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Public Diplomacy: A Review of Past Recommendations

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Public Diplomacy: A Review of Past Recommendations

Summary

Public diplomacy has been officially acknowledged as a tool in the foreign policy arsenal since World War I. Later, during World War II, it became part of the U.S. government structure when in 1942 the President issued an executive order to create the Office of War Information (OWI). OWI aired the first Voice of America program on February 24, 1942, in Europe. These activities were carried out without any authority or recognition by Congress.

More recently, during the post-Cold War era of the 1990s, public diplomacy was viewed as a low priority, and was often seen by lawmakers as a source of funds to tap for other programs. This culminated in 1999 when Congress abolished the agency primarily concerned with public diplomacy — the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) — and merged its public diplomacy functions into the Department of State.

Following the September 11, 2001 attacks, U.S. government officials, foreign policy experts, and academicians began to elevate the status of public diplomacy through numerous studies, op-ed pieces, and journal articles.

This report looks at 29 articles and studies on public diplomacy that have been identified by the Department of State as being credible reports with valuable suggestions. Various recommendations from these studies are similar. This report organizes the recommendations and provides a brief discussion of them. CRS takes no position on the recommendations.

This report will not be updated.

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Public Diplomacy: A Review of Past Recommendations

Background and Matrix

In the past six years, after the abolishment of the United States Information Agency (USIA) in 1999 and the terrorist attacks two years later, U.S. public diplomacy has been rigorously examined to determine whether improved methods, structure, and goals could help the United States win the war on terrorism. This report reviews 29 articles and studies on public diplomacy that have been identified by the Department of State as being credible reports with valuable suggestions and compares the recommendations.

These 29 documents, listed in reverse chronological order from 2005 to 1999 in **Appendix A**, vary in scope, depth, and purpose. Some are focused on public diplomacy and include numerous, specific recommendations; others are more general in nature and deal with public diplomacy in the context of broader foreign policy issues. Some reports represent the consensus of a group of authors; others state the views of a series of individuals. For the purposes of this review, each document has been given an abbreviation, for example, “PDC” for the Public Diplomacy Council, to make it easier to identify. Following in **Table 1** is a matrix indicating the major recommendations of all 29 reports. (Note, however, that the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) report from 2003 did not have relevant recommendations for this review.) The matrix lists 14 categories of recommendations that appeared most frequently. A second matrix in **Table 2** lists only those reports that include specific recommendations concerning international broadcasting. A brief discussion of recommendation similarities and differences follows each matrix. Note that this discussion deals *only* with the content of the documents. An author or organization listed in the Appendix may have written on public diplomacy at an earlier or a later date, and the views expressed in a particular document may not represent those of the organization that published the document. (For more detail on public diplomacy, in general, please see CRS Report RL32607, *U.S. Public Diplomacy: Background and the 9/11 Commission Recommendations*.)

Table 1. Key Recommendations for Public Diplomacy Reform

Study ^a	Define Overall Strategy	Presidential Directive/ Reorganize PD ^b at White House	Create New Agency	Reorganize PD at State Dept .	Redefine Role of Under Sec. of PD	Increase Embassy Involvement	Coordinate Better	Increase Financial and/or Human Resources	Increase PD And/or Lang. Training	Increase Technology Use	Increase Private Sector Involvement	Improve Communication	Increase Exchanges and/or Libraries	Increase Oversight
WP			X									X	X	
PDC1		X	X				X	X	X		X		X	
PDC2								X						
ADV1	X					X	X		X	X	X	X		
DSB1		X	X	X	X								X	
GAO1	X						X					X		
911	X							X				X	X	
NSFR							X	X			X			X
PDC3		X				X		X	X		X		X	
RAND											X			
FPA							X	X	X				X	
KIE				X	X									
DJE1		X	X			X					X		X	
DJE2	X	X	X		X			X	X	X			X	

