

Unit Introduction

"I impress on the mind of every man, from first to last, the importance of the cause and what it is we are contending for."

-- General George Washington

General George Washington understood the power of information. He understood that in order for America's revolution to succeed against the British it would need the support of the colonists and the troops he commanded in the Continental Army. To build and sustain an Army to fight and win the war, both the public and troops needed to understand what they were fighting for.

In retrospect, this philosophy would become the cornerstone of how our government would function and, ultimately, our military. In a free and democratic society, the government is held accountable to the public's trust. The public must understand and support its government and military. This is America's relationship with its government and military.



Intermediate Training Objective (ITO)

Given a public affairs scenario involving issues with the military and media relationship, develop and recommend public affairs courses of action based on the DOD Principles of Information. Upon completion of this unit of instruction, the student will be able to:

- Explain the impact of evolving technology on war reporting about the American military
- Explain the recommendations of the Sidle Commission
- Explain the recommendations of the Hoffman Report
- Explain the guidelines for coverage of DOD combat operations

Unit Overview

In this unit, we are going to look at military public affairs from a historical perspective to give you a better understanding of how far the military has come in our relationship with the public.

We are going to focus primarily on the wars fought and the military's relationship with the public and the media. The key areas to be covered are:

- Overview of America's relationship with the military
- Revolutionary War
- Civil War
- World War I
- World War II
- Korean War
- Vietnam War
- The Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) Era

America's Relationship with the Military

Our nation was founded on the principles of a free and open society. In a democratic society, the people have the power, through their elected officials, to set policies and establish laws. The voting public has the final say on policy; it is that simple.



Even though the president of the United States is the Commander-In-Chief of the military, the power to raise, maintain, and use our forces rests with the people through their elected representatives in Congress.

America's relationship with its armed services is important because the military cannot operate effectively without the support of the public, regardless of the policies set by lawmakers.

America's Relationship with the Military

The media has been considered the unofficial fourth branch of government, playing the role of watchdogs for the American public.

As part of the government, the military is not immune to that scrutiny.

The media holds the military and its civilian leadership equally responsible to the public's trust. They provide the public with information it would not otherwise have about the roles and requirements of its military. The media are the main source of information for most Americans.

The media also plays a role in helping military public affairs officers tell the military story to the public.

The PAO's role is vital to facilitating the media's relationship as a method of communicating with its publics.



Revolutionary War



General George Washington's major challenges of the Revolutionary War involved building and sustaining public support and an army for the war. During the revolution, of the 2.5 million colonists at least a quarter Tories were loyal to England and hostile to the revolution.

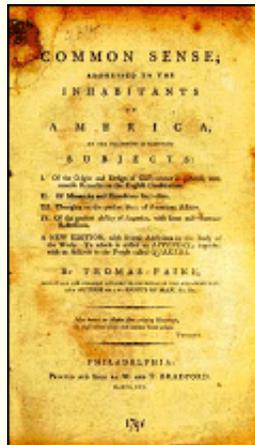
The Continental Congress was almost powerless in raising revenue and providing resources to the new army. Congress once suggested Washington supply his forces by "bayonet requisition" (draft) from local residents.

Washington wisely realized this was not a smart "community relations plan," and left bayonet requisitions to the British. Once the revolution started, support for the cause waned considerably as the cost of the conflict mounted.

Revolutionary War

The press of the time, although influential, was neither timely nor professional. They were an unreliable means to maintain popular support for the effort.

Newspapers and pamphlets reported information based on whether they supported the Revolutionary military or British Tories. Regional support for either side throughout the colonies dictated whether you would be bullied, harassed or censored. Letter writing and pamphlets were the most popular forms of disseminating information.



The *Common Sense* (left), a pamphlet produced by Thomas Paine, supported the Revolutionists' cause against British rule. *The Boston Gazette and Country Journal* (right) from Monday, October 7, 1776, published the excerpt of a letter from General Washington as the president of Congress. Most newspapers of the time were organs of opinion much like editorial pages of today.



Revolutionary War

Initially, Revolutionary soldiers were untrained, and lacked discipline. Many were simple landowners and farmers who came together to fight against the British soldiers.

The all volunteer army were poorly equipped, underpaid, underfed and, unlike European conscripts, they needed to know why they should put up with such hardships. Modern historians have reported accounts of several major troop rebellions or mutinies.

