

THE BROOKINGS PROJECT ON
U.S. POLICY TOWARDS THE ISLAMIC WORLD

ANALYSIS PAPER
Number 6, January 2004

THE NEED TO COMMUNICATE:
HOW TO IMPROVE U.S. PUBLIC DIPLOMACY
WITH THE ISLAMIC WORLD

HADY AMR



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NOTE FROM THE PROJECT CONVENORS

The *Brookings Project on U.S. Policy Towards the Islamic World* is designed to respond to some of the most difficult challenges that the United States will face in the coming years, most particularly how to prosecute the continuing war on global terrorism while still promoting positive relations with Muslim states and communities. A key part of the Project is the production of *Analysis Papers* that investigate critical issues in American policy towards the Islamic world. A special focus of this series is on exploring long-term trends that confront U.S. policy-makers and the possible strategies and options they could adopt.

A central challenge that America faces in its relations with the Islamic world is that of public diplomacy. While U.S. power is at its greatest historic heights, global esteem for the United States is at its depths. Polling has found anti-American sentiment to be particularly strong in Muslim countries and communities across the world, while the continuing violence in the Middle East has only further hardened attitudes. Thus, rather than being viewed as a victim of terrorism, the United States has become widely perceived as arrogant and anti-Muslim. Perhaps most illustrative is that what the United States calls a “war on terrorism” is broadly interpreted as a “war on Islam” by the world’s Muslims. This credibility gap is worrisome not just in itself, but also because it presents real complications for the success of our foreign policies, ranging from seeking cooperation in the pursuit of terrorists to supporting the expansion of democracy. Whether America is able to reverse this trend and better convey its policies and values abroad could be a critical determinant in winning the war on terrorism.

As such, we are pleased to present “*The Need to Communicate: How to Improve U.S. Public Diplomacy with the Islamic World.*” An astute observer of regional trends, as well as an experienced professional in the field of communications, Hady Amr uses his first-hand knowledge to shed new light on this critical issue. We appreciate his contribution to the Project’s work and certainly are proud to share his analysis with the wider public.

We are grateful for the generosity of the MacArthur Foundation, the Government of Qatar, the Ford Foundation, the Education and Employment Foundation, the United States Institute of Peace, Haim Saban, and the Brookings Institution for their support of the Project’s activities. We would also like to acknowledge the hard work of our Project staff, including Ellen McHugh and Hadia Mubarak, for their support of the Project’s publications.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The goal of public diplomacy, as defined by the former U.S. Information Agency, is “to promote the national interest and the national security of the United States through understanding, informing, and influencing foreign publics and broadening dialogue between American citizens and institutions and their counterparts abroad.” In doing so, it seeks to explain U.S. policy and values to foreign audiences, so as to improve the context for successful policy. It also seeks to engage in effective dialogue, so as to increase mutual understanding and trust.

Given the increasing power wielded by foreign citizens, consumers, and terrorists alike in this globalizing world, public diplomacy is a central component of U.S. national security. Many, though, point to the present approach to American public diplomacy as a key weakness in the U.S. policy toolkit.

Since the September 11th attacks on America, worldwide favorability towards America has drastically fallen. In particular, polling data shows that since the spring of 2002, there has been a precipitous decline in the favorability towards the United States within the Islamic world—for example a drop from 61 percent to 15 percent in Indonesia and from 25 percent to 1 percent in Jordan. Obviously, public diplomacy is no substitute for good policy, but something is clearly amiss with the way that the United States is communicating with the world.

To be successful, public diplomacy must not only be supported through greater funding towards new and innovative programming, but also be re-anchored in a new paradigm of “jointness.” American public diplomacy will be most effective and persuasive when it is rooted in a dialogue between American and foreign civil society, planned with inputs from both sides, and conducted in a manner that benefits both sides. Such a strategy must keep in mind the following lessons (listed in approximate order of priority):

- **Public diplomacy is a priority.** Public diplomacy should be prioritized within each policy initiative. The public diplomacy budget also requires greater funding to be effective.
- **Effective public diplomacy requires deeper coordination.** Foreign policy and public diplomacy must work hand in hand. The Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs and the National Security Council must be linked together in closer cooperation.
- **There is no “one size fits all” agenda.** Muslim-majority countries are exceptionally heterogeneous in terms of wealth, culture, religious composition, media access, and attitudes. Regional programs should be developed to meet strategic needs, but deployed tactically on a country by country basis.

- **Youth represent an opportunity.** The rapidly growing cohort of youth in Muslim-majority countries should be seen as an opportunity, rather than just a threat. Polls show that youth are more likely to have an affinity for American values, especially when they have Internet access. Technological connectivity often familiarizes them with American culture and policy and is a cornerstone for expansion.
- **Embrace Arab Americans and American Muslims and support intra-Muslim dialogue.** The Arab American and American Muslim communities are credible public diplomacy messengers, important allies, and can serve as important bridges and advocates for democratic values in intra-Muslim dialogue.
- **Emphasize values-based policy.** Good governance and democracy are values that citizens of Muslim countries admire about the United States and want to see take root in their countries. Aid and development policy should promote these values.
- **Create easy-access U.S. public information centers.** Accessible information centers like the American Corners program should replace the closed, fortress-like situation in which American Information Centers find themselves.
- **Expand exchange programs.** Exchange programs such as the Fulbright and Humphrey programs should be strengthened and expanded and should reflect growing U.S. geopolitical needs, in particular towards improving relations with the Islamic world.
- **Expand the use of polling.** Polling and focus groups in Muslim-majority countries should be utilized to better inform policy-makers and measure the success of public diplomacy efforts.
- **Make public diplomacy a crosscutting theme for all Foreign Service Officers.** Every American diplomat must play a part in public diplomacy, so as to maximize efforts to reach directly into civil society. Also, public diplomacy and foreign language training for diplomats should be strengthened.
- **Build closer alliances with NGOs.** Polls show that local and national NGOs and international institutions have strong positive ratings across the Islamic world. U.S. support for and visible close association with such groups will strengthen positive ratings of the U.S. Government. To be successful, however,

In turn, U.S. public diplomacy has great room for improvement in both existing programs and fostering new innovative programming. The following initiatives (listed in approximate order of priority) should be undertaken, where appropriate, with the philosophy of jointness:

the continued independence of these NGOs needs to be real and visible.

- **Leverage the expertise of Capitol Hill and state and local leaders.** Civil society in Muslim-majority countries craves dialogue with American policy makers. Members of Congress, their staffers, and state and local officials are ideally suited to engage in public diplomacy. Congress, as well as state and local government should be encouraged to take their own initiatives in this regard as well.
- **Better coordinate public diplomacy-related initiatives.** USAID, the Middle East Partnership Initiative, and the interagency Muslim World Initiative require more support. They also should be carefully coordinated with the Office of the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.
- **Strengthen the impact of speaking tours.** Significantly more speakers should be sent to Muslim-majority countries and a larger proportion of those should address what citizens there really want to talk about—U.S. foreign policy.

In sum, a successful public diplomacy effort is essential to any successful foreign policy—all the more vital to U.S. security interests in the present climate of severe anti-Americanism in the Islamic world. If

America fails to revitalize its public diplomacy apparatus, foreign perception of America will likely continue to deteriorate. A new outlook that emphasizes communication, jointness, and effective and innovative outreach is required to help raise America's standing. This will not only improve the context in which our foreign policy is carried out, but also help improve U.S. national security.

THE AUTHOR

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Mr. Amr has served in the U.S. Department of Defense, helping establish the Near East-South Asia Center for Strategic Studies at the National Defense University and in the World Bank, as an economist at the Middle East and North Africa Department. He also was National Director for Ethnic American Outreach for Al Gore's presidential campaign. Mr. Amr has a Masters Degree in Economics and Public and International Affairs from the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University.

Among Mr. Amr's numerous studies and publications are the *The State of the Arab Child* report for UNICEF and an opinion column that has appeared in *Newsweek*, the *International Herald Tribune*, the *Lebanese Daily Star*, *The Jordan Times*, the *Saudi Arab News*, and *Al-Hayat* newspapers. He has also provided commentary for a number of media outlets including *Abu Dhabi TV*, *the BBC*, *Jordan TV*, *Moroccan TV*, and *Nile TV*.

On behalf of the U.S. Department of State, Mr. Amr recently completed two extensive speaking tours to eight Arab countries—Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and the United Arab Emirates. He met with diplomats, students, the media, and business leaders about the policy-making process in the U.S. and the perceived problems in U.S. relations with the Islamic world. Mr. Amr would like to express gratitude to the various individuals from the U.S. Government for discussing the issues contained in this paper and to those U.S. Government professionals who have been working hard at U.S. public diplomacy for decades. He would also like to express his gratitude to Tamer Amr, Natalie Ellis and Allison Fine, who volunteered their conceptual skills and to Michelle Grappo, Rima Mutreja, and Saira Sufi, who volunteered their research skills.

I. DIGNITY, DIALOGUE, AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

As the U.S. wrestles with the challenges of the war on terrorism and its souring relations with the Islamic world, the question repeatedly asked across America is, “Why do they hate us?” The “they” in this question referred not only to the terrorists themselves and their direct supporters, but also the broader public in Muslim communities and countries. While Muslim populations in general reject terror and seek democracy and freedom—the very ideals upon which the United States was founded—they also have an increasing antipathy towards the U.S. government and its policies. The paradigm through which America chooses to answer this question of “why do they hate us?” and how it responds will be crucial to national security in the decades ahead.¹

Definitions of public diplomacy range from one-way, push-through, mass communication to paradigms based on the concept that two-way communication is the best method to change and inform public points of view. As long defined by the United States Information Agency (now folded into the Department of State), public diplomacy is comprised of those activities which seek “to promote the national interest and the

national security of the United States through understanding, informing, and influencing foreign publics and broadening dialogue between American citizens and institutions and their counterparts abroad.”² Indeed, this report embraces the view that to be successful, public diplomacy can and should be centered in genuine “dialogue.”

Other definitions of public diplomacy include that of the Planning Group for the Integration of the United States Information Agency, which states, “Public diplomacy seeks to promote the national interest of the United States through understanding, informing, and influencing foreign audiences.”³ Similarly, the Department of State defines public diplomacy as “government-sponsored programs intended to inform or influence public opinion in other countries; its chief instruments are publications, motion pictures, cultural exchanges, radio, and television.”⁴

The similarity in these definitions is the understanding that the U.S. government can and should attempt to shape the political environment in which it and other governments operate. Compared to traditional

1 Question from civil society leaders posed to the author on September 20, 2000 in Amman, Jordan: “When America asks itself ‘Why do they hate us?’, how do Americans answer that question to themselves?” Similar question posed to panelist Akram Baker speaking at the Fulbright conference held in Berlin, Germany, June 2002.

2 United States Information Agency Alumni Association, “What is Public Diplomacy?” <www.publicdiplomacy.org> (July 4, 2003).

3 Definition, The Planning Group for the Integration of the U.S. Information Agency, June 20, 1997.

4 U.S. Department of State, Dictionary of International Relations Terms, 1987, p. 85. <www.publicdiplomacy.org> (July 4, 2003).

diplomacy, which focuses only on dialogue between governments in pursuit of their respective national interests, public diplomacy is the business of communicating with non-state civil society actors such as NGOs, newspapers, and the general public. The goal is to interact with and build support among non-state actors for two reasons. First, they have an ability to influence our national security and prosperity directly either as allies or adversaries in the effort to strengthen American security. Second, civil society actors also have the ability to influence our national security and prosperity indirectly through their influence on their own governments' actions, as well as their influence in promoting democratic values and improving societal conditions.

The scope of this report is to analyze the public diplomacy efforts of the Department of State and the White House and suggest a new contextual paradigm on which such efforts should be based, recommend improvements to these efforts, and propose new initiatives. As such, there are a few fields that are sometimes characterized as related to public diplomacy but lie outside the scope of this paper: public affairs and psychological operations. Public affairs is defined as “the provision of information to the public, press and other institutions concerning the goals, policies, and activities of the U.S. Government.... The thrust of public affairs is to inform a domestic (American) audience.”⁵ On the other hand, “psychological operations” are the domain of the Department of Defense. Their role is to influence foreign attitudes and behavior for military advantage. Messages are not required to be complete or balanced, but merely to affect the military situation. These are certainly valuable policy tools, but cannot substitute for a proper public diplomacy apparatus.

THE NEED FOR GOOD PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

In the 2002 “National Security Strategy of the United States” President George Bush said, “Just as our diplomatic institutions must adapt so that we can reach out to others, we also need a different and more comprehensive approach to public information efforts that can help people around the world learn about and understand America.... This is a struggle of ideas where America must excel.”⁶ Indeed the struggle for ideas and a comprehensive approach to public information are essential.

Public diplomacy can never be effective without good policy. However, given the threats posed by terrorists and their support networks, a nimble, powerful and effective public diplomacy structure is vital to America's national interests. Public diplomacy—speaking directly to people, NGOs and civil society—is the primary tool through which the United States can harness what Joseph Nye, the Dean of the Harvard University Kennedy School of Government, calls “soft power.” Long a cornerstone of American influence, soft power is “the ability to get what you want by attracting and persuading others to adopt your goals.”⁷ It is also the most efficient means of power, as it doesn't require the use of force or huge financial payoffs to achieve or sustain one's policy goals.

But so far, America has failed to revitalize its public diplomacy apparatus and foreign public perception of America—across Europe, the Islamic world, and elsewhere—has continued to deteriorate. This will not only make general goals of cooperating with current and potential allies more difficult, but will also enable terrorist groups to more easily expand their support base and recruiting networks. But, if America succeeds and truly integrates public diplomacy into our foreign

5 *ibid.*

6 President George W. Bush, “The National Security Strategy of the United States,” 2002, p. 34.

7 Joseph S. Nye Jr., “Propaganda Isn't the Way: Soft Power,” *The International Herald Tribune*, January 10, 2003.

and military policy apparatus, we can succeed at building allies in the international effort to secure peaceful lives for Americans and the world. And soft power comes into play not only in terms of American public diplomacy, but also on the streets around the world. As Senator Richard Lugar, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, noted, governments and terrorist organizations “respond to public opinion, whether it is demonstrated in the voting booths or in the streets.”⁸

To be fair, the Department of State’s overall public diplomacy budget has increased by 9 percent since the September 11th attacks from \$544 million to \$594 million. The funding for South Asia rose by 63 percent from \$24 million to \$39 million, for the Near East by 58 percent from \$39 million to \$62 million and Foreign Service Officers increased by 15 percent and 27 percent respectively.⁹ While these increases are substantive, they still do not meet the vast needs. Indeed, 40 percent of public affairs officers report that the “amount of time available to devote exclusively to executing public diplomacy was insufficient and more than 50 percent reported that the number of Foreign Service Officers available to perform such tasks was inadequate.”¹⁰

The Administration has also undertaken numerous initiatives towards improving U.S. public diplomacy; while some of these initiatives have been successful, others have met with mixed results. In October 2001, Madison Avenue superstar Charlotte Beers was hired as the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. Her office helped launch a campaign to inform foreign publics about the prospering livelihood of Muslims in America. But the campaign in particular (discussed extensively in the following section “How to Upgrade Existing Public Diplomacy”), and her position in general, lacked the resources and

clout to dramatically alter the effectiveness with which the United States communicates with the outside world. Ms. Beers left her position in March 2003.

In December 2002, Secretary of State Colin Powell announced the launch of the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI). MEPI’s intent was both to show good will towards the region and help Middle Easterners “bridge the job gap...the freedom gap...[and] the knowledge gap.” But with a miniscule initial FY2003 budget of \$29 million, equal to about what the Department of Defense spends every forty minutes, the Initiative will likely not have the impact its mission merits.¹¹ The FY2004 budget is significantly larger at \$145 million—what the Department of Defense spends in about three hours, but this amount still pales in comparison to the billions spent on foreign assistance in the region.

Enabling America to engender better relations with the Islamic world strengthens American national security, but it requires more than our Government’s pocket-change. It also requires a new outlook that emphasizes communication, jointness, and effective and innovative outreach.

This policy paper begins by reviewing much of the recent work on public diplomacy and then moves to exploring current and historical sentiments of citizens in Muslim-majority countries toward America. This context is the starting point from which any successful public dialogue must take place. Next, the paper reviews the current state of public diplomacy between the Islamic world and the United States, suggesting strengths and areas for improvement. Finally, it concludes with a series of recommendations to transform and revitalize public diplomacy, targeted both at an overall framework level, as well as at the level of strategic and tactical initiatives.

8 Senator Richard Lugar, Hearing on “Public Diplomacy and Islam,” February 27, 2003, also quoted in the Council on Foreign Relations, “Finding America’s Voice: A Strategy for Reinventing U.S. Public Diplomacy,” 2003, p. 4.

9 Government Accounting Office (GAO), “Public Diplomacy: State Department Expands Efforts but Faces Significant Challenges,” September 4, 2003. 10 *ibid.*

11 Department of Defense FY2003 budget. <http://www.dod.mil/comptroller/defbudget/fy2003/fy03_greenbook.pdf>.

II. COLLECTING THE COLLECTIVE WISDOM ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

In the two years since the September 11th attacks on America vast numbers of articles have been written by Americans and individuals across the globe about the way that the U.S. Government has been communicating to the outside world. Policy-makers, media professionals, and others have all voiced their opinions on this matter.

