

Heritage Lectures

No. 817

Delivered July 10, 2003



Published by The Heritage Foundation

January 13, 2004

Regaining America's Voice Overseas: A Conference on U.S. Public Diplomacy

Welcoming Remarks

EDWIN J. FEULNER: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Ed Feulner, and I am President of The Heritage Foundation. On behalf of The Heritage Foundation, I welcome you to our conference on public diplomacy entitled "Regaining America's Voice Overseas."

Public diplomacy is a topic near and dear to my heart. From 1982 to 1994, under three Presidents, I served as a member—and for nine years as the Chairman—of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy. I have been involved in the details and the programs of America's talented international communicators ever since.

The first thing I learned about public diplomacy is that public diplomacy is too important—and too different—to be left to the very talented State Department professionals who "earn their stripes" by influencing government-to-government relations directly.

It is my pleasure to welcome not only a distinguished group of panelists this morning, but also a large and distinguished audience. Many of you, including some old friends whom I have known through our shared experiences in public diplomacy, have served our great country throughout your careers in this field. Some of you depend on this important function to improve and sustain good relations with foreign publics throughout the world. And a few of you here—from other countries—have been on the receiving end of U.S. public diplomacy efforts.

Talking Points

- Today, following the terrorist attacks of September 11, lawmakers and policy-makers agree that something must be done to bolster America's overseas communications capability.
- We have unilaterally disarmed ourselves of the weapons of ideological warfare, and that disarmament is all the more astonishing in light of the fact that our victory in the Cold War was largely the product of our victory on the ideological front.
- The Islamic world is in crisis about its identity, its weakness, and its relationship to the non-Muslim world. We need to find ways to strengthen and support those within the Islamic world who have a vision of Islam that is peaceful and that welcomes coexistence.
- Only full-service public diplomacy and international broadcasting offers the format to permit the kind of dialogues which, like cultural and educational exchanges, can kindle a democratic "fire in the minds" of listeners, viewers, and, in some regions, Internet users.

This paper, in its entirety, can be found at:
www.heritage.org/governmentreform/hl817.frm

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Nothing written here is to be construed as necessarily reflecting the views of The Heritage Foundation or as an attempt to aid or hinder the passage of any bill before Congress.

I believe we have, in fact, four congressmen from Spain joining our audience this morning.

Historians might trace the beginnings of American public diplomacy to World War II and the establishment of the Voice of America to counter propaganda from German and Japanese enemy radio broadcasts. But even before World War II, Americans proved that we have always been good at advocating our own cause.

American colonists made sure their version of battles with British troops arrived in England before the official dispatches from the British field commanders. One of my personal heroes, and the founder of my alma mater, Benjamin Franklin, was in London at the time and I believe earned the title of “America’s first public diplomacy officer.” He made sure the colonists’ accounts were spread far and wide, defusing the impact of official reports which often arrived days later.

Just as the power of communication helped throw off the yoke of colonialism more than 200 years ago, so, too, was it employed during World War II. Then, during the Cold War, it played a vital role in the defeat of communism. More than that, the advent of international broadcasting with the Voice of America, and then the surrogate radio outlets of Radio Free Europe and Radio Free Liberty, helped spread the news about democracy and free markets to captive peoples around the world.

The subsequent creation of the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) as the lead organization for America’s public diplomacy efforts brought the various components together administratively: Through contacts with foreign journalists, with international visitor exchanges (IVs) and AMPARTS (American Participants) and other programs, by broadcasting to foreign audiences, with scholarship programs and workshops to train foreign journalists, and in dozens of other ways, America told its story directly to foreign publics, and we learned to listen as well.

But with the end of the Cold War, some in the Congress and in the White House believed that the need for public diplomacy was over. I hate to say that even some of my fellow conservatives advocated cutting public diplomacy’s relatively modest

budgets and folding the U.S. Information Agency into the Department of State. As all of you know, that is what happened in 1999.

It seemed to me at the time, and even today, that the real target was a spendthrift Agency for International Development. But AID was able to tell its story domestically, which USIA was prohibited by statute from doing, so AID saved itself from the chopping block through skillful advocacy. Unfortunately, USIA could not.

Today, following the terrorist attacks of September 11, lawmakers and policymakers agree that something must be done to bolster America’s overseas communications capability. Not all of us agree on how that should be done—for example, whether USIA should be reconstituted separately, or whether public diplomacy can be strengthened within the Department of State—but I commend to you today’s panelists, who will give you differing views of both what went wrong and, more important, how we can fix it.

Senator Chuck Hagel of Nebraska will join us to stress the importance of recovering this crucial capability. I want to thank him in advance for his willingness to share his views despite a very heavy legislative schedule.

—Edwin J. Feulner, Ph.D., is President of The Heritage Foundation.

Keynote Address

THE HONORABLE CHUCK HAGEL: I am grateful for an opportunity to share some thoughts and listen to the real experts and professionals in this business.

Let me first thank you for what you are doing: for the forum that Heritage is providing to deal with what I think may be as pressing an issue, as important an issue as there is for this country—and the future of this country is directly connected to the future of the world.

The paper that Steve Johnson collaborated on with Helle Dale, and that circulated in April,¹ is an excellent and defining document as to what has

1. See Stephen Johnson and Helle Dale, “How to Reinvigorate U.S. Public Diplomacy,” Heritage Foundation *Backgrounder* No. 1645, April 23, 2003.

happened with public diplomacy. It goes back into the history of our efforts over the years and talks specifically about post-World War II efforts to tell the American story, to connect the American story with the rest of the world.

Why do we do that? We do that because it's in our interest. This is not an aid program. This is not an assistance program. This is a program that is connected directly to the future of our security, our prosperity.

September 11: A Defining Moment. I think everyone in this audience understands clearly that September 11, 2001, was a moment that has defined and is still defining our public diplomacy, our foreign relations, our national security. Everything that we have done in the Congress, almost everything the President has done since September 11, 2001, is in some way connected to that day.

One of the points made in the Dale and Johnson paper—and I believe it is exactly right—is that September 11, 2001, was the second defining post-World War II event. The first was the implosion of the Soviet Union. As Dale and Johnson point out, after that occurred, we were all kind of dumb, fat, happy, rich—life was good. You remember what was in vogue: “the peace dividend.”

So we downsized our military. We continued to cut our State Department budget, and specifically our public diplomacy efforts. Radio Free Europe and Voice of America were essentially decimated, because why did we need them? The evil empire was done. The West had won. There were really very few challenges left in the world, so why would we spend all that money on our military and our State Department?

The State Department has never been a particularly easy sell because, first of all, it has no constituency. Not many of us go back to our states and our districts and say, “We ought to put two billion more in the State Department.” Everybody says, “We're already spending half the budget on foreign aid, aren't we?” There's no constituency; there's no defense contractor that supports Voice of America or State Department programs like the Defense Department has. There are no jobs that come with the State Department.

As we all know, almost everything is connected in some way to preserving jobs, and that's how we

stay in office. Even though we ought to close some of the bases—and we've made an effort to do that, and we'll continue to make an effort to close bases because they're out of date, not needed, and are a waste—we're horrified because that would obviously have an economic impact on our states, and it is tough to have to go back to your state or to a district and say that we're going to have to close something because it doesn't make sense any more. It is not a productive use of the taxpayers' dollars for the security of our nation.

This is the genesis of what happened to our public diplomacy, as Dale and Johnson point out, right after the implosion of the Soviet Union.

Reorganizing the State Department. Also mentioned in that paper was the reorganization of the State Department to bring USAID and all other programs that we define as public diplomacy programs within the accountability portfolio of the Secretary of State. I recall that it was the then-Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Jesse Helms, who was the driver.

I supported that. Joe Biden and I were talking about this the other day. Biden supported it. It was a pretty strongly held premise on a bipartisan basis that we ought to bring these resources together where there was some accountability. The Secretary of State is our chief diplomat, and he therefore should have those tools.

But I have always been concerned, and I'm concerned today, that if we find that our message is a bit dispersed, and that everybody has a public diplomacy department—the Secretary of Defense, the White House, the Secretary of State—then I'm not sure you're doing much good. All the programs and the policies and the resources that you apply don't do much good unless you have a message. The message still does count, and it doesn't count much unless there's a purpose.

Power alone won't get us through. I gave a speech to the National Press Club about three weeks ago, and my premise was—and I talked about some of the same things that you are going to talk about and what Dale and Johnson talked about—that it may be, today and for the future of our stability and the security of the world, more important that we focus on public diplomacy than

ever before. Raw power alone won't do it. We learned a little something about that in Vietnam.

It all has to work in some semblance of structure and organization, but the core, the engine that drives it, is purpose. By almost every measurement, if you believe in polls, we've got trouble in the world today because there is a question about our purpose, our intent. Iraq is a clear example of that.

We Americans think our purpose is rather virtuous. I don't disagree with that. I think this nation, because of its judicious, benevolent use of power, especially in the last 58 years, has done more to keep peace and prosperity in the world than any other country. I don't ever want to be in a world, or I don't want my 10-year-old and 12-year-old to inherit a world, where America does not lead, for no other reason than I don't know that the next great power will be nearly as benevolent or judicious with its power as America has been with her power. There's no question that this country has done more for more people in more ways than any nation on the face of the Earth, any nation in history.

Where is the disconnect here? Why aren't people getting that? What is the problem? That's the problem you're dealing with today. Is there not a message? Is there not a clear message? Is there a purpose breakdown? Is there an intention breakdown? Is there a suspicion of our motives? What is the problem?

A Sense of Hope. I was in Iraq and Jordan three weeks ago, and what I sensed in two days of meetings in Jordan at the World Economic Forum, in regard to the Middle East peace plan, was a sense of hope. It was a sense that maybe we're at a point where both the Israelis and the Arabs understand the seriousness, but probably more to the point, the consequences of squandering this moment. I think there is a seriousness that probably hasn't been there in a long time.

Certainly, the United States can't impose peace on anyone. We will never be able to do that. But I think, in the case of the Middle East and many of these areas, there will be no peace unless there is a complete, focused involvement of the United States, and that starts with the President of the United States because symbolism is as important in this business of diplomacy as anything else.

I mention that because I was interested in talking to Arab leaders, Muslim business leaders, and others about this issue. Where is the disconnect? What is the problem here?

It appears to me—and I've seen this over the years, long before I was in the United States Senate when I was a businessman and traveled around the world—that many Americans and many policymakers don't always understand that when the President of the United States speaks, or the Secretary of State or the Secretary of Defense, that our words carry incredible weight in the world. Words matter. Symbolism matters. Actions, of course, matter. And all those things come together when you're talking about public diplomacy.

It's not a Madison Avenue kind of appeal. It's not just radio broadcast towers. It's not just programming. It's not just news. As I said at the outset, there's got to be a message. What is the message? There must be some coherence to the message. There must be some purpose behind the message. And there is a lot that we need to work through because we, in fact, are making this up as we go along.

This country—in fact, the world—has never been faced with anything quite like what we're faced with now. This President is faced with something that no President in the history of America has ever had to deal with. Certainly, Abraham Lincoln knew before he took office what was coming. Abraham Lincoln had been giving speeches on slavery and warning what was going to be the outcome. Franklin Roosevelt surely knew what the outcome was going to be. This President was hit with something completely out of nowhere.

