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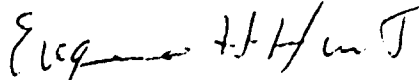
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Dr. Ted J. Smith III, School of Mass Communications, Thesis Director



Dr. Cynthia DeRiemer, School of Mass Communications



Dr. Eugene Hunt, Department of Management



Dr. Thomas Donahue, Director of the School of Mass Communications



Dr. Elske v.P. Smith, Dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences

December 7, 1990

Date

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AN EVALUATION OF THE MEDIA COVERAGE  
CONCERNING THE MISSION TO SECURE  
THE DOG KENNEL DURING THE PANAMA  
INVASION ON DECEMBER 20, 1989

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Science at Virginia Commonwealth University.

By

Joan R. Vallance-Whitacre  
B.S., University of Kentucky, May 1980  
M.S., University of Oklahoma, June 1989

Thesis Director: Dr. Ted J. Smith, III  
Associate Professor  
School of Mass Communications

Virginia Commonwealth University  
Richmond, Virginia  
December 1990

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While the support and aid I received from all made this a better endeavor, only I am responsible for errors or deficiencies.

Joan R. Vallance-Whitacre  
Richmond, Virginia  
December 1990

*To my husband and son*

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## **Abstract**

### **An Evaluation of the Media Coverage Concerning the Mission to Secure the Dog Kennel During the Panama Invasion on December 20, 1989**

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**Abstract.** On December 20, 1989, U.S. forces began their largest military operation since the Vietnam conflict. Code named Operation Just Cause, their mission was to re-establish democratic government in Panama by removing dictator General Manuel Noriega from power, capturing him, and extraditing him to the United States for trial on an array of drug charges. Not surprisingly, coverage of the invasion and its aftermath dominated the American news media for several weeks. The issue of women in the military and their role in combat was an important recurring theme in that coverage. The thesis examines in detail a controversy that resulted from the publication of two newspaper stories detailing the combat experiences of several female Army personnel. It focuses on Army Captain Linda Bray, Commander of the 988th Military Police Company and her Company's mission to neutralize a dog kennel, which housed attack dogs and Panamanian Defense Force soldiers. Two reporters, Peter Copeland and Wilson Ring, wrote articles about this company's mission, emphasizing that women



were involved in the initial actions of the Panama invasion. These stories drew widespread media attention and were reprinted by numerous newspapers throughout the nation. They also stimulated new stories by other reporters and columnists. Marlin Fitzwater, White House spokesman, repeated the news accounts, praising women soldiers. Then, reporter John Broder wrote an article that cast doubts on the initial accounts of the attack on the dog kennel. This produced a new wave of coverage designed to clarify the points at issue and a bitter controversy among reporters and principals involved. In the end, few could have been satisfied with the results. This thesis examines this body of coverage in an attempt to determine what went wrong. Chapter 2 will present the key stories in question and trace the flow of coverage on this issue. In Chapter 3 the findings of a series of interviews with several of the reporters and Army officers involved in the controversy will be used to determine the facts of the situation. Chapter 4 offers an evaluation of the coverage and suggests improvements that might prevent similar problems in the future.

## Chapter 1

At 1 a.m. Eastern Standard Time on December 20, 1989, U.S. forces launched their largest military operation since the Vietnam conflict. Code named Operation Just Cause, their mission was to re-establish democratic government in Panama by removing dictator General Manuel Noriega from power, securing his person, and extraditing him to the United States for trial on an array of drug charges (Autry, 1990:8).

From the perspective of the American government and the military high command, the operation was highly effective. The U.S. Joint Service Task Force met all of its objectives at a cost of 23 American deaths (all men, 18 of them from the Army) and several hundred wounded and injured (a total of 233 Purple Heart Medals were presented to those who received injuries in combat). Awards for valor, defined as "gallantry and heroism in combat action," were presented to 175 service personnel, including two female pilots; an additional 1248 soldiers received awards for achievement (USAPAO, 1990d:4).

Not surprisingly, coverage of the invasion and its aftermath dominated the American news media for a period of several weeks. The issue of women in the military and their role in combat was an important recurring theme in that coverage. The purpose of this thesis is to examine in detail a controversy that resulted from the publication of two newspaper stories detailing the combat experiences of several female Army personnel. Although it is difficult to know what the precise effect of that controversy was, there is no question that it reflected poorly on nearly everyone involved and exacerbated existing tensions between the military and the press. In order to document this claim, the study begins in Chapter 1 with a discussion of public perceptions of the news media, problems in the relationship between the military and the press, and issues surrounding the role of women in the military.

These issues form the background for the major task of the thesis: a detailed analysis of media coverage of a specific incident involving women in combat. It concludes by identifying the lessons learned from the controversy.

Media credibility has long been of interest to both journalists and the larger society. Recently, journalists have become more concerned about the public's distrust and reservation. Some even claim that there is a crisis in public confidence in the media (Gaziano, 1988:267; Smith, 1988:11-32).

Credibility is an important issue to study because public unwillingness to believe the news media severely hampers the media's ability to inform the public and to monitor leaders. Decreased public trust also can lead to diminished freedom of the press and can threaten the economic health of the media (Gaziano, 1988:267).

Critics characterize reporters as rude, accusatory, cynical and perhaps unpatriotic. They twist facts to suit their agendas, meddle in politics, harass businessmen, invade people's privacy, and then leave without regard to the pain and chaos they may have left behind. They are arrogant and self-righteous, brushing aside most criticism as the uninformed carping of cranks and ideologues. Perhaps worse, they claim that their behavior is sanctioned, indeed sanctified, by the U.S. Constitution (Henry, 1983:76).

One important factor in provoking distrust of the media is the suspicion that journalists care little about accuracy. In 1981, *Washington Post* reporter Janet Cooke was forced to return a Pulitzer Prize after admitting that she had invented the title character of "Jimmy's World," a portrait of an eight-year-old heroin addict. A month later, *New York Daily News* columnist Michael Daly admitted that he had made up the name of the British soldier who, he reported, had shot a juvenile in Belfast, Northern Ireland; the story was proven to contain other factual errors as well. Daly acknowledged that he had changed details in a number of other columns, but contended, in classic "New Journalism" fashion, that altering the facts had not

impaired the truth of what he had written. This rash of fraud infected the *New York Times* seven months later, when its Sunday magazine published a report from Cambodia by freelancer Christopher Jones. In fact, Jones had written the story while at his home in Spain and for part of it had plagiarized a 1930 novel, Andre Malraux's *La Voie Royale* (Henry, 1983:79).

When these journalistic fabrications were exposed, some members of the public took these extreme cases as typical of journalism and expressed delight that major news organizations had been humiliated. Journalists, in contrast, tended to see the deceptions as oddities. In fact, the fabrications of Cooke, Daly, and Jones were quickly exposed, partly as a result of probing questions from other news organizations. Cooke and Daly were fired, and Jones was dropped from the *New York Times'* freelance roster. But these examples show the vulnerability of the press, in part because editors must rely almost absolutely on the honesty of their reporters. Much more common than willful inventions are errors that result from overaggressive reporting and inadequate checking (Henry, 1983:76-79).

The mistrust of the media was heightened by several libel suits, particularly ones initiated by General William Westmoreland and Los Angeles Physician Carl Galloway against CBS, and by Mobil Corporation President William Tavoulareas against the *Washington Post*. Each raised doubts about the objectivity of prominent journalists, and questioned the techniques used to shape stories (Henry, 1983:76-77).

The failings of journalists have been compounded in the public's mind by the perception that as their power has increased, so has their presumed self-importance. As William Woo, editorial page editor of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, notes, "Arrogance, insensitivity, sensationalism, the sounding of the First Amendment alarms at every provocation--these have lost the press sympathy." Such attitudes are particularly disturbing to a segment of the public that has come to see the press as primarily interested in its own profits and renown (Henry, 1983:77).

Critical views of the press are also common in the military. For example, Major General Patrick H. Brady, former Department of the Army Chief of Public Affairs, characterizes the press as follows (1990:25-26):

Some look on news as just another four-letter word, but I believe it is more useful to look on it as a C-letter word: chaos, confusion, conflict, contradiction, crime, corruption, color, catastrophe. It does not hurt if you add some Ss--sex, sensationalism, state secrets--to it. Information must be timely if it is to be news. Being first with the Cs and Ss is the stuff of which news is made.

The words of a reporter for a national news syndicate best sum it up. He came to us for some information we provided with the comment that we were always happy to help get it right. He replied rather hurriedly, "I don't care if I get it right; I only care if I get it first."

. . . In dealing with the commercial media, we must never lose sight of the fact that news is a C-letter concept and so are they--commercial, competitive and at times contemptuous of the facts.

Chicago Attorney Don Reuben has similar views. He says, "There is no longer a prevailing feeling that the press is fighting to right a wrong. The sense is that the press is venal, out to make a buck" (Henry, 1983:77).

The unpopularity of the press had political implications that the Reagan administration (as well as other politicians) was quick to grasp. Thomas Winship, *Boston Globe* editor, says, "I think resentment toward the press has been stepped up by the public relations genius of the Reagan Administration." At various times, President Reagan proposed strict rules on contact between officials and reporters and used the FBI to track down embarrassing leaks (Henry, 1983:77).

The relationship between the press and the military began deteriorating in Vietnam War era. During this conflict, the military had to deal with hostile coverage from the media. Many military people blame the news media for the loss of the war (Gaziano, 1988:267). Reporters, on the other hand, tend to think that the military lost the war and was angered when the press pointed that out (Reed, 1990d:70).

Given this deteriorating relationship, it is not surprising that the U.S. military decided to exclude the press when they were ordered to Grenada in 1983. President Reagan was receptive to this idea, which reinforced his policy of attempting to control the flow of information to the media. Although there was little fear that the President and the military would lose the battle for public opinion if the operation went smoothly, the press was still barred from Grenada during the first two days (Henry, 1983:77).

Journalists argued passionately that the press' freedom and the public's "right to know" were at stake. Yet, most of the American public supported the exclusion of the media. For instance, *Time's* 225 letters on the issue ran almost 8 to 1 against the press. Similarly, ABC Anchor Peter Jennings said that "99 percent" of his mail from viewers on the issue supported President Reagan (Henry, 1983:76). In short, the dispute over Grenada seemed to release pent-up public hostility. It reinforced the perception that journalists are utterly detached from, and perhaps even hostile to, the government of their country (Henry, 1983:76).

Among other things, the Grenada situation showed that the military needed to devise a new plan to allow press access to future actions. Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger therefore asked Winant Sidle, a retired major general and former public affairs officer at the Pentagon who commanded respect within the press corps, to help develop guidelines for press access to future military actions (Gergen, 1990:58). Sidle's main concern was the consistently negative tone of coverage: "They are always looking for somebody to hit over the head" (Henry, 1983:77).

In 1984, the Sidle Commission proposed developing a pool system whereby the Pentagon would maintain a small, rotating group of reporters who would be on call at a moment's notice to accompany troops on military operations. Pool reporters were expected to carry beepers in Washington and their news organizations were expected to keep up with them or have a substitute if they were traveling (Gergen,

1990:58). Logistical requirements were not seen as an obstacle for a small group of reporters who would act as a resource for the rest of the press (Henry, 1983:77). Weinberger accepted the recommendations and ordered them into action (Gergen, 1990:58).

Operation Just Cause, the invasion of Panama that began on December 20, 1989, tested the concept of the media pool. Unfortunately, for reasons that were never satisfactorily explained, the decision to send the pool was made late, and as a result, it arrived in Panama late (P. Brady, 1990:43). Therefore, when U.S. Marines and Army Rangers stormed Panamanian positions, not a single journalist went with them to cover the action. The fourteen-member pool arrived four hours after the fighting started, and its members were unable to file any dispatches for another six hours (Gergen, 1990:59). Additionally, there was little logistical support for the pool once it arrived, because of operational requirements (P. Brady, 1990:44). Howard Air Force Base, where 850 members of the press were housed, could provide only two telephones to file stories and even those worked badly. Some reporters had trouble finding enough food, and some had to sleep on concrete or linoleum floors (Gergen, 1990:59).

"Worse," as Stanley W. Cloud noted in a *Time* article, "the initial pool reports shed almost no light on the confused military situation, leading with the hardly titanic news that the U.S. Charge d'Affaires in Panama, John Bushnell, was worried about the 'mischief' that deposed dictator Manuel Noriega could cause." Complained pool member Steven Komarow of the Associated Press: "We kind of missed the story" (Gergen, 1990:59).

The Southern Command Network (SCN), the Panama-based component of the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS), provided the media pool support in terms of equipment, personnel, and technical assistance. At times, this support was unavailable because they could not jeopardize their primary broadcast

mission. The media pool was initially dependent exclusively on SCN to assist satellite uplink of all their stories to U.S. networks via the SCN mobile van. Three networks also used the van to review their footage. On December 21, an SCN broadcaster became part of the Pentagon media pool. In the first days after the invasion, he and an NBC pool cameraman provided all video shots and camera work for the media pool. For instance, on December 21 and 22 the pool reporters relied exclusively on footage provided by the SCN representative in their coverage of looting in downtown Panama City, destruction of the Comandancia, and President Endara's first address at the Presidential Palace. Afterwards the media pool had sufficient cameramen and did not have to rely on the SCN representative for film coverage, but it was available for their use (Autry, 1990:6). Frustration grew among reporters as the fighting continued longer than expected and General Noriega at first eluded his captors. The invasion began at 1 a.m. on Wednesday, December 20. Seeking to accommodate the press, the Pentagon began to allow small numbers of additional reporters into Panama on Thursday and permitted a chartered jet, carrying 200 journalists, to land early on Friday morning. But armed U.S. security guards prevented reporters from leaving U.S. military installations on their own until Saturday (Gergen, 1990:59).

However, a number of major news organizations had reporters or stringers posted in Panama before the invasion. They moved around freely and did not need to rely on the military for equipment or sustenance, requiring only cooperation (Gergen, 1990:60). Additionally, other reporters traveling by bus were allowed to enter Panama through Costa Rica. Although they used the support of the military, they did not depend on it (Copeland, 1990).

The overall sentiment of journalists included in the pool was dissatisfaction with the results of its first test in a military conflict (USAPAO, 1990d:4). Some reporters said that U.S. government briefing officers often seemed indifferent to



journalists' interest and that the escorted tours provided by the military usually carried reporters to the scenes of previous action. "We kept explaining to our escorts that we needed to see troops on combat maneuvers, military police on patrol, wounded soldiers, Panamanians being taken prisoner, whatever was happening today that hadn't been reported or photographed," wrote one member of the pool, Kevin Merida of the *Dallas Morning News*. "Officials at the Southern Command were not interested in showing journalists scenes that would detract from what they regarded as a military triumph" (Gergen, 1990:59).

The Army acknowledges that it failed to utilize the media pool concept effectively (USAPAO, 1990d:3). This failure included the late decision to send the pool to Panama and, perhaps, not affording free access to the fighting as it was happening during the early stages of the operation. But the military also offered criticisms of the press. The sharpest complaint was that when the press pool was activated in Washington, one of its members violated the cardinal rule of not informing other reporters, especially those from rival publications. According to *Newsweek*, a reporter from *Time* alerted a newspaper correspondent, who called his editors hours before the invasion started. As it turned out, U.S. military preparations were so large that the Panamanians were forewarned, and thus no harm was done by the press. But the apparent leak confirmed the worst fears of the Pentagon. How could any military commander be confident about the secrecy of a future mission if the media pool were told in advance (Gergen, 1990:60)?

As General Brady has noted (1990:44):

The commercial media will cite many instances when it voluntarily held back sensitive information which could have jeopardized a military operation. I suppose we should be elated that a part of our society would forsake a story to save the lives of soldiers. But, what happens if the media decides not to hold back? The decision, after all, once they get the information, is theirs. We may have been able to take Ernie Pyle into combat with us and share information with him, but I am not sure we could do the same thing with Geraldo Rivera....

We ought not to worry about being accused of censorship: what we ought to do is to make sure we are able to do it to ensure that no information leaves the battlefield which gives comfort or advantage to the enemy.

This view is not shared by all in the military, however. In response to General Brady, Brigadier General (retired) H. J. Dalton, Jr., a former director of public affairs for the U.S. Air Force and current president of the Public Relations Society of America, argued (1990:5):

I take issue with his wrong-headed thinking about the news media and its importance to the Army mission.

Each of the services is a servant of and accountable to the American public. Often that accountability is exercised through the news media. Some of the criticism of the media is, of course, true, but his basic distrust of the media and his desire to "control" it (his words) could be harmful in the long run.

Malcolm W. Browne of the *New York Times* also disagreed (1990:5):

Without doubt, American news coverage of military affairs is often seriously flawed, and any field commander who suddenly finds himself the focus of a modern media circus (of the sort we behold in Saudi Arabia) is entitled to a little righteous fury.

But for the Army, the answer is not to declare war on the press. Accommodations must be reached on both sides, because we are both here to stay. With or without accreditation and issue flak jackets, civilian correspondents will be on the battlefields by mule or shanks' mare if necessary.

It is in everyone's interest that soldiers and newsmen serving a democratic society meet in a spirit of accommodation rather than as opponents.

Regardless of their differences with certain commanders, reporters found that most soldiers are highly approachable. "They want to talk to you, even if they know you are a reporter," one reporter said, which is far different from the Vietnam era, where many soldiers trusted no one except those who shared the experience of destruction and death that was part of their military life (Clifton, 1990:28).

Perhaps a more important criticism of the press in Panama is that some stories were inaccurate. In particular, General Brady has claimed (1990:28) that ancillary topics such as the issue of women in combat were poorly explained to the American public. Much of this controversy was the result of two stories that focused on Army Captain Linda Bray, commanding officer of the 988th Military Police Company, who led elements of her forces in an assault on a Panamanian Defense Force (PDF) kennel housing attack dogs and PDF troops. In order to see the significance of this controversy, it is first necessary to examine certain changes in the military that made this situation possible.

The Army involved in the Panama invasion differs substantially from the Army of the Vietnam era. Aside from being an all-volunteer force, it differs in composition as well (Clifton, 1990:28). This difference can be traced to 1978 when the Women's Army Corps was eliminated, thereby integrating men and women in the Army. At present, over 90 percent of the career fields in the Army are open to women. In the last ten years, the number of women in the Army has more than doubled. Today, women soldiers comprise over 11 percent (87,000) of the Active Army, almost 20 percent (57,000) of the Army Reserve, and almost 7 percent (30,200) of the Army National Guard. There are career opportunities available throughout the grade structure in each enlisted and officer specialty open to women. The Army's goal is to balance combat readiness with opportunity for career advancement for all soldiers (USAPAO, 1990b:4).

The only limits on women in the Army derive from restrictions on the participation in combat. The Combat Exclusion Laws (found in Title 10 of the U.S. Code), apply to the Navy, Marines and Air Force and preclude assignment of women to combat vessels or aircraft. Title 10 also gives the Secretary of the Army the authority to assign, detail and prescribe the duties of members of the Army. The

Army bases its policy regarding the assignment of women on the Combat Exclusion Laws (USAPAO, 1990e:3).

The Army's Combat Exclusion Policy, developed in 1977, and the Direct Combat Probability Code (DCPC) System, implemented in 1983, have established the rules under which women can be deployed in combat. The DCPC is used to determine the probability of participating in direct combat for every position in the Army. Each position is evaluated based upon four variables: unit mission, duties of the position, Army doctrine, and location on the battlefield. Women are prohibited from serving in those jobs or units which have the highest probability of routine engagement in direct combat. For example, women cannot serve in infantry, armor and cannon artillery units (USAPAO, 1990e:2-3).

Lieutenant General Allen K. Ono, U.S. Army deputy chief of staff for personnel, offered this assessment of Army women in testimony before the Subcommittee on Military Personnel and Compensation of the House Committee on Armed Services (1990:2):

These rules are in compliance with the intent of Congress and the will of the American public. These rules are not based on levels of conflict but establish the skills and positions to which women may be assigned.

Today's Army is trained and ready. It is staffed with quality soldiers. Part of the development of this quality force is the expanded role of women in the military. Women have enhanced the readiness posture of the Army. They work hard, actively participate in every major field training exercise, and are expected to remain with their units if hostilities occur. Only those positions which involve the highest probability of direct combat are not opened to them.

Despite such comments, women and their role in the military are hotly debated. The case against a major role for women in the military is presented in books such as *Weak Link: The Feminization of the American Military* by Brian Mitchell (1989). Mitchell argues that today's "charmed forces" cannot be called upon to defend the United States in battle. The notion of women in combat makes a

mockery of all that the military embodies and ultimately undermines national security by discouraging the recruitment of able-bodied males better suited to fight. Women who would prefer assignments that pose no serious physical threats are now being posted to artillery units. In making his case for the exclusion of women from combat roles, Mitchell calls upon a number of studies that compare male and female performance in the military. Based on this research, he argues that women have only 80 percent of the overall strength of men, are more prone to ailments requiring medical attention, and in general have few of the qualities--bravery, aggressiveness, and tolerance of deprivation--that are required of a combat soldier. Worse, he claims that military officials, in their scramble to open service academies to women, have seriously debased the standards of basic military training. The influence of feminist interest groups has had especially alarming results, according to Mitchell.

Advocates for women in the military, backed by a strong women's lobbying group and U.S. Representative Patricia Schroeder (Colorado Democrat), want the role of women expanded. On January 23, 1990, Rep. Schroeder introduced a House bill (HR-3868) which directs the Secretary of the Army to carry out a 4-year test program to examine the implications of the removal of limitations on the assignment of female soldiers to combat and combat support positions. This bill parallels the recommendations made by the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) in November 1989 (USAPAO, 1990c:1-9). Although not acted upon by Congress in its 1990 session, the debate concerning the bill received wide coverage in the news media.

Objectively, the question of female combatants should be easily resolved by the application of equal, task-related standards of physical strength and technical ability. Given equal treatment, the selection of a male or female for a specific task would, in an ideal world, be based upon performance alone. There is, however, a subjective side to this debate that cannot be brushed aside. Is society prepared to

accept women in the front lines, killing and being killed, in direct contact with the enemy? If so, should combat duty be completely voluntary for women, or should those who meet the appropriate standards face the same risk of draft in time of crisis, regardless of gender (Porteous, 1990:107).

This debate dates back at least to 1976, when women first entered the military service academies. But when the press informed the public that women had participated fully in Operation Just Cause, the debate intensified.

One of the first 27 targets in Operation Just Cause was a dog kennel which housed attack dogs and Panamanian Defense Force soldiers. The mission of the 988th Military Police Company was to neutralize the dog kennel. Reporters Peter Copeland and Wilson Ring wrote articles about this company's mission (see Appendix E and Appendix F, respectively, for the texts), emphasizing that women were involved in the initial actions of the Panama invasion. They stressed that Captain Linda Bray, commanding officer of the 988th, was the first woman to lead U.S. troops into combat, that three enemy soldiers were later found dead at the kennel, that a woman soldier captured an enemy soldier, and that another of Captain Bray's platoons--also led by a female officer--killed three armed men who crashed through a roadblock. Both articles were supportive of women soldiers.

These stories drew widespread media attention and were reprinted by numerous newspapers throughout the nation. They also stimulated new stories by other reporters and columnists. Marlin Fitzwater, White House spokesman, repeated the news accounts of the dog kennel seizure at a press conference, praising women soldiers. But four days after the first story was published in Washington, reporter John Broder wrote an article that cast doubts on the initial accounts of the attack on the dog kennel. This produced a new wave of coverage designed to clarify the points at issue and a bitter controversy among the reporters and principals involved. In the end, few could have been satisfied with the results.

The remainder of the thesis will examine this body of coverage in an attempt to determine what went wrong. To this end, Chapter 2 will present the key stories in question and trace the flow of coverage on this issue. In Chapter 3, the findings of a series of interviews with several of the reporters and Army officers involved in the controversy will be used to determine the facts of the situation. Chapter 4 offers an evaluation of the coverage and suggests improvements that might prevent similar problems in the future.

## Chapter 2

This chapter describes the amount and timing of print and network television news coverage of Captain Linda Bray and the assault she led on a Panamanian Defense Forces (PDF) dog kennel in the early morning hours of December 20, 1989. It is based on the findings of an extensive search designed to identify as much of the coverage of the topic as possible. The search proceeded through three steps.

The first step consisted of a search of major news data bases and indexes to find all catalogued coverage of the topic. The sources used were NEXIS, VU/TEXT, Newsbank, the Vanderbilt University *Television News Index and Abstracts*, and all available newspaper indexes. In general, all searches began on December 20, 1989, and used some combination of the key words "Panama," "Bray," "Linda Bray," "dog kennel" and "women in combat." Ending dates for the searches varied, in part due to the lag between the time of coverage and the publication date of the relevant index. The NEXIS and VU/TEXT searches extended through September 1990, all other searches were of more limited duration. In the second step, several key Army and Department of Defense facilities were contacted and asked to provide copies of any stories they had discovered on the topic. Finally, several of the individuals interviewed in the course of the study identified additional items of coverage. These procedures produced a total of 127 articles and editorials published in newspapers and magazines and 14 instances of network television coverage (including seven stories on network evening newscasts).

