

**Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication:  
Cultures, Firewalls, and Imported Norms**

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**Abstract**

This paper uses public diplomacy and strategic communication to describe an instrument of statecraft that embraces diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, international broadcasting, political communication, democracy building, and open military information operations. Each element is instrumental in its core, but each imports discourse norms requiring limited firewalls to be successful. Because U.S. public diplomacy is characterized by episodic commitment, organizational stovepipes, tribal cultures, and excessive reliance on “accidental” personalities, reforms of unusual duration and scale are required in a world where geography and military dominance no longer ensure America’s security. To transform the *intent* of political leaders and some thirty expert studies since 9/11 into *action*, a business plan is needed to map policy and public diplomacy connections, replace coordination with strategic direction, marshal private sector creativity, and institutionalize planning.

## **Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication: Cultures, Firewalls, and Imported Norms**

*The time has come to look anew at our institutions of public diplomacy. We must do much more to confront hateful propaganda, dispel dangerous myths and get out the truth. We must increase our exchanges with the rest of the world. We must work closer than ever with educational institutions, the private sector and nongovernmental organizations and we must encourage our citizens to engage the world to learn foreign languages, to understand different cultures and to welcome others into their homes.*

*And to be successful we must listen. An important part of telling America's story is learning the stories of others . . . While we must never compromise our security, we must never close ourselves to the rest of the world . . . I have said the time for diplomacy is now. Well the time for public diplomacy reform is also now."*

-- Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice<sup>1</sup>

When Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced the nomination of Karen Hughes to be Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs on March 14, 2005, she confirmed what most political leaders, many Americans, and some thirty expert studies have long recognized. The time for public diplomacy reform is now.

The Secretary did not present a plan. She certainly did not call for another study. She called for action. Look anew at public diplomacy institutions. Do more to get out the truth. Increase exchanges. Listen and learn the stories of others. Work more closely with the private sector. Encourage Americans to understand other cultures and engage the world.

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<sup>1</sup> Remarks of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, "Announcement of Nominations of Karen P. Hughes as Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs and Dina Powell as Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs," March 14, 2005. <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/43385.htm>

The Secretary's public diplomacy change agenda prompts a host of questions. Just what is "the truth"? What does it mean to listen? What are the institutions of public diplomacy? How should they be directed and integrated? What does it mean operationally to remain open to the world without compromising security? How should we "do more to confront hateful propaganda"? Emphasize better communication in hopes of improving America's image? Focus more on what we do – on actions taken to further policies such as increased support for civil society initiatives – anticipating favorable attitudes as a long-term byproduct? How do we move from problem awareness to appropriate action? What priorities matter most in the context of today's threats and opportunities?<sup>2</sup>

Details are sketchy on these and other strategic questions.

Strategy is a theme in most public diplomacy studies issued since 9/11. Reports of the Defense Science Board, Council on Foreign Relations, and U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy recommend Presidential directives to advance a variety of implementing strategies. The Djerejian advisory group urges "a new strategic direction" for public diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim worlds. Government Accountability Office reports address deficiencies in the strategic approach of U.S. international broadcasting, the absence of a State Department public diplomacy strategy, and recently the lack of a "national communication strategy."

Political leaders paid only nominal attention to public diplomacy strategy after 9/11. The House of Representatives passed two bills requiring the State Department to develop a "comprehensive strategy" for use of public diplomacy resources and to "ensure that the

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<sup>2</sup> In this paper, I assume – as do many recent studies – that public diplomacy tools built during the Cold War must adapt to a very different world. I am suggesting alternative ways of thinking about public diplomacy as an instrument of statecraft and offering specific proposals to move from reports to actions. I do not mean that better public diplomacy would necessarily and substantially have changed current levels of anti-Americanism, resistance to U.S. policies, or terrorist attacks that occurred before, on, and after 9/11. Public diplomacy's problems as a strategic instrument indeed rank rather low on my list of challenges to U.S. foreign policy. Good public diplomacy does not trump flawed policies. But we need a strong public diplomacy instrument. And we need good public diplomacy in the service of policies, democratically arrived at, with which we disagree.

public diplomacy strategy of the United States is cohesive and coherent.” No counterpart measures passed in the Senate. In creating a soon moribund Strategic Communication Policy Coordinating Committee in 2002, then National Security Advisor Rice sought “development of strategic communications capabilities throughout the government.” The White House Office of Global Communications, mandated by Executive Order in 2003 to “facilitate the development of a strategy” among “appropriate agencies,” failed to do so. The Office closed in 2005.

Widespread use of the word strategy does not mean agreement on its meaning. Some experts seek public diplomacy strategies in support of policies (war in Iraq, war on terrorism, relations with Muslims). Others advocate strategies to achieve public diplomacy reform or to measure program and agency performance. Still others recommend strategies to be implemented by departments and agencies or coordinated among them. A few call for a comprehensive communication strategy intended to support national security interests and values.

Nor is there common ground on what constitutes a public diplomacy institution. Most would agree on legacy activities of the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) distributed throughout the Department of State – exchanges, international information programs, foreign opinion research. Many add U.S. international broadcasting services directed by the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), although most broadcasters are not comfortable with the public diplomacy label. In a globalizing media environment, experts increasingly include public affairs activities of the White House, National Security Council, State and Defense Departments, and other agencies as issues warrant. Many also include democratization and outreach programs administered by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), and other organizations. And analysts now talk of military support for public diplomacy and the public diplomacy impact of open military information activities.

Recent news items tell part of the story. In April 2005, U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Ryan Crocker announced \$90 million in funding from USAID and Pakistan's Higher Education Commission to expand the Fulbright Scholarship Program in Pakistan. In June, the Pentagon awarded \$3 million in contracts to three private sector companies "to improve foreign public opinion about the United States." The U.S. military's European Command manages a *Balkan Times* website self-described as an "accurate, balanced and forward-looking" source of news and information about Southeastern Europe in nine languages. For several years, USAID has partnered with the Voice of America to fund health reporting centers and VOA broadcasts in Swahili, French, Urdu, Hausa, and other languages. USAID also funds some foreign opinion polling.

Search the Internet and you will find "The mission of USAID [sic] Office for Public Diplomacy for the Middle Eastern and MEPI Affairs is to enhance communications between the Agency and the broader Middle Eastern community in America and to catalyze the broadest possible support for democratic reform in the Middle East region." Another website contains this job posting: USAID in U.S. Embassy Bucharest is seeking an "events coordinator" to manage press conferences, workshops, and media tours. He or she will be expected to work closely with USAID's Public Outreach Coordinator *and* the Embassy's Public Diplomacy Office.<sup>3</sup>

This is not your grandparents' public diplomacy.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> U.S. Embassy Pakistan, "USAID, HEC Expand Fulbright Scholarship Program; Initiative Called 'Investment in Pakistan's Future,'" Press Release, April 6, 2005, <http://islamabad.usembassy.gov/pakistan/h05040601.html>; Renae Merle, "Pentagon Funds Diplomacy Effort, Contracts Aim to Improve Foreign Opinion of United States," *The Washington Post*, June 11, 2005; Southeast Europe Times Website, U.S. European Command, Department of Defense, <http://www.balkantimes.com/>; USAID Frontlines, "Voice of America and USAID Team Up to Beam Programming Worldwide," January 2005, [http://www.usaid.gov/press/frontlines/fl\\_jan05/partner.htm](http://www.usaid.gov/press/frontlines/fl_jan05/partner.htm); "Public Diplomacy for Middle Eastern and MEPI Affairs," [http://www.usaid.gov/about\\_usaid/presidential\\_initiative/diplomacy/](http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/presidential_initiative/diplomacy/); "Job Opportunity, American Embassy Bucharest," <http://www.usembassy.ro/USAID/aboutus06.htm>.

<sup>4</sup> Traditionally, public diplomacy was seen by many as a narrowly focused enterprise carried out by the U.S. Information Agency and its predecessor organizations, the Voice of America, and the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

The term public diplomacy is now part of a global conversation following several decades of use and considerable dispute on its meaning among professionals. Recently the term strategic communication has gained traction; some analysts use it synonymously with public diplomacy, others use it more narrowly or more broadly.

Both terms raise analytical and practical questions. Are they interchangeable? Should strategic communication be used as an umbrella label for public affairs, public diplomacy, international broadcasting, and open military information operations?<sup>5</sup> To what extent are these analytically separable activities? (When comments of a military commander at a Pentagon press briefing are carried on global media platforms, is it public affairs, public diplomacy, or a military information operation?) Should public diplomacy and strategic communication relate just to governments or also to non-state actors? Should strategic communication describe only short-term instrumental activities as a sub-set of public diplomacy, which also includes longer term exchange of people and ideas?<sup>6</sup>

To what extent are perceptions of public diplomacy and strategic communication shaped positively or negatively by other terms (e.g., spin, manipulation, advocacy, propaganda, branding, and perception management)? Naming is part of a struggle over meaning. In naming, we judge as well as describe. Are perceptions influenced by an observer's

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<sup>5</sup> Strategic communication was used by a Defense Science Board Task Force to include four "core instruments" – public diplomacy, public affairs, non-military U.S. international broadcasting services, and open military information operations. *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication*, (Washington, D.C.: Defense Science Board, 2004), pp. 12-13. Although the Task Force never addressed covert information operations, its logic would include them. Conceptual and structural issues in strategic relationships between overt and covert information operations (including firewalls, interagency committees, and use criteria) have not been addressed adequately by scholars and government advisory bodies. There is work to be done.

