

turning against the war. After commanding the US Artillery in Vietnam's II Corps in 1969, he became the army's chief of information from 1969 to 1973; deputy commanding general, US Fifth Army, 1973 to 1974; and deputy assistant secretary of Defence Public affairs, 1974 to 1975. Although he retired in 1975, he has continued as a consultant in this field right up to and including operations Desert Shield (the pre-war build-up) and Desert Storm (the aerial blitzkrieg against Iraq that followed).

"What I am going to give you now is the US military point of view," General Sidle said frankly, adding that some of it was official and some his own. "There is a genuine, serious, basic conflict between the media and the military when it comes to fighting a war." He quoted from an article written after the invasion of Grenada in 1983:

Our military is trained to win. Winning requires secrecy. Our media are trained to report. Reporting must avoid secrecy. Now there's a conflict right off the bat.... The military's position today is that, yes, we want the press to cover our military operations, but what it prints and airs must not impair the security of operations or endanger our troops.

In Vietnam, the army did not want to use formal censorship, because that would have meant involving the government of South Vietnam, which both government and media wanted to avoid. So the Defence Department invented what were called "ground rules." There were fifteen rules covering sensitive areas such as location and movements of troops and plans for upcoming attacks. A reporter arriving in Vietnam had to get an accreditation card to travel in the war zone. To get the card, the reporter had to sign a statement agreeing to obey the ground rules and recognizing that the army could confiscate the accreditation if he broke the rules. "And since they couldn't get around in Vietnam without our help, it was pretty good leverage we had." Only nine cards were lifted during all the years of the Vietnam War, General Sidle said. "But unfortunately some of them were serious. The worst one was where we had to cancel an operation because one of our major newspapers carried advance notice of it." (The paper, he let slip later, was *The New York Times*.)

The British experience of the Falklands War in 1982 was mentioned only in passing, but American officials were aware that British military authorities had been able