Nearly all of this coverage can be traced ultimately to two stories that appeared in late December, 1989. The first and most influential of these was written by Peter Copeland, a Scripps Howard News Service reporter. Not a member of the press pool, he made his way to Panama via Costa Rica. Once in Panama City, he encountered and interviewed a number of female soldiers, including Captain Bray and



several other members of her command. Based on this information, he filed a story on women in combat in Panama with Scripps Howard on December 31, 1989. After editing by Scripps Howard, this story was distributed nationwide, appearing in a number of newspapers beginning on January 1, 1990. On January 2, a version appeared in *The Washington Times*, thus bringing the matter to the attention of federal lawmakers. The full text of the Scripps Howard version is reproduced in Appendix E. The portion of the story pertaining to Captain Bray and her troops is as follows:

#### U.S. WOMEN KEY PLAYERS IN INVASION OF PANAMA

American women participated fully in the invasion of Panama, firing machine guns, taking enemy prisoners and even leading troops into battle.

The women soldiers were on the front lines of the December 20 invasion to topple strongman Manuel Noriega, and in the days following they fought snipers in crowded neighborhoods, guarded prisoners of war and helped provide security for the U.S. military headquarters and the commanding general, Maxwell Thurman.

A dozen women soldiers and officers said in interviews that the women were treated like any other soldiers, which surprised some of the women themselves and most Panamanians, who still look twice when they see a young woman behind an M-60 machine gun.

"Congress does not like women in combat, but what they don't know won't hurt them," said Pfc. Christina Proctor, a military policewoman.

"I raised my right hand to defend my country, and I've got a job to do. I was trained just like the guys and that's what I do," said Ms. Proctor, a tall, 20-year-old blonde from Strawberry, Ariz.

According to her commanding officer--also a woman--Ms. Proctor single-handedly captured an enemy prisoner after a fierce firefight at the Panama Defense Forces kennel for police dogs, which also housed 40 heavily armed troops.

"It was the first time for me, and if anybody tells you they weren't scared, they're lying," said Ms. Proctor, whose father fought in Vietnam. "In training if you make a mistake you can do it again, but here you might not get a second chance."

Ms. Proctor also has a twin sister in the Army in Panama. "My mom was crying at work because her two daughters are here and Noriega was on television all the time," she said.

Ms. Proctor's commanding officer is Capt. Linda Bray, commander of the 123-member 988th Military Police Company from Fort Benning, Ga., which landed in Panama on December 17. Fifteen of her troops are women, and 12 of them have been in combat, she said.

"The sounds, the confusion, the excitement, the teamwork and camaraderie--it automatically clicks in combat," said Ms. Bray, 29, of Butner, N.C. Not one of her troops has been wounded, she said.

When Ms. Bray realized one of her platoons was meeting heavier resistance than expected at the kennel during the first minutes of the invasion, she crashed through the gate in a jeep armed with a .50-calibre machine gun to lead the fight. Three enemy dead were found there later, she said.

"I joined the Army for the excitement, the challenge, experience and loyalty to my country," she said. "I haven't been let down a day."

One of her four platoon leaders, Lt. Kimberly Thompson of Columbus, Ga., was in charge of surrounding the Cuban embassy, which U.S. officials feared might be a refuge for Noriega and his men. Her platoon fought snipers in nearby buildings and killed three armed men in a van that crashed through a roadblock.

"I've been confronted with situations here that I thought I couldn't handle," Ms. Thompson said, "As you go through things, you get tougher."

"Everybody's talking about getting combat patches for their uniforms, but my main goal is that we go back with everybody we came with," said Ms. Thompson, 23, whose father was in the Navy and whose mother was an Army nurse . . . .

Although the Copeland story was the focus of most ensuing discussion, it was not the first to appear on the topic. Wilson Ring, a freelance reporter and stringer for *Newsday* and *Time*, had filed a very similar article, based largely on the same sources, several days before Copeland. Distributed by Newsday News Service, a version appeared in the *Indianapolis News* on December 29, 1989, and in *The San Francisco Chronicle* on December 30. But this was not Wilson Ring's only story on the topic. On January 3, the day after Peter Copeland's article appeared in *The*

*Washington Times*, a more detailed version of the events was published under Ring's byline in *The Washington Post*. The full text of *The Washington Post* article is reproduced in Appendix F. The portion of that story pertaining to Captain Bray and her troops is as follows:

**WOMAN LED U.S. TROOPS INTO BATTLE**  
**Captain's Platoon Took PDF Target**

A female captain led a platoon into battle during last month's U.S. invasion of Panama, the first time that a woman has taken such a combat role for the American military.

Army Capt. Linda L. Bray's mission, as commander of the 988th Military Police Company, was assigned to lead one of her platoons in an effort to neutralize a Panamanian Defense Force (PDF) attack-dog kennel on the edge of Panama City. Besides attack dogs, the kennel area also housed heavily armed PDF troops.

In a three-hour battle, Bray's troops secured the target after killing three PDF soldiers and capturing a number of weapons, according to Capt. Bray and her 30 troops.

While she was the only female officer actually to lead an attack during the invasion, 600 women took part in the engagement and dozens of them in MP units fought the PDF alongside men.

Three enlisted women from another of the four platoons in Bray's company played a key role in the infantry attack on the Comandancia, the headquarters of deposed strongman General Manuel Antonio Noriega. That assault produced some of the heaviest fighting in the invasion.

Still, the bulk of the fighting was done by the true combat units, the infantry, armor, artillery, which by law do not contain women combatants. There were no reports of women being among the 23 killed or 323 wounded.

The Defense Department's policy mandates that women accompany their support units, whatever the assignment. Bray's company was sent to Panama from Fort Benning, Ga., on a regular rotation a week before the movement into Panama was launched.

"Before this all started, I had always wondered what would happen. After this, in my opinion, there is no difference [between men and women]. They worked together as a team, all my soldiers," Bray said.

Bray said that for all the distinction between combat and support units, with about 11 percent of the military made up of

women, it was probably inevitable that some would see combat when U.S. forces were committed to battle.

"For whatever reason, the MPs are in a combat support role.... I hope this makes a statement. It used to be that just because you were a female you would not be able to fight. That is no longer true."

Asked if she felt the Panama experience might cause the regulations about women in combat to be tightened up. Bray answered, "I hope it doesn't happen. Any female soldier in Panama, or any male for that matter, will tell you they hope not.... I hope it doesn't cause a regression. This is a big step."

Bray, 29, a native of Buckner, N.C. and a 1982 ROTC graduate of Western Carolina University, is 5 feet 1 and weighs just over 100 pounds. She took command of her 123-member company last summer.

Her place in history came shortly after 1 a.m. H-hour of Dec. 20. For the attack on the kennel, Bray had about 30 soldiers armed with machine guns, grenade launchers and the soldiers personal weapons.

Bray said a bullhorn was used to tell the PDF soldiers in the kennel to surrender, but they refused. "I ordered a warning shot. Nothing happened. Then they fired the M-60 [machine gun] at the edge of the building." Still nothing.

After the warnings were ignored, Bray's soldiers opened fire and the PDF troops returned it. The platoon spent almost three hours securing the building, Bray said. She refused to talk about enemy dead, but her troops said that the following morning three PDF dead were found inside the kennel.

The attack was only part of the mission assigned Bray's company. Another platoon was attached to the infantry for the attack on the Comandancia.

The platoon, with three female enlisted personnel, was ordered to close some intersections about a block from the Comandancia to block any PDF reinforcements from arriving.

Pfc. Felicia Featherstone, 19, of St. Louis, said there were only 12 soldiers at the intersection she was guarding, with the rest of the platoon at the next corner. She said the confused battle saw hundreds of civilians fleeing Chorrillo, the slum neighborhood surrounding the Comandancia, running through the intersection while the PDF shot at her squad. Chorrillo's shacks were aflame.

"I always wanted to be an MP," Featherstone said, "I knew MPs break up fights, but I never thought I would have people shooting at me just because I am an American."

While the Army's women and men consulted say they do not distinguish by gender in the ranks, it was obvious that officers knew precisely where each woman soldier was during their operations.

"They performed very well," said one of the male platoon sergeants in Bray's company, who asked not be identified, "Some of the females performed better than the men. I am proud of them."

"The ones we have did good, but I don't think they should be there," said another soldier. "At Benning they say they have female problems and no one can say anything.... They need special treatment."

There were no complaints from the men about having to take orders from women. "I don't think of her [Bray] as a woman. She's the CO [commanding officer] and that's it," said Pfc. Eric Jansen, 23, of Baltimore. "She gives you an order and you follow it."

Bray said she never felt slighted as an officer because of her sex. Featherstone, however, admitted to feeling discrimination.

"Now everything has changed. The men felt that the women would slow them down. We showed them," Featherstone said. "They have a lot more respect for us now. It brought us very close.... We became a tight little family after that."

"I hope this inspires other women. There are some who feel they couldn't physically or emotionally stand it. They have to prove they can do it. They have to try harder," Featherstone said.

On January 3, the day that Wilson Ring's article appeared in *The Washington Post*, White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater offered his account of the exploits of Captain Bray and her soldiers in a press conference (see Shabecoff, 1990:B8).

It was heavily defended. Three PDF men were killed. Gunshots were fired on both sides. American troops could have been killed.

It was an important military operation. A woman led it and she did an outstanding job and the fact is that role has been anticipated from the first day she was given that assignment.

The women have been carrying out important functions within the military now for some time. Those responsibilities are well established and laid out by their training and assignments.

Be clear that from the first day that a woman was appointed to that position, it was understood she would carry out those responsibilities and women have done it well. So there.

When challenged later concerning the accuracy of his statement, Fitzwater said that he had taken the information about the dead Panamanian soldiers from newspaper accounts. But he still stood by the substance of his account: "As far as I am concerned, she performed with distinction, whether three people were killed or not" (J. Brady, 1990:2).

Clearly, January 3 was a key turning point in coverage of Captain Bray and the wider issue of women in combat. Between December 29, when Ring's article first appeared in print, and January 3, when his article appeared in Washington and, with Copeland's article from the previous day, stimulated Fitzwater's comments, the search of data bases and indexes revealed a total of nine print stories on the topic. Of these, eight were news articles and one was an editorial. In addition, there was one network television story on the subject, a three and one-half minute feature on women in combat which ran as the second item on the ABC evening newscast for January 3. That story noted the actions of Captain Bray and other women in Panama and included an announcement by Colorado Representative Patricia Schroeder of her intention to seek a change in the statutes barring women from combat.

After January 3, the volume of coverage increased dramatically. Twenty stories appeared in the print media on January 4, followed by five stories on January 5 and seven on January 6. Of these 32 stories, nine were editorials. There was no additional coverage of Captain Bray on network television until January 7. However, Rep. Schroeder and Ben Schemmer, editor of *Armed Forces Journal International*, presented their views concerning women in combat positions on the January 5 edition of ABC's "Good Morning America."

Also on January 5, reporters at a presidential news conference queried President Bush about female troops in combat. According to accounts in the January

6 editions of *The Washington Post* and the *New York Times* the question and President Bush's response were as follows:

Mr. President, in Panama we saw women leading troops in combat for the first time. Are you comfortable with women in that role? And would you support changes in the restrictions on women in combat?

No. I think this is a matter--I'd willingly accept--listen to recommendations from the Defense Department. But these were not combat assignments. But any time you have a highly trained, gung-ho volunteer force and they're caught up in some of the firefights that went on, a person, man or woman, can be inflicted into a--put into a combat situation.

But it's my understanding--and I think [Defense Secretary Richard B.] Cheney took a question on that today--that these were not combat roles. And so, I would let the heroic performance of these people be weighted and measured, and then see if the Defense Department wanted to recommend to the president any additional changes.

January 6, the day following President Bush's comments, was the second turning point in coverage of Captain Bray and the issue of women in combat. Of the seven stories that were published that day, one was an article by John Broder that appeared on page A22 of the *Los Angeles Times*. Clearly written in response to the Copeland and Ring articles (although only Copeland's article is mentioned explicitly) and Marlin Fitzwater's remarks, it cited a number of Army sources in raising serious doubts about the veracity of much that had been said and written about Captain Bray and the assault on the dog kennel. The following is the complete text of the story as it appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* (see also Appendix G):

#### FEMALE'S WAR EXPLOITS OVERBLOWN, ARMY SAYS

The Army said Friday that press accounts of a female commander's battle exploits in Panama, later repeated by White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater, were grossly exaggerated.

According to widely published accounts from Panama, Army Capt. Linda Bray, 29, led a force of 30 military police in a fierce three hour fire-fight at a Panama Defense Forces guard dog kennel that left three Panamanian soldiers dead.

The kennel, first thought to be undefended, was "heavily defended," Fitzwater said in a White House briefing Thursday. "Three PDF men were killed. Gunshots were fired on both sides. American troops could have been killed."

"It was an important military operation," Fitzwater continued. "A woman led it, and she did an outstanding job." The incident, in the early hours of the December 20 invasion, has been generally accepted as the first time that a woman has led American troops in battle.

In fact, the Army acknowledged Friday, the heavy gunfire lasted 10 minutes and no Panamanian troops were killed. Whatever Panamanian soldiers had been defending the facility faded into the woods, offering only "sporadic" sniper fire until disappearing into the night, an Army spokesman said.

The original newspaper account of the action, distributed by Scripps Howard News Service, was widely repeated by other news organizations.

Bray was interviewed extensively by her superiors Friday [January 5] after questions were raised in the Pentagon about the press accounts of the kennel incident. She denied that she was the source of the more elaborate reports of the action, according to an Army general who spoke with her.

At a news conference Friday, President Bush hailed the "heroic performances" of the American women who participated in the December 20 invasion of Panama but said that he will reserve judgement on the future role of women in combat.

Questioned about the participation of women in the invasion, Bush said that their original assignments were in noncombat duties, but "any time you have a highly trained, gung-ho volunteer force and they're caught up in some of the fire-fights that went on, a person can be...put into a combat situation."

As a result of Bray's and other Army women's actions in Panama, Rep. Patricia Schroeder (D-Colo.), said she would introduce legislation to allow women to serve in all military jobs, including combat, in a four year experiment.

The Army has about 600 female troops permanently stationed in Panama; another 170, including Bray's 988th military police company from Ft. Benning, Ga., were sent to take part in the invasion. No American women were killed or injured in the fighting in Panama, officials said.

It was not clear how the inflated accounts of Bray's exploits began. According to Scripps Howard story, Bray said that the three enemy dead were found at the scene later. But an Army spokesman, Gen. Bill McClain, said that Bray never reported any PDF casualties,



nor did the Defense Department's Panama-based Southern Command, which ran the entire operation.

The Scripps Howard account also said that one of Bray's soldiers, Pfc. Christina Proctor, "single-handedly captured an enemy prisoner." According to Bray, however, when she counted her troops at the close of the operation, she had one more than she started with. The extra man was a frightened, unarmed PDF soldier who surrendered without resistance, she told the Army.

McClain said that Bray was not even at the kennel when the shooting started. She was a half mile away at a command post.

A White House official said Fitzwater based his comments solely on newspaper accounts. He had no independent verification of the incident when he spoke about it Thursday, officials said.

U.S. law and military regulations bar women from combat roles, although they serve in numerous support jobs--such as transport and military units--that can bring them into the line of fire, as occurred in Panama. They are armed and trained to use their weapons and, like all U.S. soldiers, are authorized to fire to defend themselves.

The Broder story, which was distributed by the *Los Angeles Times News Service* on January 5 and appeared in at least three newspapers on January 6, had a dramatic impact on the tone and content of subsequent coverage. In the week following its appearance (January 7-13), most major newspapers published articles trying to clarify the accounts of the dog kennel assault and Captain Bray's role, as well as what Copeland said, what Broder said and what the Army said. For instance, on January 8 the *New York Times* printed a story by Philip Sharecoff under the headline "Report of Woman's Role Is Called Into Question," and followed that on January 9 with a story by Michael R. Gordon under the headline "U.S. Tells Calmer Story of Woman's Role in Commanding Attack." Of the sixteen stories on the topic that appeared in the week of January 7-13, eight questioned the original accounts of Captain Bray's activities.

However, Broder's criticisms in no way dominated coverage. Of the 32 editorials on the subject that appeared in the week of January 7-13, only four mentioned Broder's claims. And of the 14 articles and 25 editorials that appeared

after January 13, none of the articles and only nine of the editorials (two on January 14) addressed the criticisms. In general, most accounts after January 13 merely mentioned Captain Bray's activities without attempting to adjudicate the issues involved.

Coverage on network television resembled that in the print media. In the week following publication of Broder's story, Captain Bray was mentioned on network television at least eight times, and appeared a total of six times, twice on CBS and NBC and once on ABC and CNN. More specifically, Captain Bray was mentioned in the course of a panel discussion about women in combat on the January 7 edition of ABC's "This Week with David Brinkley." On the same date, CBS broadcast a three minute and ten second story on women in combat as the closing item on its *Sunday Night News*. In that story, Captain Bray commented on what happened in Panama and Private Proctor described her reactions to being in combat. Additionally, Representative Schroeder, General Maxwell Thurman, commanding general of U.S. Forces in Panama, and Lawrence Korb, former assistant Defense Secretary, commented on the issue; the positions of President Bush and the Defense Department were also noted.

Most television coverage of Captain Bray occurred on January 10. On that date, she appeared a total of five times on all four networks, and was mentioned in a sixth story (on ABC's early evening newscast). More specifically, she was interviewed on the morning news shows of all four networks and commented on camera about her actions during the invasion during a three-minute story devoted to the role of women soldiers in combat situations on the NBC early evening newscast. In a telephone interview with Captain Bray for this project on November 26, she said her purpose in appearing on these programs was to clarify her involvement in the attack on the dog kennel. Transcripts of her interviews on ABC's "Good Morning America" and CNN's "Daywatch" are available, and show that the doubts raised by

Broder's article were of central interest to the interviewers (see "An Interview with Captain Linda Bray: Women Troops," 1990:1, and "U.S. Army Capt. Linda Bray, Who Fought in the Panama Invasion," 1990:1).

After January 10, television news offered little coverage of these issues. Captain Bray appeared only once more, in a two minute and twenty second story on the performance of women soldiers under fire on the January 19 edition of the CBS early evening newscast. Nevertheless, stories concerning the women in combat issue continue to appear in newspapers today, particularly as the U.S. builds its forces in Saudi Arabia. Some still highlight Captain Bray and her involvement in the Panama invasion.

### Chapter 3

As shown in Chapter 2, the stories by Peter Copeland and Wilson Ring, as amplified by Marlin Fitzwater and, less clearly, by President Bush, produced extensive coverage of Captain Bray and other women soldiers in Panama and helped stimulate renewed discussion of the broader issue of women in combat. John Broder's account then added a new and more negative element to the discussion, creating a controversy about Captain Bray's actions and the various stories about her (including his own) that cannot have been satisfying for any of those involved.

It is difficult to determine either the ultimate impact of the controversy or the motives of those involved in it. But it is equally important to determine the truth of the actions of Captain Bray and her troops and why accounts of those actions differed so widely. Therefore, this chapter provides a detailed analysis of the issues raised in the Copeland, Ring and Broder stories and attempts to show how coverage of those issues was formed. Chapter 4 will adjudicate the issues and draw lessons for the future.

In order to decide which version of the events at the PDF dog kennel was closest to the truth, it is necessary to interview those who were involved in the events and the media coverage of them. Thus, attempts were made to interview eight major figures in the controversy: reporters Peter Copeland, Wilson Ring and John Broder, and five Army personnel, Captain Linda Bray, Brigadier General William McClain, Major General Patrick Brady, Colonel Bill Mulvey and Paige Eversole. The relevance of the first four figures is obvious. Of the remaining individuals, General McClain was included because of his role as Army Deputy Chief of Public Affairs at the time of the invasion and because he was the principal source for the Broder story. General Brady was Army Chief of Public Affairs and interviewed Captain Bray extensively about the assault on the dog kennel, including a tour of the site in which

she gave him a step by step account of the action. Colonel Mulvey was Chief of the Army's Media Relations Division with ultimate responsibility for providing reporters information about Army operations. Ms. Eversole was one of five Army spokespersons during the Panama invasion and was charged specifically with addressing the issue of women in combat. Ms. Eversole has since left the Army for a position at Ketchum Public Relations.

In the end, it was possible to contact only two of the three journalists. Peter Copeland was interviewed in person on October 19, 1990, at the Scripps Howard offices in Washington, DC. A transcript of that interview is reproduced in Appendix A. John Broder was interviewed in person on October 29, 1990, in the offices of the Washington bureau of the *Los Angeles Times*. A transcript of that interview is reproduced in Appendix C. All attempts to contact William Ring were unsuccessful. *Newsday* provided a telephone number for him in Honduras, but numerous calls to that number went unanswered. Fortunately, the inability to contact Mr. Ring was of little significance. As shown below, his story largely duplicated Copeland's, and it was Copeland's story that Broder took as his primary target.

Attempts to contact the various Army personnel were also only partially successful. Ms. Eversole was interviewed by telephone on October 22, 1990. A transcript of this interview is reproduced in Appendix B. Colonel Mulvey was interviewed in person on November 9, 1990, at his office in the Pentagon. A transcript of this interview is reproduced in Appendix D. General Brady declined to be interviewed on the record. General McClain agreed to a telephone interview, but was forced to cancel the appointment. However, he did make available Colonel Michael Sullivan, Executive Officer of the Army Public Affairs Office in Washington, who was with General McClain when he was interviewed by telephone by John Broder about Captain Bray. Colonel Sullivan was interviewed by telephone on November 27. Arrangements to interview Captain Bray were highly complex. At

first she was said to be stationed in Saudi Arabia as part of the Desert Shield forces. After efforts to contact her there through the Pentagon failed, it was determined that she was hospitalized at Fort Benning, Georgia. Through the assistance of the Public Affairs Officer at Fort Benning, it was finally possible to interview Captain Bray by telephone on November 26, 1990. Because the interviews with Colonel Sullivan and Captain Bray took place so late in the project, it was not possible to include transcripts in the thesis. However, audio tape recordings of the interviews are available from the author.

The general claim of the Broder article is that "press accounts of a female commander's battle exploits in Panama, later repeated by White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater, were grossly exaggerated." Although Broder indicated in his interview that the modifier "grossly" might have been overly harsh, he still maintained that accounts of Captain Bray's exploits in both the Copeland and Ring stories were "exaggerated" or "embellished" (see Appendix C). Presumably, this claim is based on his criticisms of the Copeland and Ring stories in his article of January 6 (Appendix G and Chapter 2 above). An analysis of that article shows that his criticisms focused on five issues: the sense in which Captain Bray could be said to have "led" her troops in battle, the length and intensity of the battle at the PDF dog kennel, the number of PDF casualties in this battle, the circumstances of the capture of a PDF soldier by Captain Bray's troops, and, less clearly, the character of the resistance offered by the Panamanian forces. These issues were explored in the interviews with the figures involved. The remainder of the chapter examines the claims made by Copeland, Ring, Fitzwater and Broder about each of these issues and reports the comments of the various interviewees concerning them. The goal of the analysis is both to establish the likely truth of the claims and to show how they came to be made.

The first issue concerns Captain Bray's leadership. The Copeland story begins with the claim that "American women participated fully in the invasion of Panama . . . even leading troops into battle." He then offers a dramatic account of Captain Bray's actions:

When Ms. Bray realized one of her platoons was meeting heavier resistance than expected at the kennel during the first minutes of the invasion, she crashed through the gate in a jeep armed with a .50-caliber machine gun to lead the fight.

Wilson Ring's *Washington Post* article begins in much the same fashion:

A female captain led a platoon into battle during last month's U.S. invasion of Panama, the first time a woman has taken such a combat role for the American military.

Ring then provides this account of her leadership:

Her place in history came shortly after the 1 a.m. H-hour of Dec. 20. For the attack on the kennel, Bray had about 30 soldiers armed with machine guns, grenade launchers and the soldiers' personal weapons.

Bray said a bullhorn was used to tell the PDF soldiers in the kennel to surrender, but they refused. "I ordered a warning shot. Nothing happened. Then they fired the M-60 [machine gun] at the edge of the building.' Still nothing.

After the warnings were ignored, Bray's soldiers opened fire and the PDF troops returned it. The platoon spent almost three hours securing the building, Bray said. . . .

White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater commented: "It was an important military operation. A woman led it and she did an outstanding job and the fact is that role has been anticipated from the first day she was given that assignment."

The Broder article quotes Fitzwater's conclusion, but seems to question whether Captain Bray did, in fact, lead her troops into battle by citing General McClain: "McClain said that Bray was not even at the kennel when the shooting started. She was a half mile away at a command post."

