

7-4-1984

## THE PRESS AND THE MILITARY: SOME THOUGHTS AFTER GRENADA

Donald Atwell Zoll

Follow this and additional works at: <https://press.armywarcollege.edu/parameters>

---

### Recommended Citation

Donald A. Zoll, "THE PRESS AND THE MILITARY: SOME THOUGHTS AFTER GRENADA," *Parameters* 14, no. 1 (1984), doi:10.55540/0031-1723.1371.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by USAWC Press. It has been accepted for inclusion in The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters by an authorized editor of USAWC Press.

# THE PRESS AND THE MILITARY: SOME THOUGHTS AFTER GRENADA

by

DONALD ATWELL ZOLL

It is an erroneous assumption that invariably military commanders would elect to free themselves from the scrutiny of the journalist. Frankly, some generals have doted on the press—Custer had a reporter along when he met his fate on the Little Big Horn.<sup>1</sup> Some commanders have chosen to be loquacious, like Patton, often providing most colorful copy. Others were taciturn, as in the case of von Moltke, who, it was said, could be “silent in nine languages.”

The history of representatives of the press accompanying military operations has been reasonably short. It is possible to date the inauguration of this custom from Wellington's Peninsular Campaigns,<sup>2</sup> but more substantially the practice arose during the Crimean expedition of 1854 and principally in the person of William H. Russell of the London *Times*. He saw fit, as is well known, to excoriate the conduct of that war and to provoke the bitter ire of the military command and much of the soldiery. Allow me to provide a sampling: One officer of the Royal Fusiliers spat out, “That blackguard Mr. Russell of *The Times* ought to be hung.” One Colonel Maxwell of the 88th Foot wrote, “I would delight to see these paltry knaves [war correspondents] exposed to the showers of shot and shell which never even raise the colour in our gallant commander's face. I would like to see the scurvy poltroons trying to hide their shivering frames.” It was also alleged quite widely that *The Times*, through its correspondents, provided valuable intelligence to the Russian enemy. Lord Raglan, the general officer commanding,

commenting on these press disclosures, gloomily remarked that “the enemy at least need spend nothing under the head of Secret Service.”<sup>3</sup>

It is noteworthy to point out that the custom of civilians traveling with military commands on their own instigation, often most casually and quite at their own expense, was widespread up to and including the 19th century. One may recall, for illustration, the passages in Tolstoy's *War and Peace* where the field of Borodino is visited by a number of civilian spectators. Such sojourns were not flights of fiction. Consider the ludicrous spectacle of the first battle of Manassas, when literally crowds of festive civilians journeyed out from Washington to observe what they anticipated would be the summary rout of the Confederates. Indeed, just prior to that engagement, the Washington newspapers obligingly published the details of McDowell's battle plans.

To this custom might be added the common practice of that era of permitting fairly numerous collections of foreign military attachés to join themselves, as observers, to military operations. That was a matter of reciprocal courtesy in an age of cosmopolitan professional sentiment. On occasion, too, military officers themselves served as ad hoc journalists. Winston Churchill, perhaps the most celebrated example, originally gazetted as a subaltern to a hussar regiment in India, managed to accompany Kitchener's punitive expedition in the Sudan, and participated in the memorable charge of the 21st Lancers at Omdurman in

1898 as a "guest." The result of these experiences was *The River War*, which, along with his later civilian journalistic adventures in the Second Boer War, propelled Lieutenant Churchill into national prominence.<sup>4</sup>

It may be germane, as well, to reflect that the earliest appearance of war correspondents was of English provenance, reflecting both the power and freedom of the British press, a condition hardly similar to the role of the press in most continental countries of the time. There, public scrutiny of military operations was not the common practice. As late as World War I, even members of the French National Assembly were denied permission to visit the front.

