

GOVERNMENT CONTROLS OF AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS IN CHINA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the controls placed on American news correspondents by the Chinese government during an unprecedented period of transition in China's history. Correspondents were interviewed in Beijing to identify the controls they face; how they handle those controls and the effects those controls have on their work. The results show that despite a recent expansion of freedom for the foreign media in China, many restrictions, most of which manifest as official actions, often frustrate the work of correspondents. Authoritarian controls and attempts to influence foreign reporters through public relations manipulation reveal a campaign by the Chinese government to shape its global image through international news. The methods used by correspondents to handle controls indicate an effort to circumvent the restrictions and stem from a concept of the journalist's role in society that is at odds with authoritarian press models. Nonetheless, government controls and counteraction methods have enough of an impact on correspondents that news content may be affected. The data are considered within the context of China's economic and technological transformation, which is found to both help and hinder the government's control efforts and significantly aid the work of correspondents.

Chapter 1

Introduction

China's opening of its economic system over the past quarter century has radically transformed many aspects of Chinese society. As the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) loosens its grip over commerce and business, the possible effects of economic reform on the country's government-controlled media present an excellent opportunity for examining press transformation during a transitional period in the country's history.

Beginning with the communist takeover of China in 1949, the CCP has exerted a strong control over the mass media. Although authoritarian press models that conjure images of a thoroughly brainwashed public have fallen into disuse today, it is still widely acknowledged that the Chinese government creates one of the most oppressive environments in the world for journalism.

Despite China's expanding economic freedoms and its increasing engagement in the international community, the government still attempts to manage its image abroad and control what information its public consumes. These efforts can, at times, have dire consequences for reporters. Press restrictions have resulted in the detention, beating and even killing of journalists in China who are viewed as threatening state security by reporting on sensitive topics (Watts, 2007). Reprisals continue to be exacted against reporters both foreign and domestic, even though China relaxed its rules for foreign journalists last year in anticipation of the 2008 Summer Olympic Games ("FCCC 2007 Survey," 2007; Schiller, 2007; Spratt, 2007).

In general, foreign correspondents operate under a different set of rules in China than do the domestic media. Although foreign reporters are put under surveillance by Chinese security forces and face many other restrictions, they are more able than the domestic press to report on controversial topics and face less censorship (Kahn, 2006). Still, the experiences and controls encountered by foreign reporters deserve examination. While much attention is paid to the CCP's control over the domestic media, a consideration of its restrictions on the foreign press is helpful for understanding the production of international news and the Chinese government's attempts to control its image abroad.

As pressure to reform China's media environment has grown in recent years, the CCP has struggled to appear more open by relaxing controls while not allowing coverage of topics it views as threatening its hold on power (Zissis, 2006). Such pressure will only grow as the world press descends on Beijing in August 2008 to cover China's first Olympic Games. This unique point in China's history provides an excellent opportunity for examining the media environment for foreign correspondents currently working in China. Of particular interest are the controls experienced by American correspondents. Given the American media's stature in international news and the importance of Sino-U.S. relations, the influences on correspondents' work can have significant cultural and political ramifications.

How American correspondents operate under China's present-day media environment is a largely unexplored area. Many accounts of foreign correspondents in East Asia – and the controls they faced – emerged out of the early and mid 20th-century transitions in China (See MacKinnon & Friesen, 1987; Rand, 1995; Hohenberg, 1967),

but the experiences of today's American journalists in China have not been adequately documented. The importance of U.S.-China relations underscores the need for examining the influences on actors – including journalists – who play a role in the process. Furthermore, China's unprecedented economic transformation and increasing interaction with the U.S. and the rest of the world provides a unique point in history from which to update the China correspondent experience.

The primary purpose of this study is to examine how American journalists in China today experience and deal with government controls, as well as how those controls may affect their work. American correspondents in Beijing were interviewed in-depth to determine what controls, obstacles and dilemma they face, how they negotiate those controls and what effects the controls may have on their ability to accurately cover China. The aim is to provide a descriptive and analytical picture of the press freedom status for foreign correspondents working in China, and also contribute to the understanding of China's current media environment.

The ability of American correspondents to cover China openly and accurately is of critical importance for U.S. news consumers. As the two countries navigate an often precarious and increasingly interdependent relationship, accuracy, honesty and thoroughness in the information Americans receive about China is paramount in building cultural and political understanding.

The images of countries as presented in international news coverage are elemental in shaping the perceptions people have of particular nations (Xu & Parsons, 1997). These perceptions have the potential to exact short- and long-term ramifications in a policy environment often driven by public opinion. While this study does not attempt to draw

definitive links between news coverage and its impact on audiences or policy, its exploration of government controls over correspondents is largely motivated by the importance of international news in influencing cross-cultural understanding and policy directives.

However, the impact of news on the public and policy ultimately begins with the producers of news and the influences that shape their work (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). Among those influences, governments can be among the most powerful (Yang, 1995).

The main findings indicate that although government controls over correspondents have relaxed over the past two decades, significant restrictions persist that can have a negative impact on journalists' abilities to thoroughly cover China. A mixture of loosening restrictions and the continued use of controls in many circumstances support the view that China's current press model is transitional (Curran & Park, 2000) and could benefit from further reform. Furthermore, the current controls exacted against correspondents indicate a continuing campaign by the CCP to manage and influence China's image abroad, though the efficacy of this effort is questionable.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

The study of controls placed on current American correspondents by the Chinese government is demanded by a number of theoretical perspectives on international news as well as the need for a modern accounting of the challenges faced by foreign correspondents in China. The following sections will address these concerns as they relate to the current study.

First, the hierarchy of influence model, which provides the foundational theoretical basis for studying government controls over correspondents, will be discussed. Next, China's economic transformation, or marketization, intersects with the country's press model and has some impact on the government's handling of foreign correspondents. Finally, the importance of international news, particularly as it relates to influencing the public and foreign policy, will be considered as a reason for gauging the current level of freedom for American correspondents in China.

Hierarchy of Influences

The primary theoretical approach relevant to studying how government controls affect American correspondents in China is that of a "content influence" approach, or, more specifically, the factors that influence the ways in which media content is produced. While many media studies are concerned with the influence of content, the present research is more concerned with influences *on* content. It should be noted, however, that gauging a direct link between influences on reporters and a manifestation of those

influences in their work is beyond the scope of this study. Rather, the purpose here is to thoroughly examine one of the possible influences experienced by American journalists in China, which may lay the groundwork for further research into how that influence can be detected in the media content they produce.

The content influence approach was taken by Shoemaker and Reese (1996), who categorized influences in a hierarchical model. Termed the “hierarchy of influences,” the model is illustrated by concentric circles which represent various levels of factors that influence the content journalists create. At the center of the circle lies the individual, and from there the circles extend out to layers beyond the individual that have an impact on his work.

Government controls over media exist at the fourth, or “extramedia” level of the hierarchy (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996) and can be among the most influential among all factors that weigh upon a journalist’s work (Yang, 1995). At this level, the concern is not primarily with the journalists themselves or the organizations for which they work, but with factors external to the media and its workers. There are a number of factors at this level, three of which are relevant to this study: sources, government and other media organizations.

Although Shoemaker and Reese separate journalists’ sources and governments as extramedia influences, the two often intersect. Official sources, including those with political power, are the most likely sources to be used by journalists (Gans, 1979; Paletz & Entman, 1981). Non-official sources can also intersect with government when officials pressure them to avoid talking to the media.

The link between China's media and American reporters is significant because other media organizations are identified as an extramedia influence (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). Because China's press is controlled by the government, information it disseminates that is used in any way by American journalists in Beijing may function as a controlling influence. State-run media outlets in China may be simultaneously considered official sources and part of the government.

Government controls over media can be classified into two categories, those that result from laws and regulations, and those that manifest in actions taken by government officials (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). In democratic countries, the first category may include licensing of airwaves and rules such as the now defunct Fairness Doctrine in the U.S. In China, regulations extend much further and have included travel restrictions and prior approval of interview questions (See "Handbook," 2001).

Actions taken by government officials that serve as controls on the press can range from the subtlety of leaks and off-the-record interviews aimed at influencing reporting to the blatant and brash: arrests, deportations, beatings and murder. In Russia, government manipulation has taken the form of shutting off water and electricity to media facilities, engaging in litigation against offending organizations and utilizing institutional resources such as tax police and the customs agency to influence news (Koltsova, 2001).

But not all government attempts at media control are negative. Bribery, help with law enforcement, customs and visa problems and special access to sources of information can be extended to reporters to influence them (Koltsova, 2001). Such 'positive' strategies of control carry tacit implications that journalists not damage the relationship

by offending the benefactor. In China, potential for this expectation has the potential to be found in *guanxi*, the term given to China's system of social networks and reciprocity that is necessary to successfully complete various tasks (Gold, Guthrie & Wank, 2002). Additionally, 'positive' attempts of influence can manifest via engaging the press through public relations in a way that seeks to influence their reporting.

Theories of the Press and Marketization

Much of the recent literature on the media in China has focused on the effects of marketization and technology on government censorship, though rarely, if ever, has it looked at these developments from the perspective of foreign correspondents. Still, the overall evolution of China's economy and liberalization of its media raise the question of whether and how foreign reporters and the controls they face have been affected by these developments.

In studying controls of correspondents, a consideration of China's press system and its transition is necessary for at least two reasons. First, press system theories are based largely on political models and governments' interactions with and control of the press. Second, journalists are inevitably affected and influenced by the systems under which they work; as such, press systems theories help illuminate the relationship between individual journalists and governments (See Yang, 1995).

The four theories of the press model proposed by Siebert, Peterson and Schramm (1963) categorized various press systems throughout the world, which typically correspond to a country's political and economic model. Briefly, the four theories are: authoritarian, where the press is subordinated to a totalitarian regime; libertarian, where

the press is a free-wheeling marketplace; social responsibility, where the press is free but accepts some responsibility for performing essential societal functions; and communist, where the press is an instrument of the party and serves as its propaganda mouthpiece.

While China's press system historically fits best in either the authoritarian or communist model, such theories, with their view of an effective media indoctrination machine, have gradually given way in recent decades to other models as economic development and modernization wrest power from authoritarian regimes (Shi, 1997; Chan & Qiu, 2002). Perhaps nowhere is this shift more appropriate than in China, where economic growth stemming from a liberalization of the economy has continued at a breathtaking rate for some two decades. Revisions to the original four press theories place China in a transitional or mixed model, in which the media environment is characterized simultaneously by authoritarian censorship and expanding freedoms linked to marketization (Curran & Park, 2000).

Rosen (1989) identified economic liberalization as a centrifugal force in public opinion control in China. The decentralization, commercialization, privatization and globalization of China's economy all contribute to the "loss of social control by the state" (p. 169). The media began gaining a certain level of autonomy in the 1980's as the Chinese government started encouraging economic reform, which in turn led to a shift in content away from solely CCP political news to entertainment and soft news (Chan & Qiu, 2002).

Similarly, Lynch (1999) argued that technological development, administrative fragmentation and property rights reform have eroded Beijing's ability to control the media and thus the minds of Chinese citizens. The growth of the Internet in China poses

a particularly vexing problem for the CCP as it seeks to maintain control over media content. As Harwit and Clark (2001) pointed out, web sites deemed objectionable by the government can be fairly easily accessed through anonymous web browsing and can grow so numerous as to prevent them from being tracked. In the meantime, the Internet has been identified as an important tool for foreign correspondents. One study revealed that nearly two-thirds of foreign correspondents use the Internet to find sources and over three-fourths said the Internet makes it easier for them to get background information (Wu & Hamilton, 2004).

Still, the extent to which market reforms and technology have transformed the Chinese media environment is certainly limited enough to preclude completely divorcing its press system from the authoritarian or communist frameworks. As Calvocoressi (1980) wrote, “the censor is a discredited but not extinct being” (p. 15). Hence the characterization of China’s current press system status as mixed or transitional.

Though its ability to propagandize the masses has weakened, the Chinese government continues to restrict the media to further its goals and censor, sometimes through drastic measures, alternative media voices (Luther and Zhou, 2005; Chen, 2005). Topics considered sensitive by the CCP, such as the 2003 SARS outbreak and political news, are the most likely to be targeted for censorship (Zhang, 1993; Rowen, 2006).

Although Chan & Qiu (2002) identified a net gain in press freedoms in China since the 1980’s, they also cited uneven patterns of media reform, noting that political news and media outlets in Beijing are still tightly controlled (p. 35). As such, the authors characterized the state of the media in China as a “partially liberalized authoritarian” system (p. 36).

Economic liberalization alone has not proven to be a phenomenon that results in comprehensive media freedoms (Zhang, 1993). Even in post-Soviet Russia, the government continued to exert influence and control over that country's media (Jensen, 1993), which indicates that when regimes move away from authoritarian or communist political and economic systems, press controls may persist. In China, "state control predominates," particularly when political issues are involved (Curran & Park, 2000).

While most studies have focused on Chinese media outlets in examining the effects of modernization and economic reform on the press system, the long history of China's restrictions on American reporters demands an investigation into their current experiences and access to information in relation to marketization.

Further, the libertarian and social responsibility press models from which American correspondents view the role of the press are in tension with the authoritarian elements of China's model. Journalism in China has a nearly sixty-year legacy of being a mouthpiece for the Communist Party, though a new philosophy of independence and professionalism is emerging and calls for more press freedom have risen in recent years (Pan & Chan, 2003; Zhao, 1998).

American journalists, on the other hand, have traditionally approached their role as that of a watchdog, taking an adversarial position against government and corruption in the promotion of democracy (Berger, 2000). These differing conceptions of the role of journalism in society present an ideological as well as practical challenge for American journalists in China, where they must pursue a journalistic ideology that is sometimes at odds with the interests of the CCP (See Campbell, 2004, pp. 50-53). The practical challenge that emerges from this dichotomy stems from the phenomenon that the more

critical journalists are of government, the more government will try to control media (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996).

Though attempting to prove any definitive link between marketization and changes in the press is beyond the scope of this study, its partial aim is to discover some insight into how current American reporters have been affected by China's rapid economic and technological changes, as well as what impact these changes have had on the government controls they face. This allows for some conclusions to be drawn about China's current press model, as well as the degree to which marketization and technology affect the work of correspondents.

The Importance of Foreign News

Many factors shape news content. The conceptions that journalists have of their role in society, along with government controls and other factors of influence, including cultural values, can have an impact (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; Flintoff, 2001).

Although examining the content of news is outside the scope of this study, influences over foreign correspondents and their work ultimately matter because of the importance of that content.

Foreign correspondents, by the very work they do, play an arguably powerful role in shaping how news consumers and publics view other countries, governments and people and in influencing foreign policy (Cohen, 1963; Wu & Hamilton, 2004). The American media is particularly powerful, as its international coverage is consumed by influential professionals and leaders around the world (Horvat, 2001). Any controls placed over reporters' work, therefore, may have an indirect effect in influencing mass

opinion as well as policy, just as press freedom has been shown to reduce the frequency and severity of international conflict (Van Belle, 2000).

If the social construction of reality theory, which posits that reality is not discovered but created by societies, is to be believed, foreign reporting functions to create meanings related to what is being covered (Dell'Orto, 2002, p. 2). Dell'Orto applied this theory to examine the meanings that early U.S. correspondents created for their readers.

However, even if one does not accept that reality is constructed but is instead reflected in human communication, the way in which that reality is presented nonetheless falls prey to fallible human judgment. Either way, because most of what the public knows about other cultures and countries comes to them second-hand through the news, reporters no doubt play a role in creating and shaping what Dell'Orto (2002) called a "common sense" among society regarding foreign countries (p. 3).

Hannerz (2004) was motivated by essentially the same theoretical concern in his study of foreign correspondents. With the world becoming more interconnected through the spread of modern technology, international travel, educational exchange and commerce, foreign correspondents also play a role in what Hannerz termed "today's globalization of consciousness" (p. 2). News organizations are to foster this consciousness and create a cosmopolitanism that makes audiences "feel...at home in the world" (p. 37) – a duty upon which Hannerz placed great weight.

One possible outcome of international reporting extends beyond simply a shaping of societal opinion: "...it is plausible that the evolution of a common understanding of foreign cultures influence[s] the evolution of U.S. foreign policies, and vice versa" (Dell'Orto, 2002, p.3). As Malek & Wiegand (1997) write, the "foreign correspondent is

the gatekeeper of information about foreign events and issues involving American foreign policy” (p. 12). Various scholars have found that the media have some ability to set the foreign policy agenda (Benton and Frazier, 1976; Cook, et al, 1983).

Hess (1996) noted that up until the Vietnam War, foreign policy was directed by elites, and the attitudes of the masses played only a small role in the process. But ever since television images of wounded and dead American soldiers in Southeast Asia shocked viewers in the 1960’s and 70’s, news coverage of overseas events has sometimes had a strong impact on the public, which can leverage its collective attitude and voting power to influence policy. Even prior to the impact of this “living-room war,” Cohen (1963) wrote that the press have “become an integral factor in the process of foreign policy-making” (Qtd. in Malek & Wiegand, 1997).

Although the focus of the present research is not primarily to determine how well American reporters in China reflect that country’s reality in their reporting, or even to identify what realities their reporting creates or reflects, the importance of the role that correspondents play in shaping a common understanding and foreign policy underscores the need to examine the degree to which government controls and censorship may impinge on their ability to do so. It is beyond the scope of this study to gauge any results that foreign correspondence may have on audience opinion or policy. In other words, the focus here is not aimed toward the product created by foreign correspondents in China or its possible effects, but rather what Reese (2001) called “media sociology,” defined as “those forces which set the media’s agenda” (p. 174). But because the importance of the potential effects of news is so great, the production of that news is also a concern.

It is well-established that the CCP has aimed to shape its internal image by controlling the domestic media (Chang, 1989; Houn, 1961). The Chinese government's history of also restricting foreign correspondents reveals that the leadership has also had some grasp of global media diplomacy, displayed in their attempts to control the flow of information into and out of the country.

In the "information age," what Ebo (1997) termed "media diplomacy" is a critical tool nations use to enhance their global images (p. 43). In fact, he went so far as to say that communicating a national image to the world through the media has to some degree superseded military power as the primary factor in constructing the global political hierarchy (p. 44). As Ebo (1997) wrote, "...the international image of a nation as articulated in the *international media* is an important assessment of the acceptance or impact of a nation's foreign policy in the global arena" (p. 47, emphasis added).

