

WE SHOT THE WAR

OVERSEAS WEEKLY IN VIETNAM

EDITED BY LISA NGUYEN

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Don Hirst

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WE SHOT THE WAR



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword by Eric Wakin	vii
Acknowledgments	xi
Introduction	1
Marion and Ann Enter the Pacific	9
Photographers in Focus	19
Cynthia Copple	20
Art Greenspon	26
Don Hirst	32
Brent Procter	38
Selected Photographs	45
Man on the Street	193
About the Contributors	203
Further Reading	205
Notes	207
Photo References	209



FOREWORD

IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE that the Hoover Institution Library & Archives presents this volume of photographs from its *Overseas Weekly* collection, one of the most significant acquisitions the institution has made in recent years. Begun in 1950 in Frankfurt, Germany, the *Overseas Weekly* was a landmark venture in wartime reporting and served as an alternative to US Defense Department papers like *Stars and Stripes*. Its Pacific edition began publication in 1966 and covered controversial topics more intently than the official papers did, including courts-martial, racial discrimination, drug use, and opposition to command, while also publishing raw photographs of life in the field and in billets. The photographs in the collection represent some of the most intimate and moving portraits of American GIs and Vietnamese civilians taken between 1966 and 1972; their specific purpose was to document the daily life of individuals caught in what was then the world's most grueling conflict—one that would ultimately kill over fifty-eight thousand Americans and one million Vietnamese.

The Hoover Institution Library & Archives acquired the collection of over twenty thousand photographs and two hundred contact sheets in 2014, understanding that this incredible record of the political, social, and cultural upheaval of the Vietnam era would be a significant contribution to the institution's mission to document war, revolution, and peace across the globe. Since its founding in 1919, the Hoover Library & Archives has collected, preserved, and made available the most important material on social, economic, and political change from the early twentieth century,

through World War I, to the present day. The *Overseas Weekly* collection complements the institution's other significant holdings on Vietnam, from the papers of Edward Lansdale to the manuscript of Ron Kovic's *Born on the Fourth of July* and the records of Sybil Stockdale, coordinator of the National League of Families of American Prisoners in Southeast Asia and the wife of Vice Admiral James Bond Stockdale, who was held as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam from 1965 to 1973. Since acquiring the *Overseas Weekly* collection, we have sought to enhance and encourage access to its content. This year, we digitized and made available over nine hundred images from the collection through our digital collections portal, and in the spring of 2018 the Herbert Hoover Memorial Exhibit Pavilion will feature the exhibition *We Shot the War: Overseas Weekly in Vietnam*, organized by the curator for Digital Scholarship and Asian Initiatives Lisa Nguyễn, for which this publication is a companion volume.

In addition to the significance of its photographs, the *Overseas Weekly* has a strong connection to Stanford University. Its publisher, Marion von Rospach, was the former editor in chief of the *Stanford Daily*. After graduating from Stanford in the midst of World War II, von Rospach worked briefly for the US military's official newspaper, *Stars and Stripes*, leaving after becoming disenchanted with what she considered the paper's bias toward brass hat opinion. Along with her husband (also a Stanford graduate) and three servicemen, von Rospach started the European edition of the *Overseas Weekly* with a printing press borrowed from

Stars and Stripes—and quickly became embroiled in controversy when the racy content of the *Overseas Weekly* caused the US State Department to ban it from newsstands. Marion von Rospach fought back—her own mother reported to the *Stanford Daily*, “I know she will give them a bad time. . . . She’s a fighter”—and won.