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Study ^a	Define Overall Strategy	Presidential Directive/ Reorganize PD ^b at White House	Create New Agency	Reorganize PD at State Dept .	Redefine Role of Under Sec. of PD	Increase Embassy Involvement	Coordinate Better	Increase Financial and/or Human Resources	Increase PD And/or Lang. Training	Increase Technology Use	Increase Private Sector Involvement	Improve Communication	Increase Exchanges and/or Libraries	Increase Oversight
USIP1														
GAO2	X								X		X			
CFR1	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
HER1	X				X		X		X				X	
HER2	X	X	X	X			X		X				X	
ISD							X	X					X	
USIP2									X	X			X	
BRO								X					X	
CFR2	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
PBS								X					X	
ADV2		X		X				X	X		X			X
DSB2		X		X				X		X			X	
NWC	X				X	X		X	X	X				
CFR3														
HRC				X	X		X			X				

Note: See Table 2 for recommendations for international broadcasting reform.

a. **WP:** *Washington Post* op-ed; **PDC1:** Public Diplomacy Council 2005; **PDC2:** Public Diplomacy Council 2004; **ADV1:** U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy; **DSB1:** Defense Science Board 2004; **GAO1:** Government Accountability Office 2004; **911:** 9/11 Commission Report; **NSFR:** *National Strategy Forum Review*; **PDC3:** Public Diplomacy Council 2004; **RAND:** RAND Corporation; **FPA:** Foreign Policy Association; **KIE:** Kiehl, William; **DJE1:** Djerejian, Edward, October 7, 2003; **DJE2:** Djerejian, Edward, October 2003; **USIP1:** U.S. Institute of Peace 2003; **GAO2:** Government Accountability Office 2003; **CFR1:** Council on Foreign Relations 2003; **HER1:** Heritage Foundation, May 2003; **HER2:** Heritage Foundation, April 2003; **ISD:** Institute for the Study of Diplomacy; **USIP2:** U.S. Institute of Peace 2002; **BRO:** Brown, John; **CFR2:** Council on Foreign Relations 2002; **PBS:** Public Broadcasting Service; **ADV2:** U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy 2002; **DSB2:** Defense Science Board 2001; **NWC:** National War College; **CFR3:** Council on Foreign Relations 2001; **HRC:** Hart/Rudman Commission

b. Public Diplomacy

General Recommendation Comparisons

From 1999 through 2005 numerous reports, articles, studies, and op-ed pieces have been written touting the importance of public diplomacy as a foreign policy tool and focusing on how the United States government can improve its public diplomacy operations to help win the war on terrorism. Among the many writings are the 29 considered here. (See **Appendix A** for a reverse chronological list of the reports included in this CRS review.)

Define Overall Strategy

Several reports suggest that the Administration has not sufficiently defined or verbalized an overall strategy for the use of public diplomacy to both improve the U.S. image around the world, but also counter the threat of terrorism against Americans. The 9/11 Commission Report states that the United States should identify what it stands for and communicate that message clearly. Of the ten reports that recommend defining an overall strategy, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) reports that the United States needs to do a better job of defining its public diplomacy message, and that while the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) does have a strategy for its broadcasting activities, the Department of State (DOS) does not have an integrated strategy for its public diplomacy operations. GAO states that the “absence of an interagency strategy complicates the task of conveying consistent messages.” Furthermore, GAO offers that the Administration needs to define public diplomacy success and determine how it can be measured.

The Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World report recommends that the White House establish strategic goals and oversee the implementation of programs that meet those goals. The U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy study claims that the State Department lacks authority to implement an overall strategy for the various agencies engaged in public diplomacy and recommends that the DOS Policy, Planning and Resources Office coordinate all public diplomacy efforts. The Heritage Foundation recommends that the U.S. government view public diplomacy as a long-term effort, saying that public diplomacy should be “enshrined in a doctrine that emphasizes consistent efforts.” The more recent Council on Foreign Relations report recommends rethinking how the United States formulates, strategizes, and communicates its foreign policy and should “move public diplomacy from the margins to the center of foreign policy making.” The National War College report notes a “lack of strategic planning,” and the earlier Council on Foreign Relations study says there is an absence of an overall strategy and recommends the Administration develop a coherent strategic and coordinating framework for public diplomacy activities.