One example of an attempt to shape a country's image abroad through controlling foreign media occurred in South Africa in the 1980's. Seeking to present itself as a champion of Western values and concerned that its issues were not properly understood by the world, South Africa accepted a large number of foreign correspondents, who were provided with resources such as satellite uplinks for video distribution (Giffard & Cohen, 1989). This open-arms stance to the foreign press was in and of itself an attempt at media diplomacy. But when race-related violence broke out, the government clamped down on the foreign (and domestic) media, blasting correspondents for their coverage, revoking their accreditations, expelling some reporters and jailing others, as well as implementing pre-publication censorship and restricting access to communication equipment (Giffard & Cohen, 1989). Although the efforts failed to curb reporting on the violence, they

illustrate an example of government controls of foreign correspondents in an attempt to shape a country's image abroad.

In China, such global image-making has manifested in attempts to control its foreign correspondents as well, though historically these efforts have not been positive in nature. While Zhou Enlai, China's premier from 1949 to 1976 has been credited for transforming the perception of China's foreign policy in the United States through his press interviews (Oskenberg, 1994, p. 208), more recent comments from a foreign correspondent indicate that on the whole, China views the press as an adversary. An Indian reporter said China was missing an opportunity to improve its image abroad as a "responsible world power" by distrusting the press ("FCCC 2007 Survey," 2007, p. 6).

Foreign correspondents in China are also influential within China (Oskenberg, 1994). Their reporting has at various times raised internal alarm over issues ignored or obscured by the domestic press, including the 1978-79 Democracy Wall movement, Tiananmen Square protests and the SARS outbreak (Oskenberg, 1994; Dong, 2005). Reporting on China by foreigners is available to Chinese leaders and a privileged elite and may be seen as more informative on internal developments than the domestic press. Consequently, foreign correspondents in China are prime targets for manipulation (Oskenberg, 1994).

However, the relationship between the media, policy and the public is complex and under transition. With the expansion of the Internet and the increasing use of foreign nationals as international reporters, the power that "traditional" foreign correspondents once had may be diminishing (Hamilton & Jenner, 2003). At the same time, stationing

reporters overseas is increasingly viewed by media companies as unnecessary and foreign bureaus are in decline (Rieder, 2007).

Furthermore, there is disagreement among scholars about whether the press play a role in influencing foreign policy, or instead simply reflect the policy directives of their respective governments (Chang, 1988) and in some cases are manipulated into serving as propagandists for the elite (Malek & Wiegand, 1997; Herman, 1993). In this view, governments provide information to the media that reflects a particular viewpoint, and because many foreign affairs issues are complex and difficult to identify, reporters can provide little in the way of an opposing perspective.

The concern of this research is not with arguing either side of this debate. Correspondents may indeed experience attempts by their host governments and cultures to control their work, while simultaneously reflecting the positions of their native culture and government in their reporting. Meanwhile, they also play an influential role themselves. What is important for this research, however, is the interaction of China's press controls with reporters' work, which may trickle down to influence their audiences and policy.

Restricting foreign correspondents can have a detrimental effect on international relations. First, persecution of journalists typically draws condemnation from countries that value a free press, as well as from groups such as Reporters Without Borders. But a deeper and more inconspicuous effect is that citizens may not gain an accurate picture of the people, culture and governments of other countries.

As already noted, public perceptions of countries are shaped largely by how those countries are presented in news coverage (Xu & Parsons, 1997). The importance of these

perceptions is born out of a participatory political system in which the public can have some sway over foreign policy directives. If correspondents' work is restricted, the news that is available to the public may give them a skewed perception of reality. Dell'Orto cited research that the less information that is available to people, the more likely they are to make ill-informed judgments regarding foreign cultures: either they are an "affluent ally" or a "poor enemy" (Dell'Orto, 2002, p. 11). In other cases, government censorship has contributed to the failure of foreign correspondents to accurately report important events, such as the Soviet famine of 1932-33 (Lyons, 1971). Controls over the press have also been found to affect the quality of news and may impede audiences from obtaining a clear picture of other countries (Yang, 1995).

With globalization characterizing the new world order and the United States' relations with a rising China growing in significance, accurate foreign news coverage for the American consumer, and the world, is of paramount importance. Historically the two countries' relationship has been marked by a lack of understanding that is conveyed partly through the press (Giles, Snyder & DeLisle, 2001). Therefore, a glimpse into factors that affect how well American foreign correspondents are able to create accurate coverage is necessary. This is not to in any way diminish the experiences of correspondents from other countries. Rather, the stature of both the U.S. and China in the global community draws attention to every aspect of their relations, including the media.

Defining 'Control'

Defining what is meant by 'control' in this study is important because disagreement on what qualifies as control may arise between reasonable parties. The

definition of control in this study is an amalgamation of Koltsova's (2001) definition of "practices of power" and the examples of control listed by the Foreign Correspondents Club of China.

Drawing from Koltsova's definition, control refers to "actions of imposing agents' will...to media producers or directly to the final media product" (p. 319). Agents here are defined as the government of China and any of its affiliated institutions and personnel, including police. In the FCCC's member surveys about government controls in China, several useful examples are provided that form a baseline of control actions. These include: violence against correspondent; violence against Chinese staff; violence against sources; intimidation of sources; being followed by authorities; reprimand by authorities; questioning of staff by authorities at or near scene of a story; being questioned by authorities in an intimidating manner; destruction of journalistic materials; detention; interception of communications; denial of access to public areas; and being subjected to other obstacles not in keeping with international practices ("FCCC 2007 Survey," 2007). Any actions described by the participants which fall under these examples are considered government control, assuming the action was taken by a government entity.

Synthesizing Theories

The theoretical framework of this study provides both justification for and guidance in examining how American correspondents in China experience and deal with controls placed on their work by China's government.

The hierarchy of influences provides a theoretical model which identifies government control over the press as an extramedia influence on news worthy of comprehensive examination.

Press system theories, first divided into four categories and later revised and expanded, offer an explanation for the systems under which journalists work and point to the use of controls under communist, authoritarian, transitional and mixed systems. Furthermore, the identification of a country's press model can be aided by knowledge of the controls journalists face. China's present economic and societal transformation is of an unprecedented nature such that it should be considered when studying correspondents currently working in China.

Finally, the effects of controls on American reporters in China is important for at least two reasons: the influence of international news in affecting public opinion and policy and the deepening of Sino-American relations within the context of a globalizing world and China's political and economic ascendance. Controls also illuminate the global media diplomacy of governments and are useful in this study for examining the CCP's current efforts in this realm.

Chapter 3

Historical Overview of American Correspondents in China

The literature identifies a long and complex relationship between American reporters and the Chinese government, as well as a current transitional state (as discussed in the previous chapter) in China that demands a current accounting of foreign correspondents' experiences, challenges and methods, which this study attempts to at least partially provide.

China has a rather long history of government control and censorship over foreign correspondents, as well as a few occasions of using them as public relations tools, though this was sometimes within the will of the reporters, who often chose sides in China's politics prior to the communist takeover (Rand, 1995).

Many American journalists came to China in early to mid 20th-century to cover Chiang Kai-Shek's Nationalist revolution and war (Rand, 1995). Correspondents often held obvious sympathies for either the Communists or Nationalists (Rand, p. 142) and were sometimes swayed by the propaganda war between the two factions. However, in order to obtain more accurate information, reporters often looked instead to intellectuals and other reporters as sources (MacKinnon & Friesen, 1987, pp. 81-85, 92-93).

Press controls existed in the country even well before Mao Zedong's Chinese Communist Party took control, and these restrictions were often exacerbated by intermittent war. Mao's rival, Chiang Kai-Shek, forbade any publication about the Communist guerillas in the 1930's and prevented news of his ceding Chinese territories to Japan from being sent overseas (Rand, 1995, p. 147). During the Second Chinese-

Japanese War, every dispatch had to be routed through the government's Ministry of Information (headed by Hollington Tong, a University of Missouri-trained journalist), where American and Chinese censors filtered the news (MacKinnon & Friesen, 1987). A former University of Missouri journalism professor, Maurice Votaw, "killed anything critical of the Kuomintang that came across his desk" (p. Rand, 1995, p. 196).

The reporting environment was lamented by *Time* magazine journalist Teddy White, who indicated self-censorship was also prevalent: "I think I know more about what is happening in this country than any man in town...but it is impossible to make use of this knowledge...we can't say what we know today because it may injure people whom we are trying to help" (Rand, 1995, p. 206). Self-censorship is not always wholly voluntary, particularly when authorities create a situation in which it is dangerous for reporters to disseminate the truth (Calvocoressi, 1980).

During the 1930's, American reporters were kept under virtual house arrest in the provincial capital of Chongqing. "For most of the reporters, it was a miserable situation, to be ever under the watchful eye of...spies from Chiang Kai-shek's secret service, often unable to obtain the funds necessary to hire translators or researchers, and fed doctored news from the [Ministry of Information]" (Rand, 1995, p. 208).

Aside from censorship, poor living conditions, disease and the ravages of war made life for American correspondents difficult. Rand (1995) noted the restrictions placed on journalists' travels in the 1930's and 1940's as well as the difficulty of accessing Chongqing. Reporters had to work for a major American outlet and obtain permission from the government to report in the city. If this hurdle was cleared, they had to take a dangerous flight from Hong Kong (Rand, 1995, p. 192). Although the reporters

could have only about two pounds of luggage for the trip, their own weight was not included in the restriction, which meant travelers would arrive wearing several layers of clothing. Many reporters suffered from syphilis, tuberculosis, dysentery or malaria (Rand, 1995, p. 207).

In the 1930's, legendary American journalist Edgar Snow made a journey into "Red" territory at the behest of a U.S. foreign service worker. The trip spawned Snow's book *Red Star Over China*, in which he tells the story of the early Chinese Communist movement. *Red Star Over China* includes many anecdotes of Snow's experience in reporting the story, including Mao's attempts to propagandize and yet not "[imposing] any censorship on me, in either my writing or my photography" (Snow, 1938, p. 96).

However, Rand (1995) notes that in Snow's meetings with Mao, he would write down the Communist leader's responses, have them translated to Chinese and hand them over to Mao for correction (p. 161). Given the sympathy Snow had for the Communist movement, Mao in many ways took advantage of the journalist to present a positive image of his campaign to a large audience (Rand, 1995, p. 158).

After the Revolution

Following the 1949 Communist takeover of China, correspondents for American news organizations left the country and generally were not allowed to return, though some reentered under false pretenses (Hohenberg, 1967, p. 216). This exodus was perhaps ironic, given American Edgar Snow's instrumental role in publicizing Mao's movement to the world.

Correspondents reported on China from Hong Kong and Tokyo, monitoring the New China News Agency (Xinhua), Radio Peking and communicating with the Japanese embassies for information (Hohenberg, 1967, p. 220). Reporters in Hong Kong also relied on a daily roundup of China's mainland press that was issued by the U.S. consulate. Often, the voluminous reports contained nothing newsworthy (Hohenberg, 1967, p. 226-230). This approach sometimes caused tension between reporters and editors, who expected their correspondents to go out and "dig" for stories, "although where a reporter could 'dig' in Tokyo, other than in documents, no one could say" (Hohenberg, 1967, p. 222).

In Hong Kong, the situation was much the same: anyone who desired to gain the proper background and context for reporting on Communist China had to devote a significant amount of time to research and reading, which decreased the likelihood of news organizations sending reporters there (Hohenberg, 1967, p. 222). Government control of news in Hong Kong did not weigh heavily on foreign correspondents, although the Government Information Office, which controlled the local media, also kept an eye on foreign reporters.

During the 1950's and 60's, several Western freelancers published reports about China, but they were written under strict surveillance and guided tours (Hohenberg, 1967, p. 217; Bloodworth, 1956). During such visits, the freelancers had to meet with the press department of the Foreign Affairs Ministry and provide an itinerary of their planned travels, including a list of interview subjects and questions (Bloodworth, 1956, p. 2). Foreign reporters in China were not allowed to move freely in the country during periods of the 1960's when millions of Chinese starved to death (Oskenberg, 1994).

Western reporters stationed in Peking (none of whom were American due to the United States' siding with the defeated Nationalists) had no more than government handouts from which to write their stories, as interviews, press conferences and briefings were unheard of. Much of the distributed material was simply propaganda, which meant journalists had to guess at its significance (Hohenberg, 1967, pp. 235-38).

Western reporters who did cover the country during the years following the Communist takeover were mostly from European and Canadian outlets and knew that any critical reporting could result in deportation (Hohenberg, p. 218-19). But American correspondents who wanted to enter China were not always restricted by the Chinese government. The U.S. State Department barred a group of reporters from visiting Peking at China's invitation in 1956. When the restrictions were later lifted, China had withdrawn its offer.

Protecting sources was important for the foreign correspondent. As Hohenberg (1967) writes, one reporter wrote about his sources of information early on in his stay in Hong Kong and found that, after publication, none of them were willing to cooperate with him for several months. Sources varied widely in both their socioeconomic status and could frequently influence reporters to release sensational stories that did not stand up to editorial scrutiny (Hohenberg, p. 224).

Cultural differences also limited correspondents' work in China. Takashi Oka, who was a Japanese-born American citizen reporting from Hong Kong for the *Christian Science Monitor*, wrote that since he was not a native Chinese, he did not feel comfortable contacting Chinese people and talking to them. "If I myself had been born and raised in China...it might have been different," he wrote (Hohenberg, 1967, p. 231).

The language barrier would also pose problems, which required most interviews done by freelancers to be filtered through translators provided by the government (Bloodworth, 1956, p. 2).

Many American reporters in China have relied on Chinese assistants for not only translation, but also to “illuminate the conditions in the country, the public mood, and political attitudes” (Oskenberg, 1994, p. 217). Yet historically, such assistants were agents of or informants to the government, adding another layer of control over the journalists’ work (Oskenberg, 1994). The cultural barrier, combined with the inefficacy of government spokespeople, pushed American reporters to rely more on American and pro-American Chinese sources, such as diplomats, intellectuals, teachers and dissidents (Oskenberg, 1994).

Following Normalized Relations

Although Hannerz (2004) did not focus solely on China, his anthropological study of foreign correspondents across the globe stands nearly alone in documenting the more recent practices and challenges of these reporters and editors. His account touches briefly on the experiences of foreign correspondents in China at various points during the past three decades.

Controls on Western journalists in China persisted in the 1970’s. Foreign correspondents in Beijing were confined to a walled living quarters, were not allowed to make contacts and were limited to only three Chinese publications per day (Hannerz, 2004, p. 157). But, a slight shift in the level of censorship began to appear late in the decade as a result of détente with the U.S. and the rise of technology.

After China's opening-up and normalizing relations with the U.S., Hannerz (2004) found that technology and lax enforcement of laws began to undermine CCP censorship. A Swedish correspondent in Beijing reported that he might be told by an official that a story on Tibet had not " 'contributed to understanding and friendship between the peoples' " (Hannerz, 2004, p. 171), but said the government's many restrictions on correspondents were not uniformly or successfully enforced. Hannerz also gave the example of a Chinese student in Texas who tipped off CBS News to a skirmish in the run-up to the Tiananmen Square massacre via fax as proof that technology was limiting to censorship efforts (p. 172). During the Tiananmen incident, the government shut down the transmission facilities of foreign broadcasters, but correspondents circumvented this by smuggling film out of the country via Hong Kong (p. 209).

As the Internet proliferates in China today, controlling the flow of information is becoming increasingly difficult for the CCP, though its efforts are not lacking (Hannerz, 2004, pp. 196-97; Zhang, 2006; Committee to Protect Journalists, 2006). As the Swedish reporter noted, the story of a dam burst in the 1970's that killed 230,000 people in China took 20 years to get out; today, the Internet makes such cover-ups nearly impossible (Hannerz, 2004, pp. 196-97).

A recent survey of foreign correspondents in China showed that from their perspective, China has yet to sufficiently relax its controls over foreign reporters despite the Olympics rule change. Forty percent of respondents reported experiencing some interference with their work since the in-country travel rule was lifted and 95 percent said reporting conditions in China do not meet "international standards" ("FCCC 2007 Survey," 2007). In the meantime, the official Chinese press ran at least one story

claiming that due to the new rules for foreign reporters, the foreign media were enjoying unprecedented access and that there had been fewer complaints from foreign correspondents (“FCCC 2007 Survey,” 2007, p. 7).

Participants in the survey cited hundreds of instances of various controls, including intimidation of sources, detentions, surveillance, reprimands and violence against correspondents (“FCCC 2007 Survey,” 2007). The inclusion of intimidation of sources in those actions considered to be restrictive is important because it indicates not all forms of control over foreign reporters in China are directed at the reporters themselves. Elsewhere, one foreign correspondent in China recently reported being questioned by police, having his office computer broken into and his communications and travel surveilled for trying to write about a man accused of stealing from the government (August, 2007).

Finally, China has drafted extensive regulations governing the accreditation process as well as reporting activities of foreign correspondents, which this study will consider in a comparative sense (See “Handbook,” 2001; “Guidelines,” 2003; “Regulations Concerning Foreign Journalists,” 2003; and “Regulations on Reporting Activities,” 2006). That is, the rules for correspondents are compared with participants’ experiences of their implementation or lack thereof. Regardless of the implementation, however, the very existence of regulations that place restrictions on what correspondents can report, though vague, imply a desire to control their work.

Chapter 4

Methodology

Categories of Research

The qualitative methods used in this study were aimed at exploring three categories of research about American correspondents and the government controls they face. The categories stem from the existing theoretical and historical literature and are as follows.

First, the nature of current government controls, whether via official regulations or government action (Shoemaker & Reese, 1994), deserves exploration as well as some comparison with past experience. This study identifies the primary controls American correspondents currently face and have encountered in the recent past, as well as the implementation of China's formal rules for correspondents. The identification of controls is useful in analyzing the media diplomacy intentions of the CCP. Though an exploration of the nature of the controls is paramount, some historical comparison is useful for placing the present situation within a wider context. More specifically, correspondents' experiences with information disseminated through the government, including press conferences and state news, as well as the cultivation of sources within the government in current-day China, deserve deeper exploration.

Second, the methods correspondents use to report in China in light of the controls demand attention, especially considering they are not sufficiently explored in the existing literature. Counteraction methods also help to illuminate the ideological conflicts between correspondents and the Chinese government regarding the role of the press in

society. This category includes specific actions taken to navigate or avoid controls, as well as the information sources available to reporters and the quality and development of those sources. The use of assistants is also important given their history of working as agents of control.

Third, the effects of both controls and the methods used to counteract them on correspondents' work demand attention given the need for an updated accounting of China-foreign press relations and the importance of foreign news. Within this category lies the question of how China's current point in history, especially considering its recent market reforms and the spread of technology, affects the work of correspondents as well as the government's control efforts. From a theoretical standpoint, one of the effects of controls is that an exploration thereof helps in contributing to the categorization of China's current press model, which is elucidated by a consideration of marketization and technological developments.