The paper continued to thrive, and when US involvement in the Vietnam War escalated in the 1960s, von Rospach decided to expand the paper’s circulation by launching a Pacific edition based in Hong Kong and Saigon. The government and mainstream media continued to criticize the tabloid they dubbed the *Oversexed Weekly*. In 1967 *Time* magazine cited the paper as “the least popular publication at the Pentagon”; in 1970 the *New York Times* referred to the *Overseas Weekly* as the “GI’s friend” and therefore one of the US Army’s “major gadflies”; and in 1971 *Rolling Stone* dismissed it as a “rabble-rousing newspaper for GIs.” Regardless of reproach by the establishment, circulation of the Pacific edition continued to rise. During the height of the conflict in Vietnam, the *Overseas Weekly* had a readership of approximately sixty thousand and had attracted a highly talented staff of photographers and reporters, including Ann Bryan, Art Greenspon, Richard Boyle, Don Hirst, and Brent Procter, among others. As can be seen from the outstanding photographs featured in this book, von Rospach’s fearless tenacity in the face of authority yielded one of the most historically significant collections of wartime documentation from the Vietnam era.

The *Overseas Weekly* collection, therefore, offers much to researchers on the Vietnam War and the art and technique of war correspondence. The

great Magnum photographer Robert Capa—who was killed by a land mine in French Indochina in 1954, camera in hand—once warned fellow journalists, “If your photographs aren’t good enough, you’re not close enough.” The photographs that readers find collected in this volume are the incredible work of a group of journalists who indeed were “close enough”—dangerously close—to the physical, mental, and emotional demands on soldiers and civilians in Vietnam from 1966 to 1972. Unlike photographers working for major media outlets, the *Overseas Weekly* photographers found that their subject was also their audience: they took photographs that were never intended for a civilian viewership. What divide, then, do we see between photographs taken for the *Overseas Weekly* and those that appeared on broadcast television or in popular magazines?

The Vietnam War has often been called the first “living room war” due to the proliferation of television sets in American homes in the 1960s and 1970s and advances in film and photography, which allowed journalists to carry lightweight cameras through jungles and rice paddies, on helicopters, and through the streets of Saigon. The term, however, is somewhat misleading, as it imparts the idea of civilians’ intimate and immediate viewing of events in Vietnam as somehow yielding more honest, uncensored reportage than that which they previously consumed (during World War II and the Korean War, for example) through newspapers and newsreels. Mainstream journalists covering the conflict often found that, though they enjoyed advanced camera equipment and enhanced access to combat zones, the information they received from official government outlets was, as in previous wars, often

hazy or unhelpful. Early in the conflict, mainstream journalists went as far as to dub government news briefings for official war correspondents the “Five O’Clock Follies” because of their belief that much of the information released by the authorities was inaccurate or purposefully misleading.

As in many previous conflicts, soldiers often resented the sometimes sanitized news being reported at home or in officially sanctioned newspapers, and the *Overseas Weekly* offered relief from bowdlerization and a forum for frank discussion. In addition to articles and comics, for example, the *Overseas Weekly* ran a weekly column called “Man on the Street,” in which reporters would ask soldiers’ opinions on such subjects as race, class, and the legitimacy of the war. The photographs and responses of the GIs interviewed—many of which are reproduced in this volume—provide some of the rawest and rarest glimpses into the lives and minds of those in service in Vietnam between 1966 and 1972. The fact that the vast majority of the photographs featured in this volume have never before been published will no doubt encourage critical inquiry and comparisons between the mainstream and independent, underground media coverage of the conflict in Vietnam.

The historian Stanley Karnow, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of the landmark work *Vietnam: A History*, whose papers are housed at Hoover Archives, referred to the conflict in Vietnam as “the war nobody won.” We have seen his sentiment—that of the unresolved nature of the war’s purpose and influence—grappled with through increased public and scholarly interest in the war, resulting in the production of books, films, and exhibitions that

look for the meaning of the conflict in the eyes of those on all sides who experienced it firsthand.