<sup>6</sup> Joseph Nye uses the term "strategic communication" to mean one of three "dimensions" of public diplomacy: "a set of simple themes, much like what occurs in a political or advertising campaign . . . over the course of a year to brand the central themes, or to advance a particular government policy." Nye's other two dimensions are "daily communications," which explain "the context of domestic and foreign policy decisions," and the "development of lasting relationships with key individuals, over many years through scholarships, exchanges, training, seminars, conferences, and access to media channels." His dimensions are distinguished by two central characteristics: time and "different relative proportions of government information and long-term cultural relationships." *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), pp. 107-110.

attitudes toward particular political actors or the policies they serve? For example, would critics of the Iraq War and communication strategies used to build consent for the war view public diplomacy and strategic communication differently if they were used to build consent for humanitarian assistance programs or post-Kyoto environmental policies?

In addressing these questions, this paper will discuss five considerations in developing a strategic approach to public diplomacy. It will offer four practical ways to move from report recommendations to action. Throughout it will embrace public diplomacy and strategic communication as analogous terms that describe an instrument of statecraft with multiple components and purposes.

## **Developing a Strategic Approach to Public Diplomacy**

### **1. *Strategic Logic***

Strategy is a term that answers the question “how.”<sup>7</sup> Interests and values describe the goals of strategy and answer the question “why.” A strategy is a plan for action that sets priorities and uses resources to achieve goals. Strategic logic in any endeavor involves determination of specific goals (ends) and choices among instruments (means) needed to achieve them. Public diplomacy is one important instrument among a variety of persuasive, cooperative, and coercive instruments available to strategists.

The purposes of public diplomacy are well established and relatively non-controversial. A short list would include comprehending other cultures, engaging others in a struggle about ideas on issues of common concern, fostering mutual understanding, expanding democracy and freedom, reducing anti-Americanism, and influencing attitudes and actions in support of interests and values. When Secretary Rice speaks to citizens in Egypt and Saudi Arabia about the U.S. “taking a different course” in “supporting the democratic aspirations of all people” including those in the Middle East, she is talking

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<sup>7</sup> I am indebted to National War College Professors Terry Deibel and Geb Schweigler for their insights on elements of strategic logic and classification of the instruments of statecraft. Neither is responsible for my adaptation of strategic logic to public diplomacy.

not only about a change in U.S. policy, she is identifying both a public diplomacy goal and a goal in strategic logic.<sup>8</sup>

Identifying means in a strategic approach to public diplomacy requires a much longer list and produces less agreement. Few would dispute ambassadors' media interviews, State Department press briefings, foreign opinion research, book translations, or embassy websites. Professionals engage in robust debates, however, on whether public diplomacy includes cultural diplomacy, international broadcasting, public affairs, political communication campaigns, democracy-building, and open military information operations. In this paper, I view all of the foregoing as elements of public diplomacy understood as an instrument of statecraft that can be implemented in a variety of ways.

Strategic logic is much more than a simple correlation of ends and means. In public diplomacy (and foreign policy generally), strategy requires assumptions and decisions about interests, values, policy priorities, views of diverse publics, mediated communication environments, public opinion trends, national and international contexts, threats, opportunities, strengths and limitations of instruments, trade-offs between costs and risks, trade-offs between costs and benefits, short-term and long-term objectives, partnerships with the private sector, partnerships with foreign governments, the application of strategies to situations, political intuition, and common sense.

At one level of analysis public diplomacy is an instrument of statecraft distinguishable from other instruments. At another level, public diplomacy cuts across all political, economic, and military instruments of statecraft and is essential to their use and success. Strategic logic provides a context for analyzing public diplomacy at both levels, its relevance to policies, and for business plans needed to move from intent to action.

Scholars rarely analyze public diplomacy in terms of strategic logic. Political leaders, lawmakers, and practitioners seldom have the time or inclination. Most focus on policies,

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<sup>8</sup> Steven R. Weisman, "Rice Urges Egyptians and Saudis to Democratize," *The New York Times*, June 21, 2005.

programs, budgets, organizations, and doctrines. Public diplomacy has long been an enterprise of ad hoc initiatives, organizational stovepipes, and competing tribal cultures.

There are signs this diffuse approach is changing. The Defense Science Board and 9/11 Commission urge using all instruments of national power including public diplomacy in today's strategic environment. The Center for American Progress stated recently that "the United States must integrate public diplomacy into all components of our national security." A growing number of scholars and practitioners – John Arquilla, David Ronfeldt, Barry Fulton, Joseph Nye, Vincent Vitto, David Morey, Dan Kuehl, Jeffrey Jones, R.S. Zaharna, Jarol Manheim, Jamie Metzl, and others – are turning to network paradigms and strategic assessments of public diplomacy.<sup>9</sup>

## ***2. Discourse and Instrumental Communication***

Theorists interested in public opinion and information as an element of power can be grouped into categories of discourse and instrumental communication. Much discussion of discourse communication is rooted in Jurgen Habermas' influential analysis of the public sphere and earlier writings by John Dewey. Habermas argues a deliberative form of "communicative action," which assumes the possibility of reaching political legitimacy and binding norms through speech and open debate. Language used to achieve mutual understanding and rational consensus is distinguished from language used instrumentally (and for Habermas more problematically) to advance interest-based

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<sup>9</sup> On integrating public diplomacy with other elements of national power, see *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication*, pp 11-14. This influential study released in October 2004 and a predecessor report on *Managed Information Dissemination* in 2001 were directed by Vincent Vitto, Vice Chairman of the Defense Science Board and CEO of C.S. Draper Laboratory. See also *The 9/11 Commission Report* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2004) and Lawrence J. Korb and Robert O. Boorstin, *Integrated Power: A National Security Strategy for the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: Center for American Progress, 2005). For scholarship on network paradigms and strategic assessments, see John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, *The Emergence of Noopolitik: Toward an American Information Strategy* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1999); Barry Fulton, *Taking the Pulse of American Public Diplomacy in a Post-9/11 World*, Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, Montreal, March 18, 2004; Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *The Paradox of American Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); R.S. Zaharna, "The Network Paradigm of Strategic Public Diplomacy," *Foreign Policy in Focus*, Policy Brief, Vol. 10, No. 1, April 2005, [www.fpif.org](http://www.fpif.org); Jarol Manheim, *Strategic Public Diplomacy and American Foreign Policy: The Evolution of Influence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); and Jamie Metzl, "Network Diplomacy," *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, Winter/Spring 2001, <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=681>

calculations. Discourse communication assumes people can engage in non-manipulative ways that lead to shared understandings and actions compatible with those understandings. Dewey's idea of the public displayed a similar faith in human capacity, dialogue, and the participatory citizen.<sup>10</sup>

Discourse theory relates most directly to those elements of public diplomacy that emphasize engagement and the exchange of people and ideas. It is less relevant to elements that emphasize advocacy, persuasion, policies, and strategic communication campaigns narrowly defined.<sup>11</sup> In stating the purposes of the Fulbright-Hays Act of 1961, Senator J. William Fulbright was clear:

“I utterly reject any suggestion that our educational and cultural exchange programs are weapons or instruments with which to do combat . . . there is no room and there must not be any room, for an interpretation of these programs as propaganda, even recognizing that the term covers some very worthwhile and respectable activities.”<sup>12</sup>

“Cultural diplomacy is an instrument of engagement, not confrontation,” observes Richard Arndt. For Juliet Antunes Sablosky, educational and cultural activities reflect “the values, issues, and concerns that concentrate public discourse” and “fear of engaging

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<sup>10</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996) and *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991); John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1927) and *Freedom and Culture* (1939, New York: Capricorn Books edition, 1963). Among many critics of Habermas, see Danielle S. Allen, *Talking to Strangers: Anxieties of Citizenship since Brown v. Board of Education* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), pp. 54-68; Nick Crossley and John Michael Roberts, *After Habermas: New Perspectives on the Public Sphere* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004); Craig Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1993); and Stephen K. White, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Habermas*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). For a sympathetic critique of Dewey's views and their relevance to postmodern societies, see Sheldon S. Wolin, *Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, Expanded Edition, 2004), pp. 503-517.

<sup>11</sup> Recall Joseph Nye's approach to strategic communication, p. 6, footnote 6. For a discussion of the elements of strategic communication campaigns, see W. Lance Bennett and Jarol Manheim, “The Big Spin: Strategic Communication and the Transformation of Pluralist Democracy,” pp. 287-288, in W. Lance Bennett and Robert Entman, eds., *Mediated Politics: Communication in the Future of Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). In this and other accounts, objectives are circumscribed and time frames are relatively short. Political actors use research, themes, messages, symbols, events, and alliances with like-minded groups to achieve political advantage. Strategic communication campaigns are used by corporations, unions, religious organizations, terrorist networks, governments, and activist NGOs.

<sup>12</sup> Quoted in Lois W. Roth, “Public Diplomacy: 1952-1977,” *The Fletcher Forum*, Summer 1984, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 371. Roth noted that “Fulbright's remarks were targeted at the partisans of persuasion.”

in ‘propaganda.’”<sup>13</sup> International broadcasters too contend their mission is to promote the open communication of information and ideas in support of democracy and freedom.

