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Public Diplomacy and the War on Terrorism

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Public Diplomacy and the War on Terrorism

Peter G. Peterson

The following article is adapted from the chairman's preliminary summary of the report of the Independent Task Force on Public Diplomacy sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations. Members of the task force, chaired by Peter G. Peterson, are listed on page 92. The findings discussed in this article are based on discussions and recommendations reached in task force meetings and have not been reviewed by all members. Key recommendations include the following: issuance of a presidential directive establishing a priority commitment and a new course for public diplomacy; establishment of a coordinating structure, chaired by a principal adviser to the president, to harmonize the public diplomacy efforts of government agencies, allies, and private-sector partners; as part of a broad effort to expand private-sector and indigenous development, dialogue, and debate, creation of an independent, not-for-profit "Corporation for Public Diplomacy" as the centerpiece of expanded public-private involvement in public diplomacy; and increased training, resources, and up-to-date technology for State Department and other government officials responsible for public diplomacy.

A full-length version of the report, its appendixes, and dissents can be found on the Council on Foreign Relations Web site, at www.cfr.org.

A STRATEGY FOR REFORM

A CONSENSUS is emerging, made urgent by the war on terrorism, that U.S. public diplomacy requires a commitment to new foreign policy thinking and new structures. They are needed to make clear why the United States is fighting this war and why supporting it is in the interests of others, as well as of Americans. Because terrorism is now considered the transcendent threat to America's national

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[74]

Public Diplomacy and the War on Terrorism

security, it is overwhelmingly in the national interest that the United States formulate and manage its foreign policies in such a way that, in its war on terrorism, it receives the indispensable cooperation of foreign nations.

Thus, more than in the past, the United States will need to modify not simply the implementation of its foreign policies but, in certain cases, the foreign policies themselves. The purpose is not to increase U.S. popularity abroad for its own sake, but because it is in America's national interest to do so. This requires a deeper understanding of foreign attitudes and more effective communication of U.S. policies. It also means fully integrating public diplomacy needs into the very foundation of American foreign policies in the first place. Particularly in a period when the United States is fighting a war on terrorism, the country must come to understand and accept the basic notion that "image problems" and "foreign policy" are not things apart. They are both part of an integrated whole.

A new approach and enhanced resources are also needed to establish the centrality of public diplomacy in U.S. foreign policy. To achieve that objective requires significant reform that will bring strategic planning, focus, resources, and badly needed coordination to the effort.

Today, America has a serious image problem. With broad consistency, this unflattering image is reflected in a Gallup attitudinal poll conducted in nine Muslim countries, a similar Zogby International poll conducted in ten countries, State Department and Council on Foreign Relations/Pew surveys of foreign attitudes, and media opinions and views of many observers in and out of government.¹

Perceptions of the United States are far from monolithic. But there is little doubt that stereotypes of Americans as arrogant, self-indulgent, hypocritical, inattentive, and unwilling or unable to engage in cross-cultural dialogue are pervasive and deeply rooted. In the eyes

¹See Gallup/*USA Today*, "Poll Results," February 27, 2002, and Andrea Stone, "Many in Islamic World Doubt Arabs Behind 9/11," *USA Today*, February 27, 2002, at www.usatoday.com; Zogby International, "The Ten Nations Impressions of America Poll," April 11, 2002; Pew Research Center, "America Admired, Yet Its New Vulnerability Seen as a Good Thing, Say Opinion Leaders," December 19, 2001, and "Americans and Europeans Differ Widely on Foreign Policy Issues," April 20, 2002, at www.people-press.org; and Richard Morin, "Islam and Democracy," *The Washington Post*, April 28, 2002.

of some, Americans largely ignored terrorism as a problem until faced with the enormity of the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

Also at the root of these negative attitudes is Americans' perceived lack of empathy toward the pain, hardship, and tragic plight of peoples throughout the developing world. Their pervasive sense of despair and hopelessness—in the face of America's unprecedented affluence—also leads to envy and a sense of victimhood, often accompanied by anger and mistrust. Among the most startling manifestations of foreign resentments were the expressions of joy from some groups immediately following the terrorist attacks on America. Clearly, more effective public diplomacy is needed to offset such hostility. For example, greater recognition should be generated for U.S. government assistance to alleviate poverty, discrimination, and despair, especially those efforts on behalf of Muslims in Bosnia, Yugoslavia, and the Palestinian territories. Sound public diplomacy must also articulate a positive future for peoples throughout the developing world that shows understanding and support of their desires for increased prosperity, improved quality of life, and peace.

