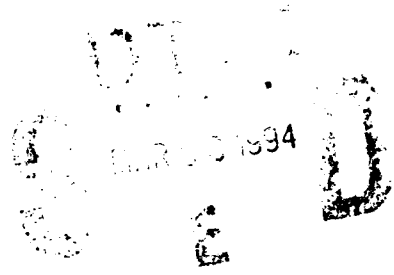# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
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THESIS

THE FIFTH ESTATE:
The New Media of Desert Storm

by

Peter M. Ryan

December 1993

Thesis Advisor: Patrick Parker

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The New Media of Desert Storm

by

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Lieutenant, United States Navy
B.A., Virginia Polytechnic Institute, 1986

Submitted in partial fulfillment
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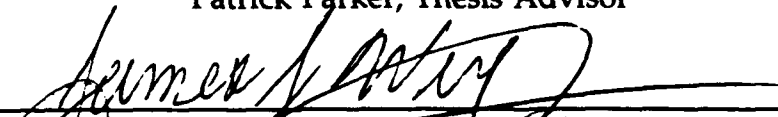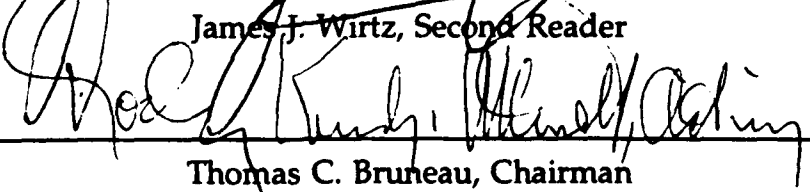December 1993

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines how changes in the news media, as evidenced in Desert Storm, have resulted in what the author terms the "new media." These changes in the media are radically altering the conduct of national policy, including war. Subject areas addressed include the new media's impact on intelligence, wartime diplomacy, and public opinion. Additionally, the potential ramifications of the growing multi-national nature of the news media are extensively examined. Specific changes in the media that also addressed include the real-time coverage of war, the global scope of wartime television coverage, technological advance of the media, and increases in national and global television viewership of wartime coverage. The methodology the author uses is a qualitative examination of the media and its apparent impact during Desert Storm. This thesis concludes with recommendations for DOD/government to confront, manage, and utilize these changes in the media so as to allow the implementation of policies that best serve the national interest. The primary purpose for this work is to spur the government/DOD into addressing the "new media" and considering the concept of an information strategy.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This thesis examines how changes in the news media, as evidenced in Desert Storm, have resulted in what the author terms the "new media." These changes in the media are radically altering the conduct of national policy, including war.

The relationship of the media to American society is so crucial to our way of life that it is protected in the first amendment of our Constitution. However, the recent changes in the media are altering longstanding assumptions about its relationship to both our government and society. Implicit in our government's past treatment of the press is a belief that they are somehow on our side during war. However, just as the paradigm of what is good for General Motors is good for our country is in question, so too is this implicit assumption by our government concerning its relationship with the media. Because the old assumptions are no longer valid, the previous theory of U.S. military/media relations must be modified. The technological changes and growing multinational nature of the media are forcing us to look at them in a new light.

Desert Storm was a watershed in terms of the media's role in war. They played an integral part in it from the very beginning. They facilitated a radically new form of media diplomacy between the United States, Iraq and the coalition, mesmerized over a billion people with nearly live television coverage of war, and provided a new intelligence capability to both sides of the conflict. The media was no longer a spectator. It was a large portion of the process by which the war

was conducted.

The methodology utilized in this thesis is a qualitative examination of the media and its apparent impact during Desert Storm. Because the media is an important component of many academic disciplines, it was necessary to utilize a broad cross-disciplinary spectrum of analysis. Subject areas addressed include the new media's impact on intelligence, wartime diplomacy, and world and public opinion. Additionally, the potential ramifications of the growing multi-national nature of the news media are extensively examined. Specific changes in the media that are also addressed include the real-time coverage of war, the global scope of wartime television coverage, technological advances in the media, and increases in national and global television viewership of wartime coverage. No history of media/military relations is provided. Additionally, the historical conflict between the military and the media concerning the dissemination of information is only addressed in passing.

To summarize the findings of this thesis:

1. The media has radically altered the diplomatic and intelligence processes. Additionally, the media's own structure is rapidly changing. We need to evaluate how to best utilize these changes to our advantage.

2. We do not know what the full consequences of this growing global media are in a time of war in terms of public opinion, world opinion, and social psychology.

3. The media and particularly the multi-national media should NEVER be considered an ally of the United States. They have other motivations. It is useful to think of them as an environment in which we conduct war.

4. The U.S. government and military need to confront these changes in our environment. Training our personnel about this environment and the formulation

of information strategies for political and military purposes are required. The ideas found in the body of the thesis may provide a useful starting point.

The primary purpose for this work is to spur the government/DOD into addressing the "new media" and considering the concept of an information strategy. We fail to proactively engage these changes at our own peril.

I. INTRODUCTION

The communications revolution of the 20th century has profoundly affected all facets of American society. This revolution has led to an information explosion. The effects of these events are felt not only by the public, but also by the elites that govern our democratic society. Our government has been forced to address the ramifications of this fundamental change in the nature of communications and information during wartime. The way information is presented to the public is important to governments for both sustaining legitimacy and power. Today, the vast majority of news information is presented to the public via the media, especially in wartime.[1] Because of this, the intermediary relationship of the media between society and government is crucial. The framers of the Constitution knew the media were important and that free speech was essential to the survival of our state. When writing about the framers, Loren Thompson indicates that, "They envisioned a central role for the press in facilitating the functioning of democracy in the new nation." She continues by saying that in 1788, Alexander Hamilton wrote in Federalist number 84, that the press was important because it would protect the nation "against the intrigues of scoundrels and traitors."[2] However, the press

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[1] A review of the literature from the 1950's until the present will reveal a growing acceptance by academics of this assumption which the author also holds to be true. Of the various forms of media, television is far and away the most influential in terms of the numbers of people directly reached. As asserted in James F. Larson, Global Television and Foreign Policy (New York: Foreign Policy Association, 1988), pp. 22-23., "Television is now the public's main source of information concerning international affairs." As this thesis will reveal, television had the greatest impact of all forms of media during Desert Storm.

[2] Loren B. Thompson, ed., Defense Beat: The Dilemmas of Defense Coverage (New York: Lexington Books, 1991), p. 3.

envisioned by the framers of the Constitution has since then dramatically changed.

The primary change in the media has been its technological advancement. This was a prerequisite for the formation of an expanding media that is increasingly unconstrained by the limitations of national borders or loyalties. The media's technological advancement, globalization, and increasingly multi-national nature are altering previously existing wartime relationships that existed between the United States' government, the media, and American society. The media information system of Desert Storm lays the foundation for thinking about the ramifications of what the author terms the "new media."

It is commonly believed that Desert Storm was monumental in a large part because the media made it so. The author concurs with this assessment. However, there are some crucial aspects about the media coverage of that conflict that are relatively new, continue to change rapidly, and require closer examination. This thesis identifies what was different about the media during Desert Storm and why these changes in the media's information process are of importance to our country both politically and militarily. It also offers prescriptive measures to confront this new environment in future wars involving the United States.

The most critical debate our country can be involved in is that public discourse concerning our involvement in war. Therefore, it is essential to examine the process by which this debate is presented to the American public. If the process is flawed and the American public does not receive the information it needs to make sound decisions, it cannot be expected to make judgements that are in its best interest. In wartime, it is

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clear that certain information, if placed in the public domain, would be detrimental to the actual troops involved in the conduct of the war. These two concepts, access to information and suppression of information, are mutually exclusive. Additionally, this military/media conflict has already been addressed numerous times and still goes unresolved. Interestingly, the formation of a "new media" has to some extent relegated this long standing conflict to lesser importance.

What do the technological changes in the media and the media's globalization mean to the American national interest during war? How does a democratic society that thrives upon open and accurate information deal with these new developments? The examination of the new media during Desert Storm is important because it sheds light on how the information process effected the American people in what has turned out to be the first war prosecuted during what many call the information age. This work is significant because it substantiates and acknowledges that our government must confront this "new media." If we fail to take action, we may be at risk of losing the next war politically because we were unable to successfully prosecute that same war on the information front. Additionally, a thorough examination of Desert Storm may lead us not only to improvements in the way information is presented to the American people, but, because of a potentially more knowledgeable public, to improvements in policy itself.

The methodology utilized in this thesis establishes a baseline for comparing the changes in the media during Desert Storm by making a qualitative examination of the media during the conflict. One of the difficulties in examining this topic is its cross

disciplinary nature. The media are central to the disciplines of journalism and communications and are very oftentimes considered key elements in the disciplines of social psychology, world and public opinion, international relations, social studies, political psychology, psychology and most importantly for this thesis, national security. Each one of these disciplines directly bears upon national policy in one form or another. The broad view of cross disciplinary analysis is helpful because it grasps the "big picture" elements essential for strategic planning. No history of media/military relations is provided. Additionally, the historical conflict between the military and the media concerning the dissemination of information is only addressed in passing.

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Following the introduction, Chapter II provides an examination of how changes in the information process during Desert Storm altered some of the long standing relationships between the media, the government and American society. Chapter III looks at other changes in the media of concern to national planners. Chapter IV prescribes methods and policies necessary for confronting the information environment, both politically and militarily. Lastly, Chapter V concludes with a summary of the major points to be extracted from this work.

II. THE MEDIA'S TRANSFORMATION DURING DESERT STORM

War does not take place in a vacuum and is influenced by many forces. One of those forces is the politics of the conflict. As Clausewitz states, "War is...the continuation of politics by different means."[3] The politics surrounding war invariably involve diplomacy of one fashion or another. As Walter Roberts explains, "Diplomacy is the means governments use to conduct relations between nations."[4] Diplomacy in war is carried out by communicating to the enemy the message you want him to receive. That message can take many forms. One such form was described in a poem in The Retired Officer Magazine titled "The Mission." It stated that, "Brave men took their bombers downtown and spoke with the enemy personally, in the only language the enemy understands: iron bombs falling on their heads."[5] While this is very dramatic, it leaves no doubt that a signal is being sent to the wartime opponent. The diplomacy of Desert Storm, while incorporating this "older" type of communication, also took on a new dimension. This dimension is the "new media." This chapter examines aspects of the "new media" evidenced in Desert Storm which have permanently changed the political/military process during war.

A. WHAT IS THE "NEW MEDIA?"

Desert Storm precipitated a new or different type of media coverage of war.

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[3]Carl von Clausewitz, On War, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 7.

[4]Walter R. Roberts, "The Media Dimension II: Diplomacy in the Information Age," The World Today, Vol. 47, No. 7 (July 1991), p. 112.

[5]C. James Novak, "Flying on a Razor's Edge," containing an anonymously authored poem "The Mission," The Retired Officer Magazine, Vol. 49, No. 6 (June 1993), p. 49.

