1958

A Study of Current Congressional Opinion--as Expressed in Publications--on Military Information Practices and Policies

Brett, Robert P.
Boston University

http://hdl.handle.net/2144/7136

Boston University
BOSTON UNIVERSITY

School of Public Relations and Communications

Thesis

A STUDY OF CURRENT CONGRESSIONAL OPINION—AS 
EXPRESSED IN PUBLICATIONS—ON MILITARY 
INFORMATION PRACTICES AND POLICIES

By

Robert P. Brett

(B.F.A., University of Georgia, 1946)
Submitted in partial fulfillment of the 
requirements for the degree of 
Master of Science
1958
Approved by

First Reader. . . Samuel G. Atkinson
Instructor in Public Relations

Second Reader. . . C. M. Sullivan
Instructor in Public Relations
### TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. THE FRAMEWORK</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Public Relations</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion level</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unification of military public relations</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of Office of Public Information</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Its composition</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidential Reorganization Plan No. 6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative and Public Affairs</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duties of service information offices</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General work categories of the Office of Public Affairs</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentagon news importance</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dilemma</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military public relations budget</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Congress</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Its composition</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of congressional committees</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The congressional hearing, keystone of the study</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td>PAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Study</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict over information policy</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The congressional role</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The hypothesis</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the study</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the study</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The congressional sample</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations of the study</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. THE CONGRESSIONAL OPINION                                           23

- General Familiarity with Military Public Relations                   23
- Functions of the Office of Public Information                         24
- Definition of public relations                                      25
- Services performed                                                   28
- Congressional questions asked                                        30

Organization of Military
- Public Relations Community                                            32
- Lack of control and coordination                                     34
- Authority over services                                               35
- Better public relations in the "old days."                            36
- Purpose of the limitation                                             36
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moss Committee Report of deficiencies of Office of Public Affairs</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The chain of command</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service refusal of inquiries</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority to overrule service</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picture of complete confusion</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy of Operation</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of budget reduction</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction as best method of correlation</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much money spent in field offices</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of Secretary Wilson</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of control over service setups</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual cost of public relations</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of administering limitation</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service &quot;kick-back&quot; to the Office of Public Affairs</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimates for 1958 and 1959</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste, talent and money</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complaint of the American people</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Release of Information</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Propaganda agency</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Releases selling legislation</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td>PAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information released is self-serving propaganda</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The &quot;Constructive Contribution&quot;</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enlisting public support for legislation</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misleading information</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-information</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withholding information</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information leaks</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of authenticity, objectivity</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information not available to public</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public failure to receive complete, accurate, and timely information</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The term as used in the study</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The government psychosis and the people's right to know</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evils of classification</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposite view</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damage of public information to country</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The President and the dilemma</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliberate government policy to withhold information</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secret information obtained by press</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generals' speeches on secret matters</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td>PAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gagging of committee witnesses ...........................................</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classification abuses and problems ........................................</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade journal disclosures ................................................................</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defense Department most restrictive and confused of Federal Branches ...</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct of Military Public Relations .......................................</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service rivalry .........................................................................</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there hidden offices? ......................................................</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Function beyond congressional intent ........................................</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public not getting balanced picture ........................................</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel not utilized ............................................................</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Public Information, counter-propaganda agency ..................</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor supervision of service releases .......................................</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter writing and congressional liaison ...................................</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary refuses congressional request ...................................</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian &quot;duty officers&quot; .......................................................</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security disclosure through administrative carelessness ..................</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public relations effort should be centralized in Washington, D.C. ....</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criticism of checking speeches for policy ...................................</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# III. THE CONGRESSIONAL IMAGE OF MILITARY PUBLIC RELATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Implosion</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Release</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Implications</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship of congressional complaints regarding Office of Public Affairs to their attitude toward the whole defense establishment</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses of action</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for professional leadership</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A. Copy of Secretary of Defense Memorandum Dated 10 October 1947</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B. Congressional Sample</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX C. Department of Defense Information Available to the Public</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

THE FRAMEWORK

The ideal study is one in which the framework is as familiar to the reader as it is to the investigator. In fact, its usefulness is measured largely by the degree of understanding established initially in defining the area of investigation, the terms used, the method of procedure, and the limitations.

Such rapport demands some mutual knowledge of the history and present status of the participants and their relationship, as well as a preview of the organization of the body of the report.

I. MILITARY PUBLIC RELATIONS

For the purposes of this paper the term, military public relations, encompasses the public relations activities--frequently referred to as public information--of all the military services and the Department of Defense.

Public relations has been defined as "the management function which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an individual or organization with the public interest and executes a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance."1

1Harlan and Scott, Contemporary Public Relations; Principles and Cases (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955), p. 3.
In government, or military, public relations there is the additional element of the public's right to know where and how the tax dollar is spent.

In almost every instance military public relations will be discussed here at the Department of Defense level. There are three reasons for this:

1. This is the level at which members of Congress choose to gather information on military public relations.

2. Only at this level can a comprehensive study be made which will produce the desired composite picture of military public relations as conducted by all of the services.

3. It is at this level that necessary facts and figures are made available concerning the activities of the combined defense establishment.

Prior to the passage of the National Security Act of 1947, creating the Department of Defense and establishing unification, each of the services acted independently in the conduct of its public relations activities. They were answerable, of course, to higher authority, but to no central authority, and with no formal means of interservice coordination.

In October of 1947 Secretary of Defense James Forrestal addressed a memorandum to the three service secretaries, their
chiefs of staff, the Chairman of the Munitions Board, and the Chairman of the Research and Development Board, which outlined the first steps to be taken toward unification of the military public relations effort.  

At that time Secretary Forrestal apparently believed that a minimum amount of regulation was desirable, or necessary. He left the administration of public relations activities in the hands of the secretaries, made no new policy recommendations, and concentrated primarily on establishing coordination machinery. A board, comprised of the heads of public relations of each of the three military departments, was designated to serve in an advisory capacity to the newly appointed Secretary. In addition, each service was asked to detail a liaison officer to his office.  

Also in the memo, responsibility was assigned for security classification, the exchange and release of information, and review of previously classified material. Five categories of information were listed which required clearance by the Secretary of Defense prior to release. It is of interest to note that no public relations division was formed in the new office. In fact, the memo specifically stated that no such division would be established.

---

Only seventeen months later this decision was reversed. And on March 17, 1949, the Office of Public Information in the Department of Defense was established by one of the last directives of the late Secretary.  

It was a natural outgrowth of unification and was created in response to pressure from the press, the public and Congress. The press, in particular, was anxious to have a central agency with which to deal. Members of Congress also desired some central office where inquiries coming in from their constituents could be answered.  

The problem that had developed during the brief trial period was seemingly unsolvable under the original organization, i.e., after the Department of Defense was established people desiring information concerning one of the services expected to obtain it from "the home office." Not finding such an office they oftentimes were sent to five or six different offices before an adequate answer was obtained.  

There were other factors involved, Congress apparently wished to achieve some economy as well as more efficient operation. For example, just prior to the establishment of the new office, the three services, operating their separate public relations staffs, had a total of about 520 people;  

3Some preliminary steps had been taken, e.g., the establishment on July 19, 1948, of the Office of Public Information, the opening on August 11, 1948, of a press room for joint use by the three services, etc.
this figure was reduced to 330. Eventually 285 were assigned to the Office of Public Information and the remaining 45 were divided among the three services to provide liaison with their respective field commands and departmental activities. "Finally, there was a feeling at the time, justified or not, that the services were to some extent operating their own public information offices at cross-purposes."^4

The new Department of Defense Office of Information was to act as the sole agency for the release and dissemination of military information at the seat of government and was assigned many specific missions theretofore accomplished separately by the services. The directive called for the creation of central Press, Radio-TV, and Pictorial Branches—the latter involving still and motion pictures, newsreels, and documentaries. Other activities provided for in the directive included News Digest and Analysis, and Security Review Branch, Books and Magazines, National Organizations, Women's Division, Civilian Liaison, and Correspondence.

Desk space was provided in the offices of OPI for newspaper and broadcasting correspondents to facilitate the release of news to the press, and thus the public. All in all, it was felt that the new directive had eliminated the

---

awkwardness caused by previously scattered locations, and at the same time eliminated duplication and overlapping.

Since 1949, a great many changes have taken place in what was originally called the CPI. Titles have been changed, new jobs have been created and old ones eliminated, the number of personnel and hours of operation have fluctuated, etc. However, the general structure and mission of the office has remained the same.

The important changes have been made above the Office of Public Information on the Department of Defense formal organization chart.

As a result of the President's Reorganization Plan No. 6, approved by Congress in 1953, several new Assistant Secretary offices were established. Thus, by 1954, serving over the Director of the Office of Public Information, there was an Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative and Public Affairs), and a Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs. The Division since that time has been referred to as the Office of Public Affairs rather than the Office of Public Information, which is now a subdivision.

Each of the services had continued to retain public

---

information activities in Washington, responsible to the secretaries of the military departments.

As outlined in 1954 by Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson, and still in effect in 1957, these organizations were expected to:

1. Confine their attention to items of interest within their own service.
2. Make use of the consolidated activities.
3. Coordinate their activities with the central office of public information.
4. Assist the central office as required.  

As of June 1957, the Office of Public Affairs had a staff of 55 civilian employees and 48 military personnel and was operating on a budget of $450,000 a year. The resolution of policy matters relating to public information activities in the Department at the national level was being accomplished by the Public Information Coordinating Council. This council, meeting at least once a week, was composed of the chiefs of information of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines, and was headed by the Deputy for Public Affairs who acted as chairman.

As of this same period the office divided its work into three general categories: Public Information, Special Activities, and Security Review. It continued to maintain

---

Ibid.
Radio-TV, Pictorial, and Magazine and Book Branches, and a Speaker's Branch which arranged for speakers and prepared speech material by request. In addition there was a press-room manned 24 hours a day, with separate service desks coordinated by the Director of Public Information. 7

It is generally conceded that the Pentagon is the source of more vital news, day in and day out, than any other agency of the government. Whether the country is at peace or war, military activity affects the lives of millions of people in a decisive and intimate way; it affects their homes, their careers, their pocketbooks, and their future. In short, it is an immense center of legitimate news. Yet, the people responsible for releasing this news are constantly faced with a dilemma peculiar to military public relations. It is perhaps best described in the report made by the Committee on Classified Information:

At the risk of stating a platitude, this country is far different from a dictatorship, and the impact of that difference is strong on the problem of information security. Being a democracy, the government cannot cloak its operations in secrecy. Adequate information as to its activities must be given to its citizens or the foundations of its democracy will be eaten away. We find that the Department of Defense

fully subscribes to these principles. On the other hand, our democracy can be destroyed in another way, namely, by giving a potential enemy such information as will enable him to conquer us by war. A balance must be struck between these two conflicting necessities.

In the Department of Defense there are peculiar factors which make the striking of the proper balance difficult. The Department spends roughly two-thirds of the national budget. At one time or another it directs the lives of millions of young men and women. And it is charged with planning for the survival of the nation in case of war. These considerations center public interest on its activities and weight the balance in favor of maximum disclosure. On the other hand, the activities of the Department are of the greatest interest to a potential enemy. He can profit from disclosures of its activities to a far greater extent than disclosures of the activities of most of the other governmental departments. So the other side of the scales is heavily weighted. The result is that striking the proper balance is more important and more difficult than is the case with most of the other departments of the government.

An Executive Order, number 10501, attempts to govern the determination of just how the proper balance is to be attained. It prescribes this dual objective: (1) to give the public full information up to the point beyond which national security will be damaged, and (2) to protect information beyond that point. As the committee notes however, "it is one thing to have a theoretically sound system and quite another thing to make it operate well in an enormous organization such as the Department of Defense."8

---


9Ibid., p. 3
Not even the briefest review of military public relations would be complete without some mention of the dilemma above. Another problem, almost as unique, has been the system of allocation, and the varied amounts of money made available for the conduct of military public relations down through the years. This topic will be discussed at more length later in the chapter, however, it is relevant here to note that the military public relations budget has dropped from approximately ten and one quarter million dollars to three and one quarter million dollars over the last six years. 10

Although the figures are not meaningful in themselves—and it should be remembered that we were at war in 1952 and not in 1957—the impact of an 87 percent budget decrease and the reasons behind it are significant to this study.

II. THE CONGRESS

The Constitution of the United States provides that certain government powers be delegated to the Federal government rather than to the State governments. One of these is the power to maintain armed forces. However, for the

10House Hearings, 1955, op. cit., p. 546 shows 1952 expenditure was $10,245,345. Present limitation is $3,270,000, see Navy Budget Digest Fiscal Year 1957; (NAVEXOS P-1355), Department of the Navy, p. 11.
Executive Branch of the Federal government to exercise this power, funds must first be appropriated by the Legislative Branch—the holder of the "purse-strings."

It is because of this check, or power of restraint, given to the Legislative Branch by the men who wrote the Constitution that Congress must be included in any discussion of military public relations.

Assuming the importance of Congress to the subject at hand is conceded, some review of its composition, privileges, problems, and tools would seem in order. While this might appear to be a rather elementary procedure—and indeed it is recognized as such—nevertheless the reader's indulgence is sought. The purpose of what follows—to establish a mutual framework, or image, upon which to base subsequent information—compels the investigator to start at the beginning in order to "set the scene."

Congress is made up of 531 United States citizens who have had their citizenship for at least seven years, are 25 years old or more and receive an annual salary of $22,500. All of them are elected directly by the people, they are charged with making laws for the people, and, they continue to hold office only so long as the people support them at the ballot box.

The present Congress, the 85th, began on January 3, 1957. It is Democratic, as of May 3, 1957, 283 of its members were Democrats and 246 were Republicans. (Two vacancies). It has 16 lady legislators, nine Democrats and
seven Republicans. Of these, 15 are serving in the House, the other, Mrs. Margaret Chase Smith (Republican, Maine) is the only lady Senator. \footnote{11}

Members of Congress are granted a number of benefits and privileges, not the least of which is an immunity which prevents their arrest for other than serious crimes, and allows them to say what they wish on the floor of Congress or in committee without fear of civil suit or arrest.

They are permitted to make six round trips between their homes and Washington, D. C., each year at government expense, are allowed $1,200 yearly for stationery, receive $3,000 of their salary tax free, and franking privileges. In addition, they receive an allowance for long distance telephone calls and telegrams, and are eligible for low-cost life insurance, free medical care, and pensions. To conduct his business, each Congressman is provided with a Washington office, an office in his home state, and from $26,000 to $84,500 per year for staff pay.

Congressmen in the pursuit of their duties are presented with thousands of bills each year—16,780 in 1956. \footnote{12} Because no single Senator or Representative could possibly read through and analyze so many proposals, the work of studying and reporting on the merits of the separate bills is divided among many designated committees.

\footnote{11}{Congress at Work; Facts, Functions, Organizations and Personalities of the 85th Congress, A Handbook, prepared by Scholastic Magazines, New York, 1957, p. 5.}
\footnote{12}{Ibid., p. 7.}
"On the hill" there are four main types of committees: the Standing Committee, which is permanent and deals with broad fields of government interest (15 in the House and 19 in the Senate); the Subcommittee, which deals with only one aspect of a Standing Committee's work (usually more than 100); the Special Committee, created to perform only some specific task; the Joint Committee, made up of members from both the Senate and the House.

In order to obtain the necessary facts upon which to base their legislative decisions, committees generally conduct hearings during which they examine witnesses, accept statements, and pry into matters relevant to the subject or agency being studied.

It is this functional keystone upon which is built the relationship of military public relations to Congress. Moreover, it is the hearing which provides the grist for the mill of congressional opinion, and this study.

III. THE STUDY

The age-old thorn in the three sides (Executive, Judicial, and Legislative) of this democratic government is the continuing conflict of opinion as to what constitutes a balanced information policy.

When the pricking pain becomes acute--because of Press or public clamor--the government body begins to writhe. Miraculously, doctors, from every walk of life, suddenly
appear. Each is apparently equipped and trained to ease the pain.

Some prescribe an emetic, believing that the throb of conflict will disappear if there is a sudden outpouring of the poison assumed to have been built up as a result of holding back information. Others, equally learned, take the opposite or paragogic view. Quite a few examine the thorn and have many meetings concerning the best method of removal. Unfortunately while debating they are merely adding to the thorn's dimensions, for agreement is most unlikely.