Presidential Directive/Reorganize Public Diplomacy at the White House

Ten of the studies discuss the White House taking a more proactive role in promoting public diplomacy, coordinating public diplomacy activities throughout the executive branch agencies, and reorganizing or initiating public diplomacy task forces or coordinating committees at the White House. For example, reports by the

Defense Science Board Task Force and the Council on Foreign Relations urge the President to issue a directive to strengthen the importance of communication and public diplomacy and coordinate all activities through the White House. The Heritage Foundation also recommends that inter-agency coordination of public diplomacy activities be carried out through the White House. The Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World report recommends the President appoint a cabinet-level Special Counselor to the President for Public Diplomacy. This person would, in consultation with the President and other agencies, establish strategic goals and messages, and oversee the implementation of programs that meet those stated goals, the report suggests. Similar ideas are offered by the Public Diplomacy Council which suggests that a cabinet level Interagency Committee on Public Diplomacy should be established by Presidential Directive, cochaired by the Deputy National Security Advisor for Communication and the Director of a new U.S. Agency for Public Diplomacy (USAPD).

Create a New Agency

Several of the studies suggest that the existing public diplomacy structure at the Department of State is not working. The *Washington Post* op-ed piece by Marks, Wick, Gelb, and Catto states that “shutting down the USIA was a major mistake,” a sentiment that has been expressed by others in recent years.¹ The op-ed piece goes on to say that public diplomacy is not very effective under DOS and “the re-creation of an effective instrument of public diplomacy has been urged by many.” Other reports propose establishing an entirely new agency to have primary responsibility for U.S. public diplomacy activities and coordination with other government entities. The Council on Foreign Relations recommends establishing a Corporation for Public Diplomacy to be modeled after the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. The Public Diplomacy Council suggests establishing an agency, the U.S. Agency for Public Diplomacy (USAPD), within the Department of State and the National Security process. The Defense Science Board reports that the President should establish a permanent strategic communications structure within the National Security Council (NSC). That report goes on to state that “the President should work with Congress to establish and fund a non-profit, non-partisan Center for Strategic Communication to support the NSC, departments, and organizations represented on a newly-recommended Strategic Communication Committee.”

Reorganize Public Diplomacy at the Department of State

Since the 1999 elimination of the USIA, numerous experts and observers have critiqued how the Department of State has conducted public diplomacy. According to the GAO, public diplomacy activities at State are fragmented among various organizational entities within the Department, with insufficient direction from the top. Many of the studies here agree that public diplomacy in the Department of State could be working better, but there are differing views as to how DOS should improve it.

¹ For example, Congressman Frank Wolf, Chairman of the Commerce, Justice, State Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee expressed this view at a hearing on Public Diplomacy February 4, 2004.

The 2002 U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy report says there should be a review of the 1999 consolidation of USIA into State with the Secretary of State making recommendations on new training, location, and reporting structure of public diplomacy personnel at the Department. The Defense Science Board's 2004 report recommends redefining the role of the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy to be policy advisor and manager. Furthermore, it suggests raising the public diplomacy office Directors to the level of Deputy Assistant Secretary or Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary. The report urges DOS to strengthen the Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP) with an Assistant Secretary and modernize and diversify its products.

The Heritage Foundation suggests restoring the independent reporting and budget channels that public diplomacy lost during the USIA merger and recreating a public diplomacy hierarchy within the Department of State as previously existed at USIA.

Another suggestion by author William Kiehl proposes creating a new public diplomacy organization within the State Department, including a new Bureau of Public Diplomacy Operations. Also, he writes, "regional bureaus must include senior public diplomacy officers at least at the Deputy Assistant Secretary level."

The Hart/Rudman Commission recommends repealing laws that establish an Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and having some of those functions migrate to an Assistant Secretary level official reporting directly to the Secretary of State. Other functions could be folded into the Assistant Secretary for Economic and Transnational Affairs, according to the Commission. Overhauling the Foreign Service system, including ending the oral exam's policy so that applicants could be better matched to particular cones, like public diplomacy, would be beneficial, the Commission asserts.

