

Global Journalist: Loory interview with Terry Anderson et. al.

This is a Feb. 28, 2002 interview by Stuart Loory with representatives of the Committee to Protect Journalists.

Host: Stuart Loory

Guests:

- [Syed Javed Nazir](#)
- [Alex Lupis](#)
- [Chris Waddle](#)
- [Terry Anderson](#)

Director: [Mary Furness](#)

Producer: Sarah Andrea Fajardo

Mentioned: Committee to Protect Journalists, [Grigory Pasko](#), Vladimir Putin, Peter Arnett, Christiane Amanpour, Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan, Russia, Colombia, Iran

Runtime: 27:47

Stuart Loory 00:10

Welcome to Global Journalist on KBIA. This is the program that says mid-Missouri is indeed — and many Americans — are interested in international news. I'm Stuart Loory of the Missouri School of Journalism. Today, we depart from the usual format of our program and instead, we convene a session of journalists right here in our studio to discuss two subjects. First, the growing lack of security for people in the news business as dramatized this month by the revelation that Daniel Pearl of The Wall Street Journal had been murdered in Pakistan. And second, what these people think about why Americans should indeed be interested in international news. Three of our guests represent the Committee to Protect Journalists, an organization founded to prevent murder, attacks, kidnappings, imprisonment or other violent or illegal attempts to muzzle journalists around the world. They are Terry Anderson, an author, speaker and honorary co-chair of the Committee to Protect Journalists. Terry suffered seven years as a hostage, held captive by Shiite Muslim radicals in Lebanon. He was kidnapped in Beirut, where he was at the time bureau chief for the Associated Press. Syed Javed Nazir, a journalism fellow at the University of Michigan and before that, editor of the Frontier Post a newspaper in Peshawar, Lahore, Pakistan. The paper was shut down and his life was threatened for

the articles that he ran. Alex Lupis, director of the CPJ's European and Central Asian programs, and our fourth guest is Chris Waddle, executive editor and vice president for news of the Anniston Alabama Star. Chris works for a small town newspaper that champions the idea of exclusive international coverage for its readers. Welcome to all of you. Let's start with Terry Anderson. Terry, tell us why you think that any of our listeners should be concerned about the safety of news, people doing their jobs anymore, any more than they're concerned with people who openly put their lives at risk policemen, firemen, doctors, whatever.

Terry Anderson 02:30

Well, when a fireman dies or when a policeman dies, don't we honor him? Don't we care about him? Don't we recognize that his is a life of service. In fact, most people don't recognize that foreign correspondents are performing a public service a very valuable one. And a dangerous one. Thirty seven journalists died around the world last year. 118 of them are in jail. Most of those are local journalists working for local media in countries that do not recognize, as we do, freedom of the press, but yes, our foreign correspondents covering places like Afghanistan put themselves in danger, so that you can read the foreign news over your coffee in the morning, or see it on TV in the evening. Now, do you care about that? I think it's widely recognized after September 11, that Americans do care about the world, they better care about the world.

Stuart Loory 03:30

Since September 11, of course, there has been a big increase in concern for international events. But before September 11, we were told by editors and news producers for broadcast that the American people just were not interested in international news. Chris, what do you think about that?

Chris Waddle 03:52

Well, it's that it's not true. I mean, the actual studies show just the opposite. And that's pointed out many times that, at meetings of editors, and I think that it will change, it will change. You're — probably at locally owned papers like my own faster than it will at big organizations. I wanted to respond to something Terry said, and it's not a disagreement, but I do conjecture that the death of Danny Pearl is going to change public attitudes. I think that the nation got wrapped up in that and particularly, you know, with upcoming birth of a child that he's never going to see, and I think there'll be a greater recognition. And as an editor, I can say, I think we'll be sending more Danny Pearls abroad and we need to. I was shocked, by two things this week as an editor, one that a retired general said on CNN yesterday that there are American forces now in 70 countries abroad, and I was shocked by the realization that there is no frontline in this war. It's everywhere in the world. And we simply are not doing our jobs as journalists, if we don't get out into that world and report what what's happening and the other thing is the Gallup poll showing the great disconnect between the Muslim world and United States and understanding of what is going on, and the journalists must be the mediating influence and making that reconnect.