What then is the approach, and why do the experts encounter so much difficulty deciding on the therapy to be used? One student of the problem has offered a very simple explanation, which most practitioners have so far failed to perceive. He states:

Conflict over information policy is an inevitable by-product of the democratic process. The point at which a proper balance is achieved between disclosure and secrecy will always be debated by groups with conflicting responsibilities and contrasting perspectives.13

If conflict is indeed inevitable—and history gives definite support to the hypothesis—then the solution lies not in removing the thorn but in learning to live with it. To pursue the analogy for a moment more, what is needed is treatment which will deaden the pain without paralyzing

---

a portion of the body.

It is important to point out here that there are other dichotomies as significant as disclosure vis-a-vis secrecy to be considered in structuring an informational policy. Under organization there is the question of centralization vs. decentralization and the effects of each on efficiency, economy, and adequate control. Under the heading of release of information there is the issue of action vs. reaction, i.e., whether to initiate and maintain a constant flow of information or restrict activity to the answering of queries.

Obviously there are a number of such choices to be made before finally arriving at what is normally thought of as a policy. The problem takes on additional complexity when the mission of such an organization is given specificity—how much time, money, and man-power can be afforded to gain what objectives.

For example, perhaps all of the figures would change if one of the expressed purposes of the program was to attract, and retain high caliber personnel—while keeping the public informed. In long-range policy planning, institutional, or accessory objectives such as this, though important, are often overshadowed by the more immediate needs demanding attention.

This background, while intended to introduce the development of the study, may also serve to engender in the reader some feeling of commiseration for the people, both in
and out of government, who must wrestle periodically with these problems.

In the forefront of this group are the members of Congress, who during the last ten years have played with considerable spirit the paternal role of questioning, watching, hoping, and waiting for the youngster that is unified military public relations to work out his own salvation. However, unlike a father's duty, it is not the job of Congress to guide, but rather to chide.

Congressional influence and control does, after all, have a negative aspect, in that its members are not responsible for—indeed, do not have the time or the staff for—determining the most effective method of operating a given government agency.

As watchdogs and holders of the purse-strings, they can, however, limit, prevent, and even eliminate if in their opinion things are not being run properly. Perhaps the best barometer of their confidence or displeasure is the size of the appropriation; whether it is increased, remains the same, or is trimmed, and under what circumstances.

As mentioned earlier, by this measurement military public relations has not fared at all well. Each year there has been a little less patience...and a little less money. In fact, in the minds of many, it is now only a token activity and could not be reduced further without Press and/or public repercussions.
The hypothesis. Considering the framework thus far, it is believed that the present limitation of funds imposed by Congress on the public relations activities of the military services and the Department of Defense is a manifestation of their displeasure with the conduct of these activities.

Purpose of the study. In addition to testing the hypothesis, it is the purpose of this study to ascertain as clearly as possible, on the basis of statements as expressed in publications, what Congress as a body thinks of military public relations.

Significance of the study. Most Americans have seen demonstrated, or through training have grown to believe in, the power of the individual citizen as an integral part of public opinion in our democratic society. Next to the force of public opinion itself probably the most dynamic, representative, and influential group in the world today is the Congress of the United States.

What Congress thinks of military public relations must of necessity have some significance to the profession as a whole. In addition, it is hoped that the results of this study may prove useful to military public relations officers in dealing with Congress, and in planning realistically for future information programs.

Congressional opinion will always be directly related to such planning in terms of money, personnel, and operational scope.
If the purpose of the study, as stated, is realized, the testimony which follows should provide enough specific information to allow the reader to answer some of the pertinent questions to his own satisfaction. The significance of the answers will necessarily depend on the reader's orientation, special interest, and individual frame of reference.

1. Does the Congress appear to be generally familiar with the managerial function of public relations in an organization—especially military?

2. Does Congress make any distinction between a planned public relations program, and a policy of public information, i.e., answering queries, preparing stories, pictures and captions for release?

3. Do Congressmen generally favor more disclosure or more security?

4. Is Congress well informed on the extent of public relations activities conducted in the "field" by the services?

5. What do Congressmen like and/or dislike about past and present public relations programs?

6. Does their opinion—good or bad—hold for all public relations activity, military and civilian?
7. What are the major areas of congressional opinion on military public relations, i.e., what items do they seem most concerned about?

8. Does their opinion reflect the opinion of their constituents?

9. Does Congress approved or disapprove of the present organization of the Office of Public Affairs?

10. What does Congress think of the administration of the public information program?

11. How does Congress feel it is treated by military public relations personnel?

12. Is Congress satisfied with the amount, type, and speed of information furnished it by military public relations people?

13. Does Congress believe the present limitation is realistic and can be administered without abuse?

14. Why does Congress feel as it does about military public relations—how strongly?

Sources. This study is based primarily on information taken from published transcripts of hearings, conducted by both houses of Congress, on appropriations for the Department of Defense over the past six years.

In addition, the hearings and reports of the House Subcommittee, investigating the Availability of Information From Federal Departments and Agencies, known as the Moss
Committee, served as a valuable source of opinion and information on the subject.

Methodology. The organization of the material from these sources was divided into five major steps: (1) the extraction of all testimony, prepared statements, and data, concerning military public relations, (2) consolidation of all the statements of each Congressman concerned in a separate folio, (3) examination of each Congressman’s folio, and listing of the different opinions expressed, (4) categorization of the separate opinions into major areas which evolved, (5) tabulation of total number of occurrences of opinion in each major area.

It is the intent of this study to do no more than summarize the material in each section. Conclusions drawn, will then be the reader’s and will be based on the actual statements made by the Members of Congress, rather than the investigator’s interpretation of the statements.

Sample. While not scientifically selected, the congressional sample used for the study was found to be highly representative geographically, politically, and even by sex when compared to the population as a whole.\(^\text{14}\)

\(^{14}\)The word “population” is used here in the survey design sense and refers to the Congress.

\(^{15}\)See APPENDIX B., Congressional Sample.
Limitations. There were a variety of limitations imposed on the investigator from the start—which could only be accepted.

While the sample is believed representative and large enough for the purpose to satisfy research requirements (5.4 percent), there is no doubt some sampling error, i.e., an amount of difference between the opinions of the Congressmen in the sample and the opinions of the population, caused by chance.

In a well controlled research design the chance of error would be kept to a very low percentage, e.g., the researcher would be 95 percent sure that the opinion of his sample correctly represented the opinion of his population.

Because the sample in this case was not selected randomly, and for a number of other more technical reasons, the validity—degree to which the study measures what it is supposed to measure—cannot be unequivocally determined or stated.

On the other hand, there is no apparent deviation in the sample norm which would indicate, or suggest, a large sampling error.

There are other, perhaps more obvious, limitations. One, is the overlapping of opinion areas; another is the difficulty encountered in attempting to accurately reduce two or three pages of questioning and testimony to one statement. Yet, it is often near impossible to extract a needed quote without changing the context at the same time.
The tabulation of the number of times an opinion occurs defies objectivity, and makes the procedure much too arbitrary. For example, one reasonably short statement can show concern and/or contain opinions in three or four different areas. This trouble is compounded by the fact that oftentimes the opinion is never really verbalized, and is rather an attitude, clearly inferred over a number of pages, from which you can deduce opinion. The enigma here is in illustrating the point to the reader.

The last, but not the least important of the limitations of this study (or any study), is the personal bias of the investigator. It is an accepted fact that each individual apprehends the world about him in a different way, tends to be selective in what he is attentive to, and what he observes, according to past learning and experience.

This selective perception implies that what a person sees, to a large extent, depends upon what opinions he already holds.

The investigator, being fully aware of this "human" limitation has made every effort to minimize it by organizing perceptions, in so far as possible, objectively.
CHAPTER II

THE CONGRESSIONAL OPINION

The major areas of opinion which follow are not arranged in order of frequency of comment, importance of subject, or amount of material available on a particular subject. There is no special order, other than that which seemed most logical for the purposes of presentation.

In this vein, an attempt has been made to predetermine the questions of the reader with the hope of achieving as much "flow" as possible in placing congressional opinion on this subject at his disposal.

I. GENERAL FAMILIARITY WITH MILITARY PUBLIC RELATIONS

If a man is a carpenter, and he meets a man who is not a carpenter, it does not take him very long to ascertain this fact. The degree of familiarity with the subject is soon evident—especially when the purpose of the meeting is the discussion of the subject.

This is by way of saying, that to a person familiar with public relations, military and otherwise, it is not difficult to broadly assess a Congressman's acquaintance with the subject, provided he expresses himself.
In this area there were 74 such expressions which have been divided into three topics. The first, of which, concerns the definition of military public information and its functions.

Senator Joseph C. O'Mahoney, of Wyoming, speaking to one of the Deputy Secretaries and Mr. Andrew H. Berding, then Director of the Office of Public Information, diagnosed the problem as follows:

The trouble...is that for some reason or another the functions of the Office of Public Information have not been adequately explained to the Members of Congress. Too many members have the idea that this is a propaganda agency for the purpose of affecting the judgement of Members of Congress and the judgement of the people rather than for the distribution of essential information with respect to what is going on.

I think, Mr. Berding, you have an opportunity now to demonstrate the acumen of those who chose you for this place, by making a clear and incisive account of what the Office of Public Information ought to do and why it ought to exist. ¹

After being told, to some general extent, of the activities of the Office by Mr. Berding, the Senator commented:

You see, one of your troubles is that this is all lumped under public information. In other words, the Department of Defense, before you came with it, chose the worst possible headline they could choose

to explain this function. So please break this down into the exact categories.

Pursuing this idea even further, presumably in hopes of clarifying the definition for his colleagues, the Senator, later in the same exchange said:

Mr. Berding, may I suggest to you an assignment that may prove helpful...Suppose you write a feature story of 750 words on a day in the life of the Director of Public Information and put it in here.3 (referring to the Hearing transcript).

This lack of definition in the minds of the members of Congress as to exactly what public information or public relations consists of is somewhat widespread. Even Congressman Edward T. Miller, of Maryland, who shows more than cursory knowledge of the subject during the hearings, was prompted to confess:

I am afraid I am a little confused...Maybe I have a different idea as to what public relations consists of than your department.4

I believe I have said,...that it seemed to me rather important for this committee, in deciding what we would consider reasonable expenditures on the public-information program to have a definition of just what public relations consists.5

Senator Dennis Chavez, of New Mexico, on another occasion, speaking to Assistant Secretary of Defense for

---

2Ibid., p. 1278. 3Ibid., p. 1284


5Ibid., p. 660
Legislative and Public Affairs, Robert Ross, asked, "...What is the main function of the Service? What do you do?"  

Senator O'Mahoney, like Senator Homer Ferguson, of Michigan, seemed to think the subject would be more manageable if there was some definition on the record. He also asked Mr. Berding:

Will you state on the record what you deem to be the function of this personnel; public relations? What are you aiming at and what do you feel is the function?

What categories do you try to cover?

In speaking of the budget, on still another occasion, Mr. Berding was asked by Senator Margaret Chase Smith, of Maine:

Mr. Chairman, may I ask what this specifically covers, what is included in public relations. I would like at some time to have a few examples of what comes under public relations.

The second topic concerns the apparent confusion of...
the Office of Public Information with two other government agencies.

For example, in the 1956 Senate Hearings, conducted for the Office of Public Information budget, Senator Chevez noted that the Army, Navy, and Air Force publish more than ninety magazines, notices, newsletters, etc. The publications which he referred to were internal, supported by the Information and Education program, and were in no way connected with military public information. He and Senator Allen J. Ellender, of Louisiana, however, ostensibly felt that the publications were a public information matter. Both Senators questioned Mr. Ross about the cost of the publications, the unification of the Information and Education effort, who headed the organization, whether it was unified with Public Information, and the nature of the operation. Understandably, in this instance, Mr. Ross was unable to supply the information.

Mr. J. R. Loftis, Director, Office of Administrative Services, Office of the Secretary of Defense, eventually filled the breach by explaining that the Information and Education program was "slanted toward morale and welfare and education of the Armed Forces personnel, whereas the public information program (was) slanted toward informing the general public."9

Later in the same hearings Senator Leverett Saltonstall, of Massachusetts, speaking of the same publications said, "It is your job to see that there is not duplication and that there is not an unnecessary number of publications?" Mr. Ross again answered that the magazines referred to were those prepared to provide information to the troops, and were not under his jurisdiction.

The other government agencies mentioned by Congressmen as overlapping or duplicating public information activities was the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service, which provides entertainment to forces overseas.

Topic number three in this section is a catch-all, actually a review of some of the miscellaneous questions asked which indicate the degree of familiarity with the subject. 10

It would seem that some of the committee members had never received aid from the public information office; one asked, "Does your office handle inquiries from Congress?"

Another:

...you made several references to the services performed for the members of Congress on the queries made by the Congressmen....but it was not clear to me just what the Members of Congress really receive from your people or want from your Office of Public Information.

10Although each question is accurately quoted, no attempt will be made to identify the individual Congressman.
On the same subject still another states: "Frankly it would never occur to me that correspondence with a Member of Congress should be looked upon as public relations."

A not uncommon subject is: "Does your office have anything to do with classification of papers?" "Does your office have anything to do with declassifying records or documents?" "Is classified material made available to your office?"

One Member sums up:

..."My experience here has indicated that our difficulty apparently has its origin at the source of determination of what should be classified and what should not be classified. Where is that authority vested, if I may ask?

On another bent; while discussing the budget one House Member asked, "Does this include recruiting activities?" He was not alone in this doubt. At least two others had asked the question before.

"What is the justification for the department to make movies and to present television programs?" This is apparently a sore spot with a few Members of Congress. Another wanted to know, "Is the cost of these movies borne by your $500,000?"

At least one felt the government was not coming out well financially with such an arrangement, he asked, "You give it to the newsreel people free of charge? Then you go down there to see your own picture and they charge you for entrance; is that it?" Others displayed interest in who reviewed television and radio programs.
In another exchange about personnel needed for the military public relations offices one Senator asked, "Who handles this information service? Is it civilians or people in the Army or Navy or Air Force?"

And then there were such questions as these:
"Is the mailing of notices, statements, and so forth under your department?"
"What are your duties in regard to the morale and welfare projects?"
"Do you hand out to the newspapers information that you think should be made for general circulation?"
"For instance, there is an airbase in Kansas or elsewhere. Do you have this kind of personnel there, too, for information?"
"Do you have any responsibility or connection with any of the cold war propaganda programs...?"
"Is it the duty of your office to run down security leaks?"

And last, but not less frequent, the question about what kind of information is released: "Is it propaganda?"

Under no circumstances should the reader be mistakenly led to believe that it is the purpose of the investigator to imply, or any way convey, the idea that it is the fault of the Members of Congress that they are not entirely familiar with the public information activities of the Department of
Defense. Nor is the quoting of the more extreme questions meant to suggest that they represent anything less than an earnest desire on the part of the questioners to get all the information possible before making a decision.

The general familiarity of Congress with military public relations is, of course, not entirely negative. However, there is very little published comment in the sources used to illustrate the extent of the positive knowledge or view. It is an unknown.

There are certainly not more than two or three statements which suggest insight, experience, or training in the field. One of them was made by Congressman Miller who said:

I have had the idea that public relations was to cover the functions that normally have been carried on by military personnel in getting out newspaper releases and taking certain cognizance of community requirements in areas where there are military installations, and what you might call an advertising program, if possible, to put the services in as good a light and on as friendly relations with the general public as possible.\(^{11}\)

To review; it would seem that the majority of the Members of Congress are not generally familiar with the definitions, functions, boundaries, scope, services, responsibilities, or organization of the various offices of military public relations.

---

\(^{11}\)House Hearings, 1956, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 657.
If this is assumed to be true, then it is as easily assumed that Members of Congress cannot be expected to place any great value on the operations of these offices.

II. ORGANIZATION OF MILITARY PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMUNITY

There is a surprising concentration and consensus of opinion on two organizational aspects of the military public relations community: coordination and control.

Because the two principles are complementary and the other comments of the total of 70, are either related or isolated, no effort will be made to subdivide within the section.

As might be expected there are a number of entries in the record questioning how the Office is organized. Congressman Glenn R. Davis, of Wisconsin, speaking to the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, opened with:

My general question is this: Where do you fit in with respect to the other public relations offices or offices of information of the three different branches of the service? What kind of surveillance or censorship or supervision, or whatever you want to call it, do you exercise over them?12

Just slightly more aggressive, Senator Smith mused:

...while I appreciate the value (of public relations) and know something about it, it always seemed to me that there could be a considerable saving and less overlapping than there is in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.13

12 Ibid., p. 663.
In speaking of the judgement required in deciding what is of a security nature and what is not, Congressman John J. Riley, of South Carolina, said:

There ought to be some criteria to guide the judgement of these folks, because sometimes we have information from people in the field that you perhaps here feel should not be given out. I think probably we have had some of that.\textsuperscript{14}

Senator Ferguson also wanted to know, "How much duplication is there in these offices?"\textsuperscript{15} He was speaking of all the public information offices. Earlier in the same hearings he asked:

Is there not something that can be done to concentrate your public relations in Washington so that the people can really get this picture on this defense?\textsuperscript{16}

More positive is Congressman Richard B. Wigglesworth, of Massachusetts, who has had quite a bit to say on the subject:

Mr. Berding, I think one of the main reasons for setting up this office (Office of Public Information, Department of Defense) was to secure a reduction and coordination of effort as compared with that which had existed before it was set up.\textsuperscript{17}


\textsuperscript{15} Senate Hearings, 1954, Part I, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 659.