**A**llowing members of the press to be present on battlefields and aiding them in this enterprise were two quite different matters. In the American Civil War, for example, press coverage was random and informal, although newsmen could wander more or less unconstrained among the troops.<sup>5</sup> The very existence of a popular press (due in large part to the technological advances of the day) made it incumbent on the part of the military establishment to undertake the earliest forms of "public information dissemination," and the issuance of regular "communiqués" dates from the Civil War era. Of course, by the close of the 19th century, newspapers had greatly increased in readership and subsequent influence and their correspondents were far more readily acknowledged.<sup>6</sup> One recalls the story of Frederick Remington, famed as an illustrator, being sent to Cuba by William Randolph Hearst prior to the outbreak of the Spanish-American War. He subsequently complained to his employer that nothing was transpiring. Hearst is reputed to have cabled Remington in reply: "You provide the pictures, I'll provide the war." Soon afterward, the USS *Maine* blew up in Havana harbor.

The procedure of accrediting and providing logistical support for the press primarily arose during the First World War. Before that time, enterprising journalists went to theaters of war—like the Indian

campaigns and the insurrection in the Philippines—on an informal basis and not without considerable risk and discomfiture. Generally members of the press were tolerated by field commanders, though occasionally welcomed, with no particular official emphasis being placed on factors of security, military or political.

World War I was another matter. It was a narrative that governments at war were eager to transmit, the conflict representing comprehensive national efforts within the sphere of a global confrontation, viewed generally in America as something of a moral adventure. The "total war" as envisioned nearly a century before by Clausewitz, the full commitment of national resources, physical and psychological, had materialized, and the matter of informing the public about the course of military operations ceased being merely a case of detached reportage—it loomed as a vital factor in the war effort. Now emerging were what could be loosely described as "propaganda ministries." It therefore became necessary for governments to participate actively in the management of battlefield news-gathering, encouraging and sponsoring such activities. In some ways this undertaking—news as a significant public psychological variable—was not so difficult an accommodation as it would become. Despite the muckraking tradition of the American press, an adversarial relationship did not exist between the press and the military establishment, due in considerable part to the character of the journalists

---

Donald Atwell Zoll is a former contributor to *Parameters*, as well as numerous other journals, including *Strategic Review*. He is the author of *Reason and Rebellion* (1962); *The Twentieth Century Mind* (1967); *The American Political Condition* (1973); *Twentieth Century Political Philosophy* (1974); and a collection of short stories, *Hoofmarks*, published in 1982 by Regnery Gateway. Former Professor of Philosophy at the University of Saskatchewan and Professor of Political Science at Arizona State University, Mr. Zoll left academic work in 1974 to write and lecture.



themselves, most of whom were militarily knowledgeable, some of them having won their spurs covering the smaller colonial wars of the recent past.

It may be well to remember that World War I introduced the practice of systematic espionage—and the attendant need for secrecy and press restraint. Before that time, many military commanders and even statesmen were hostile to the now conventional devices of information-gathering. Lord Raglan, in the Crimea, for example, refused to receive the information offered by a Russian deserter on the grounds that he would not treat with such a despicable person! Even later, Henry L. Stimson, war secretary in two wars, is famed for remarking that “gentlemen do not read other people’s mail.”

From another perspective, World War I was a decidedly controversial conflict from a military viewpoint, and it provoked both a flood of sophisticated military criticism and literary anguish. The war certainly solidified the role of the military journalist and vastly increased the manipulative capacities of the popular press. Yet, at the same time, inevitably, adjustments were to be faced concerning the “right to know” of the press versus the needs of national security, that is, the requirement of secrecy in the conduct of military operations.

**T**he principal means of resolving this problem rested on the self-imposed discretion of the press itself. Such was the general practice followed in World War II, with a few exceptions. For example, journalists were informed of the Allied invasion of Europe in 1944 and actually accompanied the landing forces in Normandy. Such a *modus operandi* depended on a number of factors, not the least of which was the basic understanding by journalists of military affairs, and the technical education of military correspondents in that era was generally admirable, at least far superior to contemporary standards. The informal linkages between the press and the defense establishment not only enabled the handling of the delicate matter of security, but also

effected a good deal of valuable public education on military matters by the national press. I cannot allege that mutual trust between the press and military professionals was total, but it was substantial, and it was ultimately based not only on the press’s “right to know,” as constitutionally mandated, but also on the military’s acknowledgement of the need for public understanding of its mission. This latter consideration was sufficiently significant that the defense establishment provided, in sum, the physical means by which correspondents plied their trade: transportation, communications, and so on.

