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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 10, 1984

JAB R.F.
P/S.

MEMORANDUM FOR JIM BAKER

FROM:

DAVE GERGEN *dg*

SUBJECT:

Interview in Broadcasting Magazine

Broadcasting Magazine, the leading trade publication of that industry, ran a long interview this week that may interest you. We have highlighted a few sections that may be of particular interest. This article also reflects the general tone of most of the departure pieces.

P.S. - The editorial was a complete surprise.



Gergen (at left) with BROADCASTING chief correspondent Leonard Zeidenberg

For three years, David Gergen has been at the center of the White House's communications effort. As assistant to the President for communications, he has helped "package" the news, as he once referred to it, served as a source for reporters, and mounted campaigns to counter developments in the media regarded as unfavorable by the White House—the nuclear-disaster, made-for-television movie, "The Day After," for instance. Thus, if the White House "manipulates" the news, as many journalists claim, Gergen is one of the manipulators. Yet, he has managed to retain the confidence and respect of at least most of the White House press corps. They regard him as honest and reliable. CBS News's Lesley Stahl describes herself as a Gergen "fan." And there are those who wonder whether relations between the White House and the press, which show signs of strain, will not deteriorate further with Gergen's departure, this month, for posts at Harvard and the American Enterprise Institute. In the "At Large" that follows, Gergen looks back on his service in the Reagan White House, discusses the state of affairs between the White House and the press, and offers some frank comments on the efforts the President's men make to put him in the most favorable light possible.

The two-way street between press and President

Where do you go next, and when?

In the next couple of weeks, I'll be reporting to Harvard as a fellow at the Institution of Politics and to the American Enterprise Institute here in Washington as a visiting fellow, both starting in January. The Cambridge appointment is for the spring semester and will provide a wonderful opportunity for reflection and rejuvenation. My plans after that are not yet settled.

Looking back, what would you say of the Reagan administration's actions toward the press during the three years you've been here? It started like a honeymoon—Reagan was well liked, seemed to like the press, the press seemed like puppy dogs. It's not that way any more.

It has soured some in recent months. I would like to think that's a temporary detour from a road we've been trying to follow most of the time we've been here. We set out in the beginning to have a good relationship with the press. The President was committed to an open Presidency and one that was accountable to the public through the press. And we intentionally sought to encourage good relations with the press. It's been my hope, and one that was shared by others—the President, Jim Baker and others—that one of the legacies of this administration would be to leave behind a greater sense of civility and professional respect between the White House and the press corps.

That was very important to us. During Vietnam and the Watergate days we created a very unhealthy climate in the press room, and there was too much of the "we versus they" and the "press-as-the-enemy" attitude that took over in the government. At the same time in the press corps there was a tremendous—it really went far beyond skepticism—disbelief, almost, in government, so we set about to see if we could put things on a different plane.

That hasn't uniformly been the case, and there are feelings on the part of the press that we've been too restrictive and that we have not been as successful as we should have been. But I think that if you look back over the three years, generally speaking, the relations have been decent and there has been a feeling of respect on the part of the White House for what journalistic professionalism is all about and for the rights of journalists. I can't speak for the press, but it does seem to me that their coverage, at least, would suggest that, while they have been critical from time to time, they've generally respected the professionalism within the White House.

But you do get a lot of hostility on the part of the press—Jack Nelson of the *Los Angeles Times*, for example, is very down on the President. He has said that whereas Carter might have gotten mad at the press because of an occasional story, Reagan seems to have no sympathy for the role of the press. It seems that criticism is almost unpatriotic. There was something he said in a *TV Guide* article that was critical of the press's coverage of Vietnam, and similarly of the press coverage of El Salvador.

I think it would be unnatural for any President to feel the press was entirely fair or accurate. The press itself doesn't believe that. There have been instances of disagreement, but generally speaking the President has never taken it personally, nor does he form grudges. We have not gone to the kind of excessives that I think you've seen in some past administrations, and the President hasn't called network executives and threatened to pull a license or throw somebody out of the White House, or cancel subscriptions. Every President that I've known in the last 20 years has had moments of extreme irritation.

That's right. But journalists think this administration has been more subtle and more sophisticated and more clever in going after the press. Those other things you mention are reason to fight back. If Kennedy tells the publisher of the *Times* to get rid of David Halberstam, naturally he's not going to. But if there is the low-level pressure

of anti-press attitudes and activities, it's harder to fight against those. We discussed some of these before: the lie detector tests, the FBI investigation, the pre-publication censorship of employees, government workers who had access to classified information. That sort of thing is harder to rally against.

Well, I know people who complain about that, and we could talk about individual programs or efforts being made to deal with classified information, and, yes, we have had the lie detector test applied in some instances, but we have nowhere near the record of the Kennedy administration. In one year over 19,000 polygraph tests were administered by the Kennedy folks. And yet people look back upon the Kennedy administration as one with a love affair between the press corps and the administration. I think some parts of history are very quickly forgotten.

Well, why are you leaving? Is it because of a better offer?

Since January 1971 I have had the privilege of serving in the White House under three Presidents—Nixon, Ford and Reagan. It's been very rewarding, but after eight years of experience in even as supercharged an environment as this one, it's time for a change. Just ask Sam Donaldson; he'll tell you what it's like after several years in the saddle.

But let me go back a moment to that question of the difficulties the administration has had with the press. We have had a rough spot here in the last three months. It's something we need to get over to return to the relations that we had. One of the ways that I think we ought to do that is to return to the schedule of more regular and more frequent interviews with the press. I am not particularly a fan of the big evening prime time press conferences. They have become unproductive over the years. We have 250 reporters in there. But I would strongly encourage that, as President, Reagan do something he did in California as governor—and that's meet with the press once a week. It worked out very well. He answered their questions, and it was extremely effective. I was not there, but everyone I talked to said it was very, very good. It would not have to be once a week here, although that could be a good thing, and would serve everyone's interest. The President has a lot to say. He has had many mini-press conferences—or availabilities, as we've called them in the past. He's enjoyed them.

Why haven't there been more? There have been 20 press conferences, big ones, production numbers, but—and I know there was talk of doing all kinds of things to supplement them—but have they been going on without my knowledge, or have they not been going on?

He's had a number of interviews at other times, and I think he's got a record of over 150 individual interviews of one sort or another in addition to his regular press conferences. But there is a lot to be said for going out and seeing the White House press corps periodically, especially in the mini-sessions and smaller, more intimate groups where he really has a chance to explain his policies.

But he hasn't. And that's probably part of the unhappiness and frustration on the part of the press corps. Press people I've talked to think that he doesn't want to do it because people around him think he's not good at it and makes too many blunders.

I don't agree with that. I happen to think he's first rate at it. I'm a firm believer in Ronald Reagan with the press, and I think that, when he does it with regularity as he did in California, when he's been out there on a regular basis—and we've gone through periods like that—he's been very good and very effective.

So why can't you just say, "Let's do it"?

It's the pressure of the schedule and other activities and a variety of other things. If you don't meet regularly, there's a tendency on any

particular day to say, "Oh, there's this story out there or that story out there, and why don't we have that story dealt with at the State Department or the Defense Department or Interior." That's why it's necessary to have a commitment.

Is there any chance of that happening?

There's some sentiment to go to that.

From what I gather, Mike Deaver is going to take over most of your functions—at least in the communications area.