Dialogue, mutual understanding, and long-term time horizons are central concepts in public diplomacy broadly defined and in cultural diplomacy. A typical definition of cultural diplomacy is “the exchange of ideas, information, art, and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding.”<sup>14</sup> Cultural diplomats assume their efforts will take time. As a 2004 report of the Center for Arts and Culture states, “short-term investments will not result in lasting benefits . . . long-term involvement is critical to creating programs.” Success requires listening to others, recognizing the “value of other cultures,” showing a desire to learn from them, and conducting programs as a “two-way street.”<sup>15</sup>

Cultural diplomats import ideal speech and education norms. In their emphasis on listening and dialogue, they also import methods of hermeneutics. They value learning through questions, reasoned argument, an orientation toward openness, not seeking to “win” every argument, not talking at cross purposes, considering the opinions of others, shared knowledge, and working out common meanings.<sup>16</sup>

Advocates make a strong case for what they do with plenty of history on their side. But there are limits. Shared understandings may not overcome deep disagreement on interests and issues. Exchanges may reinforce hostilities and competing values,

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<sup>13</sup> Richard T. Arndt, *The First Resort of Kings: American Public Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, Inc., 2005), pp. 550-553; Juliet Antunes Sablosky, “Reinvention, Reorganization, Retreat: American Cultural Diplomacy at Century’s End, 1978-1998,” *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society*, Vol. 29, Spring 1999, pp. 30-31.

<sup>14</sup> Milton C. Cummings, Jr. *Cultural Diplomacy and the United States Government: A Survey*, Washington, DC, Center for Arts and Culture, 2003, p. 1. <http://www.culturalpolicy.org/pdf/MCCpaper.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> *Cultural Diplomacy: Recommendations and Research*, Report of the Center for Arts and Culture, Washington, DC, July 2004, pp. 8-9. <http://www.culturalpolicy.org/pdf/CulturalDiplomacy.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> On hermeneutics and the art of conversation see Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, Second Revised Edition (New York: The Continuum Publishing Company, 2000), pp. 367-369 and 383-388. On ideal speech and discourse theory, see Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms*, pp. 322-328 and 359-366.

particularly if others experience an America that is myopic, hubristic, and uniformed about the world. Terrorists and radicals of all kinds have had cross-cultural experiences. Globalizing trends and a pervasive anti-Americanism that reflects fundamental differences on a variety of important issues also challenge cultural diplomacy.<sup>17</sup>

Instrumental communication draws on the early thinking of Walter Lippmann and subsequent scholarship in the social sciences on propaganda, media, and communications theory. Rare is the academic course on public diplomacy or media and foreign policy that omits a reference to Lippmann's 1922 classic, *Public Opinion*.<sup>18</sup> One reason is Lippmann's powerful argument, drawing on the pragmatism of William James, that we make sense of a complex, confusing external world "outside" through stereotypes and mental filters – the "pictures in our heads" that collectively form public opinion. In Lippmann's model of strategic communication, political actors seek to enlist the interest of publics, find common ground, establish credible symbols and authority, and create consent. Instrumental rationality is goal oriented, driven by interest-based preferences and decisions, and linked to power and the market. Subsequent thinkers – Harold Lasswell, Wilbur Schram, Lance Bennett, Steven Livingston, Russell Neuman, and many others – would build on Lippmann's ideas.

Instrumental communication is most applicable to those elements of public diplomacy that emphasize persuasion, targeted audiences, opinion research, media relations, and policy advocacy. President Kennedy's statement of USIA's mission, similar to others thereafter, stated:

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<sup>17</sup> For a creative look at cultural diplomacy "in 2015," see Donna Oglesby, "diplomacy.cultural 2015 @state.gov," in Barry Fulton, ed., *Net Diplomacy: Beyond Old Borders*, U.S. Institute of Peace, August 2002. <http://www.usip.org/virtualdiplomacy/publications/reports/15.html>. Kristen Lord provides an important discussion of the potential and limitations of cross-cultural contact in *Perils and Promise of Global Transparency: Why the Information Revolution May Not Lead to Security, Democracy, or Peace*, Chapter 3, "Transparency and Inter-Group Violence," SUNY Press (forthcoming). See also Bruce Stokes, "Public Diplomacy: America is Job No. 1," *National Journal*, May 7, 2005, pp. 1402-1403.

<sup>18</sup> Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New York: Macmillan, 1922, Free Press Paperbacks, 1997).

“The mission of the U.S. Information Agency is to help achieve U.S. foreign policy objectives by (a) influencing public attitudes in other nations, and (b) advising the President, his representatives abroad, and the various departments and agencies on the implications of foreign opinion for present and contemplated U.S. policies, programs, and official statements.”<sup>19</sup>

Public diplomacy is “the management of perceptions” in ways that “facilitate the achievement of U.S. foreign policy objectives,” argues Professor Jarol Manheim. Diplomat Christopher Ross describes public diplomacy as an art through which practitioners seek support of “carefully targeted sectors of foreign publics” for a government’s “strategic goals.”<sup>20</sup> Discourse theory is not absent from this reading of public diplomacy. The best practitioners know that listening and dialogue are keys to persuasion.

Some scholars draw a bright line between discourse and instrumental communication. Peter Dahlgren argues that Habermas’ theory of “communicative action,” understood as normatively based, non-manipulative communication, is “distinct from, and irreducible to” what Habermas calls “strategic action” or instrumental rationality.<sup>21</sup> Many post-modern writers, however, challenge the *possibility* of separating deliberative communication from power. Edward Said’s influential study of orientalism questioned a “liberal consensus that ‘true’ knowledge is fundamentally non-political.” Said urged awareness of the often obscure relationships between culture and power in civil society and the “distribution of geopolitical awareness” in aesthetic and scholarly texts. Michel Foucault argued power relations are embedded in all discourse and human interaction – “in the whole network of the social.”<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Quoted in Roth, “Public Diplomacy: 1952-1977,” Appendix III.

<sup>20</sup> Jarol Manheim, “Talking Points for Meeting with Staff of Senate Foreign Relations Committee,” December 18, 2001; Christopher Ross, “Public Diplomacy Comes of Age,” *The Washington Quarterly*, Spring 2002, p. 75.

<sup>21</sup> Peter Dahlgren, “The Public Sphere and the Net: Structure, Space, and Communication,” in W. Lance Bennett and Robert Entman, eds., *Mediated Politics: Communication and the Future of Democracy*, p. 40-41.

<sup>22</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), pp. 9-11. See also “Orientalism and After,” in Gauri Viswanathan, ed., *Power, Politics, and Culture: Interviews with Edward Said* (New York, Vintage Books, 2001), pp. 208-232. Michel Foucault, *Power: Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984*,

Others challenge the *advisability* of separating deliberative communication from power. Michael Walzer underscores the worth of deliberation in political life, but contends politics has other values that are important and different from reason. These include mobilization, organization, governance, and the management of conflict. In an important critical essay on Habermas, Simone Chambers finds essential value in deliberative communication for purposes of will formation and rationalizing public opinion. She argues persuasively, however, that society's need to take decisions places constraints on discourse. The closer participants come to closure in the political process, "the more participants will be motivated to act strategically rather than discursively."<sup>23</sup>

All public diplomacy is instrumental at its core. Discourse reasoning often drives tone, style, doctrines, perceptions, budgets, time horizons, and organizational structures. But discourse reasoning in public diplomacy is subsumed within an instrumental context. It is not only that public diplomacy presupposes activities with resource or symbolic ties to governments and non-state political entities. It is because public diplomacy is carried out for interest and value based reasons.

A partial list of the highly pragmatic purposes of educational and cultural exchanges advanced by their proponents makes the point. Exchanges increase dialogue and mutual understanding to achieve a variety of second order goals:

- Reduce tensions and negative attitudes toward the U.S., especially in Muslim countries.
- Eliminate the fertile ground that terrorist recruiters exploit.
- Influence the next generation of leaders.

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Volume III, edited by James D. Faubion, (New York: The New Press, 2000), pp. 342-345. For a discussion of rationalist discourse theory in the context of the current struggle of ideas with Islamic fundamentalism, see Roxanne L. Euben, *Enemy in the Mirror: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Limits of Modern Rationalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 20-42.

<sup>23</sup> Michael Walzer, *Politics and Passion: Toward a More Egalitarian Liberalism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004, Chapter 5, "Deliberation . . . and What Else?" pp. 90-109; Simone Chambers, "Discourse and Democratic Practices," in Stephen K. White, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Habermas*, pp. 233-259.

- Communicate freedom and democracy, justice and opportunity, diversity and tolerance.
- Combat anti-Americanism and misperceptions that threaten U.S. security.
- Open doors between American diplomats and host countries to improve understanding of U.S. policies.

To “inform world opinion,” the private sector Center for Arts and Culture states explicitly, “the U.S. Government . . . should use American cultural figures strategically.” As former Assistant Secretary of State Patricia Harrison observed, “An investment in international education is an investment in homeland security.”<sup>24</sup>

In saying that cultural diplomacy is pragmatic and grounded in interests, I do not mean to equate it with the advocacy reasoning of Walter Lippmann or the Kennedy statement of mission. There are substantial differences in the tactics, strategies, and proximity to policies of each.

### **3. Firewalls**

Although all public diplomacy is instrumental, there is a need for institutional shields, often called firewalls, to protect discourse principles and imported norms in the activities of its component elements. Government international broadcasters are best known for using (and abusing) the firewall metaphor to protect their credibility and journalistic integrity. But firewalls occur also in cultural diplomacy, diplomatic information activities, and military public affairs.

