked a lot." Friedheim, Corddry notes, as Deputy Assistant and then Assistant Secretary, was on record daily during the Vietnam War "and still never made a mess of anything."

Corddry laments the lack of attention to defense that has been characteristic of most news organizations. Even given the resurgence of interest in the 1980s, "one of the sad things is that so few people are covering Defense—which is a huge part of the American government." Considering how many reporters there are in Washington, he thinks it is remarkable "how few of them even know where the Pentagon is, and when they go there they can't get away fast enough—because it baffles them." For better or worse, Corddry likes telling people what's happening in national defense on a daily basis, "and then maybe once or twice a week *why* it's happening."

Corddry admires the work of several of his fellow reporters at the Pentagon whose tenure has been much briefer than his, but he feels it

takes time to learn how to report about national defense. It also takes concentration on the subject. Corddry says there is "no way you can be an in-and-out reporter on defense, and no way you can know what you are doing after just a short while." As a result, "not many people aspire to do it."

For those who do aspire to cover defense news and to explain what is happening, reporters Mark Watson and Charles Corddry serve as examples of how to do it well. As Watson wrote of his friends in the Pentagon five days before his death, in words that are quoted on the plaque above his desk: "That is a wonderful crowd, and I do hope that they will remain as surly and suspicious and aggressive and thirsty as always."

Chicago Tribune

The *Chicago Tribune,* circulation 780,628 (1,147,669 Sunday), has a long history of involvement with military affairs, perhaps most colorfully through the personal intervention of Colonel Robert R. McCormick, its controversial publisher for many years. Unlike the competing *Chicago Sun-Times,* the *Tribune* is a full-size newspaper and thus has space for long, complicated news stories on defense rather than the "quick hit." However, Chicago—setting for *The Front Page,* a play about old-fashioned newspapering—is an intensely competitive newspaper town. There, the reporters from the *Tribune,* as well as those from the competing tabloid, feel compelled to find a punch, a "grabber" angle, on even an involved defense story. This does not mean they will mangle the subject, but *Chicago Tribune* stories often are written to start off at a gallop rather than the careful walk defense officials might prefer. The *Tribune* subscribes to Associated Press, Reuters, New York Times, and United Press International news services.

The *Chicago Tribune* has been one of the most controversial institutions in modern American journalism, in ways that often related directly to military matters. Prior to and during World War II, the *Tribune* was dominated by Colonel McCormick, a World War I veteran and student of military history. Edwin and Michael Emery, in their interpretative history of journalism, say McCormick and his newspaper "clung to an outmoded and dangerous nationalist-isolationist point of view in the face of overwhelming public support of efforts to find peace and security through international cooperation." The *Tribune* "became the principal spokesman for the ultraconservative right wing in American politics."

What made this exceptionable was that "prejudiced" editorial opinions spilled over into the news columns of the paper. McCormick's response to such charges was that the *Tribune* was exercising freedom of the press.[8]

James Coates of the Washington bureau of the *Chicago Tribune* was surprised, in late 1981, to find that the Pentagon's press office did not list his newspaper as having a regular correspondent covering the Department of Defense. Coates had just completed a seven-part, 18,000-word series on national defense, a series that later won second place in the Raymond Clapper Memorial award competition.

Coates had not been attending the regular twice-weekly Pentagon press briefings, which he found "useless," but did go to press conferences held by the Secretary of Defense. He estimated that he had spent 90 percent of his reporting time on military subjects in 1981. He also covered the investigative fields of government, particularly the FBI. What may have confused those officials in the Pentagon who did not consider him a regular in that press corps was that, like so many other news organizations, the *Tribune* was a dropout when it came to coverage of national defense in the last half of the 1970s. The newspaper made a comeback with the attention Coates gave to the subject and then, in January 1982, assigned Storer Rowley to the Pentagon. With Rowley's arrival as a regular, both the *Tribune* and the Pentagon's information office knew the paper was back in the defense business.

Lloyd Norman, longtime Pentagon correspondent for the *Tribune* and later *Newsweek's* defense reporter, cites a World War II incident involving the *Tribune's* alleged publication of top government secrets. Norman contends that the incident, still used as an example of irresponsibility by press critics, was a case in which the *Tribune* was not guilty. It involved the allegation that the *Tribune* published, in a deliberate violation of security rules, the fact that the United States had broken the Japanese Navy's cipher code. Publication was actually the result of "imprudent and careless" reporting and editing, according to Norman, not treasonable intent. Norman says the *Tribune* did not realize the seriousness of its breach and really wanted to give drooping public morale a boost with the story of the US victory in the Battle of Midway. "As later events in the Pacific war showed," Norman says, "the Japanese never found out that the code had been broken, despite careless talk by irate naval officers at the bar of the National Press Club in Washington, D.C."[9]

The *Tribune* is no longer as controversial as it was in the McCormick era, which ended in 1955 but continued to influence the newspaper into the 1970s. Its editorials are more balanced. One of its reporters in Washington who has covered national defense issues, Jim Coates, relatively young, has no military experience, as either a serviceman or a war correspondent, and is a keen student of the military reform movement. He has been with the Washington bureau of the newspaper since 1972, and he worked closely with *Tribune* military writer and columnist William F. Anderson, through the end of the Vietnam War.[10]

Anderson, former city editor for the newspaper in Chicago, left the Washington staff and became a government official in the mid-seventies. In 1982 he reflected on his former newspaper and the news business generally:

> An era of individualistic newspapers was passing with the Colonel. Vanity and the pride and power from political kingmaking by publisher-editor owners was being replaced by cold-hearted corporations more interested in profit; radio faded and television became more than show business by featuring newspaper trained ex-war correspondents like Walter Cronkite. Rapid growth of the suburbs by-passed many old editors as automobile commuting reduced readers; the interest of stay-at-homes changed as television captured more of their leisure time. With the major exception of the family-oriented/owned newspaper like the New York and Los Angeles *Times, Washington Post* and Copley newspapers, the Pentagon thus became a news receptacle used less and less for what was there and more and more for what would enhance the line of profit. Diminished credibility of most public officials has not worked to the advantage of readers or viewers; the unbalanced result tends to foster even more distrust.

In the late 1970s Ray Coffey took over the military assignment in Washington as one of his chores at the *Tribune's* bureau. The death of bureau chief Aldo Beckman led to Coffey's assuming responsibility as the top person in the office. He and Coates shared an interest in defense stories as these became a greater part of the national agenda. The *Tribune's* assignment to the Pentagon of Rowley—a young Harvard-educated reporter who has been with the newspaper since 1979—is additional evidence of the newspaper's renewed interest in defense coverage.

Christian Science Monitor

Despite circulation fluctuations (the Monday-through-Friday circulation of the Boston tabloid dropped from 260,000 early in the decade to 174,291 in 1979), the *Christian Science Monitor* retains a rating it has had for more than seventy years as one of the premier daily newspapers in the United States. Its regional editions, printed in New Jersey, Chicago, and Los Angeles, plus an international edition in London, give it access to an elite readership looking for serious, well-written, thought-provoking material. The *Monitor* is trying to find the nuances of the issue of the moment. If these nuances fail to provide a grabber lead Chicago readers might want, that's just fine. Military officials can expect to be asked about the finer points of a defense issue if interviewed by a *Monitor* correspondent.

The *Monitor* originated in Boston in 1908 as a protest against the sensationalism of turn-of-the-century newspapers. Its mission was, as Mary Baker Eddy, founder of the Church of Christ, Scientist, said at the time, "to publish the real news of the world in a clean, wholesome manner, devoid of the sensational methods employed by so many newspapers." It was not intended to be, and did not become, a religious propaganda organ. Rather, it was and is an afternoon newspaper with influence nationally and internationally.[11]

The newspaper's policy of downplaying sensationalism and violence does not translate to a lack of attention to national security issues. On the contrary, it follows them closely. Yet the *Monitor* is, of all the newspapers with regularly assigned reporters covering the Pentagon, perhaps the one least likely to become an advocate for increased defense expenditures, or to use material that would inflame public opinion in such a way that military action or war preparations would seem a logical step.

Stephen Webbe began covering the Department of Defense for the *Monitor* when correspondent John K. Cooley left that beat—and the newspaper—in 1980. Cooley had been Middle East correspondent for the *Monitor,* based in Beirut and Athens, from 1965 to 1978, covering a wide variety of military actions. Webbe, a British national, tends to be more interested in feature stories relating to defense subjects than in the more traditional reporting style Cooley had employed at the Pentagon. For example, Pentagon officials were pleased to note that Webbe was one of the few reporters in the news room who gave significant attention, in December 1981, to an announcement by the department to the effect that it was saving billions of dollars in a

crackdown on fraud, waste, and inefficient management. They might not have been as pleased with the general thrust of another of Webbe's articles, more than 2,000 words in length, that dealt with a Soviet soldier's lot. Describing reports that had filtered back to the West, he wrote in the 3 December 1981 *Monitor* that hunger, cruelty, and exploitation were so rife in the Soviet army that if war broke out with the West, "one-half (of a company) might shoot each other." Webbe was quoting a former Soviet soldier at that point, but the conclusion of his story may have revealed a personal view. He noted that although aware of the weaknesses in the Soviet Army, the Pentagon was not predisposed to talk about them—particularly at a time when it was determined to stress the Kremlin's military might. "To do so, say defense analysts, might lead Congress to deny it some of the weaponry it is pressing for," Webbe wrote.

Many journalists admire the *Christian Science Monitor.* The newspaper employs some very talented writers and editors. It does not push them to produce sensational stories; it does the reverse. Its editor of the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, Erwin D. Canham, had nationwide stature. Its Washington bureau is headed by Godfrey Sperling, whose breakfast group of reporters meets with leading people in Washington and has become an institution in itself. Its Washington staff includes Daniel Southerland, who covered hostilities in Vietnam for UPI and was subsequently the *Monitor's* Asia correspondent. He now follows diplomatic developments. The newspaper has consistently recognized the importance of defense as a public issue of national and international importance, and it has continued to devote its assets to first-hand coverage at the Pentagon. While the *Monitor* has not been quick to reach conclusions that coincide with those of defense officials, it has provided information and a calm voice across the spectrum of defense news coverage.

Los Angeles Times

This seven-day-a-week newspaper is a blockbuster of the West Coast, circulating through the corporate offices and union headquarters involved with developing and producing weaponry. The *Times* also is carefully read by academics who participate in defense decisions or debate the ones made. Such a constituency welcomes defense stories. Also, the *Times* is a large newspaper that feels free to devote several columns to one defense story. A military official's interview with a *Los Angeles Times* reporter thus is likely to be one of several sources, and

not the sole basis for whatever article is ultimately written. For this morning newspaper, circulation is 1,013,565 with another quarter of a million added on Sunday.

On I Street, also known as Eye Street, in downtown Washington, D.C., the *Los Angeles Times* bureau spreads the width of a modern building across from the World Bank. What better location for an office that is central to a publishing success story of Fortune 500 magnitude, and a newspaper bureau that keeps an eye on government much better than most?

The Los Angeles newspaper rose more rapidly in esteem in the world of journalism than any other newspaper in the country after Otis Chandler began running the family empire in 1960. Leaving to the past a cheerleading California parochialism, the *Times* put together a staff that places it in a league with the *Washington Post* and *New York Times* at the lead in the field of general-readership newspapers. It has a particularly strong Washington bureau under the leadership of Pulitzer Prize winner Jack Nelson, whose reputation as an investigative reporter was enhanced by his Watergate coverage. Furthermore, the *Times* is foremost in total advertising lineage—a factor that not only brings in funds to pay for the endlessly inquisitive and talented reporters Chandler's organization hires, but also provides more space for the editorial material they generate.[12]

As far as defense reporting is concerned, the *Times*, as late as 1982, was still deciding precisely how to proceed, like a giant, just-awakened, staring hard at national security, realizing that it is important enough to watch carefully, and demanding that its reporters keep up with the competition.

At the *Times'* Washington bureau, a quartet of reporters, working in a circular office pod for national security and foreign affairs, follows developments. One keeps attuned to action at the United Nations, another follows State, another works from an overview of the national security process from the point of view of those in the intelligence and arms-control areas. One reporter concentrates on the Defense Department. The theory is that a newspaper like the *Los Angeles Times* should have a number of reporters working in the general area, people qualified in all the areas but spending most of their time fine-tuning their knowledge and contacts about specific pieces of the national security jigsaw puzzle. The theory also holds that three of the four can be working on breaking stories, while one is taking a couple of weeks to look at a special subject in depth. As of 1982, the quartet includes Don Shannon covering the United Nations, Oswald Johnson, a regular at State who

had covered the Pentagon in the past, and Robert Toth—former London and Moscow correspondent for the *Los Angeles Times*. Toth followed national defense issues carefully during the Carter administration, along with the *Times'* Pentagon man, Norman Kempster, who in 1981 moved to Israel as bureau chief. Newest to the newspaper in the 1982 national security quartet is David Wood, covering the Department of Defense.

In hiring Wood, a former *Time* magazine correspondent who was covering the State Department for the *Washington Star* when that newspaper went out of business in 1981, the *Times* was seeking a reporter with experience in foreign affairs and good sources on Capitol Hill, where so much happens that affects national defense. The *Times* wanted someone who would spend considerable time at the Pentagon, attending briefings, going on trips with the Defense Secretary, reading the voluminous material that is available in the national defense field. He was to be not just a "military correspondent" who would be an expert on the inner workings of the Army's latest tank, but also a true "defense correspondent"—able to immerse himself in the subject and fit military affairs into an overall context of national security and foreign policy.

When he began his career as a journalist, David Wood probably never expected to be traveling to Europe with the Secretary of Defense, as he did shortly after he began covering the Pentagon. He is certainly the only print journalist at the Pentagon with a degree in television production from Temple University. Wood was brought up a Quaker, registered for the draft as a conscientious objector, and served three years as a clerk and mail truck driver for a Quaker organization in Philadelphia during the Vietnam War. He had volunteered for a Quaker relief job in Vietnam, and was set to go when he found that the rules required that he do his alternate service within two hundred miles of his home. While in Philadelphia, Wood built on the three years of engineering studies he had done at Allegheny College in Pennsylvania to complete a degree at Temple. His television degree was not the result of Wood's burning desire to go into broadcast production but, rather, the degree he could get most quickly and easily. He began work as a full-time journalist with a weekly newspaper in the Chicago suburbs, part of a chain owned by Time, Inc. After a couple of years, he went to work for *Time* in the magazine's Chicago bureau, then Boston, then Nairobi, Kenya.

Time correspondents who write anonymously from East Africa do not become household names in the journalism profession. Wood's

work was, however, available to the *Washington Star* through the Time-Life News Service. Trying to stay afloat under the ownership of Time, Inc., the *Star* used a lot of foreign copy, some of it Wood's. He found gratification in seeing his work in print, untampered with, and carrying his by-line. Wood was pleased to shift to the *Star* in 1979. He was even more pleased with the shift to the *Los Angeles Times*, nearly two years later, when he was 36 years old.

At the Pentagon, Wood found that in his first months he ran into an impression on the part of officials that they understood what was going on but that nobody else could, because others had not "paid their dues." Wood got the feeling that people he interviewed thought there was no way he could possibly understand what they were talking about. As a result, they talked in generalities and grandiose terms that they thought communicated what he needed to know, but which actually told him nothing. He had the feeling that some officials saw their relations with the press as a game of manipulation, one in which they expected newsmen to participate as adversaries. Wood also found that officials, even at high levels, were surprisingly wrong about basic information, or presented information in a slanted way. He quickly learned to triangulate his sources, to be careful to know what their biases were, and what *their* sources were.

Working for a West Coast morning newspaper has advantages for members of the Washington bureau of the *Los Angeles Times*. The bureau enjoys a minor luxury on deadlines as a result of the time differential. Washington transmits its list of stories to Los Angeles in one- to two-line form just after noon on the East Coast, then follows with a more detailed list at about 4:30 p.m. The seven or eight major stories produced by the bureau daily can be written as the action of the government workday in Washington ends. The time difference helps, as Washington is a city of late-in-the-day actions. The *Los Angeles Times'* 7:30 p.m. general news deadline is about the same as that of the *New Yorks Times* Washington bureau. Much of the work on a breaking story, particularly one that involves reaching a government official, takes place after six or even after seven—when senior officials return calls. Unfortunately for the *Los Angeles Times*, for that very reason, officials sometimes work in geographical order in returning calls—East Coast first.

The *Times* has traditionally emphasized feature stories, and stories that are "off the news"—explaining not what happened, but what the happening means. In the 1970s, the newspaper began to place more importance on matching or beating the *Post* and the *New York Times*

on hard news. If the Washington bureau did not have a story these competitors had, editors on the West Coast wanted to know why, and there was an edge in their voice.

In Washington, however, the *Los Angeles Times,* strong as it is, labors under disadvantages. The distance from West to East Coast makes the newspaper less relevant to policy people in government. Delivering copies to the East Coast takes time. Officials do not see the *Los Angeles Times,* even if they are Californians and want to see it, until after the *Post* and that other *Times* are both available. At the Pentagon, a blockbuster story on national defense in the *Los Angeles Times* may not even be reprinted in the *Current News* clip sheet. As a result, reporters like Robert Toth and David Wood, writing for the specialized readership that follows national security issues, find it difficult to influence the Washington debate. Clearly, though, the *Los Angeles Times* is determined to report the defense story fully and from a national point of view.

New York Daily News

If what you have to say does not have the makings of an arresting headline, chances are it will not be published in the *New York Daily News.* And whether it concerns something said or something done, foulups make the most arresting headlines. The big reason for this is that the tabloid *News,* with a much smaller amount of space to fill than full-length traditional-format newspapers, always has more articles than it can use. So if the paper's Pentagon correspondent does not have an interesting, lively story, one of the competing reporters on his newspaper will get that bit of white space for 500 words or less. But the *News,* though featuring brief stories, reaches a tremendous number of people. So if educating the general public is part of the job of military officials, the *News* is a significant part of the media.

For Joe Volz, the dramatic story counts. His reader is the taxi driver in New York—and almost everyone else there. The *New York Daily News,* with a 1982 circulation of 1.6 million daily and 2 million on Sunday, reached more people in New York than any other newspaper. That made it the largest general-circulation paper in any metropolitan area in the country. Only the *Wall Street Journal* claimed a greater US newspaper readership than the *News,* thanks to its regional editions published in other cities.

As with most tabloid newspapers, the *News* is not given to wasting words. Keeping it simple and short are aims of its reporters. Stories with drama, like the Iran hostage crisis, are the lean meat and boiled potatoes of the *Daily News.* The *News* also wants stories about big spending in the military budget or stories with a New York angle. Reporter Volz will occasionally do a longer piece on some serious subject like the future of the Marine Corps, tying it to a topical subject such as the Rapid Deployment Force. Unusual stories and stories about people have always been attractive to the *News*—things like the Army's air force of tiny model planes at Fort Carson that fly reconnaisance over the troops; K-9 corps dogs that jump from planes at Fort Bragg.

Volz is an ideal writer for the *News.* He's interested in people. If he's doing a Navy story, for example, he'd rather talk to the chief petty officers or their wives than to commanding officers or admirals: "The chiefs know what's going on, and aren't afraid to tell you."

The *Daily News* takes a generally supportive view of the military in its editorials, but this does not impact on the news content of the paper, according to Volz. Like other news organizations, the *News* withdrew from covering most defense stories after the Vietnam War. Volz explains: "What we did, and a lot of papers did, was combine the Defense Department beat with the State Department beat; but the guy spent all of his time over there and wasn't even known in the Pentagon."[13] That changed in 1981 with the Reagan Administration, says Volz, "because of such a tremendous amount of money being spent, and so many friction spots around the world." Volz was sent back to the Pentagon for his second tour as a full-time defense correspondent for the *News,* and the amount of news coming out of the Pentagon in his paper increased significantly.

Volz is philosophical about the fact that despite his large readership, most defense officials regard the *New York Times* as New York's, and the world's, most influential newspaper. To him, it comes down to a question of the importance of public opinion, the mass public represented by the New York cabbie:

> There's no question in my mind that more people in New York read what I write than what anybody on the *Times* writes. Just from a circulation standpoint we sell twice the number of papers daily in New York that the *Times* does, and twice on Sunday. But who are those people? Are they articulate? Do they petition? Do they demonstrate? Do they write articles in foreign policy magazines? So rightly or wrongly, the perception in every government is that you've got to get in the *Times.*

Volz sees no reason for the perception that grants the *Times* such omnipotence: "I often say that the guys at the *Times,* not only do they not write in English, they don't *think* in English. . . . The *Times* is a very, very obscure, poorly written, poorly edited newspaper which gets by on its reputation because it writes more and longer."

A New Jersey native and 1957 graduate of Rutgers—where he was a history major and editor of the university daily newspaper—Volz served two years as an Army draftee. Most of that time was spent in counterintelligence work in Germany. After his Army time, Volz worked for weekly and daily newspapers in New Jersey before joining *Armed Forces Journal* in Washington in 1969.[14] He was a reporter for the *Washington Daily News* and then the *Washington Star,* before joining the New York paper's Washington bureau in 1973. After two years covering the Pentagon, which he already knew well from reporting on weapons projects in his other Washington jobs, he moved to cover the Justice Department. Intelligence activities continued to be one of Volz's key subjects (his first reporting of clandestine activities had been about organized crime in New Jersey). He wrote about the FBI, CIA, and military intelligence. Although not a Pentagon regular, he followed the hostage crisis, and did a special series on military preparedness. At age 46 in 1981, returning to the Pentagon beat was just fine with Volz. He expected to be there "for the duration." But there was a dark cloud on the horizon: The Tribune Company, the Chicago publishing giant, said it wanted to sell the *Daily News,* indicating it was losing money steadily as more and more readers turned to television and suburban newspapers in the New York area.

As for the New York taxi driver, Volz could say: "It would be nice if the audience counted, but I'm not concerned about that. All I'm concerned about is telling the story and getting it in the paper. I don't know who reads it. I don't know what they do with it . . . . I'm just a storyteller."

New York Times

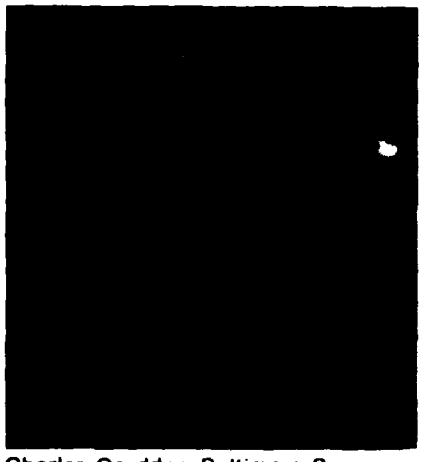
An important thing to remember about the *New York Times* is its ripple effect. A story there is a boulder dropped in a pond. One of the first ripples beyond the splash washes over the television networks, whose top executives are in New York City. They read the *Times* as they ride the train to work, and often make assignments on the basis of its articles right after they reach the office. Scholars all over the world *study* the *Times*, even if it arrives days late by mail. It is used for

reference, and errors in the newspaper become a part of history. Politicians look for guidance in its columns and editorials. With the *Times* probably more than any other newspaper, military leaders should recognize the need to talk with editorial writers as well as reporters if they want to transmit their side of a story or issue to opinion molders. Circulation is 841,890 daily and 1,403,077 Sunday. The newspaper buys almost all the major news services, including Canadian Press and TASS, and provides its own material through a news service that reaches subscribing news organizations in all parts of the country.

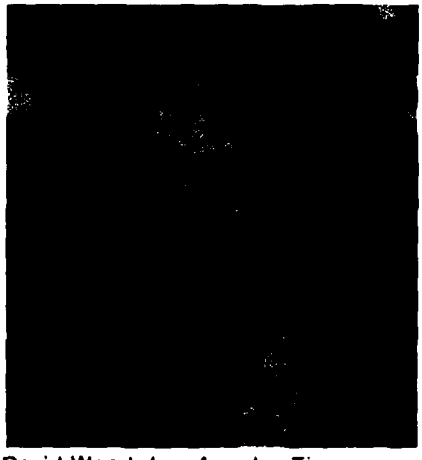
When you are "number one," there is a strong temptation to work to maintain the status quo. For most of this century, the *New York Times* has been the number-one newspaper in the United States. It has attracted and held some of the finest individual writers and editors in the business. Once the scholar's newspaper of record, it felt an obligation to provide "all the news that's fit to print." In the eighties, the *Times* still has the widest coverage of any newspaper in America but is no longer to the same extent the newspaper of record. The concept of news has changed and the world has become much more complicated. The *Times*, like other newspapers, covers less "official" news—debates in Congress, government announcements, routine developments—and has more human interest features, stories about social trends, and interpretive material.

As chronicler of the current history of the United States and the world, the *Times* still has an inordinate impact on domestic and foreign policy. It continues in the 1980s to be one of the two newspapers mentioned on almost anyone's list of news organizations that are influential in national security affairs, the other being the *Washington Post*. Critics say the *Times* has a tendency to cling to its past, to speak in ponderous tones, albeit with what one of its reporters once called "monastic taciturnity." Detractors say this keeps the *Times* from being a consistently lively, readable newspaper. Despite this, and while the *Times* does not circulate as widely among government decisionmakers as the *Washington Post*, it has the same sort of catalytic monopoly in New York that the *Post* has in Washington. It is the newspaper that starts the day for most of the nation's commercial and media elites. It has clout.[15]

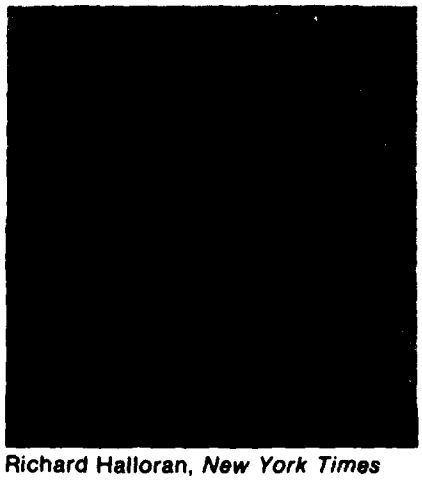
Richard Halloran, the *Times'* Pentagon man, thinks of his readership as a mythical "man on the 8:23 from White Plains." Halloran's composite reader is middle to upper-middle class, lives in the suburbs of New York and communtes to work in the city by train, is in his forties, has a college education, is in management, and tries to be a good



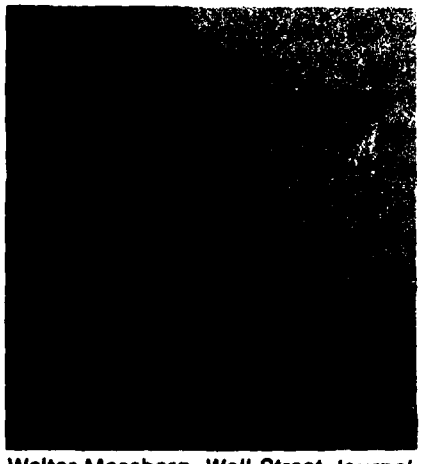
Charles Corddry, *Baltimore Sun*



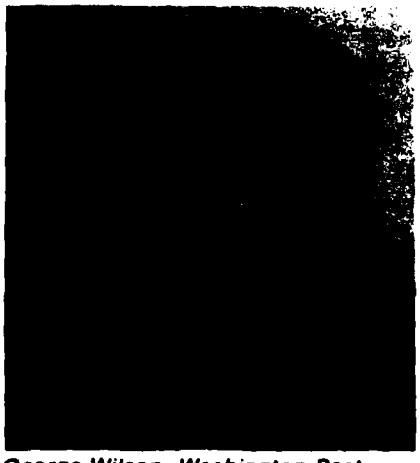
David Wood, *Los Angeles Times*



Richard Halloran, *New York Times*



Walter Mossberg, *Wall Street Journal*



George Wilson, *Washington Post*

citizen who keeps up with issues like national defense. "Joe Sixpack doesn't read the *New York Times,*" says Halloran. While he is aware of readers in the Pentagon, the White House, on Capitol Hill, or along Embassy Row, Halloran does not consider them his prime targets. Rather, he writes for that man on the 8:23, to tell him about something of importance as he begins his personal day. "What he thinks about it is not my business," Halloran says. "Getting it in front of him is."

Is the *New York Times* the most influential publication covering national security issues in the 1980s? All in all, day-in and day-out, for better or for worse, it probably is, at least insofar as it galvanizes other news organizations and guides their attention to specific issues. Its traditions of reporting the news thoroughly and objectively make subjects appearing on its pages part of the agenda for national discussion. It shoots adrenaline into the veins of executives of television networks, news magazines, and wire services—some of whom may even be on the 8:23 from White Plains.

The *Times* can offer a list of award-winning and distinguished journalists who have covered the military. Some have been reporters in the field, combat reporters. Others have been analysts who commented on military affairs or reported from the Pentagon. All of them, the *Times* would tell you, write about "military" subjects, not "defense" subjects. The Department of Defense is not in the defense business, in the view of the newspaper, but in the military business.

Hanson W. Baldwin was the paper's military specialist from 1937 through the Vietnam War. He was sent to Europe before World War II and learned about military establishments he would later write about as foes. An Annapolis graduate and confidant of senior military officers, he usually lined up on their side. His friendly complaint, in print, about command relationships in the Allied forces after the Normandy invasion triggered Army Chief of Staff George Marshall to urge that General Dwight Eisenhower speedily assume command of ground forces on the continent, taking over from Britain's General Sir Bernard Montgomery. In the 1950s, Baldwin held back a story on secret US nuclear tests for eight months. In 1960, Baldwin's commentary asked why U-2 pilot Gary Powers did not dispose of himself rather than be captured by the Russians. Later in that decade, with the *Times* taking a dovish view on the Vietnam War, Baldwin remained hawkish. He seemed as displeased as some government officials were in 1967 when *Times* correspondent Harrison Salisbury was permitted to enter Hanoi and write that his on-the-spot inspection indicated American bombs were affecting civilian as well as military targets.

Not all military writers at the *Times* have been as militant as Hanson Baldwin. Most of those who wrote about the war in Vietnam definitely did not have a cozy relationship with the government. Some of the paper's best-known military reporters of the 1960s are no longer with the *Times* in the 1980s: David Halberstam wrote about war in the Congo and Vietnam, and was later expelled from Poland for "slander." His reporting from Southeast Asia won him a Pulitzer Prize in 1964. Neil Sheehan covered the Vietnam War for both UPI and the *Times*, later covering the Pentagon for the newspaper. Gloria Emerson wrote about war in the foxholes of Vietnam with masterful prose that magnified the inequities of war. William Beecher was investigated by the US government for several national security stories containing sensitive information such as the secret bombing of Cambodia, but later became a government spokesman at the Department of Defense for two years before returning to journalism as diplomatic correspondent for the *Boston Globe*.

Still at the *Times* as of 1982 are several experienced military reporters: Craig Whitney, who was a *Times* Saigon bureau chief, later headed bureaus in Bonn and in Moscow, where he was unpopular with Soviet authorities, then moved to New York to become foreign editor. Bernard Weinraub was a field reporter in Vietnam during Tet, later covering the Pentagon. John Finney was the Pentagon correspondent for the newspaper, well known during the energy crisis of the 1970s for counting helicopters ferrying generals to work at the building. Richard Burt moved from a national security reporting assignment at the *Times* to a State Department post with the Reagan Administration, but both replaced and was succeeded by Leslie Gelb, who returned to the newspaper after government service as head of State's political-military section during the Carter presidency, followed by an interlude at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

The Reagan Administration also garnered a retired *Times* reporter—one with lengthy experience as a foreign correspondent. Benjamin Welles, who went to the *Times* as a copy boy in 1938 after graduating from college, became Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs. His Harvard classmate was Caspar Weinberger. Welles served the *Times* as a correspondent in Europe, the Far East, and Africa. He prepared for publication the papers of his late father, Sumner Welles, who as Under Secretary of State for President Franklin Roosevelt played a key part in US diplomatic history.

Finney and Gelb are important players in the *Times*' coverage of national security affairs. Gelb's role at the newspaper allows him to step

back from the day-to-day coverage handled by State and Defense Department frontline reporters and put Washington happenings into an international political-military context. (Some non-*Times* reporters question propriety involved in Gelb's reporting without disclaimer on issues in which he was a committed policy formulator in a previous administration, particularly on the crucial subject of arms control.) Finney, as news editor in the Washington bureau, is the point of contact for frontline reporters like Dick Halloran at Defense. If Finney and Halloran agree on a subject as being fit for the *New York Times,* and feel that it rates 900 words in the publication, you can very well expect to see a 900-word story by Richard Halloran in the paper. On the other hand, the *Times* has a history of tension between its New York leadership and its powerful Washington bureau. Ultimately, Washington proposes and New York disposes. It is the New York gatekeepers—the national, foreign, managing and executive editors—who put stories in the paper or keep them out.

Holding the Hanson Baldwin chair as "military correspondent" for the newspaper in New York in the 1980s is Drew Middleton. He has been with the *New York Times* since 1942. Middleton, a 1935 Syracuse University graduate, was a sports writer for the Associated Press who found himself, as World War II broke out, covering hostilities instead of sports in his London assignment. For the *Times*, he wrote about Allied campaigns in Africa and Europe and went on to be bureau chief in the Soviet Union, Germany, England, and France. A prolific author, Middleton wrote *Can America Win the Next War?* in 1975. He had some doubts.

Middleton's material in the *Times* often draws on the views of high military and civilian officials, whom he has little trouble seeing. His advice to those dealing with the press is simple: give the reporter the facts, but don't overwhelm him with trivia; then put the reporter together with a knowledgeable person who can explain and interpret the facts. He emphasizes the importance of having interviews "as far up the totem pole as possible" because officials at higher levels are more likely to have access to significant policy information.

Dealing with Drew Middleton is, for most military officials, a pleasant experience, like putting on a favorite pair of comfortable shoes. For his colleagues at the *New York Times,* dealing with him is not always so satisfying. For one thing, most of the other *Times* people writing about things that relate to the military field don't know what he is doing. He might be in New York, or Washington, D.C., or Europe, or Norfolk, or Fort Lewis in the state of Washington. This can lead to

insights that others do not have. Or it can lead to stories others have already written or are writing. For example, on 23 March 1980, Middleton wrote from Fort Lewis that the Ninth Infantry Division had plunged into a renaissance in military thinking, the object being to prepare the division for combat as a light infantry unit ready for rapid deployment and combat in the deserts of Southwest Asia or the Arctic wastes. The story may have sounded familiar, because Richard Halloran, in a special to the *Times* from Fort Lewis, had written almost the identical report three months earlier.[16]

If reporters at the *Times* are occasionally distressed because they cannot predict Middleton's actions, they are less distressed with their newspaper's policy of not predicting the future in its columns. Whereas news magazines or the *Washington Post* like a "forward roll" to their stories, and profit from colorful writing as a result, the *Times*' philosophy is that events have a way of defying predictions. The newspaper's preference is to avoid predictions, wait until events happen, and then report them. That being the case, how does a frontline *Times* reporter like Richard Halloran find out what has happened and decide what to write? Halloran believes that judgment and desire to get the facts are the greatest assets any reporter can bring to his work. "The most dangerous reporter in the world," he says, "is the one who thinks he knows something." Thus Halloran is not reluctant to stop in the middle of an interview to ask questions if he does not understand what is being talked about. He also does not mind asking officials what is happening, saying he is a great believer in "hang-around journalism." Using this technique, the reporter comes by the office of someone he knows, late in the day, and says "tell me what's going on." For a reporter with fifteen years or so of experience, like almost all the frontline people in the *Times*' Washington bureau, that kind of session can be much more useful than stories arising from complaints brought to the newspaper in various ways by malcontents. "Far less news is made by dissidents than anyone would believe," Halloran argues.

He also finds that a reporter's mistakes can lead to news stories. People call to straighten out the reporter, to explain things to him. In one story, Halloran included a paragraph about the GI Bill. He got a call from an expert on the subject who told him he was off-base. Halloran went to see the expert and spent an hour and a half learning about the current status of the GI Bill. What he learned from the expert was not a news story in itself, but "what he told me showed up later in half a dozen stories," Halloran says. "I was able to get it right because I made an initial mistake." He does not, of course, advocate sloppy reporting or deliberate mistakes just to flush out the real facts.

It is not surprising that the GI Bill should interest Halloran. He got his M.A. degree in East Asian Studies at the University of Michigan thanks to the GI Bill. Halloran had attended Dartmouth, graduating in 1951. He enlisted in the Army and was sent to Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia. A paratrooper, he served with the 82nd Airborne Division and with military advisory groups in Korea, Japan, Okinawa, Taiwan, and Vietnam before he left the service in 1955. Fascinated with Asia, he completed his area studies program at Michigan in 1957, having been a reporter, night editor, and editorial director for the *Michigan Daily* at the University. He joined *Business Week,* ultimately becoming Asia bureau chief for the magazine in Tokyo. A Ford Foundation Fellowship in Advanced International Reporting became available at Columbia University in 1964. Halloran took it, returning to working journalism with the *Washington Post* as an Asia specialist in 1965. He opened the *Post's* first Tokyo bureau in 1966, was an economic correspondent in Washington for the newspaper in 1968, then in 1969 went to the *New York Times'* Washington bureau. Before long, he was back in the Far East—as the *Times'* Tokyo bureau chief in 1972 covering Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and the Central Pacific. Returning to Washington in 1976, he was an investigative reporter, energy correspondent, and then in 1979, a Pentagon correspondent.

