Why We Need to Reestablish the USIA

Michael J. Zwiebel

"Who has anything against life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness?"[1]

—attributed to an Iranian citizen

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Michael J. Zwiebel is Director of Range Infrastructure and Investments, U.S. Army Developmental Test Command, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland. He holds a B.S. in electrical engineering from Wilkes University, an M.A. in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College, and has undertaken graduate studies in electro-optics at the University of Delaware.

FAVORABLE PERCEPTIONS of the United States were on the decline in the Muslim world prior to the attacks of September 11th. Operations Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Iraqi Freedom in Iraq have not helped change those perceptions, particularly with religious extremists. Accordingly, the U.S. Congress directed the Department of State (DOS) to reassess its public diplomacy efforts in the Muslim regions. DOS then established an advisory group, which produced a report in September 2003 with recommendations calling for a "transformation of public diplomacy" through increased funding. The aim was to establish a new strategic direction for public diplomacy, and the report recommended that the president and Congress lead this new initiative.

This article reviews public diplomacy as a form of "soft power," shows how it can be used to promote U.S. interests in the Arab-Muslim world, and assesses DOS's public diplomacy efforts since the advisory group published its report. It concludes by calling for a more effective organization, one similar to the old U.S. Information Agency (USIA), so that public diplomacy can once again be employed as an effective instrument of national power.

Soft Power

When one thinks of sovereign state power, the first thought is likely that of military capabilities. But the sovereign state has many instruments of power available to it, including diplomatic, informational, military, and economic (DIME) instruments. In *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, Joseph Nye, a former Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs and a recognized expert on international affairs and the effects of soft power, provides some useful observations on power and its relationship to the sovereign state. Power, Nye says, is "the ability to influence the behavior of others to get the outcomes you want."[2] Influence can be accomplished through forceful means, or hard power, such as military action or economic restrictions. Nye then describes an alternate source of power: soft power. He explains that soft power uses attraction to "get the outcomes you want without the tangible threats or payoffs."[3]

According to Nye, a state derives its soft power from three sources: culture, political values, and foreign policy.[4] The strength of the state's soft power depends on the attraction or repulsion its culture, political values, and foreign policy generate in the citizens of the targeted country. To make soft power work effectively, a state must carefully select the methods that will attract others to its interests. Soft power, it must be said, is not an exclusive replacement for hard power; rather, it can strengthen applications of hard power, and it may be less expensive. Soft power can be directed at either an opposing state or at its individual citizens. Public diplomacy is one form of soft power employed

by the United States. The Nation used it during the cold war to communicate American values to the populations of Communist countries (and to neutral countries and allied populations as well).

Public Diplomacy

The United States Information Agency Alumni Association (USIAAA), formed by members of the old USIA, provides information on public diplomacy. According to the group, the term "public diplomacy" was first used in 1965 by Edmund Gullion, Dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. The USIAAA cites a brochure from the Edward R. Murrow Center for Public Diplomacy at Fletcher that offers this definition: "Public Diplomacy…deals with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with those of another; the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy; communication between those whose job is communication, as between diplomats and foreign correspondents; and the processes of inter-cultural communications."[5]

By distinguishing public diplomacy from other common terms used for information exchange, the USIAAA has contributed to a better understanding of the term. The group compares public diplomacy with public affairs by suggesting that public affairs focuses primarily on domestic audiences, whereas public diplomacy focuses on foreign audiences. It then distinguished public diplomacy from diplomacy. The latter focuses on government-to-government relations, while public diplomacy focuses on influencing foreign publics. USIAAA does not attempt to distinguish public diplomacy from propaganda. Instead, it candidly admits that public diplomacy is a form of propaganda based on facts.[6]

In June 1997, the Planning Group for Integration of the United States Information Agency into the State Department provided its own definition of public diplomacy: "[It] seeks to promote the national interest of the United States through understanding, informing and influencing foreign audiences."[7]

The 1987 *U.S. Department of State Dictionary of International Relations Terms* states that "public diplomacy refers to government-sponsored programs intended to inform or influence public opinion in other countries; its chief instruments are publications, motion pictures, cultural exchanges, radio and television." DOS does, in fact, use a variety of media in its efforts to convey U.S. national values to foreign publics. They include information exchanges, English language education programs, student exchange programs, collaboration with indigenous or nongovernmental organizations, and radio and television.[8] Newer media such as the Internet and satellite broadcasting have also become effective tools for employing soft power. DOS uses them to provide direct information exchange to remote areas.