\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 159.

I am still not quite clear in my mind as to what control, if any, the Office of Public Affairs in Washington exercises over the photographs or exhibits or public statements or other informational activities of the three separate branches of the military setup. 18

I do not say that the services have done it deliberately, but experience indicated that individuals in the so-called Public Information Service have not had in the past the proper appreciation of what should and what should not be published, and that we have not had a proper system of control over public information. 19

He also complained about the frequent release of information to the Press which had been presented as secret to the Committee, observing that:

Naturally, it leads to the conclusion that there is a lack of coordination somewhere along the line. I do not know whether that is the responsibility of your office or where the responsibility lies. 20

While on the subject of security review Mr. Wigglesworth during another hearing rather paradoxically gives his view on the organization of such an office:

Of course, somebody has to consider things from the security angle, but I would not think that you would have to have set up a special division for that. 21

In the same exchange he asked of Mr. Berding: "Why should we have to set up an activity in the Department of Defense to maintain liaison with national organizations?"

18 House Hearings, 1958, Part II, op. cit., p. 1830


Congressman Erret P. Scrivner, of Kansas, engaged Mr. Philip K. Allen, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs in a pithy exchange by interrupting with:

Let's stop here. What authority do you have? You say you try. What authority do you have over the services?

Mr. Allen: We have the authority of releasing or not releasing photographs, announcements, and similar documents. We have the authority to delete sections from speeches made by both civilian and military.

Mr. Scrivner: If you get to see them first.

Mr. Allen: I do not know of many speeches by key officials which we have not seen, sir.

Mr. Scrivner: If you had seen some I have read and put your O.K. on them, you are more to blame than the man who makes them.22

Speaking to Mr. Swan, Congressman Gerald R. Ford, Jr., of Michigan, finished a discussion with these words of warning:

After all, you are the experts on this operation. Unless you coordinate what each of the three services is doing they can go off in three totally different directions.23

Congressman Miller had a rather simplified idea of how the Office could be organized; in a reminiscent mood he said:

I thought the old days in the Army, when we had maybe one fellow who in addition to his other duties was looked upon as the lieutenant or captain who talked

to the press, were days when we had better public relations than we have now, with all these experts.24

In the same hearing in a discussion of Department of Defense public relations, Mr. Miller commented:

I would hope that it be limited to a narrow base.
I think that is what most of us have contemplated when we were urging a limitation on public relations spending.25

The most incisive work in this major area was without a doubt done by the Moss Committee which devoted many hours--and hundreds of pages of testimony--to the specific study of the Department of Defense, Office of Public Affairs.

Selected opinions of Congressmen on the Committee could, and have already, filled a book. However, certain key findings were contained in a report of the Committee which related directly to the organization of the Office of Public Affairs and this section. Some of these will be quoted here as well as some of the final, or summarizing, testimony from the actual hearings.

Under the subject heading, Control of Information Policies and Practices, the report states:

At the outset of the hearings, Mr. Ross quoted from Defense Department memoranda and directives to show that his office had been assigned "responsibility for public information activities of the Department of Defense" and that the Defense Department Office of Public Information, under Mr. Ross' direction, had been named "the sole agency for the National Military Establishment at the seat of Government for dissemination of information to media of public information."*** Asked if he felt the need for additional authority, Mr. Ross replied:

24 Ibid., p. 658. 25 Ibid., p. 661.
I feel we do have the authority to get the job done (hearing transcript, July 9, 1956).

Under questioning the following day, however, Mr. Ross and his aides stated that:

Other agencies in the department may withhold information without his office's ever hearing of such withholding.

In at least one case, the Navy Department twice refused to answer requests by Ross' office that a proposed magazine article considered objectionable by the Navy be passed along to Mr. Ross' office for review of the objectionable ruling.

Mr. Ross' office did not prepare Secretary Wilson's memorandum of March 29, 1955, suggesting a sweeping reorganization of Defense Department information activities nor has Mr. Ross received any written reports of what has been done to implement that memorandum. Mr. Ross has been verbally informed of recommendations made under the memorandum by the three branches of the Armed Forces. These recommendations were made directly to the Secretary, but only verbally.

Mr. Ross was "not generally familiar" with the public information background, if any, of the chiefs of public information in the three services.25

During the hearings Congressman John E. Moss, of California, in the discussion of the Navy's refusal to answer requests, said:

I think if we are going to have the Navy in the position of being able to censor history, we will have to have more effective controls than are evident here, or we are going to have quite a rich

field of information permanently withheld from the American people. 27

After ninety pages of examination and cross-examination of Mr. Ross by Committee members—covering every area mentioned in this study—Congressman Dante B. Fascell, of Florida, with some exasperation, attempted to pinpoint the matter of centralized control:

Then what this boils down to, Mr. Ross, is that unless a matter is specifically brought to the attention of your office, either by the service or by somebody outside, it just never gets there?

Mr. Ross: I think you will have to explain the question further, Mr. Fascell. I don't see its relation to this memorandum.

Mr. Fascell: Well, we are talking about reorganizing the plan of public information activity.

Mr. Ross: Yes, sir.

Mr. Fascell: In which there is a chain of command, or a channel. From all the testimony I have heard, the channel never gets any further than the top of the services. If they want to submit it to you, they do. If they don't they don't. If they want to release something, they release it. If they don't, they don't.

The appointment of a civilian as chief will be made, you hope, or the Secretary hopes, some time in the future. But, as a matter of fact, the services do not see it that way, so in all probability they won't appoint civilian chiefs.

Now, I am just wondering how you are going to improve the effectiveness of the program, this memorandum suggests, if that is actually the situation?

Mr. Ross: All the information prepared for release, which is released by the Department of Defense, is released through our office and by our office.

Mr. Fascell: I understand that, but suppose it isn't released by the Department of Defense, that is what I am getting at.

Mr. Ross: Then it doesn't get released.

Mr. Mitchell: In other words, the Departments of the Navy, Army, and Air Force do not release anything on their own?

Mr. Ross: It is released through the Office of Public Information in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Mr. Fascell: But the point of this thing, Mr. Ross, is that if it never gets past the service to start with you don't see it, so how can you approve it for release?

Mr. Ross: Well, that is accurate, sir.

Mr. Fascell: Thank you.

Now, we understand each other.

Mr. Ross: On that particular point; yes, sir.\(^{28}\)

Still on the subject of control, and authority to override service authority if necessary, Mr. Fascell then concluded:

Then that leaves one big loophole, does it not, and that is if any inquiry for information is made to a service, and that information is refused, it never comes to your attention unless the would-be recipient brings the matter to your office?

\(^{28}\) Ibid., p. 1006.
Mr. Ross: That would be accurate, yes.

Mr. Fascell: And am I correct, now, in understanding that you have the authority to override prior disapproval? An inquiry is made to a service for information, or for release of information. The service officer refuses it. The would-be recipient then comes to your office, and my question was, do you have the authority to override the disapproval?

Mr. Ross: I do not know that I have the authority to override the service.

Mr. Fascell: Can you order service to release the information?

Mr. Ross: I do not believe so, sir.29

At the end of this exchange Mr. Moss verbally threw up his hands, stating:

Well, I wanted to get into some cases but at the moment I find I am completely confused. Because we have explained away, in my judgement, all of your authority. We first spread it on the record, and we have now explained it away.

There must be some definite authority delegated to you in your capacity as Head of the Office of Legislative and Public Affairs, and that must be a final authority and a final responsibility—final, except as the Secretary himself might act to override you.

I think at this point the record would bear me out that we have created a picture of complete confusion.30

The Committee Report summed up this testimony as follows:

Mr. Ross' office is not the sole authority for determining whether or not information will be withheld; and, in fact, Mr. Ross does not believe he has the authority to override a refusal to release information by any of the three services. He stated that the

29 Ibid., p. 1015. 30 Ibid., p. 1016.
Secretary of Defense could overrule such a decision, but admitted he had no knowledge of such a case ever having arisen.

There is no directive requiring the Secretaries of the three services to "collaborate" with Ross' office (hearing transcript, July 10, 1956).  

Just before adjourning the Ross portion of the Hearings, classification was discussed—also to the apparent dissatisfaction of the members. The mood of the Committee and the congressional opinion of the policies and practices of the Office of Public Affairs were "classically" described toward the end of the day by Mr. Fascell in a question to Mr. Ross:

Don't you feel that this whole matter of information, policy, classification, and whatnot has become reductio ad absurdum, ad infinitum, and ad nauseum?  

Mr. Ross, with some petulance, replied, "I won't answer that sir."

Section one of this chapter indicated that Members of Congress were not too familiar generally with military public relations and that this would seem to be detrimental to the success of the program.

The research done here however, under the heading of Organization, leaves the impression that, at least on this subject, familiarity should have been carefully avoided, for instead of breeding confidence and understanding, it only bred contempt.

32 Ibid., p. 1036.
III. ECONOMY OF OPERATION

Because the study source material is drawn almost exclusively from appropriation hearings each transcript has at its base the Congressman's historical duty to protect the taxpayer's dollar. This duty is perceived in different ways by different Congressmen—which is what makes the life of the Executive Branch resonant.

A limitation on funds for public information activities in the Department of Defense first appeared in the Appropriations Act for fiscal year 1951, Public Law 179, 82nd Congress, First Session. The law provided, in part, "...that expenditures of appropriations contained in this act for public information activities of the Department of Defense shall not exceed $10,950,000 including pay and allowances of military personnel...."

In the halcyon days of 1952, the military services and the still new Office of Public Information spent $10,245,345 for military public relations activities.33

Beginning in 1953, a much stricter limitation was imposed by Congress on the amount of money which could be expended by the military establishment for public information activities. That year $5,554,851 was spent.

33 Approximately two hundredths of one percent of the thirty-nine billion dollars spent on national defense that year.
In subsequent years the limit was reduced to four and one half million, then three and one half, and finally in 1957 to $3,270,000.

The reasoning behind the original limitation concept is reflected in a House Report on the appropriations bill submitted for fiscal 1954. The wording indicates that the Report is a consensus of opinion of the nine Congressmen involved, and consequently is regarded as doubly valuable to this study.

The excerpt begins with an explanation of the House cut recommended for the Office of Public Information at the seat of government. It is the justification which follows that imparts congressional attitude toward the Office:

The bill included for this item the amount of $400,000, a reduction of $100,000 under the revised estimates, and $150,000 under the appropriation for the fiscal year 1953. The committee feels that all public information activities within the Department of Defense should be more closely correlated, and it knows of no better method than a reduction in appropriations. (italics not in the original)

The committee feels confident that if this office divests itself of some of the fringe activities which really do not contribute to the serving of the public or the Congress and retains only those activities which actually contribute to a better understanding of the Department and its responsibilities, it will find that the amount recommended in the accompanying bill will be adequate. 34

The following month, July of 1953, Mr. Berding, in the hearing before the Senate, addressed Senator Ferguson:

Senator, we are here to reclaim the $100,000 cut by the House. We feel that restoration of this sum is necessary. We came to Congress with what we thought was a rock-bottom budget. We met the new desire for rigid economy by cutting one third off our budget, and came up with $500,000; $100,000 has been cut from that budget, and it is going to mean a serious cut in our facilities.

Senator Ferguson: Does this cover just the public relations in the Secretary's Office?

Mr. Berding: For the Department of Defense at the seat of government.

Senator Ferguson: Would this cover a field operation?

Mr. Berding: No; it does not. We have no field operations under my office. They would be covered under the $5 million overall limitation.

Senator Ferguson: I was wondering if we gave you the right to transfer $100,000 out of that if you could not save it out of there, and use it in yours.

Mr. Berding: That is the overall expenditure limitation of $5 million for the Department of Defense. I do not want to cut into the services...

Senator Ferguson: I personally feel that you got too much money out in the field. I think that there is a lot of so-called public relations in the field that you could cut down on. 35

In this last statement, the Senator from Michigan expressed an additional congressional opinion which led to the one million dollar reduction the following year.

Perhaps there are always political overtones in the hearings, however, direct mention is infrequent. In a prior

exchange the same year, Senator Ferguson asked: "How much was the Eisenhower budget below the Truman budget?" Mr. Berding replied:

It is $250,000 below the Truman budget. In order to restore some...round the clock service, we put it in the Truman budget for $750,000. Then realizing that there is a great desire for economy, we cut that by one-third and brought it down to $500,000 from $750,000.36

Senator Carl Hayden, of Arizona, following the same discussion, wanted some clarification of how a limitation is administered:

Is this $5 million that the chairman (Ferguson) mentioned a limitation or appropriation?

Mr. Berding: It is a limitation.

Senator Hayden: You cannot take money out of limitations.

Mr. Garlock: (Deputy Controller for Budget, Office of Secretary of Defense) Senator, the funds for public information activities exist in military personnel appropriations in the three military departments under maintenance and operation. The limitation you are speaking of is strictly a limitation on the use of money for this purpose.37

On March 31, 1954, Charles E. Wilson, Secretary of Defense made what might be termed an historic fiscal statement for a member of the Executive Branch--at the same time accelerating the down-hill trend of military public relations operational scope.

Speaking to a pleasantly surprised budget cutting House Committee, Mr. Wilson began:

I would like to talk to the committee about the manner in which we propose to revise and improve the public information part of our activities in the Department of Defense, particularly here in Washington.

...I think that it is essential that we have an organization here in Washington for this purpose, properly organized and staffed by competent people. We intend to make news more readily available to the Congress and the people, eliminate duplication and inefficiency, (italics not in the original) and do this job at less cost to the taxpayer.

It is my conviction, based upon the experience of the past year, that we can carry out this program with substantially less people and at less cost to the government than is now the case. We have secured the approval of the Director of the Bureau of the Budget and we now propose that your committee reduce the request of the Office of the Secretary of Defense budget for the Office of Public Information from our initial request of $1 million to $500,000. Under the general provisions as now written into section 723, we would recommend that the restriction on public information funds of $4 1/2 million per year be amended to provide for a maximum allowance under this restriction of $3 1/2 million per year.

The $3 1/2 million limitation will provide for the $500,000 recommended for the Office of Public Information and for $1 million each to the military departments.38

Needless to say, the House Committee approved the recommendation, with considerable enthusiasm. For example, Congressman Scrivner stated:

While it is not a big amount as compared to the entire budget, I do want to commend the Secretary of Defense for the precedent he has established here in coming in

and asking us to provide less rather than more money for some activity. It is a precedent which I hope will be followed repetitiously not by the Secretary only but also by other members of the Defense Department.39

And Congressman Miller added:

Mr. Secretary, I, like Mr. Scrivner, am delighted that we are apparently planning to operate on less money in this field, but I am particularly gratified that it is being emphasized.

Your presence here before this committee on this particular item indicated the importance with which this matter is regarded in the department, and I have always thought that it was one place where there was a great deal that could and should be done. (italics not in the original) My only comment is that I am delighted with the presentation of the program.40

As a military public relations officer in the field remarked that year (1954), "now we are everybody's whipping boy."

When Mr. Loftis soon after presented a prepared statement to the Senate Committee which referred to the one million dollar reduction some confusion was understandable. Senator Hayden, presumably a little perplexed, asked:

Is this reduction of $1 million in public-information activities below the amount authorized by the House?

Mr. Loftis: No sir; it is a reduction of a million dollars below the amount made available by Congress this year. The House has approved the full amount of the request which Secretary Wilson made, $3,500,000.

39House Hearings, 1955, op. cit., p. 557
40Ibid.
Senator Hayden: What I was trying to get at was whether we are going to be able to reduce the total of this bill by a million dollars or not.

Mr. Loftis: No sir; that reduction has already been proposed and was accepted by the House.41

This short exchange constituted approximately one-quarter of the Senate Hearing that year. With the promise from Secretary Wilson of better management in the coming year, for less money, Congress found little to discuss.

The next February, however, 1955, Mr. Wigglesworth, on the subject of the limitation, indicated that the past year's operations had not exactly met with his approval.

