

to keep tight control of their intensely competitive media, assisted by the remoteness of the war theatre and the relative ease of controlling reporters on warships.

When the Reagan administration decided to invade the small Caribbean island of Grenada in 1983, control was even easier. The press was kept out entirely until the third day, when a pool of thirteen reporters was allowed to land. "That was great for no security violations, but the press didn't think much of it, and there was a huge furore in the United States," General Sidle remembered. He was asked to head a panel of newsmen and military officers to advise on how to deal with the press in the next war. One of the major recommendations was the use of pools, a system which was employed so rigidly during Desert Storm that it has become the main target of retrospective criticism on how that operation was covered. In the invasion of Panama, the system was judged a total failure because the pool was sent too late, saw no action, "and because the place was full of reporters anyway."

In journalistic jargon, the "pool" is a term for a small group of reporters and cameramen chosen to attend a given event where there is not enough space for the entire press corps. Pools are widely used at events such as summits and other conferences attended by national leaders whose presence attracts a massive media presence. By agreement, those chosen to be in the pool are obliged to write a short, factual account of what they see and to post it in a press centre where non-pool members can read it and use the material. Normally, everyone who wants to be present personally at one of the events will get a chance to do so on a rotation basis. If that is not possible, preference is given to major international news agencies and television networks, and consideration is given to fair representation of applicants from each interested country, and from print, radio and television.

The Canadian military had no direct experience of war in the television age to draw on when the government decided to send a small contingent of ships and aircraft to the crisis area. Canadian soldiers had served in United Nations peacekeeping operations in many parts of the world since the Second World War, but the only one that had required fighting troops was the Korean War, technically a UN "police action," forty years before Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Rear-Admiral Larry Murray, chief military