Methods

In order to obtain a thorough accounting of the challenges and practices of present-day American journalists in China, interacting with these professionals on-site is of the utmost importance. Therefore, in-depth face-to-face interviews of correspondents in Beijing were the primary method used in this study. This allowed for deeper explanation than would a structured survey, though the interviews generally followed a set of questions designed to elicit responses that would contribute to the research categories.

A total of eight American correspondents working in Beijing were interviewed. Regrettably, a larger participant pool could not be obtained within the timeframe of the data collection. This was due mostly to a low response rate to inquiries as well as difficulties in arranging interviews with busy reporters. The demands of their work were also particularly heavy during part of the research timeframe due to the major news event of unprecedented rioting in Tibet.

The sample size admittedly restricts the degree to which participants' experiences can be generalized to a larger population; however, secondary data generally reflect participant responses and therefore the information gathered can be accepted as reliable. The number of participants interviewed was still sufficient to allow for comparisons between individual experiences, thus helping to preclude the development of themes or patterns that emerged from only one or two reporters. Of course, many of the specific examples provided are unique to only one participant, but are included to illustrate a control or method of counteraction.

The participants work or freelance for media outlets based in the U.S. and some had worked for several different organizations over their time in China. In defining "American" correspondent, only reporters performing work for a qualifying outlet who were native-born citizens of the U.S. were interviewed, without regard to sex, race, religion or any other characteristic not related to country of origin.

The focus on only American correspondents working for U.S. media serves two purposes. First, it creates a selection in which participants generally have similar cultural backgrounds, which aids in comparing competing conceptions of the journalists' role in society. Specifically, what a participant is likely to consider a 'control' over their work

will generally fall within a coherent framework of possibilities if the participants generally share a similar view of press-government relations. This helps to avoid a debate over what constitutes control and instead directs the focus on the description and implications of control.

Second, a focus only on American media in China stems partly from the importance of the two countries' relationship within a global context. As mentioned earlier, the U.S. is the world's only remaining superpower, but China is widely regarded as becoming the next. Therefore the American media's role is naturally more profound than would be an inclusion of all 'Western' media when considering the possible effects of news coverage on bilateral relations.

Although the selection was targeted (and thus, not random), it still provided the proper kind and amount of data to create a starting point in understanding how American journalists encounter government controls in China. The selection included only reporters currently working in Beijing, but many of the participants in the study worked in other parts of China, both on long-term assignments and for shorter, specific projects, and could therefore provide relevant data for a wider geographic scope than only Beijing.

The selection process of participants involved a combination of approaches. First, collaboration with the Foreign Correspondents Club of China in contacting members for participation resulted in the inclusion of three subjects. Other reporters were contacted based on the recommendations of other participants, while still others were found through their published work.

To help ensure candid interviews, anonymity was offered to each subject who consented to be interviewed. Consent was sought first by contacting reporters via email

to request their participation. Those who gave initial consent were presented, before being interviewed, with an official consent form outlining their rights, including anonymity and withdrawal, as a research subject.

As Fontana and Frey (1994) noted, deciding how to present oneself, gaining participants' trust and establishing rapport are important elements of effective unstructured interviewing. In each case, I presented myself to the research subjects as a student researcher and made clear that the data I sought would be published in a written thesis. Given the time constraints on the participants, a deep level of trust and familiarity that can only be obtained through significant levels of varied interaction was difficult to achieve. Nonetheless, all participants were cooperative and appeared to be forthright and open in their responses.

Most of the interviews were recorded digitally and transcribed to guarantee data accuracy. Written notes were also taken for each interview. This approach was preferred to interviewing without notes in order to highlight important themes and topics and it also aided in referencing these topics afterwards in the transcriptions. Although Hannerz (2004) conducted his anthropological study of foreign correspondents without notes or recording devices, and simply ducked away immediately following an interview to scribble down important findings, such an approach is not considered to lend itself to thorough or accurate data. This is not a disparagement of such a method, but simply an acknowledgement that recall of conversations is often not reliable enough to forgo all forms of recording and note-taking. Due to unforeseen circumstances, one interview was not recorded digitally.

Interviews ranged anywhere from 45 minutes to nearly two hours, with the majority lasting about 1.5 hours. In most cases, this amount of time was sufficient to cover each interview question. As such, follow-up interviews were not viewed as necessary.

The questions covered in each interview are found in the appendix table, categorized by the main research topics: the government controls American reporters face in China, how they respond to the controls and how controls affect their work. The nature of some questions and the information they elicited sometimes overlapped with two or more categories. Still, they have been placed here in the category that most closely fits their purpose.

The questions were often presented to participants in a more conversational format during the interviews than they appear in the appendix. In some cases, a question may not have been asked if the participant had already thoroughly discussed the topic when responding to another question. Also, frequently a question that does not appear in the appendix was asked to gain further details about a specific example in a response, or to obtain clarification. Nonetheless, each interview roughly followed the table in the appendix and sought to investigate the three main categories. Participants were given some leeway in directing the conversation, as long as what they were saying was pertinent to contributing to the research categories.

As recommended by Silverman (2005), much of the data analysis was conducted while the data-gathering process was still underway. Not only did this lighten the burden of the analysis by spreading it out over time, it also aided in quickly assimilating subsequent interview responses into the larger picture that was taking shape.

The transcripts were analyzed to identify the main methods the Chinese government uses to control American correspondents, the primary methods used to deal with those controls and the effects that each had on the participants' ability to accurately and thoroughly cover China. The controls and methods that were most often emphasized by participants are those that have been included in the results. When appropriate, secondary data is used to note the existence of experiences that differ from those of the participants, though the primary data composes the bulk of the findings.

The process for performing the data reduction was centered on the themes or patterns most explicated by the participants and relevant examples, with the aim of providing a picture of American correspondents' present-day experiences in China with a primary focus on government controls over their work. The findings are presented in an analytical and interpretative fashion, aiming for 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) and, when appropriate, in context and comparison with historical experiences as revealed in the literature. The purpose is to delve as deeply as possible into the practices and challenges of American correspondents in China to determine the level of press control in light of the technological and economic forces at play, and to provide a starting point for further research as to whether the present situation for these reporters may or may not be conducive to an accurate cross-cultural discourse in the media.

Limitations

The major limitations imposed by the methods used in this study were access to correspondents, which limited the total number of interviews conducted. Access to relevant participants was sometimes difficult to obtain given the demands placed on them

by their work, especially during a time when major news was breaking. Communicating with participants to obtain their consent was often challenging, as was finding ample time to conduct the interviews. The majority of inquiries sent went unanswered or were politely declined. Ultimately, this limited the number of participants to a less-than-optimal number.

However, the number of participants should not be overstated as a weakness given that many foreign correspondents face controls similar to those identified by the participants. Furthermore, participants' responses generally did not contradict findings that draw from a larger sample size (See "FCCC 2007 Survey," 2007). The data provided by correspondents in this study was ample enough to draw some conclusions about the broader issues of current press controls, technology, marketization and reporters' practices and challenges. While the possibility of varying or even contradictory data in other cases is recognized, the interviews nonetheless resulted in a rich set of data from which an understanding of American correspondents' experiences in China can begin to take shape. This understanding does, without doubt, reveal opportunities for further research and investigation.

Chapter 5

Forms of Government Control: Laws, Regulations and Actions

This chapter is divided into three parts, the first two following the division of government controls into laws/regulations and official actions (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). First, the formal laws and regulations for foreign correspondents in China are covered and compared with participants' experiences related to the enforcement of these rules. Admittedly, a comparison of regulations to actions blurs the line between the two categories, but such is the reality of correspondence in China (and probably elsewhere).

Second, the official action controls faced by correspondents are explored, as well as a discussion of their experience in dealing with the Chinese government as a source of news and information. The final section briefly summarizes the controls of both categories and presents them in a tabular format.

Laws and Regulations Controlling Correspondents in China

China has crafted extensive rules and regulations for foreign correspondents, which if followed and enforced precisely could be considered press controls, or at the very least a bureaucratic burden. The existence of regulations written specifically for journalists that include guidelines on how they are to conduct their work indicates a formal intent to restrict and manage foreign correspondents.

However, the written regulations are not always enforced consistently in China and appear to be loosening in many respects. American correspondents today may encounter varying applications of the rules, depending on a number of factors, including

their location, what kind of reporting they are attempting and even the individual official involved. Below, the written regulations for foreign correspondents will be examined and compared with reporters' experiences of their enforcement.

Becoming a correspondent. To send a reporter to China or to set up a bureau, foreign correspondents' news agencies must apply to the Information Department of the Foreign Affairs Ministry, which is "the competent authority in charge of foreign reporters in China" ("Regulations Concerning Foreign Journalists," 2003, Article 4). This process can be somewhat time-consuming and involves supplying the department with documentation such as a resume, profile of the media organization and "credentials or documents identifying the journalist as a professional journalist" ("Guidelines," 2003), which in most cases involves samples of their previous writing. However, accreditation of foreign reporters is not a practice unique to China and by itself should be considered more of a bureaucratic hurdle rather than a control.

Nonetheless, participants indicated that the accreditation process has historically been used by the Chinese government as a means to control the number and nature of foreign journalists allowed into the country. In the past, according to two veteran correspondents, the government strictly limited the number of reporters a foreign outlet could station in China, and the process for a news agency that wanted to increase its presence was arduous, involving many meetings between the agency and government officials.

One participant joined a news agency to replace a woman who was on leave. However, he said the government did not understand the situation, as it still counted the woman toward the outlet's total number of reporters. The reporter was given only a

temporary journalist visa and therefore could not find permanent accommodation for several months until his visa type was changed.

While most participants indicated the accreditation application process is not difficult, it can sometimes take several months to complete, longer if setting up a bureau. Participants generally had little trouble obtaining accreditation, though a few cited some instances of minor problems.

Participants indicated that the process has been used by authorities to vet the ideological views of correspondents. One reporter noted on her resume when applying that she had previously covered the “Tiananmen Square massacre.” The government said there was a “problem” with some of the language on her resume, though the offending language was not explicitly identified. The reporter replaced “massacre” with “incident” and her application was approved. Another participant told the story of a colleague who had previously written about Falun Gong from the U.S. When he applied for a position in China, he was first questioned in-person by authorities who were concerned that his reporting would take a similar tack in China.

Other problems with accreditation may stem from an ineffective bureaucracy. After receiving accreditation in the mid-1990’s, another participant was told he would have to restart the process when he mentioned that he had a wife and child who would be moving with him. Although the process was not actually redone from the very beginning, it took an extra six weeks to correct the situation.

While detailed comparison with other countries’ practices is outside the scope of this study, it is worth noting that accreditation of foreign journalists is not unique to China or even countries with restrictive media environments. For instance, the United

States employs a special application process for foreign correspondents to acquire a media visa (See “Foreign Media, Press and Radio,” n.d.). Further, while accreditation is a process of formal control over journalists, it does not necessarily have a negative impact on their ability to cover a particular country. In fact, today’s American correspondents in China indicated the process is not especially burdensome.

Upon arrival in China, journalists are to register with the Information Department and obtain a Foreign Journalist Card. Correspondents are not, according to the rules, to engage in journalistic activity without such paperwork, though some still do, which can become a risky endeavor when covering something the government considers sensitive.

About ten years ago, one reporter who was not accredited at the time but working in television was sent to shoot footage for coverage about North Korean defectors. At the site, police began checking for correspondents’ journalist cards. The reporter who did not have one said he became frightened, but eluded the police by shifting through the crowd to an area of journalists that had already been checked. Other reporters said they have been required to show their journalist card to police when being questioned.

In addition to the journalist card, correspondents are given a special “J” visa, which marks them as a journalist and must be renewed every year. Other foreigners working in China generally have a visa type which does not identify their occupation. Several participants noted that at various times they have conducted reporting activities without the proper visa or other paperwork. None said they had any problems doing so, indicating that it can be rather easy to “fly under the radar” in China, even as a journalist.

Being able to report without accreditation does not mean, however, that efforts to track reporters through visa issuance policies have been lacking in China. According to

one participant, police officers who approve visas may be assigned to handle and monitor a specific group of journalists, perhaps organized by country or language. When getting a visa approved, correspondents have to go to the officer who is assigned to them, thus making it easier for police to keep tabs on reporters.

While it is possible for foreigners living in China to receive permanent residency status, the option is not available to journalists because of the annual requirement to renew their visas. One participant noted that this makes it easier for the government to expel a foreign correspondent in a somewhat indirect manner. Rather than canceling a visa and deporting a reporter, the foreign ministry can simply decline to renew a visa, at which time the correspondent would have to leave. However, such occurrences are rare and many participants said they knew of no foreign correspondents that had been expelled in at least five years.

Although the process of becoming a correspondent in China can be time-consuming, it has become easier in the last decade according to participant interviews. A process that could take up to six months a decade ago now typically only takes about one or two months. One participant said that although the government still evaluates the backgrounds of correspondents through the application process, it has “gotten much more tolerant of the types of backgrounds that they’re willing to let in.”

Further, the creation of the International Press Center in 2000 provides a government office within the Foreign Ministry’s Information Department whose sole purpose is to assist foreign journalists working in China. The existence and operation of this office may be indicative of a positive shift in governmental attitude toward foreign

reporters and an increasing awareness among officials of the importance of international public relations.

One veteran correspondent's experience with first applying for accreditation in the early 1990's and then changing the accreditation earlier this decade illustrated the shift. When he first applied, four police officers took him to a "small, dark office," sat him down and gave him the regulations for foreign reporters, then sternly said, "We want you to be a friend of China." Several years ago the reporter switched his accreditation to a different news organization and had a much different experience. When the IPC office said his new journalist card was ready, he told them he would come pick it up:

"They said, 'No, no, wait for Friday because the head of the North American section at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs wants to talk with you first.' And I thought, OK, they're going to give me a little speech ... a little bit of a warning. ... So I went on Friday; I was a bit nervous. About four of them showed up and they said to me, 'How can we serve you better? How can we make things easier for you?' I was completely blown [away]. Because I'd been here already 10 years then and was used to more of a kind of confrontation." (February 7, 2008).

Reporting rules. Beyond the bureaucratic formalities of becoming a correspondent, vague regulations exist for the kind of reporting foreign correspondents are allowed to do, as well as rules that require prior approval to do interviews, travel and cover visits by officials from other countries. Given its prominence as a control faced by correspondents, the travel restrictions will be addressed in a separate section.

According to Article 14 of the rules, foreign journalists are not to engage in activities that "endanger China's national security, unity or community and public interests" ("Regulations Concerning Foreign Journalists," 2003). Absent are any specifics defining what constitutes endangerment or definitions of "unity," "community," or "public interests." The interpretation of the rules is reserved for the Foreign Ministry

(Article 21). Such obscurity is not unique to only regulations for the foreign press, however. Regulations in China are in general vague so as to be open to interpretation and varying degrees of enforcement (See Keller, 1994).

Although Chinese journalists sometimes face harsh punishment from the government for “stealing state secrets” or similar charges (See “Journalists in Prison,” 2007), many participants reported that it is rare for a foreign journalist to be severely punished for their reporting. One participant posited that part of the reason for this is that a harsh government crackdown on correspondents would damage the relationship between foreign news agencies and the government, to the latter’s disadvantage. This may be attributed to the Chinese government’s increasing awareness of the importance of winning international support through foreign media and indicates an aspect of its global media diplomacy efforts (Ebo, 1997).

Written regulations also require approval from the Information Department for journalists to interview “top leaders of China” (“Regulations Concerning Foreign Journalists,” 2003, Article 15). The application is to be sent at least three weeks in advance and include an outline of the questions to be asked (“Handbook,” 2001). These methods of managing access to government officials are only the prelude to the nearly impossible process of gaining access to the Chinese government that will be dealt with in more detail in a later section.

Rules stipulate that interview applications are required for every level of government, including municipal departments, commissions, bureaus and district-level organs (“Handbook,” 2001). However, many correspondents said that even if questions are submitted to government agencies in advance, the response rate is low, often never

producing a single interview. The formal interview application process is not always followed, either. One participant said not all government ministries require questions to be faxed and that on some occasions he has interviewed mid-level officials who did not have foreknowledge of the questions to be asked. Therefore, varying application of the rule gives some space for foreign correspondents to circumvent the control.

Nonetheless, one participant said it is nearly impossible to get interviews in China with both government and private organizations without at least providing some idea of what topics will be covered, even if specific questions do not have to be submitted. Most participants said that while they do not typically supply questions before an interview, they do provide a rough sketch of topics to be covered and do not consider doing so to be burdensome.

Residence and hiring rules. Regulations also say that foreign correspondents are to notify authorities of their residential location and suggest they utilize “homes and offices approved for foreigners,” which are listed as being in only two districts of Beijing (“Handbook,” 2001). However, all foreigners in China are required to register their address with police, and correspondents say that rules on living in particular locations and using only approved homes and offices are now basically defunct, even if the handbook has not been updated to reflect this fact.

When residence rules for journalists were applied (as recently as 2002 according to one participant), the approved housing was typically expensive and located within a diplomatic compound in either the Chaoyang or Dongcheng districts of Beijing. Although the rule is no longer a concern among American journalists in China, like other

foreigners they are only allowed to live in facilities that are licensed to house foreigners, though this generally has no impact on their reporting activities.

The hiring of assistants and other personnel by foreign journalists is also subject to approval from the government (“Regulations Concerning Foreign Journalists,” 2003, Article 16). Regulations request that correspondents hire all manner of personnel, including interpreters, through government offices (“Handbook,” 2001).

Although the hiring rule may not be enforced uniformly, two participants who regularly use assistants said they are still supposed to be registered with the Diplomatic Services Bureau, an arm of the Foreign Ministry. However, some correspondents said it is easier in some cases to skirt this rule for at least two reasons. First, registering an assistant with the government requires that extra fees be paid for the assistant’s health insurance and social security. The fees usually increase the expenditures for an assistant by 50 percent and very little of the money actually ends up benefiting the assistant, said one participant.

Second, not registering an assistant means they can generally work unbeknownst to the authorities and thereby avoid political pressure. Although one participant believed that government intimidation of assistants is less common now than even ten years ago, another said in the past two years the Public Security Bureau has met with assistants and asked about their employers’ reporting activities and threatened to “make things difficult” if they do not cooperate.

Despite the fact that employing an unregistered assistant is technically against regulations, one participant said there have been no ramifications for doing so, most likely because authorities are unaware of assistants who are not registered. This reveals a

gap between official requirements and enforcement which provides some leeway for correspondents to work around regulations. The use of assistants, though not a major element of correspondence from China for most participants, is dealt with in further detail in the next chapter.

Violation of regulations. Violating any regulations, according to the rules, can result in warnings, suspension or termination of journalistic activities by the Information Department (“Regulations Concerning Foreign Journalists,” 2003, Article 19). According to participants, however, enforcement of the rules appears to vary depending on where a reporter is, what he or she is trying to cover (for instance, sensitive issues are more likely to result in restrictions) and the whims of local police and other officials.