There are three kinds of firewalls in public diplomacy. First, firewalls are warranted by imported journalistic, educational, and cultural norms. Second, firewalls are justified by the need to separate public diplomacy from covert and coercive instruments of statecraft. Third, the firewall concept applies to America’s long and increasingly futile attempt to prohibit by law the dissemination of public diplomacy materials within the United States.

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<sup>24</sup> *Cultural Diplomacy: Recommendations and Research*, p. 8; Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Patricia Harrison, FY 2004 Bureau Performance Plan, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State.

*Imported norms.* International broadcasters import journalism norms in news gathering and reporting, and in other broadcasting activities. Few question the desirability of shielding broadcasters from partisan politics and interference in news content by political leaders and policymakers. There is a long history of attempts to do so. Structural mechanisms such as the statutory Voice of America Charter, the U.S. International Broadcasting Act of 1994, the Broadcasting Board of Governors, and authorities of past USIA directors have played a legitimate role in maintaining the credibility and journalistic integrity of government broadcasting organizations. The issue becomes more complicated, however, when the firewall is invoked to protect broadcasters from oversight, reasoned criticism, and decisions relating to management and budget priorities, languages, technologies, and types of broadcasting. Here a case can be made for strategic direction and oversight by political leaders in the executive branch and Congress.<sup>25</sup>

Cultural diplomats import educational and cultural norms. This is manifest in the peer review process through which decisions are made to award Fulbright scholarships and grants to arts organizations. Peer review is embedded in the authorizing legislation for these activities. It ensures that participants are evaluated and chosen on the basis of academic and professional criteria, not on policy or partisan grounds. Numerous institutions of higher education, professional associations, and cultural organizations in the U.S. and abroad participate in the peer review process.

Federal funds support peer review, and lawmakers expect private sector advisory bodies to monitor the relationship between instrumental goals and educational norms. When Congress amended the legislative authority of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy in 1977, it required that the Commission's reports include "assessments of the degree to which the scholarly integrity and nonpolitical character" of educational and

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<sup>25</sup> The advisory group led by Ambassador Edward J. Djerejian, for example, argued "Broadcasting represents nearly half the spending on public diplomacy, and it must be part of the public diplomacy process, not marching to its own drummer with its own goals and strategy, sources of funding, and board." See *Changing Minds, Winning Peace*, Report of the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World, October 1, 2003, p. 32.

cultural exchange programs have been maintained.<sup>26</sup> In another example, the high standards of academic freedom that pertain to U.S. government faculty and students at the National Defense University (NDU) apply to military International Fellows who attend NDU under exchange programs authorized by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

As with broadcasters, the issue becomes problematic when firewall claims are used to influence strategic choices on leadership, program and budget priorities, and organizational issues. Should a respected academic direct the State Department's educational exchange programs? Should reductions be made in European exchanges to permit expansion of exchanges in the Middle East? What are appropriate tradeoffs between funds for program operations and program evaluation? Should exchange participants' academic fields of study reflect foreign policy and national security goals? Should exchanges be managed by federal agencies, a quasi-government organization such as the Smithsonian Institution, or a private endowment? On such issues, there is a case for strategic direction by political leaders in the executive branch and Congress.

*Separating overt and covert.* The second use of firewalls relates to separation between open and closed instruments of statecraft. Public diplomacy is an open instrument in which success depends on truth and credibility. In contrast, intelligence and military instruments involve both overt and covert activities. Deception and undisclosed behavior in specific circumstances are expected and necessary.

Political leaders, ambassadors, military commanders, and public affairs officers know that to persuade others they must be credible. To build consent for strategies, there must be a basis for trust in what they say and do, an inclination by others to believe, and perceptions of their reliability over time. Credibility is diminished when words and actions do not match, when statements directed to multiple audiences are inconsistent, when overt and covert activities are seen to be co-funded and co-located.

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<sup>26</sup> Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1977, Section 8(b).

The history of public diplomacy is full of instances where firewall issues influenced funding and organizational decisions. CIA's two decades of covert funding for Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty ended with press disclosures in the 1970s. A commission chaired by Milton Eisenhower recommended that U.S. surrogate broadcasting services be funded openly through the Board for International Broadcasting. CIA covertly funded international activities of the AFL-CIO, educational and cultural organizations, the National Student Association, and numerous other NGOs during the early Cold War years. Again public disclosure ended the practice. The National Endowment for Democracy was created as a private entity in the 1980s to continue some of these activities through open government grants appropriated to USIA and later the Department of State. Decades of debate on whether USIA should be independent or located in the State Department turned in part on whether advocates saw need for a degree of distance between public diplomacy and a traditional State culture that emphasized closed communication.<sup>27</sup>

Recently, firewall tensions have occurred in public affairs and other information operations of the U.S. military. The rapid demise of the Defense Department's Office of Strategic Influence (OSI) in 2002 was triggered by a story in *The New York Times* alleging that "The Pentagon is developing plans to provide news items, possibly even false ones, to foreign media organizations as part of a new effort to influence public sentiment and policy makers in both friendly and unfriendly countries." The story, sourced to unnamed "military officials," is widely believed to have been leaked by senior officers in the Department's Office of Public Affairs concerned about their credibility, turf issues, and blurring the line between covert operations and public affairs. "We're supposed to have a firewall," one military public affairs officer told *Newsweek*, "this [OSI] would shatter it." Massive coverage in U.S. and global media led Secretary of

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<sup>27</sup> The democracy building community also values a degree of distance from government. Thomas Carothers, for example, seems to suggest a firewall when he distinguishes between human rights advocates, who "are uncomfortable in general with projects funded by the U.S. government" and the democracy community, which "contends that with *appropriate caution and line-drawing* the U.S. government can legitimately carry out assistance projects related to foreign political processes without unduly influencing them" [emphasis added]. Thomas Carothers, *Critical Mission: Essays on Democracy Promotion* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2004), p.17.

Defense Donald Rumsfeld to close the Office within ten days saying it had been so damaged “it could not function effectively.”<sup>28</sup>

The OSI episode cast a long shadow. Four years later, the Defense Department continues to struggle with what it calls “lanes in the road” – defining and clarifying overlapping relationships between public affairs, public diplomacy, and information operations. Should the term “psychological operations” be dropped from the vocabulary of information operations? Should “strategic communication” be added? To what extent should the military *support* or *conduct* public diplomacy? Critical distinctions turn on the conflicting goals of public credibility and military deception. As Representative Ike Skelton (MO) stated on February 10, 2005:

“I am concerned about the credibility of the United States Armed Forces. Specifically, I am worried that the blending of the realms of Public Affairs (PA) and Information Operations (IO) will have long lasting negative effects on our military, and ultimately our nation . . . It is my understanding that in General Casey’s command in Iraq they are combined in one organization. Is that true? If so, are you satisfied that a firewall exists between the two functions so that disinformation and misinformation does (sic) not bleed from IO, where they are legitimate techniques, to PA, where they would represent the abdication of the Armed Forces’ responsibility to present truthful information . . . .”<sup>29</sup>

*Domestic dissemination.* A third firewall category relates to concerns about potential abuse of the public diplomacy instrument to influence public opinion in the United States for policy or partisan purposes. Since 1948, U.S. laws have restricted domestic dissemination of government-produced public diplomacy program materials intended to inform and influence foreign publics. These laws led to litigation, much debate, and

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<sup>28</sup> James Dao and Eric Schmitt, “Pentagon Readies Efforts to Sway Sentiment Abroad,” *The New York Times*, February 19, 2002; Jonathan Alter, “Truth: The Best Propaganda,” *Newsweek*, March 4, 2002; U.S. Department of State, “Pentagon’s OSI Plans Unleash Indignation in Overseas Media,” *Foreign Media Reaction Issue Focus*, February 22, 2002; Eric Schmitt and James Dao, “A ‘Damaged’ Information Office Is Declared Closed by Rumsfeld,” *The New York Times*, February 27, 2002. In a letter to Senator Carl Levin (MI), responding to questions on OSI, the Defense Department defined the military meaning of the term “deception” and asserted that references to deception in OSI’s planning documents did not involve “provision of false information to the public or news media.” Apparently satisfied, Senator Levin appears not to have pursued the matter. Letter from Under Secretary of Defense Douglas J. Feith to Senator Carl Levin, April 6, 2002.

<sup>29</sup> Letter from Representative Ike Skelton (MO), Ranking Member, House Armed Services Committee, to General Richard B. Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, February 10, 2005.

procedural difficulties. Tactically, concerns usually can be traced less to principle than to whose political or policy ox is being gored. Nevertheless, few public diplomacy issues have energized Congressional interest more, and lawmakers have stoutly resisted efforts to amend or repeal the so-called “domestic dissemination ban.”<sup>30</sup>

The domestic dissemination firewall raises two broad questions. First, should geographically-based legal restrictions be rescinded or amended as a consequence of new information technologies and a need for reasonable standards that better serve the public interest? The Internet, satellite footprints, and other technologies create domestic spillover of information, blurring the line between active dissemination and general availability. Global NGOs and virtual communities are not defined by borders. Scholars, journalists, and the public have legitimate interests in public diplomacy materials. Americans need to know more about foreign attitudes and cultures, and about the public diplomacy activities of their government.