You can say, "But [former Senators] Gary Hart and Warren Rudman warned about it; [CIA Director George] Tenet warned about it; papers were written about it." Yes, but the fact is that this President had to deal with it, and this President, this government, this country, right now is not in a position to defer these decisions like we do on almost every other important issue, such as Social Security and Medicare.

This is different, so we can't empanel a group of wise men and women and say, "Let's study it for a couple of years, and then you give us a blueprint." It doesn't work that way. This President had to deal

with it and is dealing with it. So we are making this up as we go along. We're making the public diplomacy part of it up as we go along. We're making mistakes; we'll make more mistakes, but that's part of it.

Getting It Right. The diplomatic dynamic of this is absolutely critical, and we have to get it right. As I said in my Press Club speech about three weeks ago, what we're playing for here is something far bigger than just Iraq or Afghanistan. Those are pretty big stakes, but what we're playing for here is the future generation of the world.

We are facing a time when the reservoir of American goodwill is as low as it has been in the world since World War II. Why is that? Up until recently, most people in the world were alive during World War II or after World War II. They remember what America did. They know, many of them directly, the sacrifices made by American troops in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. They are aware of the good that we have done over the last 58 years.

Think of this: Of the roughly 6.2 billion people in the world today, almost 45 percent are 19 years old and younger. So the reservoir is low because most of the generations that were present and recalled and appreciated what America did are gone. A whole new generation has set in. What do they focus on? What is their life governed by more than anything else, even in Iran? Internet, television, mass media, the immediacy of the world today in telecommunications, transportation, commerce—everything is interconnected in every way.

Just as Arnold Toynbee once wrote, every generation, every civilization in the history of the world has always been faced with one relevant set of dynamics: challenge and response. So it is that we now have a new set of challenges, and we must now come up with a new set of responses. That is exactly what you're talking about today. We must take what Frank Scott, Charlie Wick, and so many others over the years have built for structure and calibrate it, refocus it, reorient it to the common challenges and new threats of today.

Connected with that, as always has been the case with America, except between World War I and World War II, is not to leave our friends and allies and the rest of the world behind. There was that time of isolationism that got the world in a lot of

trouble, but we learned from that. That's why we have the United Nations, NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization], WTO [World Trade Organization], WHO [World Health Organization], and all these multilateral coalitions of common interest. All are imperfect. All make mistakes, but they've done a lot of good in the world, and diplomacy is connected to those multilateral organizations.

The world must know clearly in our message that we're not unilateralists. We're not here to preserve the security of America only. We've never done that. Our security is connected to the stability and security of the world. What are we doing in Iraq if that's not the case? Or what are we doing in Afghanistan if that's not the case?

Filling the Vacuum. Another lesson we learned very clearly on September 11, 2001, is that when you don't pay attention to parts of the world that are dangerous, something's going to happen. It's like vacuums: Nature abhors vacuums. Something always fills a vacuum, and normally it's not good if you don't pay attention to it. It all fits, and diplomacy is the key to assuring as best we can that the rest of the world understands that our lens is wide, our view finder is clear, and our goal is a prosperous, peaceful, stable, secure world for all mankind because it is in the interest of this country—but not to the exclusion of everyone else.

Those are the dynamics that must be laid out clearly: The structure, the program, the facilities that help tell that story must emanate from the purpose and the message. It doesn't make any difference how much money you put in it if there is no purpose, if there is no message.

Within all this, some of us have a concern about too much power being concentrated in too few hands. I say that not aimed at any one individual, because Secretary [of Defense Donald] Rumsfeld and Secretary of State [Colin Powell] are all passing stewards through this process. You can agree with them, like them, disagree, or dislike them: It doesn't make any difference. It's irrelevant. But we have to be careful with this; the Congress especially must monitor this and make sure we do not isolate too much power in one or two departments of this government.

All of this is in the interest of security. I do not subscribe, for example, to letting the State Depart-

ment, the Defense Department, the White House and maybe Homeland Security, a couple of other departments, all have their own public diplomacy departments. They all have to have a piece, but that has to come from the President and then flow from that. If you've got a lot of different messages coming out with a lot of power being concentrated in a few agencies with a few hands, that is a great risk, not just to our message, but to the overall process and future of our country.

I want to thank you for giving me a chance to share some thoughts and, again, thank Heritage and all of the participants here for sharing your time and expertise because you are discussing something here that is vitally important to the future of our country and the future of the world. Again, to many in this audience who have given so much of their lives to causes far greater than their own self-interest, I thank you as well.

—*The Honorable Chuck Hagel (R-NE) is Chairman of the International Economic Policy, Export, and Trade Promotion Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.*

Panel I: Strengthening Public Diplomacy

JOSHUA MURAVCHIK: We have unilaterally disarmed ourselves of the weapons of ideological warfare. Ironically, that great hawk, Senator Jesse Helms, was at the forefront of this effort. I do not believe that Senator George McGovern, that quintessential dove, imagined in his wildest dreams that he could disarm us of the weapons of military warfare as thoroughly as we've been disarmed ideologically.

What makes this situation especially intolerable is that we are facing an immense global problem in terms of attitudes toward the United States. The numbers of people telling poll-takers that they have unfavorable feelings about the U.S. are much higher than the numbers counting themselves as favorable—even in a country like Kuwait, which we rescued not long ago. In our ally Saudi Arabia, 49 percent said they were “very unfavorable,” while only 7 percent said “very favorable,” a ratio of seven to one.

Perhaps even more astonishing, the proportions are roughly the same among our European allies. That is, in Germany, the “very unfavorables” are 30 percent; the “very favorables,” 4 percent. In Spain,

39 percent “very unfavorable,” 3 percent “very favorable;” Turkey, 67 percent to 3 percent, “very unfavorable” to “very favorable.” And when they asked this question in Pakistan, there's no number at all that appears under “very favorable,” just an asterisk to indicate that the numbers are too low to measure.

We are facing this enormous problem, and we are largely bereft of the tools with which to respond to it. And that disarmament is all the more astonishing in light of the fact that our victory in the Cold War was largely the product of our victory on the ideological front.

Winning the Cold War. We waged ideological battle vigorously in the Cold War. In the early phase, from the late 1940s until the intelligence scandals of the 1970s, a great part of that work was done by the CIA, which created Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, sponsored the Congress for Cultural Freedom, and gave different kinds of help to people behind the Iron Curtain and in contested areas.

When the Church Committee exposés made it impossible to continue in this manner, much of the work of the war of ideas was taken over by the USIA. Other parts of it were carried on in new ways—and in the full light of day—by the National Endowment for Democracy, and we managed to keep the radios in business with new and publicly disclosed management. Today, however, since the abolition of the USIA, we have no dedicated mechanism for carrying on this kind of work.

Three Essential Goals. We ought to aim to achieve three main goals.

First, we must try to influence the trajectory of the Islamic world. It is in crisis about its identity, its weakness, and its relationship to the non-Muslim world. We need to find ways to strengthen and support those within the Islamic world who have a vision of Islam that is peaceful and that welcomes coexistence.

Second, we need to anathematize terrorism. On a global plane, this has not been accomplished. Americans are horrified by terrorism, but the Islamic world is not. Yassir Arafat and his PLO remain the poster child of the Islamic world. There seems to be no disrepute attached to the fact that this is a leader and a movement whose métier was and is terrorism.

In the wake of 9/11, Kofi Annan tried to sell the U.N. on a new international convention against terrorism, but the Organization of the Islamic Conference vetoed it. They explicitly said, “We will not support this unless it’s rewritten to say terrorism in behalf of bad causes is bad, but terrorism in behalf of good causes is okay.”

This attitude is indulged more often than not by much of the rest of the world, including by most European governments. This year, the U.N. Human Rights Commission passed a resolution, as it had last year, endorsing Palestinian terrorism as an exercise of human rights, and every single European Union member seated on the U.N. Human Rights Commission, with the exception of Germany, either voted in favor or abstained. Most voted in favor. Britain abstained.

Third, the key problem we have in Europe and elsewhere is the understandable fear of American power. Never has there been such an absence of balance of power in the world, with one nation mightier than all the others put together. It is completely understandable that this is disquieting to others. We need to assuage this by articulating our sense of the purposes of American power and the limits on its use.

To this point, we are doing none of these things. Instead, Secretary of State Colin Powell brought in an advertising executive to, as he put it, “rebrand America.” In her confirmation hearings, Powell said, “She got me to buy Uncle Ben’s Rice, so she can sell America to the world.”

The main product of her tenure was a Web site and glossy booklet about the “Mosques of America.” I kept hearing in my mind the implied message of this campaign: “You should like us; we like you. And lots of us are Muslims, too.” It apparently never occurred to the authors of this stratagem that the fact that we have Catholic churches in this country has done nothing for our standing among the Spaniards or the French.

We need a serious effort to wage this war of ideas, and to do that we must have an agency devoted to it. The State Department, into which the functions of the former USIA have been folded, is the least likely institution to carry out this mission because the *métier* of diplomats is the soft sell.

We need an agency devoted exclusively to this mission, one which will serve as an advocate for it within the government. Anyone who has had experience in the government, or been a close observer, knows that unless a project is the chief priority of someone with institutional clout, that mission always loses out in the inevitable competition with other demands.

—Joshua Muravchik, Ph.D., is a Resident Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

DOUGLAS SEAY: I’d like to speak about Mr. Hyde’s [Representative Henry Hyde (R-IL)] bill on public diplomacy, H.R. 3969, the Freedom Promotion Act. But first, I want to lay out the context of the problem, some of the proposed measures to address it, and what the legislation aims at doing. In this process, there were several surprises we came across.

It’s been two years since 9/11, and in all that time, one phrase has been constantly heard: “Something must be done.” Unfortunately, it’s rarely followed with any concrete proposals of what to do. Everybody recognizes the problem, but in two years, very little has been done in terms of developing an agenda. So after 9/11, one of Mr. Hyde’s immediate priorities was: Let’s see what we can do.

The phrase he uses over and over again is, “How is it that the country that invented Hollywood and Madison Avenue can’t promote a better image of itself overseas?” The first step was to talk to everybody in the field. We knew we couldn’t reinvent it. Let’s talk to the experts. I think we talked to just about everybody we could find—in the government, non-government, active, retired, academia, the private sector, foreigners, Americans, everybody we could identify—and gathered their thoughts of what should be done.

That was the first surprise. There are a lot of good ideas, but nobody had an overall solution. There was no magic bullet. There are very few concrete solutions about what to do. That was a very big surprise.

The second surprise was that the problem was much larger and much deeper than we had realized. That became obvious in two hearings we had in late 2001 and early 2002. To me, the most striking thing was when we had the former Chairman of the Board of Broadcasting Governors, which over-

sees our international broadcasting, state, “We have no audience under the age of 25 in the Arab world.” No audience. That’s after half a century and several billion dollars of effort around the world. But no audience under the age of 25 in the Arab world. That’s stunning.

As I said, there’s no magic bullet; no one had a real overall solution. The one thing that kept on coming up was “Give us more money,” but the reality is there’s no point in giving people more money if the programs aren’t proving to be effective.

Two Major Problems. There were two major problems. One is how we go about conducting public diplomacy, which includes international broadcasting. We saw a lot of the things there as antiquated, ineffective. Shortwave broadcasts simply don’t compete in the modern world. They’re really a World War II relic. The second is content. It’s often unpersuasive, even to those who are able to access the information, which is a small minority of people.