Some comments:

What I am interested in is having the so-called public information and public relations work tied down to what I am sure the Congress had in mind in setting this organization up and in specifying the limitations that we have discussed here in dollars and cents.42

I think the reason for the limitation in the first place was the feeling that there had been great abuse in the field of public information; ... It was the desire to pull things down to manageable proportions that led to this limitation.43

In questioning Mr. C. H. Schooley, Director, Office of Public Information, about whether the limitation was functioning as a system of control -- if indeed the operation...
was more manageable. "How much control, if any, do you have over the $3 million setups in the service." No direct answer was forthcoming.

**Mr. Wigglesworth:** The question I am asking is what control, if any, your office has over the setups in the Army, Navy, or Air Force.

**Mr. Schooley:** ... (they) have very competent general officers assigned to these functions.

**Mr. Wigglesworth:** I am asking how much control your office has over it.

**Mr. Schooley:** As members of the Public Information Coordinating Council, we meet and discuss problems and determine policies to the best of our collective abilities.

**Mr. Wigglesworth:** I understand that. I am trying to get at your functions. Do you or do you not have anything to say about the setup in the Army... or is that something for the Army to decide on its own.

**Mr. Swan:** The answer is that they do it themselves, within overall policy guidance from the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

**Mr. Wigglesworth:** They do it?

**Mr. Swan:** We have policy control only.

**Mr. Wigglesworth:** I know that, but I want to know what the policy includes. Does it extend to organization? Does it extend to what divisions they may have in their setups, or how many people they may have in each of the divisions?

This tooth-pulling continued for some time before Mr. Wigglesworth got his answer. His final question:

But you have no authority to compel in any instance? It is a matter of recommendation which they (the services) may or may not agree to?

**Mr. Swan:** I would say it is more a matter of
recommendation than to compel; yes sir.44

As the reader might have assumed by now, the 1956 House Hearings were, lively, long (thirty-six pages), and productive, yielding more in congressional opinion than most other individual sources with the possible exception of the special Moss Committee Hearings.

While Mr. Wigglesworth, judging from his line of questioning, found that the limitation was not accomplishing what he, at least, had in mind, i.e., increased control over activities, Congressman Ford was more concerned over the practicality and economy of the limitation itself. He asked of Mr. Swan:

Do you have any idea, Mr. Swan, how much this reporting system costs for each of the three respective services to make sure that they live within this $1 million limitation?

Mr. Swan: It has been estimated that if all charges for personnel assigned to public information activities were reported they would amount to approximately $7.2 million.

Mr. Ford: That leads me to this conclusion then: that you are not living within the limitation. I must say at this point that I do not think that the limitation is doing the job that the Congress intended. So far as I am personally concerned I do not think the limitation should exist, because it is not practical.

The net effect of the limitation is that there is not a full compliance with the intent of Congress.

It would seem to me that we are not accomplishing what we want. I think personally that it is desirable to

44 Ibid., pp. 649-650.
have a good public relations program in the three services and the Department of Defense. What we are doing is imposing false limitations, which are being avoided at a costly expense of both manpower and dollars.

It is my opinion that any circumvention, if there is such, is purely unavoidable. It is completely impractical to take into account all of the people on all of the posts, camps, and stations who do some part of their work in public information.

I would like the best estimate from each of the services as to the cost of the reporting systems.

The information requested by Mr. Ford was submitted for the record. The important first few lines read:

The costs of administering the limitation on public information and public relations activities contained in the Department of Defense Appropriation Act are estimated at approximately $323,000 for the fiscal year 1954.

While the cost of administering the limitation would appear prohibitive, and thus call for some reevaluation of the entire procedure, none of the Members, other than Mr. Ford, evidenced any further interest in the costs involved.

The House Hearings on public information and public relations were finished in February, but two months later Senator Chevez in the Senate Hearings had some new questions on the same subject for Mr. Ross.

45 This is as favorable a statement as was found on the general subject of public relations made by a Member of Congress.
46 Ibid., pp. 651-655.
Can you give us an explanation of why activities similar to those charged to public information activities at the Department of Defense level are not charged as public information activities in the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

Mr. Ross: I cannot answer that; I am sorry. I do not have the answer to that.

Major General Robert S. Moore, Assistant to the Comptroller, then offered:

...the question arises in every single office from time to time as to what constitutes a proper charge against this limitation, and this is quite controversial at times.

The extent to which there is failure to comply with this congressional directive, in my opinion, is a question of interpretation of definitions.

Mr. Ross: ...We also have established procedures for administering the limitation including instructions which would make it incumbent on the services to charge against their limitation most of the activities to which you refer.

Senator Chevez: But if they do not do it, if some officer puts a different interpretation on the directive, or the work that he is doing, the limitation placed by Congress would have no effect whatsoever; is that correct?

Mr. Ross: Yes, if he did not follow it.

Senator Chevez: You are trying to cure that?

Mr. Ross: Yes.

Senator Chevez: If we get enough information before this bill is reported, we might be able to consider it.47

Although this exchange is actually a criticism of the administration of the Office of Public Information—which will be dealt with in another section—it is inserted here to point up another "limitation" issue, or weakness, which is a topic of opinion.

The search for economy is next most evident in the questions on personnel requirements and utilization. In 1953 Mr. Wigglesworth, during the House Hearings, asked about number, whether civilian or military, why an increase of seventeen people, and why they cost so much.

Congressman F. Edward Hebert, of Louisiana, speaking of the industry exhibited by public information personnel in the Pentagon, was more direct:

I would slash ten percent civilian personnel right across that board, and you will find out that they can get along with that reduction if they have to. 48

In the Senate that year Mr. Berding painfully recapped the subject of personnel reduction to the Committee Members after a comment about overlapping in his office:

We really have made an effort to cut down in the last 2 years. Personnelwise we started that Central Office of Public Information 4 years ago with 285 people. That was cut down in successive years to 263 on June 30, 1951, to 225 on June 30, 1952, and on June 30, 1953, it was down to 146. If this new cut goes into effect, we will be down to 115 or 120 from the original 285. 49

The trend continued; in 1954 the personnel were reduced to approximately 100. In 1955, Senator Ellender asked: "How much money have you saved?...Could you not use a pruning knife...Can you not do it?" 

Later in the year, in June of 1955, Senator Chevez, listening to a request for restoration of $100,000 cut in the appropriation, asked:

How many personnel do you have in this particular program?

Mr. Ross: We have 65 civilians and 45 military.

Senator Chevez: What is the main function of the service? What do you do? (Mentioned in Section I.)

Mr. Ross: In the Office of Public Information there are grouped several functions in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Senator Chevez: If you have that many personnel, there must be.

This lack of sympathy may have stemmed somewhat from another conversation, earlier, with Mr. J. A. Wylie, Budget Director, in which the Senator discovered that the original money requested for the Office ($500,000) did not actually cover all the expenses.

It was revealed to him, through questioning, that the salaries of military personnel in the Office were not included, and that the estimated cost was an additional

---

51 Senate Hearings, 1956, op. cit., p. 1369.
$300,000, charged to the military departments. The exchange ended with a rather terse, "Why did you not say that in your statement?"52

In the hearings for the 1958 appropriations Representative John J. Riley, of South Carolina, displayed interest in the same area, saying to Mr. Loftis:

Coming back to your personnel, Mr. Loftis, I wonder if we could have in the record the cost of the 48 military people attached to this office. I would like to take a combination of the two (civilian and military) to see what the shop is costing.53

The figures were interesting for more reasons than one, for they revealed that the single public information office at the seat of government cost more to operate than all of the offices of any one of the military departments. The actual expenditures at the end of fiscal 1957 were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dept. of Def.</th>
<th>$886,009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>740,491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy</td>
<td>789,187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Force</td>
<td>728,626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$3,144,313</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the $886,009, above, $336,927 was for military salaries, $454,682 for civilian salaries, and $94,400 for all other costs.54

Congressman George W. Andrews, of South Carolina,

52 Ibid., p. 425.
54 Department of Defense Analysis of Expenses for Public Information Activities Fiscal Years 1957, 1958 and 1959; dated March 21, 1958, p. 2
speaking to Mr. Allen, and Mr. Loftis, attempted to account for the difference between the actual expenditure distribution above and the stated limitation distribution mentioned below in the following exchange:

Mr. Andrews: Section 620 places a limitation of $3,270,000 on the amount that can be spent for public affairs, public information offices, throughout the services; is that right?

Mr. Allen: Yes, sir.

Mr. Andrews: What was the total amount you allocated to the three services?

Mr. Loftis: It was $940,000 to each of the three services, which together with the $450,000 appropriated for the Office of Public Affairs, makes the limitation of $3,270,000.

Mr. Andrews: Do you know anything about any witness testifying before the Moss subcommittee of the Congress that you did not allocate $600,000 of the remaining $2,820,000?

Mr. Loftis: I am not sure I quite understand that. You mean a witness testified we did not allocate $600,000.

Mr. Andrews: I am informed that two witnesses testified that $80,000 was not allocated to each of the services, which would make a total of $240,000, and then that each service refunded or kicked back $120,000. It is the money which Mr. Andrews refers to as a "kick-back" which radically alters the picture each year, i.e., money charged to the military departments but used by the Office of Public Affairs—in 1957, $336,927. This accounting system, despite the fact that it seems to annoy  

some Congressmen, is still in effect and when projected through fiscal 1958 and 1959 looks like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Authorized Limitation</th>
<th>Actual Distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distribution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept. of Def.</td>
<td>$550,000</td>
<td>$865,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>816,667</td>
<td>711,667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy</td>
<td>816,667</td>
<td>711,667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Force</td>
<td>$3,000,000</td>
<td>$3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept. of Def.</td>
<td>$620,000</td>
<td>$912,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>850,000</td>
<td>752,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy</td>
<td>850,000</td>
<td>752,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Force</td>
<td>$3,170,000</td>
<td>$3,170,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the figures show, the trend is toward increasing the amount of money for the Office of Public Affairs while the amount allowed to each service remains about the same.

In addition to the money increase, the Secretary's Office was re-organized in 1957 to increase the scope of the Office of Public Affairs by separating it from Legislative Affairs. Congressman Scrivner had some questions on the effect of the re-organization on personnel:

What did it provide as to personnel?

Mr. Allen: It says nothing about personnel.... Perhaps I should correct my previous statement. It did not involve additional personnel. It (the re-organization plan) states that except for legislative affairs, all other functions, personnel and

---

56 Department of Defense Analysis, op. cit., pp. 3-4.
records, of the former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative and Public Affairs will be assigned to the Office of Public Affairs.

Mr. Scrivner: Then why is there not a reduction in your personnel and your requests, or is this going to call for more personnel by the time it is divided up?

Mr. Loftis: This order was not necessarily designed to reduce personnel so much as to bring greater emphasis to the public affairs functions....

Mr. Scrivner: There are some of us who think that there has been too much emphasis placed on this and that there is a waste of talent and money in this particular activity. I have felt that way for some time. There are other members of the committee who feel the same way.57

While not all so condemnatory, there were many other congressional comments on a variety of subjects related to the economy of operation, e.g., unification of publications, amounts spent for security review, cost of letterheads, duplication, overlapping, waste of materials.

The common desire of all the Congressmen, no matter what the subject, was to save money wherever possible—and wherever, in their opinion, the taxpayer might not think the money was being spent wisely.

This remark of Congressman Sheppard is typical of the Representative's desire to constantly assume the role of his constituent in evaluating a program:

The average person, if he could take the releases per year volumewise would, in my opinion, look at the

appropriation of $3,500,000 (for 1955) and say, "What goes on in that sort of expenditure?" 58

To sum up, there seems to be ever present a dichotomy of opinion among Congressmen in the matter of spending, both parts of which spike the guns of military public relations; (1) they generally attempt to keep all military expenditures as low as possible, and (2) their primary way of manifesting their disapproval of any activity is through fund limitation or denial.

Perhaps one of the reasons for the poor opinion of public relations by Congress is poor public relations with Congress, especially on money saving ideas. As expressed by Senator R. Young, of North Dakota:

...I have visited many of the fighting outposts throughout the world, Korea and elsewhere, and I have found that our military men are the most cooperative and as nice to talk to as any people you can possibly find. But once they get over in the Pentagon, there is a tendency on the part of some of the lower echelon of all the military services to be pretty arrogant and develop a dislike for any suggestion that a Member of Congress might give to them on how they might economize. I hope that something can be done about that....

Senator Chavez during the same hearing, followed with:

Along those lines...there are two things that I have heard complained about. As I said, the American people will not complain about money that is used for the Army, but I have heard lots of complaints about the public relations setup and...information approach, that not millions, but quite a little money could be saved.... 59

59 Senate Hearings, 1956, op. cit., p. 22
From all appearances, "quite a little money" will be saved in military public relations, at least until the operation of the Office of Public Affairs earns sufficient public and Congressional esteem to warrant expansion.

IV. RELEASE OF INFORMATION

One of the most lucrative sources of opinion is the general subject of release of information. As mentioned in Chapter I, there is a paradox, in that no two people agree, yet many are "experts"—on how much information should be released, to whom, when, what kind, in what manner, under what circumstances, how often and in what context.

With the number of variables involved it is understandable that some issue and controversy would be evident. However, the stridency of the congressional voice on this subject implies more than mere personal disagreement or minor difference of individual opinion. There is an aggressive, negative consensus which permeates each discussion of the subject.

Of the more than ninety comments—and once again the overlapping of discussion areas is acknowledged—most were accusations of carelessness, or intentional deviation, e.g., withholding, misinforming, attempting to propagandize, etc. Some were milder.
For example, in discussing the Voice of America Mr. Berding stated in the 1954 Hearings that a staff member frequently came to the Pentagon to "pick up material." Congressman Ostertag then remarked:

Well, in a sense you are a propaganda agency?

Mr. Berding: Well, I would very much like to get away from the word "propaganda."

Mr. Ostertag: If the meaning of the word propaganda is properly defined, I would say that in a sense you are giving out information which you like to give out, and only that which you like to give out, in the interest of our country. 60

While this was not a caustic remark, or apparently even meant to be critical, it reveals the attitude of Mr. Ostertag toward the information released at the seat of government.

That same year in the Senate Mr. Berding was asked by Senator Ferguson what categories the press releases covered. He replied that:

The press releases run quite a gamut but they are mostly of an operational nature. That is, they cover promotions, bids and the like. The press releases are closely tied in with some activity of the Department, something that is useful for the public to know.

Senator Ferguson: Is it propaganda?

Mr. Berding: It is not, sir, in my opinion.

Senator Ferguson: Is it to try to sell legislation?

Mr. Berding: No; it definitely is not....

Senator Ferguson: You realize there is a statute prohibiting that?

Mr. Berding: That is right.

Senator Ferguson: Do you think all officers are familiar with that?61

Another exchange featured Congressman Hebert in which he complained about a Public Information Office attempt "to get a resolution adopted by (an) organization commending and complimenting General Marshall for being a great Secretary of Defense." Mr. Hebert contended that "it was not within the province (of the department head) to promote an accolade for his superior." He concluded with:

The Public Information Office should be an office to give information....I think the line should be drawn between propaganda and a real service.

Congressman Moss echoed these same sentiments more than once during the Moss Committee Hearings. On July 12, 1956, in a reply to Lt. General Floyd L. Parks, USA, one time Chief of Army Information, he stated:

I agree all problems this committee deals with could be handled administratively, but we seem to be making progress backward at the moment. Congress may have placed a limitation on information activities, but that was based on criticism that the information being put out was self-serving propaganda after an endless series of news releases had gone out which were more in the line of managed public relations than straight information. That undoubtedly led to curtailment of budgets for public information officers. In fact, I think all of the departments of government became sensitive to

any charge that they had a public relations man aboard. 62
(Italics not in the original.)

Additional ammunition was provided congressional guns
by the now rather famous "Constructive Contribution Clause"
contained in a directive of Secretary Wilson. The order
dealt with the clearance of Department of Defense information
and stated in part that

....review and clearance shall be related not only to
a determination of whether release of the material
would involve any technical or substantive violation
of security but also to a determination of whether
release or publication of the material would constitute
a constructive contribution to the primary mission of
the Department of Defense. 63

While the American press re-lit the "freedom of
information" torch in editorial columns, articles, and his-
torical features, Members of Congress threw their tapers
away and warmed themselves at the fire.

In less than a month Senator Chevez asked:

What Mr. Ross, is the fact about the report that Secretary
Wilson will not let you give out a lot of this information? 64

Two months later, Mr. Ross had occasion to answer a
question in part as follows:

....we respond to many inquiries from the press, from
Members of Congress and the general public, for informa-
tion concerning the activities of the Department of
Defense.