However, there are some inherent difficulties in trying to determine whether a technologically-based phenomena is fundamentally new or different. Charles S. Steinberg states, "As with most successful technologies, the results cannot be evaluated solely on the quantitative criteria of science. All technical phenomena have social, cultural, political and economic consequences."[6] Indeed, as Rear Admiral Brent Baker, the former Chief of Information for the U.S. Navy wrote in Proceedings, "Even though it (the media) is before our eyes every day, we cannot really see its social, political, and economic impact."[7] It is these consequences, as evidenced by the media's role in Desert Storm, that will be qualitatively surveyed in this chapter. This examination will reveal the existence of a media which has profoundly changed. These changes are so extensive as to require our rethinking the way we consider the media in a time of war.

To say that there was a revolution in the media coverage of Desert Storm is an understatement. As noted in Desert Storm, "The Gulf War represented a dramatic change in direction for war news coverage--in print as well as in the electronic media."[8] As further explained in The Media at War: The Press and the Persian Gulf Conflict:

> In the 40-day Persian Gulf war the news media were much more than neutral observers. From the beginning of the war on the evening of January 16, 1991, media organizations were talked about almost as much as governments, generals and troops on both sides and across the 28-nation

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[6]Charles S. Steinberg, "Preface," in his The Communicative Arts: An Introduction to Mass Media (New York: Hastings House, 1970), pp. ix-x.

[7]Brent Baker, "Decisions at the Speed of Satellite," Proceedings (August 1992), p. 69. Hereafter cited as Proceedings.

[8]William M. Vogt and Carl A. Gnam, Jr., eds., Desert Storm (Leesburg, Virginia: Empire Press, 1991), p. 98.

alliance that opposed the forces of Iraq. When President Bush and his commanders were asked about early developments in the conflict, they often said they relied on "the media," and especially on CNN. And it was said that Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein was also watching the war on television, also relying on CNN and its remarkable international presence.[9]

Never had the news been such an important element in the conduct of war.

While this may constitute a new media, the most elementary concepts related to journalistic coverage of news did not change during Desert Storm. At its most basic level, the media communicated information (news) for profit to others throughout the war. However, there were fundamental changes in many aspects of media's coverage of Desert Storm. These changes include the process by which Desert Storm was presented to the public, in the magnitude of media attention given to the war, the technological expansion of the media industry, the growing internationalization of war news, the sheer magnitude of wartime global television viewing, and the military's use of the media in prosecuting the war among others. Not only was the presentation of the news significantly different, but the impact of the media on international relations and war-making significantly changed.

Elites within our government are also acknowledging the existence of an altered media system. Admiral Baker notes that leaders or institutions ignore the changes in the media "at their own peril." He continues to note that these changes are part of our 1990s information-age lifestyle and have "greatly impacted the decision-making process."[10]

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[9]Everette E. Dennis et al., "Introduction," The Media at War: The Press and the Persian Gulf Conflict, Report of the Gannett Foundation (New York: Gannett Foundation Media Center, June 1991), p. 1.

[10]Baker, Proceedings, p. 69.

Clearly, this indicates there is a "new media" which national planners must now consider.

B. TELEVISION AND DESERT STORM

One of the most noticeable changes during coverage of war in Desert Storm, was the profound impact of television on many facets of the war. As indicated in The Media at War, "During the war, television was confirmed as America's preeminent source of information."[11] Television, and the Cable News Network (CNN) in particular, precipitated changes previously unseen in the realm of wartime coverage. As explained in CNN: War in the Gulf, a monumental change in the coverage of war was that "television viewers throughout the world saw the Persian Gulf War while it happened."[12] Even in the cases where the coverage was not real-time, the public perceived the news coverage to be live.

Another element of change in the media coverage of Desert Storm was the sheer number of worldwide television viewers of the conflict. As Philip Taylor indicates, "In the United States, an estimated 160 million viewers tuned in, making this the highest-rating event in American television history, pushing the funeral of President Kennedy into second place."[13] General Perry Smith explains that:

> At times 40 million people in the United States were watching CNN. As large as it seems, this number is quite small when compared to the

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[11]Dennis et al., p. xii.

[12]Thomas B. Allen, F. C. Clifton, and Norman Polmar, CNN: War in the Gulf (Atlanta, Georgia: Turner Publishing, Inc., 1991), p. 13.

[13]Philip M. Taylor, War and the Media: Propaganda and Persuasion in the Gulf War (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), p. 33.

international audience...its (CNN's) public relations office estimated the total number of people who watched the network sometime during the war at one billion people in one hundred and eight nations.[14]

It is likely that the addition of massive amounts of television viewing by the global population in a time of war alters the entire domestic/international political process. This is a relatively new factor that warriors and politicians will have to address in this new global information age.

The idea of media significantly impacting global politics has been around for quite some time. As Larson indicates, "In the early 1960s, Bernard Cohen noted that, in general, the media act as observer, participant and catalyst in foreign policy."[15] However, the introduction of real-time global television technology and its greater potential for world-wide impact have enhanced the relationship Cohen described. As E. L. Pattullo notes:

> The technology whereby news is transmitted has been revolutionized. Just when the morale of the man in the street has become as important as that of the armed forces, satellites and computers have made it possible to deliver, with unprecedented immediacy, words and-especially-images likely to shatter that morale.[16]

The impact of television on the human psyche in a wartime environment is beyond the scope of this study. However, the psychological impact of television must

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[14]Perry M. Smith, How CNN Fought the War: A View from the Inside (New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1991), p. xi.

[15]Larson, p. 12.

[16]E. L. Pattullo, "War and the American Press," Parameters: U.S. Army War College Quarterly, Vol. XXII, No. 4. (Winter 1992-93), p. 64.

be addressed in passing due to its potential for global ramifications in war. Doris Grabor notes in her 1988 work <u>Processing the News</u>, "Knowledge about learning political information is not only lacking in breadth and scope but also in depth. Researchers have almost totally ignored learning from television pictures."[17] Our lack of knowledge concerning the impact of television on political learning (of which war is a part) is a problem because more and more humans are being interconnected via television. This is even occurring in what were traditionally thought of as closed societies. Kevin McNamara notes, "As many as 60 percent of China's peasants own televisions and the Soviet television audience amounts to perhaps 150 million."[18] Clearly, changing the experiences of humans by way of television viewing of major crises throughout the world, will render new and different outcomes then would have otherwise been the case. We are being technologically interconnected before we understand what the full social, political, and psychological consequences will be. These concerns about television's impact are relevant because war is a very complex event which requires human interaction. Anything that may impact this human interaction should be examined and hopefully understood.

This question which Pattullo raises is that of the "television image." What exactly does this image do? Why is it likely to shatter morale? Both academia and the media are noting with increasing frequency the potential for a causative relationship between

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[17]Doris A. Grabor, <u>Processing the News: How People Tame the Information Tide</u>, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman Inc., 1988), p. 4.

[18]Kevin J. McNamara, "Reaching Captive Minds with Radio," <u>Orbis</u>, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Winter 1992), p. 40.

television viewing and certain types of human behavior. Within this country, there are indications that television had a significant effect on the American population during Desert Storm. As Admiral Brent Baker relates, "A Navy 1-800 line, established within DOD during Desert Storm, would become quickly overloaded any time CNN reported a United States Navy ship casualty. When CNN reported the Marines to be under fire, the Marine 1-800 line would rapidly light up."[19] Even the typically disenfranchised within American society were effected by television during the Desert Storm conflict. As noted in Foreign Policy, "For several days after the air war began, New York police reported a lull in crimes and a dearth of homicides. Even the bad guys stayed home temporarily to watch."[20] This relationship between television viewing and human activity has not been fully defined, but is becoming increasingly accepted by the public at large. Los Angeles' Cardinal Roger M. Mahony stated that the "visual media has an incredible power to motivate human behavior."[21] Cardinal Mahony is referring to everyday media. Because real war (as compared to Hollywood) is not frequently televised, it is even more difficult to determine what the resultant effect on human beings would be. However, it would not seem unrealistic to assume as George Will has that:

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[19]Brent Baker, "Decisions at the Speed of TV Satellites, Wanted: A Return to Information Accuracy and Objectivity," Vital Speeches of the Day, Vol. LVIII, No. 19 (July 15, 1992), p. 581.

[20]Martin Walker, "Dateline Washington: Victory and Delusion," Foreign Policy, No. 83 (Summer 1991), p. 171.

[21]Roger M. Mahony, quoted in "Criteria Rather than Censorship," The Observer, Vol. 24, No. 10 (October 1992), p. 1.

If there had been television cameras at Gettysburg, the United States would be at least two nations now. If the public had seen the carnage of that war...I am sure that Lincoln would not have beaten McClellan...It means that the media's exposure of the war would have had consequences.[22]

While the exact extent of these consequences are not known, they have tremendous importance when considered in terms of our ability to prosecute war both politically and militarily.

C. THE NEW MEDIA AND DIPLOMACY

Skillful diplomacy is critical to our country's well being in wartime. According to Paul Kennedy, diplomacy is a very important part of grand strategy which is too often overlooked. He continues by noting that diplomacy is vital, "in both peacetime and wartime, in improving the nation's position-and prospects of victory-through gaining allies, winning the support of neutrals, and reducing the number of one's enemies (or potential enemies)."[23] The new media has not changed the importance of diplomacy, only the methods by which it is conducted and the scope of its impact.

The structure of today's diplomacy is taking on new dimensions because it is being conducted within the environment of a rapidly burgeoning information network. This information network provides countries with new ways to communicate between one another during both peace and war. Walter Roberts explains this new diplomatic network:

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[22]George Will quoted in, The Press and Public Policy, Pamphlet of the AEI Forum 27 (Washington D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1979), p. 15.

[23]Paul Kennedy, ed., Grand Strategy in War and Peace (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1991), p. 4-5.

> Today, diplomacy involves not only government-to-government relations, but relations with the people of other countries as well...Communication with others about one's own foreign policy is not just a matter of engaging in a public relations campaign or obtaining a 'good press' overseas...It is a matter of political necessity.[24]

One of the relatively new elements in this diplomatic information exchange is the role of the media; particularly television. The concept of media diplomacy has been facilitated by the revolution that has taken place in the field of telecommunications.

As Abigail Howell indicates in a 1990 analysis, there are two types of media diplomacy; official and unofficial.[25] The official type is done through the official channels of government. For example, these would include the State Department or the United States Information Agency. Unofficial media diplomacy includes the news media and any other actors who are able to influence others (nations or global actors) via the growing global information network.

In Desert Storm, we saw an overlap of these conceptual structures. Television (CNN), worked with both our government and that of Iraq in conducting media diplomacy between our two nations and also the rest of the world. The new television element in national diplomacy took a momentous turn prior to military hostilities between Iraq and the United States when, as Philip Taylor explains:

> The two Presidents addressed each other's people on Iraqi and American television...by providing a public forum to the traditionally secretive world of diplomacy, CNN was quite simply changing the rules of international politics and that, as a consequence, it was also likely to alter the way in

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[24]Roberts, p. 113.

[25]Abigail S. Howell, "Media Diplomacy: The Negotiator's Dilemma," Master's Thesis Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California (December, 1990), pp. 42-9.

which modern warfare would be projected onto the world's television screens.[26]

Never before had an opposition leader had such direct access to the American public.