Because he was brought up in a family with military traditions (his father was a career naval officer, his mother an "Army brat"), Halloran—52 years old in March of 1982—has an attitude toward military officers that he believes is uncommon among reporters. He says he was brought up to expect a military officer to "tell me the truth, because that's in his nature. It's ingrained in his soul." This does not mean every one of them tells the truth all the time, he admits. "Every profession has its louts, just like newspapers." Generally, however, if an officer tells Halloran something, he believes him. A mistake will be a mistake "of the head, not the heart." Either the officer got his figures wrong or he was not fully informed himself. Military people, Halloran says, will decline—usually in a cordial manner—to discuss classified material. Halloran prefers that straightforward approach. He notes, however, that military officers and civilian officials frequently open up classified materials and paraphrase information for him when they think it serves either the purposes of the nation, the military, their own particular service, or, occasionally, the individual himself. Contrary to a widely held belief among military officers, most classified information that finds its way into the press does not come from malcontents but from someone fully authorized to make the disclosure, Halloran believes. He finds that the same way of operating is characteristic of the long-time civilian bureaucracy at the

Pentagon. As for political appointees, Halloran says they are more likely to be "slippery."

Almost exactly the opposite attitude toward the press prevails among others, in Halloran's experience. Most military officers, civilian bureaucrats, and political appointees in the Pentagon think reporters are "incompetent, lying, self-serving, devoid of intellectual honesty." Halloran observes: "Where I view the officer as a man telling me the truth until he proves otherwise, he views me exactly the other way. You have to prove yourself." Those who have not dealt with reporters are likely to be gun-shy, and those who have are likely to have been burned. "So the initial interview is important," Halloran explains. It takes skill and thought on the part of the reporter to pierce the barrier the first time, and continuing sensitivity to develop a relationship of mutual confidence. Suspicion and uneasiness between reporters and the military goes back to Vietnam. Halloran had thought the unpleasant Vietnam experience (which was particularly unpleasant between some government officials and some *New York Times* people) had been overtaken by events, but residual mistrust proved much worse than he had anticipated. He better understands now why the Pentagon beat was not a desirable assignment at the *Times* between the Vietnam War and 1979, when the SALT debate brought military issues back into prominence. Halloran believes that the Joint Chiefs of Staff intentionally, and with a certain amount of skill, turned the SALT II treaty into a full-blown debate on American military posture. Thus, despite the wariness of officials, the amount of news fit to print about military matters has burgeoned.

Getting back to his "man on the 8:23 from White Plains," Halloran contends that the phrase "the power of the press" is one of the great myths of all time. The press has influence, but not power. People do what they please, not what the press wants. The press can influence events by what it uses and how it uses it. What makes the *New York Times* important is not that it can tell people what to think, but, as Bernard C. Cohen said about the press in general, that it has the inside track on telling them what to think *about.*

Wall Street Journal

The *Wall Street Journal* strives neither to be a newspaper of record like the *New York Times*, nor a mass-circulation publication for the general population like the *New York Daily News*. Yet its ability to translate and interpret what is happening in Washington and elsewhere for people who need sophisticated and specialized information daily

has led it to the top in American journalism. It does both depth and spot stories. It is the closest thing in the United States to a national newspaper, and its circulation exceeds all others.

In the view of its national security writer, Walter Mossberg, the *Journal* is a "reporter's newspaper." Mossberg says his superiors in Washington and New York trust him. He has wide discretion to restrict his work to important changes, and is not required to try to write about every twist and turn along the thoroughfare of defense news. In addition, his readers tend to be influential people, so he gets feedback indicating that his stories have an impact on events. Mossberg has to put up with much less of the "paltry office politics" that his colleagues and friends at other daily newspapers must live with. He contends that, "There is nobody coming around to say I'm doing a lousy job and knife me in the back with my boss, something that does go on at other papers." And although for a long time pay and benefits at the *Journal* lagged behind those of other important newspapers, that is no longer the case.[17]

The *Journal* starts with a premise that a lot more is said and done in Washington than its readers need to be told. Its target when the newspaper was founded in 1889 as the voice of the Dow Jones and Company financial news service was the businessman. It began to expand after World War II. Its 1950 circulation of 65,000 grew amazingly to two million in 1982, exceeding all other US newspapers, with regional editions published simultaneously at fourteen plants in twelve states, with three more printing plants scheduled to open.[18]

The *Journal* still has a business flavor, but its readers may be Senators, corporate leaders, union presidents, or professors—almost anyone who is a meaningful participant in the US economic system, or wants to be. This broadened readership has moved the *Journal* away from news about business and industry, but its principal stories still focus on events that "move the ball." Thus reporter Mossberg may spend seven hours listening to a Senate committee debate the B-1 bomber, as he did one day in late 1981, and write only three paragraphs for the paper. "They failed to cut the B-1 out of the budget—that's three paragraphs," he explains. "Had they killed it, it would have been a change, worth more coverage."

The *Journal* still covers business news, but so do its major competitors. Other daily newspapers increased their attention to business stories markedly in the 1970s, in part because of the success of the *Journal*. Yet reporters at the *Journal* are less constrained than most of their colleagues, even on business news. For example, coverage of

daily Defense Department contracts does not tie down a reporter from the *Journal's* Washington bureau. Instead, the newspaper obtains a daily "contracts" story—usually written by Associated Press Pentagon correspondent Fred Hoffman—through the Dow Jones News Service.

The *Wall Street Journal* is one of the few news organizations that did not greatly reduce its coverage of national defense in the immediate post-Vietnam years. The newspaper has traditionally considered the Pentagon one of the senior beats in its Washington bureau, always held by someone with proven credentials and a future in the organization. Defense was once covered by Fred Taylor, now executive editor of the newspaper. Mossberg's predecessor was Kenneth Bacon, later the newspaper's chief economics correspondent. At the Pentagon, Bacon followed Richard Levine, who went on to be the chief economic correspondent and then a *Journal* executive in charge of computer-delivered news. One major reason for the newspaper's continued steady coverage of defense news in 1975–80, when others dropped out, was the business aspect of national defense.

Despite the editorials of the newspaper, which under influential editor Robert Bartley consistently favor strong national defense, correspondent Mossberg feels no compulsion to conform to any particular party line. He knows that the *Journal* has generally supported the people running the Pentagon but says that fact is irrelevant to him as a reporter. He is never consulted by the people who write editorials, and they never tamper with his news articles. In his twelve years with the newspaper, he says, he has never had any direction given to him or change made to his copy as a result of the *Journal's* editorial policy.

In fact, Mossberg finds fault with the idea that some reporters are fundamentally against national defense. "I get really irritated," he says, "by the notions pro-defense and anti-defense." To him, it's a question of what's best for the defense of the country: "Everybody is pro-defense. Everybody's always been pro-defense. Even people who were against the Vietnam War were pro-defense."

Walt Mossberg was one of those who opposed the Vietnam War, as a 1960s college student majoring in politics at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts. Born and raised in Rhode Island, Mossberg worked summers for newspapers from his senior year of high school through graduation from college in 1969, serving as copy boy and local reporter for the *Providence Journal*, as a stringer for the *New York Times*, and as a summer reporter for the *Boston Globe*. In 1970, he earned a master's degree in journalism from Columbia University and was hired by the *Wall Street Journal*. His first reporting assignment for

the *Journal* was in its Detroit bureau, covering the automobile industry and its labor relations. In late 1973, he transferred to Washington, where he covered labor, energy, and the environment until he volunteered for the defense beat in the summer of 1980.

Mossberg is now a member of a *Wall Street Journal* national security team which includes reporters Karen Elliott House, who covers the State Department, and Gerald Seib. Former *Washington Star* defense correspondent John Fialka is also with the *Journal,* as a special projects reporter. Although Mossberg is a Pentagon regular, he is encouraged by the *Journal* to go beyond the bounds of the Defense Department in his news-gathering. He does not consider himself a "superficial short-timer" at Defense, despite his relative newness to the beat. For a reporter covering military affairs, he says, "the trick is to become expert in the field and yet remain outside of it in your own mind." He feels a reporter has to "separate his own brain" so that even though he makes friends, comes to admire and respect a number of people and to understand the jargon, and gets into the depths of the issues, he does not become part of the establishment he is covering. He has to avoid becoming a captive and, he says, "it's hard not to be."

Mossberg's colleagues give him high marks as a reporter. He finds the Pentagon similar to other parts of the Washington bureaucracy he's covered, but perhaps more difficult. Among other reasons for this, he cites overclassification of information such as budget data. Mossberg finds Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger more accessible and "less nervous about talking" than people at lower echelons in the Department of Defense. However, he notes, on routines matters "you are reluctant to call the Secretary of Defense."

Military leaders are harder to penetrate than the civilian hierarchy at the Pentagon, Mossberg has found. Despite the fact that most of his formative impressions about military people were negative because of the Vietnam War, when Mossberg got to the Pentagon he found that "there were some awfully smart, well-rounded, capable people wearing uniforms." Smiling, he observes: "To my surprise, all military people—this will come as a shock to you—are not Neanderthal cartoon characters."

Military people, in turn, have found that Walter Mossberg is not an "antidefense" product of the sixties. He is a professional newsman grinding nobody's axes, not even the *Wall Street Journal's.*

Washington Post

For defense officials, reading the *Washington Post* can be as unpleasant as having a collision at sea—it can ruin your whole day. While wire services or the *New York Times* may be greater catalysts in the news business, and network television or news magazines may reach larger national audiences, no publication has greater impact than the *Post* on the people in the government's company town: Washington, D.C. One reason everyone in the government, with some uneasiness, considers the *Post* important is that, presumably, the President of the United States reads it over breakfast. Its average daily circulation, 578,831 in 1979, had risen to 760,950 by early 1982, in part reflecting a large increase following the demise of the *Washington Star*. Sunday circulation in 1982 averages almost a million.[19]

The *Post* affects the Pentagon like a horsehair shirt. It covers the building all over, and may scratch surfaces that have never been tender before. A metropolitan reporter may be interviewing military families about the rigors of life in the nation's capital. Morton Mintz may be prying into perceived contracting excesses that cost the taxpayers scads of dollars. Scott Armstrong may be taking time away from writing another book to piece together an alleged conspiracy within the Defense Establishment to commit the United States government to defend a Middle Eastern country in return for base rights. Mike Causey may be explaining to Federal workers employed by the Department of Defense the latest outrage against them and what they can do about it. The *Post's* financial section may analyze the business side of some defense program. Lou Cannon may have a story from the White House about the latest defense controversy. The *Post's* foreign correspondents or its State reporter may have picked up a story embarrassing to the US government. Walter Pincus may have written about nuclear weapons policy. Even the "Style" section of the *Post*, with its reports of social and cultural activities involving government celebrities, may contain a time bomb set to go off when the *Post* is consumed along with the morning's coffee.

The *Post's* editorials have the sharp input of editor Meg Greenfield. On the Op-Ed (opposite the editorial) page, syndicated columnists Joseph Kraft or Evans and Novak, carried regularly by the *Post*, may have some zinging inside view of a knotty national security problem. Editorial writer and Friday columnist Stephen Rosenfeld may have chosen to focus on the Soviet Union, one of his specialties. Former

defense official James Woolsey may discuss the military reform movement in one of his frequent columns. A congressional, think-tank, or other self-styled expert may have volunteered his advice on how to run the military. Even "letters to the editor" sometimes contain problems for the guardians of national defense. And on the comic page (really), there is Jack Anderson.

These ingredients combine to make the *Post* about as welcome in the Defense Establishment as a computer expert at the gaming tables in Las Vegas. But these are only the beginning. Just as likely to help coffee raise the morning blood pressure of defense officials are the stories of Michael Getler and George C. Wilson, who cover national security and Defense Department subjects on a full-time basis. Wilson is a defense regular, with a desk and phone in the Pentagon news room. Getler has a free-floating charter that calls for him to address national security issues that cross agency lines.

George Wilson has covered defense for the *Post* since 1966, except for three years out for pursuing the energy-and-environment beat. Wilson says that besides coming out in Washington and landing on the President's breakfast table, another reason for the paper's tremendous impact is that its stories are the daily "poop sheets" for politicians in the capital city. Says Wilson:

> The only thing politicians read are newspapers. They don't have time to read briefings. They don't have time to read hearings. They don't have time to read reports that the Pentagon sends them. So when you go to a Congressional hearing, you'll see that about half the questions are provoked by what the guy read over his coffee in the newspaper—which is usually the *Washington Post.*

Wilson's explanation of his routine is paralleled to an instructive degree by other military correspondents, and thus is worth summarizing for those trying to figure out what the press does, how it does it, and why.

First, one must understand that the *Post*, like other large newspapers, has the reporters of the wire services working for it. It would be inefficient to have Wilson do exactly what the wires do, so Wilson, like other specialized defense correspondents, must come up with material that is not only different but also of national consequence. Part of his job is to spot trends before they become obvious to others, to put them in context, and to make the resulting stories interesting. This is sometimes called "enterprise" reporting. Here are some examples from Wilson's recent file of defense stories:

The fleet oiler Canesteo had to remain tied at the dock in Norfolk because it did not have enough experienced petty officers below decks. Wilson heard about this problem, flew to Norfolk, interviewed the skipper and crew members, wrote an arresting front page story which dramatized the shortage of Navy specialists needed to man the fleet. The ship's skipper resisted the interview, but his superiors felt the story—admittedly embarrassing—would dramatize the need to raise pay to attract and keep specialists. And refusing to address the subject with the *Post's* reporter might spawn a worse story than the true one. So the *Canesteo's* skipper was urged to go ahead with the interview, and did. The story was embarrassing; it was front page, but it spotlighted personnel problems confronting the fleet, and was the impetus for a spate of news reports and congressional hearings that ultimately resulted in a military pay raise.

Army colonels turning down command. Wilson saw this as an important trend, a manifestation of the changed value system affecting the decisions of military officers, such as turning down command because the wife has a good job and does not want to move to Podunk. He sifted through colonels who had turned down command until he found some who would talk into a tape recorder for print. He talked to the Army Chief of Staff as well. It was an enlightening, trend-spotting story with lots of impact, although the Army's leadership saw it as overemphasis on isolated cases.

Why submarine officers quit the Navy. Wilson says that the wife's view on naval officer resignations, which accompanied the story, so moved Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger that he demanded remedial action. This story required considerable legwork, travel, and space in the newspaper. But the *Post* considered the result a worthwhile investment.

Such enterprise stories must be researched and written in between putting out the daily fires that are breaking news. Putting out the daily fires in a hurry often depends on knowing people with the answers who will tell the reporter. An example from Wilson's file is illustrative:

When Egyptian President Anwar Sadat was assassinated, Wilson was asked to give the *Post* a quick assessment in three areas: Was there a US military alert? Were we rushing any military supplies to Egypt? What was the military significance of Egypt to the United States? Wilson found that the Pentagon information office was not forthcoming. He called around, and located a gunnery sergeant in the Marine Corps operations center who told him to relax, nothing was happening. So Wilson told his desk there was no military alert. Wilson's

own experience told him that the first thing the Defense Department would do was have a meeting. He found an action officer in the International Security Affairs section of the Pentagon who confirmed that a meeting had been called. So Wilson told his desk that no decision had been made to speed up weapons shipments to Egypt. The only thing happening was a meeting. As to the military significance of Egypt, Wilson already knew a lot, but he wanted an expert witness. He was able to reach former defense official Robert Komer and produce an on-the-record interview with the man who had played a central role in military planning for the Middle East for several years. While these contributions were not major parts of the *Post's* coverage of the Sadat assassination story, they kept the newspaper from going down blind avenues. Wilson was able to respond quickly because of his experience, but also because of his credibility with the people he called. "Credibility. That's all you have in this business. You don't even own your typewriter," Wilson says.

More memorable, perhaps, is that Wilson knew enough people, who would trust him, to be the first reporter to describe the top secret plan for rescuing the American hostages in Teheran in 1980 despite the tight lid the Pentagon tried to keep on that story.

Credibility with his own organization made the Pentagon regular a valuable asset at the *Post*. A specialist reporter at the Department of Defense can be, according to Wilson, a "manure separator," or to shift metaphors, one who tells his editors "this is a bad one, and I don't think we should bite."

To deal with defense correspondents like Wilson, it is useful to know something about their typical work patterns. Wilson's workweek starts at 9:30 Monday morning when the *Post's* national staff meets as a group to discuss trends around the government and around the country. The idea is to learn what fellow reporters are doing, to spark ideas, to cross-fertilize. The meeting lasts an hour.

Ordinarily, Wilson on such a weekday would have appointments for talking with people, phone calls to make to check out reports received from callers or sent over the wires. By early afternoon he must tell his desk editor whether he wants space reserved in the next day's newspaper for a story he is working on. He must convince that editor that the story is worth printing, estimate how many inches it will run, even though he has not yet written it, and describe its thrust. If the prospective story passes this first test, it ends up on the story budget the national editor offers to the *Post's* managing editor or executive editor at two separate conferences, one at 3:30 p.m. and the second at

6 p.m. Editors from the foreign, business, or metropolitan desks may try to pick holes in the story as described, perhaps because they believe it is not worth running or perhaps because they want to use the space for their reporters' stories. There are almost always more stories written on a given day than the *Post* has room to print. Hard choices must be made. And then a whole new set of arguments may arise when the sponsoring editor contends the story should be on page one, perhaps lead the paper.

Wilson does not witness these arguments. His job is to get and write the story by deadline. Each page has a different deadline, with the front page held open the longest to accommodate the latest breaking news. But 7 p.m. is the working deadline for most stories, with editors hoping they are in by 6 p.m.

Some reporters find the combination of trying to pursue breaking stories at the same time they are trying to finish the enterprise ones so exhausting and frustrating that they leave the news business for alternative, and often more lucrative, careers. Wilson is among those who says he still enjoys "watching the show of democracy in action." He said that in 1982 when he was 54.

Although interested in pursuing journalism since editing a high school newspaper in his native New Jersey, Wilson had no idea he would end up specializing in military affairs. He did want to fly for the Navy, joined the Navy air corps at age 17 in 1945 with this hope, went to Georgia Tech to study engineering under the Navy's V-5 pilot training program, only to see World War II end on both fronts while he was still in flight school and not far enough along to get the "Wings of Gold." He left the Navy in 1947, got a private pilot's license on his own subsequently, and continued his education at Bucknell University, graduating in 1949 having majored in English with a minor in political science.

Getting aboard a newspaper proved difficult after graduation, partly because many papers owed what jobs they had to reporters who wanted to reclaim the ones they had vacated to go to war, so Wilson did house painting and edited a United Parcel Service weekly magazine before hooking on with a daily newspaper. His first newspaper job was with the *New York Journal of Commerce.* Then it was the *Newark Evening News,* some freelancing in Europe, *Congressional Quarterly* in Washington, the *Washington Star, Aviation Week* magazine, and the *Washington Post.*

Shortly after joining the *Post* in 1966, Wilson wrote the first newspaper story about the newly discovered technology for breaking one big nuclear warhead into several smaller bombs, packing them into

the nose of a missile, and sending each bomb to a different target—the MIRV (Multiple Independently-targetable Re-entry Vehicle) which has had such an enormous impact on the world arms race. In 1968, he did several months of combat reporting from Vietnam; in 1969 he covered the naval court of inquiry on why the spy ship *Pueblo* was lost; in 1970 he won the Mark S. Watson Award for "distinguished military news coverage," and in 1972 he returned to Vietnam to do a series on how the war had affected the Vietnamese people and their institutions. He has written two books from his reporting experience: *Bridge of No Return: Ordeal of the USS "Pueblo";* and *Army in Anguish,* with Haynes Johnson.

After his second Vietnam trip, with the prospect of more reporting from the Pentagon not appealing to him, Wilson went to the energy and environment beat. Wilson had encouraged the *Post* to hire Mike Getler, a magazine writer with a strong military technology background. With Wilson on the new assignment, Getler—who had worked the Pentagon as part of a two-man team with Wilson—now had the entire defense beat. Getler proved an extremely solid and highly professional reporter at the Pentagon, so much so that he was assigned to head the newspaper's Bonn bureau after five years at the Pentagon, two teamed with Wilson and three more as the *Post's* only reporter there. When Getler left, Wilson was asked to go back to the defense beat, and remained there when Getler returned to the *Post's* national staff in Washington in 1980. Getler became a roving national security writer for the *Post,* concentrating on issues that float between the Defense and State Departments and the National Security Council.

The *Post's* decision to commit a reporter to a roving national security beat was a meaningful allocation of the newspaper's resources.[20] Getler sees his expanded charter as worthwhile if for no other reason than because it lets a number of stories get into the paper that might not otherwise be covered. Getler's report of a 1981 speech given, without policy clearance, by an Army general assigned to the National Security Council staff cost the general his job. Other reporters had missed the story.

Given the *Post's* influence in Washington and Getler's view of the role of the reporters covering national defense, use of a "rover" who moves into areas that lie between and among agencies is a significant new development in the way national security issues are reported. Getler sees it as a way of keeping everyone honest: "I am convinced that the press really does have an important role to play, that it has as good a claim to a role as the traditional groups, such as the military, Congressional committee staffs, and civilian leaders in government."

Getler's reason for stressing the part played by the press is that he sees special interests at work in all the traditional areas. Reporters, he says, must not back away from national security issues, or report them from only one viewpoint. To him, the roving national security correspondent becomes the member of the press "truth squad" who makes sure all aspects of the story are covered.

Wilson and Getler are among the handful of reporters covering national defense regularly who have experience, expertise, superb contacts, and a major outlet. The writing styles of the two offer quite a contrast because, says Wilson, "Mike came up through the technical press and I came up via the murder beat." Wilson's aim is to hook the reader and get him past the first two or three paragraphs. Irreverent and a keen observer, he has a knack for making his stories interesting. Former Assistant Secretary of Defense Phil Goulding, in a book about his experiences at the Pentagon, recalls the incident in which the US ship *Liberty* was attacked by Israeli forces in June of 1967. Goulding arranged for a high official to brief Pentagon reporters, but this "briefer"—Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara—was not told to disregard the unclassified description of the intelligence collecting ship which said it had been using the moon as a passive reflector for communications. Goulding conceded: "Inevitably, George Wilson of the *Washington Post* wrote a story that the Pentagon had reached all the way to the moon to find a cover story to explain why the *Liberty* had sailed into the Arab-Israeli war. We deserved it."[21] More recently, a Wilson story about the troubles the Air Force Chief of Staff was having with Congress over bomber procurement began, "Poor Lew Allen." Such semi-flippant excursions do not always endear Wilson to officials. And even some of his own colleagues from time to time level a charge of "needling" or "hyping" a story at Wilson. Wilson both defends and explains:

> If I hyped a story and made it inaccurate, I'd say they had a bitch. If I hyped it to catch the reader and get on page one, I don't think they do have a bitch. The *Post* has a lot more latitude. When I covered the *Pueblo,* I used to show my lead to the *New York Times* guy and vice versa. He'd say, ". . . I wish I could write the lead like that. That's terrific. But the *Times* wouldn't buy it." Maybe I write it more dramatically than it deserves, but I don't think so. The *Post,* frankly, is a little more free-swinging. . . . It has a kind of a Carson's Raiders style instead of lock-stepped advances into the news.

Indeed the *Post* is a lively newspaper, and that's what may be so hard to take for so many defense officials. Its stories may disappoint the

reader who wants something written with the dullness, or detail, of an officially sanctioned government report. The fact remains: the *Washington Post* is the only newspaper game in town, or was before the *Washington Times* began publication in 1982.

Its prominence makes news flow to the *Post*. Wilson's sources are particularly good. His personality helps. There is a touch of humanity; he's like one of those easy-going pols he used to cover at the county courthouse in New Jersey. And he is low-key. Friends got calls from him in 1979 that seemed strange to the point of melancholy: he didn't want anything, just thought he'd say so long because he would be away for a while. What he didn't say was that he was on his way to Minnesota for open-heart surgery. Recovered, he returned to his beat at the *Post* and wrote a moving story about his experience with the "zipper squad." Getler has a similar inside track. Hard work and ability make his stories reflect accurately the sense of what he has been told. This earns him solid respect, as has his instinct for reporting correctly the international aspects of national defense stories.

Wilson sees his job at the Pentagon as reporting on how the Defense Department operates, what it is trying to do, how much it is spending. He believes he and his fellow reporters at the Pentagon should "find out what's going on, tell it truthfully—and get it right." As for the near future, Wilson expresses concerns about the extent to which the United States will be willing or able to exert itself militarily, in the oil fields of the Middle East, for example. About a decision to interfere somewhere distant from America, he says:

> We have no reinforcements. We have no doctors. You can't send troops out and have them bleed to death on the battlefield. You have to give up on a lot of keystones in manpower, such as the all-volunteer force, if you are going to have reinforcements. Implicit in a lot of the rhetoric is a responsibility to do things a lot differently, a lot more expensively, than we are doing now. So I think the question for the future is "Will the performance match the rhetoric?" I have some real doubts about it. When it comes to the reality of putting the 82nd Airborne into the sands of Saudi Arabia or interfering in the Sudan, are they really going to do it? Could they do it? Should they do it? These are questions that are going to be forced upon us.

Whatever happens, George Wilson, Michael Getler, and what seems like thousands of reporters at the *Washington Post* and other daily newspapers covering the Pentagon will dissect the developments in detail—ruining the breakfasts of countless defense officials in the process.

4
NEWS SERVICES

Supplementing other information about national defense in the 1980s are four news services, each representing newspaper chains, with reporters in the Pentagon press corps. The four are Copley, Scripps-Howard, Newhouse, and Hearst.[1] These news services are not international wire services like AP, UPI, and Reuters. Their material is less comprehensive and less timely. Their reporters tend to go after stories like reporters for daily newspapers, but with emphasis on feature material or analysis.

Copley

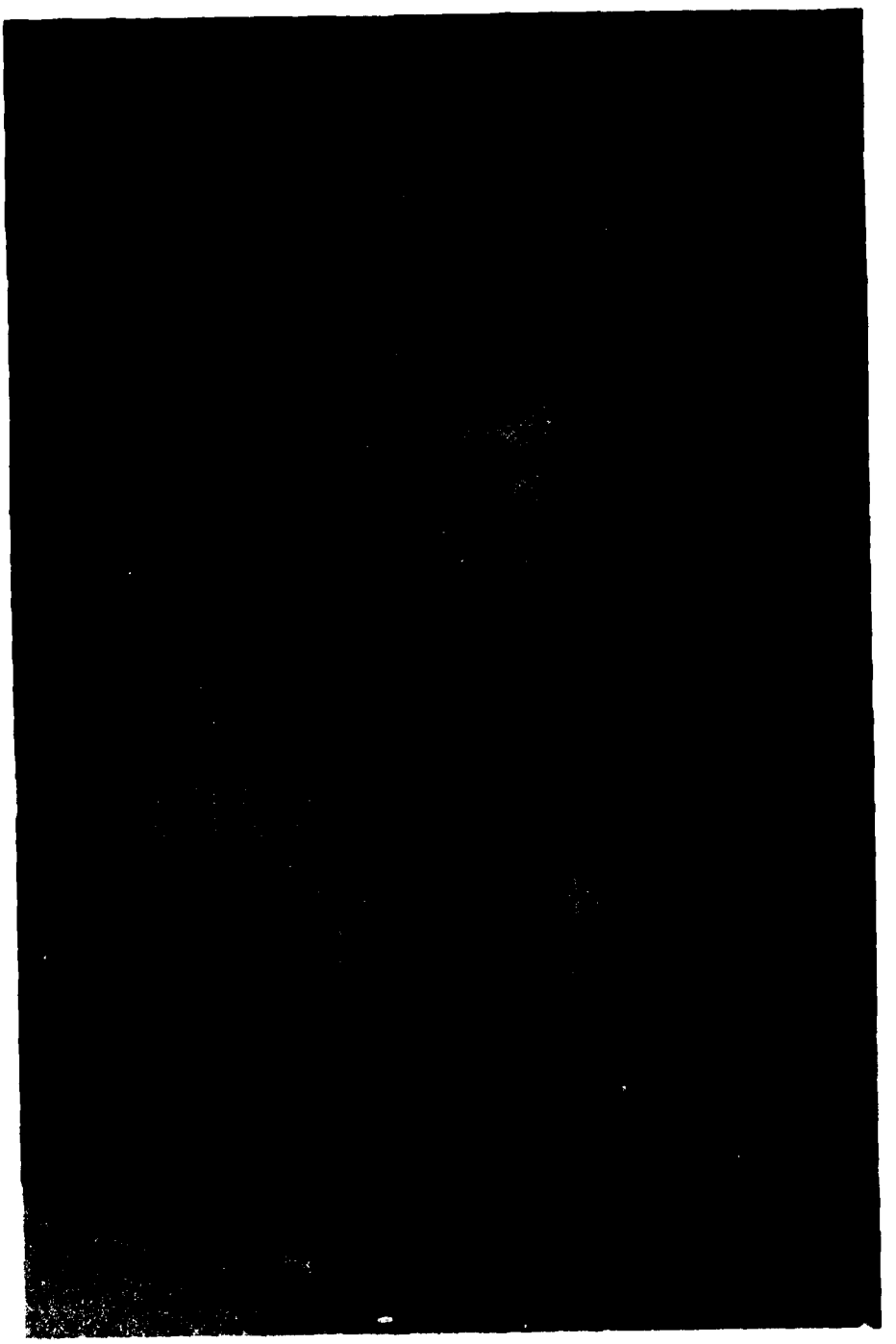
Copley News Service rates notice for its defense coverage for two principal reasons: its flagship publications are the daily newspapers serving San Diego, second largest city on the West Coast and home port for most of the US Pacific Fleet; and its bureau chief in Washington is L. Edgar Prina, who has covered military and naval subjects since just after World War II. Prina covers diplomacy and defense in addition to fulfilling his bureau-chief responsibilities.[2] Particularly interested in developments that affect the Navy and Marine Corps, his interests are not purely parochial—one of his major stories was an exclusive report on the Soviet combat brigade in Cuba, confirming its presence, size, and strength. During the Vietnam conflict, he confounded officials by reporting that President Johnson would not permit search and rescue personnel to go near enough to China's Hainan Island to look for a downed pilot whose rescue beeper was on.

Prina has followed the growth of the Soviet Union's naval forces closely, reporting ship and weapons developments as well as the transfer of military hardware to Cuba from the Soviet Union in the 1960s and 1970s. Information about the impact of the Defense Guidance on the Navy, which Prina obtained early in the Carter Administration, led to a public argument between Prina and Secretary of the Navy W. Graham Claytor, Jr.[3] Prina also tends to bring up maritime subjects at press conferences held by the Secretary of Defense and the President. In January of 1982, for example, he asked President Reagan to confirm that Admiral Hyman G. Rickover had declined a post as science advisor at the White House. The President did so, but only after a followup question by Prina. Such incidents have earned Prina a reputation among his colleagues as "the naval correspondent."

Copley's news service goes primarily to newspapers in Illinois and California, where the publishing empire is headquartered. Helen Copley inherited James S. Copley's publications in 1973, hired Gerald L. Warren as editor of her morning paper, the *San Diego Union*, and became California's version of Katherine Graham, chief executive officer of the *Washington Post*. Warren, former deputy press secretary to President Nixon, encouraged aggressive reporting. The *Union* moved from archconservatism to conventional conservatism. It became more skeptical about military matters, compensating for its past history of support for the military's points of view.

Ed Prina does several complete stories a week on national security subjects—background reports, interpretations, features or exclusives; he does not try to keep up with spot news. He also writes a monthly column for *Sea Power* magazine, which he edited as a part-time venture in the 1960s. Prina is a reporter by choice, having attended Syracuse University for his B.A. degree in journalism and political science and his M.A. degree in political science. He served two tours of military active duty, from December 1941 until June 1946 and then again from November 1951 until October 1953. His duties, Prina says, consisted of "winning the war" in the Pacific and in Korea. Between those military tours, Prina worked for the *New York Sun* and for the *Washington Star*. After the Korean War, Prina was with the *Star* as its Pentagon reporter until he joined Copley in 1966.

Prina has seen changes in the military attitude toward the press in the years since he served as a Navy lieutenant in the Pentagon. In the early 1950s, a naval captain from another section of the Chief of Naval Operations' Office—Prina was then serving in the Office of Information—expressed "horror and amazement" that Lieutenant Prina was actually



"The Naval Correspondent," L. Edgar Prina, Copley News Service, Washington bureau chief

talking to a reporter on the telephone. The captain's attitude was not resentment, of the type that became typical during the Vietnam War; it was more a "none of their damn business" attitude of the type attributed to Admiral Ernest King, whose press policy was said to be one of first winning the war, and then explaining how it had been won.

Now, Prina feels, there is a greater realization of the influence of the press in Washington among military officers. They see the wisdom in getting their story out quickly, not hiding things, and avoiding half-truths. Many in the military now realize that the press sometimes helps them, Prina says, citing the example of public concern about the Soviet Navy's buildup as an example.

Scripps-Howard

Afternoon newspapers nationwide face competition not only from their morning rivals, but also, and more seriously, from television. Scripps-Howard is a newspaper chain of, for the most part, afternoon newspapers. To make its economic picture even less inviting, Scripps-Howard began the 1980s as almost total owner of United Press International—a wire service in financial straits.

Despite this appearance of swimming against the economic tide, Scripps-Howard has some prime morning and afternoon newspaper properties: Memphis's morning *Commercial Appeal* and afternoon *Press Scimitar,* for example, along with the *Pittsburgh Press, Cleveland Press, Rocky Mountain News, San Juan Star,* and a dozen more. All its papers have correspondents at Scripps's office in Washington, and all are provided supplemental Washington coverage by a news bureau that in 1982 included Pentagon reporter Lance Gay.

The Scripps-Howard chain, moderate to conservative in its editorial stands, maintained its interest in the military during the lull in defense coverage of the 1970s. The organization has a tradition of great war reporting. Its standard for military reporting was set by Ernie Pyle in World War II. James G. Lucas, a Marine Corps combat correspondent known for his reporting from Tarawa in the Second World War, joined Scripps and won awards for coverage of the Korean and Vietnam Wars—a 1954 Pulitzer for his stories of "Porkchop Hill" and the 1964 Ernie Pyle award for his coverage in Vietnam.

Scripps-Howard's defense writer of 1982 understands what competition can do to afternoon newspapers. Lance Gay had been with the *Washington Star.* He was hired by Scripps after the sudden demise, in

1981, of the *Star*—where he had been first a local reporter and then a labor and environment expert.

Reporter Gay and his associates at the news service do not duplicate wire service coverage. The Scripps news service—which broadened its approach in the 1970s, seeking subscribers outside the Scripps newspaper family—strives to be a truly supplemental source of copy for editors. It produces "thumbsuckers," that is, analyses, interpretative reports, or pieces focusing on changes and trends. Writing around or off the news, Scripps-Howard also produces serious investigative reports, which are among its best-known trademarks. This investigative interest has caused Scripps-Howard reporters at the Pentagon to be particularly interested in defense budget stories, particularly stories that may involve cost overruns.

Lance Gay is probably the only reporter in the history of the Pentagon's news room who is an expert on the administration of justice in Kent from 1601 to 1630. That was his Ph.D. subject at the University of Maryland when he left academic pursuits to work full-time for the *Star* in the 1970s. He had already earned B.A. and M.A. degrees at Maryland, concentrating on the Tudor and Stuart periods of English history. Born in Auckland, New Zealand, in 1944, correspondent Gay is a naturalized American citizen. His father, seeing World War II coming, left England in 1936 for New Zealand, living there until 1947. The family moved back to England and then, in 1955, to Canada. Lance Gay arrived in Washington in 1964 to live and study at the nearby University of Maryland. While a Maryland student, Gay was employed as a copy boy at the *Star*. His reporting career crystallized in 1969 while he was at Harvard seeking a manuscript dealing with England's Star Chamber court, established by the Tudor kings of England and given extensive powers, unfettered by common-law procedures. Crossing Harvard's yard, he saw students taking over the university's Administration Building. It was the beginning of the Harvard students' strike. Gay stayed in Massachusetts for ten days to cover the story for the *Star*. When he returned to Washington, the newspaper offered him a reporting job. Gay enjoyed working at the *Star*, which had a good staff despite its declining revenues. He felt that it provided a balancing editorial and news voice in Washington. He believes that those who work for the government, especially those in national defense areas, would be better off had the *Star* survived.

How does his background as a naturalized citizen and historian affect Gay's work as a correspondent covering US national security issues? For one thing, he is quite familiar with world history, particularly

European and military history: "So I know who von Clausewitz was, know about the German military staff, know some of the theories and strategies of war. It helps in that sense—at least I know who some of these characters are and am vaguely familiar with what they've done." But other than that, legal history with an English twist provides few fresh insights into current US national defense problems. Those, Lance Gay must discover for himself and then pass along to readers reached by the Scripps-Howard chain.