For that reason, one of Washington's first acts as commander was to have the Declaration of Independence read to the troops so they would understand why they were fighting.



Revolutionary War



General Washington initiated and maintained an early internal information program, publishing the first official Army newspaper, the New Jersey Gazette.

Washington, unknowingly, used several modern PA techniques, that we use today, to reach external publics. Since the media was not timely nor reliable, he took his case directly to public officials and the people via letters and pamphlets. He also wrote dispatches from the front, thereby becoming the first military combat correspondent.

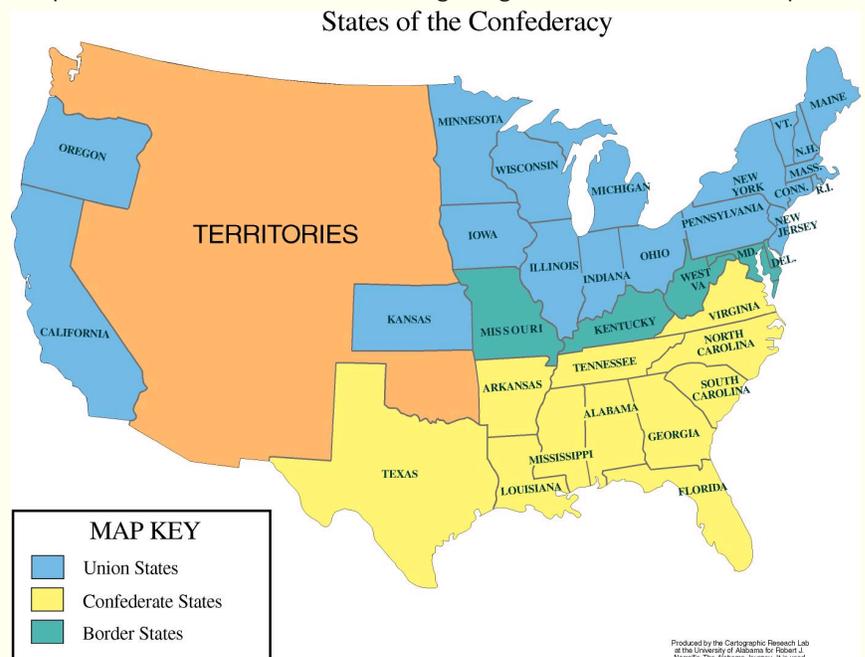
His tactic was to tell the truth -- good news and bad news -- so the colonists would know what support was needed. Truthful information thus became the first foundation of American military public affairs. When that foundation was not observed, as we will see during World War I, there were consequences.

Civil War

The Civil War's significance in terms of public affairs and war coverage was pivotal with the America public, the media and its military relations as seen through media relations.

The Civil War was different from prior conflicts in which the nation participated for the most obvious reason of all: we were the enemy. The nation was divided and, depending on which side of the Slavery debate you were on, you were right. Newspapers in the south reported different accounts of events than newspapers in the north, and vice versa.

The Civil War was a preview of "total war" efforts to come in World Wars.



Civil War



Public support was crucial on both sides to continue the war. The media began to have a more immediate impact on world events. Invention of the telegraph greatly increased the speed of news and information across the country.

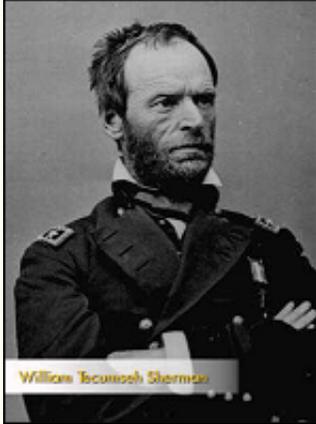
The photograph captured real images of the war. News now traveled much faster than a half-century earlier. The public was exposed to "real-time" reporting of the war.

Newspapers could publish casualty lists fairly soon after major battles. News of defeats and setbacks traveled faster.

Public support for the war in the North bottomed out in early 1864, so much so that Lincoln and his Cabinet expected to be voted out of office in that year's election. A series of Union victories, most notably Sherman's "scorched earth" taking of Atlanta, rapidly turned that sentiment around.

