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THE ROLE OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY, PUBLIC AFFAIRS, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS IN STRATEGIC INFORMATION OPERATIONS

by

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June 2005

Thesis Advisor: Hy Rothstein

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Organizing for and conducting effective public affairs (PA), public diplomacy (PD), and psychological operations (PSYOPS) in support of national security objectives is a complex endeavor. In many instances, the desired psychological "effects" are contingent on the efficiency of the organizational structure conducting the programs themselves along with the development and dissemination of appropriate messages and themes. At the present, the USG's ability to influence on a global scale is deficient due to fragmented organizational structure and underdeveloped doctrine relating to strategic influence. Duplication of efforts, inconsistent themes, and the lack of a long-term, strategically focused, integrated information strategy have been inhibiting factors to American foreign policy success. This thesis will examine public diplomacy, public affairs and psychological operations, and look at how the U.S. Government (USG) has organized for and conducted strategic influence as it relates to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

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THE ROLE OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY, PUBLIC AFFAIRS, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS IN STRATEGIC INFORMATION OPERATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Organizing for and conducting effective public affairs (PA), public diplomacy (PD), and psychological operations (PSYOPS) in support of national security objectives is a complex endeavor. In many instances, the desired psychological “effects” are contingent on the efficiency of the organizational structure conducting the programs themselves along with the development and dissemination of appropriate messages and themes. At the present, the USG’s ability to influence on a global scale is deficient due to fragmented organizational structure and underdeveloped doctrine relating to strategic influence. Duplication of efforts, inconsistent themes, and the lack of a long-term, strategically focused, integrated information strategy have been inhibiting factors to American foreign policy success. This thesis will examine public diplomacy, public affairs and psychological operations, and look at how the U.S. Government (USG) has organized for and conducted strategic influence as it relates to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

Following the terrorist attacks on September 11th, the United States Government (USG) and the American people have wondered why we have been unable to effectively influence the majority of the population in the Middle East. Since that time, the government has struggled with the question of how to both organize for and effectively conduct a strategic influence campaign in support of the Global War on Terror (GWOT). Organizing for and conducting an effective strategic influence campaign in support of national security objectives is a complex enterprise. Synergizing the effects of the various tools for strategic communications is a pivotal element of any successful information campaign. Also, and no less crucial to success is the crafting of appropriate messages and themes relative to a particular audience. There are numerous reasons why a fissure exists between America and the Middle East: a broad cultural divide, political differences, and ideological incongruities, among others; nevertheless it would seem logical that a nation with the vast resources of the United States would be able to bridge the gap. However, the United States' present capacity to conduct strategic influence in the Middle East is hindered by a dysfunctional organizational structure relative to strategic information operations and an institutional reluctance to recognize or value strategic influence as an effective instrument of statecraft.

B. METHODOLOGY

Due to the complexity and, to some degree, the qualitative nature of the subject matter this paper will utilize several different approaches to aid in analyzing the organizational structure and inter-relationships of U.S. strategic information and influence components. First, this thesis will examine the three primary components of U.S. strategic influence: public diplomacy, public affairs, and psychological operations. Next is a look at various U.S. strategic information programs, their organizational structure, and the various changes in focus and policies from the beginning of the 20th Century to the present. Chapter IV will examine public diplomacy, psychological operations, and public affairs as they relate to Operation Iraqi Freedom. Finally, the conclusions and recommendations section will attempt to tie it all together and make suggestions as to how the mission of strategic influence can be better accomplished in the future.

II. AMERICA'S STRATEGIC INFLUENCE COMPONENTS

A. INTRODUCTION

Public diplomacy, public affairs, and psychological operations are essential components of our overall national security strategy (NSS). While all three elements play complimentary roles they have separate but relatively similar missions in the scope of an information campaign: to influence and shape perception, opinions and actions.

Since 9-11, the USG has had to almost entirely re-invent its strategic influence methodology and organizational structure to meet new information requirements. The complexity and ever-increasing scope of the information environment has created a dilemma for the United States Government (USG) in that the traditional methodology and application of strategic influence, as we know it from the Cold War, may not provide a practical means to significantly deter or influence. The proliferation of news sources, both satellite and internet-based has made it increasingly difficult to influence opinions and attitudes on a global scale.

The requirement for a symbiotic relationship between foreign policy and strategic influence has always existed. Coordinating the two requires a delicate balance of truth, half-truths, and propaganda. The effective implementation of strategic influence programs can, and should, be an enabling factor for achieving foreign policy objectives across a broad spectrum.

B. INFORMATION OPERATIONS

'Information Operations' is a relatively new term that describes the sum of various emerging technologies and information manipulation methods used in the conduct of, what was once known as 'information warfare'. The Joint Doctrine for Information Operations defines information operations (IO) as "actions taken to affect adversary decision-making processes, information, and information systems while defending our own"[1]. Information, as raw, unprocessed data, is an elementary ingredient of command, combat, communications, computer, intelligence, and information systems (C4I). When that data is converted into knowledge and perception, it becomes an important part of the commander's decision-making process. Information from sources such as the media influences perceptions and attitudes, and serves to shape ideologies. IO is a tool that seeks to influence that decision-making process. In its various forms, IO applies to the full range of military operations: strategic, operational, and tactical. Although the term 'information operations' has a technological connotation it also includes the employment of non-technical means, such as the exploitation of social and cultural factors or the use of less technical means of communication to convey information, to facilitate civil-military operations (CMO), psychological operations, or tactical deception.

Information operations, by DoD definition[2], consist of:

- Military Deception (MilDec)
- Psychological Operations (PSYOPS)

1 Joint Doctrine for Information Operations. Joint Publication 3-13. Chapter II. 9 October 1998. 4-7.

2 Ibid.

- Computer Network Operations (which includes Computer Network Exploitation, Attack, and Defense)
- Operational Security (OPSEC)
- Electronic Warfare (EW)

There are other components that loosely fall under the umbrella of Information Operations but are not considered 'core elements' or pillars of IO, those include: Public Affairs, Civil Affairs, Physical Destruction, and Public Diplomacy.[3]

There is a distinct difference between the elements of IO as defined by the DoD and what actually constitutes that which enables strategic influence. Noted author, Joseph Nye Jr., coined the term "soft power", which he describes as the "ability to get what you want by attracting and persuading others to adopt your goals."[4] Soft power is wielded or exercised in the form of strategic communications involving public diplomacy, public affairs, and psychological operations. Its scope is more strategic in nature in that its application is aimed at achieving political ends by exposing foreign audiences to American culture, democratic ideals, and market economies.

C. PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Public diplomacy as a tool for influencing foreign governments and populations has renewed importance for the USG given that it is now intimately involved in the GWOT.

3 Joint Doctrine for Information Operations. Joint Publication 3-13. Chapter II. 9 October 1998. 4-7.

4 Joseph S. Nye Jr. "Propaganda Isn't the Way: Soft Power". The International Herald Tribune. 10 Jan 2003.

According to the State Department, public diplomacy is an effort focused on advocating American policy and ideals to foreign audiences around the globe. The now-defunct U.S. Information Agency defined public diplomacy as "promoting the national interest and the national security of the United States through understanding, informing, and influencing foreign publics and broadening dialogue between American citizens and institutions and their counterparts abroad."[5] According to Hans Tuch, author of Communicating with the World, public diplomacy is an "official government effort to shape the communications environment overseas in which American foreign policy is played out in order to reduce the degree to which misperceptions and misunderstandings complicate relations between the U.S. and other nations."[6] Another definition of public diplomacy comes from Joseph Duffey, director of the USIA from 1993-1999, who stated:

> Public diplomacy is the studied attempt to understand foreign cultures and institutions so as to enhance the communication and advocacy of the national goals and interests of the United States. It is the active engagement in such communication, based upon study and analysis and thought. It involves exchanges, programmed visits, speakers, conferences, intellectual encounters, broadcasting and, most of all, strategic planning.[7]

Those elements engaged in the conduct of public diplomacy and concerned with its strategic depth must be cognizant of the targeted population or actors and the

5 "What is Public Diplomacy?". Internet. Available from http://www.public diplomacy.org/1.htm Accessed 5 April 2004.

6 Tuch, Hans. Communicating with the World. St. Martin's Press, NY, 1990. 3.

7 United States Information Agency, Public Diplomacy Forum, September 1998. Internet. Available from http://www.usia.gov. Accessed 13 December 2004.

environment in which they exist. Important elements that must be understood include, but are not limited to:

- Religion
- Regional politics
- Social structure
- Literacy rates and language
- Relationships between the government and its citizens
- Economic structure and viability
- Regional media influences
- Technology
- Education levels

Public diplomacy differs from conventional diplomacy, which seeks collaboration between governments, in that it attempts to cultivate universal perceptions and support between a nation and citizens of other countries by identifying its own institutions and activities with those citizens' interests. Public diplomacy uses various means of communication mediums to foster a shared understanding of American ideals and principles. A common or shared understanding, theoretically, promotes a greater sense of unity amongst various cultures and facilitates the accomplishment of foreign policy objectives. The USG attempts to exercise public diplomacy through the distribution of literary materials, sponsoring academic scholarships and exchanges programs, exhibiting American art and culture, broadcasting about U.S. values and policies in various languages, and transmitting news to

oppressed peoples who lack information sources other than those generated by a despotic government.[8]

From all appearances, public diplomacy seems like a rather benign informational component similar to public affairs. However, the significant difference is that public affairs is used to inform domestic audiences while the premise behind public diplomacy is to influence internationally, either in a subtle manner or through overt means. That doesn't mean to say that public affairs, by itself, is not an influencing factor on intended audiences, however, its stated purpose is separate from public diplomacy.

D. PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS

Psychological operations or psychological warfare employs specific techniques to influence audiences outside of the United States. PSYOPS are a component of information operations (IO) that conveys selected information to a foreign audience for the purpose of influencing behavior in support of military/political objectives. Because PSYOP messages are not intended to be either objective or comprehensive, its mission and organizational structure have been kept separate from public affairs and public diplomacy. When utilized correctly, PSYOPS can reduce the efficiency of the enemy's military forces, influence enemy commanders and political decision-makers, lower enemy moral and create confusion within their ranks. The Joint Publication for Joint

8 United States Information Agency, Public Diplomacy Forum, September 1998. Internet. Available from http://www.usia.gov. Accessed 13 December 2004.

Psychological Operations, JP 3-53, describes three categories of PSYOPS:[9]

- Strategic
- Operational
- Tactical

At the strategic level, PSYOP may include political or diplomatic positions, announcements, or official communications for the consumption of targeted decision-makers or those who influence the decision-making process. It could either be political leaders themselves or foreign populations. President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) in the 1980's is a good example of how strategic psychological operations, in concert with a well-planned and executed deception plan, can provide long-term, strategically-focused manipulation of another political entity; in this case the Soviet Union. By 'selling' the idea that the U.S. had developed a missile defense system that could defend American soil against intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) strikes, the Soviet Union, for all intent and purpose, bankrupted itself trying to counter the program thus ending the Cold War.

At the operational level, psychological operations includes the circulation of leaflets, loudspeaker broadcasts, radio and television broadcasts, and other means of transmitting information that may encourage enemy forces to defect, desert, or surrender. Continual attacks can magnify PSYOPS effects, accelerating the lowering of morale and further encouraging the breakdown of enemy forces. PSYOP messages, by themselves or in concert with

[9] Doctrine for Joint Psychological Operations. Joint Publication 3-53. 5 September 2003

military deception (MilDec), are crafted such that they directly or indirectly influence military operations within a specific area of responsibility (AOR). Operational-level PSYOP was conducted against the Iraqis in OIF in the form of e-mail and text messaging to regime military leaders that, in turn, translated into some sort of action by those units that rendered them relatively ineffective against Coalition forces during the initial attack to Baghdad.

At the tactical level, PSYOPS are conducted through the use of loudspeakers, printed handbills, as well as other means of conveying information to populations in a crisis region such as meetings between military commanders and civic or religious leaders. Although many of the tactical and operational PSYOP dissemination means are similar, their scope is different. In layman's terms, the three levels of PSYOPS can be thought of as increasing concentric circles (tactical to strategic). All three of these types of psychological operations are utilized to establish and reinforce perceptions of the United States' military and political resolve.[10]

E. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Department of Defense (DoD) possesses a very healthy information capability used to inform (and influence) foreign audiences during both peacetime and war. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (ASD/PA) is responsible for managing public affairs activities. The primary means of communicating with foreign audiences are through public affairs messages. Their messages should be conducted in concert with PSYOP

[10] Doctrine for Joint Psychological Operations. Joint Publication 3-53. 5 September 2003 I-4.

programs. The Department of Defense's public affairs programs are generally coordinated in accordance with the interagency process and are intended to support the Department of State's public diplomacy efforts.[11]

Public affairs in support of national strategic initiatives include news releases, public announcements, press briefings, official visits, defense-related web site production and maintenance, community relations, and regional command information programs. The primary purpose of public affairs within DoD is to provide current and accurate information to military commanders, their staffs, active duty and reserve military personnel, their families, as well as other audiences that include members of the U.S. Congress, their staff and the private media structure.[12]

The global media coverage that is provided by satellite communications makes the planning for public affairs more important than ever before. The reporting of news influences public opinion, which, in turn, affects the legitimacy of an operation or campaign and ultimately may determine its success or failure. Managing perceptions through a coordinated and comprehensive public affairs campaign is crucial to influencing overall public perception of political objectives or military operations. The development of an information campaign plan that can capitalize on both the ability of the media to influence domestic audiences and psychological operations to favorably influence public opinion and perceptions abroad is essential. However, and by directive, public affairs

11 Doctrine for Joint Psychological Operations. Joint Publication 3-53. 5 September 2003 ix-x.

12 Doctrine for Public Affairs in Joint Operations. Joint Publication 3-61. 14 May 1997. vi.

may not be used as a form of military deception or as an element of a disinformation campaign against either domestic or foreign audiences, nor can *"propaganda or publicity designed to sway or direct public opinion…be included in* [Department of Defense] *public affairs programs*."[13] Public affairs may not *"focus on directing or manipulating public actions or opinion"* and by directive *"must be separate and distinct"*[14] from psychological operations.

Public affairs contrasts with public diplomacy in that its aim is to encourage public awareness on the domestic front and gain support for government policies, activities, and institutions as well as to give an accounting of government management of public assets. The Department of Defense (DoD) claims to conduct public diplomacy through combined training exercises with foreign military's, official visits, officer exchange programs, and military contacts with foreign officials.[15] However, these definitions, as provided by the DoD, contradict the reality of public affairs. Information intended for domestic consumption has ramifications far beyond the border of the United States.

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13 Doctrine for Public Affairs in Joint Operations. Joint Publication 3-61. 14 May 1997.

14 Department of Defense, Principles of Information. DOD Directive 5122.5, Appendix A.

15 Ibid.

III. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

A. INTRODUCTION

Strategic influence is certainly not a new phenomenon and has been a significant factor in the successes (or failures) of empires throughout the ages. The United States has engaged in strategic influence campaigns in some form or fashion since its foundation; however it wasn't until the early 20th Century that America became a viable world power with the necessity to influence on a global scale.

In the first noteworthy 'American' global influence effort of the 20th Century, President Teddy Roosevelt's "Big Stick" diplomacy was embodied in the Great White Fleet[16] that sailed around the world from December 1907 to February 1909. The aggregate of the U.S. Naval warships that participated were given the name, the 'Great White Fleet', due to their bright white-painted hulls. The ships made port calls throughout the world with the purpose of impressing foreign leaders and reinforcing the impression that America had become a world naval power capable of projecting influence around the globe. During Roosevelt's presidency, public diplomacy or foreign affairs was a less complicated endeavor. Authority and decision-making were a much more centralized process due to a less cumbersome bureaucratic structure. The executive branch of government, unlike today, had a significantly greater amount of power in relation to its ability to make and

16 The Great White Fleet ordered to sail around the world by President Theodore Roosevelt from 16 December 1907 to 22 February 1909 consisted of sixteen new battleships of the Atlantic Fleet. The battleships were painted white except for gilded scrollwork on their bows.

execute policy, particularly in the realm of foreign affairs. This was partly a function of a simpler, less informed populace and a world where information flowed slowly to consumers due to technological limitations. Also, in terms of public diplomacy and foreign policy, the world geopolitical landscape was less complex than it is the 21st Century.

Unfortunately, throughout the last one hundred or so years, the U.S. has consistently struggled with the question of how to effectively organize for and conduct strategic influence or strategic psychological warfare. Between World War I until the present, there have been, literally, dozens of different organizations formed to study, conduct, or provide oversight for strategic influence and/or government sponsored-information programs.

Definitions of what actually constitutes our strategic influence capabilities have changed numerous times, organizations dedicated to conducting strategic influence have been created and then disbanded, and an integrated information and influence strategy has eluded the USG throughout the past one hundred years. In order to understand how we should organize for and conduct strategic influence programs in the present it is first necessary to take a look at how that mission has been accomplished in the historical context.