Taken together, these claims raise three specific questions about Captain Bray's activities. First, was she at the scene of the battle? Second, did her activities

constitute leading troops into battle? And third, did she crash through the kennel gate in an armed jeep as claimed by Peter Copeland?

In his interview, Copeland confirmed that Captain Bray was not present at the kennel when the firing began, and repeated his claim that she crashed through the kennel gate in a vehicle. In his words:

So during the first 12 hours of the invasion Bray had troops under fire at three different locations, Quarry Heights, 4th of July Avenue where the Comandancia is and then at the kennel. There were women under fire at all three places. When the fighting got tougher, see she wasn't at the kennel when it started. She was a mile away at a command post. In fact I said that she crashed through the gate. What she said was when she realized that the opposition was stiffer at the kennel, she went up there to personally lead the attack, so she crashed through the gate in this HMMWV [High-Mobility, Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle], the armored jeep vehicle and then jumped out.

John Broder was asked: "Copeland's story told us that she wasn't at the operation at the time, perhaps that she was a mile and a half or a half mile away, and Ring's didn't mention it at all or say whether she was present or not. But you thought that was real important to get clarified?" He responded:

He thought so and she thought so as well because, I mean, the Army was concerned, I think. They may tell you differently but this event was portrayed as the first time a woman officer had led troops in combat and the Army's position, as you know, is that women are not in combat, although there are occasions when they find themselves because of their jobs in a combat situation, finding gunfire around them. And so, I think the Army's motives are not necessarily pure in this case. As I am sure you are aware, that those original stories, the first couple of days, because this was portrayed as the first time a woman had led troops in combat. Naturally, the question of combat exclusion came up and a variety of people like Pat Schroeder were called in to comment on it and they said, yes, this just proves that this thing is silly, that women are as capable as men and look at Captain Bray did and this great feat of daring and heroism and therefore this whole combat exclusion ought to be rethought and there was talk on that about introducing legislation to at least experiment with lifting the combat exclusion. So the Army obviously was concerned about this. They didn't want this one event to trigger a radical change in the Army as well as an avalanche of legislation. So, I think the Army felt it was in their interest, well, let's put it this way, without imputing their motives too much, it was in their interest to get the facts of the story out rather than to allow what they felt was an inaccurate and somewhat overblown tale to continue in circulation and perhaps



become accepted as history. When their version of events, at least as they were able to determine them, was somewhat less spectacular.

In the interview with Captain Bray, she was asked: "You were at your command post. You understood that the kennel was under more fire than they thought they would be under, so you went there?" She responded:

Correct. Right. I was at a command post when the operation began. They [the soldiers at the kennel] called back and said they needed more ammunition and [illumination] flares. Communications weren't very good at all. So that's when I grabbed Garrison and another soldier and we got as much ammunition and the flares as we could and we went down there. When we got there the initial roadblock that was supposed to be set up, was not set up. So some soldiers came running up to me out of the woods. I don't even know where they came from . . . . They didn't know what to do. I told them to stay right there. And Garrison used that vehicle to set up the roadblock. . . . I made my way on up to the First Sergeant. Got up there saw that things were under control. In route up there some firefighting went on. Then I got to my vehicle because I knew that my vehicle was the only vehicle there that had commo [communications] that was working. So, I got into that and I relayed back, because I could hear the CP [command post] calling me asking me what was going on. So I radioed back to them and told them what was going on. And then I told them play by play what we were doing at specific points in time. I happened to be laying on my belly using the radio and the .50-cal [caliber] gunner was standing over top of me, when the First Sergeant said let's crash the gate. Sergeant Galvin jumped in my vehicle and they used that vehicle to crash the gate. . . .

In the telephone interview with Colonel Sullivan, he said:

They [the Army] wanted the facts to be corrected. And if the facts were that she was at her command post, then that's what they were interested in seeing the public know.

Colonel Mulvey was asked: "Even though the commander is not at the site where the troops engage in a battle but is directing it from a command post, does the Army consider that still leading the troops?" He responded:

I certainly do. Now, realize my background. I am an infantry officer. I was a platoon leader and company commander in Vietnam, I have a CIB [Combat Infantry Badge] that gets me emotionally involved in questions like this that evolved. But, sure, as an infantry officer, the commander does not have to be in front of the troops to be leading the troops. Certainly he can command an operation from a command

position, a bunker, a building, a helicopter up above. In Vietnam where a battalion commander was flying above me and I was the company commander on the ground, I certainly felt that he was commanding what I was doing although he wasn't down there in front. I, on the other hand, had platoons doing things and I couldn't see them but I was talking to them on the radio, maybe we were in a jungle environment, I certainly felt in control of them, and certainly felt that Captain Bray talking on the radio from a half mile away or whatever the distance was, certainly by my definition would be that she was leading the troops.

He was then asked: "When the American public read that she had led her troops into combat, do you think it mattered to them that she was in a command post or that she was present at the time that the engagement started?" He responded:

Yes, it is, but I will change my position a little bit. I do think it makes a difference in the public's mind's eye as to how they picture it. If you just say 'leading the troops' to the public, I think they envision her up in the infantry follow-me statue, that she is up front, bayonet in hand, and she is leading, meaning being in front of, as opposed to commanding the troops from a command position. I guess that is where I would split it.

. . . I guess the more knowledge the public has, the more facts that they have the better, more accurate representation. If they don't, if some of the facts are missing, then they are left to assume where she was, what she was doing, and could easily get the wrong impression.

A more minor question concerns the type of vehicle used to crash the gate. Copeland's article described it as a "jeep," which perhaps would lead the public to conjure up a wrong impression. It was a HMMWV, which is the vehicle that replaced the jeep. In his interview Copeland was asked, "In your story it was written as a jeep; is that because most people won't understand what a the HMMWV is?" He said, "Right, what a HMMWV is; I meant it to be a jeep, lower case jeep, it is a jeep, [what] some people call a jeep. Do you know what a HMMWV looks like?" The interviewer responded: "Yes, it's a big vehicle and it's really low." He said: "Right. It is low, a broad flat jeep, right? Right."

The second major issue centers on the length and intensity of the battle. Peter Copeland does not mention the length of the battle, describing it only as a "fierce

firefight." The length of the fight was first mentioned by Ring, who described the fighting as follows:

In a three-hour battle Bray's troops captured the target after killing three PDF soldiers and capturing a number of weapons, according to Capt. Bray and several of her 30 troops.

He continues:

After the warnings were ignored, Bray's soldiers opened fire and the PDF troops returned it. The platoon spent almost three hours securing the building, Bray said.

Marlin Fitzwater did not offer any specifics about the battle, noting only that the facility was "heavily defended" and that: "Gunshots were fired on both sides. American troops could have been killed." Broder characterizes published accounts of the action by combining the Copeland and Ring descriptions in the phrase "a fierce three-hour fire-fight," and also cites Fitzwater's remarks. He then offers this criticism:

In fact, the Army acknowledged Friday, the heavy gunfire lasted 10 minutes and no Panamanian troops were killed. Whatever Panamanian soldiers had been defending the facility faded into the woods, offering only 'sporadic' sniper fire until disappearing into the night, an Army spokesman said.

When asked about his use of the term "fierce firefight," Copeland responded: "I did call it a fierce firefight because to me firefight, it's one of those expressions that go together, any firefight is fierce." He then added these comments in response to a question about the length of the battle.

She just told me that it lasted all night, that they started right around H-hour, which is 1 a.m., in fact I think it's in the story, and then, the way Cabido, that the fighting, that they were shooting, when they were firing, shooting trying to secure. It wasn't until dawn that they finally secured the kennel. And that was when Cabido was lying down in a prone position and stood up and sort of looked in the jungle, like right on the edge of a clearing right on the edge of the jungle, she stood up and was just all of a sudden face to face with the Panamanian soldier, and he had a gun and she said drop it. So he drops it. And that was at dawn, so that gave me the idea that it lasted all night. But really the fighting, I never knew, I never asked, or thought to ask how

long did it go on. I never said, "How would you describe the shooting, would you describe it as sporadic, or fierce, or?"--I just, I got caught up in the excitement that they had, I mean they were totally pumped about having this experience. I talked to enough of them that I thought I had a good picture of what it was like in my mind."

In his interview, Broder said that General McClain told him that the heavy gunfire lasted ten minutes and the rest was pretty much sniper fire.

[T]he interpretation, you know, did the combat last three hours or did it last ten minutes? It's a judgment call to some extent. If you were involved in a military operation where you left your barracks to go into a potential combat situation 2:00 in the morning and you hadn't heard the last of the gunfire until 5:00, even if the intense fighting was only ten minutes, you would think of that as a three hour operation, I'm not sure than an historian or even a journalist coming back a day or a week or a month later would call that a three hour engagement.

Captain Bray disagreed with all of the published accounts:

Even the Army couldn't get it right. . . . It was ten minutes into the firefight that I decided to go down, because I wasn't getting feedback. Now the whole operation--we began at H-hour, which was 1 a.m. in the morning, actually we were about 3 minutes late. So, 1:03 in the morning. The whole thing--I did not come back from the kennel until somewhere approximately 3:30, 4 o'clock the next morning, when everything had been secured. Security had been set up and I came back with the first load of weapons. So, that was all until 3:30, 4 o'clock in the morning. . . . What was happening was even though a majority of all the bullets that were fired were at the very beginning I'd say the first half-hour. You have to understand now that time is distorted, because you have no real sense of time. I'd say a majority of the bullets were the first half-hour, first 40 minutes. Then, after that what we would get a few rounds here and there coming in from the woods.

Colonel Sullivan also claimed that all published accounts were incorrect, but on the grounds that there may, in fact, have been no real battle, that is, that all of the firing may have been by American troops. From this view, even Broder's critical account is incorrect.

[I]t should be understood that by the time that interview had taken place General McClain had the advantage of having talked to General Brady and Colonel Stinet who had been down there. . . . He also had a telephonic conversation with Captain Bray. The reason that he had that conversation with her was because of the near total

confusion about the role that Captain Bray had played in an alleged firefight. And the fact that both Colonel Stinet and General McClain had told him that there had been no such thing. That this alleged firefight had been as much a suppressive fire effort on the part of Captain Bray's unit into the area of this kennel. And all of that had been confirmed in subsequent conversation with Captain Bray, the focus of which was how the disinformation had gotten out. . . .

What he tried to tell Broder was that there had been no firefight. That no one in Bray's outfit had ever alleged that there had been a firefight. And that virtually all of the disinformation, certainly that part that had been fed by the Army was a product of a "fog of war" . . . . There was no question in anyone's mind that there had been firing. The open question in everybody's mind was until they all sorted it out, did anyone fire back. And the collective impression on the part of the members of the MP Company was, again, that there had been no firefight. There had been some firing being done, but as it turned out that it was all being done by all friendly people.

He [General McClain] attempted to give all of that to Broder. Broder for whatever reason chose to use some if it . . . .

The third issue concerns the number of enemy dead found after the battle.

Peter Copeland wrote: "Three enemy dead were found there later, she [Captain Bray] said." Wilson Ring was more specific. In the third paragraph of his article he claimed that "Captain Bray's troops secured the building after killing three PDF soldiers." Later in the article he wrote: "She [Captain Bray] refused to talk about enemy dead, but her troops said that the following morning three PDF dead were found inside the kennel." According to Marlin Fitzwater: "Three PDF men were killed."

Broder's article begins by citing "widely published accounts from Panama" about the battle at the dog kennel that "left three Panamanian soldiers dead," and also quotes Fitzwater's remark. He then notes the Army's acknowledgement that "no Panamanian troops were killed" and offers this analysis:

It was not clear how the inflated accounts of Bray's exploits began. According to the Scripps Howard story, Bray said that the three enemy dead were found at the scene later. But an Army spokesman, Gen. Bill McClain, said that Bray never reported any PDF casualties, nor did the Defense Department's Panama-based Southern Command, which ran the entire operation.

Copeland explained that his wording had been carefully designed to suggest that enemy soldiers had been killed, rather than make such a claim outright:

The last thing about the three dead, my phrasing was cautious on purpose. . . . And I wish I hadn't put it in, because it is not essential to the story. But I put it in because I wanted to show how serious a fight this was. I put, "three enemy dead were found there later," she said. I said, I asked her, "I want to know how many kills, how many captured, how many wounded your company is responsible for." She told me, "Six KIA, Three at the roadblock where Kim Thompson was, and three at the kennel, but be careful, because the three at the kennel aren't confirmed." But she said, "We were told that when they policed up the area, there were three bodies found." Proctor and Kim had earlier told me that three bodies were found. So, I knew this, when, at that point I just assumed. . . . I didn't even ask [who found them]. You see what they said was, "When they policed up afterwards," which means that some other unit had come in and gone over the area and they found the bodies.

So later, I got from the Army, and Bray got from the Army, then when all the questions were raised by Bray, fired at the Army-- What about those three bodies that we heard about? They said well, there were a lot of bodies found around the area, there were no bodies found exactly in the kennel. But what she says is that, they were fighting from the roof of the kennel and also from inside the kennel. And the Panamanians are shooting it out, and the Americans and her people were shooting up and at the kennel. At some point they ran off into the woods and then some of them came back down and were shooting so there was this exchange, people going back and forth. There were bodies found in those woods nearby, but the Army decided that it was not clear what action caused their death. So they were just left as confirmed kills but nobody was given credit for them. So that's how the three bodies came out. . . .

So, I reported what they told me. That there were three bodies found, and I didn't think that there was any question about it. Apparently, later there was a question about it.

In his interview Broder explained that General McClain was his source that there were no enemy bodies found at the kennel. He said:

He [General McClain] told me the story, essentially as I related it in the piece that there were no, no confirmed casualties, which was contrary to what at least the *Post* story had said and what Marlin Fitzwater had said, probably quoting the *Post*. And then that was picked up by the *New York Times*.

In the telephone interview Captain Bray said her company did not find any enemy soldiers at the kennel. She offered an explanation about how the bodies came up in discussions. She said:

Over an extended period of time, from what I knew from the radio operator at Battalion level was that there were some bodies that were turned in from that area. But, no one could pin point with your finger what happened and where those bodies came from and if it could be contributed to the kennels. So, I told him as far as I am considering--No, there were not three bodies because we, the 988th MP Company, did not find them and turn them in and get credited with the kills. So, as far as I'm concerned--No, there were none. . . . Yes, [the bodies were found] somewhere in the general vicinity of the woods area [near the dog kennel]. . . . Hey, the four or five guys running out the back, possibly somebody else could have caught them. That or there were different other instances that happened at the kennel long after we pulled out of there. The very next night there were rounds being fired back there. . . .

They [the Panamanian government] had rehired the PDF back. I went down and I talked to the [PDF] First Sergeant who was leading his troops that night. . . . I said did you have anyone killed? He said no. And I said are all of your people back here to work? And he said no. This is with a translator, because I didn't speak Spanish. I asked that night where did you go and he pointed to the hilltop.

The fourth issue concerns the circumstances surrounding the capture of an enemy soldier by Captain Bray's troops. Peter Copeland wrote:

According to her commanding officer -- also a woman -- Ms. Proctor single-handedly captured an enemy prisoner after a fierce firefight at the Panama Defense Forces kennel for police dogs, which also housed 40 heavily armed troops.

Wilson Ring and Marlin Fitzwater did not mention the capturing of enemy soldiers. John Broder refers to the Scripps Howard account that one of Bray's soldiers "single-handedly captured an enemy soldier." He then provides a substantially different account:

According to Bray, however, when she counted her troops at the close of the operation, she had one more than she started with. The extra man was a frightened, unarmed PDF soldier who surrendered without any resistance, she told the Army.

During the interview Copeland provided the details on how Proctor captured the enemy soldier. He said:

Christina Proctor Cabido, her name got confused later in the stories because she had been, her real name was Proctor, she had married briefly and was getting a divorce, her uniform said Cabido, but her name was Proctor. So, I called her Proctor, I think, but that other people called her Cabido, same woman. . . .

Um, the question about Cabido, that, I interviewed her and Bray, Thompson, all of these people that happened exactly as I described it and no one disputes that. . . .

It wasn't until dawn that they finally secured the kennel. And that was when Cabido was lying down in a prone position and stood up and sort of looked in the jungle, like right on the edge of a clearing right on the edge of the jungle, she stood up and was just all of a sudden face to face with the Panamanian soldier, and he had a gun and she said drop it. So he drops it.

In the interview Broder said that he talked with General McClain and a "source" that he described as being a fairly senior, civilian Army official who tracks international affairs. When asked if he talked with Captain Bray, he said no.

In the interview Captain Bray described the conflicting accounts that were told to her concerning the capturing of the enemy soldier. She said:

One of the reporters that I talked with asked me, "Do you know of anything else that any of your female soldiers had done?" At that time the word got back to me, I knew that next morning as soon as day break, the people down at the kennel, a PDF was captured. And we processed him through the EPW [Enemy Prisoner of War] area. Then, the word that got back to me was that Proctor was the one that caught him. Well, what happened was she at the security point and I had gotten the word from Battalion to pull out of there that the place was secure, don't worry about it just pull out of there. So, I called down to Sergeant McGallen to get his people, come back out and return to the school where the CP [command post] was. At that time-now, this is how I understand the story now. Proctor stood up from her position saw the guy, walked over to her squad leader. And said, "Hey, if we see somebody are we supposed to capture them?" And he said, "By all means." And he and Specialist Garcia returned back to that location. Halted the guy. And then went up and apprehended him. . . . I don't know, that's what I was told by Sergeant Hunter, who was her squad leader at the time, and that's what really happened. And that's what he told me. I don't know if she was with him and Garcia and assisted in the apprehension. I didn't even inquire about that . . . .



During the telephone interview Colonel Sullivan was asked: "Did General McClain tell Broder that Pfc. Proctor did not capture a PDF soldier?" He responded:

No, no. I was about 20 feet away from General McClain all throughout the conversation with Broder. And I have no memory of him getting into any of the details of the encounter. The whole discussion with Broder was around the absence of a firefight and the absence of Bray's involvement in any worthwhile conspiracy to portray it as such.

The fifth point at issue involves the character of the resistance offered by the PDF forces. In particular, could it be said that the kennel was heavily defended? Peter Copeland did not say specifically how the kennel was defended. As mentioned earlier, he wrote: "Ms. Proctor single-handedly captured an enemy prisoner after a fierce firefight at the Panama Defense Forces kennel for police dogs, which also housed 40 heavily armed troops." Wilson Ring did not characterize the defense of the Panamanians, but mentions the large amount of weapons found in the kennel. He wrote:

Besides attack dogs, the kennel area also housed heavily armed PDF troops.

In a three-hour battle, Bray's troops secured the target after killing three PDF soldiers and capturing a number of weapons, according to Bray and her 30 troops.

During a news conference, Marlin Fitzwater said, "It was heavily defended."

John Broder cites Fitzwater's, "It was heavily defended" remarks. He then offers this criticism:

In fact, the Army acknowledged Friday, the heavy gunfire lasted 10 minutes and no Panamanian troops were killed. Whatever Panamanian soldiers had been defending the facility faded into the woods, offering only 'sporadic' fire until disappearing into the night, an Army spokesman said.

In the interview, Copeland was asked about the Panamanian's defense. He responded:

From the kennel they recovered 18 AK 47s, 23 nine-millimeter pistols, 12 light anti-tank weapons [LAW], two cases of fragmentation grenades and thousands of cases of ammunition. So this is why it was not just a dog kennel, it was also a barracks for special operations troops. They have files and photos, substantial intelligence, uniforms of Panamanian special forces troops. It had intel about how the PDF was organized, Cuban money. . . . Had 40 beds, that's where the 40 came from. Had 40 beds, they're not sure how many people were there.

Mr. Broder was not asked to discuss that issue. It was clear that he talked with General McClain and his "source."

Captain Bray agreed that the kennel was not heavily defended. In her words:

I received a report that four to five individuals were leaving out the back of the kennel. That's when the whole side, you'd have to understand the [kennel] layout, but the whole side of people opened up on them. Once we were trying to clear the kennel, we retrieved out of the kennel something like a hundred and twenty-seven P-60, which were automatic rifles similar to the M-16, approximately 23 AK-47s, 12 LAWs, and thousands and thousands of rounds of ammunition . . . . If you look at the arms and explosives in it. Ya, it was heavily defended. But did someone sit there and use all of that against us. No . . . .

. . . There were 40 beds and only one that wasn't made up [39 beds appeared to have been slept in]. When I looked at Sergeant Wade and I looked at that room that was the most surprising, because you always hear that you want a 3 to 1 ratio if you are ever going to do a deliberate attack. Here we are looking at this room that had this possibility of this many people in this building. And there was no way in heck we had a 3 to 1 ratio.

## Chapter 4

This chapter will evaluate the coverage concerning Captain Bray and her company's mission to neutralize the dog kennel during the Panama Invasion. Lessons learned from the media coverage will also be presented.

Differences of opinion remain about what happened at the dog kennel. The facts, as they could be determined from this research, concerning Captain Bray and the points of issue presented in Chapter 3 are: 1) She was located at her command post when the operation started. She went to the kennel because a) they asked for more ammunition and flares, b) they were under more fire than they thought they would be under, c) she had poor communications with them and d) she wanted to find out what was happening. 2) Her HMMWV was used to crash the gate at the dog kennel, but she was not a passenger. 3) Captain Bray said that the firefight lasted 30 to 40 minutes, that it took 3.5 to 4 hours to secure the dog kennel and there was sniper fire until dawn. 4) No enemy dead were found by the 988th MP Company, nor were they credited for the bodies that were found in the woods near the dog kennel. 5) A PDF soldier was captured by the company and was processed as an enemy prisoner. But those who were actually involved in apprehending the PDF soldier could not be determined with certainty from this research. 6) Although the dog kennel housed thousands of rounds of ammunition and over 150 automatic and antitank weapons, the PDF troops in the kennel did not use them to defend the kennel.

There is disagreement within the Army concerning the length of the firefight at the kennel or whether any real battle occurred at all. Some senior Army personnel, (e.g., Colonel Sullivan) have the opinion that there was no firefight but that the firing that was going on was friendly fire. Captain Bray's opinion is that she and her troops came under hostile fire. It is conceivable that another sector was

firing at the kennel, or that firing could be clearly heard from another sector. The operation began at 1 a.m., when it is obviously very dark outside. Confusion can arise fairly easily in a night operation. When Captain Bray arrived at the kennel, some of her soldiers were confused about what they were supposed to be doing. The firing that was going on could have been friendly fire, as Colonel Sullivan says. Although disagreement remains, there is basis for both opinions. But the truth is unknown.

The language used in the stories is sometimes ambiguous. Few terms are clearly defined in the context of the story. Therefore, the terms must be interpreted by the reader using his/her own frame of reference, which may or may not be the same as what the journalist intended. What is a firefight? What is a fierce firefight? Copeland said that to him "any firefight is fierce." Paige Eversole, who was a civilian Army spokesperson at the Pentagon during the Panama Invasion, took a similar position: "Well, if people fired at me, I would think it was pretty fierce, too." A war veteran might disagree.

What is leading troops in combat? Colonel Mulvey pointed out that from his frame of reference because of his Army and combat experience "leading troops" means directing or giving orders to your soldiers on what action to take. However, the American public may have the idea that "leading troops" means standing in front of them telling them what to do--the "follow-me" type of leader. Molly Moore, a *Washington Post* staff writer, added to Wilson Ring's article:

An Army official said the incident in which the MP unit encountered PDF soldiers at the kennel was the first time a woman has led U.S. troops into a battle situation.

What is sniper fire? Is it aimed? What is sporadic firing? What is harassing fire? According to the Department of Army Field Manual 21-75 (1967), *Combat Training of the Individual Soldier and Patrolling*:

A sniper is an expert rifleman trained in the techniques of the individual soldier and assigned the mission of sniping. . . . A sniper is physically and mentally hardened expert rifleman who must be able to: estimate ranges; search areas; locate and identify sounds; use cover, concealment, and camouflage; use maps, sketches, aerial photographs, and the compass; recognize enemy personnel and equipment quickly; move without detection; endure long periods of waiting. Your mission as a sniper is to shoot key enemy personnel-- leaders, gunners of crew-served or automatic weapons, communication personnel, observers, and enemy snipers. In the absence of these priority targets, fire on any personnel who expose themselves.

Commanders select snipers from outstanding riflemen in their units.

Harassing fire is fire to annoy or disturb the enemy persistently. When the precise location of the enemy cannot be determined, it used to get the enemy to stop their activities and seek cover. Sporadic fire is fire that occurs in different intervals, to get the enemy to worry, pause and seek cover. Using these definitions, sporadic fire and harassing fire are quite similar. By this standard, Captain Bray's unit at the dog kennel might not have come under sniper fire. Viewed realistically, it could have been harassing or sporadic fire.