Diplomacy and foreign policy are increasingly being influenced by television and the new media's technology for numerous reasons. As James F. Larson indicated in 1987:

> The rise of television news to its dominant position as an influence on the politics of foreign policy can be traced to technology, economics, pubic reliance on television as a news source and a set of international concerns. All help to explain the new circumstances facing policymakers, the press and the public.[27]

However, CNN is the network that really altered the previously established foreign policy structure. As Richard Tauber, director of CNN Satellites and Circuits indicated, it was the "widespread availability of CNN in 105 countries which spawned tele-diplomacy."[28] In all probability, the concept of media-diplomacy will expand as more technologically sophisticated communications systems pave the way for greater transfer of information between countries and other global actors.

The unofficial media also has ramifications beyond the "officially sanctioned" types of media diplomacy mentioned above. Howell states that this is the type of activity that is carried out by the media "in an effort to influence the course of

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[26]Taylor, p. 7.

[27]Larson, p. 15.

[28]Dennis et al,. p. 34-5.

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international events."[29]   One media network would clearly impact the international

diplomacy process on a world wide scale during Desert Storm. That network was CNN.

CNN played an integral part in the international relations process throughout the

war by virtue of its state of the art technology and global scope. During Desert Storm,

CNN was carried on televisions throughout the world. CNN's role, unlike that of any

other American media past or present, was to carry out a form of diplomacy that went

from being somewhat sanctioned by the American government, as noted earlier, to that

which was entirely beyond the government's control. An example of CNN's media

diplomacy took place during the Desert Storm conflict and is vividly described in <u>CNN:</u>

<u>War in the Gulf</u>;

> Benjamin Netanyahu, Israeli deputy foreign minister, was in Jerusalem but
> also, by television, on CNN's "Larry King Live." Netanyahu was taking
> calls from viewers around the world while Saddam Hussein was sending
> Scuds against Israel. Netanyahu knew that what he was saying as a
> diplomat was being heard by Saddam Hussein in a bunker somewhere in
> Iraq, and by leaders in Moscow, in Washington, in London, in Riyadh.[30]

This is but one example of the unofficial media diplomacy that CNN participated in

during Desert Storm. CNN was not only a crucial member in the diplomatic process,

but they were to a large extent independent actors. As Perry Smith notes, prior to the

air war's commencement "CNN received a call from Marlin Fitzwater, the White House

press spokesman, recommending, on behalf of President George Bush, that the CNN

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[29]Howell, p. 49.

[30]Allen et al., p. 13.

team in Baghdad be pulled out immediately."[31] CNN declined despite the wishes of

our government. This indicates that CNN's actions were beyond the control of the

American government. CNN's media diplomacy gave much of the rest of the world a

view of the war primarily from the perspective which CNN saw fit to broadcast. This

makes CNN very powerful. They have both global reach and global power.

D. MEDIA TECHNOLOGY

What has allowed the media to become a changed actor in the political process? The

primary difference in the media of Desert Storm was the utilization of new technology

that had not been around in previous wars. These changes in media technology have

significantly altered the "old" media actor. As John Fialka indicates, journalists arrived

in Saudi Arabia with "sophisticated gear: laptop computers, satellite telephones,

shortwave radios, fax machines, infrared cameras, and other electronic paraphernalia

designed for nearly instantaneous communication from the desert."[32] The Gannet

Foundation's The Media at War lists the new technologies that most impacted the

media's coverage of Desert Storm. It explains that:

> 10 [sic] applications of technology seem to have had particular impact on
> war coverage:
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> 1) Electronic mail and computer-to-computer communications;
> 2) Digital transmission of still photographs;
> 3) Facsimile transmission;
> 4) Portable satellite telephones;
> 5) Remotely sensed satellite imagery;
> 6) Frame capture of video images to print;
> 7) Portable, laptop computers;

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[31]Smith, p. 9.

[32]Fialka, p. 4.

8) International data transmission networks;
9) Flyaway satellite uplinks;
10) Computer graphics.[33]

Vietnam may be considered the first television war. However, the media technology of Desert Storm was exponentially more sophisticated than that of the Vietnam war. This technology provided the media a greatly enhanced reach in terms of the number of people it can reach at any one time. The media's technological change and increase in its ability to affect instantaneously a large percentage of the world's population has been matched only by its increased power. The media's new technology has left us with a permanently altered global diplomatic/political process due to the relative interconnectedness of the world's population.

E. TELEVISION'S IMPACT ON OTHER MEDIA

The process by which news information is gathered and disseminated to the American people is crucial to our national security. As Kevin McNamara indicates, "The medium matters as much as the message."[34] The Gulf War is indicative of changes in the media process that have altered and continue to alter the traditional media network.

Television's domination of the media in Desert Storm gained it an audience which previously did not rely as heavily upon its information. This new audience was other media. For the first time in war, print journalism had to ensure that its papers were not so far behind the current events so as to appear as old news. As explained in The Media at War, "Print correspondents had to find stories that their television counterparts had

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[33]Dennis et al., p. 35.

[34]McNamara, p. 35.

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not already beamed live into American living rooms the night before."[35] However, print journalism was not the only media affected by television.

CNN also had an impact on the other primary television networks (ABC, NBC, and CBS). The primary networks "usually ended up trying to match or imitate CNN."[36] Many stations did more than imitate CNN. As explained by General Perry Smith, "Hundreds of stations around the country carried its (CNN's) coverage, including many affiliates who switched from their own networks to feed to CNN's."[37] This was a watershed event in journalism. Television, particularly CNN, was setting the agenda for a large portion of the journalistic community. CNN was, and is, a global gatekeeper for information. Again, this gives CNN great power and influence. The old adage that first impressions are important can not be overstated. CNN can influence the immediate perception and are in a position to construct the instantaneous reality for much of America and the world during crisis situations. The slower media also feel this impact and it is reflected in their coverage. This indicates that if CNN did not cover an event, there was no event as far as their viewing audience was concerned. Viewers would probably not be able to find out about such an occurrence, which CNN had not reported, because other media are not looking beyond information which CNN provides.

While the demands of the market would appear to indicate that CNN would be willing to cover all events critical to our democracy, the fact that they have a certain

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[35]Dennis et al., p. 65.

[36]Dennis et al., p. 68.

[37]Smith, p. 6.

level of control over this situation is somewhat disconcerting. The other media, following the lead of CNN, are also a concern because they appear to be allowing CNN to a certain extent dictate the country's media agenda and may be severely limiting our exposure to alternate opinions and ideas. Hopefully this situation will soon be remedied. Possibly, the remedy will be found in the form of rival CNN-like networks created by the market driven expansion of the media.

F. INTELLIGENCE AND THE MEDIA

The impact of the media on intelligence operations has long been a point of contention between the military and the media. The obvious interest here is that information given out through the media may be of some value to the enemy. Real-time television coverage and the advent of media satellite technology to cover the battlefield has made this concern all the more pressing. Additionally, as the Economist explains, "Live, uncensored coverage from the enemy capital is something new in war."[38] This new type of trend, live media coverage from hostile territory also adds new elements to the dynamics of intelligence collection during wartime.[39]

Within the United States, the military, or government agencies such as the CIA

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[38]"The Voice of Baghdad," The Economist, 19, Jan. 1991, p. 26.

[39]The demands of the media market indicate that the media will be reporting live from hostile territory in virtually every conflict from now on. As Dean Brent Baker of Boston College indicates, "The military will arrive after the media have landed -- not before. In Somalia and Bosnia, the media were in place with their communications gear and sending out reports before the U.S. military got involved. That's a major change over Grenada or Desert Storm. That's the future." Quoted from Brent Baker, "Media Influence in the Age of Information." Address presented at the Naval Postgraduate School Issues and Answers Conference, Monterey, California, May 19, 1993, p. 3. Hereafter known as "Media Influence."

are traditionally thought of as intelligence gathering organizations. However, the media is also becoming involved in what may be thought of as intelligence collection and analysis. Because of the expanding technological capability of the media, its traditional function and relationship with official intelligence agencies is blurring. As Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney indicated in a speech after Desert Storm, "It's gotten increasingly difficult to sort out what we know from intelligence and what we know from CNN...It is clearly a factor now in the way we do business."[40]

During Desert Storm, we saw this as another example of how the media is evolving. This section shows how the relationship between the media and the intelligence agencies became more obscure during Desert Storm. Additionally, it examines how both sides in the Desert Storm conflict were able to use television for intelligence gathering purposes, and, in the case of the United States, disinformation purposes as well.

1. Intelligence Gathering by the Opposing Militaries

The use of the media for intelligence collection has long been a concern of military planners. During Desert Storm, this became a more pressing concern. This was primarily due to the ongoing revolution in media and telecommunications. The real-time nature of television allowed both sides of the Desert Storm conflict to utilize it for intelligence purposes.

The United States used television news for intelligence gathering and battle damage assessment throughout the conflict. An article in <u>Newsweek</u> vividly describes

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[40]Dick Cheney, quoted in Baker, <u>Proceedings,</u> p. 69.

this new intelligence gathering mechanism:

> In the TACC, (General) Horner...didn't know what to expect during those first 30 seconds over Baghdad. From the basement command post, Horner sent a subordinate to his office upstairs to watch CNN on television...Horner checked his watch. At nine minutes past the hour, Saddam's telephone exchange was due to be demolished. CNN needed the exchange to transmit its signal. At nine past, BARRROOOM. "What's Bernard Shaw saying now?" Horner asked. (His subordinate replied) "He just went off the air." Much later, Horner recalled: "You know, some people are mad at CNN. I used it. Did the attack go on time? Did it hit the target? Things like that."[41]

This was not an isolated incident, because, as explained in CNN: War in the Gulf:

> A U.S. intelligence official told the authors...'he (Peter Arnett) was an invaluable source to me in bomb damage assessment...satellites and aircraft gave me a 'straight-down' view'; Arnett, he said, 'gave me a street view of what had happened and what the people were doing and thinking.[42]

This manner of using the media was a revolution in intelligence collection.

Because of the instantaneous information offered by the media process, all sides in a conflict can utilize its rapid dissemination of information. It is widely thought that Saddam Hussein was watching television, especially CNN.[43] According to Admiral Brent Baker, it was not only clear that the Iraqis were watching, but that they were using "CNN television as an intelligence source."[44] There are also indications that Iraq based some of its tactical decisions on information gathered and disseminated by the media.

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[41]"The Secret History of the War," Newsweek, March 18, 1991, p. 31.

[42]Allen et al., p. 236.

[43]Dennis et al., p. 1.

[44]Brent Baker, "Desert Shield/Storm: The War of Words and Images," Naval War College Review (Autumn 1991), p. 64. Hereafter known as Baker, Naval War College Review.

The Iraqi incursion into Khafji may have been motivated by the fact that Western media advertised that Khafji "was abandoned and only lightly defended by Saudi and Qatari troops."[45] Additionally, Saddam may have been using live television reports for battle damage assessment and targeting information for his Scud missiles in a way very similar to that of the United States. As General Smith notes in How CNN Fought the War, "The Israeli government was very concerned that Iraq might be using CNN coverage in Israel to better target future Scud attacks."[46] These examples are conjectural. However, the speed and scope of information transfer has created a very real possibility that our enemies might gather militarily useful information from the media in wartime. Whether Saddam Hussein used the media for intelligence gathering purposes or not, intelligence caliber material was clearly made available to both sides of the conflict via the media during Desert Storm.