The intimate photographs of the *Overseas Weekly* have been a part of recent Vietnam related projects, reinforcing the fact that the weekly tabloid provided a unique viewpoint of the war and the culture enveloping the American soldiers fighting in it. The scenes and faces found in the *Overseas Weekly* photographs stand testament to the wide-ranging hardships that the conflict brought to soldiers and civilians. Though the origin of the Vietnam War is complex and its legacy still to be determined, these photographs help viewers remember that war is not just epic tragedy but a collection of individual experiences—and that the sorrows, joys, fears, and valor of soldiers must be given voice. Within the pages of this volume readers will find images of graphic wartime violence beside those of tranquility that emerged from the chaos. As the famous Vietnam photographer Eddie Adams once put it: “You have the whole world in the viewfinder.”

Eric Wakin

DEPUTY DIRECTOR, ROBERT H. MALOTT DIRECTOR
OF LIBRARY & ARCHIVES, AND RESEARCH FELLOW
HOOVER INSTITUTION, STANFORD UNIVERSITY



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE HOOVER INSTITUTION LIBRARY & Archives is honored to provide expanded opportunity for researchers to experience the richness of the *Overseas Weekly* photograph collection through this publication, *We Shot the War: Overseas Weekly in Vietnam*. This catalog would not have been possible without the inspiration and support of many individuals. First and foremost, the *Overseas Weekly* reporters, photographers, freelancers, associates, and relatives who readily and generously shared their time and memories of their journalistic careers in Southeast Asia. Among them are Cynthia Cople, Don Hirst, Art Greenspon, Peter McDowell, Brent Procter, Tony Mariano, Bob McKay, Kate Steffens, Bob Stokes, and Chu von Rospach. Furthermore, without the foresight and care of Ann Bryan Mariano McKay, Calle Hesslefors, and Mark Goldsworthy, an important piece of US photographic history might have been lost forever.

For research, I obtained extensive assistance from Elizabeth Engel, the deft and extraordinary senior archivist from the State Historical Society of Missouri. Her deep knowledge of the content within the Ann Bryan Mariano McKay Papers, which she meticulously processed, served as an invaluable resource. Gawain Weaver and his team of photograph conservation specialists produced the quality images seen in this volume. Veronica Oliva, permissions editor, assisted in investigating copyright status of the photographs.

At the Hoover Institution, I appreciate the encouragement and copious support of Eric Wakin, Robert H. Malott Director of Library & Archives to

pursue this project. I am humbled and grateful to all my diligent Library & Archives colleagues who wrested themselves from competing priorities to help breathe life into this catalog. Among them are Laura Bedford, James Fayne, Rayan Ghazal, and Kurtis Kekkonen (Preservation); Rachel Bauer and Stephanie Stewart (Visual Materials); Danielle Scott (Curator); Samira Bozorgi, Jean Cannon, Bronweyn Coleman, and Marissa Rhee (Exhibitions, Outreach, and Programs); Sally DeBauche, Fiore Irving, Daniel Jarvis, and Lisa Miller (Digital Materials); Sang-Suk Shon (Microfilm); Irena Czernichowska and David Sun (Administration and Finance). At the amazing Hoover Press, Barbara Arellano, Scott Harrison, Jennifer Navarrette, Laura Somers and, especially, Alison Petersen, who shepherded this process with professionalism, patience, and humor. Judith Riotto, copyeditor, delivered valuable and constructive feedback on the catalog's essays.

Finally, I could not have maintained the focus and energy required to complete this project without the support of my family. I extend my deep gratitude to my parents, Phu and Thu, daughter, Hannah, and husband, Don. Special thanks to my extended family who lived through the horrors of the Vietnam War but were fortunate enough to survive and reconstruct their shattered lives in the United States to become an infinitely stronger family unit. *Xin cảm tạ.*

Thu Phương Lisa H. Nguyễn

CURATOR, DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP
AND ASIAN INITIATIVES



Overseas
Sexy started Dany Serval models outfits from her shop
Accused GI Swindler Free on Technicality
Pink Girl Proclamation
Bobbi Wants to Be

Overseas
Sexy started Dany Serval models outfits from her shop
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Overseas
Sexy started Dany Serval models outfits from her shop
Accused GI Swindler Free on Technicality
Pink Girl Proclamation
Bobbi Wants to Be