What constitutes a battle? Does a battle begin when the operation begins or when there is an exchange of fire between the enemy and the friendly forces? Many people think of a battle as a large-scale military encounter with the enemy. (But what is "large?") Again, if the definitions of vague terms are not provided in the context of the story, then they are left to the reader's frame of reference for the meaning, which may or may not be what the reporter intended. Molly Moore added to Wilson Ring's article an explanation concerning what a battle is. Quoting Paige Eversole in her capacity as an Army spokesperson, Ms. Moore wrote:

'To the layman's ear' it was battle, said Eversole. 'But this is professional soldiering and "combat" and "battle" take on different meanings.' Eversole said the women involved in the firefight 'were performing routine MP jobs for which they were trained.'

The following sentence from Copeland's article can give the reader the impression that the deaths were a result of Captain Bray's mission: "Three enemy dead were found there later, she said." It also could give the impression that it was a fact, because she is saying it. Copeland said, "My phrasing was cautious on purpose. And I wish I hadn't put it in, because it is not essential to the story. But I put it in because I wanted to show how serious a fight this was."

Wilson Ring's initial statement about enemy casualties and the length of the battle appears to be factual because he attributes it to Captain Bray and her troops. He wrote: "In a three-hour battle, Bray's troops secured the target after killing three PDF soldiers and capturing a number of weapons, according to Bray and her 30 troops." Later in the story, however, he clarifies the source of the casualty claim and what the "three hours" of conflict entailed: "The platoon spent three hours securing the building, Bray said. She refused to talk about enemy dead, but her troops said that the following morning three PDF dead were found inside the kennel." Clearly, someone who read only the first few paragraphs of the story would likely form a different impression of the events than someone who read as far as the clarification.

There were some minor factual errors in Copeland's story. One that was not mentioned earlier concerns the date that Captain Bray landed with her troops. Copeland says Captain Bray and the 988th Military Police Company landed on December 17. In fact, Captain Bray arrived in Panama on December 12, 1989; her Company flew in on three different flights that arrived on different days.

In confused combat situations, differences of opinions will lead to contrary accounts of what happened. These differences appeared in the articles that were printed about the dog kennel operation. Given these kinds of disagreements and ambiguities, journalists can interpret and state things to serve their own objectives. In short, a journalist can choose to "spin" a story a certain way. Copeland's "spin"-

-that women are fully involved in Army operations--was initially successful in bringing their achievements to the attention of the public. But those achievements may well have been tarnished by the controversy that followed. Broder's story also had the effect he intended--to dampen or calm discussion of women in combat. But he now feels he made his point rather clumsily, and has been criticized extensively both by Scripps Howard journalists and some Army officers. Thus there were no true winners as a result of these articles. The result is a confused state of affairs where few are satisfied with the outcome.

However, certain lessons can be drawn from this series of events. The first lesson is that the Army should mention to officers during their training, such as in the Branch Advance Course, that the media will be on the battlefield. Officers need to know that they should be careful and specific about what they say to a reporter. Officers should understand that what they say can be published. The Army's guidance to soldiers is to speak about experiences and information that is most familiar to them, but not to speak for anyone else or for the Army. Yet, in most cases officers are not provided this guidance until the need arises, when something has happened (or is about to happen) that has placed them into a situation that has media interest. Officers need to recognize that the media will interpret what they say about their experiences, opinions or knowledge and extend their comments to Army policy. For example, Captain Bray said that she had no idea that the reporters were going to focus on her and her female soldiers or that issues concerning women in combat would be linked to her. She thought the reporters were going to write about her Company's accomplishments during Operation Just Cause.

A second lesson that can be drawn from Captain Bray's experiences with the media is that the Army should fully brief a soldier who becomes an object of media attention concerning Army policy and possible agendas that the press may have. By understanding these factors, the soldier can become aware that the media will want to

expand his or her comments to policy issues concerning the Army. But in providing guidance to the soldier, the Army should also allow the soldier to be himself or herself. For example, Colonel Sullivan said that Captain Bray was briefed extensively by the Public Affairs Office in Panama before she appeared on camera for the morning talk shows. At that point during the invasion, he said, she was exhausted from all the action and lack of sleep. As Colonel Sullivan noted: "Because she was briefed too much, she was over-tired--shyness and nervousness--the true Linda Bray did not come through, or come across, as well as we would have liked." General Brady has similar views: "The Army's best spokespersons are the American soldiers." Colonel Sullivan also said that the Army is using this approach with the troops who are now in Saudi Arabia; the soldiers are briefed on Army policy and possible issues, but not extensively. Soldiers are allowed to speak freely with the media, if they so desire.

A third lesson from this series of events is that it is important for the public to have the facts, as Colonel Mulvey stressed. Thus, if inaccuracies are published, the Media Relations Division at the Pentagon attempts to correct them as fast as possible. When they try to correct errors, they call the reporters involved in the inaccuracies and explain the facts to them. They write letters and speak to editors to correct errors. However, the responsibility lies with the media to rectify the errors by printing or broadcasting corrections.

An important fourth lesson is that senior officers who regularly talk with the press by telephone should have a tape recorder on their desk to record their answers to questions the journalist asks them. By having the recorded answers, they can later know exactly what they said to the journalist. Then, if the journalist misquotes them, they not only know what they said, but can prove they were misquoted. According to Colonel Sullivan, General McClain was extremely upset that Broder misquoted him. He was so upset that he formally complained to the *Los Angeles*



*Times* editors as well as complaining to Broder. But they chose not to do anything to inform the public of their errors.

Lastly, an additional lesson that can be drawn from General McClain's experience is that officers who deal with the press on a regular basis should be aware of key reporters and what their particular interests are. A journalist has a specific reason for asking most questions. By knowing reporters' interests, the officers dealing with them can predict their agenda from the type of questions that are asked.

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## Appendix A

An Interview With Peter Copeland

Scripps Howard News Service

October 19, 1990

(C) I went to (which is the mike, so I can just, that's the speaker, that's the mike, Hello!). So, I went to a photographer that I was working with had heard that there were women that fought. This was about, I don't know, a week or so after the invasion, and as we were, while we were talking about this, and I said, "Well that would be a good story." We went up to the headquarters from our hotel, we went up to the headquarters at Quarry Heights. And as we went through the checkpoint there were this group of MP's there, checking people. And there was this 6-foot blond woman who frisked us and, you know, looked through our stuff and said, "Go Ahead." and I said, I just made some soldier's talk, "smooging" and "how's it going?" And stuff like that, so I said, "Have you seen any action?" And she said, "Well, I can't talk about that." So I knew, right away, that she had. And I said, "Come on, you can tell me what it was like, I just want to know, weren't you scared?" "Well, yeah, a little bit." So she started to relax and then she said to her Sergeant, a man, "Could I talk to him?" Meaning me. And he said, "Yes, about your personal experience, but not about operational details." So we talked about combat. And this was this woman, Christina Proctor Cabido, her name got confused later in the stories because she had been, her real name was Proctor. She had married briefly and was getting a divorce, her uniform said Cabido, but her name was Proctor. So, I called her Proctor, I think, but that other people called her Cabido, same woman. So, by then I was getting psyched about getting a good story.

And I said, "Well, I need to know where did this happen, can you tell me about what the operation was?" "No! You need permission from my commanding officer." And I said, "Well, how do I get a hold of your commanding officer?" And she said, "Well, yeah, she is just up the hill." And I said, "She, your commanding officer is a woman?" And, "What is her name?" "Captain Linda Bray." So we went in and we checked in to the media center where they were controlling all of the press action. And I said, "I want to interview this woman, Captain Linda Bray, and she is an MP and she is with such and such a company." And they said, "Fine, you know, fill out a query." So, I knew if I filled out a query, it would take like ten years, probably now they would be calling and saying, you know, "We can get you that interview now." So I went out and I got one of the MP's from the gate and I said, "Come up to the media center with me." And, I said--I got one of the Colonels, one of the officers, from the media center. And I said, "I want to interview this MP's commanding officer, is that OK?" He said, "Yea, sure, you know, like 20 reporters are yelling at him, go ahead." So I said to the MP, "OK, you heard that, right, you got permission to take me up to see your Captain." And he said, "OK." So then we just got in the jeep and he drove me up there and I met one of the lieutenants, Kim Thompson, who also saw combat, and she also had as good a story and nobody ever wrote about it.

(I) The Georgia paper did.

(C) Oh they did, Oh good. OK. So, I met Kim, she was in the jeep that came to pick me up and take me up to the command station. So then, Kim went in and I talked to her on the way, and she told me some good stuff but said, "But keep it to yourself, until you get it OK'd from the Captain." But by then I had better questions to ask. So then, Kim went in and got Captain Bray and she came out and we stood



in the parking lot for about an hour and talked. And I just said, "Go over it, tell me exactly what happened, blow by blow in the kennel." And she did, and although a lot of it was in "Army." And you know, I said, "No, no, slow down, you got to tell me this in English, tell me what happened." So she did. And then I interviewed, and then I said, "Is it OK if I talk to the other people in your Company?" She said, "Fine." So I talked to probably about 10 of them altogether, out of 120. And went back and then went around and tried to run into as many women as I could, since I wanted to do a story about women in general, not just about them. So I went and I found a dozen women from different units. We just drove around and looked for women and talked to them, and got some other stories, none as dramatic as the kennel incident, but other good ones too. And in fact, Kim was in this, her guys really shot up this van and she was right there, and killed three Panamanians, and that was a confirmed kill, not like at the kennel, which we won't get into here. So on the, and then I went back and wrote the story and we moved it that day. Sunday for Monday papers. *The Washington Times*, did not have a paper on Monday, since it was New Years Day, so they used it January 2nd, this story, and they used it on the front page. And then that was picked up by the Pentagon, and they run this thing called the "Early Bird."

(I) Right.

(C) Clips of the main stories, so they used it that day, and that's when people first heard about it. And it had already been in our papers a day but it didn't run here, in Washington, so nobody knew about it. So then, it just caused this huge turmoil. In fact, I called up to the Pentagon on something else and a woman officer said, "God, have you opened up a can of worms up here." She said, "Great story, great story." Then I called somebody in the Army about something else and they said, "Our

phones ringing off the hook, great story, way to go." Very positive reaction. So then, down in Panama, all my other colleagues were coming up and saying, "Never going to hear the end of it," cause their editors call and say, "Can you match that story, we want a story about on women." You know, patting me on the back, but also saying, "you know, now we all got to write this story." And I was sort of walking on a cloud, thinking this was a really good story and I was proud of it.

So then, by Friday night of that week, sort of the first week in January, the first Friday in January, my office called and said, "We just wanted to let you know that the *LA Times* is moving a story for tomorrow, for Saturday, casting doubt on your story." And so, my stomach drops. So, I said, "OK." They faxed me the copy of the *LA Times* story. Then they called me back and I said, "Well, what are we going to do?" And my desk said, "We have already been saying that we stand by your story. We do, don't we?" And I said, "Yeah, absolutely, my story is exactly right." They said, "OK, that is what we thought, and that is what we have been telling people." And I said, "Fine." So we didn't do anything about it. And the next day, there was a lot of commotion, people talking about it, asking me about it. And in fact, on a Saturday, that Saturday, I was at a party for a book about Panama by a *Wall Street Journal* reporter, Fred Kemp, it was also his birthday so a bunch of journalists were there. *The New York Times* guy came running in and said, David Pitt, came running in and said, "My office wants me to match the *LA Times* story." And I said, "Well, it's not true, *The LA Times* story, it's wrong. Have your editors in New York, or have somebody call the Pentagon, and they will tell you that that story is not true, that the *LA Times* story is not true." So he left, this is he is right on deadline, so he runs back to a, we were in a restaurant. He goes into the lobby of the restaurant and calls his office. They do this and they call him back and say, "OK, they killed the story." So they didn't. They already circulated their Sunday paper, they didn't publish it. So then I thought the whole thing had been resolved.

Then on Monday, another *New York Times* reporter does this story that says how the *LA Times* says this and Scripps Howard says this. So see then you always lose, because doubt has been raised about the story. Even though the doubt was wrong. But now there is just this question that remains. And then so everybody else had to write this story about questions raised about it. So even now, a year later after the whole thing should have been resolved, she really was in combat, she really did perform well, there really was a firefight, you still see stories that say even though questions were raised about what actually happened at the kennel, they are only questions that were raised because one an irresponsible journalist wrote a story that was inaccurate.

Now the questions is, what was wrong with the *LA Times* story? And what was wrong with my story? The questions that the *LA Times* raised were, OK, whether there was a firefight, and what I called a fierce firefight. Whether Cabido actually captured a prisoner, and whether there were three dead at the kennel.

(I) Right, and what was the length of time of the battle? You didn't have any. . .

(C) I didn't mention that. . . But I did call it a fierce firefight because to me firefight, it's one of those expressions that go together, any firefight is fierce. There was shooting. There was an exchange of fire. I didn't know how long it lasted, they told me it lasted all night in fact, that they were there. In fact because I think in my story I have at dawn Cabido capturing its [sic] prisoner. I don't know if I actually used that expression but. . .

(I) No.

(C) They got there, the shooting started, and it wasn't until morning that they finally pulled out. So I never really got into how long it was. So I still think that it was a fierce firefight, but that is just a question of definition.

(I) They all maintain that there was fierce fighting.

(C) Yeah.

(I) All of the stories, the whole way through, say fierce firefight.

(C) Yeah, I think it was too. Um, the question about Cabido. That, I interviewed her and Bray, Thompson, all of these people that happened exactly as I described it and no one disputes that. The last thing about the three dead, my phrasing was cautious on purpose. What I said was that

(I) Three PDF found there later, she said.

Long silence.

(C) And I wish I hadn't put it in, because it is not essential to the story. But I put it in because I wanted to show how serious a fight this was. I put, "three enemy dead were found there later," she said. I said, I asked her, "I want to know how many kills, how many captured, how many wounded your company is responsible for." She told me, "Six KIA [Killed in Action], three at the roadblock where Kim Thompson was, and three at the kennel. But be careful, because the three at the kennel aren't confirmed." But she said, "We were told that when they police d up the area, there were three bodies found." Proctor and Kim had earlier told me that three bodies were found. So, I knew this, when, at that point I just assumed--

(I) Who found them?

(C) I didn't even ask. You see what they said was, "When they policed up afterwards," which means that some other unit had come in and gone over the area and they found the bodies.

So later, I got from the Army, and Bray got from the Army, then when all the questions were raised by Bray, fired at the Army--What about those three bodies that we heard about? They said that there were a lot of bodies found around the area, there were no bodies found exactly in the kennel, but what she says is that they were fighting from the roof of the kennel and also from inside the kennel. And the Panamanians are shooting it out, and the Americans and her people were shooting up and at the kennel. At some point they ran off into the woods. And then some of them came back down and were shooting, so there was this exchange, people going back and forth. There were bodies found in those woods nearby, but the Army decided that it was not clear what action caused their death. So they were just left as confirmed kills but nobody was given credit for them. So that's how the three bodies came out.

I have a TV interview here that I'll give you... Well anyway, I had it, where she says that that was just rumor control. That is what she says, that there were rumors of three bodies and that, that was not confirmed as fact. So, I just reported what they told me. That there were three bodies found, and I didn't think that there was any question about it. Apparently, later there was a question about it.

The genesis of the *LA Times* story, John Broder is a very good reporter for the *LA Times*. He is one of their two Pentagon correspondents. He said that he, because I asked him about this when I came back. The *LA Times* reporter down in Panama was telling everybody that it was a bullshit story, my story was a bullshit

story, that of course women were fighting that it was no big deal. I mean who cares if women were fighting. That was the attitude of a lot of reporters, male reporters.

And I said, "Well no it's not a big deal, but it's never really happened before." And because I didn't even think it was a big deal because I had covered the Pentagon for a year, and every time you go to a base, where you go out on a maneuver, women participate fully. They are totally integrated into the force. So it's not a big deal. I mean to me it was obvious that women fought in Panama.

(I) But, do you think that when you put that in your lead, that when people read participated fully, that they would think infantry and not just support units or service support?

(C) I didn't get into that, because I think that is a false, false labeling of what they do. Bray's unit functions as an infantry unit, even though they are not an infantry. They were sent to one of the 27 targets, they were hit right at H-hour. I mean, nobody said, "Well are there any women in that unit?" I mean they don't ask, they just send that MP company. And they had been there 3 or 4 days before reconnoitering and checking out the place, and they knew that there was going to be some sort of opposition there.

But, to get back to this *LA Times* thing, so Broder had heard rumbling that this was exaggerated. And you'll hear from a lot of male soldiers today that it was exaggerated that the whole dog kennel thing was blown out of proportion and that there was a lot of other combat that was much more fierce and that is definitely true. I mean there was really heavy fighting there in some places. He went in to see General McClain, who at that time was the Vice Chief of Public Affairs. He is now the Chief of Public Affairs. And he said to McClain, "Wouldn't you say, General, that these reports were exaggerated." And McClain says, "Well, no, I don't want to

get into characterizing." And then they went through and they talked about this thing. You will notice that Broder's story says, "The Army said Friday, that press accounts of the female exploits were grossly exaggerated." No where in his story does he back that up with a quote. There is no Army person saying that it is grossly exaggerated. Only the reporter saying that it is grossly exaggerated. I was so pissed when I saw that story that I called McClain's office, because I know him. And I know that they knew, and thought that it was a good story, my story, so I said, . . . he wasn't there. And so I talked to some Lt. Col. in Public Affairs in Panama, Jan Hall, she was like the head of Army South Public Affairs at the time. And I said, "This is bogus, you know, and I am really disappointed in General McClain." Or saying something like that. Because I thought it was him. What I thought was that the Army leak to throw water on the story because they loved the story at first, but then when it got so much attention, it was getting out of control. People like Pat Schroeder were saying, waving my story at them and saying, "Why can't women be in the infantry then, why can't women serve in combat?" So then, I figured, they panicked. And they'd throw water on the story. But they don't want to discredit one of their own soldiers who performed well and they don't want to discourage all these women who are in the military. So they figure out a half-way to do it, by leaking through a reporter that it was a little exaggerated. Throw a little doubt on it but not come right out and say it was wrong. That is what I thought happened.

So, Jan said, and other people in Panama said, "Well, we were all surprised when we saw that story because that was not the impression that we had gotten from the Army brass. So, about two hours later she called me back. And she said, "I talked to General McClain and he said he wanted me to confer a message to you, relay a message to you." And I said, "Yea, what is the message?" She said, "He wanted me to apologize to you and say that the *LA Times* story was bullshit." And that was the word, bullshit. And I said, "Fine, and I hope you are telling all these

reporters up in Washington that too." He was, if people asked, but too many people didn't. They took the *LA Times* story as gospel and then compared it to mine without going back to McClain. Because, the Army was so concerned about this story that they sent Brady, General Brady, down to--that's McClain's boss, to interview Bray in Panama. And she took him out to the kennel and walked him through it. And he said, "Great job." He was so proud of her that he sent a photograph of the two of them back to her signed to a great spokesperson for the Army, General Brady.

So, I mean, the whole, the so-called questions raised, were only raised by one person, John Broder, the *LA Times* reporter.

(I) And the *New York Times* was comparing--

(C) Right, blow to blow compared the stories, and the *Washington Times*, did you ever see that? They did one, too. I can give you a copy of this, now it is a battle of words.

(I) No, I haven't seen that.

Long silence.

(C) But what really made me mad about it was that one reporter tried to get a story, managed to throw, cast doubt on some soldiers, and women who did a really good job, and, you know, put their lives on the line, and performed really well, by all accounts. But somebody who wanted to have a good story wrote something that wasn't true. So, that is where it stands today.



And, I have got a bunch of stuff here that I'll give you. Because I tried to save a lot of stuff about it.

(I) How long were you down in Panama?

(C) Like three weeks.

(I) Were you part of media press pool, or not?

(C) No. I was, I covered Latin America for five years. And then, in 1989 I came here and started covering the Pentagon. So when I went home, I went to Chicago to visit my parents at Christmas of '89. And the office called right after the invasion. I knew, I saw it that night on TV that the invasion had started and the office called and said, "You got to go." And I said, "Well, it's my vacation, and I'm at my mom's house." And they said, "No, your current beat invaded your previous beat. So, your current beat, the Pentagon, invaded Latin America. So, you gotta go." So, I said, "OK."

No, actually, I, no, my wife said, I said, "Oh, Shit!" She said, "Go, because if you stay here you will be a wreck, thinking you should be there." So I agreed. And I went down, and at that point you couldn't get in. I was calling the Pentagon from Chicago saying, "How do I get in?" You can't get in, there is no flights, and if you try to drive in people have been beaten up and robbed and threatened with their lives. So, I flew down to Costa Rica. Then flew down, and chartered a plane and flew down to the border of Costa Rica and Panama. And then I met up with about 10 reporters, fellow Americans, a couple of Europeans. When we go to -- we found a Panamanian bus driver and we said, "We will give you \$500 to drive us there." It was only about a 5 or 6 hour drive. It took us about 15 hours to get

across the country, and we finally got about 50 kilometers away. And it was getting dark, this is on December 23, it was getting dark. And I knew we had to get in before it got dark, to Panama City, otherwise we would be stuck a whole another day, because we couldn't move at night, it would be too dangerous.

We got to a roadblock that American troops had blocked off. And there were 100 cars lined up on the Pan American highway, the only way into Panama City. And we could see these jeeps and armored personnel carriers in a circle up on the top of this hill. And I saw that they weren't letting anybody up. Anytime anybody tried to walk up they would yell, "Alto, or Alto, Stop, Stop." But it was getting dark and so I, somehow [was] elected to walk up there out of our group of journalists. And I put out my hands like this, and said, "I am a journalist, an American, I am coming up." So I started walking forward and I hear this "click, click" [a bullet being chambered into a M-16]. All these weapons being locked and they are pointing at me. These guys all have their guns pointed at my chest. There was a big machine gun pointed at me. And I said, "I am coming up, I really am an American, Mom, Dad, Apple Pie, all this stuff." So finally I get up there, this kid has still got his gun pointed down at the rest of the crowd. And they're petrified, these soldiers. They don't know all these Panamanians are gathered around, they don't know if they are snipers, they don't know if they are good guys or bad guys. And so I said to this young soldier, "You know it is an awful feeling to have an M-16 pointed at your chest, and how are you holding up?" And he said, still looking down the barrel of the gun, he says, "I'm scared shitless (sic)." So we started talking and then I said, "Let me talk to your lieutenant." And the lieutenant comes down. He is all of 21, he is the senior officer on the team. So I pull out my Pentagon pass. It is really just a building pass, it doesn't say Press. It says Department of Defense, and it's got my name on it. So he looked at it and he said,

"Well, Sir, are you escorting these journalists in?" You know, I guess he thought I was with the Pentagon.

(I) Right.

(C) And I said, "Well, ..hmm.. yeah, I guess so." And he says, "OK. Bring the bus through." So they brought them up and they searched us and we got into Panama City that night. And then it was just non-stop reporting. And luckily I was not in the pool because the pool was kept out of the action. And this caused a big stink afterwards, to this day, about the way they handled the pool. I was on the pool for Saudi Arabia, this most recent pool, and that worked a lot better because of Panama thing; it was a disaster. They were trying to make it work and one thing that is interesting about Saudi Arabia is the coverage there have been a ton of stories about women and that I think because of what happened in Panama. Women have been serving in the military for since we've had military. Their role increased. And then in Panama they were actually in combat and they fired weapons and were fired upon. And thank God none of them were hurt it was just by luck that they weren't hurt. And you know that they fought well and have totally out numbered them, out gunned them, Panamanian, basically. That has now forever changed the image of women in the military. It is a fact known to most Americans now that women fight in the military. You know I called my Mom from Panama to tell her that I was okay. And she said, you know, "How are you doing?" And I said, "Great and that I broke the story that women were fighting in Panama." And she said, "What story was that?" And I said, "Mom, women were fighting out there." And she said, "Panamanian women!" I said, "American women." She said, "Oh, I didn't know that." But now it has become accepted and all because of Linda Bray. She became some sort of symbol of what happened. And she was really happy about it at first.

And now she is, I think, feeling very bitter about the whole thing. Because it got to be, it drew attention to that one incident blew it out of proportion; and it was an important thing but it was one skirmish in a large attack. And then fact that questions were raised about it belittles her and the other women that served there, and the whole company--you know, it was a company of 120 people that served. They were actually under fire from three different places when shooting broke out because they were divided. A company is divided into four platoons. Some of them were at the dog kennel, some were at the Comandancia and some were at 4th of July Avenue. There were women under fire at all three places. Bray had troops under fire at all three places. When the fighting got tougher, so she wasn't at the kennel when it started, she was a mile away at a command post.

Long silence.

(I) You didn't say that she was there.

(C) I know, in fact I said that she--crashed through the gate--what she said was when she realized that the opposition was stiffer at the kennel, she went up there to personally lead the attack, so she crashed through the gate in this HMMWV [high-mobility, multi-purpose wheeled vehicles] the jeep vehicle and then jumped out. And I didn't know, but she said later, that she actually got in a ditch and pulled out her pistol and was firing herself. I didn't know that, and I wish I did. That she was firing at the kennel herself with her service, with her 45, how do you say it language. So it was actually more dramatic than I had thought.