Of course such broad-based considerations do not explicitly pertain to the question of imposing restrictions of secrecy or even barring the press from coverage of specific combat operations. It is surely the case that the “right to know” is not absolute, but by the same token, the right to restrict military information is also not an absolute power, either legally or practically. There arises, too, the issue of access, as against the actual suppression of reportage. In theory, one might well grant freedom to the press to cover a military operation but fail to provide physical access to the scene of encounter. To what extent, in fact, is the Department of Defense obligated to underwrite logistically the activities of the press, as has been customarily done since World War I? The truth is, of course, that given the conditions of much contemporary warfare, freedom of the press is only a vacuous phrase unless it is made substantial by the active participation of the defense establishment in the journalistic venture—a situation certainly accepted, if only in a spirit of self-interest, by the military community.

As in World War II, the war in Indochina was an “open” one, reportorially speaking. Few restrictions confined the press; the nominal forms of support to journalists were forthcoming. On the other hand, by military standards solely, it was a poorly reported conflict, due largely to a marked decline in the competence of correspondents in what might be termed traditional military journalism. This diminishment in technical

skill in reporting and interpreting military operations was accompanied, as well, by a distinct weakening of the informal bonds that had previously existed between members of the press and military officers, representing a widening schism between the educational backgrounds and social orientations of journalists and soldiers and a breakdown of significant communication and understanding.

As this decline of competence was taking place within the journalistic profession, the armed services increasingly came to resemble civilian bureaucracies—being more politically sensitive, among other things, more inclined to fret about “image” and to use the devices of information regulation as a means of obscuring organizational ineptitudes. Of course, these tendencies were stimulated by the considerable unpopularity of the Vietnam War, with its ideological cleavages and, more pertinently, the growing unfavorable “press” accorded the defense establishment. There was an anti-military sentiment in the wind, and the military community responded in large measure with a corresponding “siege mentality,” feeling decidedly misunderstood and also embattled, and blaming the media for much of its aggravation. The military community certainly no longer had much confidence in what amounted to the “discretion” of the press. In short, the Defense Department accepted the idea of “news management,” already a rather conventional concept within the civilian bureaucracy, in which it is presumed that the press is a hostile investigatory body against which, defensively, one must cope with guile and even a certain degree of justifiable duplicity.

I am convinced that the press itself brought on at least some of this retaliatory umbrage, but that premise does not alter the fact that a serious internecine neurosis was evident in some military quarters that took the form of viewing the press as motivated by malevolent intent (while, by and large, journalistic shortcomings were the result of inadequate military education, no doubt producing a certain lack of sympathy for the military professional). There were and are

sharp divisions of opinion on quite fundamental value issues between many journalists and soldiers, and there is now a virtual disappearance of a common idiom between them. On the whole, however, journalists have not succumbed to zealotry and remain convinced (and often provincial) pragmatists.

**T**he current situation—provoked in considerable measure by the uproar over the press exclusion in Grenada—falls quite neatly into two analytical categories: first, the theoretical or legal issue of press access as against military restriction of information; second, the present state of press-military relations, which drastically affects the quality of public understanding of military responsibilities.

With regard to the first, a sprightly debate now ensues over the press restrictions during the Grenada operation. The bulk of criticism in the press (including all media) more than merely implies a transgression of the very “rights” of a free press. The issue, I conclude, is more complex than suggested on the editorial pages of the national press—and certainly more complex than the reasons somewhat naively extended by the Department of Defense spokesmen for the secrecy and press exclusions of this operation.

