



# MANKIND IS OUR BUSINESS

May 28, 2002

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Luncheons: Tuesdays, 12:15 – 1:30 p.m.  
 The Princeton Club – 15 W. 43<sup>rd</sup> Street

# ARMED FORCES DAY

## THOMAS E. RICKS

### MILITARY CORRESPONDENT - THE WASHINGTON POST



Thomas Ricks covers the military for the *Washington Post*. Until the end of 1999, he had the same beat at the *Wall Street Journal*, where he was a reporter for 17 years. He has reported on U.S. military activities in Somalia, Haiti, Korea, Bosnia, Macedonia, Kuwait, Turkey, the Persian Gulf, and Afghanistan. His major articles have looked at the changed nature of peacekeeping (1992), the growing importance of non-lethal weapons (1993), the revolution in military affairs (1994), the passage of one recruit platoon through Marine boot camp (1995), the cultural battle at West Point's leadership department (1997), the U.S. military's new emphasis on operating in Asia (2000), target clearance problems in the Afghan war (2001), and the morale of U.S. troops in Afghanistan (2002).

He was part of a *Wall Street Journal* team that won the 2000 Pulitzer Prize for national reporting. That series of articles on how the U.S. military might change to meet the new demands of the 21st century is posted at <http://www.pulitzer.org/year/2000/national-reporting/works>. Mr. Ricks also was part of a *Washington Post* team that won the 2002 Pulitzer Prize for national reporting about the beginning of the U.S. counteroffensive against terrorism. Those articles are posted at: <http://www.pulitzer.org/year/2002/national-reporting/works/>.

He is the author of the book *Making the Corps*, which won the *Washington Monthly's* Political Book of the Year Award. He also has written on defense matters for the *Atlantic Monthly* and other publications. His first novel, *A Soldier's Duty*, about the U.S. military intervening in Afghanistan, was published by Random House in June 2001, four months before the U.S. actually did intervene there.

Mr. Ricks is a member of the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society and the Society for Military History. Born in Massachusetts, he grew up in New York and Afghanistan, and graduated from Yale in 1977.

### CALENDAR



May 28<sup>th</sup>  
**ARMED FORCES DAY**  
 Thomas E. Ricks

June 4<sup>th</sup>  
**UN DAY**  
 Hon. M. Patricia Durrant

June 11<sup>th</sup>  
**TRANSITION DAY**

June 18<sup>th</sup>  
 John Sexton  
 NYU Law School

June 25<sup>th</sup>  
 Abraham Briloff  
 Professor- Baruch College

July 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 Pending

July 9<sup>th</sup>  
**PRESIDENT'S DAY**  
 Silvio Amori

July 16<sup>th</sup>  
 Kerry Kennedy Cuomo

## **REPORTER OF THE WEEK**

**Tuesday, May 21, 2002**

Our President, Helen Reisler, opened the meeting. We sang "The Star-Spangled Banner," led by Allison Alessi, and Peter Brizard gave the invocation. Mats Ingemanson welcomed our visiting Rotarians from five different states.

The speaker of the day was Janine Jackson ([jjackson@fair.org](mailto:jjackson@fair.org)), she is Program Director for Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting, <http://www.fair.org>, a nonprofit media organization. The topic of her speech was the conflict of media as a profit-driven business versus its role of serving the public interest.

A classic example is the unholy mix of news and advertising. For example, NBC used to run a TV show in which discussed new books. The commercial breaks featured those books on Amazon.com. NBC got a commission of 10% for sales of those books. This relationship was not revealed to the viewers.

Journalism is also under pressure from the government, especially in times of war. Additionally, here is a lot of internal pressure in media companies. It is reported that newspaper columnists were fired after criticizing Bush. Other media companies reportedly demanded a public loyalty oath from their employees.

Journalism is in a constant struggle against what Jackson calls "fear and favor." Should the media act differently in times of war and give in under the pressure? For Jackson, this is out of the question.

Jackson does not propose governmental ownership of media companies, as is quite common in Europe. She wants more public awareness of the problem and proposes antitrust laws to at least restrict the concentration of multiple local media channels (radio, TV, print, Web.)

**-Rotarian Volker Detering**

## **DISTRICT 7230**

**47<sup>th</sup> Annual**

**“ON-TO-BERMUDA”**

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