Civil War

The Civil War also saw the widespread practice of what we now call "embedded media." Approximately 150 journalists traveled in the field with troops to observe their campaigns. Some flag officers relished the media attention, at least when things were going well. Others simply saw the press as a nuisance.



William Tecumseh Sherman

"I hate Newspapermen. They come into camp and pick up their camp rumors and print them as facts. I regard them as spies, which, in truth they are. If I killed them all there would be news from Hell before breakfast."

- General William Tecumseh Sherman

Civil War/Spanish-American War

By the Civil War, the telegraph was so well established that the Associated Press wire service was created. America's relationship with the military changed little in the years following the war.

During the Spanish-American War, however, the nation saw the increasing power of the press. Men like William Randolph Hearst, publisher of The New York Journal, and Joseph Pulitzer, of The New York World, became very influential and powerful publishers.

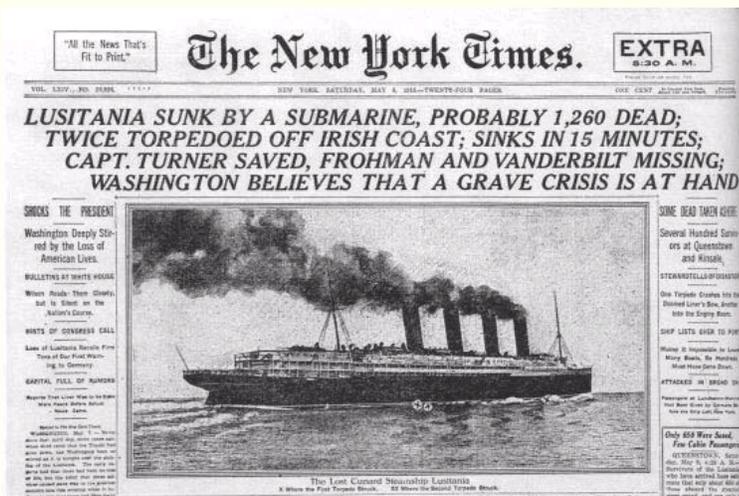
So powerful, many people say that Hearst was the reason America went to war.

This journalistic principal would set the stage for World War I.



"...You furnish the pictures and
I'll furnish the war."
- William Randolph Hearst

World War I



Many, if not most Americans, had been opposed to involvement in the European War in 1914. President Woodrow Wilson was re-elected in 1916 with a major campaign theme based on keeping the US out of war.

For years President Woodrow Wilson had proclaimed the virtues of American neutrality. Many America's saw no reason to prefer supporting Britain over Germany in the war. Consequently, in 1917, Wilson faced a dilemma: how to convince the public that American intervention in Europe was now necessary.

Having watched the Europeans fight for three years, the United States had some notion of the total economic mobilization required to participate in the conflict. While the Civil War had given some idea of what this level of effort was like, World War I took it to a new level.

The effort required strong public support, something that could not be taken for granted, despite several diplomatic incidents that had tilted public opinion against Germany.

World War I

President Wilson decided less than a week after the United States declared war on Germany to assemble the War Department's Committee on Public Information (CPI). The CPI's sole mission was to gain popular support for America's entry into war

He picked newspaperman George Creel, a journalist from Missouri, to head the CPI. Creel led the CPI in activities designed to stir America's fervor to support war.

They used a theme: *The War to End All Wars*, which was woven into art, films, in music and speeches around the country.



World War I

Creel convinced President Wilson that the best way to solidify support for the war effort was to avoid censorship. Instead, he believed the strategy was to flood the American media with positive news about the war.

This effort to "sell" the war, and the war bonds to pay for it, was so successful that it forever changed the way government approached its dealings with wartime information.

Creel created a Films and News Division to help publicize the war message. He created the Division of Pictorial Publicity, a group of commissioned illustrators and artists to reach Americans who might not read newspapers, attend public meetings or watch movies.