(I) In your story -- Has it stopped? I have another tape.

(C) No. I can lend you a tape too.

(I) In your story it was written as a jeep, is that because most people won't understand what a the HMMWV is?

(C) Right, what a HMMWV is; I meant it to be a jeep, lower case jeep, it is a jeep, [what] some people call a jeep. Do you know what a HMMWV looks like?

(I) Yes, it's a big vehicle and it's really low--

(C) Right. It is low, a broad flat jeep, right? Right.

(I) It's wide.

(C) And it's--

(I) It has, usually, has an open area in the roof--

(C) Right, and a turret--

(I) But have you had, the .50-caliber machine guns, is that what they were using on hers? That is what she said?

(C) Yes.

(I) The others were M-60 machine guns.

(C) Right, it is a M-60 but it is a .50-caliber, an M-16 is a type of machine gun, but an M-60 doesn't have anything to do with the caliber. But that sounds big. Did I say .50-caliber?

(I) Yes, .05 caliber.

(C) No, it shouldn't be .05--

(I) No, I mean .50.

(C) And you have our original story?

(I) I have the one that--

(C) Okay, that's ours.

(I) That is the only one I could find, I had to call and ask for it.

(C) That's better, than the Early Bird Edition since, like the *Washington Times* story, they inserted a lot of stuff that I didn't write. You'll notice things that are in brackets, in the *Washington Times* story, that was in the "Early Bird?"

(I) Not in the, no they didn't send me that one. Yours is the first one that I got. I mean I saw your name mentioned in there and your editor, but --

(C) Anyway, go ahead, ask me more questions.

(I) Who did she have in charge at the kennel? Was there a platoon leader in charge?

(C) I don't know who that was.

(I) Did she talk about how much fighting went on?

(C) She just told me that it lasted all night, that they started right around H-hour, which is 1 a.m. In fact I think it's in the story, and then, the way Cabido, that the fighting, that they were shooting, when they were firing, shooting trying to secure. It wasn't until dawn that they finally secured the kennel. And that was when Cabido was lying down in a prone position and stood up and sort of looked in the jungle, like right on the edge of a clearing right on the edge of the jungle. She stood up and was just all of a sudden face to face with the Panamanian soldier. And he had a gun and she said, "Drop it." So he drops it. And that was at dawn, so that gave me the idea that it lasted all night. But really the fighting, I never knew, I never asked, or thought to ask how long did it go on. I never said, "How would you describe the shooting, would you describe it as sporadic, or fierce, or?" I just, I got caught up in the excitement that they had, I mean they were totally pumped about having this experience. I talked to enough of them that I thought I had a good picture of what it was like in my mind. And then the trick is being, when you're a journalist is when you have this picture in your mind and then you put it on paper, you give that same picture in as few words as possible. And we are supposed to keep our stories at 500 words. That I expanded on because it was a good feature. But the trick is still to do it as economically as possible.

(I) That was pretty much dropped from the story, about the "I know you put it in here about Proctor single-handedly taking the prisoner."

(C) No, no one else. . . .

(I) So, pretty much, that was dropped and in the, I think the *New York Times* was saying when *Los Angeles Times* tried to put doubt on yours--that Captain Bray said there was just another body when they were counting?

(C) Yea, but they never talked to her. . . .

(I) Oh, OK.

(C) She didn't talk to them. They got that from somewhere else.

(I) So that was second hand.

(C) At least second hand, tenth hand. You know, I got it first hand, from the person that did it, and her commanding officer. So, I was confident that that was what happened. And, the other people in the unit, I mean they were all proud of her. You know, there was never any doubt.

(I) How come you choose to use Ms? And not their rank?

(C) I did not. It's Scripps Howard rule that we use courtesy titles. I did not file it that way. I never file my stories that way.

I'll tell you something very embarrassing . . . off the record.



Silence.

(C) So that you can have, I mean Scripps Howard policy is that we use Ms. when we don't know if it is a Miss or a Mrs. So since I never asked, since I didn't think it was relevant. They put in Ms.

(I) But they still don't use rank, they just use--

(C) Not in second reference, cause we don't use rank for anyone.

Like for a man you wouldn't use Mr. on second reference. You'd say, Baker, not Lt. Baker. Some use courtesy titles for everyone. We only use them for women.

(I) Associated Press style might do that.

(C) Yea, everybody is different; it's not really agreed upon.

(I) In that Lt. Thompson, when they were talking to you about that, one of the reports is saying that they fired at one of the vehicles and it turned out to be civilians that were very much drunk, intoxicated, that was in one of the stories.

(C) In one of the Georgia's story?

(I) I think it was in Georgia's story.

(C) I don't know about that, I just know that they killed three Panamanians, and armed Panamanians. Now, it is coming out that yes, there were a lot of people who

were accidentally shot up. And I don't know if they were involved in any of those. I don't think so. Because they were in a really sensitive spot, like the Cuban embassy, and I never heard of any problems with that. In fact, Thompson's in Saudi Arabia now. I mean, all of those people are. And they are all well thought of.

(I) I'll be trying to talk to Major Burt in the Pentagon, and she will not answer my calls.

(C) Why?

(I) I don't know. She puts me off.

(C) Well she wasn't around then, either. You know who would be good to talk to is a woman named Paige Eversole. She was the Army's, she was the Nancy Burt at the time, and she works for Ketchum PR firms. Tell her that I talked to you. But she would be able to talk freely now because she doesn't work for the Army now. She is at 835-8800.

(I) Is that 703?

(C) No, 202. Paige Eversole. She's actually quoted in some of these stories.

(I) I think that the *New York Times* quotes her.

(C) She was a civilian. In the Army Public Affairs Office, an Army spokeswoman.

(I) And I have left messages, every time I call Major Burt.

(C) She is really busy now because of--

(I) Saudi Arabia.

(C) Right, Saudi Arabia.

(I) I'm hoping that Major Darley who works in the office next door would run interference.

(C) Plans or Community Affairs.

(I) No, Education.

(C) I would be curious about what the Army thinks of this whole thing. I bet that they did a Public Relations After Action Report. They do After Action Reports and Lessons Learned; they're called Lessons Learned, on all these things. I am sure there is a Public Affairs one that you might be able to get even if you had to do a freedom of information request.

I am sure that there is a ton of traffic, message traffic, between the different commands--all the way up. I know this was discussed all the way up to the Chief of Staff and the Secretary of the Army on the Linda Bray thing. How to handle it, because on the one hand, they knew it was a PR coup. But on the other hand, they knew it was a potential threat to their policy of using women in everything, but the offense.

And the thing that was bad about the--for Linda Bray, is action for all these women was sort of symbolized by her because the media are so, we're just so shallow. We like to simplify everything so much, it was easier to put the whole story on her shoulders than to really go out and talk to all these different women that did it.

(I) What about Specialist Purdie? That was kind of dropped out of all the stories, too.

(C) Yea, what did she do? She shot at--

(I) She was carrying, I don't know, you didn't say whether she was carrying it--

(C) No, she was in the HMMWV with the machine gun.

(I) She handled the machine gun in one of the jeeps?

(C) Right, in one of the jeeps.

(I) And that successfully attacked a base operation for a band of urban gorillas?

(C) Yes, OK, that I got from her commanding officer and from her. But she is from a different company. And I found them just by driving around. They were based downtown.

(I) Do you remember who her commander was?

Long silence.

(I) Who was the other private that was with Purdie, Carney, that she was behind a gun. Is that one of M-60 on the HMMWV's?

(C) Yes, because that is the big weapon that the MP's have. They are very lightly armed and they are very mobile, that is why they run around in those HMMWV. See you are not supposed to keep your notebooks, but I do.

Long silence.

(C) Well what do you think about it?

(I) I think that they did their job, and that they did was what they were trained and they did an outstanding job.

(C) I think so, too. Well, what do you think about the press?

(I) I think that the one guy, attacks the story, and in some accounts, *New York Times*, he said he wished he hadn't said "grossly exaggerated."

(C) That was grossly exaggerated.

(I) I didn't think it was fair, kind of like a code of ethics, you don't go out and attack another journalist's story, unless you're absolutely certain you've got the facts to back it up.

(C) It is pretty unusual to do. And reporters are generally are hesitant to do it. When I came back everybody teased me a lot about it. Have you seen Broder yet? Have you seen Broder yet? One of the guys from the Pentagon said, "Have you touched lances with the enemy yet?" And they were joking that they have a place at the Pentagon, the correspondence pictures, about 25 of them, 8 x 10's on the wall down there. They were saying they were going to move my picture next to Broder's. So when I saw him I said, "You know you caused me a lot of trouble down there?" He said, "Hi, pal." He never said he was sorry.

(I) I think I've asked you or you covering everything that I wanted?

(C) Ok, but well I promised you a sandwich, so I'll still buy you a sandwich if you want.

(I) Let me make sure I've asked you all these questions that I had written down. The three people that were women in Captain Bray's Company that didn't see combat, Were they in the rear at Ft. Belvoir? You said 12 of the 15 females were in combat.

(C) No, the others were in her headquarters there, her forward headquarters. So, they were, but they didn't see combat.

I wish I knew where this was. It's very clear in my notebook. In fact I have the six KIA's where I wrote it down.

(I) Do you know if Captain Bray got her Army Commendation Medal?

(C) I don't know, but she is not very happy about it. I'll show you a letter she sent me. The other thing is the media coverage. This is from September. I sent her stories, I told her, I wrote her a letter and apologized for the way the media handled it. I sent her a few clips of mine. But then she never wrote back. Then I wrote her a long letter asking her for an interview. And, that's the response.

Long silence.

(C) But that response was a little cautiously worded, because that came through Public Affairs. It is not good, in the military, to draw a lot of attention to yourself, when you are a lower-ranking officer. So it was not good for her career, what happened. Because she got so much attention, although you would think it would be. You would think she would be a hero. But the Army doesn't work that way. Ok. Here it is.

Very long silence.

(C) Let's see Okay, 123 people, this Linda Bray, 123 people in the company. Fifteen women, 12 saw combat, not a single wounded, six KIA, nine captures in combat. And that's what I wrote down when she was telling me. Do you want to hear this whole thing? What she told me?

(I) Sure. Turn the tape over.

(C) I'll tell you exactly what I did in this interview. I had a better story that I could use but I didn't have enough. This K9 unit 100 dogs including pit bulls, shepherds and dobermans--they had to kill some of them. I did not put that in the

story. I was protecting them because people would get upset about that. They would be more upset about that than killing Panamanians. Two platoons were involved in that. Let me see my notes. It's amazing reading this. This is what Proctor was telling me in all those quotes I used, that she takes care of the six and M-60. If anyone tells you women weren't, that they weren't scared, is lying. It was the first time for me. All these quotes, I think I used these quotes. There are real live bullets coming at you. In training you can do it again till you get it right, but out here you might not get a second chance. Congress does not like women in combat, but what they don't know won't hurt them. See that's where if someone said something that could get them in trouble and you debate if you should use it or not. That's one of those quotes and I decided it's too good of a quote . . . to throw away and so I couldn't protect her from herself. I hope that I can sweat and smell just as much as the guys. Guys respect us for not taking a shower for five days. I didn't put a lot of this stuff in. There's no room. The reason she joined the military was to get out of a small town. Actually her sister, she's a twin, did I put that in? Her sister was there, too.

(I) That's the one that their mother was all upset.

(C) Yeah. Oh no, she's actually that, her husband was a soldier, too.

(I) Proctor was the one who was going through a divorce?

(C) Yeah, she's since changed her name back to Proctor. A lot of them wanted to know if they were going to get combat infantry badges. See they didn't understand this either. That MP's never get CIB's. Proctor and all the others asked



me to check it out for them. Cause they heard rumors that women wouldn't get CIB's and they were upset about it.

(I) Maybe that happened because they had a lieutenant, from that Georgia story I had, the lieutenant from the Public Affairs Office was an infantry lieutenant. And he was getting it. So maybe that's where they got they might get it, too. The misunderstanding, that it was the women that weren't going to get it. Because in the story that I had for that he's with Lt. Thompson. He received it.

(C) So, I had it broken down, I think, that the women, there were two lieutenants and one captain, one platoon, three in one platoon, two in one platoon, four in another platoon - eight - ten - eleven - they don't all add up - and then the headquarters platoon I guess. Those were sort of guesses. These women were supposed to be office workers given M-16s and sent out.

Long silence.

(C) One told me a story that a friend of hers got into a fire fight and started to fire and panicked and wouldn't stop firing. Her colleagues had to take the gun away from her. That I couldn't check that out. I don't think it happened. I think it's one of those things you hear about and they swear that they're true but you can never check out. Where I started at *City News* in Chicago, they have a lot of sayings. They used to say if your mother tells you that she loves you - check it out. This is from Purdie - she was saying women are actually better on the guns because they have better dexterity. Purdie telling me about another woman who grabbed some, tackled a Panamanian guy and cuffed him and took him to Military Intelligence, but I could never check that out either because you just heard about it.

If you actually saw something, that to me is good enough. Sometimes you can't be there, so you rely on what other people saw, but I wouldn't take it third hand, or second hand. So Purdie on a machine gun, took a big bad HQ [headquarters], they had radios, a five story building. She was on M-60 machine gun. Here I have down, .762, sounds to me I have the caliber wrong in my story. Cause that's the caliber, .762, but I don't know what I wrote about it. Her commander was Lieutenant Robert Mackey, Purdie's boss, 108th MP Company, Ft. Bragg. Just comments from him saying that at air assault I saw males quit and females be able to do it. And stuff like that and more quotes I didn't use. Purdie said at her side, "They were firing at us. Generally we could only return fire when fired upon and it was really scary."

We were in the HMMWV parked outside, from Wakefield, Virginia, 25 years old. I had to prove myself to the men just holding up and not running away. I wanted to cry but didn't. A lot of people feel the Army is no place for a woman. I thought they might take us off our guns and make us do office work. We have to prove ourselves more than a new male coming in. The Panamanians are really surprised. They look and then they look again when they see me up there on that gun. Then Erin Carney, 20, from Troy, NY. Her mother is very worried. She's scared, I'm her baby. Her brother is also in military. Someone told me, I heard someone from the 720th MP Company, a woman was killed.

That didn't check out either. You get a lot of misinformation out there. There are more rumors--everything is so uncertain and so up in the air. This is all from Purdie. There was this woman who, Camon Coreano, I didn't use her; she was guarding POW's [Prisoner of War], about 3,000 POW's, but she didn't actually fire her weapon so I didn't use her.

(I) But in your lead you said that women guarded prisoners of war.

(C) Right, then, she was the one. Then I have someone say that all I'd ever see about combat was what I read. I thought I'd do my twenty years and never see combat. I know people got scared but I thought I could handle it. I panicked.

(I) Did you use that "I panicked" in the story?

(C) I assume it was all used as I filed it. Cause, see it's edited here then it goes out and then it is edited by the papers.

(I) Who is saying this? "I thought I could handle it?"

(C) I think that's Vanessa Nash.

(I) Yeah, here it is, "Vanessa Nash ordered to grab a gun and guard US hospital. I thought I could handle it."

(C) Then she said, "I panicked. Every time I blinked, I'd see a tree change. I'd hear these monkeys jumping through the trees and I thought it was them. You don't know to freeze or shoot it when the time comes. But if it's a choice between taking their life and them taking my life, I'd shoot. See I don't know, I didn't have room for all that stuff.

(I) Umm, some of that was in there.

(C) Yea, that's good. See that got cut out of the *Washington Times* story. I haven't seen my original story in a long time. I didn't know what got picked up or

not. That's good. That was a good quote. Lt. Kim Thompson. Interviewed Lt. Thompson, she's in the Guard to pay for college. Her husband is a Ranger. Dad was in the Navy and Mom was an Army nurse. "We do well," she said. "It's a challenging branch for women. But I don't have," I think, she's talking about being a leader, "I don't have an aggressive leadership style now but I don't want to have any problem. I don't see a need for women in the infantry," she said. "Every female MP in my company saw combat. Twelve out of 15," she said, "In the whole company." She's a commander in the second platoon. "Two platoon leaders out of four women," she said. Her platoon has 24 people.

"I was confronted with a situation that I thought I couldn't handle. But as you go through more things you get tougher. Combat is not good for anybody. Everybody talks about getting combat patches. You know, being able to wear the patches on their right shoulder. But my main goal is that we go back with everybody we came with. I can't say that I'd do it again. Hopefully I will never see combat again. Women can do just as good a job as a man and this is showing that. It's definitely more challenging than being a teacher." That is what she got her degree in.

So then the Bray interview. I said, "Let me just go through the numbers before we get started." She said, "Okay, 123 people in the company, 15 women, 12 of them saw combat, not a single wounded, six KIA, nine captures in combat." Go through the weapons that they use. At 01:00 they were in place, At 01:30, at 00:30. At 00:30 they were in place. So at 12:30 they were in place. Then at 01:00 they started to move. They had a megaphone. They announced they were Military Police, they had 30 seconds to . . . turn lights on and off. Fired warning shots. Hostile fire returned. Two squads waiting. The Panamanians started, were on the move. And started shooting at us. Two squads assaulted from the side, individual came off from the side. Cabido caught one. She was in a security position. She

stood up and there he is. Holding an assault rifle. She crashed the gate with .50 caliber, I have here. It was her on the passenger, she was on the side of this jeep, a HMMWV. There were four women, I have down in kennel incident. There was another attack with three women in that platoon, that was out at. . . . They were on roadblocks on the 4th of July Ave. Civilians came running out and had to be carried to safety. This woman, Felicia Featherstone, a PFC [Private First Class], rescued a woman who was under sniper fire. She ran out and threw herself on top of this woman who is out in the middle, who had taken off all of her clothes. This is interesting. The woman had stripped off all of her clothes, she was freaking out, and the men couldn't go get her because she was naked. So they set up this itty bitty, Felicia, out there, skinny little thing, to go out there and get her, so she pulled her back under fire.

(I) And that was Felicia.

(C) Featherstone. She'd always wanted to be a MP. I knew MP's break up fights, but I never thought I would have people shooting at me just because I am an American. She showed up there somewhere.

(I) That name is familiar.

(C) Yeah, she's in there somewhere. So there were three fights, They were on 4th of July Ave., at the kennel, and then also they were to secure Quarry Heights.

Another lieutenant named Nancy Anderson had to secure the, where the Generals were. Where General Thurman was commanding the thing from Quarry Heights. They were assigned to secure that area. They had the rear and the front gate. The people in houses were shooting at them and they returning the fire during

the first. . . . So during the first 12 hours of the invasion Bray had troops under fire at three locations, Quarry Heights, July 4th Ave., and the where the Comandancia is, and then at the kennel.

Bray said, "There was harassing fire all night", which would be sporadic fire. At 6:20 a.m., this was on Thursday, this is the MP, this is Thompson's unit. They were the first MP's at the Libyan, Cuban and Nicaraguan embassies. They were blocking all four entrances. There was sniper fire all over, from all four corners. Then three people in the van tried to run it. So, what I wrote down, but basically there three at the kennel, not confirmed, that were found later in the woods. That's what she told me. She later waffled on that because she didn't want to be a, in a position to claim something that wasn't true. So she did tell me that they were not confirmed. I didn't say that. From the kennel they recovered 18 AK 47s, 23 nine-millimeter pistols, 12 light anti-tank weapons (LAWs), two cases of fragmentation grenades and thousands of cases of ammunition. So this is why it was not just a dog kennel. It was also a barracks for special operations troops. They have files and photos, substantial intelligence, uniforms of Panamanian special forces troops. It had intel about how the PDF was organized, Cuban money. And also there were some brand new pit bull puppies, had to kill five dogs. They were the sentry dogs because they couldn't get in. Had 40 beds, that's where the 40 came from. Had 40 beds, they're not sure how many people were there.

Linda Bray, 29 years, Butner, N.C. ROTC at Western Carolina University, graduated in 1983 joined for the excitement, the challenge and experience and loyalty to my country. I haven't been let down a single day. The sounds of confusion, excitement the team work and the camaraderie automatically clicks when it happens. They left December 12, I mean 28th. . . .

(I) They left Ft. Benning the 12th?

(C) That's what I have. Does that seem right to you?

(I) Well, just in here you said that they landed in Panama on the 17th and that's five days. . . .

(C) That doesn't seem right. I'm not sure, I don't know why, I just have last December 12th, it doesn't say. . . .

(I) In some of the other stores, I think one of them was the Georgia story, her commander from Ft. Benning said they left a week before the invasion. So that would put it around the 12th.

(C) I don't know. I had them landing on the 17th. That doesn't seem right. That might have been a typo. Not mine. Umm, they had five spanish speakers. "I have gotten quite a lot of strange looks from male Panamanians and smiles from the females," she said. Told me about her family and asked me not to use any of that so I didn't.

(I) About her . . .

(C) About her family.

(I) Oh, like her husband?

(C) Yes, her husband is a Army Ranger actually.

(I) Right, that was in the Georgia story.

(C) Oh, okay.

(I) They tried to get him. One of the reporters called and talked to him on the phone--

(C) Oh, good. That's all I have.

(I) Can you go back to the incident regarding the prisoners?

(C) Yes. Sergeant Camon Coreano.

(I) Corena?

(C) C-o-r-e-a-n-o. Thirty years old, I don't know where she's from. Did I have Sgt. Nash all night with an M-16. I had her somewhere in there.

(I) You had her actually sitting in a hole, you said, "Hunkered down behind a tree on guard duty."

(C) Right. And um, that's all. I've got to look through here too and see if there's anything else you might want. You have the Broder story right?

(I) Yes, I had to use VU/TEXT to get it because our library only holds them for a week.



(C) Yes, it says here. . . . This is a typical example. CIB part. Media were confused by what happened. Did Bray herself enter the fray? But this did not take away the significance of the event. Yes, she did enter the fray. I didn't know that though. So, this is a typical misleading story. It's true, but gives the wrong impression. It gives the impression that they are being discriminated against.

(I) Right.

(C) While they are being discriminated against, but not in this case.

(I) Every man in that case, too.

(C) Yeah, right.

(I) That was on TV too, because I got the Vanderbilt tape.

(C) Today TV interview where she said, Captain Bray says, "Shots were fired, I returned fire and that's the way it was." "So you returned fire?" "Yes, not only your troops, but you indeed did?" "Correct." That's the way she talked. . . .

"Were there any casualties?" "No, there are no confirmed casualties at the kennel." You realize she's careful to say confirmed all the time, that's why, because there is strong indication that there were but there's no proof. I'll see if I can give you. . . . This is an internal memo we sent out to our editors explaining this dispute. Let me ask if I can give you that. This the normal story, *New York Times* story.

(I) I have the *New York Times* one.

(C) Well, they did two.

(C) If you have any doubt here's another TV interview.

(I) I brought some stories with me. . . . I don't have any of the TV interviews.

(C) Okay, I'll give you one.

Long silence.

(C) The truth about the *LA* story is. He was never there. He never talked to anybody who was there. There's only one person quoted in that story, an Army General who wasn't in Panama.

(I) Is that McClain?

(C) Yeah, he was never there. I talked to 15 people who were there.

(I) Do you know what day that was?

(C) This *Times* Story?

(I) Yes

(C) Probably January 9.

(I) I must have a different edition. It's the same thing, it just doesn't have the picture.

(C) Yeah, must be a different edition. Well you know, he never called me. Broder never called me either, to interview me, which would have been a sort of natural.

Silence.

(C) Typical Army ad. They have her in a helmet not as a clerk. The Army knows very well that distinction is false, about women in the infantry.

(I) Well, they're supposed to be in the rear, but it's kinda hard to tell.

(C) There is no rear any more. In Saudi Arabia women will be one of the first to die. It's the same in the Navy. They're on supply ships, ammo ships, all those will be targeted, so they could be killed but not shoot. You want copies of all that stuff I just gave you?

(I) Yes, please.

(C) Okay. How about this, the war of words?

(I) No, I don't think I've seen that one.

(C) It's a *Washington Times* story.

(I) Yes, please.

(C) Have you ever tried talking to Captain Mucollun (?) about this?

(I) No, I haven't tried to talk to him about this. I've been trying to get through to Major Burt, because I'm supposed to use her as a point of contact.

(C) So, what did you want to find out from her?

(I) Well, I originally talked to her about three minutes, she said she was on her way out. I asked her about news releases and what they had up there on file and she really didn't give me any information. So I called up to the New York Branch of Public Affairs and talked to them. And he told me that he would try to get the early bird people and try to get them to give me a copy, but they wouldn't give me the early bird. They sent me the special edition instead.

(C) Why wouldn't they send you the early bird?

(I) Well, I asked for the early bird and what I got was the special edition.

(C) Good, that's better. This is like a, they go through and compile all the stories out of the early birds. Like they had special editions on Soviet military. I've never seen this.

(I) But I didn't think the *Washington Times* was in there at least . . .

(C) Yes it is. It's here.

(I) Oh, right there. I had asked about your editor and that's what I was looking for when I first got it. But it doesn't have the Georgia story in it, either.