Newhouse

The Newhouse newspaper chain is a new entry into the serious business of covering national defense news. Although its assignment of a reporter to the Pentagon in the late 1970s was part of a general media renewal of interest in national security issues, it was also evidence of the changes taking place in the Newhouse organization, the country's largest privately owned media company.[4]

In the 1970s, Newhouse was a company run from S. I. Newhouse's briefcase. It had no chief executive officer by name; Newhouse did not care for titles. The management a few years later was still decidedly family-centered, with Samuel Newhouse, Jr., his brother Donald, and their uncles Theodore and Norman running the business after S. I. Newhouse's death. But changes were taking place from the mid-seventies on, changes that reflected a greater investment in news coverage, including defense news.

In the 1960s and 1970s the Newhouse chain grew rapidly to include 28 newspapers in locations like Birmingham, New Orleans, Portland, Newark, St. Louis, and Kalamazoo. Newhouse had a reputation for making money, for incorporating modern technology into all phases of its business, but not for special excellence in journalism. On the national scene, the newspapers were represented by reporters in Washington taking care of one or more of the Newhouse papers in a geographic region, covering their congressional delegations and items of interest to the editors in that region. The chain had a small national staff focusing on general topics, primarily domestic issues.

As of 1982, the national staff had grown in size and had been upgraded in quality. The Newhouse reporter covering national security matters was providing copy to some 150 client news organizations via modern communications technology.[5]

Most Newhouse News Service subscribers also get at least one

wire service plus syndicated material from one of the major daily newspapers—usually the *New York Times* or *Los Angeles Times-Washington Post* news service. Therefore, Newhouse does not cover spot news. During a normal week, national defense reporter Phillip W. Smith produces a total of about five stories—each 800 words or less. The Newhouse computer transmits stories to customers in 800-word "takes," so longer stories are uneconomical. These stories may be interpretative or personality profiles of key players in the national defense picture, or special features such as a report on terrorism. Whenever possible they relate to issues that are of interest to the Newhouse-owned newspapers, many of which are located near military installations or contractors like McDonnell Douglas in St. Louis.

For Phil Smith, working for a company that provides the latest newspaper technology is a long trip from his journalistic beginnings. He first worked on his hometown Fayetteville, Tennessee, *Observer* in the 1960s. The weekly newspaper used linotype machines that heated metal and molded lines of type which eventually, through a complicated and time-consuming process, produced pages that were printed, four at a time, on a flatbed press. At Newhouse, Smith's stories are typed into a video display terminal, transferred electronically to an editor's display terminal in the same Washington office, moved to a computer in New York via telephone lines, and sent to client newspapers by the computer. At the Newhouse newspapers—like the one Smith worked for in Huntsville, Alabama—another editor looks at the story on a video display screen, and, if he decides to use it, presses a button to spin the story out in column-width, photoprinted form. The story is not on paper until it is ready to be pasted onto a page of the newspaper and printed on a high-speed multipage rotary press.

Phil Smith was born at the end of World War II, worked on his local newspaper in high school, and spent his college years in Athens, Alabama, where he worked for the Huntsville newspaper owned by Newhouse. He went to Washington in the early seventies to serve a Newhouse region that included Huntsville and Mobile. In 1976, Smith covered the political campaign as a national correspondent for Newhouse. As a Southerner, he drew the Southern candidate—one nobody had heard much about—Jimmy Carter. Following Carter's election, Smith covered the White House for Newhouse. He left that post to report from the Defense Department at the midpoint of Carter's term in office, weary from the constant travel involved in Presidential reporting.

Smith was a natural for defense. One of the few Pentagon regulars with a Vietnam combat record, he spoke the language of the GI—or, at

any rate, the marine. Smith served in the Marine Corps during a three-year break in his college education.[6] Smith joined the Corps because it offered a delayed-entry plan that allowed him to complete his college semester. His time included a year in Vietnam in the I Corps region around Danang, including Khe Sanh. Due to go home in 1968 when the Tet offensive began, he couldn't even get from Quang Tri to Danang for a couple of weeks. Smith never got farther south in Vietnam than Danang, and he was only there to pass through.

Smith labors under the same cloud that affects others who cover Washington stories for out-of-town organizations: his material is rarely seen by the people he writes about. Smith says that for reporters whose organizations do not have instant name recognition, "the chain of command gets in the way of efficiency" at the Pentagon. On one occasion, he spent days trying to arrange an interview with a senior officer only to find out, after he had given up on the interview and his story had been written and printed, that the senior officer had never been told Smith wanted an interview. He recognizes the hazards that dealing with reporters, even those writing for out-of-town newspapers, can present to officials. He muses, "I guess any reporter working at the Pentagon could get an admiral or general fired just about any day if he wanted to." But Phil Smith likes to keep promises he makes to people he interviews on a background basis. He has not caused anyone to be fired, and he has no plans to do so.

Hearst

John D. Harris is a war reporter and proud of it. For him, covering the Pentagon's budgets and hardware is less than exciting—"It bores the pants off me," he says.[7] Furthermore, Harris feels that the news game has deteriorated since he left Houston University in 1954. That was when he began a newspaper career which would later include overseas assignments for Hearst in bureaus at London, Paris, and Rome. He joined Hearst's bureau in Washington in 1980 to cover national security affairs.

Harris sees changes in his profession, the one he had chosen so that he could sleep late and still claim journalism credits for working on the afternoon college newspaper: "There was a certain caliber of guy many years ago . . . fundamental, one hundred percent ethical, decent, honest." This was particularly true of some of the old-time foreign correspondents who were at all times on call to cover wars:

> I tell with reverence about a deceased colleague named Reynolds Packard. When General Mark Clark paused before making the final entry into Rome with the Fifth Army in 1944, Packard got into his jeep, went into the city, drove up to the Grand Hotel. German officers were standing around with their suitcases, waiting for trucks to take them out of town. Pack, in his American correspondent's uniform, ignored them. He walked into the bar. The bartender recognized him and started pouring champagne for him. Pack sat down in the bar, set up his typewriter, and wrote one of the great leads of all times—"I toasted the fall of Rome tonight"—with a Rome dateline.

Reynolds Packard died in poverty, Harris notes, and his kind of reporter is disappearing: "You have a lot of hustlers and hotshots now."

Harris reports the news from the Pentagon as he reported the news overseas, concentrating on the human element that would interest newspaper readers. His sources are often old friends, military officers he knew overseas, sometimes in war. They are as bored with the Pentagon as he. Harris finds that constant examination of service publications and congressional testimony is an invaluable source in covering the Pentagon, one often overlooked, even disparaged, by other newsmen. For him there are things in the myriad of service publications that consistently surprise. His theory is that as a newsman, he is closer to the national security scene than the average reader. Therefore, if something is news to him, his almost inflexible rule is that it has to be news to the reader.

Harris believes the best way to operate at the Pentagon is to be totally honest and objective, so that his sources trust him: "They know I'm not going to exaggerate anything. Likewise, I'm not going to minimize anything. They know that if I'm told something on background or off the record I will treat it as such without question. Nobody has ever come to me in my 25 years in this game and said I had violated a confidence, because I never have and I never will." Harris also makes it clear that he does not want to know anything classified: "I am not cleared. I have no business knowing classified information. I don't want to know it." He regards classified leaks as inimical to the country's security, possibly illegal, and wants no part of them.

The Hearst newspaper chain of the eighties has been greatly reduced from its peak years of influence under the controversial leadership of William Randolph Hearst, a champion of Americanism whose 64-year journalism career ended in 1951 when he died at age 88. As of 1982, the Hearst organization has publications in Los

Angeles, San Francisco, Boston, Baltimore, San Antonio, Seattle, and Albany. Its Washington bureau provides copy only to Hearst papers, with some of its material also available through the Hearst-owned King Features Syndicate. Harris is the first regularly assigned Pentagon correspondent for the chain, which nevertheless has a distinguished tradition of war reporting that goes back to Hearst's International News Service (INS). Before INS was closed in 1958, its correspondents included feature writer Bob Considine and World War II correspondents James Kilgallen and Richard Tregaskis. It is not clear, in 1982, that Hearst will continue indefinitely to devote the attention of a full-time reporter to the defense story in Washington if that story becomes less a national focal point later in the decade. As for aspiring war correspondents, Hearst-man Harris has this advice:

> Forget it. It's not worth it. I know reporters and photographers who have died in the jungles of Asia, the sands of the Middle East. For what? For a few paragraphs in a newspaper? For a few seconds on a television screen? Their names, once famed, are remembered by few. Forget it.
>
> But I'd do it all again. Hopefully with a raise.

5
WEEKLY NEWS MAGAZINES

In April 1981, the Chief of Naval Operations, Thomas B. Hayward, criticized one of the nation's leading weekly news magazines, asserting that an article titled "Billions Down the Pentagon Drain" was "very troubling" and not particularly "helpful to America."[1] Was Admiral Hayward talking about an article from *Time*, whose founder eschewed journalistic objectivity? Was he talking about *Newsweek*, that lively publication owned since 1961 by the folks from the *Washington Post*? Perhaps *Business Week*, the magazine specializing in news of business and industry? No. Hayward was discussing an article that appeared in the news magazine where military officials have traditionally found a great deal of aid, comfort, and agreement—*US News and World Report*.

US News and World Report

Most recent of the major news magazines to come into existence, *US News and World Report* was created when two older publications merged in 1948. It caters to an educated, affluent, influential national readership. Its founder was conservative David Lawrence, a long-time Washington reporter who had been a factor in news coverage of national events since he covered the administration of his personal friend Woodrow Wilson. The story about Pentagon waste to which Admiral Hayward referred was not really far out of character. *US News's* traditions include close attention to government, to government spending, and to waste in government. In past years the magazine has looked with vigor for waste in the social services area—in housing

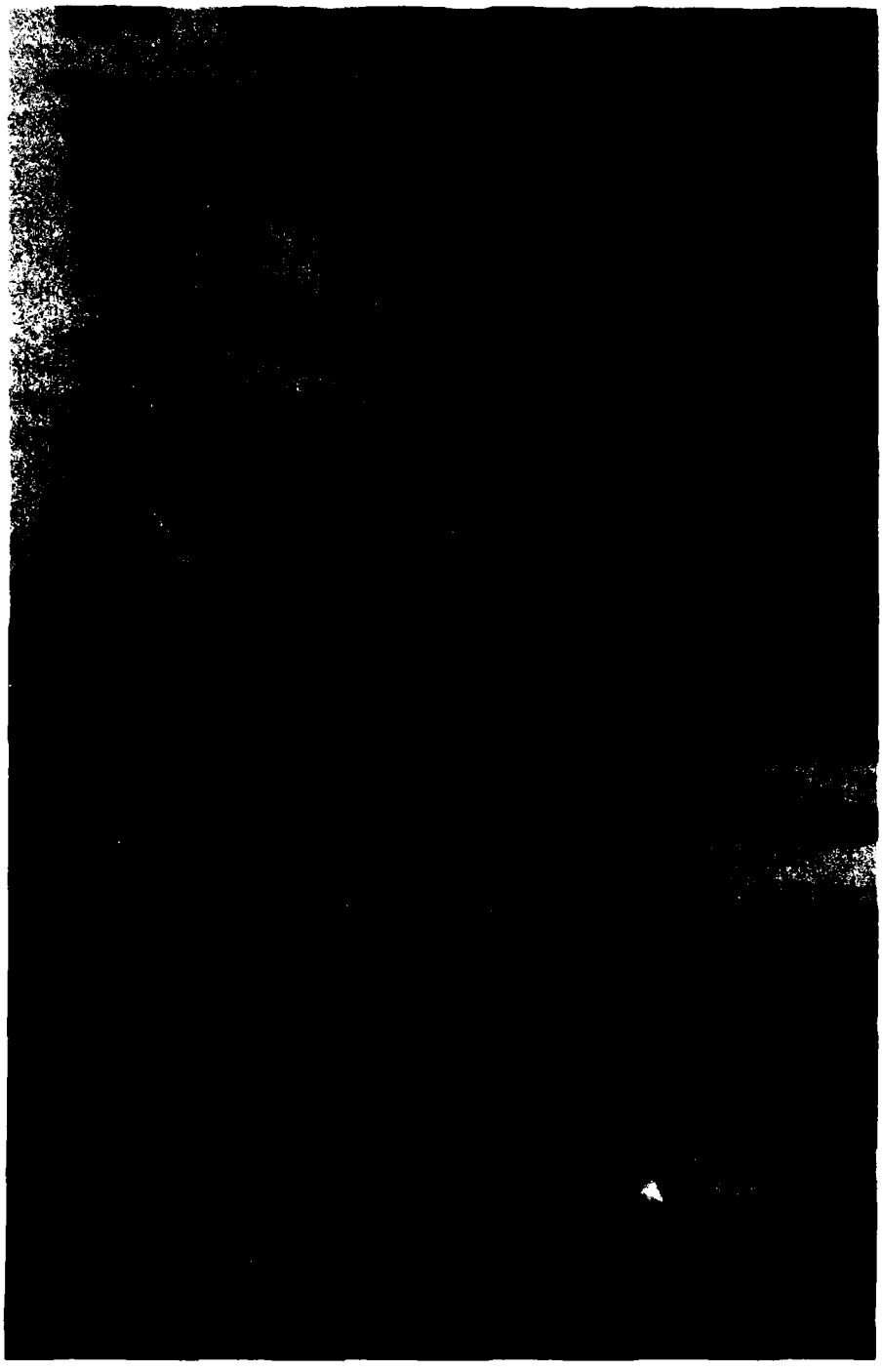
programs, social security, or food stamps. It has also looked at military waste, but this time it was looking through the eyes of a different reporter.

Robert Dudney was 30 years old when *US News* assigned him to cover the Pentagon at the beginning of the Reagan Administration. Reporters who previously worked there for the magazine had been older, more experienced in military subjects. They could relate to the government's point of view. They might not have considered a major piece on military waste worth top priority at the magazine. Dudney did.

Bob Dudney is a skilled reporter, on the way to the top of his profession. His apprenticeship in the news business is a journalist's American success story. At high school in Dallas, he became a talented writer and excellent football player. He wanted to go to the University of Missouri to study journalism, and won a football scholarship at that school. Dudney was interested in football as a means to an end during his four years at Missouri: football made them hard years, but it paid the way. The game took too much of his time. The Missouri School of Journalism was more stimulating. Student reporters worked on a university daily newspaper serving the entire community, not just the school. With some 275 cityside reporters on the paper—second in number only to the *New York Times*—competition was fierce. An automobile fender-bender at midnight could turn out three reporters and two photographers eager for a spot in the paper. Pity the fewer than 20,000 residents of Columbia, Missouri. They were more thoroughly scrutinized, or so it seemed, than the 30,000 workers at the Pentagon. Despite its excellent reputation, Missouri places little emphasis on journalism theory, and Dudney considers that a good policy. The first two years at Missouri for a journalism major do not include journalism courses. Even in junior and senior years, journalism students there are encouraged to broaden their knowledge.

Dudney went to work in Dallas for the *Times-Herald* in 1972. There, he was a fledgling investigative reporter: city hall, police, state government, fraud. Long hair and a beard (it became styled with moustache by the time he reached *US News*) were no drawback in the Southwest if you had played Big Eight football. In August 1976, Dudney was assigned to the *Times-Herald's* Washington bureau. Like other reporters for out-of-town newspapers, he chafed at knowing that almost nobody he dealt with ever read his stories. This made him work harder. After three years, through a friend, he connected with *US News*.

Dudney was self-taught in national security affairs, learning on the job as a reporter. At *US News* he began to work closely with assistant



Robert Dudney, *US News & World Report*

editor Joe Fromm, one of the most experienced and confident writers covering foreign affairs. As Fromm's wide-ranging interests led Dudney to all the crowded corridors of power in Washington, the young reporter found himself stepping on the toes of his senior colleagues from the magazine. It was an understandably difficult situation. At the beginning of the Reagan Administration, after more than a year of this quasi-internship, Dudney was named full-time defense correspondent. Orr Kelly, his highly regarded predecessor at the Pentagon, became a senior roving special assignments reporter with license to look into defense or other areas of interest to him.[2]

From his Pentagon post, Dudney continued to work closely with Fromm. He approached his beat with a desire to know his subject and not consume the time of interviewees by asking the obvious. Preparedness is a trait that news magazine reporters are able to develop more consciously than their ever-pressed daily news counterparts.

Relying to a large extent on documents and research, Dudney often has 80 percent of an article in hand before suggesting it to the magazine. Unlike Orr Kelly, who through experience learned the value of the information apparatus at the Defense Department, Dudney does not see as great a need for those channels.

Both the veteran Kelly and the newcomer Dudney feel that *US News* is different from other news magazines. The weekly magazine's role is to put events of the moment in perspective. In the case of *Time* and *Newsweek,* this sometimes becomes a "week-in-review" process. At *US News,* the objective is more to explain in detail *why* things are happening. Says Dudney: "People who read our magazine are not really interested in reading about what happened last week. They are more interested in what it means and what the implications are." He feels less of the competitiveness that characterizes the relationship between *Time* and *Newsweek.* Unlike these two magazines, which have editorial headquarters in New York, *US News* is Washington-based.

A typical example of *US News's* treatment of national defense came in its 23 November 1981 issue, which featured a cover photograph of Defense Secretary Weinberger superimposed over a picture of a strategic missile in flight, with the caption "US Defense Policy." A subcaption asked: "The Right Direction?" A four-page cover story by Dudney included a chart that showed Pentagon spending approaching the real dollar expenditures of the Korean War, and heading toward a 1985 buildup that would top Vietnam spending. It briefly profiled the President's defense team: Caspar Weinberger, Edwin Meese, Frank C. Carlucci, Fred C. Ikle, and General David C. Jones. The article focused

on factors, such as a "painful budget crunch," that were undercutting the Pentagon's campaign to rearm America—clearly a drive that needed to get "back on track," according to the magazine. With two paragraphs at the end of the story and one chart, the article brushed off the "bright spots" of improved recruiting and retention and streamlined management of the Defense Department. Management actions, reported the magazine, "are said to have curbed many procurement practices that have made the Pentagon legendary for waste, fraud, and abuse"—a legend the magazine had helped create with a lead article the previous April.

The November cover story was followed by one of *US News's* almost patented features: a question-and-answer interview with the Secretary of Defense that covered two pages and allowed him to say, among other things, that "we've been overspending but not for defense." Such interviews with government officials, giving them an opportunity to express their views without "interpretation" by the magazine, were once frequently used by *US News*. They are no longer as often included in the magazine, for two basic reasons: blobs of dull gray type are a turnoff to many readers, and journalists question the honesty of the format, which allows a magazine writer to polish an official's words and make him sound more articulate than he may have been in the actual interview. This procedure normally also allows the interviewee a final review of the copy, another questionable practice in the eyes of many journalists. Still, these "Q and A" interviews are carefully followed by people who want to obtain the sanitized views of the policymaker; they serve the foreign and domestic policy purposes of officials exceedingly well in many cases.

Robert Dudney thinks news magazines can have serious long-term influence:

> Over the years people out there in Dallas, Kansas City, Minneapolis, or wherever, pick up their *Time* or *Newsweek* or *US News* and that's what they know about defense. Television doesn't really give them much to understand. While I acknowledge the impact of what they say on the tube to a broad audience, I don't know whether it's presented in such a way as to have much of a lasting impact. A reader out there can pick up a copy of one of the magazines, and read a story about some issue, and pretty much know the important elements of that issue. That same person can look at seven straight nightly news broadcasts of the controversy and maybe he won't really understand the issue as well.

Dudney sees the role of defense reporters this way: "The ideal defense correspondent should be someone who takes the mass of confused, highly technical, often controversial information; analyzes it, organizes it, and writes it so the broadest possible audience can get the essence of what's going on."

Business Week

Like *US News,* McGraw-Hill Publishing Company's *Business Week* is written for a readership of influentials. The magazine comes right out and identifies its target: the business executive. Its editors say the magazine is "published for management . . . for the business executive."[3] The magazine is the flagship publication for McGraw-Hill, which offers some forty different publications ranging from *American Machinist* to *Washington Report on Medicine and Health.* In addition to an international edition, *Business Week* also has a profitable industrial edition, which can run to well over 200 pages although the regular newsstand edition is normally 150 pages. Its size, like that of other magazines, varies according to the amount of advertising in the issue.

Publications often considered in the field with *Business Week* are *Fortune, Dun's Review, Barron's, Forbes,* and *Nation's Business.* In reporting on defense matters, *Business Week* has a distinct advantage over these other business publications. Through McGraw-Hill's World News organization, it has the services of a full-time veteran defense correspondent plus an experienced pro in the maritime field, and a large number of reporters in bureaus overseas and in the United States.

James W. Canan, at age 53 in 1982, is a seasoned Washington reporter, respected by his colleagues. He has written a book about the military's research, development, and procurement of weapon systems, and his second book, on defense-weapons policies, was due out in 1982.[4] Canan's coworker at McGraw-Hill is Seth Payne, a former naval officer whose specialties include maritime, naval, and space reporting. Both are well-connected, knowledgeable reporters with tremendous industry sources. In their book about Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, authors Norman Polmar and Thomas B. Allen assert Payne is one of the few newsmen the admiral seems comfortable with. They recount an occasion when Admiral Rickover returned Payne's call, speaking rapidly before Payne could interrupt to tell the admiral he probably meant to call Roland Paine of the Polaris Special Projects Office. "You aren't going to quote me, are you?" Rickover asked. "Admiral, you haven't said anything worth quoting," Payne replied.[5]

As defense correspondent for McGraw-Hill, Jim Canan has seen a dramatic change in the way *Business Week* covers the military. The magazine always has been interested in technology stories, but in recent years it has taken a more sweeping approach. To make it into the magazine, routine Defense Department stories now need more of a tie to the Administration's ups and downs, or to the national political or economic scene. Interestingly enough, this trend occurred while *Time* and *Newsweek* were paying more attention to economics. The distance between these magazines in subject matter has lessened.

The editorial process at *Business Week* involves a Washington and New York dialogue. An editorial meeting for "front of the book" material is held in the Washington bureau on Wednesdays. On Thursday, an editor from Washington goes to New York for another conference, which produces a list of stories planned for the following week. Reporters then write with a Tuesday deadline. Because of the World News bureau arrangement, Washington McGraw-Hill reporters write not only for their principal outlet, *Business Week*, but also for other specialized publications in the chain.

Because McGraw-Hill is such a large organization, a cover story in *Business Week* is the product of team journalism. When Canan wrote the major portion of the magazine's cover story on why the United States would have difficulty rearming rapidly, he was dealing with material filed from correspondents in Los Angeles, Cleveland, Detroit, Boston, Houston, and Minneapolis, among others. Likewise, a cover story on United States relations with Europe, although written by the magazine's reporter in Brussels, had significant input from Canan.

Married and the father of five, Jim Canan was an Army officer before he was a newsman. After finishing his bachelor's degree at Westminster College in Pennsylvania, where he worked on the college newspaper but took most of his courses in the chemistry department, Canan was drafted. The Korean War was winding down, so infantryman Canan was sent to Officer Candidate School, commissioned, instructed in Russian, and sent to Europe. An intelligence officer, he spent time in Germany, Austria, and Trieste. Canan then went to graduate school at Northwestern University to study journalism, but quit in 1954, with the family's first baby on the way, to go to work in the newspaper business. First a reporter for the Binghamton *Evening Press*, in upstate New York, he later transferred to the Gannett chain's Washington bureau. After six years there, he went to McGraw-Hill World News in 1966 to cover defense research and development. He did that for two years, spent time on the bureau's news desk, then went back to the defense beat in 1972.

Canan does not see reporters who cover the Pentagon as having a special role other than to get a good story whenever they can. In fact, he regards as dangerous a tendency by younger reporters to think in terms of "shaping the world," as influencers rather then conveyers of information. He does, however, have some serious concerns about defense policy based on his years of observing, studying, and reporting it:

> The basic problem, the thing that worries me as a reporter and I think should and really does worry our defense planners, is that we as Americans just will not face up to the fact that our guys are going to have to fight, probably in the Middle East and probably not before too many years are up. We won't institute a draft to be ready to do this. We are still relying on technology overmuch. Even given the lesson of the Shah, we still insist on going the surrogate route as long as we can. I think one of the problems with us is that the rest of the world looks at us and sees this better than we do.

Canan quotes someone who said Americans would rather expend treasure than blood, and notes that Americans, God bless them for it, just don't like to kill people. "That also has something to do with the way we develop weapons," he says. "Down deep we really don't want to develop the weapons. We know we can do it, but we put it off as long as we can, because we don't want to have to use them."

Despite his personal concerns about defense, Canan contends that even a business-oriented magazine cannot write "good news" stories about military subjects, explaining: "If there is a problem, it's a story." He sees a utility to reporting problems:

> You could conclude that since all of us [Pentagon reporters] write almost exclusively about problems with defense, we could be considered to be anti-defense, given the nature of the stories. Not true. We like to think that if we write about problems we are in some fashion doing the establishment a favor. A lot of people who work at the Pentagon see problems and want them to be aired. In fact, we get a lot of calls over the transom from guys who say "Have you thought about this?" or "Look into that."

Canan is blunt about what he thinks the country must do, and where the Defense Establishment fails:

> We are going to have to—in very short order—suck it up. We're going to have to acknowledge first to ourselves that we are in trouble. The thing that disturbs me most about the Defense

> Department, under whichever Administration you want to mention, is that they have this terrible tendency to stick their heads in the sand. I'm not questioning their courage or anything like that; I just worry about the wishful thinking involved.

Newsweek

David C. Martin says what the Pentagon reporter must do is "accurately report what they [defense officials] want you to know and do everything you can to find out what they don't want you to know. The challenge is to make sense out of a tidal wave of information that washes over you." Martin, *Newsweek's* military writer, suggests that those who want to manage the news have better luck when they flood reporters with information than when they resort to secretiveness.

Finding out what they don't want you to know is Dave Martin's specialty. Martin was assigned to the Pentagon beat by *Newsweek* after several years' work as an investigative reporter. Yale-educated, he spent three years in the Navy as a reserve officer on active duty in the 1960s. An engineering officer on destroyers, he may have felt little need for his degree in English. From 1969 to 1973, however, following his Navy duty, he was a researcher for CBS and a rewrite man for the Associated Press in New York. In retrospect, Martin says he actually became a reporter when he joined the AP bureau in his native Washington, D.C., in 1973. At the AP, Martin rapidly became an expert on the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). In 1977, between jobs, he wrote *Wilderness of Mirrors,* a book about the Agency that was published in 1980. By then, Martin had been with *Newsweek* for three years, had reached age 37, and had phased into covering the Department of Defense as replacement for one of the Pentagon pressmen's legends, Lloyd Norman.

Martin learned some interesting things about covering national defense. One was to respect the sources that his predecessor—and other veterans on the military beat—seemed to be able to pull out of the hat at will. Another was that, even though CIA headquarters at Langley, Virginia, is only fifteen minutes up the road from the Pentagon at Arlington, they are different worlds to a reporter. At CIA, everything was unauthorized for Martin. Despite an effort by CIA Director Stansfield Turner and his special assistant for public affairs, Herbert E. Hetu, to improve the flow of legitimate information from the Agency to the public during the Carter Administration, Martin had had to become accustomed to using pay phones and calling people at home in the dark of

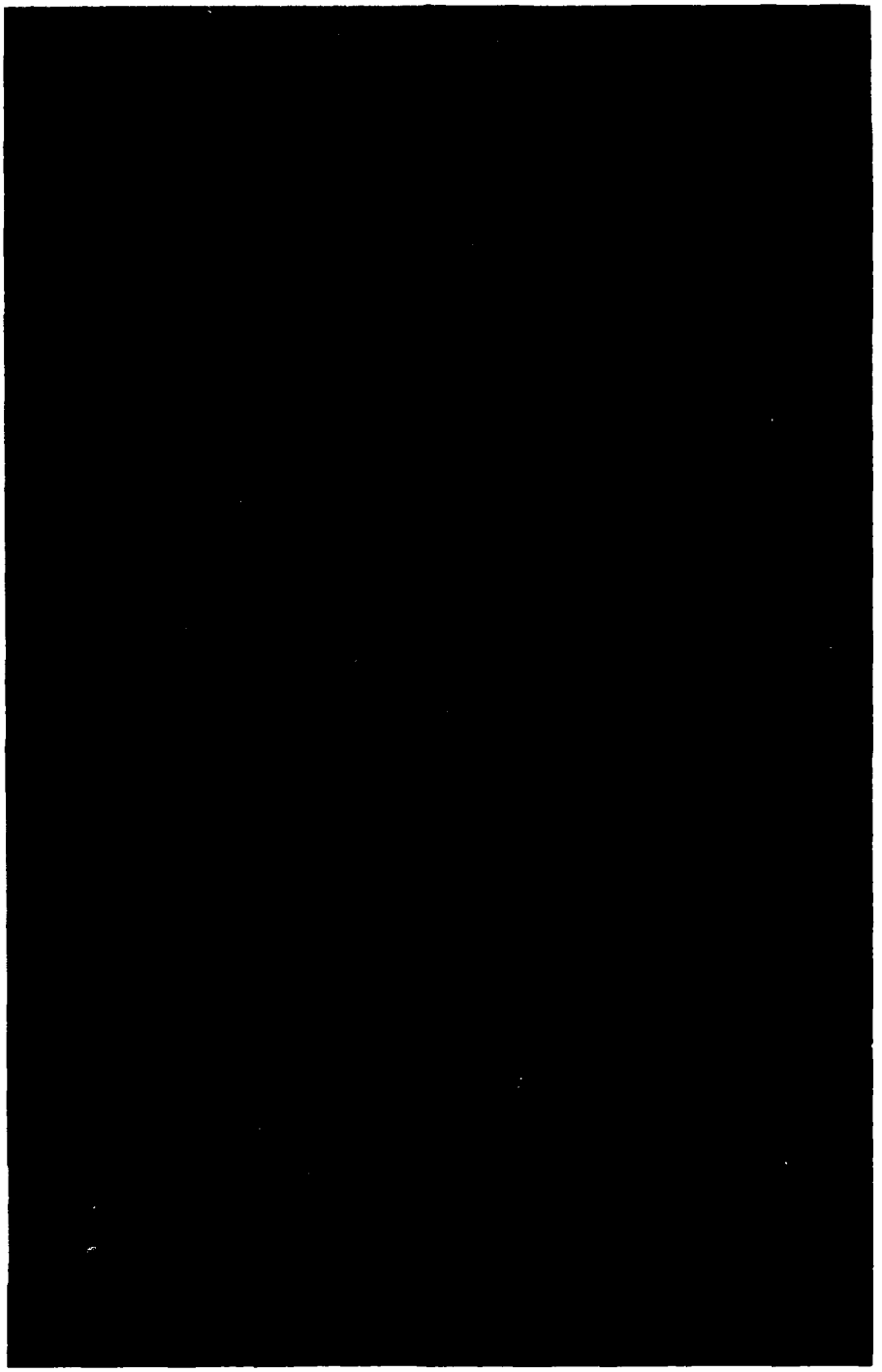
night to obtain information he wanted. At the Pentagon he found the information flow quite different, even fantastic in comparison with CIA.

Martin was not immediately happy at his new home. He arrived on the national defense beat at a time when Richard Burt of the *New York Times* seemed to have a direct pipeline to National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski. The standard joke of the time was that when Burt talked, you could see Brzezinski's lips move. The national defense story was coming from the White House, via the *Times*. Martin had no pipeline to Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, a man known for his brilliance but not for his eagerness to talk to newsmen. Even had there been an inside source for Martin, he arrived on the scene when no one at *Newsweek* cared much about the national defense story. What fun is there for an investigative reporter when he has no inside confidant, when he can get tons of information just by asking, and when his editors don't think there's much of a story on his beat?

Events changed things for David Martin, and Martin changed his views as he stayed longer in the Pentagon traces. The national defense story began to heat up, with SALT, Afghanistan, Iran, and military issues in the Presidential campaign. Martin began to work with and through the system more than he had in the past, and to be somewhat less suspicious of it. With the coming of the Reagan Administration, the national defense story was more often told from the Pentagon than from the White House. *Newsweek* could even reach the Secretary of Defense by telephone! Martin was still skeptical, his frame of mind when he arrived on the beat, but less so.

He also liked the beat a lot. It was hot. He was getting in the magazine with a regularity that had eluded Lloyd Norman since the end of the Vietnam War. He knew how to package his material for the editors in New York. "It's ambition-oriented," Martin admits. "If it gets you in the magazine it's a good beat." From the Pentagon post, he still contributed significantly to intelligence stories, such as the magazine's 23 November 1981 cover story on "The KGB's Spies in America." Martin now had inside sources, knew which information to ask for, and had editors who thought there was a big story on his beat.

Just as David Martin views national defense with skepticism, so does *Newsweek*. The magazine was founded in 1933 with a format almost identical to *Time's*, but with less opinion injected into its columns. David Halberstam describes *Newsweek* of the 1950s as "weak and bloodless," a more peaceful, stuffier version of *Time*. By 1961, when *Newsweek* was sold to *Washington Post* publisher Philip L. Graham, its circulation was one and a half million, it had a competent



David Martin, *Newsweek*

staff, and it was ready for revitalization.[6] *Newsweek* became big-time, but did not immediately gain a reputation, as some had expected it to, for being a strident liberal answer to conservative *Time*. Still, David Martin points out: "The advantage of writing for *Newsweek*, or any weekly, is that you get to inject a point of view—you just get to editorialize more." Military officials have not given much thought to the finer points of news magazine editorial views. One survey indicated that *Newsweek* was considered more fair and unbiased than *Time* by a group of senior officers, but showed that they were regular readers of *Time* by a two to one margin. They were as likely to be regular readers of *US News* as *Newsweek,* and considered the former more fair and unbiased than either *Newsweek* or *Time.*[7]

Despite the *Washington Post* affiliation, *Newsweek's* editorial decisions are made in New York. In fact, there is almost no editorial cooperation between the two publications and the New York City headquarters location affects the magazine. A story that appears in the *New York Times* and catches the eye of *Newsweek* editors in the city is likely to be high on their agenda. A story spawned by the initiative of *Newsweek's* Washington bureau, or put on the menu because the Washington staff knows it is important, frequently must compete for space in the magazine with stories that have appeared in New York simply because the New York editors perceive those stories to be important. Not only does it matter who initiates a particular story, it also matters if *Time* is interested in the same story. Each magazine seems to have excellent intelligence about what the other is doing. For example, in 1981 Martin began work on a long-range project in which he would have about five or six weeks to produce a defense cover story. During the first week of interviews, he came across *Time's* footprints. *Newsweek* immediately decided to compress its schedule in order to beat *Time* into print. *Newsweek's* cover story on defense ran 8 June. *Time* waited six more weeks to run its cover story.

Newsweek's lead paragraph in its defense cover story in June 1981 indicated the magazine's skepticism on the subject this way:

> It will cost an unfathomable $1.5 trillion over the next five years, fundamentally alter the economy, and radically change America's military posture in the world. Yet for all its revolutionary impact, the massive defense buildup planned by the Reagan Administration—the largest peacetime rearmament since World War II—has so far drawn little dissent. Even more surprising, the buildup is going ahead without any clear strategy—except to send a signal of American resolve to the Soviet Union. In a very real

> sense, the Administration is throwing money at the problem of national defense.

Unfathomable? Fundamentally altered? Radically changed? Revolutionary impact? Massive? Little dissent? No clear strategy? Throwing money? No doubt about one thing: the opening was an attention-getter and it was skeptical. It also demonstrated the magazine's willingness and ability to editorialize in its news reports.

For a routine story at *Newsweek,* the editorial process works like this, according to David Martin:

> There are some preliminary discussions between Washington and New York of potential stories on Monday and even on Saturday of the preceding week, but the real decisions do not begin to be made until Tuesday when the Washington bureau chief and the senior editors in New York begin their work week. That's the first time stories start to get in or out of the magazine.
>
> So if you see something coming, you start selling it. Tuesday is the day to start selling it. One way to sell it is to send an advisory, which is a one page written memo in essence telling them what the story is. You try and make it as sexy as possible so the editors will buy it. If they do buy it they send you a query which is an outline of how they see the story going, and if it goes that way, these are sort of the questions they want answered in the course of your reporting.

That's when the serious work starts. Martin continues:

> Frequently the story changes when you start to get into it. Inevitably, in doing a quick advisory, you've made a lot of simplistic judgments which don't hold up after you've talked to two or three people. So the story changes. Lots of times it collapses from under you. You say sorry the story's not there. Sometimes it gets better, in which case you say I need three columns, I need six columns. And a lot of times it goes as you had expected it to.
>
> You file the story on Thursday night. The writers write it in New York on Friday. Then you have arguments on Saturday. . . . Lots of times on Friday and on Saturday when the story is read back to you on the phone you'll find that the writer either missed your point or rejected your point. So you will get into an argument. Those things can become fairly contentious. But frequently, the writer has improved the story filed by the reporter.