He will have a very large share of the responsibilities.

How does he feel about the President being so available?

Mike is positive on that score. It hasn't been recognized just how much Mike has contributed to the whole process of communication in this administration. He's very creative—a master at many aspects of communication. With my departure he will not only continue his previous responsibilities but he will also take the lead on communications tactics and strategy, and he will be administering the public affairs office, the media relations office (which deals with the out-of-town press) and the White House television office.

That's a nice fit between his old duties and his new ones, and I can't think of anyone who is better qualified or will do a more superb job than Mike.

There's also a good fit between Mike's deputy, Mike McManus, and the new responsibilities. McManus, for example, is deeply involved in planning the China trip. And now he can work more closely than ever with the press, especially the broadcasting media, in figuring out what they may be doing over there.

What about your role—and this is not unique to this administration or the White House—as a packager of information?

Some people call it "putting a spin on it." Jim Baker, Mike Deaver, Larry Speakes and I do spend some time thinking about how we're going to lay out certain stories and how the President might want to handle a breaking news event. Is the President going to do something on the way to the helicopter? Is he going to say something to a reporter? What is the process going to be? How do we get the maximum bang out of a story, if it's a good story we want to get out? Some people say that's manipulative, and they accuse us of trying to manage the news.

There is an element of truth to that charge, but I've always felt that the press has ways it likes to produce the news. It's not unhealthy for the White House to be in a situation where we want to get the maximum play out of our story. We want to have the most unvarnished message go out, and have to find ways of doing that. The press is in effect a filter, and we want to get as much of our story through as we can.

I think some White Houses have gone too far; they've been preoccupied with press play. But in every modern White House there's going to be competition with the news media to see how the White House itself can get the right story out. If it doesn't, it has no way to persuade people about its policies, and to build majority support for what it's trying to do. That's part of our democratic process.

On the other hand, there are things like the television picture of the President going to the front lines, the 38th parallel and services with the troops in Korea.

No one liked that better than the networks. One of the reporters from the networks came to us and said that was the best story we've done since we've been here. Mike Deaver and Bill Henkel, our advance men, deserve a lot of credit for that. It was great television. I think every White House would rather see its President in what amounts to a heroic situation—there also was an element of courage there. And [Reagan's] being out there sent an important message to a lot of people in the military as well as people back home, and it sure is a hell of a lot better picture than a guy like Carter, stumbling up in Camp David when he's jogging around up there, falling down. One picture builds support for the President. The other, I think, destroys him.

It wasn't planned that way for them.

Sure it was. There's no secret about the fact that advance teams spend enormous time planning out every moment of a President's time. But meticulous planning, combined with a creative flair, pays enormous dividends—and in the long run helps a President govern more effectively.

As much as the press joshes the White House for the various ways we create events, there is frequently a greater degree of respect, even if they feel they've been had occasionally. We try not to fool them in that sense. When Nancy Reagan came out in front of television cameras with a birthday cake, we didn't tell the networks in advance. Frankly, we thought it would spoil the surprise if we told them. We were worried that the word would get out there was going to be a surprise, and the President wouldn't have any spontaneity. We did not expect the event to go on as long as it did, and I called the networks back and apologized. They were caught in a situation where they couldn't break away and go back to regular programming as quickly as they wanted. They said, in effect, that they'd rather put on their game shows than our game shows.

Getting back to the question of why you are leaving. Is it a case of burnout or a matter of unhappiness with the way the White House is dealing with the news?

As I said, there comes a time when you need a change. That's the main reason. Secondly, I came here because I was concerned about the state of the country and of the Presidency. I thought those were in a state of decline. I think this President has turned that situation around a great deal over the last three years. Now, as we go into a more political year, there are the kinds of responsibilities and challenges that others are extremely well qualified to handle. There are a lot of very good political people who can come in. I really came to help him get the Presidency rolling, and he's doing so well that I feel very comfortable in leaving.

It's also no secret that on some issues that relate to information policy I've lost a few battles. I think it's terribly important for this President to maintain the original commitment to openness.

And there are some that are going the wrong way?

There are other competing interests that have to be recognized and taken into account that have succeeded on occasion. For instance, on the Grenada issue, I'm very glad we have a commission that's taking a look at how to deal with those kinds of situations.

But to come back to the point, I am leaving here in a very positive frame of mind about this administration and about what this administration has accomplished. Ronald Reagan has done an extraordinary job here.

After three years dealing with the media with this tour, how do you think the media and the press, television and radio have handled the coverage? Clear, unclear, sloppy, accurate, responsible?

It gets a little tiresome, frankly, to see some folks lash out at the media every time there's a problem in an administration or a slide in a President's polls. Yes, there are certainly those in the press who are guilty of the indictments you hear all the time—arrogance, intrusiveness, bias, sloppiness, etc. But all of us need to step back from the fray a moment and recognize that the great majority of those who cover this White House are highly educated, honest men and women who try to be objective.

President Reagan believes that, on balance, the press has treated him with reasonable fairness. There has been one line of stories to which we have objected a great deal—the line that he is insensitive and his programs are biased against blacks, women and the poor. And we also object to the misperceptions that have been spread about his nuclear policies. But looking across the broad range of reporting over the past three years, I would have to say that the administration has generally met with fair treatment.

You know, the *New York Times* did an interview with [Dan] Rather a few weeks ago and talked about the unrelenting pressure from this administration.

Yes. He and I talked about that both before and after the article.

And a lot more calls are directed from the White House to CBS than to any other network. There's also the time when the President himself picked up the phone and called Rather himself during the broadcast. Could you discuss the situation?

I think it is true that among the networks, CBS is the hardest-nosed and the hardest-edged in its coverage, and I think it intentionally sets out to be a hard-hitting news organization. If we were a wildly liberal administration, I think they would have that same hard edge, to tell you the truth. Some of my friends disagree with that, but day in and day out they are just tougher, and we do keep an eye on that. If we find that the story is wrong factually or that it's totally unbalanced, we have no objection to calling them and saying, "Gee, we have a real problem with this." And I have to say that on their part, they have tended to be responsive, although not in every case. We have had a particularly difficult problem trying to deal with Bill Moyers. His commentaries, generally speaking, have been very hard slashes at the President, and we would like to see more balance in those commentaries.

But we certainly don't call them every night, or even very often. Dan Rather probably calls me more often than I call him.

Why would that be?

He has called for information, or to talk. And I'll say this—and it ought to be said—that my relationship with him has always been



extremely courteous and extremely professional, and it's always been a learning experience; there has always been something new to learn about how people in the networks see reality.

And I would venture to say that's been true of the other executives in CBS. I talk most frequently with Jack Smith, the Washington bureau chief, a first-rate individual, very professional, extremely responsive. We've spent a lot of time together over the last three years, and in more than one instance I've called him, he has checked into something, and if he says, "You guys are wrong," they don't change it. If he calls back and says, "Hey, you're right," they change it.

In looking at things, it's been my impression—my very strong impression—that CBS makes more changes between its first and second evening news feeds than anyone else. They rewrite a fair amount of their copy so that, in fact, if you're on the ball and you see that first feed...

Oh, I see. That's when you do it.