There are very big problems in both. So we collected, as I said, all the proposals in the field and tried to put them in a single bill. The legislation was structured into three sections: The first dealt with the State Department, the second with exchanges, and the third with international broadcasting. They were fairly detailed, but these were the major elements.

In State, the first element was to enhance the visibility of public diplomacy and its role in terms of the decision-making in all functions of State. The second was to enhance the role and authority of the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy. The third was to require an annual strategic plan on public diplomacy to be developed by the Secretary of State. That was to give focus to their efforts and to make certain they took it seriously.

The fourth is that the bill gave more money, or at least authorized more money, because once USIA was folded into State, they promised they would keep the money in activities that had been used by USIA, but, in fact, this amount has been reduced over the years. So it’s much smaller than the original guarantees had been.

The second portion is the exchanges. Those are focused on the Muslim world, where everybody admits our largest problem is. Exchanges are at best a long-term addition to the menu of options that we

have, but it’s important to start now, and there are several simple things that we can do.

There were a lot of surprises, as I said. One of the most surprising was that there is no central database of exchange students that we’ve had over the past decades. We’ve said that this has got to be very easy to do.

The general situation is that individual programs know who their alumni are, but there’s nowhere in the United States where we know who they all are and where they have gone, and we don’t keep in touch with these people after this enormous investment of time and money. These are people who generally have a more positive image of the United States and could influence their colleagues and citizens overseas, but we just never followed up. So that’s one of the things the legislation requires be done, is simply to develop a database.

International Broadcasting. The third element is international broadcasting, and this includes the Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia, all of those. As I said before, our international broadcasting efforts are overseen by the Board of Broadcasting Governors.

In many ways, this is the most important segment of public diplomacy because it reaches the most people overseas, but what we saw as the problem was that the decision-making and management structures were confused and overlapping. This was a virtually unanimous assessment by everyone we talked to, including people inside the structure of international broadcasting organizations.

The problem with that is it hinders development of new ideas and their implementation. What we tried to do was to clarify the decision-making and management structures, because the central purpose of this portion of the legislation was to encourage innovation in all aspects. This was the central goal. The old ways of doing things clearly don’t work, or don’t work well enough, so we need to begin developing and implementing new ways of accomplishing this goal, to which no one seems to have a comprehensive solution.

We have to try a range of new things and do so quickly, but we can’t expect success. Therefore, in a sense, we encourage failure because failure means you’re at least trying new things. There’s going to be a high ratio of failure, or at least a lack of initial

goals, but the point is to try and try again, and eventually find what works and what doesn't work.

We need to encourage that innovation, not simply settle upon a model and put it forth without any idea of how it works. Part of what we are also asking to be done is a great deal of audience surveys. Is the message reaching the population? Is it actually changing attitudes? These are very difficult things to measure, but they're essential if you want to develop an effective service.

Reinventing Public Diplomacy. We're in fact trying—not just the people in Congress, but the entire public diplomacy structure in the United States—to reinvent exactly what public diplomacy is, and that's an open-ended process.

The problem is you can't legislate innovation. What you can do, and what the legislation tries to do, is to raise the profile and the importance of public diplomacy within the government and within the public at large. You can remove obstacles; you can create structures that allow decisions to be made and implemented more easily; you can increase resources; and you can use the bully pulpit. I think that is about the extent of what Congress can do. It's up to other people in the executive branch and the wider society to add to that.

I've been very encouraged—I'll speak for myself here and not necessarily for anyone else in my office—in many areas, especially international broadcasting, because they're at least trying new ideas. They're at least trying to innovate; but it's not without controversy, and it's not without resistance, and there are legitimate differences about how one should proceed. The potential problems in decision-making and management become quite significant when that is your goal.

The third surprise was that we had expected Mr. Hyde to take the lead on proposing legislation, but also that the subject would soon be flooded with other bills. In fact, it stood out there for a long time by itself. People talked about it, certainly in Congress, about how important this was, how something needed to be done, but virtually nothing was done—very surprising; very difficult to get people to move beyond recognition of the problem, to actually propose concrete solutions.

I'm happy to say that the legislation passed the House last year. It passed unanimously even though

we had large spending increases, to which virtually no one raised objections except for the budget officials at OMB [Office of Management and Budget]. It is now in this year's State authorization bill and is ready to go to conference.

What Should Public Diplomacy Do? I just want to say a word about my view—and again, I don't want to attribute this to any of my colleagues—of just what public diplomacy should do. I admit I am a minority in this area, but I think it's important to say.

It is not to make the United States more familiar to people overseas. They're already too familiar with us: TV, radio, our popular culture—they're saturated with it. The second is not to show our values or our tolerance. Most people in surveys overseas understand the United States and respect our freedoms; they respect our values. These are not things that they're really all that confused about.

And it is not to provide news. That may have been necessary in the past when there were difficulties in getting news, but in today's modern media, from almost anywhere around the world, you can pull down any number of news services. It's simply no longer a central function.

What it should be is focusing on selling our policies. Our policies are the center of the problem. Around the world, people see our policies as aimed against them, whether they are or not, and they have a lot of people saying that. They have a lot of people in governments and our enemies saying that very thing, and we simply haven't participated in the debate.

So that is one of the key aspects, if not the focus, of what public diplomacy should be: to sell those policies, not simply to present them as though people around the world can see them objectively. That's something we simply haven't done very well in the past. We haven't participated in the debates.

—*Douglas Seay is a Senior Professional Staff Member with the House Committee on International Relations.*

WILLIAM H. MAURER, JR.: Before I get into my litany of what I believe should be done differently in PD (public diplomacy), I would like to acknowledge that there were some very positive aspects that accompanied the integration of USIA's

public diplomacy functions into the State Department, not the least of which was the collocation of those charged with explicating the policy in the same place with those who make it.

The proximity of the Under Secretary's office to that of the Secretary enhances the possibility that public diplomacy considerations might be factored into the foreign policy process more regularly than perhaps they have ever been. The functional PD elements of IIP (International Information Programs) and ECA (Education and Cultural Affairs) were also moved intact and could function largely as they had in the past within the new structure. While I may personally feel that the abolition of an independent agency to coordinate PD was a mistake, what's done is done, and I believe that, with some adjustments, PD can be successful within the State Department structure.

That having been said, however, any new structure, however carefully constructed, can benefit from an objective critique to ascertain whether what was initially envisioned was realized in actual practice. Prior to my retirement, I spent a year working in the new organization, and I believe the structure needs to be tweaked if some key capabilities, which have been compromised, are to be restored.

The major difficulty hindering the Under Secretary for PD from doing his or her job is the fact that the Under Secretary does not have the tools needed to effectively orchestrate a worldwide and country-specific public diplomacy offensive. As long as Congress continues to earmark all PD funding (and I urge them to do so), the Under Secretary has the money at her disposal, which cannot be siphoned off for some other purpose.

Resources, however, are not limited to money. In public diplomacy, having the right personnel in the right place to accomplish the mission is essential. The biggest handicaps to realizing PD's potential within the Department are the absence of country-specific expertise within the Under Secretary's office and the lack of any direct linkage between the Under Secretary's office and the field posts that have to implement PD activities.

Public Diplomacy in the Field. Perhaps the most unfortunate consequence of the reorganization of the PD function after integration is the fact that the Under Secretary, unlike the former Director of

USIA, does not have any direct authority over the PD field operations. In fact, the PD offices in the regional bureaus do not have such authority either.

PAOs (public affairs officers) work only for their ambassadors or DCMs (deputy chiefs of mission) and in some cases actually report to others at post such as political officers. In a bureaucracy, the person who evaluates you and thereby determines your promotions is all-powerful. Thus, if a PAO knows he or she should be out jawboning with journalists on an important issue but is being pressured at post to write some political reports instead, the PAO has no recourse but to do what the boss at post wants.

The Under Secretary should have some say over how the PD resources are being used in the field, and those resources include the people as well as the money. Not having a cadre in the field that reports, at least in part, to the Under Secretary makes me pessimistic as to the ultimate success of many of our PD efforts.

Right now, there is a lot of informal interchange among PD types because everyone knows one another. Therefore, some problems are finessed despite the bureaucratic hurdles. As time goes on, however, and more and more PD officers move into other jobs and non-PD officers move into PD slots, the lack of formal lines of authority back to the Under Secretary's office in Washington could create serious disconnects in getting the PD mission accomplished.

Due to budget cuts over the past decade or so, some 60 percent of our PD operations overseas are one-officer posts. In those cases where the incumbent PAO may be from another specialty, not having a direct supervisory link to headquarters expertise, guidance, and support is problematic at best. One possible way to fix this anomaly would be for the ambassador to serve as the PAO's rating officer with the Under Secretary's office providing the reviewing statement. With a direct link to the Under Secretary's office, the PAO's position at post will be strengthened and the PAO's public diplomacy efforts will be highlighted in the evaluation of his or her performance.

Regional Expertise in Washington. When USIA's integration into State was mapped out, moving the USIA area offices into the regional bureaus at State looked logical on paper. However logical this

may have looked at the time, by doing so, the Under Secretary for PD was robbed of the in-house, country-specific expertise that is necessary in dealing with a world in which one size decidedly does not fit all.

Another reality is that while the regional bureaus may have benefited from the addition of PD expertise to ensure its inclusion in policy decisions, some of the bureaus did not feel the need for more “regional experts” since they already had their own country desks. Thus, not only did the new structure compromise the Under Secretary’s ability to do her job, but the PD country desk officers were often seen as superfluous in their new locations.

One overarching problem is how PD officers view their roles and how other Department officers see theirs. There is a Chinese–Korean proverb that says: “Sleeping in the same bed with Different Dreams.” Although PD officers and their colleagues from other specialties talk about “PD,” they often are imagining different things.

PD officers view their roles as primarily to develop programs and to distribute information that explains U.S. policy. Some in the Department seem to feel that successful PD is anything that makes the State Department look good. Others in the Department are more concerned with gathering information and formulating policy. Both of these roles are essential, but the PD officers laboring within the regional bureaus work for different bosses and are cut off from the program elements of PD with whom they should work to get the PD job done.

Under the present structure, when the Under Secretary needs information about audiences, attitudes, or program activities in a specific country, she must go through a regional bureau’s front office, which will staff out the request, often but not always, to the PD office in the bureau. The response will be cleared through several layers before it gets back to the Under Secretary, and, even assuming the reply has not been overly “massaged” in the process, getting it back will take some time.

Were the Under Secretary to have a coterie of regional PD experts, working directly for her, she could operate faster and have people at hand who know what she had in mind and who have the requisite PD field experience to make it happen. The

elements of ECA and IIP all can give her what they are doing in specific cases, but she has no one to pull it all together and explain how this mosaic of activities and programs is supporting U.S. policy and getting (or not getting) the job done.

The Under Secretary’s need for in-house expertise and the regional bureaus’ requirement for PD input at the policymaking level could both be addressed by leaving a couple of senior PD officers in the regional bureaus to cement the PD-policy connection but moving the worker bees responsible for field support from the regional bureaus to the domain of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy.

To summarize, the PD budget should be enhanced and protected from non-PD uses. A direct supervisory link between the Under Secretary’s office and the field posts needs to be formalized. The Under Secretary should be provided with a coterie of regional PD experts to help manage worldwide activities.

In the big scheme of things, these suggestions are not all that draconian. Bureaucracies being bureaucracies, any change—even one that is beneficial—is often resisted. Even those who might find their jobs easier to do if adjustments were to be made resist because they are comfortable living with the status quo.

