



COALITION LAUNCHES PUBLIC DIPLOMACY MEDIA CAMPAIGN IN IRAQ

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The U.S.-led coalition launched a media campaign in Iraq with Mr. Bush assuring Iraqis that "the future of your country will soon belong to you"

British Prime Minister Tony Blair and U.S. President George W. Bush launched a media campaign on Thursday aimed at speeding the collapse of the Saddam Hussein regime and at **quelling** fears among Iraqis that coalition forces may occupy the country.

In a two-and-a-half minute video, broadcast via the newly created, U.S.-run Arab language TV network, Mr. Bush told the Iraqi people that Saddam's regime is coming to an end.

"You deserve better than **tyranny** and corruption and torture chambers," Bush said. "Your nation will soon be free."

"Towards Freedom" channel

The taped message represents one of many Iraqis will see each night between 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. local time. Programming will come from the U.S. Department of Defense as well as from the rebroadcasts of independent news outlets from both the U.S. and Britain, according to White House officials.

Thursday's message from the American president and British prime minister launched the channel, called Nahwa Al-Hurrieh or "Towards Freedom." The coalition will broadcast messages in English with Arabic subtitles from a U.S. Air Force plane flying over Iraq.

"This is a way for President Bush and Prime Minister Blair to speak directly to the people of Iraq about the freedom and the liberation that is coming to them," said White House spokesman Ari Fleischer on Thursday.

Past information campaigns

In the past, the U.S. and Britain have used media as a device to **disseminate** information to civilians in countries where there has been conflict. During the War with Afghanistan, U.S. military planes dropped meal packages sporting the U.S. flag and leaflets showing images of U.S. soldiers shaking hands with Afghan civilians.

During past conflicts in Kosovo and Bosnia, British military forces used a strategy known as Psyops - short for Psychological operations - in which they used radio broadcasts and

leaflets to influence enemy soldiers and civilians. The military is using the same practice today in Iraq, according to Britain's *The Guardian*.

The White House Office of Global Communications has also used a more broad-based campaign to improve America's image abroad. Initially headed by former Madison Avenue advertising executive Charlotte Beers, the office spent \$15 million to create a positive image of the U.S. in the Muslim and Arab worlds.

The effort included newspaper ads, glossy leaflets distributed by U.S. embassies abroad and the creation of the U.S. run music and news radio station, Radio Sawa, or Radio "Together." In addition, countries including Pakistan and Kuwait agreed to air a television ad campaign featuring Muslim Americans discussing the positive aspects of living in America.

Critics cry propaganda

Other Arabic and Muslim countries refused to air the ads. Beers said, "...if there has been reluctance, it's probably based on the point that they consider it **propaganda**."

Asked Thursday if he feared Iraqis may view the new coalition-created broadcasts as propaganda, Fleischer said on the contrary, scenes on the streets of Iraq seem to show the Iraqis welcoming Mr. Bush's message.

The coalition will also publish a newspaper in southern Iraq, with an initial circulation of 10,000. The newspaper and television broadcasts will join Commando Solo, a series of radio broadcasts the Defense Department already airs in Iraq.

Vocabulary

quell - (v.) 1: to thoroughly overwhelm and reduce to submission or passivity
2: quiet, pacify (Merriam-Webster)

tyranny - (n.) a government in which absolute power is vested in a single ruler (Merriam-Webster)

disseminate - (v.) to disperse throughout (Merriam-Webster)

propaganda - (n.) ideas, facts, or allegations spread deliberately to further one's cause or to damage an opposing cause; also : a public action having such an effect (Merriam-Webster)