Well, frequently; not always. A lot of times our calls will be late in the afternoon, and sometimes we won't know there's a problem until the next morning. But on a number of instances, when something has come across on the 6:30 news, and it's been factually incorrect, and we've called the correspondent—say Bill Plante or Lesley Stahl—and they've checked into it, then when the 7 o'clock feed comes on, if it was incorrect they've changed it. And I respect them for that—I

think that's good journalism, I think that's heads-up journalism. They're not afraid to say they're wrong, and if they think we're wrong they stick it to us. We're not asking for favorable treatment; we are asking for balanced and accurate treatment.

You have said that some Reagan people want war between the White House and the networks.

Some of the President's most ardent supporters do, as do some strong, conservative columnists. Take Pat Buchanan. He has never thought there is any love lost between the press and this administration. He thinks that the press is basically liberal and we ought to be in hand-to-hand combat with them. And we haven't felt that was the right way to go. I happen to disagree with him for a variety of reasons.

What are your reasons for thinking it's not a good idea?

Well, I witnessed the Agnew period, and there's no question that if you go to the country and you launch an assault upon the media, that is immensely popular in some quarters. But over time, it's very destructive to the credibility of the administration and the relationship that exists between the administration and the press. The relationship deteriorates and degenerates into a very nasty situation, and I think that over time the press becomes even more unbalanced in its coverage. Sure, there may be occasions when an administration

should make a frontal assault on press bias, but we shouldn't be out spoiling for a fight. That doesn't serve anyone's interest—government, press or, most assuredly, the public.

I was talking to Fred Friendly, mainly about the Grenada situation, and he said basically there are two large institutions in the society—the government and the press—and they are mistrustful of each other. There's always that friction—that tension. It can perhaps go too far, as with Grenada. But there is a feeling that this administration does not trust the press, and maybe it shouldn't—maybe it even has reasons for it. But there have been cases where you could have taken in a pool of reporters and said, "Now look, this is what's at stake: there are lives at stake here, and we don't want to risk that, but we're going to take you in because that's the thing to do."

There are some in this administration, just as there have been some in other administrations, who do not trust the press. If you took a cross-cut of the American population, you would find that many in the general public share that view, and when some of those come to work at the White House it is not surprising that they share some views that are very popular.

But I think that has not been the predominant view in this administration. My own personal opinion, for what it's worth, is that there are some members of the press whom one comes to trust and admire, and you can trust absolutely, and there are others that you can't trust worth a damn. There are members of the administration who,

through trial and error, learn who the good ones are—they can spot them—and whom not to trust.

There is an element of yellow journalism that still exists in the press. There is an element of investigating to excess. It's absolutely shameful the way some members of government are subjected to pillorying when their names are linked—even indirectly—to stories of possible wrongdoing. Too often, reputations are unfairly damaged. I've seen it in this administration and we've seen it in past administrations.

There is a responsibility on the press to police itself, and I think it doesn't always do it. The press is saying it would like to be loved. I don't think that's the issue. The press shouldn't want to be popular. There is something to be said for the old adage about the press comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable.

However, it ought to want public respect. That's the only way it will be taken seriously.

Whether it's loved or not, it's certainly not respected by the public. Not as it should be.

A few words for civility

Not all of David Gergen's journalistic concerns have to do with the freedom of the press issues, or balanced media coverage. One of them—it may come as a surprise to the newspeople concerned—has to do with the environmental comfort of the press corps itself. Acted upon, it could be the most revolutionary of all Gergen's ideas for improving the state of the art.

I wish there were a way to improve the general physical conditions under which the press works. In Williamsburg [Va.], when we went down there for the economic summit, we had outstanding physical conditions: nice layout for them to work in, there were good phones and communications services. Coffee was easily available. They were treated more as professionals. And the quality of reporting was superior.

There are so many people in the press corps now that when they go places, they tend to be herded like cattle. The conditions are not as good as they ought to be. I know that journalists are supposed to be tough—always with the porkpie hat and very able to take all that—but I wish there were a more civilized way to treat the press. I think it would make a big difference in the environment and the way the government is covered.

The more professional they can be treated, the more profes-

sional they are. They'll have more self respect and there'll be more respect for them. We have very cramped quarters at the White House [and] I do think the physical conditions and the difficulties of working under the kind of pressure that they have have something to do with the way the press reports and the way they behave. You take a Sam Donaldson [of ABC]. He feels all those frustrations. He appears to most people to be rude and eccentric, while his reporting is straight and I think he's one of the best. I think this is something that needs to be addressed over time. When you talk to some reporters in person, there is a problem. And it ought to be something we can work out with the press associations.

It is indeed, and please don't allow me to leave the impression that I was alone here in those views. There are a number of people who feel as I do, and let me just cite Jim Baker again.

I think it's overstated to say that the President is antipress, because it's not the case. He has a healthy regard and respect for the press—and as an institution, he rates it well.

As long as people keep their eye on the main ball—the need for open and frank relations with the press—things will be fine, and I am optimistic about the future here.

The President has talked—and I've got to ask this question to hold my franchise—but the President has written a number of letters and has made a lot of statements about First Amendment rights for broadcasters. That's one day. The next day he'll say something that seems to take it back. But never mind. Let's say that he believes what he says about the First Amendment. Why doesn't he do something

There are some things over which you have no control, but we ought to be erring on that side. You can take the wrong attitude initially, if you say they're all animals. If you treat them like animals, they will act like animals. Or you can treat them like professionals—and they are, they're damn good professionals. More than half of our press corps has masters degrees. They're very well educated. They are sophisticated people for the most part, if not all of them. But there ought to be a way to improve the conditions and I do think everybody would be better off.

There are some things over which you have no control, obviously.

Yes, there are things over which you have no control, but we ought to be erring on that side. You can take the wrong attitude initially, if you say they're all animals. If you treat them like animals, they will act like animals. Or you can treat them like professionals—and they are, they're damn good professionals. More than half of our press corps has masters degrees. They're very well educated. They are sophisticated people for the most part, if not all of them. But there ought to be a way to improve the conditions and I do think everybody would be better off.

That's one of the greatest frustrations of the good reporters.

Why would you say this is the case? Why would you guess the public feels as it does about the media? I'm giving you a free ball there.

The press is beginning to suffer from the same kind of criticism and loss of confidence that other major institutions have experienced in the last 15 or 20 years. The American people tend to distrust large and powerful organizations that are seen as trying to serve their own ends. Not only has the press become a huge institution within our society, but too many who now work as journalists are seen as serving not the public but their own private interests—trying to make a buck, attract an audience, grind an axe and the like.

If the press were like a hospital or a charitable institution, people would respect it, but it's seen out there as serving its own ends too often, and that is not a healthy situation.

They have a number of other problems: the arrogance that you find in some reporters, the techniques that are used to intrude upon people's private lives. There is a whole litany of what some people call "abuses"—others would call them problems—that needs to be addressed.

You occupy a bit of an unusual situation. You came here to do this particular kind of job, and I don't remember anybody in the previous administration who came in with the same attitude, the same hopes, the same ambitions for the job. Maybe Herb Klein, but I don't think he had the problems that you do. You wanted to help the Presidency and

about it? Why doesn't he get out there or send his people up on the Hill to support legislation that would really support deregulation for broadcasters, and repeal the fairness doctrine and equal time?