No participants reported receiving an official warning or having their activities suspended for violating any regulations. However, violation of China’s pre-2007 travel restriction often caused problems for several correspondents, an issue to be addressed in the following section.

Official Action Controls

The following exploration of the controls faced by American correspondents in China today covers the most prominent government actions of interference as revealed in the interviews. Although this study attempted to discover the majority of methods used to control the work of foreign journalists based on the experiences of American correspondents, outside sources reveal that other experiences and controls exist (See “FCCC 2007 Survey,” 2007).

Several areas of extramedia control were identified, including unresponsiveness, monitoring, travel restrictions (including detention) and mechanisms of external self-censorship. Additionally, the Chinese government as a source of information, including state media and the manner in which government press conferences are held, will be addressed, as well as the issue of 'positive' influence.

Unresponsiveness in a culture of secrecy. For American correspondents, much of China is shrouded in secrecy. Government officials are evasive, reports and statistics are incomplete, unreliable and difficult to obtain, and a climate of fear keeps many people from interacting with the press openly or regularly. Despite a noticeable change over the past twenty years in the openness of Chinese society and its attitude toward the press, significant roadblocks still exist.

One of the major controls faced by the American correspondent in China today is that government officials and offices are simply unavailable to reporters, who are shut out through a regime of unresponsiveness, according to many participants. A number of explanations for this situation are possible, including a historical lack of interaction with foreign media; an ineffective and inflexible bureaucracy; cultural traditions that eschew openness; a perceived need to tightly manage China's image by controlling information made available to the press; and a lack of understanding of modern public relations techniques.

The CCP's tradition of controlling the media (Hohenberg, 1967) as well as heavy-handed press controls that existed prior to the CCP's takeover (Rand, 1995), likely account for much of today's unresponsive attitude among the government. This entrenched attitude of unresponsiveness in the Chinese government may be the result of

an historical path-dependency. In other words, the introduction of a set of practices (in this case unresponsiveness to the press) is nearly impossible to reverse (See Pierson, 2000). More specifically, the longstanding attitude that the media is a tool of the government, rather than a check on its power, may result in officials seeing few reasons to cooperate with foreign correspondents. One participant alluded to this in stating his firm belief that more openness in the government is unlikely because the “government isn’t accountable to anybody.”

Another participant attributed the unresponsiveness to the government’s lack of public relations savvy, saying it “doesn’t know how to use the foreign media.” However, minimal development of public relations skill can also be traced to a lack of political accountability. In a policy environment driven or influenced by public opinion, unresponsiveness would likely be a failed strategy for a government to employ; in China, where political power rests solely with the CCP, unresponsiveness has few repercussions. In other words, there has historically been little need for the Chinese government to improve its foreign press relations, though this may be changing as China’s increased presence on the world stage requires cooperation and integration with international standards in order to enhance its image abroad.

Regardless of the factors that cause the Chinese government’s unresponsiveness (ultimately a consideration outside the scope of this study), this method of interaction with the press is found to act as an extramedia control over reporters. Many participants at least acknowledged that dealing with government officials is one of the most frustrating aspects of their work. The government’s method of handling the foreign press is so longstanding and entrenched that many participants indicated they rarely even

attempt to contact the government for information or quotes. Those who do make an effort are usually repulsed.

Correspondents often encounter some sort of run-around when trying to get information from a government office, even if they aren't requesting a formal interview or need only basic information. One participant, when trying to write about a new law designed to punish students for cheating on exams, needed only two questions answered by the Ministry of Education. When he called, officials told him to submit the questions via fax, an often standard request from government bodies. He made it clear that he did not need to interview anyone, but the ministry insisted that he fax the questions in English and also send a copy of his journalist card, despite being known by the ministry for having covered education issues in the past. For about a week he called the ministry every day to check on the status of his submission, and each time was told it would be addressed the next day. The correspondent then received a call from the ministry and was told to fax the questions in Chinese, but still received no answers after doing so. This experience indicates that bureaucratic ineffectiveness and inflexibility may also play a role in the government's unresponsiveness.

Another participant said, "If you want to try to talk to someone within the government, it's like you've stepped into a Kafka novel more often than not. It takes so many calls and faxes and calling back and usually it's a 'no' at the end." When assembling a long-term series on the environment, this correspondent said she made twenty to twenty-five requests to the State Environmental Protection Administration, the State Council and two provincial governments, but was not granted a single interview.

In some instances, the government withholds its response until after a story is published. When one reporter was writing about the National Bureau of Statistics' work, he repeatedly requested information and feedback from the NBS over a two-month period, but was always told by officials that "we're too busy." After the final story was published and criticized the NBS, the bureau sent the correspondent a seven-page rebuttal. After writing a story about an historic building in Beijing that was slated to be razed by the government, another participant said he received a phone call from a Ministry of Culture official who wanted to know where he got the information. Foreign affairs officials often comment on specific stories and explain why they disagreed with some aspect of it, according to one participant, though these occurrences were not generally interpreted as an attempt at official censorship but rather an informal expression of personal opinion. Nonetheless, it indicates more willingness among some officials to try and repair China's image rather than establish a positive image from the outset.

Unresponsiveness also makes developing government sources particularly difficult for correspondents, to the extent that some participants indicated they had invested little time in trying to do so, knowing that it would be a futile exercise. "I just didn't think it was going to work," said one veteran reporter. "There would be too much of an effort and they wouldn't want it."

One participant who had developed several mid-level government contacts over the past two decades noted that they do not convey sensitive information and are often only short-lived sources. "People get promoted and once they get up the ladder a little bit it becomes increasingly difficult for them to have contact with foreign reporters."

Unresponsiveness in China is not limited to only the government, but may nonetheless be influenced by the government's approach. Private businesses and organizations are often unwilling to talk with reporters, mostly out of fear that what they say will either draw negative reaction from the government or advantage their competitors. But several reporters indicated that companies' unresponsiveness goes beyond what they would expect.

Participants who cover primarily business-related news expressed the belief that the government's way of dealing with the media, partnered with the fact that commerce and government are still tightly interwoven, has led to an attitude of unresponsiveness among private companies in China, including those that are Western-based. Many corporations are often unresponsive in dealing with phone calls from reporters and some hold segregated news conferences, one for the foreign press and one for the domestic press. While the purpose for doing so is said to be cost control, it may instead be that companies do not want the foreign and domestic press corps comparing notes.

One participant said that many companies are hesitant to talk to reporters because they are afraid of negative government reaction if they comment on regulations:

“I think the problem is just the general uncertainty about how the government is going to react to what somebody says, whether somebody will get criticized for leaking secrets; because nobody's really sure what's a secret and what's not. The climate of general secrecy and control discourages people from being candid about topics that elsewhere would just be considered routine.” (February 21, 2008)

When calling nearly any organization in China, both governmental and private, American reporters are typically told to submit their questions via fax. Rarely, if ever, are they allowed to speak with the person they're trying to contact. One participant

indicated that without a specific name, in most cases the reporter is not allowed to talk to anyone who can provide information or be quoted.

Most participants indicated that they usually at least give some prior idea about what an interview will cover, even if they don't provide specific questions. This is not considered to be a control measure over their reporting. The general attitude among American correspondents is that providing a sketch beforehand actually aids the process in most cases as it helps interview subjects back up their claims with documentation and builds trust.

Although dealing with government and many businesses in China is difficult for reporters, talking to "regular" Chinese citizens is generally not a problem and has gotten easier in recent years. "Increasingly, and I'm basing this on experience of over a decade in China, it's easy to talk to private individuals and private individuals are increasingly willing to talk about more and more subjects," one participant said. She noted that although some older Chinese are hesitant to talk to foreign reporters, there is an attitude of openness among younger generations.

Further, participants who had spent a significant amount of time in China recognized an increase in openness in the government's press relations compared with twenty or even ten years ago. One reporter attributed the shift to a generation of younger officials who did not have the same worldview as older authorities, while others traced it to China's societal transformation and increasing contact with the rest of the world.

Despite some opening, however, the Chinese government's unresponsiveness and shroud of secrecy is still the norm when dealing with foreign correspondents, and this approach appears to have been adopted by much of the private sector. Ultimately, the

positive changes in China's handling of the foreign press toward increased openness may be circumscribed by the bounds of entrenched historical institutional practices (See Thelen, 1999).

Government press conferences and news sources. Apart from attempting to contact government agencies directly for quotes and other information, the correspondent has other avenues of trying to obtain information from the Chinese government, mainly press conferences and state media. Despite some improvement in openness in recent years, both routes were found to generally succumb to government control and therefore often serve as a roadblock to the correspondent.

China's Foreign Affairs Ministry holds two regular press briefings every week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, which foreign correspondents often attend. Other ministries hold conferences less regularly and some hold none at all.

Two views of government news conferences emerged from the participant interviews. The most common sentiment was that such briefings are largely useless in terms of obtaining the kinds of information that journalists need to construct a story that meets Western journalistic standards. Participants indicated that press officers often avoid answering questions, refer reporters to other ministries which may not hold regular conferences and have even lied when sensitive issues are garnering media attention (e.g., the SARS outbreak).

One participant said the regular Foreign Affairs Ministry press conferences are "mainly propaganda" and indicated that responses are often contradictory over time. For instance, he said, a reporter might ask a question about Taiwan and be told that Taiwan is an internal matter and not a question for the Foreign Affairs Ministry. Then, a week later

at the same briefing, the press secretary will “lash out for 40 minutes at [Taiwanese president] Chen Shui-Bian.”

Another reporter said the information at press conferences is “terrible” and that although the government has improved in terms of the frequency and regularity it meets with the press, “they do a very bad job of relaying information; they do a very bad job at representing their own government.”

Still, government press conferences may be on a path toward, at the very least, the appearance of more openness. One veteran correspondent cited a noticeable shift over the past five to ten years in how government conferences are conducted. Years ago, he said, briefings were “one-way ... They would read a statement, you’d ask a question and then they’d just read the second half of the statement. They were just not very receptive to questions.” Now, the reporter continued, “Chinese officials have gotten much better at the give and take of a news conference, being able to talk about something and somebody asks a question and you answer the question and then sort of sharpen the answer.” Another participant said it was “refreshing” to see how more accessibility to government is being made through press briefings, a noticeable change even in the past four to five years.

Now, officials at press briefings are more media savvy, are more likely to provide direct answers to questions and may be very knowledgeable about their specialty, according to several correspondents. Although one participant said press officers generally adhere to the script they have in front of them, they are willing to take questions for as long as is necessary. “I don’t know too many other conferences anywhere that do that,” she said.

Nonetheless, the level of engagement with the press at news conferences is uneven and may depend on the individuals or ministries involved. One participant indicated that while some briefings feature officials who are knowledgeable and helpful, “it’s intensely frustrating that at other events we’re able to pry so little information out of people.” One veteran correspondent said, “Most of the news conferences are stiff, ‘commie’ bureaucrats reading from turbid documents” that are read in their entirety to “suck up time so you can’t ask questions.”

If not a fount of unfettered information, government press conferences may at least serve as one of the few times a journalist can ask a question of a government official and get an immediate response, adequate or not. In this perspective, the second to emerge among correspondents, some participants indicated that briefings can be useful for obtaining timely quotes, while one correspondent said they are a place where a reporter can meet an official and perhaps begin developing them as a source. However, this more positive view of the press conference in China was not emphasized as much as the negative view. As such, government press conferences may serve some utility to foreign correspondents, but in many, if not most respects, fail to be a good source of information and are exercises in extramedia control.

While reporters frequently monitor state-run Chinese media outlets, it’s usefulness as a source of adequate information for foreign correspondents is questionable. Although one participant said the domestic media is “definitely a legitimate and important source of information,” she also noted that sometimes the domestic media are only useful for getting “the government spin on some issues.”

In some cases, it is not politics but inadequate reporting that limits the state media's usefulness. One participant gave the example of a Xinhua story about new Chinese trade statistics to illustrate the frequently incomplete nature of domestic news. The story reported only the overall trade numbers for the previous month, leaving a gaping hole for a reporter whose American audience was interested in the trade surplus with the U.S. as well as the European Union. "It makes me want to tear my hair out," the reporter said, "because it's not just a matter of not having that information to report in a spot story; it also means there's no way to build on it, because I don't have it in the first place."

In sum, government press conferences and state media are not considered by American correspondents to be responsible, accessible or accurate sources of information, though there has been some noticeable change in government attitudes toward the press among some participants.

Monitoring. Many participants indicated with a high degree of confidence that they are certain the government monitors their communication, travel and other activities. While journalists have little information about the true extent of the government's surveillance capabilities, many participants cited a number of tactics with which they were aware: eavesdropping on phone and in-person conversations; location tracking through mobile phones, security cameras and other methods; and email eavesdropping and hacking. None of the correspondents had irrefutable proof of some of the monitoring they nonetheless believed was rampant. Still, some could offer examples that seem to indicate they have been spied on.

Two participants said on several occasions they had spoken on the phone with dissidents to set up meetings. After hanging up, the dissidents called them back later and said the police had just called and said they could not meet with the reporter. The presumption was made that either the reporter or the dissident's phone was tapped (most likely the dissident's). One correspondent said when interviewing a dissident over the phone, the call was mysteriously disconnected on two separate occasions. However, she was able to call back each time and complete the interview.

Several participants assumed their email is read by authorities. One reporter recounted not being able to access his email accounts when he had sent or received messages mentioning sensitive topics, such as Falun Gong. In one case he called a family member in the U.S. and had them access his account and delete such a message. After doing so, he was able to log in immediately.

Monitoring of correspondents also takes place outside the electronic realm. Participants indicated concern that in public places, their in-person conversations with sources might be surveilled. One participant told of a source's fear of being heard during an interview in a coffee shop and resorting to whispering. Another correspondent said when she was inconspicuously interviewing people at a temple about the Dalai Lama's receipt of the Congressional Medal of Honor, she noticed several plainclothes people watching her. When she and her assistant tried to leave the temple, she said, "there was like this pincer movement where people pretending to be tourists on both sides closed in on both sides and blocked us off." A uniformed police officer then appeared and questioned them.

Many participants said they have been physically followed by authorities when covering sensitive issues or breaking news. In some cases, reporters said, authorities appeared to want the correspondent to know they were being followed; in other cases it was a poorly hidden endeavor. Regardless, many of the participants' experiences with being physically followed or chased happened when the correspondent was traveling outside Beijing and often in violation of China's temporarily suspended travel restrictions.

Travel restrictions and detention. The following examination of China's travel restrictions for foreign correspondents is categorized under official actions primarily because of perceived violations of the relaxed Olympics reporting rules. While China's old travel restrictions fall under the category of formal laws and regulations, the violation of the Olympics regulations indicate a form of government control in China emanating solely from the action of government officials. The inclusion of detention here is due to the fact that participants who had been detained in China at some point were usually traveling at the time.

Before Jan. 1, 2007, foreign correspondents were required to obtain permission from the government to travel and cover news in any location other than where they were accredited. ("Regulations Concerning Foreign Journalists," 2003, Article 15; "Handbook," 2001). To get this permission, reporters had to supply a detailed itinerary of their travel plans and interview subjects to a local 'waiban,' or foreign affairs office. If permission was granted, the reporter would be accompanied by an official while doing the interviews.

In anticipation of the 2008 Summer Olympics, the travel rule was temporarily lifted. Currently, correspondents are theoretically allowed to travel anywhere in the

country without approval. They simply must have “prior consent” from an individual they wish to interview (“Regulations on Reporting Activities,” 2006, Article 6). This rule is scheduled to lapse on Oct. 17, 2008. However, various reports as well as data gathered in this study indicate the new rule is not always followed by authorities.

Participants noted a disconnect between the new rule and its implementation under some circumstances. Adherence to the rule appears to be uneven and dependent on the particulars of a given situation and the officials a correspondent encounters. One participant said formal regulations for foreign correspondents “doesn’t promise you anything, it doesn’t promise you what the outcome’s going to be. The regulations and the enforcement are at the discretion of the local authorities at the time that you happened to be doing the reporting.” While another participant said the new travel rule has made him feel safer while traveling outside Beijing, inconsistent adherence to the rule by some authorities nonetheless limits its positive effects. Most often, the new travel regulations appear to be ignored by local authorities when a sensitive event, such as an accident or protest, has occurred.

The disconnect may reflect what has been noted as China’s “political-bureaucratic divide,” in which decisions made at the political center (i.e., the national government) ultimately “[converge] in the hands of local elites and the bureaucracy” (Zheng & Tok, 2007). Local implementation, therefore, may not mirror the political center’s intent. Some participants indicated that the national-level Foreign Ministry has in several cases intervened to compel local authorities to more closely adhere to the rule. At the same time, government instructions on implementation of the new rules reveal an effort to manage foreign journalists.

Some local officials have told correspondents that the new regulations are related only to the Olympics or have blocked off areas for “special” unstated reasons and said that it’s temporarily off-limits to journalists. One correspondent said he was followed by police as recently as late summer 2007 when covering a mining accident in Shandong province.

Tibet has historically been closed to foreign journalists, who were almost never allowed in the province under the old travel restrictions. According to one participant, the relaxed rules made it possible for Western journalists to begin reporting in Tibet in some instances, but an uprising of violent protests and clashes between Tibetan monks and Chinese military and police in March 2008 resulted in a crackdown on foreign media. Various news reports of the rioting indicated that foreign reporters had difficulty accessing sources and independently verifying information, and were eventually expelled from the province (Ang, 2008; “China steps up Tibetan crackdown,” 2008). A Foreign Correspondents Club of China news release said that an increasing number of reports had been made by foreign journalists during the riots that police had made searches without warrants and reporting materials were confiscated or deleted (Personal communication with participant, March 21, 2008).

One participant applied for a permit to go to Tibet shortly before the uprising began. He was initially told by the International Press Center that there shouldn’t be a problem and to apply to a travel agent for the permit. However, the agent told the correspondent he would have to ask the waiban in Lhasa, the provincial capital. Officials in Lhasa told him to fax a letter of what he planned to do in Tibet, how long he planned to stay and a copy of his passport. After doing so, the officials said it would take ten days

to get a response. Two days later, the riots erupted and the correspondent said, “I definitely won’t get it now.”

The restrictions on reporters during the Tibetan uprising exhibited the extent to which Chinese authorities are willing to go when sensitive issues and locations are involved. Certainly, the timing of the events also played a role. With the Olympics only months away and seen as a watershed event in China’s history, authorities likely wanted to exert as much control as necessary over the uprising to prevent it from spoiling the Games.