B. WORLD WAR I

In 1917, following America's entry in to the 'Great War'[17], then President Woodrow Wilson instituted the Committee of Public Information (CPI) for the purpose of swaying public opinion in support of the war against Germany. The CPI, also known as the Creel Committee (named after its fiery chairman, George Creel), utilized every available method to shape public opinion and garner support for the U.S. entry into the war. Creel, with a reputation as a controversial muckraker, reached out to the entertainment and advertising industries to help with the development of a number of sophisticated propaganda techniques. In his 1920 memoirs entitled *How We Advertised America*, Creel declared the following:

> …[the] war was not fought in France alone…it was the fight for the minds of men, for the 'conquest of convictions', and the battle-line ran through every home in every country…It was in this recognition of Public Opinion as a major force that the Great War differed most essentially from all previous conflicts. The trial of strength was not only between massed bodies of armed men, but between opposing ideals, and moral verdicts took on all the value of military decisions. …In all things, from first to last, without half or change, it was a plain publicity proposition, a vast enterprise in salesmanship, the world's greatest adventure in advertising…"[18]

Creel's most famous endeavor in the realm of propaganda was the concept of the "Four-Minute Men". The program consisted of a number of speakers, trained by the CPI, who would go into movie houses or other public

17 The term "Great War" refers to World War I (1915-1918).

18 Creel, George. "How We Advertised America". (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1920) 3-9. Internet. http://www.historytools.org/ sources/ creel.html. Accessed 28 September 2004.

gathering places to espouse concepts such as the purchase of Liberty Bonds, donations to the Red Cross, or enlistment in the Armed Forces. The speeches themselves were relatively short; approximately four minutes in length, hence the name. According to CPI's records, roughly 75,000 'Four-Minute Men' (and women) made a total of 7,555,190 speeches between 1917 and 1918.[19]

C. WORLD WAR II

The Second World War provided the first valid examination of U.S.'s ability to manipulate the information environment. At the beginning of the war, the USG and the War Department lacked the necessary organizational structure for conducting an integrated influence campaign of any substance. In the mid-1930's, strategic influence and information warfare began to garner attention within the USG due to the rise of the Nazi party in Germany. Adolph Hitler and the Nazi party had devoted much of their time and effort to the development of comprehensive propaganda programs designed to increase feelings of nationalism in the German population as well as manipulate and strike fear in their European neighbors. The Nazi's viewed strategic influence as a weapon in and of itself and leveraged this capability to the fullest extent in preparation for it's upcoming attacks on Eastern and Western Europe.

During World War II, the U.S. used propaganda—a creative mix of public affairs, public relations, and psychological operations--as one of, if not the most

19 "Committee on Public Information". Internet. Available from www.disinfopedia.org/wiki.phtml?title=Committee on Public Information. Accessed 26 September 2004.

important, factor in the transformation from political neutrality to active involvement in the war. Arguably, U.S. propaganda efforts controlled the path that the war took. Posters igniting powerful anti-Japanese and German feelings, pushing for the purchase of war bonds and enlistment in the armed forces, and psychological operations aimed at enemy troops, U.S. propaganda was pivotal in instilling patriotic fervor on the home front and spurred other nations to active participation in the war effort.

To organize for the conduct of strategic information programs, President Roosevelt formed two new organizations, the Office of War Information (OWI) and the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). OWI had two significant roles. First, it had a mandate to utilize all informational means available to inspire patriotic fervor in the American public and attract people to support the war effort. A public affairs/propaganda campaign was initiated on an unprecedented scale that would bring to bear the real source of American might: the public. Secondly, the OWI would organize and implement strategic psychological operations or propaganda campaigns to support the overseas influence effort. OSS was responsible for the conduct of special operations missions—namely sabotage, limited scale raids, and other special missions in support of theater objectives.[20]

The premise behind the creation of OWI was to consolidate war information and psychological operations

20 Paddock, Alfred J., "Military Psychological Operations", in *Political Warfare and Psychological Operations: Rethinking the US Approach*, ed. Frank B. Barnett and Carnes Lord (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1989), 46.

under one unified agency thereby streamlining the decision-making process under one controlling entity. However, the discernible increase in wartime propaganda had formed the need to separate the psychological warfare and propaganda function from the planning and conduct of special operations missions and intelligence operations. Overlap between the two efforts had created squabbling among the principles involved leading to ineffective and duplicative efforts minus appropriate coordination and de-confliction. Subsequent executive directives refined the mission of each agency and illuminated each agency's area of responsibility in an effort to reduce inhibiting factors effecting functionality.[21]

Recognizing a capabilities shortfall within the realm of strategic communications, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) created the Joint Psychological Warfare Committee and the Joint Psychological Warfare Advisory Subcommittee. Meanwhile, OSS created the Supporting Committee on Psychological Warfare and the director, Colonel Donovan, headed another committee: the Joint Psychological Warfare Advisory Committee. The purpose of this organization was to coordinate all information activities with other government and civilian agencies that operated independently of the War Department; these included the Department of State (DoS) and the Office of War Information.[22]

21 Paddock, Alfred J., "Military Psychological Operations", in *Political Warfare and Psychological Operations: Rethinking the US Approach*, ed. Frank B. Barnett and Carnes Lord (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1989), 46.

22 Ibid.

While the intent was to streamline the process of message construction and dissemination along with improving bureaucratic process and organization, the number of organizations actively involved in the planning and conduct of influence and psychological operations had multiplied exponentially since the onset of World War II. The increase vice decrease or simplification of organizational structure became more of an impediment to progress than a facilitator of productive efforts.

At the end of 1942, despite the fact that America was firmly entrenched in a two-front global conflict, the War Department recognized the need to cut out some of the unneeded elements of the entire psychological and strategic influence bureaucracy. They chose to eliminate the Psychological Warfare Branch due to interagency squabbles regarding each office's mission and scope. Subsequently, the JCS also chose to eliminate its own standing committees dealing with PSYOPS and turned over responsibilities to the OSS, which was better organized and equipped to carry out the task of strategic communications.[23]

Despite the dissolution of the various offices located in and around Washington DC, the military services still maintained an organic PSYOPS capability but these were limited to the operational and tactical levels of war. The JCS, in the same document which provided the guidance to disband the various psychological warfare offices, gave each theater commander, Pacific and European, the ability to control, coordinate, and implement psychological warfare

23 Paddock, Alfred J., "Military Psychological Operations", in *Political Warfare and Psychological Operations: Rethinking the US Approach*, ed. Frank B. Barnett and Carnes Lord (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1989), 46.

in their respective areas of operations (AO). The JCS document implied that theater commanders would be allowed to determine their own relationship with OWI and OSS, as needed. Subsequently, each theater commander created his own Psychological Warfare Branch that would then have the latitude to conduct PSYOPS or influence operations at the operational and/or tactical level in support of theater objectives.[24]

The Supreme Allied Commander, General Dwight Eisenhower, created the largest Psychological Warfare Branch at his headquarters in North Africa in November of 1942--the PWB at Allied Forces Headquarters (PWB/AFHQ). In early 1944, PWB/AFHQ had been reconstituted as the Psychological Warfare Division, Supreme Allied Headquarters Europe (PWD/SHAEF). PWD/SHAEF defined psychological warfare as *"the dissemination of propaganda designed to undermine the enemy's will to resist, demoralize his forces and sustain the morale of our supporters."*[25] PWD's mission statements, as stated by General Eisenhower, were:

1. To wage psychological warfare against the enemy

2. To use the various media available to psychological warfare to sustain the morale of the people of friendly nations occupied by the enemy and to cause the people of these countries to acquiesce in the wishes of the Supreme Commander.

3. To control information services in Allied-occupied Germany.

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24 Paddock, Alfred J., "Military Psychological Operations", in Political Warfare and Psychological Operations: Rethinking the US Approach, ed. Frank B. Barnett and Carnes Lord (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1989), 46.

25 Paddock, Political Warfare and Psychological Operations, 12.

4. To conduct consolidation propaganda operations in liberated friendly countries.[26]

For the allies, psychological warfare's impact on the war effort and how it contributed to the defeat of Germany were hard to accurately assess. However, General Eisenhower felt that PSYOP had played such a momentous role in the defeat of Germany that it was vital to maintain a PSYOP capability and conduct further study of it's utility in future conflict. Eisenhower noted in his after-action report of the war:

> The exact contribution of psychological warfare toward the final victory cannot, of course, be measured in terms of towns destroyed or barriers passed. However, I am convinced that the expenditure of men and money in wielding the spoken and written word was an important contributing factor in undermining the enemy's will to resist and supporting the fighting morale of our potential Allies in the occupied countries. Without doubt, psychological warfare has proved its right to a place of dignity in our military arsenal.[27]

The global struggle waged during World War II provided the thrust for the development of strategic influence as an integrating enabler of U.S. foreign policy and provided, in essence, the foundation for modern propaganda and psychological warfare that would play an even larger role in U.S. foreign affairs during the Cold War.

D. THE COLD WAR

The requirements for conducting strategic influence and psychological warfare increased dramatically during the early years of the Cold War—a war of conflicting ideologies

26 Paddock, Political Warfare and Psychological Operations,14.

27 Ibid., 20.

between the United States and the Soviet Union. In the late 1940's and early 50's it had become apparent in the West that the Soviet Union was developing into a formidable opponent both as a military power and in terms of their ability to leverage propaganda as a key instrument of foreign policy. The Soviet propaganda machine was reminiscent of Nazi Germany's pre-World War II influence apparatus. Government officials recognized that if the U.S. was going to be able contain Soviet expansionism it had to step up its own strategic information programs. At the dawn of the nuclear age, and with each side looking for a strategic edge, both the United States and the Soviet Union recognized that propaganda, control of information, and strategic influence could provide the edge that both sought so ardently. The early years of the Cold War saw the USG's establishing three critical pieces of legislation which would provide the framework for American influence and strategic information programs for the next three decades: the National Security Act of 1947, the Smith-Mundt Act, and the NSC-68.

1. National Security Act Of 1947

As the first "Cold War" President, Harry Truman signed the National Security Act that provided for the establishment of integrating policies and procedures for all departments, agencies, and functions of the federal government relating to national security. The origins of the National Security Act date back to the period immediately following World War II.[28] In 1945, the

28 "History of the National Security Council". Internet. Available from http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/history.html. Accessed 10 August 2004.