Public diplomacy is one of the national instruments of power employed to implement the U.S. National Security Strategy. By winning over the hearts and minds of individuals within a state, public diplomacy can help the U.S. Government move a state toward more democratic forms of government. If the United States can successfully use public diplomacy for this purpose, then it achieves one of the National Security Strategy objectives: to "expand the circle of development by opening societies and building the infrastructure of democracy."[9]

USIS

The U.S. Information Service library in Lahore, Pakistan, was one of the earliest successful U.S. public diplomacy missions. Membership peaked at 10,000 in the '80s and '90s.

Despite—or perhaps because of—the success it had conveying enduring U.S. values to the people in Communist countries, USIA was downsized after the cold war, and its functions were eventually merged into DOS. With these actions, the United States relegated public diplomacy to a lesser priority and effectively marginalized its ability to brandish soft power.

After 9/11, the United States declared war against religious terrorists originating in Muslim countries. In many of these

USIA

A USIA-sponsored Van Tac Tu drama troupe arrives at a Vietnamese village in 1967. Fifteen such troupes traveled throughout South Vietnam dispensing propaganda via song and dance.

countries, there is a general lack of understanding and, in some cases, a total rejection of Western ideals; U.S. interests are often misunderstood. Nye suggests that unrest in the Middle East lies at the heart of this terrorism, and that the unrest is symptomatic of a struggle between Islamic moderates and extremists. He claims that the United States and its allies will win the war on terror only if they adopt policies that appeal to the moderates and use public diplomacy effectively to communicate that appeal.[10] While all elements of national power can be used to counter religious extremists, public diplomacy can be especially effective in winning over moderates and reducing the influence of the extremists. The U.S. Government, in its national policy decisions, should give increased emphasis to the use of public diplomacy as an instrument of national power.

Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy

In a June 2003 supplemental appropriations bill, the U.S. House Appropriations Committee directed DOS to "engage the creative talents of the private sector…[in order] to develop new public diplomacy approaches and initiatives…[and to] establish an advisory group on public diplomacy for the Arab-Muslim world to recommend new approaches, initiatives, and program models to improve public diplomacy results."[11] In response, then-Secretary of State Colin Powell established the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab-Muslim World, in July 2003.

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Chaired by Edward P. Djerejian, the former Ambassador to Syria and Israel, the Advisory Group consisted of a core group of 13 people with a variety of backgrounds—foreign service, academia, medicine, news media, public affairs, law, and business. Between July and September of 2003, the group expanded on the work of at least seven other studies that had been conducted since September 2001. Its members met with many specialists, both domestic and international, in the public, private, and nongovernmental arenas. They visited Egypt, Syria, Turkey, Senegal, Morocco, the United Kingdom, and France, and had teleconferences with key individuals in Pakistan and Indonesia. In October 2003, the group produced a report of its findings that offered recommendations to DOS regarding public diplomacy.

The report, "Changing Minds, Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Arab-Muslim World" (frequently referred to as "the Djerejian Report"), begins by claiming that at a time when it is needed most, U.S. public diplomacy capability is inadequate due to outmoded techniques, insufficient resources, and too little strategic direction. The report flatly asserts that "the U.S. today lacks the capabilities in public diplomacy to meet the national security threat emanating from political instability, economic deprivation, and extremism, especially in the Arab and Muslim World."[12] Although the report focused on Arab-Muslim areas, the Advisory Group claims that many of its recommendations apply to public diplomacy in general.

The Djerejian Report emphasizes that state-to-state diplomacy isn't changing Arab-Muslim attitudes and that public diplomacy is needed. Although the aforementioned U.S. actions in Afghanistan and Iraq and U.S. moves vis-à-vis the Arab-Israeli conflict have certainly affected how Americans are perceived in the Arab-Muslim world, the Advisory Group thinks that the fundamental problem is a lack of understanding of American culture. It claims that Arabs and Muslims are exposed to heavily filtered

media (e.g., limited TV stations, restricted and filtered access to the Internet) that typically deliver messages in native languages with the American viewpoint rarely represented. Although globalized technologies such as satellite TV and radio are breaking down these barriers, and although the Group was frequently told by Arabs and Muslims that they like American values and technologies, the same Arabs and Muslims said that they do not like the policies and actions of the American government. The report concludes that public diplomacy can reconcile this dichotomy through more effective communication of American policies.

