

Introduction

For a generation, until the collapse of the Soviet Union, American news organizations reported on the world largely through the prism of the cold war. Particularly on the TV networks' evening news programs, where stories have to be short and preferably dramatic, the East-West conflict was a useful framing device.¹ Moreover, the epicenter of the struggle was in Europe, the part of the world that most Americans care most about and whose cultures American journalists were more apt to understand and whose languages they were more apt to speak.

But after the Berlin Wall came down in 1989, international news seemed to lose its urgency for many Americans. Media enterprises turned their attention to domestic matters, which were of greater interest to their consumers. News businesses were not displeased to shut down expensive foreign bureaus. At the same time, without the threat of a rival superpower, U.S. foreign policy makers searched for new defining themes. Revolving attention turned to such topics as human rights, trade, the environment, and regional hot spots; when necessary, news organizations simply parachuted journalists into war zones or other disaster areas. Although the Associated Press, CNN, and a handful of major newspapers—notably the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Wall Street Journal*—continued to maintain a substantial presence abroad, by the morning of September 11, 2001, the world outside the United States had become of only modest interest to the rest of the American

1. As defined by Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Paul Waldman in *The Press Effect* (Oxford University Press, 2003), p. xiii, “The metaphor of a frame—a fixed border that includes some things and excludes others—describes the way information is arranged and packaged in news stories. The story’s frame determines what information is included and what is ignored.”

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journalism establishment.² That day's horrendous events instantly created a new focus of American national purpose, forcefully articulated by the president, and a new framing device for the media: The War on Terrorism.

What was most immediately apparent about covering this war was its breadth, the vast scope of what had to be included. Take coverage between January 1 and April 5, 2002, on the ABC, CBS, and NBC nightly news. While there were strong competing stories, such as the Enron scandal and the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, 28 percent of total stories still related to terrorism. There were accounts of the battle of Gardez in the eastern mountains of Afghanistan, Israeli-Palestinian violence intensifying in the Jenin refugee camp, airport security testing, the kidnapping of *Wall Street Journal* correspondent Daniel Pearl in Pakistan, a crackdown on terrorism in Yemen, legal charges against John Walker Lindh and Zacarias Moussaoui, feature stories on how people were coping, and business stories about the impact on the stock market.³ It was a foreign story and a domestic story. It was a military story, of course, but also a diplomatic and economic story. Coverage of the anthrax scare encompassed health and science. The creation of the Department of Homeland Security was to be a major story about governance and politics.

A complementary impression was the complexity of the circumstances that the United States had been thrust into: a worldwide terrorist network of al Qaeda operatives; the tragedy of Afghanistan; the conflict between Pakistan and India over Kashmir; Russia's President Putin and his war in Chechnya; the aftershocks of the terrorist attacks in the U.S. that would be felt in East Africa, Indonesia, and the Philippines; the unresolved crisis of Palestine; an unfinished agenda in Iraq. All related. And always at root was the need for knowledge of Islamic culture and the Muslim religion, which generally had not been of interest to most Americans.⁴ A simple fact: in a 1992 survey of 774 foreign

2. For a brief summary of media efforts to explain international affairs in the post-cold war period, see Everette E. Dennis and others, *The Media and Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War* (New York: Freedom Forum Media Studies Center, 1993), with annotated bibliography.

3. See Tom Rosenstiel and others, *The War on Terrorism: The Not So New Television News Landscape* (Project for Excellence in Journalism, May 23, 2002). The war on terrorism was the top story of 2002, with 2,092 minutes on the network evening news programs compared with 1,756 minutes for "economy, finance, business," according to *Tyndall Report* (New York: ADT Research, 2002).

4. See Jenny Baxter and Malcolm Downing, eds., *The Day That Shook The World: Understanding September 11th* (BBC News, 2001), for short essays on how these changes were interpreted by BBC correspondents.

correspondents working for U.S. news organizations, only ten said that they could conduct an interview in Arabic.⁵

To explore a conflict “unusually complex both to wage and to report,” in the words of former Brookings president Michael Armacost, the Brookings Institution joined with Harvard University’s Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics, and Public Policy to create the Brookings/Harvard Forum on the Role of the Media in the War on Terrorism. There were twenty sessions—from October 31, 2001, to September 19, 2002, essentially spanning the first year of the war—made up of informal conversations among past and present government officials, foreign and domestic journalists, and scholars. This book of edited transcripts tries to capture the flavor of their discussions.⁶