It would be my hope that in a second Reagan term those on the domestic policy side would take a harder look at a series of issues that deal with the communications industry and telecommunications. It seems to me that we've had an awful lot of to-ing and fro-ing in this administration about where responsibilities lie—who's in charge of what?—and government as a whole is not well organized to deal with the overall question of telecommunications policy. And that ought to be one of the commitments of the second term, to deal with that.

In the coming month, I'll be joining the American Enterprise Institute, and they are setting up a center on communications to study telecommunications policy as well as the press. And it's my hope that this will be one of the important forums for taking a serious look and trying to resolve some of these telecommunications issues for they certainly need to be addressed in an extremely serious way.

On the subject of financial interest and domestic syndication. The President, you feel, to back up a minute on the First Amendment and deregulation issues, came back apparently favoring retention of those rules, which seems to run counter to everything else he supports, in communications regulation and deregulation. How does he square that?

In his view, the danger presented on repeal of the syndication rule and the financial interest rule was that the networks would acquire a monopolistic position with regard to the producers. Therefore, from his viewpoint, it's quite consistent to talk about deregulation and at the same time talk about a system that does not allow monopolies. It's almost an antitrust-type viewpoint. What he really came down in the end and said was let's hold off on a final decision on this and let the dust settle.

Getting back to the relationship with the press, the networks anyway. You mentioned Bill Moyers, who a year or so ago did that documentary entitled *People Like Us*. The White House reacted quite strongly to that. You did yourself.

Some in the White House thought I overreacted, that we shouldn't have taken him on.

Yes, but you did. You thought it was necessary then [to take him on]. Do you still think it was necessary.

Absolutely. Just as press criticism keeps the government straight if we attempt anything phony or dishonest, then I think if the White House cries foul, it will keep the network people honest. We never threatened them with loss of license. We made no institutional threat.

The administration also reacted very strongly to ABC's *The Day After*.

We did. Again, some people thought we were overreacting. Two things about that. I noticed that the British government reacted the same way when it was aired. The Secretary of Defense, Mr. Hazeltine, tried to go on the air as soon as the show was over to answer the program and he was kept off the air. They let him tape something and it was presented later. I found it interesting that the conservative government in Britain did precisely the thing we did.

Well, of course they're in the middle of the missile business.

So are we. We thought—let me just put it this way—there was an enormous amount of media hype before we got involved in this issue. In one day in the *Los Angeles Times*, there were six stories. Six stories. It was on the cover of *Newsweek*, on the cover of *TV Guide*. It was in a segment of *60 Minutes*. I have a stack of clippings two or three inches thick that all appeared before we said a word. That guaranteed a large audience.

We were concerned that with a huge audience, such a depressing film would have an emotional impact, an emotional impact that would turn into very negative feelings about the President's policies and that, in effect, would make it much more difficult to carry on those policies. It did have a large audience. One of the largest ever. And for the public affairs program that followed—a public service for the viewer—they had an audience of 50 million to 60 million people. Contrary to what some people think, the audience for the movie built over time. The Nielsen study showed an increase in the size of audience and they held 50 million-60 million people for a 10:30 p.m. hour-long show.

The emotional impact is more uncertain, but I think it was there. Just look at the way concern over nuclear war has shot up to the top of public concerns in recent weeks. We also have one survey on the movie, taken by Qube out of six metropolitan areas, which seemed to be fairly representative demographically. In the survey, 5,000 to 6,000 people responded. The interviewers asked the question before and after, "Is nuclear war something you feel strongly about because it's a very serious issue and you're very worried about it." And the number of people in that category started at 26% before the show and went up to 48% after the show. So it did have an emotional impact.

We, of course, had a small army of administration spokesmen on the air after the show, led by George Shultz. And although there was an emotional impact to the show, there was a slight increase in support of the President's program after the show. There was not a negative impact. There was a positive impact. And the predictions that people had that we might go down the tubes over the show never panned out.

Now, I would have preferred not to have been so public in our response—everybody knew exactly what we were doing. That didn't

help us. But I would argue—and the President agrees, he and I were talking about this and he said we did the right thing. In fact he called one of the people who spoke out very effectively for us, Kathy Troia (assistant secretary of public affairs), and thanked her and said she was doing the right thing. I'm really glad we were out there making our case. Under similar circumstances we should do exactly the same thing again.

Now a question that plays off Grenada. At the same time that was going on, UNESCO was meeting to talk about the New World Information Order. The Third World countries, backed by the Soviet Union, were trying to get resolutions passed in favor of licensing journalists and bringing them under the control of governments. And the United States is out there leading the charge against it.

A lot of the critics are saying that the Grenada-type thing really weakens the United States position in international bodies when you talk about the free flow of information, the honor of the press and the responsibility of the press and when you shut them out it doesn't do much good. I guess that was the fourth or fifth thing down the list to think about at the time.

It was.

But it really does cause a problem.

Trying to link Grenada to proposed press rules at UNESCO is mixing up apples with kumquats. The press rules that have been under discussion by some countries at UNESCO would be a terrible impediment to the flow of international information. The Newspeak of George Orwell would be arriving right on schedule.

In Grenada, journalists did find they could not reach the island for approximately 48 hours. But once it was opened up, no one in government tried to dictate who could come or what they could write.

I am not trying to suggest that the Grenada experience is unworthy of debate. My own view after that episode is that in nearly all cases, representatives of the press ought to go in with the military on "the first wave." If that proves impossible, then the government ought to open things up for the press just as soon as there is a plot of ground big enough to hold a reporter, a pencil and, hopefully, a camera. The press needs to let the military do the fighting, but we ought to let a free press do the reporting.

We talked about this briefly before. Under the general heading of pre-publication censorship or polygraphs or whatever—you said all those things are related to security matters. But have there been any leaks that warrant that kind of attitude? Those policies?

With one exception, I've never been aware of any FBI investigations or polygraph tests within the administration that dealt with anything other than national security. The exception was the investigation that Secretary Baldrige ordered into the leak of new economic statistics hours before their release date. He rightly felt that premature release could allow the unscrupulous to make economic profits, and he has tried to cut off the leaks.

You mentioned something about the size of the current press corps and the competition getting so fierce. Has that become a problem?

Over the past quarter century, there's been a virtual explosion in the size of the press corps covering the President, and that's caused a number of problems. Not only does it increase competitive pressures, but it becomes more and more difficult to develop personal relationships of trust between the White House and members of the press. No one on either side has enough time to spend with everyone they should, and reporters find they no longer can develop the kind of intimacy with a President that existed some years ago. Naturally, then, there are frustrations and some of the trust between the White House and the press is destroyed. But again, if both sides recognize the problem, you can make some progress in overcoming it.

I still hope that one day people will look back and say that in the 1980's, both the government and press began to restore the spirit of civility, professionalism and honesty that should exist between the two institutions. ■

Editorials

Bulls

The newsroom calculator was put to a stern test last week when asked to total the trading in broadcasting stations and cable television systems in 1983. The figures came to \$2.8 billion, yes, billion, for radio and television stations and \$1 billion, probably an underestimate, for cable systems. Time to retire the calculator and bring in an IBM main-frame.

Is there a ceiling in sight? An affiliated VHF in Boston fetches \$220 million. Wow. Followed by an independent V in Los Angeles for \$245 million. You must be kidding. Mere warm-ups for an affiliated V in Houston at \$342 million, about the price of the whole Combined Communications group when it was merged into Gannett not so long ago.