2. Intelligence Gathering By the Media

The new technology of the information age is changing the capability of the news media. Consequently, the media's relatively new technological capabilities have changed the importance of its news information from a warfighting perspective. During Desert Storm this was more noticeable than in any previous war.

As explained in The Media at War, "Most news organizations employed new and existing electronic technologies in innovative ways to gather, process and transmit

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[45]Lawrence Freedman and Efraim Karsh, "How Kuwait Was Won: Strategy in the Gulf War," International Security, Vol. 16, No. 2 (Fall 1991), p. 30, fn. 84.

[46]Smith, p. 177.

news about the war."[47] These new technological capabilities have allowed the media to transmit news information much faster, in greater quantities, and to more areas than in the past. The real-time news information transmitted during the war was very useful for military intelligence purposes. In previous wars, the media's information was often not suitable for intelligence purposes because of the time delay produced by older media technologies. The recent changes in the speed and timeliness of the media process has altered the military importance of what in the past would have been benign information. These changes have increased the amount of militarily useful information that can be found in the modern media. Additionally, what would have been considered marginally sensitive information (news) in the past could have been allowed to be reported because of a known limited news dissemination area (ie. the evening news during Vietnam was seen primarily in the United States and was for the most part not accessible enough in terms of timeliness to be of value to the enemy). The global scope of the media and modern communications systems indicates that no media information, is today, truly safe from enemy access. Desert Storm demonstrates that these relationships are changing. Not only is the technology changing the relative importance of information, but the new technologies are empowering news organizations to take on the roles of pseudo-intelligence gathering organizations.

The media's increasing ability to gather information rapidly is heading into new arenas. One such arena is that of satellite imagery. During Desert Shield the St. Petersburg Times acquired satellite imagery from Soyuz-Karta, a commercial Soviet

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[47]Dennis et al., p. 35.

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satellite company and had an imagery expert interpret the data. Not only did this newspaper acquire sensitive information, but the hired interpreter came to a different set of conclusions regarding this data than that of the official position of the United States government.[48] Another example of the media getting involved in satellite imagery is explained in The Media at War:

> ABC News was the first major news organization in the United States to use Earth-imaging, remote-sensing satellite technology. The network used remotely sensed images from the U.S. LandSat system and from Soviet satellites...LandSat images have 30-meter resolution (which means that objects over 30 meters in length/width are reliably discernible), are rich in information, can use infrared technology to see through smoke, and -- among other things -- can clearly show fires in oil wells.[49]

The use of new technologies by the media during Desert Storm helped to make Desert Storm a watershed event. As noted by John Pavlik and Mark Thalhimer, these innovations, "did not exist or existed in a far less advanced form when the press covered the last major U.S. war in Vietnam."[50] As technology improves and the markets for information expand, aggressive news organizations will develop even more sophisticated information gathering equipment. The information they are able to acquire and disseminate is already of great concern to military planners. This concern will increase with time.

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[48]John R. MacArthur, Second Front: Censorship and Propaganda in the Gulf War (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992), pp. 172-3. This controversy centered around imagery of the border between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia during September 1990. The St. Petersburg Times imagery interpreter claimed that the Iraqis were not massed on the border between the two countries as claimed by our government.

[49]Dennis et al., pp. 36-7.

[50]Dennis et al., p. 37.

3. Media Deception in Desert Storm

One of the elements of Desert Storm that received much acclaim was the "Hail Mary" famously described by General Schwarzkopf in his press briefings toward the end of the war. Part of that plan also incorporated media deception: the threat of an amphibious invasion of Kuwait. As noted in Conduct of the Persian Gulf War:

> The deception plan was intended to convince Iraq the Coalition main attack would be...supported by an amphibious assault...Among the activities planned to support the deception were Navy feints and demonstrations in the Northern Persian Gulf, Marine landing exercises along the Gulf and Omani coast, and positioning of a large amphibious task force in the Gulf.[51]

General Schwarzkopf, in one of his final briefings of the war, "pointed out how helpful the press had been in enhancing his deception plan."[52] The General's assessment seems accurate in light of the coalition's success. While it seems clear that the deception plan worked famously, there appears to be one area which has not received enough attention: ethical considerations involved with using the media to deceive the enemy during wartime.

The Coalition had total control of the skies over the Kuwaiti Theater of Operations. Therefore, Saddam did not have easy access to imagery or photo reconnaissance. Of course, Saddam may have had access to information that this author, or, for that matter the United States' government, does not know about. However, as Smith indicates, "It was clear that Hussein and his top military officers were watching

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[51]U.S. Dept. of Defense, Conduct of the Persian Gulf War: Final Report to Congress (April 1992), p. 77.

[52]Smith, p. 71.

CNN and picking up reports from other media sources."[53] The primary method by which Saddam was to "know" of our amphibious invasion was by way of the media. While this was never "officially" confirmed by U.S. government sources, the existence of this deception effort is very plausible. As noted in Parameters, "On 2 March 1991...a reporter on a National Public Radio program...revealed to listeners that the American military had "used" the...American press to delude the Iraqis about the direction from which the assault on Kuwait would come."[54] Television deception is a very real possibility in this new information age.[55]

The military's ability to utilize television deception is partially the result of the notoriously competitive nature of the media industry. As indicated in The New York Times Magazine, an unidentified reporter was quoted by then Major General Patrick H. Brady concerning the dissemination of military information as saying, "I don't care if I get it right; I only care that I get it first."[56] During Desert Storm, as noted in How CNN Fought the War, "The name of the game (for CNN) was clearly to get something on the

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[53]Smith, p. 70.

[54]Pattullo, p. 66.

[55]This was not the first use of television deception in war. Very early in the Falkland's crisis, the location of the HMS Superb, a British submarine, was inaccurately reported as being near or en route to Argentina by the British press. This was later found to be false. As noted in The Media and the Falkland's Campaign, "The media were outraged at what they saw as a deliberate piece of deception" by the British government. Found in Valerie Adams, The Media and the Falkland's Campaign (St. Martin's Press: New York, 1986), pp. 65-6.

[56]Major General Patrick H. Brady, quoted in Malcolm W. Browne, "The Military Vs. The Press," The New York Times Magazine, March 3, 1991, p. 30.

air fast and to beat ABC and the other networks."[57] These thoughts are indicative of the mindset of today's media. The intense competitive nature of the media is what will continue to allow the rapid dissemination of information and the potential for its use by the military for deception purposes.

Media deception in a time of war will continue to be a viable option because it is considered by some to be a necessary part of war. As General Smith notes:

> Deception is an important and legitimate part of warfare, and it does include, when necessary, deceiving the media...This activity is particularly important when the media is very "tuned in, " numerous, active, and international. It becomes even more important when the media provides direct inputs to the enemy camp as it was doing through CNN, the BBC, and other sources.[58]

However, there is more to consider concerning deception of the media. Deception of the media also raises some ethical questions dealing with the U.S. government allowing or even encouraging the media to report information which the government knows to be false. The use of the media, as a military tool, has the potential for severe national costs. First, if the media realizes that it is being lied to, this could ultimately lead to the disillusionment of the American people and cost the government public support for the war. A Vietnam-like "Credibility Gap" could once again raise its ugly head. Even more importantly, in an open democratic society that depends on the media for its political information, intentional deception of the media would prevent American society from having the proper information it needs to make sound political judgements. Ultimately,

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[57]Smith, p. 83.

[58]Smith, p. 70.

the people must have accurate political information in order to decide whether or not to support or attempt to alter government policy. Therefore, there must be limits to deceiving the press, even in wartime.

G. MULTI-NATIONAL MEDIA CORPORATIONS

Another element indicative of a new media is that it is increasingly transnational in nature. In Desert Storm, the primary global information distribution network was CNN. As indicated earlier, CNN was seen in over 108 countries during the war. Jonathan Alter describes this budding phenomena, "The new force, which is really quite new, is the internationalization of news - the globalization of news."[59]

Not only do market trends continue to point to the expansion of the global media network, but the lesson of Desert Storm is that CNN did it right. As Larry Grossman said, "CNN was clearly the big winner."[60] This was realized in other countries before the war's end. Perry Smith explains:

> During the Gulf War, more than eighty news organizations from the United States and around the world visited the CNN headquarters. Japanese, British, French, Italian, Dutch, and Australian television networks came and took copious notes...I expect to see twenty-four-hour television news emanating from a number of other countries by the turn of the century.[61]

As the global information revolution begins to yield multiple multi-national media corporations or large media corporations that consider themselves to be international in

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[59]Dennis et al., p. 66.

[60]Dennis et al., p. 70.

[61]Smith, p. 188.

nature and have CNN-like capability, Americans may be subjected to wartime information coming from truly foreign sources. There are serious ramifications associated with this trend when viewed from a national security position.

There is already the feeling within a large portion of the U.S. media that it should not report war from a pro-U.S. perspective. As noted by E.L. Pattullo in the Winter 1992-93 issue of Parameters;

> Walter Goodman, TV critic of The New York Times, is one of those who apparently feels that an American newsman has no stake in whether America wins its wars: 'A journalist who decides that his job is to help win a war, rather than just to describe it, is better off enlisting.'[62]

Because this is such a pervasive perspective within the so-called "American" journalistic community, one could assume that non-Americans in multi-national media corporations are not going to be any more favorable in their coverage of war from the perspective of the United States. If anything, coverage could be even less friendly. War may be presented to the American public from an anti-American point of view.

To some extent, CNN may already be viewed in this light. As Perry Smith explained, "Guidance from Ted Turner was emphatically clear that CNN was not a U.S. news organization, but an international news organization." Smith continued by noting that "the trend will be toward more international news networks."[63] National planners must consider what the ramifications of these international news networks will be our ability to implement policy including war.

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[62]Walter Goodman quoted in Pattullo, p. 66.

[63]Phone interview with Major General Perry Smith (U.S. Air Force, Retired), CNN Military Analyst during Desert Storm, by author, August 4, 1993.

III. ADDITIONAL MEDIA CONCERNS FOR NATIONAL PLANNERS

The media are regularly affecting national security and doing so in novel ways. The pace and scope of this media impact is accelerating. Due to the rapid evolution in communications technology and the global media, going beyond Desert Storm was necessary. This chapter focuses on other factors concerning the media's relationship to national security which need amplification. An understanding of these other areas is essential for the formulation of a plan for the national security establishment to confront and manage the information revolution.

A. PUBLIC OPINION CONSIDERATIONS

National planners are concerned about the impact of television coverage on public opinion during war. However, the very concept of public opinion is difficult to establish in terms of cause and effect. Yet, it is clear that public opinion is vitally important to governments, especially in open democratic societies. A 1991 study by Thomas Risse-Kappen suggests that this may be particularly true in the United States. He indicates, "Public opinion impacts policy more in the United States than in Germany, Japan, and France."[64] Even in closed societies, television and new forms of communication appear to be influencing public opinion and fostering political change.[65] The rapid nature of modern communications has facilitated political change by quickly effecting public opinion and altering desires.

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[64]Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Public Opinion, Domestic Structure, and Foreign Policy in Liberal Democracies," World Politics, Vol. 43, No. 4 (July 1991), p. 511.