The book is arranged in six sections. The first, “The Media and the Government: World War II to the End of the Twentieth Century,” includes four panel discussions that look back on past crises. In the first discussion, journalists and the spokesman for the U.S. embassy in Saigon during the Vietnam War review press coverage of conflicts from World War II through the 1991 Persian Gulf war. They reflect on changes in technology, changes in the government’s attitude toward the press, and economic changes that affect their work.⁷ In the second, four former presidential press secretaries explain how they handled national security questions at the White House. Was it ever appropriate to withhold information from the media? Or to leak information to favored reporters?⁸ In the third, a former secretary of defense, a former CIA director, and a former U.S. representative to the United Nations remember the media as an obstacle to getting their jobs done, yet in the fourth discussion, a former secretary of state tells how he used the media to promote policies he favored. The

5. See Stephen Hess, *International News and Foreign Correspondents* (Brookings, 1996), p. 86. Besides the language skills and demographics of foreign correspondents, other chapters explain the locations and subjects of international coverage.

6. This book reproduces about one-third of the spoken text. The original transcripts, along with biographical information about the participants, are preserved on the Brookings website: www.brookings.edu/gs/projects/press/Press.htm [January 21, 2003]. Many of the programs also are available from the C-SPAN archives.

7. For additional analysis of war coverage, see Barrie Dunsmore, *The Next War: Live?* Discussion Paper D-22 (Shorenstein Center, Kennedy School, Harvard University, March 1996); Everette E. Dennis and others, *The Media at War: The Press and the Persian Gulf Conflict* (Gannett Foundation Media Center, June 1991); Frank Aukofer and William P. Lawrence, *America’s Team, The Odd Couple: A Report on the Relationship Between the Media and the Military* (Freedom Forum First Amendment Center, 1995).

8. See Stephen Hess, *The Government/Press Connection: Press Officers and Their Offices* (Brookings, 1984). Chapters cover leaks, briefings, and reactions to crises; also see Elie Abel, *Leaking: Who Does It? Who Benefits? At What Cost?* (New York: 20th Century Fund, 1987).

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press, as seen by high-ranking government officials: obstacle or opportunity? And to what extent was the so-called CNN effect—the impact of instantaneous, worldwide TV coverage—responsible for President George H. W. Bush’s decision to send American troops to Somalia in 1992 and President Clinton’s decision to withdraw them the next year?⁹

Relations between the Pentagon and the press during the early stages of the war in Afghanistan is the subject of the second section, “War in Afghanistan: The Early Stages.” At a November 2001 meeting at Brookings between Washington news bureau chiefs and top Defense Department information officers, the journalists outlined their needs for information and access and the information officers let them know how much the department was willing to provide. Another panel of media critics offered a three-month assessment of the Pentagon’s press policies in January 2002. Could the government have been more cooperative in providing reporters with information and access? All agreed that geography and security concerns in Afghanistan made the operation particularly difficult to cover, yet wasn’t the problem, one journalist argued, that the press and the government have conflicting institutional positions that cannot be reconciled?¹⁰

In section three, “The Journalist’s Dilemma: Three Stories,” the panels turn to the media’s coverage of—or disinterest in—three terrorism-related stories to look for clues to why some things that are important (at least in retrospect) do not get much attention. A report by the blue-ribbon Hart-Rudman Commission predicted events much like those that occurred on 9/11, but it was barely noticed when it came out in January 2001. Was that because of competition from other newsmaking events, or was the report too scary, or was it not promoted sufficiently by the commission?¹¹ The anthrax scare, on the other hand, got plenty of attention.¹² The media’s problems lay in deciding what to report in the absence of hard evidence, dealing with scientific uncertainty, and striking the proper balance between being necessarily informative and need-

9. See Steven Livingston, *Clarifying the CNN Effect*, Research Paper R-18 (Shorenstein Center, Kennedy School, Harvard University, June 1997); also see Johanna Neuman, *Lights, Camera, War: Is Media Technology Driving International Politics?* (St. Martin’s Press, 1996).