Expressing empathy, particularly if it appears contradictory to U.S. policies and values, will not by itself be enough. Although the war on terrorism should overshadow other policy issues for the foreseeable future, the war also underscores the need for more effective public diplomacy in general. In this effort, the credibility of an American message will be enhanced significantly when it does not appear unilateral, and when international legitimacy and consensus are sought for the principles being defended. At the same time, it is important to make clear that, regardless of criticism of U.S. policies, they have been arrived at democratically. For example, opinion polls substantiate solid public backing for America's support of Israel and the U.S.-led war against terrorism.

A GLOBAL PROBLEM

NEGATIVE ATTITUDES toward the United States and its policies are clearly most intense among Middle Easterners. Many do not trust what we say. They find our words are contradicted by our policies,

Public Diplomacy and the War on Terrorism

particularly our tolerance for autocratic regimes in their region. Of course, Muslims do not live only in Arab nations: the majority of the world's Muslims, diverse in religious and social attitudes, is spread around the globe, with heavy concentrations in Central, South, and Southeast Asia. Their views of America have a different mix of pros and cons, as do attitudes in western Europe, Latin America, East Asia, and elsewhere. Criticisms of trade policies, agricultural subsidies, environmental policies, and unilateralist behavior are all a part of the mix. Rancorous European opinions are especially worrisome. The nation-states of Europe are vital allies not only in the war on terrorism, but also in so many aspects of U.S. foreign policy. In sum, America's image problem is not only regional; it is global.

Addressing the image problem should be viewed as no less than a vital component of national security. Defending America's homeland, seeking out and destroying terrorists, and using public diplomacy to facilitate allied support of the United States and to reduce the attractiveness of terrorism are all part of the same battle.

A NEW PARADIGM

PROFESSIONALS in and out of government serve America's public diplomacy needs with skill, albeit with inadequate tools and insufficient resources. Faced with the multi-front war that is terrorism, the president and the secretary of state have shown their understanding that changes are required in the public-diplomacy assets they inherited. They have taken important steps such as creating the U.S.-Afghan Women's Council, the Coalition Information Centers, and the State Department's student-exchange proposal. But significantly more is needed.

An essential starting point is to recognize that U.S. foreign policy is weakened by a failure to include public diplomacy systematically in the formulation and implementation of policy. The motivation for such inclusion is not simply to win popularity or to drive U.S. policy by forging foreign public approval. Rather, public diplomacy is important because foreign attitudes and understanding can affect the success or failure of initiatives. Examples

of misunderstood or misguided policies include the rejections of the Kyoto Protocol on global warming, the treaty to ban anti-personnel land mines, the agreement to create the International Criminal Court, and the Genocide Convention.

It must also be recognized that to a varying extent, animosity against America is related to serious policy issues. The United States cannot always make others happy with its policy choices, nor should it. Thus a part of America's challenge is to better explain why it does what it does and then accept that many will choose to differ. Some of the hostility can be offset but not eradicated. The United States should not leave an impression that all differences are resolvable or could be if it were just nicer or more empathetic. This is part of being a great power.

In the past, foreign policy was often the sole prerogative of nation-states. It historically involved interaction between leaders and government ministers. Today, people have far more access to information and more soft power to influence global affairs directly, indirectly, and through their governments. Globalization, the increased speed and greatly diminished cost of processing and transmitting information, the reach of 24/7 television programming, global news media (AM, FM, and shortwave radio, and satellite TV), growing Internet penetration, and "smart" mobile phones are central characteristics of the twenty-first-century foreign policy environment. So are populist movements fueled by religious and sectarian beliefs and wider public participation in international affairs. The information age has democratized communication by providing freedom of access to information, the ability to voice opinions, and the opportunity to enter debate. Therefore, no foreign policy can succeed without a sustained, coordinated capability to understand, inform, and influence people and private organizations, as well as governments.