Beyond reorganizing public diplomacy at State, several of the reports refer to the need for a new "culture" at State: seeking to change the perception that public diplomacy personnel are second class citizens in the Department; recruiting and hiring practices that would encourage public diplomacy skills to be highly valued; and a "much more open approach in which innovation trumps the caution," according to the National War College report.

Redefine the Role of the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy

Six of the studies refer to the need for redefining the role of the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy. Most call for strengthening the role, the chain of authority leading to the Under Secretary, and the authority to make decisions regarding public diplomacy funding, policy, personnel, and direction. In contrast, the Hart/Rudman Commission recommends repealing the laws establishing an Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and having some of those functions migrate to an Assistant Secretary-level officer reporting directly to the Secretary of State. Other public diplomacy functions should become the responsibility of the Assistant Secretary for Economic and Transnational Affairs, the Commission said.

Increase Embassy Involvement

Several reports speak of a need to increase embassy involvement in public diplomacy activities. Suggestions include expanding U.S. diplomats' personal contacts in the host country, sending the message from the top tiers of the Administration and the Department of State that public diplomacy is central to U.S. foreign policy, and requiring at least one tour in a public diplomacy assignment for Foreign Service Officers to be promoted to Senior Foreign Service Officers or Chief of Mission. Another suggestion involves embassies maintaining networks of individuals (such as former Peace Corps volunteers, exchange students, and retired Foreign Service Officers) who could be tapped to help portray America in the best light.

Coordination

Several studies suggest a lack of coordination of U.S. government public diplomacy activities by the White House and within the Department of State. The U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy notes that there have been attempts to improve coordination, citing the January 2003 creation of the Office of Global Communications within the White House, as well as the September 2002 formation of the Strategic Communication Policy Coordination Committee and the December 2002 interagency Strategic Communications Fusion Team. Nevertheless, coordination is still inadequate, according to several of the reports. Recommendations on improving government coordination of public diplomacy entities and programs include

- (1) the Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy suggests assigning the State Department's Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources with the responsibility for overseeing the strategic planning of all public diplomacy programming and resources;
- (2) the Heritage Foundation seeks better coordination through the White House, specifically through the Office of Global Communications;
- (3) the Public Diplomacy Council recommends that a new U.S. Agency for Public Diplomacy be responsible for coordinating all U.S. government public diplomacy efforts and establish an Interagency Committee on PD at the Cabinet level to coordinate and direct the national PD strategy;
- (4) the Council on Foreign Relations recommends that a coherent strategic and coordinating framework for public diplomacy be developed, including a presidential directive on public diplomacy and a Public Diplomacy Coordinating Structure led by the president's personal designee;
- (5) the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World advises a strengthening of the role of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy to coordinate government-wide public diplomacy activities, review country program plans with respect to public diplomacy, allocate human and financial resources, and play a role

in performance evaluations. The Group asserts that strengthening the Under Secretary's role is essential.

Increase Financial and Human Resources

About half of the reports state that public diplomacy resources are inadequate and call for increased monetary and human resources. The Council on Foreign Relations said that funding should be increased to "significantly higher levels" to be more in line with public diplomacy's role as a vital component of U.S. foreign policy and national security. The Council put forth the idea of establishing a Public Diplomacy Reserve Corps patterned after FEMA's disaster-relief model. The Public Diplomacy Council specifically recommends a 300% increase in public diplomacy overseas staffing and a four-fold budget increase over five years. Some, such as the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World, state that additional professional staff dedicated only to Arab and Muslim issues would be valuable.

Increase Public Diplomacy and/or Language Training

Coupled with the view since 9/11 that public diplomacy is an essential tool in U.S. foreign policy and national security is the belief that all personnel involved with conducting U.S. foreign policy should be trained about the importance of public diplomacy and given skills needed to fully utilize public diplomacy effectively. The Council on Foreign Relations states that there is a deficit of trained professionals regarding public diplomacy. GAO suggests expanding public diplomacy and foreign language training of Foreign Service Officers; the Council on Foreign Relations offers the idea of establishing an independent public diplomacy training institute; and the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World recommends that all State Department personnel receive public diplomacy training. Taking that a step further, the Foreign Policy Association argues that "public affairs diplomacy officers should be encouraged to develop language fluency and country and regional expertise and should not be rotated among regions like other FSOs [Foreign Service Officers]."