James M. Flagg created the image of Uncle Sam as a World War I recruiting poster. The poster of this modern mythological figure is still used today

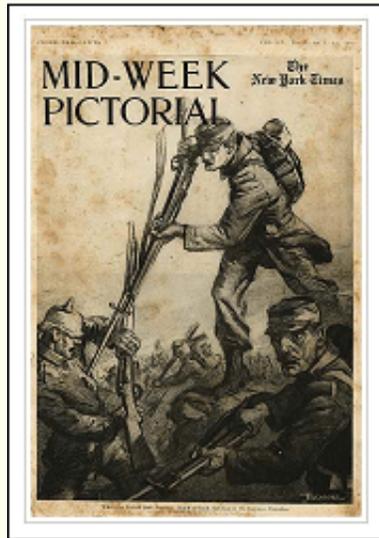
World War I

Still, if the goal as Creel suggested was to use positive information, it would have helped to have more good news.

World War I in Western Europe was a slaughter beyond anything ever seen before. Machine guns made it nearly impossible to assault fixed positions. The stalemate of trench warfare would only be broken late in the war by advances such as tanks and coordinated artillery support.



World War I



Under Creel's direction, there was a national effort to control news of the war. Only positive news of the war was allowed to be disseminated.

News from the front became a strategic commodity. The truth about the war's lack of progress and its horrific casualty lists would threaten, if not possibly end American public support of the war.

World War I

Congress supported the committee's effort by passing laws such as the Espionage and Sedition Acts. These laws prohibited publication of information harmful or critical to the war effort, including criticism.

Reporters covering the war posted a \$10,000 bond to ensure their compliance with censorship laws, which was a lot of money in 1917 - 1918.

There would be a heavy cost involved with Creel's plan of *selling the war* the way it was done. The Committee's methods worked, but objective reporting suffered. The public simply didn't have all the information it needed to make an unbiased call about the conflict.



World War II

September 1, 1939. The world was at War again.

Germany, led by Adolf Hitler, invaded Poland, which started World War Two. Fighting broke out in Europe. Japan, engaged in war with China since 1937, and Italy, who invaded Greece in 1940, signed the Tripartite Pact in 1940 with Germany, thus creating the Axis Powers.

At the time, America was a Pacifist nation. Many Americans still remembered World War I and were reluctant to get involved in another war. In addition, The Monroe Doctrine stated America would stay neutral in European wars and in wars between European countries and colonies. The American public still believed in this isolationist philosophy. The public would not support the country getting involved in the war.



December 7, 1941. Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. America declared war on Japan.

Germany, recognizing its Tripartite Pact, declared war on America. America was now involved in World War II.

"A government can be no better than the public opinion that sustains it."

-- President Franklin D. Roosevelt

The second world war is considered the high point of military-media relations, despite the immediate imposition of censorship when the United States entered World War II.

World War II

The Pearl Harbor attack inspired a patriotic cause to fight in the war. There was talk of Hawaii being evacuated for fear of future attacks or California being invaded by the Japanese. Such scenarios were unlikely, but in such a climate it was easy to mobilize public support for a total war effort.

Public Affairs during the war was easy to implement. The Office of War Information became successor to the Committee of Public Information. The Office with censorship laws (a legacy of WWI) were already established.



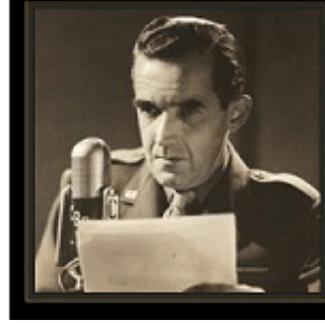
Above is an example of a WWII information campaign to promote "security at the source." Citizens were asked through public information campaigns not to talk about things they knew.

World War II

Both news coverage, and its mirror image propaganda, became more effective.

The speed of information flow continued to increase with advances in communication technology. The immediacy of radio and smaller, lighter cameras posed potential threats to operational security, a challenge for wartime public affairs.

Propaganda was perfected to a new level in this conflict, making use of advances in communications and media technology.



Edward R. Murrow brings the realities of war into living rooms during WWII through the use of radio. Americans don't have to wait as long to get news of war coverage

World War II



Propaganda was used as part of the unofficial information war. Allied troops in Europe heard "Lord Haw-Haw's" pro-German radio reports on the progress of the war, while Allies in the Pacific listened to "Tokyo Rose" predict imminent defeat at the hands of Japanese troops. "Reveille with Beverly" was the American radio program designed to build U.S. troop morale.

Newsreels also brought images of war into theaters, a growing form of entertainment for the public. All of these mediums were censored.

Both sides dropped leaflets on enemy troops.