Thus effective reform of public diplomacy must go beyond the provision of more resources. A new public diplomacy paradigm should be put in place. This means redefining the role of public diplomacy as part of a comprehensive strategy, tying it to foreign policy objectives. It means changing the recruitment and training of diplomats and other public officials and redefining their missions.

Public Diplomacy and the War on Terrorism

Specifically, five urgent areas of reform are recommended:

1. Develop a coherent strategic and coordinating framework;
2. Increase customized, two-way dialogue in place of conventional one-way, push-down mass communication;
3. Expand private-sector involvement;
4. Improve the effectiveness of public diplomacy resources; and
5. Enlarge the assets devoted to public diplomacy.

PRIORITY REFORMS

1. Develop a coherent strategic and coordinating framework.

Issue a presidential directive on public diplomacy. Early in 2001, the Bush administration undertook a review of previous efforts to integrate public diplomacy into the policy process before implementing its own interagency coordinating structure. In June 2002, 16 months later and 9 months after September 11, this review was still ongoing.

Many in the administration may feel they have made public diplomacy a genuine priority. Some useful, new steps have been taken, and a commitment to do more was indicated in a recent meeting of task force members with senior officials in the White House. However, enhanced public diplomacy does not yet appear to be a genuine priority in the eyes of people—here and abroad—who are following the subject closely and with concern. Therefore, it is essential that the president himself make clear, through issuance of a presidential decision directive, the U.S. government's commitment to reforming public diplomacy and making it a central element of U.S. foreign policy.

Core elements of the presidential directive should include (1) a clear policy and strategy to strengthen the U.S. government's ability to communicate with foreign publics; (2) an efficient and effective coordinating structure for the U.S. government's civilian and military public-diplomacy assets; (3) a requirement that all regional and functional National Security Council Policy Coordinating Committees must assess the potential implications of foreign public opinion when policy options are considered, and develop communications strategies in concert with policy implementation; (4) guidance on public diplomacy

resources, training, programs, budgets, and technology; (5) special attention to relations with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), international organizations, commercial media outlets, and coalition allies; and (6) a schedule of implementing tasks and benchmarks to evaluate progress in achieving reforms.

Create a public diplomacy coordinating structure and a dedicated secretariat led by the president's personal designee. The public diplomacy coordinating structure (PDCS) would help define communications strategies, streamline public diplomacy efforts, and horizontally transfer ownership of these efforts to U.S. government agencies, allies, and private-sector partners. In many ways, the PDCS would be similar to the National Security Council, in its role as adviser, synthesizer, coordinator, and priority-setter. It would also bear some similarity to the model of the existing Coalition Information Centers, which should be studied and adapted for broader purposes.

The PDCS should include a dedicated secretariat with members at the assistant-secretary level or above. Those members should be designated by the following: the assistant to the president for national security affairs; the director of the White House Office of Global Communications; the director or secretary of homeland security; the attorney general; the secretaries of the Departments of State, Defense, Treasury, and Commerce; the directors of central intelligence and the U.S. Agency for International Development; and the chairs of the Broadcasting Board of Governors and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The chair of the PDCS should serve as the president's principal adviser on public diplomacy working out of the White House. This will require leadership of unusually high quality and a person with regular access to the president. The PDCS chair must have the confidence and trust of the president and a deep strategic and practical understanding of the power of communications in today's global information environment. The adviser should see that strategic public diplomacy priorities are developed. Furthermore, this official should advise the president and senior policymakers on foreign public opinion and communications strategies, engage in long-range planning of public diplomacy, and review presidential statements from the perspective and context of what is known about foreign attitudes and sensitivities. This review is obvi-

Public Diplomacy and the War on Terrorism

ously far less likely to be needed in domestic communications, where senior elected officials have traversed the entire country, know the people, and understand regional attitudes and sensitivities.

It should be this official's task to oversee and coordinate public diplomacy, but not to engage in operations or program implementation.