Secondly, is there need for any statutory limit on the use of federal funds to influence domestic public opinion? Anomalies abound. Few oppose reasonable government-funded activities intended to inform Americans about their foreign policy: a Presidential news conference, a National Security Advisor’s television interview, a speech by the Secretary of State. The Secretary of Defense’s media briefings on U.S. foreign and military policies and the *DefenseLink* website draw few rebukes on domestic dissemination grounds. But the State Department’s International Information Programs website, [www.usinfo.state.gov](http://www.usinfo.state.gov), cannot be publicized within the United States or linked to State’s main website. In short, the Secretary of State can encourage a student researching a paper at George Washington University to watch State Department foreign policy briefings on C-Span, but not to visit State’s public diplomacy website.

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<sup>30</sup> Bruce Gregory, “Should Smith-Mundt-Zorinsky Legislation Be Reformed and How?” Paper prepared for the Public Diplomacy Institute/Public Diplomacy Council for submission to Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff, July 8, 2002.

The case for limits arises over scale and purpose. Low cost public information activities by U.S. officials and public affairs professionals are expected, essential to effective governance, and seldom controversial. Use of tax dollars for sophisticated communication strategies and targeted campaigns by U.S. agencies to persuade Americans of the merits of a particular policy often is controversial.<sup>31</sup> Does the potential for abuse outweigh repeal of the legislation? Or can the issue be handled through media scrutiny and Congressional oversight? If there is a case for legislation, should it apply not just to the State Department and Voice of America, but to other U.S. public diplomacy actors such as the White House, USAID and the Department of Defense? Should Congressional restrictions continue, as some argue, to protect public diplomacy resources from bureaucratic predators? Are such restrictions a serious obstacle for public diplomacy professionals?

#### ***4. Episodic Commitment, Personalities, Tribal Cultures***

Americans have no monopoly on public diplomacy as both an instrument and a label. Every country engages in public diplomacy; many now use the term. Its core concepts apply also to strategies of powerful non-state actors such as *Doctors Without Borders*, the Vatican, Osama bin Laden, and insurgents in Iraq. But can we speak of an American approach to public diplomacy? Does American public diplomacy have distinct characteristics? Arguably, it does. Three in particular shape today's problems and solutions: episodic commitment, the influence of powerful personalities, and competing tribal cultures.

*Episodic commitment.* America's self identity is deeply rooted in ideals and values – freedom, equality, democracy, human rights, and a “decent respect for the opinions of mankind.” These abstractions frame America's sense of its exceptionalism, and they are intended for export. Thomas Jefferson's last letter, ten days before his death, predicted “the unbounded exercise of reason and freedom of opinion” would spread to the world,

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<sup>31</sup> Consider, for example, the Bush Administration's use of strategic communication tools to build domestic support for the war in Iraq. See Elisabeth Bumiller, “War P.R. Machine is on Full Throttle,” *The New York Times*, February 9, 2003 and “Keepers of Bush Image Lift Stagecraft to New Heights,” *The New York Times*, May 16, 2003.

“to some parts sooner, to others later, but finally to all.”<sup>32</sup> Presidents thereafter echoed Jefferson’s vision. But not until Woodrow Wilson did they claim government agencies are needed to do the job.

An aversion to government “propaganda” ministries is embedded in American political culture. Diplomats from Ben Franklin and John Adams on were expected to engage foreign publics as well as their governments in wartime.<sup>33</sup> But in peacetime ambassadors focused their attention on other governments, not their citizens.<sup>34</sup> Conveying American ideals to the world was the work of missionaries, scholars, traders, journalists, soldiers, and activists – soft power and “citizen diplomacy.” Beginning with the Creel Committee in World War I, however, U.S. “information” agencies came and went in cycles linked to war. The Office of War Information and Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs during World War II. USIA during the Cold War. Budgets were cut and organizations abolished when wars ended.

A central question today is whether this pattern of episodic commitment should continue. Globalization, porous borders, powerful non-state actors, surprise, rapid change, and the speed and anticipation required by new threats and opportunities suggest not. Few call for creating a 21<sup>st</sup> century version of USIA. There are good reasons not to do so. But

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<sup>32</sup> Quoted in Michael Ignatieff, “Who Are Americans to Think That Freedom is Theirs to Spread,” *The New York Times Magazine*, June 26, 2005, pp. 42-44.

<sup>33</sup> Among many recent biographies of Franklin, two stand out on his role as public diplomat. See Stacy Schiff, *A Great Improvisation: Franklin, France, and the Birth of America* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2005) and Walter Isaacson, *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003). For a discussion of John Adams as public diplomat, see David McCullough, *John Adams* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001).

<sup>34</sup> The speeches and other occasional writings of public diplomat Walter R. Roberts contain some of the best analysis of 20<sup>th</sup> century forces driving change in the American approach to public diplomacy. See, for example, “The Conduct of Foreign Policy in the Information Age,” Speech given at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, June 21, 1994. Worthwhile monographs include Wilson P. Dizard, Jr., *Inventing Public Diplomacy: The Story of the U.S. Information Agency* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2004); Hans N. Tuch, *Communicating with the World: U.S. Public Diplomacy Overseas* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1990); Charles Frankel, *The Neglected Aspect of Foreign Affairs* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1965); Thomas C. Sorenson, *The Word War: The Story of American Propaganda* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968); and John W. Henderson, *The United States Information Agency* (New York: Frederic A. Praeger, 1969).

there is a case for enduring structures that combine strategic direction and flexible networks not tied to war and election cycles.<sup>35</sup>

*“Accidental” personalities.* “People are policy” in all instruments of statecraft. Strong presidents, cabinet officers, diplomats, and generals have been influential throughout U.S. history. The presidency, the State Department, embassies, and an army and navy have been permanent features of the republic. In each, powerful leaders act in institutional settings shaped by laws, customs, and established routines as old as the nation itself.

Public diplomacy is different. Government funding for international exchanges and U.S. embassy cultural and information programs began only in the 1930s, and for international broadcasting in 1942. Budgets and programs were in constant jeopardy. Appropriation hearings required justifications not only for dollar amounts in the President’s budget but often for the existence of the programs themselves. Frequent reorganizations were a disruptive element in doing business. Expert studies on “what to do” about public diplomacy appeared long before 9/11.

In this context, the occasional “accident” of leaders with vision, political access, and impact – and idiosyncratic agendas -- has been a salient characteristic of American public diplomacy. Nelson Rockefeller and Sumner Welles were instrumental in convincing Franklin Roosevelt and Congress to fund the first continuous exchange and information programs in Latin America. Elmer Davis put his stamp on the Office of War Information. Archibald MacLeish figured importantly in cultural diplomacy. Senator J. William Fulbright created the scholarship programs that bear his name. Journalist John

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<sup>35</sup> As the Defense Science Board Task Force recently argued, “For sixty years strategic communication planning and coordination has been ephemeral and usually treated with indifference. The United States can no longer afford a repetitious pattern of hollow authorities, ineffectual committees, and stifling turf battles in strategic communication.” *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication*, p. 61. See also U.S. Government Accountability Office, *U.S. Public Diplomacy: Interagency Coordination Efforts Hampered by the Lack of a National Communication Strategy*, GAO-05-323, April 2005.

Chancellor and Henry Loomis stand out in VOA's history. Edward R. Murrow<sup>36</sup> and Charles Z. Wick were influential USIA directors – the former for his impact on the thinking of President Kennedy, the latter for a personal friendship with President Reagan that led to unusual increases in public diplomacy funding. The late Congressman Dante Fascell, arguably the only lawmaker in American history to make public diplomacy a top political priority, significantly influenced the goals and activities of public diplomacy organizations for three decades. USIA, VOA, RFE/RL, Radio Free Asia, the BBG, and the National Endowment for Democracy all reflect his political talents and leadership on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. More recently, U.S. broadcasting CEO Norman Pattiz is widely seen to be “the godfather” of Radio Sawa and the Al Hurra satellite television network. Given her skills and political access, Under Secretary of State Karen Hughes likely will be another powerful leader.

Strong leaders of course are desirable in public diplomacy. Their impact is pronounced because, unlike military and intelligence instruments of statecraft, public diplomacy does not have a thick context in American political culture and national security strategy. A question for practitioners and scholars is whether public diplomacy can flourish if it continues to depend on the random appearance (and disappearance) of “accidental” personalities.

*Tribal cultures.* A third characteristic of an American approach to public diplomacy is the centrality of its tribal cultures. Here I borrow from Graham Allison's concept of “organizational culture.” In Allison's account, individuals in organizational cultures behave “in ways that conform with informal as well as formal norms.” Their identity is tied to a set of beliefs and “rules for matching actions to situations,” which they “have inherited and pass on to their successors.” They “agree on certain basics: a mission, the creation of special capacities linked to operational objectives oriented toward

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<sup>36</sup> For an even-handed discussion of Murrow, a USIA director lionized by many public diplomacy professionals, see Nicholas J. Cull, “‘The Man Who Invented Truth’: The Tenure of Edward R. Murrow as Director of the United States Information Agency During the Kennedy Years,” *Cold War History*, October 2003, pp. 25-48.

performance of certain tasks, and reliance on associated routines.”<sup>37</sup> Given public diplomacy’s multiple and ephemeral organizations, its functional distribution in larger organizations (e.g., State and Defense), its operational dependence on private sector institutions, and its diverse supporting interest groups, I prefer to capture Allison’s logic with the term “tribal cultures.”