Secretary of the Navy commissioned a group of national security experts to study how the post-war national security apparatus should be organized. The study concluded that the military and supporting executive agencies were not integrated effectively and lacked a unity of effort.[29]

Aside from the military reorganization[30], the National Security Act also transformed the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) into the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) who would be responsible for the conduct of intelligence gathering and clandestine operations in support of national security objectives. Those operations would include using subversive psychological and influence operations to undermine Soviet and Soviet-bloc political, military, and economic viability.[31]

In response to the mission of utilizing information as an instrument of strategic influence, the CIA covertly established and funded overseas broadcasting stations. These CIA-sponsored radio programs, designed to creatively illuminate U.S. government policies, were broadcast to people within Soviet-bloc countries in an attempt to destabilize the spread of Communism at the grassroots level.[32]

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29 Eberstadt, Ferdinand, "Postwar Organization for National Security," in Decisions of the Highest Order: Perspectives on the National Security Council, ed. Karl F. Inderfuth and Loch K. Johnson (Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1988), 29-30.

30 The National Security Act of 1947 realigned and reorganized the U.S.' armed forces, foreign policy, and intelligence community after WWII. It merged the Department of War and the Department of the Navy into the Department of Defense headed by the Secretary of Defense. The act was amended in 1949 to put all three branches of the armed forces under the subordination of the Department of Defense.

31 "History of the National Security Council". Internet. Available from http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/ history.html#summary. Accessed 10 August 2004.

32 "Central Intelligence Agency", The History of. Internet. http://www.fas.org/ rp/cia/ciahist.htm. Accessed 29 September 2004.

2. Smith-Mundt Act

Following an official visit to Europe in which they witness first hand the enormity of the Soviet propaganda machine, Senator H. Alexander Smith and Representative Karl Mundt sponsored the Smith-Mundt Act (1948) to counter hostile Soviet propaganda. The Smith-Mundt Act formed the fundamental charter for U.S. public diplomacy and strategic influence following World War II and established the U.S. Information Agency (USIA).[33] Smith-Mundt allotted the necessary funding for U.S. foreign information programs and provided:

> for the preparation, and dissemination abroad, of information about the United States, its people, and its policies, through press, publications, radio, motion pictures, and other information media, and through information centers and instructors abroad.[34]

The Smith-Mundt Act, which had very little opposition in Congress, *"breathed life into overseas information programs"*, and laid the groundwork for the creation of the U.S. Information Agency (USIA), a significant organization relative to strategic influence programs and one which will be discussed in detail later on in this thesis.[35]

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33 Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. International Visitor Leadership Program. Internet. http://exchanges.state.gov/education/ivp/history.htm. Accessed 2 September 2004.

34 Smith-Mundt Act, U.S. Code, Title 22, Chapter 18, Subchapter 5, Paragraph 1461 (1948); excerpt available from http://assembler.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode22/usc_sec_22_00001461----000-.html. Accessed 10 June 2004.

35 Rose, Benjamin R., Presidentially Mandated Strategic Psychological Warfare Policy Coordination Under Truman and Eisenhower: The Psychological Strategy Board and the Operations Coordinating Board (Harrisonburg, VA: James Madison University, 1999), 10-11.

3. NSC 68

In 1949, Cold War tensions took on a significant new dynamic. The Soviet Union had detonated their first atomic bomb at a remote test site in Kazakhstan on 29 August.[36] Members of President Truman's administration argued that America needed to increase its strategic influence efforts to counter the Soviets emergence as an atomic power.[37] In 1950, following the North Korean attack on South Korea, Truman signed NSC 68 which directed the increase of both overt and covert political, psychological, and economic warfare with the sole purpose of creating political and social unrest within Soviet-bloc countries—this was directly in accordance with George Kennan's strategy to "contain" the Soviet Union within its own geographic borders utilizing economic aid packages and strategic information programs to foster pro-American or anti-Soviet inclinations among various "buffer" states.[38]

E. THE EISENHOWER PRESIDENCY

In the early to mid-1950s, there were three different organizations intimately involved with strategic information policies and programs: Department of Defense, CIA, and the State Department. To ensure continuity of policies and programs, each organization established liaison elements for the purpose of synchronizing strategic influence efforts with the other departments.

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36 The Soviet Nuclear Weapons Program. Internet. http://nuclear-weaponarchive.org/Russia/Sovwpnprog.html. Accessed 8 *October 2004.*

37 Paddock, U.S. Army Special Warfare, 40.

38 Ibid.

The election of Dwight Eisenhower in 1952 to the Presidency brought about a new focus on PSYOPS and strategic information programs in general. Eisenhower's experiences during World War II had validated his beliefs that the geopolitical landscape could be shaped to our advantage with a comprehensive information strategy. To illustrate that point, in a NSC directive, Eisenhower noted "*psychological operations are established instruments of our national power*."[39]

Shortly after taking office, Eisenhower established the President's Committee on International Information Activities (PCIIA) whose purpose was to study the U.S. information strategy for the Cold War and make recommendations as to how it could or should be improved. PCIIA concluded that U.S. information programs were inadequate and that the overall strategy under Truman was too reactive to the Soviets propaganda programs and lacked any inherent offensive posture. The study also concluded that the PSB had never fully integrated its existing psychological warfare strategy with national security objectives.[40]

Shortly after the PCIIA's report was published, Eisenhower replaced the Psychological Strategy Board with the Operations Coordinating Board (OCB), whose mission was to "*coordinate and integrate psychological with national strategy and, more importantly, to act as the coordinating and integrating arm of the National Security Council for*

39 Saxon, Thomas J. Jr., The Evolution of the National Security Council System Under President Nixon (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms, 1971), 94.

40 National Security Council, Responsibilities and Principles Governing the Conduct of the Foreign Information Program and Psychological Warfare, National Security Council Memorandum (Washington D.C.: National Security Council, 25 January 1954), 2.

all aspects of the implementation of national security policy."[41] More significantly, the United States Information Agency (USIA) was officially established as an independent agency for the purpose of providing a foreign information dissemination programs.[42] USIA was responsible for the coordination of policies, plans, and operations for the foreign information program. Additionally, USIA also provided guidance to other departments concerning the official treatment of news originating from foreign information outlets. USIA's purview, however, was confined only to areas where military operations were not being conducted.[43]

Following Eisenhower's presidency, the U.S. strategic influence efforts and capabilities began to fragment. The Department of Defense and JCS disbanded their psychological warfare offices. During the twenty or so years from the Kennedy administration, in the early 1960's, until the time that Ronald Reagan took office in 1981, the U.S. utilized strategic information programs as a component of national security strategy, however it was not a priority.

U.S. strategic information programs during the Cold War were more reactive to Soviet propaganda campaigns vice proactive and foreign policy suffered as a result. The CIA still conducted covert operations and influence campaigns and the USIA maintained control of overt foreign information programs. In the 1960's, USIA's information

41 Cutler, Robert, "The Development of the National Security Council," in Decisions of the Highest Order: Perspectives on the National Security Council, ed. Karl F. Inderfuth and Loch K. Johnson (Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1988), 59.

42"United States Information Agency". Internet. http://www.acusd.edu/gen/20th/usia.html. Accessed 19 September 2004.

43 Ibid.

program strategy shifted from persuasion and an advisory role to more of an informative function with a focus on objective reporting of news events. Each subsequent administration until 1980 failed to create a permanent organization dedicated to the conduct of strategic information operations. Various departments were still expected to coordinate their activities with other agencies but there was still no controlling entity.[44] USIA remained the lead agency regarding strategic information programs but, again, the emphasis shifted away from strategic influence to support of operational PSYOPS in Southeast Asia.[45]

F. VIETNAM-ERA

The war in Vietnam was destructive to the level of American confidence enjoyed in the early 1950's and 60's. The war along with the Watergate scandal had shattered American confidence in both the institution of the Presidency and also affected U.S. credibility among foreign audiences. The fall of South Vietnam in 1975, the Iranian hostage crisis in 1979, the Russian invasion of Afghanistan in 1980, the growth of international terrorism, and the hastening of the nuclear arms race raised questions about the United States' capacity to have influence over international affairs.[46]

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44 U.S. Department of the Army, The Art and Science of Psychological Operations: Case Studies of Military Application, Vol 1, Department of The Army Pamphlet 525-7-1 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, April 1976), 110.

45 Ibid.

46"Cold War (1962-1991)". Internet. Available from http:// www.fact-index.com/c/co/cold_war__1962_1991_.html#The%20challenges%20 of%Detente</em. Accessed 5 October 2004.

The USG's lack of focus on strategic influence during this period and its tactical and operational-level focus on Vietnam led to a reduction in effectiveness against the Soviet's strategic propaganda effort. It appeared that the tide of history was turning in favor of the Communists. While the United States was mired in recession and the Vietnam conflict, pro-Soviet governments were making inroads abroad, particularly in the Third World.[47] The United States had, for all intent and purpose, lost the Vietnam War allowing the peninsula to become a unified, sovereign country under Communist rule. Meanwhile, several other Communist governments and pro-Soviet insurgencies were popping up throughout Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America as well.