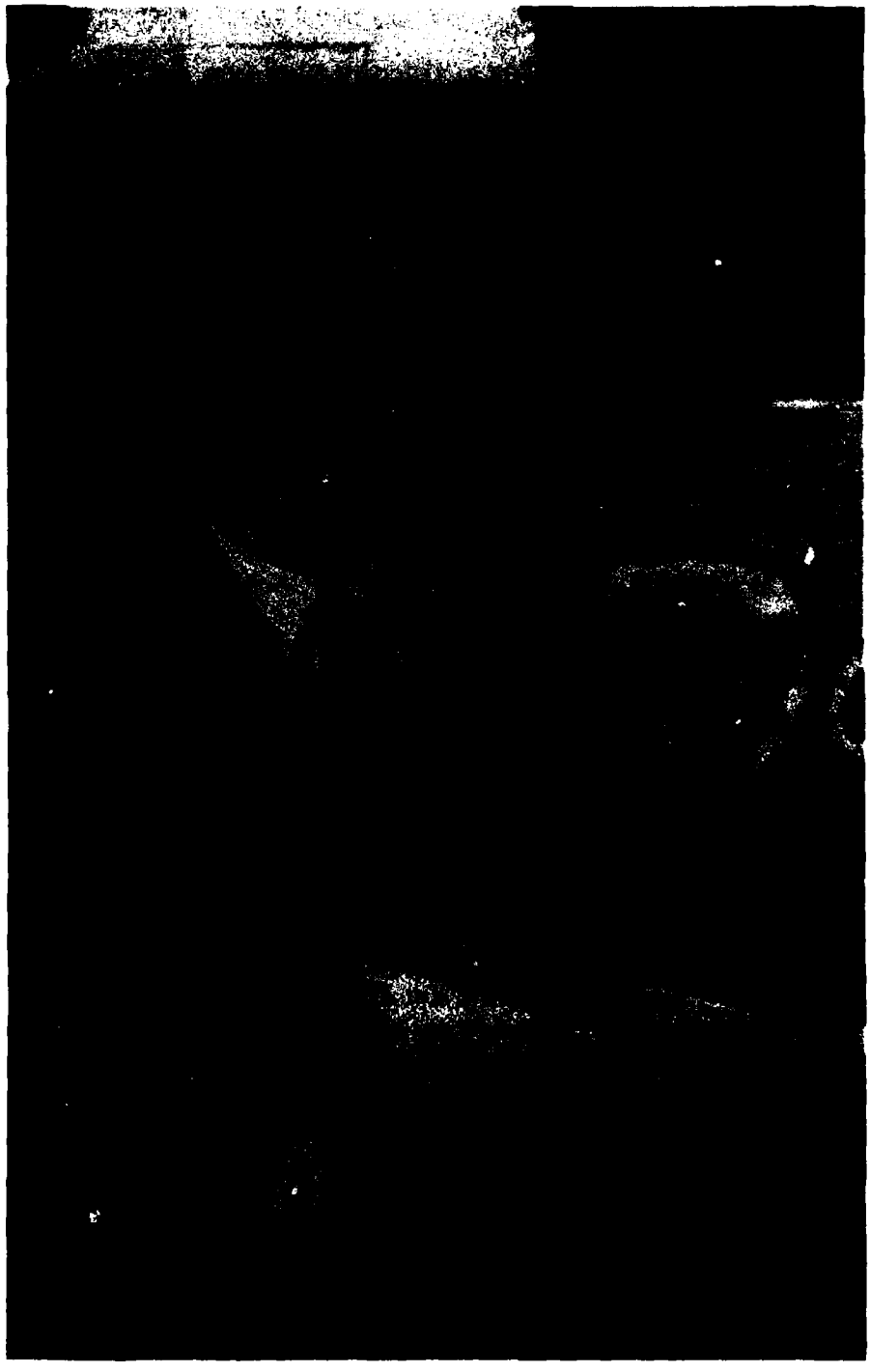
New York may occasionally improve his stories, but David Martin's work is solid. Sharp, quick, and successful in getting in the magazine, Martin earned respect from his Pentagon reporter colleagues, and in 1983 CBS hired him.

Time

At *Time*, there is a similar productive interchange between the Washington bureau and New York on a daily basis by telephone and by Telex. *Time's* Washington story conference, chaired by the bureau chief, is on Monday. A suggested story list goes to New York. Editors of the various sections of the magazine respond. At *Time*, nothing is written until the subject is approved in New York. The week's activity revolves around a negotiated, agreed-to agenda.

Time has traditionally assigned people with overseas experience to cover national defense in Washington. Their idea is that national security is interrelated with foreign affairs. *Time's* reporters should be able to look at national security happenings in a foreign-policy context. In past years, *Time's* beats were so structured that its Pentagon reporter did not have the freedom to roam to places other than the Pentagon—such as the White House and Congress, where national security policy was being discussed and decided. Some baron in New York would put the story together based on reports from various *Time* fiefdoms. That's no longer the way *Time* does it, however. When Bruce W. Nelan returned to the defense beat from three years as the magazine's Moscow correspondent in 1981, he could call himself *Time's* National Security Correspondent. Nelan could also claim—if *Time* correspondents were immodest, which they generally find unnecessary—to be writing for the most influential publication in the world.

An excellent case can be made for calling *Time* the number-one outlet in print journalism. *Time* leads all news publications in readers by a comfortable margin. In 1981 the magazine's US circulation was 4,476,500. Foreign edition sales accounted for 1,312,185 more. *Newsweek* distributed 2,955,099 copies in the United States, adding 541,307 with its international edition. *US News and World Report* had 2,103,074 total, with no foreign edition. *Business Week* had 762,582 circulation in the United States and claimed another 85,000 for its international edition. In a country with no truly national newspaper, *Time* reaches more people across a broader geographic spectrum of the country than anything else in print. Add to that the demographics of its readership,



Bruce Nelan, *Time*

tending toward higher literacy and greater affluence, and its impact on the national dialogue is obvious.

Time also can lay claim to being number one because of its heritage. Henry Luce, founder of the magazine, is credited with inventing the journalistic phenomenon we now call the news magazine, complete with a special style of writing.[8] *Time's* management in the 1920s, as publication began, felt that influential people were uninformed because no publication adapted itself to the sparse amount of time busy people have for keeping themselves informed. Ironically, the magazine that pioneered a unique form of group journalism had as its own slogan: "*Time* is written as if by one man for one man."[9]

Luce was strong-willed and conservative. So was his magazine. Founder of a publishing empire (*Fortune, Life, Sports Illustrated*), he was a towering influence on the content of *Time* until 1964 when, at age 66, he stepped aside as Editor-in-Chief of all Time, Inc., publications. In the 1950s and 1960s, Luce was an ardent cold warrior. *Time* magazine named as its "Man of the Year" in 1950 "the American Fighting Man." Luce told his friend Joe Kennedy in 1960: "If Jack shows any signs of going soft on Communism [in foreign policy]—then we would clobber him."[10] President Kennedy's special assistant, Theodore Sorensen, said that, in John Kennedy's opinion, *Time* was "consistently slanted, unfair, and inaccurate in its treatment of the Presidency, highly readable but highly misleading."[11]

The Far East, China in particular, was a special-interest area for the Luce empire. One biographer said that Luce, who was born in Tengchow of American Presbyterian missionary parents, "pushed his belief that Vietnam offered one more chance for the American century which had been repulsed in China," that he "led, not followed, the nation into war," and "manipulated 50 million people weekly."[12] In 1965, *Time* named General William C. Westmoreland "Man of the Year." After Luce, the organization moved slightly more toward the center of the national political spectrum. Having supported the US government fully on Vietnam, *Time* began to call for a change in US policy in 1968, much to the personal displeasure of President Lyndon Johnson. David Halberstam later wrote: "*Time* knew what it wanted in Saigon, it knew what should happen. If the war had been fought along the lines it wanted, if ARVN had only been as strong, and the other side as illegitimate, as *Time's* New York editors wanted, then its reporting would have been very accurate. Unfortunately, what took place in the field and what New York *wanted* to take place were very different."[13]

Time's "sober view of the world and innate Republicanism" has kept it, and still keeps it, from being antimilitary, according to correspondent Bruce Nelan. But there was a period after Vietnam when the magazine just didn't write about defense. This has changed. For example, *Time's* 27 July 1981 issue devoted its cover to Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, and its cover story ("How to Spend a Trillion") to national defense. The cover illustration by Marvin Mattelson showed Weinberger in front of dollar signs (in red) with military missiles as vertical hashmarks on the dollar signs. Inside, under headlines "Arming for the 80's" and "The Trillion-dollar Question: What Kind of Defense to Buy?" *Time* led with a snap at the jugular: "The issue is nothing less than how best to deter a Soviet nuclear attack on the US." The slant was different from *Newsweek's* cover story of six weeks earlier, but the concerns were much the same. In twelve pages of pictures and text, *Time* gave the issues *and* the answers, concluding that "Reagan and Weinberger have a once-in-a-generation chance to forge a lasting consensus for a forceful military policy," and warning that "Congress and the nation will strongly support increased military outlays—if the Administration sets clear priorities for a sustained buildup. But that support will be quickly lost if the rearmament program is perceived as nothing more than a crash attempt to solve America's serious national defense problems by merely throwing money at them."

To produce its defense cover story, *Time* devoted resources in a way it might have found to be overkill in a government venture. John A. Meyer, in a letter from the publisher on page one of the issue, revealed with pride the following mobilization of *Time's* forces:

- To get photographs for the story, photographer Neil Leiger spent four days in basic training with a brigade at Ft. Knox, Kentucky.

- Photographer Mark Meyer visited a Strategic Air Command base in the Northeast and joined a B-52 bomber crew on a simulated nuclear-alert mission. After getting a look at a Boeing air-launched cruise missile plant in Seattle, Meyer moved on to Eglin Air Force Base in Florida, where he covered one of the largest peacetime parachute drops in US history.

- Chicago correspondent Patricia Delaney, who as a child had visited uncles who were resident officers at Fort Sheridan and the Great Lakes Naval Training Center, returned to both bases and found that for today's officers the quality of life has "deteriorated sharply."

- Bonn correspondent Lee Griggs was also struck by the poor conditions he encountered as he traveled to US bases across West Germany.

- Aerospace correspondent Jerry Hannifin talked with Army generals, civilian experts, scientists, and military aviators. He also went for a test ride in the Navy F-18, the latest US combat plane, to assess sophisticated, modern weaponry.

- Correspondent Roberto Suro, then *Time's* man at the Pentagon, spent five weeks tracking Defense Secretary Weinberger. He also interviewed academic experts and defense industry executives.

- Correspondent Johanna McGeary got both Republican and Democratic views of the issue in Congress.

This army of reporters and photographers gave *Time* senior writer George J. Church all any journalistic general could want as he wrote the cover story. That's the way *Time* does it, with resources galore and talented, well-paid people.

Time's renewed interest in defense coverage was evident in the reassignment of reporter Nelan to his second round on the beat. A sole surviving son whose brother died in Germany in World War II, Nelan had no military service in the draft days of the 1950s. But returning to the military assignment at age 47 in 1981, he brought with him academic and journalistic credentials few of his colleagues could match. A graduate of the University of Illinois journalism school, Nelan worked as a police reporter for the *Chicago Sun-Times* for three years before heading for the Graduate School of International Affairs and Russian Institute at Columbia University. After two years at Columbia, he worked for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: the idea was citizen education to prompt the American people to pay more thoughtful attention to world affairs. Nelan concluded that anything he could do toward this goal there would be marginal. He then went to work for *Time*, where there might be more to gain on the margin.

After a stint as a State Department reporter Nelan became, in 1968, *Time's* Hong Kong bureau chief. From there he followed the cultural revolution in China—a nation still of great interest to the people at *Time* despite the departure of Luce. In 1972, Nelan went to Bonn, covering East and West Germany, Austria, and Scandinavia. Nelan was repatriated to the United States in 1976 for a tour as defense

correspondent. He found *Time's* interest in defense stories picking up somewhat after a post-Vietnam lull. His editors in New York recognized as news the B-1 bomber, aircraft carrier, and Army tank decisions. In 1978, replaced at the Pentagon by Don Sider, Nelan began a three-year assignment in Moscow for *Time*. Despite his background in Russian studies, or perhaps because of it, Nelan found the Soviet Union a depressing place for a reporter. His wife Rose, whose mentor in Soviet Studies at Columbia had been Zbigniew Brzezinski, liked the place better than he. Ballet lessons at the Bolshoi helped make the stay more enjoyable for her—and she did not have to produce intimately detailed information about Russia for *Time*.

For Bruce Nelan, returning to the defense assignment was like being welcomed back to the National Football League. He was reporting big stories right away. The 12 October 1981 issue of *Time* showed him with the lead story, on the Reagan Administration's strategic decision to build the MX missile and the B-1 bomber. His story concluded that "the judgment still lingers that Reagan, after claiming that the United States had allowed a window of vulnerability to fly open, had still failed to shut it tight." Nelan also reported the second story in that issue, on a subject right down his alley: the US Department of Defense report on Soviet military power.

Nelan found information flowing in the Pentagon in much the same way it had when he had left, three years earlier:

> There are always a few [military] officers who are intelligent enough and willing enough to discuss the issues forthrightly. That's the minority. The rest are scared stiff. Or they hate you. Or don't want anything to do with you because it's not going to do their careers any good. Or they can make a mistake and say too much. Anyway they don't want to talk to you. On the civilian side, again it depends on the individual to a large degree, but there is always more willingness on the part of the civilian side to talk to you. Of course they are harder to get to. They're busy, and their schedules are awful. And it's not so important for them to deal with the press on a daily basis. So it's really a question of how well you have developed your relationship with some people so you can call on them on short notice and get them to talk.

Nelan expands on official attitudes toward the press:

> Bureaucrats in general feel that talking to a reporter is unlikely to do them any good and is very likely to do them some harm. I can sympathize with that attitude. They can get in trouble and have

> problems if they put their foot wrong. But they don't properly appreciate the other side of the coin, which is that they could really do themselves some good if they could communicate. I don't mean that they are going to sell themselves to the public through the press. I mean if they properly perform the function of communication—that is, explanation and illumination of policy and what the hell is going on—if they do a good job at that, that's something very important. I think it ought to be recognized as something important. But they don't look at it that way. "This guy is going to burn me, and if he doesn't burn me he's not really going to advance me much, so to hell with it." A true politician knows better.

Nelan sees the defense story as one of continuing interest to his magazine. The whole question of the defense budget and its impact on social programs is a large and immediate story. Strategic arms reductions are potentially a huge story, especially for a Soviet expert. The future of NATO is a major security issue that blends politics and military affairs. Whatever the stories, it is clear that, in the decade of the 1980s, serious attention at *Time* will be on national defense. The other weekly news magazines seem to agree.

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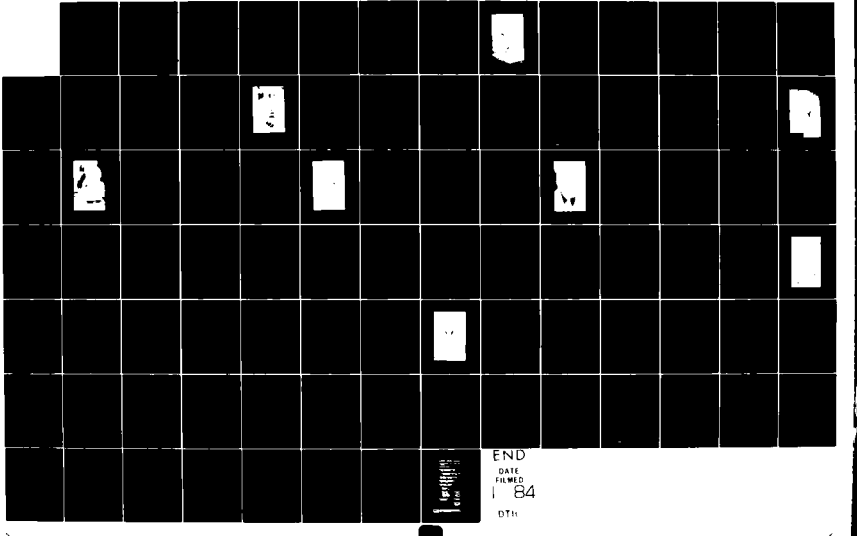

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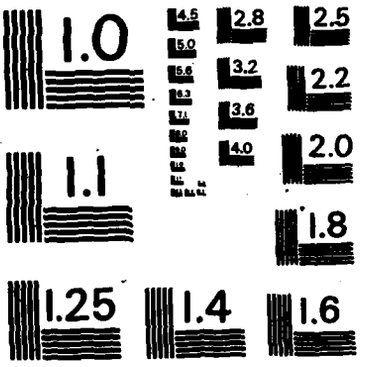

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NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS - 1963 - A

6
TECHNICAL AND POLICY PUBLICATIONS

"Technical and policy publications"—sounds dull, but it's not. Technical journals featuring national defense may be difficult to comprehend because of the specialized material they contain. But the process by which they get their news, and their significance in the murky but real world of warfare, makes them lively subjects for study.

Technical and policy publications serve a specialized national defense readership. Generally, their readers are people who want *more* information in various categories: more engineering detail, more about the policy debates, more complete details of proposals by program advocates, more information about contracts, or a more informed view of the likely trends in US national defense matters. Readers of technical and policy publications include policymakers and technicians who work for the Department of Defense or defense industries, congressional staff members, policy advocates, journalists—and foreign intelligence services, including the Soviet KGB.

Aviation Week and Space Technology

In early 1982, as the American government went through one of its periodic crackdowns aimed at reducing leaks of sensitive defense information to the media, CBS News reported that although the crackdown had been initiated because of a leak to a newspaper of information about budget projections, the only serious recent breach of security known to intelligence officials was publication of a US recon-

naissance photograph by the magazine *Aviation Week and Space Technology*.

A few months earlier, in a cover story on Soviet intelligence activity in the United States, *Newsweek* said *Aviation Week* was so valuable to the KGB that each issue was flown immediately to Moscow and translated en route. In the 1970s, *Aviation Week* created national controversy by publishing material asserting that the Soviet Union was working on a beam of charged particles that could knock missiles from the sky. How does one technical publication, otherwise obscure, rate such attention, and why are its reporters permitted to nose around freely in the Pentagon's business? Vernon A. Guidry, Jr., writing in the *Washington Star* in 1979, explained that to the bulk of the technocrats, bureaucrats, and businessmen reading *Av Week*, as it is called, the magazine is one of the main means by which the members of the military-industrial-governmental complex persuade and pressure each other. If it were not already in existence, he maintained, "the aerospace business would have to invent an *Av Week*."

The magazine is a significant and respected source for journalists who cover national defense for more general audiences. Yet editorial work at *Aviation Week* is defined by a narrow charter: the magazine is interested only in the aerospace industry, commercial and military. People read it for detailed reporting about technology. It gives specialists something they cannot get from the daily press, radio, or television. It has become the premier publication in its field, in part because of its reputation for accuracy with a most critical audience—engineers, aerodynamicists, and military officers.

Aviation Week and *Business Week* are the two most autonomous publications in the McGraw-Hill stable of technical journals. *Av Week*, unlike *Business Week*, does not use the McGraw-Hill World News Service. In fact, it prints no news-service stories. Everything in the magazine is generated by its own staff. In the case of defense news, that staff consists mainly of its energetic senior military editor, Clarence A. (Rob) Robinson. Robinson is the intuitive brand of reporter. Hunches hit him. He spots nuggets of news in conversations with officials or technicians. Something jumps out at him. He begins to look for more details. He may get a tip from a senior official in the Pentagon, then talk to half a dozen people to fill in the details. It is indeed like intelligence work.

So why do senior officials at the Pentagon, his most fruitful source of information, talk to Robinson? One reason—besides the usual interest in program advocacy—is that he trades information. Robinson

contacts three to five key people a day in the Pentagon, on Capitol Hill, or at the White House (he does not rely solely on industry sources, and discounts think-tanks completely) just to talk about what's going on. He is willing to share with them what he knows—the latest twist or turn in a program or contract. They find such information useful in the Byzantine world of defense politics, where one-upmanship is often key to survival. Robinson is a private sounding board and an information source. His magazine can also become a megaphone for ideas and viewpoints.

Another reason for Robinson's access—along with representing the leading publication in defense technology and trading information with contacts—is the personal rapport he is able to establish with military personnel, especially aviators. Robinson's age, 49 in 1982, is close to that of the colonels and Navy captains or bright young flag and general officers in the military. He served 21 years in the Marine Corps, first as an enlisted man and then as a combat operations and aviation officer, and had been selected for lieutenant colonel when he requested retirement to accept an offer from *Aviation Week*.

Robinson's record can be coded as macho. He was a high-school football player and boxer. While at Auburn University and in the Marine Corps Reserves in 1951, he was called to active duty as the Korean War started. Four weeks and no boot camp later, he was manning a flame thrower in combat. In Korea, he gained combat meritorious promotions to corporal and sergeant as a machinegun squad and assault platoon leader. Recommended for a battlefield commission, he did not get it because of injuries he had sustained as a boxer. (The physical criteria then being applied by the Marines for new officers were the same as for commissioning from the Naval Academy.) Robinson decided to stay in the Marines anyway, and was finally commissioned in 1960—in time for three tours in Vietnam. He was an advisor to the South Vietnamese Rangers, gaining flight status, with no flight training, as an aerial observer who could read a map in a spotter aircraft or a helicopter. In 1968 he was a battalion operations officer, in combat daily.

Off and on during his Marine Corps career, Robinson wrote and took pictures as a sideline. He did free-lance magazine articles for adventure publications like *Argosy* magazine and scripts for television shows like *Sea Hunt*. For three years he worked thirty off-duty hours a week as a photo-journalist for the *Kansas City Star*, which offered him the part-time job after learning that he was the Clarence Robinson whose Vietnam combat photographs had been used extensively by the wire services.

In the early 1970s, Robinson was working on the Marine Corps' Harrier vertical takeoff aircraft program at Cherry Point, North Carolina, when *Aviation Week* editor Robert Hotz asked him to visit Washington for a job interview. He did so, on the off chance, but the interview with Hotz lasted four and a half hours. The magazine made Robinson an offer he could hardly refuse. On the day he retired from the Marine Corps, Robinson moved to Washington; he began work for *Av Week* the next day. Under Hotz's tutelage, Robinson began to come up with story after good story. He received the same support and backing from Hotz's successor at the magazine, former Navy fighter pilot William Gregory. In 1981, he graduated from Harvard's program for executives.

Despite its notoriety for disclosing sensitive information, *Aviation Week* does not publish stories it considers absolutely injurious to the country. The magazine can point to instances in which it cooperated with government requests to withhold information. Most of these examples include eventually being beaten on the story by another news organization because the government did not honor its side of the bargain—usually a commitment that if the story was about to be published, *Aviation Week* would be notified. George Wilson, in his days with the magazine, saw evidence of this frustrating official disregard for commitments. At the Defense Department's request, *Aviation Week* held back a story on the high-altitude reconnaissance aircraft that was to become the successor to the U-2. Then, as Wilson recalls events, President Lyndon Johnson asked his cabinet for ideas for a news conference. Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara volunteered the details of the new reconnaissance plane, saying announcement would show that the administration had developed a new and highly sophisticated piece of military equipment. Besides, McNamara said, *Aviation Week* was going to break secrecy anyway. The magazine had its own rug pulled from under it.[1]

Aviation Week's version of its relationship with government includes other examples of holding stories and being beaten on them: the sale of Harrier aircraft to Spain, for example. The magazine further claims it had an article on the secret Stealth aircraft technology ready to be published two years before the plane's existence was confirmed by Pentagon officials. A closely held military development, Stealth was disclosed by the Defense Department during the 1980 election campaign. *Av Week's* Stealth article had, two years earlier, gone through the Pentagon's security review process. (*Aviation Week* occasionally submits its copy for Pentagon review when it makes an advance agreement to do so in connection with a special issue on a single subject like naval air, the Air Force, or strategic forces.) No one knew enough about

the aircraft to stop the article until it reached a top-level Air Force general, who called at the last minute and requested that the Stealth story be taken out of the issue. It was deleted. The issue appeared with about an inch of blank space on one page because the editors did not have a story of the same length to insert as the presses were about to roll. Two years later, another publication received national attention when a defense official allegedly provided information about Stealth and encouraged publication of an article about it. Again, *Av Week* felt cheated.

By happy contrast, *Aviation Week* finally broke its own story on particle beams after two years of waiting at the request of an Assistant Secretary of Defense. Most amazing of all is the magazine's claim that it knew in advance about preparations for the Iran hostage rescue mission, but held the story. *Aviation Week* contends that one of the nation's highest military officers, aware of this, promised the magazine a helicopter seat on the second rescue attempt which, of course, never took place.

Aviation Week officials discount allegations that they are unduly assisting Soviet information gathering. They say that with the nature of the US system, including detailed congressional hearings and reports, the Soviets have all the information they can absorb. The interesting phenomenon about the Soviets, they say, is the extent to which the Russians censor translations of *Av Week* intended for Soviet officials. Low-level officials receive the magazine with blank sections—indicating that something *Aviation Week* reported about the Soviet Union has been deleted. Higher officials get the full magazine.

What purpose does *Aviation Week* serve? Its defenders argue that the Pentagon, a building full of sycophants who labor to tell the boss what he wants to hear, is better off because of the stimulating, unbiased, timely discussion of technical issues the magazine provides.

Defense technology is of serious concern to the experts at *Aviation Week*. They are worried because they believe US technology is slowing down, and not being adequately funded. They see technology, the area in which the United States has been far ahead of the rest of the world, losing its momentum. The United States has become too safety-minded and too insulated. It tries to perfect systems to prevent failures completely, and that goal slows the entire process. As it takes longer, development of technology costs more. Then programs become unaffordable. The United States has crippled itself and is losing ground to the rest of the world. The Soviet Union is not the only fleet runner gaining on the United States. Europeans are making inroads in

ordnance, in guidance systems, in navigation components, in inertial systems, and in all sorts of areas where they previously had almost no capability.

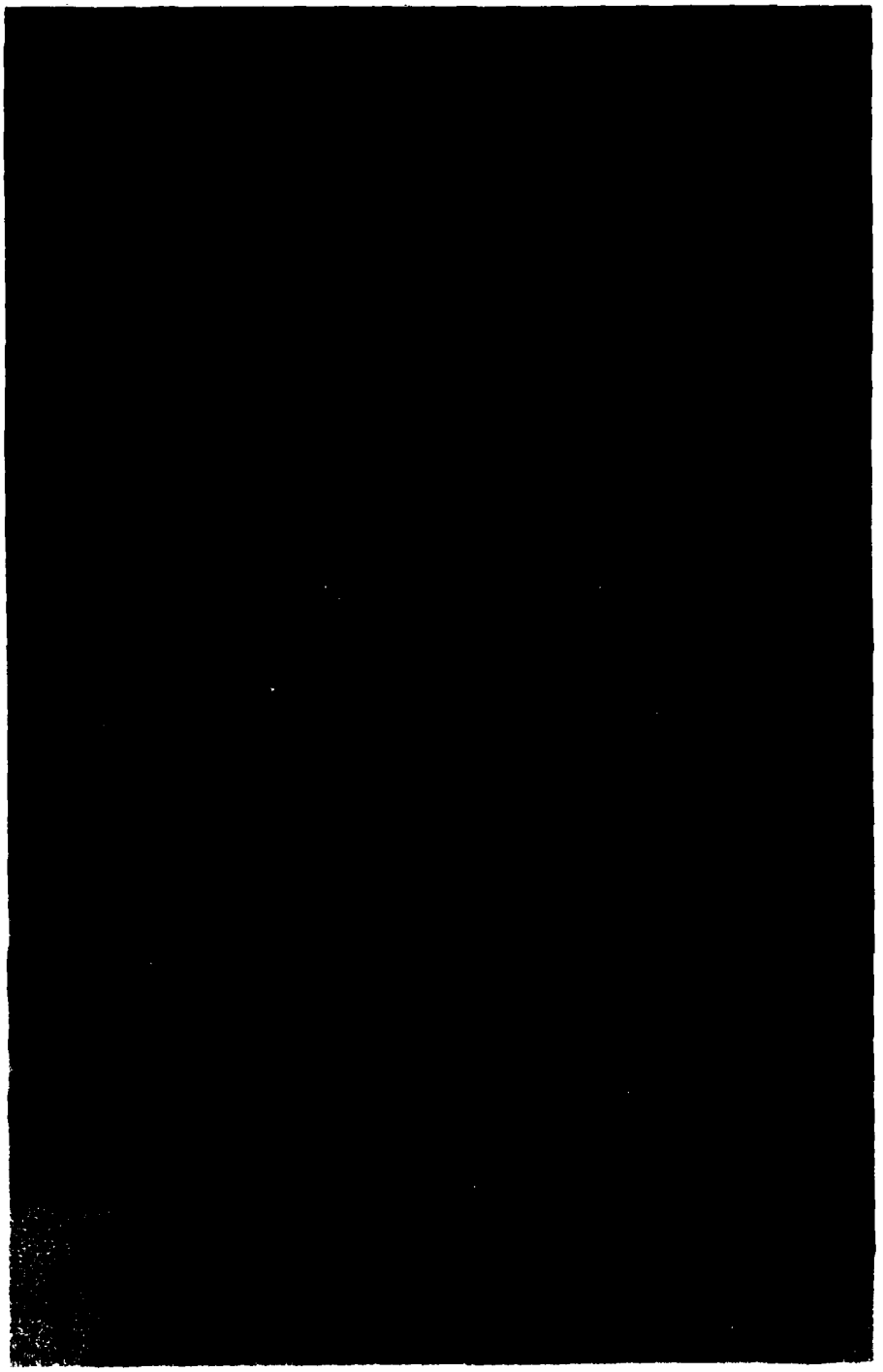
Observers at *Aviation Week* feel that everyone is beating the United States in weapons technology, the one area the United States counted on to make the difference in a world where trends in other measures of military strength have long since gone against it. *Aviation Week* was reporting a dozen years ago that the United States was moving toward a position of inferiority to the Russians in technology, and saying that it had better do something to keep from becoming second to the Soviets in military power. In the 1980s, the magazine's message has been equally gloomy—and it cannot be sure this message is being received beyond the specialized readership that holds its reporting and analysis in high regard.

Armed Forces Journal International

Descriptions like "authoritative" and "highly respected" and "well-informed" and "objective" and "a leader in its class" have been used to describe *Armed Forces Journal International* in recent years. The privately owned monthly magazine has received kudos from a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Time* magazine, members of Congress, and defense industrialists. Then Congressman Otis G. Pike said the magazine is "not simply an apologist for the Pentagon. It praises them when it thinks they are right and raps them when it thinks they are wrong."

Indeed, the *Journal*—under the aggressive leadership of editor Benjamin J. Schemmer—does a lot of rapping. It has done some unwrapping too, most notably in disclosing information on the revolutionary Stealth aircraft technology in 1980. In that case, the *Journal* had written about essential elements of the program more than two years earlier, but had withheld publication at the Pentagon's request on national security grounds. Then, as Schemmer later testified before a congressional committee investigating the disclosure, he was given still newer details about the program by a senior defense official, and invited to write an article about it. Critics of the disclosure say that it was made so the Carter Administration, then seeking to justify its decision not to continue development of the B-1 bomber, could announce the existence of the Stealth technology.

The *Journal's* Stealth article was provided to Under Secretary of



Ben Schemmer, Editor of *Armed Forces Journal International*

Defense for Research and Engineering William J. Perry for review before publication, and editor Schemmer agreed to delete several references to technical details. Schemmer told Congress he was advised that Secretary of Defense Harold Brown would not announce the Air Force's secret project until the *Journal* article appeared. Schemmer said that in his view, the decision to disclose details of the program was "irresponsible." In an official statement, the Department of Defense countered that "in view of the fact that Schemmer had withheld information for two years, and with the approval of the Secretary of Defense, Perry scheduled an appointment with Schemmer . . . , told him that we judged that the program's existence was no longer protected and offered to answer questions that could be answered within security guidelines." The Pentagon denied that Mr. Perry had encouraged Schemmer to write an article, saying that Secretary Brown had "tentative plans" for a news conference on the Stealth program before Mr. Perry met with Mr. Schemmer.

The Stealth incident prompted then-candidate Ronald Reagan to accuse the Carter Administration of compromising US security by leaking secret national security information for political purposes. He charged that the information was leaked to "blur" the Carter Administration's "dismal defense record," and called the disclosure a "cynical misuse of power and clear abuse of the public trust." In making his accusation, Mr. Reagan relied heavily on Schemmer's congressional testimony, quoting Schemmer three times and the *Journal* four times in a speech he gave in three different cities in one day.

Armed Forces Journal International is more a policy publication than one focusing on the arcane details of technology, the way *Aviation Week* does. For that reason, and because it deals with across-the-board issues in defense, the magazine considers itself unique. A humorist might explain the difference this way:

> If the Navy's F-18 fleet of aircraft were suddenly grounded because of a rash of flat tires, the *Journal* would report on the controversial and highly politicized history of the F-18 program, assess the implication of the grounding for tactical air warfare in the US military services, and question the steadiness of overseas F-18 sales in light of the new development. On the other hand, *Aviation Week* would headline its story "McDonnell Douglas and Navy Initiate F-18 Product Improvement Review."

The anecdote is overdrawn, but gets to the essential difference in editorial approach between the *Journal,* a policy publication, and *Av Week,* a technical publication.

Armed Forces Journal has a long history with distinct ups and downs, both financially and editorially. The publication began as a weekly magazine in newspaper format during the Civil War. Such luminaries as Henry Ward Beecher, Edward Everett Hale, and Ralph Waldo Emerson were concerned about the integrity of press reporting about the war, considering it irresponsible. They wanted an independent journal, without political affiliation and beholden to no clique, to report on military affairs to military professionals. Thus the *Army-Navy Journal* came into existence in August of 1863. It was an immediate financial success, even though Lincoln's Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton, was so upset by the thought of an independent journal devoted to military subjects that he asked the publishers to close it. When they did not, Stanton initiated his own publication, which failed a year later.

Then, as now, most of the *Journal's* subscribers were military officers. The publication reported everything from social news to eyewitness accounts of major battles written by the officers in command, usually under pseudonyms. In 1968, when Ben Schemmer left the Department of Defense to take charge of the magazine, it was near bankruptcy financially, and not much better off editorially. Schemmer made a series of changes, leading to the magazine's solid position of the 1980s:

- Social news was dropped as irrelevant.

- Officers' orders, except those of flag and general officers, were no longer printed—the editorial burden had been tedious and enormous, and, given progress since World War II in disseminating new assignments and promotions almost instantaneously worldwide, readers were able to get the information from other sources.

- Bills introduced before Congress that might affect the military were no longer published without exception. In the past, such bills had a good chance for floor debate or passage, but with modern Congresses they were often meaningless and likely to raise false hopes or concerns.

- Writing by military officers, once career-enhancing, but now hazardous, almost ceased to appear in the magazine—although Schemmer's habit of using pseudonyms for his contributors left the door ajar for the occasional adventuresome military steeple-shaker.

- Publication changed from weekly to monthly, reflecting a magazine rather than newspaper approach.

- Advertising sales were stressed. Schemmer's first look at the advertising picture showed only one full-page advertisement scheduled for all of 1968, and advertising was supposed to account for some 70 percent of income. LuAnne K. Levens became first advertising manager, then publisher of the magazine.

By the time the 1980s arrived, editor Schemmer was able to concentrate on the professional interest that motivated him supremely—he was in love with his typewriter. Schemmer, 50 years old in April 1982, is a South Dakota native who graduated from West Point in 1954. An infantry officer, he left the Army in 1959 to work for Boeing. In January 1965 he became a consultant for the Army at the Pentagon, and by May of that year was working in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. When he left government to take over the *Journal,* he was a GS-16 grade civilian Director of Land Force Weapons Systems in the department's systems analysis section.

But Schemmer wanted to write. He also wanted to make *Armed Forces Journal* a sort of lively defense equivalent of *Foreign Affairs* quarterly. By 1982, in addition to his work at the *Journal,* he had written two books and numerous articles for major publications. He was at work on an unauthorized biography of Alexander Haig, whom Schemmer had known for years, and two other books. His favorite one was *Because It's There,* the story of engineers and scientists inventing solutions to problems that don't exist.

The aim of the *Journal* in 1982, unabashedly, is "to assure military preparedness for the United States." Its readership averages about 22,000. Slightly more than half of these are military officers, representing each of the services proportionally. Although the name of the *Journal* was changed by adding the word "International," that refers to world-context editorial coverage rather than an overseas circulation of great note. One overseas institutional customer found its subscription canceled in 1979. The Soviet Embassy in Washington had subscribed to the magazine in bulk, and 17 subscriptions went to Russia directly—until the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. *Armed Forces Journal International* discontinued the subscription, and sent a letter explaining why. Presumably, the Russians are still able to obtain the magazine, by more covert means.

