

CPD PERSPECTIVES ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

# Public Diplomacy: Lessons from the Past

by Nicholas J. Cull

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# **Public Diplomacy: Lessons from the Past**

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University of Southern California

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## **Public Diplomacy: Lessons from the Past**

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## **CPD Perspectives on Public Diplomacy**

CPD Perspectives is a periodic publication by the USC Center on Public Diplomacy, and highlights scholarship intended to stimulate critical thinking about the study and practice of public diplomacy.

Designed for both the practitioner and the scholar, this series will illustrate the breadth of public diplomacy—its role as an essential component of foreign policy and the intellectual challenges it presents to those seeking to understand this increasingly significant factor in international relations.

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The USC Center on Public Diplomacy (CPD) was established in 2003 as a partnership between the Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism and the School of International Relations at the University of Southern California. It is a joint research, analysis and professional training organization dedicated to furthering the study and practice of global public diplomacy.

Since its inception, the Center has become an ambitious and productive leader in the public diplomacy research and scholarship community. The Center has benefited from international support from the academic, corporate, governmental and public policy communities. It is host to one of the most comprehensive online public diplomacy web sites and has become the definitive go-to destination for practitioners and scholars in public diplomacy around the world.

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## Foreword

This report was originally commissioned by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom, and presented to the FCO's Public Diplomacy Group in April 2007. Its commissioning was just one small part of the rapid evolution of British public diplomacy which characterised the administrations of both Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. In December 2005, Lord Carter of Coles produced a review of the apparatus of British public diplomacy which led to a radical new approach within the U.K. British public diplomacy moved from a loose emphasis on promoting the national brand to a tight focus on a small number of strategic objectives of major relevance to foreign policy. The organs of British public diplomacy now sought to promote the ideas on which Britain's future security and prosperity depended—with climate security foremost—without worrying whether that idea travelled with a Union Jack label or the U.K. got any particular credit. The application of the Carter review required an increased attention to the mechanisms of public diplomacy and its history. This report was commissioned as a resource to help that process.

The report was written fairly swiftly—the brief allowed only a six week window for completion—but fortunately the author had already accumulated a range of case studies to use as a core, several of which were derived from the research for his then forthcoming *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945–1989* (Cambridge, 2008). The author took two trips to London to speak to a range of 'stake holders' in British public diplomacy, including staff at the BBC World Service, British Council and Department for International

Development. The writing process benefited from conversation with colleagues at the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, including Ernest J. Wilson III (then a visiting fellow at the USC Center on Public Diplomacy) and Steve Seche (then State Department Public Diplomat in Residence), and with the Foreign Office PD team, especially Andy McKay, Jeff Taylor and Jolyon Welch.

The FCO's original brief, issued to potential bidders in January 2007, called for: 'a concise research study ... that lists, categorizes and analyses different public diplomacy strategies, techniques or approaches that have been applied by the U.K. and foreign governments, with the aim of creating a general taxonomy and historical overview of the various techniques of public diplomacy, mass persuasion and propaganda.' The FCO was especially keen to develop a succinct primer on public diplomacy which could be used to initiate private sector advisers who understood advertising or public relations but had never really considered the nature of public diplomacy. In the event, the finished report was also used as the orientation document for the new Minister of State for Public Diplomacy, Jim Murphy. The FCO originally hoped that the report might help kick-start a wider debate about public diplomacy within Whitehall and even among Britain's allies. Murphy was sufficiently taken with the cause of public diplomacy to commission an entire anthology of new writing on the subject. This appeared under the title *Engagement: Public Diplomacy in a Globalised World* in July 2008 and was launched on both sides of the Atlantic. The present author acted as an adviser to that anthology and a portion of this report was adapted for its second chapter. A second development of this report is the decision of the British Council to commission exactly the sort of Public Diplomacy playbook which the author recommends in the conclusion of this report. That book—initially an online resource—is being compiled by the author in collaboration with Ali Fisher. The web version can be accessed at <http://The-Playbook.com>.

This report had its first life circulating among the British Public Diplomacy community in electronic form, but it also fitted a wider



need within the scholarly community. The FCO was open to its external circulation and it immediately became required reading for students entering the Masters Degree in Public Diplomacy at the University of Southern California and participants in the special seminar in Strategic Communication co-taught by USC Annenberg and the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School Center for Executive Education at Monterey, California. It was abridged as 'Public Diplomacy: Taxonomies and Histories,' in publication in *Public Diplomacy in a Changing World*, a special issue of the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, in March 2008, which the author co-edited with the former Dean of the USC Annenberg School, Geoffrey Cowan. In early 2009 an abridgement appeared in Spanish translation in *Revista Mexicana de Política Exterior*, a journal produced by the Mexican foreign ministry as part of their own special issue on public diplomacy edited by César Villanueva and Jorge Alberto Lozoya. The title in that case was 'Diplomacia Pública: Reflexiones Teóricas.'

A number of scholars and practitioners have engaged with ideas in this report. The five-part taxonomy of public diplomacy, which was used for the first time in this report, has been taken up by other scholars. The volume by Ali Fisher and Aurélie Bröckerhoff, *Options for Influence: Global campaigns of persuasion in the new worlds of public diplomacy*, published by the British Council in 2008 develops that taxonomy into a spectrum of influence which is especially helpful and provocative. The current USC Annenberg School Dean, Ernest J. Wilson III, informs the author that he used the five-part taxonomy during his briefings as point-man for public diplomacy and international broadcasting during the transition of the incoming Obama administration. The author was asked to supply an electronic copy of the *Annals* abridgement of the report to brief the incoming Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Judith McHale. Given the life and after-life of this report, and to enable other scholars to follow up on citations of the original report, the USC Center on Public Diplomacy decided to republish the full report in hard copy and to make a PDF available on its website.

The report is unchanged from its original form with the exception of minor edits to reflect the most up-to-date data. The author and his colleagues at the USC Center on Public Diplomacy hope that this publication of the final form of the report will stimulate further research into public diplomacy and help maintain the conversation about this most significant and far reaching element of contemporary international relations.

Nicholas J. Cull  
Los Angeles, October 2009

—Executive Summary—  
**Public Diplomacy: Lessons from the Past**  
Nicholas J. Cull

Public Diplomacy is a term much used but seldom subjected to rigorous analysis. This report provides succinct definitions for the core vocabulary of contemporary public diplomacy including ‘The New Public Diplomacy’ and ‘Soft Power.’ It sets out a simple taxonomy of public diplomacy’s components, their relationship one to another and their respective sources of credibility. These components are: 1) Listening (the foundation for all effective public diplomacy); 2) Advocacy; 3) Cultural Diplomacy; 4) Exchange; 5) International Broadcasting. The report also identifies 6) Psychological Warfare as a parallel activity that shares some key features of public diplomacy, but which has to be administered beyond a rigidly maintained firewall. The central implication of this analysis is to underscore the essential wisdom of the present U.K. structure of Public Diplomacy, and also to highlight the need for these elements to be balanced within a Public Diplomacy bureaucracy rather than mired in mutual infighting and a scramble for resources and dominance.

The main body of the report examines successful uses of each individual component of public diplomacy drawing from the history of U.S., Franco-German, Swiss and British diplomatic practice. Each case is set out with a scenario section giving background to the problem, a narrative of the campaign and an analysis of the reasons for its success and the implications of that success. The cases considered are: the role of systematic foreign public opinion research in the re-branding of Switzerland since 2000; U.S. Public Diplomacy to support Intermediate Nuclear Force deployment in

Europe in 1983; U.S. use of the Family of Man photographic exhibit around the world during the years 1955–1963; the role of exchanges in the Franco-German rapprochement, 1945–1988; and the role of international broadcasting in British management of U.S. isolation between 1939 and 1941.

The report continues by examining five classic cases of failure in public diplomacy across the taxonomy arising chiefly from a discrepancy between rhetoric and reality: failure to listen in the U.S. ‘Shared Values’ campaign of 2001/2; the failure of advocacy in Vietnam; the long-term failure of Soviet cultural diplomacy; the case of Sayed Qutb and the failure of exchange diplomacy; and counter-productive results of Free French broadcasting during the Second World War. The author notes that the worst error is to wholly neglect public diplomacy altogether.

The final section applies the author’s taxonomy to the challenges of contemporary Public Diplomacy, and places especial emphasis on the need to conceptualize the task of the public diplomat as that of the creator and disseminator of ‘memes’ (ideas capable of being spread from one person to another across a social network) and as a creator and facilitator of networks and relationships.

The report concludes with a recommendation that a larger scale project be initiated to continue with the work begun in this report and gather past experience in PD practice from around the world into a ‘Public Diplomacy playbook’ as a mechanism to develop capacity at home and build the voices of those we wish to empower.

Nicholas J. Cull  
Los Angeles, April 2007

## 1. Definitions

### 1.1 Diplomacy, Traditional Diplomacy and Public Diplomacy

This author defines **diplomacy** as *the mechanisms short of war deployed by an international actor to manage the international environment*. Today, this actor may be a state, multi-national corporation, non-governmental organization, international organization, terrorist organization/stateless paramilitary organization or other player on the world stage; **traditional diplomacy** is *international actor's attempt to manage the international environment through engagement with another international actor*; **public diplomacy** is *an international actor's attempt to manage the international environment through engagement with a foreign public*.<sup>1</sup>

Historically PD has taken the form of contact between one government and the people of another state. PD does not always seek its mass audience directly. Often it has cultivated individuals within the target audience who are themselves influential in the wider community. Moreover, PD does not always take the form of an immediate attempt to influence a foreign public. It is also part of public diplomacy to listen to a foreign public and change your approach or even your high policy as a result. Similarly the contact need not be related to the image of the international actor, it might be the promotion of an idea (such as international cooperation on climate change) which the actor considers an important element in foreign policy. In all cases the method is some form of engagement with a foreign public and the aim is the same—*the management of the international environment*.