62 House Hearings, Moss Committee, July 9, 10, and 12,
1956, op. cit., p. 1087.

63 Department of Defense Directive Number 5230.9,
dated March 29, 1955. Subject: Clearance of Department of
Defense Information.

64 Senate Hearings, 1956, op. cit., p. 424.
Senator Chevez: What about that edict in which the Secretary said you were not to give out any information?

Mr. Ross: Mr. Chairman, the Secretary has said that we should see that the public is adequately and properly informed and we should certainly make every effort to guard the security of our nation.

Senator Chevez: That is right. There are no objections to that. I think it is a laudable effort in that respect. I hear complaints that in this public information program you are just saying how good you are.

Mr. Ross: I don't believe Mr. Chairman, that too much of our time is devoted to promoting the Department of Defense.

Senator Chevez: You would be surprised within the Department how many people have complained to me that most of the time you are saying how good the Department is. I hope it is good.65

Approximately fourteen pages of testimony and questioning were devoted to the "Constructive Contribution" in two days of the Moss Committee Hearings. The debate began with a general discussion of directives, then Mr. Moss asked:

Well,...do you make certain that the release of material or publication of the material would constitute a constructive contribution to the primary mission of the Department of Defense?

Mr. Snyder: Yes, sir.

Mr. Moss: You do?

Mr. Snyder: Yes, sir.

Mr. Moss: Can you define for me what a constructive contribution to the primary mission of the Department of Defense is?

65 Ibid., p. 1370
...Constructive contribution is part of your directive here. I am amazed that it was ever issued, and I am amazed that it continues to stand. It is in my judgment an insult to intelligent people to say that you have to have a constructive contribution to any operation of government before you can talk about it. I am interested in how it applies.

Mr. Robert Dechert, General Counsel, Department of Defense, then joined the conversation by raising the legal question of interpretation, saying further:

It seems to me that there are vast areas where you and I would agree that was an appropriate thing. Let's take this question; Suppose someone in the Department of Defense making a speech wanted seriously to criticize another department of government. Or suppose he wanted seriously to criticize a Congressman for some personal activity of his. It would be a stupid thing, just as it would be in any other activity, to allow----

Mr. Moss: You are taking me far afield.

Mr. Fascell: I surely wouldn't agree with that.

Mr. Dechert: Those are the fields where this statement requiring a constructive contribution is appropriate.

Suppose he wants to criticize an ally of ours and he is in a prominent position----

Mr. Moss: Mr. Dechert, I am not going to swallow that one. It is in the directive of policy as an item of criteria.

Mr. Dechert: I challenge that it has any usefulness at all. I think you could accomplish everything you are mentioning without putting in a policy directive the mandate that it shall make a constructive contribution. Its mere presence makes me extremely suspicious. It seems to me what you are saying is "Unless it makes us look good boys, don't you say it, and don't you clear it, Mr. Snyder, because we've got to look good to these people and this Congress. We can't afford to look bad in the public eye at any time."
That is the way I interpret it.

I agree with you that we could apply constructive contribution and come out with some very reasonable cases where it should be used. But as a matter of fixed criteria as it is here, I say that it is an improper inclusion in this instance.

Mr. Dechert: ...I know of no examples where it has been misused. If there are examples of misuse, then as we indicated before, I think we ought to quickly take into consideration the question of whether it ought to be changed.

Mr. Moss: This committee is investigating information policies. We do have many examples which have led us to ask the questions we are asking....

This committee isn't operating and spending the money appropriated by this Congress just to go out on a jolly hunt. We have very specific complaints.

If we feel in the citing of complaints we will get better response, we will do it, but it is not the burden of this committee at any time to illustrate any of its questions. We may or may not cite the examples. But your attitude, your interpretation, your application, Mr. Snyder, of this rule, is a thing of great moment not only to this committee but to the entire country....

I think it is an unreasonable requirement. But I would like to have my fears dispelled. They haven't been.66

The tenacity with which the Department of Defense held its position on the "Constructive Contribution"—under the hottest fire—is perhaps best demonstrated by the simple fact that the directive containing the clause was issued on March

29, 1955, and the exchange above took place on April 11, 1957.

It is conceivable that Mr. Moss' fears may never have been dispelled.

Another type of Congressional complaint was voiced by Congressman Jamie L. Whitten, of Mississippi, who volunteered

...a possible explanation of why sometimes facts are given to the press and to the public at a time when the Congress is called upon to keep them secret.

...that is, that this budgeted program quite naturally being one that might create an issue between the Executive and the Congress as to whether the Congress approved the reductions and changes in this budget, (for 1956) such information could possibly have been given out in order to enlist the public to support it and thereby affect the action of the Congress....

I know from some years of experience on this committee that on various occasions the military services have seen that the public got this information in an effort to get public support for their side when in the Congress there were many others who differed with them, so if it gets to a question of what I know, I personally know that.

A month later, on February 11, 1955, Mr. Whitten speaking to Secretary of the Navy, Charles Thomas, literally continued the conversation with:

In other words, the things released to the press and the things put in this record by the military, as I have heard them, are those things which would spur the American public sentiment up to appropriating $30 billion for the military. The other things which do not contribute in that direction are not mentioned.

That is true in the press. It is true—and I speak for myself only—in the presentations of you witnesses. It leads you to wonder if the prime decision has not been made and if the information given here is not all along that line. I use this only figuratively: Along the line of the Navy formerly seeing a submarine off the coast of California every time the appropriation bill was up. I use that figuratively.

On one other facet of information release practice, Mr. Whitten, in 1958, said to Deputy Secretary of Defense Reuben E. Robertson:

Mr. Secretary, let me interrupt you there. You are making a fine statement. The only thing is that I was not talking about why you do not give out...information as to the facts. You pointed out that you do not always know them and the estimates change. I was not even complaining because you did not give out your best judgement. I was saying since you cannot, is it not time we stopped giving out misleading information, which is a different thing.

A variation of this theme was offered by Senator O'Mahoney five years before. In that instance the Committee was not asked to keep the facts secret, nor was the information misleading; Instead there was cross-information issued (i.e., information contrary to the statement released by the committee) which was not made available to the committee.

The subject was the well publicized "ammunitions shortage in Korea." Senator O'Mahoney addressed General


J. Lawton Collins, Army Chief of Staff—who incidentally was at one time Army Chief of Information:

Now may I ask you another question arising from publicity that appeared yesterday. In the course of your prepared statement which with your authority was released, you spoke about the drain of ammunition. You said in this statement:

He then read the entire statement, which in part said: "Some of the types of ammunition most important to our front-line soldiers have been rationed in Korea...."

The Senator continued:

The release of this statement from this committee which was published, of course, was approved by you.

In the afternoon papers there was another story that information had been cabled back to Washington to the Pentagon from Tokyo—or radioed back, I do not know which—and a statement was made in Washington to the effect that the troops in Korea have not had to be rationed. I think it would be well if we were to have a complete clarification of that matter. (Italics not in the original.)

The release or statement which was given out by the Pentagon after your testimony here was not made available to our committee. 70

Sometimes the releases or statements are not made available to anybody, according to some of the Members of Congress. Congressman Clare E. Hoffman, of Michigan, questioned Charles Coolidge, Chairman of the Committee on Classified Information on this subject in a Hearing before the Moss Committee, March 11, 1957, as follows:

Mr. Hoffman: Did you read the hearings before this committee when we had the first panel of newspapermen?

Mr. Coolidge: Yes, I am not sure I read all of it, but I read part of it, certainly.

Mr. Hoffman: You read enough to get the idea the Department was accused of just sitting on material they wanted.

Mr. Coolidge: That is correct.

Mr. Hoffman: There was no question about that was there?

Mr. Coolidge: No, and I got the same impression from talking to some of the individual reporters.

Mr. Hoffman: Yes. Anyone who attempts to defend the departments on almost any phase of that doesn't get any place, does he, or don't you know about that?

Mr. Coolidge: I don't know.

Mr. Hoffman: Well, I can testify about that. 71

The following month, April of 1957, Mr. Moss and Mr. Snyder discussed the release of news concerning nominations for top military jobs being withheld, in one case awaiting approval from allies, etc. Mr. Moss commented:

On the matter of appointment, I regard that as clearly a matter of Executive privilege. But I don't regard as a matter of Executive privilege the determination of how much information the public is going to receive or the Congress is going to receive. 72


72 House Hearings, Moss Committee, April 10, 11, and 12, 1957, op. cit., p. 2241.
Senator Ferguson, speaking to Mr. Berding in 1953, brought up the problem of simultaneously releasing material to all media. The "exclusive" or "leak" has been a major complaint area over the years. Said the Senator:

"...there are certain commentators—that is, certain people—who apparently are able to get information: they get it in advance of its regular release. They get it where there are secret documents involved and so on. Do you think that is proper?"73

This topic is in turn related to the control of release material, which has already been covered. However, Congressman Miller observed that

Nobody likes censorship either, but with matters as critical as Defense Department business is bound to be, I still do not quite get how your office functions with respect to the three other departments in the release of news. I will give you an example. You probably read the articles which have been in papers recently about supposed preference given certain magazines with respect to news of the round-the-world flight of the B-52. It was charged that some news magazine people got pictures that were not given to others.

Does your particular office have anything to do with that?74

Mr. Allen: It did not, in that particular instance.

Later in the same Hearing, Mr. Miller inquired about another function, which had been mentioned by other Congressmen in other years:

---

74 Senate Hearings, 1958, Part II, op. cit., p. 1847.
Do you have any function of trying to keep the record straight? In other words, if some unauthorized statement goes out or appears to have the color of authenticity but is erroneous and does not tell the story, do you put out releases to counteract the erroneous impression that may be given to the public?75

Congressman Ford, four years before, had made a specific complaint which also touched on retraction, verification of authenticity and objectivity. His lament:

I have before me here this press release which came from the Department of Defense, Office of Public Information, dated August 26, 1952, which is entitled: "The Navy Department's Statement on the Effects of the So-Called Davis Rider on Officer Promotions in the Navy."

As you may recall, the Davis rider was approved on the 1953 military appropriation bill. It related to the promotions within the various branches of the service. This press release says in part, and I am quoting:

However the arbitrary provisions of the rider operate to limit the total number of the commissioned officers in a grade without consideration for the Reserve officers on active duty.

...Would you not say, from that one sentence which I read there, that was pretty strong language for the Department to put out without making a thorough investigation to the facts in the case? A little investigation of the facts would have clearly demonstrated that the Department of the Navy was completely negligent in its failure to provide the Congress with accurate information.

...It would seem to me in this kind of a situation there was a lack of authenticity and objectivity. Furthermore, it is a case of the inaccurate information getting the publicity. And furthermore, in this case no attempt was made so far as I know to clear

75 Ibid., p. 1848.
the record. Even if the record had been cleared it would not have received the widespread publicity and unfavorable results which the original release had.76

On the surface, it would seem that such incidents with the three military departments and with the Defense Department Office of Information have each year intensified the desire in Congress for some foolproof system of control of releases. This query from Congressman Andrews was not new when voiced in 1957:

**Just who in the Department of Defense decides what will and what will not be released as public information?**77

Because of the complexity of the operation, the size of the organization, and the dynamic character of world events, politics, and budgets, it is doubtful that any simple, concise answer will ever be forthcoming. The answer which Mr. Allen was able to offer was not a "who," but rather what offices were contained in the normal channel. As always, bigness defied any constant personalized treatment.

Another sub-area under this section, frequently mentioned by Congressmen, was the question of exactly what type of information is released. Among those seeking clarification was Senator Chevez, who in 1955, asked of Mr. Ross:

**All right, Mr. Ross, you tell the committee the type of information that you furnished the public in 1955.**

---


77House Hearings, 1958, Part II, op. cit., p. 1823.
What information is available and what class of information is not. Who gets it.\textsuperscript{78}

Once again, the answer is not simply stated, nor was Mr. Ross' complete. The best answer found by the investigator was contained in a Moss Committee document which lists twelve kinds of information not available to the public. It also reviews the categories within which access might be limited. Assuming that all other types of information are available, it is then possible to achieve delineation, or separation of the whole into manageable parts.\textsuperscript{79}

In the House Hearings of 1958, Congressman George H. Mahon, of Texas began a discussion of what military information is available, with Secretary Quarles of the Air Force, during which, the Symington Committee Report of January 25, 1957 was examined:

Mr. Mahon: The last point, No. 23, deals with information available to the American people, regarding our relative military strength. This point ends with this statement:
The public has failed to receive from official sources complete, accurate, and timely information which it has the right to know.

Congressman Daniel J. Flood, of Pennsylvania, subsequently took the floor saying:

\textsuperscript{78}Senate Hearings, 1956, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 426

With regard to your last question, No. 23, this is a serious proposition. Look at the next to the last sentence on page 97 of question 23:

Nevertheless, the public is neither adequately nor accurately informed about our military strength as against the great and growing wealth of communism.

Still speaking to Secretary Quarles he later stated:

The chairman read you this:

The public is still to receive from official sources complete, accurate, and timely--

and I repeat "timely"--

information which it has the right to know.

Now, I want to see the public get the information, but I wonder if even this committee receives timely information on that. (Referring to changes in intelligence estimates of Russian strength.)

Now, sometime or the other about that period of time, since this budget, your intelligence found itself to be at least 50 percent in error, vis-a-vis Russian figures. Now, as far as I have been able to find out neither the Congress nor the public nor anyone else knew of that. There was no public disclosure from our intelligence, but apparently you knew as far back as last summer, or 6 or 7 months ago, that you were 50 percent wrong on the Russian heavy bomber estimate.

Yet nobody told anybody the figures that the American public thought were so, the figures that the Congress thought were so, and the figures that this subcommittee thought were so, even during our debates while we were voting on it, and you knew, or somebody knew, that we were 50 percent wrong.80

Because this is a study of an information releasing agency it is impossible to divorce entirely any of the congressional comments under other sections from this topic of release. However, the quotes employed in the last few pages are intended to pinpoint, in so far as possible, what Congress thinks of information released.

The general opinion appears to be poor, based on the Moss Committee reports, the Symington Committee Report, and comments made during congressional hearings. There are other reports, such as the one from which this excerpt is taken—and which seems to telescope and summarize the findings:

It appears that there has been too much information, misinformation, cross-information, and non-information emanating from the Department...81

The irony is that it was written in 1953.

V. SECURITY

The term "security" as used here refers to the problems of: (1) maximum disclosure vs. security of information vital to the national defense effort—the dilemma briefly dealt with previously, (pp. 8-10), (2) classification and declassification, and (3) the inconsistent, unauthorized, or withholding of, release of information of a controversial nature, i.e., information about which there is disagreement as to whether it should be classified or not.

All three are closely related to each other, and to Section IV, RELEASE OF INFORMATION. However when the basic purpose or reason for a Congressman's comment on release of information appeared to be his concern over national security—or lack of it—then the quote was relegated to this section.

It is not surprising that the number and heterogeneity of Congressmen precluded exact agreement on very many subjects.

In this case the opinion continuum is heavily weighted at each end, with fallow middle ground. There is either too much released which is detrimental to the security of the United States, or so little that the public is denied knowledge of how its government is functioning. Some examples of these views:

Unfortunately, there has existed and still does exist in high governmental and military circles a strange psychosis that the government's business is not the people's business. For reasons less clear, high government officials persist in giving lip service to the fact that the people have a right to know but in actual practice they circumvent this right to the people. Government officials have a growing tendency to forget that in a democracy it is up to the people to make final decisions and that is impossible unless the necessary information is available on which to base such decisions. This psychosis persists to the point where some government officials decide what is good for the people to know.

The Defense Department and its component branches are classifying documents at such a rate that the Pentagon may some day become no more than a huge storage bin protected by triple-combination safes and a few security guards. Millions of documents each year are being added to the Defense Department's classified files, and only a fraction are being declassified annually.
Unless some operative system of declassification is developed in the near future, we may find ourselves completely walled off from our past historical achievements as well as from future progress in basic science.82

This statement represents the opinion of an entire committee and is based on the results of more than a year's investigation of the availability of information from federal agencies.

On the other hand, another report from another committee, also made up of Congressmen and representing their collective opinion, diametrically opposes the Moss Committee with this brief but unequivocal assertion:

Too much information has been released which is of no benefit to the American public but which is of tremendous value to our opponents.83

Conceivably, both groups could be right if judged by the specific incidents which comprise their separate frames of reference. Certainly both cannot be right when the entire problem is considered.

What is unfortunate for the man in the middle, the military public relations officer, is that even from their disjunctive poles both camps are united in their positive belief that the present classification system must be


drastically altered. Suffice to say that it would be impossible to find a solution that is not inversely proportional, i.e., the more pleased one group becomes, the more displeased becomes the other.