The management of *Armed Forces Journal* would prefer not to help the Soviets, or any other adversary of the United States, Stealth

stories notwithstanding. Therefore, editor Schemmer "salutes" government efforts to limit the disclosure of classified information to the news media. He contends that "the system doesn't leak—it's been hemorrhaging, increasingly so." However, Schemmer says the idea of asking military officers sworn to duty, honor, and country to take lie detector tests "offends me immensely." The *Journal* has long proposed, instead, some form of Official Secrets Act and Britain's D-Notice system, by which the government could instruct news organizations to refrain from using specific secret information.[2] Schemmer would not include in the secrets that he feels an obligation to protect those dealing with budget details—ones that "are only classified because the Administration wants to keep its marbles together before they present the budget to Congress." Nevertheless, he says, "With the First Amendment privilege, the press has the same responsibility that the executive, the legislative, and the judicial branches have—to account publicly for their stewardship." Schemmer enjoys quoting from an article by former Senator William Fulbright, to the effect that after years of criticism during the Vietnam War, the Senator finally understood that there were some secrets "too great for a nation to know."

Aerospace Daily, Defense Daily, and Defense Week

Three publications that rely on subscriptions rather than advertising for income have reporters covering the Pentagon regularly. *Aerospace Daily* and *Defense Daily* are eight-page newsletters published each business day and airmailed to clients. Their 1982 subscription rates are in the $600-$700 per annum range. *Defense Week*, a relative newcomer in the field, averages 14-16 pages a week, and sells for $500 a year. All three are careful not to provide information about the number of subscribers they have, since this information is proprietary. Unlike publications that rely on advertising for income, they have no business motivation for saying who subscribes or how many subscribers they have. They can assure subscribers that concerns about advertising revenues are never a factor in their editorial judgments.

AEROSPACE DAILY

Aerospace Daily provides news of programs and weapons systems of interest to the aerospace industry and those who follow it: government officials, academics, stock analysts, foreign entrepreneurs. Published by Ziff-Davis of New York, an organization specializing in consumer-oriented magazines like *Popular Photography*, the newsletter tries to describe aerospace matters in detail. Not technical in an

engineering sense, *Aerospace Daily* is quite technical in a business sense—its readers understand fixed-price-incentive contracts or fly-away as opposed to unit cost.

Aerospace Daily is represented at the Pentagon by reporter David Bond. Bond began work at the Pentagon in January 1981, after eight years covering NASA for his newsletter. Bond files an average of one major story of about 600 words per day, plus numerous odds and ends. Despite his years as a reporter in the aerospace area, Bond says, "I always consider myself to be the weak link in an information chain—I'm talking to people who are smarter than I am, and I'm writing for people who are smarter than I am." Actually, Bond has a key and demanding position at the newsletter, and his performance belies his modesty. David Bond started college at MIT, dropped out to work for a Connecticut newspaper, and returned to MIT to earn his B.S. degree in 1969, majoring in political science and minoring in math. Bond's first employer in Washington was *Aerospace Daily*. After a decade with the publication, at age 41, Bond was willing to lay claim to being a specialist in aerospace reporting. He had also revised his initial supposition about *Aerospace Daily*. He had expected it to cater to industry, and to print what industry people wanted to read about their products. On the contrary, he learned, the last thing the newsletter's customers want is to pay for a service that tells them only flattering things about their field. Bond prefers to play the news straight, leaving the editorializing to other publications, and says that is the way it is done at *Aerospace Daily*.

Some of his colleagues classify Bond as one of the reporters who, new to the Pentagon, is doing an excellent job as a result of fresh insights to the news of the building. He says, however, that he has no "new toy" feeling about the Pentagon beat. He already knew the defense aerospace field well as a result of his work at NASA. Bond's main impression about reporting from the Defense Department at a time when the general circulation media are showing enormous interest in defense programs is that the pressure is terrific. He is having to work steadily to stay ahead of the pack on aerospace news, something he and his publication must do.

DEFENSE DAILY

Defense Daily, which started as *Space Business Daily* in 1959, has as its Pentagon reporter a space advocate and pioneer. Norman L. Baker covers not just defense, but foreign policy and its relationship to defense. He is White House reporter, Defense Department reporter, and editor-in-chief for his publication. Baker's objective is to make

certain that all defense stories happening in one day are reported in some way in *Defense Daily*. He considers his newsletter not a technical service, but a management tool.

Defense Daily was inspired by the space race. Sputnik had just been launched by the Soviets when the newsletter was launched. Norman Baker was inspired by the space race too. He was already active in space technology, and writing. A World War II and Korea veteran, who served as a Seabee with the Fifth Marine Division on Iwo Jima and in Army reconnaissance and intelligence in Korea, Baker earned a degree from Indiana Institute of Technology. He worked as an aeronautical and missile engineer with Boeing, wrote articles about his proposals for a space shuttle, and had some magazine work to his credit. Baker's writing led to a move to Washington, where he helped found a magazine about missiles and rockets. He was also a founder of the National Space Club, which presents the highly esteemed annual Goddard Memorial Trophy.

Obviously, Norm Baker does not fit the mold of defense correspondents. He is not a follower of national security issues by assignment or by accident. "I made my roads to travel," he says. Having seen a need for space and defense programs, Baker has motivation for his work. "I fully believe in what I'm doing, want to get the message across. So this motivates me to write decent copy. If you want to use the word influence, that's OK. All I want is for the reader to get the facts and judge for himself." Baker feels critics must have their platform, as well as advocates. "Our readership is the type that can make its own decisions. We couldn't get away with slanting a story," he observes. Nevertheless, *Defense Daily* does have "analyses" that let you know where it stands.

As the national focus shifted in the seventies from space to defense programs, the interest of *Defense Daily* and Norman Baker shifted that way too. Baker rarely writes about space now; the NASA beat belongs to someone else. But in his migration to defense subjects he carried his dedication along. In particular, Baker takes pride in the work he and other veterans of the Pentagon press corps accomplished in shaking loose information about Soviet military advances. He cites Fred Hoffman of AP and Lloyd Norman of *Newsweek* among those who pushed defense officials to release more information about what the Soviets were up to. Baker's objective was to convince Congress and the American people that in the Soviet buildup, they had a problem—by giving the facts and letting them make up their own minds.

DEFENSE WEEK

Defense Week, in existence since 7 April 1980, began with a reporting staff of one: Richard Barnard. He was still there in 1982, but there were three more staff reporters. The weekly newspaper Barnard edits is owned by Llewellyn King, who also publishes *Energy Daily*. Readership of the defense publication includes the usual roundup of defense and military executives, foreign governments, and defense contractors. In contrast to some of the technical and policy publications concerned with defense issues, the newspaper does not restrict itself to a single segment, such as aviation. It also was feisty enough to attract considerable attention in its initial years.

In reporting defense happenings—policy, strategy, and research and development—*Defense Week* describes new weapons and programs that are coming along. It also, says Barnard, examines questions about "whether or not they are needed." Barnard, 39 years old on 5 August 1982, worked in the Pentagon as a reporter for the *Army Times* publishing company before *Defense Week* was started. Originally from Alabama, he has a B.S. degree from Florida Atlantic University, and an M.A. in communications from American University. He was in the Pentagon as early as 1970, when he began a tour as an Army enlisted man in the Defense Intelligence Agency.

Defense Week's start was accompanied by the initiation of a similar competing weekly publication, backed by *Congressional Quarterly*. The other new weekly lasted only about four months, despite informative articles by such Pentagon notables as Charles Corddry and Nicholas Daniloff. *Defense Week* seemed to rub the Pentagon with a stiffer, sometimes scratching, brush. It broke aviation stories on Air Force and Navy programs, and printed texts of some internal Pentagon memos that were not written for public scrutiny. One of the publication's major stories outlined Deputy Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci's priorities in the field of Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence—an area *Defense Week* watches closely. In 1982, the weekly was looking to the future, considering the possibility of a shift to advertising and recognizing the eventual need to provide its services to customers via computer.

The continued existence of these three unrelated but somewhat similar news outlets—*Aerospace Daily, Defense Daily,* and *Defense Week*—indicates the emphasis on national defense in the United States in the 1980s. They are there to provide their subscribers a competitive edge by giving them detailed policy and technical information, quickly and succinctly.

Interavia Publications

Only one foreign-based news organization other than the Reuters wire service was covering the Pentagon with a full-time reporter as the Reagan Administration began. Interavia Publications, headquartered in Geneva, had a one-man band in Ramon L. Lopez. As Washington correspondent for Interavia, Lopez covers defense programs, commercial aviation, and space programs. His principal defense output is for *International Defense Review,* a monthly publication concentrating on military affairs, national security, weapons development, and procurement.

Interavia's defense publication has companions called *Interavia Monthly Review,* a magazine reporting on overall aerospace developments, and *Interavia Air Letter,* a five-day-a-week newsletter with both defense and aerospace news. *Review* and *IDR* are published in four languages—English, Spanish, French, and German—and distributed worldwide. The air letter is in English and French only. Explaining one purpose of the defense coverage in these publications, Lopez says, "I try to give a defense attaché in Caracas, Venezuela, more detail than he would get from other more general sources." His work also keeps defense ministry officials, military contractors, and other interested persons around the world informed.

Lopez selects his stories for Interavia publications, but also gets special assignments from Geneva for feature articles. For the magazine, he turns out long articles of 6,000–8,000 words. His subjects usually have implications for European defense markets, such as foreign military sales policy of the United States, or US consideration of European weapons systems, or reports on strategic policy, and "big ticket" Pentagon weapons procurement. Although Lopez is one of the few people in Washington specializing in defense and aerospace news, he realizes the limits of being a one-man show working from his home and the Pentagon's news room. "I can't cover defense as well on a day-to-day basis as *Aviation Week and Space Technology,* which has a bureau of 14 people, or even *Aerospace Daily,* which has six people working at the desk. So what I do is take the cream off the top. I go for the most important stories and ignore the less important ones."

Lopez can concentrate on a single hardware-oriented subject in great detail, but he does not consider himself a technical writer. "I couldn't tell you how a light bulb works," he admits. He gathers enough technical information to describe a weapons system, without an engineering explanation of exactly how it works. Most of his information is gathered in the traditional ways: he queries the military service informa-

tion offices, program managers, congressional staffs, and contractors. Then he doublechecks numbers and other details, and closes in on things that would be interesting overseas. Contractors, in particular, are good sources for Lopez, especially contractors who are competing to build weapons for markets outside the United States.[3]

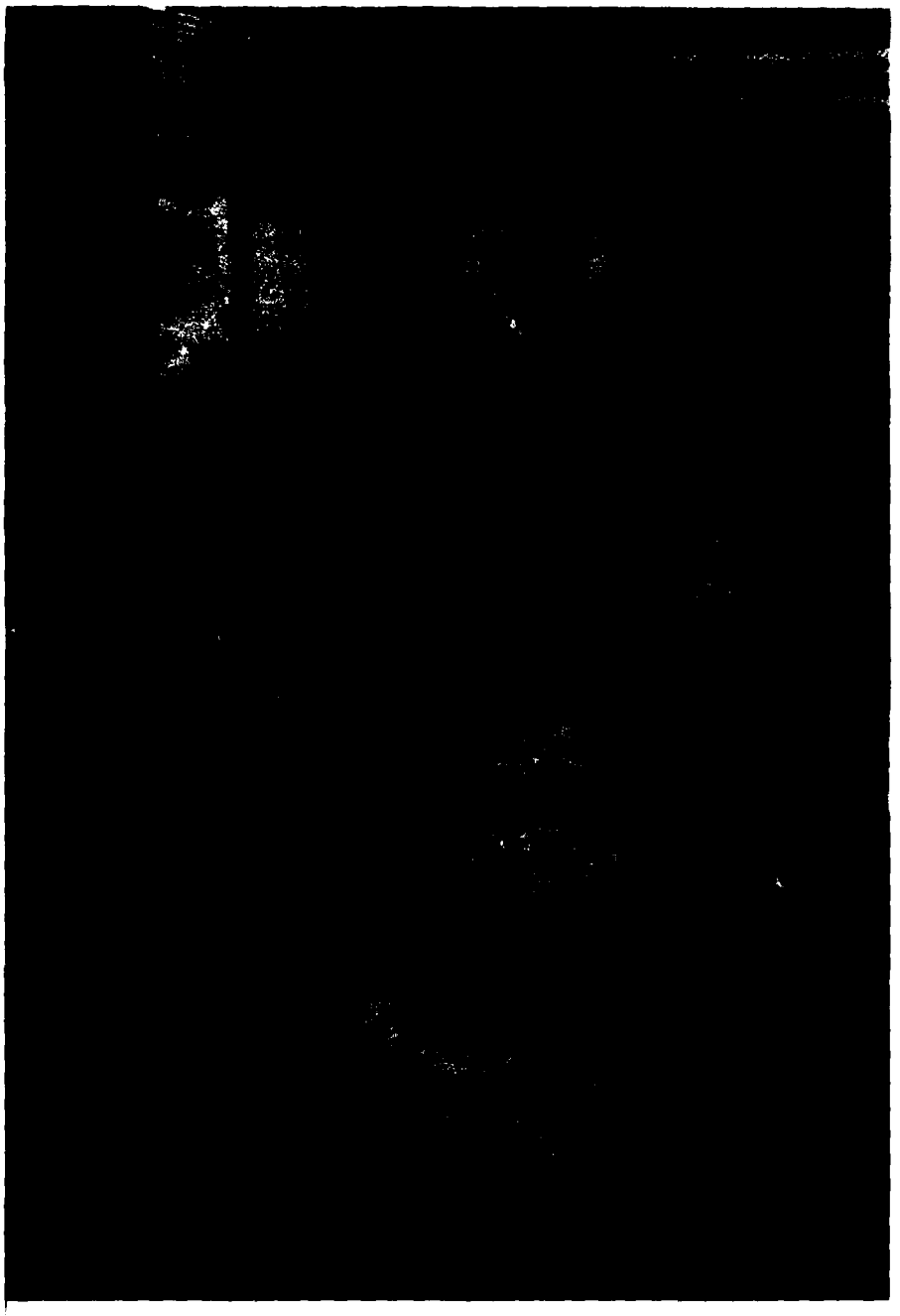
Interavia's defense magazine stories are written about six weeks before the publication is printed and mailed. The organization considers *Aviation Week* and *Aerospace Daily* its two chief US competitors. Real rivals, though, are European publications like London-based *Flight International; Defence,* also headquartered in London; and a few West German publications. Those European rivals lack a full-time Ramon Lopez at the Pentagon, although they get articles from some highly qualified writers, including some Pentagon reporters who free-lance.

Interavia's man at the Pentagon is in his early thirties, is a native Washingtonian, and is a graduate of the University of Maryland with a degree in communications. He's had a host of jobs during his first dozen years in journalism, beginning with production work at a local Washington television station. There, as a college student, Lopez helped air professional basketball games, roller derbies, and even afternoon children's programs. Lopez first came to the Defense Department's news room as a regular in 1972 to report for *Overseas Weekly,* a tabloid-sized newspaper aimed at US military personnel overseas. He subsequently held full- or part-time assignments at Mutual Broadcasting, the Agence France Presse news agency, the all-news radio station WTOP-AM, and *Aerospace Daily.* He also served six years in the D.C. Air National Guard. After 1976, Lopez concentrated on his work for Interavia, which in the defense boom of the eighties was keeping him as busy as the proverbial one-armed paperhanger.

Free-lancers and Technical Specialists

The Pentagon's news room in 1982 includes a handful of reporters who keep up with defense in broad or special areas, reporting as technical specialists for news organizations or as free-lancers selling their material on an individual article basis to news outlets.

One of these is Raymond A. Cromley, who spent sixteen years with the *Wall Street Journal,* eighteen years as a columnist with the Newspaper Enterprise Association (NEA) syndicate, and who—having been retired under automatic company policy by NEA after he reached age 65—provides a column to many of the same newspapers that



The Pentagon news room—it lacks privacy, so most reporters, except wire service and technical writers, work elsewhere most of the time. Broadcasters have separate booths but they are not private either. (Photograph by David Wilson, Office of the Secretary of the Navy)

previously used his NEA material. Age 72 in August 1982, he operates Cromley News Features, which consists of Cromley. A high-school graduate at age 15, then a student at Cal Tech in mathematics and nuclear physics, Ray Cromley became a journalist by working his way through college as a reporter. In World War II he was a specialist on guerrilla warfare, serving in China. (He eventually became a colonel in Army intelligence.) When Cromley left China, Mao Tse-tung gave a dinner in his honor. Cromley notes that the dinner was obligatory, not given in the belief that he was sympathetic to the Chinese Communists: "They knew I was a dirty capitalist." Cromley proved them correct; he later served as a chairman of the Republican Party in Northern Virginia.

A technical specialist listed by the Department of Defense as one of its regulars is Charles Wendell, of the Bureau of National Affairs (BNA). The BNA has a variety of publications with specialized information about the details of government that are useful to clients. The BNA's close to fifty publications deal with everything from "Affirmative Action Compliance Manual" to "White Collar Report." Along with other activities at BNA, Wendell keeps an eye on defense contracts. A veteran reporter, he worked for Fairchild Publications from 1957 to 1965, covering the Pentagon and electronic news.

Another Pentagon regular, and a veteran Washington journalist, is Hugh Lucas. Lucas had, by 1982, spent nearly a quarter of a century as a Washington journalist covering the Defense Department, Capitol Hill, and the White House. He also edited the *Prince George's Journal* suburban newspaper from its start in 1974 until 1977. Lucas had nine years as military editor of *Aerospace Daily*, twelve years as associate editor of *Navy Times*, and thirteen years as staff and part-time copy editor for the sports, metro, and national desks at the *Washington Post* as a second job. Lucas is a member of the Pentagon press corps by virtue of his masthead association with *Flight International*, a British magazine, and London's *Defence* magazine, and other outlets. Texan Lucas, an Army veteran with a journalism degree from the University of Missouri and a law degree from Georgetown University Law School, puts it in plain terms: "It's pure free-lancing. It's primarily an ego trip on my part, I guess, because all it does is pay my taxes. I don't make any money on it. But I've always been a reporter." Lucas sells articles to other publications, but never writes on speculation. He always knows he has an assignment. He has gained a reputation for asking tough questions in Pentagon briefings, and bull-dogging the briefer until he gets an answer. He claims no malice in this tactic. While the trait may not always have endeared Lucas to

officials in the Pentagon's public affairs office, they are quick to credit him in this respect: As a desk man at the *Post*, he frequently calls people at Defense to check out bits and pieces of stories that appear to be lacking accurate defense information.

The Association Magazines: Air Force, Army, Sea Power

Three associations publish magazines whose editors maintain close contact with the departments whose policy interests they support—the Air Force Association, the Association of the Army of the United States, and the Navy League of the United States. Similarly, the *Marine Corps Gazette* represents the interests of the Marine Corps Association.

AIR FORCE

Air Force is a monthly magazine with a circulation of about 180,000 that includes the members of the Air Force Association and other persons interested in aerospace. The magazine's editorial policy is "to communicate at a professional level the objectives of the association," the most basic of which is "to support the achievement of such aerospace power as is necessary for the defense and protection of our national heritage. . . ." F. Clifton Berry, Jr., is editor-in-chief of *Air Force.* He served in the Air Force and then in the Army; he was on active duty as a lieutenant colonel, selected for promotion to colonel, when he left the service for a transition to professional journalism in 1975.

The magazine has a theme for each issue. Traditional thematic issues include the March issue each year, which usually centers around the Soviet Aerospace Almanac, and includes a "Gallery of Soviet Weapon Systems" prepared by the editor of *Jane's All the World's Aircraft.* May is the month for the Annual Air Force Almanac issue, which provides a comprehensive reference to the US Air Force, including messages from the Secretary of the Air Force, its Chief of Staff, and Chief Master Sergeant. "Jane's Gallery of USAF Weapon Systems" is in this issue. (In 1982, the May issue sold 225,000 copies.) In December, the magazine normally deals with the world aerospace power balance, providing detailed coverage of air forces on a worldwide basis. The December 1981 issue, for example, contained in its 168 pages the London-headquartered International Institute for Strategic Studies' assessment of the 1981/82 military balance, with special sections on Soviet defense expenditures, the Warsaw Pact, NATO, and other regional force analyses. The issue included "Jane's All the

World's Aircraft Supplement" and an article by Edgar Ulsamer, its senior editor on policy and technology, on Soviet military power.

The lead editorial in the December 1981 issue was entitled "The Means to Maintain Awareness." In it, editor Berry noted the "gloomy reading" contained in the military balance assessment published elsewhere in the issue, and called on Air Force Association members, "who understand these topics better than most," to get the facts to their fellow citizens. "Too often," the editorial said, "most Americans get the information on vital national security issues filtered through some pundit's pen, shortcut by sloganeering, or compressed and distorted by the demands of broadcasting time constraints." The upshot of this, said the editorial, "is a tendency for the people to be tranquilized through the peculiarities of the mass media into a complacency that is unwarranted." It concluded that "the need now is for information, not disinformation, but the disinformation side is ahead at the moment."

ARMY

L. James Binder edits the Army association's monthly publication. It, too, supports its association's goals—but tends to downplay information about the association itself, which has other internal publications to inform its members about convention plans, local association activities, and other purely organizational details.

Army seeks to be a professional's magazine, discussing strategy and tactics and providing a sounding board for professionals in the field of military affairs. A news section deals with US Army developments, and feature articles frequently treat history and tradition. Like the other association magazines, it editorializes. And each October, its monthly issue is the Green Book about the Army, including articles authored by the Secretary of the Army, Chief of Staff, and senior commanders from the field.

Editor Binder performed his active-duty military service with the Navy, on destroyers in 1944–46. He was then in the Army Reserve for six years. After several years in journalism and public relations, including work for the Associated Press and seven years with the *Detroit News*, he became editor of *Army* in 1967.

SEA POWER

The Navy League's magazine covers the gamut of maritime interests represented in its title. In addition to articles and feature issues on the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, it pays close attention to the state of the nation's merchant marine and the maritime industry.

Says the magazine's editor, James Hessman, "We try to get articles of major national and international importance in the defense and foreign policy fields, and particularly those that are related to sea power in any one of its aspects . . . and foreign trade, raw materials, critical minerals, things like that. We concentrate on programs that are presently in the news or topics and issues that we think will be in the news."

Hessman, a former naval officer who has edited the Navy League magazine since 1972, is, like Clif Berry of *Air Force*, formerly with *Armed Forces Journal*. He says his current magazine concentrates on subjects that tend to be neglected by other policy publications and by the national press. Like the other association magazines, *Sea Power* has significant advertising income from defense-industry firms.

Jim Hessman says his magazine favors strengthened national defense "across the board." He points to the magazine's position in favor of building the B-1 bomber as evidence of this "ecumenical" approach. "We try not to be parochial. There is no doubt that we are very much in favor of a strong national defense, a strong US foreign policy. Sometimes, because we are so much so, we actually oppose Administration programs when we feel they are not adequate. . . . We enter dissenting articles and editorials."

But *Sea Power*, like *Army* and *Air Force* magazines, has a perspective. It is service-oriented, and its key policy interests relate to the services it represents. For that reason, it and the other association magazines are often looked on as unofficial but important indicators of the "real" views of the uniformed services.

As the other magazines concentrate on the aerospace and ground threats from the Soviet Union, and the world air and military balances, *Sea Power* concentrates on the maritime threat and the maritime balance. Each year, the magazine prints the foreword to *Jane's Fighting Ships'* annual issue and gives the editor of *Jane's*, retired Royal Navy Captain John Moore, a US platform for his assessment of the maritime situation in the world. Like the defense assessments carried by the other association magazines, those in *Sea Power* are inevitably gloomy for the United States, suggesting that more effort is needed.

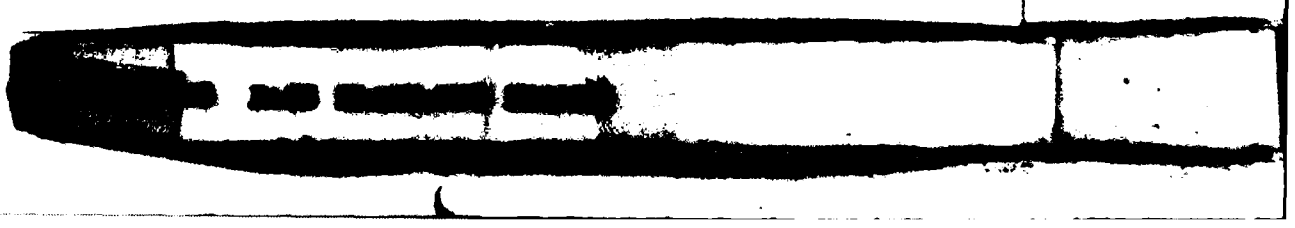
Thus, with different points of view and interests, and different orientations toward technology and policy matters, a wide variety of magazines and newsletters mine the intricate veins of national defense issues, seeking paydirt that others have not struck.

7
BROADCASTING

Television has an enormous impact on national security. Most Americans see their news about defense, rather than read it. Everyone knows and understands that. Or do they?

The television industry, with its three dominant national networks, has profoundly influenced and changed American cultural and political life. Television reaches almost everyone—entertaining, educating, informing, stimulating, and anesthetizing the public. In 1979, approximately 98 percent of US households had television receivers, and about half had two or more sets. Average daily viewing was in the six-hour-per-household range. Competition from television has severely damaged or killed many afternoon newspapers. The trends are toward more, not less, reliance on television. Yet even as polls suggest that the majority of Americans get their news from television, they also suggest that persons of high education and income are more likely to rely on print sources.

Even as the television generation matures, many of those who are part of it do not understand how the news adjunct of the broadcast industry works. The same television that many defense advocates blame for demoralizing the nation during the Vietnam War, and for neglecting defense immediately after that war, was a primary communications instrument for the nationwide national security reawakening of the late 1970s. As the eighties began, the question changed from why television was not covering defense enough, to why television was covering defense the way it was. Paradoxically, having gained public support for a stronger America, many defense leaders would then have been happy with a return to television's benign neglect of defense



that characterized much of the seventies. They failed to realize that without continued public awareness of the need for a strong national defense, no government could will such strength. Television is key to that broad public awareness.

Unless television becomes part of a skillful and successful effort to communicate with the public about defense, governments in the 1980s and beyond will find it difficult to foster the sort of public attitudes that provide national support for defense policies. Unfortunately, the military services find it difficult to communicate with the public via television. Not only is television frustrating, because the end product is under the control of the networks and usually imperfect in the eyes of military officials, it is also difficult and different. Not every military officer can communicate effectively via television. "TV presence" is not really considered an important part of a military professional's repertory the way "command presence" always has been. Even those who are effective on television are reluctant to volunteer as communicators; it is not normally career-enhancing, to say the least. So the task of communicating via national television usually falls to civilian leaders in the Defense Establishment. This is the tradition, and one which the civilian leadership has guarded. Clearly, the national objective of making America more secure in a dangerous world, which journalists would rightly say is not their job anyway, is inconsistently served by television. In part, this is because the television industry has not been notably responsible in its coverage of national defense—either in the amount of coverage it has given, or in the nature of that coverage. The unfortunate reality is that, to supporters of a strong national defense, television coverage of defense issues has frequently seemed to consist of antidefense editorials masquerading as news. Those who control television news are repulsed by government officials who ask, in moments of frustration, whose side the news media are on. Such criticisms seem to suggest that it is the duty of media to do public relations work for the defense team. That's not their duty, and no one should want America to become a propagandized society. Yet in the final analysis, journalists, like other Americans, have an obligation to the nation that transcends their vocation. In no segment of the news business is that obligation more crucial than in television.[1]

CBS

If responsibility in television news coverage of national defense is measured by the yardstick of keeping a reporter on duty in the

Pentagon, CBS outdistanced the other networks in the late 1970s and early 1980s with Ike Pappas. Already a veteran war correspondent, Pappas assumed the Pentagon watch in February 1975, just in time to report the fall of Cambodia, the fall of Saigon, and the seizure of the *Mayaguez* off the coast of Cambodia. National malaise was setting in. Says Pappas, "We were tailing off. Coverage reflected the national interest in defense, which was zero. Budgets were down. Congress was withdrawing. The Vietnam syndrome took over. We Americans didn't want to have anything to do with wars. We didn't want to have anything to do with adventures. We were hurt and we had to pull in. Nobody wanted to know about defense. I arrived at the Pentagon in this situation."[2]

For great stretches of time in the 1970s, Pappas was the only television journalist covering the Pentagon. Other networks had top reporters, like Bob Goralski of NBC, on duty for parts of that time. But most correspondents from the networks who sat at the Pentagon did just that. They sat. They were caretakers. If something big happened, they reported it. They submitted stories, but there was not much of a reaction from network gatekeepers.

At CBS, things were different. One reason was Pappas: "I was brought in to cover a beat. I'm not the kind of reporter who lets things come to me. I go and get things. I can't sit and wait for the phone to ring. I've got to make other phones ring, so I can get things going. This is what I do for a living, and I'm not going to be bored. I'm not going to be passive. I have to have an excitement and a drive. I have to have my own professional drives satisfied. I didn't want the people who had faith in me to be let down. I went out and dug up a lot of news."

Another reason was Walter Cronkite. A former war correspondent with an understanding of national defense, Cronkite would call Pappas from time to time to chat about what was happening at the Defense Department. This gave Pappas a good feeling. As had his predecessor on the defense beat, Bob Schieffer, Pappas knew that the man at the top was interested. He had a marketplace for his news. He wasn't out there selling stale loaves of bread.

Pappas saw the other networks begin to feel the pressure of his competition. As the Carter Administration showed more and more interest in defense, and the growth of Soviet military power became more apparent and more ominous, Pappas was on the air more often. He was showing up with stories the other networks had no idea were even happening. He thought he heard NBC and ABC say, "Let's go get them, we're competitive, let's not let CBS do this." Thus Pappas felt that

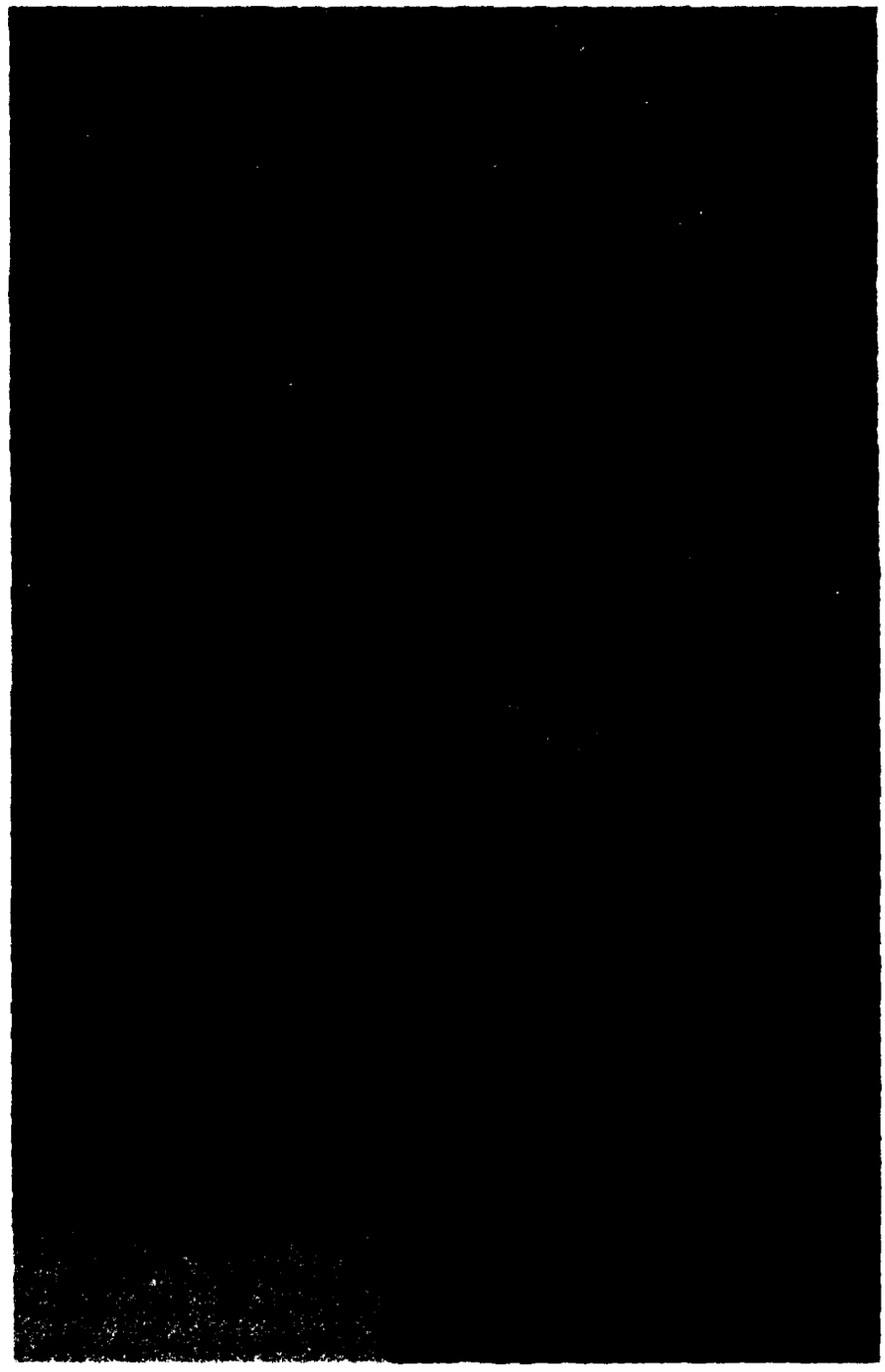
he and CBS were responsible, in a way, for drawing attention to the Pentagon in the late 1970s.

As Pentagon reporter for CBS in early 1982, 48 years after he was born to Greek immigrant parents in Queens, New York City, Pappas still had the enthusiasm that caused him to thrive on simultaneously being a college student, a wire service cub reporter, and a helper who closed up his father's delicatessen. But Pappas' tenure as a Pentagon correspondent was over. He was moving to be labor correspondent for CBS. Management had decided seven years at the Pentagon was too long to be good for CBS or Pappas. Official word of his change in assignment came while Pappas was traveling in the Middle East with the Secretary of Defense. He had a farewell "roast" dinner in Amman, Jordan, with his fellow reporters on the trip. Later, on the Secretary's aircraft, they dined on a cake made for him—a cake shaped like the Pentagon, and presented at the roast.

Even Pappas' drive did not let him do all the coverage of national defense for CBS during his years on the beat. In fact, much of the controversial defense material that appeared on the network during his last year at the Pentagon had little input from CBS's man at the Pentagon. Even before Pappas arrived at the Pentagon, CBS had made enemies with its broadcast, *The Selling of the Pentagon*, which portrayed government information efforts as sales campaigns for defense dollars. The CBS *60 Minutes* program occasionally scraped nerves with segments on military issues. These were a far cry from the generally favorable documentaries that had resulted from cooperation between CBS and the Defense Department before Vietnam. Several of Edward R. Murrow's *CBS Reports* programs and a number of documentaries in the *Twentieth Century* and *Twenty-first Century* series narrated by Walter Cronkite were considered balanced and objective by the Pentagon. Even a documentary examining the loss of the submarine *Thresher,* reported for CBS in the early 1960s by a youngster named Dan Rather, exemplified this cooperation.