### 1.2 The New Public Diplomacy

Scholars now speak of the *New Public Diplomacy*.<sup>2</sup> This term is compatible within the definition above but also draws attention to key shifts in the practice of public diplomacy. These are: 1) the

international actors are increasingly non-traditional and NGOs are especially prominent; 2) the mechanisms used by these actors to communicate with world publics have moved into new, real-time and global technologies (especially the Internet); 3) these new technologies have blurred the formerly rigid lines between the domestic and international news spheres; 4) in place of old concepts of propaganda Public Diplomacy makes increasing use of concepts on one hand explicitly derived from marketing—especially place and nation branding—and on the other hand concepts growing from network communication theory; hence, there is 5) a new terminology of PD as the language of prestige and international image has given way to talk of ‘soft power’ and ‘branding;’ 6) perhaps most significantly, the *New Public Diplomacy* speaks of a departure from the actor-to-people Cold War-era communication and the arrival of a new emphasis on people-to-people contact for mutual enlightenment, with the international actor playing the role of facilitator; and 7) in this model the old emphasis on top down messaging is eclipsed and the prime task of the new public diplomacy is characterized as ‘relationship building.’ The relationships need not be between the actor and a foreign audience but could usefully be between two audiences, foreign to each other, whose communication the actor wishes to facilitate. Again, as the following grid will show, the aim of managing the international environment remains consistent.

**1. Fig. 1. The Old Public Diplomacy and the New**

<b>Dominant Characteristics</b>	<b>Old PD</b>	<b>New PD</b>
1) Identity of international actor	State	State and non-state
2) Tech. environment	Short wave radio Print newspapers Land-line telephones	Satellite, Internet, real-time news Mobile telephones
3) Media environment	Clear line between domestic and international news sphere	Blurring of domestic and international news sphere.
4) Source of approach	Outgrowth of political advocacy & propaganda theory	Outgrowth of corporate branding & network theory
5) Terminology	“International image” “Prestige”	“Soft power” “Nation Brand”
6) Structure of role	Top down, actor to foreign peoples	Horizontal, facilitated by actor
7) Nature of role	Targeted messaging	Relationship-building
8) Overall aim	<b>The management of the international environment</b>	<b>The management of the international environment</b>

One unresolved issue of the New Public Diplomacy is the relationship between the output of the new players and the interest of the state. Some national governments have tended to look on NGOs, IOs and corporations with active voices overseas as unpaid auxiliaries of their state PD effort. This misses the extent to which these newcomers are international actors in their own right, and their PD represents their attempt to manage the international environment through public outreach in their own interests rather than the interests of the state to which they have been historically connected. States may find that their relations with these new players will be less like relations with their own internal PD organs and more like dealings with allied states with overlapping ideological interests, who can be expected to part company when a conflict of interest arrives.

### 1.3 Soft Power

A key feature of the New Public Diplomacy has been the rise of the term ‘Soft Power’, as coined by Joseph Nye at the end of the Cold War, as an expression of the ability of an actor to get what it wants in the international environment because of the attractiveness of its culture rather than military or economic leverage.<sup>3</sup> PD can be the *mechanism* to deploy soft power, but it is not the same thing as soft power, any more than the army and hard power are the same thing. It is possible for an international actor to have PD and not Soft Power (like North Korea) or Soft Power and minimal PD (like Eire).

The advantage of the term ‘Soft Power’ is that it has moved the conversation around PD into the realm of national security and provided a language for arguing that attention be paid to PD. The disadvantage is that Nye has presented it a mechanism for ‘getting what one wants.’ The idea of a state entering into each international conversation purely to get what it wants makes excellent strategic sense but it is certainly not attractive, rather it is repulsive: negative soft power. Listening and being open to being changed by an encounter is attractive. Hence, paradoxically too much public focus on soft power can actually diminish an actor’s soft power. An example of this was Secretary of State Powell’s remarks following the Indian Ocean Tsunami of December 2005 that American aid for stricken countries would be good for U.S. public diplomacy.

Soft Power is increasingly seen as a dated concept. U.S. analysts including Ernest J. Wilson III and Nye himself now speak of a dynamic combination of hard power and soft power in which PD informs policy making, which has been dubbed ‘Smart Power.’ An investigation of the concept of Smart Power co-chaired by Nye and Richard Armitage at the Center for Strategic and International Studies appeared in early 2008.<sup>4</sup>



## 1.4 The Foreign & Commonwealth Office Definition of PD

In 2005 Lord Cole's review of British public diplomacy defined PD as 'work aiming to inform and engage individuals and organizations overseas in order to improve understanding of and strengthen influence for the United Kingdom in a manner consistent with governmental medium and long-term goals.'<sup>5</sup> The key component here was the definition's emphasis on the use of PD to serve policy goals. Today the FCO Public Diplomacy Group has an even more succinct working definition of public diplomacy as 'the process of achieving the U.K.'s International Strategic Priorities through engagement with the public overseas.'<sup>6</sup>

Under this definition the generation of strategic priorities becomes a key process. It should not be expected that each element within the public diplomacy apparatus should take an equal role in realizing every single priority. The British Council, for example, is more suited to serving an objective of engagement with the Islamic world as part of a counter-terrorist policy than assisting in combating illegal migration. But each element, nonetheless, has a role to play—within the limits of its respective editorial or operational independence—and none should be considered exempt. The ideal situation would see a coming together of policy and apparatus with tasks that suit the timescale and approach of the PD actor in question. A policy which cannot be helped by the ethical journalism approach of the BBC World Service or two-way cultural engagement and relationship building of the British Council needs rethinking. By the same token the Treasury should question why revenues should be spent on activity which cannot be linked to foreign policy objectives. Listeners are being informed and relationships being built for a reason. An awareness of policies—or the terms of this author's definition: the priorities for the management of the international environment—is a precondition for effective public diplomacy. This said the term 'engagement' within the definition is also significant. Effective engagement requires listening and feeding back, hence the apparatus

of public diplomacy and especially its listening elements should have a key role to play in defining and shaping the policies they will be called upon to deliver.

## **2. The Evolution of PD as a Concept and its Core Approaches**

The term Public Diplomacy was first applied to the process of international information and cultural relations in 1965 by Edmund Gullion, a retired American diplomat turned dean of the Fletcher School of Diplomacy at Tufts University near Boston. It took immediate hold in the United States for three reasons. First, America needed a benign alternative to terms like propaganda and psychological warfare to allow a clearer distinction between its own democratic information practices and the policies pursued by the Soviet Union. Second, America's international information bureaucracy—the United States Information Agency (1953–1999)—welcomed a term that gave them the status of diplomats (at the time of coining they did not enjoy the status of full Foreign Service career officers). Third, as the term implied a single concept of a nation's approach to international opinion, so it contained within it an implicit argument for a centralization of the mechanisms of public diplomacy. USIA used the term to argue for continued dominion over Voice of America radio and to justify its absorption of the rump of cultural work still held by the State Department. This was accomplished in 1978.

Despite its increasing use in the U.S., the term made little headway in the international scene until the years immediately following the Cold War, when the challenges of real-time television news, the emerging Internet and the obvious role of ideas in the political changes sweeping Eastern Europe convinced key western players that image making and information had a new relevance in international relations. Numerous bureaucracies, including Britain's, adopted the terminology of public diplomacy. This said, the relative youth of the term belies the antiquity of its constituent parts, most of which are as old as statecraft.

## **2.1 Listening**

While most of the elements of PD are presented here in no particular order, the choice of the first is deliberate, for it precedes all successful public diplomacy: Listening. Listening is an actor's attempt to manage the international environment by collecting and collating data about publics and their opinions overseas and using that data to redirect its policy or its wider public diplomacy approach accordingly. This has traditionally been an element of each constituent practice of public diplomacy, with advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange and broadcasting agencies each attending to their own audience and opinion research. Information on foreign public opinion has also been gathered as part of the regular function of conventional diplomacy and intelligence work. In its most basic form this covers an event whereby an international actor seeks out a foreign audience and engages them by listening rather than by speaking, a phenomenon which is much promised but seldom performed. It is common to see public diplomacy responding to shifts in international opinion; cases of listening or structured opinion monitoring shaping the highest levels of policy are harder to find. The holy grail of public diplomats is to be, in the famous words of USIA director Edward R. Murrow, 'in on the take-offs' of policy rather than just 'the crash landings.' While systematic assessments of foreign opinion are modern, the state of a neighbour's morale has been a feature of intelligence reports as long as there have been spies.<sup>7</sup> No state has made responding to international opinion central to its diplomacy or even its public diplomacy, but Switzerland has made some interesting experiments in the field.

## **2.2 Advocacy**

Advocacy in Public Diplomacy may be defined as an actor's attempt to manage the international environment by undertaking an international communication activity to actively promote a particular policy, idea or that actor's general interests in the minds of a foreign

public. Today this includes embassy press relations (frequently the hard end of policy promotion) and informational work (which can be somewhat softer and less angled to hard and fast policy goals). Elements of advocacy are to be found in all areas of PD, and its short-term utility has, historically, led to a bias towards this dimension of PD and a tendency to place it, and the elements of the bureaucracy most closely connected to it, at the center of any PD structure. The unique features of the other fields of PD have led to an almost universal centrifugal force within all PD bureaucracies as they strain to be free of the ‘taint of policy.’

Ancient examples of advocacy may be found in Herodotus where envoys from Xerxes of Persia appeal to the people of Argos for their neutrality in the Empire’s invasion of Greece in 480 BC.<sup>8</sup> While advocacy is common to all states, it is a dominant concept in American public diplomacy, where each element is scrutinized during congressional oversight for its contribution to selling the idea of America.

## 2.3 Cultural Diplomacy

Cultural diplomacy may be defined as an actor’s attempt to manage the international environment through making its cultural resources and achievements known overseas and/or facilitating cultural transmission abroad. This work often overlaps with exchanges, and hence the two have been often housed together though seldom happily. Historically Cultural Diplomacy has meant a country’s policy to facilitate the export of examples of its culture. Today this includes the work of organizations like the British Council or Italian Cultural Institute. Ancient examples include the Greek construction of the great library at Alexandria, the Roman Republic’s policy inviting the sons of ‘friendly kings’ from their borders to be educated in Rome, and the Byzantine Empire’s sponsorship of Orthodox evangelism across the Slavic lands. Discomfort with advocacy roles and overt diplomatic objectives have led some Cultural Diplomacy organizations to distance themselves from the term and the term

Public Diplomacy also. The British Council prefers to describe itself as ‘Cultural Relations’ agency, though its core tools are cultural work and exchanges, and its objective falls within the definition of diplomacy.<sup>9</sup>

The great spenders in Cultural Diplomacy have been the French, who have heavily subsidized an international network of schools to sustain the French language, understanding that their prestige and influence is largely tied to the survival of the *francophonie*.

