



Changing Minds Winning Peace

A NEW STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR U.S. PUBLIC
DIPLOMACY IN THE ARAB & MUSLIM WORLD

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IN THE ARAB & MUSLIM WORLD

Report of the Advisory Group on
Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World

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October 1, 2003

Submitted to the Committee on Appropriations
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PREFACE

IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE COLD WAR AND THE TERRORIST ATTACKS of September 11, 2001, the United States of America is engaged in a major struggle to expand the zone of tolerance and marginalize extremists, whether secular or religious, especially in the Arab and Muslim world.

While the conduct of policy is the primary determinant of success or failure in this struggle, the role of public diplomacy has taken on critical importance in the effort to understand, inform, engage, and influence people in this important region of the world, home to some 1.5 billion Muslims.

While we refer here to the “Arab and Muslim world,” we recognize that Muslim societies and countries are diverse — culturally, linguistically, ethnically, and even religiously — and that, as in other regions of the world, we have to tailor our approach accordingly.

While our mandate is focused on the Arab and Muslim world, the analysis and recommendations that we present in this report necessarily go to the larger challenges of U.S. public diplomacy.

To meet this public diplomacy challenge, several important studies have been issued recently, including:

- » “The Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Managed Information Dissemination” (2001), by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics;
- » “Building America’s Public Diplomacy Through a Reformed Structure and Additional Resources” (2002), a report of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy;
- » “Finding America’s Voice: A Strategy for Reinvigorating U.S. Public Diplomacy” (2003), the report of an independent task force sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations;
- » “U.S. Public Diplomacy” (2003), by the U.S. General Accounting Office;

- » “Strengthening U.S.-Muslim Communications” (2003), from the Center for the Study of the Presidency;
- » “How to Reinvigorate U.S. Public Diplomacy” (2003), by Stephen Johnson and Helle Dale, published by the Heritage Foundation; and
- » “The Youth Factor: The New Demographics of the Middle East and the Implications for U.S. Policy” (2003), a Brookings Institution study by Graham E. Fuller.

Congress, too, became concerned about how to meet this public diplomacy challenge, and in June 2003 the House Appropriations Committee, whose subcommittee of jurisdiction is chaired by Rep. Frank Wolf, included a directive in the supplemental appropriations bill that stated:

“The Committee expects the Department to engage the creative talents of the private sector to the maximum extent possible to develop new public diplomacy approaches and initiatives. In this regard, the Committee expects the Department [of State] to establish an advisory group on public diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim world to recommend new approaches, initiatives and program models to improve public diplomacy results. This advisory group should include individuals with extensive expertise in public diplomacy, media, public relations, and the region...”

I was asked by Secretary of State Colin Powell to chair this advisory group, which has 13 members and which began meeting in early July and continued its work through the end of September. We contacted and were briefed by dozens of specialists and practitioners, both here and abroad in the public and private sectors, including non-governmental organizations. We traveled to Egypt, Syria, Turkey, Senegal, Morocco, the United Kingdom, and France. We used video conferencing for discussions with individuals in Pakistan and Indonesia.

I wish to commend the outstanding competence and work of this advisory group, whose members gave voluntarily of their time to tackle this difficult issue intensively over a short period of three months.

The earlier reports, cited above, were very useful to our work. We thank their authors, as well as the many individuals who spent time sharing their views and insights with us.

I wish also to thank Secretary Powell, Deputy Secretary Richard Armitage, and Assistant Secretary Patricia Harrison for all the support

that they extended to the Advisory Group to accomplish its mission. We especially appreciate the dedication of the U.S. Government personnel, both in Washington and in the field, and of the foreign service nationals in the embassies and the consulates that we visited.

Given the statutory responsibilities of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy to follow up and evaluate public diplomacy programs, its members may wish to pursue this function relative to the findings of this report.

We hope this report will bring about the changes needed to provide strategic direction and help secure the resources to accomplish the crucial work of public diplomacy.

Edward P. Djerejian
CHAIRMAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AT A CRITICAL TIME IN OUR NATION'S HISTORY, THE APPARATUS OF public diplomacy has proven inadequate, especially in the Arab and Muslim world.

The fault lies not with the dedicated men and women at the State Department and elsewhere who practice public diplomacy on America's behalf around the world, but with a system that has become outmoded, lacking both strategic direction and resources. The good news is that Congress and the Executive Branch understand the urgency and are ready to meet the challenge.

The solutions that we advocate match these times, when we are engaged in a major, long-term struggle against the forces of extremism, whether secular or religious. We call for a dramatic transformation in public diplomacy — in the way the U.S. communicates its values and policies to enhance our national security. That transformation requires an immediate end to the absurd and dangerous underfunding of public diplomacy in a time of peril, when our enemies have succeeded in spreading viciously inaccurate claims about our intentions and our actions.

Our adversaries' success in the struggle of ideas is all the more stunning because American values are so widely shared. As one of our Iranian interlocutors put it, "Who has anything against life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness?" We were also told that if America does not define itself, the extremists will do it for us.

First and foremost, public diplomacy requires a new *strategic direction* — informed by a seriousness and commitment that matches the gravity of our approach to national defense and traditional state-to-state diplomacy. This commitment must be led by the political will of the President and Congress and fueled by adequate financial and human resources.

We fully acknowledge that public diplomacy is only part of the picture. Surveys indicate that much of the resentment toward America stems from real conflicts and displeasure with policies, including those involving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and Iraq. But our mandate is clearly limited to issues of public diplomacy, where we believe a significant new effort is required.

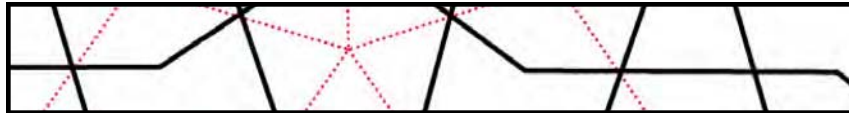
We make the following major recommendations:

- » A new operating process and architecture are required for the transformation of public diplomacy. Specific, structural changes relating to the organization of the White House, the National Security Council interagency process, and the State Department, as described in Chapter IV, are urgently recommended. A presidential directive to all relevant governmental agencies emphasizing the importance of public diplomacy in advancing U.S. interests and instituting these changes, should be promulgated.
- » The U.S. Agency for International Development and the Defense Department, both of which engage in activities with a significant public diplomacy dimension, must be more closely tied to the reinforced strategic direction and coordination that we propose.
- » A new culture of measurement must be established within all public diplomacy structures.
- » The importance of public diplomacy in meeting the strategic challenge that America faces in the Arab and Muslim world requires a dramatic increase in funding. The current level is absurdly and dangerously inadequate, and no amount of reprogramming of existing resources can correct this.
- » Additional professional staff for public diplomacy dedicated to issues of the Arab and Muslim world is urgently needed. The professional level of fluency in the local languages and the level of knowledge about Arab and Muslim societies must be dramatically enhanced.
- » Given the strategic importance of information technologies, a greater portion of the budget should be earmarked to tap the resources of the Internet and other communication technologies more effectively.
- » Programs in support of English language training, a critical instrument of outreach, education, and job opportunity, must be expanded and supported by increased funding and human resources.

- » A rapid expansion of the scope of the American Corners program for local institutions should be undertaken, especially given the decreased access to American facilities.
- » A major new initiative, the American Knowledge Library, should be launched. It involves translating thousands of the best American books in many fields of education into local languages and making them available to libraries, American Studies centers, universities, and American Corners.

I

Strategic Direction



THE UNITED STATES TODAY LACKS THE CAPABILITIES IN PUBLIC diplomacy to meet the national security threat emanating from political instability, economic deprivation, and extremism, especially in the Arab and Muslim world.

Public diplomacy is the promotion of the national interest by informing, engaging, and influencing people around the world. Public diplomacy helped win the Cold War, and it has the potential to help win the war on terror.

But a process of unilateral disarmament in the weapons of advocacy over the last decade has contributed to widespread hostility toward Americans and left us vulnerable to lethal threats to our interests and our safety. In this time of peril, public diplomacy is absurdly and dangerously underfunded, and simply restoring it to its Cold War status is not enough.

First and foremost, public diplomacy requires a new *strategic direction* — informed by a seriousness and commitment that matches the gravity of our approach to national defense and traditional state-to-state diplomacy. This commitment must be led by the political will of the President and Congress and fueled by augmented financial and human resources.

We fully acknowledge that public diplomacy is only part of the picture. Surveys show much of the resentment toward America stems from our policies. It is clear, for example, that the Arab-Israeli conflict remains a visible and significant point of contention between the United States and many Arab and Muslim countries and that peace in that region, as well as the transformation of Iraq, would reduce tensions. But our mandate is clearly limited to issues of public diplomacy, where we believe a

significant new effort is required.

Special efforts and additional assets are needed in the Arab and Muslim world, but to be effective in those nations, where today's greatest challenges lie, the entire system of public diplomacy urgently requires a broad and deep transformation.

We recommend that strategic direction and interagency coordination of public diplomacy come from a new office located in the White House and headed by a special Cabinet-level Counselor to the President. The office would be supported by outside experts in global communications as well as by a reinvigorated interagency policy-coordinating committee.

The State Department would remain the lead agency for public diplomacy programs with an enhanced role and authority for the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, but the State Department, Defense Department, U.S. Agency for International Development, government-sponsored international broadcasting and all other entities that participate in public diplomacy would follow the unified strategic direction of the new White House office.

We also recommend that no public diplomacy activity be launched without as much testing and research as possible and that programs be continually measured for effectiveness.

These two changes alone — strategic direction and vigorous measurement — would quickly improve public diplomacy at a critical time in our nation's history. In the pages that follow, we offer many other specific recommendations.

The most effective programs of public diplomacy — the ones most likely to endure and have long-term impact — are those that are mutually beneficial to the United States and to the Arab and Muslim countries. We urge that care be taken to emphasize programs that build bridges and address the region's weaknesses, especially in education, while at the same time advancing the American message and building a constituency of friendship and trust.

We also urge the U.S. Government to collaborate with American businesses and nonprofit organizations, which have the world's best talent and resources in communications and research.

We emphasize that, in all public diplomacy efforts, the U.S. recog-

nize that the best way to get our message across is often directly to the people — rather than through formal diplomatic channels.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ENHANCES NATIONAL SECURITY

The attacks of September 11, 2001, required America to pursue a long-term, comprehensive war on terrorism. Extending military power abroad, practicing vigorous state-to-state diplomacy, choking off financial resources to our adversaries, and improving the defense of the homeland — these steps are all necessary, but not sufficient to the task. Despite our best efforts in these areas, animosity toward the United States has grown to unprecedented levels, making the achievement of our policy goals more difficult and expensive, both in dollars and in lives.

A year ago, in the National Security Strategy of the United States, President George W. Bush recognized the importance of adapting public diplomacy to meet the post-September 11 challenge: “Just as our diplomatic institutions must adapt so that we can reach out to others, we also need a different and more comprehensive approach to public information efforts that can help people around the world learn about and understand America. The war on terrorism is not a clash of civilizations. It does, however, reveal the clash inside a civilization, a battle for the future of the Muslim world. This is a struggle of ideas and this is an area where America must excel.”

But America has *not* excelled in the struggle of ideas in the Arab and Muslim world. As the director of the Pew Research Center said earlier this year, attitudes toward the United States “have gone from bad to worse.”

Hostility toward America has reached shocking levels. Again, according to Pew, “the bottom has fallen out of Arab and Muslim support for the United States.” For example, shortly before the war against Saddam Hussein, by greater than a two-to-one margin, Muslims surveyed in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Jordan said the United States was a more serious threat than Iraq. Only 2 percent of British Muslims agreed with the statement that “the United States supports democracy around the world.” The Arab and Muslim world, however, cannot be addressed in isolation. Animosity toward the U.S. is part of a broader crisis worldwide.

What is required is not merely tactical adaptation but strategic, and radical, transformation.

NOT PRESENT FOR THE DEBATE

Often, we are simply not present to explain the context and content of national policies and values. As the Advisory Group was told in Morocco: “If you do not define yourself in this part of the world, the extremists will define you.” They have defined us, for example, as ruthless occupiers in Iraq and as bigots, intolerant to Muslims in our own country. These depictions are dead wrong, but they stick because it is rare that governments or individuals in the region are prepared to take up our side of the story and because the United States has deprived itself of the means to respond effectively — or even to be a significant part of the conversation.

As one of many examples, we watched a program on al-Arabiyya satellite television titled “The Americanization of Islam,” whose theme was that the United States had embarked on a sinister plot to change the 1,500-year-old religion. The true American position was nowhere represented. Our views were absent from the program, just as we are absent, despite the dedicated efforts of our public officials at home and abroad, from much of the intense daily discourse on U.S. policy and values taking place throughout the Arab and Muslim world.

WHAT TRANSFORMATION WILL REQUIRE

The United States needs to transform the way we explain and advocate our values and policies and the way we listen to what others are saying about us — not just in Arab and Muslim states, but throughout the world. This transformation will require:

- » a new clarity and strategic direction for public diplomacy, guided from the White House;
- » a new process for developing strategic messages and disseminating them, making use of the best information technology;
- » new programs to implement the strategy, continually test their effectiveness, and make adjustments;
- » a top-to-bottom review of every current program, with the elimination or renovation of those that do not “move the needle,” that is, produce more favorable attitudes toward the United States and more accurate understanding of American interests;
- » a new management structure that provides accountability, speed, and coordination across many government departments, not just the

State Department;

- » adequate resources, drawn through reallocation from existing programs and through new personnel and money;
- » a new balance between security and engagement, one that prevents U.S. embassies and other facilities from appearing to be “crusader castles,” distant from the local population; and
- » a firm commitment and directive from the President to all relevant government agencies that emphasizes the importance of public diplomacy in advancing American interests and tips the balance in favor of the forces of moderation.

The transformation we advocate can have a profound effect on Arab and Muslim societies as well. These societies are at a crossroads, with the opportunity to take the path toward greater liberty and prosperity, within the context of their own rich cultures. With effective policies and public diplomacy, we can galvanize indigenous moderates and reformers within these societies. The overall task is to marginalize the extremists.