Even before the demonstrations, however, some correspondents had problems when applying to travel to Tibet under the new rule. All persons wishing to travel there are required to obtain a permit, but theoretically journalists should be approved to go there under the new rules without needing permission from the local foreign office. Still, some correspondents have had their applications kicked back by agents and were questioned about why they were going and whether they had arranged interviews.

Along with Tibet, Xinjiang Province ranks among the most sensitive geo-political issues in China and has therefore been difficult for foreign correspondents to access, according to several participants. Shortly after the new travel rule was implemented, one correspondent recounted being followed and closely monitored in Xinjiang, where the Muslim community has at various times called for a separatist movement in the province, resulting in clashes with Beijing over terrorism and insurgency (Wayne, 2007).

The reporter scheduled a trip to visit several of Xinjiang’s cities and notified the local foreign office because he wanted to talk to government officials. When he arrived in one of the cities, however, it was immediately clear that the old way of handling visits

from foreign journalists was still the norm. The reporter was constantly followed by two government vehicles and minders stayed in his hotel. Each day between noon and 2 p.m., the reporter was supposed to stay in the hotel to sleep and was not allowed to do interviews.

While Tibet and Xinjiang have historically been controversial in China, the new reporting rule has also not been followed in cases where sensitive issues, rather than sensitive locations, are at play. One correspondent said he was questioned by police when trying to go to a dissident's home on the outskirts of Beijing, where he is accredited to report. Police held him up for ten minutes, demanded to see his journalist card and followed him to a bus stop after leaving the dissident's house.

Another reporter said she has been questioned by police twice in Beijing since the new rule's passage, once for doing interviews at a temple about the Dalai Lama, and another time for covering the destruction of "petitioner's village," where people from throughout China travel to seek national government assistance when they feel their local governments have failed on some point. An American photographer was questioned and physically assailed by police at the village in 2007 ("FCCC 2007 Survey," 2007).

Incidents in which reporters have been questioned by police about their activities after the new travel rule was implemented are generally viewed by the participants to be a violation or disregarding of the rule. While many of these cases did not ultimately prevent the reporter from speaking with sources and gathering information, participants generally expressed dissatisfaction that they would be questioned under the relaxed regulations, especially in the city where they are accredited.

The data provided by participants regarding the apparent Olympics rule violations mirrors a survey that found 40 percent of foreign correspondents in China had experienced some sort of interference with their work since the new rule's implementation ("FCCC 2007 Survey," 2007). Such episodes appear to be a latent abuse of the old travel rule to block reporters from covering sensitive events even in locations where they are accredited.

For instance, if reporters who were based in Beijing tried to cover a demonstration or protest within the city under the old rule, they would often be detained by police who said they had not applied to the Beijing city government for permission to report there. One participant who is accredited in Beijing said police told him to leave the scene when he attempted to interview people who were filing petitions opposing the construction of a building near an apartment complex. Another correspondent tried to enter a large government-approved church in Beijing when a controversial meeting was taking place, but a police officer prevented him and other foreign journalists from going inside and escorted them away from the premises. Yet another participant was detained by police for six hours in the mid-1990's for arriving at the scene of an artists' community in Beijing that was being shut down by the government.

Under the old travel restrictions, information sharing between hotels and police throughout the country was used to track, question and sometimes detain correspondents. When traveling in China, foreigners generally are required to present a passport when checking into a hotel. Visa information is then sent to the local police, who become immediately aware of the presence of any foreign journalists. This has often resulted in correspondents being questioned by police at their hotels, and one participant said under

the old restrictions a correspondent was detained nearly every month for traveling without permission.

Detentions appear to be more likely if the reporter works for a large news outlet, though further data is needed to confirm this. (A participant from a large organization said he and his colleagues have been detained by police so regularly that they do not keep track of each instance.) Higher frequency of detentions among high-profile journalists could be due to at least two reasons. First, large and powerful news outlets generally attract more attention from authorities given the influence their work can have on a wide audience. Second, large organizations, such as wire services, are tasked with covering a large amount of breaking stories, many of which may be considered sensitive issues or require travel without permission to get the story in a timely manner.

One veteran correspondent said he was frequently detained by police when trying to cover disasters such as floods, airplane crashes, landslides or chemical spills. The reporter's detentions were generally due to violating the pre-2007 travel restrictions for foreign correspondents, though the participant said he always tried to follow the rules. But despite contacting the local authorities for permission to enter their city or province, the reporter rarely received a timely reply. Given the demand of needing to cover breaking news when it happens, the correspondent would usually go to the scene without permission, and oftentimes be detained or otherwise removed from the area. When being questioned by police, he would explain that he had applied to the local waiban and never received a reply. The police would then contact the waiban, which would typically state that they had denied the travel request.

The correspondent said that while police are generally polite and professional when detaining reporters, the incidents still achieve the authorities' desired effect: wasting correspondents' time and controlling their access to the scene as well as sources. For writers who are on deadline, delaying tactics can severely hamper the amount and timeliness of information they gather. One reporter went so far as to say that the old travel restrictions, for print reporters in particular, had "ceased to be meaningful, except when there was breaking news, in which case you were much more likely to be in a situation when there were loads of officials and police present."

Most participants said they had never had their reporting materials confiscated or destroyed by police when traveling or reporting on sensitive issues. However, one journalist recalled that at some point his notebook and a tape recording of interviews were confiscated, and another participant said it was common for police to make photographers erase digital memory cards. He said a photographer friend of his had been forced to do this after taking photographs near the Beijing home of Hu Jia, an activist and dissident who has been charged with subversion (Attewill, 2008).

Encouraging self-censorship through source intimidation. The term self-censorship appears to be clear in ascribing responsibility for its use, that is, the "self" is responsible for self-censorship. However, as previously noted (Calvocoressi, 1980), self-censorship can sometimes be imposed from the outside, by forces who employ fear and other mechanisms to coerce others into walking a fine line. This dynamic appears to play out in China, but is generally directed at sources and has an indirect but nonetheless notable impact on foreign correspondents' activities.

Increasingly, according to several participants, authorities have turned to intimidating sources rather than confronting reporters directly. One veteran China reporter said he had noticed the shift especially after the new Olympics reporting regulations were implemented. As one participant said, “the government encourages a process of self-censorship” that generally involves pressuring sources in order to influence reporters. “If they know you’re going to a certain area because there’s someone who’s been speaking out on a particular issue, they’ll go after them, which doesn’t technically violate the [travel] regulations, but still impedes your ability to do your work,” another reporter said.

The correspondent who reported on the Shandong mining accident said that even before reporters arrived at the scene, government officials closed off the living quarters where deceased miners’ families lived and sequestered others in hotels. Family members were not allowed to leave and outsiders, including reporters, were not allowed in.

Many sources, both in and outside government, are afraid of retribution from the government if they speak to reporters in an unflattering way about the Chinese Communist Party or certain sensitive issues. This fear makes it difficult for foreign correspondents to develop some stories and puts them in an ethical quandary, where they must balance protection of sources against reporting the news. One participant said this situation “weighed on the conscience” and said she felt “a little guilty” about the jailing of an activist after the activist was featured in a story.

Another reporter noted having to protect sources from government retaliation as one of the primary issues facing foreign correspondents in China today, but stressed that local rather than national government is more likely to pressure a source. Regardless, the

participant repeatedly emphasized the need “to be careful” when dealing with sensitive sources. Another veteran reporter noted that being followed by local police while on reporting trips was often aimed at sources, making it “very hard to do your job, not because I feel threatened but you know that you’ll put anyone you interview in jeopardy.” Indeed, in a breakdown of the types of interference correspondents faced in China in 2007, intimidation of sources was the most common action cited (“FCCC 2007 Survey,” 2007).

Mechanisms of external self-censorship in China appear to be aimed more at domestic sources in an effort to coerce them into not speaking with reporters or to perhaps limit correspondents’ willingness to communicate with them, which points to a shift toward more subtle and indirect attempts of control. This could be due to authorities’ recognition that direct controls on journalists are more likely to be noticed and garner negative attention, whereas source intimidation can be difficult to detect but nonetheless regulate the flow of information. These efforts are indicative of a desire among Chinese authorities to appear more open but maintain some control over news content.

‘Positive’ influence. As mentioned in chapter two, not all mechanisms of government control manifest in a negative fashion. ‘Positive’ inducements, such as bribery and special access, have been noted as methods used by authorities to influence journalists (Koltsova, 2001). However, attempts by sources, businesses or government officials in China to influence American correspondents through such ‘positive’ inducements appear to be rare and ineffectual when they do occur. At the same time,

some data indicate Chinese authorities may be shifting their censorship attempts to more subtle and indirect approaches, such as public relations influence.

Instances of positive influence from China's government are rare among foreign reporters and were not cited by any participants. One correspondent posited that the government "doesn't know how to use the foreign media" and therefore positive influence wouldn't enter the equation since access is routinely denied from the outset.

At press conferences held by companies in China, it is common for domestic reporters to be given an envelope containing 'travel' or 'taxi' money which is typically in amounts far exceeding that which is necessary for traveling to the briefing. Two participants reported being offered this money and both refused it on ethical principle. Other participants said foreign correspondents are not given the money because companies know foreign reporters generally cannot be influenced in this way.

A classified national government memo regarding the Olympics travel rules reveals an effort by the government to positively influence foreign media, stating that the rules' implementation should in part be used to influence foreign journalists. Obtained by Reporters Without Borders, the memo instructs local government authorities to improve its dissemination of information and handle the foreign media professionally. However, it also says officials are to "guide journalists in a positive way" through propaganda; "create positive opinion online" and "manage journalists doing on-the-spot interviews in an orderly and effective manner and influence their coverage of the event" ("Working recommendations," n.d.). Instructions include suggesting "content themes" to journalists, all in an effort to "enhance China's international image."

As such, the memo reveals a campaign by the Chinese government to match its increase in access for foreign journalists with an increase in efforts to influence their reporting. It is notable that these efforts take a positive form, rather than direct, negative controls – that is, influencing journalists through engagement rather than restriction. China’s increased engagement with the world may demand such an approach, as it is more subtle and indirect. However, attempts to control foreign correspondents under the new travel rules include both violations of the rules as well as propagandizing journalists, which supports the notion that a shift toward increased freedom for the press in China is currently restricted by historical path-dependency (Pierson, 2000).

Controls Remain a Factor

Participant interviews revealed that although China’s foreign media control mechanisms have loosened in recent years, a number of roadblocks still exist for American correspondents in China. These remaining elements of authoritarian control reveal a desire by the CCP to shape its image through international news (Ebo, 1997).

The formal regulations and rules for foreign correspondents in China indicate at the very least the intent to control journalists. Although some rules may have lapsed and others are simply not followed, still others create problems for correspondents and are open to a wide range of interpretations and applications.

Just as foreign correspondents were closely monitored and escorted by government minders before the country opened in 1978 (Bloodworth, 1956), American journalists today are still under the watchful eye of the CCP and face some significant controls, most of which fall under the category of official actions rather than laws or

regulations (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). However, the balance of controls belonging to actions may be a result of outdated and often vague regulations. In the case of travel restrictions, there is overlap between the two categories.

Correspondents are still detained, followed and questioned by police in some circumstances; their sources are sometimes intimidated and pressured to not speak to the media; reporters' communications may be surveilled; their access to government is nearly nonexistent; and the relaxed Olympics travel regulations are sometimes violated. The harsh crackdown on the foreign press during Tibetan demonstrations and rioting indicate a continued willingness among authorities to exact totalitarian measures in extreme and sensitive circumstances. All of these controls lead correspondents to employ measures to avoid interference and have some effect on their ability to cover China, both of which will be discussed in the following chapters.

However, it is important to note that the historical hard-line approach taken toward foreign correspondents in China appears to be softening to some extent. While both primary and secondary data indicate correspondents continue to face government control in China, a number of participants said the attitude toward foreign media has recently and is continuing to progress toward a degree of openness.

A softening and redirection of control mechanisms themselves may also be underway. Chinese authorities appear to be shifting some of their methods away from hard-line approaches and toward public relations manipulation or indirect influence via source intimidation. This indicates an increasing awareness among Chinese authorities of the need to engage in subtler control methods that are more palatable to the international community than heavy-handed approaches applied directly to reporters.

Though it is difficult to generalize any aspect of Chinese society given China's vast complexity, the data reveal that an environment of authoritarian foreign press controls persist in China, punctuated by indications of reform and relaxation that may be bounded by entrenched government attitudes and approaches toward the media. The controls also point to a desire to influence China's image abroad, sometimes through an increased implementation of 'positive' or indirect techniques.

The controls faced by American correspondents in China in recent years, briefly summarized in the appendix, are categorized by Shoemaker and Reese's (1996) extramedia government influences of laws/regulations and actions.

Chapter 6

Handling Controls

A number of strategies are employed by American correspondents in China to circumvent, avoid or otherwise negotiate the controls they face. This chapter details those methods and also addresses the development of sources and the role of guanxi, as well as the use of assistants.

An exploration of the reporting and control counteraction methods used by participants is important for constructing an in-depth picture of correspondent experiences. Also, counteraction methods can be seen as one aspect of the effects of government media controls. Though the majority of effects that controls (and counteraction methods) have on correspondents are addressed in the next chapter, it is important to also view the information here as largely a response to government controls, which is illuminated by the U.S. and China's differing press models and conceptions of the journalist's role in society.

The strategies are organized here conceptually but generally are applied to a specific control. For instance, avoidance and prevention are often applied to counteract monitoring. Inevitably, however, some strategies overlap with multiple controls. When appropriate, a discussion of source development is introduced, although this is not in itself necessarily a strategy for handling controls. The final section considers the theoretical implications that counteraction methods have in relation to incongruent press models and conceptions of the journalist's role in society.

Circumvention: Obtaining Visas and Accreditation

While visa and accreditation problems were not prominent issues among participants given that they were all accredited with established organizations, several reporters mentioned scenarios when they skirted the rules to continue reporting in China.

For seven months, one journalist reported on a regular work visa, which is illegal because the “J” visa is the only valid type for journalists. Work visas are sometimes obtained through a black market, where the recipient is registered with a company they don’t actually work for. The correspondent said he expected to get in trouble for reporting on a work visa, but never did.

One participant said many reporters get started as correspondents in China by freelancing without proper accreditation or a journalist visa. Though this practice may be widespread, especially among freelancers, they appear to rarely get caught. As mentioned in the last chapter, one reporter avoided being caught without accreditation by simply hiding in a crowd.

Nonetheless, correspondents did not communicate a need to frequently circumvent the formal accreditation process or work illegally, because most journalists working for established organizations can fairly easily obtain the required paperwork.

Negotiation and Hardball Approach: Dealing with Unresponsiveness

While some reporters have simply given up on getting adequate responses from government officials and put little effort into contacting them, others noted that they still tried to get an official response on many stories despite the high probability they would be unsuccessful. At government press conferences, inadequacy rather than the absence of

a response is more of a problem and therefore draws different techniques. Correspondents generally employ one of two approaches in dealing with government unresponsiveness in China: They either utilize some technique to negotiate the unresponsiveness, or take the “hardball” approach when dealing with officials. The term “negotiate” here characterizes methods used to cope with unresponsiveness by adapting behavior or making decisions in light of that unresponsiveness and in an attempt to work within its confines. The “hardball” approach means a reporter attempts to attack the control head-on, rather than shape their reporting methods to adapt to the terrain of unresponsiveness.

Given that reporters typically cannot get a government comment on an issue at the time they need it, one participant said she records and archives all of the press conferences she attends, a way of negotiating with inaccessibility. If an official addresses a topic that isn’t related to the story of the day, she has the comment archived and can refer to it if she covers the issue at a later time. She said this method is useful because although a timely government position may not be available, she can at least include in her story what is already on the record.

Some participants said that press conferences, inadequate as they are, still serve as a conduit to the government. Therefore, government press briefings in China serve as both a control on correspondents and an imperfect method of dealing with an unresponsive officialdom. Though the conferences are generally useless to reporters for the reasons outlined in chapter five, they still provide a place where correspondents can directly engage government officials and get timely quotes. In fact, the briefings could be considered the pinnacle of the Chinese government’s interaction with the press, when given its general inaccessibility outside the conferences. Therefore, the very act of

attending a conference can sometimes be considered a strategy of negotiating unresponsiveness. This is not to say that if the government was more responsive reporters would not attend the conferences; but in some instances it may be the only way to obtain government feedback.

Correspondents indicated that they did not hesitate to ask tough questions at news conferences, often taking a “hardball” approach. So while attending a press conference is a strategy of negotiation, reporters may take a different tack during the briefing. “I cut them no slack,” one participant said, noting that he would pose “go-for-the-throat” questions when controversial issues were being addressed. Another participant noted the difference between the questions foreign correspondents and the Chinese media would ask at briefings, using the Tibet issue as an example:

“The Chinese media would all ask questions about economic development in Tibet. And members of the Tibet delegation would give these long-winded, number-filled answers that the Chinese media would dutifully write down and the foreign media would all sit there like this [bored and uninterested]. And then the foreign media would all ask questions about the Dalai Lama and religious oppression and the Tibetan officials would also give these long-winded answers. But the foreign media would all sit there and scribble down and the Chinese media would sit there like this [bored and uninterested] because they knew they would never be able to print any of it.” (March 11, 2008)

The response among foreign correspondents to highly controlled government press conferences, therefore, is to push ahead with asking the questions they want to ask, despite knowing the response may be inadequate.

However, because press briefings and access to the government leaves much to be desired among correspondents, they must frequently look elsewhere for information or analysis to include in their stories, which is ultimately another form of negotiation. “It

forces you to expand your network of potential commentators, whether it's end users or analysts or whatever, whether it's inside or outside of China," said one participant.

Developing Sources: Networking, Guanxi and Language

While not necessarily a direct response to specific controls, how correspondents develop sources in China is of interest considering the necessity of sources for news reporting and the general climate of secrecy and government control in China. Furthermore, reporter-source interaction often intersects with controls, especially when one considers the mounting pressure placed on some Chinese sources.

Participant interviews revealed that in many respects, developing sources in China is not wholly different than how they are developed in other countries. On the other hand, China's culture and the secretiveness often displayed by sources present specific challenges to correspondents.

One participant cited techniques similar to those a reporter might use elsewhere. "You just meet every person that you can and chat them up about their field," he said, which may or may not result in the person being quoted in a story. For instance, if a source alerts a reporter to new government regulations, the reporter will simply get a copy of the regulations and work from those, rather than including the person's name as a source. Providing this confidentiality is sometimes important considering the uneasiness among many sources to be quoted in the media. Another participant said sources in China are developed "the way you do anywhere: you build up trust." However, building trust may take more time in China than in the U.S. and involve meeting for meals and continuing to talk over a period of time.