Indeed, American public diplomacy towards the peoples, governments, and civil societies in Muslim-majority countries became a topic of heated debate immediately after the September 11th attacks. In particular, Congress and the policy community in Washington devoted significant resources to this debate. Recent developments include numerous conferences by leading public policy institutions.¹² This paper is based on the growing literature of reports and articles, along with interviews with key Washington policymakers, and almost 100 presentations by the author about U.S. policy and the U.S. policy making process across the Arab World in 2002 and 2003.¹³

The general consensus is that the present U.S. public diplomacy apparatus is not only under-resourced, but also lacking an effective strategic direction, particularly towards the Islamic world.

At the core of the established wisdom on the subject are a set of several important reports by both influential think tanks and government offices. They include:

- “America Loses its Voice,” issued by the American Enterprise Institute in 2003;
- “Changing Minds—Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World,” issued by the Advisory Group for Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World in 2003;
- “Finding America’s Voice: A Strategy for Reinvigorating U.S. Public Diplomacy,” issued by the Council on Foreign Relations in 2003;
- “How to Reinvigorate U.S. Public Diplomacy,” issued by the Heritage Foundation in 2003;
- “Strengthening U.S.-Muslim Communications,” issued by Center for the Study of the Presidency in 2003; and
- “U.S. Public Diplomacy: State Department Expands Efforts but Faces Significant Challenges,” issued by the Government Accounting Office in 2003.

12 The House International Relations Committee Hearing, “Public Diplomacy and the Anti-Terrorism Campaign,” October 2001. Brookings Institution, “2002 Doha Conference on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World,” 2002. The Council on Foreign Relations, “Public Diplomacy: A Strategy for Reform,” July 2002. The Center for the Study of the Presidency, “U.S. Communication with Muslim Communities, June 2003.”

13 The author conducted almost 100 dialogue sessions in Muslim-majority countries with diplomats, business men, college students, high school students, and journalists in both September 2002 (in Cairo, Alexandria, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Al Ain and Amman) and then again in January 2003 (in Casablanca, Rabat, Marakesh, Muscat, Riyadh, Damman, Jeddah, and Damascus).

The Voice of the Policy Community: Six Key Reports on U.S. Public Diplomacy

(■ = priority — blank = not a priority)

	AEI ¹⁴	CSP ¹⁵	Advisory Committee ¹⁶	CFR ¹⁷	GAO ¹⁸	Heritage ¹⁹
Need						
There is a need to improve Islamic world perceptions of the United States	■	■	■	■	■	■
Problems						
Inadequate U.S. public diplomacy structure	■	■	■	■	■	■
Inadequate funding of public diplomacy	■	■	■	■		
U.S. policy toward the region is opposed in Muslim-majority countries		■	■	■		■
Solutions						
Change the paradigm to joint planning for joint benefit			■			
Strengthen dialogue		■	■	■		
Emphasize values-based policy			■	■		
Realize that youth represent an opportunity				■	■	
Harness Arab Americans and American Muslims as bridges		■	■	■		
Create a corporation for public diplomacy	■	■	■	■		
Build closer alliances with NGOs and the private sector		■	■	■	■	
Create easy-access public information centers overseas			■			
Expand polling				■	■	
Expand exchange programs and database of alumni		■	■	■	■	■
Make public diplomacy a cross-cutting theme for all Foreign Service Officers				■		
Re-examine the sources of anti-Americanism		■				
Create Capitol Hill Caucus on public diplomacy		■		■		
Create “60 Minutes” type shows in Arabic shown in the Middle East to open lines of communication		■				
Co-create media messages that identify shared interests with civil society organizations from Muslim-majority countries		■	■	■		
Reduce notion that America is all about “sexuality” and “liberal values”		■				
Increase quality of Foreign Service Officer training in various areas including foreign languages, especially Arabic			■	■	■	■
Create web sites in Middle Eastern languages to support war on terrorism					■	
“Shared Values” type programs should show American generosity and foreign aid					■	
Make local populations aware of USAID assistance			■		■	
Create and use indicators to measure public diplomacy performance			■	■	■	■
Issue a Presidential Decision Directive and strengthen interagency coordination			■	■		■
Take advantage of the Internet, satellite, and mobile phone revolution to communicate message			■	■		
Build bridges between U.S. society and other societies through art, music, theater, etc.				■		
Make foreign policy more sensitive to public diplomacy concerns				■		
Create a Public Diplomacy Reserve Corps				■		
Ensure that information technology and communications are a priority			■			
Develop a Center for U.S. Arab / Muslim studies in the United States			■			
Develop focused speaking programs for public policy			■			
Increase interfaith dialogue			■			
Strengthen the role of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy			■			
Establish Office of Policy, Plans, and Resources and an Arab and Muslim Countries Public Communications Unit			■			
Incorporate Department of Defense more into public diplomacy			■			■
Modify Outdated Legislation including the 1948 Smith-Mundt Act which restricts on public diplomacy activities		■				
Reorganize foreign broadcasting to streamline management/more funding		■				

The chart at left provides an overview of these reports, including how each defines the need, the problem, and the solutions. The key finding is that there is broad consensus on a number of issues. They center upon the need to improve public perceptions in Muslim-majority countries, finding weaknesses in three areas:

- The current public diplomacy structure in the U.S. government is ineffective.
- Funding for public diplomacy is inadequate.
- U.S. foreign and domestic policy is seen globally—and not just across Muslim-majority countries—as a threat.

There was also broad support for number of key points:

- There is a need to expand existing exchange programs and create a database of American and foreign alumni participants.
- There is a need to increase the number of Foreign Service Officers and expand their training.
- There is a need for the U.S. Government to build closer alliances with NGOs and private sector organizations.
- There is a need to embrace indicators to measure public diplomacy performance.
- There is a need to create a corporation for public diplomacy.

Strikingly, however, across the papers, there was a surprising absence of discussion of the fact that, in addition to the need to improve Islamic world perceptions

of the United States, there is also a paramount need to improve U.S. perceptions of Islam and the Islamic world and that without success in this undertaking, there would be little improvement in the relationship. Furthermore, generally absent from the policy papers was a recognition that there is a need to recognize that the Islamic world is heterogeneous and that the use of a “one size fits all” agenda should be avoided in the formulation of policy and program solutions.

But, across the reports, there was broad acceptance of the fact that U.S. policies are central determinants of global views. For example, the Council on Foreign Relations wrote, “From Paris to Cairo, from Bonn to Amman, from Madrid and Moscow to Istanbul and Jakarta, ordinary citizens actively oppose fundamental American policy decisions....One of the greatest challenges the United States is now facing in the Arab world is the perception that America is both propping up undemocratic regimes and unfairly supporting Israel with indifference to Palestinian suffering and humiliation.”²⁰

The Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World wrote, “Surveys indicate that much of the resentment towards America stems from real conflicts and displeasure with policies, including those involving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Iraq.”²¹ It also wrote, “‘Spin’ and manipulative public relations and propaganda are not the answer. Foreign policy counts. In our trips to Egypt, Syria, Turkey, France, Morocco, and Senegal, we were struck by the depth of opposition to many of our policies.”²² The Center for the Study of the Presidency wrote, “The Palestinian cause has assumed an importance beyond

14 American Enterprise Institute, “America Loses its Voice,” 2003.

15 Center for the Study of the Presidency, “Strengthening U.S.-Muslim Communications,” 2003.

16 Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World, “Changing Minds—Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World,” 2003.

17 Council on Foreign Relations, “Finding America’s Voice: A Strategy for Reinvigorating U.S. Public Diplomacy,” 2003.

18 GAO, “U.S. Public Diplomacy: State Department Expands Efforts but Faces Significant Challenges,” 2003.

19 Heritage Foundation, “How to Reinvigorate U.S. Public Diplomacy,” 2003.

20 Council on Foreign Relations, “Finding America’s Voice: A Strategy for Reinvigorating U.S. Public Diplomacy” 2003, p. 1.

21 Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World, “Changing Minds—Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World,” 2003, p. 9.

22 *ibid*, p. 18.

that of other regional or foreign policy issues and is now equated with issues of personal welfare. Along with U.S. policies toward the region, it has become a prism through which Arabs, and increasingly, Muslims in other regions view the United States.... The perception that America supports many authoritarian governments...fuels anger at the United States and its policies.”²³

Although this paper does not tackle the U.S. foreign and domestic policy issues that drive global and Islamic world public perceptions of America, it does acknowledge that our policies are central determinants of global views. Nonetheless, how we communicate, including methods and our posture of humility—or lack thereof—remains a central part of how we tackle the problems of public diplomacy and it is these methods that this paper will examine.

23 Center for the Study of the Presidency, “Strengthening U.S.-Muslim Communications,” 2003, p. 5.

III. HOW CITIZENS FEEL: U.S. RELATIONS WITH THE ISLAMIC WORLD

In order to set the context for a discussion about public diplomacy, it is important to understand the starting point from which dialogues between American citizens and citizens of Muslim-majority countries take place. This context both informs the type of public diplomacy efforts that will be most effective as well as creates a sense of urgency to dedicate resources and energy to these efforts.

DO WE HATE THEM?

To contextualize the public's view in Muslim-majority countries of "America," a quick examination of what Americans think of the Islamic world would be useful. Two years after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, it is still difficult for most Americans to think about "Islam," "Arabs," or the "Middle East" without reflecting on the severe and painful damage the September 11th terrorists inflicted upon the American people and their sense of security.

The findings of polls (conducted first before the September 11th attacks, then a few months after the attacks, and subsequently in the summer of 2003) show that the favorability ratings by Americans of "Muslims" actually rose from a relatively low 45 percent

before the attacks, to 59 percent in December 2001.²⁴ One plausible explanation was that familiarity with Islam bred appreciation. According to the 2001 Pew poll, 73 percent of those "with some knowledge of Islam have a favorable view, compared with 53 percent of those who say they know little."

But by the summer of 2003, 44 percent of Americans polled felt that Islam is more likely than other religions "to encourage violence," up from 25 percent as recently as March 2002. Also by the summer of 2003, the percentage of non-Muslim Americans who said their religion had a lot in common with Islam had fallen to 22 percent, from 27 percent in 2002 and 31 percent shortly after the terrorist attacks.²⁵ The U.S.-led war on Iraq and the ongoing violent Israeli-Palestinian conflict seems to have deepened discomfort among Americans of things "Muslim" or "Arab."

Significant leadership efforts by President Bush to embrace Islam had a positive impact on how Americans view Islam, but the impact of such statements efforts seemed to last months not years. For example, the President's September 17, 2001 visit to the Washington Islamic Center at which he made a powerful statement that "Islam means peace" and that those

²⁴ *Christian Science Monitor*, "Americans See Religion as Gaining Clout in Public Life," December 7, 2001. The poll was released on December 6, 2001 and conducted on 1500 adults in November 2001.

²⁵ The Pew Research Center for the People and The Press, The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, "Religion and Politics: Contention and Consensus." <<http://www.pewtrust.org>> (July 24, 2003).

engaging in racism against Muslims in America “represent the worst of humankind” had an impact over the short to medium term.²⁶ The 2001 Pew poll shows that “conservative Republicans made the most substantial leap in acceptance of Muslims, from 35 percent to 64 percent.” The transformation of American viewpoints—particularly the strong transformation of views held by Republicans—is not only notable, but also demonstrates that there is a great opportunity to change perceptions through leadership.

THE HISTORY BEHIND THE HATRED

The United States faces an uphill battle today for the hearts and minds of the citizens of Muslim-majority countries. Historically, the distancing between the United States and the Islamic world was underscored by half a century of support to authoritarian governments in that region which generally failed to foster democracy or self-determination. The problem was then accelerated by the 2000–2003 deterioration in the situation between Israelis and Palestinians, during which the United States did little to remedy the situation.²⁷ The problem was compounded through divergent views on the aims and process of the “war on terrorism,” and the 2003 U.S. invasion and ongoing occupation of Iraq.

Across Muslim-majority countries, citizens feel a comfortable commonality with American values, education, and technology. But it is also clear that, in the two years since the September 11th attacks on America, there has been a steep deterioration in support for U.S. foreign policy across Muslim-majority countries. There is an important history behind this state of affairs.

Nearly a century ago, America was seen in a generally positive and benevolent light in the Islamic world

and viewed certainly better than the European powers that had colonized that region. The first interactions were primarily undertaken by American missionaries in the mid-1800s. These missionaries later founded four of the great learning institutions across the region: the American University of Cairo, the American College of Persia, Robert College of Istanbul, and what is today known as the American University of Beirut. These programs were highly popular, well respected, and served as “a bridge between cultures.”²⁸ While they introduced the region to Western values, they also “sought to introduce Americans to an (Arab and Islamic) world unknown to them.... (and) served as ethnographers of Arabs to Americans.”²⁹ This approach of working for joint benefit—both Arabs and Americans—allowed the missionaries to win the trust of local populations and work closely with them to create these learning institutions which continue to serve as beachheads for American values in the region.

This dynamic began to change though by the mid-twentieth century, as the United States began to stretch its global muscles and replace some of the regional roles and presence of the European powers. However, even as recently as the 1956 Suez Canal Crisis, when President Eisenhower forced the United Kingdom, France, and Israel to relinquish their joint occupation of the Suez Peninsula, America was still seen as a beacon of light across the Arab World and more broadly across Muslim-majority countries as well. It was generally viewed as a new kind of world power, which embraced justice in its policy formulation.

Mid-century shifts in American policy in the region, however, began to slowly contribute to increasing antagonism. Indeed, U.S. support of autocratic regimes across the region and perceived U.S. ambivalence to Israel’s mistreatment of the Palestinian people

26 “‘Islam is peace,’ says President,” <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010917-11.html>> (July 4, 2003).

27 Marc Lynch, “The real turning point for Arab public opinion was Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon’s bloody reoccupation of the West Bank in early spring of 2002,” “Taking Arabs Seriously,” *Foreign Affairs*, September/October, 2003, vol. 82, number 5, p. 81.

28 Ussama Makdisi, “Anti-Americanism’ in the Arab World: An Interpretation of a Brief History,” *Journal of American History*, vol. 89, issue 2, p. 538

29 *ibid.*

did not go unnoticed, nor did the 1953 CIA overthrow of the Iranian prime minister and U.S. aid in establishing the Shah of Iran's notorious secret police. As Professor Ussama Makdisi of Rice University states, "Among the vast majority of Arabs today, the expression of anti-American feelings stems less from a blind hatred of the United States or American values than from a profound ambivalence about America: at once an object of admiration for its influence, films, technology, (for some, its secularism, its law, its order), and a source of deep disappointment given the ongoing role of the United States in shaping a repressive Middle Eastern status quo."³⁰

This policy dynamic continued through the 1950s, up until the early 1990s. The 1993 Peace accords between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization suggested a potential opening in U.S.-Islamic world relations, but that door began to close in 2000, when violence re-erupted between Israelis and Palestinians in the 2nd Intifadah and slammed shut in early 2002 with the U.S. failure to prevent the grave deterioration in the situation between Israelis and Palestinians. Initially, across the Arab regions and then increasingly across the broader Islamic world, people began experiencing what they saw as ongoing repression and humiliation of the Palestinian people as a loss of their *own* dignity. In a time of increasing access to the Internet, satellite television, and mobile telephones, but still limited means of political expression, the dispossession of Palestinians from their land thus has become a visceral "blood issue" that America cannot ignore in its dealings with the Islamic world.³¹

THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: WHY DO THEY HATE US?

Just as Americans cannot forget their own traumatic experience of the September 11th terrorist attacks, the citizens of many predominantly Muslim countries

cannot escape their own perceived experience with America, American weapons, and American policy. Importantly, policy makers have noted that the increase in "resentment of the United States has occurred at a time when Muslims across the world are open to the very ideals that America has propagated for decades, such as democratic governance, free market economics and the expansion of international trade and investment."³²

Two substantive sets of recent polling research, conducted by Zogby International and the Pew Global Attitudes Project (both in 2002 and 2003), illustrate the current status of Muslim attitudes toward America and leave clues as to how a new strategy towards public diplomacy could improve the situation. The overall picture shows a worsening of the Islamic world's perceptions of America, fuelled by recent U.S. policy and frustration at the inability on the part of the Islamic world to make inputs into that policy.

