

havior continue to be painted in the darkest possible shades, journalistic themes persist in echoing those of official Washington, American's worst fears go unchallenged in the press, and labels continue to be substituted for analysis." His 1982 study referred to such stories of questionable veracity as the possible KGB role in the attempt on Pope John Paul's life; the alleged Soviet manipulation of the nuclear freeze movement in the US; the suspected Soviet use of chemical weapons in Southeast Asia; and the claimed use of slave labour to build the Soviet natural gas pipeline. When Reagan replaced Carter, Dorman argued, there was a shift in emphasis and interpretation revealed in the American media, with a new stress on the failures in the Soviet Union. This detectable shift supported the views of those "who believe mainstream journalists are often little more than spear carriers for official Washington."

An earlier study, by the Columbia Journalism Review, was completed in 1980. It concluded that "for most of the US media, the meaning of the Iranian and Afghan crises seemed plain enough: the United States had become ominously weak, and its Soviet enemy defiantly, perhaps decisively, stronger . . . The mass of articles on national security since last summer (1979) was premised on an assumption journalists seemed to take for granted: the huge size and menacing nature of the Soviet Threat." These two reviews may have been overly critical of US news coverage, but they provide a warning about the kind of American interpretation that shows up constantly in Canadian newspapers and TV shows.

In 1983, Barrie Zwicker, a Toronto journalist, did a study called "War, Peace and the Media" for *Sources*, a Canadian media directory. Zwicker assessed the coverage of the Soviet Union in the *Toronto Star*, the *Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Sun* for a six-month period in 1982-1983. He stated that the Canadian public is being treated to "a hodgepodge of distorting trivia, boring stereotypes, and transparent bias parading as news." Espionage stories were by far the leading category of Soviet news, followed by items on Brezhnev and Andropov, on Soviet armaments, the Soviet war in Afghanistan, Soviet arms proposals, its space programme and the "Soviet threat." Soviet sports, arts and culture only just made it into the top ten categories.

Zwicker judged that of 147 opinion columns published in that period, only four could be considered friendly or favourable. Of 43 editorials or cartoons, 25 were hostile or negative and the rest were neutral; none could find anything positive to say about the Soviet Union. A biased view of the USSR presented in the media can colour Canadian views of arms control and disarmament issues. Perhaps a more balanced coverage will develop in 1987 because this year, not only the CBC and the *Globe*, but

also Southam and the *Toronto Star* will have correspondents based in Moscow.

The Zwicker survey suggests that Canadian journalists can be just as ethnocentric as their American colleagues. Since the source of the stories categorized in the Zwicker study are not given, it is possible that the blame might fall on the 'gatekeepers' in these Canadian newspapers. A well-known fact among working journalists, especially those in the field of foreign affairs, is that far too many editors and deskmen have a limited knowledge of, or interest in, international affairs, especially in arms control and disarmament issues.

For every good and experienced foreign editor, there are a dozen for whom the task is a bore, and they would prefer to use hyped, dramatic coverage rather than informative, consistent stories that provide their readers with real background on Soviet life and Soviet positions on complex issues. It is people like this who would trivialize Reykjavik or the Stockholm conference with headlines, as the Americans did, about who "won" and who "lost."

The foreign correspondent covering arms control negotiations does not face the problems of the reporter dealing with civil wars, Communist insurrections or military coups. There are no struggles getting the visa, avoiding the censors, or coping with physical dangers and bureaucratic harassments. Rather, he or she must anticipate a wall of silence at the negotiating site, and a plethora of leaks and attempts at news manipulation in the superpower capitals. It means taking a skeptical view of the official word from NATO headquarters, or from the Warsaw Pact when it provides any. It means digging behind the public rhetoric, while trying to avoid being buffaloes by diplomatic verbiage or scared off by baffling acronyms. Most importantly, it means writing these complex stories in a fashion that is intelligible to the ordinary reader, because that is the only way these esoteric subjects will be rescued from the military backrooms and strategic think-tanks and debated in public.

The Canadian government long ago opted out of developing nuclear weapons for the Canadian military arsenal, and therefore issues of nuclear strategy have not been a priority with the Canadian public or its press. The result has been, until very recently, that Canadian newspapers have tended to ignore serious analysis of the implications for Canada of changes in nuclear strategy. For example, the doctrine of flexible response, unveiled in the early seventies, drew little comment in Canada. Nor did Carter's 1980 Presidential Directive 59 which planned the targeting of the Soviet leadership in a limited nuclear war.

There was a little more coverage and concern expressed in the Canadian media over Reagan's Na-