## **2.4 Exchange Diplomacy**

Exchange diplomacy in PD may be defined as an actor’s attempt to manage the international environment by sending its citizens overseas and reciprocally accepting citizens from overseas for a period of study and/or acculturation. While this can be conceptualized as a one way process (the argument runs: ‘My students will go overseas and tell you how wonderful my country is; your students will come here and learn how wonderful my country is.’), the element of reciprocity has tended to make this area of PD a bastion of the concept of ‘mutuality’: the vision of an international learning experience in which both parties benefit and are transformed. Ancient examples may be seen in inter-community child fostering practiced in Nordic and Celtic Europe. As already noted, exchanges often overlap with cultural work but are also used for specific policy and/or advocacy purposes as when targeted for development or to promote military inter-operability with an ally. When housed within a cultural diplomacy agency the aspect of mutuality and two way communication within exchange has sometimes been subordinated to the drive to project national culture.<sup>10</sup>

While the United States has invested heavily in exchange through the Fulbright Scholarships, this work never displaced the centrality of advocacy in its PD. Japan, in contrast, has always emphasised exchange as an organizing concept for its PD. This attitude dates back to the Meiji period of nineteenth century modernization when the government swiftly learned to make use of the readiness of foreigners

to trade their modern knowledge for experience of Japanese culture. Japanese diplomats routinely use the term ‘exchange’ to refer to the entire world of public diplomacy.

## **2.5 International Broadcasting (News)**

International broadcasting (IB) is an actor’s attempt to manage the international environment by using the technologies of radio, television and Internet to engage with foreign publics. Commercial international broadcasting may still be regarded as PD, but it is PD for the corporate parent, which can warp its output or insist on rigid objectivity according to its desired ends. Both commercial and state-funded IB can affect the terrain on which all PD is practiced: witness the rise of Al Jazeera in the late 1990s. IB work as practiced by states can overlap with all the other PD functions including listening in the monitoring/audience research functions, advocacy/information work in editorials or policy broadcasts, cultural diplomacy in its cultural content and exchanges of programming and personnel with other broadcasters. The technological requirements of international broadcasting are such that the practice is usually institutionally separate from other Public Diplomacy functions, but the best reason for considering international broadcasting as a parallel practice apart from the rest of PD is the special structural and ethical foundation of its key component: News.

Historically, the most potent element of IB has been its use of news, especially when that news is objective. This aligned the entire practice of IB with the ethical culture of domestic broadcast journalism, and turned IB into a mechanism for diffusing this culture. Some IB has sought to use alternative ethical sources and models for its content, as with the Arab state-funded religious broadcasting. Here the broadcasts were judged according to religiously-based ethics. The aim was not so much proselytizing for Islam as boosting the image of the state by associating it with a worthy activity.

While IB proper dates only from the mid-1920s (with the Soviet Union and the Netherlands leading the field) it is possible to find

state-funded news much earlier. Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II (1194–1250) distributed a newsletter about his court’s activities around neighbouring capitals. Thanks to the achievement of the BBC World Service, international broadcasting has long been the most widely known element in British public diplomacy, even though BBC research indicates that a small percentage of listeners do not connect the BBC with the country, Britain.

## 2.6 Psychological Warfare (PW)

Psychological Warfare (PW) sits outside most conceptualizations of Public Diplomacy and most PD bureaucracies too. It is controversial even to include this area within a discussion of PD, however it will be considered here alongside the accepted subfields of PD as a *parallel activity*. In an international information context psychological warfare can be defined as an actor’s use of communication to achieve an objective in wartime, usually through communication with the enemy’s public. Typical objectives include the breaking of the enemy’s will to resist or facilitating surrender or dissent within enemy ranks. This process can be overt (sometimes called white propaganda) or covert. In black propaganda the origin of the communication is concealed and may be the diametric opposite of the purported source (as when Britain established fake German army radio stations during World War Two). In grey propaganda the source is merely unclear.

The oldest treatises on statecraft include injunctions to practice psychological warfare. The ancient Indian equivalent of Machiavelli—Kautilaya—tells his readers to spread rumours within the enemy camp. This practice sits so awkwardly beneath the umbrella of public diplomacy that most bureaucracies of PD would exclude it even if the covert/military agencies were willing to allow them a hand in its practice. Historically the approaches have mixed. USIA played a major role in psychological warfare in the Dominican Intervention of 1965 and the Vietnam War, and was prominent in a counter-disinformation role in the second Cold War (the Reagan

years). Similarly, the BBC's external services were fed material by a PW arm of the Foreign Office and Secret Intelligence Service: the Information Research Department (IRD). PW was the dominant approach in the Soviet approach to international information.

At this point the reader may ask the difference between Public Diplomacy and propaganda. This is a reasonable question but the answer turns on what exactly is meant by 'propaganda.' In the morally charged sense in which propaganda is to information as murder is to killing, PD clearly may *become* propaganda if used for an immoral purpose. In the morally neutral sense in which propaganda is simply mass persuasion, there is an obvious overlap. This overlap is diminishing, as propaganda seldom emphasizes the two-way street/mutuality which has been part of the most sophisticated public diplomacy policies or the relational and network ideas which are so central to the New Public Diplomacy.<sup>11</sup>

While, as has been noted along the way, various states have emphasized a particular element of PD in their approach, the ideal structure would balance all and allow each the space and funding to make its own necessary contribution to the whole. One of the regrettable features of public diplomacy around the world is that this is seldom the case and that rather than competing with the organs of hard power for their share of funding, the agencies of soft power and public diplomacy have fought each other for funds and for the dominance of their outlook.



### 3. Three Taxonomies of PD

The basic taxonomy of PD discussed above can be expressed as follows:

**3. Fig. 1. Basic Taxonomy of Public Diplomacy & PsyWar**

	Type of PD	Sample Activities	State in which this form of PD has been salient
I	Listening	Targeted polling	Switzerland
II	Advocacy	Embassy press relations	USA
III	Cultural diplomacy	State-funded international art tour	France
IV	Exchange diplomacy	Two-way academic exchange	Japan
V	International broadcasting	Foreign language short-wave radio broadcasting	Britain
	PsyWar	Disinformation	USSR

While these subfields of PD share the general goal of influencing a foreign public they diverge in four important respects: their conceptual timeframe, the direction of flow of information, the type of infrastructure required and the source of their credibility. The inter-relationship of time, flow and infrastructure are expressed on this grid:

**3. Fig. 2. Taxonomy of Time/Flow of Information/Infrastructure in PD & PsyWar**

	Type of PD	Timeframe	Flow of Information	Typical Infrastructure
I	Listening	Short & long-term	Inward to analysts and policy process	Monitoring technology & language trained staff
II	Advocacy	Short term	Outward	Embassy press office, foreign ministry strategy office
III	Cultural diplomacy	Long-term	Outward	Cultural Center and/or library
IV	Exchange diplomacy	Very long-term	Inward & outward	Exchange administrator, Educational office
V	International broadcasting	Medium-term	Outward but from a news bureaucracy	News bureaus, production studios, editorial offices, and transmitter facilities
	PsyWar	Short-term	Outward	Printing facilities, covert. Broadcasting facilities, covert network

Like all forms of communication the effectiveness of each form of PD hinges on credibility, but here the fields radically diverge. Each finds its sources of credibility in a different place and hence each ideally requires the *appearance* of a wholly different relationship to government in order to flourish. International broadcasters know that the impression of an editorial connection to government runs counter to credibility; cultural organizations are able to flourish in places where a formal arm of the state would have no credibility and any hint of a connection between psychological warfare and PD is so damaging that the whole subject is excluded from PD discussions.

**3. Fig. 3. Taxonomy of credibility in state PD & PsyWar**

	Type of PD	Source of credibility	Helped by perceived connection to government?	Helped by perceived distance from government?
I	Listening	Validity of methods used	Yes if it implies the actor is listening to world opinion	No if it implies the actor is not listening to world opinion
II	Advocacy	Proximity to government	Yes	No
III	Cultural diplomacy	Proximity to cultural authorities	No	Yes
IV	Exchange diplomacy	Perception of mutuality	Yes if it implies the actor is listening to the world	Yes if it implies the exchange is not self-interested
V	International broadcasting	Evidence of good journalistic practice	Usually no <sup>12</sup>	Yes
	PsyWar (white)	Proximity to government	Yes—essential	No
	PsyWar (black)	Proximity to audience fantasies	No—essential	Yes—essential

These structural differences between the elements of public diplomacy only become critical when a state attempts to administer all its PD under a single bureaucracy. The two classic models of state PD take opposite positions on this question. In the U.S. model of the 1980s all the overt arms were grouped within a single agency (USIA). In the British model they are disaggregated into separate functions with the sole grouping being the linkage of Cultural

Diplomacy and Exchange Diplomacy within the British Council. Both models have their limits but the centrifugal forces within the U.S. system, and especially the tensions between advocacy and mutuality-based exchange on one hand and journalistically-based international broadcasting on the other proved wasteful and often crippling. While an element of strategic direction is necessary to maximize the utility of public diplomacy for the state which is picking up the bill, this has to be handled with care to avoid compromising the perceived integrity of each element of PD work.

### **3.1 The Golden Rule of Public Diplomacy**

The most potent voice for an international actor is not what it says but what it does, and history is full of examples of international actors who found the best PD to be no substitute for a bad policy. Hence, the most important link in any PD structure is that which connects research to policymaking and ensures that the impact of an actor's decisions on foreign opinion is weighed in the foreign policy process. There is also a need to coordinate between each element and elements whose role could be considered 'PD by deed' such as an international development agency. It is possible for good policies to make no difference to a nation's 'soft power' if they are not publicized or coordinated with PD. This was, at times, the fate of some U.K. aid projects run by Department of International Development.<sup>13</sup>

## 4. Lessons from Five Cases of Success

When handled well public diplomacy can be essential to the success of a foreign policy. Each element in the taxonomy has its success story, which carries broader lessons for the wider operation of public diplomacy.

### 4.1 *Listening*: Re-Branding Switzerland, 1997–2007

#### **Scenario:**

In 1996 a number of factors converged to draw international attention to the issue of the Swiss banking system's willingness to handle Nazi gold during World War Two, and presumed retention of gold stolen from the victims of the Holocaust. In the United States, Senator Alfonse D'Amato began hearings on the issue, while a Holocaust survivor named Gizella Weisshaus initiated a class-action suit for restitution. The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office published a report claiming that \$500 million in gold had been deposited in Swiss banks by persons unknown during the war. The Swiss stepped up their ongoing investigation of the issue and early in 1997 established a fund to compensate victims of the Holocaust who had lost assets during the war, but it was widely perceived as too little too late. At the same time Switzerland seemed increasingly isolated from the European mainstream by being outside the European Union. Swiss prestige and influence were in serious decline. The country's Federal Department for Foreign Affairs reluctantly accepted that Switzerland faced a serious crisis in its international image. Switzerland already had an inter-agency mechanism which was supposed to manage its international image, called the Coordinating Commission for the Swiss Presence Abroad (COCO). Founded in 1976 with 20 members, COCO was constituted within the foreign affairs department. With a staff of just five people, a budget of CHF 2.4 million, and an approach that seemed rooted in the venerable Swiss tradition of the volunteer militia, it seemed inadequate to the crisis of the late 1990s.