1951
CALIFORNIA
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INTRODUCTION

THE VIETNAM WAR has been memorialized as a period of dramatic political, social, and cultural upheaval. The harrowing images that emerged from this era have shaped public opinion, have left indelible imprints on the American psyche, and continue to rivet viewers today. *We Shot the War: Overseas Weekly in Vietnam* explores the interrelationship between artistic technique and journalistic content through the photographs submitted to the *Overseas Weekly's* Pacific edition, a military tabloid at once beloved by troops and reviled by the Pentagon for its muckraking content. The striking pictures and personal essays published in this catalog aim to bring viewers behind the viewfinders of photojournalists who covered the conflict in Southeast Asia for the *Overseas Weekly* between 1966 and 1972.

The *Overseas Weekly* was the bestselling privately owned newspaper published in Europe and Asia for members of the US armed forces overseas between 1950 and 1974. With the tagline “a touch of home away from home,” this publication served up an eclectic farrago of military exposés, pinups, and comic strips. Its editorial content was constructively controversial. It readily tackled issues of racial friction and integration, drug abuse, and the justice system in the military service. In 1966 the *Wall Street Journal* described the *Overseas Weekly* as “a journalistic court of last resort for the ordinary GI. . . . It publishes hardhitting and accurate exposés of abuses of military authority. . . . When it talks, the brass listens—like it or not. And the GIs snap it up.” At the helm of this landmark publication were two highly respected women: Stanford-educated Marion von Rospach, founder and owner of the Overseas

Media Corporation, and Ann Bryan, the editor in chief of the *Overseas Weekly's* Saigon office.

For more than forty years, the elusive photo morgue of the *Overseas Weekly's* Pacific edition lay moribund in a Nordic cellar until it was bequeathed to Mark Goldsworthy, a Swedish graphic designer, by former *Overseas Weekly* photographer Calle Hesslefors. What resurfaced was an enormous cache of more than twenty thousand photo negatives. Each 35mm film strip was carefully enwrapped in translucent glassine and weathered green and white envelopes that marked the location where it was processed: Photo Perfect at 22 Ngô Đức Kế in Saigon. The negatives were warped, fusty, and deteriorating. Some envelopes contained faded pencil-written notations and typed dopesheets that yielded important clues about the photographers, locations, dates, subjects, and purpose for which the images were taken. A vast majority of the negatives were undescribed and unattributed. When the collection arrived at Hoover Institution Library & Archives at Stanford University in 2014, preservation and curatorial staff advanced Goldsworthy's previous endeavors to research the historical background of the paper, preserve the negatives, and make digital contact sheets and descriptive information available online. As the collection was cataloged and processed, several questions arose: What was this publication, and where were the extant copies? Who was its target audience? Who created content for the paper, and where are they now?

At the time, online information about publication was fragmentary so Hoover staff turned to traditional research methods, combing through



◀ **OW STAFFER**

Ann Bryan.
1969 | South Vietnam



▲ Negative film envelopes from Photo Perfect, a film processing lab in Saigon.
1969 | South Vietnam

microfilm reels of historical newspapers, tracing primary sources at peer archival institutions, and connecting to human networks. Elizabeth Engel, senior archivist of the State Historical Society of Missouri, where Ann Bryan's papers are housed, played a pivotal role in piecing together this intriguing puzzle. Vietnam Old Hacks, a community of journalists who reported on the war, also provided valuable linkages. From these connections, principal figures whose names appeared in the collection were finally brought to light. After a series of introductions, emails, and phone calls, the photographs were reconnected with their creators, who had presumed that their life's work had been destroyed and permanently lost. The unexpected reunion elicited varied responses, from elation to distress. For some, the photographs brought back nostalgic recollections of their time with the *Overseas Weekly*. For others, the images conjured startling memories of the war and compelled them to confront a painful past they were not entirely prepared to face.