10. See Michael Getler, “Challenges: The Press and the Pentagon,” *CJR* (November–December 2001), p. 26; Stanley W. Cloud, “The Pentagon and the Press,” *Nieman Reports* (Winter 2001), pp. 13–16; Nina J. Easton, “Blacked Out,” *AJR* (March 2002), pp. 36–40.

11. See Harold Evans, “Warning Given . . . Story Missed,” *CJR* (November–December 2001), pp. 12–14.

12. See David Murray, Joel Schwartz, and S. Robert Lichter, “The Anthrax Feeding Frenzy,” in *It Ain’t Necessarily So: How the Media Remake Our Picture of Reality* (Penguin Books, 2001), pp. 197–212; and John Schwartz, “Efforts to Calm The Nation’s Fears Spin Out of Control,” *New York Times*, October 28, 2001, section 4.

lessly frightening. The third story concerned dissent. In the months following 9/11 there was wide support for the antiterrorism campaign and very few stories about dissent. How much attention should the media pay to dissent when it is a marginal aspect of the national mood?¹³ These are the daily dilemmas of journalism.

News gathering in Afghanistan, the Middle East, and Washington is the focus of section four, "Reporting from the Field: Three Sites." In the first discussion, journalists who had just returned from Afghanistan explain the new technologies of war coverage and techniques for surviving in a war in which journalists often were targets. Their vastly different experiences range from being caught in the crossfire of competing Afghan warlords at Tora Bora to being tightly controlled by the U.S. military at Kandahar airport.¹⁴ How do war correspondents assess personal risk? In the second discussion, correspondents covering the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians also touch on reporting in a dangerous environment, but they focus more on sorting truth from propaganda, changes in a conflict with a long history, differences between American and European reporting, and the problems in covering shuttle diplomacy.¹⁵ The third conversation, about news gathering in Washington, takes place among foreign correspondents, who explain the news angles that are especially important to their audience; relations with their editors, who often get breaking news from the United States before they do, through the Internet; their treatment by the U.S. government; and how they deal with their audiences' stereotypes of Americans.¹⁶

"From Different Perspectives," section five, includes a discussion of the U.S. government's public diplomacy program and whether it differs from

13. See Laura Flanders, "Why Is Dissent Not Fit for Coverage?" *Extra!* (The Magazine of FAIR—The Media Watch Group) (November–December 2002), pp. 10–11.

14. Commentary on reporting from Afghanistan includes Sherry Ricchiardi, "Dangerous Journalism," *AJR* (April 2002), pp. 28–33; Pamela Constable, "The Conflict in Covering the War," *Washington Post*, December 2, 2002, Outlook section; Robert G. Kaiser, "Already, Too Many Pieces Are Missing," *Washington Post*, December 23, 2001, Outlook section; Matthew Rose, "In War's Early Phase, News Media Showed A Tendency to Misfire," *Wall Street Journal*, December 24, 2001.

15. Aspects of Middle East reporting are discussed in Sherry Ricchiardi, "Bullying the Press," *AJR* (May 2002), pp. 26–31; and Sharyn Vane, "Days of Rage," *AJR* (July–August 2002), pp. 32–37.

16. The most controversial news outlet has been the Arab language network al Jazeera. See Fouad Ajami, "What the Muslim World Is Watching," *New York Times Magazine*, November 18, 2001; Sharon Waxman, "Arab TV's Strong Signal," *Washington Post*, December 4, 2001, Style section; and "Judging al-Jazeera," *Communicator* (published by the Radio-Television News Directors Association), December 2002, pp. 8–9.

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propaganda,¹⁷ an assessment of the role of Congress in the campaign against terrorism, an analysis of American public opinion during 2001–02, and the perspectives of four Americans with distinguished careers in public service who were asked to place the war on terrorism and the government’s response in a broader context.

The book concludes with section six, “9/11 and Beyond,” in which a panel of journalists returns to the beginning, to the remarkable story of how American news organizations covered the events of September 11, 2001. The panelists review relations between the government and the media in the first year of the war on terrorism, and they turn finally to the factors that may account for the dramatic rise and fall in public support for the media that occurred over the year.

Here is an opportunity to eavesdrop on interesting conversations among men and women who have had unique experiences. There is new information—and good stories. The notes to this introduction are meant to constitute a selective bibliography for those who wish to delve deeper into the topics in each section. Certain currents or themes keep popping up, and they are worth further attention.

