

Geneviève Rossier, whose short-notice performance on the first morning was widely praised by participants, won high marks for her work under frustrating circumstances in the Gulf. Aileen McCabe, who had spent two years in the region as Middle East correspondent for Southam News, showed both initiative and depth. Tied down with 900 others in Jordan, she produced a stream of analytical reports that ignored the pervasive propaganda and made an effort to convey the Arab peoples' point of view. But the editor and general manager of Southam News, Jim Travers, was dissatisfied with the overall performance of the Canadian news contingent.

The Canadian part of the struggle was so small that we really didn't have a real military story... We were unable as a press corps to put enough pressure on the federal government...to explain why they weren't pushing the United States to try and make sanctions work... We put ourselves in a position where we could quite easily be conned, partially because of our reliance on US sources, which, once the conflict started, proved to be surprisingly jingoistic...including some highly respected organizations...I don't feel at the end of it that we as journalists were able to supply the information necessary in a democracy for people to assess the issues and analyze correctly the prosecution of the war.... The public was in no mood to rally around us and in fact was quite happy to see the constraints put on the press, and I think that's something that should concern us very, very deeply.

A tonic for frustrated self-critics was provided at lunch on the second day by Ann Medina, a CBC reporter, producer and veteran foreign correspondent. She set forth an apparently simple, but actually difficult creed: that the job of a reporter is to be a witness.

Yes, there's no such thing as pure objectivity, but there is in our gut. We all have some recognition of more subjective or less subjective, more objective or less objective. It does make a difference when a reporter goes out and tries to toss away all the baggage, all the biases, all the preconceptions. They don't succeed but they try to shed all that and to tell you what they saw...

How does this reporting work? If you take as a given that even in normal times, any government, any opposition, any interest group, is going to want to slant the information a little bit, we all do, whatever we're in, sometimes maybe even push that little parameter of truth a bit. If all this takes place in peacetime, what about in wartime? In wartime the stakes are high. In wartime, if somebody loses the game, the consequences are greater. The pressures for deception, the pressures for changing a little bit about the truth of events, the temptations to do that...are greater than at any other time. In