Move public diplomacy from the margins to the center of foreign policymaking. Too often public diplomacy is seen as reactive, not proactive, and as a response (often defensive) to a crisis. Edward R. Murrow, the respected newsman whom President John F. Kennedy appointed director of the U.S. Information Agency, is said to have observed after the Bay of Pigs fiasco that USIA should be in on the "takeoffs" and not only the "crash landings." Murrow urged that public diplomacy officials be included when and as foreign policies are made, for several reasons: (1) to ensure that policymakers are aware of the likely reaction of foreign publics to a forthcoming policy; (2) to advise how best to convincingly communicate policies to foreign audiences; and (3) to ensure that U.S. diplomats are prepared to articulate policies before they are announced.

This approach, which inculcates public diplomacy into the ongoing policymaking process and thus makes it "present at the creation," deserves strong endorsement. Public diplomacy must be an integral part of foreign policy, not something that comes afterward to sell the foreign policy. To repeat, it must be considered at the same time as foreign policy is being made and, as such, must explain how U.S. policies fit the values and interests of others, not just those of Americans. Otherwise, the United States will encounter the same problem it did for many years on human rights policy: the president would launch a foreign policy that did not include human rights, and then, when attacked, the government would roll out the human rights rhetoric, but people abroad would not take it seriously.

2. Increase customized, two-way dialogue in place of conventional one-way, push-down mass communication.

Adopt an "engagement" approach that involves listening, dialogue, and relationship building and increases the amount and effectiveness of public opinion research. Traditionally, U.S. public policy has been

communicated via a push-down method, which suffers from limited reach and inadequate explanation to foreign media. Policy is created, speeches given, press releases written, and press conferences held—all with a primary focus on addressing American news media. Messages are typically delivered by a limited number of officials to foreign audiences, composed primarily of representatives of governments and international organizations. Foreign publics get short shrift. This push-down approach affords little open discussion of the basis for policy decisions. Communications, geared toward a domestic audience, assume a keen understanding of the American system of government—knowledge that is often deficient among foreign publics. Often absent is the linkage of policies to the values of others, indeed to our own values of freedom and democracy.

Persuasion begins with listening. The U.S. government spends only \$5 million annually on foreign public-opinion polling, far less than the research costs of many U.S. senatorial campaigns and only a fraction of the \$6 billion spent for these purposes by American private-sector organizations. Additional research funds are needed to shape programs and efforts from their inception and to continually monitor and evaluate their effectiveness.

New attitudinal research and target marketing can define potential target audiences along a continuum of support for U.S. foreign policies, including hard support, soft support, and undecided. New research techniques, for example, have shown it is six times more expensive and difficult to move undecided consumers to the category of soft support than it is to change soft supporters into hard supporters. Such research can be helpful in defining target audiences. Thus the first objective must be to move the moveable before addressing the skeptical.

Support voices of moderation, with special attention over the longer term to young people: empower them to engage in effective debate through means available or created in their societies. In the Middle East and other areas where frustration with America is high, the young make up an unprecedented and increasing portion of the population. Despair at high unemployment levels and dim futures, combined with

fundamentalist, anti-Western education, makes the young likely recruits for a terror campaign.

Radical Islam's assault on America and the West is also an assault on moderate and secular Islam in the vast majority of the Muslim world. Moderate voices are often not heard above the din of the fanatics. Therefore, U.S. public diplomacy should encourage dialogue with and debate within Islam about the radicals' efforts to hijack Islam's spiritual soul. Participatory communications can be expanded by employing radio and television talk shows and new interactive media forums—such as Secretary of State Colin Powell's 90-minute MTV dialogue in February 2002 with young people in 146 countries.

Credible messengers, who complement official government sources, should be more fully employed. Indigenous talent and independent messengers, such as mullahs and talk-show personalities, can criticize certain aspects of Islam with more credibility than can U.S. government spokespeople. Fostering indigenous dialogue and debates must be done with an understanding that some commentary will be critical of the United States. By the same token, U.S. participants in debates and dialogues should in no way shrink from countering conspiracy theorists, lies about America, and, of course, lies about themselves.