THE REINFORCING CYCLE OF ANIMOSITY

Americans, on the one hand, and Arabs and Muslims, on the other, are trapped in a dangerously reinforcing cycle of animosity. Arabs and Muslims respond in anger to what they perceive as U.S. denigration of their societies and cultures, and to this Arab and Muslim response Americans react with bewilderment and resentment, provoking a further negative response from Arabs and Muslims. A transformed public diplomacy that is candid about differences but also stresses similarities — especially in values — can dampen the animosity and help end the cycle.

Most changes will not occur overnight, but some steps, taken immediately, will produce short-term solutions. More importantly, however, the U.S. Government needs to view public diplomacy — just as it views state-to-state diplomacy and national security — in a long-term perspective. Transformed public diplomacy can make America safer, but it must be sustained for decades, not stopped and started as moods change in the world. Public opinion in the Arab and Muslim world cannot be cavalierly dismissed.

We must also confront the contradiction that troubles believers in democracy and liberalization. They see official U.S. diplomacy as fre-

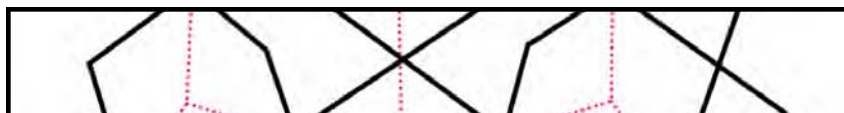
quently buttressing governments hostile to freedom and prosperity. Public diplomacy gives the United States the opportunity to supplement the support of such regimes — often a policy necessity — with broader, long-term promotion of universal values and economic, political, and social reforms that directly support public aspirations.

CANDOR AND CONFIDENCE, NOT SPIN AND SUGAR-COATING

Finally, we want to be clear: “Spin” and manipulative public relations and propaganda are not the answer. Foreign policy counts. In our trips to Egypt, Syria, Turkey, France, Morocco and Senegal, we were struck by the depth of opposition to many of our policies. Citizens in these countries are genuinely distressed at the plight of Palestinians and at the role they perceive the United States to be playing, and they are genuinely distressed by the situation in Iraq. Sugar-coating and fast talking are no solutions, nor is absenting ourselves.

America can achieve dramatic results with a consistent, strategic, well-managed, and properly funded approach to public diplomacy, one that credibly reflects U.S. values, promotes the positive thrust of U.S. policies, and takes seriously the needs and aspirations of Arabs and Muslims for peace, prosperity, and social justice.

II Crisis and Challenge



WORSENING ATTITUDES OF ARABS AND MUSLIMS TOWARD AMERICA

The bottom has indeed fallen out of support for the United States. In Indonesia, the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, only 15 percent view the United States favorably, compared with 61 percent in early 2002. In Saudi Arabia, according to a Gallup poll, only 7 percent had a “very favorable” view of the U.S. while 49 percent had a “very unfavorable” view. In Turkey, a secular Muslim, non-Arab democracy that is a stalwart member of NATO and a longtime supporter of America, favorable opinion toward the U.S. dropped from 52 percent three years ago to 15 percent in the spring of 2003, according to the Pew Research Center.

The problem is not limited to the Arab and Muslim world. In Spain, an ally in the war in Iraq, 3 percent had a very favorable view of the United States while 39 percent had a very unfavorable view.

America’s position as, by far, the world’s preeminent power may well contribute to the animosity, but it is not a satisfying explanation. The United States enjoyed the same level of relative power after World War II, for example, but was widely admired throughout the world. Arab and Muslim nations are a primary source of anger toward the United States, although such negative attitudes are paralleled in Europe and elsewhere.

WHY ATTITUDES ARE IMPORTANT

Since September 11, 2001, the stakes have been raised. Attitudes toward the United States were important in the past, but now they have become a central national security concern. Although the objective of foreign policy is to promote our national interests and not, specifically, to inspire

affection, hostility toward the U.S. makes achieving our policy goals far more difficult. The Defense Science Board reported nearly two years ago that effective “information dissemination capabilities are powerful assets vital to national security. They can create diplomatic opportunities, lessen tensions that might lead to war, contain conflicts, and address nontraditional threats to America’s interests.” Achieving our interests is far easier if we do not have to buck a tide of anti-Americanism in addition to considered policy opposition.

TODAY’S PUBLIC DIPLOMACY HAS PROVEN INADEQUATE TO THE TASK

The creation of the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) 50 years ago, at the height of the Cold War, was a recognition that traditional state-to-state diplomacy alone could not achieve U.S. interests in a world of fast communications and sophisticated propaganda. Government is only one player among many trying to influence the opinions of people in other countries, and state-to-state diplomacy alone will not improve negative attitudes of citizens. In fact, quite the opposite. For example, the United States has, in recent years, increased its material and moral support for the regime in Jordan, but attitudes toward the U.S. among average Jordanians have worsened sharply. According to research by Pew, 25 percent of those polled in Jordan had a favorable view of the U.S. in the summer of 2002 and just 1 percent in the spring of 2003.

Similarly, Egypt is the second-largest recipient of U.S. assistance in the world, yet a report on public diplomacy issued in September 2003 by the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) stated that “only a small percentage of the population was aware of the magnitude” of that aid.¹ We were told repeatedly during our visit to Cairo that Egyptians were grateful to the Japanese for building their opera house. But they were unaware that the United States funded the Cairo sewer, drinking water, and electrical systems and played a key role in reducing infant mortality in Egypt. Whether aware of extensive American aid or not, Egyptians, by a wide margin, hold negative opinions of the United States. A survey in 2002, for example, found that only 6 percent of Egyptians had a favorable view of America.

The USIA defined public diplomacy as “promoting the national interest and the national security of the United States through understanding, informing and influencing foreign publics and broadening dia-

1. U.S. General Accounting Office, “U.S. Public Diplomacy,” September 2003, GAO-03-951, p. 17.



Photo:
Ehab Samy

The Japanese seem to get more credit for building Cairo's opera house than the U.S. does for building the city's critical infrastructure.

logue between American citizens and institutions and their counterparts abroad.”² Today, communications are even swifter and anti-American propaganda even more insidious — in part because our adversaries, lacking the power to counter the U.S. militarily, have become more adept at non-military techniques. Television is by far the most efficient means of disseminating ideas in the Arab and Muslim world, and accurate portrayals of U.S. policies on TV are largely absent. We saw one of our worst nightmares in the bidonvilles of Casablanca, where homes lacked plumbing but had hand-wired satellite-TV dishes.

Matters were far different during the Cold War. Soviet and Eastern European citizens were then shut off from the West by their governments. Today, by contrast, Arabs and Muslims have a surfeit of opinion and information about the United States, much of it distorted by journalists and propagandists hostile to America. Arabs and Muslims are also bombarded with American sitcoms, violent films, and other entertainment, much of which distorts the perceptions of viewers who lack the contextual background to understand, for example, that the lifestyles in programs like “Friends,” “Dallas,” and “Seinfeld” are not the norm.³

H.R. 3969, a bill introduced in Congress in 2002 to enhance public diplomacy, states, “Existing efforts to counter...misinformation and propaganda are inadequate and must be greatly enhanced both in scope

2.
“What is Public Diplomacy?” U.S. Information Agency Alumni Association, September 1, 2002.

3.
In Damascus, we were surprised to find “Seinfeld” aired twice daily. A Syrian teacher of English asked us plaintively for help in

explaining American family life to her students. She asked, “Does ‘Friends’ show a typical family?” Americans place programs like “Friends” in an accurate context. Some Arabs and Muslims have a harder time doing so.

and substance.” Part of this inadequacy is the result of a lack of proper resources, both human and financial, but much of it is the result of insufficient strategic coordination at the top and a management structure that lacks flexibility and limits accountability.

Overall, since the fall of the Berlin Wall, our efforts at public diplomacy, especially in the Arab and Muslim world, have proven severely inadequate. But with greater focus, commitment, and changes in management structure and resources, the downward trend can be quickly reversed.

THE ROLE OF POLICY AND THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION

Before we present those recommendations, however, we must make an effort to separate questions of policy from questions of communicating that policy. Surveys show clearly that specific American policies profoundly affect attitudes toward the United States. That stands to reason. For example, large majorities in the Arab and Muslim world view U.S. policy through the prism of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Arabs and Muslims overwhelmingly opposed the post-9/11 U.S. military campaign in Afghanistan, as well as the use of force against Iraq, and the U.S. war on terrorism in general. It is not, however, the mandate of the Advisory Group to advise on foreign policy itself.

While the United States cannot and should not simply change its policies to suit public opinion abroad, we must use the tools of public diplomacy to assess the likely effectiveness of particular policies. Without such assessment, our policies could produce unintended consequences that do not serve our interests. Public diplomacy needs new and efficient feedback mechanisms that can be brought to bear when policy is made. This is another reason that a public diplomacy management structure must begin in the White House.

Separating simple opposition to policies from generalized anti-American attitudes is not easy. The two kinds of animosity interact and amplify through feedback loops. For example, a single word from the President of the United States (or from a congressman or even an American entertainer) can harden into formidable antagonism the view of an Arab citizen who was wavering on a policy question.

Americans are often perplexed by such antagonism. Unlike powerful nations of the past, the United States does not seek to conquer but to

spread universal ideals: liberty, democracy, human rights, equality for women and minorities, prosperity, and the rule of law. Specifically, according to our values and principles, the American vision for the Arab and Muslim world is for it to become a peaceful, prosperous region working toward participatory government, with democracy, social justice, human dignity, and individual freedom for all; a region where extremism, in either a secular or religious cloak, is marginalized and where the zone of tolerance is expanded.

In more concrete terms, stated American policy toward the Arab and Muslim world on issues like those below, needs to be more fully communicated:

- » peaceful settlement of conflicts between the Arabs and Israelis, in Kashmir, and in the Western Sahara;
- » peace in Afghanistan and Iraq;
- » regional security cooperation;
- » global energy security;
- » free, open, representative, and tolerant political systems;
- » economic growth through private market economies, free trade, and investment;
- » education systems that prepare students to participate constructively in civil society and the global marketplace;
- » a free press, with public and private media that educate, inform, and entertain, with careful attention to accuracy and respect for the diversity of the region;
- » full participation of women and minorities in society.

Our values and our policies are not always in agreement, however. The U.S. Government often supports regimes in the Arab and Muslim world that are inimical to our values but that, in the short term, may advance some of our policies. Indeed, many Arabs and Muslims believe that such support indicates that the U.S. is determined to deny them freedom and political representation. This belief often stems from our own ambivalence about the possibility that democracy's first beneficiaries in the Arab and Muslim world will be extremists. It has caught us in a deep contradiction — one from which public diplomacy, as well as official diplomacy, could extricate us. But we must take these key policy challenges in the region seriously, and we must minimize the gap between

what we say (the high ideals we espouse) and what we do (the day-to-day measures we take).

We must underscore the common ground in both our values and policies.

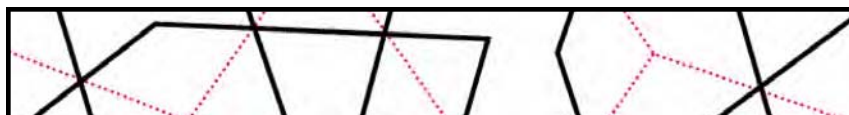
We have failed to listen and failed to persuade. We have not taken the time to understand our audience, and we have not bothered to help them understand us. We cannot afford such shortcomings.

Surveys show that Arabs and Muslims admire the universal values for which the United States stands. They admire, as well, our technology, entrepreneurial zeal, and the achievements of Americans as individuals. We were told many times in our travels in Arab countries that “we like Americans but not what the American government is doing.” This distinction is unrealistic, since Americans elect their government and broadly support its foreign policy, but the assertion that “we like you but don’t like your policies” offers hope for transformed public diplomacy.

Arabs and Muslims, it seems, support our values but believe that our policies do not live up to them. A major project for public diplomacy is to reconcile this contradiction through effective communications and intelligent listening.

III

Instruments of Public Diplomacy



IN THE MID-1990S, AFTER THE FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL, THE UNITED States abandoned many of the tools of public diplomacy that had helped win the Cold War. Funding for the United States Information Agency was slashed repeatedly as isolationists and budget hawks combined with long-time domestic opponents of the use of “propaganda.” For example, during the 1980s and 1990s, staffing for public diplomacy programs dropped 35 percent, and funding, adjusted for inflation, fell 26 percent.¹

The truth is that Americans are uneasy about government direction of information, even in promoting national interests abroad. That is why we have never had an equivalent of what in other nations is called a “ministry of information.” In 1999, the USIA was abolished as a separate agency, and most of its functions were folded into the State Department. When the terrorists attacked on September 11, the importance of opposing anti-Americanism with words as well as weapons became obvious, but the United States was caught unprepared.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Today, the State Department spends approximately \$600 million on public diplomacy programs worldwide, and the Broadcasting Board of Governors (see below) spends another \$540 million. In addition, the Middle East Partnership Initiative proposes to spend \$100 million to expand economic, political, and educational opportunity as well as to empower women. These amounts together, by way of comparison, represent three-tenths of 1 percent of the annual Defense Department budget.

Working with State Department budget officials, we calculate that

1. Staffing and funding for diplomatic and consular programs and exchange programs only. Broadcasting activities are not included.

only about \$150 million of the \$600 million public diplomacy budget was spent in Muslim-majority countries. But of that amount, the vast majority went to earmarked exchange programs and to the salaries of public affairs officers, foreign service nationals, and other employees involved in public diplomacy in embassies. Because of a lack of funds, very little public diplomacy work is carried on outside national capitals — a mistake, in our view, because the impact is often greater in such areas.

We found that funding for public diplomacy outreach programs comes to only \$25 million for the entire Arab and Muslim world — a depressingly small amount.

To say that financial resources are inadequate to the task is a gross understatement.

HUMAN RESOURCES

“In times of war and peace,” wrote Secretary of State Powell in the May issue of *State Magazine*, “our public diplomacy and public affairs efforts are crucial to the success of American foreign policy, and they must be integral to its conduct.” He is correct, of course, but the State Department lacks the human resources for such crucial efforts. More than half the public affairs officers responding to the September 2003 GAO survey on public diplomacy said that the number of foreign service officers available for public diplomacy is insufficient.² The State Department increased the number of officers in public diplomacy jobs from 414 to 448 in recent years, but that is still a paltry figure, with insufficient emphasis on the Arab and Muslim world.

² GAO, “U.S. Public Diplomacy,” September 2003, p. 25.