(C) No, see most of these are from Washington or available here like *USA Today*, *Time Magazine*.

(I) So, I got a hold of them and they sent me this. I called, tried to call Mr. Rosemund.

(C) Who's that?

(I) He works at Media Relations.

(C) Did you ever see the *Washington Post* story on this?

(I) I didn't bring my whole stack.

(C) Oh yes, look at this. This is the *Washington Post* Story you can easily get. What is this? Oh,

(I) I used the Newsbank, too.

(C) Okay, now he did a separate interview. He's also the only other reporter who talked to her. And he has okay. He says that the Platoon spent almost three hours securing the building. She, Bray, refused to talk about enemy dead but her troops said that the following morning three PDF men were found inside the kennel. So,

they told him that too, not only me--I wasn't totally making it up. This guy Willie Ring actually interviewed her first, before me, but I don't know who he did it for. He works as a stringer for *Time Magazine* and for the *Washington Post* and he actually got to her first.

(I) But, he didn't do the story.

(C) Well, I don't know. Not unless he did it for somebody else. It didn't run in the *Washington Post* until after mine ran and it didn't run in *Time Magazine* because it was too late. Their deadline is on Friday, he interviewed her on Saturday, I interviewed her on Sunday, but he actually beat me on the story, but I got the credit for it, as far as I know my story ran first. But I've always wanted to call him, I don't know where he is, cause I know him but I just haven't seen him. The last I heard he lived in Honduras. But he actually should get more credit, or the blame for this, or share it with me. But he only, as far as I know, only wrote about her, what I wanted to write about was women in general, I didn't want to focus only on her. I wanted to show what she did was one sharp instance, but it was not by any means isolated. Or it wasn't some exception. But, of course, that message didn't carry through.

End of Tape

## Appendix B

Paige Eversole, Former Army Spokesperson

October 22, 1990

(I) In one of the stories the *Washington Times* put out, you are the spokesperson?

(E) Right.

(I) This is after Peter Copeland's article on Captain Bray in the *Washington Times* had been out, this was published on the 10th of January. You are quoted as saying, "The impression you get from reading the newspaper articles is that it was a massive firefight."

(E) That is the impression one would get from reading Peter's article. Help me refresh my memory here, what I was talking about was Peter's article?

(I) Well, I think you were talking about Peter's article and Willie's and that the impression was up to interpretation because if someone was firing at you, you would think it was pretty fierce.

(E) Right.

(I) In Peter's article, he said it was a "fierce firefight."

(E) Right.

(I) In Willie's he said it lasted, or was a 3-hour battle. Now, what my question is, is they said the *Los Angeles Times* guy, John Broder, was brought to the discrepancies between the two accounts as well as the Army's version. And I was wondering, where was he getting the Army's version. Do you know?

(E) Let me think for a second, again, this is the *LA Times*,

(I) Right.

(E) I'm having a little trouble hearing you since you turned on your tape recorder, but tell me the last sentence again, the *LA Times* reporter--do you have a person's name, is there a by-line on that?

(I) Yes, it's John Broder.

(E) And, what did he say?

(I) Well, it in the . . . He says . . . He is just discounting what Peter said about it being a fierce firefight . . .

(E) Oh, I see . . .

(I) And that it only lasted 10 minutes. And this is Valerie Richardson, she is saying in her article that Broder in *LA Times* is comparing Peter and Willie's article with the Army's version. I was wondering if you know where that Army's version came from.



(E) There was at some point, and I don't know when the *LA Times* article was written, the date that it was. But at some point, the Army actually issued a press release describing the entire event. So initially, the Army version would have come from, probably, Captain Bray herself. She would have certainly--she became the center of a lot of attention very quickly. So there were lots of people calling her up, both within the Army and outside of the Army saying, "What really happened, what happened at that dog kennel?" So initially the Army version would have come from Captain Bray, who obviously was there and was the person most familiar with it. But then, the official--if you want to call it the Army version of the whole incident--and what they may be referring to is a Press Release that was issued several days later. And probably a person you should talk with on this too, who could fill in all the blanks for you is, Colonel Bill Mulvey is the Chief of Media Relations for the Army. And I don't know if you have already spoken with him or not.

(I) Not about this.

(E) OK, he might be a good person just to touch bases with. I know his boss, General McClain, who was the deputy chief of public affairs at that time, spoke personally with Linda Bray because he was concerned and just wanted to hear for himself what the correct version of the story was. Again, we were in Washington and all the action was in Panama. So we were limited in our ability to get good information from Panama. Partly because there was so much going on, that was still when there was a lot of action going on down there, military action. We were really trying to stay out of their way and let them do their business. They were swamped with reporters. Swamped with media requests down there, and it was difficult sometimes just to get a telephone line in and out of Panama. So at one point General McClain finally called Captain Bray himself because he wanted to hear from her

what the story was. And I think that General McClain may have actually spoken with a *LA Times* reporter. But you might want to talk with Colonel Mulvey and General McClain both because they can probably give you their recollection on the issue. And they can certainly pull out a copy of their Press Releases, too. They keep all their files. So you might ask them for a copy of the Press Release, which was issued within days of the Bray incident giving the Army's official version that was written by one of our journalist, an Army journalist in Panama. I hope you will make this distinction too, when I say the Army version of the story, I'm not suggesting that the Army embellished or didn't embellish, or made up a version. It is the Army's version in the sense that it was the Army journalist, soldier journalist, talking to a soldier and getting her version. And then translating it for lay people. I think that part of the difficulty when you have . . . or one difficulty . . . is that when you have a soldier, like Captain Bray, who is very wrapped up in an action: 1) It is very difficult to get to her, it is difficult to have the time to talk with her and she may not explain something so that it is clear to a layman. I'm not suggesting that is what happened here, but I think that that is always difficult when lay reporters are covering military actions. That the world of professional soldering has its own language, just as professional lawyering, or professional doctoring, or professional anything else that you choose to do for a living. Everything that we do for a living has its own language, and soldiering is no different.

(I) I understand. Peter mentioned that he was under the impression that General McClain went down there, to Panama, and talked with Captain Bray. Do you know if he did that?

(E) I believe, my recollection is, that General McClain talked with her by telephone. But I believe that General Brady, who at the time was the Chief of Public

Affairs, I believe that he may have seen her in person. So you will need to check that with General McClain. But, my recollection is that General McClain had a telephone call with her and perhaps General Brady saw her in person.

(I) In the article that Valerie Richardson is quoting you, she says that, "The army wasn't concerned with the errors in the Scripps Howard's account since they were just honest mistakes and frequently occur in stories written during the chaos of battle." Can you add anything?

(E) Well, I would say, I guess, I think it is important to keep in mind, and this is a key point I hope you will make, is that Peter Copeland was a known quantity to us. Peter Copeland covered the Pentagon on a regular basis. He was known to us as being a fair, objective reporter who always went the distance to get the facts and get them accurately. If there was a story and when Peter Copeland reported an incident there were . . . I can't remember, I don't have a copy of his story in front of me, but certainly . . . and that is one of the things when I made the comment to the reporter about Peter Copeland's story, when I said something about, "Well, if people fired at me, I would think it was pretty fierce, too." That was certainly the way I felt and I still feel that way today. But, I also . . . it was also a response of mine intended not to have a reporter take something out of context and not to have a reporter make a judgment about Peter in that story that shouldn't be made. And I was certainly being very careful of my words there. But, in effect, I came to Peter's defense. Because I wouldn't want to paint him in a negative light. I mean . . . again, he was a known quantity. If a reporter had written that story that we had not known, or that I had not known, I might have answered that question a bit differently, I might have been more cautious. But in talking about Peter, I felt, I knew without a shadow of a doubt, because Peter and I have worked before on

stories, I knew without a shadow of a doubt that Peter had done his best to get an accurate story. And that if there had been an inaccuracy or a nuance that gave the wrong impression, I knew that it was because of the time situation and fog of war and not any desire of Peter's to embellish or to enhance the story to his own benefit. I think that that is an important point here. I hope that you'll make that. Because there's sort of a traditional discussion about military public affairs officer and reporters and how they get along. And one of the points that is always made is that they need to trust each other more, they need to work together more. And then when you have a crisis, you can work through it more easily together. And I think that that is a point that is well taken here, that Peter was a Washington, Pentagon based reporter and I knew his work and motivation very well. I don't know if that answered your question or not. But, in terms of the question, it is not as though I was trying to brush off inaccuracies. I was not trying to minimize any inaccuracies. But neither was I interested in pointing a finger at Peter, whom I knew to be a reputable and honest reporter.

(I) Now, he wasn't part of the Press Pool that went down there, but once he got into Panama City, was he, so to speak, an accredited journalist once he got there?

(E) I don't know, you'd have to ask him, but I feel sure that he probably was. I mean, the Army accredits, to be an accredited reporter in a military situation like that, in a war situation like that. He certainly fit all the descriptions of an accredited reporter. Now whether he physically went somewhere and signed in, I don't know. But, he certainly met all the requirements for an accredited reporter.

(I) OK. Well let me rephrase the question. Because he wasn't part of the press pool, would that cause him problems.

(E) Oh no, I don't think so. Not at all. Not at all. In fact, my understanding is that, don't quote me on this because I wasn't there, but my understanding is that some of the people that pool, that the pool in Panama, had more difficulty moving about than some of the other people who were not part of the pool. So, it is interesting to note that the people who broke that story, that Bray story, were not with the pool. I think, my impression is, and please don't quote me, because I wasn't there, my impression is that there were some logistical difficulties getting the pool around which were just not anticipated. I think, because of the quick nature of the military action. There just wasn't as much planning time as they would have liked. But no, that didn't make his reporting different, it didn't give him more or less access to the activities. It's not as if he had been a pool reporter he could have gotten to Linda Bray more quickly. That is not the case.

(I) I was just concerned about him . . . I know he went to the headquarters, I wondered if that caused him problems since he wasn't part of the press pool to get there. He didn't say it did.

(E) Yea, my guess is that it did not. Only because, again, he was the one that, he was the second person on the story. So, my inclination is that he got there as quickly as he could, quicker than anybody else.

(I) And you said that once this story broke you got flooded with calls on women in combat.

(E) Right, literally hundreds of calls came in from all around the country, from media all around the country. And this is everything from little tiny papers out in

the heart of America, the heartland of America, to major dailies, and also international interest too. I remember getting calls from London. So, we just had really massive interest, massive, massive amount of calls. In the two and one-half years that I worked there, it was the hottest issue, in terms of, not the hottest issue in terms of sensitivity, but the hottest issue in terms of calls coming in constantly. So, I was working 8 hour days and longer just taking phone call after phone call after phone call. Doing interviews back to back all day long, for 8 hours or more on that issue. I did a number of live radio talk shows around the country, took call in questions. Did some on television standups and then arranged some other interviews follow on interviews. Once the first wave of media interest was over we then got a number of requests for follow on interviews with the Policy people in the Pentagon who were most familiar with the policy issues regarding women in combat. So, I was instrumental in setting those up and getting the people there and ready for those interviews. So, it really came in two waves. But the first wave of calls was the most dramatic in terms of just the sheer numbers which were just enormous. But I would say, that this is what I said the other day, I thought it was great because it gave the Army the opportunity to tell its story and the Army was very well prepared to do that. The Army has a good story to tell in terms of women in the Army. And I think, and it will sound funny, but I really believe this . . . . And you should stress that I am no longer on the payroll, so I don't have to say this if I don't want to, but the Army is truly on the cutting edge in our society in terms of where women are and what women can do and what opportunities exist for women. Opportunities to manage, opportunities to have nontraditional jobs, opportunities to be paid equal amounts with men, to be rewarded for their skills. I really think they are on the cutting edge. Many people would disagree with that, I am sure, but my feeling is that they have never seen it close up and don't really understand that, but I believe it to be true.

(I) Did you, you didn't talk to Captain Bray yourself, did you?

(E) No. I didn't. No.

(I) I'm trying to get hold of Wilson Ring, who you mentioned worked for *Newsday*. He is in Honduras. I'm not sure I'll be able to get him down there. The other guy, in Los Angeles, John Broder, I'm also going to try to get a hold of him.

(E) I think he'd be pretty easy to get a hold of, Broder.

(I) Well, I hope so.

(E) Yea, I hope so, too.

(I) Because, I kind of need his side of the story to balance what motivation he had to write his story.

(E) If you need to talk to General McClain, let me give you Colonel Mulvey's phone number. I'm sure he'd be happy to arrange an interview with you for General McClain.

(I) OK.

(E) And that might be valuable. It's Colonel Bill Mulvey. He's Chief of Media Relations for the Army. He was in that job at the time. His number is 703-697-

7589, and you can tell him that you've spoken with me and that I recommended that you call him and possibly General McClain, as well.

(I) OK. Did you have anything else that I didn't ask you that you thought was pertinent?

(E) I don't know. I guess it's difficult because I'm not sure exactly where you are going. But I think I guess I've made all my points. I guess it took the Army by surprise. I think one of the interesting, it's sort of an aside, is that it took, the level of media interest took the Army by surprise and I think this again goes back to the fact that women have become so much a part of the mainstream Army that the Army knew, and this is -- I was quoted to this effect in *Time Magazine* in January 15, issue by the way . . . . But the Army was fully aware that women were a mainstream part of the Army and the Army knew that it was not going to war without women. And the Army felt very comfortable with it with the way it defined women's roles in the Army. And, I guess, the level of the media interest really surprised the Army because what it told me was that there are a lot of people out there who really didn't understand that there were women, who trained exactly the way men do, who learned to fire an M-16, who learned to throw grenades, who wear battle dress uniform, exactly the way men do, who are in the line of fire just as the men are . . . with the exception, of course, that women don't serve in the infantry. Women don't serve in combat positions. But that women are just as vulnerable on the battlefield and the Army had come to grips a long time ago with the fact that women are going to be casualties on the battlefield. Well the modern battlefield is a very lethal place, it is a fast moving, very lethal place. And, the Army had come to grips with the fact that women were going to casualties on the modern battlefield in direct proportion to the numbers in which they were serving, which is about 11 percent. So the Army knew



all that and felt very comfortable with it. And it was interesting to us, in hindsight, I guess, we did not a very good job of educating the American public prior to that, but it seemed so natural to us that we thought that the process was complete. But I think that the whole episode offered the Army an opportunity to educate the American public. And as far as I could tell, the public responded very well to it. And I think that the Army did a good job of telling its story, because it had such a good story to tell. And was very open about it . . . . The Army was very open about discussing the whole issue. And I think that that served the Army well. So, as far as I am concerned the whole thing is sort of a success story for the Army and for women in general. And I would describe myself as a feminist. And, so from that standpoint, I was very pleased to be the person who was able to deliver that message on behalf of women in the Army.

(I) One other question, well a couple of other questions . . . . Peter said in his lead paragraph that women participated fully in the invasion of Panama and I know my professor just . . . he really said that that was a little controversial, and when I asked Peter about it he said, as far as he was concerned, that is what he meant. What do you think about what he said there?

(E) Well, I think that that is an accurate statement. You know, women did participate fully in the invasion, because they deployed with the male troops. There was some confusion in Grenada, where there were just a few women who would have deployed initially, in fact who were sent to Grenada, were sent back to Ft. Bragg, were sent to Grenada again. There was some confusion. But, during Grenada, people were kind of calling up and going, "Well, what should we do with the women, should we take the women? Should we leave them at home? What should we do?" There was none of that in Panama. You know, If you were on duty

that day, whether you were male or female, if they needed the job that you occupied, if they needed that job in Panama, you went. There was no hesitation. And women participated fully, just as they had trained to do. So you had women flying helicopters, you had women flying helicopters who were ferrying troops into fighting areas. You had women who were working in logistics. Just women throughout. Women, just to sort of demonstrate the point that women are very fully involved in the mainstream Army, and the Army, literally, cannot go to war without them. And so, when the Army deployed for Operation Just Cause, the women deployed right along with them and there were no midnight phone calls back to the Pentagon going, "What should we do with the women?" There was no question about it. The battalion commanders and the brigade commanders knew what to do with the women and that was get them over there. So, from that standpoint--and I think from any standpoint any way you look at it--women were fully involved in that military engagement.

(I) Can I ask you a personal question? Have you seen the book *Weak Link*, I think it's by Brian Mitchell.

(E) Oh, Brian Mitchell. I know of the book. I have seen Brian Mitchell on talk shows and I just refuse to read that kind of trash. But I think that Brian Mitchell hasn't been in the military in some time. And I think that Brian Mitchell is, number one, his whole argument is off base. I think that he would be hard pressed to make that argument stand up. If you really look at the numbers, if you look at what is really going on in the military . . . . You know, he is arguing, I think, from a very weak standpoint. I think a lot of it, and this is my personal opinion, but I think a lot of it is just personality based. I think that Brian Mitchell is a very traditional guy, I think that he is hide bound (?). I think that he really doesn't like the idea of having

women compete with him and having the same type of jobs that he does. I think he probably views the military as a man's domain. This is just my gut feeling from just watching him in some of his performances on television, but I think that this is an emotional issue for him. And the issue is not really an emotion, the issue is rooted in fact, you know, and in logic. There are plenty of jobs in the Army that women are just as qualified to do as men and there is no reason they shouldn't do them. And I just think that Brian Mitchell is completely off base and I think that it is an emotional issue for him. Again, that is my own position, the emotional one that I take. I just have no use for him or for his line of reasoning.

(I) Now, I haven't read the book either. But my professor said that one of the things in his book is that he says, and I think, it's the field artillery, that Brian Mitchell was at a demonstration where they had women loading some weapon. And after it was all over and Brian Mitchell found out that they were empty cases that the women were handling and that supposedly that the people presented it as if they were alive ammunition, as it were heavier type stuff, and he used that against women, that they couldn't do it because they were only handling the . . . .

(E) Uh, that is unfortunate. Whatever was going on that day in that particular . . . . It is conceivable to me that if they were going to do a demonstration, they might not have live ammunition. For whatever reason, maybe for safety reasons, maybe because, I don't know, for whatever reason. But the Army does demonstrations for people all the time and in many cases you will see that they are not using live rounds or live ammunition. But obviously, I can't believe it was a demonstration where there were only women, or where there were only women using, you know, lifting certain types of shells. The other thing is that if they, the Army, it just doesn't make any sense, if these are the jobs that these

women have, and they have to lift these shells or whatever they were doing every single day, it doesn't make any sense that for one dog and pony show the Army would give them something lighter to handle. And even if they did, what of it? I mean, these women, if they had to handle heavy things every single day, and then on this one day they got the day off. I mean if they were unable to do it, they would all be out with back trouble. You know what I am saying. It's just like, that's the kind of faulty reasoning that you see one situation and you hear something about it and then you make a generalization about 80,000 women in the Army based on one incident where you may or may not have all the facts. Not you personally, but Brian Mitchell. I would be willing to bet that if Brian Mitchell thought that that was the case he never pursued it with the chain of command. He would have been entitled to go to someone and say, "Is it true that you didn't have live ammunition? Is it true that they were lifting something less than they usually lift? What do they normally do?" You know, but my guess is that he is the kind of person who would find it convenient not to get all those answers. But if you are in a . . . there are physical requirements for jobs that require you to do physical labor, hard physical labor . . . and God knows, I couldn't pass most of them, but there are requirements there for men and for women. So, if you are in a job that requires you to do some heavy lifting, the Army, just from a business point of view, they are going to make sure that you can do that heavy lifting, or else you are not going to have that job. You know, that is just the way the world works, and that is the way the Army works.

(I) Well, I just thought it was kind of odd that, I just didn't see it happening the way, exactly . . . . The way it was presented to me . . .

(E) I don't see it happening either. Probably . . . because, I think, the Army is smarter than that. It may be that there was no live ammunition there, but I would be

willing to bet it was for reasons other than the people who were moving it around. And, again, even if they did have, maybe they wanted to have something go smoothly that day because it was a dog and pony show for visitors, but so what. The Army does millions of dog and pony shows, and sometimes they do them for reasons, they just have to put on a dog and pony show. But chances are that if there is a woman who is in that job, you know the other 364 days of the year, she is out there pumping along with the guys that she is working along side of. She has got to pull her weight or she has got to get out of there. So, I have not seen the Army cut anybody any slack in a long time and I would think that what Brian Mitchell is describing either didn't happen or didn't happen the way he is alleging.

(I) OK. I appreciate your time.

(E) Well, you are certainly welcome. Please give Colonel Mulvey a call, and good luck with your thesis. It sounds like you've got. I mean it is an interesting case. It is also kind of a tough case. But good luck with it. Do you need the correct spelling of my name or anything?

(I) Well, let me make sure I get it . . .

(E) OK. It's Paige Eversole. And at that point, during Just Cause, I was working as an Army Spokesman. And I prefer the term Spokesman, not spokeswoman or spokesperson. And I was an Army civilian. I am not an officer in the Army.

(I) OK.

(E) Thanks, very much. Good luck.

(I) Thank you.

(E) Bye, bye.

End of tape.

## Appendix C

An Interview With John Broder

*Los Angeles Times*

October 29, 1990

(I) Well, were you in Panama at all?

(B) No, never down there, I mean, not in this context, I've been there before, just passed through.

(I) But not during the invasion part for the article?

(B) No. One reporter from the Bureau went and spent a fair amount of time down there and some of our foreign staff, based in the region were there.

(I) Um, did the *Times* run another story obviously other than your 6 January story about Captain Bray?

(B) Um, not that I recall, no, we didn't, you know that the *L.A. Times* and the *Washington Post* share a news service and they, the *Post* had written its own version of this story. Again, I don't remember the dates, but it was a day or two or three before my piece. Um, not only took the original account of Captain Bray's exploits but I think embellished it some or certainly expanded it from the original story which was first in Scripps Howard right, Peter Copeland's story?

(I) Well actually, Peter's story hit the news stands first but Wilson Ring, he actually interviewed Captain Bray first.

(B) Okay, but I thought . . .

(I) Copeland got the credit for it because it hit the stands . . .

(B) Okay, then the *Post* had the story but held it for a day, is that what happened?

(I) I don't know, I haven't been able to get Wilson Ring, he's in Honduras.

(B) He's a freelancer right? Or a

(I) He's a stringer.

(B) Stringer, okay, well, the first that anybody heard of it was the, as far as I remember, was the Scripps Howard story which was picked up by the wires that day and then the *Post* came in, again you'd have to check the dates, the publication dates as I recall, first there was the Scripps Howard story and then the wire versions and then the next day the *Post* story which I think was on page one, the Wilson ring story which was gave her considerably more credit for what she did than ever the Copeland story. Again, you remember the details much more thoroughly than I do.

(I) I've been studying it.

(B) And then of course, um, Marlin Fitzwater and what he did.



(I) What, what put you on the story?

(B) A guy I know in the Army called me up, I think he called me, or I called him about something else related to Panama. I don't really want to identify who he is but

. . .

(I) Can you give me any kind of description?

(B) Fairly Senior. He's a civilian Army official who tracks international affairs, I mean he's not in an unrelated field, he's not in procurement or force structure or anything like that, he's involved in international Army affairs, a fairly high-ranking civilian. And he and I talk fairly regularly. And I, was talking to him, I think it was the day after the *Post* or the *New York Times* story and he said, suggested to me that I ought to check it out he said, "There's something fishy about this story." He said that the Army was, "The Army's curiosity was raised by it because they had a count that were different and so they were doing, not an investigation, but they were checking into it because it didn't sound right to people in the Army in Washington," um, so I did, I checked it out.

(I) So, uh, what did you do?

(B) Well, it was simple. The first person I called and whatever, the day before the story appeared, I think it was that Thursday or Friday was General, Brigadier General Bill McClain who is the head of Army Public Affairs.

(I) He was Deputy at the time.

(B) Was he?

(I) He's head now.

(B) Anyway, I called him. And I said, "What do you know about this Captain Bray affair, because somebody suggested to me that there was some concern in the Army about the accuracy of these reports and I was just curious and what's going on?" And he said, "Well, funny that you should call because I just talked with her." I think that's what he said that he had just talked with her and various other people who had been present at this event, the assault on the kennel. And I said, "Well, what's the story." And he told me the story, essentially as I related it in the piece that there were no, no confirmed casualties, which was contrary to what at least the *Post* story had said and what Marlin Fitzwater had said, probably quoting the *Post*. And then that was picked up by the *New York Times* that she was, in fact, not even present at the kennel at the time of the assault, supposed assault, and several other particulars. Again, they're in the article, which again, I haven't had a chance to go back and read. In fact, he said that their inquiry, again, it wasn't a formal investigation. It wasn't meant in any way to malign her integrity because what she told him was that her account had gotten blown all out of proportion and here are the facts, which he would then relate to me. And I reported it as I reported it, at least as he told it to me and there it sat for 24 hours or so.

(I) Copeland's story told us that she wasn't at the operation at the time, perhaps, that she was a mile and half or a half-mile away, and Ring's didn't mention it at all or say whether she was present or not. But you thought that was real important to get clarified?

