

SUMMER 2011

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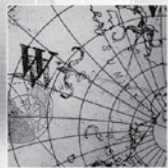
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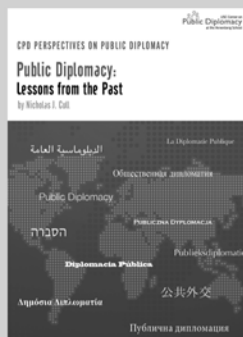
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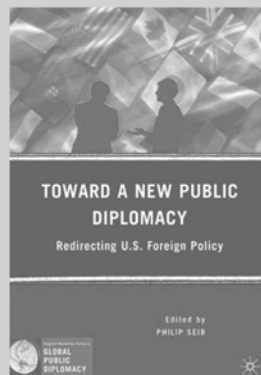
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## FROM THE EDITORS

Issue 6, Summer 2011

Welcome new and returning readers to the sixth issue of *Public Diplomacy Magazine*. This has been an exciting third year of production, made possible by the continued leadership of public diplomacy graduate students and support from a growing international network of scholars and practitioners. The outgoing editorial team is pleased to present this latest collection of articles and interviews focusing on international broadcasting.

In today's networked world, the communication tools that are utilized to document and illuminate the human experience are changing at a rapid rate. So too are the agents and structure of organizations that have helped deliver information since the invention of the telegraph. In seeking to make sense of such transformations, *PD* called upon various academic and professional experts to explain key factors that define modern-day forms of international broadcasting, in which media organizations must now take into account the voices of millions who are instantly connected to a vastly expanding universe of social media and digital communication resources. Unlike previous issues, we have expanded our "At Post" section to include an interactive array of interviews with current and former members of the Broadcasting Board of Governors to provide an engaging comparative perspective on our theme. We hope you enjoy the special insights that all of our contributors have so generously provided.

Since *PD* continues to remain primarily an online publication, we invite you to participate in collective dialogue and provide your feedback at [www.publicdiplomacymagazine.org](http://www.publicdiplomacymagazine.org). The outgoing team and I wish much success to the new editors who will undoubtedly guide *PD* to new levels of achievement.

Sincerely,

Mark Preston  
Editor-in-Chief

Senior Editors

Taleen Ananian  
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Melanie Ciolek  
Mariana Gonzalez Insua

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## TRENDS & DEVELOPMENTS

### Social Media & Business: Creating New Pathways in Diplomacy

**SIMON MAINWARING**

Business, much like sports and music, is one of the few “languages” that can bridge political, cultural and social barriers between nations and ethnic groups. As international trade expands and corporate brands become respected and consistent contributors to peaceful and prosperous societies, corporations can play an increasingly vital role in furthering international diplomacy.

Social media is rapidly advancing this new role of business. The tools of social media are connecting companies and their customers as never before, while at the same time allowing citizens to talk amongst one another to share their ideas, hopes and values. Facebook, Twitter and technology such as smart phones are dismantling the long-standing, hierarchical power structures through which consumers and citizens were told by top-down institutions and media monopolies what to think or how to behave. Now consumers and citizens can seamlessly talk among each other, aligning around shared values, causes or topics in ways that don’t necessarily support the status quo.

The good news is social networking tools are arriving at the same time that we are developing a heightened awareness of the crises we face in the world. The global financial meltdown of 2008 reinforced the extent to which our economies, cultures and lives are intimately connected. A spate of natural disasters such as the earthquakes in Haiti, Chile, and most recently in Japan, and the powerful citizen-led political revolutions throughout the Middle East are inspiring citizens and consumers to express their growing collective desire to live in a better world where governments and economic systems take responsibility for providing people with greater security, peace and prosperity.

Social media is facilitating new types of relationships between business and consumers that can help drive diplomacy in the

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coming years. In the marketing world, social media gives consumers new leverage to demand that corporations take on greater social responsibility in exchange for the profits they make from selling their products to a worldwide audience. For their part, brands are recognizing the value of using social media to connect directly with their customers and to ensure that they are relevant, meaningful and sharable within the social business marketplace. Within this mutually beneficial partnership, consumers are insisting on building a world based on new values (e.g. sustainability, prosperity and peace), and businesses are increasingly listening and responding.

A recent example of the power of social media in business was the *Pepsi Refresh* campaign. Started in 2010, Pepsi challenged consumers in the U.S. to identify worthy charitable projects that Pepsi could fund to the tune of about \$20 million. The company created a platform where anyone could list a charity that needed support and all consumers could vote on which cause they wanted Pepsi to support. The campaign attracted consumers by the millions raising the brand's awareness and earning them valuable social capital.

There is no doubt that in the future we will see more instances of consumers and brands working together for social transformation throughout the world. As brands seek to enlarge their global appeal, such projects will cross formerly sacred boundaries, involving consumers from many cultures, religions and nation-states all working together and aligned around shared values. Ultimately, when traditional diplomacy is struggling to win popular support or to generate tangible change on the ground, it very well may be that enlisting the support of brands and their consumer communities will be the most effective way to achieve that goal.

• • •

*Simon Mainwaring is the author of We First: How brands and consumers use social media to build a better world (www.wefirstbook.com). He is the founder of We First, a social branding consultancy that help companies build communities, profits and positive impact. He is a member of the GMI Digital Advisory Board, the Advisory Board of the Center for Public Diplomacy at the USC Annenberg School, AdAge's Power150 and is an Expert Blogger for Fast Company. Follow Simon on twitter: @simonmainwaring*



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# THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING

VOA and the BBC at a  
Crossroads. *As a User Says:*  
“Grab a Board and Catch a Wave  
– It’s Your Freedom in the end.”

**ALAN HEIL**

2011 is shaping up as a pivotal year in publicly-funded international broadcasting. The two giants in the field, the Voice of America (VOA) and the BBC World Service, are struggling to confront two realities. One is a technological floodtide that continues this year to gather speed, force and reach: the stunning and rapidly evolving ways audiences access news and information via new and social media and converse across national boundaries. Another is that governments in both the United States and the United Kingdom are under huge pressure from constituents to cut deficits. Hard choices loom for international broadcasting managements on both sides of the Atlantic.

This article will describe VOA in its 70th year, and how geopolitics, new technologies and programming may shape its future. The Voice is the largest U.S. government overseas multimedia broadcast network, reaching more than 123 million listeners, viewers and social media users worldwide each week. It does so in 44 languages (26 of these producing television programs) and is on the air more than 1,500 hours weekly. VOA is rebroadcast live or on a delayed basis worldwide by 360 affiliate radio or TV stations, some of them national networks. In Muslim majority countries, VOA’s reach exceeds 80 million people.

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In addition to traditional media, the Voice has a variety of state of the art delivery platforms. These include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, podcasts, short messaging services (SMS), email subscription services and partnerships with rapidly growing cell phone distribution networks. The annual cost of programming production: \$206 million. The VOA and its worldwide staff of about 1,200 managers, editors and reporters is guided by its legislative charter, Public Law 103-415, to be an accurate, objective and comprehensive source of news and to reflect U.S. thoughts and institutions in all their diversity, as well as U.S. policies and policy debates.

### **Geopolitical Factors**

The mass popular uprisings in Arab countries that caught the world by surprise earlier in 2011 have had a profound impact elsewhere on the planet. Authoritarian governments half a world away tremble at the thought that their citizens might be inspired by accurate, balanced, on-scene, timely reporting from the Middle East, beamed to their citizens by VOA and the BBC:

- In China, there has been stepped up blockage of foreign news websites. This has coincided with the tightest restrictions since 1989 on reporting by foreign correspondents of local protest demonstrations. VOA's Stephanie Ho was roughed up, and along with her colleague journalist Ming Zhang, detained by security police (some in civilian clothes) along with other foreign correspondents on February 27 as they covered protests in the heart of Beijing. A uniformed officer intervened to stop a man in plainclothes from hitting Ms. Ho after she had been shoved from the street into a nearby shop. The cameras of many others were smashed or their videos were confiscated. "Since the people's uprising in the Middle East," the *Washington Post* said in a lead editorial (March 7), "the crackdown has taken on a new ferocity." Hardened security surveillance of peaceful protests spread to Shanghai and other cities as well.
- In Russia, President Medvedev warned an audience of security officials in Vladikavaz about what he called "the direct impact" of the Arab uprisings on Russia, particularly in the northern Caucasus. He urged "preventive measures."
- In North Korea, officials tightened their control of information by snuffing out the relatively small protest gatherings in February and March to keep its people from being influenced by the pro-democracy activists in the Middle East.

- In Iran, an organization called the Iranian Cyber Army announced it had temporarily blocked the website of VOA's Persian News Network (PNN), and Iranian authorities increased jamming of RFE's Radio Farda. One of VOA's most popular programs is Parazit (meaning *static* in Persian, a reference to Iranian government efforts to jam PNN). The creators and co-hosts of the satire program, Kambiz Hosseini and Saman Arbabi, have appeared on U.S. media and Facebook, and recorded more than 20 million impressions on Parazit's Persian language page in January. VOA is by far the leading international broadcaster to Iran, reaching an estimated one out of five Iranians each week.

These examples illustrate the unique importance of what experts call "full-service global broadcasters" like VOA and the BBC. They are respected for their credibility and reportage of events in the world and regions they reach. They cover their own national news and information about culture, history, science, finance and civil society. In times of crisis, full service radio and TV programming merge in microseconds with new and social media to empower publics and stimulate debates and action in unprecedented ways. Media analyst Matt Armstrong says: "New and old media converge to become now media."

Professor Shibley Telhami of the University of Maryland, when asked about the sudden Arab awakening said: "In no time, it seems, peoples' fear of governments has become governments' fear of the people." "For decades," adds Middle East analyst Barbara Slavin, "politics in the Arab world has been frozen like a fossil in amber. The amber has shattered." Or in the words of an Egyptian blogger conversing with fellow bloggers via VOA's website, [voanews.com](http://voanews.com): "Grab a board and catch a wave — it's your freedom in the end."

### **New Technologies**

Rebecca McMenamin is director of new media at the International Broadcasting Bureau, a support organization for VOA. At a recent panel discussion on Capitol Hill, she volunteered a few examples of how social media can, as she put it, "help people navigate what is a lot of clutter out there" in this 21st century world of citizen journalists. Among Russian speakers, there were more than 13 million page views of VOA content last year and this is growing every week. In cases like Afghanistan and Somalia, McMenamin said, there are traditional radio markets and audiences. But text messaging in those countries is expanding quickly, too. In Somalia and the Somali diaspora communities, a quarter of a million users subscribe



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to VOA's Somali Service text messages. VOA's Indonesian Service reaches more than 20 million on TV and radio, with a Facebook fan base of more than 300,000. In Belarus, McMenamin reported, VOA's Russian service contacted a local blogger on Facebook. He toured the main square in Minsk and described the scene as police gathered moments before a major crackdown against protesters. According to the current annual budget request for VOA, there were at least a quarter of a billion page views of its 44 language websites in Fiscal Year 2010. The leaders were English, Vietnamese, Persian, Mandarin, Russian and Burmese. Departing VOA Director Danforth Austin has led the striking expansion into new and social media since he assumed charge in 2006.

More and more, carefully sourced user-generated videos and content are enriching VOA's reportage. In the aftermath of the March earthquake and tsunami in Japan, VOA English Service website editors mixed users' images from the scene with exclusive reports by correspondent Steve Herman and his minute-by-minute tweets. According to Matthew Baise, director of English web operations, page visits in the past year to VOA's English regional news programs to Africa grew by 137 percent, its newly-restored offerings to the Middle East by 102 percent, and to Asia by a record 92 percent. The Arab spring of 2011, the Ivory Coast governmental crisis, and the tragedy in Japan all drew many more web users.

### **Programming Impact**

Radio can be a riveting theater of the mind in the hands of skilled reporters. There have been the recent examples of this at VOA:

- VOA correspondent Margaret Besheer, covering the United Nations Security Council as the crisis in Libya erupted in late February, described "an amazing moment." That was when Libya's ambassador called on the Council "to save Libya." This was a stunning break with the Gaddafi government he had previously represented. The drama reached its climax after the envoy's remarks when he was embraced by his deputy, another defector from Libya, and the two broke into sobs as the Secretary General and other diplomats rushed over to congratulate and comfort them.
- December 2010, VOA's Mandarin Chinese language website carried the searing image of an empty blue and white chair. That was the vacant seat reserved in Oslo for imprisoned Chinese human rights activist Liu Xiaobo for his protests against a government that had prohibited him from traveling to Norway

to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. But the world didn't forget. VOA Mandarin Chinese reporters Nan Wang and Suli Yi were on the scene to file radio, TV and web reports about the ceremony. Somehow, they found time to send out 87 tweets, with news updates and photos. In just a few days, 172,000 people spanning the globetweeted back. In China, some opposition figures even altered their avatars to form the shape of that empty chair.