Where possible, the United States should cooperate and coordinate with allies, who are often more believed than U.S. sources. Allies such as the United Kingdom have recently announced their renewed commitment to external communications, and these efforts should be coordinated at the highest possible levels in both multilateral and bilateral talks. Conversely, the United States should find ways to counter the distorted picture of America, created with wildly erroneous reporting by journalists and government-supported media in such countries as Saudi Arabia and Egypt, the latter a major recipient of U.S. aid. Both countries maintain friendly official relations with the United States yet tolerate and even encourage media bashing of America. The United States needs to address the questions of whether and how to challenge such bashing at government levels. This is not a call for censorship, but an effort to encourage professional journalism that would separate truth from falsehood.

Peter G. Peterson

Foster increasingly meaningful relationships between the U.S. government and foreign journalists. Too often, foreign reporters feel they are treated as second-class citizens in American information efforts. To the extent the U.S. government marginalizes foreign journalists, it alienates a group of effective, credible messengers. Access by the foreign press to high-level American officials should be increased. Senior policymakers should brief foreign journalists at U.S. overseas press centers and be available for one-on-one interviews. Moreover, communications processes should be restructured to ensure a coordinated and consistent effort to engage foreign journalists more effectively at all times—not just in times of crisis.

The administration has already taken some steps in this direction, including increasing foreign press access at President George W. Bush's recent meeting with Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia in Crawford, Texas. It can go further by establishing a summit that brings together members of the foreign press and high-level government officials to discuss foreign policy. This meeting could be held in an informal setting and bring in foreign journalists located in Washington, D.C., and New York City, as well as journalists from abroad. It would provide journalists with rare access to high-level officials, including even the president, and show the U.S. government is committed to fostering a dialogue with them on important issues.

Craft messages highlighting cultural overlaps between American values and those of the rest of the world. In the short term, public diplomacy seeks to influence opinions and mobilize publics in ways that support specific U.S. interests and policies. The short-term focus is primarily, but not exclusively, on issues. By contrast, in the long term, public diplomacy promotes dialogue in ways that are politically, culturally, and socially relevant. Ideally, the two should be linked in a comprehensive public diplomacy strategy. This involves finding sufficient common ground to permit dialogue.

To attract and strengthen the hands of people who are in a potential frame of mind to help, the United States needs to make them part of what it does in ways that reflect their interests and values. If recent polls are correct, the Muslim world responds more favorably to U.S.

values and freedoms than it does to U.S. policies. If the target audience does, in fact, support the concepts of freedom and democracy, this common ground must be leveraged to build consensus and ownership.

By repeating lies about American economic, social, and cultural values, enemies in the war on terrorism have been able to rally a tremendous amount of support. As former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Richard Holbrooke has asked, “How can a man in a cave out-communicate the world’s leading communications society?” Osama bin Laden has been able to find common ground, consensus, and support with his constituencies. The United States needs to match this with a “best-in-class” communications strategy.

Recent opinion studies report that although many U.S. policies are deplored, there is a mystique surrounding America’s culture, values, and economy. Thus, to foster a better understanding of U.S. policies, ways should be found to tie them more closely to American cultural values, including the nation’s democratic traditions and its capacity for self-criticism and self-correction. Values that should be highlighted include strength of family, religious faith, expansive social safety nets, volunteerism, freedom of expression, the universal reach of education and its practical consequences in economic prosperity, and America’s achievements in science and medicine.

The messages should include sympathetic news coverage and advice on important local and regional problems that might be of practical help in the areas of health care, agriculture, and daily life, as a means of building interest and confidence in American news sources. Where possible, U.S. foreign policies—for example, the peacekeeping mission in Kosovo or U.S. humanitarian aid to Afghanistan—should be presented as a reflection of American cultural values. We must also create bridges between American society and other societies using common cultural pursuits in every genre of art, music, theater, religion, and academia.

3. Expand private-sector involvement.

Deliver more bang for the government buck by creating a much expanded role for the private sector. Several reasons underlie this firm conviction. First, target audiences of the U.S. government have historically tended to

be foreign officials, and the government must inevitably observe diplomatic protocols in communicating with these counterparts. U.S. diplomats often feel constrained when it comes to making public statements explaining U.S. policy. For example, diplomats are often expected to have their speeches approved in advance by the State Department. Independent messengers can be more fluid in their ability to target and engage varied audiences. Second, private-sector participation in public diplomacy adds, to some extent, a “heat shield” that can be useful when tackling controversial issues that might have negative political or diplomatic repercussions.