Increase Technology Use

Most of the eight reports that speak about increased, more effective, and creative uses of technology referred to use of the Internet. For example, the National War College report states that there are "deficiencies in information technologies and the mindsets needed to integrate new technologies into the conduct of diplomacy.... State Department needs to learn how to leverage the Internet's capabilities and potential in the conduct of diplomacy." In addition, some reports promote increased satellite broadcasting and more creative use of all available information technologies.

Increase Private Sector Involvement

Some studies make the observation that the private sector has many advantages in getting things done quickly, being highly effective, and efficient in influencing people. By incorporating the best practices of the private sector in U.S. government

public diplomacy activities, it is believed that public diplomacy can become a more valuable foreign policy tool. RAND suggested that “outsourcing” public diplomacy would put some distance between a “favorable message and an unfavorable messenger,” and that identifying private sector talents could be motivated through a competitive bidding process. Another idea comes from the Public Diplomacy Council to create a public-private partnership “Foundation for the Global Future” to provide permanent off-budget funding for international exchanges conducted by civilian and military federal agencies. The U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy agrees with the Council on Foreign Relations about creating an independent Corporation for Public Diplomacy. Additionally, the Commission would encourage overseas posts to explore local public-private partnerships, find ways for visitor exchanges to take advantage of private sector generosity, and develop Internet and media programming that would utilize public/private partnerships. The Advisory Commission also proposes that private sector communication consultants could become more involved in public diplomacy efforts with advertising, as well as entertainment programs, and that the academic community could offer public diplomacy majors at American colleges and universities. GAO adds that the U.S. government could collaborate with the private sector to develop optimal methods for measuring effectiveness of public diplomacy efforts.

Improve Communication

Improved and increased communication between the United States and foreign, particularly Arab and Muslim, populations was cited by a few of the studies. The Defense Science Board’s 2004 report asserts that “nothing shapes U.S. policies and global perceptions of U.S. foreign and national security objectives more powerfully than the President’s statements and actions, and those of senior officials.” The Board suggests that the President communicate directly with overseas audiences.

The 9/11 Commission Report recommends that the United States should identify what it stands for and communicate that message clearly. The 9/11 Commission observed that many foreign populations receive large amounts of aid from U.S. citizens and never know from where it came.

The Council on Foreign Relations proposes a more customized, “two-way” dialogue, as contrasted to conventional one-way, “push-down” mass communication, including an “engagement” approach that involves listening, dialogue, and debate that increases the amount and the effectiveness of public opinion research. Furthermore, communication should foster increasingly meaningful relationships between U.S. government, foreign publics, and foreign journalists. The Council says the U.S. government should: support voices of moderation, especially among the young; identify and develop indigenous talent; and craft messages highlighting cultural overlaps between American values and those of the rest of the world.

The RAND study encourages finding different ways of promoting two-way communication, such as call-in talk shows, live interaction among different elements of an audience, and broadcasting debates, rather than offering monologues. The Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World proposes establishing an Arab and Muslim Countries Public Communications Unit under the

direction of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy to work closely with the Office of Global Communications and coordinate U.S. government media outreach to Arab and Muslim populations and promote a ‘rapid response’ team to react and correct inaccuracies and distortions in foreign media.

Increase Exchanges and Libraries

More than half of the 29 reports recommend expanding U.S. exchange programs and/or U.S. libraries overseas, making it the most common proposal among this group of reports. Some ideas for exchanges include expanding the U.S. Speaker and Specialist Program, expanding shorter duration exchange programs, creating American studies programs in local universities in Arab and Muslim populations, creating a public-private partnership, “Foundation for the Global Future,” to provide permanent off-budget funding for international exchanges conducted by civilian and military federal agencies, significantly broadening Middle East/U.S. exchange programs, and expanding exchanges to government officials and business professionals. Several studies echoed recommendations to expand American overseas libraries as well as the American Corners Program.² In addition, the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World proposes implementing a new American Knowledge Library to translate the best American books and make them available to local libraries and universities.