- In July 2010, seven months before President Mubarak stepped down, VOA Cairo bureau chief Elizabeth Arrott interviewed a prominent Egyptian scholar. He told her that Egypt's younger generation was restless. They were chafing at the arrest and torture of citizens by authorities, corruption in high places and very high unemployment. The scholar said they would either continue to accept their plight out of fear or decide to organize mass street protests like the ones that ended Mubarak's 30-year reign a few months later.

VOA broadcasters, using established and new media, can engage traditional audiences in conversations that could only have been imagined a few years ago. Simply by reporting the news objectively, broadcasting public service announcements or organizing mass town meetings on health issues or treatment of women, they can save lives and make a real difference to audiences. Recently, a suicide bomber injured scores of people in a crowded marketplace in the southern Afghanistan city of Kandahar. Immediately, VOA's Radio Ashna broadcast an appeal for blood donations to save the wounded. Dozens of local residents responded. And in Nigeria this year, VOA's Hausa Service is conducting a series of four town meetings on the benefits of girls' education in the largely Muslim north. These town meetings, cosponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development, have attracted high-ranking officials in Africa's most populous nation, including Muslim religious leaders. More than 3,000 people assembled for such a town meeting in Sokoto. These events are broadcast by VOA and reported in the local media, multiplying their impact many times over.

### **Back to Those Hard Choices**

In this year of destiny for the two major international broadcasters, lean budgets have the potential of taking a heavy toll. That is particularly the case in London, where the BBC World Service is forced by funding reductions to close five language services and eliminate shortwave radio in Mandarin to China, in Russian, and in Spanish to Latin America. BBC managers project huge audience

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losses globally. The World Service has 180 million radio listeners weekly worldwide, including about 85 million of them on shortwave.

By way of contrast, in Washington, the Broadcasting Board of Governors that oversees VOA, RFE/RL, Radio Free Asia, Alhurra TV, Radio Sawa (in Arabic) and Radio-TV Marti has actually requested a 2.5 percent increase in its overall budget for the year beginning next October 1. But the Board has recommended an end to all VOA television and shortwave radio broadcasting to China in Mandarin and Cantonese. This would shift all VOA Chinese indigenous languages on shortwave to the regionally-oriented U.S. station, Radio Free Asia. The Broadcasting Board of Governors terms this “a strategic realignment” aimed at looking to the future by expanding VOA Internet text, video and audio services and other platforms. More than half the VOA China Branch staff would lose their jobs. Critics say that such downsizing would greatly hinder production of content and interaction with social media users in China. Moreover, they note, the PRC is relentlessly expanding its Great Electronic Firewall to block information from abroad and only about a third of Chinese are online today.

The Board’s reasoning: heavily jammed shortwave reaches less than 1 percent of the Chinese audience. The BBG says reducing the VOA China Branch staff would save an estimated \$8 million a year, roughly 1 percent of the entire BBG budget. Efficiencies in consolidating managements and reducing administrative overhead at the five U.S. government-funded overseas network entities (VOA, RFE/RL, RFA, Alhurra TV/Radio Sawa and Marti to Cuba) might be an alternative. In any case, Congress will have the final say on proposed reductions. A new VOA director, former NPR, ABC and CNN correspondent David Ensor, takes office in June.

Some on Capitol Hill are advocating retention of traditional as well as new media in U.S. international broadcasting. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, an ex-officio member of the BBG, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in February, “Even though we’re pushing on-line, we can’t forget TV and radio because most people still get their news from TV and radio.” The Director General of the BBC, Mark Thompson, told a London conference (March 2) that he profoundly regrets the proposed BBC World Service cuts:

*“The future of news and information,” he said, “is intrinsically multi-platform, multi-device, and multi-media. No one medium, neither TV, nor radio, nor print, nor even the web are sufficient in themselves... those players who control or have an interest in multiple platforms are capturing the highest amounts of news consumption.”*

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The Defense Department’s former desk officer for China, Joseph Bosco, agrees:

*“The revolutionary events in the Mideast,” he wrote in March, “demonstrate that a picture can be worth a thousand tweets. Television and radio are still the most effective media to convey dramatic images and descriptions, as well as to provide in-depth discussion of contemporary historic events. They are also the only contact with the outside world for the millions of Chinese without Internet access.”*

Bosco noted that the Pentagon today spends billions of dollars to cope with new Chinese weapons systems. In this multimedia era, outlets like VOA and RFA by reporting events accurately, completely and objectively can, as Bosco put it, “help foster political reform in China for a fraction of the cost.”

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*Alan L. Heil Jr., a former deputy director of VOA, is the author of **Voice of America: A History**, Columbia University Press, New York, 2003/2006, and editor of **Local Voices/Global Perspectives: Challenges Ahead for U.S. International Media**, Public Diplomacy Council, Washington, DC, 2008.*

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# PERSPECTIVES

## Al Jazeera English in Focus

**PHILIP SEIB**

In the vastly expanded contemporary universe of journalism, Al Jazeera English developed with less fanfare than attended the first years of its parent, Al Jazeera Arabic. The news cacophony is louder and more distracting today than it was in 1996, when the Arabic channel was born. Having a lower profile worked to AJE's advantage as the channel's leadership sorted out issues of format, logistics, and management.

The lower profile is no more. With the Middle East revolutions of early 2011, Al Jazeera English established itself as the go-to site for breaking news. Even in the United States, where stodgy cable and satellite companies have refused to carry the channel, audiences found ways to watch it. AJE executive Tony Burman reported that as of February 3, traffic to AJE's live online stream had increased 2,500 percent, with 60 percent of that coming from the United States.<sup>1</sup> As the tempo of events in Egypt increased, so did AJE's viewership, on the air and online, reaching its peak when Hosni Mubarak stepped down on February 11.

Beyond this surge in prestige and audience, AJE's current and prospective role in journalism and politics deserves serious consideration. The channel's ambitions are significant, its achievements to date merit recognition, and its prospects are such that the channel could well become one of the world's most authoritative sources of news.

To understand the political significance of Al Jazeera English, it is important to recognize the historical importance and regional influence of its Arabic-language parent. AJE is very much a child of the Arabic channel, and despite its level of editorial independence, this relationship remains crucial.

When Al Jazeera Arabic first went on the air in 1996, few observers expected the channel to amount to more than a quickly forgettable publicity stunt by a country that most people could not

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<sup>1</sup> Tony Burman, "The 'Al Jazeera Moment'?" thestar.com (Toronto), February 4, 2011, <http://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorialopinion/article/933097--the-al-jazeera-moment>.

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locate on a map. That dismissive attitude, which was found mostly in the West, was built on the false assumption that the Arab television news audience did not care where its information came from. In reality, there was a hunger among Arab viewers for news about their lives that they could trust and in which they could claim ownership. For too long they needed to rely on the BBC, CNN, or other non-Arab information sources to tell them what was happening or else they were dependent on news programming tightly controlled by Arab governments, featuring dreary-looking broadcasts and “news” that only the most credulous would accept.

Al Jazeera changed all that. First, it looked different. With generous financial support from the Qatari government, Al Jazeera was able to feature eye-catching state-of-the-art production values that held viewers’ attention. More important was the content – an unprecedented expansion of pan-Arab journalism into topics that almost all other television channels in the region (with the exception of some in Lebanon) dared not address. By the time of the 2000 intifada, Al Jazeera had become the principal television source for news about Arabs reported by Arabs. Its coverage featured an Arab perspective, which some critics denounced as bias, but it was a slant that attracted and retained viewers.

As a result of the channel’s often fiery coverage, the emir of Qatar began hearing regularly from aggrieved neighbors, but Al Jazeera was rarely reined in. Subsequently, some Arab governments shut down Al Jazeera’s operations in their countries, a practice that continues today. In October 2010, the Moroccan Ministry of Communications withdrew accreditation from the channel’s staff in the country, citing a failure to follow “the rules of responsible and serious journalistic work.” The Moroccan authorities said that Al Jazeera’s coverage “seriously distorted Morocco’s image and manifestly damaged its interests, most notably its territorial integrity” in reports about Western Sahara, territory that is the subject of a continuing dispute between Morocco and the Algerian-backed Polisario Front.<sup>2</sup> A few weeks later, the Kuwaiti government closed Al Jazeera’s bureau in that country, accusing the channel of interfering in Kuwait’s internal affairs by reporting about a violent police response to a public gathering organized by the Kuwaiti opposition.<sup>3</sup>

Outside the region, the most significant government criticism of Al Jazeera has come from the United States, particularly during the George W. Bush administration, which objected to the channel’s

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<sup>2</sup> “Morocco Suspends Al Jazeera Operations Indefinitely,” Committee to Protect Journalists news release, <http://cpj.org/2010/11/morocco-suspends-al-jazeera-operations>.

<sup>3</sup> “Media Watchdogs Condemn Kuwait for Closing Al Jazeera,” Daily Star (Beirut), December 15, 2010.

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coverage of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, coverage that often emphasized the cost of conflict in terms of civilians’ lives. Nervous Western governments used the label “the Osama bin Laden network” to characterize Al Jazeera, a tactic that worked well among those who had never seen the channel’s newscasts and were ready to believe that it was part of an Arab terrorist conspiracy.

But in terms of audience loyalty, being perceived as an irritant to Arab governments and the United States did no harm to Al Jazeera. Attacks on the channel enhanced its credibility as an independent voice. Such controversies showed that Al Jazeera *matters*.

Perhaps most significantly, these varied factors contributed to an altered public sphere in the Arab world brought about by an “Al Jazeera effect” that extended beyond the Qatari news organization to numerous other regional satellite channels and then to Internet-based media that have empowered individuals and groups in unprecedented ways. “News,” which for so long had largely been a product of Arab officialdom, had become something that people were beginning to trust as being on *their* side, and therefore as a tool of intellectual liberation in a society that tended to frown on such.

After its first decade, Al Jazeera’s journalistic credentials and political influence were well established within the Arab world, but its reach was limited. To maintain and expand influence requires an audience that can grow. The direction for growth was clear. Only about 350 million people speak Arabic, but the most widely spoken language in the world is English.

With the channel so well known, and with its ambitions made realistic by its financial solidity, creating Al Jazeera English made sense. Understanding those ambitions is important. Put simply, Al Jazeera wants to change journalism, and by so doing, change international politics.

The two goals are closely related. Journalists who claim to have no political agenda are disingenuous. There is no reason to do journalism if your coverage has no effect. Whether the news story is about the failures of a local housing project or about global warming, the information journalists deliver should provide news consumers with knowledge that they can use to develop opinions and then act upon them. That is a political outcome. Critiquing governments’ performance has similar political ramifications. Wadah Khanfar, Al Jazeera’s director general said: “We have to challenge centers of power. When they are trying to hide facts, people should learn that governments from now on cannot brush away stories and cannot hide the truth....”<sup>4</sup> Few journalists would disagree with that.

By early 2011, Al Jazeera was moving forward with plans to

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<sup>4</sup> “Al Jazeera Now,” transcript of On the Media, March 26, 2010, [www.onthemediain.org/transcripts/2010/03/26](http://www.onthemediain.org/transcripts/2010/03/26).



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further expand its array of channels by creating Al Jazeera Turkish, Al Jazeera Swahili, and Al Jazeera Balkans. None of these would have as large a language-based audience as Al Jazeera English, but the expansion is evidence of the overall Al Jazeera mission to upgrade international journalism and purposely extend its own influence.

Al Anstey, managing director of Al Jazeera English, noted that AJE has a “shared heritage” with the parent Arabic channel; “We have the same DNA,” he said. He also said that this audience might be attracted by AJE being “comprehensive in our coverage of the Middle East,” adding that although plenty of other news organizations also cover the region extensively, audience members with an emotional stake in events there “don’t necessarily feel comfortable” with reporting by those without true grounding in the Arab world. In terms of having the credibility to build audience, he observed, the question may be viewers’ judgment about “which prism are we looking through?”<sup>5</sup>

The 2008-9 Gaza war coverage underscored the significance of the AJE prism. As the only English-language television news organization with crews inside Gaza, its reporting – replete with graphic images of Palestinian casualties, many of them children – was certain to find a receptive audience among those whose sympathies were with the residents of Gaza as well as those who were dissatisfied with Western news organizations’ coverage that came only from within Israel.

A case can be made that the Gaza coverage was simply good journalism, and any pro-Palestinian political impact was an unintended (although predictable) ripple effect. The Gaza story was a breakthrough for AJE in that its monopoly on on-site English-language reporting helped the channel build trust in its news product among an audience that was, because of language, familiar with Al Jazeera news only by reputation.

Al Jazeera was created partly to enhance Qatar’s public diplomacy, giving the state an identity that would be recognized by publics as well as governments, particularly in the Middle East. In a dispatch among the WikiLeaks documents released in late 2010, U.S. Ambassador to Qatar Joseph LeBaron wrote: “Al Jazeera’s ability to influence public opinion throughout the region is a substantial source of leverage for Qatar, one which it is unlikely to relinquish. Moreover, the network can also be used as a chip to improve relations. For example, Al Jazeera’s more favorable coverage of Saudi Arabia’s royal family has facilitated Qatari-Saudi reconciliation over the past year.” Al Jazeera denied that it had been used as a political tool in

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5 Author interview with Al Anstey, Doha, January 4, 2011.