It soon became apparent that the newly available photographs of the *Overseas Weekly*—many of which had never been published—deserved to be seen by a wider audience. Thousands of pictures were methodically and subjectively examined for digitization, exhibition, and publication. The process of

elimination proved to be a challenging task—there were far too many exceptional images. The final selection—representing a miniscule percentage of the entire corpus—was based on the physical condition of the negatives, visual impact, emotional resonance, and balanced representation of topical themes covered by the *Overseas Weekly*. The captions, derived from descriptive text gleaned from the dopesheets and photo envelopes, give context to the visual imagery.

We Shot the War: Overseas Weekly in Vietnam—a companion piece to a physical exhibition held at Hoover in 2018—is presented in four parts. Part one, “Marion and Ann Enter the Pacific,” describes the journey and adverse conditions von Rospach and Bryan faced while managing operations of this roaring publication. For these two journalists, the war in Vietnam extended beyond the battlefields and reached into the courtroom, where they fought for the right of women to report in combat zones and argued against media censorship.

Part two, “Photographers in Focus,” brings together the personal recollections of surviving photojournalists of the *Overseas Weekly's* Saigon bureau: Cynthia Copple, Art Greenspon, Don Hirst, and Brent Procter. These individuals offer their professional take on combat photography and recount the circumstances that led them to Vietnam in the 1960s. Their mission to tell a vital story, from the GIs' point of view, led them dangerously and intimately close to the action and people fighting the war. Copple, a UC-Berkeley English graduate who had participated in Vietnam teach-ins in 1965, arrived in South Vietnam in 1967 on impulse and with a desire to filter the hysterical arguments of both pro- and anti-war protesters and to seek the

truth of war. Hirst, an enlisted Army soldier who served in Vietnam for two tours of duty in 1964–65 and 1967–68, was trained in combat photography. He returned to Vietnam and soon became Bryan’s main reporter and confidant. In addition to combat reporting, Hirst also covered human-interest stories like Johnny Cash, June Carter, and Carl Perkins’s 1971 performance for exuberant US troops at the Long Binh military base in Vietnam—an experience that was later recounted in Cash’s hit song “Singin’ in Vietnam Talkin’ Blues.” Greenspon, perhaps best known for his photograph “Help from Above,” which inspired the movie poster for Oliver Stone’s *Platoon*, captured striking action shots of emotion-laden soldiers during a terrifying Viet Cong attack in Huế during the spring of 1968, a pivotal turning point in the war. Procter, a New Zealander who was drafted for the war, found himself stationed in South Vietnam, not as an army grunt but as a war correspondent. He later succeeded Bryan as the *Overseas Weekly*’s Saigon bureau chief, serving in that post from 1970 to 1972.

Part three, “Selected Photographs of the *Overseas Weekly*, Pacific Edition,” showcases a provocative mix of photographs of American soldiers in Vietnam making the best of an unfamiliar situation. The *Overseas Weekly* photojournalists accompanied service members on their missions to the central highlands of Pleiku, the citadels of Huế, the rice paddies of the Mekong River Delta, the coastal areas of Đà Nẵng, and the border regions of Laos and Cambodia. In this section, readers will find





— Page 24

The Overseas Weekly

A TOUCH OF HOME ... AWAY FROM HOME

Vol. 21, No. 42 25 U.S. Cents

Pacific Edition

Oct. 23, 1966

Hell With Red Tape — OW Enters Pacific

— Page 4

Check Comics Inside!

Petty Gripes Trigger GI To Slay Sgt in Vietnam

— Page 5

Off-Beat Gear Outlawed For Airmen in Vietnam

SAIGON — He's a strange-looking airman deuce — decked out in Army jungle fatigues and a battered Aussie bush hat tilted at a rakish angle.

But A/C Earl L. Morrison, an aircraft mechanic on the Tan Son Nhut AB flightline, will have the stick his unusual duds in mothballs next time an AP or a gung bo officer spots him.