Current public diplomacy techniques are not getting the word out. The Djerejian Report observes that even though Egypt is the second largest recipient of U.S. foreign assistance, Egyptian citizens give more credit to the Japanese for developing an opera house in Cairo than to the United States for funding critical infrastructure development in Egypt's cities. The report found that even though broadcast media, specifically television, are the most effective means to disseminate ideas, U.S. policies or positions are usually absent from Arab-Muslim media programs.[13]

Citing information from a September 2003 General Accounting Office (GAO) report on public diplomacy, the Djerejian Report provides statistics collected by several opinion research firms on favorable public opinion of the United States.[14] The data summarized in table 1 below indicate that favorable public opinion has been declining over the past several years. The Djerejian Report also refers to an April 2002 Zogby International survey (mentioned in the GAO report) showing that Arabs and Muslims had a favorable view of American movies, television, science and technology, and education, but were opposed to American policy toward Muslim countries.

The Djerejian Report provides detailed information on current public diplomacy activities as well as specific organizational, financial, and programmatic recommendations to transform DOS's public diplomacy efforts. It suggests that all public diplomacy programs should have some demonstrable measures of effectiveness before being implemented (although it does not make specific recommendations on such measures). Some current creative ideas, it says, need to be expanded. Among these are the "American Corners" program, which establishes cultural centers that provide free Internet access, books on American culture, and English language classes to citizens in Arab-Muslim cities; several Arabic-language radio programs (e.g., Radio Sawa) and magazines (e.g., *Hi*); and an Arabic-language TV network (Alhurrah) that offers regional programming. The report also approves of a new initiative, the American Knowledge Library, which will translate en masse books related to science, democracy philosophies, and American culture.

Despite these DOS efforts, the report concludes that U.S. public diplomacy is not making enough of an impact. It goes on to make its recommendations about increased funding and a new strategic direction (the latter led by the "political will" of the president and Congress).[15] The report also sets up the "Ends" (better understanding of U.S. national values among Arab-Muslim populations), "Ways" (establish and execute a strategic plan), and "Means" (increased levels of funding) to increase the effectiveness of public diplomacy in the Arab-Muslim world.

	% Favorable in 1999/2002	% Favorable in 2003	Change
Indonesia	61 (2002)	15	-46%
Saudi Arabia	7 (2002)	0	-7%
Pakistan	23 (1999)	12	-11%
Turkey	52 (1999)	12	-40%
Jordan	25 (2002)	1	-24%
Egypt	6 (2002)	0	-6%

Table 1. Change in favorable views of the United States between 1999/2002 and 2003.

DOD

Reporters from the Voice of America and *Newsweek* interview BG Steven Hawkins of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the Dawrah power station in Baghdad, Iraq, on 14 April 2003.

Agencies Using Public Diplomacy

A variety of organizations use public diplomacy to promote U.S. interests, many of them sponsored by DOS, to include the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Other independent organizations, such as a small Syrian group called Dar Emar, contribute to this effort.

The BBG, an independent federal agency that supervises all U.S. Government-supported non-military international broadcasting, is verifiably an effective public diplomacy instrument. The BBG oversees radio and TV stations (e.g., the Voice of America, Radio Sawa, and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty) that broadcast in 65 languages to over 100 million people around the world. The BBG's Radio Sawa, transmitting in over fifteen Arab-Muslim countries, is considered one of the most innovative public diplomacy initiatives, according to the BBG website.[16]

Both the Advisory Group and the recent 9/11 Commission have recognized that effective public diplomacy can influence moderates within Arab-Muslim countries. The 9/11 Commission claims that "the government has begun some promising initiatives in television and radio broadcasting to the Arab world, Iran, and Afghanistan. These efforts are beginning to reach large audiences."[17] The Commission has also emphasized that the BBG needs to run programs that counteract religious extremist movements in the region because "local newspapers and the few influential satellite broadcasters—like Al-Jazeera—often reinforce the jihadist theme that portrays the United States as anti-Muslim."[18]