The role of guanxi, or the Chinese system of networking and exchanging favors (Gold, Guthrie & Wank, 2002), was found to play a role among some participants in their ability to successfully report in China. However, the different characterizations and understandings of guanxi produced varying degrees of emphasis on its importance.

One participant said guanxi is “the ultimate door,” and added, “that door is either closed to you or it is open and welcoming.” Under this characterization, access to sources, both official and non-official, is often dependent on the contacts and guanxi a reporter possesses, as well as following cultural and professional protocol. “I would suggest that any prospective reporter in China go out and buy themselves a copy of the latest ‘Miss Manners’ handbook, because the Chinese government operates according to protocol,” a reporter said. He emphasized that due to China’s tradition of Confucian values, using titles and showing respect to officials may be more important than in other countries. In the end, doing so can bear fruit, even if the process is difficult and takes years: “After a while you see that those relationships really do pay off, people really do treat you differently because you’ve kind of walked the road with them for a while,” he said.

At the same time, other participants indicated that developing sources through guanxi was not significantly different than the American system of “networking,” in which reporters find sources through friends or other associates who share names and contact information. Some reporters rely on each other to find sources and also gather names from other news stories, just as did early 20th-century China correspondents (MacKinnon & Friesen, 1987, pp. 81-85, 92-93). Competition among organizations and reporters remains, but camaraderie is also an important aspect of reporting.

Still another reporter said she frequently calls people “cold” and is able to get an interview “60-70 percent of the time,” revealing that guanxi or personal connections may not always be necessary. But for a small percentage of sources who are less cooperative, she said, having a connection helps. She added: “Then you also have that hardcore 10-15 percent of the government people who are going to say ‘no’ no matter what you say.”

Government sources in particular are very difficult for American correspondents to access and build relationships with. One participant hinted at the use of guanxi in developing such sources when she said that to access some government officials, it helps to “find out what they want from the media.” Another correspondent said, “It has often been very much a case where they had information they wanted to get out,” but noted that such instances are rare given that government officials are not rewarded for openness or even successfully representing the government’s views. But in these cases, a tacit quid pro quo may take place in which the reporter gains access to an elusive, yet media-conscious government source while offering that source a public platform.

Knowing an official before they achieve high levels of power can also help to open doors. One participant said he developed sources among the academic community, some of whom later moved to government. However, he noted that when government officials reach a certain status following a number of promotions, they often no longer share information with reporters.

Retired government officials are one other possible avenue for accessing China’s power structure. Many retired officials still see government documents and may be consulted from time to time by active officials, according to one participant, who said he would often contact a retired official who had also taught at the university level. In some

cases the official would put the reporter in touch with former students who worked in government; in other cases he would “pretend not to know” or not respond at all, depending on the issue at hand.

Given the general inaccessibility to sensitive information and candid assessments from government personnel, human rights workers and academics can be good sources for correspondents, especially if the latter’s position affords them some leeway to speak openly about controversial issues. Also, “man-in-the-street” interviews have gotten easier to do in China over the past decade due to the increasing willingness among the locals to talk about various issues with reporters.

Language abilities are also an important aspect for correspondents to develop sources. All of the participants in this study had at least conversational abilities in Mandarin, and many emphasized the necessity of acquiring language skills to successfully report in China. “Ultimately if you can’t speak Chinese, then you can’t make small talk; then every interaction you have with whomever is going to be formal,” said one reporter, who added that being able to hold informal conversation is helpful when dealing with both official and non-official sources. Language abilities can also aid in building a network of sources, thus making it easier to cut through the secrecy of China.

In sum, source development outside the government in China is not especially different than it may be elsewhere, but can present unique challenges to the foreign correspondent that make cultural and language training, as well as personal connections and *guanxi*, important in many cases. When trying to develop government sources,

correspondents in China may have little or no success, with only a few methods available to overcome the barriers to officials.

Avoidance and Prevention: Counteracting Monitoring

A number of methods and practices were revealed by the participants for avoiding and preventing controls, especially government surveillance of their activities.

Many reporters said they often turn off their mobile phone and remove the battery to prevent their location from being tracked. Others simply leave it behind when reporting on sensitive issues. One correspondent recounted traveling to a remote location to investigate complaints about a military nuclear mining project and leaving his phone in Beijing and taking a “clean” phone – a mobile with a new number that could not be connected to the reporter. Other “clean” phones might include a public phone or Skype, an Internet calling program. Many participants said they often arrange interviews with sources through these calling methods.

China’s attempt to block access to certain Internet sites is well-documented (Zhang, 2006). This may pose a problem for a reporter who needs to find information about sensitive issues or even keep abreast of events through banned media sources (See Barboza, 2008). These roadblocks are often overcome by correspondents through anonymous proxy servers, which can jump over firewalls. As one participant said, “I think that right now we’re fighting a proxy war, using proxy servers.” He said that without using such servers, he would not be able to access controversial news about China from Western outlets. While one participant cited the web site Anonymouse.org as

a good proxy method, many other avenues are available for correspondents to bypass China's firewall (August, 2007).

Participants also described techniques to avoid in-person eavesdropping, such as being aware of their surroundings in public and not spending a lot of time doing interviews in the open. When trying to cover demonstrations, reporters emphasized the need to try and blend in with the crowd and not draw attention to themselves – a tough task for someone who is not ethnic Chinese. One participant said she tried to avoid doing sensitive interviews in population centers, where her activities would be more easily noticed and quickly reported to authorities. In some cases she also would do interviews via telephone to avoid being detained when showing up in person.

Some participants told stories of avoiding authorities who were following them via hiding and evasive driving. The correspondent who was tailed in Xinjiang by two government cars recounted one such episode:

“At one point we were being followed and did a couple of loops around the block, then pulled the car into a place where we couldn't be seen. We jumped out and went into a busy bazaar with thousands of people, went down a whole bunch of back alleys and sat down in a little tiny barbershop out of the way.” (March 5, 2008)

During a reporting trip to cover a coal mining accident in northern China, another correspondent and a colleague were confronted the first night they arrived in their hotel room by a police officer. The officer told the reporters that if they promised not to do any more reporting about the accident, they could stay the night and then leave early in the morning. The reporters agreed and the next day were put into a taxi by the officer, who told the driver to take them to the nearest town, then return and confirm that he had done so. Shortly after driving off, the reporters told the driver to stop and were switching

to another cab when they noticed the first taxi had stopped 100 yards away and was going to follow them. The reporters paid their new cab driver to lose the first one and were able to escape after what the participant called a “ridiculous Keystone Cops chase” through the town.

Another reporter said on some occasions he would try to lose possible tails by going in the front door of a building and leaving through the back, sometimes leaving his car onsite and taking a taxi to another location. In some cases, the sources of correspondents may handle the details of avoiding government surveillance. One participant provided the following scenario when he met with Falun Gong members:

“They would tell you to go somewhere, go to a McDonald’s and sit on the second floor in the back, sit there for fifteen minutes then go to the payphone and call and then you’d get another instruction. Or they’d say sit there for fifteen minutes then go to someplace else and then call. You’d be run through several locations before you could meet somebody and they would have people all along the way to watch whether you were being tailed or not. And you never knew who was actually watching you.” (March 11, 2008)

However, such methods may be less successful in an increasingly technological age. One participant expressed concern about the government’s ability to track reporter’s public activities through a growing network of security cameras in Beijing, negating the effectiveness of switching cabs or evasive driving. “The guy watching on the video camera can just follow you from one taxi to the next and he doesn’t get caught behind in traffic,” the reporter said. China’s Public Security Bureau has indicated that up to 300,000 government surveillance cameras are needed in large cities such as Beijing and Shanghai (Bradsher, 2007). According to one participant, the existing cameras in Beijing are monitored from a central location.

Still other participants said they did not employ many techniques to avoid being monitored, beyond perhaps occasionally making phone calls on a public phone. For some participants, this was due to the generally uncontroversial nature of their reporting. Other participants displayed a confidence that although they are surveilled, there will generally be no consequences resulting from what they do. In fact, several correspondents made light of their suspicion that their homes or offices are bugged and jokingly addressed their invisible eavesdroppers during interviews.

Run and Hide Strategy: Handling Travel Restrictions

Though considered one of China's primary attempts at controlling foreign journalists, the government's pre-Olympics travel restrictions were rarely adhered to by participants. One veteran reporter said he hadn't applied for permission to travel in at least ten years, though he had indeed reported from many places in the country outside Beijing. Further, those who covered breaking news under the old rules rarely had time to make travel applications before deadlines began to loom.

While on the road under the old restrictions, correspondents often employed tactics to avoid being detected for as long as possible. This might include going straight to interviews as soon as they arrived in a city or town, rather than checking into a hotel first. This way, reporters would get their most sensitive work finished before the police received word of their presence. In some cases correspondents would stay overnight in a bathhouse, where they could sleep in massage rooms and leave early the next morning, to avoid detection. If possible, others would finish their reporting within one day, without ever checking into a hotel.

In one case in which a correspondent and colleague were traveling without permission, their driver gave his identification to the hotel when they checked in. Though the reporters did not ask him to do this and it was not a regular practice, it nonetheless prevented police from being informed by the hotel that journalists were staying there.

Participants communicated a need to leave an area as quickly as possible and travel light under the pre-Olympics rules. One correspondent stressed arranging travel details beforehand to streamline the process and decrease the likelihood of being caught without a permit. This could mean taking a train to a city and having a local car and driver ready, as driving in with out-of-town license plates would be too obvious. One reporter said when traveling she does not take all of her notebooks or have contacts' phone numbers with her for fear of them being confiscated.

The methods employed to avoid authorities under the old restrictions appear to have been largely successful among several of the interview participants. Although several participants had been detained by police and questioned on numerous occasions, others managed to consistently avoid authorities across a long period of time on multiple illegal reporting trips.

In the cases where the new Olympics reporting rules have been violated by local authorities, reporters have sometimes contacted the Foreign Ministry for assistance. Doing this has helped some correspondents avoid any further trouble, but has not been known to result in gaining further access to sources or news scenes.

Correspondents who are blocked from accessing places where news is happening generally try to be cooperative with officials, a form of negotiating with controls. One

reporter who was questioned outside the home of a dissident said that although he felt as though the police wanted to drive him away through intimidation, he instead politely answered their questions, provided his identification and was eventually given access. Another reporter said she was able to “talk my out of it” when being questioned by police. Being cooperative with authorities may prevent a situation from escalating to something worse; it does not, however, necessarily ensure that reporters are granted access to their sources, as evidenced by the participant who agreed to cease reporting in exchange for delaying his expulsion from the area.

Misrepresentation: Going Undercover

Under some circumstances, two participants said they had misrepresented their status as reporters in order to gain access to sources or certain locales. Although this method was not commonly cited among the participants, its ethical implications warrant that it be noted.

The correspondent who wrote about a historical building to be destroyed by the government did not tell his primary source for the story that he was a reporter when conducting interviews. Instead, he posed as someone who had interest in buying the property to prevent its destruction. After the story was published, the source called the correspondent and “threatened” him for a week, but ultimately did nothing.

In another incident, the same participant claimed to be a tourist when trying to gain access to a province where the construction of a dam had caused an uprising among local residents. The area was sealed off and authorities were checking identification to prevent journalists from entering. Pretending to be a tourist, the reporter showed

authorities a travel book and said he wanted to visit a nearby pagoda. After being allowed in, he interviewed locals about the dam situation. He did not take notes or record and simply relied on his memory of what people said when composing the story, a method that also lowered his profile.

When covering human smuggling from China to the U.S. and other Western countries, another reporter visited several port towns and did not reveal to anyone that he was a journalist. Instead, he told people he was an investor and started asking around about whether anyone from the area had emigrated to the U.S. and how they got there. Even doing this undercover, the reporter said a crowd would often gather and he would have to cut the interviews short to avoid attracting too much attention.

Both correspondents who misrepresented their status expressed some dissatisfaction with having to do so, but one placed part of the blame on China's censorship efforts. "It makes it very hard to work within an ethical framework here given the constraints that we deal with," he said. Both reporters mitigated the situation by not using the names of anyone they interviewed undercover.

Nonetheless, both participants indicated that misrepresenting themselves was necessary to obtain the information they needed and the method was ultimately successful in producing stories. The source who threatened the correspondent admitted that he would not have talked if he had known the participant was a journalist. "There's nothing else I could do," the reporter said. "Would I do it again? If need be, yes."

Having to go "undercover," though not a common practice, indicates that controls in China sometimes put reporters in an ethical quandary where they are forced to choose

between maintaining the purest professional standards and getting the information they need.

Protecting Sources

Because many of the Chinese government's attempts to encourage self-censorship among foreign correspondents are exacted through intimidating Chinese sources, the protection of those sources is essential, according to many participants. Protecting sources is not a practice that is unique to correspondents in China, but given the harsh consequences Chinese people may face when speaking out on controversial matters (For example, see Yang, 2008), it is of the utmost importance for many American correspondents to successfully cover sensitive topics.

In addition to protecting journalists, many of the methods correspondents use to avoid monitoring also are employed to protect their sources. For instance, if a reporter takes a circuitous route to meet someone for an interview, this is often as much for the source's benefit as it is for the reporter's.

Correspondents also alluded to situations in which they had to gauge their source's understanding of the possible repercussions they could face when deciding whether to name them in a story. Statements made by participants indicate that gauging a source's understanding of such a situation involves asking them about their awareness of possible consequences for being quoted and a consideration of their socioeconomic status.

Despite these methods of source protection, participants reject any influence external mechanisms of self-censorship might have on the nature or topics of their reporting. Indeed, no participant said they had ever significantly altered how they

composed stories to protect sources. In some cases, only a source's surname and their general location might be used in a story – a practice that is not uncommon in other countries. One participant said if a source that is not media-savvy wants to be quoted speaking harshly about the CCP, he might choose to paraphrase their statement in order to protect them, but still keep the spirit of the quote.

Furthermore, none of the participants said they had not pursued a story or did not use a particular source to spare them potential harm. This suggests that many correspondents reject China's efforts at encouraging self-censorship by forging ahead with their reporting as though the possible consequences will be outweighed by the value of the story.

Using Local Assistants

Although most of the participants interviewed did not use Chinese assistants, the role assistants have played for foreign correspondents historically (Oskenberg, 1994) and the insight provided by participants warrant the matter some attention. The assessment of local assistants' usefulness by participants indicates that to some degree, assistants can serve as a strategy for dealing with government controls, or at least navigating correspondence from China with greater ease. While this signifies a marked departure from the historical view of assistants as agents of control, the small number of participants who were able to adequately comment on this issue limits the conclusions that can be drawn. Consequently, the use of local assistants in China by foreign correspondents demands further research.

As noted earlier, assistants are technically to be registered through the government, but participants said many correspondents who employ assistants do not follow this rule. This may allow the assistant more freedom, as it becomes more difficult for the government to apply pressure on them if it is unaware of their employment situation. Under these circumstances, it is unlikely that correspondents face indirect controls from the government through their assistants. However, some participants noted that in the past when assistants were frequently hired through the government, they were suspected of spying on reporters, were expensive to employ and not as effective as privately hired assistants (Also see Oskenberg, 1994).

While correspondents generally prefer to conduct their own interviews and stressed the importance of Chinese language training, some participants noted that assistants can still be an asset. Even if a reporter can speak Mandarin, some sources are still a bit uncomfortable talking to foreigners and can be put at ease if an ethnic Chinese person is present to take part in the discussion. A participant who does a lot of interviews with a local assistant said the arrangement allows her to focus more on the source's "nuance and body language and to sort of start thinking about how I want to come back with the next question."

Furthermore, a Chinese assistant may have an easier time than a foreigner when making phone calls and setting up interviews. "It's ... really nice to have someone who can cut through the bureaucracy here," said one correspondent. He said he has an assistant make calls to arrange interviews, noting, "if a foreigner calls they'll hang up on you ... so I found that I get a better success rate when that person [the assistant] calls than when I call myself."

Assistants are therefore a generally positive element for correspondents in China, though they are not frequently used. Most participants had little need for an assistant because their language and cultural skills were adequately developed and also because they prefer to conduct interviews on their own. As one participant said, “Ultimately I think the reporter wants to be independent. You don’t want to have to rely on somebody else for your information.” While this may partly indicate a continued suspicion that local assistants can act as controls over reporters, the generally positive assessments of assistants by those participants that used them indicate a possible shift away from Chinese assistants being viewed as agents of the government and toward a more positive role.

Counteraction Methods and the Role of the Journalist

Though primarily practical in nature, counteraction methods used by American correspondents point to the clashing perspectives between the U.S. and Chinese press systems. Whereas much of the domestic press in China may view its role as a didactic mouthpiece for the CCP, American journalists often view themselves as watchdogs over government (Berger, 2000). Therefore, control counteraction methods and strategies may stem partly from a dedication among correspondents to the notion that the press is to be informative and work as an agent of accountability. This dedication fits with the libertarian and social responsibility models of the press found in America.

Participant responses regarding their view of the journalist’s role in society were mixed, but only to an insignificant degree when comparing the American and Chinese press systems. Though some correspondents eschew the “watchdog” persona and focus

more on their role as informers, control counteraction methods point to a belief among participants that the CCP's restrictions are largely illegitimate and unnecessary. Reporters indicated a strong rejection of many control efforts, especially travel restrictions and source intimidation. This rejection indicates American correspondents transfer to their work in China many of the ideals – such as independence, professionalism and responsibility – of the libertarian and social responsibility models of the press practiced in the U.S.

Generally, the transference of Western press ideals to the practice of journalism in China appears to be successful. (It is important to note the transference of ideals being discussed here concerns only the production of news, not news content.) Many counteraction methods are effective in circumventing controls and creating space for coverage of a wide range of topics, many controversial. Nonetheless, these strategies, and particularly the controls they inspire, can often have a negative impact on journalists' work.

Chapter 7

The Effects of China's Controls, Marketization and Technology

As noted in chapters two and three, the possible effects of China's press controls (and, consequently, the methods used to counteract them) on American correspondents' work are potentially significant. The role of the press in shaping audience perception of other countries (Dell'Orto, 2002) underscores the need for reporters to have accurate information and freedom to thoroughly cover their beat. Furthermore, foreign correspondents' work can have policy implications (Cohen, 1963; Wu & Hamilton, 2004) and therefore the ultimate effects of the influences on their ability to accurately and thoroughly report may be far-reaching. Specifically, press freedom has been inversely correlated with the severity of international conflict (Van Belle, 2000).

This chapter proposes a greater practical importance of official actions in comparison with written regulations in China and also examines the effects of China's press controls and correspondents' counteraction methods on participants' work, including the limitations on what topics they can cover. The focus on the effects of controls and counteraction methods at the level of news production consequently reveals opportunities for further investigation of the connection between controls and news content.