Because Mickey Mouse has struck 7th AF, which recently clamped down on unauthorized uniforms and zeroed in on off-beat headgear. Specifically outlawed were the Aussie bush hats — nicknamed "go-to-hell" hats — and bright colored baseball caps with or without homemade unit insignias.

"For years, the Air Force has been strong on keeping the uniform simple and clean," primly explained a Tan Son Nhut lieutenant. "This all started with people coming up with slight alterations of the uniform, just to be different. Then it went from bad to worse."

"Ticked-off flyboys don't see things that way."

"Who's there to impress with sharp uniforms — Vietnamese cabbies and bar girls?" griped an airman third.

At Tan Son Nhut, grease monkey Morrison is one of the last

independent troopers who are bucking the crackdown by continuing to wear their go-to-hell hats.

Time was — just a few weeks ago, in fact — when dozens of guys roamed the big base and the streets of Saigon with the distinctive headgear.

Sometimes they rolled up the brims on one side, sometimes on both sides. The hats were usually OD or camouflage and guys sewed on patches, available in many local shops, with the names of their outfits.

Most popular patch was one that defiantly proclaimed, "Go to hell," and eventually all the bush hats became known by that name.

COs figured a man who drew a Vietnam tour deserved to break a couple of little regulations, looked the other way. Some leaders went their men one better, authorizing individual unit patches for hats and uniforms to beef up esprit de corps.

Unauthorized baseball caps, decorated with the name of the squadron or detachment in bright letters, were very popular. Troopers, tacked on little brass rank insignia — also against the regs.

Writing in an Air Force newspaper, A/C Patrick Baker of Da Nang AB reported that in baseball caps "color is predominant with each squadron vying

for the brightest combinations." Other units, especially at the big bases, adopted flashy berets with equally unusual colors.

But now all those bizarre bonnets are rapidly vanishing after the head shed ruled that you WILL cover your head in the authorized manner, flyboy.

If the Air Force is getting picky, can the Army be far behind? Surprisingly, the usually stricter ground-pounders aren't getting any static about headgear, according to officials.

Morrison faces Mickey Mouse.

"We don't have a regulation on hats," said a USARV spokesman, "because we don't have a problem."

Although rules are understandably rigid about when GIs have to wear steel pots for their own protection, most combat COs don't much care about what their men use at other times.

At the 25th Inf Div soldiers can sport sweatbands made of camouflage material and topped with a Tropic Lightning Division patch. Other outfits allow GIs to encrusted hats and uniforms with mottos or nicknames.

So at least when it comes to how you can clothe your skull, this man's Army obviously offers a lot more bennies than the blue-nosed Air Force.



photographs that capture the many faces, scenes, and facets of war, from the gritty realism of combat to the sanguine moments of hope and humanity. Also portrayed are the Vietnamese, Montagnards, and Cambodians who suffered immeasurable sorrow and loss during the protracted war. There are Boyle's photographs of North Vietnamese army defectors like the gold-toothed Trần Văn Hai who, exhausted from the virulent destruction of war, desired a peaceful future for his country. There are Procter's photographs of unnamed men of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) preparing for an unknown future post-Vietnamization. In one photo, taken during a jump school training session, the carnival-like environment and light-hearted expressions of the soldiers appear to contradict the gravity of the situation. And then there are Hirst's photographs of smoldering landscapes and of individuals like Võ Thị Phương and countless other anguished mothers, bewildered children, and terrorized Vietnamese families.

Part four, "Man on the Street," features close-up portraits and selected quotations by US soldiers that form a representative sample of opinion on the interview topics so often covered by the *Overseas Weekly*, such as racial prejudice in the service.

Though Vietnam War's complex and polarizing history has yet to be reconciled, there are still lessons to be learned, people to be remembered, and hearts to be healed. The *Overseas Weekly* photograph collection — now publicly accessible at the

◀ First issue of the *Overseas Weekly*, Pacific Edition, October 23, 1966. Image courtesy of the State Historical Society of Missouri.