(B) He [General McClain] thought so and she thought so as well because, I mean, the Army was concerned, I think. They may tell you differently but this event was portrayed as the first time a woman officer had led troops in combat and the Army's position, as you know, is that women are not in combat, although there are occasions when they find themselves because of their jobs, um, in a combat situation, finding gunfire around them. And so, I think the Army's motives are not necessarily pure in this case. As I am sure you are aware, that those original stories, the first couple of days, because this was portrayed as the first time a woman had led troops in combat. Naturally, the question of the combat exclusion came up and a variety of people like Pat Schroeder were called in to comment on it. And they said, "Yes, this just proves that this thing is silly, that women are as capable as men and look at Captain Bray did and this great feat of daring and heroism. And therefore this whole combat exclusion ought to be rethought". And there was talk of that about introducing legislation to at least experiment with lifting the combat exclusion. So the Army obviously was concerned about this. They didn't want this one event to trigger a radical cultural change in the Army as well as an avalanche of legislation. So, I think the Army felt it was in their interest. Well, let's put it this way, without imputing their motives too much, it was in their interest to get the facts of the story out rather than to allow what they felt was an inaccurate and somewhat overblown tale to continue in circulation and perhaps become accepted as history. When their version of events, at least as they were able to determine them, was somewhat less spectacular.

(I) You know that the DACOWITS [Defense Advisory Committee On Women In The Service] had suggested that they do a four year study earlier in the year?

(B) Yeah, right. Well, as I said, it's been a subject of controversy for some time and the Army's position is certainly represented by Public Affairs Office is you know, we have legislation. We have a ruling, let's not change it, certainly because of this one affair.

(I) Did you talk to Captain Bray or Christina Proctor?

(B) No, I didn't.

(B) And you did all this from Washington?

(B) From Washington, from my desk.

(I) I think that Robin Wright, you said contributed to the story. How much did she contribute?

(B) Her name was at the bottom of the story?

(I) See, I don't have your story, I had to get it from VU-text, because our library only keeps *Los Angeles Times* for a week.

(B) It says at the end Robin Wright contributed?

(I) Yes, *Times* staff writer Robin Wright contributed to the story.

(B) Probably because she had a relationship with the same source in the Army and if I'm not mistaken she may have said, "Why don't you call so and so? He's got a

good story for you." And that may have been how it came up. And now that you've refreshed my memory, that's probably how it did come up.

(I) But she wasn't in Panama either.

(B) No, no, no and she wasn't involved in any of the reporting of the story, she just came up with the tip so I gave her a credit line at the end.

(I) Oh, okay.

(B) I wouldn't have had the story if she hadn't suggested I call this guy. Or I might have talked to him and by then somebody else would have been on to it, because, I think, the Army was eager to get this story out, it doesn't surprise me. I certainly don't know that he was eager to, that my source had planted the story out of some propaganda reasons. But certainly McClain was more than happy to cooperate and pass on the things that he had learned from interviewing Captain Bray and others were aware and familiar with the incident.

(I) When, I think, it was Valerie Richardson from the *Washington Times* talked with you, supposedly on a telephone interview, you, she's quoted you as saying that you wouldn't have used the term "grossly exaggerated" had you thought about it a little more, on the exploits.

(B) I might have just said, "Exaggerated." Error embellished, or some word like that, grossly exaggerated, I thought, the point I was trying to make, maybe rather clumsily, was grossly exaggerated impugned the credibility or the motives of the reporters, the other reporters involved and certainly Scripps Howard took it that way,

because we had a big blow-up with them. And they took it as an insult to their reporter's integrity. And as it turned out the Copeland story was quite straight, straightforward there were less inaccuracies, exaggerations or embellishments in that story than in the later *Post* story. And then the Fitzwater version of it which again was taken from that morning's *Post* and then put on the front page of the *New York Times* the next day. As I tried to explain to Valerie, it began to look like a game of telephone, it got a little bigger and further from the actual facts each time it was retold.

(I) What do you think about Copeland's phrase, in his lead, he put "American Women Participated Fully in the Invasion of Panama?"

(B) Um, I don't have a particular problem with that. He ah, I think the point he was making, his original story as I recall was not about Captain Bray, it was about women truck drivers, I don't know, about helicopter pilots, transport pilots and various other women that were in whatever they do in the military, those jobs and those women were represented in Panama. And they are not in the combat specialties and so that part was in there, but everything that the women do in the military they did in Panama and I think that's what he meant. I don't have any trouble with that. You know, again in later retelling, it got to be that women were leading troops in combat and I think that's a bit of an exaggeration and certainly given the amount of return fire that came from the kennel. Yeah, I mean it was a hairy situation but combat may be a bit stretching it. There was some sniper fire, but it was not, not a classic combat operation.

(I) Did General McClain, was he the one that put you on to, that the heavy gunfire only really lasted ten minutes? And the rest is pretty much sporadic?

(B) Right. Sniper fire.

(I) Sniper fire.

(B) Oh yeah, I had forgotten what was it . . . one of the accounts said it was a couple of hours, three hours.

(I) Wilson Ring's story said that the battle took three hours. I think he's probably say for them to try to secure the whole kennel, but, ah, after studying this I mean that's what I come up with.

(B) You're not . . . You're sort of dancing around the question a little bit and so am I in answering, the question was I used by the Army for their purposes, uh, continuing the exclusion of women from combat jobs in the military. Um, maybe, a little bit. I don't think my original source had that intention. I do suspect to some extent that General McClain was more than usually eager to respond to questions about this affair. I think that the Army, as it watched this incident grow in scope and influence, and not necessarily what Captain Bray did or did not do, or what did or did not transpire at the kennel itself, but the way Pat Schroeder and other advocates of broader female participation in all aspects of military jobs and life. I think that there was a concern in the Army and an effort by the senior leadership of the Army to try and nip that before it got out of hand, before they were steamrollered or railroaded into accepting something on the basis of this particular incident and a hand full of others. And I came to that conclusion not necessarily that day but certainly, certainly after Scripps Howard began to raise questions about my sources and methods and interpretation in writing and reporting, I began to wonder

about that. And then I saw there was a later account, oh a week, two, three weeks later, I don't know when it was, it was a *Post* story, I think it was Molly Moore, about two women Army truck drivers. Are you aware of that?

(I) Um, hum, right.

(B) Uh, how did that story get out and it proved to be largely inaccurate. Certainly the interpretation of it was inaccurate. What was it, they broke down and refused to go into battle or something like that. I mean, that was the original story, right? And they were even considering whether to bring them up on charges? Again, you're more familiar with the story and the clip, but the motivations behind that story coming out, particularly coming out inaccurately, I think were questionable. And there is certainly a--the Army is a male dominated institution and institutions tend to have a, tend to reflect the biases of their dominant by the people who run them, obviously. And a lot of men are, especially senior men, you know, the guys that got up into the general office, were very concerned about the role women will play in the future. And it was in somebody's interest, I don't know whose, uh, to put out that story about these women truck drivers, which was, it was--I was about to say grossly exaggerated. I guess that's a phrase that sticks in my mind. It was wrong is what it was as far as I could tell.

(I) Most papers that published that story came back and corrected it.

(B) And where did it come from? Did it come from, you know, a couple of low level officers, or enlisted guys in a women's unit? Did it come from high up in the Army, hierarchy? I don't know. But it came from where I consider to be that wing tendency in the military to try and limit the participation of women. And it was



suspect and really, and that made me think well, what about the Bray incident? Why were they so quick to quash that when, you know, the interpretation, you know, did the combat last three hours or did it last ten minutes? It's a judgment call to some extent. If you were involved in a military operation where you left your barracks to go into a potential combat situation 2:00 in the morning and you hadn't heard the last of the gunfire until 5:00, even if the intense fighting was only ten minutes, you would think of that as a three hour operation. I'm not sure that an historian or even a journalist coming back a day or a week or a month later would call that a three hour engagement. The point is that you have to look at peoples' motivations, as well as the facts of the situation, and think that legitimate questions could be raised about both of those incidents because of the motivations of individuals at least within the Army to try and stall or limit the progress of women in the military.

(I) What kind of response do you think you have gotten from that phrase, "grossly exaggerated?"

(B) The only comment was some Scripps Howard people who felt it was unfair, that it was a slur on their reporter and their editors for having allowed such a piece of poor journalism to be published. Um, if your a journalism student you realize that one tries to make the most of one's material. Um, but it certainly, they did phrase or that their story had more of an impact, more of an effect at Scripps Howard than it did at the *Los Angeles Times*. You saw it played page 16 or 26 on a Saturday in the *LA Times* they didn't think that much.

(I) Some people would say the *Los Angeles Times* has more weight than Scripps Howard. Your story brought the attention back. Uh, do you have a copy of your story as it appeared, because all I have is this VU-Text.

(B) Um, I'm sure we can find it. Do you have the date?

(I) 6 Jan.

(B) I'm sure we can find it. If not, the whole paper . . .

(I) It was in the home edition? That's what they call it?

(B) What page?

(I) Page 22, column one.

(B) Twenty two. Let's go look, want to?

(I) Do you have anything else to add?

(B) You got the *Washington Times* piece. I've seldom been on the other side of the microphone or the other end of a telephone being interviewed, but I thought you did a pretty good, fair job at that and represented my sentiments pretty clearly. I was, um, Scripps Howard's professional feelings were hurt by the affair. And I didn't intend that at all and in fact later accounts were more inaccurate than the original account. I'm not sure that going back I could find serious fault with Peter's story. But, again as the game of telephone progressed, the *Post* version, the Fitzwater version, the *Times* version, each built on that a little and it grew slightly more exaggerated. Uh, and his story I thought was unobjectionable but they said or they, again, I don't remember how I attributed, I said that the original version

appeared in Scripps Howard. And then [it] was later picked up, something like that which implied that later incrustations and inaccuracies that were added upon Peter's original story. I may have implied unfairly that he was guilty of those where. Um, you know phrases like three hour battle never appeared in his story, but they felt they were taking the brunt of my criticism unfairly and to some extent they were.

(I) Your lead was press account for the female commander's battle and exploits in Panama later repeated by Marlin Fitzwater were grossly exaggerated. Then almost towards the end you said.

(B) The original version, something like that?

(I) "It was not clear how you inflated acts, accounts of the Captain Bray's exploits according to Scripps Howard's story, but Bray said that there were three enemy dead, were found at the scene later. But the Army" . . . and then you go on about the Army.

(B) Um.

(I) I think that's the only time you really mention it.

(B) Maybe the only publication that I actually . . .

(I) "The original newspaper account of the actions as submitted by Scripps Howard, why widely repeated by other news organizations?" You did . . . You just . . .

(B) It made it look like they were the ones that were guilty of all the inaccuracies or exaggerations that later appeared in other publications and they weren't and that was unfair. Let's go see if we can find the clip.

END OF TAPE

## Appendix D

Colonel Bill Mulvey

U.S. Army Chief of Media Relations Division, Pentagon

November 9, 1990

(I) I think thesis where I am trying to talk about confidence in the media.

(M) Confidence, who's confidence?

(I) The public's confidence in the media, and when they read something, how much confidence do they have in it? How accurate the stories are? Once the story is published if it's a little bit inaccurate what does the paper do about it, what does the media do about it? What do the people who originated the story, you know, the story came from, want to do about it, if anything? If it is a little bit inaccurate, is that ok, or if it is grossly inaccurate, do they try to correct it? And in this case, Peter Copeland wrote the article that initially broke the story, but he wasn't the first one who met with Capt. Bray, but his story got most of the attention.

(M) Right, have you talked to Peter?

(I) Yes, I talked to him really at great length.

(M) Good. Because I have too, and, you know I guess, most of my information is as much from Peter and, I have never talked to Capt. Bray myself. General Brady

talked to her, I think General McClain talked to her once or twice. I think General Brady actually walked the grounds of the dog kennel with her. I think one of my aides, maybe Paige Eversole, talked to her directly, I am not sure.

(I) I have interviewed Paige.

(M) Yea, well I was going to say, so my information on that particular situation is all second hand and I am glad you've gone to the primary so if you will see me as more philosophical, backed away from it, maybe a little more analysis; but as far as verifying facts and so forth, I am not a very good source for that. But I'll try . . .

(I) I hope so sir. Um, When Peter Copeland's story came out, what did you and the Army here think about it being inaccurate . . . A little, or a lot?

(M) I guess, when his story first came out, realizing we are talking nine, ten months ago, as I recall, we took it at face value as being possible, possibly accurate, possibly completely accurate. And some of that was because I know Peter Copeland and so previous work, and I think that may have a place in your paper, that reporters build credibility for themselves with media relations people, such as myself, and also with readers. If I read and believe Jack Anderson, then I read and believe Jack Anderson. If Dan Rather never gets it right, then I will watch Peter Jennings and if you choose who you read, or sometimes you read particularly off ed. pieces and so forth to disagree with the journalist. But anyway, to get back to your question. I took it at face value as possibly correct because of the personal knowledge of Peter Copeland. At the same time having been in the Army 22 years and knowing about initial reports often being quite inaccurate, I was certain open to learn more and suspected that the initial reports were not accurate. With no intent that they were

being misrepresented but I've just-- I have worked in Army operations centers and when that first report comes in, we joke about it and say initial reports are 90% wrong. And so, while one, I gave it the possibility of being right, I also saw it as an initial report that there was, very likely, more to this story and it may be wrong, again nothing to do with Peter Copeland. It just may be wrong because it is an initial report.

(I) Paige Eversole said that she was flooded with calls after it appeared. Did the Army want to tone it down because of that?

(M) Yes, I think that would be accurate to say. That we did not want that to be an issue. Women in combat, when it merged with the Combat Infantry Badge [CIB] issue, that was another one that we didn't want to be an issue so . . . our approach to it, yes we wanted to tone down, keep it from being a story as much as we could and we felt with the growing interest . . . I guess we understood why journalists were interested in it, but we didn't want them to be interested in it--if that makes sense.

(I) Now, is that related to DACOWITS [Defense Advisory Committee On Women In The Service] the request for the four year testing and Pat Schroeder?

(M) Well, that is part of it. We saw it being and used as an argument as an issue for that request for DACOWITS study. So that was on the agenda, it would certainly be used, but I don't think we didn't want it played big as a way to get back at the DACOWITS recommendation or anything like that. I don't think there were any political motives there. It was strictly that here is an MP [Military Police] that was doing her job, got caught up into a firefight, or whatever it was, and so did a lot

of male soldiers. And we saw it as, I guess we wanted to see Linda Bray as a green person, not as a female or a male, but as a person. And it was being reported strictly as a female issue and that is [what we] wanted to low key. If there was anyway that we could keep it from being strictly a women in combat story, and if it wasn't a women in combat story, then there wasn't really much of a story, because there were a lot of male soldiers doing the same or much more that no one was paying any great attention to.

(I) That is what I wanted to ask you. Because there were a lot of other fights going on, much fiercer than the dog kennel, but it got most of the attention because it was--

(M) Because it was a female story--women in combat.

(I) That was one of the reasons that the Army wanted to tone it down, the story.

(M) Right.

(I) OK. What kind of guidance--I'm going to play ignorant on this--what kind of guidance, if any, does the Army have in talking to the press?

(M) OK. I think you owe in your paper to talk about the Principles of Information and if you don't have a current copy from Mr. Cheney, that, although these aren't the words, and I can get you a copy of the Principles of Information. At the Defense Information School, of course, we say maximum disclosure with minimum delay. In my office that is the guidance that we follow. If there is an incident, combat or otherwise, we will go ahead and discuss it to get the accurate



facts out on the street as quickly as possible. And that is really the guidance that Paige Eversole and the other desk officers go, now if there is something classified about it, then that is a different story. As far as what were the facts, we would like to get it out as quickly as possible and that really is a technique for low keying a story that we have. So while I say that we wanted to downplay the story, that doesn't mean that we wanted to manage what was written, but more to get it over with just as quickly as possible. And our guidance, our philosophy, it is hard to find your written guidance for that, but our philosophy was the way to make this story go away, was to get all the information out quickly, get it written about, and it is over. It goes away. As opposed to trying to withhold information and let misperceptions get out and then have to continue to counter those, and the story just builds and builds. If we can get it all out quickly, that is the best way to get it over with.

(I) What kind of guidance did the Army give to Capt. Bray and her troops when they are going into combat, to talk to the press? Or, even before they were sent on their trip to Panama, were they given any kind of guidance that the reporters would be there?

(M) I really don't know. We are probably at too high a level here to know what was done at Fort Benning or for that matter at Fort Bragg. You realize that Just Cause was completely classified up until the time that it happened. So we in Media Relations were not putting out any type of guidance on that. Now normal . . . now let me back up a little bit . . . . From my perspective, we don't give out nearly enough guidance, training, class work, or how to deal with the press within the Army school system and within the Army training environment. I think we should, the implementation would be difficult, monumental, logistically, personnel-wise and so forth, but we don't teach media relations to the basic course; we don't teach to the

advance course. There is an elective at Fort Leavenworth that has 40 students, which I have taught one of those classes out there. We have a media day at the War College one day, for War College students. I just this Monday, of this week, conducted a class on media relations for the Army JAG [Staff Judge Advocate's Corps] graduate course at Charlottesville, where I spend the morning talking to them about military media relations and how to deal with the press. And in the afternoon we gave these 57 lawyers a workshop on how to do interviews, an ambush interview, a talk show interview, a set-up interview, a remote interview, and so forth. And this was at the invitation of the JAG school, but overall, I think, we do not nearly enough. So my guess is, and it is just a guess, get it from Bray, that she didn't have any kind of guidance in advance about talking to the press before she went down there for Just Cause. I think any lieutenant in the 82nd [Airborne Division] and the 5th Mec [Mechanized] and in the 7th [Infantry Division], certainly not from the Department of the Army level, now what the PAO [Public Affairs Office] for the 7th Infantry Division did or what was written in the 5th Mec's OP [Operation Plan] Plan or the Ranger's OP Plan about talking to the press, there may have been some things in there, but I am not aware of them. What we have done for some exercises, I have done as a Division and Corps PAO has certainly said that soldiers, officers, could talk to the press with a Public Affairs Officer present. The reporters, for REFORGER [Return of Forces to Germany] exercise, for example, would be credentialed, they would have a press badge, and we would write into the operations order this is what the press badge looks like. You can expect to see them during the exercise. You are certainly free to talk to the reporters. We would recommend that a Public Affairs Officer be present, but the key bit of guidance in my last tactical experience, the 7th Corps for REFORGER was talk at the level that you know about and have authority for. In other words, if you are a platoon leader, talk about your platoon. If you are a company commander, talk about your company. But, don't

talk about the brigade operation or don't speak for the President, or the Secretary of Defense, or the Corps Commander, what-have-you. Speak at your level of expertise. So that guidance, translated, whether Linda Bray got it or not, would have been, talk about what you did at the dog kennel, which you have personal knowledge of. And I think, if you look at all the stories that came out about it, eventually or in the totality of all of them that she said she, "Was back at the command center talking on the radio and all I knew at that point was what was happening on the radio and then when I was there I knew about this ditch and this building and this vehicle." You know, so she talked about what she knew. But how the battle was going in Cambino Heights, or something like that, that wasn't part of her operation, she shouldn't and she didn't talk about.

Now, where that breaks down is when she gets asked, "Well, what about women in combat?" You know, the bigger policy issue. Should women get the combat infantryman's badge because you got shot at? What do you think about the Army's policy of this and combat exclusion policy and those lines of questions that is where she is certainly entitled to her opinion on those things. And she is going to be asked about it, but she has got to be careful that she is not speaking for the Army or speaking for all women in the Army, although that is what the reporters want her to do. They want, you know, here is the Army's position, or a typical female in the Army's position, when in fact it is her personal opinion and I think she, the interviews I saw her on, the morning talk shows, she was pretty good about staying away from these bigger issues. I can tell you about what happened at the dog kennel but out of shyness, out of nervousness, out of guidance, I am not sure which, she really didn't go into the bigger issues that all those commentators and reporters did.

(I) Are there any lessons learned about Capt. Bray's media attention and coverage?

(M) I'm not sure that there are any new lessons learned. There might have been at other levels. I don't know. Paige may have had some lessons learned. I guess from my perspective it was really just a reinforcement of existing lessons. And that was to go ahead and make the facts available just as quickly as possible. Invite reporters in to set the record straight. To write a letter to the editor to set the record straight. To call the reporter who had written the incorrect story, to try to get him the facts to correct it, and I guess this is getting on into your paper. All those things we already have those lessons it just a matter of they were proved once again. Nip it in the bud, get the facts out just as soon as possible. Set the record straight just as soon as possible. If reporters ask about it, tell them. Make her available, make the facts available and hope that the story gets done accurately by enough reporters that the public will know what the truth is as opposed to initial erroneous reports.

(I) What did your office have to do in that incidence? Did you have to send letters to the editor? Call anybody, do anything?

(M) I really don't remember all the options we took. And again, there were other people involved: Chief of Public Affairs, General Brady, and General McClain. I am not sure if they wrote letters, if they made phone calls. I know there were certainly calls back and forth to Colonel Swank who was the Public Affairs Officer for South Com [Southern Command in Panama], about that. Because of course, Peter Copeland and the other reporters were still in Panama, were still down there, so . . . . And South Com was in charge. It was not Army's position to be correcting all that it was really a South Com responsibility.

(I) South Com responsibility to try to get it corrected?

(M) Yeah, and I don't want to completely say that it wasn't Army, because she was an Army MP. I really don't remember and I am not sure I have anything on file because we wrote a lot of letters, we wrote an average--out of my office--3 to 5 a month setting the record straight. Numerous phone calls back to reporters saying you got it wrong yesterday afternoon. Saw Wolf Fitzer on CNN and walked right down the hall and said, "Here's two factual errors in your report, it's not three divisions coming out of Europe, it's two divisions coming out of Europe. And you said that the reserve brigades will go to Saudi Arabia and that is not what Mr. Cheney said. They will be considered and they may go to Saudi Arabia, but he didn't say they will." He broadcast again on CNN two hours later with those two things fixed. So, that's just setting the record straight, so you don't have to write a lot of letters.

(I) South Com had a press release, at least two press releases, I have a copy of the second one, I don't have a copy of the first one.

(M) I didn't keep a file on this case, if any body did it would have been Paige. And she wouldn't have taken it with her, it might be back here.

(I) Captain Goodno is working with me on this and she didn't have it either.

(M) Sorry.

(I) That's OK. Do you know if General McClain, I know he talked to John Broder--

(M) Yes.

(I) But John Broder, did he come in and talk to him in person, or was that a phone call?

(M) As I recall, they talked in person the first time.

(I) The first time? . . . There was more than once?

(M) I think there was a second time. I'm not 100% sure about that. My guess is that it was in person. Just one on one in the office, it might have been a phone call.

(I) He quotes General McClain indirectly that Captain Bray said in Peter Copeland's story there was a Private Proctor who captured the enemy soldiers single-handedly. And in Broder's article, he said, "According to Capt. Bray, when she counted her troops at the close of the operation, she had one more than she started with, the extra man was frightened, unarmed PDF soldier who surrendered without assistance, she told the Army." That is in his thing . . .

(M) Uh huh.

(I) Broder did not talk to Captain Bray nor did he go to Panama. And he is saying that he only talked to General McClain and an unidentified source that he won't reveal. So he, I don't know that you would know, but do you know he might be saying that she told the Army.

(M) No.

(I) Scripps Howard says that General McClain called them when they got, when they knew that Broder was doing the story--

(M) That Broder was doing it? OK, so you already had Copeland's story . . .

(I) Copeland's story was out, and Broder is working on one, General McClain called Scripps Howard and, I think, I don't think General McClain himself called, but someone saying that General McClain asked them to call Scripps Howard to relay a message to Copeland that McClain was sorry about Broder's article, but he did not say what Broder wrote. Do you know anything about that?

(M) I have heard that before, but I guess I was under the impression that McClain probably made that phone call. Hi John!

(?) You almost sounded like Bill though--

(M) Sorry . . .

(M) I just don't know for sure, my suspicion is that General McClain would have made that phone call himself. Talked to Broder, knew what Broder was saying, and wanted Scripps Howard to know that he was being quoted incorrectly, or whatever. I wouldn't be surprised if he made a phone call himself, or like you say, that someone was calling directly for him.

(I) I wasn't sure which way it was. Copeland was not at Scripps Howard at the time, so someone had to relay it to him. I am not sure whether General McClain actually called them and then they had to tell him because he was in Panama.

I lost my train of thought, what I was going to say . . . I'll go on to the next question.

This is a kind of a symatics [syntactical] type of thing. Even though the commander is not at the site where the troops engage in a battle but directing it from a command post, does the Army consider that still leading the troops?