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this way, stating, “This is the U.S. embassy’s assessment, and it is very far from the truth.”<sup>6</sup>

However, wielding influence is part of what Al Jazeera does, and it does so overtly. Al Jazeera has created a training center which works with journalists from underdeveloped countries and a Centre for Studies, which is a think-tank that focuses on geopolitics.

In the end, the story of Al Jazeera English comes back to the mission of journalism. The channel seeks to deliver a journalistic product that is based on a nontraditional worldview. As it showed during the first months of 2011, it is fully capable of covering the world’s most important events. This is a sign that the channel is maturing in ways that will accrue to its own benefit and that of its viewers.

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*Philip Seib is a professor at the University of Southern California’s Annenberg School and is Director of the USC Center on Public Diplomacy.*

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6 Robert Booth, “WikiLeaks Cables Claim Al Jazeera Changed Coverage To Suit Qatari ForeignPolicy,” *The Guardian*, December 6, 2010.

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## R.I.P., Broadcasting

**SHAWN POWERS**

In its current manifestation, the term “broadcasting” is relatively young, arriving only in the 1920s to describe transmissions originating from radio stations across Europe and the United States relayed to other states and nations without much specific direction. Originally an agricultural term, meaning to “scatter seed over a broad area rather than sowing it in designated places,” experts thought that it expressed the proper idea behind radio transmissions.<sup>1</sup> Due to developments in beam technology, in 1924 Guglielmo Marconi successfully tested Shortwave (SW) radio and introduced it to the world, firmly establishing “broadcasting” into the lexicon of global communications. Compared to medium- and high-wave broadcasts, SW broadcasts could be received thousands of miles away, using a relatively small amount of electricity. While the sound quality was not as good compared to the other waves, the potential to reach audiences in foreign countries sparked significant interest among governments. Importantly, the genesis of the term broadcasting is an important indicator of the strengths and weaknesses of the particular technological medium: one message, controlled by the broadcaster, disseminated broadly. While there are important uses for this type of communication, it is no longer a sufficient description of the expanded responsibilities for those who have traditionally been known as “international broadcasters.”

Broadcasting was to the 20th century what the World Wide Web has been to the 21st: both were revolutionary mediums enabling people, governments and organizations to communicate with others with more ease. Similar to the difficulty of predicting what will be the next revolution in communication mediums, communications professionals, to a large extent, didn’t foresee a world where broadcasting would no longer be the primary means through which global public communications would take place. Yet, we’ve entered an epoch in which a global communications infrastructure allows for the immediate transmission of digitized signals to be relayed and received from almost everywhere on earth. More importantly, not only are these technologies mobile and increasingly affordable, but unlike the radio receivers of the 20th century, today’s cell phones and laptops enable traditional “audiences” to beam their

<sup>1</sup> Hanson, Elizabeth C. (2008). *The Information Revolution and World Politics* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc), page 24.

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own messages with extraordinary reach, thus challenging the basic assumptions underlying the term “broadcasting.” To think of government-supported news and information organizations simply as international broadcasters intellectually and practically impedes their ability to adapt to the realities of the 21st century. This is not to say that no role exists for broadcasting in the current climate. To the contrary, in certain contexts and countries, unidirectional, simple flows of accurate and timely information can be critical, particularly in crisis situations. But the scope and talents of these networks need not end there. Indeed, there is tremendous value in engaging audiences in the news making and dissemination process, as the Al Jazeera Network has demonstrated in its world-class coverage of Egypt in February and March 2011.<sup>2</sup>

While one should never read a book by its cover alone, to deny the significance of the book’s jacket altogether is foolish. Similarly, while the terms used to describe government-sponsored communications are not the only element of international communications policy and strategy in need of reconsideration, to deny their importance as organizing principles for both those engaged in what has been traditionally known as “broadcasting” as well as what has traditionally been thought of as mere “audiences” would be shortsighted. There is a reason why National Public Radio changed its name to NPR, and why CNN’s Headline News is now, officially, HLN. In each case, the news organization grew out of its original descriptor, and while wanting to maintain brand recognition, it also wanted to shed the antiquated messages and/or mediums imposed on them from previous eras. NPR is no longer merely a radio broadcaster, but rather a multimedia news organization that fosters the relay of its audio shows and textual transcriptions of said shows, in addition to countless avenues for conversations on topics touched on through their programming. HLN is no longer merely a cable news channel focused on “headline news,” but rather a news organization that produces specialized programming presenting, with some level of interactivity, the softer side of the news. In both cases, the change in name, while symbolic, was meaningful in helping employees and audiences alike understand how each organization was adapting to the needs to a 21st century citizenry.

U.S. government-sponsored international news organizations—the Voice of America, Radio Free Europe (RFE), Radio Free Asia (RFA), Radio and TV Marti and the Middle East Broadcasting

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2 Powers, Shawn. (2011) “From Broadcast to Networked Journalism: The Case of Al-Jazeera English.” In *Histories of Public Service Broadcasters Online* (Eds. Brugger, N. and Maureen Burns). Peter Lang Publishing, New York.

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Network (MEBN)—are currently undergoing a strategic review.<sup>3</sup> While the focus of the strategic review includes each organization’s operations, and the overall structure and mission of American intentional broadcasting, it is unclear if it extends to the level of the symbolic structure and leadership—most clearly articulated in the title—of each organization. Even the body overseeing the networks, the Broadcasting Board of Governors, is steeped in the language of 20th century global communication flows. The underlying structure of global civil society has fundamentally changed for the better, and it is time that the overbearing structure of U.S. international news organizations reflected their interest and ability to engage in the current information ecology. This means, for starters, new names for the U.S. government- supported networks that draw from their extensive heritage while also signifying the dramatic change required of them to achieve their goals moving forward.

Instead of the Voice of America—the network most closely aligned and charged with, at times, airing an official explanation of American policies—why not the Voices of America, emphasizing the diversity and plurality of opinions represented in the American republic? As for RFE and RFA, why not something along the lines of the European and Asian Networks for Freedom, emphasizing their history in promoting free speech, expression and thought, while also embracing the organizing principle of the 21st century: networks.<sup>4</sup> MEBN, the youngest of all of the American-supported international news networks, is in need of the most dramatic reform, a topic that has been discussed in great detail elsewhere.<sup>5</sup> But it is also the network most able to benefit from a re-chartered outlook on news production for the 21st century. In no other regions have the burgeoning voices of the youth been so clearly aligned and amplified with new media technologies, as they have been in Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, Jordan and elsewhere where recent large-scale protests have

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3 Broadcasting Board of Governors, “Board Continues Strategic Review,” Jan 10, 2011 <[http://www.bbg.gov/pressroom/press-releases/Board\\_Continues\\_Strategic\\_Review\\_\\_\\_\\_.html](http://www.bbg.gov/pressroom/press-releases/Board_Continues_Strategic_Review____.html)>

4 Castells, Manuel. (2000). *The Rise of the Network Society*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell).

5 While Alhurra in particular has made strides in reform (for example, see: Broadcasting Board of Governors, “Quarter of Egyptians Tune to Alhurra During Recent Crisis, Feb 17, 2011 < [http://www.bbg.gov/pressroom/press-releases/Quarter\\_of\\_Egyptians\\_Tune\\_to\\_Al-hurra\\_During\\_Recent\\_Crisis.html](http://www.bbg.gov/pressroom/press-releases/Quarter_of_Egyptians_Tune_to_Al-hurra_During_Recent_Crisis.html)>), many have criticized the network as poorly structured and designed given the current news climate in the region. For example, see: USC Center on Public Diplomacy (2008). *An Evaluation of Alhurra TV*; Powers, S. & el-Gody, A. (2009). *The Lessons of Al Hurra*. In *Toward a New Public Diplomacy: Redirecting U.S. Foreign Policy*, (Ed. Seib, P.) Palgrave Macmillan, New York; Marwan M. Kraidy, “Arab Media and US Policy: A Public Diplomacy Reset,” Stanley Foundation Policy Analysis Brief, January (2008); William A. Rugh, “Broadcasting and American Public Diplomacy,” *Transnational Broadcasting Studies*, vol. 14 (Spring 2005); Marc Lynch, *Voices of the New Arab Public: Iraq, Al-Jazeera, and Middle East Politics Today* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).

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occurred. A network strategically enabled to tap into and encourage the responsible and thoughtful expression of opinions in the Middle East, using all of the different technologies available to reporters and citizens alike, would be a tremendous asset in a region that continues to be dominated by state and self censorship. Building on the plurality and diversity of the “Voices of America,” perhaps something along the lines of “Voices of the Middle East” would be an appropriate name for a network that emboldened, trained and curated underrepresented perspectives from around the region.

The practice of broadcasting is, of course, far from obsolete, as there will always be a need for quick and accurate flows of information from one to many. But it should no longer be the organizing principle by which U.S. news and information organizations see their mission, operation and mandate. If the current strategic review is to achieve the dramatic re-working of the traditional international broadcasters, then it is important to not only look at the micro processes underlying the day-to-day operations of news gathering and dissemination, but also the macro level structures and symbols that serve as the critical organizing principles of any organization. Put another way, we need to think less in terms of spreading our intellectual seeds from one to many, and more in terms of establishing, maintaining and building robust and authentic networks of knowledge for global citizens to engage with each other, our government, and civil society. R.I.P. broadcasting; long live networks of knowledge!

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*By Dr. Shawn Powers, Assistant Professor, Georgia State University;  
Associate Director, Center for International Media Education.*

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## International Broadcasting in the Social Network Era: New Allegiances in Deterritorialized Space Call for New Public Diplomacy

**OLIVER ZÖLLNER**

If we understand public diplomacy as an activity by state actors (and, in some cases, by non-governmental organizations alike) to foster understanding of a country’s “ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and current policies” (Tuch, 1990: 3), then international broadcasting appears as a tool well-suited to fulfill this task. Audiences the world over can tune in to radio and television programs produced in London, Beijing, Paris, Doha, Washington, and many more places – in their vernacular tongue or a global language of their choice. Thus the world could be a place rejoicing in informed debate, rational deliberation, and tolerant acceptance of other countries’ viewpoints and policies – and yet, as we all know, it is not.

### **International Broadcasting, Public Diplomacy, and Empire**

International broadcasting has its origins in colonialism and empire maintenance (or, if you prefer that other term, imperialism). In 1927/28, the Dutch Philips Corporation initiated broadcasts for expats in the Dutch East Indies – the first of their kind. Twenty years later, the newly founded Radio Nederland Wereldomroep (today: Radio Netherlands Worldwide) took up this discontinued tradition, this time including programs in foreign languages. Among the first broadcasting organizations to target audiences abroad in their home languages was the Soviet Union’s Radio Moskva (Radio Moscow), founded in 1929 as a straight propaganda service dedicated to glorifying the achievements of Communism. Germany started her Weltrundfunksender (Worldwide Broadcasting Station) in the same year. Shortly after the Nazis’ takeover of power in 1933, the station was renamed Deutscher Kurzwellensender (German Short-Wave



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Service) and became a propaganda instrument of that dictatorship. France's short-wave service Poste Colonial (Colonial Relay System) started in 1931 (its present-day successor organization is Radio France Internationale). The United Kingdom's British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) initiated its Empire Service in 1932; the service's first foreign-language broadcasts were produced in Arabic in 1938 in order to counter anti-British uprisings in Arabic regions of the British Empire (partly fuelled by German-backed propaganda programs). Towards the end of Empire, the service was renamed BBC World Service in 1965. Japan's Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai (NHK) was founded in 1926 and started its international services in 1935 amidst rising sentiments of aggressive hyper-nationalism and expansionism. The United States of America lagged behind in this airwave-bound game of international self-representation, propaganda and counter-propaganda, or generally speaking psychological warfare, forming her Voice of America only in 1942, in the middle of World War II.

With the onset of the Cold War, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty contributed to the ideological struggle with the Soviet empire, and the concept of "public diplomacy" developing in parallel in the United States as a tool of self-representation in a context of heightened antagonism (Cull, 2009). New adversaries in later decades encouraged the United States to form broadcasting services such as Radio/TV Martí, Radio Free Asia, Radio Sawa, Alhurra Television, inspiring other broadcasters to install similar services: e.g., the BCC's Arabic Television in 2008, a late second attempt to set up a British voice in the Middle East (after a failed first BBC attempt from 1994-96 led to the creation of Qatar-based Al-Jazeera satellite channel, a huge rival to any Western broadcasting endeavor in the Arabic-speaking world ever since its rise to fame in 2001); France's Arabic-language arm within its France 24 televisions operation; Germany's Deutsche Welle TV Arabia; or Russia Today's Al-Rusiya Al-Youm.