My list of tribal cultures, no doubt controversial, includes:

- (1) Foreign Service officers who train for and specialize in public diplomacy as carried out in State Department bureaus and U.S. embassies;
- (2) Cultural diplomats and associated professionals in academic institutions and exchange program NGOs;
- (3) U.S. international broadcasters, members and staff of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, and their Congressional sponsors;
- (4) Communication strategists and public affairs advisors to Presidents, cabinet secretaries, and directors of agencies with international responsibilities;
- (5) Military officers who train for and specialize in open information operations including public affairs, psychological operations, and civic affairs; and
- (6) Professionals associated with government and non-government democracy-building organizations such as USAID, the National Endowment for Democracy, the Democratic and Republican international institutes, and other organizations.

These cultures are not hermetically sealed. Formal and informal overlap exists. The Secretary of State sits *ex officio* on the BBG. Foreign Service officers carry out press and cultural activities sequentially and simultaneously. Diplomats are assigned to military units; soldiers serve in embassies. Presidential communication advisors come from and go to diplomatic posts. Nevertheless, viewing public diplomacy as a set of distinct and often competing cultures is analytically useful. It offers insights into the preferences and

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<sup>37</sup> Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, second edition, (New York: Longman, 1999), pp. 145-158.

performance of public diplomacy actors. It helps us understand why strategic direction and establishing priorities are both necessary and hard to achieve.

Each tribal culture has its own beliefs and rules for matching actions to situations. For example, Foreign Service officers who train for and execute public diplomacy emphasize the value of professionals with operational experience, the priority of “the field” over Washington, face-to-face communication, language skills, and the long-term importance of dialogue and ideas. Broadcasters stress journalism norms, independence from policy agencies, audience research, gaining market share, and media channels (radio, television, and the Internet in descending priority). Cultural diplomats privilege educational norms, deep knowledge of other cultures, engagement (vice confrontation), fostering private cultural connections, and long-term results most believe are inevitable but difficult to predict or measure.<sup>38</sup> Communication advisors to senior political leaders, drawing on political campaign strategies, underscore press relations, themes and messages, talking points, building domestic consent (a first priority) and foreign consent for policies, and occupying space advantageously within news cycles. Military officers value information as an instrument of national power, communication strategies, doctrine, training and education, media, innovative technologies, leveraging NGOs, and interagency coordination led preferably by the National Security Council, alternatively by the Department of State. Democracy builders place priority on civil society initiatives, working with indigenous groups in non-democratic and transitional societies rather than regimes in power, training, partnerships with NGOs, and fostering democracy as an end not as a cover for other goals.<sup>39</sup>

Public diplomacy’s tribal cultures compete for resources and freedom of action.

Although most professionals attribute utility to competing cultures, their inclination is to exclude rather than include. For example, broadcasters concede the value of diplomats’ country and language expertise, but rarely are Foreign Service officers invited to

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<sup>38</sup> But not impossible to measure given sufficient resources. The State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs has earned recognition in recent years for the quality of its program evaluation studies.

<sup>39</sup> These characteristics are illustrative and not mutually exclusive.

participate in broadcasting's language service program reviews. Cultural diplomats grant a place for policy advocacy, but often dismiss it as spin or propaganda. Embassy officers play to their field expertise and give lower priority to mass audience communication and Washington-based activities. Military information officers, *unusually*, prefer that State take the lead in public diplomacy and lament its failure to do so. There are exceptions, but players from competing tribal cultures seldom attend the same conferences, participate on the same task forces, or stress the need for "inter-cultural" assignments, learning, and mutually reinforcing activities.

Political scientist Amy Zegart maintains that interest groups and Congress play a smaller role in shaping the organization and activities of foreign affairs agencies, compared with domestic agencies.<sup>40</sup> In foreign affairs, she suggests, the politics of recognition, priorities, resources, and bureaucratic structure is dominated by conflicts and compromises among bureaucrats and other self-interested players who are isolated to a considerable degree from the national political process. Public diplomacy's tribal cultures are no exception to this model, although broadcasting and exchanges do benefit from interest group attention. Support for broadcasting has come from U.S. ethnic groups, particularly those from Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, Asia, and Cuba. Educational exchanges gain advantage from U.S. academic institutions and program partners in the NGO community. Other elements of public diplomacy in the State Department (and previously in USIA) have not had similar backing from domestic constituencies. For this and other reasons, embassy information activities receive less support in Congress relative to exchanges and broadcasting. Military information

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<sup>40</sup> "[W]e find that *national security agencies arise and evolve in fundamentally different ways than their domestic policy counterparts* traditionally studied in American politics. In domestic policy, interest groups and their legislative supporters take the lead in shaping agency design and operations. The action takes place mostly in Congress. But in national security affairs, presidents and bureaucrats are the primary players, battling over agency structure far away from the Capitol steps [emphasis in the original]." Amy B. Zegart, *Flawed by Design: The Evolution of the CIA, JCS, and NSC*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), pp. 6-7. Allison and Zelikow, citing research by Randall Ripley and James Lindsay, take a slightly different perspective: "In the arena of [foreign and defense] structural policy, decisions tend to be dominated by 'sub-governments,' consisting of bureaus, congressional committees, and other interested actors – all attentive to protecting their domain from outside intrusion, whether by president, secretary of defense, or congressional leader." *Essence of Decision*, p. 289. I take "sub-governments" in this context to be equivalent to public diplomacy's tribal cultures.

operations, although they lack the support of similarly dedicated interest groups, benefit from a defense budget that is vastly greater than budgets for diplomacy and intelligence.

Traditional doctrines and structures limit the ability of public diplomacy's tribal cultures to adapt. Elitist perceptions shared by many, but not all, Foreign Service officers and cultural diplomats foster a narrow professionalism and resistance to change. Reforms at the strategic level must be led by strong political leaders and, with exceptions, voices outside the cultures themselves.

### ***5. Interagency Integration: Coordination or Strategic Direction?***

Structural transformation of public diplomacy no longer seems in doubt. Americans are changing their military, intelligence, and law enforcement instruments on a scale not seen in fifty years. Historically, public diplomacy changes tend to follow. More importantly, political leaders now promise change. Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Karen Hughes, citing "almost every report on public diplomacy" and a mandate from President Bush and Secretary Rice, has committed to leading an effort "from the State Department" to "reinvigorate the interagency process." Her priorities: "to identify and marshal all the communications and public diplomacy resources of our different government agencies and provide leadership to make our efforts more coordinated and more strategic" and "to more fully integrate policy and public diplomacy."<sup>41</sup>

Under Secretary Hughes will lead change at a time of unusual opportunity. Important voices want to integrate national security instruments and reform interagency process. The 9/11 Commission prominently called for a global strategy that uses, in addition to military action, "all elements of national power: diplomacy, intelligence, covert action, law enforcement, economic policy, foreign aid, public diplomacy, and homeland

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<sup>41</sup> Karen Hughes, Statement before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, July 22, 2005. Her other priorities include: "a reinvigorated public diplomacy community in the State Department," empowering public diplomacy professionals, working to "reinvigorate public diplomacy as a vibrant, vital career path," and marshalling the "great creativity" of America's private sector.

defense.”<sup>42</sup> Others seek robust stabilization and reconstruction (nation building) operations to match war fighting capabilities. Still others recommend bringing the military’s Goldwater-Nichols planning and execution reforms to the entire military/civilian national security structure. Underlying these impulses is a desire to replace stove-piped national security instruments built in an era of “relatively static threats” with capabilities needed to compete with “adaptive, highly-agile opponents with flexible doctrine, short chains of command, and rapid internal processes.”<sup>43</sup>

Public diplomacy’s strategic challenge is grounded in a central question: what should be the duration and scale of the public diplomacy reforms called for by leaders and expert studies? Put differently, how and to what extent should the components of public diplomacy be integrated with each other and with other instruments of statecraft? Should Americans insist on bold efforts leading to *strategic direction* – or another temporary effort to *coordinate*?

Attempts to *coordinate* public diplomacy with other instruments of statecraft date from the early days of the Cold War. President Truman’s Psychological Strategy Board (1951) and President Eisenhower’s Operations Coordinating Board (1953) are notable examples, followed by President Reagan’s National Security Decision Directive 77 (1983) and President Clinton’s Presidential Decision Directive 68 (1999).<sup>44</sup> Efforts to coordinate since 9/11 include the White House Office of Global Communications and the National

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<sup>42</sup> “If we favor one tool while neglecting others,” the Commission added, “we leave ourselves vulnerable and weaken our national effort.” *The 9/11 Commission Report*, pp. 363-364. The Commission famously said a great deal about intelligence, law enforcement, and homeland security reforms. It said much less about “how to do it” for other elements of national power including public diplomacy. See also Lawrence J. Korb and Robert O. Boorstin, *Integrated Power: A National Security Strategy for the 21st Century*.

<sup>43</sup> *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: U.S. Government and Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 2005, p. 13. See also *In the Wake of War: Improving U.S. Post-Conflict Capabilities*, Report of a Council on Foreign Relations Independent Task Force, July 2005 and the Defense Science Board’s 2004 Summer Study on *Transition to and from Hostilities* (Washington, DC: Defense Science Board, December 2004).

<sup>44</sup> For a discussion of past efforts to coordinate public diplomacy, see *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Managed Information Dissemination*, (Washington, D.C: Defense Science Board, 2001), pp. 50-53. See also Dizard, *Inventing Public Diplomacy*, passim.

Security Council's Strategic Communication Policy Coordination Committee. Neither endured; both were sharply criticized.<sup>45</sup>

Although structurally different, these coordination efforts shared common characteristics. They did not last. They were driven by temporary White House frustration with a lack of public diplomacy planning and execution in response to crises or in communicating high profile policies. Elegant formal authorities (and the occasional strong personality) at times fostered cooperation and shared information. But without exception they did not have *sustained* impact -- a capability over time to plan strategies and determine operational priorities on a broad range of policy and public diplomacy issues.