The most ambitious look at defense by CBS, or any network, in the late seventies and early eighties was *The Defense of the United States,* a five-part, five-hour series first broadcast in the spring of 1981. In it, CBS News set out, in the words of its president, William Leonard, "without preconception, to provide the American people with a balanced look at the defense dilemma facing this country today: the Soviet threat, the present state of our military forces, and how much we should spend on defense over the next five years."[3]

The Defense Department went out of its way to cooperate with the



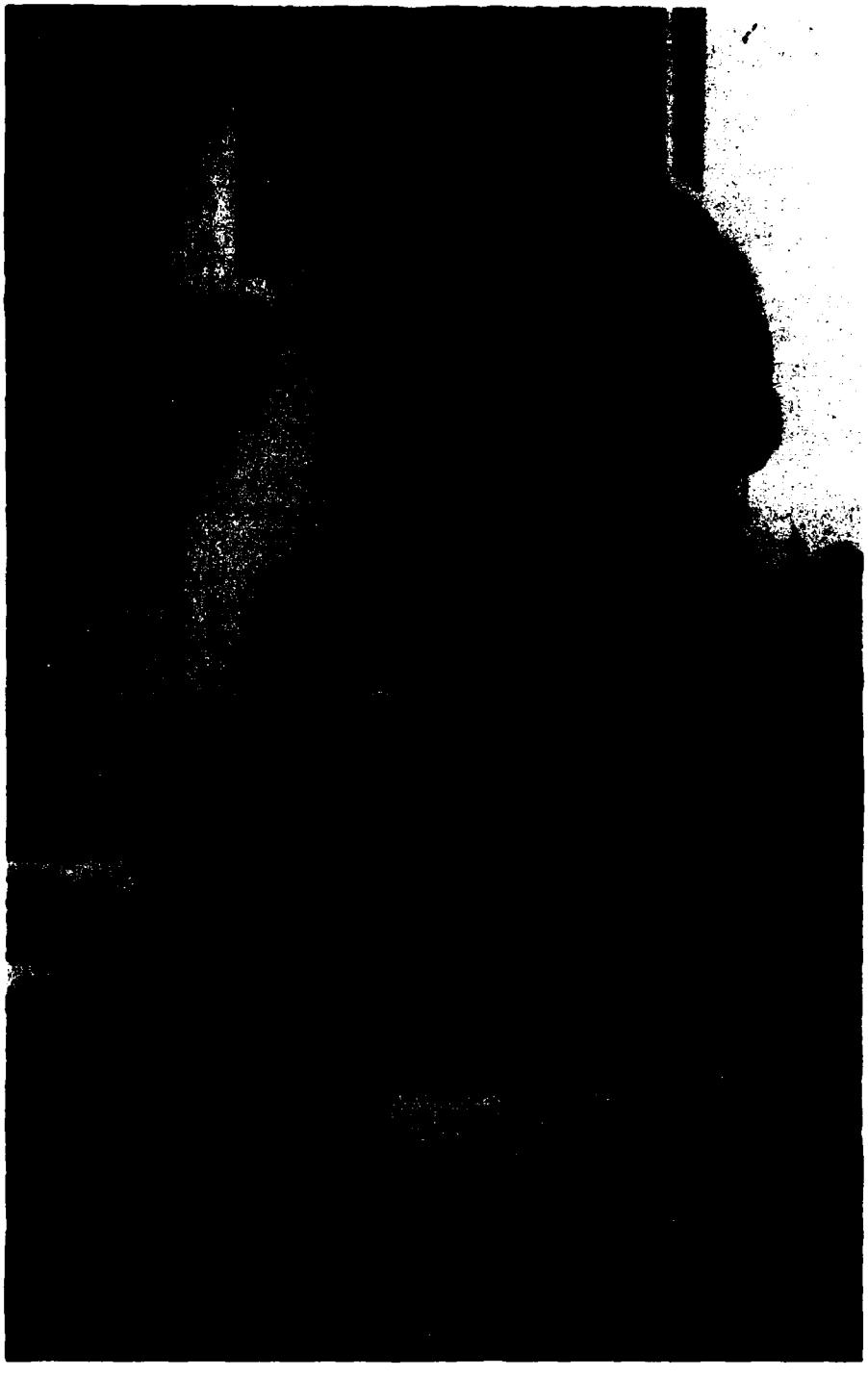
Ike Pappas, CBS, seven years at the Pentagon

network on the 1981 series. The result was extensively praised, and extensively criticized. The view of officials in the Defense Department was clearly that CBS had missed the mark. That view was shared by many leading defense advocates. Even the timing of the CBS series was significant. It was broadcast just after the 1980 election, when there seemed to be a consensus in Congress and in the country for a military rebuilding effort. Merely by re-examining the question that had been debated in the Presidential campaign, CBS News seemed to question this consensus and to attempt to slow the momentum of the rebuilding effort.

Oddly enough, CBS's expert on national defense, Pappas, had almost no role in the five-part documentary. Did the network want to avoid using someone who might puncture the revelations their producers dreamed up? Was CBS News aware of the controversy its series was likely to cause, and as a result did it deliberately disassociate Pappas from the series so that he could continue to function at the Pentagon? The programs might have been different had Pappas been more involved. He was initially scheduled to be a part of the production, to anchor one of the hours. But, he said, "there was a tremendous competition for my time—it takes months to do one of those documentaries and the question was who was going to cover the day-to-day events at the Pentagon." Pappas found the series "dramatic, gripping," but like so much television, "too simplistic—at least to a reporter who has been so close to the subject for so long." He didn't see much in the series he would have changed, but he didn't see much that was news to him either.

If Pappas' being left out of *The Defense of the United States* was the result of his being needed at the Pentagon, such a situation would no longer pertain a few months later. CBS added a second man to the Pentagon beat in 1981. When Pappas left the beat, CBS continued its two-man policy by naming former NBC reporter Bill Lynch to the Pentagon team, to be joined later by David Martin. And old war correspondents never fade away: Pappas was in Lebanon in mid-1982 to cover the fighting.

CBS reporters at the Pentagon feel that the network, in the Reagan era, is more interested in defense news than ever. But the character of the interest has changed. New York is tougher on stories. Competition for time on *CBS Evening News with Dan Rather* is greater. Ratings are at stake and the other networks more menacing than in Cronkite's heyday. They are slicing their cake a different way, but the appetite is there. By 1981, says Pappas, it had become fashionable at CBS to be



Bill Lynch, CBS (Photograph by David Wilson, Office of the Secretary of the Navy)

interested in defense. The editors were saying, "What about the MX? What about the B-1?" Before then, he notes, those people thought the B-1 was a vitamin pill. Before, they didn't want any part of defense. "Now," says Pappas, "even the dilettantes are interested."[4]

Television coverage of the Pentagon has built-in advantages and disadvantages for a reporter. The key advantage is that television is visual. The source—government official, civilian or military—knows who the reporter is. He's seen the face. Though they may never have met, the source has the feeling that he knows the reporter personally. The television reporter has talked to him from his set. They have had eye association. The official trusts the television person a little more. Says Ike Pappas: "The impact is dynamite. Being visual opens doors. I use that advantage."

On the other hand, television reporters who cover the Pentagon must cope with disadvantages. Television is a fleeting thing. Newspapers and magazines have permanence. Pappas notes that officials who want to leak something will leak it to the newspapers before television. There is a perception in government that if you have an important point to make, it is better to get it in print. Indeed, there is merit to this view. Television will follow up on an important print news story. If a story is big in the *New York Times,* television will probably use it. Newspapers are reluctant to do the reverse. It takes a monumental news break on CBS to cause a major daily newspaper to use the story and credit the network. Hence those who want to influence policy anonymously go first to the newspapers.

The perception of television as a fleeting thing, and of television news as an adjunct to an entertainment medium, plays tricks on defense officials. Because they are normally still at work and miss the evening network news, the impact is not so real to them. They may read the transcript of a network news piece—even videotapes are available. But transcripts do not have the immediacy, the eye contact, or the visual impact that makes television such a mover of public opinion. And videotapes must compete for time on the executive's schedule. Until hard-working Secretaries of Defense and service Chiefs of Staff start going home from work at a decent hour, plopping down in an easy chair in front of the television set, and watching the evening news—CBS especially—they may not know what's driving the sentiments of those who must ultimately defend the country, or provide for its defense.

There are signs that key defense leaders are becoming more and more enlightened as to the power of brief, simplified-for-the-masses news reports that are patched into network newscasts, as well as the

impact of network news documentaries, and interview shows like CBS' *Face the Nation.* If they are, these officials must wonder whether the good old days when CBS and the Defense Department were relatively comfortable partners will ever return. They must further concern themselves with the future, when defense correspondents again become war correspondents, covering US forces in action. Officials must face the prospect of an Ike Pappas or someone like him on the next battlefield, and plan to deal with the difficulties uncontrolled television coverage can create for those who must fight and win wars.[5]

ABC

A story told at ABC is that Roone Arledge, president of ABC television news, was watching one of President Jimmy Carter's televised press conferences. A question from a news magazine correspondent led to an acrimonious exchange between the reporter and the President. "Who is that reporter?" Arledge asked, continuing: "He should be in television. Call him and see if we can hire him." That's the way John McWethy became a broadcaster.

McWethy moved to television from his post as chief White House correspondent for *US News and World Report* in 1979. After a brief time in the ABC Washington bureau, he became the network's Pentagon correspondent. One of his print journalism colleagues in the Pentagon says McWethy is "overqualified" for the ABC job—an assessment showing both respect for the reporter and disdain for the television medium.

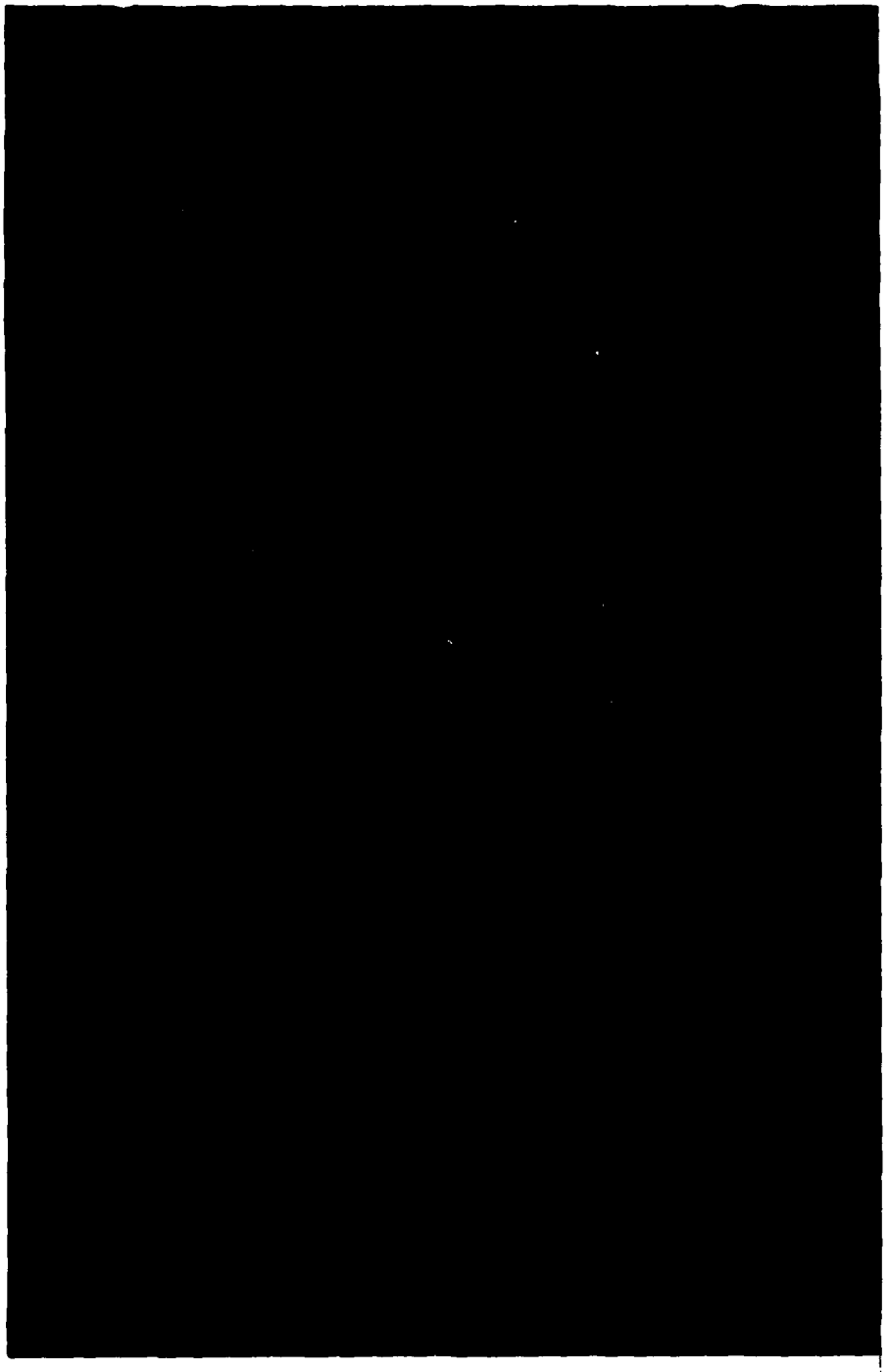
ABC is challenging other US television networks for top ratings in television news. All the networks expend huge sums of money on news coverage, but ABC's application of really big resources seemed to start when Arledge moved his successful showmanship skills from sports broadcasting to straight news in the late 1970s. What he brought with him was a determination to win the audience—and money to win it with. This revitalized ABC effort impacted on overall television coverage of national defense issues. During the Iranian hostage crisis, ABC initiated a well received late-night half-hour of news, later converted to ABC's *Nightline* news program. ABC assigned two correspondents full time to the Pentagon news room at the beginning of 1981, becoming the first of the networks to have two reporters there in the eighties. ABC began extensive use of graphic technology that eases coverage of stories for which there are no actual pictures. This new technology, which other

networks are also using, brought to the network serious national defense stories of a type that often had been left out in the past.

ABC's resurgence of interest in defense made McWethy a regular on *ABC World News Tonight*—appearing twice a week on the average, compared to something like once a month for his predecessor at the Pentagon, Bill Wordham. Because defense had been downplayed by the Carter Administration during Wordham's time at the Pentagon, ABC downplayed it too. With national defense back in style, McWethy found air time plentiful. The network let McWethy do geopolitical pieces that had usually been out of bounds for ABC Pentagon reporters: he could talk about the latest world crisis on the basis of what he learned from Pentagon intelligence estimates, which he found often "more interesting, more conservative and more accurate" than State Department assessments. He thought up special assignments, such as a three-part series on "future wars" dealing with sophisticated military hardware. In the series, he covered such things as the prospects for military space programs, particle-beam technology, and lasers.

When exercise "Bright Star" was held in Egypt in late 1981, ABC was the only network to send its Pentagon correspondent to the scene of the Rapid Deployment Force exercise. The gesture only cost money—and the time of a tired McWethy, who is also asked by the network to travel with the Secretary of Defense when he leaves Washington on frequent official trips. An ardent journalist since age fifteen, McWethy was 35 when he covered "Bright Star." He has a master's degree in journalism earned at Columbia University in 1970.[6] A native of Chicago, McWethy had worked for five different newspapers by 1969, when he graduated from Depauw, in Indiana, with a B.A. degree and course work in creative writing, philosophy, and political science. He regards journalism as a continuing education: "It is the only profession where you have a calling to learn all sorts of new things." McWethy's reporting lifetime began seriously with *Congressional Quarterly* in 1971. One of the things he produced in this initial job was *Power of the Pentagon*, a book that dealt with congressional oversight of defense programs. Moving to *US News and World Report*, he was that magazine's science and technology editor for five years, then its White House man for two. He has never worked outside journalism and has no uniformed military experience.

McWethy's first colleague for ABC at the Pentagon was David Ensor, who shifted to cover State in the fall of 1981. McWethy was then joined by Rick Inderfurth, a novice to television reporting and to reporting in general, but not a novice to national security issues.



John McWethy, ABC-TV (Photograph by David Wilson, Office of the Secretary of the Navy)

Inderfurth worked as an assistant to Zbigniew Brzezinski at the National Security Council, and then was a staff member on the Senate Intelligence Committee.

As a print journalist now in television, Jack McWethy has mixed emotions about his new medium. He rates the *Washington Post* and *New York Times* as the most influential news organizations: "Every policymaker in Washington *must* read them, every journalist who covers Washington *must* read them. It is not true that every policymaker and every journalist must watch ABC, NBC, and CBS. They don't." On the other hand, he notes that what appears on the networks is very influential because of its immediacy. He observes that while television may be learning to deal with one of its major constraints—visuals—by using new graphic techniques and global satellites, it still has a serious time constraint. Even a half hour of *ABC World News Tonight* on weeknights, a half hour of *Nightline* news, 25 minutes of news on the *Good Morning America* show, and a couple of hours of news spread throughout the weekend fails to provide the kind of detailed coverage that print gives. The result, McWethy says, is that television leaves a grossly simple "taste in the mouth" about what has been seen. Thus, he explains: "What I leave at the end of a minute-and-thirty-second piece is an impression. What a newspaper story leaves is facts and figures and quotes."

McWethy sees no antimilitary bias at ABC, except "when they believe that I am being used as a pawn to tout a particular Administration line." ABC executives in New York, he says, are worried about his crying wolf, or "being played like a twelve-piece string orchestra." Network documentaries are mostly outside McWethy's purview. ABC's *20/20* documentary news program, to which McWethy rarely contributes, has been accused by the military services of being biased and inaccurate in some of its coverage. Such developments create "enormous problems" for McWethy in his daily coverage. He may have had nothing to do with the *20/20* program, and he may have agreed or disagreed with it; but to the Pentagon, he is part of the opposition, by association, when his network is off base.

Preparing a story is a hectic process for any television reporter at the Pentagon. McWethy finds it especially difficult to work in the close confines of the small Pentagon room that houses network correspondents. They can overhear each other. For that reason, and because of the complications of putting together a television news piece, McWethy tends to vacate the Pentagon for his downtown office at ABC News in the early afternoon. His sources include individuals on Capitol Hill, at

the White House, and at the State Department. He can talk to them by phone more freely from the ABC bureau, and at the same time control the editing process on his story. On sticky points, he tends to check with the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs or others in the Pentagon, to get a reaction before making a judgment on what to say in his broadcast.

Observing the information process at the Pentagon during his first two years was interesting for McWethy. He saw a difference, and saw it as a reflection of two key personalities: the Secretaries of Defense. "Harold Brown, who could not stand to talk to anybody, including reporters, had to have someone who was enormously able" as his public spokesman, McWethy observes. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, on the other hand, "is very outspoken. He talks all the time—but doesn't always tell us anything." McWethy sees Weinberger as "enormously skillful" and says Weinberger can "manipulate the press" by making himself available to reporters, especially for television interviews. McWethy believes that puts Secretary Weinberger in the camp of officials who feel that reporters are a menacing part of the mechanism of the country, but at the same time realize they have to deal with reporters, "barring a change to the Constitution." Says McWethy: "Once you come to the realization that you have to deal with the press, there are ways to make it work for you if you are skillful. Weinberger, in particular, is good at that."

Changes at ABC News have been noticeable at the Pentagon. With ABC, defense officials used to have a comfortable feeling. Like the Washington Senators baseball team of old, who were "first in war, first in peace, and last in the American League," ABC could be counted on to be last in the network news ratings. Compared to the other networks, ABC could also be counted on for relative docility—which defense officials might have called responsibility—in their coverage of military issues. But ABC of 1982, covering defense issues with youthful vigor and enormous resources, is no longer last, and no longer docile. The network would argue forcefully that it is meeting its responsibilities more adequately than it has for many years.

NBC

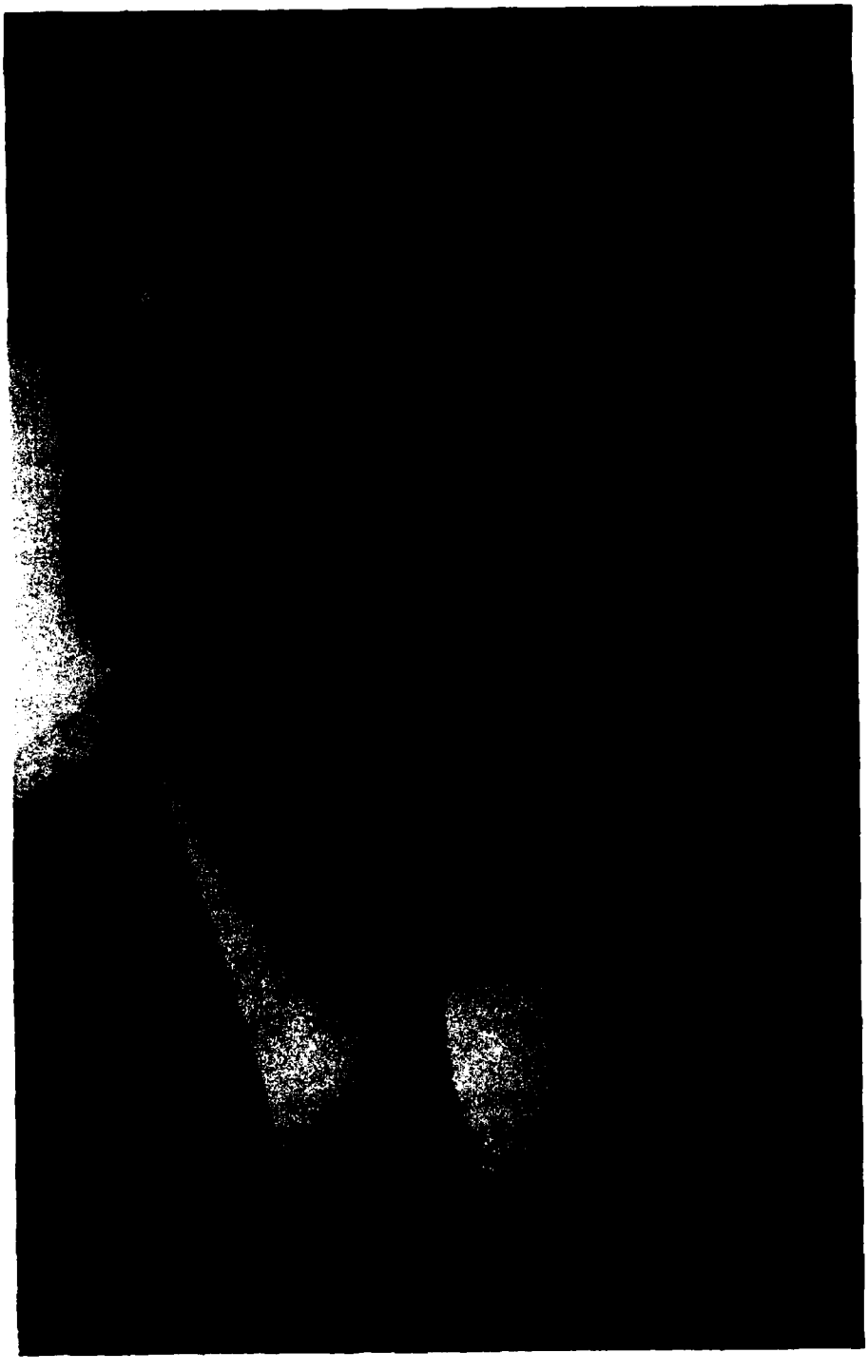
Like ABC and to a degree CBS, the National Broadcasting Company was unimpressive in its coverage of national defense immediately after the Vietnam War. NBC is trying to change that in the eighties.

Whereas at times in the mid-1970s the network had no one assigned as a regular defense correspondent, NBC by 1981 had two experienced reporters working full-time at the Pentagon. The network gave attention to defense subjects on its interview and documentary programs throughout the seventies. But even after renewed interest in defense coverage became standard in most news organizations, NBC was slow to focus on the story. In the late 1970s, NBC's reporter at the Pentagon was lucky if he made it on the air with a story once per week on *Nightly News*. One NBC correspondent said then that his network had not been doing all that it should, but that the problem was not Vietnam but inefficiency. Somebody somewhere at NBC had decided defense was not "visual" enough.[7]

As national attention to Iran increased, NBC's coverage of defense began to increase, but in 1980 its reporter at the Pentagon, Ford Rowan, quit the network. Rowan, who had not been appearing frequently on the network with his material anyway, said he departed because NBC elected to meet the demands of Iranian militants. The militants had asked for air time in return for granting NBC the first television interview with one of the hostages being held at the American Embassy in Teheran. Rowan's abrupt departure halted whatever renewed effort the network was making to cover the Pentagon.

NBC went back to its effort at sustained coverage of the Defense Establishment in January 1981 by assigning George Lewis, who had just covered the campaign of Vice President George Bush, to the Pentagon beat. Then the network added Gene Pell to the Pentagon. But Pell left NBC in early 1982 to head the Voice of America's news operation, replaced at the Pentagon by Don Porter. And by mid-1982 Lewis was replaced by Richard Valeriani. After Lewis's arrival, there were defense officials who rated NBC's Pentagon coverage as the most balanced, least sensationalized defense news appearing on the networks. Valeriani, a veteran television newsman and frontline NBC White House and State Department reporter, becomes another in the string of NBC reporters to be faced with the difficulties that pertain to reporting from the Pentagon.

For George Lewis the learning period at the Pentagon had left a lot to be desired. Lewis was no stranger to the military. He covered the Vietnam War for twenty months and returned to Saigon in 1975 to cover its fall to the Communists. He was among the American journalists evacuated from Saigon aboard US Marine Corps helicopters. A week after the American Embassy in Iran was taken by militants in 1979, Lewis—who was then nominally stationed in the NBC Houston bureau



Richard Valeriani, NBC

to cover the southwestern United States and Mexico—was on his way to Teheran. He spent the next 64 days there. Ironically, Lewis was one of two NBC correspondents who got into the Teheran embassy for the first televised hostage interview, the incident that led to Ford Rowan's departure from the network. About that episode, Lewis says he believes NBC made the right editorial call: "My feeling is that within the limitations placed on us by the militants we did the best job we could. It was important to get inside the embassy and talk to someone who was being held hostage because it was the first time we'd had a firsthand account of how those people were faring."

When assigned to the Pentagon, Lewis found the network interested in the change in defense policy with the new Administration. He was glad to have a chance to get together with old friends from his Vietnam days. But it was not that easy in the jungles of Washington, which tend to make military people as cautious as they might be in the jungles of Southeast Asia. Lewis looked up an old friend from Vietnam days, and said, "Let's go to lunch." His friend agreed. But Lewis ended up going to lunch with the military man *and* his boss, because the military man wanted a witness to what he said—and didn't say—to a newsman.

Lewis also found that he had to do a lot of reading. He was amazed at the amount of information that came his way as a matter of routine. If there is an information difficulty at the Pentagon, he sees it as one of too much information. "Separating the wheat from the chaff is often the problem," he contends. Officials at the Pentagon are "pretty credible," Lewis says, but there are "some people who just don't know what the hell's going on." Others have axes to grind. More significant for Lewis as a television reporter is a "tendency toward camera shyness," particularly among military people. They do not feel they should be out in front on policy issues. This willingness of the military to let civilians state policy is a "great tradition," says Lewis, "Otherwise we'd have a banana republic!"

After a year on the defense beat, Lewis saw the story of the immediate future as the debate over the policies of the Reagan Administration. He flags two big stories to watch: the All-Volunteer Force and the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance:

> Are we going to be able to continue with an all-volunteer force? That, I think, is going to be the big crunch . . . of this administration. When the demographics start getting to a point where you don't have enough eighteen-year-olds and you have an administration

> that wants to increase the total strength, those two lines go in opposite directions and what do you do?
>
> The other big story is going to be NATO, I think. You've got this administration pushing for a defense buildup. You've got a lot of pressure from the other NATO countries going the other way—the whole pacifist movement, our fears about the neutralization of Europe.

Lewis characterizes official attitudes toward reporters at the Pentagon as one of "cautious tolerance" bent on "maintaining a proper relationship" between official and newsman. He senses that officials feel television is inferior to print journalism in terms of communicating on complicated issues or discussing things in detail, but superior to print in terms of getting their message across.

Reflecting on the value of sources, for television journalists as well as print, Lewis makes the point that comes up over and over in discussions with Pentagon reporters: "In a beat like defense, one of the important things is that you've got to have some tenure." Unfortunately, in the fast-moving world of network television, tenure is difficult to come by. For NBC, it's Richard Valeriani's turn to become the Pentagon expert on national security matters. Meanwhile, George Lewis has been covering a war between the United Kingdom and Argentina.

Cable, Independent TV News, and the Future

The early 1980s sees two new television organizations covering national defense with full-time reporters—Cable News Network (CNN) and Independent Television News Association (ITNA). Changes in television technology that could eventually completely revolutionize the industry are evident too.

CNN

CNN, a 24-hour daily cable news network, was started with aggressive publicity by Atlanta yachtsman, sports magnate, and television entrepreneur Ted Turner. The network claimed to reach eleven million homes in 1982, and Turner contended that cable news ultimately would drive newspapers out of business and usher in a communications revolution with profound impact on ABC, CBS, and NBC.[8] The cable network showed immediate interest in coverage of defense news. It hired David Browde, who had been reporting on

military stories for a local station in Norfolk after a decade of work in radio and television news. Browde soon switched back to one of his previous employers, ITNA, but CNN added a correspondent with extensive overseas reporting experience to replace him. Charles J. Bierbauer, former Bonn and Moscow bureau chief for ABC television, became the cable news network's Pentagon man in May of 1981.

Just after he joined CNN, Bierbauer reached his 39th birthday, on Polish National day, July 22. The fact that he relates his birthday to an Eastern European holiday is indicative of the depth of knowledge Bierbauer has about Europe, especially Soviet bloc countries. In various radio, television, and newspaper jobs, he has been based in Yugoslavia, Austria, West Germany, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. He speaks German and Russian—which he learned while in the US Army in the early 1960s—and has some familiarity with Serbo-Croatian. His master's degree in journalism from Pennsylvania State University in 1970 was based on a thesis entitled, *Vecernje Novosti: Prototype of Yugoslavia's Liberated Communist Press.*

Bierbauer found that Cable News Network, unlike the other major electronic news organizations, had an "insatiable appetite for news." The network had twenty-four hours a day to fill. Correspondents at CNN could report more stories, deal with them at greater length, and were subject to less editorial direction than at the traditional networks. Bierbauer's average story might run only two to three minutes, but that length is twice the average for a good-sized defense item on one of the major network's half-hour nightly newscasts. Bierbauer could go to five or six minutes or longer if the story warranted, and update his stories throughout the day if there were new developments.

Cable News Network also offered, from its Washington bureau or its Atlanta headquarters, a variety of specials. Two of most interest to the defense community were weekend interview programs, *Newsmaker Saturday* and *Newsmaker Sunday*—hour-length shows broadcast twice during the day. Commentators on the network included John Keeley, a retired intelligence officer and the military affairs expert for CNN. For Bierbauer, CNN is "quite receptive" on defense-related stories, and the Pentagon is an intriguing beat, possibly more interesting than CNN's other major posts at the White House, State Department, and Capitol Hill. After a dozen years overseas, much of it in Eastern Europe, he feels the information flows very well at the US Department of Defense. By comparison, "you could never get any information from the Soviet Ministry of Defense, even if you could get them to answer the phone."

But the cable news experiment remains an unproven commercial venture. Should it be a success, it is by no means clear the Ted Turner

operation will dominate the field. In 1982, Westinghouse and ABC were joining in a twenty-four hour cable news service, competing head-to-head with CNN. Other all-news cable networks are being formed, while the Atlanta network is said to be losing a million dollars a month after two years of operations. Dave Browde, the former CNN Pentagon correspondent, predicts that Turner will have to sell (CBS had shown interest) or go broke. Meanwhile, people in those eleven million homes are watching news other than that provided by CBS, NBC, or ABC. And much of that news is about national defense.

ITNA

Television coverage of the Pentagon as the eighties began included Browde's organization, but just how much attention it would give and for how long the Independent Television News Association (ITNA) would be interested was in question. Unlike the other cable network, ITNA produces television news reports dealing almost exclusively with headline issues of national importance. It provides a daily electronic feed of individual stories, producing no overall news program but giving producers of newscasts at local affiliates a menu of material to choose from. ITNA began in the mid-seventies as a seven-station cooperative, but by 1982 was providing its services to more than twenty stations, including major markets: New York, Los Angeles, and Washington, DC. Browde was ITNA's Washington bureau chief before leaving that administrative post for the reporting job at Norfolk that preceded his CNN stint. After his return to ITNA, he covered a beat consisting of State and Defense. By early 1982, he was concerned about being typed as a defense specialist in the television business, and was ready to cover the congressional scene for ITNA. Whether or not ITNA will continue to be listed among news organizations with a regular Pentagon reporter remains to be seen.

INTO THE EIGHTIES

The decade of the eighties is likely to see an even greater transfer of information about national defense to the public via television and radio. Public broadcasting, for example, may do more. Although public broadcasting does not cover the Pentagon with a regular correspondent, Public Broadcasting Service deals with defense matters frequently in the *McNeil-Lehrer Report*, a half-hour discussion program focusing on a single issue each weekday evening, and in Friday evening's *Washington Week in Review*, where reporters discuss topical stories that are capturing attention in the nation's capital. National Public Radio's *All Things Considered* sometimes includes defense subjects or commentaries. Moreover, a significant trend in Washington journalism is toward the establishment of bureaus representing out-of-town stations, any one of

which may decide to turn its attention to a defense subject of either local or national concern on a given day.

The multiplicity of television news sources has the potential to give viewers more in-depth reporting on defense plus more of what television does with greatest impact—live coverage of breaking stories. The time constraint on television news may be eliminated. National defense issues may be explained and shown more fully. With the trend toward narrowcasting through hundreds of new low-power television stations, and direct-broadcast satellites that may be operating in the late eighties, there could even be a new network channel devoting all of its time to defense and foreign affairs subjects. This sort of channel could bring the national security debate via television to the aficionados who now laboriously plow through carefully written journal articles, monographs, and books. But the end result may be that Americans, in general, know less about national defense than they know now. Consensus for or against national security policy may be even more difficult to mobilize in the body politic. Superficial as the major networks may be, they do at least provide a data base from which most Americans learn and decide about national defense and other national issues. The networks homogenize the product. Will they continue to serve that purpose in the future, or will small groups of Americans know more and more about less and less? For the eighties, such a situation seems remote. A more prudent assessment would be that the major television networks—through their evening news, morning news, documentaries, and interview programs—will continue both to reflect and to establish public attitudes on national defense issues.

Eventually, however, defense officials may wonder why they were, at a critical moment in the development of mass communications technology, more concerned about dealing with the print media than broadcasting. They may wonder why they did not plan to take advantage of the opportunities television offers—for rallying public support, for maintaining military morale, for enhancing peer-group respect for those who serve their country in the profession of arms. They may wonder, too, why they did not plan more skillfully to deal with the enormous impact broadcasting is likely to have on a nation at war.[9]

8
REACHING OVERSEAS AND INTERNAL PUBLICS

Should the American government conduct information programs aimed at people in foreign countries? Should it conduct information programs aimed at its own employees, such as military personnel? How much money should the government spend on such programs, and what editorial policies should it adopt when it speaks? These are worthwhile questions for consideration elsewhere, but the fact remains that the US government *does* communicate with overseas publics, and it *does* communicate with its own people. Therefore, a lot of what government communicates affects national security.

In this chapter, we set aside most of the basic arguments that relate to government information programs, in order to introduce the reporters who work in or near the Pentagon's news room and who communicate with these special audiences. In addition, we look at one commercial news organization that exists primarily to communicate with service personnel, and learn that it can carry a great deal of information that serves the purposes of the Department of Defense. Finally, we examine the question: What impact do the Pentagon press corps reporters and their outlets have on the government's efforts to communicate with people in foreign countries and with people who work for the government?

America's Voices Overseas

Two agencies of the US government, the Voice of America (VOA) and the United States Information Agency (USIA), have reporters

covering the Pentagon. The two organizations are part of American efforts to communicate with people in foreign countries, in particular those who may be subjected to propaganda from the Soviet Union.[1]

The United States Information Agency is the official public relations arm of the US government abroad. Its basis is a consolidation of the USIA and the former Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the State Department. The Voice of America is the agency's global radio network. As of 1981, VOA had regularly scheduled broadcasts in 39 languages, with broadcasts in other languages specially programmed.

In conducting public diplomacy for the United States, USIA and VOA frequently must deal with national security issues. For example:

- The 1981 US government booklet assessing and describing Soviet military strength was distributed overseas by USIA. Secretary of Defense Weinberger's press conference at the time of public release of the booklet was televised live to Europe at US government expense.

- The Voice of America in September 1981 aired an interview with Secretary of Defense Weinberger on its program *Press Conference USA*. The *Washington Post* reported that the program was delayed, according to a VOA spokesman, because it was thought the Secretary's remarks would "anticipate" a United Nations debate on the involvement of the Soviet Union in the use of chemical-biological warfare in Cambodia. The program, when broadcast, included a clarification of some of Secretary Weinberger's remarks to restate US policy regarding biological warfare and emphasize that the United States renounced any use of such weapons and remained in full compliance with the biological weapons convention.

- A debate of some public magnitude broke out in 1981 as to whether or not Reagan Administration appointees would jeopardize the integrity and accuracy of VOA's output by politicizing the Voice's news output. The government maintained that news carried by VOA would continue to be truthful. There were indications that more attention would be given to ensuring that American points of view, especially on national security issues, were fully aired.

- USIA and VOA conducted major campaigns to inform the international public about President Reagan's 1982 European trip, which emphasized NATO, and about his series of speeches outlining arms reduction proposals.

These upper-echelon happenings, significant as they may be, are not the purview of USIA and VOA reporters at the Pentagon. Bill Durham, USIA's man there, concentrates on US government statements that provide current policy to press officers in US embassies. His principal contribution is to the *Wireless File* that goes out each evening from Washington in English, French, Arabic, and Spanish versions. With the information contained in the file, US officials overseas can better communicate on behalf of their government—speaking with one voice, as it were. Similarly, VOA's John Roberts covers the Pentagon to obtain material that will be useful to the broadcast arm of America's overseas communications network.

Informing the Troops

In a democracy, a well-informed military organization works best. Morale and efficiency are enhanced by a steady flow of facts about world events, national news, local happenings, and details that pertain specifically to military life. The United States recognizes the importance of an informed military community by maintaining an elaborate system to provide news to military people, especially those stationed overseas.[2]

AFIS

There is a flood of information for service personnel and their families from the Department of Defense. Some of it, largely the printed material, is produced within the Department and tailored to Department goals. Other material, especially radio news, is recycled from US media outlets for overseas use. The American Forces Information Service (AFIS), an activity of the Department of Defense, is charged with informing members of the armed forces, Department civilian employees, military reserves and retirees, and families of service personnel. In addition, each of the separate military services conducts an extensive internal information program.