Technology: Journalism and War Respond to Change

What becomes clear from the first comment in the first panel discussion is how aware journalists are of how changes in technology have affected their work. Daniel Schorr begins by explaining the technology of radio reporting from Omaha Beach on D-Day in 1944, and Ted Koppel joins in: “Let me pick up where Dan Schorr left off, because there is kind of an evolutionary scale here in terms of the technology and how the technology has had an impact on the way that things are covered.” He compares TV coverage in Vietnam in 1967, when “as much as three days might elapse between the time that the story was written and the time it got on the air,” and today, when “a journalist has to be prepared to go on the air instantly, around the clock.” For the audience, that means knowing about events sooner; for Koppel, it also means less time for correspondents to think about and report the events.

Those responsible for government information policy feel the same pressures. Describing what she called “one new dynamic of warfighting and war

17. See Carla Anne Robbins, “In Attack on Terrorism, U.S. Has Early Priority: Managing Its Message,” *Wall Street Journal*, October 4, 2001; William Powers, “Brand of the Free,” *National Journal* (November 17, 2001), pp. 3576–79; Maud S. Beelman, “The Dangers of Disinformation in the War on Terrorism,” *Nieman Reports* (Winter 2001), pp. 16–18.

reporting in the Information Age,” Victoria Clarke, the Pentagon’s chief spokesperson, has written, “We can be quick, or we can be accurate, but [it] is a challenge to be both at the same time. With news hitting the airwaves or Internet almost as quickly as it happens, journalists are understandably impatient for information. Our challenge is to find a balance between speed and precision—being as quick as we can and as accurate as possible.”¹⁸

The battlefield uses of new technologies—such as small, inexpensive digital video cameras—suggest not only improved ways to relay copy from inaccessible places, but, in the constant tug between military authorities and journalists, the possibility of military field commanders losing control of the story.¹⁹ Michael Gordon of the *New York Times* explains how using new technologies affected his reporting from Afghanistan: “I had no relationship with the American military, despite repeated efforts to establish one. But what I did have was my sat phone, and I had e-mail, and I could kind of call back to the Pentagon and say, ‘Look, this is what I see here. How does it fit with what’s supposedly happening?’”

And yet in war today there is another type of technology that also may have a profound impact on what is reported and how. Increasingly military technology, the new tools of war, determines how basic information is provided and authenticated. That began to become apparent in 1991 during the Persian Gulf war, when the world learned of bombs hitting Iraqi targets from U.S. military videotapes presented before an audience of journalists playing the part of “extras” in the drama, asking questions that TV viewers often found irritating. The military clearly set out to dominate the news, and it had the equipment to succeed.

Pentagon briefings, often technologically enhanced, reached an apex under Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld during the fighting in Afghanistan. As reported in the *Washington Post* on December 12, 2001: “The Rummy Show has aired two or three times a week since bombs-away on Oct. 7, and it’s a direct hit. The best zingers make the nightly news and next day’s paper. Members of the public call the Pentagon to find out when Rumsfeld—whose friends call him Rummy—will be on television next. Nielsen Media Research figures that something like 800,000 people watch his appearances live on cable.”²⁰ Note how often conversations in this book turn to Rumsfeld’s briefings—

18. See Nancy Ethiel, ed., *The Military, the Media, and the Administration: An Irregular Triangle* (McCormick Tribune Foundation, 2002), p. 140.

19. See *A New Look at the World: Digital Video and International News* (Pew International Journalism Program, 2001).

20. David Montgomery, “The Best Defense: Donald Rumsfeld’s Overwhelming Show of Force on the Public Relations Front,” *Washington Post*, December 12, 2001, Style section.

sometimes in awe, as when German TV correspondent Claus Kleber reported on the reaction in his country, and sometimes in frustration, as when ABC correspondent John McWethy said of the briefings: “Message control is the way that this administration is trying to communicate what it is trying to do.” In short, the government’s briefing system is designed to give the public the information that the government wants the public to have, but it is not necessarily designed to meet the demands of the press.

At the same time, the advent of two technological innovations—cable TV with its twenty-four-hour news channels and complicated military weaponry that requires explanation—has produced a new breed of semi-journalists: a corps of retired generals and admirals and other experts whose pointers have been much in evidence on TV screens since the 1991 Persian Gulf war. It is a news formula that often gets mired in making predictions or in rhetorical crossfire, as chemical and biological weapons expert Jonathan Tucker explained to our panel on the anthrax scare: “I would be on shows in which there would be an alarmist and I would be the one trying to tamp down some of the hysteria, and the alarmist would get 90 percent of the attention. So I assumed that it was because he was saying what they wanted to hear.”