**The Campaign:**

In 2000 Switzerland founded a new unit within the Federal Department for Foreign Affairs to coordinate the country's international brand image with the title Presence Switzerland (PRS). This new unit's mission was to connect with opinion makers overseas, and coordinate the international outlook of international players across Swiss society with the motto: 'Joint action, joint promotion.' Its CEO is a diplomat with the rank of Ambassador, Johannes Matyassy, and its staff includes individuals with backgrounds in media analysis, public relations and branding. PRS operates under a board drawn from the foreign ministry, banking (ever a sacred pursuit in Switzerland) and other businesses, media and state agencies for culture, sports, tourism and youth affairs. The board met only three times a year under the presidency of ex-parliamentarian Ruth Grossenbacher-Schmid to determine the organization's strategy and priority countries and green-light any project with a budget of over CHF 250,000 from its annual budget of CHF 10,000,000. Presence Switzerland designated seven priority countries in which it would initiate or support activities (its immediate neighbours Germany, Austria, France and Italy, and the U.S., U.K. and People's Republic of China), but also had the leeway to focus elsewhere as the need was perceived. Ad hoc activities took place in Russia, Spain, Central Europe and Scandinavia. PRS has mounted a series of major set piece events which included 'the House of Switzerland—Switzerland at the Olympic Games' in Athens in 2004 and Turin 2006, and the Swiss pavilion—the Mountain—at the World Exhibition Expo 2005 in Aichi, Japan. The U.S., U.K. and Spain all saw major campaigns in the first three years. All reflected a high degree of state-private cooperation, and high production values.

The key to PRS's success has been its listening research. From its foundation PRS launched seven on-going image surveys in key target countries. Methods included polling and media analysis. The data was used to determine and refine the activities necessary to reposition Switzerland in the minds of selected audiences. Follow-up surveys were used to evaluate performance and generate the

next round of surveys. The surveys proved an effective mechanism for identifying discrepancies and local problems in the image of Switzerland. It seemed, for example, that exactly the qualities which Swiss valued about themselves—their political system with its direct democracy, their modernity, their humanitarian commitment—were not understood overseas or not known about at all. There were local problems too. A survey in 2002 segmenting opinion among managers, politicians and the general population in selected countries revealed an anomalous spike of anti-Swiss feeling among the British political sample. Only 30% of the sample reported a positive attitude towards Switzerland when the average was 65%. Presence Switzerland investigated and found that the problem stemmed from an identification between Switzerland and conservatism, which in turn had grown from the Swiss embassy's continued sponsorship of events for British Conservative Party-related groups for several years into the era of New Labour government. The Swiss embassy duly switched to funding organizations affiliated with the Labour government such as the Fabian Society, and the polls fell into line with the attitude towards Switzerland in other places.

**Analysis:**

PRS's own data and independent research suggest that Switzerland successfully moved beyond the crisis of the 1990s and returned to a position of respect in the international firmament. The relative contributions of PRS as against the genuine reforms and work to set right wrongs dating back to World War Two remains moot, but sound policy is the best public diplomacy in any case. It seems that a major part of the success of the Presence Switzerland approach has rested on careful selection of its targets. PRS operates principally in the developed world, allowing the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) to take the lead elsewhere. It has had some success in coordinating the international efforts of stakeholders including business, local and regional government, and public relations researchers. It has remained separate from other actors in Swiss nation branding such as the state cultural agency

Pro Helvetia, Switzerland Tourism, Location Switzerland and ‘osec Business Network Switzerland.’ PRS’s feedback mechanisms include training for high- and mid-level Swiss diplomats to generate understanding of the branding approach, but there is little evidence that PRS has been able to feed back into the wider making of Swiss foreign or domestic policy.

For a while the future of PRS seemed uncertain. In the course of 2005 the Swiss parliament suggested that the various agencies engaged in branding Switzerland should work more closely together to maximize their synergies. The Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (seco) proposed to create a single body to incorporate all the agencies, including PRS. A number of agencies lobbied to preserve their independence, including Pro Helvetia and the Swiss Marketing Organization for Cheese and Wine. In January 2007 the Federal Council decided to create a single body to promote foreign trade (incorporating such bodies as Location Switzerland, ‘osec Business Network Switzerland,’ SOFI (the Swiss Organisation for Facilitating Investments) and SIPPO (the Swiss Import Promotion Programme)), but preserved PRS, Swiss Tourism and Pro Helvetia as they stood. The Federal Department for Foreign Affairs has been asked to create a new model for relationships between the various Swiss branding agencies. PRS and its research-driven approach seem destined to remain a part of the machinery of Swiss foreign policy for years to come.<sup>14</sup>

## **4.2 *Advocacy:* U.S. PD to support Intermediate Nuclear Force deployment in 1983**

### **Scenario:**

In 1975 the Soviet Union began deployment of intermediate nuclear forces (INF) in Eastern Europe in the form of the SS20 missile. As NATO had no equivalent missiles in place, Moscow had gained a massive strategic advantage in the Cold War. For the purposes of deterrence and to stimulate serious arms reduction talks the U.S. needed a counter deployment but faced mounting public



opposition to nuclear weapons in Western Europe. In 1979 NATO decided to pursue a 'twin track' policy seeking an arms reduction agreement while deploying its own INFs in Europe. It fell to the Reagan administration in 1983 to accomplish the deployment of ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCMs) and the Pershing II ballistic missile.

### **The Campaign:**

To manage a supporting public diplomacy campaign the Reagan White House convened a small inter-agency group under the chairmanship of Peter H. Dailey, Reagan's advertising manager in the 1980 election and his ambassador to Ireland. The core of the administration's strategy was to accept that arguments in support of the deployment from the United States would be counter-productive and that the case was best made by local voices in European politics and the media. To this end USIA convened a small committee of private citizens including the British financier Sir James Goldsmith and two media moguls, Rupert Murdoch and Joachim Maitre (of Axel Springer Publishing in Hamburg), with a view to both raising private sector finance and getting the message into the European press. This committee met with President Reagan for lunch and was briefed by Dailey.

The real master stroke in the INF campaign was the selection of a new U.S. ambassador to NATO, David M. Abshire. Abshire was the founder of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington DC and already had a special relationship with the European think tank circuit and defence journalists. He also knew senior people in the European peace movement. He, in turn, recruited an experienced USIA man, Stanton Burnett (then Minister Counsellor for Information in the U.S. Embassy in Rome), and a colleague from CSIS named Mike Moody to run his campaign, and began to call in favors and rekindle old relationships in the cause of deployment. The core of his argument was that the Soviet deployment of the SS20's in 1975 was the real disruption to peace rather than America's plan. Abshire was not averse to branching off into just

war theory or talking about real peace—he liked to use the Hebrew *shalom*—being more than the absence of war, but an international system based on real respect between countries. In June 1983 Vice President George H.W. Bush made a European tour and obtained the necessary agreements for the deployments, which went ahead everywhere planned except the Netherlands. While follow-up polls showed that the INF deployments were unpopular with the wider population, Europeans were apparently convinced of the sincerity of the American approach to arms reduction and attached far more significance to other issues of the day like social and economic concerns. The point was that the opinion had shifted enough to allow the missiles to be deployed. The Americans had made a move that compelled the Soviets to negotiate, which in retrospect looks like the winning play in the Cold War confrontation. Abshire received the Distinguished Public Service Medal for his service around the deployment.<sup>15</sup>

**Analysis:**

This campaign is notable for its strictly limited objective (tolerance of INF deployment rather than nurturing a love of the Reagan administration), careful selection of the audience (European opinion makers rather than an un-winnable mass audience) and equally careful selection of a credible messenger (Abshire) who was already known to the target audience. It is notable that the Reagan administration was not concerned that its public diplomacy be seen to be effective by a domestic American audience, nor that any credit be seen to accrue to the administration as a result. The focus remained getting the vital missiles into place. Abshire was undoubtedly helped by the fact that he had a good case springing from the prior deployment of Soviet missiles, and credibility given to U.S. statements of intent to negotiate once the missiles were in place.

### **4.3 Cultural Diplomacy: America's *Family of Man* Exhibit, 1955–1963**

#### **Scenario:**

Throughout the early 1950s the United States trailed the Soviet Union in key aspects of its international image. The Soviets had successfully associated international communism with peace (branding their subsidized movement with the image of Picasso's dove), whereas the U.S., with its leadership of the U.N. in Korea, seemed associated with war. Similarly, Moscow aligned with over-arching values of international class solidarity and human progress and their local expression in movements for revolution and liberation, while the United States was identified with the political and economic status quo, and seemed to have no ideological appeal. In 1952 Dwight Eisenhower ran for the presidency on a platform of up-grading America's informational approach to the world, and once in office created an integrated United States Information Agency and instituted a special emergency presidential fund to pay for cultural diplomacy work overseas.

#### **The Campaign:**

USIA did much to present the best of U.S. culture to the world. The export of jazz music, and especially tours by integrated bands, proved a useful counter to the image (and shameful reality) of American racism. In 1955 USIA deployed a spectacular new tool of cultural diplomacy: a magnificent photographic exhibition originally developed for the Museum of Modern Art in New York called *The Family of Man*. Created by the legendary photographer Edward Steichen, *The Family of Man* comprised 503 pictures by 273 photographers, both professional and amateur, from sixty-eight countries including the Soviet Union. Engagingly hung in three-dimensional space, the pictures provided multifaceted glimpses of human life in all its diversity, including courtship, birth and parenting, work, learning, self-expression and beyond. The entire show glowed with life-affirming energy.

Within months of the exhibition opening in New York City, USIA created two touring editions and sent one to Berlin, and the other to Guatemala City. In Berlin, crowds three and four abreast flocked to see it. Many came from the eastern sector, wearing sunglasses to avoid being recognized. Further editions toured simultaneously to wildly enthusiastic reviews for the rest of the decade. In 1959 the show even opened in Moscow as part of the American National Exhibition that summer. In Paris the cultural critic Roland Barthes raised a rare voice of opposition, attacking the show in his seminal book *Mythologies* for presenting its images without reference to history. This was—of course—the point, because history meant either the dialectic of class conflict pedalled by Moscow or the local national experiences that held human beings apart. By 1962, when it stopped touring, the exhibition had visited ninety-one locations in thirty-eight countries. In 1965 the U.S. government presented the entire exhibit to Steichen's birthplace, Luxembourg.