The BBG has claimed that "Radio Sawa, a 24/7 station, has garnered large audiences of young people in the region with its mix of news, information and Western and Arabic music," but the Djerejian Report criticized the station for simply appealing to youthful Arab musical tastes and not influencing the larger public.[19] The BBG countered that the Advisory Group doesn't understand its (the BBG's) role, which is to offer examples of high-quality American journalism that promote and sustain freedom and democracy by broadcasting accurate and objective news and information about the United States.[20] The BBG might also have cited a February 2004 ACNielsen report which found that "the percentages of adults (age 15 and older) listening to Radio Sawa on a weekly basis are 73 percent in Morocco, 42 percent in Kuwait, 35 percent in UAE, 27 percent in Jordan, 11 percent in Egypt and 41 percent in Qatar."[21] Further, 80 percent of Radio Sawa's listeners consider it a reliable news source, and another ACNielsen survey, in October 2003, found that Radio Sawa's listeners view the United States more favorably than do non-listeners.[22] Nor is that all. The age demographic in many Middle Eastern countries is heavily skewed toward the younger generation, with over 50 percent of the populations in many countries under the age of 20.[23] Appealing to a youthful audience appears to be the right way to go.

Despite criticisms in the Djerejian Report of the effectiveness of the BBG, both the Advisory Group and the 9/11 Commission recommend increasing the BBG's funding for new broadcasting programs. The Middle East television station Alhurra, created

in February 2004, is a recent result of new funding. Alhurra directs its programming at Arabic-speaking viewers in 22 countries across the Middle East.[24]

Another organization contributing to public diplomacy is USAID. An independent government agency under the direction of the secretary of state, USAID provides humanitarian, developmental, and democracy-building assistance to developing countries and countries affected by disaster and afflicted with poverty.[25] USAID relies on partnerships with voluntary organizations, indigenous organizations, universities, American businesses, international agencies, and other U.S. and foreign governmental agencies to improve the lives of people in developing countries. By helping to expand democracy and the free-trade market, it plays a key role in carrying out U.S. foreign policy.

The Djerejian Report criticizes a legal restriction that prevents USAID from promoting the good work it is doing. Prohibiting "USAID…from using program funds to disseminate information about its activities" overlooks the fact that "a great deal of [US]AID's work is public diplomacy."[26] USAID has since established an Office of Public Diplomacy within its Bureau of Legislative and Public Affairs. According to an April 2004 USAID press release, "The Office of Public Diplomacy helps to coordinate and infuse the development and humanitarian message of USAID to the U.S. Government, the American People and the Arab world."[27] The release also introduced Walid Maalouf as the new Director for Public Diplomacy for Middle Eastern and Middle East Partnership Initiative Affairs.

Maalouf has international-affairs experience, having served as the alternate U.S. representative to the United Nations' 58th General Assembly. Another USAID press release highlights his credentials: "He was an integral part of the Middle East team at the Mission and the first U.S. Representative to deliver a speech at the U.N. in Arabic. Maalouf's new Office for Public Diplomacy (in USAID) has taken quick action to engage Arab communities."[28] At a media summit in May 2004 with key Arab press correspondents and Arab-American publishers, Maalouf declared, "USAID's new diplomacy initiative is committed to presenting a more accurate image of America to the greater Middle East and promoting a better understanding of the policy goals of Presidential Initiatives and the mission of USAID."[29] A press release noted that "this media summit was the largest exchange between Mideast-American correspondents and U.S. officials and was the first of several outreach events to the Arab and Moslem communities in the United States."[30]

Besides government-sponsored public diplomacy, private citizens seek to establish better relations between Muslims and Americans. In an article in *The Jerusalem Report*, Yigal Schleifer describes how Syrian Ammar Abdulhamid is using his nongovernmental organization, Dar Emar, to promote a better understanding of American culture and democracy in Syria. Dar Emar is translating appropriate English texts in an attempt to educate Syrian citizens about American culture and the philosophical foundations of democracy. Abdulhamid says, "When you have an intense project of translation, it leads to dialogue and questioning and hopefully a renaissance will come out of that…. If you want positive change in Syria, there is no substitute for positive engagement."[31]

Dar Emar's website provides specific details of many proposed programs. One program, Project Etana, attempts to bridge the knowledge gap between the Western and Arab worlds and provide insight into Western culture. The effort will translate into Arabic many classical and modern Western works, especially in history, science, and the humanities. Speaking about his efforts, Abdulhamid admits, "This is not easy, nor should it be…my first idea was that we don't understand America, even Muslims living in America don't understand it, so forget about Syrians living in Syria under a socialist government."[32]