A key question is not whether today's political leaders will create a new interagency structure. No doubt they will. A more critical question is whether they will create a flexible, adaptive structure grounded in legislation that will last over time -- beyond election cycles and the tenure of powerful personalities.

The question of scale is also crucial. A "reinvigorated interagency process" must deal with stovepipes: tribal cultures, firewalls, multiple agencies, numerous Congressional committees, and a decentralized budget process. As the 9/11 Commission put it in discussing intelligence, "It is hard to 'break down stovepipes,' when there are so many stoves that are legally and politically entitled to have cast-iron pipes of their own."<sup>46</sup> Is another attempt *to coordinate* stovepipes sufficient? Or is some level of strategic direction required? If the latter, to what extent should it entail authority to task and compel outcomes? Should a reinvigorated interagency process be directed at the White House, cabinet, or sub-cabinet level? Serious reform can be achieved by a powerful

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<sup>45</sup> *Changing Minds and Winning Peace*, pp. 58-61; *U.S. Public Diplomacy: Interagency Coordination Efforts Hampered by the Lack of a National Communication Strategy*, pp. 11-14; and *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication*, pp. 23-26. The Defense Science Board was particularly blunt: "The White House Office of Global Communications and a National Security Council PCC now have formal authorities relating to strategic communication coordination. Their practical influence is marginal at best, non-existent at worst. Their authorities should be rescinded." See pp. 61-62.

<sup>46</sup> *The 9/11 Commission Report*, p. 403.

Under Secretary of State, but only with the full backing of the President and Congressional leaders – and recognition of the stakes for the nation as a whole by departments, agencies, and tribal cultures prone to bureaucratic infighting.

The absence of reform does not reflect disinterest in public diplomacy by the President and senior political leaders. Far from it. As a Defense Science Board Task Force recently observed, the President, the National Security Advisor, the Secretaries of State and Defense, and senior military commanders “devote extraordinary amounts of personal time to advocating policies and shaping perceptions at home and abroad.” Lack of reform is due to disinclination thus far to engage difficult institutional and operational public diplomacy problems at department and interagency levels. “Personal commitment by top leaders,” the Task Force concluded, “has not been matched by needed changes in the organizations they lead or in a dysfunctional interagency process.”<sup>47</sup>

Most expert studies recognize the essential importance of Presidential leadership in achieving reform. Many call in general terms for *coordinating* structures analogous to past models. Most assume or state explicitly that America’s political culture and form of government make joint action difficult to achieve. Most also recognize the need for both talented people and effective structures. With few exceptions, however, experts and political leaders have not called for public diplomacy reforms with authorities and strategic direction on a scale similar to the 9/11 Commission’s intelligence reform recommendations – or comparable to the national security and public diplomacy initiatives taken in the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication*, pp. 20-23. The Task Force analyzed three *coordination* models used in the past – National Security Council, cabinet department, and independent agency. It concluded each had advantages and disadvantages and that none had been consistently successful, pp. 60-63.

<sup>48</sup> Exceptions include the Defense Science Board Task Force, which states: “Today on a scale not seen since the 1940s, we are shaping new approaches to intelligence, military force structures, nation-building, and homeland security. We must devote comparable creativity and energy to strategic communication.” *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication*, p. 84. See also Barry Fulton’s recommendations to develop a “redefinition” of public diplomacy and “a national strategy for the conduct of public diplomacy” in “Taking the Pulse of American Public Diplomacy in a Post-9/11 World.”

## **Moving from Reports to Action**

Duration and scale of public diplomacy reform are crucial. To transform ideas into action, two other priorities must be addressed. What should be done “to more fully integrate policy and public diplomacy”? How should the U.S. “reinvigorate the interagency process” and marshal the creativity of America’s private sector? I propose a business plan with four elements.

### ***1. Policy and Public Diplomacy Connections***

Most reports stipulate that policy and public diplomacy cannot be separated. Many imply without much elaboration that some policies are major drivers of anti-Americanism and other threats to U.S. interests. Few offer concrete proposals to systematically integrate policy and public diplomacy within and among agencies in terms of three strategic dimensions: (1) comprehending public attitudes, media filters, and influence structures; (2) setting policy priorities; and (3) choosing messages, channels, instruments, and other means tailored to situations.

Awareness by political leaders that policy and public diplomacy are inextricably linked is welcome and important. Institutionalizing this awareness over time is the hard part. So too is recognition that coherent and flexible strategies are required for more than one issue at a time. Muslim outreach planning and programs currently dominate and deserve high priority, but needed also are public diplomacy strategies linked to nuclear proliferation, China’s projection of hard and soft power, famine and genocide in Africa, U.S. relations with India, and other issues. The U.S. should not try to “do it all,” but in public diplomacy as in policy it must do more than one thing at a time.

A presidential directive is needed to integrate policy and public diplomacy. This directive should require that:

- (1) All regional and functional National Security Council policy committees *assess* the potential impact of public opinion when policy options are considered and *develop* public diplomacy strategies in concert with policy implementation;

- (2) All foreign policy initiatives of the State Department's regional and functional bureaus, and policy elements in the Department of Defense and USAID, have public diplomacy assessment and planning components;
- (3) The Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs have authority and resources to serve effectively as the Secretary of State's principal *advisor* on public diplomacy and as the Department's voice on the U.S. government's interagency public diplomacy planning bodies;
- (4) The Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs have authority and resources to *manage* the Department's public diplomacy, including discretion to assign public diplomacy responsibilities and budget priorities to embassies and the Department's bureaus, to concur in public diplomacy assignments, and to review performance ratings of senior public diplomacy officers in the Department's bureaus and embassies; and
- (5) The Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs direct the State Department's foreign opinion and media research activities now located in the Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research.<sup>49</sup>

To be successful, these reforms will require Presidential direction supported by the political will of the Congress, new authorities for the National Security Council and the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, and mandatory incentives and penalties for career officers.

## ***2. Strategic Direction***

The case against public diplomacy *coordination* is strong. Not only has coordination never worked on a sustained basis, it is not adequate to current needs. Just as the 9/11 Commission found a compelling need for innovative restructuring and a “quarterback” to call plays and assign roles in intelligence, so too with public diplomacy. New strategic direction and evaluation authorities are required. Unlike intelligence, the challenge will not be to create a new organization but to transform existing structures. Strategic direction for public diplomacy must be flexible and adaptive. Its models should be

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<sup>49</sup> For a more comprehensive discussion of these suggestions, see *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication*, passim.

connectors and networks, not stove pipes and hierarchies. And a talented “quarterback” is essential.

Although a strong cabinet Under Secretary of State with full support from the President and the Secretary can bring about real and immediate change, any approach that places the public diplomacy “quarterback” in a sub-cabinet position *over time* carries a heavy burden. Only rarely do Under Secretaries advise presidents directly. Cabinet departments typically do not think and act in interagency terms. Departments are organized around preferences, outputs, and constraints that make it difficult for them to set interagency priorities and move resources. Whether the State Department can or should “quarterback” today’s multi-agency, multi-issue public diplomacy is a threshold question to be considered with care.

An alternative approach, one recommended by a Defense Science Board Task Force and a bill pending in the Senate, calls for a Deputy National Security Advisor to serve as the focal point for strategic direction.<sup>50</sup> This NSC Deputy would report through the National Security Advisor and advise the President directly on all matters relating to public diplomacy (analogous to the double-hatted role of public affairs spokespersons in State and Defense). He or she also would lead an interagency committee comprised of all national security and public diplomacy agencies. So far, not much is new. Presidential imprimatur. White House (NSC) leadership. An interagency committee. All have precedents. Two new elements are required for this approach to succeed. *First, the NSC Deputy must have authority to direct and task, not just coordinate.* This means authority to assign operational responsibilities (but not manage their execution) to departments and agencies, move resources, set broad public diplomacy priorities in the President’s budget,

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<sup>50</sup> *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication*, pp. 62-64. In S. 192, a bill introduced January 26, 2005 and devoted largely to stabilization and reconstruction, Senator Richard Lugar (IN) included sense of Congress language calling on the President to “establish a permanent organizational structure within the National Security Council” to oversee strategic communication, and to establish “a deputy national security advisor for strategic communication to serve as the President’s principal advisor on all matters relating to strategic communication.” This NSC deputy also would chair a “strategic communication committee.” S. 192, “To Provide for the Improvement of Foreign Stabilization and Reconstruction Capabilities of the United States Government, Section 4, “Strategic Communication.”

and concur in the appointment of senior public diplomacy officials in cabinet departments and agencies. *Second, the President and Congress should work to achieve legislation that would make such an arrangement permanent.*

Critics will argue this approach would “operationalize” the NSC. Yes, it would to the degree it entails broad authorities to direct and task. Execution and program management, however, would remain with line agencies. Others will object that legislation would limit the power of the President to staff the presidency. The answer is yes. But so did the National Security Act of 1947 and other laws relating to the direction and management of foreign policy. Still others will object because they will lose turf and authority. Again the answer is yes. Many of public diplomacy’s structures were built in an era when threats and opportunities for the most part were stable and predictable. Incremental adjustments to traditional models will not achieve a public diplomacy that is smarter, faster, and more effective. “Just as an earlier generation of Americans created new ways to meet the national security challenges of the 1940s and 1950s,” the Defense Science Board concluded, “we must make changes on a similar scale today, and we must ground these changes in legislation.”<sup>51</sup>

### ***3. Marshal Private Sector Creativity***

Political leaders and most experts are in agreement that America must find ways to benefit more fully from the talents and imagination of its private sector. The General Accountability Office (GAO) recently recommended that the Secretary of State develop a strategy “to engage the private sector in support of common public diplomacy objectives.” The State Department “heartily endorsed” the recommendation.<sup>52</sup> There is less agreement, however, on how to do it.