I suspect that, if change is going to come, it will come down from the top or from the outside since, to quote that late, great American comedian George Gobel, “There is more than one way to skin a cat, but no matter how you do it, there is no way you will get the cat to cooperate.”

—William H. Maurer, Jr., is a former Director of the United States Information Agency.

AMBASSADOR WILLIAM A. RUGH: Let me focus on the interagency process in public diplomacy, which is my assignment, and let me focus quite narrowly for purposes of illustration by contrasting the situation we have today, with the interagency process, with the situation we had in a previous international crisis, the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait in 1990.

I picked those two because at that time, we had a major foreign policy problem and military problem that the United States was facing, and it involved

the public diplomacy element. Today, we have a similar international crisis, with not only military and diplomatic, but also public diplomacy aspects.

By way of introduction, it seems to me that the crises in public diplomacy have increased as the resources and means to deal with them, in terms of public diplomacy, have diminished over the last decade or 20 years.

The interagency process, and this includes all U.S. government agencies, including the White House and the Pentagon and the State Department and other agencies of government, including now Homeland Security, it seems to me, works better in the field. That is, it works better at embassies abroad than it does in Washington, partly because an embassy is a small unit in which people have face-to-face interchange, and ambassadors and political officers have a better appreciation of what public diplomacy is because they see the PAO, the cultural attaché, and the information officer every day and learn to appreciate what he or she does.

Problems in the Field. Nevertheless, there are problems in the field as well as in Washington, and the interagency process is not working as well as it used to. Let me focus on the previous crisis, and then I'll come to the current situation by contrast.

In 1990, after Iraq invaded Kuwait, we formed an interagency committee. USIA and the State Department co-chaired the committee. Its steering committee met every single day. We were on the phone throughout the day talking to each other. We had a weekly plenary meeting that was chaired by USIA and State as co-equals, which also included the Department of Defense, the National Security Council, CIA, and others.

Those other agencies were clearly subordinate, in the public diplomacy policy development process, to the State Department and USIA. It was a tandem arrangement between State and USIA, with State making policy as it is supposed to do and USIA undertaking the public diplomacy effort, which is developing public diplomacy guidance, establishing foreign public opinion, doing reaction analyses, and developing programs to deal with those problems. The focus, of course, was on the immediate urgent crisis, but we continued under that system to manage the long-term programs, such as the programs of educational exchange and others.

We developed many projects and products during that crisis. We undertook to produce a film. The purpose of the film was to demonstrate the overwhelming power of the United States and the coalition that was arrayed against Saddam Hussein and to persuade Saddam and his advisers to withdraw from Kuwait without a conflict.

The film admittedly didn't succeed because Saddam, for his own reasons, did not withdraw without a fight, but I think the process of developing that film was interesting because it illustrated that the idea for the film came out of a cooperative effort. It was an appropriate public diplomacy activity—aimed at the public primarily in the Arab world, but all over the world and also the Iraqi public.

The idea for the film came out of discussions between USIA and State. It was developed with USIA resources, with film production talent at USIA, since USIA had done films for many years. It used footage provided by the Defense Department acting as a subordinate player, not the dominant one. The film was reviewed by the Secretary of State and by the President himself before it went out. And that was just one example.

We organized interviews for the President with Arab journalists. We organized statements by the President that were carried by all USIA media, including the Voice of America, WorldNet, the Wireless File, and others. At that time, the Voice of America was part of the USIA structure with an autonomous position, but it was very supportive of our public diplomacy.

In the next panel, you'll hear from a real expert, Alan Heil, who will tell you how that functioned. But in my perception, sitting in USIA and looking at the VOA, the staff at the VOA had such journalistic integrity and independence that they provided honest reporting of what was going on in American public opinion, but they also broadcast all important official American statements. They did interviews with U.S. officials during that crisis, and they provided for audiences around the world a wonderful effort of support for our public diplomacy effort without being totally controlled in a policy sense by the State Department.

The Fragmentation Problem. Let me move to the current situation. Because of the decline in funding, which caused a decline in staff, as Bill Maurer

has talked about, and because of the merger of USIA and State in 1999, we've seen a dramatic decrease in the effectiveness of public diplomacy and the interagency process. Public diplomacy, as Bill has indicated, has been fragmented because public diplomacy officers have been scattered around to the Department of State and must work through layers of non-public diplomacy officers.

As Ed Feulner said in his introductory remarks, public diplomacy officers have a different mindset and a different role from State Department officers. They are a profession; they are a skill, a learned skill; they look at the world somewhat differently; and they provide a complementary role and a complementary function to State Department officers, to political and economic officers and ambassadors.

Now, 9/11, Afghanistan, and Iraq have thrust the Department of Defense into the forefront of our foreign policy, and it has taken over what appears superficially to be a role in public diplomacy. But I would argue that the Defense Department doesn't do public diplomacy.

The Defense Department's focus is not on a foreign target audience; its focus is on primarily an American audience. The State Department focus is on foreign officials. Public diplomacy officers focus on a foreign audience other than officials, primarily. The Defense Department, in its public statements and in its films and all of its PR efforts, is focused, I would argue, primarily on an American audience, and DoD is not so concerned about foreign reaction.

The exception was perhaps during the war in Iraq, when we had a DoD briefing officer in Doha, Qatar who had a few foreign journalists in his audience, so he had to answer some foreign questions, but the daily briefings by the Defense Department here in Washington and by the State Department and by the White House answered American questions. They don't answer foreign questions. And that's an important difference.

We now have the addition of the Department of Homeland Security into the mix. The integration of Homeland Security personnel into the process of processing visas and dealing with visa requests abroad and at home has added another group of people who do not focus on public diplomacy and

do not focus on the national interest as related to foreign opinion, but relate to security.

Balancing Security and Educational Exchange.

After 9/11, we have justifiably increased our concern about security, but I would argue that there are ways to balance security with educational exchange without harming either one, and we haven't found that yet. We are still leaning too far in the direction of security to the detriment of educational exchange and the exchange of persons.

Finally, there is public diplomacy that is being carried out by the U.S. government and its various agencies today, but it is less coordinated than it ever was. The complete separation of the broadcasting function from the State Department completed a process that was always an arm's-length, autonomous arrangement between USIA and State on the one hand and VOA on the other, but it has led to some unfortunate innovations. I respect the interest in innovations, but I think there are some innovations that have gone in the wrong direction.

I think the creation of the Middle East network, Radio Sawa, in place of the Arabic service of the Voice of America is a mistake because it focuses only on people under 30 and has reduced, in comparison to the Arabic service of the Voice of America, the amount of news and the amount of important material about American opinion and about American activities.

The problem with VOA in the past was not the content of the program. The content was excellent. I'm talking about the Arabic service and the English service in particular. The problem was the signal. People couldn't hear it. If we had improved the signal so that listeners could listen on medium wave all over the Middle East and the Arab and Muslim worlds, and kept the VOA program, we would be much better off than we are today with Radio Sawa, which has probably a better signal and a pretty good audience, according to reports in some places where we're broadcasting on FM; but the content is disappointing and is not as supportive of our public diplomacy effort as the content of VOA used to be.

In conclusion, what we need is better coordination; better integration of our various agencies, including Homeland Security; a reassertion of the primacy of the State Department and the public diplomacy professionals in public diplomacy; and

an increase in professionalism, a focus on public diplomacy as a profession, organizational cohesion, and greater efficiency, as Bill talked about. I think we have a chance to turn this around if we focus on the public diplomacy function, which we have not yet done.

—Ambassador William A. Rugh is President and Chief Executive Officer of America–Mideast Educational and Training Services.

SHERRI MUELLER: Special thanks to the Heritage Foundation for this welcome opportunity and for focusing a spotlight on the urgent imperative of regaining America's voice overseas.

Please consider this question, reportedly asked in a real job interview. You're driving alone in your car on a wild, stormy, rainy night, and you see three people at a bus stop: an elderly lady who looks gravely ill, an old friend who once saved your life, and the perfect man (or woman) of your dreams.

Knowing your car holds only one passenger, to whom would you offer a ride? You could pick up the fragile old lady, or you could take your friend, because after all, you owe that person your life; however, you may never be able to find the man or woman of your dreams again.

The candidate who was hired answered, "I would give the car keys to my friend, let her take the little old lady to a hospital, and I would stay behind and wait for the bus with the man or woman of my dreams."

I hope that this story illustrates what I hope the results of our deliberations will be: that we will think about creative alternatives to the challenges we face. The challenges are compelling.

Focusing on Financial Resources. I couldn't begin a talk about strengthening U.S. government-sponsored exchanges and the public-private sector partnerships that sustain them without first focusing on financial resources. The State Department's budget for these activities was cut very dramatically in the mid-1990s.

Last year, when I was in Beijing, I asked the cultural affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy how many International Visitor Program slots she had each year for Chinese leaders. She replied, "90." Ninety slots for a population of 1.29 billion people: We're not even scratching the surface.

Many of these federally funded exchange programs leverage remarkable private funding and support from volunteer citizen diplomats. Citizen diplomacy, a subset of public diplomacy, is the notion that the individual has the right, even the responsibility, to help shape U.S. foreign relations.

Let's take the International Visitor Program as an example of private-sector involvement. Most of you here—and I know many of you have been heavily involved in that program over the years—know that the State Department brings foreign leaders to the United States for two to three weeks to meet with their professional counterparts and to help them develop a better understanding of the history and heritage of the United States.

Almost all money, a base budget of about \$50 million, is spent in this country. In a survey in 2000, U.S. ambassadors ranked the State Department's International Visitor Program first of the 64 tools of public diplomacy at their disposal.

The National Council for International Visitors, my organization, is a nonprofit and the private-sector partner of the State Department. Our program agency members and 95 community organizations help administer the International Visitor Program. Approximately 80,000 volunteer citizen diplomats are involved in NCIV member activities each year. Yet our members and organizations with similar missions need more exchange program participants if they're to keep their local funders interested and their volunteers, both professional resources as well as host families, engaged.

Importance of Citizen Diplomats. We're underutilizing citizen diplomats, one of our most remarkable and cost-effective assets. These volunteers, working with coalitions, such as COLEAD [Coalition for American Leadership Abroad] and the Alliance [Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange], are persuasive advocates in conveying to the U.S. Congress the positive impact exchanges have on U.S. communities.

I want to say special thanks to Hill colleagues on both sides of the aisle who are working hard to appropriate adequate resources and strengthen infrastructure for U.S. government-sponsored exchanges. The field needs outspoken champions in Congress who will articulate the importance of making the long-term investment in building those per-

sonal, human connections that really come in handy when our leaders are trying to negotiate security arrangements, or hammer out a trade agreement, or perhaps establish procedures for containing an epidemic.

Ambassador Rugh mentioned security requirements and making sure they don't damage exchanges. On April 16, the Public Diplomacy Council, the Public Diplomacy Institute, and the Alliance sponsored a wonderful forum that focused on sustaining exchanges while securing borders. Rather than rehearse the concerns raised, such as the possibility of losing major market share of international students in our country when higher education is one of our major exports, I refer you to the report on that meeting.

International Exchange and Domestic Education. Another challenge is to strengthen the connection between international exchange programs and domestic education concerns. We're all rightly concerned with the Pew Global Attitudes Report that documents the dramatically escalating negative stereotypes of the United States, but equally sobering is the National Geographic–Roper 2002 Global Geographic Literacy Survey, which demonstrated that knowledge of geography among young adults in the United States continues to trail that of young adults in most other countries. For instance, only 17 percent of our young adults could find Afghanistan on a world map.