[65]For a good explanation of the impact of the media in once closed societies see, McNamara, pp. 34-5.

It may be problematic for today's leaders that technology has allowed the instantaneous transfer of public emotion into the policy-making arena. As William Albig writes, "Large publics cherish the emotions and sentiments and apply them to public issues." He continues by adding that "George Washington said, 'The people must feel before they will see'."[66] However, Albig indicates that this emotion is "at once a basis of strength and of weakness in the opinions of large publics...sentiments frequently distort the judgments of masses."[67] Instant foreign policy judgements made by the masses, especially about war, are highly susceptible to an overriding dependence on emotional input. As Secretary of State, Elihu Root said:

> When policy on foreign affairs is largely dominated by the people, the danger lies in mistaken beliefs and emotions...the system of democracy in the United States has incorporated many types of representation and of checks and balances upon the initial opinions of publics.[68]

Secretary Root suggests that we should be concerned about an emotional public and the instantaneous democracy of a national "pseudo-townhall meeting," especially in a time of war. Publics need a chance to sort out their feelings and time to think about issues of such grave importance.

These circumstances have been facilitated by the technology of the information age that has allowed the instant transfer of television images throughout the country and the world. To some extent, this is already a concern as is the case in Somalia and

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[66]George Washington quoted in William Albig, Modern Public Opinion (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1956), p. 12.

[67]Albig, p. 12.

[68]Albig, p. 12.

Bosnia. James Schlesinger states:

> In the absence of established guideposts our policies will be determined by impulse and image. In this age image means television, and policies seem increasingly subject, especially in democracies, to the images flickering across the television screen...National policy is determined by the plight of the Kurds or starvation in Somalia, as it appears on the screen. "If a tree falls in the forest"--or a catastrophe occurs, but is unrecorded on tape--it is unseen...it is Somalia or Bosnia that draw the attention, because the cameras are there.[69]

Because of the immediacy of television and its potential to influence opinions through images, in combination with the increasing speed of the global information network, many of the impediments to instantaneous input to policy making are eroding. National planners should examine how best to chart a course in this era of instant policy, driven by both television image and an emotionally charged public.

1. World Opinion

Another phenomena associated with Desert Storm, was the globalization of wartime media coverage. No previous war was as visible to the world as Desert Storm. The common bond and global thread of the wartime media became clear during Desert Storm. The global media's very existence made viable the concept of world opinion.

Because of the relatively new technological interconnectedness of the globe, a full understanding of world opinion and its impact on international relations, especially during war, has not been developed. There are a massive number of variables to consider when trying to understand this relationship. A study of world opinion is

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[69]James Schlesinger, "Quest for a Post-Cold War Foreign Policy," Foreign Affairs and the World 1992/93, Vol. 12, No. 1 (1993), p. 18.

beyond the scope of this thesis. However, the concept of the media's relationship to world opinion during war is very important to the international relations process. Additionally, this idea begs the question, "What are the consequences for international relations, as a result of the impact on world opinion, of the instantaneous and massive exposure of war via television to a large portion of the world's population?" As noted in the previous chapter, the effects of television viewing on much smaller single culture audiences are little understood. A world audience presents even more difficult problems because of the addition of multiple cultures, value systems, and national interests among others. However, Professor Glen Fisher has some ideas on how the international relations process is effected. He says that, "One can hardly overstate the degree to which psychological and cross-cultural factors affect the international relations process."[70] Television is directly related to these two ideas. The first idea is that of the psychological element of international relations. Television unwittingly takes part in this process and as noted earlier, we really know very little about how this mechanism works. The other portion of Fischer's idea is the element of forced cross-cultural exposure. The television media's expanding global viewing audience is unintentionally taking part in the cross-cultural exposure to which Fisher is referring.

The entire concept of world opinion and the impact of television on world opinion, especially during wartime, need further study by national planners. As McNamara noted in the Winter 1992 Orbis, "Television technology - which was most

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[70]Glen Fisher, Mindsets: The Role of Culture and Perception in International Relations (Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, Inc., 1988), p. 1.

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conspicuously displayed by CNN during the Persian Gulf war - presents the United States and other Western governments with a tremendous opportunity to influence world opinion that they should not fail to seize."[71] Unless we truly understand how this process works, we will be unable to formulate a sensible strategy for the management of global media relations in a time of war.

2. Media Spin and World Opinion

The portrayal of issues is a critical element in the global reporting of news and is directly related to world opinion. This is particularly true during wartime, because the news is perceived to be vital by much of the world. World opinion, or that of various nations, groups of nations or other global actors, could be easily swayed by a subtle change in the global reporting of a story of international significance by multi-national media networks. Another term for this portrayal of information by the media, is "media spin." Lieutenant Colonel Marc D. Felman argues that, "media spin" is so important to the political process, and therefore also to the conduct of war, that it must be considered a "new principle of war."[72] The global scope of media information transmission has elevated Felman's argument to an even higher level of importance for national security planners. Gone are the days when the media interacted with only a domestic audience. In all likelihood, the "media spin" received by the world community will influence world opinion, the international relations process and hence, United States'

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[71]McNamara, p. 40.

[72]Marc D. Felman, Lt Col, USAF, "The Military/Media Clash and the New Principle of War: *Media Spin*," Master's Thesis, Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama (June, 1993), p. v.

national security.

World opinion is very important to the United States. As noted in the January 1993 National Security Strategy of the United States, "America...will lead in a collective response to the world's crises."[73] Leadership of the world community requires that the United States have the support of other states and global actors. The first impression most of the world will receive on matters of global import, will be through the media's presentation of this information. A negative presentation of news information from the perspective the United States, to the world community, could easily undermine U.S. policy goals and deny the United States the international support it requires for the effective implementation of foreign policy.

Desert Storm is testimony to the ramifications and possible hazards to U.S. policy resulting from fluctuations in world opinion caused by the reporting of news globally and cross-culturally during wartime. The globalization of news has created a new environment in which warriors and American policy makers must both operate. This new media environment could have easily damaged U.S. policy efforts during Desert Storm.

Relations between the United States, Arab allies and the other Coalition forces were very delicate during Desert Storm. Seemingly innocent global news reports, including those items which could have been reported but were not, could have damaged or destroyed the fragile alliances. As Colonel John M. Shotwell indicates in

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[73]George Bush, National Security Strategy of the United States (Washington D.C.: The White House, January 1993), p. 3.

the <u>Marine Corps Gazette</u>:

>A miscue with the press could turn into a propaganda coup for Iraq...The Saudis granted us the privilege of observing our religious practices in their holy land so long as we didn't flaunt it. Had media routinely trained their cameras on our Marines bowing before a chaplain on the sacred Arabian sands, it could have given Saddam fuel to ridicule...(Saudi Arabia) in the eyes of the rest of the Arab world.
>
>Disregard of other host nation sensitivities could cause similar repercussions in Arab eyes. We'd permitted media coverage of intramural touch football games at the King Abdul Aziz military facility soccer field with positive feedback. But when one of those games pitted the Wrecking Crew against the Desert Foxes, the CNN report, though a light-hearted account, created a public affairs nightmare. Those were all-women teams. The spectacle of females grappling in gym attire in a country that normally drapes its women in black from head to toe shocked and offended the Saudis. 'Televising such matters on an international TV broadcast has negative results' advised the Saudi Eastern Area Commander ...'which might be utilized by the enemy to accompany opposing propaganda against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia'.[74]

Not only could these reports have destroyed the fragile network of alliances, but a multi-national media network, advancing its own agenda, could have easily played up the cultural differences within the Coalition in an attempt to undermine the political goals of the United States. Colonel Shotwell continues by noting, "The BBC reported an address by Saddam in which he belittled American forces by telling his troops that they would be fighting 'women in shorts.' We can only surmise as to the psychological impact of that statement on the morale of the Iraqi soldiers."[75] Colonel Shotwell adds that while very few American soldiers failed to understand or appreciate Arab sensitivities, "some Americans chose to demonstrate their ignorance or intolerance

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[74]Col. John M. Shotwell, "The Fourth Estate as a Force Multiplier," <u>Marine Corps Gazette</u>, Vol. 75, No. 7 (July 1991), p. 75.

[75]Shotwell, p. 75.

around reporters, who sometimes printed their off-hand derogatory comments."[76] Even under the best of conditions, the negative behavior of a few will always receive a disproportionate share of attention from the press. The press does not typically report "the trains that run on time." These types of statements or actions by any "representative" of the United States during wartime, including soldiers, sailors or civilians, encourage a more negative media spin. In a deployment of over 500,000 personnel, some will make rude comments about other nationalities or cultures. The more "enlightened" media will in all likelihood enjoy putting a negative spin on such occurrences. This type of media spin, when transmitted globally, could interfere with, impact, or undermine U.S. policy goals.

B. MILITARY EXPERTS WITHIN THE MEDIA

Another relatively new phenomena is that of former military personnel and military experts being hired by the media as analysts for the coverage of military conflicts.[77] These people are utilized like John Madden to add color and commentary to the coverage of a football game.[78] However, they are not covering a football game, they

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[76]Shotwell, p. 75.

[77]One of the first uses of former military personnel for live media analysis purposes was seen in the Falkland's War. This was a very controversial issue in England during the conflict. For an examination of this topic, see Valerie Adams, The Media and the Falkland's Campaign (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986).

[78]What is being called "info-tainment" is another issue, which, while relevant to this thesis, is beyond its scope. This concept deals with the distinction between news and entertainment. Just what is the dividing line between these two concepts. Its importance to democracy is that the media gives the public the information it needs for decision making. The media is supposed to be objective. Entertainment is not held to the same standard. When the border between these two types of information is blurry, it can create confusion on the part of the public. It can potentially lead to concerned

are covering war and all its myriad complexities. There are potential problems with military experts distributing their knowledge and expertise, via the media, to the rest of the world.

Moreover, the exposure of new tactics and strategies to the enemy via media could easily be harmful to the United States in a time of war. Global media, such as CNN television, may be particularly damaging. While some of the media commentators were merely describing situations during Desert Storm, some were discussing tactics and strategy. Some of the media's military expert discussions may have seemed so simplistic as to be trivial to our wartime efforts. However, depending on the level of the enemy's sophistication, this discussion of tactics or strategy could have in fact been useful. If nothing else, a military expert's discussion of a potential weakness of ours gives even an unsophisticated enemy fuel for propaganda. This propaganda would appear more credible to our country and the world, because it would have been garnered from a so-called military expert, which, by definition, would have made it appear more accurate.

The vast number of opinions and strategies received from the media may be of little use to any side in a conflict. However, the personnel chosen by major networks to give commentary during Desert Storm, were, "military experts."[79] It was well known that these analysts possessed a wealth of knowledge and experience. Additionally,

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citizens not knowing what level of credibility to give to information which might be important for them to know.