Third, it is important to communicate American belief in democratic and open debate—the give and take of a culture that thrives on legitimate critiques and, at its best, admits weaknesses and uses truth as the most powerful form of public diplomacy. Private messengers can engage in controversial critiques and debates that U.S. government officials might be reluctant to take on for fear of political backlash. Fourth, the U.S. government is unlikely to attract as employees a sufficient number of truly creative professionals who use the newest, most cutting-edge forms of media, communications, or technology. Furthermore, media or entertainment spokespeople may be more likely to cooperate with private sources, such as NGOs, than if the U.S. government directly funded the effort.

Send credible and independent messengers. Broadened use should be made of credible and independent messengers, particularly Arab and Muslim Americans, from diverse sectors of American life. Such credible messengers could include

- Arab-American firefighters and police officers who rushed to the World Trade Center scene;
- Women and children, including Arab and Muslim Americans, who lost loved ones in the terrorist attacks on America;
- Arab or Muslim Americans who are thriving in the United States and can tell of the respect their religion receives;
- Arab and other Muslim students who have studied at American universities and colleges and returned after their graduation to their home countries; and
- Well-known American sports figures and celebrities (such as

Public Diplomacy and the War on Terrorism

Muhammad Ali), business leaders, scientists, and health-care providers.

Credible television properties and personalities such as MTV and *Sesame Street* should also play a substantial role. Likewise, the printed press remains highly influential in these foreign countries.

Create an independent, not-for-profit "Corporation for Public Diplomacy" to bridge the gap between public- and private-sector initiatives. The Corporation for Public Diplomacy (CPD) would be a focal point for private-sector involvement in public diplomacy. In terms of operations, it would be similar to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), which is not part of a cabinet-level department and therefore is somewhat independent of direct political influence. The CPB has a seven-member board of directors appointed by the president. Four can be from the president's political party; the other three must be of the opposing party.

As a corporation with tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. tax code, the CPB can receive private-sector grants, which have been substantial. (The publishing magnate Walter Annenberg, for example, gave the CPB hundreds of millions of dollars to administer a school-based initiative.) The CPB has been deeply involved in the establishment or support of such public-television programs as *Sesame Street*, *The News Hour with Jim Lehrer*, Bill Moyers' documentaries, and *American Playhouse*. Many of the most widely acclaimed public-television programs would likely not have been created or flourished had they been the sole prerogative of the U.S. government.

Because the CPB makes grants to a variety of individual producers and stations, the grantees, in a sense, have to defend what they are doing. The CPB, and inferentially the government, which provides the CPB with about \$350 million of public moneys each year, are not seen as directly responsible for the programs that result.

In an analogous structure, the CPD would leverage private-sector creativity and flexibility. It could receive private-sector grants and would attract media and personalities who might be less willing to work directly with U.S. government agencies. It also could take advantage of the fact that private media can often communicate

American family values, religious commitments, and the merits of democracy more effectively than government officials do. Groups such as the Advertising Council and the ad hoc group of Hollywood executives, producers, engineers, and creative people who joined forces after September 11, both of which have done enormous work for public causes, should be enlisted to help the CPD.

Private-sector partnerships working through the CPD would effectively mobilize and use America's rich and diverse resources. Muslim and Arab Americans seeking to build bridges and improve cross-cultural relations might be reluctant to work for the U.S. government or might be dismissed by foreign audiences if they were seen to be working for the government, but might be more willing to work for a private organization. Messages are much more likely to be trusted if delivered by trusted messengers.

Finally, the CPD would be positioned to support independent, indigenous media channels (satellite, radio, and TV networks or private satellite-TV stations programming jointly with existing Arab stations) or joint think tanks studying domestic issues with countries in the region.

4. Improve the effectiveness of public diplomacy resources.

Initiate State Department reforms that reaffirm the precepts that public diplomacy is central to the work of all ambassadors and diplomats, that bold initiatives are rewarded, that taking risks is expected, that occasional mistakes will be accepted, and that the absence of requisite skills will be penalized. The budget and operational authority of the undersecretary of state for public diplomacy and public affairs must be increased substantially. Public diplomacy should be made the full-time or at least a primary responsibility of the deputy assistant secretary in each of the department's regional bureaus.