Terry Anderson 05:31

I'm enormously encouraged by by hearing a small town newspaper man, commit himself to international news coverage. Because I think and have thought for many years that the perception that

Americans don't want you to national news in the newspaper is a perception of the editors, not of the readers, is what we call the gatekeeper problem.

Chris Waddle 05:53

It might be a front office problem. It's very expensive to send people abroad and I think the reason why there is so few broadcasting reporters abroad and they all live in London and fly out. And the reason so many papers —

Stuart Loory 06:09

You can provide \$10,000 bottles of wine and —

Chris Waddle 06:11

(laughter) Well, they might try that. And I think the people that— the editors who are closest to their readers and that tends to be a community newspapers — are more attuned to the need to get abroad and happily, their — the Knight Foundation and some other support groups have made it possible for us to get people abroad.

Terry Anderson 06:32

Don't forget the biggest bargain in journalism, the AP foreign wire, you can get news about the entire world and most newspapers have the AP as members and United States virtually every newspaper in the country, but they don't use the stuff. They get this huge one report, first class reporting from 18 or 90 different countries and it comes into their computers and they don't use it

Chris Waddle 06:58

Bear in mind also, it's mistake to think that you must have an expensive bureau overseas to do overseas coverage. A lot of the international stories can be done at home, including the story about Muslims and the Muslim religion, which by the way is the fastest growing religion in the United States of America. T

Terry Anderson 07:16

There are more Muslims than Presbyterians in the United States.

Chris Waddle 07:18

There are far more than Episcopalians, and frankly, they're more enjoyable people to be around. (laughter) Speaking as an Episcopalian.

Stuart Loory 07:28

Telephones may start ringing.

Terry Anderson 07:31

It was interesting to me, last year, the Columbus Dispatch, one of the better middle American newspapers did a survey of its own community. Now this is truly Middle America. And they found a surprisingly large number proportion of the population of Columbus in those environments with international connections. There are people who are either immigrants, children of immigrants, married

to foreign people foreign born. People who had traveled overseas who had some connection with the world, and who wanted to know about it, maybe it was a only a slice of the world. They wanted to know about Pakistan, because they have family there. Or they wanted to know about Africa because they traveled there. But they had a connection with the world and wanted to maintain it through there.

Stuart Loory 08:22

Syed, you have been in this country now for several months. Yeah. You have had a chance to judge how Americans treat international news. What do you think? Is it — are Americans as interested as most Pakistanis and international news?

Syed Javed Nazir 08:41

When I came here 10 years ago, as a Fulbright Scholar, I looked at the American newspapers in the morning, the front page, and I was surprised that there were very little foreign news reflected on page one and I I talked about this with my colleagues, and I discovered it all news is local. But after 10 years, a lapse of 10 years, and I've come back here and now I find a dramatic transformation. And, of course, there's focuses a lot more on foreign news. But all this has been prompted by September 11. And I think it's a it's a healthy change. And there's bound to be a lot more interest in for news compared to focus on foreign news. Compared to Pakistan, I think, although Pakistan is relatively an educated society, we just have 37 to 38% literacy rate, but the interest in foreign news, what happens around the globe, I think it's far more pronounced. I have no other way of explaining that. But United States is a big country. So most people want to know what's happening here. And what whatever it does is, it affects the entire world, and historically also people in the subcontinent. discuss a lot about what happens overseas.

Stuart Loory 10:03

Alex Lupis, you work for the Committee to Protect Journalists? How much support does the committee get from the American people for its work?

Alex Lupis 10:15

We get we get quite a lot of support. Most of our supporters are American journalists, American media companies and American foundations who are committed to promoting press freedom. I think what a lot of our supporters realize is that journalists are very often the first targets overseas. When a government wants to crack down and become more authoritarian and take rights away from the people, that the press is usually the first target because they don't want them to get information about what's going on. So most of our supporters in the us realize the strong link that press freedom overseas has with political and economic and national security issues that affect our foreign policy in our country.

Chris Waddle 10:59

Alex I have been expecting somebody to say and so maybe I will suggest it since no one else has. I believe that more journalists have died in Afghanistan than American GIs. Now, most of those were international journalists, not not exclusively Americans. But I would be interested in your organization — if my suggestion turns out to be true, I think that would be an important thing to tell Americans.