Government controls over the press can also be useful in analyzing the Chinese government and China's current media environment, though the nature of the data gathered in this study allows only indirect analysis. In addition to having an impact on China's image abroad, China's controls of foreign reporters may indicate an attempt by

the government to shape that image through ‘global media diplomacy’ (Ebo, 1997) and provide some insight for identifying the country’s current press model. It is helpful to consider the implications of press controls within the context of China’s recent marketization and the growth of technology; specifically, how these phenomenon may interact with correspondents’ work and government controls.

Laws and Regulations v. Official Actions

Due to the varying applications of the laws and regulations for correspondents in China, the written rules often overlap with specific official actions of control and as such their effects will be addressed in the following sections of this chapter. While this organization flows naturally from the nature of participant responses, it also has significant theoretical implications.

Shoemaker and Reese (1996) divided government extramedia influences into laws/regulations and official actions. In China, official actions appear to frequently overshadow the written rules for foreign correspondents, largely due to their uneven application by officials. For instance, though the travel restrictions play a prominent role in the controls reporters face, the implementation and violation of the rules are often what really matter for the correspondent. Furthermore, many written rules appear to now be defunct or frequently not followed, even by authorities. Instead, decisions made by officials in a particular situation are paramount.

Therefore official actions in China are ultimately more important than laws and regulations when evaluating government controls on foreign correspondents. While laws and regulations are still useful for examining the thinking and intentions of the power

structure, the nature of China's bureaucracy appears to subordinate the written rule to the official action. The disconnect between the political center's intent (laws/regulations) and its implementation (official actions) points to an ineffective and inflexible bureaucracy that in some cases is entrenched in old practices that are difficult to change (i.e., path-dependency).

The Effects of Accreditation

China's management of journalists through accreditation, while not seen as particularly burdensome to this study's participants, nonetheless is at least a method of bureaucratic control. For instance, the regular renewal of official paperwork with the Chinese government makes it easier to track correspondents and in the past has been used to carefully control the number of correspondents allowed into the country. The initial accreditation process has also been used to evaluate the ideological perspectives of reporters. While from an historical perspective China has become more open in allowing American correspondents in the country (See Hohenberg, 1967), the accreditation process indicates a continuing desire to exercise some control over their numbers and helps authorities keep a close watch on their activities.

However, it is important to note several factors that mitigate the restrictiveness of the accreditation process. First, accreditation of correspondents is practiced by democratic countries such as the U.S., where freedom of the press is enshrined (See "Foreign Media, Press and Radio," n.d). Also, in recent years there has been an apparent positive shift in the government's attitude toward correspondents, at least to some extent at the national level. This is evidenced by the creation of the International Press Center

and a more open and congenial attitude among some officials involved in accreditation matters. Furthermore, participants did not generally note any highly burdensome aspects of the accreditation process, beyond its sometimes time-consuming nature. One correspondent noted that obtaining accreditation in Thailand was more difficult than in China.

Overall, accreditation requirements have little impact on foreign correspondents and their ability to cover China. It is a process of formal control but can also be viewed as a standard bureaucratic procedure used by other countries.

The Effects of Unresponsiveness and Government Press Conferences

Unresponsiveness. The inability to obtain a wide range of information from government and private sources in China is a particularly vexing problem that impacts the work of foreign correspondents. This is especially an issue for reporters who cover breaking news and preferably need quick access to reliable information in order to meet daily deadlines.

One of the major effects that unresponsiveness and government secrecy have on the reporting process is that it takes an inordinate amount of time to obtain what is considered by participants to be basic and uncontroversial information. Many times, the information cannot be attained at all, despite extensive efforts to do so. Such digging is reminiscent of similar challenges post-Revolution China correspondents faced (Hohenberg, 1967, p. 222). Ultimately, this wastes reporters' time and limits their reporting in some cases. "I spend a vast amount of my time scrounging around trying to find minor pieces of information that are readily available anyplace else," one participant

said. “So when it comes time to do a big picture story, our coverage often is just too rudimentary.”

While the government’s lack of interaction with foreign correspondents does not impact every story, there are many stories in which its unresponsiveness either circumscribes a story’s depth or leaves it to be shaped by others. “There are things that are very dependent on what officials are going to tell you and you’re never going to get that,” said one participant, who added, “a lot of times I’m talking to people that have a beef against the government, they have an axe to grind.” Unresponsiveness, therefore, forces correspondents to seek and rely on alternative sources of information.

Participants did not indicate that unresponsiveness forced them to rely more on Western or American sources, though correspondents usually must look far beyond the Chinese government for information and analysis. While it is uncertain whether this results in a particular viewpoint gaining more traction in their reporting, it is quite certain that the government’s view is not as effectively or frequently communicated as it could be. In a country dominated by one political party, it is essential for audiences both foreign and domestic to have accurate information about the party and its policy implementations, and a lack of access to government appears to influence the thoroughness of reporting from the perspective of some correspondents. Other research has noted a prevalence of simplistic frames in American news coverage of China (Mann, 1999).

Unresponsiveness also indicates that China’s current media diplomacy (Ebo, 1997) efforts, at least among the American press corps, are not generally conducted in a positive manner (though its approach shows some signs of moving in that direction). One

participant hinted at the possible effects of government unresponsiveness in news content: “If somebody picks up the phone and answers and gives me a reasonable answer, then that’s the way they come across in the story,” he said. “If they consistently ignore me, then that’s going to be mentioned and that paints a different picture.”

The government’s frequently utilized method of ignoring media requests, therefore, has a high likelihood of engendering and perpetuating a negative view of China (and especially the CCP) in U.S. media coverage, and consequently, among U.S. media consumers, though this cannot be conclusively stated and is in need of further research. Nonetheless, several participants expressed the sentiment that the Chinese government has the potential to improve its image abroad via more open engagement of the foreign press.

Furthermore, the simple fact that the government regularly fails to effectively communicate with the press leaves correspondents in a desperate search for information, uncertain about the government position on a given matter or unwilling to try and obtain it, in all cases unable to adequately reflect it in their reporting. According to one participant, this is often dealt with in stories by using “blanket boilerplate that says, ‘Ministry X does not respond to, does not normally comment on.’ ”

Many correspondents expressed frustration with the government’s handling of their requests, and while it is uncertain what ultimate effect this has on news content, at the very least it greatly complicates correspondence from China, especially when information or reaction from the government is essential to a story. The relationship between officials and the foreign press in China is also characterized by a different dynamic than, for instance, the relationship between the American press and the U.S.

government. In the latter, reporters generally need to keep a healthy distance from official sources and are empowered by their “watchdog” role over government (Berger, 2000). In China, however, where the CCP ultimately holds authority over media coverage, access to government sources must often be developed through close personal relationships that can take a long time to build. Some correspondents choose to not invest this time given a high likelihood of failure.

Press conferences. The inadequacy of government news conferences in China appears to impact correspondents much in the same way as does its general unresponsiveness and secrecy: a lack of access to reliable and timely information that is the reporter’s lifeblood.

The conduct of government press conferences also affects correspondents in that they are often driven further away from looking to the government as an accurate source. A few participants said they often no longer attended conferences, with one saying, “it’s a waste of time.” This may serve to contribute to a lack of effective government communication appearing in reportage.

However, given that some participants noted a positive shift in recent years, government press conferences also help illuminate China’s current press model. Though by Western standards the conferences are still sorely lacking, an apparent willingness to engage the press more frequently and with at least the appearance of increased openness indicates a change in the government’s attitude toward the political value of the media. As such, the CCP appears to be trying to partly deliver its global media diplomacy through conducting news conferences in a more positive manner than it did in the past.

At the present time, however, these efforts continue to be circumscribed by the entrenched problems participants cited of propaganda, evasiveness and unresponsiveness.

The Effects of Monitoring and Travel Restrictions

Monitoring. Government monitoring of foreign correspondents in China can have some negative effects on reporters' work but is generally not a major roadblock. However, its existence reveals an obsession by the government to keep tabs on correspondents and have information available to thwart their activities if necessary.

The monitoring of correspondents in China can sometimes force reporters to take various actions to avoid being surveilled when trying to get a story. These methods can waste time and increase the tension of meeting with sources. Monitoring sometimes results in authorities intimidating or questioning reporters about their activities. In those cases where correspondents may be blocked from accessing their email due to offending messages, reporters may be prevented or at least delayed in obtaining information.

Although monitoring can sometimes inconvenience reporters, participant responses indicate that surveillance of their activities generally has little impact on their work. Many correspondents said that while they assume they are monitored, they rarely see concrete evidence of it and usually don't worry about it.

However, monitoring of journalists by Chinese authorities indicates strong authoritarian elements remain in China's press model. Spying on reporters may be ultimately aimed at preventing them from covering highly sensitive topics, or simply an indication of what one participant termed a "neurosis of control." Even if monitoring

seldom results in controls over what correspondents cover, its practice points to government distrust of the foreign media and underscores a mixed press model in China.

Travel restrictions. China's travel restrictions for correspondents, including violations of the pre-Olympics reporting rules, often negatively impact journalists' work. The restrictions have forced correspondents to take measures to avoid being detected; slowed and sometimes completely barred their access to sources; increased the pressure of traveling within China; and in some cases have involved physical violence ("FCCC 2007 Survey," 2007).

Though the restrictions were often ignored or otherwise circumvented by participants, this was often the case because correspondents knew that following the rules would itself limit their reporting. One participant indicated that approved trips had to be for "innocuous" reasons, or they would otherwise be difficult to obtain. Facing the prospect of government minders on approved trips also provided correspondents with a reason to skirt the rules. Additionally, applying for travel permission was often a near impossibility when breaking news was happening.

Traveling without permission, though frequently practiced, often distracted reporters from their primary responsibility, as they had to devote energy to much more than simply the practice of journalism. On top of getting access to sources and quickly conducting interviews in an inconspicuous manner, correspondents had to be concerned about local authorities detecting their presence and detaining them or expelling them from the area.

Some reporters indicated the controls have made them more cautious in how they report some stories, which may ultimately limit the scope and depth of coverage. One

participant said that she has chosen to not travel to the scenes of certain events, such as demonstrations or to the house of a dissident. Although the reporter was not necessarily concerned about her safety in these situations, she viewed it as a “lose-lose” if she was detained before accomplishing any reporting.

One correspondent noted that the pre-Olympics travel restrictions had a primarily psychological effect, increasing his worry that he would be caught and face some kind of trouble with authorities. “It put pressure on me, it made me a bit nervous about who I talked to, where I went,” he said. “I was always kind of thinking I might be being followed.” Though rare, the prospect of a foreign correspondent facing physical danger (“FCCC 2007 Survey,” 2007) further heightens the tension when reporting outside the official boundaries. The psychological impact controls have on correspondents may contribute to limiting the depth of reporting, as it can influence their decisions during the reporting process. However, further research focused specifically on this issue would be needed to obtain a clearer picture of the psychological effects of controls on news content.

Travel restrictions also sometimes limited the information a correspondent could obtain when authorities blocked them from the news scene or expelled them before they had completed reporting. However, when being detained or questioned for violating the travel rules, reporters’ biggest concern was often that they were losing valuable time as their deadlines passed. One participant elaborated on this:

“They learned eight or nine years ago that basically the worst thing for a reporter is for the authorities to waste his time. Some of us were willing to endure physical danger. But what really turned all of us off was their wasting our time. They’d take you to the police station and hold you for eight hours. You’d write out a little statement saying here’s what I did, I went to the scene of such and such. Reporters hate that. So they’ve learned that that’s a pretty good deterrent.”
(February 21, 2008)

Those journalists who had experienced violations of the relaxed Olympics travel rules appeared to be frustrated at such episodes, just as they were about travel restrictions in general. Recounting an instance of being followed after meeting with a dissident, one participant said, “there should be no reason they should follow me, they’ve got no right to follow me.”

The relaxation of the travel restrictions for the Olympics is indicative of a media diplomacy effort by the Chinese government, in which it seeks to tout more openness to the world (See “FCCC 2007 Survey,” 2007, p. 7). However, episodes of continuing to apply the old rules have the potential for negatively affecting what information a correspondent can obtain in certain situations. When a correspondent is thwarted by authorities who improperly interpret the Olympics reporting rules, their reporting is complicated and likely not as complete as it could be, especially for breaking news. Given the promise of more openness from Chinese officials, such violations only work to increase correspondents’ frustration and poor press-government relations.

As mentioned earlier, government control attempts in China in some instances appear to be partly shifting away from outright restrictions and toward more indirect attempts at propaganda and public relations influence. While the old travel rules are indicative of a government effort to manage what information about China is revealed to the rest of the world, the government is also currently trying to work within the new rules to continue managing the message. As revealed in the classified memo instructing officials to influence foreign journalists during the Olympic reporting period (“Working recommendations,” n.d.), China appears to be shifting toward a more ‘positive’ approach

of correspondent control, at least while the rules are suspended. However, the methods detailed in the memo indicate ‘positive’ methods that are less direct than those cited by Koltsova (2001); rather than bribes or offering special access, Chinese authorities are instructed to suggest topics of reporting and carefully manage the information correspondents receive.

Although the memo indicates a campaign is underway to propagandize foreign journalists, its effectiveness is unknown. Most participants appeared to exhibit a keen awareness of government attempts at propagandizing, for instance those that occur during press conferences. The government’s Olympics reporting period management campaign, therefore, cannot be conclusively gauged for its effect on correspondents, but does offer some insight into China’s press model. Specifically, it provides evidence supporting the mixed or transitional model (Curran & Park, 2000), such that Chinese authorities’ official methods of control are shifting partly toward ‘positive’ influence within the context of greater press freedom, while negative controls still remain. In other words, China has coupled its relaxation of foreign press control with an enhanced propaganda campaign effort.

The Effects of Source Intimidation

Many aspects of the source development process in China are not necessarily different than elsewhere, but in those cases where the threat of government recriminations and intimidation against sources come into play, it is found to have a negative impact on correspondents’ work in two ways: It complicates their attempts to report on controversial issues and also may shape the kinds of sources they rely on. This

in turn may have some effect on news content and audience perceptions of China and its government. Despite complicating the process of reporting, however, source intimidation does not ultimately sway correspondents' reporting decisions.

Many participants indicated that having to protect sources and the possibility of government recriminations for sources is a very frustrating aspect of their work. As mentioned in chapter five, correspondents sometimes face the ethical problem of endangering sources vs. getting the story. Additionally, the process of talking with dissidents and other controversial sources is complicated by the fact that reporters place a high premium on their protection and have to employ many of the time-consuming and tedious methods used to avoid monitoring, travel restrictions and detention.

Intimidation of sources is more likely if controversial issues are at hand and therefore makes covering these matters more difficult for correspondents. At the same time, however, the government's attempts to encourage reporter self-censorship through source intimidation largely appear to be ineffective in influencing news coverage; many participants indicated they do not alter the stories or sources they pursue because of these threats. Indeed, some participants said that despite the possibility of being detained or worse, or the danger faced by sources for talking to foreign media, they do not change their reporting habits or avoid stories they know will be controversial. While source intimidation is a serious matter, especially for Chinese people, it does not appear to have a major impact on the majority of correspondents' willingness to conduct interviews or pursue sensitive stories.

Though self-censorship pressure on reporters may not ultimately affect news content, the narrowing of sources available to reporters may in fact shape their stories.

The pressure placed on sources in China can sometimes limit the amount of information and viewpoints that foreign correspondents can obtain. Because many people are unwilling to speak with reporters out of fear of government retribution, journalists may rely heavily on dissidents who are unafraid, as evidenced by the correspondent who said he often speaks to people “with an axe to grind.”

One participant said that although it is clear that some topics are off-limits for people to discuss (such as criticism of the CCP or its leaders), the boundaries of permissible discussion are unknown and shifting. The fear of retribution may lead some potential sources to steer clear of foreign reporters or their refusal to talk about certain topics that would not actually result in negative reaction from the government.

Reliance on disaffected sources, coupled with government unresponsiveness, likely exacerbates a negative view of the Chinese government in some foreign reporting, thereby undermining China’s attempts to shape a positive image of itself in the media through controlling sources. Government self-censorship efforts are found to have a limiting effect on what information is available to correspondents, which may also impact the depth of their reporting in some cases, though reporters themselves are not greatly influenced by these efforts.

Topics Affected by Controls

Many issues in China are difficult for foreign correspondents to cover given the government controls they face. It is possible that nearly any story, unless it is of the most innocuous nature, can be a challenge. Other matters are so controversial they are nearly impossible to report on, unless a correspondent is willing to face serious consequences.

Nonetheless, participants indicated they feel they can cover nearly any topic in China, though doing so may be fraught with the difficulties outlined in chapter five.

Topics on religious freedom (e.g. Falun Gong) and political independence of Taiwan and Tibet frequently were cited by reporters as topics that are the most sensitive and difficult to report on in China. Coverage of Xinjiang Province is also problematic. Any significant coverage of these issues has the potential for the most extreme retribution a foreign correspondent would likely ever face in China. “If I wanted to end my career in China real fast, I would do a series on Falun Gong,” one participant said. “And it might win me a Pulitzer Prize if I did it well, but I’d better have a job in London lined up, because you’re out of here.” This indicates that controls may interact with concerns of job security and career development among correspondents who want to pursue the most controversial issues in China.

The expelling of foreign correspondents from Tibet during the March 2008 protests and riots underscores the difficulties reporters face in covering breaking news in a controversial region. News reports cited the problems reporters encountered in verifying information about the riots due to the government’s strict control over the area (“China steps up Tibetan crackdown,” 2008; Ang, 2008). Such control may limit the depth of coverage or result in inaccurate information.

Any time an issue involves demonstrations or protests, reporters may have problems getting the story. Correspondents cited protests involving government construction and destruction of buildings where authorities attempted to thwart reporters’ work by questioning them and blocking them from the scene. Coincidentally, protests,

disasters, conflict and freedom are among the most common themes in foreign news (Gans, 1979).

Beyond the highly sensitive topics, however, there exist a wider range of issues correspondents may find difficult to cover due to China's restrictive reporting environment. "It's hard to think of ones that are not," said one participant. "The wide range of topics turns out to be surprisingly difficult," he added, citing energy policy, the environment, transportation, the Internet, trade and intellectual property as areas where private and government sources are uncooperative, thus making substantial coverage a challenge. Participants also noted numerous problems when trying to report on natural disasters and accidents of various kinds.

Generally, the difficulties foreign correspondents face in covering topics that aren't hot-button issues (e.g., Tibet) stem from unresponsiveness. Whether experienced from government or the private sector, this unresponsiveness is due largely to a fear among sources of drawing negative attention from authorities, according to several participants.