In reaction to the appearance that the U.S. was 'losing' the Cold War in the late 1970's, many academics, politicians, journalists, and policy makers rebelled against then President Jimmy Carter's liberal policies on defense and the 'containment' of Communism. Many of these experts, both Democrat and Republican, chose to align themselves with Ronald Reagan, who pledged openly to tackle Soviet expansionism head on.[48]

G. THE REAGAN ERA

Ronald Reagan was elected in 1980 with a mandate to return America to a position of dominance on a global scale. The Reagan administration was committed to stemming

47 "Cold War (1962-1991)". Internet. Available from http:// www.fact-index.com/c/co/cold_war__1962_1991_.html#The%20challenges%20 of%Detente. Accessed 5 October 2004.

48 "The Cold War since 1970". BrainEncyclopedia.com. Internet. Available from http://www.brainencyclopedia.com/encyclopedia/ t/th/the_cold _war_since_1970.html. Accessed 5 October 2004.

the spread of Communism, particularly in the Third World. Reagan, however, would not allow the U.S. to be pulled into any protracted, long-term interventions as had happened in Vietnam. Instead, he preferred quick campaigns to attack or overthrow leftist governments utilizing both military and informational means. Under Reagan, strategic influence was elevated from a supporting or subordinate role in U.S. national security strategy to a main area of focus along with traditional diplomacy, military, and economic strength.[49] The foundation for Reagan's global influence strategy was laid out in three directives: National Security Decision Directives (NSDD) 45, 77, and 130.

NSDD 45 focused on U.S. international broadcasting programs and declared it a fundamental component of U.S. national security policy.[50] It also provided the necessary funding and political mandate to increase U.S. propaganda programs abroad through international broadcasting programs like Voice of America (VOA), Radio Free Europe, and Radio Liberty.[51] NSDD 45 also established Radio Marti' for the purpose of rallying anti-Castro support in Cuba and among Cuban exiles in and around south Florida.[52]

NSDD 77 established a Special Planning Group (SPG), under the control of the NSC, to conduct planning and

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49 "The man who beat communism". Economist.com. Internet. Available from http://www.economist.com/printedition/displaystory.cfm?Story_ID=2747709. Accessed 20 October 2004.

50 Reagan, Ronald W,. "United States International Broadcasting", National Security Decision Directive Number 45 (Washington D.C.: The White House, 15 July 1982), 1. Internet. Available from http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsdd-045.htm. Accessed 5 October 2004.

51 Ibid.

52 Ibid., 2.

coordination of U.S. public diplomacy efforts.[53] The President's National Security Advisor chaired the SPG, whose other members included the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of State, and the director of the USIA among others. NSDD 77 also established four other committees that reported to the SPG: the Public Affairs Committee, the International Information Committee, the International Broadcasting Committee and the International Political Committee.[54]

Another critical aspect of NSDD 77 was that it gave the Public Affairs Committee responsibility for planning and coordinating significant speeches relating to national security. It also provided guidance for the planning, coordination, and implementation of public affairs for foreign policy events as well as other issues relating to national security.[55]

The International Information Committee was responsible for the planning, coordination and implementation of international information activities in support of national security policies and objectives. This organization's activities were almost all USIA-related and managed by the Director of USIA.[56]

The International Political Committee was controlled by the State Department and had responsibility for the development, synchronization, and execution of

53 Reagan, Ronald W., "Management of Public Diplomacy Relative to National Security", National Security Decision Directive Number 77 (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 14 January 1983), 1. Internet. Available from http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/ nsdd/nsdd-77.htm. Accessed 5 October 2004.

54 Ibid., 2-3.

55 Ibid., 3.

56 Ibid., 2.

international political activities relating to national security matters. NSDD 77 also directed the International Political Committee to counter Soviet information programs. Additionally, the directive gave the Department of State the responsibility of providing direction to other agencies regarding the implementation of political action strategies in support of the International Political Committee's established objectives.[57]

Towards the end of Reagan's first term as President, the administration felt that it was necessary to refocus U.S. strategic influence policies and objectives above and beyond what NSDD 45 and 77 had provided the previous four years. A defining moment in U.S. strategic influence operations occurred in March of 1984 when the President signed NSDD 130. This document reiterated the administration's commitment to strategic information.

NSDD 130 envisioned information as "a strategic instrument for shaping fundamental political and ideological trends around the globe on a long-term basis and ultimately affecting the behavior of governments…" and declared information as a key strategic instrument to affect foreign audiences in ways favorable to U.S. national interests.

NSDD 130 also stated that it was "*vital that the Armed Forces maintain a strong and active international*

57 Reagan, Ronald W., "Management of Public Diplomacy Relative to National Security", National Security Decision Directive Number 77 (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 14 January 1983), 1. Internet. Available from http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/ nsdd/nsdd-77.htm. Accessed 5 October 2004. 2-3.

information capability."[58] In addition, the directive also noted that, in order to be effective, the U.S. national security apparatus should contain people with "*sophisticated training in the international information environment*…"[59]

Reagan-era strategic influence, both in terms of it's organization and focus, was so successful that it directly contributed to the end of the Cold War, the democratization of several Third World nations, and the rebirth of U.S. nationalism. The Reagan administration's efforts were also instrumental in facilitating his successor's, George Bush, ability to construct and maintain a multi-national coalition during Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm in 1990-91.

H. A NEW WORLD ORDER

President George Bush inherited an entirely different geopolitical situation than any of the previous eight Presidents. The Cold War had ended, global telecommunication technology was exploding, and America had no monolithic adversary to prepare for war against. Bush, having served as the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) in the 1970's, understood the importance of information programs, covert and overt, domestic and foreign, in furthering national objectives. Due to the vastly different international landscape, President Bush felt it necessary to re-evaluate international information programs, along with their organizational structure and

58 Reagan, Ronald W., "Management of Public Diplomacy Relative to National Security", National Security Decision Directive Number 77 (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 14 January 1983), 1. Internet. Available from http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsdd/nsdd-77.htm. Accessed 5 October 2004. 2.

59 Ibid., 3.

mission. Political pressure over budget concerns, existing from a huge national debt left over from the Reagan years, prodded the Bush Administration to study how strategic influence components could be consolidated in order to increase efficiency and reduce costs.

National Security Directive (NSD) 51, which superseded Reagan's NSDD 77, provided the impetus to create the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG).[60] However, due to budget constraints in the Clinton-era presidency, it wasn't until October 1st, 1999, as part of the 1998 Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act, that the BBG became an independent organization responsible for all government and government-sponsored international broadcasting programs.[61]

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) is an independent, autonomous organization responsible for all USG and government-sponsored, non-military, international broadcasting programs. It was created on 1 October 1999 as a result of the 1998 Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act under the Clinton Administration. The BBG is actually made up of several different broadcasters: the Voice of America (VOA), Alhurra, Radio Sawa, Radio Farda, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Radio Free Asia (RFA), and Radio and TV Marti. The BBG receives assistance from the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) in all matters pertaining to international broadcasting. Each week, more than 100 million listeners tune in to BBG

60 Clinton, William J., "The Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Missions", Presidential Decision Directive 68 (Washington D.C.: The White House, 30 April 1999). Internet. Available from http://www.fas. org/irp/offdocs/pdd/pdd-68-dos.htm> Accessed 5 April 2004.

61 Bush, George., "United States Government International Broadcasting", National Security Directive 51 (Washington D.C.: The White House, 17 October 1990). Internet. Available from http://www.bushlibrary.tamu.edu/ research/nsd/NSD/NSD%2051/0001.pdf. Accessed 5 October 2004.

managed, U.S. sponsored radio and TV programs broadcasted in 65 languages. The focus of these radio and TV stations is on broadcasting content that supports democracy as well as providing information which is related to the establishment of democratic institutions.[62]

In support of U.S. foreign policy following September 11th, the BBG has established three priorities:

- To provide accurate and objective news and information to priority areas in support of the war against terrorism;
- To provide clear and accurate information to regions of the world where freedom of information is suppressed or denied, or to areas that lack freedom and democracy;
- To serve humanitarian efforts by assisting nations in crisis, or are suffering epidemics and illiteracy.[63]

Despite the fact that the BBG has played a pivotal role in the dissemination of U.S.-sponsored messages in states and regions that lack the free flow of information, there are still plenty of questions regarding its role as a legitimate component of U.S. foreign policy.

I. PRESENT GEOPOLITICS AND TECHNOLOGICAL TRENDS

A significant trend in geopolitics is the development of exclusive alliances based upon common economic or political goals that have been facilitated by the information and technology explosion of the early 1990's.

62 Johnson, Stephen and Dale, Helle., "How to Reinvigorate U.S. Public Diplomacy". The Heritage Foundation: Backgrounder. April 23, 2003. Internet. Available from http://www.ifa.de/b/volltext/us-publdipl.pdf. Accessed 5 April 2004. 3.

63 "About the BBG". Broadcasting Board of Governors. Internet. Available from http://www.bbg.gov/bbg_aboutus.cfm. Accessed 17 September 2004.