There are many ways to forge links between exchanges and domestic education. NCIV's LEADers in Education Initiative, expanding the International Thanksgiving Fellowship Program, the Fulbright Teacher Program—these are excellent models, but many are unknown, and they involve only a small percentage of eligible participants.

Exchanges would also be strengthened if we developed a viable form for distilling the lessons we've learned from decades of implementing them. We need to view the field more holistically, identifying ways to share best practices and generating synergy among programs. We do not always think of the military when we study exchanges, yet the Department of Defense does a lot with exchanges and training, and values person-to-person relationships.

There is an article in the current issue of *The Atlantic* where Robert Kaplan quotes a Marine lieutenant colonel at Camp Pendleton: "We want an empire not of colonies or protectorates, but of personal relationships." The author notes: "The formal base rights that we have in 40 countries may in the future be less significant than the number of friendships maintained between U.S. officers and their foreign counterparts."

How do we bring U.S. practitioners together from different agencies and with the private sector to exchange ideas and share best practices? Perhaps the Interagency Working Group at State can play a greater role. Those of us in the private sector are working on a summit on citizen diplomacy. We're talking to our sister cities colleagues, who have proposed a White House conference on citizen diplomacy to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the one President Eisenhower hosted in 1956.

Among the lessons that merit consideration, participants in exchange programs learn more about the United States, who we are as a people, and what we value by how the program is administered than by what some expert tells them about the U.S. governmental system and democratic values. The credibility of both the exchange program and the participant is preserved by private-sector involvement and assuring access to a wide range of institutions, opinions, and experiences.

British scholar Giles Scott Smith recently completed an article analyzing Margaret Thatcher's 1967 experience as a participant in the International Visitor Program, when she was an up-and-coming member of Parliament. He writes, "The openness of the program, allowing remarkable freedom of access for the visitor to American social and political life, has definitely been one of its most valuable assets. Visitors expecting a propaganda exercise were pleasantly surprised to find it a very different experience."

Exchanges are more than a two-way street. There are exciting models out there. Burlington, Vermont's mayor, Peter Clavelle, talks about his tripartite sister city relationship with the Palestinian city of Bethlehem and the Israeli city of Arad. He described a sister lake partnership where Burlington's Lake Champlain region is linked via exchanges of biologists and municipal officials to

the communities around Lake Ohrid, on the border of Macedonia and Albania, and Lake Toba in Indonesia. The Lake Champlain experience inspired the creation of LakeNet, a global network of more than 900 people and organizations in 90 countries working on the management of sustainable lakes.

Many Americans and many foreign leaders, scholars, and even younger leaders cannot spend a long time away from careers or families. It is important not to sacrifice any of the longer-term academic programs. The Fulbright Exchange Program is one of our truly fine accomplishments, but we must greatly increase the number of short-term exchanges, including Americans going abroad. We need to share what we have learned about making these shorter sojourns more productive.

It is dangerous to focus most of our attention on resources and exchanges with the current crisis spots around the world. Of course we must do that, but we must make sure we're not pulling resources away from places where we've just made a critical mass of investments, such as in the former Soviet Union, or where we have never made the investment our own immediate self-interest demands, such as in Latin America.

Telling America's Story. In recent discussions of U.S. public diplomacy, there's been much emphasis on what is *our* message. Years ago, whenever I walked into the old USIA building and I saw the plaque with the inscription "Telling America's story," I always wanted to see that inscription extended to "Telling America's story is done best by good listeners."

Our volunteer citizen diplomats *are* good listeners, and the best way to strengthen exchanges is to expand opportunities for effective citizen diplomacy, not only by having them host exchange program participants, but also by having them serve as citizen ambassadors on brief trips overseas to meet with program alumni. A comprehensive citizen ambassador program would be a powerful, uniquely American way to reinvigorate U.S. exchange programs.

The Voice of America is not only an impressive radio operation; it is also the volunteer effort that speaks volumes to official exchange program participants about who we are as a country, what we value, our belief that the individual can make a difference,

and our belief in the primacy of the private sector and the freedoms we celebrated just last week.

There's a plaque in a D.C. park dedicated to Edward R. Murrow. It reads, "He helped the world know what America at its honest best could be." We need to redouble our efforts to help the world know what America at its honest best could be.

—*Sherri Mueller, Ph.D., is President of the National Council for International Visitors.*

Panel II: Streamlining Foreign Broadcasting

SETH CROPSEY: It is a pleasure to be back at The Heritage Foundation where I spent almost four exciting and productive years at the Asian Studies Center in the 1990s. I want to thank Ed for holding this meeting here on an important topic and for the opportunity to take part in this discussion. I'd also like to pass along Ken Tomlinson's wishes to all of you for the success of this enterprise.

I was thinking about the points I wanted to make here, and I recalled a story about an event that took place a little bit over a century ago. At that time, in 1898, the Sanitation Department of New York had commissioned a study to determine how much land it would need in 1950 to dispose of manure from the city's horses. The authors of the study based their projections on the assumption that the number of horses per capita wouldn't change, but that the population would grow very rapidly.

In their conclusion, the study said that the city would need to acquire approximately one-third of Long Island as a dump for this form of waste alone. I think that everybody would agree that this study was fatally flawed. The authors did not realize that they were on the brink of a transportation revolution that would make the automobile the dominant form of transportation everywhere.

I mention this story because many of our debates about international broadcasting sometimes look a little bit like it, not graphically but in form. They focus on radio alone, or on whether we should shift resources from shortwave to medium wave and FM in one or another market. These debates are not trivial. They are serious, but I'm concerned that, like the sanitation study of 1898, they risk distracting attention from the revolution in communications that the entire world is now experiencing.

Worldwide Importance of Television. For an increasing number of people around the world, television, and especially direct-to-home satellite television, is the most important medium for delivering the news. In Russia, to take one example, 85 percent of the population gets all—not some, but all—of its news from television. And the Internet now attracts more people who speak languages other than English than those who speak our native tongue.

Nothing I've said detracts from the importance of radio in those parts of the world that are primarily dependent on radio or from the importance of radio as a means of communication. In my mind, it simply means that today, and even more so in the future, those of us who talk about and plan for international communications have to look beyond radio if we are to succeed in delivering America's message to the world.

I'm happy to say that all of us involved in U.S. international broadcasting are trying to do that, and I'd like to devote a few minutes to telling you about a project that we've just launched that highlights both our new focus and our new approach to making sure that we deliver America's message to the world.

Last Sunday, the 6th of July, the Voice of America launched a really remarkable new initiative. It's a 30-minute nightly in Iran that is an all-news program that aims at reaching the millions of Iranians who use direct-to-home satellites to watch television. That program features news about Iran, including the demonstrations that are rocking the foundations of the ayatollahs' regime. It contains information about American policies and world news affairs that is especially relevant to the Iranian people.

This program is professional. It's fast-paced. It is eminently watchable, and it's even more watchable if you understand Farsi. I've been told by our lawyers that I should be very careful about saying publicly that it can be watched on the VOA Web site. It went on the air only 11 days after the money for it was authorized by our board, and I think that all of you in this room know full well that this is remarkable for any government project.

It really took 11 days from the go-ahead to put that up, and it's a good, solid show. How did we do

this? The foundation was VOA's excellent Persian Service. The foundation is the new Radio Farda, which many of you know about. Also, VOA Persian's increasingly significant and important Internet operation.

Second, we learned over the past few years the importance of seeking out experts who know the communications business because they've succeeded at it in the private sector. They are an important part of strengthening and invigorating our broadcasts and attracting wider audiences.

Third, we knew from our research and from reading the newspapers that the Iranian people are not only hungry for news and information free of the Tehran theocracy, but have tuned into satellite television and the Internet to get it. I saw an article sometime in March that pointed out that something like 2 million satellite dishes had been imported into Iran over the previous 18 months. I suppose corruption has some good sides to it.

In taking this step, we understood something that often gets lost in discussions about international broadcasting. A half century ago, the only channel we had to reach the world was shortwave broadcasting. Sometimes, as in the case of the Soviet bloc, governments could and did jam our programs with success—not entirely, but with success.

Using a Variety of Channels. Now we have multiple channels, and no government is in a position to block our message if we use a variety of channels: Internet, e-mail, satellite, et cetera. Indeed, by overloading the system, every time we add an additional medium, we magnify the problem of those who fear the unimpeded flow of information.

Was the program to Iran that we launched on July 6 a success? I think so. We've heard from viewers who have called by phone and sent e-mails to say that their ability to see the demonstrations their own government is trying to suppress gives them new hope and encouragement that the Iranian people will be next to gain their democratic rights.

Are we getting jammed? Yes, we are, but we're getting through on the Internet and through satellites that are not being jammed.

I'd like to share with you an e-mail and a phone message that we've received from Iranian viewers over the past couple of days. One viewer called and said, "I watch the program; both image and voice are good. Thank you." Another e-mailed us:

Your program is totally under a microwave beam. They want to make sure that you cannot be seen or heard. Is there any way the U.S. government can take this complaint against the Islamic regime to the world court, the Hague, because what they are doing is obstructing our access to the free flow of information.

So we're able to get through on some satellites, and where we're not able to get through on others, we're able to get through on the Internet. People are listening; they're watching; and they're responding.

This is a success; but to my mind, the most significant thing about the success of the new VOA television program is that it shows we are now thinking outside this sphere that has contained most discussions of international broadcasting up to now, and it suggests to me that we are going to be able to be full participants in the new and revolutionary communications environment.

Let me conclude with three points. Within the next five years, technology will have advanced to the point that no one will need to have an external dish to get satellite television. Authoritarian governments may try to stem the influx of this technology, but they will fail. Televisions are going to have this capability, some probably here and in Japan first, but within X number of years, every television made will have this capability.

We are going to be there to make sure that our audiences have accurate and balanced information about the world and about America and its policies, and we will get through on those televisions.

Worldwide Rise of the Internet. Also, within five years, the percentage of people on the Internet who are not Americans will exceed 75 percent. When this happens, the Internet won't just be the sort of Americanizing force that we've assumed it would be up until now. It will be a new zone of struggle, and let me assure you that U.S. international broadcasting will be there as well.

Also, about five years out, ever more people around the world will be turning to radio, but I think that they will be doing so in much the same way that you and I do today: as a source of entertainment and what we listen to while we're driving to and from work.

So radio will continue to have enormous audiences, and we will be there with new innovations, and that extends to television as well: for example, Middle East Television, for which Broadcasting Board of Governors Chairman Ken Tomlinson has succeeded in securing support at the highest level of this Administration. In fact, when Ken briefed President Bush last month, the direction from the President was clear on this and others of our efforts to reach critical audiences in the war against terrorism. The President's message was "proceed."

Radio Sawa and Radio Farda are other examples of international broadcasting's effort to attract new generations to our broadcasts. Some who think within the paradigm that has been valid up to now have criticized these new efforts, but I believe that we need to see all of these new directions as part of a world that is changing and one in which we must compete, and one in which we must compete successfully.

Making a New Commitment. In promising you that we will be there, I must say we're going to have to make a new commitment to ensure that we have the resources necessary for this more complex and more demanding enterprise. Over the last decade, the resources that have been spent on international broadcasting for the United States have been reduced in real terms by more than 40 percent, and our workforce has been reduced by more than one-third.