▲ **OW STAFFER**

Overseas Weekly reporter Richard Boyle conducts interviews on the drug problem in Vietnam.
August 9, 1969 | South Vietnam

Hoover Institution Library & Archives, whose mission is to collect, preserve, and make available the most important materials about global political, social, and economic change in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries—offers a new generation of researchers an opportunity to reflect on, reexamine, and remember the grave sacrifices made by soldiers, journalists, and civilians in pursuit of democracy, a free press, and peace.

► **DON HIRST**
Overseas Weekly staff member
Jacqueline Desdame.
August 3, 1969 | South Vietnam





BRIEFING
ROOM

MARION AND ANN ENTER THE PACIFIC

WHAT THE HELL IS A WOMAN DOING HERE?

DURING THE 1960s, as war intensified in Southeast Asia, news agencies and journalists worldwide descended on Saigon in droves. Shielded, for the most part, from the brutality of guerilla warfare, the capital city of the Republic of South Vietnam pulsated to cacophonous rhythms of rock 'n' roll, buzzing mopeds, warbling street hawkers, and periodically the crackle of rifle fire. Here, the new bureau office of the *Overseas Weekly's* Pacific edition, nestled in "Soul Alley" of the Khánh Hội district, swayed to its own distinct beat. The *Overseas Weekly*, an English-language military tabloid, represented an alternative subculture within the news industry. Working in concert with the *Overseas Weekly*, American GIs were given a platform to call attention not only to the brave acts but also the questionable conduct of their superiors and fellow soldiers.

With an initial investment of \$3,300, the *Overseas Weekly* was founded in Frankfurt, West Germany, by two Stanford University graduates, Cecil and Marion von Rospach (who met while working for the student paper, the *Stanford Daily*), and three servicemen, Captain Charles Garnett, Captain Jim Zicarelli, and Sergeant Joe Oswald.¹ Its first issue was published on May 14, 1950. The *Overseas Weekly* served as a counterpoint to US Department of Defense-sanctioned newspapers such as *Stars and Stripes*. As an independent, citizen-run paper, it sought to give the American troops abroad a voice by exposing often obscured truths about conflict, war, and the military establishment. At the time, the paper was disdainfully dismissed for being nothing more than a sensational tabloid peppered with schlocky content (and thus nicknamed the *Oversexed Weekly*).²

Following the outbreak of the Korean War and divorce from her husband, twenty-five-year-old Marion von Rospach took over as president and majority stockholder of the Overseas Media Corporation, the parent company that not only put out the *Overseas Weekly's* various editions but also distributed other American periodicals in West Germany, operated a color film-processing plant, and published books. In the early years, her operations were conducted on a shoestring budget out of the trunk of a worn Studebaker.³ Von Rospach, a supercharged dynamo of a businesswoman, was usually found with her sleeves rolled up, hair disheveled, and clothes wrinkled.⁴ To GIs, the *Overseas Weekly* was described as a cross between a parrot and a lion and von Rospach as a cross between Ike and Bob Hope.⁵

The *Overseas Weekly* conducted its business without political interference until it printed a series of articles on the sex-reassignment surgery of a transgendered World War II veteran, Christine (née George) Jorgensen; the ill treatment of American soldiers in Turkey; and the underground activities of the American Nazi Party within the US military ranks.⁶ As a result, von Rospach was ordered to stop printing and distributing the *Overseas Weekly* following a storm of protest from commanders in the field and others concerned with the moral welfare of dependent military personnel. The ban was lifted after intercession by several US congressmen and with the public support of the Hearst Corporation and the American Civil Liberties Union. In 1961, tensions flared again when the *Overseas Weekly* brought to light the alarming details of Major General Edwin A. Walker and the indoctrination of US troops by the John Birch Society, a far-right political