Have buyers lost their minds or been suckered? Not likely.

Boston went to Metromedia, where John Kluge has presided as a wizard of the parlay too long to be taken in. Los Angeles went to New York investors who have perfected the leveraged buyout. Houston went to A.H. Belo, a Dallas landmark expanding into the widening electronic world.

The only conclusion to be drawn from the escalating prices of electronic properties is that some very successful venturers with very professional financial advice at their command are betting fortunes on a long future. There'll be no bets against them on this page.

Insider's account

This issue's "At Large" with David Gergen is commended by the editors to the readers with even more than our usual fervor. Indeed, several readings of those pages leave us with the impression of a most unusual document, dealing candidly and straightforwardly with the front lines of the confrontation between President and press. Moreover, they leave one with the impression of a most unusual public servant, who could serve one man loyally while remaining true to an even larger commitment to the country itself. The more we came to know Dave Gergen, the more we wished he were staying put.

Considering the present state of affairs between the Reagan White House and the press corps—which is to say, sorry—one must hope that Gergen's successors will heed his injunctions for civility and comity. It is sobering to realize, in light of Gergen's assertion that Reagan and company came into office determined to do something constructive about the administration-press relationship, that things have gone so awry—or, as he puts it, that they have so "soured."

Speaking specifically, we endorse enthusiastically his suggestion that the President make more frequent appearances before the press, broadcast and otherwise, whether in mini-sessions or the more formal appearances. And we agree with him, too, that newsmen should be in the "first wave" of any future military actions, although we would not qualify such a policy by having it apply only "in nearly all cases."

Gergen's suggestions for improving the conditions under which newsmen ply their trade catch one unprepared: to treat the press in a civilized way is so revolutionary a suggestion that it is almost certain to be resisted by a suspicious press corps. Are they trying to lull us to sleep? Many cynics will wonder. But it is of a piece with his overall thesis that administrations and press behave and treat each other in a responsible manner.

It is apparent that Dave Gergen will continue to be an important partisan in the ongoing war to extend the First Amendment's protections to all media and all times. The Fifth Estate is fortunate to have the likes of him around.

All the way

By closing time on Jan. 19, the deadline for comments, the FCC will no doubt have been given a load of advice about what to do with its multiple ownership rules. (This page will forbear, at least for the moment, from suggesting the first disposition that comes to mind.)

The advice is certain to be contradictory. There will be those who favor retention of the present rules, a school that sees miracles in the number seven: seven AM's, seven FM's, seven TV's; seven lean years and seven fat; seven brides for seven brothers; seven come eleven, baby needs a new pair of shoes.

There will probably be proposals of other formulas—indexing, for example, as in the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index, or was it the Hirschman-Herfindahl, that the Justice Department uses to multiply the squares of a lot of numbers to decide whether a merger is good or bad.

On still another tack, the National Association of Broadcasters, where the membership is divided on the question, is expected to propose that the rules be liberalized but leave it pretty much up to the FCC to decide how.

Will anyone come right out and tell the FCC to give up its numbers game? Tinkering with arbitrary limits will lead only to the same dead end that the FCC reached in its rule of sevens. Nowhere in the Communications Act is the FCC instructed to set any limits on multiple ownership. Why not leave broadcasting to the same restraints imposed on other businesses by the antitrust laws?

There will be those who predict that a rash of consolidations would follow elimination or moderation of the rules. They will ignore the realities of the marketplace which has already imposed tighter limits than those of the FCC. No more than two companies have attained the full portfolios that the FCC allows in all the years that the rule of sevens has been in existence. True, Taft Broadcasting has said it will enlarge its holdings under looser regulation, and others no doubt have similar plans. They will, however, be restrained by the same factors of station price and probable revenue that have kept all but two portfolios from being filled so far.

Following the example of its other movements toward deregulation, the FCC in its multiple ownership rulemaking ought to free the marketplace to act.



Drawn for BROADCASTING by Jack Schmidt


"If you ask me, they're carrying customer relations too far when they make us dress up to cable the castle."

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 12, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR JAMES A. BAKER, III
MICHAEL K. DEAVER
RICHARD DARMAN
LARRY SPEAKES
MICHAEL McMANUS
ROBERT SIMS

FROM: PETER ROUSSEL 

There will be a meeting in preparation for the Tuesday Friedheim/ANPA/ASAE meeting on Friday, January 13 at 4:00 p.m. in Jim Baker's office.

The meeting next week will be on Tuesday, January 17, at 3:00 p.m., in the Roosevelt Room. Those who will be attending are:

White House Staff

James A. Baker, III
Michael K. Deaver
Richard Darman
Larry Speakes
Michael McManus
Bob Sims
Peter Roussel

ANPA/ASAE

Creed Black, President of ASNE
Chairman and Publisher
Lexington Herald-Leader Company
Lexington, KY

William C. Marcil, Chairman and President of ANPA
Fargo Forum
Fargo, North Dakota

Edward R. Cony
Vice President/News
The Wall Street Journal

Mr. Jerry W. Friedheim
Executive Vice President of ANPA

Mr. Ed Fouhy
Chairman of the FTNDA-FOI Committee
ABC Washington Bureau Chief

The attached materials are for your review prior to both these meetings.

Attachments



American Newspaper Publishers Association

The Newspaper Center, Box 17407, Dulles International Airport, Washington, D.C. 20041
Executive Offices: Reston, Virginia (703) 620-9500

Jerry W. Friedheim
Executive Vice President

January 13, 1984

Larry M. Speakes
Assistant to the President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Larry,

It was good to talk with you this morning, and enclosed are the summary biographies of the expected press participants in Tuesday afternoon's meeting.

Also enclosed is a copy of the Statement of Principle that ten press organizations issued this week on the issues under discussion. Our delegation will reiterate those points at the meeting and will welcome the views of the White House officials. Our side also will respectfully suggest that yours seriously consider issuing some sort of reaffirmation from the government about these things, perhaps from your office or maybe something like the enclosed Principles of Public Information that three previous Secretaries of Defense found valuable.

Also, instead of characterizing the meeting as "off the record," I would suggest we ask our principals at the beginning of the session to agree (our side will) that any comments after the meeting be in generalities and that neither side quote folks on the other by name; further that in general your guys know that mine will need to say afterwards something like:

We had a very cordial and useful meeting and brought to the attention of the White House officials the points covered in our previously-issued Statement of Principle. As in our Statement of Principle, we discussed coverage techniques and access techniques which we think have in the past and could in the future provide prompt news coverage of military operations while respecting always the need for mission security and troop safety. We didn't agree on everything; and we didn't agree that things were done exactly right in Grenada. But we did find a willingness for the government side to consider the points raised in our Statement of Principle; and we asked that the government strongly consider issuing its own similar reaffirmation of the historic principle that American print and broadcast journalists should be present at U.S. military operations.

Best regards,

Enclosures

cc: Pete Roussel

Jerry W. Friedheim

ANPA

TO ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF A FREE PRESS

memo from ...
JERRY W. FRIEDHEIM

November 3, 1983

Dear Jim,

If Cap had issued something like the attached and backed it up with proper civilian control of DOD public information matters the Grenada news blockade could have been headed off and the whole thing done right instead of wrong.

It's never too late to set things right....