So if we're going to meet these challenges ahead, that situation will have to be addressed. President Bush has regularly reminded us that the war against terrorism is one in which information and the delivery of information are as important as, if not in fact more important than, military strength.

U.S. international broadcasting today has emerged from the old paradigm, and I hope that, today and in the future, we can talk about how to take advantage of the communications revolution. I hope also that we can remember with humor and understanding the limitations of the 1898 study that

I mentioned at the beginning. If we do this, the entire world, and not just the residences of Long Island, will be the better for it.

—*The Honorable Seth Cropsey is Director of the International Broadcasting Board.*

ALAN L. HEIL, JR.: It has been absolutely wonderful to hear my friend Seth Cropsey speak about the value of innovation in international broadcasting. I think the example he used of the VOA Persian Service going into television seven days a week is exactly the right direction for U.S. international broadcasting in the years ahead.

It reminds me of when the first VOA radio-TV simulcast took place—coincidentally, also in Persian—on October 18, 1996. Being in that control room with TV and radio people working together was something akin to being in NASA mission control. We had produced live radio call-ins for some months by then, but the big question was: Would we get viewers?

The studio guest expert for the day was a Persian-speaking satellite TV specialist, as an aid to those new audiences we hoped to reach via home dishes in Iran. The control room anxiously awaited a call from a viewer, but for many minutes, listeners—not viewers—phoned in. The time ticked by, and finally, precisely at the half hour, the VOA Persian program host, Ahmed Baharloo, got a thumbs up from the studio engineer. It was the first viewer! The control room erupted in applause.

That first viewer, a man named Mehrdad, told Baharloo: “You know, I’ve been listening to you on the radio for maybe 15 years, but I never knew what you looked like.” Baharloo was quick to respond: “Did I disappoint you?”

Mehrdad in Tehran: “Not really.”

Baharloo in Washington: “You know, we’ve got to send you a prize because you’re the first TV viewer of our program.”

Mehrdad in Tehran: “No need to give me a prize; you have just given me the greatest gift of all.” Boy, did we take that one up on the Hill in a hurry!

Three Types of International Broadcasting. International broadcasting, when you take a longer look at it, has a history spanning three-quarters of a century. Radio Netherlands, the first to broadcast transnationally, went on the air in 1927. I maintain

that since then, there have been three principal types of international broadcasting.

First of all is Type One. Fewer and fewer people today remember the heavy-handed World War II or Cold War propaganda in the East–West war of ideas—not very subtle exhortations on behalf of the originating countries. The chief purveyors, of course, were the international broadcasters of the Axis countries, of the Soviet Union, of China, and of Albania. All to little effect.

Type Two international broadcasting has been the youth-oriented pop culture format. These formats were, and are, designed to build much larger audiences in the new generation by attracting them with the latest pop music hits and informal chatter, but relatively light use of news analysis and discussion. Type Two international broadcasting has been typified by VOA Europe, on the air in the late 1980s and early ’90s; to an extent by France’s Radio Monte Carlo Middle East; and, most recently, by the new U.S.-funded Arabic Service, Radio Sawa, which replaced VOA Arabic 15 months ago.

Type Three international broadcasts are what I call “full-service” programs built around accurate, objective, and comprehensive news and analysis with a complete range of features about life in the U.S. and in other countries. Often, this full-service format is misrepresented as being heavy and unappealing to youth. That may not be necessarily so; cultural, economic reportage, interactive call-in programs, and some music are all typical of full-service international broadcasting.

Historically, over the past three-quarters of a century, the most widely listened to overseas radio networks, among them the BBC, VOA, and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, have—in the main—employed the full-service model. People listened because this kind of programming reflected events as they occurred: the cutting edge of the news, someone once called it. In addition—and this was unique to international broadcasting and much else about public diplomacy—the best programs added dimension and context essential to overseas listeners and, in the latter years, to viewers and Internet readers as well.

Success of Full-Service Broadcasting. The full-service broadcasters sought to be faithful mirrors of events in the originating countries, as well as the

region receiving the programs. These broadcasts made a profound difference.

In Poland, in the summer of 1980, a budding labor movement named Solidarity had a few scattered local units in Warsaw, in Kotowice, and, most famously, in Gdansk. Lech Walesa and his several hundred followers learned to type out minutes of these local meetings and hand them over to the wire services. The Polish services of the Western broadcasters, including VOA and RFE, then beamed news of the meetings back into Poland within an hour or so. In about 10 weeks, Solidarity had grown into a national movement of 10 million listeners and members. The rest, as they say, is history.

In the early 1980s, huddled on a park bench in their city of exile, Andrei Sakharov and Yelena Bonner took notes painstakingly through the Soviet jamming. These were notes of what VOA, the BBC, and Radio Liberty were saying. The Sakarovs were able over several hours, and sometimes by patching together notes from the morning and evening, to form a composite picture of the day's events, not only in the Soviet Union, but in the world at large.

This was possible only because full-service international broadcasting provided a wealth of detail about what was going on that was of direct concern to these intellectual leaders in the Soviet Union. In 1989, the publicly funded international broadcast networks had reporters in all the capitals of Eastern Europe as regimes tumbled like ninepins.

In 1992, Paul Goble, who later served successively, at RFE/RL and VOA, spoke about the power of facts to transform societies. In his view, Western international broadcasters, by reporting campaign debates and elections in the West in great detail for decades, had effectively eased the way for some historic post-Cold War transitions.

At least a score of multi-party elections were held in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe—many for the first time ever. The process and outcomes were accepted as absolutely legitimate by populations and leaderships, Goble said, “because listeners had heard from international broadcasters for years how elections worked in the West.” The fall of the Berlin Wall reverberated in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, where constitutional conventions or elections were held in many countries in the 1990s.

A Fire in the Mind. As Librarian of Congress James Billington once put it, “Democracy is a fire in the minds of men. That fire feeds on constant communication back and forth, a sharing of information, ideas, skills, experience.” Is there a possibility today that U.S. international broadcasters, by simply sharing facts in partnership with their listeners, can help breathe substance into what may still seem to be faint new embers of reform in some totalitarian societies and in the Islamic and Arab worlds?

I say “partnership” and “sharing” because, with the advent of live call-ins, as the stories about the VOA Persian Service illustrate, U.S. international radio and TV programs are no longer one-way. It's no longer, as former BBC World Service Managing Director John Tusa once said, “I fired a signal into the air; it fell to earth I know not where.” Listeners questioning and responding to experts in studios in Washington for the first time have their say.

Add to that the unheralded work of the International Media Training Center at the International Broadcasting Bureau, which supports VOA. Thanks largely to help from USAID, that Center has had exchanges with 7,000 broadcasters from more than 100 countries since VOA founded the program in the early 1980s. Today, those contacts are being used to solidify relationships between VOA, VOA TV, and hundreds of radio FM and television stations around the world.

China, to this day, jams VOA and Radio Free Asia direct Chinese-language broadcasts and blocks their Internet sites and those of the major Western news agencies, but information does get through. On a VOA Chinese-language radio and television live call-in just a couple of months ago, there was a breach in this electronic Great Wall. A number of Chinese listeners and viewers were calling in to that program, and they heard a prominent Hong Kong journalist deliver a stunning, on-air critique of Iraq war coverage by none other than the state-controlled media of the People's Republic of China.

Jin Zhong, editor of *Open Monthly* magazine, noted that China TV had covered in excruciating detail every coalition military reverse during the three-week war. But suddenly, when television news services everywhere were showing those live pictures of Saddam's statue tumbling—over and over, again and again—Beijing media showed only fleet-

ing images of the event. Overnight, Mr. Jin added, Iraq became a “non-story” on Chinese state media.

Only full-service international broadcasting offers the format to permit these extended dialogues between specialists, viewers, and listeners: the kind of dialogues which, like cultural and educational exchanges, can kindle a democratic “fire in the minds” of listeners, viewers, and, in some regions, Internet users. They do so by simply relating the news and facts in a straightforward fashion and analyzing the events of the day.

In the Middle East, a reappraisal is underway about the objectivity of the new non-government Arabic satellite TV networks, which commanded the lion’s share of audiences in that region during the Iraq war. A prominent Saudi columnist wrote that the credibility of Al-Jazeera and Abu Dhabi TV may have been an unintended casualty of the war.

There’s a remarkable candor today in Middle East media circles. Many Saudis, the columnist wrote, noted that, until just a couple of days before Baghdad fell, all of the news on the Arab TV channels was about coalition reverses, and many Saudis are now thinking they were following a mirage. The closer they thought they were getting to the truth, the further they were from reality. And the information ministers of Kuwait, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates publicly criticized the credibility of the Arab satellite TV channels—on Kuwait state television.

Middle East scholar Hisham Sharabi believes the independent Arab TV networks are an important catalyst in what he sees as a possible transformation of the Arab political order. He says that candid discussions of history, economics, and literature are now taking place on Al-Jazeera. Panel programs are dealing with women’s issues, as well—subjects which have been hardly tackled in the past by indigenous Arab media.

Sharabi said that the rise of a new kind of consciousness is taking place in the Arab world, and the possibility is growing for an unprecedented mass-scale commitment to action on the part of the citizens. Might U.S. international broadcasting organize itself to seize the moment, to build the fire, to ensure that the multimedia networks provide the intellectual fodder for those unknown Walesas, Sakharovs, and Mandelas of the Arab

world? Events dictate no less: news in depth about such things as the Israeli–Palestinian road map negotiations, the reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Ensuring the Dialogue. How might we ensure that the influential listeners and viewers of today and tomorrow are engaged in a dialogue about America and its policies, about the reconstruction which is occurring in the Middle East, and the new thinking there?

First, we must recognize that it is unlikely that those in a position to influence events in the Middle East will be much attracted by a program that contains brief news headlines, rapid-fire summaries, and chats on trivia, all characteristic of the Type Two broadcasting I described earlier. Britney Spears, Jennifer Lopez, Eminem, and Egyptian pop star Amr Diab are fine in moderation. They belong in a program schedule, but not as the dominant feature in an around-the-clock U.S. international broadcast schedule. In fact, one might say that they sound truly out of place in times of war and crisis.

Second, we need an independently commissioned program of content analysis and audience research to test the validity of any new format that is introduced in U.S. international broadcasting. In the case of the new Type Two broadcasts, there should be independent translations at the same hours of the Arabic and Persian international radio programs of the United States, Britain, and France, as well as the TV programs of Al-Jazeera and the Middle East Broadcasting Centre in London. Then we could judge the content of them all, back to back, at the same hour, and compare.

We need audience effectiveness research conducted by a firm or firms using the same standards as applied to all U.S. international broadcasts. Radios Sawa and Farda are now judged on the basis of separately contracted surveys.

Third, the Administration and Congress, as The Heritage Foundation report indicated, should work together to streamline international broadcasting. Organizationally, this has become what one writer called “an architectural monstrosity.” White House and congressional tinkerers, Mark Hopkins wrote, “have established a wing here, a porch there, a shaky cupola on top, and some dormers jutting from the roof.” He may well have been referring to a

couple of not-so-self-evident truths about our overseas broadcasting today.

One is that 17 VOA languages have been duplicated elsewhere in the system in the past dozen years. Another is that there are at least seven separate newsrooms in this sprawling mansion of many missions, with even more wings or cupolas planned. What if all these newsgathering and reporting efforts and analytical reflections could be pooled, with information transparently exchanged among the seven newsrooms? The programming content of all the networks could be immeasurably enhanced.