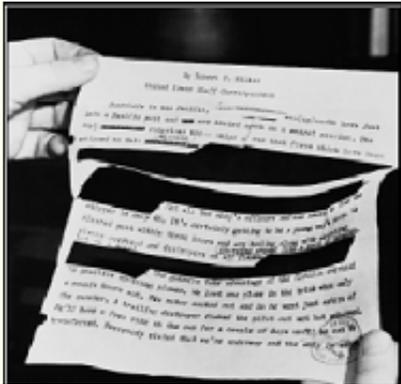
World War II

The Office of War Information's (OWI) mission was to tell the U.S. public about the war and its goals.

The OWI undertook campaigns to enhance the public's understanding of the war at home and abroad. It coordinated government information activities and handled liaison with the press, radio, and motion pictures. The agency issued elaborate guidelines, divided into numerous categories, to insure conformity in every film. One such project was the film "Flying Tigers" (shown right) starring John Wayne and John Carroll.



World War II



Press controls and censorship worked but may have kept military leaders from realizing that the nature of wartime media coverage changed with the advent of the nuclear age.

Field press censorship units, under control of the Office of Censorship, performed the job of suppressing information thought harmful.

For the first time, the Pentagon controlled release of news material.

World War II

"I believe the old saying 'public opinion wins wars' is true. Our countries fight best when our people are best informed. You will be allowed to report everything possible consistent with national security. I will never tell you anything false."

-- Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower
Supreme Allied Commander



The Korean War



There were not many developments between the military and its relationship with the public and media during the Korean War. The Korean War, however, was the last major U.S. conflict in which coverage is dominated by print and radio journalism.

The military's relationship with the public was about to change.

The Vietnam War

The Vietnam War was a turning point in the relationship between the media and the military.



For most of a decade, the country was enjoying economic prosperity following World War II. The country was in the early stages of the Cold War Era. Politically ideological battles were waged, led by Senator Joseph McCarthy, against Communism - a.k.a. the Red Scare.

The pendulum began to shift from conservatism to liberalism as gender, racial and ethnic, and generational revolutions affected American society. At the center of it all was America's involvement with the Vietnam War. Public support was weak. Many Americans felt we shouldn't be in Vietnam. And the country was polarized between the "haves" and "have nots."

The growing consensus was "If you were poor, you went to war."

Advances in technology brought the stark realities of the war and of social and cultural protest into America's living rooms.

The Vietnam War

When studying public opinion toward the war in Vietnam, you really have to consider what was going on in the country.

- Most people were more interested in the "Cultural Revolution" going on: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Freedom Marches; the Beatles and Woodstock; Woman's Rights Movement; and the Youth Culture Movement.
- The civilian leadership never saw a need to generate support for the war effort. They categorized it as a police action.
- In fact, the gradual escalation and troop buildup never really forced Americans to make a conscious decision about our involvement in Vietnam.
- That is, until 1968, when Americans decided the war was not worth the price.
- There were more university trained and educated journalists covering this war than previous conflicts.



The circumstance around the Vietnam War created a complex political situation. For starters, there was no declaration of war.

The Vietnam War



Older correspondents covering Vietnam sometimes remark they liked the way the military let reporters travel with troops, ride on helicopters, file stories when they wanted without censorship.

On the other hand, they may recall with contempt the efforts made to conceal what was really happening on the battlefield. Older service members and retirees who fought during Vietnam often say the media was responsible for losing the war.

But America learned what happens when you let the media loose on the battlefield in a what they reported as a "screwed up war."

The Vietnam War



"Murder of a Vietcong by Saigon Police Chief."
Vietnam. 1968. Photo Credit: Eddie Ams. Copyright AP.

America's military forces were in Vietnam to assist the government of South Vietnam against aggression from Northern Vietnam Communist. It was not supposed to be our fight. The normal communication rules did not apply because we were not a war.

Consequently, censorship as practiced in earlier conflicts was not really an option. South Vietnam leaders were both corrupt and incompetent, making it hard to help them. In the end, Americans wound up prosecuting the war.

One of the most infamous images that summed up the war for American's was the photo of a Vietcong spy killed by a Saigon police chief. The real story behind it did not match the power of the image and the public's

perception.

Television compounded the situation, bringing the war home for many Americans.

The Vietnam War



Broadcast journalism reached new heights during this period.