Jerry

Jerry

Attachments

KC - File NOW PLEASE -

11/15
R.F.

11/20

✓

MDT
Pls return to me
so I can show to
Cap W. Thanks.
JAB



NO. 153-69
Oxford 50192 (Info.)
Oxford 73189 (Copies)

MEMORANDUM FOR CORRESPONDENTS: March 5, 1969

Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird issued the following memorandum March 4, 1969:

MEMORANDUM FOR Secretaries of the Military Departments
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
Director of Defense Research and Engineering
Assistant Secretaries of Defense
Assistants to the Secretary of Defense
Directors of the Defense Agencies

SUBJECT: Public Information Principles

To assure that the American people are fully informed about matters of national defense, I intend that the Department of Defense shall conduct its activities in an open manner, consistent with the need for security. This means that unclassified information, other than that exempted by the Freedom of Information Act, must be readily accessible to the public and the press. Because of the importance I attach to this matter, I want to state certain principles which I expect to be followed in the conduct of public affairs activities of this Department.

1. Our first concern must be the security of the United States and the safety of our Armed Forces. Therefore, information which would adversely affect the security of our country or endanger our men should not be disclosed.
2. The provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (5 USC 552) will be supported in both letter and spirit.
3. No information will be classified solely because disclosure might result in criticism of the Department of Defense. To avoid abuse of classification procedures, we must adhere strictly to the criteria set forth in Executive Order 10401.
4. Our obligation to provide the public with accurate, timely information on major Department of Defense programs will require, in some instances, detailed public information planning and coordination within the Department and with other government agencies. However, I want to emphasize that the sole purpose of such planning and coordination will be to expedite the flow of information to the public. Propaganda has no place in Department of Defense public information programs.

MORE

Therefore, I direct that each addressee review all pertinent directives, policies and public information plans to insure prompt and complete compliance with these principles. Those which do not meet the foregoing criteria will be revised or rescinded.

The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) is responsible for advising and assisting me in the fulfillment of these public information principles throughout the Department of Defense.

/s/ Melvin R. Laird

END

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

January 31, 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR Secretaries of the Military Departments
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
Director of Defense Research and Engineering
Assistant Secretaries of Defense
The General Counsel
Assistants to the Secretary of Defense
Directors of the Defense Agencies

SUBJECT: Public Information Principles

To assure that the American people are fully informed about matters of national defense, the Department of Defense will conduct its activities in an open manner, consistent always with the need for security and personnel safety. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, unclassified information, other than that specifically exempted by the Act, is to be readily accessible to the public and to the press. The following principles apply:

1. The Department's first concern must be the security of the United States and the safety of the men and women of the Armed Forces. Information which would adversely affect the nation's security or endanger military personnel should not be disclosed.
2. No information is to be classified solely because disclosure might result in criticism of the Department of Defense. To avoid abuses, the declassification and classification criteria set forth in Executive Order 11652 will be strictly observed.
3. The provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (5 USC 552) are to be supported in both letter and spirit.
4. The Department also has a responsibility to make available accurate and timely information about plans, budgets, and activities so that the public, the press, and the Congress may assess and understand proposals and programs. As the nation moves under the Nixon Doctrine from an era of international confrontation further into an era of negotiation, it is increasingly important that the realities of national security

MORE

TAM 2

and of defense strategy be available to and understood by the public. Recruitment and retention of the active and reserve All-Volunteer Force will require a vigorous response to the need for information explaining this national goal. Therefore, when interested citizens -- particularly students -- request defense information and/or speakers every effort must be made consistent with the demands of national security to participate in such discussion and dialogue.

5. The Department's obligation to provide the public with accurate, timely information on its major programs will require, in some instances, detailed public information planning and coordination within the Department and with other government agencies. The sole purpose of such planning and coordination is to expedite the flow of information to the public: propaganda has no place in Department of Defense public information programs.

The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) will advise and assist the Secretary to help assure adherence to these public information principles throughout the Department of Defense.

Ernest Richardson

JUL 21 1973

**MEMORANDUM FOR Secretaries of the Military Departments
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
Director of Defense Research & Engineering
Assistant Secretaries of Defense
General Counsel
Director of Defense Program Analysis & Evaluation
Assistants to the Secretary of Defense
Directors of the Defense Agencies**

SUBJECT: Public Information Principles

To assure that the American people are fully informed about matters of national defense, the Department of Defense will conduct its activities in an open manner, consistent always with the need for security and personnel safety. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, unclassified information, other than that specifically exempted by the Act, is to be readily accessible to the public and to the press. The following principles apply:

1. The Department's first concern must be the security of the United States and the safety of the men and women of the Armed Forces. Information which would adversely affect the nation's security or endanger military personnel should not be disclosed.

2. No information is to be classified solely because disclosure might result in criticism of the Department of Defense. To avoid abuses, the declassification and classification criteria set forth in Executive Order 11652 will be strictly observed.

3. The provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (5 USC 552) are to be supported in both letter and spirit.

(Over)

4. The Department also has a responsibility to make available accurate and timely information about plans, budgets, and activities so that the public, the press, and the Congress may assess and understand proposals and programs. It is important that the facts about national security and defense strategy be available to and understood by the public. Recruitment and retention of the active and reserve All-Volunteer Force require a vigorous explanation of this national goal. Therefore, when interested citizens -- particularly students -- request defense information and/or speakers every effort must be made consistent with the demands of our primary national security mission to participate in such discussion and dialogue.

5. The Department's obligation to provide the public with accurate, timely information on its major programs will require, in some instances, detailed public information planning and coordination within the Department and with other government agencies. The sole purpose of such planning and coordination is to expedite the flow of information to the public: propaganda has no place in Department of Defense public information programs.

The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) will advise and assist the Secretary to help assure adherence to these public information principles throughout the Department of Defense.

James R. Pebley

DEC 18 1983



American Newspaper Publishers Association

The Newspaper Center, Box 17407, Dulles International Airport, Washington, D.C. 20041
Executive Offices: Reston, Virginia (703) 620-9500

Jerry W. Friedheim
Executive Vice President

December 12, 1983

Honorable George Bush
The Vice President
Old Executive Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20501

Dear George,

Per the second paragraph of your letter of the 7th:

Of course nobody suggests that newsmen be involved in the planning of a military mission. Those of us with some experience do strongly suggest that government public affairs experts--both civilian and military--must be involved in that planning to make it possible to do right what was unnecessarily done wrong in Grenada.

We are in contact with Gen. Sidle and will participate in his efforts to improve things.

Some of the calm, serious and senior folks in the press have asked also to discuss this important situation with the President and his top aides. I call to your attention the two attached letters of 1 November and 1 December. It is, I think, rather unfortunate that to date the White House has not even responded to these letters.

Since every thoughtful person wants to seek understanding and cooperation it would seem wise for both sides to take the outstretched hands of the otherand to start by talking.

Your own deep understanding of and personal interest in these matters is recognized and very much appreciated.

Best regards,


Jerry W. Friedheim

Attachments



American Newspaper Publishers Association

The Newspaper Center, Box 17407, Dulles International Airport, Washington, D.C. 20041
Executive Offices: Reston, Virginia (703) 620-9500

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Newark, N.J.

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The Wall Street Journal
New York

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Lee Enterprises Inc.
Davenport, Iowa

Donald N. Soldwedel
The Yuma (Ariz.) Daily Sun

Arthur Ochs Sulzberger
The New York Times Co.