An effective public diplomacy campaign requires well-trained staff with an in-depth knowledge of the culture in target countries and fluency in local languages. Since 9/11, especially, it has become clear that training, knowledge, and fluency are all sorely inadequate.

In the GAO survey, 58 percent of public affairs officers reported that the time available for public diplomacy training was inadequate.³ Officers outside the public diplomacy cone, including ambassadors, economic and political officers, and AID officers, also need training in communicating with the public, but receive little or none. The State Department understands these deficiencies and is moving to remedy them, but it lacks resources. Other cogent complaints from public affairs officers are that they have insufficient time “to devote exclusively to executing public diplo-

³ Ibid., p. 29.

macy tasks” and that, lacking staff support, they are required to spend too much time on administrative work.⁴

4.
Ibid., p. 25.

The Advisory Group’s three main recommendations on human resources concern dedicated regional staff, language skills, and broader training.

We believe that professional staff for public diplomacy must be more dedicated to particular regions. Unlike other kinds of diplomatic work, where moving across regions is desirable for experience, the level of expertise required for public diplomacy, especially in the Arab and Muslim world, means that a core professional staff should be developed and targeted to specific areas.

The ability to speak, write, and read a foreign language is one of the recognized prerequisites of effective communications. Foreign service officers who are fluent in Arabic immediately convey a sense of respect for and interest in the people to whom they speak, and fluency prevents the distortion of translation.

Effective public diplomacy thus requires sufficient cadres of officers trained in the languages and dialects spoken in the Arab and Muslim world. Currently, however, far too few officers are able — and willing — to communicate publicly in the languages of the region — whether in Arabic and its many dialects, Turkish, Farsi, Urdu, Bahasa Indonesia, or others. The latest statistics show that only 54 State Department employees have tested at the fully professional or bilingual level of competence (at or above “Level 4”) in Arabic. Of these, some were tested years ago and may no longer maintain the tested level of competence. Others are serving outside the Arab world. Only a handful can hold their own on television. The situation with other languages common in the Muslim world is even worse.

There are two problems. First, the absolute numbers trained to the requisite level is inadequate. Second, among officers with sufficient training, some shy away from public discourse; they protest they are not spokespersons and worry that mistakes in articulating and explaining policy may prove costly to their careers.

It is imperative that the State Department recruit language-qualified personnel and train new and existing personnel in the relevant languages. A special effort should be made to recruit first-generation Arab-Americans and Muslim Americans. The time that must be invested in this

training — typically two to three years — is best spent at the beginning of a career. Once an officer is properly trained, incentives must exist to encourage maintenance, improvement, and use of proficiency. Today, the State Department has 279 Arabic speakers at all levels, but only one-fifth have fluency. We recommend, as an initial goal, having 300 fluent speakers within two years and another 300 by 2008. Of these 600 fluent Arabic speakers, at least half should be willing and able to speak and debate publicly. In the meantime, as a stop-gap measure, the department should contract with competent consultants who already speak Arabic (and other languages of the region) to engage in public and media forums.

The State Department’s Foreign Service Institute has embarked on a significant revamping of its Arabic training program. Departmental managers must parallel this by according greater recognition to the value of language training in assignments, compensation, awards, and promotions and by requiring those with the necessary fluency to participate actively in public diplomacy activities regardless of job title.

The problem of inadequate language competency is widespread, not just in the U.S. Government but throughout American society. With a new strategic architecture, public diplomacy officials should address the issue broadly,⁵ but, for now, emergency measures are needed.

Finally, as we note throughout this report, the training of those engaged in public diplomacy throughout the government — including AID officers and technology specialists — must be far broader and deeper.

GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING

The United States spends more than a half-billion dollars a year on government-sponsored international broadcasting — about the same amount it spends on all the public diplomacy programs of the State Department combined.

Broadcasting has played an effective and distinguished role in the history of U.S. public diplomacy. The Voice of America (VOA) was launched in 1942 to disseminate information about American policies and interests globally by radio. Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty served as “surrogate” radio stations for Eastern Europeans and Russians behind the Iron Curtain and are generally credited with helping to win the Cold War.

The fall of communism changed the role of broadcasting profound-

5. See an excellent report on this subject: U.S. General Accounting Office, “Foreign Languages: Human Capital Approach Needed to Correct Staffing and Proficiency Shortfalls,” January 2002, GAO-02-375.

ly. In 1999, Congress passed legislation to bring all government-sponsored international broadcasting services under the authority of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), which describes itself as an “independent, autonomous agency.” The board comprises the Secretary of State and eight private citizens, most of whom are active in the media business. The BBG employs 3,200 people around the world and has a budget of \$540 million in fiscal 2003.

How valuable is government-sponsored international broadcasting in the Arab and Muslim world? With much of the potential broadcast audience hostile to the United States and receiving, unlike citizens of Iron Curtain countries, abundant information from other electronic sources, the answer is that we do not know. Not enough research has been conducted.

A survey by the GAO, however, asked State Department public affairs officers, “How effective is government-sponsored international broadcasting in achieving U.S. public diplomacy objectives in your host country (promoting U.S. national interests through understanding, informing and influencing foreign audiences)?” Only 5 percent answered “very effective” and just 22 percent “generally effective,” for a total of 27 percent. By contrast, 9 percent of the PAOs judged broadcasting “very ineffective” and 23 percent “generally ineffective,” for a total of 32 percent. Another 27 percent gave the uninspiring answer, “neither effective nor ineffective.”⁶

6.
GAO, “U.S. Public
Diplomacy,” p. 61.

The BBG operates the VOA, a news and information service in more than 50 countries (but no longer in Arabic); Radio and TV Marti, beamed into Cuba; Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, now mainly in the former Soviet Union, the Balkans, and Afghanistan; Radio Free Asia, in 10 countries, including China, Burma, and Cambodia; Worldnet, a global satellite TV service in English; and, of special relevance to this report, Radio Farda in Iran and Radio Sawa, now in Arab countries.

Farda, which broadcasts in Farsi, devotes about three-fourths of its broadcasting time to entertainment and one-fourth to information; it also maintains a website.

The strategy of Radio Sawa, launched in 2002 to replace VOA’s Arabic service, is to attract a large, youthful audience through popular music, and then to inform the audience about U.S. policies, values, and interests during interruptions for news and features. Sawa is currently carried on FM transmitters in Jordan, Kuwait, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Qatar, Bahrain,

and Djibouti as well as Baghdad, Irbil, and Sulaymaniyya in Iraq. Sawa uses AM transmitters in Cyprus and Greece to cover Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Gaza, and the Eastern Mediterranean. Sawa's budget for fiscal 2002, its launch year, was \$35 million, including \$16 million for one-time capital costs. The budget was \$22 million in fiscal 2003, and \$26 million has been requested for fiscal 2004. By comparison, the entire Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP) for the State Department had a budget of \$49 million in 2003.

Television is by far the most powerful medium for transmitting news and opinion in the Arab world. Satellite TV, which is generally beyond government control, is widespread, with estimated penetration rates of 75 percent in the Gulf States, 30 percent in the West Bank and Gaza, and between 10 percent and 20 percent in Egypt. About a half-dozen satellite news networks beam programs in Arabic, but major government-sponsored networks, such as BBC, do not. The BBC plans to launch a Middle East Television Network (METN) to fill this gap. First-time start-up costs are estimated at \$25 million, with fiscal 2004 operating costs of \$37 million.

Although METN content is still uncertain, the BBC states that "a typical programming day would include: A Morning Show (3 hours); All News (3 hours); family entertainment, including children's shows (5 hours); All News (3 hours); entertainment and information programs (3 hours)."

The view of the Advisory Group is that Sawa needs a clearer objective than building a large audience. To earn continued financial support, it must show, through continuous research, that it can change attitudes of Arab listeners toward the United States, that is, "move the needle" toward what the State Department, in its mission statement on public diplomacy and public affairs, calls "influence," which comprises "understanding," "constructive disagreement," and "active support."

Sawa has yet to prove that its strategy can accomplish this goal, especially at a time when it faces significant and increasing competition from broadcasters who understand the region and can respond quickly. Indeed, we worry that the BBC's nearly single-minded objective for Sawa is audience-building — a target that may deter Sawa from adding more influential content.

Recently, the BBC announced the results of an ACNielsen survey of Sawa's audience in several Arab countries. The survey found, for example,

that 11 percent of Egyptians aged 15 and older listened to Sawa in the previous week, as well as 40 percent of Kuwaitis. But in its review of the survey, Sawa noted only a single question on attitudes toward the United States, and that question proved little. It asked, “How favorably or unfavorably inclined are you personally toward the USA?” Sawa listeners had more positive views than non-Sawa listeners (no polling was done in Egypt; results in Qatar, for example, were 34 percent favorable for Sawa listeners and 22 percent for non-Sawa listeners). This result was to be expected, since any listener to a U.S.-sponsored station is likely to be favorably disposed to the United States. A better question would be whether Sawa had changed a listener’s attitudes toward America. Better still would be the establishment of an attitude baseline to measure whether attitudes have improved and to compare the impact of other media, while controlling for demographic factors.

We were concerned that in the BBC’s “Sawa Strategy,” there is no mention of changing minds or improving attitudes as objectives. Instead, the BBC says Sawa aims to “cover U.S. policies and actions in full” and to “engage the audience with dynamic, interactive features.”

The planned Middle East Television Network presents a more difficult problem. If it succeeds in attracting and influencing a significant audience, it will become a critical U.S. Government-sponsored voice in the Arab world. That would be an important accomplishment. Our interviews with people in the region, however, reveal a high level of skepticism about state-owned television of any sort.

More importantly, we believe that its projected funding may be inadequate for a high-quality network meant to compete with sophisticated broadcasters like al-Jazeera. It is likely that well over \$100 million a year would be needed to run METN at a truly professional level. Whether METN will be effective is uncertain; a large investment will have to be made before serious testing of its ability to meet public diplomacy objectives can begin. The question that faces policymakers is whether these funds can be better spent on other public diplomacy instruments, including others involving electronic media. To put the funding in context: \$100 million is about 40 percent more than all the money the State Department spends on international information programs worldwide and well over four times what it spends on specific public diplomacy outreach programs in Muslim countries.

An attractive, less costly alternative or supplement to METN may be the aggressive development of programming in partnership with private firms, nonprofit institutions, and government agencies — both in the United States and in Arab and Muslim nations. This programming can then be distributed through existing channels in the region. Supporters of METN argue that only a U.S.-run network can guarantee distribution of U.S. content, but our conversations with media executives in the region suggest otherwise.

In this regard, we endorse the recent recommendation of an independent task force sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations to establish “an independent, not-for-profit ‘Corporation for Public Diplomacy,’” a tax-exempt corporation, supported with both U.S. Government and private funds. Like the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, this organization would make grants to individual producers and to independent, indigenous media channels with the aim of creating and disseminating high-quality programming in the Arab and Muslim world.⁷

7. For a complete description, see the report of the independent task force chaired by Peter C. Peterson, “Finding America’s Voice: A Strategy for Reinvigorating U.S. Public Diplomacy,” Council on Foreign Relations, September 2003, pp. 37-39.

More broadly, in the view of the Advisory Group, international broadcasting, with the exception of the news function itself, should be brought under the strategic direction of the Advisory Group’s proposed office of the Special Counselor to the President (see Chapter IV, under “The White House”). Broadcasting represents nearly half the spending on public diplomacy, and it must be part of the public diplomacy process, not marching to its own drummer with its own goals and strategy, sources of funding, and board. Congress needs to reexamine the legislation that created the BBC to ensure that broadcast operations support the strategic mission of U.S. public diplomacy.

The BBC should also safeguard the professional integrity of the effort, but all broadcasting must fit into the overall public diplomacy strategy of the United States. It is critical, however, that news and opinion programs be accepted as credible and reliable. The truth is our ally.

ACCESS TO AMERICAN EDUCATION

Education is an area where Americans and the peoples of the Arab and Muslim world have solid common ground, but the United States has not taken sufficient advantage of this important shared value through public diplomacy. To the contrary, key programs, such as funding scholarships

for future leaders, have been cut to the bone. We recommend major increases in resources to help Arabs and Muslims gain access to U.S. education and urge creativity in finding ways to link U.S. educational institutions with those in the Middle East.

Even today, when many Arabs and Muslims harbor an extremely negative opinion of the United States, they maintain a positive view of American education. A recent poll by Zogby International found, for example, that respondents in Indonesia, Pakistan, and Lebanon had a broadly favorable attitude toward U.S. education, averaging 80 percent approval, with little difference among the countries.

Many especially admire modern education because it takes them away from the rote memorization that characterizes traditional methods of learning and moves them toward more critical ways of thinking. Education gives young people access to the global economy and in many instances delivers them from poverty. As a result, it was not surprising that many people we met during our travels said that America can be most helpful through education — through teaching Arabs and Muslims at American institutions in the region, helping to improve curricula in Arab and Muslim countries, or bringing students to the United States.

We were especially impressed with American universities in the Middle East. They provide credible models, not only of American pedagogy but also of transparency, pluralism, and democratic practice — all important universal values. These institutions have an abiding commitment, as well, to the values of tolerance, free inquiry, and critical thinking. They have a tradition of educating men and women who become leaders and opinion-makers in their own societies.

Because they have been nurtured in the American liberal-education tradition, graduates of these universities are typically open-minded and thoughtful interlocutors with whom Americans can work to address common concerns.

Therefore, institutions such as the American University of Beirut, the American University in Cairo, and the Lebanese American University — each set up by the private sector and each currently enrolling about 6,000 students — are well positioned to help impart America's values to the Arab and Muslim world. Strengthening these institutions will improve the region's own educational infrastructure, both directly and more broadly by

highlighting the universities as models of change at all levels. The “Arab Human Development Report” of the United Nations emphasized the deficiency of education in the region and its effect on human and economic development: “Educational achievement in the Arab countries as a whole, judged even by traditional criteria, is still modest when compared to elsewhere in the world, even in developing countries.”⁸

8. “Arab Human Development Report 2002,” United Nations Development Programme, sponsored by the Regional Bureau for Arab States and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, p. 51.

The Advisory Group recommends that the U.S. Government encourage support for American educational institutions in the Arab and Muslim world as part of our public diplomacy effort. The greatest long-term impact would come from scholarships to needy students from throughout the region, especially those from poorer countries.