[79]For a list of the 73 military experts used by CNN during Desert Storm, see, Smith, pp. 210-213. For a list of the experts used by the NBC, CBS, and ABC see Smith, pp. 100-102. These lists encompass a significant who's who in the U.S. military/defense policy/strategic thought arena.

during the war these experts were receiving information from their contacts located within the Pentagon and other Washington think-tanks.[80] These experts, who are often closely connected to the center of the U.S. defense establishment, were privy to information that would have been of value to the enemy. Because of their close ties to the defense establishment, these experts might not realize that what seems to them to be innocent information could possibly be helpful to a less sophisticated enemy. Theoretically, the goal of a media organization is to make money by getting the story right. Consequently, arm-chair quarterbacks in the form of military experts are paid to add color and provide <u>accurate</u> estimates of U.S. strategy and tactics. Those that do perform, will be around for the next conflict. If these experts are doing what they are paid to do, they may also be helping the enemy.

C. FUTURE MULTI-NATIONAL MEDIA CORPORATIONS

As the information revolution expands and multi-national media continue to develop, one can expect more organizations to improve their ability to project their ideas throughout the world. What might these ideas look like? As Edward Epstein says, "The pictures of society that are shown on television as national news are largely...performed and shaped by organizational considerations."[81] For multi-nationals, profit is the bottom line. Therefore, multi-national media's organizational concerns cannot be expected to coincide with U.S. national security interests.

The message received will depend upon which organizations or countries are able

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[80]See chapter 11, "Where I Got my Insights," in Smith, pp. 84-94.

[81]Edward J. Epstein, <u>News from Nowhere: Television and the News</u> (New York: Random House, 1973), p. 258.

to project their ideas in this new information environment. This is not a new phenomena, as Albig explains in regards to television and radio in the 1950's, "New and unsolved problems of control are presented...If information, opinions and entertainment may be diffused more widely than was previously possible, the questions of what information and whose opinions become ever more significant."[82] These concepts will be of greater concern to our national strategists in wartime. The manner in which the news is reported to the American public is crucial for maintaining support for war. What are the potential ramifications of multi-nationals reporting wartime news?

The future multi-national media will be claiming to report war in an objective manner. The demands of the media market will force them to claim cultural and information neutrality and objectivity or face the loss of global market share. They will be forced to claim this type of policy whether or not the claim is actually true. CNN may be indicative of future trends in this arena. CNN claims no allegiances or loyalties to any country and in its mission statement says that its commitment is to a "fair and balanced 24-hour global news network."[83] Retired General Perry Smith, who was employed by CNN during Desert Storm, indicated that he was reprimanded by CNN during his commentary on the Gulf War any time he said "our" forces or "we" on the set when referring to United States' or Coalition forces.[84] No global network could survive if it claimed to be partial toward one culture or country over another. Therefore,

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[82]Albig, p. 436.

[83]CNN Mission Statement, CNN, Pamphlet (Atlanta: Turner Broadcasting System, Inc., undated, estimated 1993), p. 2.

[84]Phone interview with Smith, by author, August 4, 1993.

mission statements, such as CNN's, will be the norm. Over time, multi-national media companies may even develop reputations for being factual brokers of information to the American public in the same way we look at CNN today. However, as Epstein indicates above, the organizational drives and objectives will ultimately determine the media's portrayal of war, not American national security interests.

Counting on multi-national media corporations to be objective in wartime is risky at best, and due to the nature of wartime journalism is probably unrealistic. Trying to put war into context, may, by the very nature of the task, require loss of objectivity. As explained by Jonathan Alter writing about Desert Storm, "In a war like this one, full 'objectivity' is not only impossible, it's dishonest. No reporter can be expected to resolve whether he is a journalist first or an American."[85] Nationalism is not easily erased.

Given the population relationship between the United States and the rest of the developed world, it can be assumed that a large percentage of the journalists who work for the multi-nationals of the future will not be American. Multi-national media corporations may have internal biases against the United States which are not readily apparent to the outside observer or have not manifested themselves in skewed peacetime coverage. These naturally occurring biases, no matter their origin (i.e. cultural, national, religious etc.), whether intentional or not, will make it difficult at best for these companies to present wartime news objectively to the world.[86]

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[85]Vogt and Gnam, Jr., p. 99.

[86]If Saddam Hussein had not been considered such a tyrant by most of the world and galvanized world opinion so strongly against him, we may have seen this type of concern for CNN's presentation of the war. Even with such one-sided moral support, some within the Washington elite felt that the presentation by CNN was full of Iraqi

Thus, it would seem that American public opinion may be vulnerable to manipulation by multi-national corporations in the future information environment. Statements of information neutrality by multi-national media firms could possibly leave the American public open to propaganda. Implicit in the CNN mission statement is the recognition that the future Hitlers and Stalins of the world will receive global coverage equal in scope to that of the Churchills and Roosevelts. True balanced coverage demands this. However, the previously described biases of multi-national networks are inevitable and will only be exacerbated in an emotional wartime conflict. Therefore, these media networks, even if unknowingly, will take sides in a conflict. This structure presents a future where multi-national media corporations, with potentially anti-American agendas or biases, are reporting wartime news to the American public in such a fashion as to be skillfully spreading discreet propaganda and attempting to undermine American public support for our policies. This may have already started.

In the Gulf War, the information coming out of Desert Storm was more "balanced" than in the past. As noted by Dan Hallin in The Media at War, "I think that if you compare it (Desert Storm) with Vietnam there was more coverage from the other side in this war...Clearly American television had more access to the other side than it had in Vietnam."[87] Jonathan Alter explains some of the reasons for this. He says there were

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propaganda. These would include Senator Alan Simpson, R-Wyoming and Reed Irvine of Accuracy in the Media, Inc.. For an examination of this topic see numerous post-Desert Shield Aim Reports including, "Coverage of the Coverage," Aim Report, Vol. XX-4, February-B 1991, p. 1. CNN claims to be a truly objective international news network. I contend that this to some extent unrealistic in peacetime, and impossible in war.

[87]Dennis et al., p. 66.

two forces clashing during Desert Storm in terms of media coverage; nationalism, and the globalization of news. He explained that the clash was not that intense because, "The war was so one-sided and it was Iraq against the world. If we had seen a war in which the world was really divided, then I think we would have seen a much more intense clash between these two forces."[88] In all likelihood, world opinion during future wars will not always be so skewed. How will global information networks such as CNN portray such events? If the trend is toward consensus for military action being determined by the world community, then the global press' role will become ever more critical. The advent of multi-national media corporations, whose allegiances may not rest with the United States, demands a strategy from our government for confronting these new challenges.

D. STRUCTURE OF WAR

When considering the media during war, it is prudent to examine the effects the media on the structure of war . As the technology of war has progressed, the distances between opponents have increased. In all wars prior to Desert Storm, the media was an integral component of the picture, poised right in the thick of the battle. This war partially due to the structure of war and the media's technology. However, Desert Storm was a military technological watershed: this was the first war where the preponderance of combat time was spent "softening" the enemy with air power. When looking at the <u>sheer</u> amount of time involved with all of Desert Storm, 88% of the war's time was involved with strictly air combat. All previous wars involved time-intense

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[88]Dennis et al., p. 66.

struggles for land involving combat troops. Air power, by its very nature is impersonal. The advent of cruise missiles has made it even less personal. This was the first war where air power played "a determining role in winning a war."[89] This potential change in the structure of war relates very directly to a new media.

In previous wars, the media were close to the troops and able to get personal stories of the boys on the front. Simultaneously, they could also be in on the action to get first hand accounts of live combat. This desire is very natural for media correspondents because, to them, "war is always *the* ultimate news story."[emphasis added][90] This was no different in Desert Storm except that the boys on the front were not the main story because for the majority of the war there was no ground combat. Reporting on air war is entirely different from reporting on ground combat. The planes leave their bases and return, with at best, camera footage of a target destroyed. There can be no personal coverage of the trauma of war when it is left in the skies away from the cameras.

Land combat is not unaffected by the effects of this technological leap, and hence its impact on the media. Speed and standoff weapons are now the norm in American ground combat. As pointed out by James Dunnigan and Austin Bay, the 24th Mechanized Infantry Division moved at heretofore unheard of rates of advance during combat in Desert Storm. This combat movement of 92 km per day "was a record-

[89]James F. Dunnigan and Austin Bay, From Shield to Storm: High-Tech Weapons, Military Strategy, and Coalition Warfare in the Persian Gulf (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1992), p. 145.

[90]Dennis et al., p. 2.

breaking movement for a mechanized ground force in the twentieth century."[91] As the speed of ground combat and distance between opponents increase, the ability for the media to get the human interest story they desire will become more difficult.

Additionally, Western publics are very sensitive to high casualties. Depending upon the nature of the war and the interests involved, high casualties for countries such as the United States are rarely acceptable. This will force the conflict to technologies that conserve manpower and put greater distance between opponents. Because of this, there will be a tendency to keep the troops as far from harms way as is feasible. This too will limit the opportunity for front-line human interest stories because the troops will not be as involved in the action as in the past. Ships sitting safe off shore and troops in a rear area bivouac are not very exciting and do not sell well with the media. This structural change in our way of prosecuting war will force the media to seek new ways to cover it.

As the evolution of modern combat continues, the ability of the media to get first-hand accounts of war will continue to decline. The combat environment is the media environment as well. Just as there was not a large amount of media coverage of the Battle of the Atlantic in World War II, because of the location of that type of warfare, the structure of modern war will increase the distance between media and war. The media was not pleased that "the military supplied much of the news that came out of the gulf through briefings and videotapes."[92] A good question to ask is, "Just how much of the

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[91]Dunnigan and Bay, pp. 278-279.

[92]Dennis et al., p. xi.

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war could have actually been seen on a first-hand basis?" Given the media's growing technology, quite a bit more of the war could have been seen then was made available. Military briefings will continue to be the main source of information for the media in the short term. However, there appear to be additional changes in the structure of war which will precipitate changes in the media's coverage of war and conflict.

The end of the Cold War has left us with changing and unstable world which in their own ways will affect the media's reporting of war. The structure of war and conflict is changing, especially that involving more developed countries. The popular wisdom indicates that rather than large-scale wars between developed countries, the trend appears to be toward what are low and medium intensity conflicts with primarily third world countries. Many of these conflicts will erupt in third world countries where value systems are vastly different than our own. The growing number of conflicts in the third world has put reporters out on the cutting edge of turmoil, oftentimes beyond U.S. military protection. While third world elites may realize the importance of the media and try to use it for their own purposes, many times they will not have control of their uncivilized populations who do not have that same understanding. Reporters will be at risk because they may very well be seen as extensions of the United States or the developed world and fair game for local populations. It takes a degree of sophistication that these populations most likely do not have to know that they can use reporters to sell their side of the story to the world. For example, according to The New York Times, after the USS Ilarlan County recently pulled out of Port-Au-Prince, Haiti, "Members of an American television crew (who had no U.S. military protection)...were briefly arrested

and threatened with execution."[93] In past conflicts the US military was usually there first and took responsibility for the safety of the media. This is not necessarily the case anymore as the media will many times be ahead of the military. At times, media organizations without protection may find that operations in certain areas are too hazardous for live coverage on the ground. However, there is still a great incentive to get the story. This will be another factor leading to the media deciding to utilize the safety of highly technological information gathering devices rather than to risk the loss of reporters in the field. The media will utilize its new technologies (such as those listed in chapter two) to get the story without endangering its members. The changing nature of war and conflict will leave the media no other option than to reevaluate how to best cover these new and continually changing developments.

