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## The Artillery of the Press

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*U.S. Navy*

James Reston

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man, he states, consists of his effort to improve the milieu in which he and his fellows live. While there is reason for pride in the contemplation of American foreign policy, there is no reason for complacency; the United States does not control the future of the world. But the study of foreign policy "ought to teach us to do what we can to see that our own country in serving its own interests, also serves the interest of mankind."

In these parlous days when U.S. policies are being attacked both abroad and at home, it is a relief and pleasure to read a sober, factual analysis of American foreign policy over these past 20 years by a qualified writer who tells us that Americans can be proud of their country. This book is highly recommended for inclusion in the library of anyone concerned with United States foreign policy in this new age.

THE HON. T.S. ESTES  
State Department Adviser

Reston, James. *The Artillery of the Press*. New York: Harper & Row, 1966. 116 p.

Mr. Reston's expressed purpose in writing this book was "to define and illustrate the problems of conducting American foreign policy in the last third of the twentieth century with a press and a Constitution whose traditions were formed in the last third of the eighteenth century." His motivation for its preparation came from a deep-rooted conviction, formed over 20 years ago as the result of an unusual experience in Moscow, that the press should be something more than simply an instrument of the government. Different theories of the proper relationship between reporters and officials have been of special interest to him ever since. In this recent volume, based on lectures given in the Elihu Root series before members of the Council of Foreign Relations in 1966, he has attempted to offer practical

suggestions for improving relations between reporters and officials in government. His theme is that the growing power of the United States in world affairs, and more particularly the growing power of its President, requires a relentless barrage of facts and criticism "as noisy but also as accurate as artillery fire."

Regarding the role of the press as critic rather than as the compliant instrument of government, his observation is that American reporters worry about their dilemma between obligation to country and obligation to truth much more than is generally realized. Mr. Reston is particularly well qualified to address his subject, both from his experience as an active reporter of the news and as a trusted and respected adviser to officials in government; he is one who is, and has been for years, in a unique position to observe closely, assess, and pass judgment on the relationship between officials and members of the various news media. Fascinating and thought-provoking reading is provided in his candid and very astute analysis of the techniques employed before the public and behind the scenes by officials in government and reporters alike and in his discussion of the many elements to be considered in selecting and preparing items to be presented to the public through the wide range of modern news channels. In today's shrinking world, with virtually instantaneous communications and a growing capability to report almost anything and everything, the forces, techniques, pressures, and problems which serve to control and manage the news are of vital and continuing interest to everyone. Mr. Reston's book makes a very worthwhile contribution to the literature available on this subject and should be a must on every officer's reading list.

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