Although hundreds of scholars in the United States are intimately acquainted with the Muslim world, few scholars in the Muslim world are real specialists in American culture and society. Discussion of this glaring difference after 9/11 resulted in the creation of one center for American Studies at Cairo University. Since this center is a local initiative and is not viewed as imposed by the U.S. Government, it enjoys credibility.

The absence of American Studies centers in the Arab and Muslim world is striking. There is a clear need and much demand for such centers in major universities in the region. They would include significant library collections, dedicated instructors, and electronic means of making available accurate and high-quality information about U.S. history, culture, and government. The Advisory Group recommends American financial assistance — both public and private — to support Arab and Muslim universities that attempt to build or expand such centers. We also recommend that U.S. universities offer assistance to such centers through opportunities for faculty and student exchange.

We advocate more general cooperation as well: joint ventures between American universities in the United States and universities in the Arab and Muslim world with collaboration in curricula, teaching methods, and testing. Partnership between American universities and regional universities can help both sides and promote shared values; in fact, such partnerships can begin at the high-school level. In addition, we recommend funding public policy centers at Arab and Muslim institutions of higher education to promote critical thinking on key issues and broader economic, social, and political opportunities for the region. We also

should consider support for adult education programs.

Educational exchange programs appear to have been broadly effective. Many people in positions of leadership in the Arab and Muslim world have studied at U.S. universities. For example, 80 percent of the members of the Saudi cabinet have an American master's or doctoral degree. Two women who are former prime ministers of Muslim countries also studied here.

Many who studied in the United States came here on scholarships funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development. But AID scholarships have been drastically reduced, from 20,000 in 1980 to only 900 this year.

The U.S. must also stand for academic freedom in the Arab and Muslim world. Too many scholarly institutes and initiatives have been effectively silenced by governments supported by the U.S. — often without notice at all in Washington.

Exchanges and cooperative agreements in areas like journalism and media studies can have a direct impact on how the United States and its policies are viewed in the Muslim world. Similarly, professional education partnerships — in medicine and business, for example — can build on common ground.

Finally, we recognize that concerns about security are appropriate in the wake of the terrorist attacks of 9/11. However, these concerns have caused a decline in student visa applications and issuance. For example, visas granted to students from Pakistan have declined by one-third in the past two years. Similar declines throughout the Muslim world are generating ill will among a population we want to reach. The right balance must be struck. The Advisory Group urges a closer look at visa policies in light of the important value of educational programs in promoting national security. We also urge that potential Arab and Muslim exchange students be better informed about actual policies, since many are deterred by false rumors that Americans simply don't want them in our country. In particular, we recommend the establishment of a fast-track procedure to accommodate individuals participating in educational and other exchange programs.

CENTERS, CORNERS, AND ROOMS

Until the past decade, easily accessible facilities housed our public diplomacy activities in major foreign cities. Various known as cultural cen-

ters, information centers, libraries, or even “houses,” they were open to the public and served as the venue for a wide range of activities, including reference services, book circulation and presentation, publications distribution, English teaching, book and art exhibits, lectures, film and television screenings, cultural performances, exchange-alumni activities, and, most recently, satellite television reception and Internet access.

The Advisory Group has heard abundant testimonials from foreign opinion-makers on the positive impact of these institutions on their education and outlook in formative years. One spoke with passion about how the quotations from the Founding Fathers and presidents that graced the walls of a cultural center continue to serve as his inspiration. A State Department official told us, “I have never served in a country where people haven’t said you blew it when you closed the cultural centers and libraries. They tell me, ‘No wonder my kids don’t know the truth about the United States.’”

Cost-cutting after the end of the Cold War forced the closure of many of these facilities. Others were transformed into “Information Resource Centers” open only by appointment. Security concerns, meanwhile, created irresistible pressure to move the remaining facilities into the fortress-like perimeters of our diplomatic and consular establishments, thus rendering them almost inaccessible to the general public. One Pakistani told us that getting to the American center was “like going to jail or getting into Fort Knox.”

The Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs recognized the need to reverse this trend toward self-isolation and, in the course of 2002, launched an expansion of the “American Corner” concept, which was successfully inaugurated in Russia during the 1990s. Currently, about 150 American Corners are in operation or planned. They can be launched with only a small outlay — typically between \$25,000 and \$40,000.

American Corners are usually located at universities, libraries, or other host-country facilities, often at the request of those institutions. In Turkey, for example, American Corners have been started in three cities — Bursa, Kayseri, and Gaziantep — and housed in chambers of commerce. Malaysia has two American Corners with a third pending. Indonesia has five, funded at \$250,000, with four more pending approval. Among the other countries with large Muslim populations that have American Corners today or plan them shortly are: Bangladesh, Oman, United Arab

Emirates, Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan. If the requested fiscal 2005 funding of \$5 million is approved, 80 new American Corner programs will be established in the Middle East, South Asia, Africa, and East Asia.

American Corners provide a multifunctional programming platform to tell America's story, especially to the young, through books, periodicals, the Internet, music, film, and other means. The Corners also serve as meeting places for American events, offering virtually all of the program possibilities of the former centers, but on a smaller, more technologically advanced, and more cost-effective scale. The Advisory Group recommends that current materials be expanded far beyond what are now on offer and that resources be provided for more translations into local languages on a timely basis. American Corners can be homes to what we call the "American Knowledge Library," a proposal to offer essential readings in English and in translation.

The success of American Corners needs thorough measurement. The department needs to know, on a strictly analytical basis, not only who is using the Corners, but also whether the information provided is changing minds. Assuming that initial measurement efforts show success, the Advisory Group supports the most rapid possible expansion of the American Corners program throughout the Arab and Muslim world. A leitmotif of our discussions with foreign opinion leaders has been that "the United States is absent" in the cultural life of many Arab and Muslim countries. American Corners have an important role to play in filling that vacuum.

We also believe that the State Department should expand the American Corners concept to take advantage of U.S. Government-owned buildings in urban centers. A promising example is the Palazzo Corpi in Istanbul. Built in 1873, it became the U.S. embassy in Turkey in 1906 and then the consulate general after the government moved its capital to Ankara. The building, on a residential street, was not easily defended and was attacked six times by terrorists. The consulate general was moved this year to a new site on 222 acres, 10 miles from the city center. Our impression was that the new consulate general, which, including land acquisition, cost \$83 million, appeared to local residents to be a "crusader castle," high on a hill, aloof and inaccessible to the Turkish people.

A better balance can be struck between security concerns and the

Photo: Courtesy of Mukrime Postacioglu



The new \$83 million U.S. consulate outside Istanbul satisfies important security concerns but also seems a remote “crusader castle.”

need to advance public policy through greater contact with the local population. We recommend that the Palazzo Corpi serve as the site for a center, under Turkish or joint U.S.-Turkish ownership, for advancing U.S.-Muslim understanding. A revived Palazzo Corpi can be a prototype for other such institutions throughout the Arab and Muslim world. Istanbul, a city that could become another Geneva, a locus of open international dialogue, is an appropriate starting point.

The Under Secretary also prompted the development of the “American Room,” an interactive electronic exhibit directed at young people between the ages of 16 and 25. The Room is an exhibit meant to give viewers a taste of the American experience by laying out six values (liberty, pluralism, openness, community, opportunity, and self-expression), showing how these are embodied in the activities of three Americans, and offering access to other materials on these themes. The Smithsonian’s Exhibit Services Division is developing a prototype. If it is successful, the concept will be offered to our overseas posts in several formats for mounting at host-country public institutions. Seed money for American Rooms amounts to \$500,000, and we recommend that the State Department develop a complete business plan for rollout and testing.

PUBLICATIONS

There is strong evidence that high-quality publications in many fields are in demand in Arab and Muslim countries, especially by elites, teachers, and students. This demand presents an important opportunity to transmit

American knowledge and scientific achievement in a manner that can have several benefits.

First, such publications help present an accurate picture of American life and institutions. In Syria for example, we found that many of the elites learned about the United States (in distorted fashion) through books published by the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Second, publishing cutting-edge books in various fields ranging from psychology to astronomy projects American advancement in areas that much of the Muslim world greatly admires. A Zogby International poll, for example, found that in Egypt, Kuwait, Pakistan, Indonesia, Iran, and several other Muslim countries, at least four-fifths of respondents had a favorable attitude toward American science and technology. Third, to the extent that one American objective is to upgrade the educational systems in the region to provide the skills that will allow citizens to compete in the global marketplace, publications can be an important component of the educational strategy.

Like all programs of public diplomacy, an effective publication strategy must take the people of the region seriously and understand their needs. In popular publications, such as magazines, the ultimate success or failure of any project will depend on content. For example, *Hi*, a glossy lifestyle magazine, in Arabic, is aimed at younger readers and sold throughout the region. It was launched by the State Department in July. Circulation and testing for changed attitudes will determine *Hi's* success, but it is already clear that its ability to attract readers will depend not only on its relative cost, but also on its ability to address the burning issues of the day in the arenas it seeks to cover.

The most important potential contribution to strategic success in public diplomacy will come through books. Certainly, distributing high-quality English books to universities and other centers of learning is helpful, but a greater opportunity exists in the translation of books from English to local languages. We, therefore, propose a significant new initiative: "The American Knowledge Library."

THE AMERICAN KNOWLEDGE LIBRARY INITIATIVE: We propose a massive translation program of thousands of the best books in numerous fields into Arabic and other languages of the region. Recommendations would come from boards of academic and other experts in fields ranging from American history and government to general sociology, economics,

business, and the hard sciences. These books would be distributed to libraries and other centers of learning as well as marketed through local partners. They would also be housed in American Corners and American Studies centers and made available to all universities and high schools.

Book translation programs exist at a few of our posts, such as those in Jordan and Egypt. These have been small in scope, focused more on popular volumes related to the United States and are limited in distribution. Still, they appear to have been largely successful. Importantly, the costs of translation of each book (less than \$5,000 on the average) are strikingly reasonable when one considers the benefits of the translation. There are, of course, royalty, production, and distribution costs as well. These could be mitigated by joint ventures with the private sector. Translating 1,000 books a year would help create an important American Knowledge Library and could have an enduring impact on the quality of local education as well as on Arab and Muslim perceptions of the United States.

TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS

In an era when budgets are stretched, time is short, and travel is increasingly difficult and expensive, the rich bounty of 21st century information and communications technologies (ICT) has become the lifeblood of global communications outreach and impact. Technology is essential to a public diplomacy with consistent strategic direction.

INTERNET PIPELINES: We heard from some public diplomacy specialists who consider Arab and Muslim countries poor candidates for Internet and other ICT services. Conventional indicators, such as telephone density, number of computers, and basic literacy rates, place developing countries at low levels of access — and many Arab and Muslim countries even lower. Politics and culture, not just economics, may continue to thwart Internet access in many Muslim countries, especially among women.

But other factors should be considered in assessing the abilities of people to tap into the bonanza of the digital world. For example, the International Telecommunications Union ranks the Middle East as one of the world's fastest-growing digital mobile phone regions. SMS (short messaging service), only now catching on in America, is already widely used in many Arab countries.

With the advent of third-generation cell phone technology and increasingly wide deployment of digital services, large segments of the population in developing countries are well-positioned to tap into sophisticated mobile Internet services within the next two to five years. Several Arab and Muslim countries (notably Malaysia, Dubai, and Egypt) are among global leaders in the early use of ICT E-government as well as E-commerce applications. Egypt is also promoting rural access and will have all 500 of its initial ICT community centers up and running by next year. Moreover, by locating the centers in small stores and coffee shops instead of in sterile government buildings, Egypt ensured low costs and accessibility were built in from the start.

Today, even the world's poorest countries have invested heavily in telecommunications infrastructure. It is not necessary to own a computer or even a phone to surf the Web at an Internet cafe or a friend's workplace or to respond to shared-address e-mail accounts. Moreover, in countries like Saudi Arabia, where Internet Service Providers (ISPs) are still highly restricted, it is commonplace to maintain an offshore e-mail account in places like Bahrain, where long-distance phone calls are cheap and Internet filters are few. Even in Syria, where there are only two ISPs, both closely watched and limited, citizens find ways around the restrictions, sometimes through accounts in Lebanon.

The United States has a strategic stake in ensuring that the citizens of Arab and Muslim countries have access to the wealth of democratic ideas and values — as well as to the empowering enterprise resources — that the Internet can now help deploy. The demographics of the Internet are changing. A decade ago relatively few women used computers beyond the workplace, even in the West. Today, throughout the world, young people of both sexes are increasingly computer-literate and Internet-hungry. Public diplomacy must recognize that more than half the population of the Arab and Muslim world is under the age of 17. Opinion polling in Arab and Muslim countries suggests that those with Internet access are more favorably inclined toward American values and culture — and fall within the younger age cohorts.

Even if demographic and cultural “digital divides” never go away, digital opportunities will expand. Whether it is the young man who is paid by his village to make a two-hour ox-cart and bus journey to Lahore

once a week to sit in a cyber café downloading information to take back to his village, or the heavily veiled young mother who gets her cousin to relay helpful hints from a children’s health website, or an al-Jazeera staffer who combs the Web for tidbits for an upcoming interview, the Internet is increasingly a resource as well as an influence throughout the world.

- » The Advisory Group supports current U.S. Government-funded programs that promote the regulatory policies needed to develop sustainable ICT and Internet access in Arab and Muslim countries. We strongly urge that new priority be given to education and training for targeted constituencies on issues of content, application, and secondary access.
- » We also believe that the U.S. Government should engage in strenuous efforts to promote dissemination of computer hardware and software to make the Internet an option for as many people in the Arab and Muslim world as possible. In particular, public diplomacy should seek to empower those who live outside the cities and are less influenced by leaders hostile to the United States. Hardware and software dissemination can be done by selective efforts using NGOs.
- » In addition, we recommend that substantially more public diplomacy resources be set aside for translation of Internet-linked information and news on U.S. Government websites in Arabic, Urdu, Farsi, Bahasa Indonesia, and other strategically important languages. Working, for example, with the Centers for Disease Control and many other major American data bank resources, officials should give attention to creating user-friendly “share and care” type websites designed and customized to benefit poorly enfranchised Muslim constituencies, including women and young people.
- » The Advisory Group also encourages initiatives that more effectively incorporate target audiences as well as local country partners in developing customized and innovative uses of asymmetrical as well as interactive services. More foreign service nationals should be enlisted in this process. Awards and other incentive programs, including youth exchanges, should be encouraged to promote best practices, practical innovations, and local country “buy-in.”
- » Finally, the process and content of U.S. efforts in advanced communications technology — as in traditional media — should be aimed at encour-

aging Arab and Muslim governments to lower barriers to access through reduced costs and less official censorship.