George W. Wilson
Concord (N.H.) Monitor

December 1, 1983

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We wrote you a short letter one month ago asking if a few press executives might meet with you to discuss serious matters of mutual concern to the press and to your administration. Because we have not had any reply to that letter, we want to reiterate that our concerns have not diminished.

We recently co-chaired a meeting with top-level representatives of The Associated Press, United Press International, The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, Associated Press Managing Editors and The Society of Professional Journalists/Sigma Delta Chi. It was clear to everyone that it is now more important than ever for a few of us, perhaps including one or two broadcast representatives as well, to have an opportunity to talk directly with you and your senior assistants.

We are confident that it would be mutually beneficial for us to talk together about press and government relationships.

We reiterate that we are recommending a small, substantive meeting so that we can discuss very serious and increasing concerns which are shared broadly throughout the U.S. news media.

Sincerely,

Creed C. Black
President
American Society of
Newspaper Editors

William C. Marcil

DEC 18 1983

3
SOCIETY OF
NEWSPAPER EDITORS



Lexington Herald-Leader Co.
Main and Midland
Lexington, Kentucky 40507

November 1, 1983

LEXINGTON (KY) HERALD-LEADER
President

RICHARD D. SMYER
THE OAK RIDGER, OAK RIDGE, TENN.
Vice President

ROBERT P. CLARK
HARTE-HANKS NEWSPAPERS
Secretary

MICHAEL G. GARTNER
DES MOINES (IOWA) REGISTER
Treasurer

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Would it be possible for a small group of newspaper editors and publishers to meet with you?

The leaders of our two organizations, the American Society of Newspaper Editors and the American Newspaper Publishers Association, would very much appreciate the opportunity to discuss matters of concern to the press and the U.S. government. We believe such a discussion would be mutually beneficial.

Yours truly,

Creed C. Black
President
ASNE

William Marcil
President
ANPA

CCB:jc

cc: James Baker
Michael Deaver
David Gergen
Edwin Meese

bcc: William C. Marcil
/Jerry Friedheim
Edward R. Cony
Charles S. Rowe
Herbert G. Klein
Lee Stinnett

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NOV 7 - 1983

OFFICE OF
JERRY W. FRIEDHEIM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 6, 1984

Dear Mr. Black and Mr. Marcil:

The President has asked me to respond to your invitation to meet with a representative group of your membership. Unfortunately, the schedule for this month is extremely busy for the President. He has, however, asked me to inform you that he has asked selected members of his senior staff to meet with your group.

The President and I welcome hearing your views on the press policy concerning the Grenada Rescue mission.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,



MICHAEL K. DEAVER
Assistant to the President
Deputy Chief of Staff

Tues. 3 P.M., January 17

Mr. Creed C. Black
Mr. William C. Marcil
American Society of Newspaper Editors
The Newspaper Center
Box 17407
Dulles International Airport, Washington 20041

Accord Asked on Reporting Of U.S. Military Operations

By JONATHAN FRIENDLY

In a display of unity prompted by restraints on coverage of the invasion of Grenada, 10 major news organizations asked the Reagan Administration yesterday to affirm as a matter of principle that reporters will be allowed to cover United States military operations.

The groups, representing the nation's broadcasters, newspapers, magazines and news services, said they agreed that there was a need to maintain military security and protect troops, points stressed by the White House and the Pentagon in explaining the restraints last October.

The news groups also said they could agree to limited restrictions such as military censorship or delayed filing of reports as long as journalists were not excluded from combat missions.

"Our society remains healthy and free primarily because our public has an independent source of information about its government," they said in a formal statement sent to the White House and the Defense Department. "Preservation of this principle is essential to the proper functioning of our constitutional democracy and to our national well-being."

Congressional Hearings Urged

The statement urged Congressional hearings on the issue of press access to combat. Individual Congressmen had protested the restraints during the initial days of the invasion, but no formal hearings have been scheduled.

A White House press spokesman, Pete Roussel, said the Administration welcomed the comments from the news organizations. He said he was trying to schedule a meeting between senior White House staff members and the leaders of the news groups.

The Pentagon said Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger would have no comment because the issue was in the hands of a special panel that the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. John M.W. Vessey Jr., is creating to study the issues.

The chairman said only announced member of that panel, Winant Sidle, said he welcomed the news organizations' statement and was pleased that they have said they will talk to his group. He said he expected to start hearings next month.

Mr. Sidle, a retired major general who is corporate spokesman for the Martin Marietta Corporation, said the formation of the panel had been slowed because none of the news organizations would agree to name a representative as a member. They say membership on a government panel is inappropriate for news organizations.

Yesterday's statement was formulated by representatives of most major

ing. These are the American Newspaper Publishers Association, the American Society of Newspaper Editors, the American Society of Magazine Editors, the Associated Press Managing Editors, the National Association of Broadcasters, the Radio-Television News Directors Association, The Associated Press, United Press International, the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, and the Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi.

The group was headed by William C. Marcil, president of the publishers' association, and Creed C. Black, president of the newspaper editors' society. They said the statement was not a "monolithic" or formal "position of the press," but rather "the carefully considered work" of senior representatives of each organization developed in meetings in Washington on Nov. 30 and in New York on Monday.

Military commanders, supported in advance by Secretary Weinberger, barred reporters entirely during the first two days of the Grenada invasion and then permitted only partial access to the island for several more days. President Reagan and his top aides said they thought the practice had helped keep the operation a secret from troops defending the island and would follow it again if conditions warranted.

Past Practices Stressed

Many journalists considered the exclusion a threat to the principle of the public's right to know about important Government actions. The news executives had considered a proposal to sue the Government, but decided instead on a program of protest and public education about the issue.

Some public opinion surveys and a sampling of letters to the networks and newspapers indicated general public support of the decision to curb reporters, later tempered by fears that it could set an unhealthy precedent.

Yesterday's statement stressed the past practice of allowing reporters access to combat zones subject to conditions that preserve military security. The press and the military, it said, "can agree on coverage conditions which satisfy safety and security imperatives while, in keeping with the spirit of the First Amendment, permitting independent reporting."

"Unfortunately, such historic accommodations were neither sought nor achieved" in the Grenada operation, they said, and during the first days, "when public concern and interest was most intense, the public was denied an independent source of information. The government's shifting justifications for this unprecedented exclusion," they said, were "unfounded or could have been met by proper planning and ex-

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PM-Media-Military, 600K

Media Groups Ask that Reporters Be Present at Military Operations

NEW YORK (AP) - Major U.S. press and broadcast organizations have agreed on a statement of principle calling on the government to ensure that reporters be present at U.S. military operations.

The statement is addressed to retired Army Maj. Gen. Winant Sidle, who has been named to chair a commission on press access to military operations. Army Gen. John W. Vessey Jr., chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, appointed Sidle and sent questionnaires to news organizations seeking their views on media access.

The commission and the press-broadcast group which drew up the statement both grew out of the U.S.-backed invasion of Grenada Oct. 25, in which reporters were barred from the island for more than two days. The media responded with criticism that it was the first important military operation since the Revolutionary War that had been blacked out to the media, and, hence, to the American people.

The statement of principle called on the highest civilian and military officers of the government to reaffirm the historic principle that American journalists, print and broadcast, with their professional equipment, should be present at U.S. military operations.