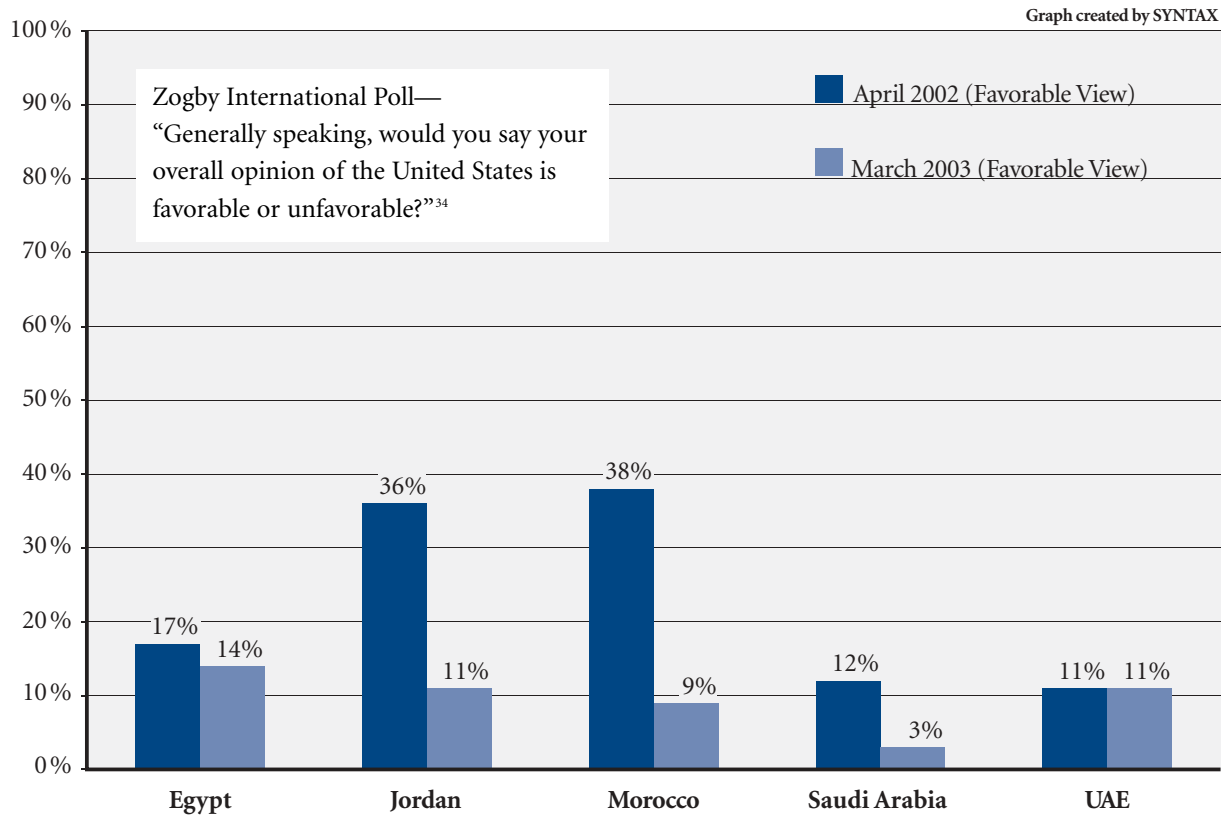
On the more positive side, the polls also suggest a common set of values between the populations of many Muslim-majority countries and Americans (that is not shared by Europeans), as well as strong support for international NGOs, a desire for increasing dialogue, and a rejection of outright boycotting of the United States. Importantly, the Zogby polls also show that both youthfulness and Internet exposure are highly correlated with more positive attitudes toward America—suggesting a strong potential opening to engage these growing segments of the population through public diplomacy. Both the Zogby and Pew polls were conducted over time, capturing snapshots of attitudes toward America in both mid-2002 and mid-2003 (Zogby polled 10 countries in April 2002 and 5 in March 2003; Pew polled 22 countries in 2002 and 44 in April/May 2003). The polling data reveals astoundingly low and declining overall attitudes toward America.

³⁰ *ibid.*

³¹ James Zogby, President of the Arab American Institute, speaking at the Center for the Study of the Presidency Conference on "U.S. Communications with Muslim Communities," June 13, 2003.

³² Center for the Study of the Presidency, "An Initiative: Strengthening U.S.-Muslim Communications," 2003.

Percent of Population with an Overall Favorable View of the U.S.³³



**Table 1: Pew Global Attitudes—
Percent of Population with an Overall
Favorable View of the U.S.³⁵**

	Summer 2002	Spring 2003
Indonesia	61%	15%
Jordan	25%	1%
Kuwait	66%	Not conducted
Lebanon	35%	27%
Morocco	27%	Not conducted
Nigeria	77%	61%
Pakistan	10%	13%
Palestinian Authority	Near 0%	Not conducted
Turkey	30%	15%

Table shows the percentage of respondents who had a combined very favorable and somewhat favorable view of the United States.

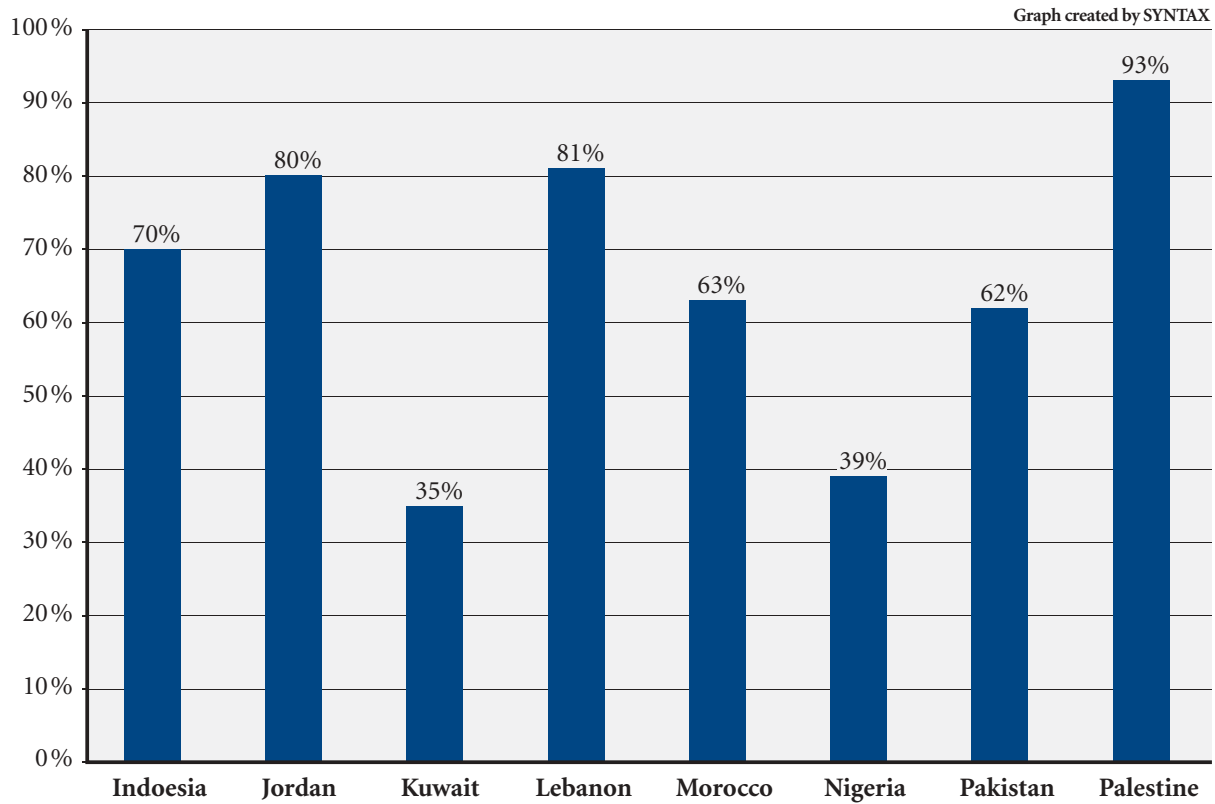
Clearly, the general attitudes toward America declined substantially over a short period of time. The Pew and Zogby poll results are consistent. They suggest that, across Muslim-majority countries, citizens feel that U.S. policy makers ignore their concerns and that this may lay at the root of their frustration with America. From 2002 to 2003, the public in the Islamic world increasingly felt that America does not take their interests into account when formulating policy decisions. By 2003, 92 percent of Palestinians, 81 percent of Lebanese, 80 percent of Jordanians, and 63 percent of Moroccans believed that the United States did not take their views and interests into account when

³³ John Zogby, Zogby International, “America as Seen Through Arab Eyes: Polling the Arab World after September 11th,” March 2003.

³⁴ John Zogby, Zogby International, “America as Seen through Arab Eyes: Polling the Arab World after September 11th,” April 2002.

³⁵ Pew Global Attitudes Project, “Views of a Changing World,” June 2003.

Percent of Population which Feels the United States Does Not Take Their Interests into Account³⁵



formulating policies. Between 2002 and 2003, the figure in Pakistan rose from 36 percent to 62 percent. Interestingly as comparator groups, 76 percent of South Koreans also felt that their views are not taken to account in the formulation of U.S. policy, while only 25 percent of Israelis felt similarly unheard. Here, the policy implication is that the U.S. Government needs to do a better job not only listening to the concerns of others, but also ensuring that publics in those countries feel that they have been listened to.

In addition, the 2003 Pew poll shows that citizens across Muslim-majority countries believe that U.S. foreign policy makes the Middle East less stable.

This includes 91 percent of Jordanians, 74 percent of Indonesians, 63 percent of Moroccans, 61 percent of Turks, and 85 percent of Palestinians. Furthermore, citizens from a disturbing number of countries in the region felt that the United States “could become a military threat” to them, 74 percent in Indonesia, 73 percent in Pakistan, 72 percent in Nigeria, 58 percent in Lebanon, 56 percent in Jordan, and 46 percent in Morocco. Surprisingly, 71 percent of citizens in NATO ally Turkey also felt this way. If three quarters of citizens in a NATO ally are afraid that we might one day attack them, then something is clearly lacking in our public diplomacy.

³⁵ Pew Global Attitudes Project, “Views of a Changing World,” June 2003.

These numbers are also important because they illustrate how public opinion in Muslim-majority countries can develop into real policy problems. For example, in the run up to the U.S.-led attack on Iraq, it was negative Turkish public opinion of the proposed attack on Iraq that made it too difficult for the Turkish Government to allow the United States to use Turkey as a staging ground. This cost the United States the opportunity to open a “second front” in the war against Iraq and reduced the amount of coalition troops available for the war. Similar problems in foreign public perceptions of the United States cost the United States better cooperation during the post-war period in particular with troops and aid money contributions and in wider efforts against terrorism in places like Southeast Asia.

THE GOOD NEWS

Despite the bleak picture of worsening attitudes toward America, the results of the polls also suggested very strong grounds to be positive about the potential for public diplomacy to positively influence the Islamic World’s perceptions and views.

First, the data revealed a strong foundation of common values between the United States and the Islamic world that neither share with European countries. It highlighted that while policy may be a strong source of disagreement, the basic premises upon which American culture, society, and political systems operate are shared widely across Muslim regions. In the 2002 Zogby polls, attitudes toward “American science and technology” polled favorably high across eight Muslim-majority countries, from 71 percent in Saudi Arabia to 93 percent in Iran. Similarly, ratings towards “American Freedom and Democracy” were also seen as favorable, with the exception of Iran, ranging from 50 percent in the UAE to 64 percent in Pakistan. “American Movies and Television” scored high with favorability ratings ranging from 53 percent in Egypt to 77 percent in Indonesia (as a comparison—the

French favorability rating was 47 percent and this was well before the U.S. standoff with France over Iraq). “American Education” scores from 57 percent favorability in Kuwait to 81 percent in Lebanon, with the exception of Iran (here France gives “American Education” a low 27 percent score).

In fact, the Arab world in general has been shown to have a value system that closely matches America’s value system, except in importance of religion to daily life. The table underlines the powerful alignment of U.S. and Arab values.

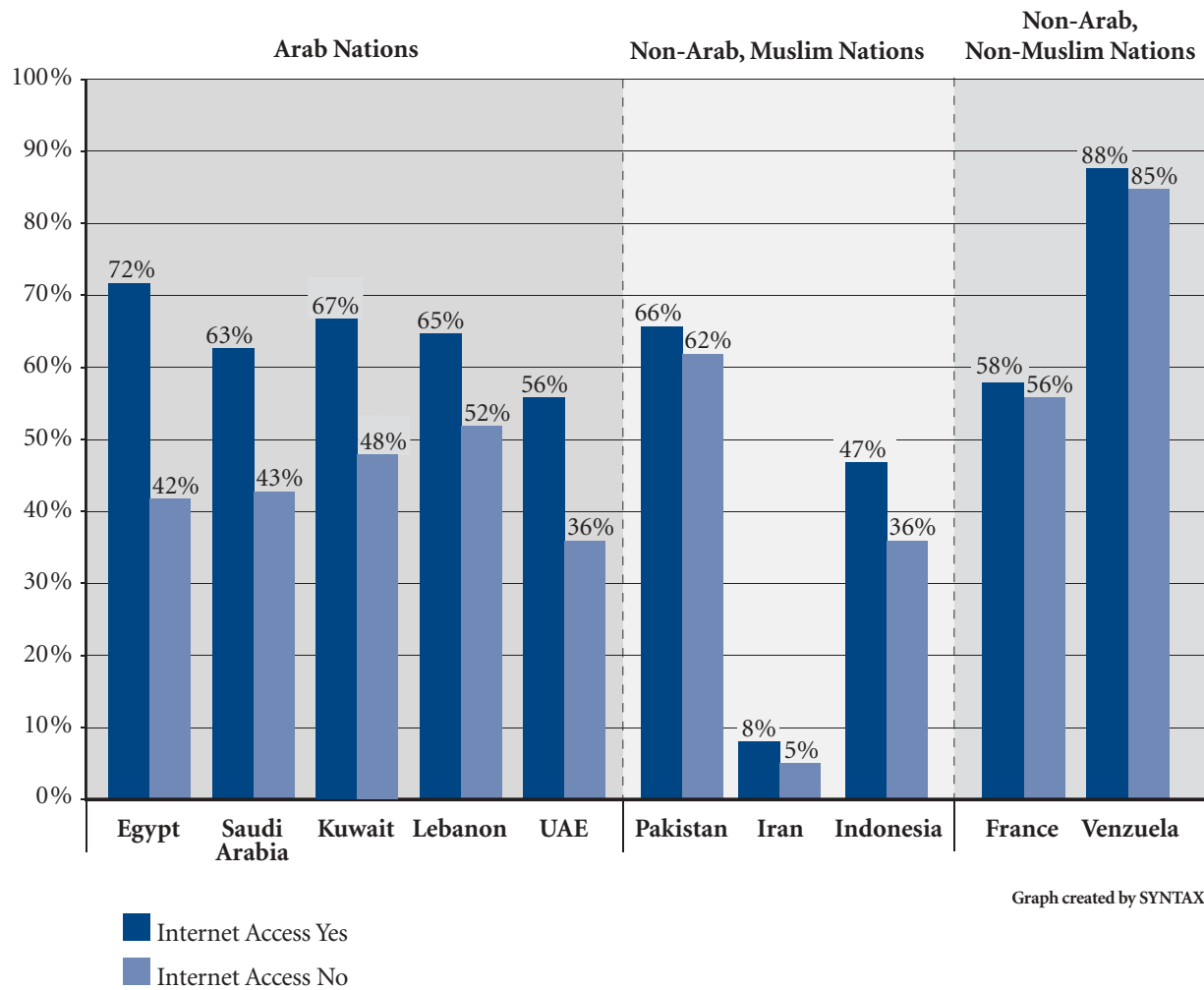
Importance of Concerns in Personal Life: A Comparison of Arabs and Americans³⁶

Concerns	Arab Rank	American Rank
Quality of Work	1	2
Family	2 (tie)	1
Religion	2 (tie)	7 (tie)
Job Security	4	5
Marriage	5	4
Friends	6	3
Foreign Policy	8	7 (tie)
Leisure Time	9	8

Similarly, the Pew polls demonstrated that on issues such as freedom of speech, the rule of law, and democracy, people across the Islamic world share core values with America. 92 percent of respondents in Turkey, 92 percent in Lebanon, 53 percent in Jordan, and 79 percent each in Uzbekistan and Pakistan feel that it is important to be able to “openly say what you think and criticize the (state or government).” Similarly, there are strong majorities who believe in the importance of “honest elections...held regularly with the choice of at least two political parties” including 94 percent in Lebanon, 90 percent in Turkey, 75 percent in Uzbekistan, 71 percent in Pakistan, and 55 percent in Jordan. Also, even stronger majorities in all five countries believe that “a judicial system that treats everyone the same way” is important. 98 percent in Lebanon, 95 percent in Uzbekistan, 94 percent in

³⁶ John Zogby, Zogby International, “America as Seen through Arab Eyes: Polling the Arab World after September 11th,” March 2003.

The Favorability of American Freedom and Democracy by Internet Access³⁷



Turkey, 78 percent in Pakistan, and 57 percent in Jordan felt this way. There is similar, across the board, support for the freedom of the press. Given that strong support for freedom of speech, the rule of law, a free press and democracy are all core American values, it would seem natural for our foreign policy to actively support and trumpet these values among Muslim populations around the world.