All of this mixing of wars, technologies, and journalism is nothing new, of course, and dates back in American history at least to the Mexican-American War in 1846, when the newly invented telegraph intensified reporters’ competition for battlefield scoops. Still, then as now, the mixing deserves special attention because of the consequences, predictable and unexpected, that always follow.

Globalism: The World Watches Together

As new technologies contribute to shrinking the world, globalism, in the context of the media and the war on terrorism, boils down to the proposition that everything relates to everything else. That interrelatedness comes into focus in the pages ahead when foreign correspondents in Washington talk of their work and their relationships with their editors and their audiences, diplomats and others talk of the role of propaganda, and everyone talks of the so-called CNN effect.

But before there could be a CNN effect, there had to be a Cable News Network. In the opening chapter Peter Arnett relates how Ted Turner, CNN’s founder, “introduced the idea of international global images” in the early 1980s and expanded it to include “satellite coverage of the whole world,” which led in 1991 to Arnett’s being in Baghdad as the United States dropped the first bombs of the Gulf war. He continued to report live from the besieged capital throughout the conflict. The Age of Instant TV War had arrived.

“The CNN Effect,” a separate chapter, relates how pictures of starving children led to President George H. W. Bush’s decision to send troops to Somalia in 1992. As Lawrence Eagleburger, secretary of state at the time, told our panel, “If there hadn’t been television and the reporting on the mess in Somalia we would never have done it, absolutely correct.” Had the Age of Instant TV Diplomacy also arrived? And, of course, the brutal pictures on television of the desecrated body of an American soldier being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu forced President Clinton to withdraw the troops the next year. Judy Woodruff, the CNN anchor, suggested one measure of the power of televised pictures when she said that the soldier’s body had been seen in CNN’s report for only two and a half seconds.

In contrast to globalism’s wide-angle view, or perhaps because of it, foreign correspondents in Washington often have to report the world through a narrow lens. In the pre-CNN era, according to a 1979 study, foreign correspondents in Washington concentrated on reporting “cosmic” issues rather than the home angle.²¹ Now the panelists spoke of the importance to them of the Turkish angle or the Mexican angle or the Russian angle. When covering the Afghanistan campaign, for instance, the angle for Turkish correspondent Yasemin Çongar was, “What’s going to be the second target?”—Would it be neighboring Iraq?—“because this is the only thing Turkey is so much concerned about.” The Mexican angle, according to José Carreño, was “the impact of this conflict on the U.S. borders with Mexico in terms of vigilance, in terms of trade, in terms of immigration, in terms of the people that are already here, illegal aliens, most of them are Mexicans.” The “biggest story” for Andrei Sitov “was probably the introduction of the Russian presence in Kabul, although it’s the emergency ministry’s personnel rather than the military.”

Foreign correspondents in Washington work within the context of their audience’s view of the United States and Americans. For Jean-Jacques Mevel of *Le Figaro*, it’s what he calls “the historical French anti-Americanism.” “Under the surface,” according to Toby Harnden of London’s *Daily Telegraph*, Europeans consider themselves “more sophisticated and more thoughtful and more reasonable. . . . Americans eat too much, are very fat, and just make loads of money . . . [They] don’t read books, and don’t have passports, and don’t travel.”

But anti-Americanism is rarely the attitude of the foreign journalists who report from America. More typical is that of Sitov, the Russian, who said, “I feel it is a personal and professional privilege to work here,” adding, “I also met

21. See Stephen Hess, “How Foreign Correspondents Cover the United States,” *Transatlantic Perspective* (published by the German Marshall Fund of the United States), December 1983, pp. 3–5.

some wonderful people, made some very good friends.” They try to see as much of the country as possible. Harnden, for example, was in competition with a colleague to visit the most states, and he said with pride, “In two years I’ve actually written stories from thirty-five states.” They see themselves as countering the misperceptions of their audiences and home offices.