Freedom of the press does not equate with full public disclosure, nor is a government obliged, in all instances, to volunteer information detrimental to its welfare. Those precepts would be accepted, I feel certain, by most journalists. Nor, I think, need a government invariably tell the truth if it has reasonable grounds for not doing so. It is far more important, incidentally, that officials of governments tell the truth in private than in public, and no prudent student of politics would wish to demand a degree of public disclosure that would menace the opportunity for truth-telling among statesmen. That a government is not required at all times to disclose what it knows implies that it may strenuously use what legal means are at its disposal to exclude the press from access to information deemed too sensitive for public distribution. But a government may also merely choose not to actively aid and support

the press in its quest, likely in the case of less critical matters.

If we grant that governments have legitimate reasons for withholding information from the press (that there are, to use the British phrase, "official secrets"), then the main issue becomes one of making a rational separation between truly sensitive information, whose public disclosure would endanger national security, and information whose public currency would only be politically embarrassing to the government in power. That differentiation is not simple to make and is further complicated by the fact that inevitably it is the government itself that must make such judgments, placing great strain, to say the least, on its circumspection. Of course, the overall attitude of the press has been traditionally skeptical; the press is generally suspicious that attempts to forestall its investigations are in fact motivated by crass political considerations. It is a reasonable verdict, I think, that governments tend to overstress the need for secrecy, while the press often unfairly disparages such need, both being, as it were, occupational attitudes.

There are two types of information relevant to official secrecy: specific factual information (technical data or troop dispositions, for example) and information relating to persons, events, and intentions (generally to be labeled, perhaps, as "political intelligence"), matters that lie close to the core of customary diplomacy. The press understands the first form of restriction because such restriction rests upon the assumption that the possession of such information by a potential enemy would be evidently hazardous (while, if that risk were not a factor, possession of the information by the general public would be quite harmless).

The second type of information cannot be so easily dealt with, because restriction of "political intelligence" implies that in some instances information is kept secret not to forestall an adversary but on the assumption that such information would be better off not known by the domestic populace (for a variety of reasons). That presumption is not universally accepted by the press by any

means, and the matter raises a host of philosophical wrangles. Yet there is obviously a marked difference between the denial of press freedom, as in a straightforward police state, that consists of interference with the right to print, repression of advocacy, and a coercive uniformity with governmental policy, on the one hand, and, on the other, the unwillingness of a nominally democratic government to share all its confidences with the press.

I do not underestimate the ethical burden that this places on governments. The temptation to mask stupidities and venalities behind the wall of official secrecy is seductive, and no government has been wholly immune from the temptation. On balance, though, a modest amount of political stonewalling must be tolerated in order to protect the necessary seclusion of some military and diplomatic activity. "Freedom of the press" does mean, among other things, the untrammelled right to speculate openly on governmental vagaries, substantially and critically, and to employ legally acceptable means to procure otherwise inhibited information on such without fear of retaliation. A vigorously critical press is quite evidently the best insurance against a government taking a fulsome view of its power and its self-protective prerogatives. The journalists can and must sound the alarm, surely, if they detect the use of official reluctance to inform the public as a means of bureaucratic protection or aggrandizement.

Regrettably, the history of military administration contains numerous examples of the use of official secrecy to hide incompetence or moral turpitude. There is a strong inclination in any tight-knit bureaucracy to "circle up the wagons," to tidy up its own laundry under the umbrella of public restraints on information. We need, in this regard, able military critics—as we have such political critics—to insure that there is, in fact, a public accounting for military malfeasance, as indeed such standards are applied to all professional performances. If the contemporary American press is to be faulted in this connection, it is not on the

basis of some excessive zeal (occasionally to be noted, perhaps, in the journalists' adversarial political ruminations), but rather for its general inability to evaluate military performance in a sophisticated fashion. It is interesting to note, for illustration, how much print has been expended on the political ramifications of the Marines' predicament in Lebanon and how little spent on the purely military questions relating to the tragedy of the bombing of the Beirut headquarters. Serious issues present themselves regarding military competency in this otherwise melancholy operation.