BALANCING OLD TECHNOLOGIES AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES:

When USIA was inaugurated at the beginning of the Cold War, a top priority was establishing global shortwave radio services in strategically targeted languages. USIA was brilliantly successful in piercing the Iron Curtain with news, concepts of democracy, and insights into American culture that were beyond the reach of much of the world. VOA, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, and other government-sponsored radio programs were often the major source of reliable news coverage and spread ideals of democracy far beyond the communist-dominated world. Today, the public diplomacy challenge is less about being the source of reliable news and information and more about engaging listeners awash in misinformation, culture-clashing, and growing anti-Americanism.

Currently, nearly half of the formal U.S. public diplomacy budget continues to be appropriated for radio and television infrastructure and programming under the Broadcasting Board of Governors. The BBG is independent of other arms of public diplomacy, and its programming and operations are concentrated on expanding the reach of traditional off-air and satellite broadcasting.

The BBG is starting to do some Web link enhancements of its radio and television programs, but its ambitious and expensive plans to build its own satellite TV network in the Middle East means that it is unlikely to feel an impetus to expand content synergies and delivery systems beyond traditional 20th century broadcast formats and technologies.

Meanwhile, the other two principal arms of public diplomacy, the State Department and AID, are paying increasing attention to technology-enhanced programs. While far behind the private sector in harnessing the economies and growing efficiencies of video streaming and IP telephony, the State Department is working on several “virtual” initiatives. The recently launched “American Corners” (see above) and Information Resource Centers, designed to serve as virtual libraries, are excellent examples of how the U.S. Government can use the vast and increasingly user-friendly resources of information technology to establish (or reestablish) a cost-effective American presence amid resource constraints and security concerns.

Digital videoconferencing (DVC) is also finally coming into its own in augmenting the vast array of public diplomacy meetings, speeches, conferences, and exchanges that the State Department coordinates around the world. Posts such as Tel Aviv have turned to DVC for all their speaker programs because of travel and security concerns. With good videophone conferencing equipment costing less than \$300 and line charges often around \$60 an hour, the economics are compelling. The Advisory Group saved tens of thousands of dollars and many days by interviewing embassy officials and Pakistani and Indonesian leaders through two DVCs with Islamabad and Jakarta, rather than traveling halfway around the world.

More than a year after 9/11, the Administration launched the White House Office of Global Communications, primarily to address media concerns in the Arab and Muslim world. The OGC uses the Internet to ensure that all U.S. embassies abroad are armed with up-to-the-minute and coordinated daily policy messages directly from the White House. We were told in Egypt that the embassy has discovered Short Messaging Service as a cost-effective and real-time way to alert journalists to important breaking news and thematic messages over cell phones.

CHANGING CULTURES, NOT JUST PRIORITIES: U.S. Government investment in information technology networks, software, and services is only as good as the senior-level commitment that makes ICT a priority and the staff-level buy-in and man-hours required to make it useful.

Despite the strategic role that ICT plays in managing and measuring, as well as delivering, information, the State Department continues to be among the least-advanced government agencies in its effective use. Both the department's Information Technology Planning Project report and the September 2003 GAO report highlight chronic and long-standing deficiencies in effectively incorporating ICT in support of public diplomacy activities.

The litany of ICT problems includes inadequate or poorly planned resource allocation, government network security restrictions, lack of interagency cooperation, bureaucratic conflicts in migrating the unclassified network from PDNet to OpenNet Plus, inability to buy inexpensive off-the-shelf software, absence of meaningful performance measurements, lack of ICT incorporation in broader strategic planning, and limited embassy-level involvement in design and customization.

During the past year, the State Department has made a concerted

effort to address some of these concerns through a three-phase Information Technology Planning Project. But its initial report correctly emphasizes that “discussion of technology cannot be divorced from organizational and cultural change necessary to reap maximum benefits from technology investment.”

While more resources will help, there is no substitute for more senior-level attention to ensure that the corporate culture changes as well. Congress exacerbates the problems by over-specifying and earmarking more than 90 percent of the expenditures in the State Department and AID. Long-favored programs from the Cold War and short-term reactions to post-9/11 leave little room for the longer-term investments in the people as well as the technologies required to maintain effective management, measurement, and follow-up.

For example, while NGO programs like IREX (International Research Exchange Board, which manages professional and academic exchanges) long ago designed and routinely maintain sophisticated electronic data banks and Internet websites to bring more value to exchange programs, the State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs says it continues primarily to be a paper operation with few organized records and follow-up procedures to keep in touch with the hundreds of thousands of government-funded educational-exchange alumni.

The effective use of information technologies and services must become a priority far beyond educational fellowships and exchanges. ICT must become integrated into the State Department’s culture and not simply be a concern of a few network managers and isolated techies.

In this regard, the Advisory Group recommends, first and foremost, that senior officials in all the agencies involved in public diplomacy establish clear-cut incentives, not just bureaucratic requirements, to use the vast and growing array of information technology networks, platforms, and applications more effectively.

In addition, all public diplomacy initiatives — new and old — must be reviewed to discover how information technologies and services can be used for cost savings, expansion or replication, customization for target audiences, impact measurement, data management, and follow up. With private-sector help (including in the host countries), both embassies and Washington should establish “partnering groups” to assess best practices and

support new pilot projects and to find ways to encourage the development of human resources in the field of technology to serve public diplomacy.

Finally, we must address the 1948 Smith-Mundt Act. This legislation provides, in part, that any “information about the United States, its people, and its policies” prepared by the United States government for dissemination abroad “shall not be disseminated within the United States, its territories, or possessions.” [29 USC § 1461(a)]. These restrictions on domestic use of public diplomacy materials are to some extent obsolete in the modern era of Internet access and global media communications. We believe that Congress may wish to review the Smith-Mundt Act with these considerations in mind.

EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

Since 1940, when Nelson Rockefeller invited a group of Latin American journalists to come to the United States, exchange programs have been an integral part of U.S. public diplomacy, bringing about 700,000 promising foreigners to America, among them the young Anwar Sadat and Margaret Thatcher. The Fulbright-Hays Act of 1961 institutionalized exchanges, but funding since the end of the Cold War has been declining. Between 1995 and 2001 alone, academic and cultural exchanges dropped from 45,000 to 29,000 a year.⁹

Secretary of State Colin Powell recently noted that 39 current heads of government, including President Karzai of Afghanistan, are former participants in the International Visitors Program (IVP). In all, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), the division of the State Department that oversees these exchanges, estimates that more than 200 current and former heads of state and about 1,500 Cabinet-level ministers have been involved in the program.

In fiscal year 2003, an estimated \$245 million will be spent on exchanges, which include, among others, the Fulbright Program, which directs a wide range of teaching, study, and research exchanges; the Humphrey Program, which brings mid-level public service professionals, mainly from developing countries, to the U.S. for a year of study and professional experience; the IVP, which enables U.S. ambassadors to invite current and emerging foreign leaders (4,500 of them last year) to obtain first-hand knowledge of American culture, politics, and people; and the

9. U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, “Building America’s Public Diplomacy Through a Reformed Structure and Additional Resources,” U.S. Department of State, 2002, p. 10.

Citizen Exchange Program, which awards grants to U.S. nonprofits for exchanges with foreign counterparts. The ECA is seeking another \$100 million for FY 2004.

The separate International Military Education and Training (IMET) program serves more than 1,000 military officers from the Arab and Muslim world and seeks a total budget of \$90 million for 1,446 officers from the Near East and South Asia in fiscal 2004. IMET initiatives offer more than 2,000 courses at some 150 military schools and installations. IMET is a powerful national resource that helps shape future leaders around the world and develops lasting relationships between U.S. and foreign officers.

Since 9/11, there has been a serious effort to increase the number of civilian exchanges from the Arab and Muslim world. In fiscal 2003, about one-fourth of the total exchange budget was directed to countries in the region. In addition, the Partnership for Learning, a \$6 million program, was launched to bring Arab and Muslim university students to the United States to complete their education.

Considering the gravity of today's threat and the cultural preference for face-to-face exchanges in the Arab and Muslim world, the Advisory Group considers this shift in resources only a modest beginning. Wherever we went — from Egypt to Senegal to Turkey — we heard that exchange programs are the single most effective means to improve attitudes toward the United States. But today, large sums are devoted to parts of the world where the threats and needs are nowhere near as pressing as they are in Arab and Muslim nations.

The programs should also take into account the youthful demographics of the Middle East. High school students must be added to the priority group, and more short-term exchanges — two to three weeks, rather than a semester to a year — should be launched as a way to get immediate benefits in a time of crisis.

The two-country selection model that has long been associated with the Fulbright program is a good one. By sharing both the selection process and the certification process, both the United States and the home country of the person coming to America become invested in the outcome, and neither feels itself the "recipient." In addition, the sending country has a greater incentive to ensure that only the most appropriate students are sent forward.

Since 9/11, many of the best Muslim students in the Middle East and South Asia have grown fearful of coming to the United States. Sensational press accounts of mistreated Muslims and confusing changes in visa policy have both contributed to depressing the demand for exchanges to the United States. We recommend that ECA work to expand the network of U.S. volunteer sponsors and pair exchange alumni with prospective visitors to allay fears. The State Department urgently needs an alumni database for this effort. Also, U.S. officials must make current visa expectations clear, so students can make plans. Security needs must be balanced against the importance of changing attitudes toward the U.S. through exchanges.

Educational programs such as Fulbright involve both the United States and foreign countries in a two-nation selection process. Similarly, the State Department should find new ways to send young Americans abroad, with U.S. Government financing, if necessary. These youthful Americans studying in the Middle East can quickly change inaccurate perceptions about U.S. society.

More journalists should be brought to the United States on exchanges. A formalized training program to teach professional journalism to Arab and Muslim journalists should be supplemented with a program that would send international journalists around the country to work with media in smaller cities to gain an appreciation of the diversity and richness of the American landscape.

While anecdotal information on the value of exchanges is persuasive and while 94 percent of exchange participants believe the program is “highly successful” or “valuable,” more sophisticated research is needed. In its September report on public diplomacy, the GAO cited exchanges as an example of a program that lacks information that can “demonstrate progress toward the more fundamental objective of achieving changes in understanding and attitudes about the United States.”

ECA needs more resources to develop its database and perform useful measurements. We believe that exchanges are a highly effective tool of public diplomacy, and our strong inclination is to recommend a substantial increase in current programs, at least to the level requested for fiscal 2005. But research that confirms the value of the programs — and that helps target them — must come first.

Finally, both the ECA exchange and IMET programs need to devote far more resources to the Arab and Muslim world. We recommend that fully half of all exchange dollars be directed to students, teachers, future leaders, and military officers from Arab and Muslim nations. IMET, especially, needs a strategic reappraisal. The 2004 request for IMET in Thailand, for example, comes to \$2.5 million; for Indonesia, the country with the world's largest Muslim population, the request is just \$600,000. Afghanistan, with its tenuous hold on stability and its significant position in the war on terrorism, is also slated to receive only \$600,000. Such imbalances are a recipe for failure. They should be corrected immediately.

CENTER FOR U.S.-ARAB/MUSLIM STUDIES AND DIALOGUE

The United States should establish a center, along the lines of the Dante B. Fascell North-South Center at the University of Miami, which studies Western Hemisphere issues, and the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii, which promotes better relations between the U.S. and the countries of the Asia Pacific region. These centers are funded by the U.S. Government. No such center for the Arab and Muslim countries exists.

The Center for U.S.-Arab/Muslim Studies and Dialogue, essentially a public-policy think tank, would study ways of strengthening understanding and relations between the United States and Arab and Muslim countries. Research would encompass many subjects, including trade, economic policy, immigration, democratic governance, corruption, security, the environment, and information technology.

In addition to maintaining a research staff, the Center would direct an extensive program of international fellowships for decision-makers from Arab and Muslim countries, with each fellow spending about two weeks in the United States and interacting with American fellows. Fellowships would be built around specific conferences. One might comprise leading chief justices and senior judges from Arab and Muslim countries exchanging ideas with leading judges from the United States and other Western countries. The objective would be to inspire an impartial judiciary in Arab and Muslim nations.

Another conference, which would bring journalists together, might be tailored to subjects that promote accurate reporting, freedom of speech, tolerance, building a civil society, and the role of journalists as the con-

science-keepers of nations. Other conferences would be geared to legislators or police officers. The center should be located at a university in a major cosmopolitan urban area like New York.

Currently, our ability to reach populations in the Muslim countries and promote understanding and universal values is limited by the lack of cooperation in many of those countries. The new center would promote the best in public diplomacy by facilitating direct engagement between individuals rather than between states.

Facilities like this, beyond Washington, are great incubators for promoting intercultural and interfaith dialogues and finding common ground. Many private exchange organizations might take part as well; longstanding international relationships exist with many exchange groups, and a meeting facility could become the magnet that brings the public and private sectors together. For instance, professional exchanges, now run by associations like the American Bar Association, could also use the new permanent center.

ENGLISH TEACHING

Successful public diplomacy strategies have always focused on language teaching (good examples are the British Council and the American Language Centers at their peak). Language is a broad, natural, and mutually beneficial front on which to engage important foreign audiences.

Employing native and non-native teachers, texts, and classroom interaction on a daily basis, education-based diplomacy enjoys great credibility, respect, and access to broad audiences. Little else is as effective at conveying information and shaping attitudes. In the case of English, the potential scope of this influence is enormous, comprising just about every school-age person in the world today and millions of teachers.

U.S. public diplomacy has always included English teaching in one form or another, from Bi-national Centers, Direct English Teaching Programs, *English Teaching Forum* magazine, and other English teaching materials to English Language Officers, English language specialist and fellows exchange programs, Fulbright, International Visitors, and VOA Special English. Our libraries, once open to the public and rich in general books and popular periodicals, were also a significant aspect of our language-based public diplomacy.