Rising negative views of the United States throughout the world also disturb those in “public diplomacy,” whose job it is to sell U.S. policies to people overseas.²² But how receptive are those who don’t trust the United States to getting a sales pitch from the U.S. government? The view of the United States seen through the eyes of foreign correspondents, although not always flattering, is less likely to be rejected out of hand by overseas audiences.

Everything connects to everything in what we call globalism: a vigorous foreign press corps in the United States creates a healthier bond between America and the rest of the world; and the attention that the U.S. media devote to the rest of the world expands Americans’ understanding of why their government has declared war on terrorism—and of how some U.S. policies may have helped to give rise to terrorism.

Yet regardless of how the United States is being forced to feel the consequences of its position as the world’s only superpower, there is no assurance that international news in the U.S. media is going to return to its cold war dimensions. Perhaps the contrary. Andrew Kohut’s polling found that nine months after 9/11, “There is little indication that the news interests and habits of the American public are much different than they were in the year 2000.”²³ If Americans choose to go back to thinking as usual, will American news organizations not go back to business as usual?²⁴

The Clash of Responsibilities: Waging War, Reporting War

The major current that runs through these conversations is the clash between those in the government who have the responsibility to provide for the common defense, as established in the Constitution, and those who have the

22. See Adam Clymer, “World Survey Says Negative Views of U.S. Are Rising,” *New York Times*, December 5, 2002; for the full report, see the Pew Global Attitudes Project, *What the World Thinks in 2002* (Washington: Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 2002).

23. Andrew Kohut in John Schidlovsky and others, *International News and the Media: The Impact of September 11th* (Washington: Pew International Journalism Program, 2002), p. 5.

24. For a survey of foreign news in the U.S. press, see Stephen Seplow, “Closer to Home,” *AJR* (July–August 2002), pp. 18–31.

responsibility and the right, guaranteed by the same Constitution, to tell the public what the government is doing and where and how well the government is doing it.

Sometimes these conversations became quite heated, based as they were on the past experiences of the panelists. Recalling his years as a war correspondent in Vietnam, Stanley Karnow accuses the military of lying—“or at the very least they will try to keep you from finding out and reporting everything that goes on because in certain cases it’s embarrassing and embarrassing to the military means that it serves the interest of the enemy.” From the other end of the press-government nexus, former CIA director R. James Woolsey concludes: “I would say that although we did the best we could, my general impression was that with rare and important exceptions like David Broder [*Washington Post*], most of the press that was covering us, including for the national dailies and the like, was not objective about either the CIA’s importance or what we did.”

When Pentagon officials and Pentagon reporters were brought together at Brookings during the Afghanistan engagement, much of the conversation resembled a negotiation over what the government would and would not permit in covering the war. For instance, when Kirk Spitzer of *USA Today* asked whether “we could not in some fashion cover the Rangers a little more closely than we have now,” Colonel Bill Darley replied, “If I understand the question, Kirk, the question is, Can you embed with the Rangers? The short answer, under current circumstances: No.”

They were not arguing about abstract principles; their immediate concerns were how to fight and how to report a specific war. There are comparable debates before and after all American military conflicts, debates that often are complicated, theoretical, ethical, judgmental. But at root, they are really about work, about professional soldiers and professional journalists trying to do their jobs.

In this context, to fully grasp the boldness of the Pentagon’s media strategy in the second war against Saddam Hussein—encouraging 600 or so journalists from all over the world to embed with coalition troops in Iraq—it is useful to jump back a few wars, to Vietnam. Reporters in Vietnam were free to roam, write, film, and photograph at will. The United States lost the war. “Ergo,” the military planners must have thought, “in the next war we will be very cautious about having the nattering press wandering around the war zone.”

Fast forward to the Persian Gulf war in 1991, and, sure enough, we see the most restrictive press policy ever: censorship on the battlefield with military officers clearing reporters’ copy and information otherwise delivered through the generals’ televised briefings. The United States won the war. “Ergo,” thought the military, “how much better can it get?”

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The brilliance of choosing the embedding strategy in 2003 was that the military abandoned a design that it considered highly successful, realizing that what had worked in Gulf War I might be a poor choice for Gulf War II. Why? Because in 1991 the Americans were universally recognized as the good guys; not so in 2003, when world opinion was hostile and certainly would have been skeptical of information that came through the U.S. government.