One of the most concerned in the group which believes that we are consistently giving out too much valuable data is Congressman Mahon. On March 31, 1954, he revealed mixed feelings of some progress vis-à-vis terrible mistakes.

To Secretary Wilson:

I personally would not hesitate very long to give you a chance to try to modify our public information program, with the hope of improving it.

...I think that some progress is being made in this field of public relations. We belabor the subject almost daily, in the committee, of tighter restrictions on information that is given out. Most of the morning has been taken up in discussion of that matter here, and I think it would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of stricter controls on information that is helpful, or might be helpful to the enemy.

I think the damage that has been done to this country by the spies and subversives is just a tiny drop in the bucket compared to the damage that has been done by release of public information as to national defense procedures and programs, and developments, through the Department of Defense, through the Congress and through industry, and through trade journals, and so forth.

I think we have given the enemy the equivalent of billions of dollars worth of information....

I do not know whether you feel as strongly as I do about this matter or not, but you probably do not.

Secretary Wilson: Well, we feel quite strongly about it, I can assure you of that, and I am very hopeful that we can make some real progress in it.
If we seem to be clamping down pretty tight, and if we get a howl and some criticism from the people whose job it is to try to promote this stuff all the time, bear with us a little bit, and support us in it.84

Whether because of the kind of action taken or the manner in which it was carried out and presented to the public, it is generally agreed that Mr. Wilson's ensuing public relations program, both for himself and the Department of Defense, got more "howls" than "support."85

Some of the results:

Mr. Moss: I recall where one member of the Appropriations Committee wrote and asked for the pictures of some of the interiors of non-combatant military planes used to carry personnel.

Some of them were rather delux pieces of flying equipment. He received the photograph, stamped "secret."

Now remember, under Executive Order 10501, the security of the United States was directly and gravely involved in that plane's interior. You know Mr. Snyder, just as I do, that that couldn't affect the security of anyone except perhaps the peace of mind of a few people at the Pentagon. It might have outraged some of the taxpayers. But it certainly would not have disturbed in any way, even remotely, the security of this nation unless perhaps a disturbed Admiral or General might not be able to do as efficient work, fearing public criticism.

It is this type of thing which makes me feel we cannot depend entirely upon the Executive. We have got to share this responsibility; we have to protect the interests of the Congress, which is immediately


85 The responsibility for criticisms contained in prior and subsequent Sections of this study leveled between February 1953 and October of 1957 must rest on the shoulders of Secretary Wilson.
representative of the people. We also have to protect the public interest because sometimes we have public officials who don't perform as they should. We have to have all the avenues open to learn all the facts necessary to prove that they haven't performed as they should.86 (Italics not in the original.)

The Executive Order to which Mr. Moss referred, was promulgated on November 6, 1953, and (1) deprived twenty-eight Federal agencies of the power to classify information on grounds of national security, (2) restricted classification power to seventeen agencies, (3) re-defined security classifications—dropping the RESTRICTED category, and (4) established new machinery for appeal and review.

The "dilemma" gained new status through Presidential recognition when Mr. Eisenhower wrote:

Throughout the lengthy consideration of this order it has been the purpose to attain in it the proper balance between the need to protect information important to the defense of the United States and the need for citizens of this democracy to know what their government is doing.

The protests of the citizens who did not feel that they knew what the government was doing continued. Following the "constructive contribution" directive in March of 1955, complaints doubled and re-doubled. The American Society of Newspaper Editors lodged a formal dissent. The managing editors of the Associated Press in a resolution adopted in November 1955, stated:

86 House Hearings, Moss Committee, April 10, 11, and 12, 1957, op. cit., p. 2242.
The Association expressly condemns the withholding of information that has not been classified and that is not eligible for classifying on the pretext that it is not 'constructive' or on the excuse that even though it is nonsecurity information it might be of 'possible use' to a potential enemy.

The effect on Congress of such well publicized outcries is a matter of conjecture, however, when coupled with the predispositions of the two camps mentioned earlier it is not surprising that "new Congressmen" rather than countries were heard from during the year. Senator Stuart Symington, of Missouri, warned:

No careful reader of our press can doubt that this country is menaced by a deliberate policy on the part of our government to withhold information from the American people.87

Another Democrat, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, of Minnesota, was more lyric but no less alarmed when he read into the Congressional Record.

This shroud of silence which has descended over the government prevents not only the American people from knowing what it is doing, but prevents the government itself from functioning as it should.88

Other Congressmen, on the other hand, have continually voiced concern over the amount of information presented in testimony as secret which finds its way to the public press. Congressman Charles B. Deane, of North Carolina, speaking to

87 From a speech made in New York City, July 7, 1955.

Secretary Wilson in 1955, said:

I want to follow up... on how news releases appear in the press and in magazines on what might usually be referred to in the committee as extremely secret.

Mr. Deane then mentioned an article in the U. S. News and World Report of January 28, 1955, which contained most specific information on the number and composition of units of the U. S. Army and where they were to be located, saying:

I wonder whether or not we are being asked, as members of the committee, to suppress certain testimony when the press actually seems to know more about it than members of the committee.89

Representative Scrivner has pursued the proposition for many years. In 1953, he proposed to Mr. Berding:

Let us take the story on the atomic submarine. Let us take the story on Nike. Let us take the story on a lot of these missiles and other things. Do they clear through your office?

Mr. Berding: If they are formal press releases they do.

With regard to some of those, there may be material written by a representative of a newspaper or a magazine. You referred to the atomic-submarine story. A good many of those stories were in magazines. They were not formal press releases.

A magazine correspondent came in and he talked to different people. He got a bit here and a bit there, and after a while he got himself quite an article.

Mr. Scrivner: That is exactly the thing that is disturbing us; the fact that they can go around and pick up a bit of information here and a bit of information

89 House Hearings, 1956, op. cit., p. 63.
there, and while maybe the one story may not be complete and accurate, perhaps the item under discussion will not be named, but a week later some other news story breaks and while it may not incorporate all the information in the previous story, here comes the name of the item, a name we were told we could not even put down on our notepad in this room.

Mr. Berding: It is a problem, Mr. Scrivner. I recognize that. It sometimes assumes serious proportions. 90

Congressman Wigglesworth merely took note of the "problem" in 1953, mentioning Mr. Scrivner's statement during a discussion of the Office of Security Review. 91

But in the Hearings during March of 1954 he elaborated:

I raise this question, Mr. Secretary, because this committee has been greatly disturbed in the past on various occasions by the fact that something has been presented here across the table as being secret or classified, and then within the next two or three days the whole thing, or a large part of it, has appeared publicly in the pages of some newspaper or other publication, indicating a complete lack of proper control somewhere along the line. 92

In 1957 he reiterated:

As I think you know, this committee has been very hard put to understand how time and again we are told here in secrecy about this or that development or this or that new model, or whatnot, and then within a few days or a week or so we see practically what we have been told in secret in some magazine or some newspaper or some photograph that has been put out. 93

91 Ibid., p. 613.
In the same Hearing Mr. Scrivner diverged slightly in an exchange with Mr. Allen:

That brings up another question of a small point. Hardly a day goes by but we pick up a paper and see where some general, 1-, 2-, 3-, or 4-star, has gone someplace to make a speech. First you wonder how he can find that much time to go, let alone prepare it. In that speech there will be things said, apparently now with your approval, that to this committee do not seem proper because perhaps just that day or within the week perhaps the very things this man is discussing publicly have been presented to us as a secret matter.... You put a secret label on it because you are afraid we will talk--however, this committee never has.... Somebody, a general or admiral or somebody, goes out and makes a speech.... yet as far as we are concerned the information is still secret and we cannot say anything about it....

I could show you examples at least once a week of that if not more. It is a little bit irksome.

Mr. Allen: I should think it would be. 94

Congressman Riley also quizzed Mr. Allen, without revealing exactly what he had in mind. However, it can be assumed that he was worried about speech content, in that he used the word "censorship" in his initial query:

What about the speeches that the military people make; are they referred to you for your censorship?

Mr. Allen: Only those originating at the seat of government here in Washington. I do not review the speeches that people in California present for example.

Mr. Riley: The ones that originate in the Pentagon?

Mr. Allen: Yes, sir.

---

94 Ibid., p. 1835.
Mr. Riley: Who reviews the speeches of those officers who are in the field?

Mr. Allen: I do not know....

In the same discussion, which shifted to the area of standardization of information releases, Mr. Riley commented:

I was wondering how you achieved any standardization of the information that you release.

Mr. Allen: It is rather difficult, except that we try to withhold only such information as is necessary to withhold for security reasons. Otherwise, we permit free discussion.

Mr. Riley: Some feel that certain items are of security nature and others might not. There is a wide difference of opinion there.

Mr. Allen: That is right. This is in the judgement area....It is very difficult to have any real standard, with no formula.

Mr. Riley: There is no regular formula?

Mr. Allen: No; and no IBM machine to work it out.95

While Mr. Riley and Mr. Scrivner worried about lack of censorship in the utterances of the upper military echelons, Congressman Flood, was upset by the controls imposed upon them by the Office of Public Affairs:

Do I understand that out of an abundance of caution your advisory council or your office (speaking to Mr. Swan), actually demands the appearance before your council of military witnesses with maps and statements to be submitted, and other information, before they are allowed to come up here? Do you include in your jurisdiction an interrogation or the placing of an imprint on the testimony of military men before they come to an executive session of this subcommittee?

95 Ibid., p. 1827.
This is an executive session and you all know that no statements are issued out of this committee.

Do I understand that General X must bring you a statement and if he is going to use maps or charts he must bring it to you before he comes to this subcommittee.

Mr. Swan: ...It asks that the services submit prepared statements to the Security Review Branch, of our office where anything that would be inimical to the security of our country is deleted....

Mr. Flood: I had the impression—I gather I am wrong; and I certainly hope I am—that under Mr. Seaton's order not only do you become an accessory after the fact but before the fact, and your office wants to find out, "What are you going to say up there? Do not say that; that is a security matter." I want to know what glorified clerk is going to tell what general that he cannot tell me what.96

On a gentler note Senator Ferguson quietly asked Mr. Berding:

Now, do you know whether or not any of your civilians or any of your military officers on public information are releasing any secret information?

Mr. Berding answered that he had no information of anyone doing so, and certainly not from his office, to which Senator Ferguson replied, "You do recognize that that should not exist."97 This perhaps should be labeled the understatement of the year 1953, in view of the enormity of the problem and its prominence in Mr. Berding's work.


Classification, or absence of it, will be treated here only to clarify in the reader's mind what part the Office of Public Affairs plays, and what the two main abuses are in the mind of Congress. Congressman Andrews asked the question:

We hear a lot of dissatisfaction about classification. What does your office do in an effort to coordinate the classification of documents and papers between the services?

Mr. Allen: Actually we do not have much to do with the classification and declassification of particular documents as such...The services apply the classification and declassification procedures which are spelled out in their regulations as to the handling of these papers.98

This essentially answers the question. The Office of Public Affairs does, in fact, very little classifying or declassifying, its main interest in the matter being to screen material proposed for publication and safeguard military security. Relatively speaking this is a very small part of the classification picture. However, probably because the Office has a Security Review Branch, it is often criticized for policies not actually under its control or within its jurisdiction.

The abuses of the present classification system as brought out in the Moss Committee Hearings are quickly described by two questions of the Chairman and the answers of Mr. Trevor Gardner, Former Assistant Secretary of the Air Force:

---

Well, we are studying the problem that is a problem of the American people and of their Government and I think Congress has to recognize a certain responsibility in sort of edging people over to the overly cautious side in the classifying of information. Some committees from time to time have jumped on personnel, or Federal departments or agencies, and have been very critical of them. Do you feel that that, together with the fact that you can be severely criticized for under-classifying, or failing to classify, but rarely ever criticized for overclassifying, might increase the tendency of an individual to overclassify?

Mr. Gardner: There is no question about it....

Additionally, the classification may be abused so that a document may be classified Top Secret when actually it should be unclassified, perhaps to protect the individual's position in the matter. I can recall having received an instruction to cancel an important program and the instruction itself was classified Top Secret....The reason for putting Top Secret on it was that the office issuing the instruction to cancel did not wish to be identified with it....

Mr. Moss: Is it possible that some of the classification that is being used is being used to save departments, agencies, and individuals from possible embarrassment?

Mr. Gardner: Yes, I am sure that occurs quite frequently.99

Mr. Gardner painted a gloomy picture during his testimony—unfortunately, there is every reason to believe that he did not exaggerate the situation. Two other statements which he made illustrate the inherent impracticability of the system:

Within the Military Establishment, I am sure there are at least one million people who can originate classification of documents.

---

One of the things that I know you are concerned about (to Mr. Moss) is how do they ever get unclassified and I would say that only hundreds of thousands of documents get unclassified, as opposed to the millions that get classified.

In all fairness, it should be noted that all breaches of security cannot be laid at the door of the Defense Department. In 1954 Congressman Mahon told Secretary Wilson:

You can close everyone's mouth at the Pentagon, but if these trade journals continue to give intimate details in regard to our defense gadgets, your program is not going to be worth much.

...The trade magazines carry all of the information about our latest developments, scientific achievements, and our guided missiles.

Secretary Wilson: We will make it a little more expensive for them to do it, I assure you of that.

Mr. Mahon: If you would cancel a few hundred million dollars in contracts, some of these days you might wake them up to what they are doing to us.

Secretary Wilson: Let us see how we get along with this next year.

Mr. Mahon: I am perfectly willing to go along and see how you get along, but I wish, somehow, we could do something about this.

The last time that Secretary Forrestal was in this room, he was summoned here because a release had been made by the Pentagon about bacteriological warfare.

We asked Secretary Forrestal and the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force to come down here and confer with us about this problem, and the Secretary assured us that he was going to work out a much improved system for public information.

---

100 Ibid., pp. 38-39.
I am sure he tried, but nothing much came of it, and I hope more will come of this. 101

Now Mr. Wilson has also come and gone, but Congress is not yet appeased. In the 1958 Hearings many of the same House Members were still bitterly complaining about the same things, including Mr. Mahon who had such high hopes:

We have been discussing here in the committee whether or not we are receiving reports that are too alarming or whether or not they are sufficiently alarming.

I doubt if there is any other country in the world that makes it so easy for espionage agents to gather information. I believe that the only real problem of the espionage agent is the one that I myself have—that is, in finding time to evaluate and reach the proper conclusions from the mass of conflicting information that we get.... 102

While some protest the lack of security the dilemma thrives, for other Members of Congress in April of 1958, were busily engaged in bringing a bill before the House to prevent concealment from the public by Federal agencies of documents and information considered essential to proper conduct of government and an informed public opinion.

To sum up, it would seem that the only security about which Congress is in complete accord is "social", and that on the subject there is consensus only in their opinion of military public information, which was briefly expressed in a Committee Report, to wit:

The study of the Defense Department so far shows that the informational policies and practices of the Department are the most restrictive—and at the same time the most confused—of any major branch of the Federal Government. 103

VI. CONDUCT OF MILITARY PUBLIC RELATIONS

In addition to the opinion regions already covered there has been considerable congressional interest in the administration of the Office of Public Affairs, i.e., how the business of military public relations is conducted at the seat of government.

As the reader by now might expect, the legislators have, over the years, found a number of items about which to wax eloquent. Foremost among these is the matter of service headline rivalry which, according to Congress, continues unchecked despite repeated demands for corrective action.

In 1949 the issue was prominent enough to warrant treatment in a press release issued by Congressman Carl Vinson, Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, which read in part:

The Armed Services Committee wants it clearly understood that if persons in the armed services or in their employ continue to pass statements to the press which are calculated to depreciate the activities of a sister service and which, at the same time, jeopardize the national security, the Committee will step in

with a full-scale investigation. We will not tolerate the continuance of this practice. 104

Congressman Ostertag, in May of 1953, asked Mr. Berding:

Do you feel that the establishment of the Office of Public Information has in any sense overcome the great competition which has prevailed between the several branches of the military over the years?

Mr. Berding: I am quite convinced that it has, sir. I am most emphatic on that point. 105

During that same year Congressman Scrivner was particularly vocal, mentioning the problem on more than one occasion. Speaking to Dr. Walter Whitman, Chairman, Research and Development Board he complained:

I, too, have been somewhat irked about this rivalry for headlines... between the services; which can do nothing more than create a great deal of lack of confidence of the public, and a great deal of wonderment as to whether they are fighting under the same flag or not,...for the public to read these stories, they might well wonder whether the Navy is an ally of the Air Force or whether the Air Force is an ally of the Navy or whether either one of them is an ally of our Army.