Terry Anderson 11:33

I wonder, aside from accidents, which are inevitable — the crash of a helicopter that is dying from hospital

Chris Waddle 11:42

For the combat deaths, I've just been two or three.

Stuart Loory 11:45

I think now we should, as put it the accidental deaths, the number of military casualties is probably higher, but in the beginning of the war, before those accidents, you're right. There were more journalists killed.

Chris Waddle 12:01

And it's interesting that the American military won't allow journalists to go up on the front lines with them. They tell us to tell us it's too dangerous. Well, obviously, it's dangerous. So wherever you are in there is the front line is all around you.

Terry Anderson 12:15

I don't mean to argue with our wonderful American military people, but I've been hearing that for 25 years and every place I've ever seen the American military. Oh, it's too dangerous up there. You can go up there.

Chris Waddle 12:26

You know, it's an excuse to keep us from seeing.

Stuart Loory 12:31

Okay, we have to take a break now. This is Global Journalist on KBIA. I'm Stuart Loory and we'll be right back. Welcome back to Global Journalist. You may listen to this program again, ask questions or make comments by going to www.globaljournalist.org or here in mid-Missouri by calling us at 573-882-9641 Before the break, we were beginning to talk about the impact of warfare on journalists and how great it is these days, but there is also, as Terry, you pointed out, the problem of journalists these days, being somehow attacked before the the real enemy.

Terry Anderson 13:28

That was not always the case. As a matter of fact, in my days as a journalist, the only place where I ever felt under attack like that was in America itself covering the civil rights movement, and never overseas. Why has that changed overseas? It has changed over the past 15-20 years. I can remember when I first arrived in Lebanon in 1982, in the midst of a terribly vicious war that had already gone on six or seven years. With the Israeli invasion, I could go anywhere and talk to anyone. I took my chances like everybody else I might get caught by sniper, I might get hit by shell and, and people did die that way. But I wasn't a target. I could talk to Palestinians, to Lebanese, to Syrians, Israelis, anybody cross the front lines, I was willing to take the chance. And I was seen as somehow neutral, even though I was an American. But 1984 that began to change with the rise of radical fundamentalist Islamic groups in Lebanon, who make no distinction between journalists and civilians, or their great Satan enemy. You're an American or a Westerner or an Englishman. And that was led to the kidnappings and killings of the

mid-1980s in Lebanon. And since then, it's very clear that in many of the conflicts that journalists have covered they are targets in themselves because of who they are.

Chris Waddle 15:00

As an editor who sometimes sends people into touchy situations, so European media send their reporters to Wales to a combat training school, where they're not taught to fight, but they're taught to what is safe and what is not safe and how to avoid danger. And to my knowledge, we don't do that in this country and isn't a time that we establish a short course training program for, here's what mines look like. And here's how to spot the setup.

Terry Anderson 15:36

In fact, we do to a certain extent, the AP has begun doing that with some of their people, recognizing that they need to be trained in this area. I've taught it for a number of years

Stuart Loory 15:47

I think at that school in Wales, as a matter of fact, that that school is supported.

Terry Anderson 15:50

And I have talked to the Marine Corps there about setting up such a course for journalists at the Marine Corps university. It's beginning to become more important because remember, there is there are two generations now in America of young people who have no experience in the military. Since Vietnam, they don't know anything about it. Now, if I send you to Wall Street, I expect you to know what a stock is, what a bond is, or a put and a call is, and yet some of our organizations send people to cover wars, who don't know the difference between the M16 and an F 16. Who wouldn't recognize a major if they saw one?

Chris Waddle 16:30

I can remember getting shot at and the American South in the 60s. I remember being afraid, wondering what those headlights were in the rearview mirror and you always were afraid of a sheriff or a highway patrolman in Alabama late at night, but we talked to each other and we had older journalists, more seasoned journalist. Is that going on now? Is there a place where people on their first assignment can go to Terry Anderson and others and Stu Loory and say, well, tell me the stories and tell me what to expect. And that tell me, you now, how not to lose my life

Terry Anderson 17:10

On an informal basis, yes. And foreign correspondents frequently come to people like Javed in Pakistan, and say, you know, tell me what's going on here.