Because the military's media strategy permitted reporters to be up front, allowing what Ted Koppel called "a total convergence of access and satellite technology," the war was seen through the eyes of journalists.²⁵ The press rather than the Pentagon became the messengers. The most obvious consequence of embedding was that people all over the world got more information, faster, than they had ever gotten from a battlefield before. Yet embedding was not without critics. Two major strands of criticism were depicted in a *Doonesbury* cartoon by Garry Trudeau in which an embedded CNN reporter interviews an army public affairs officer.²⁶

Reporter: So how're the embeds working out, lieutenant?

Officer: Well, it's a mixed bag. On the one hand, the TV pictures show us at our best. But they also show the horror of war . . . which our enemies can repurpose as propaganda. I'm not talking about your recent feed, of course.

Reporter: Which one? The soldier giving out Skittles?

Officer: Classic stuff. I smell Emmy.

Criticism number one is a variation of the Stockholm syndrome: the journalists start to identify with the soldiers and lose their professional detachment. The same thing, of course, can happen to reporters covering a police beat or a sports team, and journalists must always guard against the tendency. But the problem is magnified when it is a matter of life or death, as *Asahi Shimbun* correspondent Tsuyoshi Nojima noted while embedded with the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force: "I have asked myself repeatedly whether I can keep a neu-

25. See Howard Kurtz, "The News Veteran," March 28, 2003, *Washington Post*, March 28, 2003, Style section.

26. Garry Trudeau, "Doonesbury," April 10, 2002, *Washington Post*, April 10, 2002, Style section. Among the many interesting articles on the embedding controversy, see Josh Getlin and David Wharton, "With Media in Tow, Does Objectivity Go AWOL?," *Los Angeles Times*, March 22, 2003; Carolyn Lochhead, "It's All There in Living Color," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 25, 2003; Josh Getlin and Elizabeth Jensen, "Media and Government Make Uneasy Bedfellows," *Los Angeles Times*, March 26, 2003; David Shaw, "Embedded Reporters Makes for Good Journalism," *Los Angeles Times*, April 6, 2003; Douglas MacKinnon, "Embedded Journalists Put Our Troops in Danger," and Christopher Hanson, "Reporting the War," *Baltimore Sun*, April 7, 2003.

tral attitude, because I sleep with [U.S.] soldiers every night and I am always guarded by them. . . . Yesterday, when a bomb hit Iraqi troops, I unconsciously shouted, ‘Great!’”²⁷

Looking back on the coverage from the battlefield in Iraq, it is clear that the Pentagon chose a risky news management strategy and that it paid off for the U.S. government, the press, and the public: the government got third-party assessments of a war that it was winning; the journalists got what journalists most want—access; and the public got some of the most stunning wartime reportage ever recorded.

Yet it also is clear that the Pentagon had another important reason for choosing this strategy: it expected to conduct a war that would be very short and relatively low in casualties. Yet a future war might be neither. So it is a shaky premise to think embedding will become a permanent fixture of battlefield reporting because it worked well in Iraq.

Ultimately, then, how does a democracy resolve the clash of responsibilities that arises in waging war and reporting war? We think that there are answers in these conversations, especially in the views of two panelists, one from each of the two perspectives, who seem to share a similar approach to problem solving: Karen DeYoung, associate editor of the *Washington Post*, and Victoria Clarke, assistant secretary of defense for public affairs.

“It’s a trade-off,” said DeYoung, the journalist. “It’s a trade-off between our argument that the more information we have the better we are able to reflect the truth and all parts of the truth, and their belief that if we limit the information that’s available to you and funnel it through one source, then we have control over the information. And sometimes we lose, sometimes they lose. Hopefully in the end everyone wins.”

And the final word from Clarke, the military’s spokesperson and probably the prime architect of the Iraq embedding policy: “It is in my interest for the American people to get as much appropriate news and information about this war as possible. If we keep them informed, if we keep them educated, they will stay with us.” Turning to the reporters, she then said: “The news media. It’s your business. It’s your obligation to get out as much news and information as possible. So we have common objectives. There is a healthy tension. What’s the level, what’s the appropriate information? There are probably mistakes and variations on each side, but I happen to think it’s a very healthy tension.”

Trade-offs and healthy tension. These are the keywords that best define what the relationship should be between government and the media in the war on terrorism.

27. Reported with the permission of Yoichi Nishimura, Washington bureau chief of *Asahi Shimbun*, April 16, 2002.