### **Soft Power, Strategic Communications and the Notion of Dialogue**

These sketchy (and profoundly abridged) outlines of the history of international broadcasting (following Briggs, 1985; Browne, 1982; Brunnquell, 1991; Zöllner, 2009) point to traces and traditions that linger on. Only very few audience members would not be aware of the goal of international broadcasts, regarded here as tools of public diplomacy to inform and engage people's hearts and minds, and therefore being about 'soft power,' or "the ability to shape the preferences of others" (Nye, 2008: 95). International broadcasting can be journalistic in nature, and in the best of all cases it is (the BBC World Service setting the standards for many others).

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In other cases it is very obviously not blessed by a journalistic, fact-gathering approach but rather plagued by an urge to convince and leave no room for second thoughts. But whatever the journalistic or propagandistic credentials of a broadcaster-as-public-diplomat, it is never truly impartial as topics covered by such an organization almost inevitably reflect its host nation's policy concerns and strategic interests – what might be called a structural partiality, or simply an example of "strategic communications" (Taylor, 2009: 14). This more or less top-down approach of broadcasting is reflected in the medium's monologic nature, which is in turn determined by its one-way technical apparatus. True dialogues of a symmetrical nature, where the roles of communicator and recipient are interchangeable and where messages are not necessarily bound to 'success' in the Habermasian way, are very hard to achieve via radio or television (Zöllner 2006). Against this background, international broadcasting as an instrument of public diplomacy is an expression of power not quite as 'soft' as Nye's term would suggest: it is about persuasion and attaining certain pre-determined goals; it "is no altruistic affair" (Melissen, 2005:14).

### **The Ascent of New Empires and New Technologies**

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, marked a symbolic turning point in world politics: the struggle between 'the West' and an 'Islamism' is, at its core, detached from a territorial reference that for the past 200 years has been called a nation-state; rather, it is about traditional territorially-bound hegemonic powers fighting new ideologies that are vague, decentric, and loosely organized, and yet easily spreading around the globe with the help of new media. This war of images and ideas (Kimmage & Ridolfo, 2007) leaves traditional public diplomacy and trans-border broadcasting organized by nation-states hapless, dazed and confused, or so it seems. The arrival of the new threat of adverse ideologies that are hard to pin down to some clearly defined territorial 'enemies', and their increasingly sophisticated use of Internet-based channels of communication, coincides with the slow decline of the old Western power bloc and the at times awe-inspiring ascent of new centers of power (e.g., China, India).

Times like these would call for a renewed awareness of the importance of some form of 'public diplomacy' as a forum of intercultural exchange on equal footing. However, it seems that what prevails with audiences around the world is an old, perhaps clichéd, perception of international broadcasting as government diplomacy pursuing national interests and hegemonic agendas:

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as an instrument of nation-branding or as a ‘voice of imperialism’. There seems to be a lack of credibility that is associated with public diplomacy and international broadcasting – a deficiency that only very few broadcasters have managed to stay more or less clear of (with the BBC World Service obviously playing in its own league as a journalistic role model, and Al-Jazeera being perceived as a trans-national, pan-Arab broadcaster rather than a Qatar-based station largely financed by an autocratic monarch).

Recent protest movements and popular uprisings in Iran, Tunisia, Egypt and elsewhere have highlighted the increased importance of deterritorialized, decentric, non-national systems of communication and mass-organization, that is, social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. With a bit of fancy, these Web 2.0 applications with their dialogic functions might be called the new ‘nations’ of the post-national era. This in turn calls for a new public diplomacy – and hence, a new conceptualization of what sort of instrument international broadcasting could be beyond a mere copycat-like insertion of Facebook and Twitter applications on broadcasters’ Web sites – which just makes them dependent of those new, post-national power structures embodied by global corporations of the Internet economy.

### **A New Public Sphere?**

As Manuel Castells fittingly remarked, the “implicit project behind the idea of public diplomacy” should be to “harness the dialogue between different social collectives and their cultures in the hope of sharing meaning and understanding” and to build a new kind of public sphere, or global civil society, “in which diverse voices can be heard in spite of their various origins, distinct values, and often contradictory interests” (Castells, 2008: 91). For the time being, it is doubtful whether the worldwide community of public diplomats and international broadcasters on the one side, and local activist movements and other exponents of civil society on the other, share enough common ground to bring this promise to life. The global civil society that would be so much in need of a truly ‘public’ diplomacy/ broadcasting service is as yet not part of the dialogic equation while the traditions of empire and propaganda linger on.

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*Oliver Zöllner is a professor of media economics at Stuttgart Media University, Stuttgart, and an honorary professor of international communication at the University of Düsseldorf, Germany. From 1997 to 2004, Zöllner was Director of the market and media research department of Germany’s international broadcaster, Deutsche Welle. This was accompanied by various teaching assignments at a string of universities from 1996 to 2006. Zöllner is the author and editor of several books on international communication and broadcasting research, some of them in English.*

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# PUBLIC DIPLOMACY SNAPSHOT: INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING

ANNA DAWSON  
JENNIFER GROVER  
MOLLY KRASNODEBSKA  
APARAJITHA VADLAMANNATI

Layout by Taleen Ananian

### BBC World Service

In more than 200 countries

**BBC**

**33 Languages**  
• From English to Azeri, Bengali, Somali, and Uzbek...

**3 Platforms**  
• Radio  
• Television  
• Online

**Sample programs**  
• *Heart and Soul*: explores all aspects of religion and spirituality, and asks how faith impacts the lives of people around the world.  
• *Women at War*: explores the impact of war on women and their families, featuring women in today's conflict zones.

### China Radio International

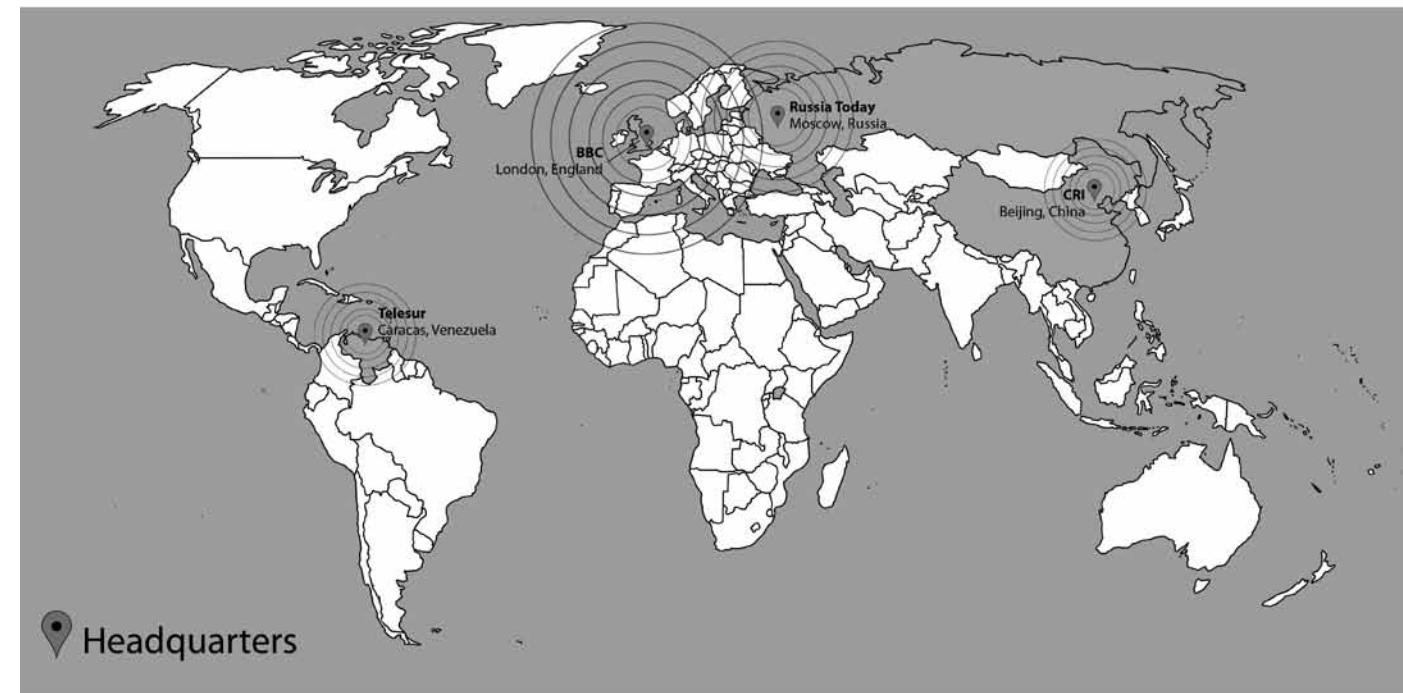
In nearly 100 countries

**CRI**

**56 Languages**  
• From English to Arabic, Hebrew, Kazakh, Serbian and Vietnamese...

**4 Platforms**  
• Print  
• Radio  
• Television  
• Online

**Sample programs**  
• *People in the Know*: publicizes views of Chinese experts and government, as well as leaders of foreign national and international organizations.  
• *Life in China*: platform for average Chinese people to tell their tales, whether it's children recounting their homework, or farmers talking about their spare time.



### Telesur

In nearly 100 countries

**telesur**

**2 Languages**  
• Portuguese  
• Spanish

**2 Platforms**  
• Television  
• Online

**Sample programs**  
• *Let's Meet*: provides information about Latin American countries, their culture, people, history and geography, showing the diversity of this region and discovering what we have in common.  
• *Synthesis*: weekly 30-minute tour through the most important headlines of the week in Latin America and the rest of the world.

### Russia Today

In more than 100 countries

**RT**

**4 Languages**  
• English  
• Arabic  
• Russian  
• Spanish

**2 Platforms**  
• Television  
• Online

**Sample programs**  
• *Adam vs. the Man*: gives the millennial generation a new voice and a new sense of empowerment.  
• *In My Humble Opinion*: weekly commentary devoted to events happening in and around Russia, covering the areas of politics, economic, business and society in the post-Soviet space.

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## AT POST

### Interviews with current and former members of the Broadcasting Board of Governors

#### **Former Governors**

**JAMES GLASSMAN**

**TED KAUFMAN**

#### **Current Governors**

**MICHAEL MEEHAN**

**S. ENDERS WIMBUSH**

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## James K. Glassman

### ***1. How does U.S. broadcasting advance public diplomacy priorities for the U.S.?***

My view has always been that U.S. international broadcasting is journalism with purpose, not, as many have argued, to burnish the U.S. image, but, rather to advance vital U.S. interests. Its stock in trade is accurate, credible journalism. And the purpose and power of such journalism varies by country and circumstance. In Afghanistan and Pakistan, it counters violent extremist propaganda. In Egypt and Yemen, it nurtures the democratic opposition. In the Balkans, it fosters ethnic and national reconciliation. In Nigeria and Rwanda, it eases inter-religious and tribal tension. In North Korea and Cuba, it reveals the folly and failure of command economies and dynastic rule. In Belarus and Ukraine, it exposes chronic corruption and cronyism. My interest in public diplomacy has always been to “move the needle” – that is, to have a real effect on the ground. With a weekly reach to some 165 million people in the languages they speak (59 overall), U.S. international broadcasting is doing that in virtually every global hot spot where U.S. interests are critically in play.

### ***2. What do you perceive to be the biggest challenge to U.S. international broadcasting today?***

There is absolutely no doubt that the problem is distribution. Absent interference such as radio jamming and Internet blocking (China, Iran, Ethiopia, et al), laws proscribing breaking news content (Pakistan, Turkey, Indonesia, et al), denials of local broadcast rights (Russia, Saudi Arabia, Syria, et al), U.S. international broadcasting easily would gain another 50 million listeners and viewers.

### ***3. What do you perceive to be the greatest area for potential growth or opportunity with U.S. international broadcasting today?***

Social media. Aggressive development of social media will fundamentally alter the broadcasting model -- to show that facilitating free discourse can foster freedom and democracy, the BBG's core mission, as much as exemplifying a free press, the agency's age-old paradigm.



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**4. Where are some regions where U.S. international broadcasting has been particularly successful? Where is it lacking?**

No two places have been more important to U.S. strategic interests over the last 10 years than Iraq and Afghanistan, and in both countries U.S. international broadcasting has achieved astounding audiences and impact. Total weekly reach in Afghanistan and Iraq is 65 percent and 72 percent respectively. And in both countries U.S. broadcasters are not only among the leaders in audience but are also top sources of news with excellent scores for news reliability. This is not to overlook Haiti, Zimbabwe, Burundi, Burma, Cambodia, Armenia, Serbia, Albania, and many more countries where U.S. international broadcasting is in a market-leading position. Yet when one considers the accolades U.S. international broadcasting has gotten, and rightly so, for its work during the Cold War, it amazes me that today's broadcasters, including those working for Arab-language Alhurra TV and Radio Sawa and Farsi-language Persian News Network, have been so little recognized for their efforts. The one region where the broadcasting has struggled, amidst stiff media competition, is Latin America.

**5. Besides the BBC, what are other international broadcasting networks that you think the US should look to as an example?**

Fellow Western broadcasters the BBC, Radio France International, Deutsche Welle, and Radio Netherlands Worldwide are all close colleagues and do excellent work. Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya would merit our admiration, especially for supporting the Middle East democracy movement, were it not for their penchant to turn a blind eye to pro-democracy activities within the countries in which they are headquartered, and for their too frequent incitement of pan-Arab nationalism and their reflexive criticism of Israel and the U.S.