**W**ith regard to the second analytical category noted earlier, the present state of press-military relations, the controversy sparked by the invasion and occupation of Grenada is strongly shaped by what might be termed the informal relationship between the press and the military establishment, a connection that appears to be continually fraying and deteriorating. There is no doubt whatsoever that the confidence of the military in the discretion of the press had evaporated altogether. This was made evident by the fact that the Department of Defense chose to abandon its more or less traditional policy of providing necessary logistical support and access to the press corps. Moreover, the existing communication channels between the press and the military were reduced almost exclusively to DOD press releases and a limited number of press conferences. Quite as remarkable, I think, was the total absence of "in-house" military reportage—creating a lamentable paucity of information regarding the operation and inspiring, in course, the evitable questioning of the political appropriateness of the undertaking.

I think that the angry reaction of the press to what it has described as a "blackout" is at once understandable and, in most part, justifiable. What is pertinent to that reaction, however, is the press's own contribution to the critical deterioration of mutual trust between journalists and the military community. This unhappy state of affairs has been brought about by a number of factors,

including the significant lowering of journalists' professional competence in military affairs, an excessively bellicose orientation on the part of some correspondents, and the widening gap between the social world views of civilian journalists and professional soldiers, indeed, in some cases a divergence of rudimentary ethical perspectives.

Conversely, the reaction of the Department of Defense vis-à-vis the Grenada operation was inappropriately clandestine, and its public information techniques were inept. Its justification of the absence of press representation during the initial operations—that the exclusion was motivated by concerns for the journalists' safety—was patently unbelievable. Frankly, one suspects that inadequate intelligence penetration of Grenada rendered the Defense Department decidedly unsure as to just what it would discover once the island was invested, and that consequently it chose to bar the press until those conditions could be determined. The site, a relatively remote island, obviously made such a press exclusion feasible.

One detects, I submit, a certain bureaucratic neurosis at work, a return to the siege mentality that has earlier characterized the defense establishment. Regrettable as that may be, more serious yet is the collapse of wholly necessary reciprocities once extant between journalists and the military. It is not mandatory that the Defense Department trust all journalists, but it is vital that it trust a few of them. Moreover, not all journalists are either sworn foes of the military or committed to tawdry exposés to feed the current public appetite for scandal. On the other hand, however, there are now few real military specialists among the press corps (although there are a number who are concerned with the somewhat amorphous category of "national security") and this lack of what amounts to professional military credentials among the press has created certain frustrations and even suspicions among military professionals. For a variety of reasons it is not practicable for the military community to educate journalists in specific features of military art and science, at least not in an overt manner (although there has

been some enthusiasm for this in some quarters). No, the improvement of the educational quality of journalists in this sphere must rest essentially with those who control and manage the media, in short, with the proprietors, who must exhibit a willingness to forego the increasingly theatrical orientations of American journalism in favor of more solid intellectual substance. At this writing, I must conclude that this reform is unfortunately unlikely.

**T**he fact remains that today no military operation, anywhere mounted, can proceed without a carefully structured press policy and plans for its implementation as integral to the undertaking as any other staff concern. Even taking into account the rapidity with which the Grenada expedition was launched, such a provision for press participation should have been forthcoming, and it was not. Nor was adequate in-service coverage presented. Ultimately, force of arms is either sustained or mitigated by the willingness of the civilian population to render support, however remote or indirect, and such support in these times is made tangible on the basis of both information and judgment that follow immediately upon events. If, indeed, there is a tardiness in providing information—and from the customary independent sources—there is a reaction, however unwarranted, that raw information is repressed or restricted in the interests of public manipulation. I concede that there may be those times and circumstances when such restriction (and corresponding manipulation, when it comes to that) may be justified, even at the risk of depressing the public confidence. When such restriction is not objectively necessary or when there are shortcomings in staff planning re information distribution, however, the damage is scarcely to be justified, and the indelible impression is created in the public mind that tardiness or inaccessibility are devices meant to conceal either devious purposes or organizational failures.