An increasing demand to get first hand accounts of war, and a decreasing supply created by changes in the structure of war, will precipitate an even greater technological expansion of the media's information gathering capability. As noted in the previous chapter, the distinction between intelligence information and news information is already blurring. Tomorrow's journalist will forge the gap between himself, world crises, and combat action by technological sophistication. The battlefields of the future will increasingly find satellite coverage and remotely piloted vehicles replacing the journalist in the field. Consequently, information which had been relegated to the realm of intelligence will increasingly find itself in the main stream media.

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[93]Howard W. French, "U.S. Withdraws Troop Ship From Haiti," The New York Times, October 13, 1993, p. A4, col. 4.

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E. MEDIA DIPLOMATS

This section examines how the new media, which is global in nature, has magnified the president's power in a severe crisis, and how it has significantly weakened him in relation to less menacing threats. The global media has also expanded the role of those who were once largely removed from the diplomatic process including congressmen and other elites.

Prior to the new media, the president was more able to be the primary spokesman for our country. His, or his direct representative's voice was the voice that mattered most in international affairs. However, the global media has altered this structure by allowing many more people, such as congressmen and other elites, to visibly take part in the diplomatic relations process. Depending upon what the new media decides to broadcast, our enemies will receive a much more diverse and discordant array of signals than in the past. For example, during Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the new media, particularly CNN, afforded congressmen the opportunity to "talk directly" to Saddam Hussein from the Capitol and communicate their message directly to the enemy.[94] These actors previously would not have had the opportunity to actually participate directly in the diplomatic process.

The media's role in the diplomatic process needs to be addressed from several perspectives. First, the media's addition of multiple actors to the diplomatic process has changed the dynamics of that process. The media has facilitated the appearance on the world stage of multiple voices which in the past would not have been heard.

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[94]Felman, p. 19.

Additionally, these representatives, in one fashion or another, appear to be or claim to be speaking for the United States. While it is true that statements by certain actors carry more weight than others, the diplomatic process has been radically altered in terms of the number of players who are able to directly make an impact. The media's addition of actors to this process has changed the power relationships within our government.

The President, as Commander in Chief, is given a certain level of latitude to utilize military force. Control by only one actor allows for continuity of effort and assists in coherent signaling in the diplomatic arena. This structure enhances deterrence by backing our threats and statements more credibly with force. If enemies thought we needed overwhelming congressional and elite support for every use of the military option, they would be far less deterred. However, congress does have a degree of authority over the military. The changes in the global media that have precipitated the amplification of the apparent need for congressional acquiescence for military action have effectively altered the power relationships in our government between the president, congress, and other elites.

The arrival of the new media and the fact that congressmen will normally rally around the president in a crisis has greatly enhanced the president's strength to deal with severe crises. Congressmen, particularly if they are known to be powerful legislators such as Senator Sam Nunn, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, can now more significantly aid the president in deterring a would be opponent. Because of the global media, this is no longer an isolated event and is cast upon the world's stage. If, as is expected, this was reported via the media live to the

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enemy leadership during a tense situation, this could in fact be a force diplomatic multiplier for the president and greatly enhance his power to deal with the situation.

However, the media can have the opposite effect as well, particularly in a less threatening situation where governmental consensus is low. An elite, who appears to have great influence in the United States in the eyes of our enemy, say a Ross Perot, could, on media broadcasts, vehemently oppose a president's military force proposal. Depending on the level of power our rivals thought this actor wielded, this could radically weaken our president's negotiating position. For example, during Desert Storm, Senator Nunn voted against the use of force to remove Iraq from Kuwait. If he had chosen to vehemently posture himself so strongly against military action and the wishes of our President, and this had been amplified by CNN, this very well may have empowered Saddam Hussein to think we would not resort to military action.

The nature of our adversary will determine the level of consensus for military action within our country. A very threatening enemy will result in a high level of consensus. A more nebulous threat will result in a lower level of consensus. On balance, it would appear that the media will strengthen our president against major threats because it will effectively amplify our resolve. However, the advent of the global media has significantly weakened the president from a negotiating perspective against lesser threats. Even in times where the president did not intend to use force, the fact that he could more believably saber rattle certainly gave him more credibility with our potential enemies and allowed him to negotiate from a position of strength. The power and credibility of our president's saber rattling against less menacing threats is greatly

diminished because the corresponding lack of consensus by our congressmen and other elites is made so evident by a global media. This would appear to significantly weaken deterrence against smaller threats because the addition of these newer "media diplomats" undermine our president's ability to signal with credibility during these types of conflicts.

It is up to the media's portrayal of the situation and the tone in which it is packaged as to what message is received by our adversaries. It is troubling that they have the control over whether or not the information they broadcast will assist or undermine the president's policy goals. Additionally, it is quite disturbing that the media will control the tone of the diplomatic signal through its editing process. There is no guarantee that the true level of consensus will be conveyed by the global media. Signaling is a very fine diplomatic art which to a certain extent is, now, sadly out of the traditional zones of governmental control.

Another element of concern is the element of multiple diplomatic voices during a severe crisis. In a conventional crisis, the amplification of congressional and elite support can be a benefit to the president. However, in a severe crisis, the diverse signaling that would be facilitated by the global media may actually be detrimental to the search for a peaceful resolution. Imagine if CNN had been in existence during the Cuban missile crisis. What would have been the result? When the consequences of the signaling are so dire, the addition of these many actors to the process may actually be destabilizing. It would be expected that elites would rally around the president's efforts. However, it would seem that the global media would be active and make some effort

to be involved in the diplomatic process. In a situation where only one diplomatic voice may be optimum for stability, we may be faced with something else. It would seem that the possibility for misinterpretation of diplomatic signals and a greater potential for disaster would be enhanced because the number of diplomatic actors and signals would both be increased by an active global media.

IV. STRATEGIES FOR THE INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT

The information environment described in the preceding chapters must now be addressed by national planners. As time progresses, this information environment will grow more complex. This chapter will forward information strategies, both political and military, for confronting this new situation. In order to do this, the basic elements of information transfer are also considered.

A. BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT

In attempting to formulate strategies for this new environment, it is necessary to further describe the information environment's basic structure and characteristics. While the technology of the information age has changed our lives dramatically, it has not altered the fundamentals of the information process. As noted in The Communicative Arts, "For any communication to be complete there must be at least two persons involved--a sender and a receiver."[95] When examined from a strategic point of view, this may give us several areas for analysis: the sender, the process by which information is sent, and the receiver. This is relevant to all information flows. This would include the media, the satellites, airwaves, and cable by which the broadcast is sent, and the television set and viewer. Additionally, the sender and receiver must both process the information for it to be useful. For our purposes, this would be the media and viewer. This gives us five areas for thought in terms of an information strategy.

While the basic information process is identical for all countries, cultures, and global actors, the capability to accomplish the tasks incumbent upon those who rely on

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[95]Steinberg, p. 43.

information is not the same among global actors. Some countries will have the technology to receive, disseminate and process information faster and more accurately than others. Related to this is the fact that not all global actors will even receive information that may be intended for their consumption. Also, various actors will not interpret the exact same information in the same way due to various biases and cultural lenses. What this may mean is that multiple information strategies and tactics may be necessary if we are to succeed in an interconnected world consisting of diverse cultures, peoples and global actors. If we send the wrong message, allow critically damaging information to be sent which we may have the ability to control, or if the message is incorrectly interpreted because of a cultural miscalculation in a time of war, we could suffer severe political and military losses. The above ideas may be helpful to keep in mind when trying to formulate political and military information strategies for wartime.

B. POLITICAL STRATEGIES

To form political strategies, I have looked at the evident and anticipated changes in the media and how they impact the political process. From these changes, political information strategies have been developed. The political and military information strategies will to some extent overlap because war is just a specific type of policy and therefore an intimate part of the political process.

1. Global Diplomats

It would appear that the communications revolution has greatly expanded the number of personnel taking part in the diplomatic process. From the president to the American fighting man, everyone has an opportunity to be a diplomat for his country.

When overseas, the American fighting man has always been known as an "ambassador" for his country and was instructed to behave accordingly. However, due to the relatively new nature of the global communications network and the intense coverage war receives from all facets of media, many more military personnel will be serving in the capacity of actually having the continuous ability to act as diplomats for our country in a time of war.

To counter the impact of this communications phenomena, regular training of our soldiers, sailors and government employees of the potential ramifications of their statements to the media is needed. It is not just the exact content of their statements that is of concern. It can be something so subtle as the manner in which a message is conveyed. In the case of a severe crisis, such as the nuclear confrontation described in the previous chapter, it would appear the addition of unnecessary actors taking part in the diplomatic dialogue could be destabilizing and therefore detrimental to our national survival. A code of conduct for dealing with the press in a time of war or crisis, by all branches of government, may be in order.

2. Cultural Understanding

One element which both the military and politicians should concern themselves with is the cultural nature of information. Due to the differences in culture, communication can be distorted, confused, or mistaken between actors. If this is to happen in a time of war, the results could be devastating. Prior to Desert Storm, Saddam Hussein miscalculated the impact that his parading of hostages in front of the television set would have on the Western world. Presumably his message was that of

Iraqi benevolence. The intended message was a far cry from that received in the West. He then made another serious blunder during the war. As stated in Desert Storm, "Exhibiting the POWs (on television) may have been meant by the Iraqis to undermine the resolve of the coalition forces, but had a diametrically opposite effect."[96] These were tremendous political losses which could have been averted if Saddam Hussein had understood the Western mindset. Perhaps Saddam's mistakes will help us to realize how important cultures are in terms of how a message is interpreted.

The most sensational topics will always find their way across the airwaves, especially in a time of war. An American soldier, sailor, or U.S. representative will find all comments, especially those that are culturally offensive, about host nations or allies, and activities which offend the sensibilities of host nations or allies, during wartime, may quickly find their way into news rooms around the world. This would be especially true if members of the global media which reported the information either believed the information would better serve their monetary interests or had a hidden agenda against the United States.

To formulate a strategy to deal with the cultural element of the political equation we will have to better understand the cultures we are dealing with. To some extent this is already attempted. Prior to arriving to foreign lands, soldiers and sailors are always briefed as to what is culturally acceptable behavior. The information age will make this training all the more imperative, especially in a time of war. Colonel Shotwell's quote in the previous chapter dealing with women in shorts in a Moslem land

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[96]Vogt and Gnam, Jr., p. 130.

is testimony to how seemingly innocent cultural differences could lead to severe political consequences. Prior planning should have anticipated this type of difficulty and prevented its occurrence. Possibly, some culturally offensive behaviors on our part may even have to be curtailed to maintain our alliances in wartime. If nothing else, we should attempt to make everyone involved as aware of cultural sensibilities as is possible so as to prevent diplomatic crises. Ensuring that all players in the diplomatic process, now including the common fighting man, understand to the best of their capability the cultures we are dealing with is a good first step.

3. PUBLIC OPINION

World and American public opinion are greater concerns for today's warrior and politician. The information front is going to be utilized by our enemies to destroy American alliances and undermine through American public opinion our country's resolve to fight. Saddam Hussein was to some extent able to manipulate the media for these ends during Desert Storm. Examples of this include the highly reported bombings of the so-called baby milk factory and air raid shelter. We should anticipate future enemies who will be more sophisticated and better able to utilize the mass media in order to further their political objectives. There are certainly many potential adversaries who would be more capable than Saddam Hussein in this endeavor.