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*Ambassador James K. Glassman is the founding executive director of the George W. Bush Institute, dedicated to research and action in four areas: education, global health, human freedom, and economic growth. The Institute is part of the George W. Bush Presidential Center, which will also include a library and museum on the campus of Southern Methodist University in Dallas.*

*Glassman served as Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs from June 2008 to January 2009, leading the government-wide international strategic communications effort. Among his accomplishments at the State Department was bringing new Internet technology to bear on outreach to foreign publics, an approach he christened "Public Diplomacy 2.0."*

*Prior to his State Department post, from June 2007 to June 2008, he was chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, directing all non-military, taxpayer-funded U.S. international broadcasting, including Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, and Alhurra TV. He continued to serve as a governor of the BBG, representing the Secretary of State, during post as Under Secretary.*

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# Ted Kaufman

## **1. How does U.S. broadcasting advance public diplomacy priorities for the U.S.?**

First of all, it is very important to understand that U.S. international broadcasting is not public diplomacy like the State Department global outreach programs. Yes, broadcasting reaches beyond the heads of national governments to communicate directly with overseas publics, and yes, broadcasting operates in a manner consistent with U.S. foreign policy objectives. But broadcasting's chief role is to serve as a free press, and to do accurate, credible journalism, and here it parts company with public diplomacy, which does advocacy. Broadcasting's "message" is its provision of fact-based news and information. What the U.S. government implicitly communicates to the world through broadcasting is that we stand for freedom of expression, that we uphold the inherent rights of citizens worldwide to receive and impart information without restriction. Indeed, research by the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) consistently shows that receiving reliable, relevant news and information is the number one reason audiences tune in. And I would add that the number one responsibility of the BBG is to safeguard the editorial integrity of the broadcasts against any party, including those inside our government that would seek to influence the coverage of the news and information.

## **2. What do you perceive to be the biggest challenge to U.S. international broadcasting today?**

U.S. international broadcasting, like all global media, has to accommodate the rapidly evolving relationships consumers seek to have with media. This means two things. First, broadcasting has to provide audiences with the content they want the way they want it. Audiences using shortwave broadcasts are disappearing; most receive their news and information through AM, FM, TV, cell phones and the Internet. This is a real challenge when the highest priority countries like China, Russia, Cuba, and North Korea can relatively easily block these transmissions. Secondly, broadcasting has to accommodate audience demands to share their own reports and their reactions and ideas. So, it's not just about the content broadcasting can deliver; it's also about the engagement broadcasting can offer. The global media environment today is about the democratization of

information. Traditional media mechanisms are not dead, even if many in the commercial sector are finding it hard to monetize their content. Great, well-sourced and edited content will always find an audience. But media outlets today have to share the platform with citizen journalists and bloggers. Everything changes when anyone with a mobile phone can film, photograph, and feed content on breaking events instantaneously into the global news stream.

## **3. What do you perceive to be the greatest area for potential growth or opportunity with U.S. international broadcasting today?**

In addition to meeting emerging audience demands for content and engagement that I just noted, I would highlight two major opportunities. The first is broadening service to underserved countries, and nowhere is this opportunity greater than in Africa. As a member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, I traveled frequently to Africa, where I have seen endless potential for broadcasting to serve populations in need of every kind of information imaginable. Certainly it's the news of the day, but it's also information on health, maternal care, education, micro-business, agriculture, science, technology, the list goes on. It is for good reason that nearly 40 percent of U.S. International broadcasting's worldwide audience is in Africa, but there is considerable room for growth in countries like Angola, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, among others. The second area of opportunity is breaking through almost complete government censorship to reach populations now denied knowledge by their governments. There are multiple offenders, including Iran, Russia, North Korea and Cuba. But the single largest violator is China. As a BBG member, I also made it a point to travel regularly to China. Every time I visited, I pressed the Chinese authorities to open up, allow Voice of America and Radio Free Asia to have more than token correspondents in the country, grant them access to local media to distribute their programs, and end jamming of radio signals and blocking of the Internet. While China has almost unfettered access to the U.S. market, U.S.-supported broadcasters have no access to the Chinese market. Penetrating the almost complete government censorship in China would yield new audiences, reaching upwards of hundreds of millions for people. And this is what the Chinese fear. But now, broadcasting's advances in developing tools for Chinese citizens to circumvent their government's blocking of the Internet may be on the verge of a significant breakthrough. We can only hope so.

## **4. Where are some regions where U.S. international broadcasting has been particularly successful? Where is it lacking?**

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During my tenure as U.S. senator, I held a hearing on broadcasting's impact that looked at two countries in particular: Iraq and Afghanistan. Broadcasting's reach and impact is global. There are many places where the weekly reach of broadcasting exceeds 20 percent of all adults, something unheard-of in the American media market. But Iraq and Afghanistan stand out because it is of course these two countries where the U.S. has been at war. Today, we look back at the Cold War and rightly consider that VOA and Radio Free Europe were vital contributing factors towards ending that conflict. We know from research done then and verified subsequently that VOA and RFE weekly reach rates in Eastern Europe averaged 20-30 percent while such rates were in the 10-20 percent range in Russia. In the "hot" wars of Iraq and Afghanistan, U.S. international broadcasting has consistently reached 60-70 percent of adults weekly. This is astounding success. To be sure, audience reach is not the sole gauge of impact. But considering that in both Iraq and Afghanistan, fledgling democracy has emerged and advocates of terrorism enjoy scant popular support, it is not unreasonable to credit broadcasting with making a significant contribution by sustaining accurate, credible news and information in the face of partisan and sectarian as well as extremist media outlets. Where success has been lacking in reaching significant audiences has been in places like Central Asia, as well as Russia and China. But this is due largely to severe restrictions on distribution. While citizens in many areas of the world have unprecedented access to information, many still do not enjoy this benefit, including those who do not generally have their own governments to blame. Nonetheless, wherever U.S. International broadcasting has clear access to the media outlets audiences use, it is successful.

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*Edward "Ted" Kaufman is a Senior Lecturing Fellow at the Duke University Law School. He was the Chair of the Congressional Oversight Committee of the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP). The Panel created to oversee the Treasury Department's handling of the TARP funds.*

*Kaufman was formerly United States Senator from Delaware, where he served on the Foreign Relations, Armed Services, Judiciary and Homeland Security Committees. He arrived in the Senate with significant experience, having served 22 years on the staff of United States Senator Joseph Biden, 19 years as Chief of Staff, and taught about the Congress at the Duke University School of Law and Duke's Sanford School of Public Policy for almost 20 years.*

*From 1995 until 2008, Ted was a Board member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), the independent, autonomous, federal entity responsible for all U.S. government and government-sponsored non-military international broadcasting. He was appointed to the BBG by the Presidents Clinton and Bush and was confirmed by the Senate for four terms.*

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# Michael Meehan

## **1. How does U.S. broadcasting advance public diplomacy priorities for the U.S.?**

U.S. international broadcasting was established on a simple idea – that the objective truth serves the national interest and is central to democracy and freedom. That idea continues to underlie our work. Today, U.S. sponsored broadcasts on radio, TV, the Internet and mobile devices allow populations to learn the facts, share their experiences, and become participants in a global community.

We give citizens in China, Vietnam, Iran, Burma and elsewhere access to news and information about what is happening in their own countries and overseas. We fight those who attempt to jam our signals or censor the Internet, with aggressive and thorough circumvention efforts.

U.S. international broadcasting also provides the kinds of stories that are censored or distorted within domestic media outlets. In the case of the political events in Egypt and the Middle East, for example, Radio Free Asia focused mainly on China's reaction to the demonstrations, including the government ban on news of the unrest as well as Chinese cyber activists' calls for similar demonstrations.

There are daily examples of local coverage that supports democratic ideals. RFA's Tibetan service provided extensive coverage of the exile elections beginning last year in May with broadcasts via the Internet, satellite television, and shortwave radio of a Kalon Tripa candidates' forum. Tibetans living within China's Tibetan regions also posed pre-recorded questions to the candidates during the forum. The event was part of a series of seven town-hall-style debates in Dharamsala and Bylakuppe, India, with general exile candidates, capping off eight months of interviews, profiles, and discussions about the race.

## **2. What do you perceive to be the biggest challenge to U.S. international broadcasting today?**

The speed of the changing communications platforms. We need to do more with less. We need to take a fresh look at the complicated organizational structure. Establishing a rational organization of our five networks would help us better use our limited resources. It is critical that we maximize our transmission resources, to build up our multimedia capability, in order to overcome

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the numerous external challenges of distribution to inhospitable countries, online censorship, threats to press freedom and jamming.

The rapid rise of cell and mobile phones is nearly equal to the drop in shortwave. We need to actively rethink our broad use of shortwave and use a greater mix of technologies that work for our audiences. If an audience doesn't use shortwave, we can't afford to cling to it out of historic idealism. In places where shortwave continues to be popular in Africa, and elsewhere, we remain committed to reaching our audience on that platform.

Over 20 million people visited VOA's website in March 2011. It is time to modernize the Smith Mundt Act and give us the latitude to engage our audiences in conversation with Americans and be unfettered in an era where our news products are widely available online.

## **3. What do you perceive to be the greatest area for potential growth or opportunity with U.S. international broadcasting today?**

The decentralized commercial news media worldwide does less and less original high quality reporting. The area for the greatest growth potential is audience engagement that capitalizes on our traditional broadcast platforms and outstanding journalism. We need to freshen programming to appeal to the large youthful audiences and integrate our radio and T.V. content more fully with the new social media, mobile and online tools.

We also have opportunities to better reach untapped markets with improvement of our distribution network. We are taking a careful look in places like Ethiopia and the Congo to see in what ways we can improve our reach and impact.

We helped VOA launch a new initiative using a cloud-based multimedia platform called Citizen Global. VOA's journalists are taking considerable personal risk to travel to remote villages and document the use of rape as a tactic of war in the Democratic Republic of Congo. VOA is creating a record of stories that would otherwise not reach the outside world. We are using new methods of acquiring content - marrying our traditional radio and T.V. journalistic content with citizen journalist accounts, eye-witness interviews and third-party crowd sourcing. VOA's **Congo Story: War, Women and Rape** helps end the isolation of victims by documenting the details of this tragedy in an interactive web platform that will help drive awareness and accountability.

The social media site includes other credible news sources, and reports and analyses from international organizations and research institutes. The moving documentary details gathered from this unique project will be shared across the VOA's traditional radio

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and T.V assets, online platforms and language services and made available to the other BBG networks. Once tested, this low-cost pilot project with crowd-sourcing, traditional journalism and social networking will be considered for future development.

#### **4. What is your top priority as a Board member this year?**

Giving our networks the tools they need to succeed in the marketplace is my first priority. We manage an incredibly complex global broadcasting operation. Some of our infrastructure is held together with proverbial duct tape and shoestring. I think most people understand that U.S. international broadcasting operates in both rudimentary and sophisticated media markets.

There is no way for us to successfully engage our audiences if we can't be on the platforms people use (F.M., T.V., Internet) or have the visual appeal of comparable news sources. To do so, we have to use our limited resources as efficiently as possible, update and integrate our systems, and take a fresh look at our programs vis-à-vis the interests of our increasingly youthful audiences.

We are planning to roll out a comprehensive strategy that encompasses organizational restructuring as well as actionable steps we can take on the ground to allow our broadcasts to gain new audiences and be successful in the field.

#### **5. How is U.S. international broadcasting currently taking advantage of new technology to advance its goals?**

As an organization, we are platform agnostic. We strive to be on the media that our audiences prefer. We don't have unlimited funds so we have to venture into new tools with existing resources. Our networks are having noteworthy success with SMS headlines in places like Afghanistan and Kenya and are exploiting social media tools in other places like Iran and Russia. Voice of America's Russian Service has rolled out a new iPhone app that does more than just deliver the latest news and information - it lets citizen journalists use their mobile devices to upload and share short reports, photos or video about key events in their target region.

RFE's Radio Azadi partnered with Afghan mobile service provider Etisalat to launch an interactive SMS news service allowing mobile phone users in Afghanistan to subscribe to free news updates and emergency alerts from the station. Five months after its launch, the new service has already attracted over 200,000 subscribers.

One of the most important ongoing efforts for us is the research, development and implementation of web anti-censorship tools. In a number of important markets for U.S. international

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broadcasting, such as China and Iran, our audiences face ongoing and sophisticated online censorship. The tools and techniques we have fostered through a collection of partnerships with outside organizations are critical to breaking down these "Great Walls" on the Internet.