Increase Oversight

A few of the studies recommend greater and continuous oversight of public diplomacy activities. One suggestion was for Congress to provide legislative authority for a quadrennial review of public diplomacy. Another would create a new congressional committee structure with sustained oversight of all U.S. government public diplomacy programs and activities.

² The American Corners is a program that was initiated in October 2000 whereby a library in a host country provides space, staff and overhead expenses for the United States to offer publically-accessible research facilities and information on U.S. culture.

Table 2. Key Recommendations for International Broadcasting

Study ^a	Define Overall Objectives	Reorganize Broadcasting	Develop Rapid Response	Bring BBG ^b Under White House	Special Attention to Arab/Muslim Populations	More Resources	New Technologies	Combat Jamming
PDC1	X					X	X	
ADV1					X	X	X	X
GAO1	X							
NSFR					X	X		
PDC3					X			
DJE2			X	X	X			
HER1		X						
HER2		X						
USIP2		X						
CFR2		X						
PBS	X				X	X		

a. **PDC1**: Public Diplomacy Council 2005; **ADV1**: U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy 2004; **GAO1**: Government Accountability Office 2004; **NSFR**: *National Strategy Forum Review*; **PDC3**: Public Diplomacy Council 2004; **DJE2**: Djerejian, Edward, October 2003; **HER1**: Heritage Foundation, May 2003; **HER2**: Heritage Foundation, April 2003; **USIP2**: U.S. Institute of Peace 2002; **CFR2**: Council on Foreign Relations 2002; **PBS**: Public Broadcasting Service

b. Broadcasting Board of Governors

Broadcasting Recommendation Comparisons

Of the 29 reports and articles, 11 offer recommendations specifically for U.S. government international broadcasting. Recommendations range from having strategic objectives to reorganizing the broadcasting entities to increasing resources and using more technologies to focusing on combating jamming. (See Table 2.)

Define Overall Objectives

GAO, the Public Diplomacy Council (PDC), and the PBS News Hour broadcast suggest the need for the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) to better define its overall objectives and strategy of obtaining the objectives. The 2002 PBS broadcast states that there is no grand strategy or coordinated approach of U.S. broadcasting with other public diplomacy activities. GAO's 2004 report states that while the BBG does have a strategic plan and has made progress in some measuring of its progress, the BBG has not defined a plan to adequately measure audience size or its programming credibility overseas. The PDC's January 2005 report urges the "Administration and Congress to take a hard look at how international broadcasting is managed to serve broad U.S. public diplomacy goals and the American taxpayer and integrate broadcasting more closely with other public diplomacy tools." The PDC believes that international broadcasting should be more closely integrated with other elements of strategic communication.

Reorganize Broadcasting

Although the U.S. government international broadcasting structure was reorganized in 1994, some reports recommend reorganizing U.S. international broadcasting again. The U.S. Institute of Peace states that, "the current array of US government broadcasting services is duplicative, expensive, and even counterproductive."

The Heritage Foundation's May 2003 report asserts that international broadcasting has "lapsed into a jumble of duplicative efforts, led by a part time Board of Governors." Reorganizing broadcasting would make it more streamlined and more efficient, the report claims. Furthermore, according to Heritage, revitalizing the Voice of America's resources and program content is in order as VOA has been neglected while Middle East programing has "proliferated in a confusing array."

The Council on Foreign Relations (July 30, 2002) "supports an independent and well-qualified broadcasting board with a full-time, top-caliber Chief Executive Officer who would report to the current BBG and be empowered to direct and supervise all U.S. nonmilitary international broadcasting activities. Furthermore, the Department of State and the BBG should strengthen the Secretary of State's role in providing information and guidance on foreign policy to the BBG by clarifying and specifying the Secretary's role in making decisions on broadcast languages and other foreign policy matters."

Develop Rapid Response to Anti-American Messages

The Advisory Group for the Arab and Muslim World proposes that U.S. government media should reach out to Arab and Muslim populations and promote a ‘rapid response’ team to react and correct inaccuracies and distortions in foreign media.

