

But I am not prepared to be one of the pall bearers of the satellite age. I'd like to say a word about the real promise of the satellite and also one of the great victories of journalism in the Gulf War.

Who said the satellite's virtue lay in its instantaneity. In the early promise of technology, we spoke of defeating distance. We used words like link, instead of live. The great promise of the satellite's age was pluralism. The monopoly of opinion and comment would be destroyed. We would hear people from the University of Cairo, we would link with Islamabad and Amman. Never again would the only Arab viewpoint come from just the local university. We would also defeat the inner distance of our own communities and continents, we would enter people's homes and speak with single mothers in Gainsborough and link them with a mother in Chicago and Toronto to create interconnections that were hitherto unthinkable.

This is my point. The dream was to defeat distance. It was hijacked to defeat time. Brian Stewart makes a very important observation which has not really sunk into most of us. This is the first war in the history of humanity where a representative of the other belligerent appeared almost nightly in the homes of the world. Can you imagine interviews with Ho Chi Minh in American livingrooms at the height of the Vietnam war? Can you imagine Soviet and Chinese comment and debate on American screens in the wake of the Tet offensive?

On our network, on radio and on television, (and this is where I regret the bleed-over of the American criticism onto the Canadian side), my memory of the war were links to Cairo, to Mubarak's advisors, to political scientists and historians and to politicians in Amman and Jerusalem and Iran, to Rajhida Dergham, debates between figures and Moscow and Washington links between Ottawa, Berlin and London, debating the morality of a course of action at the moment. And that part of the journalistic war was a characteristic of Canadian radio and television coverage, perhaps because we couldn't quite play the instantaneity of the moment game, and we weren't able to access the American ground forces. But perhaps also because we had more of a stake in pluralism.