

At present, the *Globe and Mail* has eight correspondents stationed abroad full time, Southam News nine, the *Toronto Star* five, the Canadian Press five, the CBC has nine and CTV three. The *Globe*, the *Star*, Southam, and the Canadian Press have reporters or columnists in Canada who specialize in peace and security affairs, and Thomson Newspapers have a foreign and defence columnist.

The 1986 Caplan-Sauvageau report on communications³ made use of a special study of TV and radio coverage carried out by Peter Desbarats, a former CBC journalist who is now head of the journalism programme at the University of Western Ontario. The study showed that, in addition to sports, Canadian TV news was "constantly preferred" over the American product by a vast majority of Canadians. But Desbarats pointed out that "much of TV coverage of international events seen by the Canadian viewer, particularly on private stations, comes from American networks. Even the CBC, with the most extensive network of correspondents, relies on American sources for much of its foreign coverage." It might be added that both CBC TV's *The Journal* and CBC radio's *As it Happens* seem to rely heavily on American and British experts in their interviews on arms control and disarmament issues.

Does the press provide *enough* of a Canadian perspective on the issues of peace and security? Is the quality of coverage getting any better? To address these questions, the author performed a rather unscientific survey, combing the extensive clippings files of 26 Canadian newspapers and looking at more recent microfilm in the Parliamentary Library.

According to the three above-mentioned commission reports, most Canadians get their news from television and radio, and call them "the most credible sources." Yet broadcasters generally follow newspaper and agency coverage. For instance, the Canadian Press news agency, which gets 85 per cent of its foreign news from the Associated Press in the US, serves about 110 Canadian newspapers. It rehashes this file for Broadcast News, its affiliate, which feeds 383 Canadian radio and 66 TV stations. But print journalism regularly provides more detailed, extensive and informative coverage of foreign affairs, especially peace and security issues, than the electronic media. It might also be argued that Canadian decision-makers rely upon the medium of print for serious news coverage. (Although, in today's electronic world, politicians are probably more sensitive to the immediacy of the TV "clip.")

The topic 'peace and security' covers too wide a swath for this paper, including as it does such matters as arms control and disarmament negotiations; defence issues, involving NATO and NORAD; East-West relations; and regional conflicts like those in

Central America, the Middle East, Afghanistan and Iran-Iraq. This paper will confine its study to arms control and disarmament issues.

PUBLIC INTEREST

The 1980 election of US President Ronald Reagan did more to stimulate interest and coverage of arms control and disarmament questions than anything in recent years. The rhetoric and actions of his administration resurrected concerns that had been lying dormant for some time.

Public concern about nuclear weapons and their control or elimination seems to surface in cycles, and the media follows suit. There was public anxiety and wide coverage during the first couple of years after Hiroshima, culminating with the Baruch Plan, put forward in the United Nations and designed to eliminate nuclear weapons. From the late forties to the mid-fifties, there was a diminution of interest. In the early sixties, coverage increased again because a public outcry over fall-out from nuclear testing coincided with the comprehensive disarmament plans being put forward by the Soviet Union and the West. There was another smaller flurry of media attention in the early seventies when SALT I and the ABM treaty were signed.

In these cases the Canadian media were merely reacting to fluctuations in government actions and public attentiveness. This was especially noticeable in Canada in the seventies, when Canadian leadership was more inward-looking than in the days of Lester Pearson and Louis St. Laurent. The public was more concerned with the Quebec crisis and economic problems at home, and the media was consumed with separatism and constitutional reform. Organizations like the CBC and Canadian Press, which had had correspondents in Moscow and at the United Nations in the fifties and sixties, withdrew to home base during the seventies. They took little interest in nuclear issues at the very time when the nuclear arms buildup was at its height.

In 1978, the United Nations sponsored its first Special Session on Disarmament in order to stimulate world attention and action on this neglected subject. While the two superpowers had little of substance to offer, Canada's Prime Minister Trudeau proposed a "strategy of suffocation" which won considerable attention among the aficionados of disarmament as a pragmatic way to get beyond mere arms control. But while the Canadian media covered his speech prominently because of the uniqueness of his attendance at the UN, there was hardly any serious analysis of his proposal in the Canadian press. What little coverage there was suggested that disarmament was a 'motherhood' issue