The dispersal of culture, ideas, and trade on a global scale will continue to have a symbiotic effect on the world's populations. New communication and information technologies provide instant connectivity worldwide in all matters pertaining to political, social, and economic integration. It stands to reason that the growth of global communications will continue to accelerate and increase the collective awareness of events and issues worldwide making information readily accessible to even the remotest areas of the earth. For the United States, the technological revolution has become a double-edged sword. As U.S. information capabilities grow, so do those of the rest of the world through the exportation of new technologies. No longer does America possess an information monopoly, contrary to the belief of most U.S. citizens. Anecdotal proof of this point lies in the fact that the majority of the Arab world still is unclear as to what actually transpired on September 11th or why the U.S. chose to conduct offensive operations in Iraq and Afghanistan to effect "regime change". Foreign news agencies such as Qatar-based Al-Jazeera have effectively countered U.S. information programs designed at illuminating and, perhaps justifying, American foreign policy and intent relative to the war in Iraq and the Global War on Terrorism.

IV. OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

A. INTRODUCTION

The terror attacks of 11 September 2001 uncovered several significant weaknesses in U.S. information policies and strategy. For fifty years, America had focused on countering the Soviet military and ideological threats. However, after the end of the Cold War, the USG failed to reorganize and adjust its strategy for two specific emerging threats—asymmetric and/or non-state actors. The U.S. has always trained and organized to win the last war and our strategic information programs and strategy were no different. The fact that the USG could never adequately integrate strategic influence capabilities under one unified interagency process or organization had created significant periods of lackluster effort relative to foreign information programs. The focus of this chapter will be on providing an analysis of Operation Iraqi Freedom through the framework of U.S. efforts in public diplomacy, psychological operations, and public affairs/relations.

B. "SELLING" THE WAR

Immediately following 9-11, strategic influence efforts focused aggressively on the Arab and Muslim worlds. Only days after the attack, Secretary of State Colin Powell accepted an invitation to appear on *Al-Jazeera*, the Arab satellite news channel. The purpose of this interview, at least in the eyes of the administration, was to explain America's position that Islamic fundamentalists had "declared war" on the United States and the U.S. was justified in pursuing these organizations wherever they

sought refuge. The Bush administration recognized, relatively early on, that U.S. public diplomacy had failed to "sell" America to the world, and particularly to the Middle East.

In an effort to re-invigorate the public relations aspect of the administrations' War on Terror, Charlotte Beers, an accomplished advertising executive from Wall Street, was sworn in as the new Undersecretary of State for Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy. Beers was, for all intent and purpose, meant to be to the Bush Administration what George Creel was to Woodrow Wilson—a savvy public relations expert creative enough to 'spin' the war whichever way the administration wanted. Unfortunately for the administration, the information environment was significantly more complex than it was in 1917. Within two months, a House of Representatives subcommittee held a hearing on public diplomacy and according to Beers and other experts in the field of public diplomacy who testified at the hearings, the problem for the U.S. was that the rest of the world did not know or understand us or the principles on which America was founded.[64] Accordingly, the main focus for Beers was to begin a comprehensive effort to 'educate' the rest of the world about America, its democratic values, and the concept of liberty.[65]

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and National Security Adviser Condoleeza Rice followed Secretary Powell's example and also agreed to be interviewed on *Al-*

64 Charlotte Beers, Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy, "American Public Diplomacy and Islam", Testimony before Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 27 February 2003. Internet. Available from http://foreign.senate.gov/hearings/hrg030227a.html. Accessed 10 January 2005

65 Ibid.

Jazeera. Concurrently, the State Department began compiling evidence that linked Al Qaeda with the 9-11 attacks. Their findings were published in a brochure called "The Network of Terrorism".[66] A government-sponsored website and a series of ads about Muslim life were also created to call attention to the "shared values" between America and Muslims. Several new radio stations, in various Southwest Asian-dialects, were also created and plans to develop an Arabic-language TV network were initiated.

Congress and the Bush administration pushed for an intensification of PD efforts to include boosting funding for new programs aimed at illuminating American culture and policies to the rest of the world. Subsequently, Congress passed the "Freedom Promotion Act of 2002", which increased the budget for public diplomacy by nearly $500 million dollars annually. Furthermore, both the White House and the Pentagon[67] created offices specifically intended to help the U.S. achieve post 9-11 public diplomacy goals.

With the influx of funding and the new emphasis on public diplomacy programs, the USG expected a significant increase in Arab and Muslim goodwill towards American policies, however it didn't come to fruition and, in fact, had decreased steadily between November 2001 and December 2002. This begs the question: How, despite the resources at its disposal, had the U.S. public diplomacy effort

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66 "The Network of Terrorism". U.S. Department of State. Internet. Available from http://www.pa-aware.org/ resources/pdfs/Network%20of%Terror.pdf Accessed 12 January 2005.

67 The Pentagon created the ill-fated "Office of Strategic Influence" in late 2001. The office was created with the purpose of providing a vehicle to undertake global strategic influence in support of the GWOT. OSI was disbanded before any tangible programs were introduced.

resulted in even less support in the Arab world? Was, or is the problem institutional in nature or is it a function of conflicting ideologies trying to find common ground that doesn't actually exist given the religious, cultural, and political differences?

The most obvious or simple explanation for U.S. failure of public diplomacy relative to the Middle East is the fact that President Bush inherited a poor PD organizational structure with limited capabilities. Convinced that the USIA and other components of strategic communications were no longer vital to national security following the Cold War, conservatives in Congress forced the Clinton administration to sign the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act (1998) that shut down the USIA. Responsibility for conducting public diplomacy was handed over to the Department of State under the direction of the newly created Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. Hundreds of USIA staff personnel were either let go or forced to retire leaving the public diplomacy corps roughly half the size that it was at prior to the end of the Cold War. With the USIA went several American libraries located overseas and foreign broadcasting programs were cut by nearly a third.[68] Unfortunately, the State Department was vastly undermanned and ill-equipped to take on the burden of coordinating and executing the broad strategic communications mission.[69] Pre-Bush organizational structure and strategy are only

68 Kaplan, Latif, Whitelaw, and Barnes. "Hearts, Minds and Dollars in an Unseen Front in the War on Terrorism, American is Spending Millions…To Change the Very Face of Islam." U.S. News and World Report, 18 April 2005.

69 Ibid.

part of the dilemma and merely describes one aspect of the inadequate public diplomacy effort in the early period following 9-11.

Following the terrorist attacks, the Bush Administration, with a limited strategic influence capability, allowed a political and social climate to grow where the majority of the Arab world perceived the U.S., and the newly declared "War on Terror", as anti-Islamic in both nature and practice. The whole intent behind public diplomacy is to build support for American foreign policy. The fact that the U.S. was unable to adequately convey its message, in support of strategic objectives, can be linked to a lack of American credibility within the Arab world and an, initially, insufficient strategic influence doctrine. Therefore messages conveyed by America were rarely given credence by all but the most progressive of Arabs.[70]

Middle Eastern cultures perceive a sharp contradiction between what the U.S. says and what it actually does. Therefore a credibility issue exists for the USG when attempting to influence Arab perceptions. U.S. credibility in the Arab world is affected by the cultural differences between the two societies, which are vast. U.S. strategic influence, inexplicably, is conducted through the vacuum of American cultural influences that clearly don't translate well in the Arab world. The Muslim perception that the U.S. was waging an unjust war for the purpose of controlling the 2nd largest oil reserve in the world or conducting an all-out assault on the Muslim world itself was just that: a perception, by those who were directly

70 Zaharna, R.S. "The Unintended Consequences of Crisis Public Diplomacy: American Public Diplomacy in the Arab World". Foreign Policy in Focus, Vol. 8, Number 2, June 2003.

affected by the U.S.'s actions—the average Middle Eastern citizen. Muslim perception is Muslim reality regardless of how we, as Westerners or Americans, see the Global War on Terror and the subsequent invasion of Iraq. While it is generally accepted that Muslims and other Middle Easterners have a favorable view of American's as individuals, they do not care for U.S. policies in the region, particularly with respect to our long-standing support of Israel.[71]

Initially, and somewhat haphazardly, U.S. strategic influence programs focused on getting America's message out both to the Muslim world and the American people. The USG attempted to "sell" the GWOT in the same manner in which advertising companies sell commercial products: with a glut of sound bites and images intended to create warm feelings toward a particular product or idea. This information-centric approach parallels the 'over-kill' methodology that fits conveniently within the unique American paradigm where information is a form of currency and problems are solved or products sold by increasing the amount of information supplied to the consumer. In this case, the 'product' was the idea that the U.S. Government had reserved the right to use any and all means to (1) bring to justice those responsible for 9-11, and (2) effect regime change in those countries that were suspected of either harboring or having relationships with known terrorist organizations.

In the beginning, the content of the message made sense; the U.S. had been attacked, without warning, on its own soil, by a hostile foreign entity and it would use any and all means to bring those responsible to justice. The

71 Zaharna, R.S. "The Unintended Consequences of Crisis Public Diplomacy: American Public Diplomacy in the Arab World". Foreign Policy in Focus, Vol. 8, Number 2, June 2003.