Bring Broadcasting Board of Governors under White House

The Advisory Group for the Arab and Muslim World states that about half of the fund for public diplomacy goes for international broadcasting. The Group believes that U.S. government international broadcasting should be brought under the strategic direction of their proposed new Special Counselor to the President, saying “[broadcasting] 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.”

Special Attention to Arab/Muslim Populations

Five reports provide various proposals regarding additional broadcasting to Arab and Muslim populations. As previously mentioned, the Heritage Foundation argues that the various Middle East surrogate broadcasting entities such as Radio Sawa and Al Hurra TV have distracted the BBG from properly maintaining VOA resources and programming. The Advisory Group for the Arab and Muslim World recommends a thorough independent review of the Middle East Television Network, saying that there is a high level of skepticism in the Middle East region about state-owned television of any sort. The Group suggests that paring up with private sector programming might be more effective. The U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy recommends expanding communication with Arab press by creating a network of 24-hour message dissemination and monitoring centers. The Public Diplomacy Forum (February 2004) held a panel discussion on Middle East broadcasting. One panelist referred to Radio and Al Hurra TV as being state-run, and therefore, less successful with Middle East audiences. The panelist said that, “the Arab public is interested in American programming, but they are not necessarily interested in programming that is under tight U.S. government direction.” Another panelist said that “there is no market waiting for Al Hurra’s message.” The third panelist strongly disagreed and said that “the United States should have started Radio Sawa and Al Hurra a long time ago.”

Other reports generally support ongoing Middle East broadcasting or think more resources and expanded programming to Muslim and Arab populations should be forthcoming.

More Resources

As with public diplomacy, most reports that addressed resources urged a greater long-term monetary commitment for international broadcasting. Reaching larger audiences and improving the ability to measure impact are two primary needs for additional broadcast funding.

New Technologies

International broadcasting is one area of foreign policy that can make use of new technologies to become more effective. The Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy encourages the BBG to look for better software to improve broadcasting's reach to foreign audiences over the Internet. The Commission suggests the educational programs teaching the English language or American culture might be useful. Also, the Commission recommends that satellite television programs can be further developed to increase local language programming available via satellite TV. The Public Diplomacy Council recommends more innovative broadcasting, Internet programs for youth, and interactive radio programming.

Combat Jamming

The Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy notes that there are some areas of the world such as North Korea, China and Cuba where the United States has difficulty reaching audiences because of local government jamming. The Commission notes that technologies such as the Internet and direct broadcast satellite have made it more difficult, but not impossible, for governments to block American programming from their citizens. The Commission urges the BBG to continue to develop new methods to combat jamming.

Appendix A

(WP) Leonard H. Marks, Charles Z. Wick, Bruce Gelb and Henry E. Catto. “America Needs a Voice Abroad,” *Washington Post*, February 26, 2005.
[<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A54764-2005Feb25.html>]

(PDC1) Public Diplomacy Council. *Call for Action on Public Diplomacy*. January 2005.
[<http://pdi.gwu.edu/merlin-cgi/p/downloadFile/d/7536/n/off/other/1/name/ACALLFORACTIONONPUBLICDIPLOMACY01-2005prin/>]

(PDC2) Public Diplomacy Council. “Transformation Not Restoration.” Statement of Dissent to *Call for Action on Public Diplomacy*. January 2005.
[http://pdi.gwu.edu/merlin-cgi/p/downloadFile/d/7537/n/off/other/1/name/Dissent_12-21-04pdf/]

(ADV1) United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy. *2004 Report of the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy*. September 28, 2004.
[<http://www.state.gov/r/adcompd/rls/36275.htm>]

(DSB1) Defense Science Board. *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication*. September 2004.
[http://www.acq.osd.mil/dsb/reports/2004-09-Strategic_Communication.pdf]

(GAO1) U.S. Government Accountability Office. *U.S. Public Diplomacy: State Department and Broadcasting Board of Governors Expand Post-9/11 Efforts but Challenges Remain*. GAO-04-1061T. August 23, 2004.
[<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d041061t.pdf>]

(911) National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States. *The 9/11 Commission Report*. July 22, 2004.
[<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/911/index.html>]

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