### **Analysis:**

The *Family of Man* was a remarkable piece of cultural diplomacy on many levels. It certainly succeeded as a work of art, winning friends for America by virtue of its emotional impact. On the surface it was not an argument for American culture specifically. It displayed many cultures and sought to emphasize their shared experiences. Only a few images were identifiably American and these included images which showed the downside of life in the U.S. such as Dorothea Lange's pictures of dust bowl poverty in the 1930s. Similarly, only a few images were overtly political—a rioter in Berlin, a Nazi round-up of Jews in Poland, a dead soldier in Korea—yet its politics was clear. Rather than crassly presenting America to the world, America presented the world to the world and gained credit thereby, and in the process America highlighted certain aspects of life which were repressed in the Soviet Union. The diverse religious experience of mankind was in the foreground of the exhibition, as was the idea of democracy. To hammer the point home short texts taken from the world's great holy books and political philosophers accompanied the

pictures. While no specific geopolitical shifts can be attributed to the show's progress around the world, it certainly challenged Moscow's monopoly of humanism and was a testament to the eclecticism and diversity of American culture that would prove the foundation of the country's 'soft power.' It also reflected an interest in the rest of the world which is not perhaps typical of American culture and in so doing this approach mitigated against an important aspect of America's negative soft power (a cultural dimension which repels others).

The exhibit has had an afterlife as a piece of cultural diplomacy. In the 1990s the Luxembourg state restored the exhibit and placed it on permanent display in the magnificent Château de Clervaux in the north of the Grand Duchy. Here it is presented as a celebration of humanity on a par with Goethe's writings or Beethoven's symphonies, and advances the cosmopolitan image of its new home country by association. In its final form the show has recently been placed on UNESCO's Memory of the World register.<sup>16</sup>

#### **4.4 Exchange: Franco-German rapprochement, 1945–1988**

##### **Scenario:**

In the history of the west no relationship had been as fraught as that between France and its neighbor to the east: Germany. Generations of Frenchmen were raised to look for *la revanche*—revenge against Germany for its seizure of Alsace, while Germans spoke of *Deutsch-französische Erbfeindschaft*—a cross-generational enmity and vendetta. Over a five-hundred-year period the inhabitants of France and Germany fought more wars than any other antagonists in Europe. As successive regimes rose and clashed, France and the German speaking states became engines of each other's nation building process with states and identities evolving in mutual opposition, culminating in the French role in triggering the reunification of Germany by initiating the Franco-Prussian war of 1870. In 1945, as for the second time in a generation the smoke cleared from a Franco-German dispute which had escalated

into world war, a number of influential people in both France and Germany placed *Versöhnungsgedanke* (reconciliation) between their two nations at the top of their agenda.

### **The Campaign:**

The public diplomacy process began with individual initiatives. In 1945 a Jesuit priest named Jean du Rivau founded a *Bureau International de Liaison et de Documentation* (BILD) with a German equivalent *Gesellschaft für übernationale Zusammenarbeit* (GüZ) to promote Franco-German knowledge and understanding, and the associated publications *Documents* and *Dokumente* to the same purpose. BILD pioneered the exchange of school children. In 1948 three German politicians, Carlo Schmid, Fritz Schenk and Theodor Huess (destined to become president the following year) founded a Deutsch-Französisches Institut in Ludwigsburg. Meanwhile leaders in local government were already looking to international exchange as an expression of a vision of a European culture founded on free municipalities. In 1947 French and German mayors came together in a Union Internationale de Maires (UIM), which in turn devised a network of ‘twinning’ (*jumelage/Städtepartnerschaft*) agreements linking French and German towns of similar size, history or industry. The first such agreement came in September 1950 with the twinning of Montbéliard and Ludwigsburg. Hundreds of others followed suit, steered from 1951 by a Council of European Municipalities (CEM). Civic exchanges, student exchanges and sporting fixtures followed, many showcasing war veterans in a new peaceful role. By the end of the century over 2,000 communities up to and including cities and entire provinces had twinned.

The localities led the way and the national governments followed, in part as the generation exchanged in the late 1940s moved into their adult careers. The mutual proliferation of *Goethe Institutes* and *Instituts français* was one example of national institutions following where the mayors had led. In January 1963 it reached the very top as Konrad Adenauer and Charles De Gaulle signed the Elysée Treaty with a preamble that spoke of an end to the ‘centuries-old rivalry’

and a ‘fundamental redefinition’ of the relationship between the two countries. The first step to this redefinition was the creation in the summer of 1963 of a Franco-German Youth Office (Office Franco-Allemand pour la Jeunesse/Deutsch-Französisches Jugendwerk) with an annual budget of 40 million DM. Annual participation topped 300,000 and by 1997 five million students, around 70% of who were high school-age, had been exchanged. One analyst called it ‘the greatest mass migration ever.’ This generation in turn added another inter-governmental layer to the Franco-German relationship. In 1988 France and Germany concluded a series of bi-lateral cultural agreements including the creation of a joint High Council for Culture; an Ardenauer-de Gaulle prize (as the most prestigious of many prizes promoting Franco-German understanding); a structure to further facilitate university exchange and joint-degree programs, and most innovatively of all, the launch of an entire Franco-German TV channel. This channel—ARTE (*Association Relative à la Télévision Européenne*)—which went on the air in May 1992, included not only supportive feature programming but also news and weather from Franco-German perspectives. While the clearest result of the exchanges was more exchanges, there was a palpable political convergence between the two. French and German leaders who grew up during the exchanges can look to each other for cooperation and trust that their populations will tolerate cooperation in a way simply not possible in a certain European neighbour, just a channel’s breadth away but with far less exposure to these sorts of exchanges.

**Analysis:**

While the historical enmity between France and Germany presented a formidable obstacle to success, the post-war Franco-German exchanges were helped by underlying factors. First was the symmetry between the two countries. While each had threatened the other in the past, neither had an advantage in the post-war years; in fact both were in the same situation of recovery from humiliation in war and getting used to living in a world dominated by the United States and the Soviet Union. Secondly, there were a number of shared

ideological reference points which made exchange easier, from mayors in both countries who shared a vision of peace built upwards from cooperation between civic units, to the common culture of the church. Twinning ceremonies were regularly accompanied by church services and de Gaulle and Adenauer attended mass together. Thirdly, there were ulterior motives for the move. The exchanges gave France an opportunity to export its language—an on-going obsession—and West Germany had a mechanism for countering the internationalist youth propaganda aimed at its young people by East Germany. Finally, and paradoxically, the enormity of the challenge—the scale of Franco-German historical enmity—was a major impetus to addressing the problem. Must it take the death of millions to motivate a truly dynamic exchange program? This question should not diminish the achievement of the post-war exchanges, but simply place that achievement in context. This case shows how exchanges can snowball—especially when future leaders are specifically targeted—with the immediate post-war generation instituting the state-funded exchanges of 1963, and the generation brought together by that experience going on to conclude the agreements of 1988 and beyond.<sup>17</sup>

#### **4.5 *International Broadcasting: British management of U.S. isolation 1939–1941***

##### **Scenario:**

In the summer of 1940 the British Empire found itself alone facing the combined might of Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy. The war cabinet acknowledged that its only chance of survival lay in gaining material and eventually military support from the still neutral United States. Unfortunately, the U.K. had low credibility in the U.S. owing to its record of appeasement and the exposure of Britain's propaganda in America during the First World War. The U.K.'s assets included the infrastructure of U.K. international broadcasting, the arrival of a new, dynamic and half-American Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, and the relative cohesion of the British public.



### **The Campaign:**

The keynote of the British campaign against U.S. neutrality was to avoid anything heavy-handed and wherever possible to facilitate description of events by American voices rather than attempt to export British voices. Britain's broadcasting facilities were used to allow U.S. radio correspondents—most famously Ed Murrow of CBS—to report on the war. Murrow brought Britain's war into the living rooms of America. Re-tooled in the spring of 1940, the BBC North America service played a supporting role in the drama. Programming included material angled to appeal to American tastes but alien to British broadcasting, most notably a soap opera about life during the Blitz which was designed to dramatize the conflict for American women (a demographic especially linked to isolationist views). This program was rebroadcast on the content-hungry poor sister of American radio, the Mutual Network, within the USA.

The BBC emphasized the absolute credibility of news. Stories were reported whether or not they reflected well on Britain, and Britain escaped its reputation for propaganda earned during the Great War. The whole effort was helped by the willingness of Americans to 1) see the coming of Churchill as a new era in British politics; 2) the dissemination within the British and U.S. media of the idea that Dunkirk represented a clean break with the old Britain of class divisions and Empire; and 3) that a new wartime 'people's Britain' had emerged. Radio speakers, like J.B. Priestly, both expressed this view and, as regional voices, were representative of it. While Churchill's broadcasts were relayed to the U.S., they were largely crafted to avoid any direct appeal to America but rather to present the spectacle of a leader addressing his people and mentioning his hope that America would come to Britain's aid, which Americans could overhear and draw their own conclusions. The idea of overhearing was also present in a BBC radio co-production with NBC called *Children Calling Home* in which British evacuees in America were heard speaking to their parents in Blitzed Britain. The cumulative effect of this strategy was not to sell any particular British idea or war aim to America, but rather to promote an American identification

with the British cause. Polling revealed a gradual process whereby Americans did not so much reject their neutrality as came to believe that the survival of Britain was more important than preserving it, and this permitted President Roosevelt to take ever more explicit steps to assist the British. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was that Empire's response to the resulting mood in U.S. foreign policy and hence U.S. belligerence cannot be wholly separated from the story of British public diplomacy.