Syed Javed Nazir 17:19

I think they need to have a new look at it before they venture into a country or a new society, especially where there's a lot of radicalization. I think American journalists need to get a lot of briefing, get a lot of they should be filled up with all the necessary information, the working of the terrorist organizations in that country, or the people there precisely going in. To do the stories on, there should be a detailed knowledge of the turf and the terrain, and other things before — I mean, nobody should just enter in

without acquiring the right knowledge. And what happened to Daniel Pearl could partly be, you could you could place your finger on that. He went in, perhaps not with total knowledge or what kind of people he was dealing with. This led to all kinds of problem if he had had language skills, if you knew the network of working the terrorists people, I think, perhaps his fate would have been slightly different.

Terry Anderson 18:16

You may not know that, in 20 years of covering Asia and Africa, the Middle East, I rarely went into a country where we did not have a local person, a journalist, working directly for the AP working as a stringer for the AP or simply a local journalist for a local paper who was willing to help me and guide me. I have been repeatedly saved by local people. And I've certainly been made to look a great deal wiser and more intelligent than I was by people who live there, who knew the area and were willing to help me and guide me. Funnily enough, last week at the CPJ board of directors meeting, we decided to do exactly what you're talking about. I have done some of this for my journalism classes were taught, asking my friends, who are some of the top correspondents in the world, to send me some of their thoughts on what a young journalist going into a dangerous area should know. And I taught that for several years, and now we're going to try to assemble in a book, as much of that body of knowledge that all these wonderful correspondents like Christiane Amanpour, and Peter Arnett and others have developed over the years so that we can pass it on to younger journalists.

Stuart Loory 19:28

That will be an important book for young journalists. I'd like to move away from the question of danger to American correspondents, which is mostly what we've been talking about, to talk about encroachments on press freedom to correspondents from around the world. Javed, you have had serious problems. Your life has been threatened. The two of you are going off to Russia right after your visit to Columbia, to intercede for a Russian journalist who is now in jail for what he has been doing. What is the situation involving reporters getting into trouble for trying to write the truth around the world? And what are we doing about it? And what should we be doing about it?

Terry Anderson 20:19

That is the reason that the CPJ exists. And it's what we do every day. It's what Alex does every day. By far, most of the journalists who who get in trouble are local journalists like Javed, who get in trouble with their own government. It is the government that puts them in jail, or has the beaten or threatens them, or on occasion has them killed. There are unfortunately, many places in the world where governments are run by people who do not believe in freedom of the press. We have had over 600 instances last year of documented cases of attacks on the press around the world. There are 118 journalists in jail as we speak, the cpj exists to help those people to do what they can for them, as we did for Javed when he was under attack and under threat. And as Alex does every day for people in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Tell them about some of the cases that you have now.

Alex Lupis 21:19

Yeah, I was just gonna say I mean, the vast majority of cases that we do handle are actually journalists covering corruption or war crimes, or organized crime, because those are the issues that embarrass the government the most. So when an incident does come up, we use — using English language wire services, Russian language wire services, contacts with local journalists' associations, we document it

thoroughly and issue press releases, sometimes protest letters directly to the head of state, to let them know that we're monitoring very closely what they're doing, that we're going to publicize in the West in Washington, DC, in London, in Rome and Paris, to make sure Western policymakers know what they're doing. To try to get them to back off and in cases like our mission to Russia, this is a journalist who simply reported that the Russian Navy was dumping unprocessed nuclear waste into the Sea of Japan. And so they put them in jail for it.

Stuart Loory 22:13

He reported it. He appealed his convictions to the Russians Supreme Court, the Russian Supreme Court threw out the convictions, and he's still in jail. What's going on there?