Printed material provided by AFIS includes a magazine *(Defense)*, a monthly tabloid newspaper *(SSAM* for Soldier, Sailor, Airman, and Marine), a press service that goes to editors of unit newspapers, and a variety of material like *Background Notes* on foreign countries, and

booklets, pamphlets, fact sheets, and posters such as those supporting drug and alcohol abuse prevention. These are not insubstantial undertakings: the policy magazine, which provides a monthly voice for the Secretary of Defense and his staff, circulates 80,000 copies to senior officers and civilian managers. *SSAM*, aimed at first- and second-term enlisted personnel and junior officers, uses a highly graphic tabloid format and prints 250,000 copies per issue.[3]

Defense's broadcast arm, American Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS), was, in 1982, providing 82 hours of weekly television entertainment and information programming for overseas audiences, more than 700 scheduled radio newscasts each week, and 80 hours of radio programming. It went only to locations where English language broadcasts would otherwise be unavailable. Most AFRTS television news is produced by military people assigned to local AFRTS stations, although television news from US commercial and public networks is videotaped and sent to stations on a delayed basis. Satellite transmission promises to change that, giving military audiences overseas instantaneous national television news like that available to civilians in the continental United States. That is already the case with radio, where satellite, cable, and shortwave are used to provide 24-hour a day service, which includes teletype news from AP and UPI in addition to the audio service.

The Pentagon's broadcast network, in choosing its entertainment shows, relies on audience surveys, which it has found to parallel closely viewer preferences in the United States. It also attempts to provide a news menu closely resembling that found in the States. Broadcast managers are sensitive to suggestions that there might be manipulation of information going to Americans overseas on this government network. Instructions say that it shall "ensure a free flow of information and entertainment programming to overseas DOD personnel and their dependents without censorship, propagandizing, or manipulation." Suggestions for control of broadcast material have sometimes come from overseas military commanders, many of whom would prefer to avoid news or documentaries that might—by dealing with controversial political or emotional subjects—undermine stability in the military organization. Nonetheless, AFRTS said in a policy message in November 1981 that it "has always operated on the principle that our audience will be provided material it wants, not what we think it should have. Service men and women rely on AFRTS for a free flow of news, information, and entertainment without censorship or manipulation." The network said that this free flow "creates audience confidence which

is vital if we are going to be effective in supporting the internal information efforts of the Department of Defense, the military services, and overseas commanders."

STARS AND STRIPES

In discussing news that reaches military people, it is useful to look at two other organizations aiming their product at the military community. Each has reporters covering the Pentagon regularly. One is commercial and reaches readers in the United States and overseas. The other, the *Stars and Stripes* newspaper, is quasi-governmental and is found only overseas. Each provides significant amounts of printed news that service personnel want.

Stars and Stripes is not a government publication in the generally understood sense. It is an "authorized, unofficial" daily newspaper published under the authority of the Department of Defense. Charged with adhering to accepted journalistic principles of accuracy, objectivity, balance, and readability, it has its own reporting staff, uses wire services and a variety of other material including press releases from military organizations. It does not carry editorials, but uses a variety of signed columns and cartoons—"carefully balanced within the liberal-conservative spectrum."

Actually, there are two *Stripes* newspapers. One serves the Pacific and is edited and printed in Japan. The other serves Europe, with offices in Darmstadt, near Frankfurt, Federal Republic of Germany. The objective of each publication is to be self-supporting, with money coming from the sale of the newspaper and from other revenue-producing activities such as bookstores. Circulation fluctuates, depending on US military involvement worldwide. In 1968, the European edition had 150,000 copies. In the Pacific, 205,000 were distributed, of which 106,400 went to Vietnam. By the 1980s, the European edition circulated to about 110,000, and the Pacific edition was down to 40,000.

The idea is to provide readers with a daily hometown newspaper. American service personnel overseas need US news to maintain their sense of citizenship, to exchange information on the conduct of the military mission in the unified military area, for entertainment and morale building from things like sports news and comics, and for information that affects people personally as part of the military community. Providing news about Washington developments that touch on the military community is the task of the two *Stripes* reporters assigned to the Pentagon. In 1982, the Pacific edition of *Stripes*

assigned a permanent reporter to the Pentagon for the first time in the newspaper's history, Air Force Master Sergeant Dwight Trimmer, a 12-year military man in his first *Stripes* assignment, who is looking for personnel issues that affect people in the military, particularly those in the Pacific.

Trimmer's colleague from European *Stars and Stripes* was, until her transfer to the home office of the newspaper in 1982, Air Force Senior Master Sergeant Grace Blancett. She was the only woman regular in the Pentagon press room for most of her tour in Washington, which began in early 1979.[4] Experienced as a reporter in civilian life and in the military, Blancett has been able to report the truly big story of the era for military readers: the move toward increased pay and benefits for armed forces personnel. Since congressional passage of a compensation package for military people in 1981, Blancett thinks the next big story likely to be of interest to *Stripes* readers will be living conditions.

Blancett finds her sex no barrier to covering news at the Pentagon, although, she says, "I'm usually the only woman in the room" at press conferences and interviews. Being with *Stripes* makes it easier for her to cover some things. On the other hand, being part of the family and an active duty military person occasionally makes the job more difficult too. She feels that the role of a *Stripes* reporter in the Pentagon is to "inform the American public; not to try and influence or to change policy . . . but to be a disinterested observer and reporter of what's going on in the Pentagon that's going to affect American policy and American lives."

ARMY TIMES PUBLISHING COMPANY

When military professionals want information that will be useful to them personally, they usually turn to the *Times*. Not the *New York Times*, but the *Army Times, Navy Times*, or *Air Force Times*.

These weekly newspapers have no connection with the government. They are commercial enterprises, part of the largest nongovernment military newspaper publishing company in the world. Founded in 1940, Army Times Publishing Company was strong enough in the 1970s to build a successful chain, the *Journal* newspapers, in the Virginia and Maryland suburbs surrounding Washington, D.C. For military readers, the *Times* publications maintain a winning blend of news about individual uniformed services, with heavy emphasis on "bread-and-butter" issues. This editorial approach comes close to giving the company a commercial monopoly of the general military audience in the United States and in many overseas locations.

"Since more than 90 percent of our readers are either active or retired military people or dependents of military people, the main thrust of our news has to do with things that affect them personally," says Robert E. Schweitz, editorial vice president of the company. Coverage thus deals with information that will help people in their military careers—news about pay, promotions, education, benefits, and other information military people need in making decisions about their careers. This includes heavy coverage of planned personnel policies and congressional action in the areas that affect people in the military.

Although commercial enterprises, the *Times* papers are vital to internal information flow for the military services. Surveys of active duty military personnel have shown that the papers are a leading source, perhaps *the* leading source, of career information for military professionals. Just as important, these surveys show that the newspapers are often much more credible to readers than official government pronouncements or publications.

The *Times* organization devotes considerable editorial effort to covering national security issues in Washington. In a move toward increased coverage of defense hardware subjects in 1982, a new section was added to all *Times* papers. The papers had found from surveys that their readers wanted more information on such professional subjects. Never inclined to overlook a business potential, the *Times* papers now can also hope to attract more advertisers from the defense industry. Still, the basic story for the *Times* papers has to do with the factors of daily life for military people. The *Times's* own news service, put out by editor Bruce Covill and four reporters, covers stories that affect all military services. In the Pentagon, the news service is represented by Tom Philpott, a former Coast Guard officer in his early thirties, and Paul Smith, another young reporter and a former naval officer. Philpott spends most of his time on personnel and policy issues, qualifying thereby as the *Times* organization's official Pentagon correspondent. Smith deals principally with health issues and reserve affairs. Another of the news service team, Alan Carrier, follows the military exchange systems and the Defense Department's school system for military children. Martha Craver is Capitol Hill correspondent for the news service. Their product is shared with the individual *Times* newspapers, each of which maintains an independent staff to cover specific service topics.

Air Force Times editor Bruce Callander has four reporters pounding beats to gather news about uniquely Air Force subjects. *Navy Times* editor Bill Kreh and *Army Times* editor Lee Ewing also deploy reporters to cover the military and sea-service items of importance to their readers.

The *Times* organization has a tradition of stability in its editorial staffing. Callander is an expert on the Air Force from his days as a bombardier in World War II. He earned a journalism degree from the University of Michigan and returned to Air Force duty as an information officer during the Korean War. He joined *Air Force Times* in 1952. After fifteen years as an associate editor—the *Times* papers tended for many years to use that title for all reporters—he became managing editor. Callander says his primary approach as editor of the newspaper is to be as close to a real newspaper as possible—not to be just an arm of the government. "We owe our primary responsibility to the guy who plunked down the money for a subscription or a single copy," he says. "We are doing what our reader would do if he could get to Washington, open the right doors, and ask the right questions." Using that guideline, *Air Force Times* is more interested in something helpful for its reader than in something that's merely interesting.

Navy Times, likewise, is looking for a few good stories of interest to its readers—Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. Editor Kreh went through Navy boot camp at the end of World II, then in 1946 was a member of the second class at the Navy's school for enlisted journalists. He joined *Navy Times* in 1953, took over as editor in 1975.

Lee Ewing is a relative newcomer to the publishing company. *Army Times's* editor joined the newspaper group in 1971 after military service as an infantry officer and later a combat intelligence officer in Vietnam. Ewing was born into an Army family. He was in high school in West Berlin when the Berlin Wall went up. Ewing wrote for the *Times* magazine, which supplements each of the company's newspapers, covered Congress, wrote a column, worked as an associate editor for *Air Force Times*, and edited the *Prince Georges Journal* for three and a half years. He came to *Army Times* to be editor in 1980, directing a staff of five editors and five reporters.

Military officials do not know quite how to treat the *Times* newspapers. They are in the family but certainly not house organs. Overall, relations between the individual papers and the services they cover have been good. Every now and then, however, service officials are at odds with one of the papers. On such occasions, the *Times* editors lean toward what they think are the best interests of their readers. If that interest and

the service's bureaucratic interests coincide, fine. If not, the newspapers—although anything but antimilitary—become, as editor Ewing says, "His Majesty's Loyal Opposition." An editorial in the 12 April 1982 *Navy Times* makes the point that applies to all these service journals. Commenting on an awareness that some of its stories on military pay had upset readers, the newspaper said, in part:

> We think it is an important part of our job to give readers whatever insight we can to the changing mood in Washington.
>
> Some Pentagon officials would rather we did not. They would rather we emphasize the efforts that the services are making on behalf of their people and not worry them with reports of the negative reaction to those efforts on Capitol Hill.
>
> Well, we do try to cover the Pentagon proposals, but we aren't in business to tell half the story.

Pentagon Reporters and Special Publics

What we learn from the case of *Army Times* and its company's related publications is that special audiences which the government seeks to reach often rely on commercial media, and sometimes may be reached by them more easily than by the government's channels of communications. Not only is this true for service-related information, it is also true for news of a more general variety in the national defense field. Consider the impact of the AP and UPI wire service reporters and television network reporters on US service personnel overseas, for example. Since the military's own broadcasting service relies on and transmits material from these wire services and electronic news organizations, it is writers like Fred Hoffman and Richard Gross, and broadcasters like John McWethy and Bill Lynch, who provide much of the military news diet for overseas service personnel. No matter how erudite and well informed the material of other Pentagon reporters, it is less likely to reach the US military population overseas than is the reporting of regulars who work for the wires and the nets. But other reporters also have their impact on service personnel. Service personnel read the news magazines, see the syndicated daily newspaper material, and follow the technical and policy writings of the members of the Pentagon's press corps. Much of what they think of their country, their mission, and their leadership is based on these reports. They are

just as likely to be led, or misled, by Pentagon reporters as are their cousins who are not in uniform.

Foreign audiences, too, get many messages from Pentagon reporters. People in major countries of interest to the United States—in Japan, or the NATO countries, for instance—receive information from the media of the United States, either directly or funnelled through foreign reporters who work in Washington or New York. The "blackbirds on a fence" variety of Washington journalism, where one flies off and all fly off, applies on a worldwide basis. If Pentagon reporters and other Washington newsmen fly off in the direction of a particular story about US national defense, you may be sure news media in other countries will join the flock. This international aspect of Washington journalism is one of the items that indeed gives influence to the media—often more influence and more ability to affect events than the government has.

9

PENTAGON REPORTERS: TRAITS AND OBSERVATIONS

> On its devotion, on its faithful followers, may rest the future of our civilization.
>
> James Forrestal, 1947

> In our country a strong free press and a strong free Nation are *inseparable*.
>
> Melvin Laird, 1971

> I have . . . the greatest respect for the profession, and it is only that respect that leads me occasionally to point out things that are in error.
>
> Caspar Weinberger, 1982

The first two quotations above were carefully selected for engraving on plaques in the alcove near the Pentagon press room where memorabilia from war correspondents like Ernie Pyle are on display, along with the names of reporters who lost their lives in combat zones from World War II to the present. The quotation from Secretary of Defense Weinberger came as part of a candid response to a question about his attitude toward the press in general and toward Pentagon reporters in particular.

Whatever else they are, Pentagon reporters are an established part of Washington journalism. They are important officeholders in what William L. Rivers calls the "Other Government," which he says is firmly in control. Observers have called the overall Washington press corps predominantly a liberal eastern establishment; the product of selective schools, unrepresentative of the country. Stephen Hess, in a 1978 study for the Brookings Institution, profiled the general Washington

news corps. He found that as a whole the Washington press corps was not young, not female, and not black; that it was heavily from the Northeast and well educated. He also found that reporters for the inner ring of influential news organizations were even less young, less likely to be female, more schooled, and more likely to be from the Eastern seaboard. Hess concluded that "if there is an average Washington reporter and an average American, they do not look like each other; the average influential Washington reporter looks even less like the average American."[1]

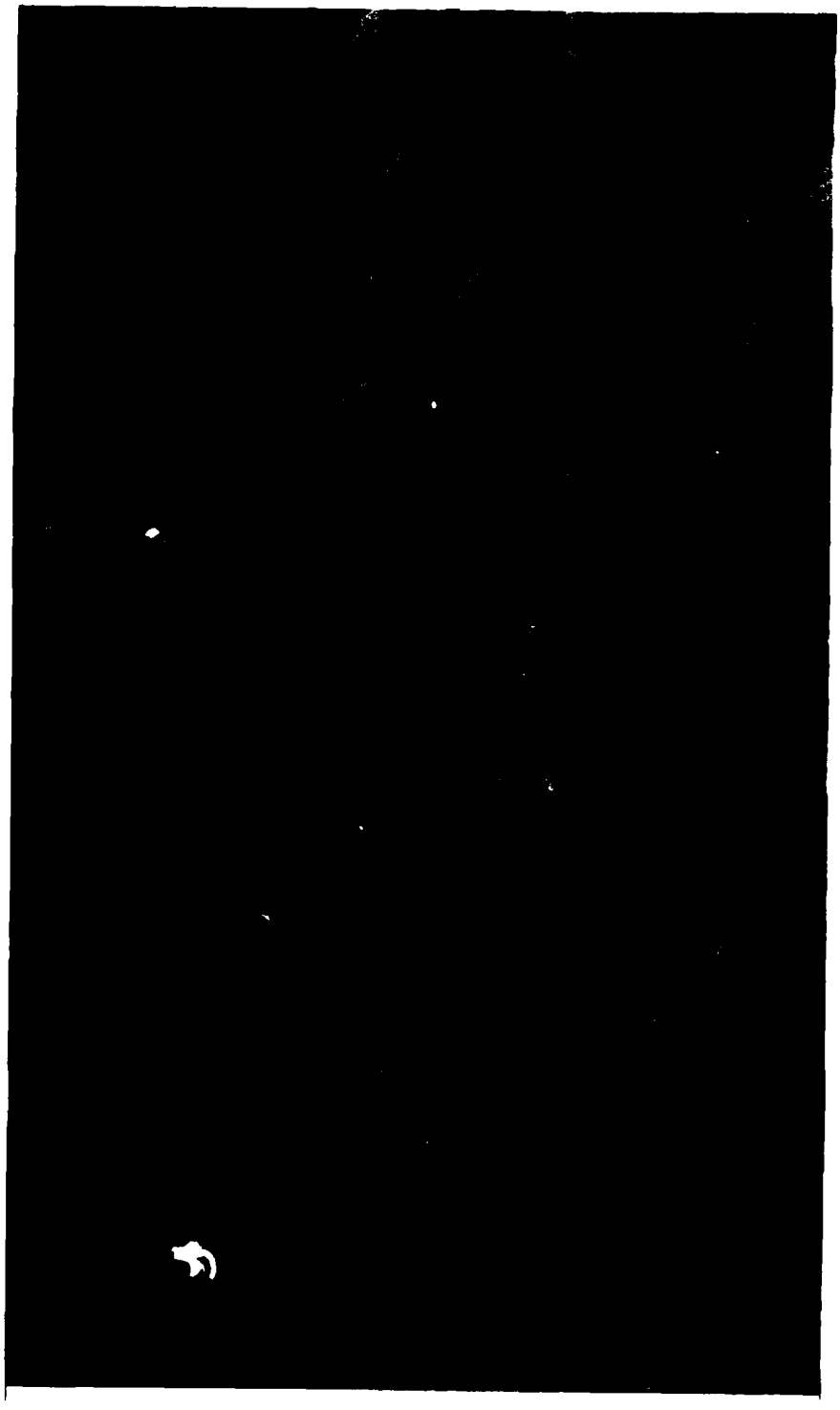
Another study, by S. Robert Lichter and Stanley Rothman for the Research Institute on International Change at Columbia University, surveyed members of the national media elite during 1979 and 1980 and compared their backgrounds, attitudes, and outlooks toward American society with those of executives at several major corporations. This study found that journalists were in some respects typical of leadership groups throughout US society: mainly white males in their thirties and forties, highly educated, well-paid professionals. They were primarily from northern industrial states—New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and the New England states. Lichter and Rothman's study concludes that the national media elite are a powerful new leadership group in American society, observing: "Some hail them as the public's tribunes against the powerful—indispensable champions of the underdog and the oppressed. Others decry them for allegiance to an adversary culture that is chiseling away at traditional values."[2]

Traits

Are the members of the Pentagon press corps in 1982 like those national and Washington media groups described by Hess and by Lichter and Rothman? In addition to the specific descriptions of individuals given in previous chapters, we can make several assessments of the group as a whole.

AGE

With regard to age, the Pentagon reporters are decidedly mature. More than a third of the group is over age 50. Those who report for influential organizations are quite close in age, as a group, to those reporting for influentials elsewhere in Washington—just over half of them are age 40 or greater. Only one is in his twenties.



Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger answers questions from Pentagon reporters in the Department of Defense briefing room

EXPERIENCE

The Pentagon group is filled with experienced journalists. Forty-one percent have spent more than 20 years in journalism. Only 4 of 39 in the group have been reporters for less than 10 years; three of those four went from active military service directly to reporting on defense issues. Many have vast experience in reporting national security news. Almost half of them have been reporting from the Pentagon for seven or more years. On the other hand, 18 of the 39, including a high percentage of those representing the influentials, are in their first three years of reporting from the Pentagon beat. The day of the long-time defense expert reporting from the Pentagon for influential media outlets seems to be passing, unless a new generation of old pros is formed in the eighties.

Interviews with the Pentagon correspondents indicate they feel that their group is better qualified to report on defense issues than outsiders occasionally assigned by news organizations seeking a fresh or objective viewpoint, or by news organizations that cannot spare a reporter for full-time Pentagon coverage. Pentagon reporters feel these outsiders are frequently uninformed or are pressed to produce material before they can become well informed, and that occasionally they arrive at the Pentagon with a substantial bias on national defense subjects, or with stereotyped views of the Defense Establishment.

Although Pentagon reporters tend to divide between old-timers and first-termers on the beat, they have very different attitudes about this phenomenon—attitudes that do not always correlate with their own tenure in the building. Reporters with longer time on the job in the Pentagon are generally regarded as more knowledgeable than their colleagues, and as having better sources. Some reporters, however, feel that the old-timers have diminished enthusiasm for the beat; they fail to see things as new and exciting. Those adopting this viewpoint tend to praise several bright, hard-working, enthusiastic journalists who are covering the defense story for the first time. Defenders of the veteran reporters counter that these journalists have just as much brilliance, stamina, and enthusiasm as their newer colleagues, and that they avoid many specious stories that those with less experience are inclined to latch onto.

EDUCATION

Almost all the Pentagon reporters have college degrees, and one-quarter have advanced degrees. That compares favorably with other Washington journalists, although Washington journalists reporting for influential organizations have a slightly higher level of postgradu-

ate education than the Pentagon group. Most Pentagon reporters have degrees in the humanities. The Pentagon group tends to have degrees from selective or highly selective universities—Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Brandeis, and MIT, for example.[3] Degrees in journalism or in the mass communications field predominate. Advanced or bachelor's degrees in journalism that they have are from some of the best-known schools in that field: Columbia, Northwestern, Stanford, Missouri, and Boston universities.

REGION

Washington journalists tend to be from the Northeast, but Pentagon reporters are slightly more likely to have come from the northeastern United States than other Washington journalists, even journalists in Washington working for the most influential news organizations. More than half the Pentagon reporters working for influentials in 1982 are originally from the northeast.[4]

SEX AND RACE

No black reporters are covering the Pentagon full time in 1982. Only one regular reporter in the Department of Defense press corps room is a woman. She works for the government newspaper *Stars and Stripes,* and is leaving for another assignment with the newspaper. That leaves the Pentagon group totally male, except for the occasional forays of Sara McClendon or women reporters who are visiting the Pentagon on special assignments, or to cover women's issues. Although women reporters have been assigned to the Pentagon in the past, especially by the television networks, none have figured prominently as regular general-issue defense correspondents for an extended period of time. With an increasing number of women journalists and black journalists in the United States and in Washington, especially in the younger age groups, it would seem that their absence from the Pentagon press corps is only temporary. However, as Hess points out, any straight-line projection that assumes older white male reporters in Washington will be replaced by those from the more heavily black and female group of younger Washington reporters is wrong. The replacements for the veterans are probably learning their trade in places like Nashville, Louisville, Indianapolis, or Newark.

MILITARY SERVICE

Fourteen of the 39 reporters have no military service at all. Most of those who were in the military served as enlisted men, mostly draftees. Of the ten reporters below age 40 who are working for news organizations other than technical or service publications, only two had military service of any kind. The trend in Pentagon journalism, like trends in

other elite sections of US society, seems clearly toward a corps of national security correspondents who have not been in uniform.

ATTITUDES

Attitudes of Pentagon reporters are not easily identified. Reporters are, for the most part, quite noncommittal about their personal views on social issues—even on the issue of the importance of a strong national defense. The conclusions that follow are, therefore, tentative and interpretative. For that reason, it is useful to restate the view of one of the Washington respondents to Stephen Hess in 1978, a diplomatic correspondent discussing whether or not there is a political bias in the Washington news corps. "They are more conservative at the Pentagon," he told Hess. What this observation and interviews conducted with Pentagon reporters in 1981–82 suggest is that, being knowledgeable about the issues of national security, Pentagon reporters do not have knee-jerk reactions on the subject. They tend to show genuine and great concern for national security. They are worried about the country's ability to wage war in the present or the future. They take the Soviet threat seriously. Those reporting for technical and policy publications are decidedly more pro-Pentagon in their attitudes than are those reporting for general news organizations. General media reporters are well aware that what they report and how they report it has an impact on the security of the country. Pentagon reporters for general news outlets, however, do not feel the need to discard their personal and professional integrity because they *might* upset some facet of national security. They believe that official concern about secrecy, for example, is often cynical and self-serving. Said one newspaper reporter, when asked about a possible government regulation or law to control national security information and restrain the press from publishing classified facts:

> I'd oppose it bitterly. I think it would be entirely inconsistent with the First Amendment. It would be inconsistent with our whole structure of government, in that it would make it even easier than it is today for people put here by the taxpayers to hide from the taxpayers things they are doing that there is no reason to hide except to avoid political embarrassment. The system of classification of so-called secrets is grossly abused and almost meaningless. It is dangerous to have to take upon yourself the judgment of whether something really impairs the national security, but you are pretty much forced to do it by indiscriminate use of the word secret. Those in government who advocate regulation of the press would do well to ask themselves a more fundamental question: what is really secret?

Most of the reporters say they have been provided "classified" information by government officials at various levels in the Defense Establishment. They feel challenged, personally, by suggestions that they are being disloyal to the country by publicizing information that is leaked to them. Clearly, with one or two exceptions in the entire press corps, they feel that the burden of protecting military information is on the government. They resent being put in a position of making decisions about whether or not to report information that might be harmful to the country. Whatever their political persuasion, the Pentagon reporters deny any desire to report information that would result in physical harm to individuals serving the United States. Most indicate they will voluntarily withhold such information if they are convinced it would have that result. They emphasize over and over that the persistent assumption that information is leaked to reporters by those with an axe to grind is wrong. The most important stories are, they say, usually dug out in bits and pieces by reporters using good reporting techniques. What disturbs them greatly is that the most significant of the real leaks seem to come from those at the top of the government hierarchy, not from the bottom.[5]

ETHICS

Reporters of all stripes have standards dealing with ethics and with a sense of obligation, of integrity, of search for truth. Some have these feelings more keenly than others; some adhere to principles more carefully than others; but the glue that binds journalists is as strong as that binding military professionals. It's just a different glue. Journalists have a set of drives and priorities different from most military people or civilians who are in national security occupations.[6] Pentagon reporters for general news outlets feel that they are at the cutting edge of the question of national security versus the people's right to know. They view themselves as a small band of beleaguered representatives of the people allowed partial access to the organization that controls life and death for Americans and for most of the people on the planet. They want to know what is going on. They want to tell people what is going on. They want to do that in a professional manner, to be recognized as good reporters and to avoid hurting the country in the process.

They also know that they have responsibilities. Sometimes they are uncomfortable with those responsibilities, as when they wonder if they should blurt out a story that some infighter, showoff, whistleblower, partisan, or gossip has leaked to them.[7] They are even more uncomfortable when they have pieced together a major national security story, and can't be sure of its impact on the country. They are

also uncomfortable when they feel they are being used by officials. They are uncomfortable when they are lied to. They are uncomfortable when their patriotism or loyalty or honesty is questioned. They are uncomfortable when they or their sources are investigated, or when they sense hostility from officials that might mean phones are being tapped or a bureau chief is being told how unprofessional his Pentagon reporter is. But they recognize they have responsibilities beyond journalism, and they understand the realities of national defense better than other people in their own organization. Oddly enough, they often have to represent the Pentagon and its views in their dealings with bureau chiefs, editors, or publishers.

Pentagon reporters know, too, that they are vulnerable. They can be cut off from information by officials. Their sense of responsibility can be used to keep them from going with a story, even though they have seen such restraint rewarded with duplicity in the past. On the other side of the coin, they can be accused by colleagues and critics of being lapdogs instead of watchdogs at the Pentagon.[8]

The fact that the Pentagon reporters are dealing with military subjects suggests that they would be among the first journalists to be subjected to government hostility, government restraint, government persecution, perhaps even government prosecution. They have to be careful and cautious, although they do not like to admit it. Even on the subject of government efforts to control leaks, many of them seem to be whistling in the dark. Said one reporter for a technical publication: "When there is a crackdown at the Pentagon on leaks, my phone rings off the hook. Americans don't like to be told what to do. That's not their nature." Others take a more realistic view, admitting that stern measures *do* control the flow of information, at least temporarily; that an awareness in the Pentagon of management's intent to punish leakers does have a deterrent effect on potential sources, that sources *do* dry up in times of such stress.

In general, the reporters' ultimate national defense goal is the same as the goal of those in the defense establishment they report about—they want a strong and safe America. Sometimes, their profession calls on them to pursue that goal in ways that seem inconsistent, often wrong, to those who are not journalists.

Observations

Reaching conclusions about the press is the easiest thing in the world. Everybody does it. We all think we are experts. But the more you

know about reporters and their organizations, the more difficult generalizations become. Some observations that flow from this study may be of assistance to those who want to understand news coverage of national security issues better, or to become better communicators themselves.

1. The news business is complicated. National defense news is further complicated by the need for military security as well as by the size and scope of the Defense Establishment. Thus, covering national defense is more difficult than covering most other Washington news beats. Reporters who work as regulars in the Pentagon press corps are much like senior reporters in other parts of Washington. A few have been covering the defense story for many years. Others, especially those representing the most influential news organizations, have three years or less on the job in the Pentagon. Younger members of the group tend not to have had military service. Almost all consider themselves professionals in their field, look upon the Pentagon as a good beat, and are glad to be where the action is. They are in no way constrained to use Pentagon sources, but seek facts and opinions from those whom they find to be qualified and willing to cooperate.

2. Competition is a key factor in covering national defense, as in other parts of the news business. If reporters believe information they have uncovered is going to be used by another news outfit, even though it may be sensitive national security information, they are tempted to use it to beat the competition. They believe responsibility for keeping secrets rests with the government, not with reporters. Also, although most reporters who cover the Pentagon decide for themselves what news to report and how to report it, some feel they must pursue certain stories to attract the attention of editors and officials in their organizations who ultimately decide what to use on the air or what to print. Many have to do a considerable amount of selling to cause a story to be used.

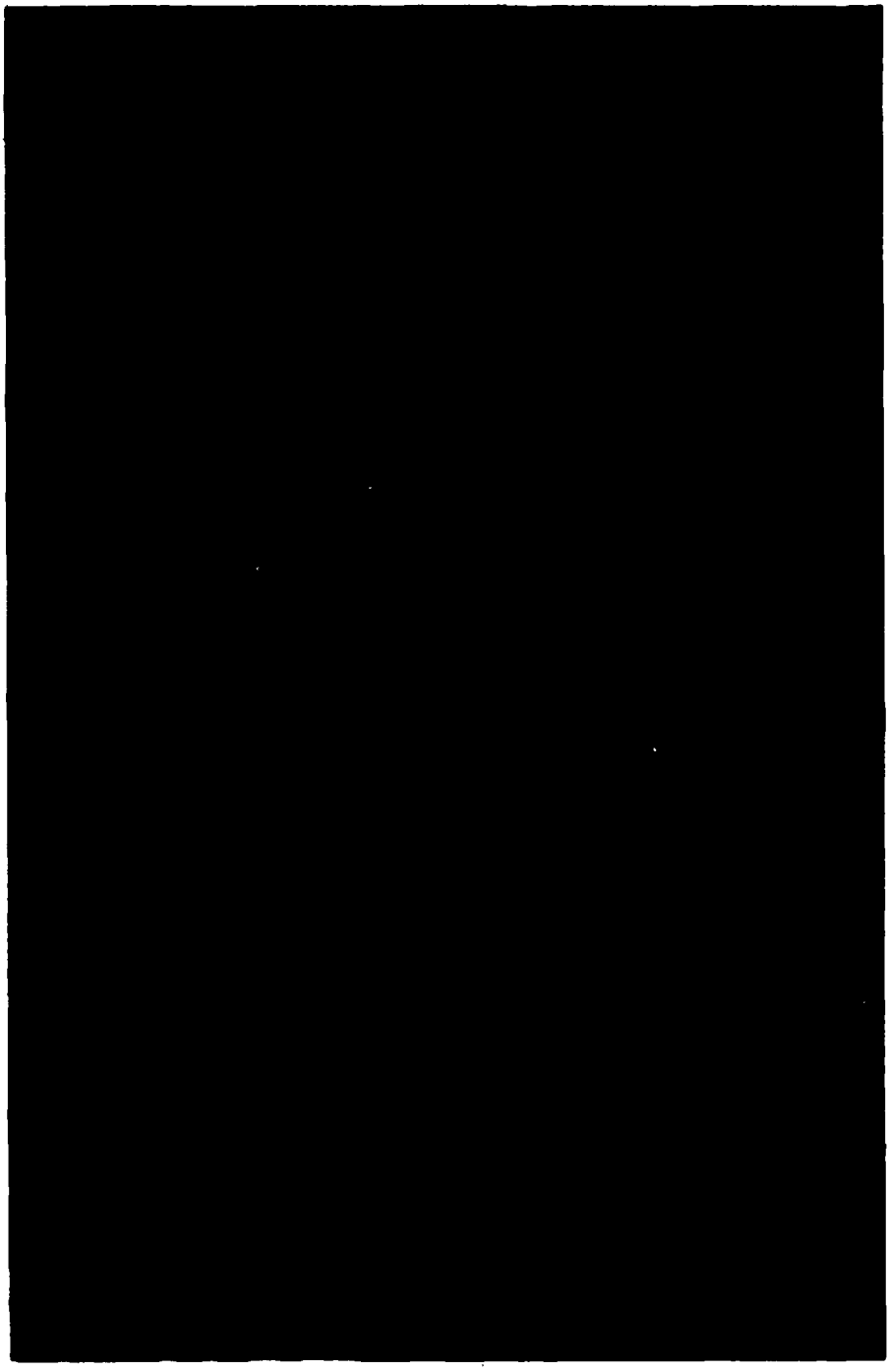
3. There is constant interaction between the various segments of the news business. The wire services, television networks, the *New York Times, Washington Post,* and *Wall Street Journal* affect each other and other media outlets. Technical publications also set trends that influence the rest of the media in important ways, or break stories that seize the journalistic pack's attention. Similarly, news about national defense affects key individuals, especially in Congress and the Washington bureaucracy. Pentagon reporters have an impact, too, on people abroad and on the military services.

4. Technology has changed reporting of national security news. Television can bring military subjects to viewers with immediacy and impact. Print journalists find their work more and more oriented toward

interpretation and expansion—as do television journalists within the constraints of the time allotted them. Most print journalists covering the Pentagon, consciously or unconsciously, write for elite audiences: i. e., opinion leaders. Reporters sense that officials believe television has more immediate impact than print journalism. At the same time, many correspondents feel that television is inadequate to the task of providing detailed, analytical information about national defense. The future promises changes in the way the American public receives its news about national defense, although the precise nature of these changes is difficult to predict. The net effect, however, is likely to be more reporting to the public about military subjects.

5. Attention given to national defense issues by the media closely parallels the media's perception of the current importance of defense to the public and the government. Reporters *report* national defense developments, they do not *manufacture* them. News coverage of national security issues declined in the early and mid-1970s, principally as a result of the national malaise over Vietnam. Interest in defense news surged after the change of governments in Iran and the hostage crisis, Soviet actions in Afghanistan and Poland, and other events smelling of powdersmoke forced themselves on the public and government. News organizations consequently increased their coverage of defense subjects. Pentagon reporters foresee a continued interest in arms reduction talks, the future of NATO, debates over a return to some form of conscription, the quality of military technology, military readiness, and whether or not the United States will use military force as an instrument of foreign policy. Barring actual combat, the focus of the reporters who cover the Pentagon on a day-to-day basis is likely to concentrate on budget-related issues, because those issues drive so much of the activity in the Department of Defense.

6. Reporters working for general news organizations reject the suggestion that their role is to propose policy solutions, or even to push the ideas of policy advocates. Rather, they see themselves as observers who ask hard questions, analyze answers, compare views, and report accordingly. They prefer to gather news through individual discussions, by telephone, or face to face, with authorities who either make decisions or are well enough informed to discuss issues intelligently. Most reporters take a cautious attitude toward pronouncements by the government, but they seem to develop confidence in leaders who are available, candid, knowledgeable, and relaxed. They contend that defense officials can communicate about their areas of responsibility without violating security or jeopardizing their careers.



Henry E. Catto, Jr., Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, at the Pentagon podium

7. Developing a cadre of defense leaders who are available, candid, knowledgeable, and relaxed with reporters without risking their careers will not be easy. Working with reporters can be precarious for officials. Say the wrong thing; get into trouble. Say the right thing; reporter gets it wrong; get into trouble. Motivations and attitudes of officials do not match those of reporters; they are marching to different drummers. Yet when trust is established they can help each other—and the Nation. Reporters are an ever-present fact of life in the business of national security. They cannot be ignored or wished away. While they can and should be criticized for errors, criticism does little good after the damage is done. Precision is the vital ingredient in the relationship. The interaction of reporters with the military will continue to be adversarial but not confrontational. Yet those reporters who cover the Pentagon regularly often have valuable insights. Their criticism can be beneficial, and answering their questions a wholesome exercise.

8. In the final analysis, policies and programs that cannot be successfully explained to the public are usually ill-conceived. Therefore, a realistic policy of dealing with the media makes good sense. Some things can not and should not be discussed with reporters; some American military battlefields of the future may be closed to the immediacy of modern news coverage. But the major subjects of keenest interest to defense reporters can be discussed with them, and should be. Good policies and good programs ought to be explainable—and good officials ought to know how to do the explaining.