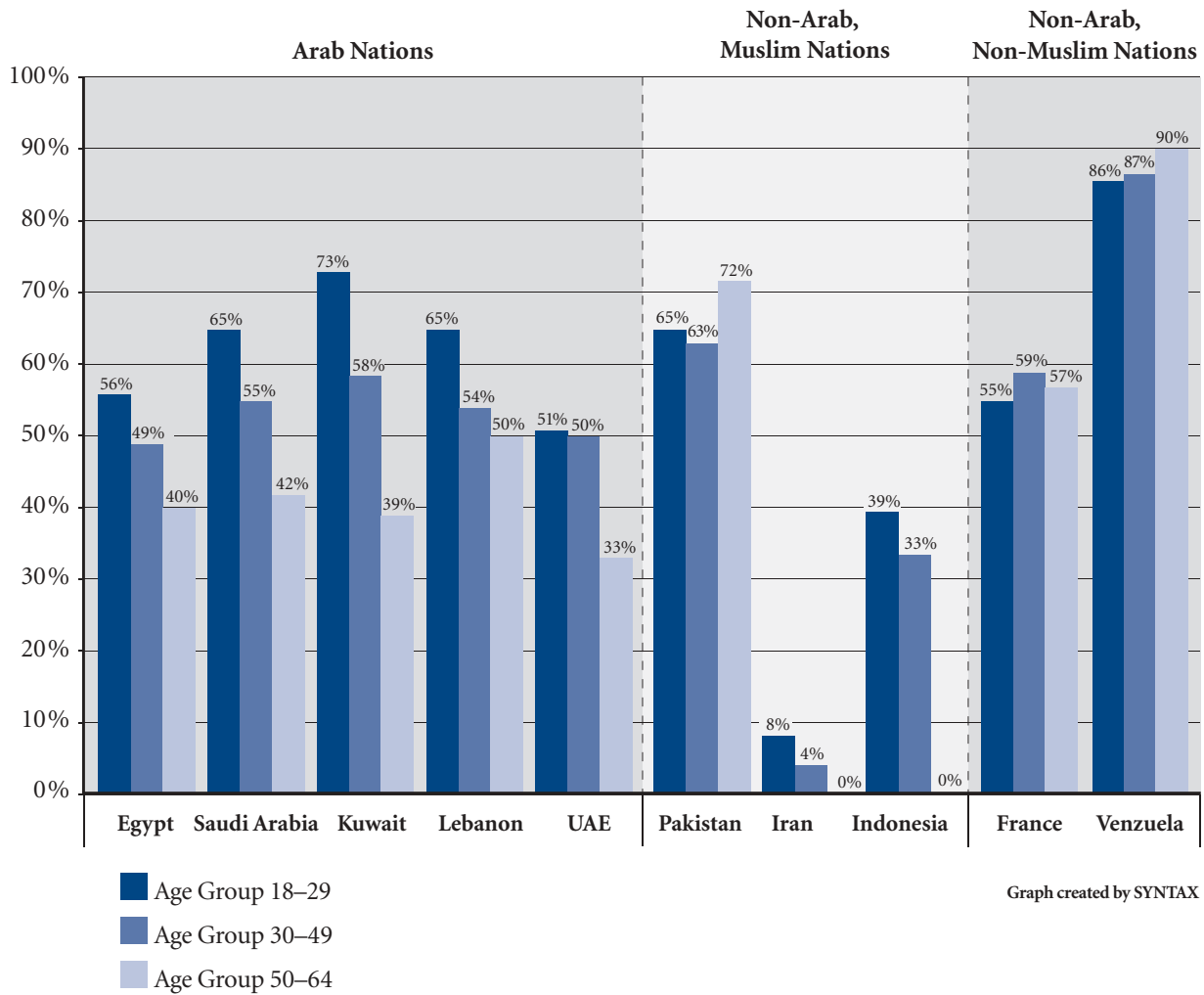
Second, polling data suggested several key potential opportunity areas for public diplomacy to address in

order to improve attitudes toward America. These include working with NGOs, which are viewed favorably across the Muslim-majority countries, as well as targeting two growing segments of the population who are more favorably disposed toward America—those with Internet access and Muslim youth.

The Pew polls demonstrate that non-governmental organizations—like the Planned Parenthood Federation, Care International, and the Red Cross—enjoy positive standing in a number of countries

³⁷ *ibid.*

The Favorability of American Freedom and Democracy by Age³⁸



across the region. In Lebanon, Turkey, Uzbekistan, and Jordan, NGOs have positive support at 82 percent, 67 percent, and 66 percent respectively. A public diplomacy policy implication of this finding is that as the United States seeks to be seen as doing good work for the public benefit in the Islamic world it should consider closer and more visible programming with international institutions and local and national NGOs.

The Zogby polls also illustrate two important population groups to target and leverage through public diplomacy efforts. The first of these groups, individuals with some form of Internet access, have overwhelmingly more positive views of America (excluding U.S. foreign policy) than those who do not have Internet access, controlling for socio-economic differences. For example, 56 percent of UAE respondents with Internet access hold a positive view of American freedom and democracy, versus 36 percent of those

³⁸ *ibid.*

who do not have access. 100 percent of Indonesians with Internet access have a favorable view of American science and technology as compared to only 82 percent of those who do not. 67 percent of Lebanese with Internet access have a favorable view of the American people as compared to 58 percent of those who do not. The conclusion poses an extraordinary opportunity for U.S. foreign policy. Indeed, efforts by the United States to expand productive Internet access throughout the Islamic world are likely to yield positive results, both in terms of goodwill towards America and the general development goals pursued by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

A second important group, youth aged 18–29, also hold a significantly more favorable view of America (excluding U.S. foreign policy) than those aged 30–49 or 50–64. For example, 18–29 year-olds in Egypt hold an 87 percent favorable rating of American science and technology in contrast to only 56 percent of those aged 50–64. 54 percent of those aged 18–29 in Saudi Arabia had a favorable rating of the American people contrasting to only 35 percent of 50–64 year olds. 68 percent of 18–29 year-olds in Kuwait had a favorable rating of American education as opposed to only 37 percent of 50–64 year-olds.

The conclusion challenges the popular conception that there is a disenchanted and burgeoning youth segment of society that holds the most negative views of America. Instead, there is a dual opening. While there is potential for youth disenchantment with limited job opportunities, this large segment of society also perhaps presents the single biggest opportunity for the United States to improve its relationship with Muslim-majority countries. Furthermore, expanding Internet access may be used as a tool in this regard.

The findings from the two polls illustrate the difficult context in which the public diplomacy dialogue must

take place. But they also present significant opportunities in the clear mutual appreciation of common values, important vehicles (NGOs, and the Internet), and potential allies and stakeholders (youth) from which the dialogue can find stable common ground, emerge, and prosper.

IV. COMMUNICATION FOR JOINT BENEFIT

An immediate objective of American public diplomacy and foreign policy should be to transform our relationship with Muslim-majority countries, reversing the recent steep deterioration in a way that enhances our national security. Significant attention has recently been focused on the importance of public diplomacy to the national security of the United States. Policy makers—and to an extent, the American people—realize that how we communicate our foreign and domestic policies dramatically affects how the world views us. In turn, that affects how successful the United States is at building allies for our national security efforts. Given the realities of the September 11th attacks, America needs a broad coalition to protect itself. To build and sustain the alliances necessary, i.e. to make our coalitions both bigger and more “willing,” we have to communicate more effectively.

Bearing in mind that public diplomacy is no substitute for good policy, Americans should have two expectations of their country’s public diplomacy. First, that the government can and should better communicate American policies and values abroad. Just as clear and effective communication of American policies and American values is an essential component to prevent one’s opponents from seizing initiative on the political campaign trail, so too is it the case in terms of communications around the world.

Second, the government can and should engage in effective dialogue that has the potential to make tremendous progress towards increasing mutual understanding and building long-term and self-sustaining trust. To be effective, such dialogue efforts should be understood as activities that will not just inform, but also communicate with audiences in the Islamic world and those in the United States, be they governmental audiences, civil society, or groups of private individuals. Furthermore, such efforts need to be joint in both their planning and execution, in order to build a sense of dignity into the dialogue.

In more practical terms, the first step of this process is the joint identification of mutual interests and concerns through U.S. dialogue with civil society and government leaders in Muslim-majority countries. The second step in this process is joint planning and implementation. It is important to contrast this with concepts developed essentially by Americans and then implemented with the help of citizens, groups, or governments from Muslim-majority countries.

The mission for U.S. public diplomacy efforts has long been to broaden “dialogue between American citizens and institutions and their counterparts abroad.” This paper argues that to be successful, U.S. public diplomacy efforts must embrace the centrality of this

purpose. This means, humility in our approach and fully embracing the paradigm of jointness—from conceptualization to implementation. Although the depth of the concept of jointness has not been embraced by other major recent reports on the topic, the similar but less profound, concept of dialogue has been embraced by many of the recent reports on public diplomacy. For example, the Council on Foreign Relations in their 2003 report writes, “The United States can reach these people by listening to their needs and by initiating genuine dialogue, and by taking into account their cultural and political realities.”³⁹

INFORMATION PROLIFERATION

Muslim-majority countries have witnessed a dramatic transformation in recent decades. Increasing numbers of mobile and fixed telephone lines and growing Internet penetration, all combined with rapidly rising literacy rates, mean that students, journalists, and business leaders across Muslim-majority countries obtain information directly from the digital and satellite TV world, often as fast as Americans.⁴⁰ They are greatly interested in public affairs, but the political climate provides a limited range of viewpoints. According to a recent writer in *Foreign Affairs*, “The new Arab media increasingly constructs the dominant narratives through which people understand events. In some ways, the absence of democracy makes the new media even more powerful.”⁴¹

Rising literacy rates across the region also mean that increasing amounts of information will be digested in increasing detail and with increasing sophistication. Literacy rates among Arab countries have

reached 73 percent for men and 49 percent for women.⁴² The overall enrollment rate for secondary schools shot up from 37 percent to 54 percent between 1980 and 1995.⁴³ These rising literacy and telecommunications rates have created a more educated public that can no longer be ignored as irrelevant to the global security and diplomacy processes. In turn, these factors mean that “spinning” policies is now near impossible in the era of globalization. As one U.S. diplomat based in Saudi Arabia put it, “Out here, the audience—youth, journalists, and business leaders—knows instantly what is said on the floor of the U.S. Congress. It’s impossible for us to say one thing in English back in the United States and another thing in Arabic over here. . . . Frank discussion is what is needed.”⁴⁴ Thus, while spinning could have negative outcomes, public diplomacy can play a vital role in opening communications with citizens in Muslim-majority countries.

However, although they may have higher literacy rates and increased access to information, publics in the region do not necessarily have sophisticated insight into the richness of American society and policy formulation. As one public diplomacy expert expressed, “It is not what one says, but what the other hears, that ultimately matters most.”⁴⁵ A troubling dynamic is that while interested publics in the Islamic world receive enough information (and misinformation) to justify an opinion about the United States and its policies, there is not enough quality information to understand the texture of decision-making in the United States. Certain kinds of information, particularly about the policy formulation process that results from the American system of democracy, would be of particular value.

39 Council on Foreign Relations, “Finding America’s Voice: A Strategy for Reinvigorating U.S. Public Diplomacy,” 2003, p. 5.

40 Egypt is somewhat typical among Arab countries where from 1990 to 2000, the number of fixed telephone subscriptions tripled from 1.6 million to 5.4 million and the number of mobile telephones grew from a mere 4000 to 1.4 million according to the prominent International Telecommunications Union. <http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/update/pdf/Update_1_01.pdf> (August 1, 2003). Internet penetration rates are undergoing a rapid transformation and range from a typical low of 0.1 percent in Bangladesh to 37 percent in the United Arab Emirates according to the NUA and their global data, available on <http://cyberatlas.internet.com/big_picture/geographics/article/0,1323,5911_151151,00.html> (August 1, 2003).

41 Marc Lynch, “Taking Arabs Seriously,” *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2003, vol. 82, number 5.

42 UNICEF, “State of the Arab Child,” 2002, p. 87.

43 UNDP, “Arab Human Development Report,” 2002.

44 This quote is from a briefing given to the author in January 2003.

45 Chris Ross, “Public Diplomacy Comes of Age,” *The Washington Quarterly*, The Center for Strategic and International Studies, Vol. 25, Issue 2, pp. 75–83.

As an illustration, many Americans would be surprised at how well informed Muslim publics are about certain aspects of American policy or the more extreme parts of the American political landscape. For example, when Attorney General Ashcroft announced in 2001 that he would be targeting 5000 Arabs in the United States for dragnet interviews, the news met with little outcry in the U.S. press, but broke immediately overseas.⁴⁶ When conservative leader Pat Robertson stated that Islam “is not a peaceful religion” and Rev. Jerry Falwell called the Prophet Muhammad a “terrorist,” it spelled trouble for America’s efforts at public diplomacy, as these conservatives are closely associated with the Bush Administration.⁴⁷ Indeed, the comments caused minimal stir inside the United States, but quickly caused anti-Bush rioting in Bombay, India.⁴⁸

A more recent example of how events, little noticed in Washington, can create a stir across Muslim-majority countries was the proposed appointment of Daniel Pipes to the board of the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP). While Pipes is almost unknown inside the U.S. body politic, his often anti-Muslim views are well known in the Islamic world.⁴⁹ Thus the appointment of Pipes to the board of USIP, a semi-governmental institution that few Americans outside Washington are even aware of, caused quite a problem for U.S. public diplomacy with Muslims worldwide, including even in the Muslim minority communities in Europe.⁵⁰

Such events illustrate how rapidly and profoundly events in Washington can affect the climate in which terrorists recruit allies around the world. More importantly, though, they also illustrate that the problem is

not just getting information about America out there, but how America expresses itself. In the words of one Arab youth leader, “We have plenty of information about America from satellite TV and the Internet. What we need is a dialogue with America so that we can each start to understand each other.”⁵¹

THE NEED FOR COMMUNICATION TO A NEW CONSTITUENCY

In the wake of the September 11th attacks, Americans feel that the hearts and minds of citizens around the world are now more central to American security than ever before. Indeed, civil society throughout Muslim-majority countries is so affected by U.S. policy that citizens often feel as though they are stakeholders of—or even constituents in—U.S. policy formulation. Many even feel they have an active role to play. This tendency is most pronounced in countries such as Saudi Arabia and Jordan that are globalizing rapidly or have had close relations with the United States.

Indeed, the world has rapidly become more interdependent. This has been fueled by dramatic advances in telecommunications, the spread of the Internet to once remote villages, the spread of disease through high-volume air-transport, and transformations in social behavior. These forces have been coupled with the recently developed ability of small groups of people to wreak massive amounts of destruction and terror. Given this dramatically increasing interdependence, the United States as the global superpower bears the responsibility to itself and humanity to engage and address the concerns of those who feel like stakeholders as if they are constituents. Given our own

46 Congressman Elijah Cummings (D-MD-7). <http://www.house.gov/cummings/articles/art01_48.htm>.

47 Naples Daily News, February 23, 2003. <<http://www.naplesnews.com/02/02/neapolitan/d763187a.htm>> (August 1, 2003).

48 From the *Conservative News Service*, CNSNews.com, and <<http://www.crosswalk.com/news/1172035.html>>.

49 James Zogby quotes Pipes as having previously written, “All immigrants bring exotic customs and attitudes, but Muslim customs are more troublesome than most.... Fears of a Muslim influx have more substance than the worry about *jihad*. West European societies are unprepared for the massive immigration of brown-skinned peoples cooking strange foods and not exactly maintaining Germanic standards of hygiene,” *Saudi Arab News*, Op Ed, August 2, 2003.

50 For example, action alerts denouncing the Pipes nomination went out among Muslim communities world-wide, including, the Swiss Muslim League. <http://www.rabita.ch/arabe/articles/congres_usa.htm>.

51 Youth Leader, World Association of Muslim Youth, dialogue with the author arranged by the Public Affairs Officer of the U.S. Embassy, Saudi Arabia, January 25, 2003.

global political and economic interests, ignoring these concerns will only be at our own peril.

In such a state of affairs, public diplomacy is more important than ever in addressing these new actors on the global stage, thus increasing the likelihood that they evolve into allies and not adversaries. But to be successful, and cut through decades of U.S. disregard for democracy and vibrant civil society across many Muslim-majority countries, dialogue must be based on mutual respect and a paradigm of joint planning for the benefit and learning of both parties.

Muslim citizens desire—indeed crave—a dialogue with America.⁵² Across Muslim-majority countries, students, business leaders, and journalists alike feel that for too long America has been speaking *to* them and not *with* them. Given the growing influence of American culture, U.S. foreign policy, and the American economy on the lives of individuals across Muslim-majority countries, people are starting to feel “as if” they are direct stakeholders in the decisions of American democracy.

Harnessing these sentiments is important. A cornerstone of effective public diplomacy is an internalization of the understanding that the decisions we make affect their lives directly. For instance, the U.S. war against the regimes of the Taliban and of Saddam Hussein and the current occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq have dramatically changed the economic and geo-political reality, not only for the people of those two countries, but also the surrounding sub-regions of Central Asia, the Gulf, Anatolia, and the Levant. The U.S. alliance with Pakistan has also affected the Indo-Pakistani political calculus. The continued tense relationships between the United States and Syria and Iran also dramatically affect commerce and politics in the region. The evolving half-century U.S. relationship

with Saudi Arabia and the newer relationship with the other Gulf States is a powerful determining factor of life in the Arabian Peninsula and beyond. Likewise, U.S. policy has a huge bearing on Israeli-Palestinian relations, as illustrated by the \$3 billion per year of U.S. assistance to Israel. In turn, the \$250 million in annual U.S. economic assistance and about \$200 million in U.S. military assistance are equivalent to a remarkable 5 percent of Jordan’s GDP.⁵³

Treating the citizens of the Islamic world as if they were legitimate stakeholders in U.S. policy can be a cornerstone to a more successful U.S. public diplomacy strategy—and a fundamental manner to respond to increasing global interdependence and the special burden of being the lone superpower. One way to conceptualize this is thinking of foreign audiences as another set of constituents (in the Congressional sense of the word constituents), with which it is essential to engage in two-way dialogue about U.S. policy.

Clearly, non-Americans living across the ocean have no inherent right to be treated literally as constituents of our government and our democracy. They cannot and should not pay taxes, serve jury duty, or vote in our elections. Still, as people, these citizens are affected by the policies of the U.S. Government, and in turn, they have the capacity to affect our lives, our economy, and our security. Thus, they are a key audience with ramifications for the success of policy. Honest, forthcoming communication and exchange between the United States and citizens of the Islamic world can reduce misunderstandings, build commonality, and strengthen the ability of the U.S. Government to find allies in its quest to secure a safer world.

The paradigm of “joint planning for joint benefit” should permeate the thinking behind a constituent-based public diplomacy program. As an illustration,

52 The author made this observation throughout his approximately 90 dialogue sessions in Muslim-majority countries. James Zogby made the same observation about his trip to Saudi Arabia in the spring of 2003 remarking that audiences with whom he spoke told him that what they wanted was dialogue, not more information. He was speaking at the Center for the Study of the Presidency Conference, “U.S. Communications with Muslim Communities,” June 12–13, 2003.