Although many topics are difficult for foreign correspondents in China to cover, most of the participants said they felt as though they could accurately represent the country to their audiences. While this sentiment may be partly due to an unwillingness to face the personal implications of not accurately covering their beat, it also indicates that, except for a few sensitive issues, correspondents feel enough freedom to pursue most topics. Still, this is often not without significant reporting difficulties that can limit depth and thoroughness. One participant who covers mostly business said the following:

“I’m always startled when you see articles from the U.S. that quote twenty people and I just think they [reporters] probably had to talk to a hundred people to get these twenty examples of whatever. And I’m thinking, talking to a hundred people in China would take a year! And just finding people on topics I need to know about. We have to invest far too much time and as a result the articles we file are not as detailed, are not as nuanced and colorful as they could be.”
(February 21, 2008)

Such lack of nuance, not only on controversial matters but also on what is considered routine by most Western reporters, may limit to some extent the picture of China available to American audiences in the news. Though it is outside the scope of this research to identify the effects of news content, the fact that government controls in China often limit correspondents’ work points to the need for further investigation into how those controls may impact the “common sense” (Dell’ Orto, 2002) China correspondents create for their audience. Indeed, such controls may in fact significantly influence news content.

The Impact of Marketization and Technology

Though government controls may have many negative effects on correspondents’ work, China’s current societal transition also plays a large role in affecting both foreign journalists and the government’s control regime. Therefore when considering the experiences of foreign reporters in China at this point in its history, it is necessary to consider these developments. Doing so not only illuminates the work of correspondents, but is also essential for any discussion of China’s current press model.

China’s market reforms appear to have had at least some impact on correspondents’ work in recent years in relation to the government controls they face. Technology has also greatly transformed how journalists do their jobs and has both

enhanced and limited the government's ability to control reporters. Nevertheless, the reach of marketization and technology in transforming the Chinese media environment is found to be in line with previous research that identifies an uneven pattern of reform (Chan & Qiu, 2002) indicative of a mixed press system (Curran & Park, 2000).

Based on participant responses, China's opening up to the international community is one of the primary factors in the relaxation of control over the foreign press that some reporters have noted in the past ten to twenty years. As one participant put it, "Whatever openness and pluralism that exists in China today is all because of the economy." This may be due to the incompatibility of rigid government control and marketization. "If you want to have a dynamic economy, you've got to give people much greater control over their private lives and over information," one participant said. The Chinese government may have recognized the incompatibility and is struggling with how to loosen restrictions to foster economic development and openness while maintaining enough control to continue trying to manage its image in the press. This echoes previous research that China's economic liberalization has hampered the government's ability to control public opinion (Rosen, 1989; Lynch, 1999) while authoritarian elements of control still persist.

Authoritarian practices are in sharpest relief when controversial issues erupt (Zhang, 1993; Rowen, 2006). The March 2008 Tibetan riots, for instance, resulted in harsh controls over the foreign press. After journalists were allowed to return to the province, their access was managed carefully by authorities (Hutzler, 2008). As such, the Chinese government's press control efforts surrounding the incident indicated that sensitive political issues draw the strongest authoritarian reaction.

Although it is not possible in this study to measure the level of impact marketization has had on China's press model, correspondents presented a picture in which, at least from their perspective, freedoms for foreign reporters have improved in China as a result of expanding economic freedom and in comparison with the past, but many instances of control remain a common experience of their work. This is evident when considering many of the controls from chapter five while also noting many veteran correspondents cited changes in the government's attitude toward and handling of reporters. As such, the experiences of participants in this study lend credence to the mixed or transitional press model (Curran & Park, 2000) as that which best describes current-day China.

Technological change was also cited by correspondents as having an impact on their work. Many participants noted that the Internet has made it much easier for them to access information and find sources, while the proliferation of mobile phones has made it possible to connect with sources in ways previously unthinkable.

"Telecommunications technology has made a tremendous difference in China," said one participant, noting that when he started reporting in China last decade, his organization had only one mobile phone. "Of course now every single person has one and you can call in from any event and immediately dictate a story if necessary," he said. Because even impoverished Chinese people in the countryside have mobile phones, it is easier to find sources if news breaks outside large cities.

The Internet means correspondents can and must report much faster than in the past, which of course enhances the negative effect of unresponsiveness. Still, as one correspondent said, "you cannot say that the sum total of the benefits offered by the

Internet do not outweigh the downsides.” Reporters keep in touch with sources via email, monitor Chinese blogs and can quickly file their stories electronically.

Simultaneously, however, technology may in some ways make it easier for the government to monitor correspondents and their sources. As already noted, China implements a firewall to block certain web sites and has apparently blocked access to email accounts if they contain offensive messages. One correspondent said using email makes it easier for the government to track his activities because, “they now have a written record of everything you have sent, so they know perhaps even more specifically what you’re up to.”

The government has also used Internet postings to crack down on dissidents and other potential sources (For example, see Cody, 2008). Therefore as Chinese citizens acquire more means for expressing their opinions, it also becomes easier for the government to target opinions they don’t like since they are publicly published.

As noted in the previous chapter, technology has also made it easier for the government to surveil correspondents, particularly through an expanding network of security cameras and the ability to track people’s locations through their mobile phones. Although correspondents said avoiding the latter is rather easy (via disabling the phone), it is becoming increasingly difficult to go anywhere in China’s large cities without being on camera (Bradsher, 2007).

In sum, the vast economic and technological changes China has experienced in the past quarter century have transformed the work of American correspondents in both positive and negative ways. Marketization appears to be at least partly responsible for a loosening of press controls as the government seeks to sustain economic growth in

partially open markets. Reporters can now gain greater access to information and sources through the Internet and telecommunications, as well as deliver news to their audiences faster.

At the same time, it is not possible to definitively gauge a cause-effect relationship between marketization and less government control over correspondents. Perhaps more importantly, however, is that the continued use of various press controls, some through technological means, limits whatever loosening effect marketization and technology have thus far had on press restrictions. China's reporting environment for American correspondents is therefore decidedly a mixture of authoritarian control and expanding freedom.

Two Realities for China Correspondents

The effects of China's controls over American correspondents, coupled with the transformation they have experienced over the past two decades, in many ways indicate that reporters work in two realities. One reality is that China continues to try and control correspondents through various measures that differ in their application across time, locales and situations. These controls frequently impact how correspondents do their work, often frustrating their efforts to gain access to information, sources and news scenes, all of which may limit the depth and timeliness of their reporting.

The other reality within which correspondents in today's China operate is one in which societal transformation has in some instances loosened government restrictions over reporters, if sometimes only on the surface level. But it was undeniable among many participants who had spent a decade or more in China that reporting freedoms had

increased and the government's attitude toward the press had improved since they first began working as correspondents. Whether these changes are due primarily to marketization is uncertain, but it appears to be a good possibility deserving of further investigation.

It is encouraging that press freedoms for foreign correspondents in China have increased in recent years, but some significant and troubling controls remain that may ultimately have a negative impact on news content. Because government controls are considered an "extramedia influence" that can have a significant influence on journalist's work (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; Yang, 1995), more research is needed to discover how today's controls over China's foreign correspondents may influence content and, in specific cases, audience opinion and policy. Though it is outside the scope of this study to make specific claims where content has been influenced, it is reasonable to assert that the work of American correspondents in China is affected by government controls, often in a negative way.

Chapter 8

Conclusions and Discussion

This study set out to investigate three aspects of American correspondents' work in China: the government controls they face, the strategies they implement to deal with those controls and what affect both the controls and the counteraction methods might have on their work. In addition to helping construct a picture of current controls American reporters face in China, the aim was also to consider how China's unprecedented economic and technological changes have influenced journalists and government control efforts, as well as to explore how China's current press model and media diplomacy efforts might be identified from foreign correspondent experiences.

In-depth interviews with eight American correspondents working for U.S. media in Beijing were the primary method of data collection. Though the sample size is not without its limitations, it was sufficient in providing ample data to begin constructing a picture of foreign correspondent experiences in China as they relate to government controls. Media reports and a 2007 survey of foreign correspondents in China also buttress many of the controls identified by participants (See, for example, Hutzler, 2008; "FCCC 2007 Survey," 2007; Ang, 2008; "China steps up Tibetan crackdown," 2008).

Participant interviews revealed a number of significant "extramedia" influences that the Chinese government implements in an effort to control journalists. Briefly, these controls were found to manifest primarily in government unresponsiveness; inadequate government press conferences; travel restrictions; encouragement of self-censorship via source intimidation; monitoring and surveillance of correspondent activities; questioning

and detaining reporters; blocking access to the scene of news; violation of Olympics reporting rules; and attempts to propagandize journalists. To a lesser degree, China's written regulations for correspondents function as a control over their work, but are largely dependent on the manner in which they are implemented in a given situation.

Among the controls identified by participants, unresponsiveness and travel restrictions appeared to be the most frustrating and burdensome on their regular activities. Though the travel restrictions are currently suspended, violations of the new rules point to a disconnect between official policy and its implementation, as well as the greater importance of official actions compared to regulations and laws. Still, the reinstatement of the rules after the Olympics will present an opportunity to examine what possible effects the suspension may have had on the government's approach to correspondent travel going forward.

Government unresponsiveness is especially a problem for journalists covering a country in which government bureaucracy plays a large role in everyday life. Information that only the government can provide to help sharpen and deepen news coverage is often unattainable, even if it is relatively uncontroversial. This was found to be extremely frustrating for many correspondents, who thrive on providing as much detailed and accurate information as possible to their audience.

Unresponsiveness may stem from a combination of factors, including ineffective government bureaucracy and entrenched practices of handling the media that are difficult to reverse. The government attitude toward the press is likely born out of the CCP being generally unaccountable to the press or the public. However, as China increases its

presence in global politics and business, there are some signals that officials may be moving toward more subtle methods of control via public relations manipulation.

Intimidation of sources in an effort to encourage self-censorship was also cited by participants as a particularly troubling and increasingly common method of government control. As many direct controls over correspondents become less tenable, authorities appear to be directing more censorship energy toward Chinese sources, who can face far more damaging repercussions than foreign journalists. This may be partly due to correspondents' abilities to circumvent the vast majority of controls and the government's acknowledgement that good relations with the foreign press are helpful for global media diplomacy.

Correspondents employ a number of methods to counteract the controls they face, many of which appear to be successful in overcoming roadblocks to reporting. Employing these strategies may stem partly from correspondents' view of their role as watchdogs and may be indicative of clashing American-CCP views of the press' role in society. In other words, the libertarian or social responsibility models of the press that typically characterize the approach of American journalists may partly drive their counteraction methods within China's mixed press system with many authoritarian elements.

Among the counteraction strategies identified in this study were actions taken to avoid being monitored, including disabling mobile phones, evasive driving, hiding from authorities and using Internet proxy servers; actions to skirt travel restrictions, including traveling without approval, quickly conducting interviews and leaving an area as soon as possible; mixing negotiation, resignation and the "hardball" approach when dealing with

unresponsive government officials; protecting sensitive sources but not allowing intimidation to alter reporting decisions; and taking advantage of every opportunity to develop sources in a society steeped in secrecy (though increasing openness is notable). Though these methods are largely practical in nature, their use among American correspondents are often in pursuit of stories considered controversial by the CCP and point to the dichotomy between Western and official Chinese notions of the journalist's role in society.

The controls correspondents face in China, as well as their counteraction methods, appear to have a significant impact on journalists' work and can occupy a large space of their experience. Though it is not possible in this study to draw direct links between government controls and their effect on media content, it has been established that (1) government laws and actions toward journalists are legitimate extramedia influences over news content (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996) and (2) significant government controls over American correspondents exist in China today.

Within the extramedia influences of government control, Shoemaker and Reese (1996) identified both regulations/laws and official actions as two categories of control. Though China has extensive written regulations and laws governing foreign correspondents, the data indicate that official actions generally have the greatest practical impact on journalists' work. This implies that in a vast bureaucracy, such as China's, regulations and laws may be less important than official actions in terms of analyzing the implications for journalists. However, regulations remain useful for understanding the intentions of China's global media diplomacy efforts.

The extramedia influences on American correspondents from the Chinese government are found to have some negative impact on journalists' abilities to cover China, particularly when government information or input is essential. While correspondents feel as though they are able to accurately represent China to their audience and can successfully negotiate many controls, some also voiced concern that their reporting is limited in depth and nuance due to the controls, revealing a gap between professional ideals and what they are able to accomplish.

The controls over American reporters in China identified by this study pose a number of possible implications in need of further exploration. First, given the importance of international news in shaping public perceptions of other cultures and countries as well as policy, reporting limits may have a negative influence on U.S.-China relations and have the potential for shaping policy directives in specific situations. However, further research is needed in this area to clarify the strength and nature of the relationship. What can be said unequivocally, however, is that the practice of reporting is often frustrated in China due to government restrictions, whether direct or indirect.

Second, China's controls on correspondents help illuminate the government's regime of 'media diplomacy' (Ebo, 1997), or its attempt to shape China's global image in the international press. China's efforts may ultimately be unsuccessful at cultivating a positive image, however, given that unresponsiveness often leaves reporters frustrated and forced to look elsewhere – including to those with anti-CCP sentiment – to construct stories.

At the same time, China appears to be at least partly shifting its methods of correspondent control away from the more negative approaches to 'positive' engagement.

This includes careful message management and propagandizing journalists, though the efficacy of this campaign is questionable. Regardless, it is part of a noticeable shift in government attitude toward the foreign press that many participants noted taking place in the past ten to twenty years. Though the shift includes propaganda efforts, it also manifests in a genuinely more helpful and welcoming attitude toward foreign reporters than in the recent past.

While the purpose of this study was not to make a historical comparison, participant responses indicate a marked difference in government restrictions between the present day and various periods during the last century. For example, direct government control over foreign media content which was common prior to the 1949 Communist revolution (See Rand, 1995 and MacKinnon & Friesen, 1987) appears to not be practiced today. Heavy-handed restrictions on living situations (Rand, 1995, p. 208) have also ceased. Also, native reporting assistants do not appear to be as much of a control threat as they have been in the past (See Oskenberg, 1994), though government efforts to use assistants as controlling agents is still cited. It is notable that most of this study's participants do not use assistants, generally because they can speak Mandarin and prefer to do their own interviews.

China's marketization and technological transformation have significantly changed the landscape for foreign journalists. While direct links between economic reform and relaxation in government control are in need of further exploration, correspondents (as well as various scholars; see Rosen, 1989 and Lynch, 1999) attribute most of the increase in freedom to these developments. Technology has made accessing

information and sources easier for reporters, but at the same time has aided the government's control efforts in some respects.

Despite signs of increasing freedoms for the foreign media in China, today's correspondents still face significant and troubling controls over their reporting efforts that, when considered alongside the positive changes, support the transitional or mixed view of China's press model (Curran & Park, 2000). The continued use of controls over correspondents and the prominence of these controls in their work indicate the media environment for foreign reporters in China contains many authoritarian elements. When the apparent loosening of some restrictions over the past two decades is taken into account, China continues to exhibit an uneven pattern of media reform (See Chan & Qiu, 2002). This pattern is perhaps exemplified by the government's tight controls over foreign correspondents during the March 2008 Tibetan uprising, only months before the Summer Olympics that prompted relaxed travel restrictions for reporters. The incident also underscored the fact that controversial issues continue to draw the most aggressive press restrictions from the CCP (Zissis, 2006).

It should not be understated that China's positive changes toward the foreign press, though marred by the persistence of troubling controls, lay the groundwork for further reform. Given the importance of the United States-China relationship for both countries as well as the world, an accurate and open exchange of information is essential. The reporters who play such a prominent role in this exchange would benefit from an expansion of freedom and cessation of burdensome controls. Consequently, this would present China with an opportunity to truly enhance its global image and foster improved cross-cultural relations.

Appendix

Interview Questions

Controls faced by correspondents	1. <i>Describe the process of becoming a correspondent in China and any related difficulties, particularly problems with the government.</i>
	2. <i>What are the most significant controls you face as a reporter in China?</i>
	3. <i>Please provide examples of controls.</i>
	4. <i>In your experience, how well does the Chinese government enforce its own rules for foreign correspondents?</i>
	5. <i>Do you ever encounter ‘positive’ attempts of influence, such as bribery, special favors or access to confidential information with an implication that your work will not offend?</i>
	6. <i>Is guanxi ever involved in the reporting process? How?</i>
	7. <i>How useful (or not) are press conferences held by the Chinese government?</i>
	8. <i>What is your experience with contacting government sources and obtaining information from them?</i>
How correspondents respond to controls	1. <i>What are the editorial policies and protocols related to controls that you must follow?</i>
	2. <i>How do you handle controls in light of your organization’s editorial policies and protocols?</i>
	3. <i>How do you develop sources?</i>

<p>How correspondents respond to controls, contd.</p>	<p>4. <i>How much do you rely on Chinese researchers, translators, fixers, etc.? In what ways do you rely on them?</i></p>
	<p>5. <i>What are the main steps or actions you take to avoid and/or counteract government controls?</i></p>
	<p>6. <i>How do cultural and language barriers factor into your work?</i></p>
<p>How controls affect correspondents' work</p>	<p>1. <i>Which topics are the most difficult to report on in terms of government censorship?</i></p>
	<p>2. <i>How does the possible endangerment of your Chinese colleagues affect your work? To what degree are these colleagues in danger because of their association with a Western media outlet or reporter? How does relying on assistants affect your work and its accuracy?</i></p>
	<p>3. <i>During China's civil wars in the last century, some correspondents engaged in self-censorship to protect their sources and others. How, if at all, have you engaged in self-censorship because of fear of government retaliation?</i></p>
	<p>4. <i>How does your idea of the journalist's role in society conflict or not conflict with attempts by the government to control your work?</i></p>
	<p>5. <i>How do you determine the significance and accuracy of government news releases and press reports?</i></p>

How controls affect correspondents' work, contd.	6. <i>How are technology and market reforms affecting your ability to obtain information? How, in your view, are they limiting or enhancing the ability of the Chinese government to control your work?</i>
	7. <i>Do you feel you are able to accurately represent China to your American audience? Why or why not?</i>

Government Controls of American Correspondents in China

<p>Official actions</p> <p>(Actions taken by officials at all levels of government, including bureaucrats and police)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresponsiveness (both government and government-influenced private sector) • Detention • Questioning • Monitoring (including electronic and physical surveillance and following) • Source intimidation • Inadequate government press conferences and state media • Prevention of access to news scenes • Violations of Olympics travel rule • Destruction or confiscation of reporting materials • Public relations manipulation
<p>Laws/regulations</p> <p>(Implemented to varying degrees)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic travel restrictions (Suspended until Oct. 17, 2008) • Prior submission of interview questions • Journalist visa and yearly renewal • Reporting regulations • Hiring regulations/registering of assistants

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