Minuscule in terms of overall public diplomacy resources, the enthusiastic and creative use of post and ECA programs by English Language Officers over the years has helped shape a perception abroad that America actively supports English language teachers and learners. In the long run, however, our very success weakened government support for English teaching in public diplomacy. Since English has clearly become the global language of commerce, the assumption was that English could make its own way in the world. Indeed it can, but by disassociating ourselves from its teaching we lose an enormous opportunity to influence and inform.

Linguists have turned up no evidence that early exposure to a foreign language negatively affects first language proficiency or cultural integrity. Most Ministries of Education recognize this and are aggressively working toward earlier introduction of English into their curricula. But there is and will continue to be opposition from conservative (and usually undemocratic) groups quick to politicize this issue in the name of defending local linguistic, cultural, and religious values.

There are great opportunities here. Increases in the following are strongly recommended by the Advisory Group:

- » The number of English Language Officers and the size of their budgets. There are currently only 15 such officers in the field. We met with two of them, in Cairo and Ankara, and they are skillful and energetic, but they have negligible resources. Budgets are capped at \$5,000 per officer per region. This means that English-teaching programs are at the mercy of public diplomacy funds at each post. ELOs cooperate fully with public and cultural affairs officers and are rated by them, but their overall effectiveness can be limited by the way posts view the importance of support for English language teaching. Larger program funds for English Language Officers, managed by ECA, as well as more backup staff, would give the effort more clout and flexibility.
- » The English Language Specialist program, which sends approximately 90 U.S. professors abroad for two- to six-week visits each year.
- » The English Language Fellows program, which places approximately 100 American teachers in local host institutions each year on 10-month grants to teach, train teachers, and develop curricula.
- » Distribution of the *English Teaching Forum* magazine (currently 65,000 copies of each issue).

In addition, new English Language Officers should be given the full public diplomacy training course. This was done under USIA, but since integration the officers are allowed only an abbreviated course on the grounds that they are specialists.

SPEAKER PROGRAMS

For decades under the aegis of the USIA, American speakers from academia, politics, media, and business traveled abroad to engage foreign audiences. The U.S. Speaker and Specialist Program, one of the most direct manifestations of smart public diplomacy, is now run through the Bureau of International Information Programs. In fiscal 2002, it sent approximately 1,000 speakers around the world and conducted 500 programs a year that beamed speeches to foreign sites through digital video conferencing (DVC).

Although 1,500 speeches, in person or through DVC, sound like a lot, we believe the number is severely inadequate to the task. We recommend a substantial increase in the program, but only if three changes are made.

The first requires some background. Currently, nearly all speakers are sent at the request of embassies, often to meet immediate, ad-hoc needs, such as filling places at conferences or addressing a misunderstanding about U.S. public policy or the economy. Embassies ask IIP either for a specifically named speaker or for one who meets the embassy's qualifications. IIP typically fills the request.

While supplying speakers in this fashion can be useful, the process lacks a strategic focus. The question the State Department needs to ask is, "How can this speaker help improve attitudes toward the United States?" The Bureau has begun to move in this direction by imaginatively starting a limited "offered speaker" program this year, by which it markets speakers on specific topics to embassies. This approach appears to strike a better balance between strategic direction and local knowledge. But IIP itself needs more strategic direction both from within the State Department and from the new White House Special Counsel's office that we propose in this report.

The second change is that the Bureau must adopt serious methods to measure the effectiveness of individual speakers and the program as a whole. Currently, embassies send reports back to Washington with judgments on the effectiveness of speakers, plus press clippings, if any. Even

these report cards are flawed because of the ability of speakers to request embassy responses to their performance through the Freedom of Information Act discourages candid negative comment. At any rate, the best way to measure the effectiveness of a speaker is by surveying the audience, both at the event and later. Resources must be provided for analytic measurement.

The third change is that the IIP speaker programs must be coordinated with complementary activities, such as the International Visitor Program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

IIP's current budget for speaker programs is about \$9 million, including travel expenses and modest honoraria for the speakers plus the cost of staffing and administration in Washington. IIP has asked for an additional \$1.9 million for fiscal 2005 to engage critical foreign publics "on issues such as terrorism, national security, economics and U.S. society." With strategic focus, measurement, and coordination, the bang for the buck could be enormous. This funding should certainly be approved, and if measurement confirms its value, the speaker program should be multiplied several fold. The program is especially agile, and it should be directed where it is needed most — right now, the Arab and Muslim world.

THE PRIVATE SECTOR, INCLUDING NGOS

We strongly encourage American public diplomacy to support local NGOs in Arab and Muslim society as such institutions develop independent of extremist groups and ideas. Such NGOs extend our reach into the core of the societies and help us to find allies who share our passion for wider participation in society and the economy with special concern for the inclusion of youth and women.

In our travels, we saw the value of such NGOs in the micro-lending process, in education (where, in Turkey, several organizations campaigned for critical, rather than rote-memorization approaches to learning), in the youth organizations of French Muslims in Paris, and in the new organizations of young entrepreneurs in Syria who seek relationships with American counterparts.

These local initiatives are the first hope for the development of a new class that could change the political and social balance in these countries. They are important to us not only because they are small groups incubat-

ing positive attitudes toward the United States and are strongholds of opposition to extremism, but because they are the first building blocks for a new middle class that could be the basis of a democratic cadre and an indigenous force for nonviolent change.

In Morocco, we also encountered examples of indigenous philanthropic foundations, similar to those in the United States, helping the poor and providing educational opportunities for ambitious young teenagers who are not satisfied with what conventional education offers and want to learn English to fluency and open their paths to American college or university education.

These foundations represent a new self-image for certain well-to-do families that are using their wealth for the benefit of wider society. One of the key elements of the American encounter for Arabs and Muslims is to see that the U.S. businessman lives as a citizen, not only as a stereotypical capitalist.

We strongly recommend that public diplomacy engage the full range of American civil society — from the private sector to the NGO structures and to the philanthropic foundations. The Arab and Muslim world must come to understand that the essence of America is not only in its government and military but in its citizenry and its civil institutions and business community. We need not merely to bring the historical problem in the region the full range of our talents, but also to address the problem in a way that teaches through experience the essence of America.

INTERCULTURAL AND INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

Intercultural dialogue has always been an important part of public diplomacy. In this era of concern about conflict between U.S. and Muslim culture, intercultural and interfaith dialogues are even more vital.

In Senegal, Morocco, and Turkey we encountered an encouraging phenomenon. We met imams and other religious and devout Muslims who were eager to show us an Islam of tolerance and openness and pluralism and who wanted very much to present a non-Wahabi Sunni Islam as the normative Islam and its real historical representation. We found similar tolerance at a luncheon in Damascus attended by local religious leaders of all faiths, including Christians, Muslims, and Jews.

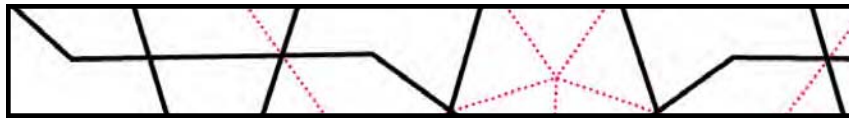
These encounters convinced us that the time has come for a broad

attempt to create interfaith dialogue with Muslims both to publicize their perspective on Christians and Jews in America and to help alleviate some of the hostility that Americans have developed toward Islam for its perceived extremism and ethnocentrism.

Religion-based dialogue cannot be a function of government itself, but practitioners of public diplomacy can encourage such engagement through American NGOs and educational institutions. Such dialogue holds tremendous promise in improving attitudes of Arabs and Muslims toward Americans, and vice versa.

IV

A New Operating Process and Architecture for a Transformed Public Diplomacy



OPERATIONS

The operations of public diplomacy must be strategic and systematic and — above all — an integral part of the national security policy of the United States.

We agree with the conclusions of the GAO in this regard: “[The] State [Department] lacks a comprehensive and commonly understood public diplomacy strategy to guide implementation of . . . programs Furthermore, there is no interagency public diplomacy strategy to guide State’s and all federal agencies’ communication efforts. This limits the government’s ability to convey consistent messages to overseas audiences and thus achieve mutually reinforcing benefits.”¹

The lack of a strategic and systematic focus for communicating foreign policy stands in stark contrast to the focus for communicating domestic policy. When the White House decides, for example, to advocate a course of action to improve the economy, a sophisticated, long-range plan to achieve that goal is promulgated; a broad array of government agencies and private-sector supporters is mobilized; a media plan is set; polling and other forms of public-opinion measurement are deployed; potential pitfalls are assessed; and mid-course adjustments are made. Public diplomacy requires at least as much serious attention.

Strategic direction and accountability must begin with the White House. However, the State Department should remain, as it is now, the lead agency for public diplomacy. Changes in operational structure and

1.

GAO, “U.S. Public Diplomacy,” p. 13.

incentives are required at the State Department as well. The outline of the process follows:

- » U.S. interests and the policies to pursue them should be clearly identified. Public diplomacy must participate in the process of policy formulation (“in on the takeoffs as well as the crash landings”). Public diplomacy officials must have access to the formulation of foreign policy in order to advise on methods of presentation and likely responses in other countries. Warnings of adverse reactions should not alter policy but rather prepare policymakers.
- » The public diplomacy strategy to support the policies should include elements that are both long-term and short-term.
- » Based on extensive research, specific programs within the strategy should be set and responsibilities carried out among different government departments in partnership with the private sector, including nongovernmental organizations, wherever possible. Those programs should have clear, quantifiable goals and avoid unnecessary layers, and managers must be held accountable.
- » Progress toward achieving the goals should be tested and course corrections made.
- » At the end of this process, the goals are achieved — though, in many cases, the long-term objectives will never be fully met and those programs must continue.

This process is simple and straightforward—similar to an election campaign.² But public diplomacy faces three special management problems.

First, it involves not only the State Department and its field posts but numerous other agencies of the federal government, including the White House, the Defense Department, the Homeland Security Department, the Justice Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and others. Second, some of its goals, unlike those, say, of an election campaign, are long-term — in many cases, very long term. Third, short-term political objectives may interpose themselves. A new architecture will have to surmount these special problems.

THE WHITE HOUSE

The structure, or architecture, that can accommodate this process must begin at the White House.

2. The September 2003 GAO report, at p. 15, offers an excellent flow chart titled, “Elements of a Typical Public Relations Strategy,” developed after “a roundtable discussion with some of the largest public relations firms in the United States.” The Advisory Group held similar discussions.

The President, in every word, whether addressed to domestic or international audiences, is the most important voice influencing attitudes toward the United States abroad. Just as important, the President enforces discipline and makes certain that those who carry out both official and public diplomacy speak with one voice. There can be no success without the seriousness of purpose and interagency coordination provided at the direction of the President of the United States. Public diplomacy must have his stamp of approval, enthusiastic support, and long-term commitment. In fact, he must be considered the ultimate director of public diplomacy.

While the mandate of the Advisory Group relates to effective communications with Arab and Muslim societies, we recommend an architecture that can coordinate communications worldwide and adapt to global conditions by directing resources and attention to crisis areas. Public diplomacy must be targeted and tailored to local conditions, but it must be guided by a broad, worldwide strategy.

Currently, two institutions within the White House have responsibility for aspects of public diplomacy. The Office of Global Communications, established by executive order on January 21, 2003, is responsible for disseminating daily messaging themes on foreign policy throughout the government.³ A Strategic Communications Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC), comprising key officials throughout the government, was established in September 2002. It has been dormant for many months, following the resignation from the State Department of one of its co-chairs and the reassignment within the National Security Council of the other.

This current structure, which is strictly tactical, is inadequate to the demands of public diplomacy today. The Advisory Group recommends a new strategic architecture, headed by an eminently qualified person who has the President's ear. The new structure will accommodate extensive outreach to the creativity and expertise of business, nongovernmental organizations, and academia. And it will oversee a procedure for regular assessment of the effectiveness of the public diplomacy programs run by diverse government agencies.

Specifically, we propose the establishment of a Cabinet-level Special Counselor to the President for Public Diplomacy, who would head a relatively small office. The office would have limited line responsibilities. Its function, in consultation with the President and other govern-

3.

The office is headed by a Deputy Assistant to the President. Its mission is to "advise the President, heads of executive departments and agencies on the utilization of the most effective means for the United States Government to ensure consistency in messages that will promote the interests of the United States abroad." Administrative support comes from the Office of Administration within the Executive Office of the President, as directed by the Chief of Staff.

ment agencies, would be to establish strategic goals and messages, to oversee the implementation of programs that meet those goals, and to ensure effective measurement of those programs.

During the Cold War, the functions of this proposed Special Counselor were often performed by directors of USIA, such as Edward R. Murrow and Leonard Marks, who were both outstanding leaders and close confidants of the President.

The Special Counselor would participate in policy formation within the NSC and would also chair a newly constituted President's Public Diplomacy Experts' Board, comprising 16 distinguished citizens outside the government with relevant expertise, plus, as ex-officio members, the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs and the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. The citizen-members would be appointed by the Special Counselor, upon the recommendation of the Secretaries of State and Defense and the National Security Advisor. The citizen-members would be chosen strictly on the basis of their professional expertise, not for partisan or political reasons.

The board would continually assess the quality, quantity, and adequacy of public diplomacy programs and provide independent advice and analysis to the White House on long- and short-term issues concerning U.S. communications abroad.

This board would be broadly analogous to the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, established by President Eisenhower. PFIAB has the power to invade the entire intelligence community in its hearings and deliberations, sometimes carried out by task forces on special issues. The new board, like PFIAB, would have the authority to review the performance of all agencies of government engaged in public diplomacy. The board, led by the Special Counselor, would meet at least twice a year with the President.

In addition, we urgently recommend that the interagency PCC be reactivated and co-chaired by the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs and by a high-level representative of the NSC.

This reinvigorated NSC/PCC could help ensure effective operational coordination and increased synergies throughout all departments and agencies, with emphasis on bringing the efforts of the State Department, the Defense Department, the CIA, AID and others into concert.

The current Office of Global Communications would remain in the White House, working directly with the new Arab and Muslim Countries Public Communications Unit (see below), in coordination with the Special Counselor.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT

The integration of the USIA into the State Department was meant to bring public diplomacy closer than ever to policymaking, but it has been incomplete on two levels. First, the institutional culture of much of the department has persisted in viewing public diplomacy as a secondary function and career path. Second, the clarity of coordination and communication that characterized the relationship between USIA's strategic center in Washington and its operational posts in the field has yet to be duplicated within the new structures.