Ideas Still Have Consequences. It's not my place here to prescribe a specific organizational framework, but there's no point in discarding the full-service approach to international broadcasting, which has made it such a success in years past. I think we have to recognize what was said eight years ago when VOA faced massive budget cuts and a veteran practitioner of public diplomacy wrote, "Ideas have consequences."

VOA embodies the importance of democratic culture and shared values, not just the raw economic interests of military power as a basis for international relations. America has an actual advantage in promoting U.S. interests and values in the world. The writer concluded: "The importance of moral leadership in the world by precept, by reasoning, and by sharing information, is vital."

That writer, as some of you will by now have guessed, was none other than Edwin J. Feulner, Jr., reflecting on VOA's essential full-service broadcasting role in the national interest. Not that the Broadcasting Board of Governors doesn't have elements in it that are striving to preserve the Voice's strengths. Some board members, and my friend Seth Cropsey, recognize the value of full-service international multimedia broadcasting, and several actions taken since last September point to this.

One of Ken Tomlinson's first acts was to restore Focus documentaries each weekday, which explore, in depth, current events, both in the U.S. and abroad. These are classic products of full-service international broadcasting, as valuable today as they were years ago. The board also retained the VOA

Persian Service. That's the right approach: When you introduce a new pop music service to attract youth, be certain you retain a parallel unit that's of interest to leaders and future leaders in a society as well.

The words ring true today of full-service international broadcasting's role, especially in the post-9/11 world of such danger and opportunity. "We must not," as Ed Feulner wrote, "unilaterally disarm in the information age."

Today, that advice seems sound for all of U.S. public diplomacy, including broadcasting in the highly competitive era of ideas and the vast babble of sounds, images, and e-mails. We dare not muffle America's Voice, America's substantive Voice, in any area of the world and especially in the strategically vital Middle East.

—Alan L. Heil, Jr., is former Deputy Director of Programs for the Voice of America.

RHONDA S. ZAHARNA: I thank The Heritage Foundation for the opportunity to be here today. One of the joys of being in academia is being able to learn and expand one's thinking through such forums. I also thank The Heritage Foundation for addressing public diplomacy, especially during this critical time. Today, as we are seeing in Iraq, the perceptions held by foreign publics have not only domestic consequences, but foreign consequences for Americans as well.

And thank you, Helle Dale and Steve Johnson, for your outstanding report, "How to Reinvigorate U.S. Public Diplomacy." I am a great fan of clarity and insightful information; your report had both. In fact, I want to use your report to answer the question that Steve posed: Is arm's-length public diplomacy²—using radio, television, Internet, advertising, and other mass media—effective?

I want to begin with that question. First, let me give a "no" answer, then a "yes" answer, and then conclude by returning to your report, which I believe can answer not only this particular question, but also many more.

Is arm's-length public diplomacy effective? When Steve asked the question, I was immediately

2. While I would like to claim credit for coining this expression, proper attribution goes to Stephen Johnson, The Heritage Foundation, in personal correspondence, July 2003.

reminded of Edward R. Murrow's notion of effective public diplomacy: the ability to cross that critical "last three feet." That critical three feet was, of course, the distance that separates two people or, symbolically, two peoples.

Using culture as a guide, let me first explain my "no" answer. In both the American and Arab cultures, communication is fundamental, yet each views communication fundamentally differently. This, in turn, influences which medium is the most preferred and most effective way to communicate with others.

The Information-Centered View of Communication. Most Americans tend to have an information-centered view of communication. Communication is seen primarily as information transfer. By extension, communication problems are seen as a lack of information—"we have to get the message out"—or as others not understanding the information—"we have to explain the message better, need more facts."

With this focus on information transfer, the mass media are ideal for communicating with the American public. The mass media are efficient; one can convey the most information to the most people in the least time.

They are credible. Yes, there was America's experience with yellow journalism, but that negative experience led to a stringent code of journalism ethics, fostering an eminently positive relationship between the American mass media and public. The "most trusted man in America" was a journalist.

They are familiar. In America, information campaigns and the mass media grew up together, and most Americans have grown up with the mass media, from the Saturday morning cartoons to the Sunday newsmaker interviews.

The Relationship-Centered View. In contrast to America's information-centered perspective of communication that makes the mass media ideal for communicating with the American public, people in the Arab world tend to have a relationship-centered view of communication. Communication is the glue that binds and connects people.

Just as Americans tend to complain of "information overload," many in the Arab world bemoan "relationship overload," or how to manage the overload of personal and social obligations that comes with too many relationships. Communication problems, in turn, are phrased as relationship problems: One's relations are strained or in danger of being broken. Every effort is made to heal, protect, or preserve the relationship.

If Americans turn to advanced technology to enhance the flow of information, people in the Arab world turn to a mediator whose special skills can enhance relations. Because communication equates with relationships, interpersonal communication is the ideal medium. It may not be the most efficient medium, but it is the most effective in building and sustaining relationships.

It is highly credible. Face-to-face communication allows for a total sensory experience: If the tongue lies, the eyes may betray the truth. Additionally, government-controlled media do not have a stellar history of trust and credibility with the public. Walter Cronkite's counterpart in the Arab world is likely to be plural and personal: someone not only familiar, but often familial.

Finally, interpersonal communication is the most familiar channel. Most Arab children are more likely to grow up playing with their cousins than sitting alone watching television. Most do not have an intimate relationship with the media.

So, when it comes to arm's-length public diplomacy in the Arab world, my answer is "no." These fundamental differences in how people in America and the Arab world view communication and corresponding media only scratch the surface. Cultural differences are exacerbated, although less perceptible, when one looks at cultural differences in mass media content and delivery styles.³

Radio Sawa has been a qualified success and exception, but the success Radio Sawa enjoys may reflect the fact that American music is wildly popular. American policies are not. Relying on the mass media to present and explain American policies via the media may not have the persuasive power or

3. R. S. Zaharna, "Al-Jazeera & American Public Diplomacy: A Dance of Intercultural Miscommunication," in Mohamed Zayani, ed., *Critical Perspectives on Al Jazeera* (UAE: American University of Sharjah, forthcoming).

credibility to cross that critical three feet in reaching the Arab public.

What About Iran? Having answered “no,” let me now contradict myself. What about Iran? Many have noted the connection between the student demonstrations for freedom and corresponding calls for democracy on satellite television and Internet sites.

Iran is not an Arab country, but it does share many of the cultural features characteristic of the Muslim world. Specifically, communication is about relationships, and interpersonal channels are the preferred channels.

I am not an Iranian specialist, so I hope you will forgive me if I trespass on the political nuances that reflect those more knowledgeable than I. However, from the perspective of cultural sensitivity and effective public communication, the Iranian case offers insight into why mass media can be effective.

First, there is a precedent. In public communication, wherever there is a precedent there is familiarity, which fosters the likelihood of greater acceptance. Although not a fond reminder to many Americans, the Ayatollah Khomeini was an Iranian exile who fomented a revolution by using audio cassettes from his apartment in France. Today, Persians in Los Angeles are trying to do the same via the Internet and satellite television.

Second, there is a mixing of impersonal technological media with interpersonal interactivity. In the case of the Ayatollah, his tapes (impersonal medium) were hand-delivered and often discussed in secret meetings (personal context). When you look at what is going on today in Iran, there is the Internet (impersonal medium), but it is the very personal dialogues of the chat rooms and blogs that convey the message.

Third, and perhaps most fascinating to me in terms of public communication, is how seamlessly the contextual fit is. For persuasive messages, the last thing you want is a bulge that draws attention to itself, begging to be examined and possibly activating audience defenses in the process.

In the Iranian case, the media and messages may be coming from the outside, but they are responding

to a need from the inside. Iranians may be turning to the Internet, but not solely for political messages. Half of the blogs relate to sex and romance. While the youth may be clamoring for greater freedoms, they are not alone. Political reformers exist within the leadership as well as those who voted them into power.

Because of this top-bottom, inside-out mix of media, America has a wide range of opportunities to interject its own voice without drawing attention to itself. America’s communication is *part of*, not *apart from*, the ongoing public dialogue in Iran.⁴

In the case of Iran, yes, arm’s-length public diplomacy is effective; but these contrasting cases in this one region alone highlight a more important question: What factors can help make arm’s-length public diplomacy effective?

Public Diplomacy as a Tool of Foreign Policy. This is where I turn back to your report and why I liked it so much. The underlying message I got from the report was that public diplomacy is a tool. Whereas I have talked today about the mass media as a tool of public diplomacy, public diplomacy is a tool of foreign policy.

Knowing how to use public diplomacy as a tool, I believe, is reflected in the report’s conclusions:

One, there is a need for training. Training will help officials use the tools of public diplomacy more skillfully.

Two, there is a need to address the structural organization. Addressing the bureaucratic barriers within the structure can help make public diplomacy more responsive, agile, and, ideally, proactive.

Three, there is a need for greater resources. Providing more resources can help put the importance of public diplomacy on par with the important communication goals America is trying to achieve.

I thank The Heritage Foundation for taking the lead and keeping American public diplomacy in the forefront. And I pray that public diplomacy can be strengthened during this difficult time as young American GIs interact with the Iraqi people, for projected in the mirror images and actions of each are expressions of vulnerability and distrust.

4. Given that the expression “the foreign hand” used by the Ayatollah Khomeini in the 1979 revolution appears to still be in circulation, drawing attention to American communication apart from Iran’s communication efforts may not be advantageous.

Poor communication fuels feelings of distrust, misunderstandings, and uncertainty, thereby increasing the likelihood of hostility. It is a lose-lose situation for both peoples. Effective communication, on the other hand, has the power to foster understanding, trust, and security, thereby increasing the likelihood of cooperation and mutual benefit. It is a win-win situation for all.

—*Rhonda S. Zaharna, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in the School of Communication at The American University.*

KARIN DEUTSCH KARLEKAR: I'm going to start by summarizing the environment for the media around the world, as well as existing efforts to promote press freedom.

Freedom House's annual *Survey of Press Freedom* has been conducted since 1980 and currently tracks trends in media freedom in 193 countries around the world. Each year, we rank the level of press freedom in each country on a comparative and numerical basis, based on three categories: legal and administrative controls on the functioning of the media, political pressures on the media, and economic pressures. We also then categorize each country as having "Free," "Partly Free," or "Not Free" media.

Pattern of Deterioration in Press Freedom.

Our latest survey data, which we released in May, pointed to a notable worldwide deterioration in press freedom in 2002. Of 193 countries, only 78, which represent only 20 percent of the world's population, were rated "Free." Forty-seven, or 38 percent of the population, were rated "Partly Free," and 68, or 42 percent of the world's population, were rated "Not Free." Therefore, about 80 percent of the world's population does not have access to truly free media.

In our survey, we looked at two factors in the past year that contributed to this decline. One, not too surprisingly, was continuing political instability and civil conflict in countries such as Colombia, Venezuela, and Nepal. In countries like this, the media often come under fire as part of wider political conflict.

The other reason, which is a bit more worrying and also surprising, was that many of these violations of media freedoms were occurring in countries which were nominally democratic, which have

elections, and which in our other survey of political rights and civil liberties are rated as free or high on a partly free scale. In such countries as Russia and Ukraine, politicized judiciaries, as well as restrictive legislation, can work to impede the media. Governments that are not receptive to criticism will try to crack down on independent sources of information.