Military organizations are hardly infallible, either in terms of policymaking or tactical execution. Making war on any scale is

the most complex and hazardous of human undertakings. Any military journalist worthy of that title surely appreciates this simple truth, and thus military professionals must accord to journalists a decent sense of proportion, assuming that they have warranted such an evaluation by past performance. The burden of assuming omniscience and omnipotence is impossible for a military service to bear, and it is not prudent to attempt to do so. *If* journalists are not avidly waiting to pillory the professional military establishment by the imposition of rationally inapplicable standards, then the military professional must not arbitrarily assume that the journalist is an ill-intentioned interloper who needs to be met with behind some uneasy facade of infallibility. There is, thus, a pressing need for a mutual candor not at all presently evident in military-press relations. The military journalist must have certain guild ties to the profession of arms, just as a working police reporter is in some respects an adjunct member of the police force insofar as he shares common principles and outlooks with the men on the beat. This does not mean that either a military journalist or a police reporter would turn a blind eye to corruption, but at the same time they would have rational expectations concerning how military organizations and police forces must function.

One can easily conjure up an alternative scenario for the Grenada enterprise *if* mutual confidence between the press and military had prevailed. As in the case of the Falklands invasion, journalists could and probably should have had reasonable access to the assault vessels and to the lodgment areas when once secured. One may choose to criticize American journalists for professional lacks, perhaps, but they cannot be faulted for a shortage of courage and hardiness. Nor, by and large, can journalists be accused of flagrant irresponsibility when confronted with such elemental situations as actual combat in process. But the Grenada instance seemed to indicate that, to many, the risks of trust were greater than the risks of mistrust.

The inescapable fact is that the Grenada affair has exacerbated what was already a



tenuous situation concerning military reportage. The image, true or false, of the Department of Defense as an immense, monolithic bureaucracy, a self-serving interest group preoccupied with internal solidarity and the reduction of external and inhibiting scrutiny, has been intensified. This eventuality comes at a time when the defense establishment, almost ironically, is virtually compulsive about improving its repute within the national body of opinion and is curiously ultrasensitive about the public relations dimension. Yet it chose obtusely to neglect these considerations in the specific case of Grenada (and, to some lesser degree, in that of Lebanon).

It is wrong for the public to conclude that the Defense Department has in its mind some wicked intention to subvert the nominal practices of a free press. Nor is the Defense Department's attitude an arrogant one, at base, despite what appeared as quite cavalier behavior during the Grenada undertaking. The Department of Defense has become very wary about the sympathies of the press and grows correspondingly hyper-defensive—somewhat in keeping with the mood of the present administration of which it is a part. But this disquietude of the military regarding the reliability and ideological compatibility of the American press is far from being groundless. The military attempts to work with a press that no longer speaks its language. It cohabitates with a national informational apparatus that increasingly is a commercially centered manifestation of less-than-laudatory public appetites and tastes, a growingly doctrinaire and narrow-gauged press establishment that views itself as some special tribunate, a moral arbiter unto itself, the articulation of Rousseau's "General Will." The charge of arrogance is a two-edged sword.

**I**f the problem—the restoration of a complementary working relationship between the press and the military community—is large in scope, I am convinced that its resolution must be small-scaled, at least in part. I remain of the opinion that this relationship, very much like

the practice of diplomacy, finally depends on mutual regard for the acuity and probity of the *participating individuals*, journalists and those with whom they interact within the defense establishment. We must return to the practice of seconding to the area of military affairs journalists who are military specialists, preferably with both a military education and some prior active service. Care must be taken, correspondingly, to appoint press relations officers of liberal learning and high professional élan (not apologists, but sharp-minded students of the media). Only by informal intercourse between persons of this sort will the linkage be resolidified.

But this is not enough, although it is perhaps the most crucial factor. It would be most inadvisable for the Department of Defense not to strive to open up its processes, where security conditions allow, since the education of civilian journalists may be considerably enhanced by permitting them to roam the "shop" and come to more adequately appreciate the hardly simple mission of the armed forces. Bureaucracies do not like criticism, but the military community is only in part a bureaucracy; more importantly, it is the corporate form of a profession. Professions proceed on the basis of both internal and external examination, dialogue, controversy, and criticism. The military profession therefore should welcome, even encourage, thoughtful and acute criticism, irritating as it might be, for criticism of that variety flows from those who care enough to hazard the fires of controversy.