REINFORCING THE CRITICAL NATURE OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY: Despite the best efforts of the most senior managers to combine the traditional focus of the department on policy representation, analysis, and reporting with USIA's focus on public outreach and programs, the two cultures have yet to coalesce. This must occur – if public diplomacy is to play an effective role in promoting the national security of the United States. In the new post-9/11 world, every State Department employee, and, indeed, every American abroad, shares in shaping America's image. Department employees of every career path and at every level must contribute to helping foreign audiences understand U.S. policy and values. "Our public diplomacy and public affairs colleagues are pros," wrote Secretary of State Powell in May, "but they cannot do their jobs alone. Every man and woman in the State Department is America's face to the world." This reality must be accepted and built upon through these recommendations:

» As was done some years ago with regard to trade promotion, the President's letter of instruction to Chiefs of Mission should be revised to emphasize the critical importance of public diplomacy to national security and to highlight the expectation that Chiefs of Mission will personally participate in public diplomacy activities and ensure that the members of their staffs do likewise. The Secretary of State should reinforce this step by reiterating the same message in a formal communication to domestic employees through the Assistant Secretaries.

- » The work requirements for every employee serving abroad should include appropriate participation in public diplomacy activities, and each employee should be accountable for this participation in the performance evaluation process.
- » All employees who serve abroad should attend an introductory training course in the basics of public diplomacy. Employees who aspire to rise to high policy positions should be required to serve at least one tour in a public diplomacy position.

CLARIFYING COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION: Within USIA, clear two-way channels of communication and coordination linked senior agency management with field practitioners through the geographic area officers. These channels provided the means for developing and communicating strategic guidance, developing country-specific programs, allocating human and financial resources at home and abroad, following trends in foreign public opinion, reporting program results, and holding practitioners accountable for their performance.

With the integration of USIA into the State Department, these channels lost their clarity. The previous direct link between senior USIA management and public affairs officers through the Area Offices became indirect, with the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs and the geographic Assistant Secretaries often providing separate guidance, and the Chiefs of Mission or their deputies undertaking the performance evaluation of public affairs officers.

If public diplomacy is to have a coherent strategy throughout the Arab and Muslim world, the role of the Under Secretary must be strengthened in recognition of the incumbent's ultimate accountability for the effectiveness of the department's public diplomacy programs. We have already proposed the enhancement of the Under Secretary's role in coordinating public diplomacy government-wide (see the section above on The White House), but, within the department, the position needs enhancement as well.

The Under Secretary must set strategic guidance, review country program plans, allocate human and financial resources, monitor public opinion and program results, and play a role in performance evaluation – all in collaboration with missions abroad and in consultation with the geographic and functional bureaus.

Many proposals to deal with this structural issue have been put for-

ward, including some that, in essence, would recreate USIA within the department. The Advisory Group is convinced that enhancing the authority and role of the Under Secretary is essential.

We recommend that the department establish an Office of Policy, Plans, and Resources within the Office of the Under Secretary. Its function would be to coordinate the development of strategy and strategic guidance, oversee the process of producing country-specific implementation plans, and monitor the execution of these plans and assist in the allocation and management of both financial and human resources. This Office would work closely with missions abroad, with geographic and functional bureaus, and with the new White House Office of the Special Counselor, which would set government-wide strategy. The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee for Commerce, Justice, and State has supported the establishment of such an office.

We recommend, in addition, the establishment of an Arab and Muslim Countries Public Communications Unit under the direction of the Under Secretary. It would coordinate, on a daily basis, the U.S. Government's media (print, television, radio, Internet) outreach to Arab and Muslim nations and provide "rapid response," both in disseminating timely messages and in reacting to inaccuracies and distortions in the foreign media.

This unit, which would work closely with the Office of Global Communications in the White House, would be composed of approximately five public diplomacy officers with regional knowledge and language competence, covering the Arab, African, South Asian, Central Asian, and Southeast Asian Muslim countries. These officers would draw on the resources of the geographic bureaus and the new Media Outreach Center in the U.S. Embassy in London, which monitors and interacts with the pan-Arab press and media.

Our proposed Arab and Muslim Countries Public Communications Unit is modeled in part on the highly effective Islamic Media Unit that was established by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom after the attacks of 9/11 and that we watched in operation during our trip to London.

Specifically, the new State Department unit, working with embassies abroad, would determine the content of broadcasts and press reports from the region, with a view toward achieving accurate and forceful presentations

of U.S. policies, decisions, and initiatives, as well as quick reaction to views, opinions, and perceptions appearing in the press and media in the Arab and Muslim countries.

The unit would produce substantive content (that is, talking points, op-ed pieces, scripts) to meet these requirements and suggest and schedule media appearances by U.S. Government officials in the United States and abroad. The long-term goal is to provide content and context that will improve attitudes toward the United States in the Arab and Muslim world. We are not precluding other such units for other regions.

In summary, the Secretary of State should do the following:

- » Formally empower the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs to draw up a public diplomacy strategy for the Arab and Muslim world in collaboration with missions abroad and in consultation with the geographic and functional Assistant Secretaries;
- » formally empower the Under Secretary to require missions abroad to formulate country-specific public diplomacy program and resource plans for the Under Secretary's approval in consultation with the geographic Assistant Secretaries;
- » formally empower the Under Secretary to review financial resources and shift them in accordance with the current priorities and needs in consultation with the geographic Assistant Secretaries and the Assistant Secretary for Resource Management; and
- » formally give the Under Secretary the authority to concur in the assignment of public affairs officers abroad and Public Diplomacy Office Directors at home and to contribute to the evaluation of their performance.

And the Under Secretary should do the following:

- » Establish an integrated "Office of Policy, Plans, and Resources," as described above;
- » establish a "Public Communications Unit for the Arab and Muslim World," as described above; and
- » establish an appropriate mechanism for eliciting and analyzing program results and promoting best practices.

MEASUREMENT

A new culture of measurement must be established within the State

Department, government-sponsored international broadcasting, and all agencies concerned with public diplomacy.

No new program should begin and no current program should continue unless careful study shows that it has a reasonable chance of success and that its likely benefits outweigh its costs.

“Success” in a general sense means improving attitudes toward the United States. More specifically, it means encouraging support for discrete policies. The proper unit of measurement is not the number of publications distributed by embassies, the number of households reached by radio, or the number of speeches made by advocates of U.S. policies. Those are all important inputs, but the key measurement is the *output*, which is influencing people’s views and attitudes.

Measurement of information programs is often difficult since extraneous factors, beyond the control of public diplomacy practitioners, can have an impact on attitudes. Still, creative solutions can be found. For instance, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have constructed a model to gauge the effects of media- and community-based programs to reduce tobacco use.⁴ Other agencies have done the same, and, working with private-sector and NGO resources, leaders of public diplomacy programs can find effective ways to measure how they are doing.

It is clear that the measurement function has not been given proper emphasis. The State Department, said the September GAO report on public diplomacy, “is not systematically and comprehensively measuring progress toward its public diplomacy goals. Its overseas performance measurement efforts focus on anecdotal evidence...rather than gauging progress toward changing foreign publics’ understanding and attitudes about the United States.”⁵

How deficient are current resources? According to a survey by GAO, 79 percent of public affairs officers “reported that staffing at their missions was insufficient to conduct systematic program evaluations.”

But resources are not the only problem. Sophisticated and meaningful measurement has simply not been given proper emphasis in public diplomacy. For example, the State Department reported that 94 percent of all exchange program participants viewed their experiences as “valuable.” But, as the GAO concluded in its September 2003 “Public Diplomacy” report, “While it is useful to know that participants’ experi-

4. U.S. General Accounting Office, “Program Evaluation: Strategies for Assessing How Information Dissemination Contributes to Agency Goals,” September, 2002; GAO-02-923.

5. GAO, “U.S. Public Diplomacy,” p. 18.

ences were favorable, this information does not demonstrate progress toward the more fundamental objective of achieving changes in understanding and attitudes about the United States.” We call this progress “moving the needle,” and every person involved with public diplomacy must ask daily, “Does this activity move the needle?”

We fully recognize that precise measurement of progress in moving the needle of public opinion is often difficult. If, for example, it is true that public opinion in Arab and Muslim countries responds more to policies than to public diplomacy, it is clear that successful public diplomacy will not be able to change minds dramatically in the presence of strong opposition to policy. Experts can find ways to measure the change while controlling for the impact of policy, but we do not underestimate the difficulty of that assignment, and it is vital that policymakers understand that public diplomacy alone cannot significantly improve attitudes toward policies that people in other countries strongly oppose.

We also recommend that:

- » The Office of Research in the State Department’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research receive funding adequate to monitor foreign opinion on a regular basis;
- » a separate outside unit, managed by a private-sector contractor, measure and evaluate programs in parallel with government agencies; and
- » the State Department immediately complete a new worldwide database of alumni of its various exchange programs. Work on this database, which would be extremely valuable both in measuring the effectiveness of programs and in designing follow-up activity, cannot currently proceed for lack of funding.

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

When we asked the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) how much of his budget of \$13 billion goes to public diplomacy, he answered, “Almost none.” He explained that AID is generally prohibited from using program funds to disseminate information about its activities – a restriction that the Advisory Group recommends be ended immediately. But, in a broad sense, a great deal of AID’s work is public diplomacy at its best. AID’s programs, in the words of one of its top officials, are “American values in action.”

For example, AID funds nongovernmental organizations like the International Human Rights Law Group, which before the fall of the Taliban was active in helping Afghan women refugees. AID has brought tens of thousands of students to U.S. universities on scholarships. It has helped establish community radio stations “with civic education and moderation mandates” in Mali and other African countries. In Iraq, AID has put into place 14 major contracts and grants for reconstruction work, including partnerships between U.S. and Iraqi educational institutions and assistance in improving agriculture. In addition, of course, AID food, health, and infrastructure assistance helps spread universal values, as practiced by generous Americans, throughout the developing world.

How many people in the Arab and Muslim world, or anywhere else for that matter, know the extent of AID’s activities? Too few.

The Administrator of AID reports to the Secretary of State, and its officers are part of country teams at our missions abroad. Still, AID operates largely outside the current public diplomacy framework. Our recommendation for providing new strategic direction of public diplomacy through a White House-based architecture would help bring AID into closer coordination with other government agencies. An AID representative, for example, would take active part in the NSC/PCC, and top AID officials would assist in setting overall goals.

As noted, we recommend that AID — which, like many other government agencies, is subject to extensive Congressional earmarking (more than 90 percent of its programs) — be free from burdensome legal restrictions on publicizing its work. A portion of funding from every major project should be devoted to communicating the project’s benefits to the public. “We *are* the message,” one AID official said to us, but “we get people saying, ‘Why don’t you publicize what you do?’”

AID has taken an important first step with a corps of new development information officers, mainly foreign service nationals, in 20 countries. AID has also become more forthright about branding its activities, so recipients know that they are receiving contributions from the American people. This outreach is a vital piece of public diplomacy, although we were reminded on our travels in the region that many recipients of aid of any sort sometimes react with resentment at needing it.

Finally, we strongly urge that AID officials be included in the

enhanced public diplomacy training that we have recommended for our missions throughout the world. In short, there must be greater recognition, government-wide, that AID must be an integral and conscious part of implementing the public diplomacy strategy of the United States.

THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT

The role the Defense Department plays in public diplomacy is neither broadly recognized nor well coordinated. For example, the department is now handling the greatest part of the U.S. Government communications effort inside Iraq, and, as part of the Coalition Provisional Authority, our military has become the primary defender of the democratic process in that country. While the State Department is generally considered the lead agency in public diplomacy, the Defense Department dominates public diplomacy in Iraq – the most immediate battleground in the struggle of ideas.

The postwar emergence in Iraq of 160 new newspapers, 20 television stations, and 80 radio stations reflects the great hunger for information in that nation. Despite the best efforts of American officials, those media are not getting the U.S. story. We were told by a key player that the CPA needs “a thousand Arabic speakers” to create an effective press operation and interact with the Iraqi media. It is urgent that the United States marshal the best communications talent to accomplish the critical task of helping both Iraqi and world opinion understand America’s role as a liberator and builder of democracy, not as conqueror and occupier.

Iraq is only one example of how better public diplomacy coordination among all government agencies could advance a unified strategy. In general, we are concerned that the Defense Department, with resources that dwarf those of all other agencies of government, is not fully integrated into the public diplomacy architecture. The changes we propose, based in the White House, should provide for more coherent messaging and better overall coordination. Putting the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy in the proposed President’s Public Diplomacy Experts’ Board and revitalizing the NSC/PCC for public diplomacy will help, but the Pentagon’s achievements during the Iraq war in the area of “jointness” – or coordination among armed services – needs to be applied in relationships with other government agencies as well.

V Specific Recommendations



STRUCTURE

- » A new operating process and architecture are required for the transformation of public diplomacy. Specific, structural changes relating to the organization of the White House, the National Security Council interagency process, and the State Department, as described in Chapter IV, are urgently recommended. A presidential directive to all relevant governmental agencies emphasizing the importance of public diplomacy in advancing U.S. interests and instituting these changes, should be promulgated.
- » The U.S. Agency for International Development and the Defense Department, both of which engage in activities with a significant public diplomacy dimension, must be more closely tied to the reinforced strategic direction and coordination that we propose.
- » A new culture of measurement must be established within all public diplomacy structures.
- » A permanent facility should be established for the study of Arab and Muslim societies and their relations with the United States and for enhancing intercultural and interfaith dialogue.
- » An independent Corporation for Public Diplomacy should be created to facilitate funding for private and non-profit broadcasting and Internet applications.
- » With the exception of the news function, international broadcasting should be brought under the strategic oversight of the new Office of the Special Counselor to the President.

FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESOURCES

- » The importance of public diplomacy in meeting the strategic challenge that America faces in the Arab and Muslim world requires a dramatic increase in funding. The current level is absurdly and dangerously inadequate, and no amount of reprogramming of existing resources can correct this.
- » Additional professional staff for public diplomacy dedicated to issues of the Arab and Muslim world is urgently needed. The professional level of fluency in the local languages and the level of knowledge about Arab and Muslim societies must be dramatically enhanced.
- » Given the drastic reduction in AID scholarships awarded to students in the region, from 20,000 in 1980 to 900 currently, there should be a significant increase in funding for scholarships across the board.
- » Given the strategic importance of information technologies, a greater portion of the budget should be directed to tap the resources of the Internet and other communication technologies more effectively.
- » Major increases in resources should be devoted to helping Arabs and Muslims gain access to American education, both in the U. S. and in Arab and Muslim countries. We urge creativity in linking U. S. educational institutions with their counterparts in the regions. A serious financial commitment, both private and public, should be made to educational institutions such as the American University of Beirut, the American University in Cairo, and others.