We discussed this other day with Secretary Wilson and if you can help him to stop that I hope you will. 106

In 1954, it appeared that Mr. Berding should not have been so "emphatic," for the situation remained unchanged—at least to Mr. Scrivner and some others, including the

104 Reproduced and referred to in the Moss Committee Hearings, July 9, 10, and 12, 1956, op. cit., p. 931.
106 Ibid., p. 157.
President of the United States. In a four-way discussion with Mr. Scrivner, Secretary Wilson, and Assistant Secretary Seaton, Mr. Wigglesworth opened with:

I do not think the committee wants to close doors to proper information, but I think the anxiety heretofore has been rather in the opposite direction; that in the eagerness to make available some news that was a scoop or a headline story that proper care has not been exercised.

Mr. Seaton: We are aware of that.

Mr. Scrivner: Plus another fact, that there seemed to be a race on between services for the headlines. If one service comes out with one story, immediately another one has to break into a headline to compete, and then a third one, until finally you have a whole cycle, much of which would have been better had it not gone out.

What will your new setup do to stop this race for headlines?

Secretary Wilson: ...I have been studying this thing now, on and off, for a year. If you get into the thing too late there is not much you can do about it. So this is an effort to get into it at the right time.

I will say this: If this organization does not make an improvement over what has been done Mr. Seaton and I are both going to be in trouble. Not only are you gentlemen irritated by it, but the President certainly has been concerned, too.107

So was Congressman Miller, who the next year registered a mild rebuke, saying to Mr. Swan:

It occurs to me—and I think this committee has expressed itself on this score in the past—that while wholesome rivalry and a certain amount of pride of service is a splendid thing there have been instances where the

We have been discussing off the record some of the situations that have developed which seem to demonstrate a great deal of rivalry between the services for headlines.

What authority does your office have and what is your office doing to minimize this ever-growing race to get the headlines in the news by the service.\textsuperscript{110}

Probably the answer lies not with the Office of Public Affairs but in the basic structure of the Defense organization with its present loose policy control of three separately administered services.

Other comments about the administration of the Office of Public Affairs through the years have been varied and seldom concentrated. The second and third most popular topics being congressional liaison, and whether the activities of the office have expanded beyond what Congress intended in setting the limitation in 1951.

In talking about the number of military public information offices Senator Ferguson exhibits a rather obvious distrust of the integrity of the services in obeying the regulations imposed by the limitation. He mentioned duplication and added:

\textit{....Then I want to know whether or not there are many more (offices) that are covered up under other names and under other jobs that are used on public relations part time or whole time.}\textsuperscript{111}

Congressman Ford also has shown some lack of trust and on one occasion stated:

\textsuperscript{110}{House Hearings, 1958, Part II, op. cit., p. 1834.}

\textsuperscript{111}{Senate Hearings, 1954, Part I, op. cit., p. 659.}
I know why the limitation was imposed, but I am wondering whether there is strict compliance.\footnote{112}{House Hearings, 1956, op. cit., p. 651.}

Congressman Wigglesworth became concerned in a discussion with Mr. Schooley about the scope of the Office of Public Information, saying:

If I understand the picture, just as one member of this committee, I think this subdivision of your work (the answering of letters from governmental and non-governmental agencies desiring information), as defined goes far beyond what the Congress ever thought of including in a public information set-up. Obviously if you are going to take over the whole correspondence of the Department of Defense and call it public information work you are going away outside the original field that was contemplated.\footnote{113}{Ibid., p. 667.}

Prior to that, in a conversation with Mr. Swan he had asked:

\ldots What study, if any, have you made to convince yourself that the work now being done under the head of public information is in fact public information work.\ldots \footnote{114}{Ibid., p. 665.}

While his contemporaries thought that there was too much "going on" in the various offices Congressman Whitten felt strongly that there was a need for informing the public more completely about the Russian situation; said he:

\ldots The American public is not being given a balanced portrayal of the facts that exist. I do not think that there is any question but what this is true.\ldots

I wish somebody would take the money involved for one of these carriers or for one of these air wings, to intensify our efforts to find out whether Russia is
really 10 feet high, or only 5½ feet high.115

If we are going to have a balanced judgement we should have a balanced knowledge of the facts.116

The gentleman from Louisiana, Congressman Edward Hebert, had other problems on his mind—and a quick solution:

Congressman Hess was telling us yesterday that he went over there last year and made a check when a baseball game was going on and found 114 people standing around looking at television. He counted them. Why were they not doing work? It is all right to have your break for coffee, but apparently even "coffee breaks" in the Pentagon lend themselves to overstaffing. You can walk over there any day and go into a lot of offices and see people and wonder what they are doing.

I will return again to the press agents and the public information situation. They cried like babies over there when the Appropriations Committee in effect cut their water off, but they are doing all right. They are doing fine. They had research people in there who were developing magazine stories, counter propaganda. It was a counter propaganda agency over there against the Congress under this man Fritchey, who was then heading the thing.

Mr. Wigglesworth: Heading the Public Information Service?

Mr. Hebert: He was then heading the Public Information Service. He is now the Goebbels of the Democratic Committee.

Mr. Hruska: Do you remember his first name?

Mr. Hebert: Yes; Clayton Fritchey. They removed him, or he resigned.

These are little things that I have given you, but they set the pattern.117


116Ibid., p. 40.

If such things indeed set the pattern, the pattern was soon changed, for Mr. Hebert's accusation that the office was a counter-propaganda agency against Congress was never repeated, nor in fact had it been made prior to that time.

Although the problem of control was covered in SECTION II under organization, the following exchange concerning the number of releases allowed by the services and the Department of Defense is considered more a matter of how the office is conducted, or administered.

Congressman Sheppard read in a magazine article entitled "How to Collect Military Information," that the Navy Hometown News Center put out 6,569 releases a day and that the Army Center produced 9,043 daily. He then asked Mr. Swan, "Are you familiar with that?" Mr. Swan replied that he was not. Mr. Sheppard then said:

But if you people have the responsibility of scrutinizing this material, the releases and so forth, it would occur to me that you should have some knowledge as to whether these services that have been referred to here are in reality putting out that much stuff, and you should know what is in it. 118

Mr. Sheppard then figured that the volume of releases mentioned would amount to $4 million a year while the limitation that year was only $3.5 million for the entire military establishment public information program.

Congressman Miller like Mr. Wigglesworth, was more

concerned with the letter writing function of the public relations people and told Mr. Swan:

It never occurred to me that...if a mother wanted to know why her boy had not written, that would become a responsibility of the Public Relations Department.

That used to be handled by the Company Commander or the first sergeant....

Mr. Swan: As to that sergeant who wrote the letter, if you could look back over some of those letters you would understand why we have an Inquiry Section now and a good letter going back to the person in reply.

Mr. Miller: Sometimes the letters are so good they do not mean a thing.\(^\text{119}\)

This subject of letter writing brings us to the next subdivision, congressional liaison. Most eloquent, and humorous, is Representative Daniel Flood who felt the matter deserved thorough examination:

Is it the collective genius of the Public Information Coordinating Council that has produced these remarkable form letters that Members of Congress get from the various armed services, which have increased only in length and not in information?

There was a time when we asked for some information we were brusquely brushed off with 1 or 2 paragraphs. That has improved considerably with reference only to the length of the letter.... Obviously it is the result of professional techniques, and I would presume it is the brain child of an imposing array, such as the entire Council. I cannot imagine one man giving birth to it.

Has this Council decided that the replies to Members of Congress should be this? We all get them. We have sat around and compared them. If there are 7 paragraphs, 6 of them will be alike, with the exception of punctuation. The last 4 paragraphs are invariably identical: "Glad to...

\(^{119}\) Ibid., p. 668.
have you on board; sorry for your trouble; glad you wrote us; if we can help you again come in."

But nothing ever happens. I have been impressed by this genius which has created this weapon. Does your office handle this? Do you pass upon these matters of weighty policy like that?

Mr. Swan: No, sir; we do not.

Mr. Flood: Where does that stuff come from? Who will create that letter?

Mr. Swan: That would come from the legislative affairs side of our office.

Mr. Flood: Now I am back to the Tinker to Evers to Chance business. I am still out.

Mr. Swan: There are two sides to the Assistant Secretary's Office. One is on public affairs and one is on legislative affairs. I am the Deputy for Public Affairs.

Mr. Flood: This is of no interest to you, but I have been here at these hearings for 2 weeks and I have been playing a game of hare and hounds. I have actually caught up to nobody on 2 or 3 of these problems. I will try the next fellow.

Mr. Swan: Good.

Mr. Flood: Maybe next year I will get back to you. It seems to develop that way. With my sense of humor it probably will not amount to very much anyhow, but I want you to know that my colleagues apparently do not have the same sense of humor I do, and somebody had better improve congressional liaison, because it is very shabby, and my colleagues have their tail feathers mussed up, believe me. (Italics not in the original)\textsuperscript{120}

One of Mr. Flood's colleagues with ruffled plumage was Mr. Scrivner who, in the 1958 Hearings, prefaced his opinion with a backhanded compliment, saying:

\textsuperscript{120}Ibid., pp. 667-668.
....As far as legislative liaison is concerned, some of them do a fairly good job and yet, on the other hand, some of the things that happen make your blood boil. In the first place, when I write to the Secretary of Defense or to the Secretary of the Army or to the Secretary of the Air Force, I expect a reply from the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of the Army or the Secretary of the Air Force. Maybe it will be prepared by legislative liaison, but if I were merely wanting some information, I can pick up the phone and call legislative liaison myself. When I write to the Secretary, I have a reason for doing it and every Member of Congress is in the same position.

To write to any of the secretaries and get a letter back signed by maybe a lieutenant colonel or a colonel or even a general does not answer it. If that is going to be the program that is going to be followed, I for one would just as soon abolish some of these things and let the secretaries answer some of their own correspondence. They do not have any more mail to sign than I do.\(^{121}\)

One of the Secretaries, namely Robert Ross, on an earlier occasion made legislative feathers fly not by failing to answer his congressional mail but by refusing to supply requested information. As Mr. Fascell explained it during the Moss Committee Hearings:

\[\text{(the) Research and Development Policy Council (of the Department of Defense) came up with a series of recommendations on the need for an increased flow of technical information, and classification and declassification. The Assistant Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force Departments made comments on these recommendations. This is one of the areas which the House Government Information Subcommittee is studying, so we asked Assistant Secretary Ross for the recommendations and the comments.} \]

\[\text{Assistant Secretary Ross—the Defense Department official in charge of legislation and public affairs—has formally and officially refused to inform the House Government Information Subcommittee what recommendations, if any, were} \]

\[^{121}\text{House Hearings, 1956, Part II, op. cit., p. 1836.}\]
presented to improve the flow of scientific information. Mr. Ross—the information expert of the Pentagon—has decided in his wisdom to restrict information about proposals to improve the flow of information.

For 16 months this subcommittee has been working on recommendations for legislation and for administrative improvements that will make more information available. The Defense Department recently has completed a study by experts in the field of scientific information.

Today we will try to find out, through discussions with the legal experts of the Pentagon, just what authority of law they claim, to throw the cloak of secrecy over the facts of Government necessary to the public and to the Congress.122

The authority claimed was a letter of the President's addressed to the Secretary of Defense dated May 17, 1954.123 However, it is not the legal ramifications of the case that are important to this study, rather the end and effect of the military public relations representative in the government refusing to cooperate with Congress. The act could safely be described as the very antithesis of congressional liaison.

On a somewhat lighter note Congressman Flood told Mr. Allen of another liaison problem:

....I have had occasion when home to....call different offices, and to my amazement I get some civilian on the phone, some totally inadequate juvenile who has no idea of military terminology....He answers the phone. "Where is the duty officer?"


Well, the duty officer is having lunch. That is all right. I am for that. Or "He will be here in a minute." That is all right. He probably is down the hall seeing a man about a dog. I am for that, too.

But is it Public Relations, or whose job is it? First of all, must you have civilians? There is nothing in the world more frustrating than for a member of this subcommittee to pick up a telephone to call a duty officer about a morale or emergency release and then draw some civilian who does not know you are a Member of Congress, and certainly does not know that you are a member of this subcommittee and he could not care less. You talk to him for 5 minutes and you finally convince him that you are a Member of Congress, and "Can I please talk to some military personnel?" If he has had a good dinner and a good night's sleep and is not unhappy, this fellow will finally put some military personnel on the phone who talks your language.

That happens not once, Mr. Secretary, but that would happen at half past 10 tonight. If you do not believe me, call up. He would not know who you are, either. When you tell him, "I am the Assistant Secretary of the Department of Defense for Public Information," that will leave him cold.

I do not know whose shop that is. I called up there a couple of weeks ago—where, I will not specify—on an emergency matter like that, and I got the most effeminate voice that you could believe. I said, "Who are you? Are you a civilian?" He said, "Yes." I said "Are you a WAC or a WAVE or what are you?" He said, "No I am a man." I would have bet him even money.

The idea of having this sweet voice coming out of a duty office at 11 o'clock at night is not good public relations. Maybe the fellow just had bad luck. He drew me.

Haven't you heard of these civilians trying to handle these military messages? Believe me, I have had trouble with them over the telephone. They do not know what these military abbreviations are. I do not know when they started. Maybe you are supposed to have civilians there. Maybe the idea is to put military personnel in line of duty and take civilians
for these more mundane tasks. That has merit. I suppose. But at least they should be sent to some kind of training school for 10 minutes and you or whoever handles these things should point out to them, "When you do business with those men up there, be smart. If you ever are lucky enough to get Mr. Scrivner or Mr. Flood be doubly smart." But nobody does that. It is not good, and I am on your team. Imagine what happens when you draw somebody who is not.

Call up tonight about 10 o'clock just for fun and see what kind of luck you have. It will astound you, what you get.124

As stated before, in other Sections, these are only some of the comments on the subjects selected. The quotes which follow, on the other hand, are miscellaneous "one-time" opinions which are offered to impart general attitude and illustrate the variety of areas dealt with.

Congressman Wigglesworth: A couple of weeks ago, Mr. Secretary I wrote you a letter at the suggestion of 1 or 2 members of the committee, calling attention to an Associated Press article which appeared under date of March 17, entitled, "18 Types of Guided Missiles Revealed by Pentagon Slip."

I assume you are both familiar with that article. It was felt that the committee ought to have an explanation of the situation. You remember, the article stated in part that

...an official Defense Department catalog of weapons shows the United States has at least 18 types of guided missiles in use, production, or under test. The fact cropped up probably unintentionally when a Department production report was included yesterday among a file of routine daily orders given to newsmen which bore no secrecy label.

The article goes on, developing what was included in that report, including much information believed previously to be classified. That is the type of thing which frankly alarms me in respect to the Information Service we are talking about.\textsuperscript{126}

In a discussion of training for public relations officers, an administrative function, Mr. Schooley testified before the House Committee in February of 1955 that the "Chief of Information of each military department has policy responsibility." Congressman Ford then asked, "Do you think those schools are worthwhile?" This was followed shortly by another of those statements indicating lack of trust in the services' ability to administer their own departments:

I see a need for Public Information training, but I think you have to keep your finger on the operation. I think that ought to be a function of your office.\textsuperscript{126}
(The Department of Defense Office of Information)

Senator Ferguson opined, apparently after a recent trip to military installations that:

There are certain things that the public should know in relation to the whole defense program.

I just felt, as I traveled from base to base, that the public relations there is not as important as being geared to an overall program to give the people an idea as to what is going on.

Then, as he looked over the proposed 1955 budget which Mr. Wilson had slashed by one million dollars—primarily affecting the services—the Senator asked Mr. Loftis, "Now,

\textsuperscript{125}\textit{House Hearings, 1955, op. cit., p. 550.}\textsuperscript{126}\textit{House Hearings, 1956, op. cit., p. 657.}
is that the purpose of trying to bring more of it here in Washington, to give the picture to the public." 127

What the purpose was, how right the reasoning, and how successful the implementation are some of the most provocative questions facing the reader. One fact, reasonably ascertained by the investigator; since the attempted effort at centralization of military public relations activities in the Department of Defense the number and variety of congressional complaints have increased.

Congressman Moss, for example, offered this one:

I have here a document, from Mr. Phillip K. Allen, Deputy for Public Affairs in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, titled "Public Information Pointers."

In this guide, one of the items, with which I disagree rather strongly, states:

Speeches and announcements can have a great impact at home, and abroad; be sure to check them for security and policy with the Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative and Public Affairs)

I think checking them for security is very proper.