U.S. strategic influence apparatus began 'selling' its military and diplomatic options to its allies, neutrals, and perceived enemies. The problem was not the message but rather how and from what perspective it was crafted. In the Arab world, effective communications provide the basis for amicable relationships and trust. Instead of focusing on one-way information exchanges, Arabs tend to rely on informal, two-way, association-building methods (such as face-to-face contact) in order to connect people within loose social or tribal networks. The distinctive American technique of public diplomacy relies heavily on the mass media to broadcast its message throughout the world, leveraging the advantages of the instant connectivity of satellite communications and the Internet. Arabs, on the other hand, have a deeply rooted distrust of their own media therefore over-reliance on this form of communication to appeal to Middle Easterners may not be the best course of action.[72]

In retrospect, the USG grossly undervalued the deep-rooted cultural differences between the West and the Islamic world. Operating within its own cultural vacuum, the USG tried to reach Arabs by merely increasing the amount of information it supplied explaining to its position regarding U.S. policy and impending military action.

C. PSYOPS IN SUPPORT OF OIF

The U.S. and its coalition partners enjoyed a relative degree of success conducting psychological operations in

72 Zaharna, R.S. "The Unintended Consequences of Crisis Public Diplomacy: American Public Diplomacy in the Arab World". Foreign Policy in Focus, Vol. 8, Number 2, June 2003.

support of military operations in Iraq. The dropping of leaflets, radio and TV broadcasts, and news releases (in concert with the overall public affairs mission) were successful in causing the Iraqi military to, in essence, dissolve under constant coalition pressure, both mental and physical. This enabled military forces to conduct an attack that may be unprecedented in the history of warfare. Reportedly, the PSYOP campaign included over 300 hours of TV and radio broadcasts and over 50 million leaflets were dropped in key areas of the country during both the build up and military phase of the operation.[73]

Operational and tactical PSYOPS were effective at almost every stage of the operation. However, where the U.S. fell short was at the strategic level of psychological and political influence. This was partly due to the organizational structure relating to approval authority for strategic PSYOP and also a function of poor analysis. DoD and PSYOP planners failed to effectively lay the foundation for both ending the conflict phase and the post-combat rebuilding stage within Iraq. Indirectly, the USG's failure to adequately or accurately measure Iraqi (and Arabs in general) attitudes toward the United States and its policies created an environment within the country where few U.S.-generated messages would have validity. Specifically, USG officials underestimated the impact of U.N. sanctions during the period following Operation Desert Shield/Storm in 1991, failure of the U.S. to support the anti-Ba'ath uprising immediately after the first Gulf War, and, perhaps more importantly, America's continued support,

73 Cordesman, Anthony H. The Lessons of the Iraq War: Issues Relating to Grand Strategy. Center for Strategic and International Studies: Wash DC. July 2003. 25-27.

politically and economically, of Israel. No public relations effort or information operation can make up for bad policy or policies that appear to be anti-Muslim in intent and practice. The U.S., in its public diplomacy campaign and PSYOP effort, failed to convince the average Iraqi citizen that America was not invading Iraq for the purpose of controlling its oil or that its intention was to be an occupying force.[74] The insurgency that followed the official end of combat operations, arguably, can be attributed to these factors. Had the USG recognized just how deep anti-American feelings ran in the region, post-combat phase losses might not have reached the level that they have.

Organizationally speaking, the top down planning and approval authority that exists within DoD and the Pentagon has been a hindrance to effective PSYOPS in Iraq and has caused U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) planners to "miss the boat" often due to poor use of assets and an even worse sense of timing. Pentagon officials failure to plan for Phase IV operations along with an inability to capitalize on PSYOP targets of opportunity within the area of responsibility (AOR) has, perhaps, hindered efforts to subdue the insurgency, restore civil order, and support civil-military operations (CMO) within Iraq.[75] To which degree either failure has contributed to the insurgency is debatable and fodder for another study however conflict resolution depends on convincing not just Iraqi citizens but Arabs in general that the U.S. has no intention of

74 Cordesman, Anthony H. The Lessons of the Iraq War: Issues Relating to Grand Strategy. Center for Strategic and International Studies: Wash DC. July 2003. 25-27.

75 Ricks, Thomas E. "Army Historian Cites Lack of Postwar Plan." Washington Post. 25 December 2004; Page A01.

long-term occupation of Iraq and that it has viable nation-building plans in place to create a better, more prosperous nation.

D. PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS IN OIF

> One cannot wage war under present conditions without the support of public opinion, which is tremendously molded by the press and other forms of propaganda.
>
> General Douglas MacArthur, US Army

In *On War*, noted military theorist Carl von Clausewitz, identified three pivotal entities that effect a nation's ability to conduct war: the government, the military, and the people. As the United States witnessed in the Vietnam Conflict, dissension within the public domain creates a significantly unstable political and social environment thus affecting the decisions of the political leaders regarding the prosecution of the war. In order to declare and wage war, the public must be convinced that those actions are, indeed, necessary and more importantly, in their own interest.

Following the 9/11 attacks, the Bush administration and the Pentagon began to develop a calculated public affairs campaign to raise support for a potential invasion of Iraq. Government domestic communications were also aided by the heightened emotions and sense of insecurity following the attack. It is no secret that the American center of gravity has always been public opinion therefore insuring domestic support is vital to maintain the level of support needed to wage war. In the case of going to war in Iraq, the American public was told repeatedly that military force may be necessary to remove Saddam Hussein from power

because Iraq posed an imminent threat to U.S. national security. By defining the national interests that were at stake for America and its citizens, the White House set out to make the war with Iraq the most important topic on the minds of the American public before the conflict. In order to make this issue one of critical immediacy, they first relied on targeting the emotions of their audience.

With 11 September 2001 still in everyone's minds, the USG's public relations campaign strove to not only make the public recall the feelings they experienced during that horrific event, but to strengthen those feelings in the hopes of hitting a nerve and eliciting an immediate emotional response in order to create support for military operations in support of the Global War on Terrorism. An example of which comes from President Bush's State of the Union Address given on January 29th, 2002:

> …For many Americans, these four months have brought sorrow, and pain that will never completely go away. Every day a retired firefighter returns to Ground Zero, to feel closer to his two sons who died there. At a memorial in New York, a little boy left his football with a note for his lost father: Dear Daddy, please take this to heaven. I don't want to play football until I can play with you again some day…[76]

Another key aspect of that address, now more familiarly known as the "Axis of Evil Speech", was the administration's laying the groundwork, publicly, for the invasion of Iraq based on their alleged ties to Al Qaeda

76 Bush, George W. "State of the Union Address." United States Capitol, Washington D.C. 29 January 2002. Internet. Available from www.whitehouse.gov/news/2002/01/20020129-11.html. Accessed 10 January 2005.

and other terrorist organizations combined with the Bush administrations belief that Iraq had not dismantled their WMD programs after 1998:

> …Iraq continues to flaunt its hostility toward America and to support terror. The Iraqi regime has plotted to develop anthrax, and nerve gas, and nuclear weapons for over a decade. This is a regime that has already used poison gas to murder thousands of its own citizens -- leaving the bodies of mothers huddled over their dead children. This is a regime that agreed to international inspections -- then kicked out the inspectors [1998]. This is a regime that has something to hide from the civilized world…States like these, and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States. In any of these cases, the price of indifference would be catastrophic...[77]

Following the invasion of Iraq and subsequent capture of Baghdad, it became apparent that Iraq's WMD programs had all but ended in the mid to late-1990's creating an undercurrent of distrust among many American citizens and undermining USG credibility both at home and abroad. Subsequently, the public relations experts were able to exploit the visible proof of human rights violations found by occupying U.S. military forces gave the administration something else to focus on further rallying domestic support for the military action in Iraq. This was enabled by, perhaps, the single most influential public affairs

77 Bush, George W. "State of the Union Address." United States Capitol, Washington D.C. 29 January 2002. Internet. Available from www.whitehouse.gov/news/2002/01/20020129-11.html. Accessed 10 January 2005.

effort undertaken during this or, perhaps, any other war: the embedding of reporters with military units in Iraq.