Fully train U.S. ambassadors and Foreign Service officers. In an age when heads of state converse directly—and when instructions from headquarters and reporting from the field occur in real time—the role of the ambassador as a public diplomat becomes increasingly important. Public advocacy and local language skills

are essential for today's ambassadors. They must be comfortable with and seek out opportunities to meet with editorial boards, make public statements, and appear on television and other indigenous media. Delegated authority is needed to speak for the United States without excessive clearance requirements, and policymakers must understand the need to provide timely content.

Currently, the State Department offers a two-week training seminar for new ambassadors. Only a small amount of that time is devoted to public diplomacy. The State Department usually provides a one- to two-page printed summary on public diplomacy in the country to which an ambassador is assigned. Two days are devoted to media skills training, but this training is not mandatory, and not all ambassadors participate.

Similarly, the State Department provides only minimal public diplomacy training for officers entering the Foreign Service. All new officers participate in a seven-week entry-level course, but only one hour out of those seven weeks is devoted to public diplomacy. For those officers entering the public diplomacy career path, a three-week public diplomacy course is strongly encouraged but not required. After that training is completed, public diplomacy officers then serve a consular tour, as opposed to a public diplomacy training tour. And the State Department's much-reduced public diplomacy training contrasts with previous practice in the U.S. Information Agency—where new public diplomacy officers participated in a three-month-long, intensive seminar and then were assigned to a training tour.

Initiate a structured evaluation of diplomatic readiness and prioritized spending through a "Quadrennial Diplomacy Review." This evaluation, similar to the existing Quadrennial Defense Review, should be conducted by the secretary of state in consultation with the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy. It should replace budget-driven reviews of the status quo with strategy-based assessments of themes, diplomatic readiness, requirements, and capabilities and thereby provide a much-needed, long-term national information strategy.

Establish an "Independent Public Diplomacy Training Institute." The long-term need of the Foreign Service to attract and train public diplomacy-minded professionals is analogous to the service's need for those who understand the ever-increasing role of economics in foreign policy—"geoeconomics"—in contrast to the earlier dominance of strategic Cold War thinking. A new "Independent Public Diplomacy Training Institute" (IPDTI) could help in recruiting and preparing a new breed of foreign professionals who understand the critical role of public diplomacy.

The IPDTI would offer training and services in public opinion research, cultural and attitudinal analysis, segmentation, database management, strategy formulation, political campaign management, marketing and branding, technology and tactics, communications and organizational planning, program evaluation, and media trends. It would also attract the best private-sector talent and techniques from U.S. corporations and universities in research, marketing, campaign management, and other relevant fields and then apply private-sector "best practices" in communications and public diplomacy. In coordination with, and as a supplement to, the State Department's National Foreign Affairs Training Center, the IPDTI would enhance the quality of public diplomacy programs and the skills of the next generation of foreign affairs professionals.

Establish a public diplomacy reserve corps. This agency, patterned on the Federal Emergency Management Agency's disaster-relief model, would augment U.S. and overseas operations; mandate an action plan, a skills database, periodic training, updated security clearances, and simplified re-entry regulations; and recruit prestigious experts from relevant professions for short-term assignments.

Capitalize on Internet-age realities. Current trends in information technology are transforming how the world communicates. Diplomats need to understand that the Internet revolution will, over time, fundamentally change the relationship between information content and communications channels, though at the present time the Internet is far from heavily used in most developing countries. Therefore, it is currently of somewhat limited value in reaching

most of the targeted audiences. At the same time, the audience it currently reaches is an influential one and should certainly not be ignored. As the simple one-to-many broadcasting model of the past gives way to a more complex array of push-and-pull interactions between content providers and audiences, public diplomacy must use all available communications resources.

Since American public diplomacy has limited resources and is unable to reach 100 percent of any population, it must use modern technologies to identify, prioritize, and target those who must be reached. High-priority communications targets might include attitudinal segments that are supportive or potentially supportive of the West and need further information and encouragement, or they might include the large population of young people in many Arab and Muslim countries. Products in one medium, such as a TV interview, can be used in other media formats such as print, Web sites, radio, and videocassettes.