But I recall an incident where the Secretary of the Air Force, Mr. Quarles, had some difficulties with a speech submitted to Mr. Ross' Office because of questions of policy. I think that the people are entitled to know the views of a man who, obviously, has the confidence of the President, or he would not be serving as Secretary of the Air Force. That is, without any screening of those views by the Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Public Affairs. 128

127 Senate Hearings, 1955, op. cit., p. 159.

128 House Hearings, Moss Committee, March 11, and 12, 1957, op. cit., p. 2122.
Along these same lines Senators Chevez, Saltonstall, Ellender, and Symington found fault with Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, Murray Snyder on June 4, 1957.

Senator Symington began with:

I make the suggestion that Mr. Murray Snyder, who has issued a statement to one paper saying that Secretary Douglas did not mean what he said before the committee, be requested to come before the committee. Secretary Douglas is a man of honor. I suggest we get Mr. Snyder down here to find out why he assumes the prerogative of speaking for Mr. Douglas after Mr. Douglas has given us a contrary position. I say for the record that when the Secretary of a department comes before this committee and, under questioning, takes a position which later is denied by a press representative in the Department of Defense, then I think this committee should be interested in letting the Secretary of the department in question give his position before the committee, to see whether or not he was telling the truth.

Senator Chevez: I believe he was telling the truth. As a matter of fact, I felt he was one Secretary who knew what he was talking about.

Senator Saltonstall: Let us have Mr. Douglas here.

Senator Symington: Also, Mr. Snyder.

Senator Saltonstall: I believe in getting the facts. If somebody said he did not say what he thought he said, let us get Mr. Douglas back. I believe in getting the facts entirely, and let us get them from the source.

Senator Ellender: I agree with Senator Symington. If Mr. Snyder made a statement, denying what Secretary Douglas stated, it would be important, and it may be very interesting to find out how Mr. Snyder got the information.

Senator Chevez: I agree with the Senator from Missouri. We will have Mr. Snyder up here.
Senator Symington: The New York Times, Washington, June 1, reads as follows:

Murray Snyder, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, said the controversy was now being "ameliorated."

He added that he was sure Mr. Douglas was not fighting the Wilson directive.

Secretary Douglas told us he made a protest on the Wilson directive; that he signed one and was in the process of getting up another; so I think the committee has the right to find out the facts.

Senator Chevez: We are going to get the truth. I do not take public relations very seriously at times.129

Here is a challenge for military public relations practitioners, and perhaps their multi-clad brothers on Michigan and Madison as well. Certainly, at the first blush, (and the word does not seem inappropriate here) it would appear important to the emerging profession that all Members of Congress "take public relations seriously" all of the time.

CHAPTER III

THE CONGRESSIONAL IMAGE
OF MILITARY PUBLIC RELATIONS

When measured by the quoted statements contained in Chapter II, there is little doubt as to the general feeling of the Members of Congress toward military public relations. Nevertheless, before the reader brings his own value judgements to bear on specific questions, some brief summary of the subjects and opinions concerning them might be helpful.

This is to say, that having examined the parts, before attempting to mold a "Congressional Image" for evaluation, the parts should be put together.

I. THE IMPLOSION

For the sake of brevity, and ready reference, the implosion--or quick re-assembling of the parts--will be abbreviated and aimed more toward reminding the reader of material covered than restating quotes.

Section I, Familiarity. It was found that Congressmen who expressed themselves on the subject were not familiar with the functions of any of the offices of public information; that the functions had not been adequately explained; that most thought the main purpose propaganda, and that there was widespread confusion concerning the scope and definition of public relations as practiced by the military.
Questions asked generally indicated an abysmal lack of knowledge of the aims, or responsibilities of the Office of Public Affairs or of previous services rendered.

Section II, Organization. The major complaints of Congress on the organization of the military public relations community were lack of centralization, coordination, and control. Included were numerous accusations of overlapping, unnecessary offices, loose supervision, little or no authority, and inefficient organization.

Specific examples of the services withholding information, refusing requests from the public and the Department of Defense, plus admittedly not being bound by a chain of command, made a rather strong case for Congress' opinion that public relations were better in the "old days," and should be limited to a narrow base.

Section III, Economy. The Legislators believe that there is no better method of correlating the activities of the Office of Public Affairs then reducing its appropriations; that the Office should be divested of fringe activities; that too much is spent in the field offices; that personnel are not properly utilized and their number should be reduced; that there is also a waste of talent and money; that the money "kicked back" to the Office of Public Affairs by the services should be shown in the budget; and that the services are not charging all of the activities that should be charged under the limitation. One Congressman thought the
limitation impractical, and another charged there was considerable public disapproval of the public relations set-up coupled with the conviction that quite a little money could be saved.

Section IV, Release. In discussing the release of military information the paramount issue was the misuse of the Office to disseminate "self-serving propaganda," i.e., information designed to make the military look good, garner public support, influence legislation, etc. The second most frequently heard remarks were on the withholding of non-classified information, e.g., material not deemed a "constructive contribution" to the primary mission of the Department of Defense.

Examples were forthcoming of the release of misleading information, cross-information, non-information, too much information, and no information. Also deplored was the absence of standardization, objectivity, authenticity, and public retraction. In short, according to Congress, the public failed to get complete, accurate, or timely information relative to the military establishment.

Section V, Security. The consensus was that the classification-declassification policy needed complete overhauling. Beyond that there was no agreement. One group of Congressmen affirmed that too much information of value to potential enemies was released, while the other group mourned the burial of information required by the public to
intelligently meet its responsibility in a democracy. Within the two camps were some vehement complaints, e.g., that classification is censoring history, blocking scientific progress, used as a cover for personal fear of embarrassment, preventing government from functioning properly, gagging high officials, and is a deliberate method of withholding public information.

In the "pro" group—those for more classification—it was charged that damage done by public information releases, leaks, trade journal stories, and speeches greatly exceeded that done by spies and subversives. The final conclusion: The Department of Defense was the most restrictive and confused government agency, and within the Department the responsibility for what was and was not released rested with the Office of Public Affairs.

Section VI, Administration. There is absolute agreement among the Members that the service rivalry for headlines must be eliminated. Other observations were: too much work is being done which is not public relations; personnel supervision is poor; offices are circumventing the limitation purpose through administrative shenanigans; not exercising responsibility in scrutinizing releases; and are careless in administrative procedures.

Of some moment was the feeling about congressional liaison—poor, and the letter writing talent in general of
public relations people—worse. And lastly, perhaps Defense Secretaries should, whenever possible, not refuse congressional requests for information.

II. THE IMPLICATIONS

As stated in Chapter I, the investigator will not draw conclusions—preferring to let the reader interpret the research material as he sees fit. There are a number of reasons for this, the most compelling being that unless an opinion study is conducted under carefully controlled conditions with scientific research methods, the researcher's conclusions, though possibly well founded, cannot be presented with any measured mathematical veracity.¹

While the comments of the Members of Congress are believed sufficiently salient to satisfy the hypothesis, the degree to which they can be used to make or project other assumptions is purely speculative. There are, however, certain broad implications which might properly be included as part of the study.

The reader is invited to review the questions offered on pages eighteen and nineteen, all of which, the Congressmen have answered to some extent in their remarks. Based on the almost totally negative view which Congress has taken toward

¹See discussion of Limitations, pp. 21-22 this study.
the Office of Public Affairs, one of many offices in the Department of Defense, certain other things may be implied. For example:

There were a number of areas of complaint which are not necessarily peculiar to public relations activities although that was the context in the quotes selected, e.g., the strongest and most frequent opinions were concerned with the general inefficiency of the Department of Defense organization, in that, there was waste of talent, personnel and money, no coordination, correlation, or control of the services or various sub-offices, and that as a result there was service rivalry, poor security policy, and confusion.

The constant repetition of the charges over a six year period leads one to suspect that the feelings expressed may not be isolated, or reserved for a single office of the Department of Defense. To use an analogy, it is unheard of for high blood pressure to build up in only one part of the body.

From these suppositions, and recent legislative attempts aimed at shrinking the Department, it might be implied that Congress has come to believe that unification, or centralization of the military establishment has been given a fair try, and proved inefficient.

2The Vinson-Arends Bill to reduce the number of Assistant Secretaries is an example.
If this is so, and Congress gradually manifests its belief with what it considers to be appropriate action, then the present Executive position is directly threatened and a battle looms, for it is well known that the President favors maximum unification.

The purpose of this conjectural discussion— which may seem to be far afield from the subject of the study—is to see what the future holds for military public relations in view of these possible implications.

For the overall establishment there are really only two courses open, (1) to decentralize and thus re-accentuate the identity of the separate services, or (2) truly centralize and establish one military department.

Up to now, each course has been soundly criticized by the proponents of the other as impractical, impossible, and imprudent. The present system of limbo-like semi-unification is the resulting compromise. It is this system which is constantly under fire not only from Congress but all other quarters.

Under the first course, assuming a "watered-down" version of the Defense Department remained in existence, in all probability there would be no big change in present military public relations procedures, or problems. The individual services might eventually obtain more "legitimate" funds for public relations through direct representation at
appropriations hearings, which they do not have now. But at the seat of the government the problems of standardization of procedure, rivalry, overlapping, duplication, loose policy control, rather than unity of command, and so forth, would remain to irritate, annoy, and confuse the Members of Congress.

From this, it follows that the limitation of funds would be continued, and eventually no formal program of public relations worthy of mention would exist because of the stigma attached.

Under course number (2), there could be only one Office of Public Affairs, Information, Public Relations, or whatever title, and it would supervise all of the field offices. Theoretically speaking, there would be no service rivalry, less waste of money, manpower, and talent, absolute control of policy and administrative procedures, and thus less confusion.

Whichever course of action is chosen, or evolves, there is one other element not yet mentioned which in the end is the controlling factor. That is, of course, the human element. For without active, intelligent direction, by men trained in the field of public relations, no program can, or will, succeed, regardless of organization structure.
This leads to the final implication of the remarks which Congressman have been making since 1952; until we have professional public relation's leadership sensitive to each of the many publics—including Congress—which must be satisfied with the conduct of the Defense Establishment, it is doubtful that public, press, service, or Congressional opinion of military public relations can be improved or enhanced.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
BIBLIOGRAPHY

PUBLICATIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT


UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS


Department of Defense Analysis of Expenses for Public Information Activities Fiscal Years 1957, 1958, and 1959; March 21, 1958. (Mimeographed.)


BOOKS

APPENDIX A

COPY OF SECRETARY OF DEFENSE MEMORANDUM

DATED 10 OCTOBER 1947

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Washington

10 October 1947

MEMORANDUM

From: The Secretary of Defense

To: The Secretary of the Army
    The Secretary of the Navy
    The Secretary of the Air Force
    The Chief of Staff of the Army
    The Chief of Naval Operations
    The Chief of Staff of the Air Force
    The Chairman of the Munitions Board
    The Chairman of the Research and Development Board

Subject: Public Relations of the National Military Establishment.

I. General Policy

A. The armed forces of a democratic nation have a positive responsibility to achieve the widest possible public understanding of their mission and operations. Therefore, information about the National security shall be released.

B. The National Security Act of 1947 establishes the unification of the armed services. It is to be emphasized that the conduct of public relations is to conform to the spirit of the law and that inter-service controversies are to be avoided. The Secretaries of the three Departments will be responsible for explaining this policy to all personnel and for enforcing compliance with it.
II. Security

A. Establishment and definition of security classifications shall continue to be the responsibility of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; assignment of security classification to a document, information or material shall continue to be done by the branch of the armed service having cognizance.

1. Both the definitions and the assignment of classifications should be revised periodically, releasing any information no longer requiring classification.

2. The Secretaries of the three Departments shall arrange for their public relations divisions to interchange regularly lists of activities and materiel which require security clearance prior to release so that one Department will not unknowingly break the security classification of another.

3. Release of newly declassified information involving two or more agencies should be approved by all the agencies involved.

III. Organization

A. The public relations activities of each Department shall continue to be administered by the Secretaries, following the general policies as established and as may be changed from time to time.

1. In the interest of conserving manpower, space and communications, distribution and duplication of facilities, the Secretaries of the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force are requested to study and to report by December 1, 1947, on the feasibility of --

   a. Establishing in the national capitol a single press and information room, jointly staffed by the Armed Services, for the dissemination of all public information from all branches of the National Military Establishment.

   b. Establishing in the field similar central jointly-staffed press rooms in key cities
like New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, even though the boundaries of military districts, naval districts and air commands do not coincide exactly.

B. No separate public relations division will be established in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, but one of his assistants will be designated to handle public relations matters.

1. The heads of the public relations activities of the three Departments are hereby designated an advisory board to the Secretary of Defense on the conduct of public relations.

a. Each service is requested to detail a liaison officer to the Office of the Secretary of Defense to assist in the coordination of public relations activities; including military participation in special and civic events.

2. No information in the categories listed below shall be released by any Department without prior clearance with the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

   a. Statements quoting or citing the authority of the Secretary of Defense.

   b. Announcements by the War Council, the Munitions Board, the Research and Development Board and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

   c. Announcements on those subjects (principally general policies, budget-making and other subjects) which by the terms of the National Security Act are made the specific responsibility of the Secretary of Defense.

   d. Public addresses by members of the War Council, Munitions Board and Research and Development Board.

   e. Releases affecting more than one of the three Departments in the military establishment or other Executive Departments when mutual agreement cannot be reached by the departments or agencies concerned.
3. Before material is submitted to the Secretary of Defense for clearance under 2 above, the initiating service will obtain agreement or comment from all activities concerned. After release is authorized, details of effecting publication will be handled by the appropriate branch of the military establishment.

James Forrestal
APPENDIX B

CONGRESSIONAL SAMPLE

1. Sen. Joseph C. O'Mahoney, Wyo. (D)
2. Rep. Edward T. Miller, Md. (R)
3. Sen. Dennis Chavez, N. M. (D)
4. Sen. Margaret Chase Smith, Me. (R)
5. Sen. Leverett Saltonstall, Mass. (R)
12. Rep. Dante B. Fascell, Fla. (D)
13. Sen. Carl Hayden, Ariz. (D)
15. Rep. F. Edward Hebert, La. (D)
23. Rep. George H. Mahon, Tex. (D)
25. Sen. Stuart Symington, Mo. (D)
26. Sen. Hubert Humphrey, Minn. (D)
APPENDIX C

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC

All categories and types of information possessed by the Department of Defense are available to the press and other information media serving the general public, except that which requires protection for reasons of national defense or the release of which would otherwise be incompatible with the national interest. The types of information which might be withheld, or to which access might be limited, under particular circumstances, fall into two basic groups. The first group covers information requiring protection in the interest of national defense which is withheld or controlled in dissemination pursuant to Executive Order 10501, dated November 5, 1953, as implemented by departmental directives and instructions. This is normally referred to as classified information. The second group covers certain other official information requiring protection for the national defense and the overall national interest and is withheld, or controlled in dissemination, pursuant to various constitutional, statutory, or executive branch requirements, as implemented by departmental directives or instructions. Following, it is believed, are the major subcategories of information in this latter group, which, of course, cannot be deemed all inclusive since there are probably some isolated situations which do not neatly fit them:

(1) Records and information which pertain to individuals such as personnel records, medical records, and investigative reports, documents, and proceedings of administrative boards or military tribunals.

(2) Information as to the identity of confidential informants and information furnished by them in confidence.

(3) Information received in confidence from private individuals, firms, or organizations in connection with bids, proposals, trade secrets, patents, and reports of a financial, technical, or scientific nature.

(4) Information which is, or may reasonably be expected to be, connected with any pending or anticipated litigation before Federal and State courts or regulatory bodies.
(5) Advance information on proposed plans to procure, lease, or otherwise acquire or dispose of materials, real estate, facilities, or functions, which would provide undue or discriminatory advantage to private or personal interests.

(6) Preliminary documents relating to proposed plans or policy development when premature disclosure would adversely affect morale, efficiency, or discipline.

(7) Examination questions and answers to be used in training courses or in a determination of qualifications of candidates for employment, entrance to duty, and advancement or promotion.

(8) Information as to communications between members of the executive branch, the release of which could hamper the candor among such members in advising with each other which is essential to efficient and effective administration and the preservation of the proper separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches of the Government.

(9) Information disclosure of which would be of intelligence value to a potential enemy, where particular circumstances render it impracticable to technically "classify" the information under the provisions of Executive Order 10501.

(10) Information received from other Government agencies for official use of the Department of Defense, any further dissemination of which is controlled by the agency which provided such information.

(11) Atomic restricted data.

(12) Information furnished by friendly foreign nations to the United States in the course of cooperative defense activities the release of which, without their approval, could jeopardize the safety of such friendly foreign nations.