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*Michael P. Meehan currently serves as President of Blue Line Strategic Communications, Inc. and as Senior Vice President at Virilion, a digital media company. He also served as the first President of BGR Public Relations, LLC. For over two decades, Meehan served in senior roles for U.S. Senators John Kerry, Barbara Boxer, Maria Cantwell and former Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, two presidential campaigns, two U.S. House offices and congressional campaigns in 25 states. Mr. Meehan earned a B.A. in political science from Bates College.*

*Meehan serves as Co-Chair of the BBG Communications and Outreach Committee, Vice Chair of the Board of Radio Free Asia and as Co-Chair of the Strategy and Budget Committee.*



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# S. Enders Wimbush

## **1. How does U.S. broadcasting advance public diplomacy priorities for the U.S.?**

Throughout U.S. international broadcasting's long history, the tools and goals have been consistent: delivering accurate, reliable and credible reporting that opens minds and stimulates debate in closed societies - especially where local media fails to inform and empower its citizens. The International Broadcasting Act finds that "Open communication of information and ideas among the peoples of the world contributes to international peace and stability and the promotion of such communication is in the interests of the United States."

Take a quick look at the recent coverage of the seismic events in the Middle East by Alhurra TV and Radio Sawa. You will understand that audiences there have come to rely on our broadcasters for even-handed and comprehensive coverage of the protests and upheaval as they unfolded.

From the beginning of the democratic movement in January, Alhurra and Radio Sawa's newsrooms received calls from opposition leaders and citizen protesters wanting to share information. Representatives of Egyptian opposition parties - including Wafd, Ghad and the Movement for Democratic Change - sought to appear on Alhurra because they knew people were watching and listening. Alhurra's coverage was quoted around the world, including by CNN and a leading regional paper Al Hayat, wrote that "Alhurra was distinguished for its live and continuous coverage of the protest..."

Results of a February poll of Egyptians in Cairo and Alexandria showed that 25 percent of respondents tuned into Alhurra to follow the uprising in Egypt. The telephone survey was conducted during the network's 18 days of live comprehensive coverage of the historic events in Egypt. This is a testament to Alhurra's excellent journalists who covered this story, despite threats against them. Our correspondents were in the streets of Cairo and Alexandria providing viewers with a firsthand account of the stories of the protesters and their unwavering desire for reform. Alhurra also brought the American perspective on the crisis; both the official Administration position as well as reaction from diverse voices throughout the public policy community.

Providing reliable, accurate and balanced news and information clearly fulfills our legislated mission and serves the interests of the United States.

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## **2. What do you perceive to be the biggest challenge to U.S. international broadcasting today?**

U.S. international broadcasting began in 1942 during World War II and has evolved over time through a series of initiatives framed by world events. While our mission is unchanged we are an assemblage of disparate parts that would benefit from a more rational structure that eliminates duplication and overlap and clarifies the distinct role of each network brand. We face the challenges of reaching audiences in authoritarian countries and engaging the world in conversation about democracy and U.S. policies and institutions.

We need the right content, to reach the right target audience, using the right technology. The world is infinitely more complex than when I was the Director of Radio Liberty in Munich in the late 1980's. It is our challenge to customize our broadcasts for each marketplace in order to be as effective as possible. This is no small endeavor and requires very careful research on the market conditions and audience preferences.

## **3. What do you perceive to be the greatest area for potential growth or opportunity with U.S. international broadcasting today?**

U.S. international broadcasting needs to reach critical markets in new ways and continue to combat longstanding obstacles of jamming, censorship and lack of distribution within authoritarian countries. When you look at all the planks of the mission of U.S. international broadcasting as defined by Congress, there are many markets where there are growth opportunities. In places like Central Asia, if we could secure local distribution, we could expand our reach and impact exponentially.

To be relevant to our audience we need to address the issues of concern to them. That may mean learning English or providing features on business, science, agriculture and health to improve their economic opportunities and well-being. There is a well documented youth bulge in the populations of the Middle East, South Asia and elsewhere. Our distribution and programming needs to be positioned to be accessible and appealing to them.

## **4. What is your top priority as a Board member this year?**

We began a comprehensive strategic review in September 2010 and its completion - culminating in a new Strategic Plan - is my top priority. We are actively engaging those within in our organizations as well as from noted outside experts for insights on the political and media factors shaping BBG broadcast environments,

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to understand current broadcasting strategy and effort, and to think expansively about future directions, not just for the next year or two but five years out and beyond, to the extent our data and analysis provide clarity.

As the Strategic Review progresses, the regional reviews is where the rubber will meet the road. Out of these assessments, specific strategies will begin to emerge. As noted in the initial guidance for the Strategic Review provided to the entities, BBG staff will begin a rolling write-up of findings from the regional looks as the foundation for the new strategic plan and will share drafts with all concerned.

From Cuba to China, we are making a careful study of ways we can be more successful.

### **5. How is U.S. international broadcasting currently taking advantage of new technology to advance its goals?**

As events have unfolded in the Middle East, it has been exciting to hear about a new wave of audience engagement with Radio Sawa and Alhurra TV, our Arabic language broadcasts. We also see the explosive popularity of VOA's satire Parazit with exponential growth of its fans on Facebook as the program is heralded as the "Daily Show of Iran."

At the same time, we can't forget that traditional radio and television technologies are overwhelmingly the preferred media in our broadcast markets. Of our worldwide weekly audience of 165 million people, just five million people are on new media. In a place like Iran, satellite TV is widespread and 94% of the population uses TV weekly for news, compared to 20% weekly use of the Internet for news. In Afghanistan, where U.S. international broadcasting reaches more than 35% of the population, weekly use of radio for news is 71% and 38% of TV for news is 38%. Meanwhile, BBG networks reach 38 million listeners via shortwave radio, concentrated in distinct markets (including Nigeria, Afghanistan, Burma, Ethiopia, and Zimbabwe). In the best of circumstances, our programming and distribution are reflective of the audience media use. This is as true for radio and TV as it should be for online and mobile platforms.

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*S. Enders Wimbush is Senior Director for Foreign Policy and Civil Society at the German Marshall Fund of the United States. From 1987-93, he served as Director of Radio Liberty in Munich, Germany. Mr. Wimbush has also worked for the Hudson Institute, where he was senior vice president, Booz Allen Hamilton, Science Applications International Corporation, the Rand Corporation as a consultant, strategist and analyst of international security issues, and for Runzheimer International as director of communications.*

*Earlier Mr. Wimbush directed the Society for Central Asian Studies in Oxford, England. In addition to dozens of policy studies for both the public and private sectors, Mr. Wimbush is the author or editor of seven books, including several authoritative histories of Central Asia and the Caucasus, and many articles on international strategy and security competition in scholarly, professional and popular media.*

*Mr. Wimbush serves as Chair of the BBG Strategy and Budget Committee as well as Chair of the Board of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc.*

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## CASE STUDY

# Struggling to be Heard: Australia's International Broadcasters Fight for a Voice in the Region

**ALEX OLIVER and  
ANNMAREE O'KEEFFE**

East Timor, or as it's officially called, Timor Leste, is one of the world's newest and smallest countries. It lies just 400 miles north west of Australia. During a referendum in 1999 to determine its independence from Indonesia, the website of Radio Australia was hit two million times by East Timorese and Indonesians seeking news from its bilingual service. Australia's then Foreign Minister acknowledged shortly afterwards the "value of Australia's international broadcasting activities in conveying accurate news and information to the region as well as providing an Australian perspective ... [it] is very much in the national interest."

Yet Radio Australia's efforts during the Timorese struggle for independence came after a period of great turbulence for the broadcaster; it had been threatened with closure in the mid-90s, and its budgets had been slashed by half. In response, the prime minister of another of Australia's near neighbors, Papua New Guinea, offered to return \$1 million in Australian aid to keep the Radio Australia service open to his country. The broadcaster ultimately survived and since then, Radio Australia has continued to provide a much-needed independent source of news in the region.

Radio Australia has been providing an international broadcasting service to the Asia Pacific region since 1939. In 1994, its efforts were complemented by the introduction of a television service to the region (now known as the Australia Network). But like Radio Australia, it has weathered periods of government hostility or neglect. Decisions on Australia's international broadcasting have been made, both by government, and within the Australian Broadcasting Corporation itself, on the basis of budget considerations, the

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competing claims of the services themselves and the imperative of maintaining domestic public broadcasting. Although the government has recently taken a more consistent and serious approach, the funding for both broadcasters falls well short (on a per capita basis) of their international counterparts.

But the periodically erratic resourcing of the past is not the only factor which has hampered Radio Australia and the Australia Network in their task of attracting and maintaining audiences and promoting Australia's interests effectively. Government and administrative struggles over the control and direction of both broadcasters have made consistency and strategic coherence elusive goals. This has compounded the impact of the low level of resourcing for international broadcasting and counteracted the benefits that would generally come from its longevity.

Australia's international broadcasters operate in a unique geopolitical environment. As one of the most prosperous middle powers on the globe, Australia occupies a privileged place within the Asia-Pacific region. Among its neighbors are the poorer and less stable nations of the Pacific and some of the most populous emerging economies in the world, like Indonesia, China and India and the developed economies of Japan, Singapore and Korea. This paradoxical position confers both opportunities and obligations on Australia: opportunities, because among those close neighbors are Australia's strongest and fastest-growing trading partners; obligations, because along with Australia's prosperity and unique situation within our region come responsibilities towards our poorer or unstable neighbors. Building trust, promoting understanding, and engaging these nations by projecting our image and generating interest in our culture, expertise, ideals and values can only benefit Australia's long-term interests. Aside from assisting them with our substantial aid program, promoting stability in the region fosters Australia's security and prosperity.

In this unique position, Australia must work effectively to project its views and manage its relationships with its increasingly powerful neighbors. However, Australia's resourcing of diplomacy has eroded damagingly over the last decades, and the impact on its public diplomacy has been acute. With the exception of a significant investment in educational exchanges (mostly through development assistance programs), Australia's public diplomacy is minimal, and consists largely of its investment in its international broadcasters.

The Australian situation contrasts starkly with the international trend of the last decade which has seen a massive expansion in government-funded international broadcasting as one of the primary tools of public diplomacy. Both potent and versatile, it is used to achieve a broad spectrum of public diplomacy objectives: providing

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alternative sources of information and ideas to countries without robust media systems of their own, communicating with diasporas, preserving languages, maintaining cultural diversity and projecting national identities.

While the global financial crisis has curtailed the budgets of some broadcasting nations (the BBC World Service has endured significant cuts, and America's international broadcasters have been threatened with belt-tightening measures), their consistent investments in the past decade have given them an edge in building strategic footholds in places where their international interests lie, including the increasingly pivotal Asia-Pacific. Undoubtedly, the international broadcasting landscape is undergoing rapid transformation. The market is becoming intensely crowded, and short-wave radio, once the staple of the government-funded broadcaster, is waning in influence. But FM transmission is rapidly gaining traction, and the information revolution has propelled the more sophisticated broadcasters into an era of multimedia ascendancy. Australia's international broadcasters have been operating in a policy and financial environment which has impaired their ability to keep pace with these transformative developments.

The resilience of Radio Australia and the Australia Network following their near demise in the 1990s suggests that Australian international broadcasters have the potential to further Australia's national interests in a strategic and beneficial way. Yet the anemic funding of public diplomacy in Australia demonstrates that Australian governments of all colors have a limited appreciation of its value in projecting Australia's soft power. Uncertain even of the appropriate corporate model for international broadcasting (privately or publicly managed) and hesitant to commit meaningful resources to it, Australia is unlikely to reap the benefits these tools can offer.

The value of international broadcasting—and conversely, the danger in not comprehending that value—was reinforced pointedly by Hillary Clinton in Senate testimony in early March 2011 when she argued that the U.S. was “in an information war, and ... losing that war,” particularly against emerging new broadcasters like Al Jazeera and China's CCTV. At the end of the Cold War in the late 80s and early nineties, Western nations, confident of a lasting peace, began to neglect the tools that had sustained them in the ideological war against communism. In the United States, institutions of public diplomacy and strategic communications were disbanded and foreign service hiring was frozen in what Defense Secretary Robert Gates called a “gutting” of the U.S.'s ability to engage, assist and communicate with other parts of the world. Other countries blindly tagged along. Then came 9/11, and the U.S., along with the rest of the West, was unprepared. Its international broadcasters like the

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Voice of America, Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe which had performed vital roles in the Cold War were losing credibility, hobbled by years of government cost-cutting. The West's voice to the world had gone quiet, precisely at the time when the information revolution was giving vocal power to a whole generation of non-state actors: individuals, NGOs, extremists and terrorist groups.

The first decade of the 21st century was spent rebuilding those tools of communication. The BBC World Service expanded aggressively with foreign language TV into the Middle East, Voice of America regrouped and powerful, well-backed new operators like Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya emerged. China stepped into the fray, reportedly committing over \$6 billion to its international broadcasting alone, through CCTV and international radio.