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<sup>51</sup> *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication*, p. 64.

<sup>52</sup> U.S. General Accountability Office, *U.S. Public Diplomacy: Interagency Coordination Efforts Hampered by the Lack of a National Communication Strategy*; Under Secretary of State Karen Hughes, “The Mission of Public Diplomacy,” Confirmation hearing statement before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, July 22, 2005. <http://www.state.gov/r/us/2005/49967.htm> “We also must develop effective ways to marshal the great creativity of our private sector. American companies, universities, private foundations, our travel industry all have extensive contact with people throughout the world. Our music and film industries, artists and entertainers create powerful impressions – sometimes good,

One approach, for which support is growing, is to establish a non-profit center to leverage knowledge and skills in America's academic, business, media, and NGO communities. Although views vary on structures and purpose, members of the Defense Science Board, Djerejian advisory group, Council on Foreign Relations, The Heritage Foundation, U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, Center for the Study of the Presidency, and other groups see need for a focal point – related to but independent from government – through which private sector organizations could strengthen public diplomacy. The intent is not to duplicate effective government activities or replace the government's public diplomacy direction and planning. Some models call for government grants and task orders. Others see a center as a grant-making organization. There is much support for harnessing expertise on foreign cultures and languages, opinion polling and media analysis, evaluation and measurement, education and training, media creativity and skills, and consultative services. Such a center could serve all government departments and agencies engaged in public diplomacy.

Two groups, task forces created by the Defense Science Board and the Council on Foreign Relations, share the view that a non-profit center could provide information, analysis, and services in four areas:

- (1) *Knowledge*: global public opinion, cultural influences (values, religion, entertainment, education), demographics, media trends and content analysis;
- (2) *Products*: support for communication strategies, plans, themes, messages, media, and programs;
- (3) *Services*: support for cross-cultural exchanges of ideas and people, deployment of temporary communications teams, language and skills data bases, training; and
- (4) *Evaluation*: studies of changes in foreign attitudes, public diplomacy metrics, and long-term evaluation of messages and programs.

Their suggested organizational models are the RAND Corporation or other federally funded research and development organizations and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. The goal is to provide a magnet for private sector expertise and a source of

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sometimes bad, but always powerful. I welcome ideas to more fully engage the private sector because I believe this engagement is critical to our success.”

analysis independent from the special pleadings of government organizations. In the Defense Science Board's thinking, a non-profit center could provide knowledge and services that are "agile, adaptable, and cutting edge; that are multi-disciplinary and fuse capabilities from a variety of sources . . . [and that require] critical feedback to key decision-makers based on polling and research, and longer term independent analyses."<sup>53</sup>

Moving from general report recommendations to implementation is a challenge. Congress does not legislate 501(c)(3) organizations. Congress does, however, fund and otherwise support private organizations in many fields including public diplomacy. In instances such as the National Endowment for Democracy and Radio Free Asia, the private sector developed research, a business plan, and articles of incorporation that Congress then supported through funds appropriated to U.S. agencies that in turn provided annual grants to the organizations. On April 28, 2005, Rep. Mac Thornberry (TX) introduced a bill that would direct "the Secretary of State to solicit from tax-exempt national security and foreign policy research organizations offers to establish a Center for Strategic Communication, and select one organization to establish such Center."<sup>54</sup>

The initiative to create a public diplomacy center lies in the first instance with the private sector, which has supplied no dearth of reports but which thus far has not provided a comprehensive business plan. One organization should take the lead in inviting interested parties to collaborate in developing a plan that would build on the best ideas of those calling for increased private sector support for public diplomacy.

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<sup>53</sup> *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication*, pp. 66-69; *Finding America's Voice: A Strategy for Reinvigorating U.S. Public Diplomacy*, Report of an Independent Task Force Sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations, 2003, pp. 37-39.

<sup>54</sup> H.R. 1869, "Strategic Communication Act of 2005," Rep. Thornberry's bill summarizes the Center's duties to include: (1) provision of information and analysis to the Department of State, the Department of Defense (DOD), the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Director of National Intelligence on U.S. security and foreign policy issues; (2) development of U.S. communications strategies and monitoring techniques; (3) support of government-wide strategic communication through services provided on a cost-recovery basis; (4) contracting with private sector and academic entities; and (5) mobilization of non-government initiatives. Senator Lugar's bill, S. 192, contains sense of the Congress language urging creation of "an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan center for strategic communication."

#### ***4. Quadrennial Diplomacy Review***

Observing that public diplomacy programs are based on budgets not program requirements, a group of professionals associated with the Public Diplomacy Institute and Public Diplomacy Council in 2002 recommended a Quadrennial Diplomacy Review comparable to the military's Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). A year later a Council on Foreign Relations Task Force called similarly for a Quadrennial Public Diplomacy Review (QPDR).<sup>55</sup> Both groups deplored the absence of an institutionalized process for systematic, long-range public diplomacy planning – a process that would anticipate rather than react to challenges and identify capabilities needed to address them.

Apart from the Department of Defense, no U.S. department or agency devotes substantial resources to long-range planning.<sup>56</sup> Today's global environment is more complex. Change is more rapid. Interagency operations are becoming routine. The planning horizons of America's adversaries are years and decades, and they are not tied to U.S. elections and Congressional appropriations cycles. Public diplomacy requires planning to deal with modernization, infrastructure, budget, personnel, training, and technology requirements. A Quadrennial Diplomacy Review should link such planning to private sector expertise and established public diplomacy standards to include country-specific program and staffing requirements.

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<sup>55</sup> *Public Diplomacy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Proposals to strengthen the conduct of public diplomacy submitted by the Public Diplomacy Institute/Public Diplomacy Council in response to requests from staffs of the House International Relations Committee and Senate Foreign Relations Committee, February and May, 2002; *Finding America's Voice: A Strategy for Reinventing U.S. Public Diplomacy*, p. 35.

<sup>56</sup> *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols, U.S. Government and Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 2005, p. 27-29. The CSIS study notes that the State Department's policy planning office "develops a 'big picture' approach in specific policy areas . . . [but] tends (with some exceptions) to focus on issues already on the agenda rather than challenges that might loom over the horizon." The study recommended creating a "Quadrennial National Security Review (QNSR). See also H.R. 1746, a bill introduced on April 20, 2005 and co-sponsored by Representatives Mac Thornberry (TX), Mark Kennedy (MN), and Jeff Miller (FL), that would require a "quadrennial review of the diplomatic strategy and structure of the Department of State and its related agencies."

## **Conclusion -- Achieving a Workable Concept and a Viable Strategy**

Governments and many non-state actors deploy a broad range of persuasive, cooperative, and coercive instruments in a wide variety of circumstances. The challenge for scholars and practitioners is to assess available instruments in terms of specific threats and opportunities, cross-cutting funding priorities, situational costs and risks, and the strengths and weaknesses of each.

Historically, *public diplomacy* described activities of a few civilian agencies (e.g., USIA, the State Department's cultural bureau, the Voice of America). This approach is too narrow and no longer fits today's multi-player, multi-issue public diplomacy universe. *Strategic communication* has a rich academic literature that derives from social science scholarship and analysis of campaigns of political candidates and activist non-state organizations. It too is a term with broadening application to a range of deliberative and instrumental activities by governments. Usage and further research will shape how scholars and practitioners view both.

For now, let us conclude that public diplomacy and strategic communication can be used analogously to describe a blend of activities by which governments, groups, and individuals *comprehend* attitudes, cultures, and mediated environments; *engage* in dialogue between people and institutions, *advise* political leaders on the public opinion implications of policy choices, and *influence* attitudes and behavior through strategies and means intended to persuade. In this formulation, both terms entail a discourse logic and an instrumental logic. They embrace activities that foster reasoned discourse on ideas and values with the goal of reaching shared understandings. Within the same conceptual framework, they also include advocacy activities that seek to influence opinions, decisions, and actions. Both are used in response to threats and opportunities that achieve analytical and strategic relevance as they relate to particular interests and values.

In developing a strategic approach to this important instrument of national security and foreign policy, we should honor the past, but we must also move beyond legacy concepts

and structures. I have suggested five conceptual considerations: (1) develop a strategic logic that integrates public diplomacy into policy and all political, economic, and military elements of statecraft; (2) comprehend the strengths and roles of discourse and instrumental characteristics; (3) understand the relevance and limits of firewalls and imported norms; (4) overcome the constraints of episodic commitment, excessive reliance on personalities, and tribal cultures; and (5) insist on reforms of unusual duration and scale.

Transformation of public diplomacy will mean mapping policy and public diplomacy connections, replacing transient attempts to coordinate with durable strategic direction, marshalling private sector creativity, and institutionalizing a strategic planning system that anticipates. Geography, time to react, and military dominance are no longer sufficient to ensure America's security. Nor is the repetitious pattern by which Americans allow their public diplomacy instruments to rust after wars – only to “rediscover” and “reinvest” when next challenged. It is time to move from reports to business plans, from intent to action.

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