PROGRAMS

- » Programs in support of English language training, a critical instrument of outreach, education, and job opportunity, must be expanded and supported by increased funding and human resources.
- » A rapid expansion of the scope of the American Corners program for local institutions should be undertaken, especially given the decreased access to American facilities.
- » A major new initiative, the American Knowledge Library, should be launched. It involves translating thousands of the best American books in many fields of education into local languages and making them available to libraries, American Studies centers, universities, and American Corners.

- » The creation of American Studies programs in Arab and Muslim countries, through a collaborative effort with the private sector and with local universities, should be pursued.
- » The U.S. Speaker and Specialist Program should be substantially expanded.
- » Professional exchanges and educational programs of shorter duration that reach more diverse segments of the Arab and Muslim world should be expanded.
- » A careful independent review of the merits of the Middle East Television Network initiative should be undertaken.

APPENDIX A

The Shared Values Initiative

THE “SHARED VALUES” INITIATIVE WAS CONCEIVED ON OCT. 25, 2001, a month and a half after the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. Its objective was to bring the United States into the broad “conversation” about America that was raging in the Arab and Muslim world.

The centerpiece — but not the only element — was a television advertising campaign, in the form of mini-documentaries that would show Muslim Americans going about their daily lives in a tolerant society. The campaign was meant, in part, to correct a mistaken image of American hostility to Islam that research showed was prevalent in the Arab and Muslim world.

The research that led to the campaign, for example, found that an average of only 12 percent of respondents in nine Muslim and Arab nations surveyed believed “Americans respect Arab/Islamic values.” As a result, the campaign strategy was to “establish a recognition that Americans and Muslims share many values and beliefs [and] demonstrate that America is not at war with Islam.”

In our research, the Advisory Group became especially concerned, not so much about the content of the TV spots but about the protracted process and expense of bringing them to fruition. The process took far too long; flexibility and speed are urgent requirements in this kind of public diplomacy effort. Also, we found that, in some cases, resistance to the advertising campaign at some embassies may have contributed to the inability of the State Department to air the mini-documentaries on government television channels in key Arab countries.

We heard from several marketing experts who believed that advertising was not a good way to spread these messages. We disagree. The campaign was well-conceived and based on solid research. The issue of why countries rejected the ads and why the process, from conception to airing, took so long should be examined. In both cases, the remedies lie in earlier incorporation of host-country expertise and a better and swifter system for testing, contracting, and approval.

The project was approved on February 19, 2002, nearly five months after it was conceived.

The mini-documentaries were aired from October to December 2002.

However, despite the effort, time, and expense, the mini-documentaries could not be shown in several countries. They were denied clearance outright in Egypt and Lebanon and were withdrawn in Jordan.

Indonesia was the only country where a post-campaign survey was done, and that survey produced high ratings for recognition and understanding. For example, the survey determined that 63 million Indonesians learned that “Islam is not discriminated against” and is given equal treatment with other religions in the United States.

The lack of acceptance of the mini-documentaries in countries like Egypt was disappointing, but the length of time before the campaign reached the air was also troubling.

Ordinarily, in the private sector, an advertising campaign takes three to six months from conception to completion. We found it took almost three times this long for “Shared Values.”

We determined that, with a proper organizational structure, the project would have proceeded like this:

OCTOBER 25, 2001: Briefing on concepts/creative from the advertising agency.

NOVEMBER 1, 2001: Five creative alternatives are presented and the final one selected and conceptually approved.

NOVEMBER 8, 2001: The selected concept with any final modifications is finally approved. It is circulated among the U.S. missions with a one-week deadline for critique. The budget is proposed by the ad agency.

NOVEMBER 15, 2001: The critiques are received from the U.S. missions. They are reviewed and any modifications considered. The ad agency is given the go-ahead to proceed with the project. The final budget is approved.

NOVEMBER 1 TO NOVEMBER 30, 2001: The agency does the groundwork to select the subjects and makes arrangements for focus groups to generate reaction.

NOVEMBER 15 TO NOVEMBER 30, 2001: The agency does the filming.

NOVEMBER 30 TO DECEMBER 15, 2001: Focus groups react to the mini-documentaries, and changes are incorporated.

NOVEMBER 1 TO DECEMBER 15, 2001: The ad agency and public diplomacy officials in Washington and U.S. missions abroad identify, research, and negotiate the media outlets where the mini-documentaries are to be presented.

DECEMBER 15 TO DECEMBER 17, 2001: Final review of the mini-documentaries, the media outlets, and the media budget.

DECEMBER 18, 2001 TO JANUARY 5, 2002: Reluctant host countries are identified and consulted and negotiations with them completed.

DECEMBER 18, 2001 TO FEBRUARY 15, 2002: Methodology to assess the effectiveness of the campaign is developed and approved.

JANUARY 6 TO FEBRUARY 10, 2002: The campaign is launched.

FEBRUARY 15 TO FEBRUARY 28, 2002: Effectiveness is assessed.

MARCH 1, 2002: Decisions are made to proceed with phase two of the project or abandon it in light of the results of the survey.

APPENDIX B

Members and Staff of the Advisory Group

AMBASSADOR EDWARD P. DJEREJIAN, Chairman of the Advisory Group, is founding director of the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy at Rice University. He is the former U.S. ambassador to Syria under Presidents Reagan and George W. Bush and to Israel under President Clinton. He also served as Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs and Deputy Press Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the White House. Relevant languages: Arabic and French.

AMBASSADOR DAVID M. ABSHIRE is President of the Center for the Study of the Presidency and Vice Chairman of the board of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, which he co-founded in 1962. He was formerly U.S. ambassador to NATO, chairman of the U.S. Board of International Broadcasting, Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations, and Special Counselor to President Reagan, with Cabinet rank. He is also President of the Richard Lounsbery Foundation of New York.

STEPHEN P. COHEN, PH.D., is National Scholar for the Israeli Policy Forum and President of the Institute for Middle East Peace and Development. He is currently a Visiting Professor at Lehigh University and has also taught at Near Eastern Studies and Psychology Departments at Harvard, Princeton, and the City University of New York. Languages: Hebrew and French.

AMBASSADOR DIANA LADY DOUGAN chairs the Cyber Century Forum, is Senior Advisor at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and Co-Chair of the Center for Information Infrastructure and Economic Development under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. She was formerly U.S. Coordinator for International Communications and Information Policy under President Reagan and a director of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting under Presidents Ford and Carter. Earlier, she was the CATV marketing director for Time Inc.

MAMOUN FANDY is a Senior Fellow at the United States Institute of Peace and president of Fandy Associates, a Washington consulting firm. He formerly taught at Georgetown University and at the Near-East South-Asia Center for Strategic Studies at the National Defense University. He is author of *Saudi Arabia and the Politics of Dissent*. Born in Egypt, he became a U.S. citizen in 1994. Languages: Arabic.

JAMES K. GLASSMAN is a Resident Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, a weekly syndicated financial columnist for the Washington Post, and host of the website TechCentralStation.com. He is the former editor of *Roll Call*, publisher of *The New Republic*, President of the *Atlantic Monthly*, executive vice-president of *U.S. News & World Report* and host of “Capital Gang Sunday” on CNN and “TechnoPolitics” on PBS.

MALIK M. HASAN, M.D. founded two health-care firms, Qual-Med, a Fortune 200 company that later became Healthnet, and Health Trio, Inc. Born in India, he was raised in Pakistan, and graduated from King Edward Medical College in England. He retired as a neurologist in 1992 and, among other philanthropic activities, co-founded the Hasan School of Business at the University of Southern Colorado. Languages: Urdu.

FARHAD KAZEMI, PH.D., is Professor of Politics and Middle Eastern Studies at New York University. He was formerly Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at NYU. He currently serves as a Trustee of the American University in Cairo, where he chairs the Academic Affairs Committee, and is author of, among other books, *Culture and Politics in Iran*. Born in Iran, he was naturalized as a U.S. citizen in 1977. Languages: Farsi and Arabic.

JUDITH MILESTONE retired recently from a 21-year career at CNN, where she was senior vice president for network booking. Currently, she is Vice Chair of the board of trustees of Smith College and Chair of the Atlanta Steering Group of the Council on Foreign Relations.

HAROLD C. PACHIOS this year completed his term as Chairman of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, where he continues to serve. He

is managing partner in the law firm of Petri, Flaherty, Beliveau, Pachios & Haley, based in Portland, Maine. In a long career in government and politics, he served, in among other roles, as Associate White House Press Secretary under President Johnson and Chairman of the Maine Democratic Party.

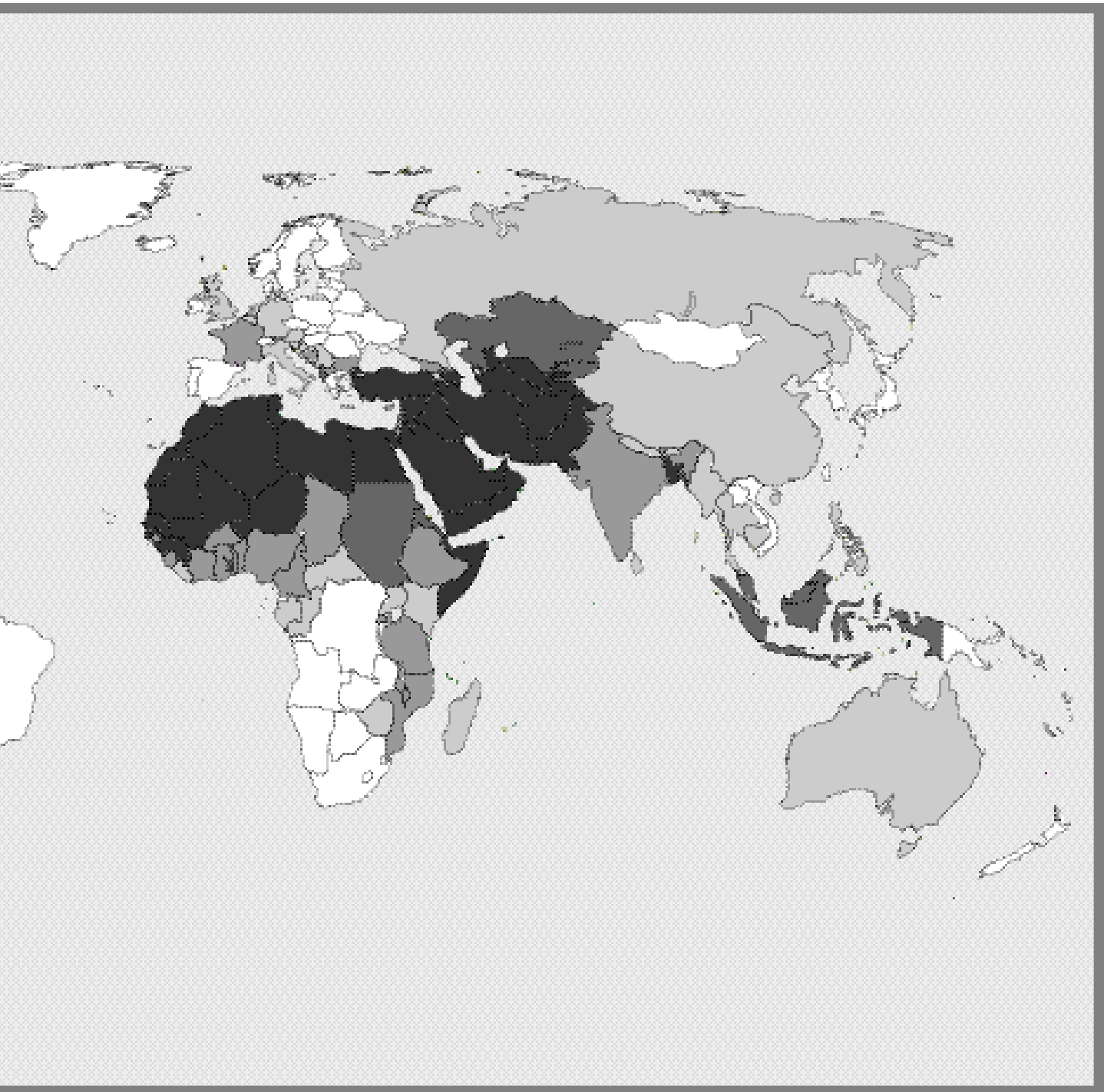
GEORGE R. SALEM is a partner in the international law firm, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, LLP, and a principal in AG Global Solutions, which focuses on strategic solutions and problem-solving for corporations and governments. He is co-founder and Chairman of the Arab American Institute and served as Solicitor of the U.S. Department of Labor during the Reagan Administration. Languages: Arabic.

SHIBLEY TELHAMI, PH.D., is the Anwar Sadat Professor of Peace and Development at the University of Maryland and Senior Fellow at the Saban Center of the Brookings Institution. His most recent books are *Identity and Foreign Policy in the Middle East* and *The Stakes: America and the Middle East*. Languages: Arabic and Hebrew.

JOHN ZOGBY is president and CEO of Zogby International, the well-known polling firm. Called “the most accurate pollster” by *USA Today* and “the pace setter in the polling business” by the *New York Post*, he has conducted extensive surveys in the Arab and Muslim world. He is author of *Arab America Today: A Demographic Profile of Arab Americans* and *Decision 2002: Why the Republicans Gained*. Languages: Arabic.

AMBASSADOR CHRISTOPHER ROSS, consultant to the Advisory Group, is the former U.S. ambassador to Syria and Algeria. He currently serves as Senior Advisor for Arab World Public Diplomacy at the State Department. Languages: Arabic and French.

NINA DELORENZO, staff director for the Advisory Group, is Chief of Staff in the Bureau of International Information Programs at the State Department.



COVER ILLUSTRATION

A drawing inspired by geometric patterns found in a Timurid scroll in the collection of the Topkapi Palace Museum, Istanbul, Turkey.

DESIGN

William Drenttel and Kevin Smith, Winterhouse Editions