But there are signs that complacency is settling in to the West again, and there are serious concerns that inattention to the basic tools of public diplomacy will find it unprepared for whatever the world has in store for it next. Right after the BBC World Service was forced to announce deep cuts to its budget affecting even its Arabic-language services, Egypt and Tunisia evicted their Presidents, and the impact is reverberating across the Middle East. Both the BBC and Voice of America have announced that their Chinese language services will be cancelled due to budget pressures. The Republican-led U.S. House of Representatives just voted \$60 billion in budget cuts, with the Chairman of Appropriations dubbing them the "largest reduction in non-security discretionary spending in the history of the nation." Yet even Defense Secretary Gates has argued that America cannot simply "kill or capture its way to victory" and that its non-security efforts in persuading and inspiring foreign publics were pivotal in the outcome of the Cold War.

The recent events in the Middle East have surely reinforced the power of the media (new and old) to inspire, engage, and propel change. International broadcasters are just as important now as they ever were.

As a Western nation on the edge of Asia, Australia is neighbor to a couple billion people living in vastly different socio-economic conditions, with different religions and political systems. But while we ramp up aid spending in the region by doubling the aid budget over the next five years, we have sliced our public diplomacy budget in half and resource our international broadcasting services feebly.

In a region undergoing dynamic transformation, Australia will struggle to maintain an effective voice if it persists in its course of under-resourcing public diplomacy and international broadcasting. History shows that this is a dangerous course.

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*Alex Oliver and Annmaree O'Keeffe are research fellows at the Lowy Institute for International Policy based in Sydney, Australia. In 2010, they co-authored the Lowy Institute paper **International broadcasting and its contribution to public diplomacy**, a study commissioned by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation focusing on the international broadcasting operations of ten major broadcasting nations in North America, Europe, the Middle East and Asia.*



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# Transformation of Radio Taiwan International

**PHILIP WANG**

Faced with budget cuts, major media organizations such as Voice of America (VOA) and BBC World Service recently announced they will cancel their radio broadcasts in Chinese, among other foreign language services. They will shift their focus from shortwave broadcasts to digital channels such as the Internet and cell phone operations to serve their listeners.

For a number of years, Radio Taiwan International (RTI) has been focusing on shortwave and digital media at the same time.. Even though there is a worldwide decline in the number of shortwave listeners today, we see it is equally important to maintain our short wave services in mainland China and other regions in the world. The popularity of the internet services does not deter RTI from broadcasting on the short wave for many reasons. We have seen the example of the Jasmine Revolution in Egypt where the government cut off Internet access during the demonstrations. When that happens, shortwave broadcasting plays a crucial role in providing people with information from the outside world. Another reason is that Taiwan is strategically close to mainland China and our shortwave broadcasts, if not jammed or interrupted, can easily reach all regions of mainland China. Even though mainland China has opened up economically, it has not politically. Many mainland Chinese listeners still like to listen to programs from Radio Taiwan International, as described by a shortwave leading magazine *Passport to World Band Radio*, which compared programs of RTI as more “heart-lighted” than those of CRI (China Radio International).

In addition, one of the most important jobs of RTI is to disseminate information on Taiwan to our friends worldwide who are interested in this island country, most of whom are located in South America, Africa, the Caribbean, and the South Pacific. Many of the listeners in these regions rely very much on shortwave as Internet connectivity is still not as fast.

To serve elites and those who are comfortable with the Internet, RTI underwent a facelift on the Chinese webpage with a more user-friendly Web 2.0 version. The English Web 2.0 webpage will be launched this summer. Apart from Internet broadcasting, other channels such as mobile phone and IP TV (Internet Protocol

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TV) have also been launched to serve those who are interested in visual presentation.

RTI’s webpage can also satisfy the needs of intellectuals and young people who prefer online information and social networking. Our new webpage will have more audio-visual contents, which can be shared on Facebook, Plurk, Twitter and so on. More importantly, they will also be made available via podcasts, all of which are available within iTunes and can be easily downloaded. Podcasts are made available via RSS feeds as well.

The transformation of RTI in this digital era will certainly bring our listeners a brand new look and listening experience, especially as we face the transformation and innovation of media communications.

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*Philip Wang is the President of Radio Taiwan International. Mr. Wang obtained his master’s degree in history from Fujen Catholic University in Taiwan. Prior to serving as president at Radio Taiwan International, he had worked at a number of media outlets in Taiwan.*

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## IN PRINT

# Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty: The CIA Years and Beyond by A. Ross Johnson

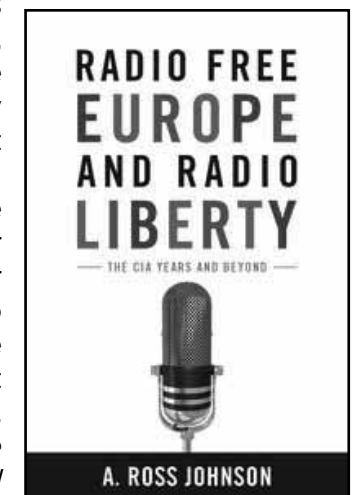
**Reviewed by  
JERRY EDLING**

Quick: when was the last time you listened to the radio, and what did you hear? If you can't remember, you're not alone. Radio is a background medium. It's something that's "on" while listeners are doing other things, whether they're driving to work with the window cracked on a traffic-snarled freeway or varnishing this year's home improvement project in the garage.

In the early years, Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty were "on" while their listeners were engaged in the Cold War. Far from being background media, these radio stations played critical roles in some of the most turbulent periods of world history. At times, they were the soundtrack to revolution. A. Ross Johnson's book *Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty: The CIA Years and Beyond* is their story.

The goal of this book seems to be to set the record straight about "the Radios," as they are called. RFE and RL are portrayed neither as grassroots efforts to fight Communism, financed by citizens and their "Truth Dollars," nor as fronts for covert action by the CIA. Government records, the author says, "tell a more nuanced story." Johnson writes:

*"The Radios were not the beginning but the culmination of efforts in the late 1940s and early 1950s to harness the*



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*talents of recent émigrés from the Soviet Union and Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe to promote the United States' national interests in the aftermath of World War II."*

Initially, he writes, the aim was to prepare émigrés for a role in restoring freedom to their homelands rather than employing them as communicators. As the title of the book suggests, Johnson does not gloss over the role of the CIA. Indeed, he argues that the Radios "would not have emerged without the initiative and backing of the Department of State and the organizational efforts of the Office of Policy Coordination and the CIA, of which it was a loose part." Johnson says the CIA not only was present at the creation but also kept the Radios from "being emasculated or closed down at some points throughout the first two decades of their history."

At the same time, RFE and RL weren't simply the mouthpieces of the Agency. Their origins lay in public-private partnerships. Take the Free Europe Committee (FEC), which was the organizing body of Radio Free Europe. Johnson writes that directors of the FEC saw fundraising "more as a way to gain public support for the FEC's efforts and to provide a cover for covert U.S. government funding than as a significant source of revenue;" and he states that the majority of funding for the Crusade for Freedom, which invited Americans to fight Communism with their "Truth Dollars," came from corporate contributions.

The book is at its best when it compares and contrasts the Radios' role in revolution. Johnson singles out Polish October, the Hungarian Revolution and the Prague Spring and subsequent Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 for close scrutiny. Polish October started with a demonstration by workers in Poznań for better economic conditions in 1956, and escalated into political protest and, ultimately, a revolt. Radio Free Europe urged moderation, working under the assumptions that Władysław Gomułka's reform regime offered Poles their best hope and that Polish Stalinists and the Soviets might try to incite violent protest as an excuse for Soviet intervention. Johnson writes, "The performance of the Polish Service during the dramatic days of October 1956 received high marks in RFE internal reviews conducted at the end of the year." By contrast, an internal RFE policy review rated many of the programs broadcast to Hungary during its Revolution that same year as "mediocre or worse." Some broadcasts to Hungary included anonymous exhortations such as "Safeguard Revolutionary Unity!" and "With Murderers There Is No Peace. Repeal Martial Law Immediately!" Radio Free Europe policy advisor William E. Griffith, who is quoted by Johnson, found the tone of the broadcasts "insufficiently professional, too emotional and too didactic."

Radio Free Europe has been accused of giving Hungarians false hope during the 1956 revolution by promising Western military

assistance, assistance that never materialized; but Johnson believes that is unfair. He says that allegation stems from a single RFE program: a review of the Italian press and an article in the London Observer that anticipated Soviet intervention. Johnson writes that two other stations – Radio Madrid and NTS Radio – mentioned military assistance from the West, and given the number of foreign and domestic Hungarian-language broadcasters during the period and the difficulty of reception through jamming, it is possible that listeners could have attributed those broadcasts to Radio Free Europe.

The lessons of Hungary paid off more than a decade later, during the Prague Spring and the subsequent invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Union in 1968. Once again, caution reigned. When the editors of two Czechoslovak newspapers visited the RFE building in Munich in July, for example, RFE managers urged the visitors not to publish a story on their visit. (One of the newspapers did anyway.) "There were two reasons for RFE's restraint," writes Johnson. "First, RFE management (like the U.S. State Department and most Soviet watchers of the day) believed (reasonably, but in the event wrongly) that small steps away from Communist dogma were less likely than bold reformist actions to provoke a Soviet crackdown. ... Second, RFE was determined not to repeat the errors it made broadcasting to Hungary in 1956." During the Soviet occupation, says Johnson, "both radios sought to keep their audiences informed while bending over backward to avoid even the appearance of encouraging active resistance to the Soviet invasion, fearing that it might end in violence." At Radio Free Europe, policy director Ralph E. Johnson ordered that he or his American staff approve in advance all commentaries on the invasion. At Radio Liberty, Policy Advisor Robert Tuck directed that all news features and commentaries "be checked by the policy office as soon as written and before broadcast."

According to Johnson, many listeners have wondered why U.S. government support for the Radios was ever concealed. His answer, in part, is that concealment was "initially justified on the grounds that the Radios would convey hard-hitting anti-regime messages to countries with which the United States maintained diplomatic relations and for which it could not assume responsibility." Why the CIA? As the Voice of America, which was the U.S. government's "official" broadcaster, expanded and fought "for larger budgets, it would have been impossible to justify to Congress and the public a second U.S. government-funded international broadcaster," Johnson argues.

RFE and RL were major players in the Cold War. This book portrays them as flawed, but valiant efforts to wield soft power during a particularly dangerous time in world history.

# NORTHWESTERN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS



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THE NORTHWESTERN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS (NJIA) IS AN ENDOWED, UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH JOURNAL THAT SEEKS TO EXPAND KNOWLEDGE AND RAISE AWARENESS OF CONTEMPORARY TOPICS IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS THROUGH PUBLISHING AND CAMPUS PROGRAMMING. THE JOURNAL PUBLISHES EXCEPTIONAL ARTICLES, PAPERS AND THESES SUBMITTED BY SCHOLARS, EXPERTS, AND STUDENTS OF RELEVANT DISCIPLINES FOR AN INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE.

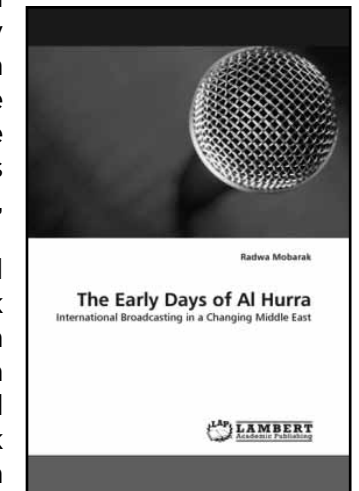
## The Early Days of Al Hurra by Radwa Mobarak

**Reviewed by  
APARAJITHA VADLAMANNATI**

Issues in the Middle East concerning American foreign policy have received prominence in the news in the last decade. Starting with the events of September 11, 2001, until today, 10 years later, the U.S. government has been working to win the “hearts and minds” of Middle Eastern publics in an attempt to better understand their cultures while projecting American values of freedom and democracy. One of the many tools used to promote these values has been international broadcasting.

In her book, *The Early Days of Al Hurra: International Broadcasting in a Changing Middle East*, Radwa Mobarak provides an in-depth analysis of the very beginnings of Al Hurra, America’s first television station to broadcast to Arab publics in the Middle East. Mobarak begins the book with a condensed history of broadcasting projects by mainly Western states in the Middle East. She then transitions into a case study focused on the first month of broadcasts by Al Hurra. She concludes that to make these endeavors successful in creating positive relationships, continued evaluation is necessary.

Starting with a history of international broadcasting in the Middle East, Mobarak gives the reader a solid background on how the U.S. and other governments began their broadcasts and how they determined what stories were worth telling. Mobarak details the reasoning of several European governments in initiating broadcasts to the Middle East before and during World War II. She states that broadcasts were a popular means of creating ties with the region for economic purposes and/or gaining support for their position in the war. Once the war was over, the world transitioned into a stand-off between the newly created superpowers – the U.S. and the USSR – during the Cold War. With the Middle East in a strategic military and economic position for the U.S. largely due to its vast quantity of



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petroleum, it was crucial to keep a competitive edge through public diplomacy. Though interest and investment in public diplomacy waned at the end of the Cold War, September 11th reminded officials of the need to restart efforts.