In the area of international broadcasting, the resources of the U.S. government reach about 100 million people weekly in 65 languages. The Broadcasting Board of Governors oversees the Voice of America, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio and TV Marti, Radio Free Asia, and Worldnet Television. One of the new related developments is the Middle East Radio Network (MERN), which was added in the spring of 2002. Known in Arabic as "Radio Sawa," this station aims to attract young Arab adults. Delivered via local FM and AM radio and digital satellite, the station is still trying to build an audience, so most of the programming is Middle Eastern and U.S. music, with newscasts twice per hour. Gradually it will add components, such as audience "voting" for favorite songs, recorded questions from listeners about American and U.S. foreign policy, call-in discussions, and news stories about young people, women's issues, and health. In other words, the MERN will interact with its audience, and the underlying messages will be respect for each other and each other's opinions. The MERN is also building an Arabic-language Web site that announcers will constantly promote on the air. On that Web site will be key documents of American culture, including the only Arabic-language text in cyberspace of the U.S. Constitution. This approach may become a model for all the languages of U.S. broadcasting.

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5. Enlarge the assets devoted to public diplomacy.

Build congressional support for public diplomacy. Congressional support must be built for public diplomacy efforts through sustained oversight and the formation of a new congressional subcommittee structure within the relevant committees, such as the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House International Relations Committee. Congress' role in authorizing and appropriating resources for public diplomacy is crucial, and increased resources are far more likely if Congress has a sense of ownership and oversight of public diplomacy and its links to foreign policy.

Bring funding in line with the role of public diplomacy as a vital component of foreign policy and national security. The marginalization of public diplomacy has created a legacy of underfunded and uncoordinated efforts. For example, the approximately \$1 billion spent annually on

the Department of State's information and exchange programs and U.S. international broadcasting is only four percent of the nation's international affairs budget.

From 1993 to 2001, overall funding for the State Department's educational and cultural exchange programs fell more than 33 percent, from \$349 million to \$232 million (adjusted for inflation). Over the past decade, exchanges in societies with significant Muslim populations declined—even as populations in those countries were increasing. State Department exchanges with Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand decreased 28 percent; those with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen fell 21 percent; and for those with Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and India the decline was 34 percent.

Thus, as populations in Muslim countries increased by an estimated 16 percent, per capita spending by the State Department decreased by more than 33 percent. Similar decreases in funding can be seen in the budget for international broadcasting, and today Voice of America listening rates in the Middle East average only about two percent of the population. Finally, drastic cutbacks have been made in many U.S. information libraries and "America House."

Investing one percent of the nation's proposed \$379 billion military budget on public diplomacy will result in a budget increase to \$3 billion to \$4 billion—a figure that still pales in comparison to the \$222 billion American companies invest annually on overseas advertising. The marginal increases in funding now being considered in Congress will have insufficient impact and will not be commensurate with the problems this report describes or the reforms for which it calls.

The bottom line: U.S. public diplomacy must be funded at significantly higher levels—with moneys phased in over several years, tied to specific objectives, and monitored closely for effectiveness, including the possible use of test campaigns.

Build a stronger public diplomacy through enhancements in key areas. Areas such as foreign public-opinion research, recruiting, training, media studies, program evaluation, significantly expanded field staffing and exchanges, U.S. international broadcasting via the

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MERN and the American Embassy Television Network, and content, marketing, and branding of multi-language Web sites could all be enhanced to effectively promote public diplomacy. Today, within the U.S. government, there should be few higher spending priorities than public diplomacy.

MEETING THE CHALLENGE

IN SUM, the promise of America's public diplomacy has not been realized due to a lack of political will, the absence of an overall strategy, a deficit of trained professionals, cultural constraints, structural shortcomings, and a scarcity of resources. Money alone will not solve the problem. Strong leadership and imaginative thinking, planning, and coordination are critical. Public diplomacy is a strategic instrument of foreign policy, and U.S. leaders must provide the sustained, coordinated, robust, and effective public diplomacy that America requires. Indeed, the war on terrorism demands it. 🌐