In terms of regional breakdowns, the Middle East is definitely the worst region by far in our survey and the only region that has an average score of "Not Free," although countries in the region have different ratings and are very mixed. Africa is still a huge problem area. Parts of the former Soviet Union and Central Asia, and certainly a number of countries in Asia and in the Americas, still have "Not Free" media.

The Need for Balanced Information. The results of our survey point to several issues that I'd like to discuss in the context of this panel. The first is that there definitely is a crucial need for balanced information in these numerous countries where free media do not exist. In these countries, broadcast media are usually under state control, and any existing independent newspapers do not often reach a wide section of the population due to distribution problems.

In these countries, foreign broadcasts can be and are a crucial source of news. For example, in Afghanistan, the BBC and the VOA were and continue to be vital sources of information for most of the population.

The main challenge for foreign broadcasters is that they should not be seen as PR agents of a certain country or a certain point of view. Otherwise, they really will not have any credibility with the local populations. The information they present should be balanced, and it should be very relevant to the people in that country. So, for example, it obviously should not just focus on American news or viewpoints, but it should also include a large component of local and regional news so that people will have access to information that affects them directly.

However, the more important issue to keep in mind is that the environment into which these foreign broadcasts are made is also important. In that regard, a key goal for the U.S. and for other govern-

ments should be to keep promoting a free environment for media around the world. Independent local media outlets that provide critical coverage and scrutiny play an essential role in keeping governments and other actors responsible and accountable, and also in keeping the citizens of a particular country well-informed and exposed to a wide range of diverse opinions.

In terms of current efforts to promote free media that are being undertaken by a range of U.S. government actors, other multilateral organizations, and donors, as well as private groups, you can divide the field into several categories.

Importance of Advocacy. One key issue is advocacy, which can draw attention to violations and can help pressure governments not to clamp down on the press. A recent, very positive example is the case of Hong Kong, where efforts by Freedom House, as well as by a number of other U.S.-based and Hong Kong-based organizations, to put pressure on the Hong Kong government resulted in the postponement of security legislation which was expected to be passed in Hong Kong.

In terms of other areas of assistance, looking at the wider legal environment and trying to suggest reforms for problematic laws is also very important, as restrictive legislation continues to impede the media in many countries. Another major area is implementing programs that train journalists and other media managers to become more professional, how to write about certain issues, and how to manage media businesses.

I'd like to end by talking about a Freedom House program, which, in terms of what we've been talking about today, combines the training aspect for journalists with other elements of public diplomacy.

Freedom House is currently running a program in Nigeria to train journalists. It's an exchange program in which journalists have been brought over to the United States to do internships for about a month in a variety of U.S. broadcast and print media outlets. They also learn about the American democratic system and have access to a wide variety of meetings with government representatives, NGOs [non-governmental organizations], and other media outlets in the United States.

The second half of the program will be to conduct workshops in Nigeria, and these journalists that we

have brought over here will help to conduct these workshops to help reach a wider range of journalists in Nigeria.

In this way, journalists are being trained to become more professional and to cover important issues, and they also gain exposure to the United States at the same time. So it's a nice combination of an exchange program as well as a training program.

—Karin Deutsch Karlekar, Ph.D., is Senior Researcher at Freedom House.

MARK HELMKE: As my long-time mentor, boss, and friend, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Richard Lugar, has said, "American public diplomacy lacks vision." He says this not so much out of criticism, however, but as a challenge for all of us to do better.

Chairman Lugar's challenge is complicated by the mindset in institutions that still remain from the Cold War and continue to cripple America's efforts to confront the diplomatic realities of today. While America's military has gone through a major overhaul and significant new funding since the collapse of the Soviet Union, our State Department and, therefore, our public diplomacy efforts have suffered from neglect.

Except for the Nunn-Lugar disarmament program that has had to fight for its life every year for the last decade, I think future historians will see the 1990s as the wasted decade of the American Imperium. The United States won the Cold War and then blew the good graces of the world on self-indulgence rather than leadership.

Bipartisan Blame. The blame is bipartisan. Bill Clinton only cared about America being fat, happy, and dumb; much of the Republican Congress was isolationist. Throughout the 1990s, the State Department budget was cut while we struggled to open new embassies to accommodate the 19 new countries liberated by the end of the Soviet empire.

For three years, the State Department could not afford to hire any new Foreign Service officers—not one. Where is the failure of American public diplomacy? That's where it is.

Today, for every dollar the United States spends on the military, we spend only seven cents on the State Department. For all the fevered press accounts of the so-called wars between the Pentagon and the

State Department, that's a joke. There is no contest between the State Department and the Pentagon. There's no war between them. The Pentagon rolls over the State Department every single day in this city. The sorry state of State is a national shame.

The promise of America is great, but the follow-through around the world does not live up to our billing. It's no wonder the rest of the world hates us. I was in Kiev when Ukraine drove a stake into the heart of the Soviet empire on December 1, 1991. Three weeks after Ukrainians voted for their independence, Mikhail Gorbachev announced, on Christmas Day, that the Soviet Union was no more.

I returned to Washington giddy with delight. For a Goldwater–Reagan–Lugar Republican, I wanted to scream, “We won; we won; when are all going to Disneyland?” But to my dismay, and later disgust, all I encountered at the State Department were long faces of concern. The striped-pants set did not like this turn of events.

I was dumbfounded until one day it dawned on me as I was staring at another framed sheepskin from another prestigious Ivy League university behind the desk of another State Department expert, and it read “Ph.D., Soviet Studies.” I slapped my poor dumb Hoosier head, and it dawned on me: These guys were experts in a country that no longer existed. Of course they were reluctant to change.

We have to change, and we have to start changing very quickly, and Chairman Lugar is leading the way. As he has said, “The United States has a military unrivaled to none. We also have to start having a diplomatic corps and a public diplomacy diplomatic corps that is unrivaled to none throughout the world.”

The Beginnings of Change. To his benefit, Secretary Powell is beginning to make changes. Continuing education is now a must at the State Department. Unlike the military, where advanced training has long been seen as a sign of advancement, the culture of State used to see that as a demerit.

The same is now true for congressional experience. Rising generals and admirals have long seen Hill experience as a way to get moving up. State saw congressional experience as Siberia. Powell's beginning to change that too, but much more is

required, especially if we're going to train diplomats that diplomacy now requires the complex skills of political communications and not just the refined skills of diplomatic communications.

Yesterday, the Senate began debating the State Department authorization bill, which includes for the first time in 18 years foreign assistance legislation. The last time the Senate took up such legislation just happened to be the last time a certain Senator from Indiana named Lugar was chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.

Well, that Senator named Lugar intends to be a chairman or ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee at least for the next 10 years, and he intends to pass such legislation each year, systematically remaking and increasing the funding of the State Department, the Voice of America, and other international broadcasting services. I think we're going to get that bill passed today.

Before I came over here, in fact, the Democrats were actually amending the State Department authorization bill with unemployment insurance for Americans: not foreigners, but Americans. It's the first time in my life I've ever seen the Senate of the United States, the greatest deliberative body, actually thinking that a foreign policy bill was such a fast-moving vehicle that they were going to put American domestic legislation on it.

That shows you something about where we're going with this legislation. This is an important thing, because if we can start passing these bills every year, we can slowly but surely increase that seven cents to something more significant, and we can start making some real policy changes.

In that bill, there is \$30 million for new exchange programs for the Middle East and the authorization to go on with \$30 million we already appropriated to set up Middle East TV. There is more money for training for public diplomacy for State Department employees.

Increasing Political Communications Training. One thing that the Senator wants to do in this coming year is to do more to train, not just public diplomacy, but what we call political communications at the State Department. He also wants to see how we can recruit and sign trained and experienced political communicators for special interna-

tional assignments, both for the short term and the long term.

The Defense Department has a contract in Iraq with a private company here in Washington, and we have tens of thousands of trained political communicators. How do we mobilize people to go into countries, not just Iraq, but all over the world, at times of crisis to assist our State Department in political communications? I think we need to be able to find ways, just as we mobilized military reservists, to mobilize civilians to assist not just in public diplomacy and political communication, but in rebuilding countries and nation building.

On nation building, Senator Lugar said quite clearly after he came back from Iraq two weeks ago, "Let's just admit it, clear and simple, we are into nation building." This is the frustration we also had after the breakup of the Soviet Union, and this goes to the education issue that's long been overlooked in the State Department.

Democracy is not just elections. We know that instinctively here in the United States. I've been frustrated that too many of our diplomats never understood that. Democracy requires all the mediating institutions that Madison and the founders wrote about 200 years ago, and we have to promote all those mediating institutions.

A free press that is legally protected and that has a trained, educated, and responsible press corps is critical to the process, and we have to help build those institutions. We have to go about it in a responsible way, and we should figure out how we institutionally do that.

I think there's a paradigm that we have to look at. Chairman Lugar is looking at it not only in the context of Iraq, but also in the context of funding issues that we had in this year's authorization bill in Central Europe. OMB [Office of Management and Budget] called for the elimination of 14 language services in Central Europe, from the Balkans down to Romania. OMB argued that we don't need to continue to broadcast in Lithuania, Poland, and places like that anymore. But as soon as budget cuts were called for, we received complaints from all those countries, saying, "We still like Voice of America and Radio Free Europe." And those are NATO countries.

We did some checking to find out whether there is really a free and fair press. Are we protected in all

those countries? Senator Lugar has called for retention of funding for the next year while we do a study. Those funds are not in the House bill, and we might have trouble getting those funds into the appropriations measures.

We have the same issue with Iraq. We have \$60 million going not just into Iraq, but into Arabic Service, Middle East broadcast in general. I have received complaints from a number of NGOs that we finance who are in the business of helping to train free and fair media across the world, saying, "We shouldn't give that money to the Broadcasting Board. You should give the money to us to set up a free, fair, indigenous media in those countries."

Valid point. I think we should be doing both. But I think that there's a continuum—and Chairman Lugar and I have discussed this at length—and that is, we should be in the business of broadcasting into countries that do not now have all the democratic institutions that we believe they should enjoy, and especially countries that have dictatorships or rogue regimes.

Improving the Broadcasting Board. We should also have the Broadcasting Board set up in a way that when democratic institutions are set up, there is a mechanism in place so that Voice of America Iraq or Radio Sawa could eventually spin off in a privatized way if it can. We need to have that mechanism in place so that if Voice of America Poland or Radio Free Europe Lithuania can stand by itself, the United States can say we did our business there. It can stand by itself.

We need to think of ways in the future that the Broadcasting Board can do that, but at the same time, through USAID or some other entity, we're also busy helping to train journalists, set up the rule of law through the open media, make sure all the institutions are in place to ensure that we have a free and fair press in those countries.

At the same time, we need to have the trained diplomats involved in public diplomacy through exchange programs, but also the trained diplomats who know how to be engaged in political communications; who understand that diplomacy in this day and age is not just diplomat to diplomat, but diplomat to publics; who understand, as we understand in the United States today, that we have to talk to various constituencies.

That's going to require a major change at State in the culture, and it's going to require us funding State adequately as taxpayers, and that's where Chairman Lugar sees us taking State in the future.

—Mark Helmke is a Senior Professional Staff Member with the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

—Helle Dale, Deputy Director of the Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute for International Studies at The Heritage Foundation, served as moderator for Panel I, and Stephen Johnson, Senior Policy Analyst for Latin America in the Davis Institute, served as moderator for Panel II.