53 According to the World Bank, Jordan’s GDP was \$9.3 billion in 2002. <<http://www.worldbank.org/data/databytopic/GDP.pdf>>.

joint planning for joint benefit means that exchange programs planned between the United States and a foreign country involve the participation of both sets of nationals in the planning of goals, processes, and participants. In this conceptualization, simply bringing foreign nationals to the United States to learn about America is insufficient. Simple immersion, without dialogue, fails to induce communication and therefore does not constitute effective public diplomacy. Similarly, sending experts to the Islamic world to speak about the United States may accomplish some goals, but cannot achieve a fulfilling or sustainable two-way dialogue with Muslim communities.

While certain public diplomacy efforts will simply entail a more effective broadcast of message, the majority of public diplomacy efforts require a dialogue component that opens communication with global constituents and other civil society actors like NGOs. Embracing the paradigm of two-way dialogue will not only increase American understanding of the Islamic world, but will also increase the chance that U.S. messages will be heard.

The following sections flesh out how an overall public diplomacy strategy, based on communication, jointness, and innovative ideas towards a foreign constituency can better succeed at winning over audiences and improving the climate for U.S. policy towards Muslim countries.

V. HOW TO UPGRADE EXISTING PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The question of funding is always a critical issue for any governmental effort. Today, the federal government spends about \$1.2 billion on public diplomacy efforts. According to the GAO, \$594 million is spent by the Department of State on public diplomacy.⁵⁴ The rest is spent by the Department of Defense on exchange programs. The entire U.S. “diplomacy” budget thus is miniscule when compared to other components of the war on terrorism. For example, the U.S. Government spends about 7 cents on the Department of State for every dollar that is spent at the Department of Defense.⁵⁵ According to the GAO estimate, the \$594 million is spent as follows: \$245 million or 41 percent is spent on educational and cultural exchanges, \$226 million or 38 percent is spent by the regional bureaus, \$71 million or 12 percent is spent on international information and \$51 million or 9 percent is spent on related programs.⁵⁶

Accordingly, the size of the overall public diplomacy budget is an issue. Specific areas of funding improvement that mandate rapid and dramatic increases include increasing exchange programs, adding to staff within the Office of Public Diplomacy and at U.S. embassies throughout Muslim-majority countries, and the creation of new initiatives targeting the region,

ranging from new American Corners programs to increasing Internet access.

However, effective public diplomacy is not gained simply by throwing money at the problem. The purpose of this section is rather to provide the reader with an overview of the framework through which the U.S. Government conducts public diplomacy and provide suggestions on how to make improvements in a number of these existing programs. It will initially reflect on proposed changes to the organizational structure of the U.S. public diplomacy apparatus and then examine six key areas of U.S. public diplomacy: long term programs by the Office of the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, post-September 11th initiatives of the Office of the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, the Middle East Partnership Initiative, the Muslim World Initiative, and the Office of Global Communications.

THE ORGANIZATIONAL DEBATE

There is an ongoing debate about the ideal organizational structure of public diplomacy functions and their distribution within the Department of State, its sub-agencies, and other agencies. While the current

54 GAO, “U.S. Public Diplomacy: State Department Expands Efforts but Faces Significant Challenges,” September 4, 2003.

55 Mark Helmke of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, CSP conference, “U.S. Communications with Muslim Communities,” June 12, 2003.

56 GAO, “U.S. Public Diplomacy: State Department Expands Efforts but Faces Significant Challenges,” September 4, 2003.

attention to the debate is a result of realization in the wake of the September 11th attacks that U.S. public diplomacy efforts need to be more effective, the discussion is not new. Ever since the United States Information Agency (USIA) was merged into the Department of State in the 1990s, putting the vast majority of U.S. public diplomacy activities inside the Department of State, calls for change have been made.

It cannot be disputed that the structure governments choose for their public diplomacy effort impacts how effectively they do business. This subsection discusses three models: the former USIA model, the British/French model, and the proposed corporation for public diplomacy.

The USIA Model

Many advocate a return to the public diplomacy structures that the United States used in the past. The former United States Information Agency, which truly hit its stride during the 1960s, incorporated the majority of conceivable public diplomacy activities under one roof—from cultural exchange, dealings with the foreign media, to more propagandistic activities like direct broadcasting. The benefit to this approach is that an independent agency could conceivably be more nimble with fewer resources and less bureaucratic encumbrance. The negative side of this approach is that there was little “buy-in” from the policy community because the policy-making agency, the Department of State, was separate from the public diplomacy agency, USIA. Also, any “learning” that would take place, especially if public diplomacy is a two way process, is unlikely to feed back into the policy-making process.

The British / French Model

In the case of the British and French approach towards public diplomacy, the majority of functions are handled by the British Council and the *Alliance Francaise*. These both lie outside their Ministries of Foreign Affairs. Their functions include cultural exchanges,

cultural activities, language instruction, and some development activities. Importantly, key activities linked to propaganda are kept distinctly separate from the public diplomacy effort. One of the strongest benefits to this approach is that the British Council and the *Alliance Francaise* have significant positive iconic image in all the countries in which they work. This is because these British and French institutions are seen by foreign publics as largely independent of the foreign policy objectives of their governments and because they reflect a diversity of views that in turn engenders respect for more liberal political systems and democratic values.

The approaches combine many of the core goals and activities of U.S. development programs, such as the recently launched Middle East Partnership Initiative, with the exchange and outreach programs of USIA. Both the Council and the Alliance have managed to undertake effective public diplomacy and two-way interaction between civil society around the world and British and French civil society respectively. This approach may be an ideal middle ground between the two American approaches previously tried. In the United States, though, the question is whether the creation of such an agency is worth all the upheaval that reorganization would cause.

A Corporation for Public Diplomacy

The idea for a non-profit “corporation for public diplomacy,” modeled after the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, has been debated and discussed extensively since September 11th.⁵⁷ Those in favor argue that it could bridge the gap between the public and private sectors and also open the door for private sector donations to support global efforts at public diplomacy. They also argue that the corporation would be more nimble and able to draw on the talents of the private sector in advertising and might be a more credible messenger for skeptical audiences.

⁵⁷ Among the major reports reviewed, the reports by the American Enterprise Institute, the Center for the Study of the Presidency, and the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World, all discuss and essentially endorse the creation of a corporation for public diplomacy.

Although a Washington consensus seems to be emerging in support of a corporation for public diplomacy, global public diplomacy may be far too delicate to rely on the uncertainties of the marketplace. More importantly, the solution of a private corporation may not properly match the problems. A touchstone requirement for success is that public diplomacy must be, and be seen, as part of a two-way dialogue that feeds back into the policy process. If indeed a corporation for public diplomacy can address the issues of political sensitivity and genuinely provide feedback into the policy process, it could be a wonderful way to offer a non-profit, non-governmental framework from which to launch jointly planned projects for joint benefit. Policy makers will have to pay careful attention that such a corporation, if created, works in synchronicity with the main public diplomacy apparatus and embraces the concept of joint planning for joint benefit. If the consensus for such an apparatus gains strength, creative approaches to bridge the gap between the public and private sectors should be undertaken.

Despite the merits of the various above models, this paper embraces the notion that the most efficient and realistic approach to upgrading public diplomacy in the near-term is to harness the maximum results from the model currently in use. As with the creation of the Department of Homeland Security in the wake of the September 11th attacks, a sweeping reorganization will not only take time, in the midst of lingering crisis for the U.S. image globally, but also enact a reshuffling of governmental functions that is no guarantee to enhanced effectiveness.

In addition, keeping the bulk of public diplomacy integrated into the Department of State has great benefits to a strategy of communication. There is greater potential for “buy-in” from the policy making side, needed to make public diplomacy a success. Moreover, the “learning” that takes place from the American side can feed improvements in policy-making. Thus, the

suggestions and recommendations made herein presume the current public diplomacy structure.

LONG TERM PROGRAMS OF UNDERSECRETARY FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

At the Department of State, the Office of the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs is divided into three sections: Public Affairs, Economic and Cultural Affairs, and International Information Programs. These offices run exchange programs, public affairs efforts, and cultural centers around the world in close cooperation with staff at embassies and in the regional departments.

Educational Exchanges

About 700,000 foreigners have come to America as part of visitor or exchange programs.⁵⁸ The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and the Department of State work to foster mutual understanding between the United States and other countries through international educational and training programs. The bureau does so by promoting personal, professional, and institutional ties between private citizens and organizations in the United States and abroad, as well as by presenting American history, society, art, and culture in all of its diversity to overseas audiences.

Across the board, there is a sense that exchange programs and speaking tours—i.e., person to person contact—are some of the most effective ways to build bridges and reduce misunderstanding. Among the most notable participants in exchange programs and international study have been British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, who visited the United States in their student days and both of whom built strong personal ties with the U.S. Government when they became leaders and played a significant role on the international stage. In

⁵⁸ Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World, “Changing Minds—Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World,” 2003.

turn, President Clinton was a Rhodes Scholar studying at Oxford University in England as was Senator Richard Lugar, both of whom have played a leading role in U.S. international relations. ECA estimates that more than 200 current and former heads of state, along with about 1,500 cabinet level ministers, have been involved in exchange programs, including Afghan President Hamid Karzai. These programs are successful because they benefit not only the participant and their host institution, but also both the United States and the country from which (or to which) they visit.

In FY2003, an estimated \$245 million was spent on exchanges including the Fulbright Program, the Hubert Humphrey Program, the International Visitors Program (IVP), and the Citizen Exchange Program. At the core of the activities is the Fulbright program, which has sent thousands of American university and graduate students across oceans to study and tens of thousands of foreign students to the United States. In fact, the Fulbright Program, which oversees a wide range of academic and research exchange programs in both directions, already somewhat embraces the concept of joint planning for joint benefit, as foreign governments participate in the selection and funding process.⁵⁹ The IVP allows U.S. ambassadors to invite emerging foreign leaders to spend time in the United States and the Citizen Exchange program gives grants to American NGOs to conduct exchanges with foreign counterparts. The separately funded International Military Education and Training program seeks a budget of \$90 million for 1,446 officers from the Near East and South Asia to participate in exchanges in fiscal year 2004.⁶⁰

The Hubert Humphrey Fellowship Program, since 1978, has brought over 3000 mid-level professionals, from over 100 countries, to the United States for a year of study and professional experience. Since September 11th, renewed interest in engaging the Islamic world has brought the proportion of participants from Muslim-majority countries to 56 out of 137 applicants for the 2003–2004 academic year, or about 41 percent.⁶¹ This large proportion of Humphrey Fellows coming from the Muslim-majority countries shows the remarkable flexibility of the program and its desire to embrace Muslim-majority countries after September 11th.

While these exchange programs are a great credit to the department, they can be improved to better leverage their strengths and improve U.S. standing. First, these programs need to be fortified both financially and strategically. They should be expanded and re-targeted towards the Islamic world—as they were focused on key Cold War battlefields pre-1989 and in Eastern Europe in the post-Cold War era. Given that our need for dialogue with civil society in the Islamic world is dire, our exchange programs should reflect that priority. At a bare minimum, at least one sixth of all the exchanges, not just the Humphrey, should take place with the Muslim-majority communities, reflecting the Islamic world's one sixth of the global population. Ideally, the percentage should be higher, given the present strategic demands. This will require better support to potential fellows in the visa application process, which presently acts to discourage, rather than encourage Muslim visitors to the United States.

Second, past investments in such fellowship activities should be better leveraged. A database of Fulbright, Humphrey and other exchange scholars from both

59 For example, in 2001, the Congressional appropriation to the Department of State for the Fulbright program was \$121.7 million and foreign government support, through bi-national commissions, added \$29.2 million more.

<<http://exchanges.state.gov/education/fulbright/ffsb/annualreport/part1.pdf>> (September 12, 2003).

60 Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World, "Changing Minds—Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World," 2003.

61 For the 2003–2004 academic year the 56 fellows come from: Albania (1), Algeria (1), Bahrain (1), Bangladesh (5), Benin (2), Burkina Faso (1), Cameroon (2), Egypt (4), Indonesia (1), Ivory Coast (1), Jordan (1), Kenya (1), Malaysia (1), Morocco (3), Niger (1), Nigeria (4), Oman, (1), Pakistan (4), Philippines (3), Palestine (1), Senegal (2), Syria (3), Tajikistan (1), Tunisia (5) ,and Turkey (2). Phone conversation and e-mail confirmation with Jennifer Gibson, Department of State. September 25, 2003.

sides should be created and nurtured in outreach activities. This is a constituency that we can utilize to deepen America's understanding of the Islamic world's understanding of America. With more than 255,000 Fulbright fellows—96,400 from the United States and 158,600 from other countries—and about 3,000 Humphrey fellows, this is a powerful resource of potential ambassadors for dialogue and communication that should be mobilized. And reportedly, this would not be a costly undertaking with estimates as low as \$600,000 for such an endeavor.⁶²

Third, the exchanges should better reflect a concept of joint planning for joint benefit. Too often the programs are pre-programmed with minimal participant input. Exchanges should be run in such a way to promote learning and dialogue among large numbers of Americans and the participant's home country. To promote collaboration, the participants should have a say in how this could be conducted.

Speaking Tours

Speaking tours send American experts to meet with local audiences and explain U.S. society and policy. They are an efficient and effective means of outreach. Over the course of a tour, a speaker can literally meet with thousands, as well as conduct multiple press interviews to expand their presence. In turn, the tour can create expert contact points in America that foreign audiences and media can utilize in the future.

Unfortunately, speaking tours to Muslim-majority countries both before and since Sept. 11th have been minimal. Of the 1,600 such programs conducted in the year after the September 11th attacks, only 125 were to the Islamic world. Among the Muslim-majority countries receiving the greatest number of U.S.-speakers in FY2002 were Jordan (8), Malaysia (14), and Turkey (11).⁶³ This shortchanging of the Islamic world is a terrible misappropriation of energy and

resources. Leaving aside the priorities of the war on terrorism, Muslims make up about 17 percent of the planet, but only eight percent of the speaking tours were dedicated to this population. At a time when the United States faced a crisis of communication, it is unclear why that portion of the world is getting less than half of its share of speakers. In fact, from FY2001 to FY2002 the number of speakers to Muslim-majority countries actually dropped from 210 to 155.⁶⁴ One way to heighten speaking numbers is to better harness the American Muslim community, which is increasingly politically active and often better received in the region.

A second issue is not just how few speaking tours were undertaken, but also the topics that were covered by these speakers' tours. Of the 125 programs that did travel to the Islamic world, only 20 addressed U.S. policy issues and only 22 focused on the role of Arabs or Muslims in American society.⁶⁵ Once again, at a time when U.S. policy in the region and the treatment of Arabs and Muslims in American was overwhelmingly on the minds of the citizens of Muslim-majority countries, to only have 16 percent of those speakers traveling to Muslim-majority countries address U.S. policy and under 18 percent address the role of Arabs and Muslims in America was a sorely misplaced set of priorities. Policy issues such as measures taken in the U.S. "war on terrorism" are central to relations and a cornerstone of building an honest and forthright communication. They should be addressed head on, as they cannot be simply avoided.

Third, an attempt must be made to leverage the creative ideas and insights that emerge from speaking tours and discussions in Muslim-majority countries. Currently, there is no institutionalized mechanism through which speakers can report on the ideas that emerged from the discussions they led. Instead, members of speaking tours are only asked to comment on

62 GAO, "U.S. Public Diplomacy: State Department Expands Efforts but Faces Significant Challenges," September 4, 2003.

63 Robert Satloff in *The Washington Post*, December 1, 2002.

64 Data provided to the author by Mr. Lwin of the Department of State on August 1, 2003.

65 Robert Satloff in *The Washington Post*, December 1, 2002.

the logistical aspects of their trip to the bureaucracy. This means that the only present means of feedback is ad hoc; there is occasional reporting back to the Department of State in the form of cables from the Public Affairs staff. But more often, the essence of the information and debates simply evaporates. This fact is not lost on audiences across Muslim-majority countries. As one business leader in Syria commented at such a session, “While it is interesting to have a dialogue with you, what we want is a dialogue with policy makers. How can we do that? And what feedback will you give them when you get back to Washington?”⁶⁶

While the speaking tours have brought many valuable American speakers to countries across Muslim-majority countries, they could be improved. Currently the speaking tours are conceived as a one-way exercise whereby information is given to the audience across Muslim-majority countries.

One way to contribute to a genuine dialogue would be to require U.S. participants in speaking tours, in Muslim-majority countries, and elsewhere, to write a report relating their political and cultural findings from the tour. They might also present these findings to the appropriate interlocutors at the Department of State and any other interested agencies. One mechanism to institutionalize this is the creation of a “Washington Day” of arranged meetings with policy-makers and Congressional members and staff for speakers at their return, which could serve as part of their debriefing process. The minimal investment in time by those in Washington to meet with returning experts would be worth the benefits. It would not only foster better area expertise and lessons learned in Washington, but also help transform the depth of the debate overseas.

Another idea, in the context of jointness, would be to have joint speaking tours combining both U.S. and Islamic world speakers, perhaps even taking place both

domestically and abroad. The organization of two-way tours would be transformative. Audiences and policy-makers across Muslim-majority countries would sense that the U.S. was genuinely interested in their story, and would likely beget more genuine listening to the U.S. story on their part. An additional possibility is the organization of video conferences between citizen groups in the United States and in the world, moderated together through a discussion by joint speakers.