### **Analysis:**

The case of Blitz-era Britain is one of many examples of trusting that a foreign correspondent, once embedded with one's own population or forces, will be reporting from your point of view. More than this, it shows the value (also noted in public relations theory) of an indirect or overheard message having greater credibility than a direct appeal. Like a modern corporate re-branding/re-launch, it helped that the beginning of Churchill's premiership could be presented as a clean break with the past and the beginning of a new Britain, although there were obviously more political continuities than ruptures. It also helped that the British people were susceptible to the narratives of defiance and resistance that accompanied the Blitz and 'lived the brand.' Had a significant split emerged between the image and reality of Britain during these years, the impact on American opinion would have been severe. Later indications that Churchill himself might have ideas which ran against U.S. hopes for the post-war world (such as his unwillingness to 'preside over the break-up of the British Empire') produced tensions in the Anglo-American relationship. The bottom line is the effectiveness of the broadcasting channels especially in presenting a partisan perspective on the news and fostering an emotional connection to the British case, which was not present before the war but which was destined to long outlast it.<sup>18</sup>

## 5. Warnings from Five Cases of Failure

Before exploring failure to apply elements of the taxonomy of public diplomacy, it is important to note that the greatest failure is visited upon the state which neglects its public diplomacy, as has been the case in Israel in recent years. Israel's traditional policy of *Hasbara* (explaining) which served the state so well until 1967 has been little in evidence in the Second Intifada.<sup>19</sup> Israeli public diplomacy has focused on seeking to rally Jewish communities around the world to support Israel and maintaining the state's reputation before its one key ally—the United States—rather than seeking out audiences further afield. It is as if world audiences which were not already for Israel were assumed to be against it. This policy led to unnecessary 'own goals.' The damaging story of the so-called massacre of Jenin would have been prevented if the IDF had permitted journalists to accompany their advance. In the event the story was told solely from the Palestinian point of view. The Israel-Hezbollah war of June 2006 reflected many of the same problems, with the added dimension of a complete under-estimation of the difficulty of deploying hard power in the age of real-time TV. By any logistical metric of conventional war, Hezbollah lost, yet its struggle and civilian casualties were much more attractive to international audiences than the application of force and disciplined use of civil defence seen on the Israeli side. Hezbollah ended that struggle with its soft power much enhanced.

Once a PD policy has been put into operation, much can go wrong and there are clear examples of failure across the taxonomy of public diplomacy. The reader will soon begin to identify certain overlapping traits that mark many failures, the most common of which is an assumption that appearance and reality can somehow be two different things without the audience ever noticing.

## **5.1 *Listening*: The U.S. ‘Shared Values’ Campaign**

The usual problem with listening and opinion research in PD is that it either is not done, or that when done it is not fed into policy. During the Vietnam-era, Lyndon Johnson dealt with the decline in the international standing of the U.S. simply by cancelling the polls. Richard Nixon ended the practice of receiving a digest of editorials from around the world by asking that he only be sent editorials when he had made an important speech.

One of the most notorious failures of recent U.S. public diplomacy—the Shared Values campaign of 2001/02—reveals flawed listening. It was the brainchild of an Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy whose background at the highest levels of the advertising industry had taught her that no campaign could succeed without proper research and responsiveness to the audience. She initiated a TV and newspaper advertising campaign to show the Muslim world that Americans shared their most cherished values of faith and family and that Arab-Americans lived in prosperity amid tolerance. The campaign was thoroughly tested before and after delivery and always scored well. The problem was that it answered a question that no one was asking. Muslim hostility to the U.S.A was based not on an erroneous idea that Arab-Americans had a hard time in Dearborn, Michigan, but a fairly accurate idea of American policy in the Middle East.

The whole question of listening leads into the evaluation of public diplomacy, and thereby deep water. In a world where public diplomacy is judged by its short-term ability to ‘move the needle,’ the longer-term projects (like the use of exchanges) appear to contribute little while the short-term advocacy initiatives alone seem relevant. Attempts to evaluate cultural diplomacy can seem like a forester running out every morning to see how far his trees have grown overnight. Evaluators of public diplomacy must therefore maintain an awareness of the distortions that may proceed from their analysis. One obvious danger is to evaluate an international broadcaster by the size of its audience rather than the influence of its audience.

## **5.2 *Advocacy: The U.S. in Vietnam***

The United States invested an immense amount of time and money in advocacy around its war in Vietnam. The effort marked the all-time high in U.S. expenditure on PD as Washington worked to sell its Saigon clients to the Vietnamese people and sell its effort in South East Asia to the world. The essential problem with the campaign was that it relied on claims that were undermined by the wider reality of the war. The cluster bombing, search and destroy missions, mounting civilian casualties and GIs ‘destroying the village in order to save it’ proved more powerful than any protestation at a Washington press conference that the U.S. was fighting in the best interests of the Vietnamese people. No less significantly, the credibility of the U.S. presence in Vietnam was limited by the quality of its client regime in Saigon, which deteriorated with every Washington-backed coup or reshuffle. Both factors played into the rival claims to legitimacy made by the Communist enemy. The Vietnam War is the classic reminder that the best advocacy in the world cannot offset a bad policy.

## **5.3 *Cultural Diplomacy: The Image of the Soviet Union***

Throughout the Cold War the Soviet Union invested heavily in projecting its cultural image. Arts diplomacy, sports diplomacy, radio broadcasts, film exports and a massive international publishing operation were all used to build a picture of the Soviet state as a place which valued expression, cultivated excellence and tolerated diversity. Cheerful, colourfully costumed Soviet minorities were always prominent in any representation of Soviet culture. The problem was that these elements were present within Soviet cultural exports precisely because they were not typical of life in the Soviet Union. Moscow portrayed itself as it wanted to be, not as it was. The investment won admiration in the medium-term, especially in the developing world, but could not counter the reality of political oppression or economic decline so clearly revealed during the course of the 1980s.

### **5.4 Exchange: The Case of Sayed Qutb, 1948**

Advocates of public diplomacy frequently speak as though all that is necessary is for a foreigner to be admitted to the country on an exchange program for the scales to fall from their eyes and for understanding to dawn. This is not the case. While empirical studies suggest a strong correlation between exchange experiences and international understanding, there are important exceptions. Perhaps the most famous is that of Sayed Qutb, the Egyptian writer who spent 1948 in Colorado as an exchange visitor studying the U.S. education system. He was appalled by what he saw: consumerism and lasciviousness run amok. On his return to Egypt he became a founder of the Muslim Brotherhood and a major voice warning against the coming corruption of the west. Analysts of Qutb's career have argued that he held unsympathetic views about the U.S. before his exchange experiences, but it seems clear that the experience amplified these and perhaps motivated him to greater militancy. The fact that he had actually been to the U.S. also enhanced his credibility when talking to countrymen who could not dream of visiting. The role of the students from the 'Hamburg cell' in the 9/11 plot is a reminder of the danger that without support, the exchange student can draw the 'wrong conclusions' from a PD point of view and retreat into an echo chamber of prejudice rather than advance into a new understanding. The lessons of Qutb and Hamburg are that exchange students need support and monitoring, and that exposure to a country's culture may have unintended consequences. Intervention to improve the experience of exchange students and other visitors through visa reform, and even reminding the travel industry and citizen groups of their duties as host, would also mitigate the risks of an exchange having a counter-productive effect.

### **5.5 *International Broadcasting: British/Free French broadcasting to France in World War Two***

It is only to be expected that an international actor in possession of a mechanism for communicating to foreign publics as potent as international broadcasting will succumb from time to time to the temptation to distort for short-term gain, but messages spun in one year have returned to haunt their originator in the next. The French theorist Jacques Ellul cites the following example: During World War Two British/Free French broadcasts from London and Algiers blamed the food shortages on German occupiers requisitioning production for themselves, which was not happening. This created unrealistic expectations of the liberation of France and led to ill-feeling and unrest when the post-occupation government in France had to maintain rationing and proved unable to control inflation.<sup>20</sup>

## **6. PD in the Information Age**

The dawn of the information age and advent of ‘the New Public Diplomacy’ has brought with it both a spirit in some quarters that anything can be accomplished by public diplomacy and a certain defeatism among others who feel confounded by the proliferation of media of mass communication. This section will examine the extent to which new technologies transcend the PD lessons of the past or underline their enduring value. Examples of the power of this new technology to wrong-foot the powers-that-be abound, from the ability of a photograph from a cell phone to circle the globe and derail a carefully planned media event to the speed with which an SMS text message can be passed from person to person and rally citizens to a protest. The power of SMS was felt by the Spanish government in the wake of the Madrid bombings. When the government blamed Basque separatists for the attack, citizens passed word of a protest march in double-quick time by text and the resulting upheaval led to a turnaround in the expected result in the the Spanish elections just a few days later.

Treatments of the new public diplomacy always point to the recent changes in the world of international communication and especially the role of new technology. It is equally important to also consider the new demography and political economy which underpin contemporary international relations. International communication is not necessarily about CNN or multi-million-dollar cultural centers overseas. Any message that crosses a frontier is an international communication. A letter home from a family member working overseas or an encounter with a returned refugee is international communication, and one which might have more credibility for the recipient than a newscast from London or Atlanta. The potential for interpersonal international communication has increased exponentially as a result of the Internet revolution but also because of an unprecedented mobility of populations. In addition to the familiar categories of refugees and migrants (both documented and undocumented/illegal), scholars have identified an entirely new class of international person: the *ampersand*, workers who live in communities which exist simultaneously in both the developed and developing world and spend part of the year in each. Their hierarchies, institutions and social networks are the same in either country. These too are transmitting information and their communities can as easily be enclaves of American life in El Salvador as Salvadoran life in Queens.<sup>21</sup> While mobilizing both the digital and interpersonal connections to the ends of public diplomacy is a daunting prospect, small changes could have big results.

## 6.1 *Listening in the digital era*

One of the great clichés of contemporary PD is to speak of the ‘need to listen.’ Listening has to be more than a rhetorical strategy; it has to be visible. No International actor could sustain a foreign policy driven entirely by the whims of its target audience, but all actors would do well to identify the points where foreign opinion and its own policy part company, and work hard to close the gap or explain the divergence.



Beyond the basic courtesy of listening, the systematic integration of foreign public opinion research into public diplomacy remains the most important task in the digital era, being as neglected a field as it was in the previous epoch of public diplomacy. Advances in software and the proliferation of online source material (not least blogs) have made it possible to monitor online media in English in real time and other sources in near-real time. PD resources might sensibly be used to facilitate the development of monitoring software in strategic languages (Farsi is an obvious candidate). Such work can produce indices of success and failure, but more important yet is the qualitative research to actually identify the ideas emerging from the target audience.

In traditional public diplomacy the qualitative research function was usually the province of the public diplomat in the field: the press attaché or public affairs officer who knew the key editors and intellectuals and had his or her finger on the pulse of the nation to which he was assigned. That officer routinely fed back his responses into the policy mix and could argue against the use of a particular approach or bluntly suggest a new policy altogether. One feature of recent U.S. public diplomacy (especially in Iraq) has been an unprecedented emphasis on contractors to deliver key PD functions. In these cases the feedback is unlikely to suggest a different approach let alone a different policy; more typically, the contractor's feedback stresses success and recommends further expenditure with the contractor. This is a dangerous precedent.