It also said the news media should reaffirm their recognition of the importance of U.S. mission security and troop safety.

When essential, both groups can agree on coverage conditions which satisfy safety and security imperatives while, in keeping with the spirit of the First Amendment, permitting independent reporting to the citizens of our free and open society to whom our government ultimately is accountable, the statement continued.

The statement grew out of meetings in Washington Nov. 30 and New York on Monday. The group was chaired by William C. Marcil, chairman and president of the American Newspaper Publishers Association, and by Creed Black, president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. Marcil is president and publisher of the Fargo (N.D.) Forum, and Black is chairman and publisher of the Lexington (Ky.) Herald-Leader.

Since the Grenada invasion, Marcil and Black have twice appealed to President Reagan to meet with a small group of media representatives to discuss reporters' access to military operations. Marcil said Monday some response is expected from the White House.

Edward P. Cony, vice president-news of the Wall Street Journal and chairman of a coordinating task force named by Marcil and Black, said: "While no press group or even any combination of press groups can speak for the diversified U.S. press, both print and broadcast, this agreement among 10 groups is most unusual and represents a unity that very seldom has occurred." Cony is chairman of the ASNE Freedom of Information Committee.

The statement also recommends:

-That civilian and military officers plan for press access to military operations and maneuvers, in keeping with past traditions.

-That the Sidle study group consult with military operations experts and make recommendations (to Vessey) on how to assure mission security, troop safety and prompt media access.

-That appropriate congressional committees hold hearings to develop the historic record of media-military relations; develop the facts of the government's handling of media access in Grenada more fully; and demonstrate how wise leaders can satisfy always the joint imperatives of effective military operations and of a timely flow to a free citizenry by a free press of independently obtained information.

In addition to ANPA and ASNE, the statement was developed by a special committee of senior representatives of the following organizations: Society of Professional Journalists-Sigma Delta Chi, Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, The Associated Press, Associated Press Managing Editors, United Press International, National Association of Broadcasters, Radio-Television News Directors Association and the American Society of Magazine Editors.

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R.F.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 24, 1984

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MEMORANDUM FOR JOHN F. W. ROGERS

FROM: Larry Speakes *S*

I need your help in working out a solution to our problems with the traveling Transportation Office staff.

As you know, Bobby Law has been taken off of travel status because of his duties in Central Files, and the White House Garage is unable to let us have the required number of people for our longer trips. I am attaching Billy Dale's memo that explains the situation fully.

These people have been an important part of our traveling group and we are going to be severely crippled in an election year without their assistance. My main objective is to head off press complaints.

cc: James Baker ✓

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 16, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR: Larry Speakes
FROM: Billy Dale *BD*
SUBJECT: Support from the Military on Presidential trips

With the loss of Bobby Law from traveling, I think it was automatically assumed that the slack would be picked up with support of the military drivers from the garage.

On the upcoming trip to California in February, keeping in mind that we have two stops in Illinois and an overnight in Las Vegas before arriving in Santa Barbara, I requested three men from the garage until we get to Santa Barbara at which time one could be returned to the motor pool to be used as a driver leaving two for support of the press office while The President is at the ranch and return to Washington on the press plane.

Mr. Borden indicated that he didn't think the garage would be able to provide me with more than two men because it would make him short of help. I can see where this could be a recurring problem from trip to trip.

With this in mind and looking ahead to the upcoming year of campaigning, and anticipating a heavy travel schedule the loss of Bobby Law will be felt even more. Therefore, I would like your help in determining the status of Bobby on future trips or the amount of support to expect from the military.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 18, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR JAMES A. BAKER, III
 MICHAEL K. DEEVER
 RICHARD DARMAN
 LARRY SPEAKES
 MICHAEL McMANUS
 ROBERT SIMS

FROM: PETER ROUSSEL

Following is a summary of comments made at the meeting on January 17, 1984, between members of the White House staff and representatives of the American Newspaper Publishers Association and American Society of Newspaper Editors.

Creed Black: "We are here regarding the first amendment, thus would like this meeting to be on-the-record..."

Jim Baker: "If this meeting is the subject of news stories, then it's an end run of the Sidle Commission ... will make it more difficult to be candid and frank ... will look like we're undercutting the Commission..."

Creed Black: "We don't want our colleagues in the press corps to ask how we did at this meeting and have to say, "It was off-the-record."

Larry Speakes: "Think it should be off-the-record until we agree on a statement."

Ed Fouhy: "Think we have to have some characterization of this meeting. In essence aren't you saying this is on background."

Larry Speakes: "No, in essence, it's off-the-record."

Jim Baker: "...Think we can agree on a statement along the lines of the first few lines of your statement ... "We look forward to continuing discussions through the Sidle Commission, etc. ..."

(NOTE: At this point the attached statement was agreed upon.)

Bill Marcil: "Security needs can be met while providing press coverage..."

Creed Black: "...Think the press should be in on all military operations..."

Jim Baker: "Including the Iranian hostage rescue mission?"

Creed Black: "Not sure about that ... circumstances dictate ... The principle is the important thing ... think it is important for the President to assert this principle ... We want re-affirmation from the President ..."

Ed Fouhy: "Given clear guidance by civilian authority, press plans can be made in advance ... We are asking for re-affirmation as a quid-pro-quo ..."

Ed Cony: "Public Affairs officers can work it out ... the pools don't necessarily have to know where they're going ..."

Jerry Friedheim: "We are pleased that Cap Weinberger and General Vessey are looking into this ... we think that can be productive ... It's the President's role to put it all together and he must protect the principle of the first amendment ... Doing this thing right (pools) is a plus for everybody, for the credibility of the government ... The pool would be there to protect the government if something goes wrong ... Civilian control by the President and Secretary of Defense is vital and any niche carved out of that can come back to haunt you ..."

Jim Baker: "This is the first time we've confronted a situation like this -- the first time since LBJ and the Dominican Republic ... This was not an ongoing war like Normandy or Vietnam ... This was a commando-style operation ... Press coverage was not discussed in NSC but suppose it was at DoD ... There are some nitty-gritty questions in developing a policy here ... You didn't have a brand new war starting; Grenada wasn't like World War II ... It was a unique situation -- how could we have picked a pool? ..."

Jerry Friedheim: "It's a difficult problem and it's not unsurmountable ..."

Jim Baker: "There's no question that we need to plan ... there's even a difference of opinion within the Administration ... It seems there are several questions out of this that need study: One, do you preserve secrecy with the first wave?; two, how long do you restrict before permitting reasonable access ... We should let the Commission study this, make recommendations, then make Administration policy ..."

Ed Fouhy: "What we're asking for is reasonable access in a timely fashion ..."

Larry Speakes: "We'll cooperate with the Sidle Commission, work closely with them and we'll keep in touch with you ..."

Jim Baker: "It's important to us that we end up with a policy ..."

Mike Deaver: "I've been impressed with the reasonableness and professionalism of the approach you've taken today."

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

We had a very cordial and useful meeting and brought to the attention of the White House officials the points covered in our previously-issued Statement of Principle. As in our Statement of Principle, we discussed coverage techniques which we think have in the past and could in the future provide prompt news coverage of military operations while respecting always the need for mission security and troop safety. We look forward to continuing discussions with the Sidle panel.