POST-SEPTEMBER 11TH INITIATIVES OF THE UNDERSECRETARY FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

In addition to the prior longer-term public diplomacy programs by the Department of State, there have been a number of more recent initiatives relevant to the Islamic world undertaken in the post-September 11th environment. These initiatives have generally sought to use media more effectively as a tool. The efforts include: the plan to launch “American Corners” across Muslim-majority countries, the production of the *Muslim Life in America* documentary, the launch of *Radio Sawa*, and the launch of *Hi* magazine.

In general, while these initiatives represent an excellent start, there is much more that could be done to effectively harness the power of media to strengthen mutual understanding. The touchstone concept in the creation of programming for it to be effective is that initiatives and projects be co-identified and co-developed with partners from Muslim-majority countries.

Libraries and American Corners

Prior to 1994, there were over 100 U.S. Government libraries around the world that served as places of learning and interaction between the U.S. Government and the local populations. The libraries were accessible and offered public access to books of all kinds through the interaction with a librarian. They were often located in American Cultural

⁶⁶ From a discussion with the author during a presentation he gave in Damascus, Syria at a roundtable discussion organized by the U.S. Embassy, January 2003.

Centers and served as a place for local students and civil society to convene. However, growing security concerns around the world, especially since the attacks on U.S. embassies in Africa in 1998, led to the closing of many libraries or their relocation inside many fortress-like embassies. They were also redefined as Information Resource Centers, the goals of which were to “serve post and mission-wide information needs in support of U.S. public diplomacy objectives.”⁶⁷ As a result, the libraries and cultural centers that do exist are hardly used. Local citizens do not feel comfortable being searched and screened several times to enter a U.S. Embassy-based American Cultural Center, just to read a book, scan a magazine, or attend a lecture.

In late 2000, a new concept of “American Corners” emerged and was first implemented in Russia. Today, that concept is targeted for spread across Muslim-majority countries. The American Corners are smaller versions of the old U.S. libraries. But instead they are placed in locales such as local libraries and shopping malls, so that they can give more direct exposure to the population. They provide books, CD rooms, Internet access, and a local staff person. The goal is to provide some of the interactivity of the old library services plus the capacity to directly answer questions about the United States. This is a creative and flexible initiative that merits a more rapid roll out across the Islamic world. Locales should make sure to include both rich and poor neighborhoods, inside and outside the capital cities.

One of the drawbacks of this initiative, however, is that the staff of these American Corners are not American citizens and thus the personal “American” touch could be lost. Another problem has been quality control. An increase in an American presence, such as with a stronger link to speaking tours and local embassy staff run events, as well as better oversight, will help them better play a role in communicating American policy and values.

An essential way to make these American Corners dramatically more effective would be to strengthen their two-way interactivity. The organization of a function whereby users of American Corners could log into interactive chat sessions with Americans might be an effective way to engage college students, opinion leaders, or general citizens. Likewise, an effort made to set up counterpart “Corners” in American public and school libraries, whereby Americans citizens could interact directly with citizens across the Islamic world might be another effective improvement.

Documentary: *Muslim Life in America*

A little over one year after the September 11th attacks on America, under the leadership of the Charlotte Beers, the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, the Department of State launched a new communications campaign. It was designed to “establish a mindset that Americans and Muslims share many values and beliefs” and “demonstrate that America is not at war with Islam.”⁶⁸

Although it took a year, the Office was able to produce and develop television commercials, magazines, and speaking tours that addressed the issues of shared values. A key aspect were “mini-documentaries” that ran in Indonesia, Malaysia, Kuwait and Pakistan, as well as on Pan-Arab news stations. The spots—produced in Arabic, English, French, Indonesian Bahasa, Malaysian Bahasa, and Urdu—addressed commonalities in the values of family, faith, learning, and charity and allowed Muslim Americans to tell the story in their own words.

The program, though, was widely lambasted and, as attitudes worsened during the period, it was considered largely unsuccessful. However, the critics who vociferously point out the campaign’s failures should not throw the baby out with the bathwater. First, the problems of the documentary are not an indictment of public diplomacy spending as a whole. Indeed, only

67 Public Diplomacy Research Center, Mission Statement,” <<http://usinfo.state.gov/iip/irc/ircmissi/htm>> (July 20, 2003).

68 Marguerite Peggy England, Director, Office of Strategic Communications and Planning, Department of State, “Shared Values,” July 2003.

about 1.5 percent of the total public diplomacy budget was spent on *Muslim Life in America*.⁶⁹ Second, few of the critics have ever seen the programs or weighed the empirical evidence evaluating the effort.

Perhaps the best case study of some of the possibilities is the experience of *Muslim Life in America* in Indonesia, the globe's fourth largest country and largest Muslim-majority country, with a population of 212 million.⁷⁰ Subsequent polling indicated that 91 million Indonesians were made aware of the campaign, with up to 67 percent of viewers recalling some of the main messages of the campaign.⁷¹ This compares extremely favorably to campaigns by the leading soft drink, credit card, and computer hardware companies, which had recall levels ranging from 36 to 54 percent. Indeed, of the estimated 137 million Indonesians who saw *Muslim Life in America*, an estimated 63 million recalled that "Islam is not discriminated" against in the United States, 60 million recalled that there is "freedom in doing religious duties" in the United States, and 48 million learned of "religious tolerance" in the United States.⁷²

Such extremely high recognition of values seems to show that the production of paid advertising is indeed effective. One other notable finding of the post-viewing studies was that among those who saw the mini-documentaries, those from outside the capital had much higher recall than those from the capital did. The success of the advertisements can be best summed up in the words of one Indonesian college student. "The ad explains that going to America is OK, even if you are Muslim. You don't have to feel threatened."⁷³

But, clearly the mini-documentaries failed to reach their full potential. A key problem was that the national media

of many Muslim-majority countries refused to show them. They did not run as hoped in Morocco, Egypt, Lebanon, or Jordan. The release of the mini-documentaries unfortunately coincided with the run up to the U.S.-led attack on Iraq. As such, many governments that were closely cooperating with the United States, such as Jordan and Egypt, refused to air a U.S. made documentary for fear it would be taken as a transparent effort to demonstrate the positive side of the United States. As Charlotte Beers put it, "They consider it propaganda."⁷⁴

The refusals, even from governments closely allied to the United States, illustrates the sensitivities across the Islamic world and the need to develop a more communicative and joint public diplomacy approach. One way to avoid such stumbling in the future would be for the projects to be joint. By involving more-deeply engaged indigenous co-planners, the documentaries would have reflected local sensitivities and local interests and not been seen as outside propaganda. Another important lesson from this experience is that pre- and post-polling are crucial to measuring the effectiveness of large-scale public diplomacy efforts. Both USAID and the advertising industry have long used this approach of using objectively verifiable indicators. As such, polling should be easily applied to large-scale public diplomacy efforts at the Department of State, providing guidance for subsequent programming.

Radio Sawa

Radio Sawa (Radio Together) is a service of U.S. International Broadcasting, which is operated and funded by the Broadcasting Board of Governors, an agency of the U.S. Government.⁷⁵ Although conceived well before the September 11th attacks on America, *Radio Sawa* was launched in 2002. It can be heard on FM stations in about a dozen cities throughout the

69 U.S. Ambassador Chris Ross, CSP conference, "U.S. Communications with Muslim Communities," June 12, 2003.

70 World Bank. <<http://www.worldbank.org/data/databytopic/POP.pdf>> (September 11, 2003).

71 NFO Worldwide presentation by Marguerite Peggy England, Director, Office of Strategic Communications and Planning, Department of State, July 2003.

72 England, "Shared Values," July 2003.

73 AdWorks, "Common Ground: Topline Findings Report," January 17, 2003.

74 News Hour with Jim Lehrer, "Public Diplomacy," January 21, 2003.

75 *Radio Sawa* homepage. <www.radiosawa.com> (July 20, 2003).

Arabic speaking region—including Abu Dhabi, Amman, Baghdad, Casablanca, Djibouti, Doha, Dubai, Erbil, Jerusalem, Kuwait, Manama, Rabat, and Sulimaniyah, as well as AM frequencies throughout Egypt and the Levant.

In terms of building an audience, *Radio Sawa* has been a success. Indeed, *Radio Sawa* has rapidly shot to high popularity among youth in a number of countries. It is strongly popular for its mix of Arab and Western music, no commercials, and short news spots twice every hour.

Among young adults aged 15–29, 51 percent in Jordan, 25 percent in Kuwait, and 30 percent in the UAE were listening to *Radio Sawa*.⁷⁶ In fact, among that same age group in Jordan, *Radio Sawa* had the highest recorded market share.⁷⁷ The data also shows that *Radio Sawa* listeners are more likely to have more favorable attitudes towards the United States in all three countries. In Jordan, *Radio Sawa* listeners had a 37 percent favorable attitude towards the United States as compared to 22 percent of non-listeners. In Kuwait, the percentages were 49 and 54, respectively. And in the UAE, the percentages were 42 and 57, respectively. However, it is unclear whether *Radio Sawa* caused listeners to be more favorable towards the United States or if more favorable listeners chose *Radio Sawa*. But *Radio Sawa* has not been alone. In late 2002, shortly after the launch of *Radio Sawa*, *Radio Farda* was launched. Like *Radio Sawa* it is a 24-hour news and entertainment radio broadcast aimed at listeners under the age of 30.

Radio Sawa has been highly successful in its launch and for this the management must be highly commended. But, given the extent to which Arab youth across crave dialogue with U.S. policy-makers, its long-term payoff in public diplomacy success will likely depend on how truly interactive the programming becomes and whether it can play a role in joint communication between American and Arab youth. For

example, U.S. International Broadcasting might explore links with partner radio stations in the United States to jointly broadcast call-in shows discussing U.S. policy. It might also consider expanding similar broadcasts elsewhere in the Islamic world beyond the Arabic-speaking countries and Iran.

Hi Magazine

Hi is a new monthly magazine about Arab-American life, produced in Arabic. Started in the summer of 2003 it is being sold throughout the region. The glossy 72-page magazine is somewhat interactive, asking readers to write in their comments about articles and their suggestions for articles and urging them to ask questions about life in America in general and Arab-American life in America in particular. *Hi* represents a new return to print media for U.S. public diplomacy, particularly suited in the Arabic-speaking region where the majority of youth do not have Internet access at home.

The success of the venture will depend on how interactive it becomes and the sustainability of the project. Its website, www.himag.com, is a good start. But to truly embrace interactivity, it should launch a general chat room with occasional dialogue sessions with American youth, Arab-Americans, and even U.S. policy-makers. The print version should also seek to link reader questions to U.S. leader interviews.

www.opendialog.org

In 2002, the Department of State, in cooperation with the Council of American Muslims for Understanding, launched the website www.opendialog.org. The website is available in English, Arabic, Indonesian Bahasa, Malaysian Bahasa, French, and Urdu. It is a platform for the exchange of sentiments among American Muslims and Muslims from around the world. The effort does benefit from embracing the concept of mutuality and harnessing the credibility of the American Muslim community. However, it is limited in

⁷⁶ U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, “American Public Diplomacy and Islam,” February 27, 2003.

⁷⁷ *ibid.*

scope and could benefit from expansion, better publicity to widen exposure, and much greater interactivity.

Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy

On July 16, 2003, the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy named 13 private citizens to take part in an Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World to be chaired by former Ambassador Edward Djerejian. Assembled at the request of Congress, the advisory group traveled to the region during the summer of 2003 and reported back to Congress on October 1, 2003, the Department of State, and the President on its findings. The group took a wise approach in its inclusiveness by including members of the Arab, Jewish, and Muslim communities in the United States, many of whom have significant experience with the communities across the Islamic world.

This report concurs with the views of the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World when it expresses concern over the creation of a Middle East Television Network by the U.S. Government. The proposed \$100 million budget for the television network is a dramatically large amount of funding for a government-sponsored television station in a region where there is a “high level of skepticism about state-owned television of any sort.”⁷⁸

The Advisory Group for Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World has proposed the creation of an Arab and Muslim Public Communications Unit that would coordinate closely with the Office of Global Communications in the White House. Such a proposal for the establishment of a five person unit is practical and likely to be successful.

The question as to whether this group can or should be the precursor to a permanent advisory group on public diplomacy should be carefully considered by the Undersecretary. While more heavy bureaucratic

structures are not needed, this group may be an effective way to link in citizen involvement, particularly from the communities relevant to the region.

The Middle East Partnership Initiative

In December 2002, Colin Powell publicly launched the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) with \$29 million in initial funding. President Bush put his personal prestige behind the initiative in his May 9, 2003 speech at the University of South Carolina, saying, “In an age of global terror and weapons of mass destruction what happens in the Middle East greatly matters to America. The bitterness of that region can bring violence and suffering to our own cities. The advance of freedom and peace in the Middle East would drain this bitterness and increase our own security.”⁷⁹ \$100 million was allocated for FY2003 and \$145 million for FY2004. One strongly positive aspect of MEPI is that it is designed to be nimble, responsive, and demand driven. It will support local, on-the-ground initiatives instead of the more cumbersome and large projects carried out by the large consulting firms that do millions of dollars of business each year on USAID contracts.

The four pillars of the project are educational reform, political reform, economic reform, and women’s empowerment. Educational programs are designed to “bridge the knowledge gap” by providing more access to education and raising the quality of education. Political programs will be created to “bridge the freedom gap” by supporting local initiatives that strengthen Arab civil society, expand participation, and encourage a more-open media, while promoting women’s rights. Economic programs will be created to “bridge the job gap” by helping encourage reform and private and public sector development. Women’s programs are designed to “reduce barriers—cultural, legal, regulatory, economic and political—to women’s full participation in society.”⁸⁰

78 Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World, “Changing Minds—Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World,” 2003.

79 U.S. Department of State, “President Bush Presses for Peace in the Middle East.” <<http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rls/rm/20497.htm>> (August 20, 2004).

80 U.S. Department of State, “Middle East Partnership Initiative.” <<http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rt/mepi/go/>> (September 11, 2003).

MEPI has already funded dozens of substantive programs, especially in education and political reform. Education programs have included an effort to improve literacy and relationship building between eight pairs of U.S. and Arab universities. Political reform programs include an effort to strengthen women's political participation in Kuwait, political party support in Bahrain, a region-wide effort on judicial reform led by Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, and a young ambassadors program for youth from around the region to visit the United States. One such program was undertaken during the summer of 2003 whereby 26 students from over a dozen countries across the Middle East—including non-USAID countries like Syria, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE—were nominated by their professors as having displayed "leadership skills." They traveled to the United States and participated in a program at Dickenson College in Carlisle, PA. They also traveled to the cities of Baltimore, New York City, Philadelphia and Washington, DC to learn more about American history, politics and culture. Such programs are a very strong start for MEPI—particularly given the rapid time in which the effort was launched.

Many of the programs MEPI has undertaken have certainly been innovative. In the field, they are often in sync with public diplomacy efforts because it is often the Public Affairs Officers who have conceived and implemented these programs. It will be important, however, to closely coordinate the activities of MEPI and USAID so that they are mutually reinforcing. Also, these programs, could in many cases be improved if they embraced the principle of jointness. That means that the programs should be co-conceived by Americans and Middle Easterners and that the programs be based on the principle that both Americans and Middle Easterners have much to learn from one another.

The Muslim World Initiative

The Muslim World Initiative is a government-wide effort based on the formation of a 20-member inter-

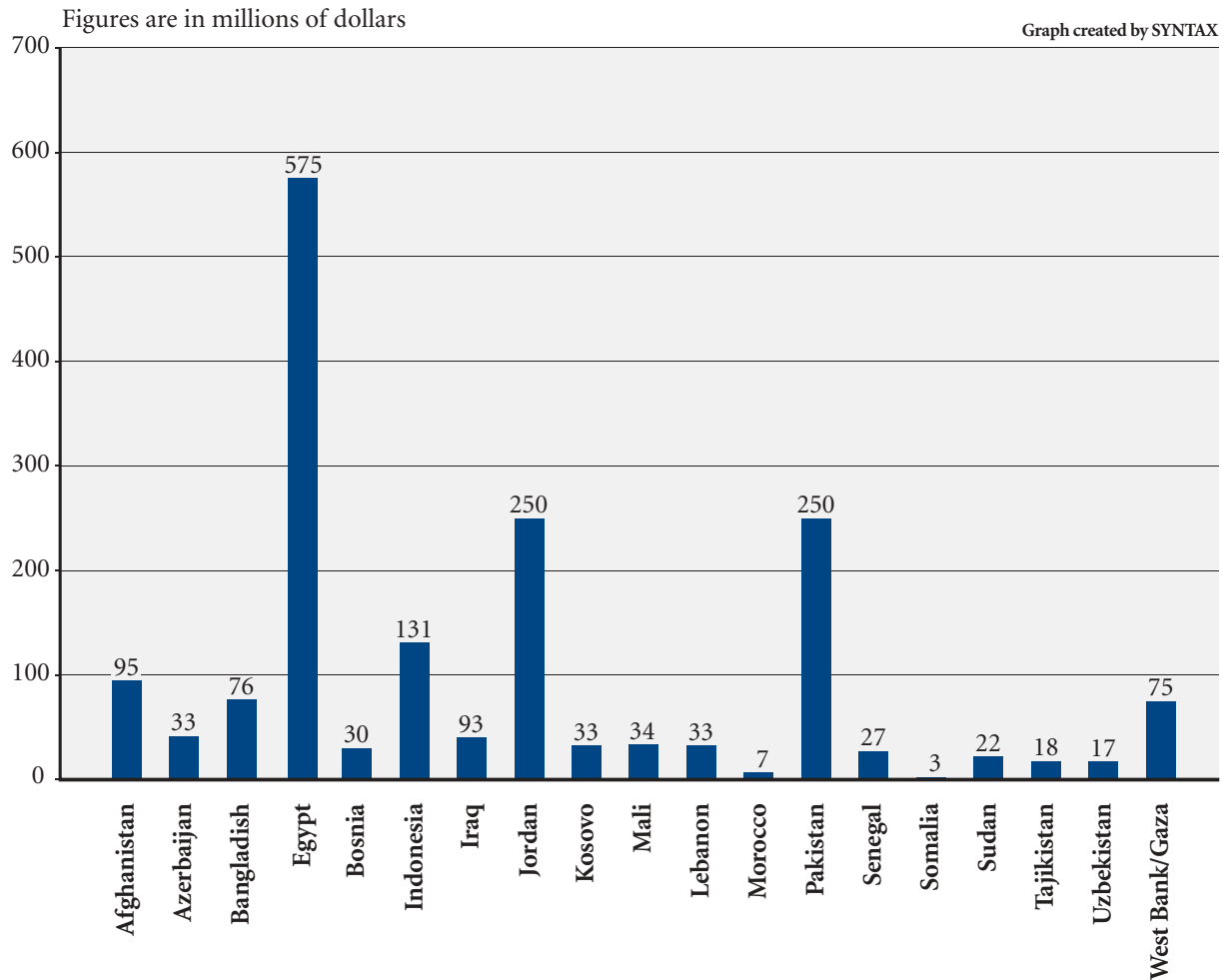
agency working group to continue to review activities. USAID spends almost two billion dollars each year on development projects across Muslim-majority countries. Since the fall of 2002, USAID, part of the Department of State, has attempted to improve and better coordinate the government-wide "Muslim World" community of practice. The effort began with an inventory of existing USAID programs across the Islamic world and evaluations of past programs in education, economic reform, growth, and democratic governance.