Terry Anderson 22:26

The Russian democratic again, judicial system is not as well developed as a democracy as we would hope. In America, the Supreme Court overturns the law, then people convicted under that law are automatically released. The law is unconstitutional, the arrest is wrong, you go free. That doesn't necessarily seem to follow in Russia these days. The Supreme Court has overturned the law under which he was convicted and he remains in jail. What we're going to do is go over and, you know, President Putin and government officials were embarrassed by what this man reported

Chris Waddle 22:59

As important as these big cases are I'm convinced that there are innumerable ones that are unknown and underreported. A good friend in Argentina, as an investigative reporter has to have unlisted phone. He had someone call his wife and said, we know the birth weight of your baby. And the exact minute it was born. Clearly the government provided that information. I'm just back from the Balkans, from teaching at Bulgaria, where I encountered many cases that don't get reported to your organization but clear intimidation. Now. The problem is wider and deeper than we know.

Terry Anderson 23:37

Oh, it goes on every day. Certainly we can't handle every case. Journalists around the world fight this daily,

Syed Javed Nazir 23:43

yeah, on a daily basis. And it's not necessarily the government which is the major offender at times and countries like Pakistan where you have groups, which are almost like militias. Religious parties have a militant arm, and these are the people who feared most and they are the ones who block journalists. And if you're working on an expose or you're revealing something, these are the people who, who block your way and and if you don't pay attention to their threats and they have other ways of dealing with you

Stuart Loory 24:11

In a lot of countries, it's drug dealers and people who are growing narcotic drug products.

Terry Anderson 24:17

It's a big problem in Colombia,

Stuart Loory 24:19

It's a huge problem in Colombia, and the problem there is not only kidnapping and murder by the drug dealers, but it's a big business. You kidnap somebody, and you take them hostage and call for ransom.

Terry Anderson 24:35

Yeah, it's a commercial enterprise. It's, uh, it's very complicated in Columbia and it has been for many years between the paramilitary pro government rightists and the leftist guerrillas, and the narco traffickers who are kind of not necessarily separate from the first two groups, and the people who kidnap for money is very, very — one of the most dangerous places in the world work

Chris Waddle 24:54

but don't leave out the white slavers in Serbo Croatia and the old fashioned black market. Those tough guys can also be the enemy of journalists.

Terry Anderson 25:05

But and you know, don't let us get too discouraged here. Because despite of everything that we have talked about, and despite the 600 cases that Alex and, and the others have documented at the cbj local journalists in these places like Pakistan, and Colombia and Sierra Leone and other plances, they do a wonderful day to day job of fighting these attempts to muzzle the press. It is amazing to me, for instance, in Iran last year when they shut down all those newspapers — it wasn't amazing to me that the Iranian government shut down the newspapers. It was amazing to me that there were 30 newspapers willing to publish anti government news, and that there were millions of readers who wanted to read it, which made it a danger to the government.

Stuart Loory 25:47

That was Javed's case in Pakistan also. Are you going to be able to go back to Pakistan?

Syed Javed Nazir 25:56

Well, hopefully Yes, things are changing. President Musharraf is trying to get the situation under control. And he's a moderate. And I believe he's got a battle on his hands. What is going to succeed? It's very hard for — it's premature for me to say. But there are reasons to be optimistic. And I think once the situation changes for the better, which means we get rein in the religious elements, there's a hope for me to go back and resume normal life.

Stuart Loory 26:22

Okay, we've got about 45 seconds left. Tell us, Alex, if you would, about how confident you are that you're going to be able to do something for Grigory Pasko in Russia?

Alex Lupis 26:33

Well, this is a very key time for us to send a mission because he has an appeal pending with the military section of the Supreme Court. So we're going to go and meet with political and military officials in Vladivostok in Moscow. We're going to hold press conferences, we're going to make sure people in Russia know what's going on and put as much pressure as we can on the government.

Stuart Loory 26:57

Terry, do you think it's gonna work?

Terry Anderson 26:58

I wouldn't be going if I didn't think we had a chance. He may have embarrassed the government with what are he reported and what we're going to make clear is that we will embarrass them further if they keep him in jail. And that's the only weapon we have

Stuart Loory 27:08

Well, good luck to you and Javed. Good luck to you. It's nice to have you all here in Columbia. We are out of time though, and I'm sorry about that. Our guests today have been Terry Anderson, Syed Javed Nazir, Alex Lupis and Chris Waddell. Our director is Mary Furness and our producer is Sarah Andrea Fajardo. For all, I'm Stuart Loory and Global Journalist will be back next week.