(M) I certainly do. Now, realize my background. I am an infantry officer. I was a platoon leader and company commander in Vietnam, I have a CIB that gets me emotionally involved in questions like this that evolved. But, sure, as an infantry officer, the commander does not have to be in front of the troops to be leading the troops. Certainly he can command an operation from a command position, a bunker, a building, a helicopter up above. In Vietnam where a battalion commander was flying above me and I was the company commander on the ground, I certainly felt that he was commanding what I was doing although he wasn't down there in front. I, on the other hand, had platoons doing things and I couldn't see them but I was talking to them on the radio, maybe we were in a jungle environment, I certainly felt in control of them, and certainly felt that Captain Bray talking on the radio from a half mile away or whatever the distance was, certainly by my definition would be that she was leading the troops.

(I) When the American public read that she had led her troops into combat, do you think it mattered to them that she was in a command post or that she was present at the time that the engagement started?



(M) Yes, it is, but I will change my position a little bit. I do think it makes a difference in the public's mind's eye as to how they picture it. If you just say 'leading the troops' to the public, I think they envision her up in the infantry "follow-me" statue, that she is up front, bayonet in hand, and she is leading, meaning being in front of, as opposed to commanding the troops from a command position. I guess that is where I would split it.

(I) Peter Copeland's article told where she was in the article and Wilson Ring, I don't remember, I don't think he mentioned where she was. He didn't say she was there or wasn't there. I'm pretty sure that's the way his was. Didn't that conjure up the wrong impression to the American public?

(M) I . . . the fact that he didn't mention where she was?

(I) Well, Peter Copeland told where it was, but--

(M) Right, but by leaving it out?

(I) By leaving it out, I am pretty sure Wilson Ring, either he didn't have room for it or he chose not to put it in?

(M) Well, I guess I could go either way on that. I do think that by not saying it, it does conjure up in the public's eye a wrong impression. If they are making a decision or forming an opinion about leadership . . . Well, let's see, I don't know, that's a tough one. I guess that if I were in a command, I would rather that the public had all the information such as in Copeland's story. Know that she was back there, back in a command position as opposed to dodging bullets initially when it is

initially happening. I guess the more knowledge the public has, the more facts that they have the better, more accurate representation . . . . If they don't, if some of the facts are missing, then they are left to assume where she was, what she was doing, and could easily get the wrong impression. I don't know if this made any sense at all. Sorry.

(I) I understand what you are saying. Broder really tried to emphasize that in his article. That she was not present and he really, sort of, in my impression, and this is my personal opinion, that he kind of picked on Scripps Howard story. But, in that instance, Peter Copeland's article did say where she was, so I didn't understand why it was that important--so that he clarified it. He said that it was very important because it conjured up a wrong idea.

(M) It also makes good print, good copy for Broder.

(I) For Broder, well Broder said that he didn't think that the *Los Angeles Times* thought much about his article since they printed it on page 22 whereas Copeland's and Wilson Ring's article were all on the front page. And I guess the *Los Angeles Times* as far as I know, did not print any other story on Captain Bray, they didn't run the first article.

Do you know if General McClain, he is quoted in Broder's article, he never quotes him directly, it is indirect, and that leads me to believe that it is an interpretation of what he said. Did he say, and I know you don't know for sure, but your impression of General McClain, that the Army wanted the story, to throw water on Copeland's story? Is General McClain, speaking out, to do that, through Broder? Because I know, Broder approached him.

(M) Maybe we ought to look at the "throw water on it" and go back to one of the first questions that you asked, that we wanted to put that story in perspective and make it a green story, for instance you could use purple for Jointance [Joint Services], to make it a story without the male or female aspect of the story. I don't know for sure if they said that, or if they even discussed it. It would track, yes we wanted to throw water on, not kill the story, but let all the facts out to say, put the fire out, if you want to carry out the analogy. It is not that big of a story. It is there, here's the facts. Put the water as the facts, put the facts out, and then that story does not continue to burn and to grow as a big issue because the facts have been put out and it goes out by itself.

(I) You don't know anything about what Capt. Bray was in the hospital for or anything?

(M) What now?

(I) Yes.

(M) No--

(I) I was trying to get her impression. I know Peter Copeland wanted another interview with her and showed me a response. And she was very--chose her words very closely, exactly what she wanted to say. That she thought it had been blown way out of proportion. And that was why she didn't want to grant another interview.

(M) And she has maintained that for quite sometime. I have talked to the Public Affairs Officer at Fort Benning myself several times. And we always make, forward

the request, but we always tell them that we are willing to take no for an answer if that is her desire. And she has been pretty consistent in not wanting to do others. There's plenty of opportunities for other interviews, and to make her more of a celebrity, if you will, and reopen the issue. And she hasn't wanted it. And my approach to that is that we will do everything in our power to protect her if she personally doesn't want to do any more interviews. And we will respect that right and do everything to support her right to say no.

(I) Yea, and I can understand that. I was hoping that since mine is not really published that I could get her side and try to figure out where the facts lie. And what her feelings are about the media. Because that is what my paper is, the media, not necessarily the facts of this story. It is how the media works.

(M) If you haven't talked to her, written to her, whatever, I would encourage you to go ahead and do that. Explain where you are coming from, who you are and what your intended product is and she may reconsider. I just see her as a shy person who did not want that media attention, that was nervous with it when it happened and wanted to get out of the limelight as quickly as she could. Anybody trying to get to her, she has just been saying, not interested, no thank you.

(I) Do you have anything to add?

(M) No, sorry I didn't have any more details, that was one I didn't keep a personal file on because it was being worked both above me by General McClain and General Brady and below me by an action officer who had an account with women in the Army and saw it in a broader context.

So while I was seeing a couple sides of it I just didn't have any more details or much personal involvement in it. I could philosophize all day, but--

(I) That's on policy--

(M) Sure, if there is anything else on your basic, maybe not your thesis, about the public wanting it to be right, caring if it is right . . . . We certainly care that the story come out right and that the facts get printed. I'll just add on one little thing that might be of interest. There seems to be a growing tendency in journalism to go back to previous stories electronically with NEXIS equipment, or some type of filing system like that, to find old stories and bring them up. That is why it is important that we continue to let a story play itself out so that all the facts, if it takes us writing a letter to the editor, and getting it printed, or calling in another reporter and trying to get them interested in a story, just so something else is printed so when you put in the search words, Bray, Panama, you not only get Copeland's story and this one and that one, but you get follow on stories. Otherwise you are always going to have \$600 hammer and toilet seats that are just going to become myth. One I saw this week, Bradley fighting vehicle. It is made out of aluminum and it burns. Of course, you can set a match to a Bradley fighting vehicle and it burns. Now, we addressed that four or five years ago and completely answered all of that, but obviously what this reporter had done, he was just looking for material problems, so he went back, whether it was a NEXIS search, or something like that, and didn't do the research to find out what the Army's answers were to those things and this is really plaguing us now with Saudi Arabia that the M1 tank uses too much gas. Well, the M-16 doesn't fire when it is dirty. As everybody knows from Vietnam, well as everybody knows from Vietnam, there was initially some problems, those were fixed. The M-16A2 is a totally different rifle from the M-16 that we had in Vietnam. And

so to say everybody knows that the M-16 is not going to work in Saudi Arabia or the M1 tank isn't going to work because of previous stories. It is very important to set the record straight. Almost, whether the public cares or not. I don't mean that callously, they may not be interested in the story, but if we can get the story printed right, then researchers, like yourself, later on, if they do it right, can go back and get the whole story and then decide for themselves. So we really do like to close things out, if we can, to get it all on the record.

(I) I did do a VU/TEXT search on AP and *Los Angeles Times*, because I didn't have access to those and I got all the stories from AP, so I got to see what was printed and what was actually written.

(M) If you wanted to use our NEXIS machine, I'll point it out to you, it's just on the other side of that wall, that would give you access to a lot more. I don't know, if you want to put Captain Brady's name down or search word 'Bray' or Panama or whatever, because there have been *Ladies Home Journal* stories or whatever . . . . There have just been a lot of other stories that she has been featured in. It would give you references. If you want to do that I have one or two people, I personally don't know how to operate the machine, but I can get someone to go in there with you and--

(I) I appreciate it. I have stories. But I need as many as I can.

(M) That would be a lot more exhaustive than just going to the *LA Times* and AP News Service

(I) I was able to get to microfiche for others, but I had to pay for the VU/TEXT.

(M) I understand. This would give you a menu of the stories that there are and you could just look through and see which ones you already have and the ones you don't have you could print them out.

(I) I appreciate this sir.

END OF TAPE

## Appendix E

Peter Copeland, Scripps Howard News Service

January 1, 1990



U.S. WOMEN KEY PLAYERS IN INVASION OF PANAMA  
Scripps Howard News Service  
Release date: 1-1-90  
By PETER COPELAND  
Scripps Howard News Service

PANAMA CITY, Panama -- American women participated fully in the invasion of Panama, firing machine guns, taking enemy prisoners and even leading troops into battle.

The women soldiers were on the front lines of the Dec. 20 invasion to topple strongman Manuel Noriega, and in the days following they fought snipers in crowded neighborhoods, guarded prisoners of war and helped provide security for the U.S. military headquarters and the commanding general, Maxwell Thurman.

A dozen women soldiers and officers said in interviews that the women were treated like any other soldiers, which surprised some of the women themselves and most Panamanians, who still look twice when they see a young woman behind an M-60 machine gun.

"Congress does not like women in combat, but what they don't know won't hurt them," said Pfc. Christina Proctor, a military policewoman.

"I raised my right hand to defend my country, and I've got a job to do. I was trained just like the guys and that's what I do," said Ms. Proctor, a tall, 20-year-old blonde from Strawberry, Ariz.

According to her commanding officer -- also a woman -- Ms. Proctor single-handedly captured an enemy prisoner after a fierce firefight at the Panama Defense Forces kennel for police dogs, which also housed 42 heavily armed troops.

"It was the first time for me, and if anybody tells you they weren't scared, they're lying," said Ms. Proctor, whose father fought in Vietnam. "In training if you make a mistake you can do it again, but here you might not get a second chance."

Ms. Proctor also has a twin sister in the Army in Panama. "My mom was crying at work because her two daughters are here and Noriega was on television all the time," she said.

Ms. Proctor's commanding officer is Capt. Linda Bray, commander of the 123-member 988th Military Police Company from Fort Benning, Ga., which landed in Panama on Dec. 17. Fifteen of her troops are women, and 12 of them have been in combat, she said.

"The sounds, the confusion, the excitement, the teamwork and camaraderie -- it automatically clicks in combat," said Ms. Bray, 29, of Putner, N.C. Not one of her troops has been wounded, she said.

When Ms. Bray realized one of her platoons was meeting heavier resistance than expected at the kennel during the first minutes of the invasion, she crashed through the gate in a jeep armed with a .50-caliber machine gun to lead the fight. Three enemy dead were found there later, she said.

"I joined the Army for the excitement, the challenge, experience and loyalty to my country," she said. "I haven't been let down a day."

One of her four platoon leaders, Lt. Kimberly Thompson of Columbus, Ga., was in charge of surrounding the Cuban embassy, which U.S. officials feared might be a refuge for Noriega and his men. Her platoon fought snipers in nearby buildings and killed three armed men in a van that crashed through a roadblock.

"I've been confronted with situations here that I thought I couldn't handle," Ms. Thompson said. "As you go through things, you get tougher."

"Everybody's talking about getting combat patches for their uniforms, but my main goal is that we go back with everybody we came with," said Ms. Thompson, 23, whose father was in the Navy and whose

MORE

mother was an Army nurse.

Ms. Thompson studied to be an elementary school teacher but chose the Army. "It's definitely more challenging than being a teacher," she said.

As a personnel records supervisor stationed in Panama, Sgt. Vanessa Nash, 30, handles a pencil more than an M-16 automatic rifle.

But two hours before the invasion began, Ms. Nash was ordered to grab a gun and spend the night hunkered down behind a tree to guard a U.S. hospital.

"Every time I blinked, it looked like the trees in front of me changed positions. We heard leaves falling and would whisper, 'Here they come.'"

"I didn't know if I would freeze or shoot, but I knew I had to take their lives or they would take mine," said Ms. Nash, of Anniston, Ala.

"I always thought I would do my 20 years and never see combat," she said. "I heard people got scared, and I thought I could handle it. I panicked."

Spec. Cheryl Purdie, 25, said, "I had to prove myself to the guys just holding up and not running away."

"I wanted to cry, but I didn't."

Ms. Purdie, of Wakefield, Va., is a member of the 128th Military Police Company from Fort Bragg, N.C. She handled a machine gun during a successful attack on a base of operations for a band of urban guerrillas.

Another member of the 128th Company, Pfc. Erin Carney, 20, of Troy, N.Y., said, "We have to prove ourselves more than a new male coming in."

"A lot of people feel that the Army is no place for a woman, and I thought they might take us off the guns and put us in the office," Ms. Carney said between patrols of downtown Panama City.

"The Panamanians are really surprised," she said. "They look and then they look again when they see me up there on that gun."

(Peter Copeland is a reporter for Scripps Howard News Service.)

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## Appendix F

Wilson Ring, *Washington Post*

January 3, 1990

# Woman Led U.S. Troops Into Battle

## Captain's Platoon Took PDF Target

By Wilson Ring  
Special to The Washington Post

PANAMA CITY, Jan. 2—A female captain led a platoon into battle during last month's U.S. invasion of Panama, the first time that a woman has taken such a combat role for the American military.

Army Capt. Linda L. Bray's mission, as commander of the 988th Military Police Company, was assigned to lead one of her platoons in an effort to neutralize a Panamanian Defense Force (PDF) attack-dog kennel on the edge of Panama City. Besides attack dogs, the kennel area also housed heavily armed PDF troops.

In a three-hour battle, Bray's troops secured the target after killing three PDF soldiers and capturing a number of weapons, according to Capt. Bray and her troops.

While she was the only female officer actually to lead an attack during the invasion, 600 women took part in the engagement and dozens of them in MP units fought the PDF alongside men.

Three enlisted women from another of the four platoons in Bray's company played a key role in the infantry attack on the Comandancia, the headquarters of deposed strongman Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega. That assault produced some of the heaviest fighting in the invasion.

Still, the bulk of the fighting was done by the true combat units, the infantry, armor, artillery, which by law do not contain women combatants. There were no reports

men being among the 21 killed or 323 wounded. [A Pentagon spokesman said he still could not determine whether the wounded included women.]

The Defense Department's policy mandates that women accompany their support units whatever the assignment. Bray's company was sent to Panama from Fort Benning, Ga., on a regular rotation a week before the movement into Panama was launched.

"Before this all started, I had always wondered what would happen. After this, in my opinion, there is no difference [between men and women]. They worked together as a team, all my soldiers," Bray said.

Bray said that for all the distinction between combat and support units, with about 11 percent of the military made up of women, it was probably inevitable that some would see combat when U.S. forces were committed to battle.

"For whatever reason, the MPs are in a combat support role . . . I hope this makes a statement. It used to be that just because you were a female you would not be able to fight. That is no longer true."

Asked if she felt the Panama experience might cause the regulations about women in combat to be tightened up, Bray answered, "I hope it doesn't happen. Any female soldier in Panama, or any male for that matter, will tell you they hope not . . . I hope it doesn't cause a regression. This is a big step."

Bray, 29, a native of Luckner, N.C. and a 1982 ROTC graduate of Western Carolina university, is 5 feet 1 and weighs just over 100 pounds. She took command of her 123-member company last summer.

Her place in history came shortly after the 1 a.m. 11-hour of Dec. 20. For the attack on the kennel, Bray had about 30 soldiers armed with machine guns, grenade launchers and the soldiers' personal weapons.

Bray said a bullhorn was used to tell the PDF soldiers in the kennel to surrender, but they refused. "I ordered a warning shot. Nothing happened. Then they fired the M-60 [machine gun] at the edge of the building." Still nothing.

After the warnings were ignored, Bray's soldiers opened fire and the

PDF troops returned it. The platoon spent almost three hours securing the building, Bray said. She refused to talk about enemy dead, but her troops said that the following morning three PDF dead were found inside the kennel.

The attack was only part of the mission assigned Bray's company. Another platoon was attached to the infantry for the attack on the Comandancia.

That platoon, with three female enlisted personnel, was directed to close some intersections about a block from the Comandancia to block any PDF reinforcements from arriving.

Pfc. Felicia Featherstone, 19, of St. Louis, said there were only 12 soldiers at the intersection she was guarding, with the rest of the platoon at the next corner. She said the confused battle saw hundreds of civilians fleeing Chorrillo, the slum neighborhood surrounding the Comandancia, running through the intersection while the PDF shot at her squad. Chorrillo's shacks were aflame.

"I always wanted to be an MP," Featherstone said. "I knew MPs break up fights, but I never thought I would have people shooting at me just because I am an American."

While the Army's women and men consulted say they do not distinguish by gender in the ranks, it was obvious that officers knew precisely where each woman soldier was during their operations.

"They performed very well," said one of the male platoon sergeants in the Bray's company, who asked not to be identified. "Some of the females performed better than the men. I am proud of them."

"The ones we have did good, but I don't think they should be there," said another soldier. "At Benning they say they have female problems and no one can say anything . . . They need special treatment."

There were no complaints from the men about having to take orders from women. "I don't think of her [Bray] as a woman. She's the CO [commanding officer] and that's it," said Pfc. Eric Jansen, 23, of Baltimore. "She gives you an order and you follow it."

Bray said she never felt slighted as an officer because of her sex. Featherstone, however, admitted to feeling discriminated.

slow them down. We shower them," Featherstone said. "They have a lot more respect for us now. It brought us very close . . . . We became a tight little family after that."

"I hope this inspires other women. There are some who feel they couldn't physically or emotionally stand it. They have to prove they can do it. They have to try harder," Featherstone said.

*Staff writer Molly Moore, in Washington, added:*

Pentagon officials said that of 600 Army women among the 24,500 officers and troops involved in the invasion, about 170 of the women were with Army units from the United States and 430 had already been stationed in Panama.

According to Army spokeswoman Paige Eversole, women served not only in the Military Police but in support roles for the infantry, military intelligence units, a signal battalion and the headquarters of the 18th Airborne Corps. Four women also provided support services for special operations teams.

While U.S. laws and Army regulations forbid women from serving in jobs that have been designated "combat" roles by the military, modern warfare has blurred the definition of combat.

An Army official said the incident in which the MP unit encountered PDF soldiers at the kennel was the first time a woman has led U.S. troops into a battle situation.

"To the layman's ear" it was battle, said Eversole. "But this is professional soldiering and 'combat' and 'battle' take on different meanings. Eversole said the women involved in the firefight "were performing routine MP jobs for which they were trained."

"The whole combat thing has been a fiction," said U.S. Rep. Patricia Schroeder (D-Colo.). "There is no such thing as a combat zone any more. One day a position can be in a combat zone, the next day it isn't."

Most of the women involved in the 1983 Grenada invasion were not allowed into the country until the fighting subsided, although at least one woman assisted in loading and unloading Air Force aircraft on the ground in Grenada during the initial hours of the invasion.

## Appendix G

John Broder, *Los Angeles Times*

January 6, 1990

# Female's War Exploits Overblown, Army Says

■ **Panama:** No enemy soldiers were killed, and the fire-fight lasted only 10 minutes, officials disclose.

By JOHN M. BRODER  
TIMES STAFF WRITER

WASHINGTON—The Army said Friday that press accounts of a female commander's battle exploits in Panama, later repeated by White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater, were grossly exaggerated.

According to widely published accounts from Panama, Army Capt. Linda Bray, 29, led a force of 30 military police in a fierce three-hour fire-fight at a Panama Defense Forces guard dog kennel that left three Panamanian soldiers dead.

The kennel, first thought to be undefended, was "heavily defended," Fitzwater said in a White House briefing Thursday. "Three PDF men were killed. Gunshots were fired on both sides. American troops could have been killed."

"It was an important military operation," Fitzwater continued. "A woman led it, and she did an outstanding job." The incident, in the early hours of the Dec. 20 invasion, has been generally accepted as the first time that a woman has led American troops in battle.

In fact, the Army acknowledged Friday, the heavy gunfire lasted 10 minutes and no Panamanian troops were killed. Whatever Panamanian soldiers had been defending the facility faded into the woods, offering only "sporadic" sniper fire until disappearing into the night, an Army spokesman said.

The original newspaper account of the action, distributed by Scripps Howard News Service, was widely repeated by other news organizations.

Bray was interviewed extensively by her superiors Friday after questions were raised in the Pentagon about press accounts of the kennel incident. She denied that she was the source of the more elaborate reports of the action, according to an Army general who spoke with her.

At a news conference Friday, President Bush hailed the "heroic performance" of the American women who participated in the Dec. 20 invasion of Panama but said that he will reserve judgment on the future role of women in combat.

Questioned about the participation of women in the invasion, Bush said that their original assignments were in noncombat duties, but "any time you have a highly trained, gung-ho volunteer force and they're caught up in some of the fire-fights that went on, a person can be put into a combat situation."

As a result of Bray's and other Army women's actions in Panama, Rep. Patricia Schroeder (D-Colo.) said she would introduce legislation to allow women to serve in all military jobs, including combat, in a four-year experiment.

The Army has about 600 female troops permanently stationed in Panama; another 170, including Bray's 988th military police company from Ft. Benning, Ga., were sent to take part in the invasion. No American women were killed or injured in the fighting in Panama, officials said.

It was not clear how the inflated accounts of Bray's exploits began. According to the Scripps Howard story, Bray said that the three enemy dead were found at the scene later. But an Army spokesman, Gen. Bill McClain, said that Bray never reported any PDF casualties, nor did the Defense Department's Panama-based Southern Command, which ran the entire operation.

The Scripps Howard account also said that one of Bray's soldiers, Pfc. Christina Proctor, "single-handedly captured an enemy prisoner." According to Bray, however, when she counted her troops at the close of the operation, she had one more than she started with. The extra man was a frightened, unarmed PDF soldier who surrendered without resistance, she told the Army.

McClain said that Bray was not even at the kennel when the shooting started. She was a half mile away at a command post.

A White House official said Fitzwater based his comments solely on newspaper accounts. He had no independent verification of the incident when he spoke about it Thursday, officials said.

U.S. law and military regulations bar women from combat roles, although they serve in numerous support jobs—such as transport and military police units—that can bring them into the line of fire, as occurred in Panama. They are armed and trained to use their weapons and, like all U.S. soldiers, are authorized to fire to defend themselves.

Times staff writer Robin Wright contributed to this story.

## U.S. Will Fund Plan Move Con

From Associated Press

WASHINGTON—The United States is prepared to pay \$3 million to an international mission to begin planning for the voluntary relocation of Contras to their home countries under conditions announced Friday.

State Department spokesman Richard L. Holman said the funds would be used to commission a study by the National Endowment for Democracy and the Organization of American States officials. The study, known by its Spanish acronym, was set up parallel to the dismantling of most of whom are barracks.

"We have explanations to the government and the Nicaraguan people," Boucher said. "The OAS secretaries general have been informed."

The commission will be asked to submit a report for use of the funds.

The disclosure was made in a major activity concerning the rebels as Nicaraguan elections draw closer. President Ortega will be running in a 25 election against state led by Violeta Chamorro.

Sources close to the government said that officials would meet with Contra representatives. CIAV officials tend.

Amnesty for return in peace to be discussed, sources said.

In addition, State officials are expected to meet with CIAV officials to discuss the location of peace process.

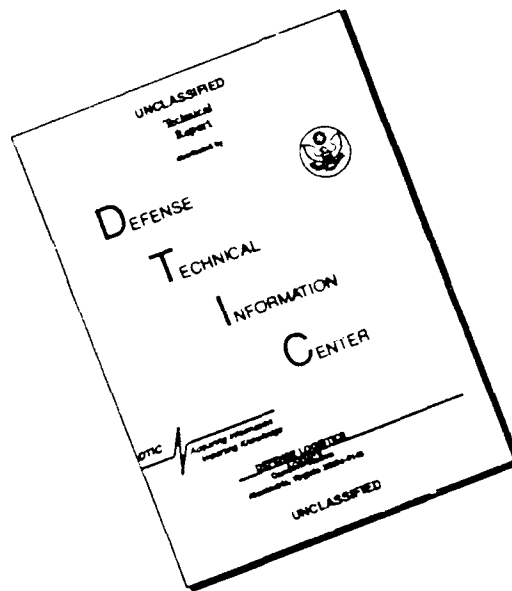
Most of the Contras

## VITA

Joan R. Vallance-Whitacre was born September 27, 1958 in Honolulu, Hawaii, to Ruth J. Hollis Vallance (deceased) and Roy W. Vallance (deceased), the fifth of five children. She is an American citizen. She graduated from North Hardin High School (Radcliff, Ky.) in June 1976, and attended the University of Kentucky in Lexington. She received her B.S. in Accounting in May 1980. She was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army as an Adjutant General's Corps Officer. Ms. Vallance-Whitacre has been selected for major. She attended University of Oklahoma January 1987 to June 1989 and received her M.S. in Human Relations. She is an Army spokesperson at the New York City Branch of the Chief, Public Affairs Office, U.S. Army. She attended Virginia Commonwealth University and graduated December 1990 with a M.S. in Mass Communications.



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