NOTES

CHAPTER 1

1. Curry, "The Press: An Industry, a Legacy and Sometimes a Pain," *Defense*, August 1981, pp. 18-20.

CHAPTER 2

1. Unless otherwise noted, quotations, biographical details, and personal anecdotes are derived from a series of interviews conducted by the author between September 1981 and April 1982 with individuals listed in Sources. Two studies of Pentagon reporters were helpful as guides and benchmarks: A. V. Underwood, Jr., "The Washington Military Correspondents" (Master's Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1960); and D. L. Strole, "Newsgathering at the Pentagon" (Master's Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1971). For a detailed account of US military actions during the Yom Kippur War, see Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., *On Watch* (New York: Quadrangle, 1976), pp. 432–449. Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger also describes the events in his memoirs, noting that, "At 6:30 a.m. . . . I discovered that the worldwide alert of American forces was all over the morning news. I was shocked." See *Years of Upheaval* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1982), pp. 575–613. One version of how secrecy of the 1973 US alert began to unravel is that an individual en route to the Pentagon, stopped for speeding, explained to the police that he was rushing to work because there was a nuclear alert, whereupon a police reporter picked up the story.

2. John F. Berry, "Mellon Heir to Buy UPI? Reuters Also Interested," *Washington Post*, 8 October 1981, p. D14. Eric Pace, "United Press Agency Is Sold," *New York Times*, 3 June 1982, p. 1. Albin Krebs, "United Press International: Reputation of Always Being a Very Lively No. 2," *New York Times*, 3 June 1982, p. D17.

3. Richard Fryklund, "Covering the Defense Establishment," in *The Press in Washington*, ed. Ray E. Heibert (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1966), p. 166. Fryklund later served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs.

4. Julius Fransen, "Wire Services in Washington," in *The Press in Washington*, pp. 44–45. Fransen was UPI bureau chief in Washington.

5. If senior defense officials want national attention to their speeches—safe avenues for communication with the public because of the policy review process that clears the speech—they must commit themselves to a text, submit it for review by the Freedom of Information directorate in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, then have it released as a blue-topper by the Defense Information section of the same office, in advance. (Few documents have less news potential than yesterday's speech.) Although senior officials must have their speeches cleared, they often speak off-the-cuff without the formality of clearance. They do this, or depart from their cleared text, at their own risk. Former Chairman of the JCS Adm. Thomas H. Moorer used to say that when in office he had two speeches: one to put through for clearance and one to give to audiences. Some speeches, like some congressional testimony, contain major policy statements or new information. Most, however, are bland and repetitious as far as news content is concerned. Reporters learn to scan them quickly or file them for future reference. Secretary of Defense speeches are the only ones in the Department guaranteed close scrutiny, as they often contain policy statements of national significance. But reporters can become apathetic about Secretary of Defense speeches too.

6. Peter Braestrup, *Big Story* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1977), vol. 1. Hoffman looks back at his overall reporting on the Vietnam War—some of it from the field as well as from Washington—and says that he feels comfortable with his twelve years' production.

7. Two of the three US television networks gave the spokesman for the Center for Defense Information a national forum and near-equal time with the Secretary of Defense in their reports on the book. Most daily newspaper reporters at the Pentagon did not mention the Center's views.

CHAPTER 3

1. The list has been the same for decades, with a few notable exceptions: the *New York Herald-Tribune* and *Washington Star* are out of business; the *Detroit News* did not replace its military analyst, Col. Robert Heinl, after his death in 1979. Heinl, a retired Marine Corps officer, followed retired Army general officer and historian S.L.A. Marshall as military analyst for the *News*. Generally supportive of the military editorially, the *News* continued to cover defense and foreign affairs from its Washington bureau after Heinl's death, but without

assigning a reporter exclusively to the Pentagon or hiring another retired military officer as analyst.

2. For example, James McCartney, national correspondent for Knight-Ridder newspapers, whose work appears in the *Philadelphia Inquirer, Miami Herald,* and others in this chain of 33 dailies. McCartney says he specializes in national security as "an area rather than a building." As do many Pentagon regulars, he keeps up with the State Department, the White House's national security apparatus, think tanks, and relevant committees of Congress. But he does not maintain the Pentagon contacts many reporters have. For McCartney, public dialogue has to do with those attacking or criticizing the policies of the Pentagon, which he says are relatively easy to determine. McCartney follows stories without necessarily trying to compete on a hard-news basis—he expects to be just "behind the crest of the wave," adding insight. His material goes not only to the newspapers owned by Knight-Ridder, but through syndication to a total of 125 outlets. Another Washington reporter with expert knowledge of the Pentagon is William Beecher, the diplomatic correspondent for the *Boston Globe.* Before joining the *Globe* in 1975, he served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs. Beecher reported from the Pentagon for the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times* in the 1960s and 1970s. He concentrates on State Department coverage for the *Globe,* and frequently produces extremely well-informed pieces on national security subjects. His stories are syndicated to about 125 papers.

3. *Circulation figures are from Editor and Publisher International Yearbook,* 1980 edition.

4. Jules Witcover, "Surliest Crew in Washington," *Columbia Journalism Review,* Spring 1965, pp. 11–12.

5. Katherine Winton Evans, "The News Maker: A Capitol Hill Pro Reveals His Secrets," *Washington Journalism Review,* June 1981, pp. 28–33. In this interview, Congressman Aspin says the publicity he generates for himself is aimed at trying to influence the debate on national defense, not at getting votes in his Wisconsin district. "You're trying to change the focus of the debate among the aficionados who are going to influence the size of the defense budget, the shape of the defense budget, the posture of the United States, etc.," he says.

6. If reporters from outside Washington have influence on defense it usually tracks to *Current News,* which is a part of a larger news clipping and news summary operation provided by the Department of Defense. The service includes *Radio-TV Defense Dialogue,* a broadcast transcription service. This material is useful both to officials and to reporters. See Benjamin F. Schemmer's interview with Harry M. Zubkoff, Chief of the Secretary of the Air Force's Research and Analysis Division, the Defense Department's executive agent for news clipping and analysis services: "It's the 'Exec Syndrome,' The Palace Guard, That Really Bugs Me," *Armed Forces Journal International,* December 1979, pp. 34–40. Other such services, including a *White House News Summary* are produced for officials in various agencies. See story by Allen Cromley, the *Daily Oklahoman,* 21 September 1980, p. 11.

7. This and other direct quotations from reporters in this chapter, along with anecdotes and biographical material, resulted from interviews conducted with individuals listed under Sources.

8. Edwin and Michael Emery, *The Press and America*, 4th edition. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1978), pp. 489–91.

9. Lloyd Norman, "The Love-Hate Affair Between the Pentagon and the Press," *Army*, February 1980, pp. 14–18. Norman covered the Pentagon for 32 years before his retirement from *Newsweek* in 1979. Like Elton Fay and Mark Watson, he is one of the correspondents whose reporting skill, length of tenure, and integrity entitle him to a special place in the annals of Pentagon coverage. Norman concludes this article by saying that every service academy and war college should include a course in public and congressional relations, with lectures and textbooks by Henry Kissinger and Admiral Hyman G. Rickover. Of note regarding Norman's code-breaking point is the fact that during the *Progressive Magazine* case in 1979, after the magazine published details of hydrogen bomb construction, the government produced a brief revealing that when the White House found that the *Tribune* had made the World War II code-breaking disclosure, it decided to say nothing whatsoever in reaction to the story. As a result, the brief argued, the Japanese—who did not read the *Tribune*—never knew that the United States had broken the code.

10. Says Coates about Anderson: "It always impressed me to note the easy access Bill had to Defense Secretaries and other high officials. While he was getting James Schlesinger or Melvin Laird on the phone, I was waiting on hold for Yeoman Smith at the Navy PIO desk."

11. Sibyl Wilbur, *The Life of Mary Baker Eddy*, (Boston: The Christian Science Publishing Society, 1929), pp. 358–64. Also, Emery and Emery, *The Press and America*, pp. 372–73.

12. Even with the advertising the *Los Angeles Times* gets, space is still a problem. Its Washington bureau receives constant exhortations to cut down on story length. Occasionally, stories are shortened in Los Angeles. For an unauthorized treatment of the Chandler empire, see Robert Gottlieb and Irene Wait, *Thinking Big: The Story of the "Los Angeles Times," Its Publishers and Their Influence on Southern California*, (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1977). Also, Halberstam, *The Powers That Be*, and Dennis Holder, "The Los Angeles Times Reaches for the Top," *Washington Journalism Review*, July/August 1982, p. 16.

13. Lars Eric Nelson moved up to become the *News's* Washington bureau chief after covering the combined State/Defense beat.

14. Volz followed George Wilson, later his *Washington Post* colleague at the Pentagon, on the *Newark Evening News*.

15. The *New York Times* has been written about extensively. The authorized history: Meyer Berger, *The Story of the New York Times, 1851–1951* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1951). Another insider's history that emphasizes the

power struggle within the newspaper, including conflicts between the New York hierarchy and Washington bureau: Gay Talese, *The Kingdom and the Power* (New York: New American Library, 1969). Ruth Adler, ed., *The Working Press* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1966) contains reporters' own stories, compiled from "Times Talk," the house organ of the *New York Times*. For an exposition of the philosophy that guides the *Times* in its relationship with government, see James Reston, *The Artillery of the Press: Its Influence on American Foreign Policy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966). In "I Remember," *Parade*, 2 May 1982, pp. 4–7, David Halberstam reflects on his experiences in Vietnam. Halberstam says, "In ancient times, messengers who brought the King news he did not want to hear were executed for their trouble; now, in modern times we simply attack reporters."

16. Leon V. Sigal, *Reporters and Officials* (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath and Company, 1973), discusses the organization and politics of newsmaking at the *Times* and *Washington Post*. An analysis of the effect of the Vietnam War on the relationship between the military and the press is included in Middleton's article "Vietnam and the Military Mind," *New York Times Magazine*, 10 January 1982, p. 34. Middleton says the military is not doing well in sorting out their feud with the press, although the dispute is less strident—and that the press, for its part, is doing no better in arriving at an improved understanding of the military.

17. The November 1981 issue of *Quill* magazine said salaries for reporters for news bureaus in Washington ranged from $35,000 to $45,000 a year. The scale at the *Washington Post* after four years of experience was just a few dollars shy of $30,000, with many of the *Post's* stars earning more than $50,000. In broadcasting news, salaries at the network television level frequently exceeded $100,000.

18. In a full-page advertisement in the 19 January 1982 *Washington Post*, on the 100th anniversary of Dow Jones & Co., the publisher of the *Journal* explained its history and philosophy. The *Journal* in 1982 printed its editions in Chicopee, Massachusetts; Princeton, New Jersey; White Oak, Maryland; Orlando, Florida; Naperville and Highland, Illinois; Riverside and Palo Alto, California; Bowling Green, Ohio; Sharon, Pennsylvania; and Dallas, Seattle, Denver, and Des Moines. Another printing location in Texas, plus plants in Georgia and North Carolina, were to open. It also printed a daily Asian Edition in Hong Kong and elsewhere in Asia. The *New York Times* reaches a national elite audience and the *Christian Science Monitor* a smaller specialized audience, but neither is a truly national publication. In contrast, most major countries—the Soviet Union and Great Britain, for example—have one or more national dailies. In September 1982, the Gannett Company began publishing the Washington-based *USA Today* as a general-interest national daily newspaper for the United States. But the plain fact is that in the 1980s the national American audience is reached via television, radio, and the news magazines. It is also reached through the wire services and syndication, but such material is subject to the whim of thousands of local editorial gatekeepers.

19. The *Post* is well chronicled in Chalmers M. Roberts, *The Washington Post: The First 100 Years* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), and David Halberstam, *The Powers That Be* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979).

20. Similar to the *New York Times's* assignment of Richard Burt as "national security affairs correspondent" in 1977. Burt, who had a background in national security that included frequent articles and a post as assistant director of London's Institute for Strategic Studies, had never covered the Pentagon as a reporter, and was not considered a "real newsman" by his ink-stained colleagues.

21. Phil G. Goulding. *Confirm or Deny* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), p. 115. Goulding's book describes a series of selected episodes that occurred during the tenures of Defense Secretaries Robert McNamara and Clark Clifford in which the government's public affairs apparatus was involved.

CHAPTER 4

1. The Gannett Company, largest newspaper chain in terms of numbers of daily newspapers in 1982, had no correspondent seen regularly in the Pentagon. Its news service has a reporter assigned to cover defense news periodically. As the company prepared to initiate its national daily newspaper headquartered in Washington it was expected to increase its attention to national security coverage.

2. Prina won the White House press corps pool on the 1976 Presidential election by predicting the exact number of electoral votes for the winner, Jimmy Carter. Later, he told his political seer friends that he had an advantage over them: he was not a politics writer. As in previous chapters, anecdotes, biographical details, and direct quotations are the result of interviews with individuals listed under Sources.

3. The two later became reconciled, after Prina wrote a column that recounted the incident and took the view that the Secretary had his job to do, and Prina had his. Prina's personal relationship with Claytor's successor, Navy Secretary Edward Hidalgo—Prina's regular tennis partner at the Chevy Chase Country Club—gave Copley the inside track on a long-running story concerning the Navy's plans for a new hospital at San Diego.

4. Samuel I. Newhouse & Sons of New York was the fifth largest media company in America, according to a survey published in 1981 by *Advertising Age*. The survey said Newhouse had estimated 1980 revenues from media operations alone of $1.25 billion, with profits estimated at $100,000,000. Only publicly-owned ABC, CBS, RCA (NBC's parent organization), and Time, Inc., had greater media sales. Of these top five, only Newhouse derived more than 50 percent of its total sales from media revenues. The top ten media companies had 48 percent of the industry's total media revenues. Others in the ten were

the Gannett Company, Times-Mirror Company (publisher of the *Los Angeles Times*), Hearst Corporation (privately owned), Knight-Ridder Newspapers, and the Tribune Company (privately owned). The *New York Times* and *Washington Post* companies were eleventh and twelfth on the list, respectively.

5. Newhouse News Service can be purchased by subscribers through Field Enterprises of Chicago, publisher of the *Chicago Sun-Times*, as part of the package that includes material from the *Sun-Times, Baltimore Sun, Boston Globe,* and the *London Telegraph*. The total service is fed to subscribers on the same network that handles the *New York Times* News Service, the *Times* service going to its subscribers for 12 hours, and the Field material going to its clients in the alternate 12-hour period. Some subscribers take one of the services, some take both. All material is handled through the *Times* computer in New York.

6. His draft board decided he was not taking enough courses one semester. Says Smith: "When you come from a small town in Tennessee, you don't go away to Canada. That's the way it is, and I'm glad I went into the service."

7. Harris' exploits as a correspondent covering conflicts in Vietnam, Northern Ireland, the Middle East, Cyprus, and Africa are chronicled in his book, *War Reporter* (New York: Manor Books, 1979).

CHAPTER 5

1. Speeches of 21 April 1981 and 22 April 1981 to the Erieland Executives Club and to the Pittsburgh World Affairs Council, respectively. In the Pittsburgh speech, Adm. Hayward commended *Newsweek* for a three-part series on "why the public schools are flunking."

2. Kelly, with *Wall Street Journal* reporter Kenneth Bacon, originated a series of newsmaking breakfasts given by a select few of the Pentagon reporters, with a different top official as guest each time. It has been continued by Dudney. Kelly's and Dudney's views, and quotations and other biographical and anecdotal material in this chapter, unless otherwise noted, resulted from interviews with them and with others listed under Sources. For more about *US News,* see James Conway, "US News and World Report: The Surprising, Successful, Eccentric, Paternalistic Magazine Where the Message Is the Message!" *The Washington Post Magazine,* 27 June 1982, p. 9.

3. James L. C. Ford, *Magazines for Millions* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969), p. 137.

4. James W. Canan, *The Superwarriors* (New York: Weybright and Talley, 1975).

5. Norman Polmar and Thomas B. Allen, *Rickover* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982), p. 454.

6. Richard Halberstam, *The Powers That Be* (New York: Knopf, 1979), pp. 206, 363–366.

7. Robert B. Sims, "Admirals, Information Officers, and the News Media" (Master's Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1971), pp. 60, 84. Similarly, a *Washington Journalism Review* survey of more than two hundred members of Congress and other high-level government officials reported in the January/February 1982 issue of *WJR*, p. 37, showed *US News* was perceived as more accurate and objective than either *Time* or *Newsweek*.

8. Time, Inc. has been described in a number of works, including Halberstam's *The Powers That Be*. The most complete work is the authorized history by Robert Elson, *Time, Inc., The Intimate History of a Publishing Enterprise*, 2 vol. (New York: Atheneum, 1968–73). Biographical treatments are: John Kobler, *Luce, His Time, Life and Fortune* (New York: Doubleday, 1968), and W. A. Swanberg, *Luce and His Empire* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972). A shorter work on *Time's* beginnings is Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines*, vol. 5 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 293–329. Mott begins with a parody of what was known as "Timestyle," saying: "Mediocre nor commonplace was never *Time*. Lucelanted, now and then prejudiced, unfair was The Newsmagazine, but Timediting was always a smart art. Henry Robinson Luce hired helpers of many talents, built amazing circulation, accumulated advertising, made millions. No piker he."

9. Emery and Emery, p. 383.

10. Swanberg, p. 410.

11. Ibid., p. 430.

12. Ibid., pp. 438, 472.

13. Halberstam, p. 471.

CHAPTER 6

1. Citing this example and others that later affected him at the *Washington Post*, reporter Wilson says, "I'm not so sure that we sin more than we are sinned against." Quotations in this chapter, as well as anecdotes and biographical material, are the product of interviews with individuals listed under Sources.

2. This is not the prevailing view in the Pentagon press corps, by any means. Almost all reporters, other than Schemmer and those representing service policy publications, are adamantly opposed to controls on the press, insisting instead that the responsibility for controlling government secrets lies with the government. The discussion parallels those relating to protecting CIA's secrets. John M. Maury, who had experience as a military intelligence officer for 27 years with CIA, and two years as an Assistant Secretary of Defense, addressed the issue by suggesting that US national security is vulnerable to espionage conducted

through media channels, pointing out that the basic US espionage law (18 USC 793) makes it a crime to reveal classified information only if it is done "with intent, or reason to believe, that the information is to be used to the injury of the United States or to the advantage of any foreign nation." Maury suggested, as early as 1978, that Congress examine the possibility of a law similar to that applying to "restricted data" under the Atomic Energy Act to bind individuals who, by virtue of employment or contractual relationship with an intelligence agency, voluntarily assumed, by sworn commitment, the obligation to protect source and method information. This would, he felt, help prevent a situation in which an American official might pass secrets to a member of the media, who could publish them or pass them on to whomever he pleased, claiming that his intent was only to let the American people know what their government was doing behind their backs. Maury's proposal, however, was short of suggesting anything as drastic as the British Official Secrets Act, or the security laws of most of the European democracies, under which any disclosure of classified material could bring severe criminal penalties. The theory behind the British Official Secrets Act is that information belongs to the Crown, the sovereign head of state; whereas in the United States, sovereignty rests with the people, who own the government's information. The irony of US Federal statutes, Maury says, is that they provide clear-cut criminal penalties, fines, and imprisonment for the revelation of a wide variety of government information—for example, the unauthorized revelation of insecticide formulas, or the names of persons on relief—for political purposes. For Maury's full view, see *Congressional Record*, 2 February 1978, S1123–S1124, or his testimony in the Report of the Subcommittee on Oversight of the Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives, on CIA and the Media, 27 December 1977–5 January 1978, pp. 51–60. In 1982, Congress passed an oft-delayed bill to outlaw naming US intelligence agents, with criminal penalties for journalists and others who disclose information that serves to identify a covert agent.

3. Arms experts say that top officials of many small nations rely on articles and advertisements in publications like Interavia's to select the hardware they buy. Walter Mossberg, "To the Victors Belong Not Just the Spoils But Also More Credibility for Their Ads," *Wall Street Journal*, 1 July 1982, p. 40.

CHAPTER 7

1. Enormous attention has been given to the impact of television on the national decisionmaking process. *Washington Journalism Review* has provided consistently useful material on the subject, including special reports on Iran and the press in retrospect: Frederick B. Hill, "Media Diplomacy—Crisis Management With an Eye on the TV Screen," May 1981, pp. 23–27; David Altheide, "Network News—Oversimplified and Underexplained," May 1981, pp. 28–29. *TV Guide* articles of particular interest are Morton Kondrake, "Eye on the

Pentagon—Is TV Telling US Enough?," 25 August 1979, p. 2; Ron Nessen, "Journalism vs. Patriotism—Should TV News *Always* Tell All?" 27 June 1981, p. 4; Gerald R. Ford, "*Making Foreign Policy: How TV Influences a President's* Decisions," 19 September 1981, p. 4; and John Weisman, "TV and the Presidency," 20 March 1982. The Weisman article is based on an interview with President Reagan in which the President says that television reporting became slanted against United States involvement in El Salvador. President Reagan called for mutual trust between government and television on sensitive national security issues. For a thorough study showing that, by 1970, the public believed American television had ceased to be primarily an entertainment source and become a major journalistic force, see Robert T. Bower, *Television and the Public* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1973). Television (and other media reaching the home, such as mailed advertising, specialty magazines, and home computers) is blamed for the fact that in the last three decades the number of newspapers sold in the United States has fallen behind population growth. In 1950, one daily newspaper circulated for every 2.8 Americans. By 1982, it was about one paper for every 3.6 persons. See Joy Mathews, "Newspaper Editors Ponder Ways to Halt Disappearance of Readers," *Washington Post,* 3 May 1982, p. A10.

2. As in the previous chapter, unless otherwise noted, the quotations and anecdotal or biographical material in this section resulted from interviews with individuals listed under Sources. Descriptions of CBS are plentiful, and include Halberstam, *The Powers That Be.*

3. The CBS series was criticized by Joshua Muravchik and John E. Haynes, "CBS vs. Defense," *Commentary,* September 1981, pp. 44–55. This article drew a response from CBS News President Leonard and others, published with the authors' rebuttal in *Commentary,* December 1981, pp. 4–14. Also see criticism by Benjamin F. Schemmer, "The One-and-a-Half-Trillion-Dollar Misunderstanding," *Washingtonian,* August 1981, p. 54; and text of address by Admiral Thomas B. Hayward to Commercial Club of Chicago, Friday, 20 November 1981 (Department of Defense release number 532-81). Favorable reviews of the series, which attracted a virtually unheard-of 30% of the viewing audience, included Arthur Unger, "Marathon Look at a Complex Question: National Defense," *Christian Science Monitor,* 12 June 1981, p. 19; George B. Church, "The Telling of the Pentagon," *Time,* 29 June 1981, p. 46.

4. The Rather version of *CBS Evening News* began emerging from the doldrums of transition in late 1981, regaining its lead in the ratings. Commentators began to predict that CBS would reassert itself as "the loudest and proudest voice in broadcast journalism." See Tom Shales, "The New Look at CBS News," *Washington Post,* 23 December 1981, p. C1. But by mid-1982, the ratings for the three networks were still close.

5. See the satirical article by Lt. Col. David S. Rilling, USMC, "Lessons Yet Unlearned," *Armed Forces Journal International,* July 1981, pp. 68–69. Rilling shows how World War II might have been different had the average American

been bombarded by well-intentioned media coverage, beginning with anchorman "Homer Omniscient" in Washington on 7 December 1941, and shifting to reporter "Ellie Erudite" at Pearl Harbor. More seriously, in a detailed memoir, Robert Elegant reflects on reporting from Vietnam in "How to Lose a War" in *Encounter,* September 1981, pp. 73–90. With Elegant's article is a brief description, by Philip Jacobson of London's *Sunday Times,* of US network television's methods in covering turmoil in El Salvador in 1981 and resultant footage that was "used to convey a misleading impression." Viewers in 1982 became accustomed to seeing war coverage on television that was "cleared by Israeli censors" and "cleared by Argentine censors." Will they some day see film "cleared by US censors?" See William A. Henry III, "A Double Standard for Israel?" *Time,* 12 July 1982, p. 61.

6. McWethy and *Wall Street Journal* defense correspondent Walter Mossberg were students together at Columbia. Coincidentally, McWethy's father worked for the *Journal* for some thirty-five years, ending his career in Chicago as head of the newspaper's Midwestern operations.

7. Kondrake, "Is TV Telling Us Enough?", *TV Guide,* 15 August 1979.

8. Richard Zoglin, "The Pioneer of Cable-TV News," *Saturday Evening Post,* November 1981, pp. 32–36; Christian Williams, *Lead, Follow or Get Out of the Way: The Story of Ted Turner* (New York: Time Books, 1982).

9. For a hypothetical view of the role of the media in a "televisual society" during an international crisis and war, see General Sir John Hackett et al., *The Third World War* (New York: Macmillan, 1979; Berkeley Books, 1980), pp. 319–331.

CHAPTER 8

1. USIA was renamed the International Communications Agency (ICA) during the Carter Administration, then renamed USIA in 1982. USIA and VOA and their impact on national security are topics that could rate separate and extensive treatment, outside the scope of this work. For additional reading, see the following: Kenneth R. Giddens, "The War We Are Losing," *Vital Speeches of the Day,* Vol. XLIV, No. 15, 15 May 1978, pp. 477–480; Francis S. Ronalds, Jr., "Voices of America," *Foreign Policy,* No. 34, Spring 1979, pp. 154–160; Kenneth L. Adelman, "Speaking of America: Public Diplomacy in Our Time," *Foreign Affairs,* Vol. 59, No. 4, Spring 1981, pp. 913–936; John E. Reinhardt, "Challenge for Communications Development," *Department of State Bulletin,* February 1979, pp. 50–54; "The Great Propaganda War," *U.S. News and World Report,*[11] Jan. 1982, pp. 27–30; Elizabeth Bushmiller, "The Wick Whirlwind: Reagan's ICA Chief Brings Hollywood Hustle to Washington," *Washington Post,* 11 May 1982, p. B1. Again in this section, as in previous chapters, direct quotations and other information were the product of interviews with people listed under Sources.

2. The Defense Department's internal information system also provides, in some instances, entertainment, training, education, and the potential for emergency communications. Overseas, it usually serves not only Defense Department people, but other US citizens as well. In most host countries it spills over into the indigenous area, providing a usually welcome news and information service.

3. *SSAM* deals with controversial subjects and conveys Department of Defense policy or views. One issue, in February 1981, generated discussion and criticism—from some senior officers and from women's advocates. The issue's feature article dealt with the subject of women in combat. On its cover was artwork featuring "Red Sonja," an Amazonian comic character. Most of the negative reaction was to the artwork. Defense officials defended the issue. The publication was then still a relatively new entity designed to reach an audience that is difficult to get to through conventional government information approaches. Officials say the newspaper does not compete with monthly service magazines, *All Hands, Airman,* and *Soldiers,* which are highly informative but considerably stiffer in style than *SSAM.* Rather, they regard *SSAM* as an additional means to communicate with junior service personnel. Department surveys indicate the newspaper is popular with its intended audience.

4. The other woman reporter who frequently covered the Pentagon in this time period and is considered a regular reporter there whenever she wishes to be so considered is Sara McClendon, a Washington correspondent since 1944 who reports for her own news bureau, occasionally lectures on military issues, writes for magazines, appears on television shows, and was once a member of the Department of Defense Committee on Women in the Services, whose newsletter she edited. McClendon served in the Women's Army Corps in 1942–44, reaching the rank of First Lieutenant. Describing her, *Armed Forces Journal* said she is probably best recalled as the reporter who made John F. Kennedy's news conferences so much fun to watch: "He never failed to take her questions; she never failed to make him laugh; yet she asked some of the toughest questions he faced." Several other women reporters cover Pentagon issues, although they are not technically regulars in the press corps as defined for purposes of this study. For example, *Armed Forces Journal's* staff, except for editor Ben Schemmer, is mostly women, including Deborah Kyle, who regularly writes on complicated defense policy and technical subjects. Other organizations, especially the television networks, have assigned women reporters to the Pentagon, usually for relatively brief periods of time. For example, Hillary Brown of NBC covered defense for months in 1980. Women have a war correspondent tradition as well—Marguerite Higgins was one of the stars of Korean War coverage. Elizabeth Pond was captured and released in Southeast Asia, as were Kate Webb and Michele Ray. Dickey Chapelle was killed in Vietnam in 1965. Georgie Ann Geyer's syndicated reports on foreign events have often come from war zones.

CHAPTER 9

1. Stephen Hess, *The Washington Reporters* (Washington: Brookings, 1981). Descriptions of modern Washington reporters go back to Raymond P. Brandt's article, "The Washington Correspondent," *Journalism Quarterly*, Vol. XIII (June 1936), pp. 173–76, and Leo C. Rosten, *The Washington Correspondents* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1937). Later writing on the subject includes William L. Rivers, "The Correspondents after Twenty-Five Years," *Columbia Journalism Review*, Spring 1962, pp. 4–10; and Dan Nimmo, *Newsgathering in Washington* (New York: Atherton Press, 1964). For an analysis of diplomatic reporting see Bernard C. Cohen, *The Press and Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963). Dom Bonafede brings the subject of Washington journalism up to date in a three-part series in the *National Journal*, 17 and 25 April and 1 May 1982. For an interpretative view, see William L. Rivers, "The Media as Shadow Government," *Quill*, March 1982, pp. 11–15. The 476 respondents in Hess's study amounted to 38 percent of journalists covering national government for American commercial news organizations in 1978. Influential news organizations, as defined by this press group itself on the basis of its reading and viewing habits, were ABC, CBS, NBC, *Time, Newsweek, US News and World Report*, AP, UPI, the *Washington Post, New York Times, Wall Street Journal*, and *Washington Star*. In *The Pentagon Reporters*, the same group, less the *Star*, was considered influential for purposes of comparison.

2. Lichter and Rothman, "Media and Business Elites," *Public Opinion*, October/November 1981, p. 42. Their study focused on 240 journalists and broadcasters at the most prominent media outlets in the United States, not limited to Washington. They found this group secular in outlook and politically liberal. Of their respondents, 50 percent eschewed any religious affiliation, and very few were regular churchgoers. In Presidential elections, 94 percent of those voting (62 percent were voters in 1964, 67 percent in 1968, 74 percent in 1972 and 82 percent in 1976) voted for Johnson over Goldwater, 87 percent for Humphrey over Nixon, 81 percent for McGovern over Nixon, and 81 percent for Carter over Ford.

3. Colleges considered highly selective are those in the first two categories of the selectivity index in James Cass and Max Birnbaum, *Comparative Guide to American Colleges*, 9th ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), pp. 578–82. Other schools on the Cass and Birnbaum index were considered nonselective.

4. *Northeast* includes Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. *North Central* includes Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas. *South* includes Delaware, Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas. *West* includes Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Washington, Oregon,

California, Alaska, and Hawaii. Hess used birthplace and undergraduate college attendance to form his scale, allotting each reporter to the state he or she said was home, or to the region of the country where the reporter grew up.

5. In the midst of this 1981–82 study, another furor over leaks broke out, not unlike those that occurred in the previous administrations. There was a steady stream of news and commentary about this episode. For those interested in this case, see the following: Deborah M. Kyle and Benjamin F. Schemmer, "Leaks Bug Top DoD Officials; Pleas to Stop Them Seem to Prompt More," *Armed Forces Journal International,* September 1981, p. A28; statement by William P. Clark, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, the White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 12 January 1982; "Pentagon Says No One Forced to Take Lie Detector Tests," *Defense Daily,* 15 January 1982; editorial, "Leak Time," *Washington Post,* 16 January 1982, p. A20; Michael Getler and George C. Wilson, "White House Aide Calls in Government Spokesman to 'Clarify' Press Rules," *Washington Post,* 19 January 1982, p. 3; Charles W. Corrdry, "Data Leaks May Lead to Lie Tests," *Baltimore Sun,* 19 January 1982, p. 5; editorial, "Mr. Reagan and the Press," *Christian Science Monitor,* 19 January 1982, pp. 4–5, 9–10; Howell Raines, "Reagan Defends Policies to Curb News Disclosures," *New York Times,* 20 January 1982, p. 1; Associated Press, "Tighter Security Rules Weighed," *Washington Post,* 21 January 1982, p. A5; Michael Getler, "Restrictions Protested by Reporters," *Washington Post,* 22 January 1982, p. 7; Jack Anderson, "Paving the Way for Censorship," *Washington Post,* 24 January 1982, p. D7; "Lid on Leaks," *Time,* 25 January 1982, p. 25; "Plugging Leaks: It's Reagan's Turn," *US News and World Report,* 25 January 1982, p. 13; Les Whitten, "Cries and Whispers—Washington Leaks All," *Washington Post,* 31 January 1982, p. H1; Robert J. McCloskey, "How Not to Stop Leaks," *Washington Post,* 1 February 1982, p. A12; Jody Powell, "Leaks: Whys and Wherefores," *Washington Post,* 7 February 1982, p. B7; George Lardner, Jr., "Weinberger Pressing for a Broader New Secrecy Classification," *Washington Post,* 14 February 1982, p. A16; Meg Greenfield, "The Gabby American Way," *Washington Post,* 17 February 1982, p. A23; "Pentagon to Fire Official for Alleged Disclosure," *Washington Post,* 27 April 1982, p. A4. Editor Greenfield sums up most of the opposition's comments on Administration efforts to tighten security, saying, "The Presidential reflex to plug leaks is as understandable in origin as it is doomed in practice." For extended discussion of the issue of freedom of the press versus national security imperatives, see Harold L. Nelson, ed., *Freedom of the Press from Hamilton to the Warren Court* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1967); Emery and Smythe, *Readings in Mass Communications,* 4th ed., pp. 441–459; James Russell Wiggins, *Freedom or Secrecy,* rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964); and Don R. Pember, *Mass Media in America,* 3rd. ed. (Chicago: Science Research Associates, Inc., 1981), pp. 301–344.

6. For a discussion, see John C. Merrill, "Ethics and Journalism" in Emery and Smythe, pp. 116–126; and Michael J. Kirkhorn, "The Virtuous Journalist," *Quill,* February 1982, pp. 9–23.

7. Lloyd Norman listed the classic varieties of leakers: infighter ("determined to win regardless of the means"), show-off ("a braggart who likes to demonstrate how important he is in the Pentagon"), whistle-blower ("a zealot who is convinced that his agency . . . is being mismanaged and only he has the right answers"), the partisan ("feels his organization is being zapped by the rival's more glamorous or impressive weapon system or military mission"), the true-blue good guy ("truly believes that an informed press is vital to a democracy"), and compulsive talker ("bubbly with the latest flash"). Three more basic ways to categorize leakers might be: (1) disaffected lower-level employees, (2) those opposed to a program or trying to sell a program, and (3) senior officials. The third category is potentially the most damaging to national security, because of the information senior officials have access to. They may share this information with members of the press for political purposes, or to ingratiate themselves, or because they are so immersed in their aspect of the subject they may not be aware of the damage a leak can do to confidential sources of intelligence information. A leak about US knowledge of a Soviet weapons development could result in the loss of months or years of future intelligence-collection efforts, and be costly not only because it makes intelligence more difficult to obtain (as security is clamped down on the other side), but costly because intelligence collection efforts are *per se* costly.

8. Roger Morris in "Reporting for Duty: the Pentagon and the Press," *Columbia Journalism Review,* July/August 1980, pp. 27–33, took the position that American journalism responded to the Iranian hostage crisis and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan with "strident, frustrated chauvinism." He chastized Drew Middleton of the *New York Times*, Fred Hoffman of AP, and other writers, calling them part of a "militant press" that "forgot a lesson: beware of Pentagon sources." Morris praised *Scientific American, Atlantic,* the *Los Angeles Times,* and *Christian Science Monitor* for articles that were "conscientious objectors" to the "drumroll of the general press." What was needed, he said, was to prevent American journalism from "marching off in lockstep" with the military. Similarly, Alan Wolfe, in "Defense Crisis at 'The Times'—The Pentagon Handout Papers," *The Nation,* 13 November 1980, pp. 503–506, complained about a seven-part series by the *New York Times* on military preparedness, calling it a "non-story filled with Pentagon propaganda." Voluminous material exists on the subject of media responsibility. Many modern reporters don't see the issue the same as their predecessors did. For a commentary from a respected Washington journalist who covered Presidents from Franklin Roosevelt to Jimmy Carter, see Vermont Royster, "On the Freedom and Responsibility of the Press," *Policy Review,* Summer 1979, pp. 33–39. A more current commentary is from ombudsman Robert J. McCloskey, "Whose Side Is the Press On?" *Washington Post,* 1 December 1981, p. A19.

SOURCES

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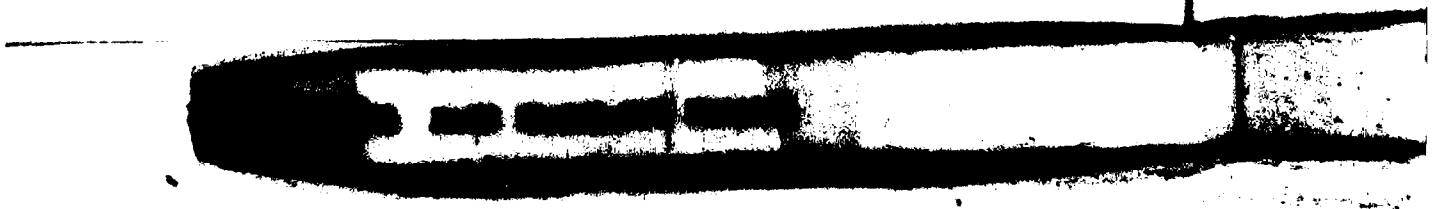

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