The ideal PD structure would provide for systematic listening, research and analysis within each strand of public diplomacy, and ensure a mechanism to feed back results and advice into the administration of public diplomacy and back into the highest level of policy making. Since this is hard to achieve as it necessarily treads on toes—another approach would be to supplement enhanced listening on one's own side with enhanced speaking on the part of one's target: building the public diplomacy capacity of other nations. This is already happening in the area of nation branding and could usefully be extended though established mechanisms as educational

exchanges and targeted grants. The mechanisms of peer-to-peer media which offer an obvious new way for ‘us’ to speak to ‘them’ could be used to give ‘them’ a voice amongst ‘our’ public.

One recent case of foreign policy listening—albeit in a domestic context—is that of Canada’s posting of certain draft policy documents online to allow interested citizens to contribute to their development. The experiment brought a feeling of engagement and ownership on the part of respondents, and excellent suggestions and refinements to the policy documents so published.

## **6.2 Advocacy, from global real-time news to an ideas-based PD**

One core problem of contemporary advocacy is the disruption of old news boundaries and cycles. Not only is a message crafted for Kansas heard in Kandahar, but a message from Kandahar has circled the globe several times before Kansas is awake. The prime method adopted to counter this effect has been to move the advocates closer to their target audiences so they are responding in the same news cycle (a classic example being the eventual deployment of a coalition spokesman in Islamabad to counter the advocacy of the Taliban ambassador and spokesman Mullah Abdul Salem Zaeef).

This blurring of boundaries has led to a second problem, the penetration of domestic priorities into advocacy. This has produced messages for Kandahar crafted for Kansas and—to sustain the example—messages for Kandahar delivered with a public fanfare desired to impress Kansas with just how much was being done to win the war of ideas. There is no easy answer to this, but one is to accept that overly-public public diplomacy is counter-productive, and consider a model of advocacy based not on the advocacy of a state but of its policies and ideas. In an ideas-based public diplomacy, an idea, once cut free from its point of origin, is passed along peer-to-peer networks and reproduced in the traditional media. The attention of the advocate should therefore be applied to shaping an idea or argument such that it will become a *meme* (an idea, behavior, style

or usage that spreads from person to person within a culture) and be reproduced by others beyond the immediate reach of the advocate. Historical examples of the use of memes include a project in the early 1980s for U.S. public diplomats in the Eastern bloc to collate anti-Soviet jokes and then distribute these to posts worldwide so that colleagues could pass them to the local media or introduce them into conversation as they saw fit.<sup>22</sup>

The advocate can boost the credibility of an idea by working to associate that idea with the messenger who will give it most credibility, and to distance it from a messenger likely to undermine that credibility. For example, because of its link to the Global War on Terror, the U.K. has limited credibility as a messenger in many Islamic countries, so the British government might not be the best messenger for messages related to democratization, while the European Union (rather an under-utilized voice in public diplomacy but one through which the U.K. may legitimately speak) could have more credibility.

The corollary of an ideas-based PD is to recognize that PD is advanced not only by the creation of memes but also by the promotion of an environment that will best sustain those memes. This means that issues like media development and regulatory policy are an important facet of public diplomacy and should be planned in tandem with the rest of the PD approach.

A series of blogs created by the Dorset-based consultancy River Path Associates has shown that new technology can be an efficient way of advancing a priority idea within a PD policy. Examples include the British Council's funding of a live blog, 'the Daily Summit'—<http://www.dailysummit.net>—which opened proceedings at a number of summits to wider world scrutiny beginning with the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002. The blog became a place where conference participants and the world outside could converse and engage around the core issues. It received 150,000 hits and was cross-reported in the non-digital media, reaching a wider audience. The blog continued with dual language coverage, in Arabic and English, of the World Summit on

the Information Society in Geneva in 2003. The blog provided a mechanism by which the Iranian public could challenge their own government and speak for freedom of the media; journalists working for the blog presented questions from the Iranian blogosphere at the press conference given by the former president and current chair of the 'expediency council,' Mohammad Hashemi Rafsanjani. A River Path blog on Northern Ireland, <http://www.sluggerotoole.com>, provided a valuable space for cross-community political dialog.<sup>23</sup> Finally, the consultancy showed that a blog could advance the PD goals of a humble NGO by working with the European Network on Debt and Development to track the politicking around the appointment of a new president at the World Bank in 2005 (and the fate of the present incumbent) on a blog: <http://www.worldbankpresident.org>. The site has been a one-stop-shop for inside scoops and leaks, and brought otherwise hidden machinations into the light of day.

### **6.3 Cultural Diplomacy: Diasporas and the potential of the blog**

If cultural diplomacy is conceived in its most basic terms as an international actor's attempt to manage the international environment by facilitating cultural transmission across an international boundary, there are many ways to do this besides teaching one's language, organizing an exhibition or sending a play on tour. The obvious missing dimension is attention to the interpersonal level of communication and the people whose lives cross the international boundaries who carry messages whether international actors like it or not.

Two major groups which have been used historically for interpersonal work in public diplomacy are refugees and diasporas. During World War Two the British Council operated a home division to help refugees learn more about their haven. A generation of Poles and Czechs learned both the English language and English political values through British Council classes before returning to their homelands. They were fated not to be the vanguard of intra-

European understanding but an Anglophile rump beneath the yoke of Communism. The principle was, however, good. A happier outcome attended the use of the Italian Diaspora in the United States as a mechanism to communicate with the people of Italy during the vital election campaign of 1948. The State Department and Italian language press in the U.S. urged Italian-Americans to write home about the quality of life possible under capitalism, and the U.S. post office carried the letters for free. Millions were sent and were credited with a positive effect in a close-run victory for the Christian Democrats over the Communist Party. The effort inspired a general letter writing campaign by multiple U.S. foreign language minorities during the 1950s to explain the country's Cold War policy.

Today's equivalents of the Polish and Czech refugees and the Italian-Americans of 1948—asylum seekers and recent migrants—are not generally seen as an opportunity for cultural transmission, but merely as a welfare problem to be managed. At minimum the role of immigrants and migrant workers as a mechanism of international cultural transmission should be considered in the creation of policy towards them. Relatively simple reforms could make their life easier—short of the unrestricted immigration that they might wish for—enabling their access to low cost banking and international currency transmission facilities, for example, would both provide a valued service and stave off exploitation. The point of provision of these services—perhaps a secure Web site—might be the point at which other more focused ideological cultivation could be delivered. Reminding host populations and their opinion formers that their hospitality or otherwise affects the international reputation of their country would also help. Diasporic populations within the U.K. are the ideal subject for initiatives in relationship building and network-based public diplomacy. Such a project would require a rethinking of the domestic structure of the British Council, where work with diasporas in the U.K. has happened largely without central coordination.

The direct equivalent of the Italian-American letters home are the thousands of blogs which are written by ex-pats located in the

west and voraciously read in home countries. While the Cold War method of providing a crib sheet of politically valuable points is too blunt an instrument for our own times it is worth considering how western PD might assist the bloggers. One approach would be to consider extending certain privileges hitherto reserved for the press to prominent bloggers. Another would be to cultivate bloggers *en masse* by co-sponsoring a forum through the British Council. It would also make sense to see if there is software needed to facilitate blogging in less commercially viable languages which, if created by a public spirited body and made available as shareware, might open new channels.

The issue of empowering diasporas leads directly into the issue of connectivity in the developing world and the need to empower the people with whom the ex-pats wish to connect. While certain states show extraordinary levels of connectivity (Morocco has just passed the 50% mark), others lag behind. Connectivity alone cannot be assumed to guarantee sympathy for the society which created the technology, but the fundamentalisms which fuel the *jihad* thrive on stereotype and are implicitly challenged by multiple perspectives. Connectivity will help. One example of empowerment which might be applied by a cultural diplomacy agency is that of the digital ‘cultural points’ established by the Brazilian government in its poorest neighbourhoods. These provide the computer resources to allow the user to create his or her own artistic content and pass it on to a global audience.

#### **6.4 Exchange and online virtual worlds**

The potency of exchanges as a mechanism of Public Diplomacy is beyond dispute, but their implementation has been limited by budget and geography and by cultural barriers to participation of all members of society. One mechanism by which the proven benefits of the exchange and the new technology of the internet can be brought together is through the development of online virtual environments which allow geographically remote users to interact

in real time. Best known examples are massively-multiplayer online role playing games like the Tolkein-esque World of Warcraft (launched by Blizzard Entertainment in late 2004), but the scope of virtual worlds now extends beyond gaming to the essentially social environment of Second Life (launched by Linden Labs in 2003) in which participants meet, build, trade and interact in much the same way as they do in the 'regular world.' As of February 2007 World of Warcraft claims over eight million players world-wide.<sup>24</sup> In April 2007 Second Life had over 5,400,000 members and the number concurrent citizens in residence at any one time had passed 36,000.<sup>25</sup> Yet more significantly, in the first three months of 2007 the national origin of residents shifted from 50% American to around 30%. Linden Labs is in the process of adding an internet voice protocol so that residents will be able to speak to each other in the environment rather than just communicate by typing into message boxes. The obvious application of Second Life as a public diplomacy environment would be to create locations within the virtual environment dedicated to cultural exchange which advertise themselves as a space to encounter other cultures. One model might be a virtual World's Fair space with many countries displaying their cultural wares. Sweden has already opened an embassy in Second Life. Beyond this there is room for entirely new online environments and games designed with a public diplomacy purpose in mind like Peace Maker, which allows Israeli and Palestinian players to view their dispute through the eyes of the opponent rather than the self. Online games can be seen as the successor to the conflict resolution strategy of 'jigsawing' by which a peace maker divides the pieces of a puzzle between factions in conflict and thereby requires those factions to cooperate in order to complete the puzzle.

Public diplomats who venture into virtual worlds should do so with the same respect that they would bring to terra incognita in the 'real world.' Second Life already has its own mores and customs, and its own 'liberation front' with an agenda of opposition to corporate (and likely by extension government) exploitation of their virtual world. Activity in Second Life is likely to be subject to scrutiny, and

agencies with a firewall between themselves and central government like the BBC or British Council are likely to fare better than the FCO itself.

