Marvin L. Stone (born Feb. 26, 1924), former President and Chairman of The International Media Fund, former editor of *U.S. News & World Report* and Deputy Director of the U.S. Information Agency in the Reagan administration, died May 1, 2000, in Falls Church, Virginia. The cause of death was cancer.

From 1989-1995 Stone was the founding President and Chairman of The International Media Fund, an organization devoted to encouraging and supporting a free press in Eastern Europe and the Balkans. The Fund, initially encouraged by the State Department and largely funded by Congress, built independent radio stations, TV studios and printing presses in 14 countries, trained hundreds of working journalists and emphasized especially the training of university students.

Prior to his leadership role at the Media Fund, Stone served as Deputy Director at the United States Information Agency from 1985-89.

Stone’s career in journalism spanned 40 years, including every phase of news gathering from daily newspaper to wire service to news magazine. He began as a police reporter on the *Huntington Herald-Dispatch* in Huntington, W.Va., and later covered four wars, interviewed a score of world leaders, reported from major international conferences and filed dispatches from 35 countries.

As the third editor of *U.S. News & World Report*, from 197685, Stone was responsible for the magazine’s editorial shift towards the center from the more conservative views held by its founder David Lawrence. Stone introduced four-color photography to the magazine and opened editorial opportunities for minorities. At the time of the magazine’s sale to Mortimer Zuckerman in 1985, Stone was also chairman of the parent company that included real estate and publishing interests. After what he described as six “amicable” months with Zuckerman, Stone resigned to accept an offer from the White House to take the USIA post, for which he was confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

As a foreign correspondent, starting after his graduation in 1949 from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism as a Pulitzer Traveling Fellow, Stone chronicled events in Europe and Asia off and on over a span of four decades.

From his base in London in 1951, after months of investigation, Stone was the first to report that the Soviet Union had developed the H-bomb, coming as an apparent surprise to U.S. authorities, who reported its atmospheric test shortly thereafter. In Asia, as Far East Director of Hearst’s International News Service, Stone covered the latter stages of the Korean War and the 1953 armistice signing at Panmunjom. Two years later, from his base in Hanoi, he covered the final days of the French Indo-China War. He and two other American correspondents were aboard the command plane that dropped the last paratroopers into Dien Bien Phu before it fell to Ho Chi Minh in May 1954. At other times Stone covered the Quemoy-Matsu crisis in the Taiwan Straits in 1958 and witnessed the birth of SEATO. Switching to Europe, he covered the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961.

Then, following completion of a Sloan-Rockefeller graduate fellowship in science at Columbia, he wrote extensively on the birth of the Space Age, witnessing shots from Cape Canaveral. He was author of the Doubleday Science Series book, *Man in Space*.

While editor of *U.S. News*, Stone was chosen as a panelist in the Carter-Reagan debate in Cleveland in 1980. Stone said later he was amazed that one appearance on national
television prompted more mail than a year’s worth of response to his magazine editorials. Stone’s question of Carter in that debate resulted in the President’s reply that he had just that morning discussed nuclear defense strategy with his young daughter Amy, a statement that brought considerable grief to Carter’s campaign.

In 1989, President Bush appointed Stone as Commissioner–General for U.S. interests at the planned Seville world’s fair, but Stone resigned months later in protest over lack of White House support and a slash in funding by Congress.

Stone was a U.S. Navy small-boat officer in the Pacific in World War II.

At one time or another, Stone served on the Executive Committee for the American Society of Magazine Editors, was a director of the National Press Foundation and a member of the National Advisory Board of American University. He was chairman of the U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation, past president of the Foreign Correspondent’s Club of Japan, a Trustee of the Washington Opera and Vice President of the Public Diplomacy Foundation.

Over the years Stone was the recipient of many awards and honors, including: Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism’s 50th Anniversary Honor Award in 1963, Marshall University’s Distinguished Alumnus Award in 1973, three honorary degrees, the National Distinguished Alumnus Award from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities in 1977, four Freedoms Foundation awards, the Legion of Honor from the Chapel of the Four Chaplains in 1980, the American Eagle award in 1983, the Silver Gavel award in 1983 from the American Bar Association, the Gold Mercury International Award, the Communication award from the Boys Clubs of America, the Gill Robb Wilson award from the U.S. Air Force Association, the Distinguished Honor award from USIA; he was named to the Washington Journalists Hall of Fame in 1990.

Stone’s memberships included The Center for Security and International Studies where he was an Adjunct Fellow, the White House Correspondents Association, the American Society of Magazine Editors, the National Press Club, Omicron Delta Kappa, Sigma Delta Chi, the Foreign Correspondents Club of Japan, the International Club, the Cosmos Club and Caribao.

A native of Burlington, Vt., Stone was a graduate of Marshall University in Huntington, W.Va. He attended Columbia School of Journalism, where he won a Pulitzer Traveling Fellowship and —10 years later—a Sloan Foundation Fellowship to study science writing. He also received a Knight International Press Fellowship, Hungary 1995 and Croatia 1996.

Stone was a long-time resident of Falls Church, Va. Survivors include his wife, Sydell (Terry) Stone; two daughters, Jamie Faith Stone and Stacey Hope Goodrich; and a son, Torren M. Stone.

Copies to: New York Times (call to James Greenfield’s attention)  
Washington Post (call to John Goshko’s attention)  
Washington Times  
Huntington Herald-Dispatch  
Charleston Daily Mail  
Burlington (Vt.) Free Press