Assessments of Progress

Much has been written about soft power, public diplomacy, and the Djerejian Report, with discussions about the pros and cons of recent efforts in these areas. The Council on Foreign Relations, founded

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after the 1919 Paris Peace Talks to promote knowledge of foreign policy, focuses on broadening America's understanding of the world and U.S. foreign policy. Through its magazine, *Foreign Affairs*, and its various sponsored forums, the Council encourages a wide range of views while avoiding advocacy for specific policies.[33] The Council's website provides a question-and-answer page on terrorism that discusses the implications of public diplomacy and its recent impact on terrorism. Citing a 2002 Gallup survey conducted in nine Muslim countries, the Council concludes that America has an image problem abroad that could hinder the war on terrorism.[34]

The Council's website acknowledges some of the recent attempts to reach Arab and Muslim audiences, such as appearances by Colin Powell, then-National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on Al-Jazeera, and it credits former Ambassador to Syria Christopher Ross for appearing on Al-Jazeera and speaking Arabic; however, it claims that, in general, current U.S. Government public diplomacy efforts are deficient.[35] To improve the U.S. public image in the Arab-Muslim world, the Council suggests that public diplomacy should be integrated into U.S. foreign policy development processes. Apparently, it believes that embedding public diplomacy within DOS isn't working, and that public diplomacy needs more attention at the strategic level.

Kathy R. Fitzpatrick, an associate professor of communication at DePaul University, has addressed the ways soft power enhances other instruments of national power. "As a nation," she argues, "we may have the mightiest military and the most sophisticated technology, but such strengths ultimately will not matter if we fail to capture the minds and hearts of people around the world with the enduring story of freedom and democracy."[36] Fitzpatrick points out that we must first educate ourselves about other countries before we attempt to change their views. She too recognizes that for public diplomacy to be effective, it must be considered when developing foreign policy. She also warns against the dangers of "diplomatic chaos"—the confusion experienced by foreign citizens when U.S. policies and goals shift each time a new president is elected. Says Fitzpatrick: "[It's] no wonder foreign citizens get confused about what this country really stands for."[37]

John Brown, of the Institute of Communication Studies, University of Leeds, assesses the Djerejian Report in his article "Changing Minds, Winning Peace: Reconsidering the Djerejian Report."[38] He claims that the report was too easy on DOS, and asserts that many of the public diplomacy challenges discussed in the report have been around since World War II. Brown recognizes that accurate measurement of the effectiveness of public diplomacy is difficult, if not impossible, but claims the report does not make any specific recommendations to address the problem. The report's recommendations are unimaginative, he says, and simply call for continuation of existing programs, more bureaucracy, and more funding. Nevertheless, Brown proposes that program assessment is not as important as acknowledging that public diplomacy programs are inexpensive and life would be more dangerous without them. He recommends that foreign officers be empowered to implement public diplomacy solutions that they feel will work in their regions, and that Americans be reminded that cultural differences play a significant part in foreign policy, so public diplomacy should be considered in development of foreign policy.[39] Again, there is the suggestion that public diplomacy is not emphasized enough at the strategic level within DOS.

In a June 2003 article in *Foreign Policy*, Nye claimed that anti-Americanism has increased in recent years, while U.S. soft power has been reduced.[40] One of the goals of the National Security Strategy is the promotion of democracy; however, Nye stated, "democracy…cannot be imposed by force."[41] Nye therefore proposed a time-phased strategy to develop effective public diplomacy. First, there should be a short-term focus on communicating current events through broadcast media. Nye believes that Radio Sawa is working, but thinks the United States needs a larger voice in such Arab media as Al-Jazeera television. In the near term, he argues, the United States should develop and communicate strategic themes or messages that depict it as a democratic nation interested in helping Muslim nations. He cites Bosnia and Kosovo as examples of American intervention on behalf of Muslims. Nye also advocates long-term efforts in cultural and educational exchanges. He believes that partnerships with governments, businesses, universities, and foundations can be exploited to encourage cultural understanding and exchange of information. In Nye's estimation,

the biggest problem affecting United States public diplomacy is its underfunding.[42]