The next generation of software will greatly enhance the possibility for exchanges using not only virtual worlds but social networking sites like MySpace and Facebook. Google and Microsoft are well advanced in developing technology that will allow translation of spoken and written languages in real time much more effectively than anything that has been previously available. Again, one implication of this is to refocus the priority of the public diplomat on improving connectivity among target groups

### **6.5 *International Broadcasting in the era of YouTube***

International broadcasting has had its own set of challenges in recent years. Commercial channels now compete with the old state-based providers; new media offer both new mechanisms to access old services, and make alternatives readily available. While there is still a place for the traditional services, including shortwave services to those portions of the world with minimal Internet connectivity, international broadcasters need to respond creatively to the new world and guard against preserving old practices and approaches for their own sakes. One approach is to consider the objective of the particular international broadcasting activity. If it has a developmental objective, such as democratization, sustained broadcasting by an external surrogate might at some point stifle indigenous voices in the target country. The emergence of coordination between international broadcasting and development with bodies like the World Service Trust is a step in the right direction. It is also interesting to note that some international broadcasters allow their foreign language branches to act as *de facto* overseas bureaus for the local broadcaster in the target country.

One of the most encouraging recent developments is the rise of truly interactive programming in international broadcasting. The BBC World Service has led the way with innovative shows like



*Africa Have Your Say* in which the audience is both participating in dialogue and putting issues forward for future discussion. This program, which airs three mid-day hours a week, has become a major site for African self expression, with questions and comments coming in through direct calls, e-mails and SMS text messages. Programs generated by audience feedback include treatments of taboo subjects like suicide as well as the expected developmental agenda subjects like corruption and community relations.

As already noted, PD actors should not only deliver the right messages but work to create the right environment for those messages through promoting appropriate international and domestic regulatory regimes. Yet more basically, anything that the PD actor can do to promote the connectivity of his target audience, including investment in wireless projects, creation of internet-cafes, investment in workable real-time translation software or assisting with the acquisition of basic English skills, will help.

In the era of YouTube and the peer-to-peer revolution in digital media the relationship between the broadcaster and audience has been transformed. Each audience member has the ability to create and distribute their own content and operate as either a multiplier for the broadcaster's original message, or distort it beyond all recognition. One way to move into this new world is to conceive of the broadcaster as a *creator of content* who might actually lose complete control of that content before it reaches the end user, and to ensure that at least some of its regular content is made available in easily mash-able and/or shareable forms. Making the FCO's international news feeds available as YouTube posts would extend the reach of material that otherwise relies upon the editorial choices of potentially unsympathetic stations. Other obvious techniques would be to encourage the creation of YouTube films to advance particular goals through competitions organized by the British Council, BBC, DfID or even an FCO overseas post. YouTube films are a classic example of an Internet meme: once called into life the best will be passed around and have a life of their own.<sup>26</sup>

## **7. Conclusion: The Future of Public Diplomacy**

The foregoing analysis confirms the enduring significance of public diplomacy in international relations and the essential wisdom of the disaggregated British structure. It has separated the elements into a basic taxonomy of equally significant functions, but argued that the historically neglected listening function does deserve a special status as the starting point for public diplomacy. It has highlighted some of the present trends in technology and the international environment in which PD must work, and shown how the past can illuminate the road for those navigating this new world. The rise of the network society creates more opportunities than it closes for PD, especially if the public diplomat is mindful of the limitations of his or her craft and the necessity for thinking in terms of building relationships. These relationships, which transmit the ideas thought necessary for policy, must also carry back responses necessary to adjust that policy and steer towards a shared future.

This report has merely touched on the reserve of accumulated wisdom and experience locked in the past experience of PD. The field presently lacks a basic compendium of successful and unsuccessful cases which could be used as a 'Public Diplomacy Playbook' by its practitioners. Compiling such a work would be a straightforward task for the FCO and international partners to accomplish in conjunction with a willing academic institution. Sharing this accumulated experience would be an effective way of empowering those target countries whose PD voices could enhance the global conversation.

### Author Biography:

**Nicholas J. Cull** is Professor of Public Diplomacy at the University of Southern California where he directs the Master's program in Public Diplomacy. He has published widely on the history of public diplomacy, propaganda and the mass media. His books include *Selling War: the British Propaganda Campaign Against American Neutrality in the Second World War* (OUP, 1995), *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945–1989* (CUP, 2008) and most recently (with James Chapman) *Projecting Empire: Imperialism and Popular Cinema* (I.B. Tauris, 2009). Cull is also co-editor of *Propaganda and Mass Persuasion: A Historical Encyclopedia, 1500–present* (ABC-Clio, 2003). He serves on the editorial board of *The Journal of Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*. His current projects include working with Ali Fisher to create the Public Diplomacy Playbook called for in the conclusion of this report. The on-line version can now be accessed at <http://The-Playbook.com>.

Cull is British; born in 1964 and a graduate of the University of Leeds (BA 1986; PhD History 1992). From 1988 to 1992 he was a Harkness Fellow and visiting lecturer at Princeton University. He taught American Cultural History at Birmingham from 1992 to 1997, and from 1997 to 2005 he held the chair of American Studies at the University of Leicester. He is president of the International Association for Media and History and a fellow of the Royal Historical Society. He is married with three sons.

## Endnotes

- 1 Engagement between an actor and its own public is known in the United States as Public Affairs.
- 2 The key exploration of this idea is Jan Melissen, ed., *The New Public Diplomacy*, London: Palgrave, 2005.
- 3 See Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power*, New York: PublicAffairs Press, 2004.
- 4 <http://www.csis.org/smartpower/>.
- 5 Carter Review, December 2005, p. 8.
- 6 FCO Public Diplomacy Group to posts, October 2006.
- 7 See, for example Sun Tzu, *The Art of War* (tr. Samuel B. Griffith), Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1963, p. 145 [ch. XIII v. 4: ‘What is called “foreknowledge” cannot be elicited from spirits nor from gods, nor by analogy with past events, nor from calculations. It must be obtained from men who know the enemy situation.’]
- 8 The Persian argument was based on kinship in that in legend Argives and Persians shared a common ancestry through the hero Perseus. Argos remained neutral, though presumably not for this reason. Herodotus, 7, 150 see A. D. Godley, tr. *Herodotus*, Vol. III (Heinemann, London, 1919), pp. 459 and 461.
- 9 For work setting Cultural Diplomacy outside of Public Diplomacy (by restricting PD to the work here described as ‘advocacy’) see Harvey B. Feigenbaum, ‘Globalization and Cultural Diplomacy,’ 2001, Center for Arts and Culture at <http://www.culturalpolicy.org/pdf/globalization.pdf>.
- 10 The origins of exchange are thoroughly explored in Richard T. Arndt, *The First Resort of Kings: American Cultural Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, Washington DC: Potomac Books, 2005, ch. 1.
- 11 While the feedback of information from the audience to the actor has been part of sophisticated propaganda structures of the past—the Jesuits and the Bolsheviks were both masters of this—they did not listen to be transformed by the encounter. Their dialogue was a pedagogical technique to facilitate the audience’s acceptance and ownership of the ideas that the actor wished to communicate.
- 12 The exception here might be termed the RFE paradox. Radio Free Europe originally claimed to be funded by American citizens. In 1967 the press revealed the hand of the CIA, necessitating special legislation to allow overt funding to the station. Thereafter its reputation and listenership increased. While this may have been due to a change of guard at the top,

- audiences spoke of the prestige of the station having been enhanced by the revelation of its true sponsor.
- 13 The author's own position is that aid agencies need to be closely coordinated with PD and hence, in the U.K. example, DfID should have observer status on the U.K. Public Diplomacy Board.
  - 14 This analysis is based on the author's contact with PRS since 2005, including conversations with Ambassador Johannes Matyassy, Seraina Flury Schmid and Mirjam Matti.
  - 15 This case is based on the author's interviews with Ambassador Abshire (23 October 2006) and the NSC staffer who oversaw the campaign, the late Walter Raymond (12 December 1995).
  - 16 The fullest study of the exhibit is Eric J. Sandeen, *Picturing an Exhibition: The Family of Man and 1950s America*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995. For recent scholarship see Jean Black and Viktoria Schmidt-Linsenhoff (eds.) *The Family of Man, 1955–2001: Humanism and Postmodernism, A Reappraisal of the Photo Exhibition by Edward Steichen*, Marburg, Germany: Jonas Verlag, 2004. The catalogue—Edward Steichen, *The Family of Man*, New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1956—remains in print.
  - 17 A useful English language introduction to this story is Ulrich Krotz, *The Ties that Bind: The Parapublic Underpinnings of Franco-German Relations as Construction of International Value*, Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies, Harvard, October 2002, online at <http://www.ces.fas.harvard.edu/publications/docs/pdfs/Krotz4.pdf>; also Antoine Vion, 'Europe from the bottom up: town twinning in France during the Cold War,' *Contemporary European History*, II, 4, (2002), pp. 623–640.
  - 18 The classic treatment of this campaign is the author's own *Selling War: British Propaganda and American 'Neutrality' in World War Two*. Oxford University Press, New York, 1995.
  - 19 For a full exploration see Eytan Gilboa, 'Public Diplomacy, the missing component in Israel's Foreign Policy,' *Israel Affairs*, Vol. 12, No. 4, October 2006, pp. 715–747.
  - 20 Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, Vintage, New York, 1973, p. 77.
  - 21 This term was coined by Samuel P. Huntington in *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*, Simon & Schuster, 2004, pp. 204–213.

- 22 As these jokes had originated with hard-pressed Soviet citizens, the role of the US in giving an extra shove to distribution was easily obscured and the jokes took on a life of their own. Examples of bespoke memes include the creation and dissemination of rumours by Britain's political warfare executive in World War Two and various Soviet-era disinformation projects, the most famous being the 'AIDS is an American bio-weapon' rumour.
- 23 For a case study of Slugger O'Toole see Mick Fealty, 'Slugger O'Toole: The New Media as track Two Diplomacy,' in Joseph J. Popiolkowski and Nicholas J. Cull (ed's.) *Public Diplomacy, Cultural Interventions and the Peace Process in Northern Ireland: Track Two to Peace?* Figueroa Press, 2009, pp. 89–98.
- 24 By the end of 2008 World of Warcraft claimed over 11 million monthly subscribers.
- 25 By the end of 2009 Second Life claimed over 17 million members with spikes of over 75,000 resident at any one time. For up to date statistics see <http://dwellonit.taterunio.net/sl-statistical-charts/>.
- 26 This approach to viral and web 2.0 media was embraced at the very end of Bush administration by Undersecretary James K. Glassman in projects like the Democracy Video Challenge.