Finally, the bond will be reformed if there are substantial improvements in the quality of the upper-echelon civilian leadership of the defense establishment, particularly in terms of the didactic functions of such persons. It is a fair judgment that many of those recently appointed to the Department of Defense, whatever other merits were theirs, were neither sufficiently knowledgeable about military art nor particularly fluent in public exposition, from an educational standpoint, of the whole area of military affairs. There is a lively temptation, I think, for secretaries of defense to view the press relationship

problem of the DOD on the basis of their earlier experiences in other governmental or civilian bureaucracies, and most of that prior experience misleads them. In a loose way, the role of the secretary of defense resembles a university president far more than it does a corporate chairman of the board or, say, the secretary of HUD. The university president, despite his administrative powers, is, after all, first among equals; he "manages," if you will, a collegium of professionals. Indeed, frequently his deans or non-administratively involved professors are better educated and better informed than he is in sheer professional terms. Most university presidents are primarily outward-looking; that is, they are essentially concerned with "public education" relevant to the welfare of the institution (to include, of course, fundraising, private or public, from donors to legislators). In this situation, the university president cannot expect, and perhaps would not want, either tight control over the interaction of the press with his institution or to create the appearance that he was shielding the activities of his colleagues from public view. Our hypothetical president understands, one hopes, that he or she exists in an untidy world of cerebral ferment and knows he can scarcely insulate his school from contentious opinion; he places his own emphasis, thus, on deepening the public understanding of the true nature of his institutional enterprise.

So must secretaries of defense, but only a few have been skillful at the kind of public education that increases general cognizance of the problems of national defense. Ideally, the defense secretary and his immediate deputies can set a critical style, invoke an ambience, that can do much to facilitate the working relationship of the press and military officers. And he must not err, so to speak, on the side of niggardly disclosure, if only to avoid intimations of institutional sandbagging.

It is not my objective here to assess the Grenada incursion from a political or military standpoint—those are separate issues—but it is clear enough that from the

more limited perspective of the interaction of the press and the defense establishment, this event demonstrates the present unsatisfactory nature of the relationship. While Grenada does not represent quite the cause célèbre depicted in many somewhat distraught editorial commentaries, it would be ill-advised not to see in this situation some disturbing features. Neither party can afford to encourage some surly vendetta or pursue some cat-and-mouse scenario between the working press and the military, and blame can be liberally distributed in all quarters for current misunderstandings. Yes, the remedy lies in encouraging a decidedly higher standard of technical proficiency in the press concerned with military affairs. Yes, the Department of Defense must not follow its inclination to adopt the "Hussite tactic," to retreat back into its comforting suspicions about the rectitude and fairness of the media. The time has come, now, for some high-level colloquia between the two professions, journalistic and military, in order to examine frankly a state of affairs that might well evolve, if left to fester, into a dangerous impasse.

#### NOTES

1. Mark Kellogg, journalist, also perished with Custer's five companies of the 7th Cavalry on 25 June 1876.
2. In 1808, the London *Times* sent Henry Crabb Robinson to Portugal and, hence, Spain to report on Wellington's campaigns against the French.
3. The above quotations are cited in Christopher Hibbert's excellent study, *The Destruction of Lord Raglan* (New York: Pelican Books, 1963), pp. 192-95, 259-76.
4. While in India, the young Churchill had already authored *The Malakand Field Force*, a critical account of the punitive expedition on the Northwest Frontier that had decidedly shocked some of his military superiors.
5. It might be noted that civilians other than journalists wandered freely among the forces during the Civil War, people such as Walt Whitman and Clara Barton, among others, to minister to the wounded as decidedly unofficial volunteers.
6. The most extensive coverage of the Civil War, in both text and drawings, came from *Harper's Weekly* and *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*. Photographs, such as Matthew Brady's, were not directly reproducible in the press due to technical problems, and drawings were the principal means of illustration. Correspondent-artists were a press institution until World War I. Winslow Homer covered the Civil War, in company with numerous others, and Remington later gained fame on the frontier and in Cuba.