Danielle Pletka, Vice President of Foreign and Defense Policy Studies for the American Enterprise Institute, has argued that democracy is on the rise in Arab countries. "Democracy is the talk of the Arab world," she claims, "…democracy is now at the center of debate in Arab capitals."[43] Asserting that change is underway, Pletka notes that "the Arab League has embraced a series of…reforms; the Saudis have announced plans for municipal elections starting in November; and the Bahrainis and Qataris are making real changes to their political systems."[44] She warns that politically restrictive governments and low literacy rates in the region are obstacles to the expansion of democracy, but she provides evidence that some Arab citizens want reform and are looking to outside organizations to impose it.[45] Likewise, she notes that Palestinian scholar Daoud Kuttab has argued that "Arab democrats have failed to reach their goals through their own efforts," and they should welcome support from outsiders "irrespective of the messenger."[46] Although Pletka claims that President Bush is making "headway" in the promotion of democracy in Arab countries, she charges that he hasn't been aggressive enough. Many of the concerns she raises can be addressed by doing a better job of directly articulating U.S. values to Middle Eastern citizens. Public diplomacy initiatives can help to secure the recent democratic gains against extremists who violently oppose such change.

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DOS Activities

In testimony before Congress, DOS officials have defended the public diplomacy efforts they have undertaken since the Djerejian Report. But Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Margaret Tutwiler told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on February 2004 that U. S. Government public diplomacy efforts "must do a better job reaching beyond the traditional elites and government officials." She described the effort to improve America's image as a difficult challenge that will "take years of hard, focused work."[47] Patricia Harrison, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, offered testimony regarding public diplomacy efforts focused on Arabs and Muslims to the House International Relations Committee in August 2004. Citing DOS's strategic ends for public diplomacy, she stated, "The foundation of our public diplomacy strategy is to engage, inform, and influence foreign publics in order to increase understanding for American values, policies, and initiatives." Harrison asserted that the ways to achieve these ends are "through traditional programs and all the tools of technology, involving both public and private sectors" along with "daily briefings and public outreach by our missions around the world."[48]

Tutwiler's and Harrison's testimonies describe many new efforts to improve U.S. public diplomacy. These include changes in funding and organization and new programs for exchange, education, information, and broadcasting. For example, public diplomacy funding has been refocused to aim at the heavily Muslim regions of the Middle East and South Asia, so that 25 percent of all funding for exchange programs is now aimed at this region, as compared to 17 percent in 2002. Organizational changes include establishment of the Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources for Public Diplomacy and an interagency Policy Coordinating Committee on Muslim Outreach focused on strengthening coordination with the Department of Defense and other agencies. Elsewhere, the Fulbright Scholarship program is now operational within Iraq and Afghanistan (the program was absent in Afghanistan for 25 years); USAID is working to ensure that recipients of its programs know that they are being assisted by the United States; thirty public diplomacy officers have been assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, making it the largest public diplomacy operation in the world; and the Alhurrah television network is now broadcasting to a huge Middle Eastern audience.[49]

Persistent Problems

Clearly, the United States has taken great pains to expand its influence in the Arab-Muslim world through public diplomacy efforts. The U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy provides some of these details in its 2004 report, which concludes that "significant progress has been made in many areas."[50] However, the report goes on to say that "there is still much that can be accomplished" and "the agencies and structures of public diplomacy need to be properly coordinated to achieve maximum efficiency."[51] While asserting that U.S. public diplomacy is making an impact, it suggests that public diplomacy still needs more strategic-level influence.

Despite being one of the four DIME instruments of national power, the information element does not get enough attention at the strategic level. DOS has cabinet-level influence and execution responsibility for the diplomacy element, but only recently, with the creation of the White House Office of Global Communications, has the information element attained strategic-level policy attention. Although DOS employs public diplomacy to execute the information element of national power, it does not give public diplomacy the same top-level attention as diplomacy or international development.

In October 1998, USAID and USIA were merged into DOS. The old USIA promoted U.S. national interests through a variety of international information, education, and cultural programs. Today, the functions and authority of the former USIA have been assigned to the Office of the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. In contrast, USAID remains an essentially intact organization within DOS, receiving only overall foreign policy guidance from the secretary of state. Interestingly, USAID retained its old public diplomacy functions within the Office of Public Diplomacy under the Bureau of Legislative and Public Affairs. Hinting at a need for reform, DOS recently established a Policy Coordinating Committee for Public Diplomacy to ensure synchronization between the two DOS organizations.