The information front is today very real, and with the growth in technology will continue to expand. As noted during Desert Storm by an Army officer in the Wall

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Street Journal, "The media is really a battlefield, and you have to win on it."[97] No longer will Chamberlain be able to go to Munich alone, he will be forced to travel in the company of American national and world opinion. The international political equation has been altered by the changes in the global information structure which allows the apparent will of a nation or nations to be cast into the diplomatic relations stew. However, it is only the apparent will of a nation which is being transmitted to others. The reality of a nation's will may be far different than that which the images or words convey. Once again, the spin which the media puts on its presentation will be critical to the way information is received around the world.

The information environment thus presents us with images and perceptions from those images. These are some of the tools to fight the war on the information front. During Desert Shield and Storm, Kuwait hired the public relations firm of Hill and Knowlton to sell its story to the world. This may be indicative of future trends in the way in which wars may be fought. Possibly, rather than always fighting militarily, war in the pursuit of national goals will in a large part be fought informationally through the media. Military personnel must be trained to realize that they are continuously fighting on the information front. The changing nature of war may require us to reconsider the public relations positions in our government and military. They may need to receive higher priority. Because of the speed and scope of information flow, it will be imperative to "sell" your side of the story to the world community in

[97]Walter S. Mossberg, "U.S. Used Press as Weapon," The Wall Street Journal, 28 February 1991, p. 3.

what Rear Admiral Brent Baker describes as "a fast-paced war of words and images."[98]

He also notes:

> Democracies are at a disadvantage in the war of words and images. The democratic process is one of bureaucratic coordination and determining consensus on an answer...Dictators can easily get their views out first and fast. Some call it winning the battle of first perception.[99]

Where possible, we must work on ways to improve the speed of our political signaling process. The growing intensity of the battle on the information front has elevated the importance of public relations as critical members in the pursuit of our country's national interests. While the media coverage of Desert Storm was somewhat favorable, the nature of the enemy gave us advantages which we will not have in the next war. Marketing the government's position, through the global media in a time of war, needs to be thoroughly reexamined.

This information front is continuous, knows no bounds and is politically just as crucial as the one where the actual fighting exists. In the past, power has been measured in many ways including industrial, economic, and military. Possibly, the predominant power of the future will be none other than the power of information. The changing nature of the information front and its relationship to political success should compel us to seriously consider the formulation of a peacetime and wartime political information strategy.

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[98]Baker, <u>Naval War College Review</u>, p. 59.

[99]Baker, <u>Proceedings</u>, p. 70.

C. MILITARY STRATEGIES

The trend toward instantaneous global media presents extreme challenges for the military planner. Concerns for troop safety and operational security are greatly enhanced. Additionally, information which was inconsequential in the past, due to the time delay inherent in the old media processes or because of limited dissemination areas, could now be exploited by the enemy. But, the media can also be used to our military advantage. The speed and scope of information transmission has altered the old relationships. Additionally, global media networks who claim no allegiances to the United States are new elements with which we must contend. As far as the military is concerned, media networks must be thought of as an environment in which the battle is fought both politically and militarily. However, this information environment is not static and is continually changing. The information environment has the ability to act as a significant force multiplier if properly used. Therefore, we must train and plan accordingly.

Implicit in the U.S. military's past handling of media relations is the underlying assumption that the media were on our side, that the military was responsible for helping them get to the story, and that to some extent we could control information and its release. Desert Storm was an anomaly in that many components of the information environment worked in our favor. This structure most likely will not hold true in the future. As Peter Braestrup indicates in Hotel Warriors:

> Both Washington policymakers and senior Army officers should not embrace the notion that handling the news media Gulf War-style is the way to do things next time. Nor should journalists be fixated on the Gulf experience. Next time: will be different. Improved technology will make

journalists less dependent on military communications, and censorship will be harder to impose.[100]

A more aggressive and technologically sophisticated media, which emphasizes both speed and real-time images, a media that often arrives ahead of the military, and the trend towards more multi-national media personnel with little military understanding covering stories of international significance (war being of the highest international significance) all tend toward the possibility of more instances where sensitive information is being released. How can military personnel handle this situation?

One of the goals of a country during war is to gather and process information. Accurate information must be received by the actual units in the field to be of value. Napoleon was famous for his ability to disseminate information to his subordinates via letters which would take all night to compose. He was militarily superior to his peers, in part, because of his information handling capability. Because of the changes in the information environment, we must reevaluate our country's governmental and private information systems and those of our allies and enemies. This reevaluation should encompass the entire information spectrum. This would include not only the communications between our leadership and the operators in the field, but also communications of our enemies and allies, the media, business, NGO's and other actors which have a potential to impact our security. This should be done with an eye toward informational exploitation and with attention given to the basic elements of the information process. Additionally, it is incumbent on us to reevaluate our operational

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[100]Peter Braestrup, Foreword, in Fialka, p. xiii.

security procedures. We must thoroughly understand the information environment if we are going to be able to win on it.

Because the media is forever part of the environment in which we will operate, we must utilize it to its maximum capability. If the media is oftentimes going to arrive ahead of the military, we should maximize our use of the information they provide. Intelligence officers at all levels should be versed in the media's latest capabilities and be able to track the latest media operation. Because of the media's expanding technological capabilities, including satellite imagery etc., the media does not even need to be deployed in an area of interest to provide useful intelligence caliber information. We should not reject these opportunities, because, as Howell recently stated, "The media is another...tool."[101] It will be a significant task to incorporate the media into the entire military intelligence network. However, we can not afford to ignore information which may be politically and militarily useful, especially in a time of war.

We must formulate a strategy for handling the growing multi-national media. One critically important assumption must always be made in this regard. Because their interests are transient, we must NEVER assume that the international media is on our side during war. Even the traditional networks such as CBS and ABC can no longer be thought of as team players during wartime. They are providing an essential service for our democracy, but consider themselves to be honest brokers who are not to take sides in a wartime conflict. We assume their loyalty at our own peril.

There are elements of the media which we can consider in terms of a media

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[101]Howell, p. 196.

strategy. The media relies on the information structure described earlier in this chapter. As such, it may be possible to exploit various sectors of this information path. The first section of this process is the media's reception of information. Because they work under extremely tight time constraints, they have little time to filter, screen, and process information. This gives us an advantage in terms of being able to deceive them in a time of war. They will not have time to determine what is really "good" information and what is not. Additionally, the media has a propensity to repeat information that other news sources have reported. This would be, rather than a force multiplier, a deception multiplier. Intelligence or public relations officers should be versed in which news services are under the highest time constraints and least successful at filtering out disinformation. This is an example of the type of media understanding which we must possess if we are going to be successful on the information front.

The ability to portray our enemies in war as legitimate contenders in the field of ideas is risky. Can the United States give our wartime opponents the opportunity to sway world opinion in such a fashion? Critics of my concern for the swaying of world opinion may say that the "balanced" information would speak for itself. The problem is that the information given out by multi-national media in wartime will not be balanced.

With the potential for multi-national media corporations to be routinely reporting the news of the future to the American public, these news organizations may eventually be looked at as honest brokers of news information. They may come to be viewed in the same light as a Walter Cronkite was for so many years. However, Walter Cronkite

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was an American who we believe had the interests of the United States at heart. What could we say about a multi-national media establishment whose primary interest was profit? How would such a company report a major war to the world community? Would they do it as Americans or not?

It is possible that in future wars and conflicts we may need to confront a multi-national media organization for choosing to partake in activities which clearly and directly undermine our wartime objectives. Examples of this could include the media's dissemination of anti-U.S. propaganda or aiding the enemy with intelligence information. There are many ways we could counter these types of media behavior including jamming media broadcasts, anti-satellite operations, media deception, covert activity such as infiltration of the media, and other types of special operations. Creating a technological virtual reality to sway an enemy's public opinion may even be possible. Academics are currently discussing in forward looking studies the future of warfare in areas such as cyberwar and netwar.[102] This discussion needs to go beyond academia. The revolution in information technology is vast and the possibilities are endless. The military now needs to formulate media contingency plans as a part of a larger political/military information strategy.

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[102]For a good example see, John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, "Cyberwar is Coming!" Comparative Strategy, Vol. 12 (1993), pp. 141-165.

V. CONCLUSIONS

How will the new media influence our ability to deter war, or, in its failure, conduct war? A recent example of this difficulty could be seen in Somalia. It cannot be known how much credibility our country lost around the world with our adversaries, with the image of a dead American soldier being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu and an America seemingly unable to do anything about it. However, it is fair to say that this television image, which was transmitted throughout the world, seems to have greatly empowered our adversaries. For example, a recent report in The New York Times indicated that U.S. policy problems in Haiti, including the cancellation of plans to disembark troops and advisors in Port-au-Prince and the embarrassing exit of the USS Harlan County from the port, were exacerbated by a very "small gang of toughs" who had been empowered by the significant U.S. policy failure in Somalia which they had recently witnessed on television.[103] It seems almost unbelievable that this television image of the Somalia situation may have actually assisted a small group of thugs to force the retreat of a U.S. warship. However, if it is true, the world-wide dissemination of the television images from Somalia, may be the biggest U.S. foreign policy failure since the terrorist bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut. This is a revolution in the conduct of foreign policy.

War and other types of conflict have to be viewed in terms of the constituents of power. We are progressing from the realm of the industrial age into the information

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[103]R. W. Apple, Jr., "Policing a Global Village," The New York Times, 13 October, 1993, p. A1, col. 4.

age, of which the media is an integral part. The control of information will increasingly be seen as a constituent of power. Whoever has the control of information has power. This is not to say that the other forms of power are now unimportant. However, the summation of information power and other forms of power is greater than the individual parts. War may be transforming into an information war as much as it is a war of destruction. We need to understand what this means in terms of our ability to protect our nation.

To summarize the findings of this thesis:

1. The media has radically altered the diplomatic and intelligence processes. Additionally, the media's own structure is rapidly changing. We need to evaluate how to best utilize these changes to our advantage.

2. We do not know what the full consequences of this growing global media in a time of war in terms of public opinion, world opinion, and social psychology. This also needs to be examined.

3. The media and particularly the multi-national media should NEVER be considered allies of the United States. They have other motivations. It is useful to think of them as an environment.

4. The U.S. government and military need to confront these changes in our environment. Training our personnel about this environment and the formulation of information strategies for political and military purposes are required. Those ideas found in the previous chapter may provide a useful starting point.

5. We fail to proactively engage these changes at our own peril.

The types of changes in media technology seen in Desert Storm will continue to occur; probably at ever increasing rates. As in Desert Storm, these changes in technology will alter the media process, the media product the American people receive and impact the conduct of war. The importance of the media in the American system

cannot be over stated. If anything, due to its new information handling and transmission capabilities, the media is more important than ever. National planners need to examine the media's role in war and the national decision making process because the American people are ultimately the determinants of United States' policy. Admiral Brent Baker said, "Stay tuned for the New Media Order."[104] More importantly, we must seize the initiative and proactively engage the "New Media Order," now!

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[104]Baker, "Media Influence," p. 15.

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