The Initiative created a database of activities and consulted extensively with region-specific and sector-specific experts. It also hosted seminars on understanding political Islam and a workshop on "U.S. Engagement with the Muslim World." The Initiative has also supported research by the Center for Strategic International Studies on the history, traditions, and the existing infrastructure of philanthropy across the Islamic world and how the U.S. Government could work with infrastructure of Muslim philanthropy to prevent the finance of terrorism. The Initiative also hopes to develop the concept of a "Partnership for Progress," a network that would involve "moderate" Muslim non-state individuals and organizations to provide a means of exchange and dialogue and to develop strategies to counter "Islamic extremism." Finally, it will seek to engage other bilateral donors, such as the Canadians, Europeans, and the Japanese, about joint strategies to meet the objectives of the Initiative.

While many of these individual initiatives are excellent, the contextual framework deserves more consideration and some of the concepts seem to require further refinement.

First and foremost, it needs to be recognized that the \$1.7 billion spent by USAID across the Islamic world each year is a very significant amount of aid. As has been previously noted, economic and military aid combined equal 5 percent of Jordan's GDP, yet only 25 percent had a favorable view of America in 2002

U.S. Foreign Aid in Fiscal Year 2003 from USAID⁸¹



and only 1 percent by the spring of 2003.⁸² This underscores the need for more visible foreign assistance. As the Advisory Group for Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World found during its visits, “Egyptians were grateful to the Japanese for building their opera house. But they were unaware that the United States funded the Cairo sewer, drinking water, and electrical systems and played a key role in reducing infant mortality in Egypt.”⁸³

Second, USAID should coordinate its activities more closely with the Office of the Undersecretary of Public Diplomacy and the Public Affairs Officers in embassies around the world. This will aid the U.S. Government in more effectively communicating the depth of involvement of the United States in development assistance in these countries. In addition, there should be more strategic resonance between USAID projects and overall State Department objectives—such as those of education, jobs, democratization, and

81 Data provided by USAID to the author in July 2003. Afghanistan funding levels represent previous year un-obligated figures as FY03 levels had yet to be precisely determined. Iraq FY03 funding has not yet completely obligated as was not included. This figure reflects what USAID had obligated to Iraq by summer FY03.

82 The Pew Global Attitudes Project, 2002, 2003.

83 Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World, “Changing Minds—Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World,” 2003, p. 20.

civil society of MEPI—as well as the objectives of the local governments themselves. Civil society and citizens themselves across the Islamic world need to see that USAID projects are jointly planned between the U.S. Government and their own civil societies and governments.

Finally, the concept of the U.S. Government creating a network of Muslim “moderates” should be treated carefully. Heavy-handed United States support of such indigenous individuals or groups is likely to undermine their efforts, as close association with the United States may be seen locally as undesirable. In turn, excluding those lacking U.S. sanctioned views from any form of communication isolates them further (leaving aside the fact that the polling indicates this excludes much of the population), when in fact what is most needed is a dialogue with all but the hardest line extremists. Lastly, the definition of “moderates” is a blurry one for the U.S. Government to impose. “Moderation” in the Islamic world in terms of domestic or foreign issues does not always equate with those who are open to dialogue with the United States.

THE OFFICE OF GLOBAL COMMUNICATION

In response to a need for more effective communication with non-American media, the Office of Global Communication (OGC) was formally established in January 2003. It is designed to serve as a core component of the Bush Administration’s public diplomacy strategy. The office formally falls under the Communications Department of the White House, but works closely with the National Security Council.

The OGC has sought to play three primary roles: message coordination, message management, and increased access for the international media to senior U.S. Government officials.

Message coordination

The OGC has played a vital role coordinating amongst the various U.S. Government agencies to strengthen the effectiveness of message. In the post-September

11th era, many government agencies have been communicating messages that are either intentionally directed at the international media or of interest to the international media. Such agencies include: the Department of State, USAID, the Department of Defense, the Department of Justice, the Treasury, and the Department of Homeland Security. OGC has ably established a coordinating mechanism among these agencies to assure that the messages being put out by these agencies are coordinated with each other both in terms of content and in terms of timing. Given that communicating a comprehensive and effective message is a key goal of public diplomacy, such a function by the OGC is extremely valuable and should continue.

Message management

The OGC produces a daily one-page newsletter that is distributed throughout the U.S. Government and globally. It is targeted at those who make remarks to the multiplicity of international media such as ambassadors and public diplomacy staff around the world. The purpose of the daily “Global Messenger” is to provide a readily available overview of the message that the White House is seeking to promote each day. U.S. diplomats worldwide can blend this message with other locally salient concerns to produce a message that is right for the locality.

Increased access to foreign media

The OGC has also undertaken strenuous efforts to have the President, Cabinet members, and other senior officials offer increased time to foreign journalists both in Washington and overseas. The number and the quality of interviews with senior government officials have increased dramatically since the establishment of the OGC. In addition, special approaches have been developed to give access to foreign journalists at the various government agencies, the White House, Camp David, and the President’s ranch in Texas. Also, although not formally part of the OGC, the Department of State has established an office in London to “take ownership,” according to one Department of State official, of the job of communicating to the pan-Arab media, much of which is based

in London. Such creative and nimble approaches should receive the overwhelming support of the public diplomacy community and be institutionalized to ensure that regularized access is provided.

A new initiative under consideration by OGC is to launch “listening tours” of the Islamic world. In this setup, teams of current and former policy makers would engage in discussions with foreign publics to understand and internalize their concerns about U.S. foreign policy. The aim is that it would at least give the impression that we are “listening.” But the lessons learned and legitimate policy recommendations must feedback into policy making. Because this is unlikely to happen, such efforts may ultimately backfire.

The OGC is playing a vital role in synchronizing and refining the message that emanates from Washington to the world. Its aim of providing enabled access to foreign journalists to Washington is crucial. However, the OGC remains essentially a message communications and coordination operation. Thus, it does not seek to provide the broad array of activities and the genuine interface into the policy process that is needed for successful public diplomacy efforts. Its role is positive, but no substitute for the needed changes and innovations. In addition, the OGC faces the continual challenge of striking a balance between its drive to keep a wide array of government agencies “on message,” while encouraging a diversity of information to emerge to the global media from the vast U.S. Government.

VI. WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO? INNOVATIONS IN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The previous section provided an overview of the U.S. approach to public diplomacy and proposed innovations that related to those programs. This section explores possible new policy initiatives. These encompass a discussion of proposed strategic changes, as well as more specific initiatives and measures that could be undertaken.

STRATEGIC SHIFTS

The fundamental change that should transform the practice of public diplomacy would be for practitioners to embrace the paradigm of joint communication discussed in earlier sections. Many public diplomacy efforts will by necessity remain one-way mass communication efforts. But even in those, increased use of polling and focus groups can provide feedback to the efficacy of the efforts. For the majority of public diplomacy efforts, however, a broad push should be made for public diplomacy to conceive of its dialogue and exchange activities as a means to strengthen understanding across both sides of the U.S.-Islamic world divide.

Because listening begets listening, it is more effective to plan programs where both American citizens and citizens from Muslim-majority countries participate, in both the activities and as the target audiences. In turn,

to be most effective, such efforts should be jointly planned to the extent possible. Involving non-Americans in the planning of U.S.-funded activities may often be difficult. But such jointness will avoid failures and create a more self-sustaining program, so the payoffs are worth it. For instance, if setting up advisory groups that include non-Americans is not technically feasible or appropriate, the consultation of civil society leaders from Muslim-majority countries can still be included from the very beginnings of projects.

In addition to the amendments and reforms needed in existing programs discussed in prior sections, the following proposed strategic changes should be undertaken:

Strengthen Coordination of Public Diplomacy within the Executive Branch

Some have proposed the creation of a “Public Diplomacy Coordinating Structure.” This structure would be similar and parallel to the National Security Council (NSC) as “advisor, synthesizer, coordinator, and priority setter” and include members at the assistant-secretary level.⁸⁴ However, creating a separate coordinating structure would have two negative consequences. First it would further bloat the bureaucracy. Second and more importantly, the creation of a separate structure would separate out the public

84 Council on Foreign Relations, “Public Diplomacy: A Strategy for Reform,” July 30, 2002.

diplomacy aspects of foreign policy and remove them from the overall foreign policy process.

Instead of a new “Czar for Public Diplomacy,” what might be more effective would be to create a position within the NSC staff that would be responsible for coordinating the range of interagency public diplomacy activities and making sure they square with the foreign policy objectives of the nation. Such an approach would not only provide better visibility to the issue at the White House level, but also inherently help assure that lessons learned through dialogue in public diplomacy are kept within the foreign policy-making apparatus.

Presidential Leadership

In lieu of the “Czar for Public Diplomacy,” the President himself must make it clear that Cabinet and sub-Cabinet level officials must consider America’s standing in the world to be a priority. They should make the effort to not only conduct interviews with the foreign press on a regularized basis, but also engage in genuine dialogue.

The President should also lead by example on this by ensuring time in his schedule for dialogue with the international media. The Office of the Presidency is a valued policy tool in bringing attention to issues and swaying views. Given the importance of the war on terrorism and the risks of a fissure between the United States and the Islamic world, it should be utilized to the greatest extent possible in reaching out to media from Muslim-majority countries. In the weeks after the September 11th attacks, the President made a pointed effort to do so. The needs in this regard are great and require continued attention.

No “One Size Fits All” Agenda

Muslim-majority countries are as varied as Algeria, Bosnia, Egypt, Indonesia, Kuwait, and Senegal. They differ in everything from social structures, to levels of economic and political development, to composition of ethnic and language groups. These differences shape differing emotional reactions to the United

States. Communities within these nations also vary tremendously in terms of their relationship with different forms of media and technology.

While general strategies and approaches must be developed, the U.S. public diplomacy agenda towards the Islamic world cannot be monolithic. Instead, a portfolio of potent tools and approaches should be developed so that they can be tactically deployed as effectively as possible on the public diplomacy playing field. Each country, each age bracket, each ethno-religious group, and each political affiliation will have different sets of concerns. Different forums and forms of media will have to be adapted to be most affective at reaching them.

Increase the Involvement of Arab and Muslim Communities and Support Intra-Muslim dialogue

The United States is an immigrant nation and should take advantage of that strength. Given the centrality of public diplomacy to our foreign policy and national security interests, the United States would do well to tap the huge reservoir of understanding of the region that exists among the Arab American and American Muslim communities.

Indeed, if one of the objectives is persuade Muslim-majority countries to see America more positively, a powerful tool would be through U.S.-sponsorship of increased intra-Muslim dialogue with significant interaction with American Muslims and Arab Americans. Despite the fact that many American Muslims and Arab Americans may be critical of certain aspects of U.S. foreign policy, they are almost universally supportive of the democratic values on which America is founded.

In addition to U.S.-supported intra-Muslim dialogue, there are wide-ranging opportunities to harness the talents and insights of these communities and infuse them into public diplomacy strategizing and activities. Such activities might include the creation of an interchange with leading thinkers and political leaders on

what can and should be done in regards to our own public diplomacy from the region, perhaps as a branch activity of the Advisory Group. Another approach would be to harness Arab Americans and American Muslims to help prepare and even accompany officials when they visit the region (akin to how political donors and CEOs often join delegations). Joint meetings might also be created to discuss the concerns of political and civil society leaders in U.S. foreign and domestic policy and then work together to formulate a response. To embark on this path, the relative paucity of Arab Americans and American Muslims in the internal structure of the Department of State and other agencies must be addressed. A more representative and effective body of culturally aware civil servants can be achieved through strengthened recruitment programs towards these groups.

PROGRAMMATIC SHIFTS

Not all public diplomacy should be top-down. Beyond shifts in strategic focus, an effective public diplomacy should also be flexible and innovative. Wherever possible, new program ideas and initiatives should be nurtured and developed. The U.S. Government has a body of creative civil servants and an academic community of unparalleled excellence. We should take full advantage of these strengths in our search for improving public diplomacy.

The following are a series of proposed programmatic suggestions. They mandate further study for possible application.

Increase the Use of Polling and Focus Groups to Measure Success and Better Understand Foreign Opinion

Some have argued that the experience of Madison Avenue does not apply in the world of public diplomacy. They could not be more wrong. While the overall corporate approach and goals are obviously differ-

ent, there are many tools from the world of marketing that can be carried over to the policy world. Two obvious ones are the use of polling and focus groups to help shape an effective message. Polling can also help us measure the success of our programs; indeed, the U.S. Government itself admits that, “State is not systematically and comprehensively measuring progress toward public diplomacy goals.”⁸⁵ Today, the U.S. Government spends only \$5 million to \$10 million on foreign public opinion polling, while the private sector spends about one thousand times as much. Expanded use of polling is drastically needed if public diplomacy efforts are to be measured and kept on target. Government spending should increase by a factor of about five to ten, in order to make a difference.⁸⁶ Furthermore, the U.S. Government must also keep lines of communication open with the private sector to ensure that it is using the latest, most innovative, and most efficient techniques and technologies.

However, public diplomacy is about more than just building up a “brand.” Corporations design mechanisms of customer communication and feedback. So should the U.S. with its foreign “constituents” in today’s interdependent world. Taking their views into consideration and attempting to reach out to them is a key to ultimately succeeding in public diplomacy. This work could be undertaken by the Office of Research in the Department of State’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research.

Expand Use of Technology for Communication.

Linked with the need to use the latest in corporate strategic methods of communicating to global audiences, the U.S. Government must recognize that e-mail, chat rooms, websites, and text messaging have become a key part of the spread of information, communication, and political organizing across the Islamic world. For example, in 2002, Coca-Cola was targeted with a boycott in the region

85 GAO, “U.S. Public Diplomacy: State Department Expands Efforts but Faces Significant Challenges,” September 4, 2003.

86 *ibid.* The GAO report calls for spending \$30 million to \$50 million on polling.

because the company was erroneously thought to donate a proportion of its proceeds to Israel. The firm estimates that nearly 4 million text messages were forwarded from person to person around the world raising the issue.⁸⁷ As this episode illustrates, this a key sphere in which U.S. public diplomacy efforts must also enter. While the interactive components of *Radio Sawa* and *Hi* magazine are a good start, an expanded presence is needed. In addition, these projects and similar ones could become far more interactive in their approach, to broaden their appeal. They should develop their own chat room capabilities, e-mail list serves, offer email to users, and even develop partnerships for special programs with key Arab Internet portals, such as Maktoob.com and Arabia.com.

Involve International, U.S., and National NGOs in the Public Diplomacy Process

Polling data and interview findings show that international, local, and national NGOs are highly recognized and respected throughout Muslim-majority countries. An effective public diplomacy strategy should recognize the credibility of institutions like the Planned Parenthood Federation, the Red Cross, and local and national NGOs. The U.S. Government should respect the independence of such organizations, but attempt to find joint priorities where they could cooperate. And these efforts should be carefully highlighted in such a way that the NGOs are not seen to be doing the bidding of the U.S. Government but instead that the U.S. Government is seen to have found common ground with the NGOs in jointly planning projects without compromising the missions of these NGOs. This should be done through dialogue that ultimately leads to mutually developed projects with the offices of such international NGOs both in Washington and in the field. In particular, the NGOs that are viewed as most credible by the populations of Muslim-majority

countries should be engaged, which were generally local NGOs.⁸⁸

Include Public Diplomacy Activities and Training for All Foreign Service Officer Posts

In today's world, where the global public is playing an increasingly powerful role in geo-politics, the concept of public diplomacy needs to be at the center of all diplomacy. A mandatory public diplomacy training module should therefore be included in the training for all Foreign Service Officers (FSOs). Additionally, existing FSOs should be required to receive such training as part of their regular career development. The training framework should embrace the concept that the best public diplomacy is jointly planned for the joint benefit of American and foreign audiences. The modules could perhaps end with an actual public diplomacy activity carried out by the class, serving as both a learning exercise as well as an additional outreach effort in the U.S. tool kit.