According to Edgar Schein, a prominent organizational theorist, coordination of effort is one of the four essential elements necessary for effective organizational performance.[52] The Policy Coordinating Committee for Public Diplomacy is an attempt to achieve this coordination of effort within DOS. Another of Schein's essential elements is "authority structure"—having an organizational structure or chain of command that gives one the right to direct the actions of others.[53] DOS, however, has split the public diplomacy functions between organizations with different chains of command. Without a proper authority structure, it will be difficult to coordinate public diplomacy effectively.

A New-Old Recommendation

To address these persistent shortfalls, the U.S. Government should resurrect within DOS a construct similar to the old USIA. This new agency, which might be called the Public Diplomacy Agency, should be tightly coupled to DOS in both policy and management, just as USAID is. In a tripartite relationship with DOS and USAID, an organization like the Public Diplomacy Agency could wield the information instrument of national power very effectively to help us achieve our national objectives. If the president appointed its director and Congress appropriated funding, this independent agency would have the agility to execute its mission and the authority structure needed to coordinate public diplomacy in the most effective manner—all while remaining accountable to national security policy and the public.

Summary

Since the Advisory Group published its report on the use of public diplomacy to influence the hearts and minds of Arab and Muslim people, DOS has made some improvements. The BBG's broadcasting efforts, in particular, have been a real success. Probably the most difficult challenge for DOS will be to develop feedback mechanisms to measure the effectiveness of its myriad public diplomacy programs. In the face of this challenge, we should remember that without any public diplomacy efforts, the world would be a more dangerous place.

Although DOS has made improvements in wielding the information element of national power, public diplomacy initiatives continue to lack adequate funding, they aren't being properly coordinated with other foreign affairs agencies, and they need more strategic direction. Nevertheless, DOS has shown through the recent expansion of U.S. influence in the Arab-Muslim world that it has the necessary knowledge and processes to execute a truly effective public diplomacy program.

DOS does, however, need a better organizational structure to provide strategic focus. One solution would be to stand up an agency within DOS—something along the lines of the old USIA—that is specifically charged to prosecute public diplomacy. Doing so would ensure that public diplomacy policy is effectively coordinated at the department level and would allow for greater influence at the cabinet or strategic levels. The DOS-USAID model worked exceptionally well during the recent tsunami relief efforts in Asia; it could certainly be used to create a more effective organization for employing the information element of national power. Now is the time. To win the war on terror, we have to ensure that the Arab-Muslim world hears a consistent, positive U.S. message. We need a public diplomacy agency. ***MR***

Editor's Note: The military in general and the Army specifically are wrestling with the development of an as-yet unsatisfactorily defined capability for influencing foreign populations at the cultural level of engagement. This capability has been variously described as "public diplomacy," "strategic communications," and "information operations." Whether this is even an appropriate mission for the military continues to be heatedly debated in many quarters of the military and the government. Ironically, the government at one time had within its structure an organization dedicated to just such activities—the U.S. Information Agency (USIA). The USIA served in this role from the onset of the cold war to 1999, when it was officially disestablished. It ran a wide variety of programs aimed at promoting goodwill through respectful, culturally sensitive foreign engagement, as well as activities aimed at promoting among foreign peoples an understanding of U.S. institutions, society, and culture. During times of military crisis, the USIA became part of the country-team, performing the very functions of public diplomacy and cultural engagement that the military now appears to be trying to develop. Overall, the USIA played a dominant role in winning the values dimension of the cold war. It did this not through propaganda and bombast, but by focusing on the contrast between communism and democracy and using a policy of openness and exposure to America with all its positive aspects as well as its flaws. More information about the USIA and its functions can be obtained at http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/usia/ or http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/usia/abtusia/commins.pdf.

NOTES

1. Attributed to an Iranian interlocutor by Edward P. Djerejian, Chairman, Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World, in testimony before the House Subcommittee on the Departments of Commerce, Justice and State, the Judiciary and related agencies, February 4, 2004, 11.
2. Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004).
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. United States Information Agency Alumni Association, "What is Public Diplomacy," <http://www.publicdiplomacy.org/1.htm>.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. The USIAAA public diplomacy website provides specific examples of the programs used today. See the United States Information Agency Alumni Association, "Public Diplomacy Activities and Programs," <http://www.publicdiplomacy.org/9.htm>.
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