After presenting a condensed history of international broadcasting, Mobarak expands upon the substance of the book by introducing the reader to her case study focusing on the first month of broadcasts by Al Hurra. Mobarak positions her analysis of Al Hurra through the lens of “agenda setting” – the effects of repeating certain news stories and pieces to direct attention and form opinions based on repeated facts rather than the whole picture. In doing so, she was able to clearly analyze the intentions of broadcasts on the channel and evaluate audience perceptions.

Considering that the station was analyzed in its first month of inception, February to March 2004, Mobarak speculates that it might be biased toward U.S. policy. She instead finds that, though a majority of the content was focused on Iraq, it was surprisingly unbiased. Unfortunately, none of this mattered to the viewing public. Her research shows that the programs were rarely opinionated, but the general public perceived information from the channel as suspicious and as “American propaganda.” Nearly 70 percent of experts and 65 percent of the general public disagreed that Al Hurra would create positive images of America. Experts that Mobarak interviewed also denounced the channel as being a blatant scheme by the American government to force-feed American viewpoints, but they still watched to gain a “fresh perspective” and for “breaking news” due to the regularity with which headlines were aired every few hours. One of the most interesting points that Mobarak finds is that those who knew Al Hurra was funded by the U.S. government viewed it as a mouthpiece for American policy, whereas those who did not know, found the channel to be objective and balanced. The general public also found the programming to be more extensive and thorough than experts that viewed the channel.

Al Hurra clearly has far more critics than supporters in the Arab world due to the station launching directly as a result of 9/11 in the midst of the Iraq War, and receiving funding from the U.S. government. Yet, Mobarak indicates that this is only more reason for the U.S. to make concerted efforts to continue this project. America needs a space to not only explain itself but to also gain trust within the region and listen to local opinions. The statistics from 2004 may not seem promising, but possibilities to increase the credibility of Al Hurra clearly exist as indicated by figures showing that publics that do not know the station’s source of funding speak well of it.

It is critical to continue evaluating programs on Al Hurra to make sure that they can eventually be tailored to become more

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recognized in the region for their objectivity rather than for whether or not they are pro-Israel or pushing an American agenda. It would be interesting to learn whether, after seven years, the public views Al Hurra with more or less trust, or how the channel is perceived as an agenda-setter by experts in the region, especially after American intervention in the recent revolutions and announcements of pulling out of Afghanistan. It seems productive that scholars, such as Mobarak, continue evaluating American public diplomacy efforts like Al Hurra to make future projects more credible, to mend the old ones and to build stronger bridges between communities.



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## END NOTE

### In International Broadcasting, Even the Static Must be Credible

**KIM ANDREW ELLIOTT**

Early this year, the Voice of America, the often-overlooked U.S. government-funded international broadcasting service, relished the best publicity of its 69-year history. The high point of that publicity was the January 20th appearance on Comedy Central's "The Daily Show" by Kambiz Hosseini and Saman Arbabi, host and producer of "Parazit," the weekly satirical show on VOA's Persian News Network (PNN). "Parazit" (Persian for static, referring to Iranian interference targeting VOA satellite transmissions) is modeled after the "The Daily Show," except that Iranian life and politics are the objects of its humor.

Hosseini and Arbabi were warmly received by "The Daily Show" audience and by the host Jon Stewart, who said "I'm proud to be considered in the fraternity of humorists that you guys are in, and I'm honored to have you on the show."

The Daily Show appearance was just one in a stream of coverage for "Parazit." The show has also been covered in, or on, *The National* (Abu Dhabi), the *Washington Post*, *CNN*, Public Radio International's "The World," PBS "Frontline," PBS "NewsHour," and "Fox News Sunday."

The triumph of "Parazit" is gratifying to me because it provides belated support for the hypotheses of my Ph.D. dissertation, *An Alternative Programming Strategy for International Radio Broadcasting* (University Of Minnesota, 1979). The alternative strategy was in response to years of listening to the dreary talks, commentaries, and analyses that were the staple of international shortwave broadcasts. To a large extent, content that was suitable for print was simply read into a microphone. The result was very boring international broadcasting.

My alternative, or H<sub>1</sub>, was a more lively approach, something more suited to radio. Entertainment, I argued, could be part of the mix in international broadcasting because it helps to maintain the audience's attention.

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I occasionally injected humor on my own VOA program, "Communications World," 1995 to 2002. Though my bits were not nearly the caliber of those of "Parazit," they did encourage at least some listeners to keep tuning to the program.

With "Parazit" providing such good publicity for VOA, and supporting my old graduate school hypotheses, it is with trepidation that I discuss a possible downside. Almost all of the interviews with Hosseini and Arbabi appear to be based on the premise that the purpose of the program and therefore of VOA PNN, is to undermine Iran's government. As Chris Wallace said on Fox News Sunday, "Parazit takes on the regime by making fun of it."

As useful as entertainment programming may be to bringing an audience to VOA, VOA's main value is news that is more comprehensive and reliable than the news the audience gets from their state-controlled state media. To maintain an audience, and to ensure that every news item is believed, credibility must be the primary consideration for an international broadcaster. There is nothing wrong with (and I am sympathetic to) criticism of the Iranian regime. But, if "Parazit" is perceived as an anti-regime program, rather than just a humor program, the audience may wonder what the purpose of VOA PNN is. News and advocacy should be conducted by separate organizations.

While most of the interviews of the "Parazit" team were friendly, proceeding on the assumption that "Parazit" and VOA should prod the Iranian regime, this exchange on NPR's "On the Media," January 14, 2011, touched on the issue of credibility:

Kambiz Hosseini: *"We use dark humor and angry dark comedy because for me growing up in Iran, I felt a lot of suppression. That caused a lot of anger, not only for me, for my, my generation. Even though we are angry and we are a product of a revolution that we had nothing to do with, we're trying to manage to control this anger and try to talk to, to Islamic Republic government and say, dude, what you are doing to us is not right and we need our freedom back."*

Bob Garfield (interviewer): *"But it is a VOA show, so, literally speaking, you guys are agents of the government of the United States. How does that affect your credibility with your audience?"*

Saman Arbabi: *"We've earned our audience's trust because we've never taken sides with anyone. We've criticized Obama in the past. We've also criticized the*

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*Green Movement within Iran, the opposition leaders. So we've gained our credibility by just being balanced."*

If audience research (which can be conducted in Iran, or at least with Iranians abroad) determines that viewers perceive "Parazit" indeed to be balanced in its distribution of humor, no adjustments are required. If the viewers perceive the show to be anti-regime, VOA's credibility could be affected.

In that case, the solution need not be especially difficult. The "Parazit" team is no doubt capable of spreading the humor out a bit: more about the opposition groups when opportunities arise, and more about other countries, including the United States. This does not have to adhere to a quota system: President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and others in the Iranian leadership will provide the most fodder for satire.

Humor aimed at politics in the United States may raise eyebrows. Those with old-school, bullet-theory ideas of communication would ask, "Why would 'Parazit' want to make fun at the expense of the country that pays for the program?" Nothing would better demonstrate that "Parazit" is qualified to make fun of the Iranian regime than the fact that it, at least occasionally, and in a suitably bipartisan manner, also makes fun of events in the United States.

In the history of radio international broadcasting, there are occasional instances of humor. Charlie and His Orchestra of Germany's World War II radio broadcasts and "Warmonger's Monthly" on Radio Moscow's North American service in the 1980s both, predictably, aimed their invective at the governments of their target countries. They were trying, in vain, to drive a wedge between those governments and their citizens.

In 1967, Radio Sweden's English Service launched "The Saturday Show," an improbable and courageous departure from the usual international radio fare of that Cold War era. The program's humor was aimed at the panoply of nations, including the United States, Britain, the Soviet Union (woe be to the USSR when one of its submarines was detected beneath Swedish waters), and China. Most of the writing of host Roger Wallis and colleagues was, however, directed at the politics and society of Sweden itself.

While a graduate student in Minneapolis, I listened to "The Saturday Show" most Saturdays on my shortwave radio. After a few weeks of listening, it was my impression that Radio Sweden was a very independent station transmitting from a very free country.

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## RFE/RL's Voices of Solidarity and CNN's Freedom Project

On a smaller scale, another entity of U.S. international broadcasting enjoyed a burst of publicity. Again, it involved content that might make its audience wonder about the station's mission.

During the 2011 New Year's weekend, Radio Svaboda, the Belarusian service of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, broadcast "Voices of Solidarity." World leaders, including former President George W. Bush, former U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, former Czech president Vaclav Havel, read the names of all the hundreds of Belarusian activists jailed after the dubious December 19 election of president Alyaksandr Lukashenka .

In an editorial, the Washington Post wrote, "the gesture offered some needed attention to a country whose holiday season crisis has yet to prompt an adequate reaction from the United States and other Western governments." "Voices of Solidarity" was also praised in a blog of The Economist.

The event was a good idea, but the selection of RFE/RL to conduct the event was not a good idea. RFE/RL probably has the most substantial external, independent news service available in the Belarusian language. Radio Svaboda's listeners and website readers must know, without ambiguity, that RFE/RL is a news organization, not an anti-Lukashenka faction.

RFE/RL's credibility would have been subject to less strain if "Voices of Solidarity" had been conducted by Charter 97, or some other European NGO. Radio Svaboda could have covered the event, live, and almost in its entirety, cutting away just enough to let the audience know that RFE/RL, and not the event organizer, controlled the microphone.

Private U.S. international broadcasters have also blurred the line between advocacy (for good causes) and journalism. An example is: "The CNN Freedom Project: Ending Modern-Day Slavery." SAME PARAGRAPHQuoted in a March 7, 2011, press release, **CNN International managing director Tony Maddox** said, "The inhumanity of those who trade humans is truly shocking and should be stopped. Our coverage will spotlight not just those responsible, but the many courageous groups and individuals on the frontlines doing genuinely admirable work." Maddox also wrote, "CNN will use the full range of our international resources to track and champion this story."

There is probably no more commendable cause than the campaign against modern-day slavery. But should a news organization use terms such as "should be stopped," "genuinely admirable," and "champion"? Reporters do not "champion." They report. If the reporting on this issue is adequate, the audience will draw the obvious conclusions.

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## The BBC's uncomfortable place

In January 2009, the BBC was asked by the Disasters Emergency Committee in the U.K. to broadcast an appeal to donate to humanitarian assistance for residents of Gaza affected by Israel's Cast Lead military operation. At a time when there was much concern in Britain about the suffering in Gaza, this would have reaped public relations benefits for the BBC. The BBC, however, declined to participate. BBC Director General Mark Thompson said the decision was because of "a concern whether aid raised by the appeal could actually be delivered on the ground." Thompson then outlined what he called "a second, more fundamental reason" for the decision:

*This is because Gaza remains a major ongoing news story, in which humanitarian issues - the suffering and distress of civilians and combatants on both sides of the conflict, the debate about who is responsible for causing it and what should be done about it - are both at the heart of the story and contentious. We have and will continue to cover the human side of the conflict in Gaza extensively across our news services where we can place all of the issues in context in an objective and balanced way. After looking at all of the circumstances, and in particular after seeking advice from senior leaders in BBC Journalism, we concluded that we could not broadcast a free-standing appeal, no matter how carefully constructed, without running the risk of reducing public confidence in the BBC's impartiality in its wider coverage of the story. Inevitably an appeal would use pictures which are the same or similar to those we would be using in our news programmes but would do so with the objective of encouraging public donations. The danger for the BBC is that this could be interpreted as taking a political stance on an ongoing story. ... It is sometimes not a comfortable place to be, but we have a duty to ensure that nothing risks undermining our impartiality. It is to protect that impartiality that we have made this difficult decision.*

It was, indeed, "not a comfortable place" for the BBC. Five thousand protesters demonstrated in front of BBC's Broadcasting House in London. The Archbishop of Canterbury criticized the decision. Actors vowed to reject future BBC work. The BBC, nevertheless, did not change its mind.

The BBC World Service supports worthy causes, such as women's rights, HIV/AIDS prevention, and environmental

protection, through its independently and charitably funded BBC World Service Trust. In general, however, the projects of BBC WST are not incorporated into the programming of BBC World Service radio or BBC World News (the global English news channel). They are, instead, conducted through partners, including local media and NGOs in various countries. This arrangement allows BBC to be involved in virtuous international projects, while keeping the BBC world services out of the business of advocacy.

The international broadcasting of news, information-rich but message-free, may seem a sterile and heartless endeavor. It certainly is not a fast track to humanitarian awards. The work of international broadcasters who fastidiously adhere to the principles of journalism nevertheless serves the profound human need for accurate information.

...

*Kim Andrew Elliott, expressing his own views, is an audience research analyst in the U.S. International Broadcasting Bureau. From 1995 to 2002, he was producer and host of Communications World, a popular weekly Voice of America program about electronic media and international broadcasting. Before he came to the Voice of America in 1985, Dr. Elliott was on the faculties of communication at the University of Massachusetts and the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. He has a B.A. in international affairs from the George Washington University and a M.A. and Ph.D. in communication from the University of Minnesota. He reports on international broadcasting at [www.kimandrewelliott.com](http://www.kimandrewelliott.com).*

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