In her capacity as Ambassador to Morocco, Margaret Tutwiler launched a program that also demands broader exploration. All the American staff at her embassy were required to participate in at least one public speaking engagement within their posting during the year. Such a program, if launched across the Islamic world, could dramatically increase the direct exposure that foreign populations have with American officials, as well as raise our own diplomats skill-sets and area expertise.

The Department of State is clearly taking public diplomacy training more seriously. However, the current improvement is primarily focused on improving the training levels for public diplomacy-dedicated officers, which is being increased from three weeks to 19 weeks.⁸⁹ Such upgrades in the public diplomacy training should spread to FSOs from other specializations.

87 Afzaal Malik, Public Affairs Director of Coca Cola for Central Europe, Eurasia, and the Middle East, Center for the Study of the Presidency Conference, "U.S. Communications with Muslim Communities," June 12–13, 2003.

88 Pew Global Attitudes Project, information provided to the author upon request. The NGOs discussed in the survey for Islamic countries were generally local and national NGOs with the exception of the Red Cross and the Planned Parenthood Federation.

89 GAO, "U.S. Public Diplomacy: State Department Expands Efforts by Faces Significant Challenges," September 4, 2003.

Redress Shortfalls in the Language Skills of Public Diplomacy Officers

Recent reports reveal dramatic shortfalls in the foreign language skills needed to communicate to citizens of Muslim-majority countries—Arabic, Indonesian Bahasa, Farsi, Turkish, Urdu, or others. If the basis of communication and dialogue is language, the most fundamental skills—the ability of FSOs to speak the languages of countries in which they work—are often lacking. For example, in the Near East region, 30 percent of FSOs did not meet the foreign language requirements of their posts.⁹⁰ Indeed, the latest data shows that only 54 Department of State employees have tested for high (“Level 4”) Arabic or above and only 279 at all levels.⁹¹ These numbers fall woefully short of the need. Instead of the 54 high level speakers, the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World calls for the development of 300 Arabic speakers at this level by 2008 who are able to “speak and debate publicly.” In fact, given the vastness and diversity of the Arabic-speaking world, and the complexity of public diplomacy and general diplomacy across so many fields, this is the minimum required to meet the need.

One direct way to jumpstart this process is to engage America’s immigrant community of Arab-Americans, Indonesian-Americans, Iranian-Americans, Turkish-Americans, Indian-Americans, and Pakistani-Americans who could prove to be a ready source of foreign language and cultural skills that could be put to use in the service of the nation. Depending on the speed of this undertaking, such an effort need not necessarily cost significantly additional funds. Hiring native, or near-native, speakers will reduce the need for language-training and if the posts are simply reallocated from other regions as staff retire, few additional positions will be required.

Engage Capitol Hill in Public Diplomacy

The U.S. Congress, which has more than five hundred voting members and thousands of staff, represents a powerful reservoir of talent and knowledge about how American democracy works. Given the tremendous appetite that citizens of Muslim-majority countries have for information about American policy and the U.S. policy-making process and the powerful desire they hold for dialogue with U.S. policy makers, members of Congress and their staff members are perhaps the most ideal of public diplomacy ambassadors.

This appetite on the part of citizens of Muslim-majority countries to engage America is similar to that of Eastern Europeans at the later part of the Cold War and the period immediately after. During that period, members of Congress and their staff embraced a culture of direct public diplomacy. Many saw their public duty to involve not just visits back home but also listening and speaking travels to Eastern Europe, Russia and other states in the former Soviet Union, and states at risk of falling to Communism.

Today, we face a similar long-term and serious challenges to national security. Congress should therefore undertake initiatives of outreach towards Muslim-majority countries similar to those during and after the Cold War. Similarly, Congressional staffers (not just from a limited number of committees, but from all offices) should be encouraged to play their part as public diplomacy ambassadors. They also should be enlisted in an effort to travel overseas to convey American values, while learning about foreign concerns.

While such efforts should certainly be coordinated with those of the executive branch, there is no need for Congress to wait to undertake these activities. Beyond increased foreign travel, there should be a reciprocal attempt to make foreign audiences more

⁹⁰ *ibid.*

⁹¹ Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World, “Changing Minds—Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World,” 2003.

aware of the workings of Congress and nurture networks of engagement and communication at the legislative level.

As an illustration of the present misplaced priorities, the Congressional Fellows program brings in 50 young leaders each year to spend 10 months working in Congressional offices. In 2003, only three of these were from outside the United States. Only one was from the Islamic world, (Egypt, the other two were from Argentina and Brazil).⁹² Similarly, foreign legislator and staffer exchange programs should be organized, with an especial emphasis on democratizing states in the Islamic world.

Leverage State and Local Politics

There are 50 state legislatures across America and thousands of local political bodies, ranging from city councils to school boards. While state and local legislators do not play a powerful role in shaping U.S. foreign policy, these bodies provide experts in American domestic policymaking and governance issues, providing a bevy of potential public diplomacy ambassadors.

Exchanges between state and local legislators and government officials and legislators from the Islamic world should be increased. Local government in the United States deals with sizeable problems—and on a scale similar to many Muslim-majority countries. As such, programs could be developed whereby U.S. state and local legislators were partnered with foreign legislators. In addition to two-way visits, they could engage in joint working sessions about wide-ranging issues, like the administration of public safety, environment, or education. The Department of State and Congress are well suited to leverage their international expertise and relationships to arrange such efforts with state and local governments. But so too are local, and particularly, state governments well suited to take their own initiatives in this regard. Many could

build and expand on the relationships offered through trade promotion and sister city programs, targeting relations with the Islamic world.

Strengthen Internet Access for Youth Across Muslim-Majority Countries

A key finding is that youth across the Islamic world who have Internet access are more likely to be open to creative thinking and exposed to the variety of global opinions and information. As such, they tend to hold views that share more commonalities with America. Indeed, the polling data shows that Internet access is likely to increase openness to American values and ideas. This occurs even when controlling for income, meaning that this phenomenon is not just limited to rich elites.⁹³

This is a critical opening that should be expanded upon. Public diplomacy efforts should work more closely with MEPI and USAID to develop programs to strengthen both the quantity and the quality of Internet access for youth across the Islamic world. Efforts should also be made to engage with the private sector in both the United States and the Islamic world in Internet initiatives.

These programs should then be integrated with other efforts as much as possible. As a positive example to build upon, MEPI has recently funded a \$1.5 million project in Yemen to create a communication and collaborative learning network for 24 high schools throughout Yemen. They will then be linked with each other and with high schools in the United States. Providing such access to modern information and technology may be one of the wisest investments the United States could make to strengthen U.S.-Islamic world relations.

92 Interview with Congressional Fellow, September 24, 2003.

93 Zogby International, "America as Seen through Arab Eyes: Polling the Arab World after September 11th," 2003.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

Public diplomacy is a central component of America's national security. Given the increasing power wielded by citizens and terrorists alike in this globalizing world, the effort to win hearts and minds around the world is crucial to strengthening U.S. homeland security. Public diplomacy has two central missions: First, to better explain U.S. policy and values to foreign audiences, so as to improve the context for successful policy; Second, to engage in effective dialogue to increase mutual understanding and trust. To the extent that the public diplomacy process co-plans its projects with civil societies and governments overseas, it will better succeed at both missions.

More resources are needed for this effort to be successful. But, for true rewards, the process must also be smart. It requires a strategy that emphasizes communication, jointness, and innovative outreach. It should be an emphasis of national priority, vested with the prestige of the Presidency, and carried out by a nimble and effective coordinating structure led by the National Security Council and the Undersecretary of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.

The following strategic and thematic suggestions—listed in approximate order of priority—should be furthered:

- **Public diplomacy is a priority.** The general public diplomacy budget requires greater funding to be effective. Public diplomacy should also be prioritized within each policy initiative.
- **Effective public diplomacy requires deeper coordination.** Foreign policy and public diplomacy must work hand in hand. The Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs and the National Security Council must be linked in close cooperation.
- **There is no “one size fits all” agenda.** Muslim-majority countries are exceptionally heterogeneous in terms of wealth, culture, religious composition, media access, and attitudes. Various regional programs can and should be developed to meet strategic needs, but they should be tactically deployed on a country by country basis.
- **Youth represent an opportunity.** The rapidly growing cohort of youth in Muslim-majority countries should be seen as a challenge and an opportunity, rather than just a threat. Programs that empower and inform youth should be developed. Polls show that youth are more likely to have affinity for American values, especially when they have Internet

access. Technological connectivity often familiarizes them with American culture and policy and is a cornerstone for expansion.

- **Embrace Arab Americans and American Muslims and support intra-Muslim dialogue.** The Department of State and other relevant agencies should increase the involvement of the Arab American and American Muslim communities in the dialogue with the Arab and Islamic world. They are credible public diplomacy messengers, important allies, and can serve to be important bridges, and advocates for democratic values in intra-Muslim dialogue.
- **Emphasize values-based policy.** Polls show that governance and democracy are values that citizens of Muslim countries admire about the United States and want to see take root in their countries. These values should be highlighted and U.S. foreign aid and development policy should focus on supporting good governance.

In turn, U.S. public diplomacy has great room for improvement in both existing programs and fostering new innovative programming. The following initiatives should be undertaken:

- **Create easy-access U.S. public information centers.** Accessible information centers like the American Corners program should replace the fortress-like situation in which American Information Centers find themselves. These centers should be rolled out as rapidly as possible across the Islamic world and made as interactive as possible.
- **Expand exchange programs.** Exchange programs such as the Fulbright and Humphrey programs should be strengthened and expanded, with a particular focus on U.S. geo-political needs towards improving relations with the Islamic world. The programs should also seek to better promote dialogue among a large number of both Americans and citizens of other countries.

- **Expand the use of polling.** Polling and focus groups in Muslim-majority countries should be utilized to better inform policy-makers and measure the impact of public diplomacy efforts. While international public opinion should not drive policy making, policy makers should at least be aware of how global publics feel about our policies, as it will affect their likely success.
- **Make public diplomacy a crosscutting theme for all Foreign Service Officers.** Public diplomacy training and activities, and language training, should be increased for all Foreign Service officers. Today, when foreign communities and even individuals can impact American security, every American diplomat must play a part in public diplomacy, so as to maximize efforts to reach directly into civil society.
- **Build closer alliances with NGOs.** Polls show that local and national NGOs and international institutions have strong positive ratings across the Islamic world. U.S. support for and visible close association with the efforts of such groups will strengthen positive ratings of the U.S. Government. To be successful, however, the independence of these NGOs needs to be real and visible.
- **Leverage the expertise of Capitol Hill and state and local leaders.** Civil society in Muslim-majority countries craves dialogue with American policy makers. Members of Congress, their staffers, and state and local officials are ideally suited to engage in public diplomacy. The need for such initiatives is too important to wait for leadership from the top; state and local government can take their own initiatives.
- **Better coordinate USAID and MEPI with public diplomacy efforts.** USAID and MEPI are excellent programs, built on solid staff. But they require more financial support. They also should be better coordinated with the Office of the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs to maximize good will and ensure synchronicity.

- **Jointly-plan to avoid failures—even for information campaigns.** While much maligned, initiatives—such as the “Muslim Life in America” documentary—have empirically demonstrated that the U.S. public diplomacy apparatus can successfully communicate important messages to millions. However, the limits on such initiatives are placed by their failure to incorporate local involvement and the resultant perception of propaganda.
- **Strengthen the impact of speaking tours.** Significantly more speakers should be sent to Muslim-majority countries and a larger proportion of those should address what citizens there really want to talk about—U.S. policy. Upon the completion of their tours, speakers should be required to brief U.S. policy makers on their findings. Another idea would be to sponsor joint speaking tours that coordinate agendas and target both domestic audiences.

In conclusion, great progress has been made in the way the United States conducts public diplomacy since September 11th. However, the United States still faces deep problems in its standing in, and outreach towards, the Islamic world.

It is through understanding, informing, and influencing foreign publics that the national interest and security of the United States can be advanced. A strategy of innovation, communication, and jointness will be far more effective in achieving the goals of public diplomacy. This requires a broadened dialogue between American citizens and institutions and their counterparts abroad. The results of this dialogue must feed back into the policy-making process, in order for that dialogue to be seen as effective across the Islamic world. Such a paradigm shift towards conceptualizing public diplomacy as an effort for the shared communication and benefit will help transform the U.S. relationship with the Islamic world from one of animosity to one of amity.

Public diplomacy can never be a substitute for good policy. However, efforts to transform the way the United States conducts its public diplomacy can go a long way in building lasting bridges that can contribute to better security for all.

THE BROOKINGS PROJECT ON U.S. POLICY TOWARDS THE ISLAMIC WORLD

The *Brookings Project on U.S. Policy Towards the Islamic World* is a major research program, housed in the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution. It is designed to respond to some of the profound questions that the terrorist attacks of September 11th have raised for U.S. policy. The project seeks to develop an understanding of the forces that led to the attacks, the varied reactions in the Islamic world, and the long-term policy responses that the U.S. can make. In particular, it will examine how the United States can reconcile its need to eliminate terrorism and reduce the appeal of extremist movements with its need to build more positive relations with the wider Islamic world.

The Project has several interlocking components:

- The U.S.-Islamic World Forum, which brings together American and Muslim world leaders from the field of politics, business, media, academia, and civil society, for much-needed discussion and dialogue;
- A Task Force made up of specialists in Islamic, regional, and foreign policy issues (emphasizing diversity in viewpoint and geographic expertise), as well as government policymakers, who meet on a monthly basis to discuss, analyze, and share information on relevant trends and issues;
- A Visiting Fellows program that brings distinguished experts from the Islamic world to spend

time in Washington D.C., both assisting them in their own research, as well as informing the wider work ongoing in the project;

- A series of Brookings Analysis Papers and Monographs that provide needed analysis of the vital issues of joint concern between the U.S. and the Islamic world;
- An Education and Economic Outreach Initiative, which will explore the issues of education reform and economic development towards the Islamic world, in particular the potential role of the private sector;
- A Brookings Institution Press book series, which will explore U.S. policy options towards the Islamic World. The aim of the book series is to synthesize the project's findings for public dissemination.

The Project Convenors are Stephen Philip Cohen, Brookings Institution Senior Fellow; Martin Indyk, Director of the Saban Center for Middle East Policy; and Shibley Telhami, Professor of Government at the University of Maryland and Brookings Senior Fellow. Peter W. Singer, National Security Fellow in the Foreign Policy Studies Program at Brookings, serves as the Project Director.

THE BROOKINGS TASK FORCE ON U.S. POLICY TOWARDS THE ISLAMIC WORLD

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THE SABAN CENTER FOR MIDDLE EAST POLICY

The Saban Center for Middle East Policy was established on May 13th, 2002 with an Inaugural Address by His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan. The establishment of the Saban Center reflects The Brookings Institution's commitment to expand dramatically its research and analysis of Middle East policy issues at a time when the region has come to dominate the U.S. foreign policy agenda.

The Saban Center's purpose is to provide Washington policymakers with balanced, objective, in-depth, and timely research and policy analysis from experienced and knowledgeable people who can bring fresh perspectives to bear on the critical problems of the Middle East. The Center upholds the Brookings tradition of being open to a broad range of views. Its central objective is to advance understanding of developments in the Middle East through policy-relevant scholarship and debate.

The Center's establishment has been made possible by a generous founding grant from Mr. Haim Saban of Los Angeles. Ambassador Martin S. Indyk, Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy Studies, is the Director of the Saban Center. Dr. Kenneth M. Pollack is the Center's Director of Research. Joining Ambassador Indyk and Dr. Pollack in the work of the Center is a core group of Middle East experts, who conduct original research and develop innovative programs to promote a better understanding of the policy choices facing American decision makers in the Middle East. They include Professor Shibley Telhami, who holds the Sadat Chair at the University of Maryland; Professor Shaul Bakhash, an expert on Iranian politics from George

Mason University; Professor Daniel Byman from Georgetown University, a Middle East terrorism expert; Dr. Flynt Leverett, a former senior CIA analyst and Senior Director at the National Security Council who is a specialist on Syria and Lebanon; and Dr. Philip Gordon, a Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy Studies at Brookings who specializes in Europe's and Turkey's relations with the Middle East. The Center is located in the Foreign Policy Studies Program at Brookings, led by Vice President and Director, James B. Steinberg.

The Saban Center is undertaking original research in six areas: the implications of regime change in Iraq, including post-war nation-building and Gulf security; the dynamics of the Iranian reformation; mechanisms and requirements for fulfilling a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; policy for Phase III of the war on terror, including the Syrian challenge; and political change in the Arab world.

The Center also houses the ongoing *Brookings Project on U.S. Policy Towards the Islamic World*, directed by Dr. Peter W. Singer, National Security Fellow and Director of the Project on U.S. Policy Towards the Islamic World, Foreign Policy Studies Program at Brookings. This Project, established in the wake of the September 11 terror attacks, focuses on analyzing the problems that afflict the relationship between the United States and the Islamic world with the objective of developing effective policy responses. It includes a Task Force of experts that meets regularly, an annual Dialogue between American and Muslim intellectuals, a Visiting Fellows program for experts from the Islamic world, and a monograph series.



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