It was called the "The Living Room War" because Americans could come home from work, turn on their television and see the war unfold as they ate dinner.

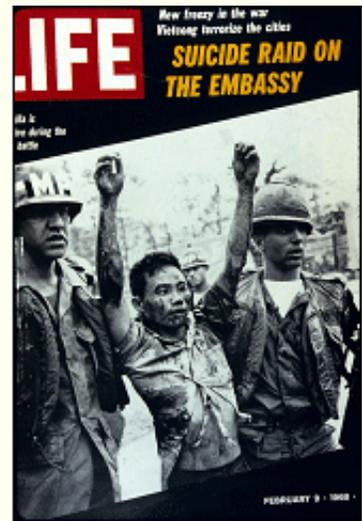
The media was granted open and independent coverage as embedded reporters. They reported on what they heard and saw in combat, good and bad.

The media had a major impact on public opinion not because they controlled what Americans thought, but because America had never seen anything like what it was seeing. Television was having a profound impact shaping America's opinion.

The Vietnam War

America could never report mission complete because we lacked strategic goals. Essentially, the goal of three successive American presidents was to not lose the war.

Instead of using censorship (which would have been a hard sell to Americans) to control media coverage, we relied on excessive classification to prevent Americans from getting the truth about the war and its lack of progress.



The Vietnam War

The problem with this public affairs approach was that the reporters were on-scene and reported the disconnect between the official word and the truth on the ground. Daily news briefings in Saigon came to be called the "Five O'Clock Follies" because of the lack of credible information being presented.

Reporters covered the war from both North and South Vietnam and they knew the truth about everything, from bombing ineffectiveness to low troop morale.



The Vietnam War

The failure in Vietnam and resulting press coverage some significant effects on future operations.

First, military credibility with the American public was severely damaged by officials who refused to tell Americans the truth about the war.

Secondly, media coverage of war led many military leaders to believe that media coverage was responsible for losing the war. This is a belief still held by some today.

Finally, the media and military became increasingly hostile and distrustful toward each other.



Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)

We are not going to discuss Military Operations Other Than War in detail because it is discussed in another unit of instruction. However, three significant military operations other than war during this era - Grenada, Panama, and Desert Shield/Desert Storm - led to U.S. changes in how military public affairs is handled and how we interact with the media.

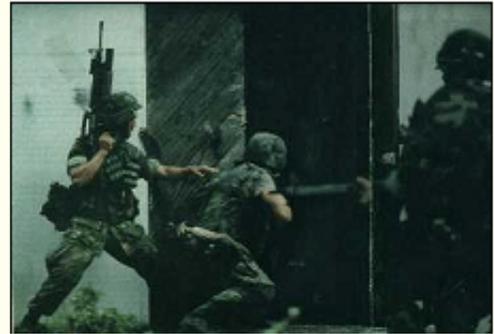
Four others -- Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Haiti -- also had an impact on military operations.



Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)

Grenada (Operation Urgent Fury 1983)

By 1983, the legacy of Vietnam news coverage—that media coverage of combat operations leads to criticism and military failure—had left its mark upon an entire generation of military leaders. For this reason, along with concerns about operational security, media were completely left out of the planning process for Operation Urgent Fury in Grenada.



There was no initial release about the operation. When 600 reporters showed up in Barbados to cover the operation, public affairs was unable to accommodate them. Small media groups were given tours of the airfield, but those groups refused to share their materials with other media. Very little information was available for the first two days of the operation.

Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)

Although the operation was a success, excluding media coverage turned into a major problem. The media relations aspect was a disaster. The public initially supported a news blackout, but reports surfaced questioning how 400 Cuban construction workers could have inflicted so many casualties on U.S. troops. Failure to plan for media coverage of this operation threatened the military's credibility.

Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)



Maj. Gen. Winant Sidle

Following the Grenada operation, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Gen. John Vessey asked retired Maj. Gen. Winant Sidle, a former public affairs officer with the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV), to head up a panel to develop a recommendation on how the military and media might work together in future operations. You might note that it was the CJCS and not the DOD that took on this mission.

General Vessey accepted the Sidle Panel's findings and recommendations and reaffirmed DOD's commitment to its maximum disclosure, minimum delay policy. In retrospect, the solutions offered by the panel may have led to another embarrassing situation in Panama six years later because commanders in the field thought it was now DOD's job to plan public affairs for an operation.

Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)

The Sidle Panel made several recommendations in their report, of which four were significant to public affairs. The Panel recommend that:

- Operational planning must include public affairs.
- A clear set of ground rules replaced censorship.
- Media pools, when used, must be as large as possible and the pools be disbanded as soon as practical.
- The panel recommended the creation of a DoD-managed National Media Pool, a standing group of Washington-based military journalists who could be rapidly deployed to cover the initial phases of any future operation.

Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)

Operation Just Cause, (Panama, December 1989)



Operation Just Cause was the first operational deployment of the DOD National Media Pool recommended by the Sidle Panel. Things did not go well.

At that time, Defense Secretary Dick Cheney's concerns over security led to late notification and deployment of the pool.

Once the media pool arrived in Panama, its members received very little support from PAOs or unit commanders, who were concerned about the pool's safety and operational security.

The pool spent most of its time in briefings and being shuttled to "safe" stories, without seeing much actual fighting.

Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)

Reporters already in Panama, however, covered the fighting. The members of the media pool were outraged at such treatment and threatened to sue, calling the pool arrangement a debacle.

Secretary Cheney asked Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs Fred Hoffman to evaluate the deployment and make recommendations for improvement. Hoffman was chosen because of his position and his 20 years experience as an Associate Press reporter.



Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)

There were several recommendations that came from Hoffman's report that were significant to DOD public affairs. The Hoffman Report recommended that:

- The Secretary of Defense require operational commanders to support the National Media Pool.
- Combatant Commanders be responsible for a PA plan to Support the operation.
- Safety concerns not prevent media from getting access to combat operations.

Hoffman's recommendations were endorsed and implemented by a letter from General Colin Powell (USA), then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to all combatant commanders prior to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)

Desert Shield/Desert Storm (Persian Gulf 1990-91)



No one in public affairs planned for media coverage on the scale of a Desert Shield-type operation. Consequently, when Iraq invaded Kuwait in August of 1990, we went back to the drawing board about the use of media pools, ground rules and coverage of combat operations.

Not since World War II had America found itself in a conflict with an enemy with the combat power of Iraq. (Iraq was considered to have the one of the most powerful militaries on the planet.) And not since Hitler had we found someone as easy to hate as Saddam Hussein, President of Iraq.

Hussein's capability and willingness to use weapons of mass destruction and the undeniable U.S. interests of the Gulf's oil reserves simplified the effort to generate public support for the war effort.

Also, Desert Shield marked the first use of American public relations firms (employed by the government of Kuwait) to generate American public support.

Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)



There were a number of challenges facing public affairs: host nation sensitivities; instant global communications; a vast and extremely high-tech battlefield; and approximately 1,400 media outlets covering the war. If not dealt with in some manner, media technology would enable the enemy to watch our every move on the battlefield.

From the very outset of the conflict, President George Bush stated that Saddam Hussein, not the people of Iraq, was the enemy. He also was very deliberate in making the war a coalition effort, not simply a U.S. counter-attack in the Arab world. Both were key to the political success of the operation, but exercising some degree of control over the media was also essential.

Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)

Media technology advanced exponentially from the early 1980's. Satellites allow live reporting from anywhere in the world. In addition, the Cable News Network (CNN) provided the public with 24-hour news coverage.

DOD instituted a media pool system on reporters covering U.S. forces. It also imposed ground rules for media that were "enforced" by PAO escorts who conducted security review of all pool materials.

PAOs could not technically censor media reports, but they could flag questionable information. This had much the same effect because it delayed the release of the story in question while DOD and media representatives debated the issue.



Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)

The media was never happy with the pool arrangements.



- Only about 200 media pool slots were opened to reporters. As a result, many were left covering the war from hotel-based Joint Information Bureaus in Dhahran and Riyadh.
- Most Americans—whose sons and daughters served in the Gulf—supported restrictions on media coverage.
- After the war, however, it became clear that much of the war—particularly Army and Navy operations--went uncovered by media.

Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)

Media executives challenged pool restrictions in several lawsuits, none of which resulted in judgments against the government. Media executives also proposed changes for media coverage of military operations. DOD proposed Statement of Principles: News Coverage of Combat, which outlined how the media would prefer to cover future operations. DOD accepted nine, but rejected the tenth: reserving the right to conduct a security review.

Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)

The Guidelines (as outlined in Joint Pub 3-61) are:

- Open and independent coverage should be the standard method of covering U.S. military operations.
- Pools may be the only method practical for covering initial stages of an operation. If used they should be disbanded as soon as possible within the first 24-36 hours. The arrival of pools should not prevent coverage of on-scene media.
- Pools may be the only method practical for some extremely remote operations.
- Credentialed media will be provided a set of ground rules for covering operations. Media who violate those rules will lose their credentials to cover the operation. Media will try to assign experienced reporters to cover military operations.
- Journalists will be provided access to all major military units. Special operations restrictions may prohibit coverage in some cases.
- Public affairs officers should act as liaisons but not interfere with the reporting process.
- Under conditions of open coverage, commanders will allow media to ride aboard aircraft and vehicles when feasible. The military is responsible for pool transportation.
- Commanders will allow media access to communications systems for transmission of pool products and when possible make such facilities available for transmission under open and independent coverage.
- These principles will also apply to the DOD National Media Pool.
- Not accepted* News materials— words and pictures--will not be subject to military security review.

Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)

Other military operations other than war - such as Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Haiti - saw the use of further technological advances that impacted war coverage. We have seen the growing impact of the 24-hour news cycle from services like CNN, FOX News, and CNBC/MSN, where news coverage is round the clock with late breaking information. In addition, we have also seen the impact of the electronic reporting and the internet's influence on print journalism.

Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)

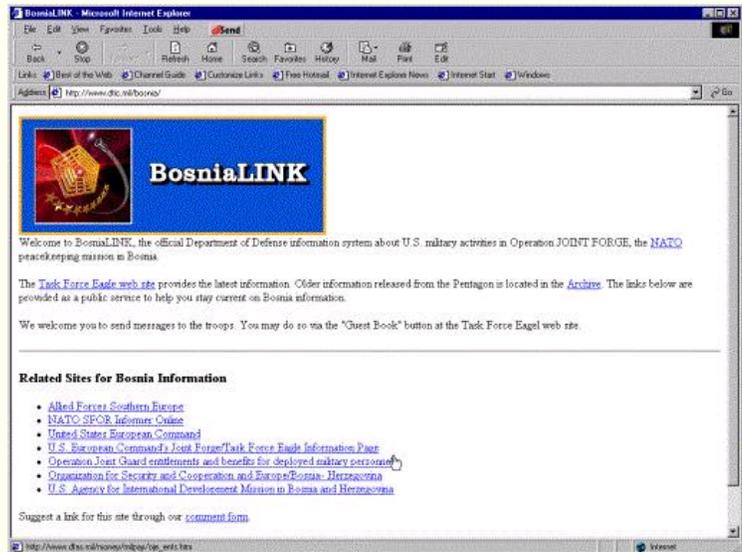
Communication Technology

DOD will never again be able to completely control the information flow from the battlefield. Today when our forces deploy, people take cellular and camera telephones, digital cameras, the Internet links them to the rest of the world and the speed of personal communications will almost certainly continue to increase.

What does that mean for a PAO?

We must monitor technology changes for both opportunity and potential liability. Bosnia is a good example of applying new technology (at the time) to a PA mission. Since technology is ever changing, you may be the first to recognize another innovation, if you are paying attention.

On the downside, things like OPSEC and next of kin notification will get more difficult. Wives now know when husbands are flying missions and expect a call when they return safely to base.



Unit Summary

The United States and its military have a unique relationship with each other. We have discussed the role and impact of evolving communication has had on how the media reports on military operations.

As a free democratic society, the military has and always will be accountable to the American public. Truth is essential to gaining and sustaining public support.



Unit Summary

You should be able to recognize the principles that govern the relationship between Americans, their military and the media, so you are better prepared to serve as a public affairs officer.

In understanding the history of military public affairs, you will be able to advise your command on courses of action to take based on lessons learned from the past.

The new challenge for commanders and PAOs is keeping up with the speed of technology to control misinformation. Is this possible? Good tactics include monitoring the rumor mill and making sure you keep media covering your unit busy. Stories abound in any deployment, and if you are not aggressive about finding them and feeding them to the media, you will spend your time constantly chasing rumors.