The brain-child of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, Torie Clarke, the embed program gave the Pentagon the opportunity to foster a bond between civilian reporters and troops in the field, a relationship which the USG gambled would create a lasting and harmonious relationship. In the embed program, journalists would live with a military unit experiencing everything that the average soldier did on a daily basis; which included fire fights, attacks from improvised explosive devices (IED), and the everyday jubilation and sorrow that is a fundamental aspect of combat. Not only did this allow the media access to breaking news but it also gave the appearance that it was, in fact, unbiased and unvarnished. Private media corporations such as CNN, Fox News, and the 'big three' (CBS, NBC, and ABC) jumped at this opportunity and sent journalists by the dozen to a one-week crash course on military equipment and operations sponsored and instructed by military personnel. The Pentagon's willingness to allow unimpeded access to journalists appeared, on the surface, to be a colossal compromise on the part of the military establishment. However, what the media members failed to appreciate or account for was the uncommon bond that develops between those in combat therefore journalists became, in a sense, a part of the unit, biased by their shared hardships in a uncompromising and harsh environment. It is reasonable to assume that the Pentagon carefully considered the pros and cons of allowing this level of media access and determined the benefits

outweighed the potential for a public relations disaster. As it was, the Pentagon successfully leveraged the media as a strategic enabler in support of its overall IO campaign.[78]

Embedded media also played a significant role in reducing the ability of the Iraqis to conduct a significant propaganda campaign of their own. Hussein's brash claims of U.S. troops being 'slaughtered' on the battlefields by elite Republican Guard troops were quickly dispelled when American network news stations showed members of the U.S. Army's 3rd Infantry Division relaxing in Saddam Hussein's Presidential Palace in downtown Baghdad. Up-to-the-minute reporting by embedded journalists in the field with U.S. troops highlighted the frenzied nature of the battlefield and the Ba'ath regimes blatant disregard for the laws of land warfare and the Geneva Convention. Embedded media members reported on the insurgents' tactics; using women and children as human shields while engaging U.S. troops; and engaging U.S. and Coalition forces from hospitals, mosques, and schools. The military-media relationship, though delicate and fraught with distrust, is critical to U.S. global influence and information strategy. In the case of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the USG was able to use embedded media to shape the information environment in perhaps the most important arena: American public opinion, in a manner favorable to U.S. political and military objectives in Iraq.[79]

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78 Project for Excellence in Journalism, "Embedded Reporters: What Are Americans Getting?" April 2003. Internet. Available from http://www.journalism.org/resources/research/reports/war/embed/default.asp. Accessed 26 April 2005.

79 Ibid.

Unfortunately, that support hasn't continued in what has now become known as Operation Iraqi Freedom II (OIF II) where U.S. and Coalition forces have faced a difficult and bloody insurgency. Despite the fact that the U.S.-led coalition has made significant improvements in Iraqi quality of life, introduced a democratically elected government, and killed or captured a majority of former Ba'ath officials, media support during the post-invasion period appears to have substantially lessened. Reporting has often focused on negative topics such as the death of civilians, human rights violations by U.S. service-members at Abu Ghraib prison, and the rising death toll of U.S. forces. Are these newsworthy events? Yes, however they are not indicative or reflective of the situation as a whole in Iraq.

Where did the USG go wrong in maintaining media support for military operations following the end of "official" combat operations? Political leaders must inform the public about foreign policy goals; the military must persuade the public that it can accomplish those goals at a tolerable cost. The government achieves communication objectives by providing information to the media who then reports it through various news mediums. Media reports of victory and progress serve to reinforce and broaden public support for the policies and actions that the government takes on their behalf. The media also provides access to the military and conveys the complexity of its mission to the general public. In essence, the media provides a forum for the military to enlighten the public as to what it

does. The press has its own incentives to report on military affairs, and it needs the military's cooperation to do so.[80]

During OIF I, an overwhelming majority of media reports were positive as there was plenty of "good news" to report. The media reported the positive stories that the USG provided them and, again, each helped the other to achieve their respective goals. As the stability and security operations began in Iraq and the insurgency began to intensify, dissension in various levels of government occurred concerning a range of political aspects of the operation in Iraq. News stories began to reflect the tone or overall negativity towards certain events in Iraq. Writing after the abrupt withdrawal of Coalition forces from Fallujah [April 2004], Ralph Peters offered his assessment of the power of the media in determining military outcomes:

> The [US] Marines in Fallujah weren't beaten by the terrorists and insurgents, who were being eliminated effectively and accurately. They were beaten by al-Jazeera…The media [are] often referred to off-handedly as a strategic factor. But we still don't fully appreciate [their] fatal power…In Fallujah, we allowed a bonanza of hundreds of terrorists and insurgents to escape us—despite promising that we would bring them to justice. We stopped because we were worried about what already hostile populations might think of us. The global media disrupted the US and Coalition chains of command…We could have won militarily. Instead, we surrendered politically

80 Porch, Robert. "The American-Media Relationship." Internet. Available from http://www.nwc.navy.mil/press/Review/2002/ winter/art5-w02.htm. Accessed 26 April 2005.

> and called it a success. Our enemies won the information war. We literally didn't know what hit us.[81]

The protracted insurgency has presented new challenges for the USG in seeking to shape the media's portrayal of conditions on the battlefield. The experience of U.S. Marines in the first battle of Fallujah and, then again, in An Najaf[82] typifies the problem that the USG has had in managing the media in OIF II. Moves to decisively engage and defeat insurgent groups were rapidly thwarted by media reporting of hardship and suffering in the towns and of considerable damage to the urban infrastructure. Political pressure to limit the assault quickly followed, and the Marines subsequently withdrew. In both examples, the general perception is one of strategic defeat for US forces, whatever the tactical success achieved by U.S. forces. Managing the media in this type of politically charged environment presents a different challenge for the USG altogether given the role the media can play in influencing the domestic and international portrayal of military operations.[83]

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81 Peters, Ralph. "Kill Faster," New York Post, 20 May 2004.

82 The siege of the Iraqi holy city of An Najaf took place in August 2004 and was similar in nature to the attack on Fallujah. U.S. Marines supported by two Army brigade combat teams battled over control of the city from insurgents led by cleric leader Muqtada al-Sadr.

83 Peters, Ralph. "Kill Faster," New York Post, 20 May 2004.

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V. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

A. RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout the 20th Century, the USG's strategic information programs have had periods of great success followed by drastic reorganizations and periods of ineffectiveness. Post-war troop reductions and the perception that peacetime strategic information requirements are not as essential as they are in wartime further hampered the continued growth of influence capabilities. It is evident that the U.S. has a desperate need for an integrated information strategy consistent with both foreign and domestic policies. The development of and publishing of a National Information Strategy (NIS) would establish concrete objectives and give unifying guidance to all elements of U.S. information programs. Just as the National Security Strategy (NSS) and National Military Strategy (NMS) unify the efforts of all agencies concerned with national security and the projection and application of military power, a National Information Strategy (NIS) would unify the efforts of all government agencies involved in strategic communications and information operations. An NIS would provide appropriate guidance on information themes and strategies aiding planners in the development of coherent information campaigns in order to support U.S. policy objectives. In a historical sense, it appears that the Reagan Administration created a model for how U.S. strategic influence policy and organization should be conducted. Looking at it strictly based on results, no other administration since Theodore Roosevelt accomplished as much in the arena of strategic influence as the Reagan

administration. Serving as President during, arguably, the most critical period of the Cold War, Reagan elevated strategic information programs to where they became a fundamental instrument of U.S. national security policy. No other administration before or since has been able to control and manipulate the information environment as well. The Bush Administration would be well served to elevate, through a Presidential directive, all elements of strategic communications to include public diplomacy, public affairs, and military IO, to a position of prominence within the overall National Security Strategy (NSS) of the United States. Presidential or executive-level advocacy provides the necessary impetus to improve the overall organization, coordination, conduct of, and funding for strategic influence programs.

Creation of a strategic information organizational structure within the National Security Council should be formally established and given appropriate authorities to apportion responsibilities and prioritization of efforts within the applicable agencies that are involved in strategic communication programs. Just as NSDD 77 did under President Reagan, the current administration would be prudent to create a Special Planning Group or committee for strategic influence and information operations which would provide the necessary oversight and coordination of all elements of U.S. information programs to include military information operations conducted in support of theater objectives. Like all government agencies and programs, tasking authority and advocacy are inherently crucial elements to an organizations overall functionality. It is crucial that this organization be provided the appropriate

executive-level authorities to plan, advise, coordinate, or execute all elements of strategic communications across the entire spectrum from public diplomacy to military information operations and all other supporting or related capabilities and activities.

Government communication programs necessitate employing true regional experts versed in language, social customs, history, political systems, and religion. These experts should encompass the bulk of the personnel who study, plan for, and execute information programs in support of national security policy and objectives. Cultural understanding is fundamental for environmental context and important to the development of an information strategy relative to a particular region. Understanding the history of a region or specific country will help focus the influence strategy. Developers of information strategies need to determine whose attitudes and behaviors we are trying to change and focus on those who are most apt to be influenced in a manner that support U.S. policy objectives.

B. CONCLUSION

Rapid advances in technology have produced an exceptionally complex information environment. Global communications have served to expand the collective cognizance of major events, issues, and concerns. Global inter-connectivity has ignited passions, sparked perspectives, and compelled nations, organizations, and institutions worldwide to think and act in accordance with the perceptions and biases of those with whom they interact. Advances in information capabilities have

complicated the United States' capacity to manipulate the information environment in its favor. That being said, the U.S. has the potential to exert an unparalleled amount of influence on the rest of the world through its all-encompassing media and information capabilities but only if the USG recognizes the importance of strategic information programs and their effects on the rest of the world.

Roughly a dozen years following the end of the Cold War, the United States again finds itself in a battle for "hearts and minds." The ongoing counter-insurgency in Iraq, like the Cold War and the war in Vietnam, will require an ambitious influence strategy and effort to contain, and eventually eradicate, the hatred and distrust for the United States and its policies in the region. The U.S. Government has a desperate need to engage in an integrated strategic influence campaign in order to lessen the antagonistic mind-set and actions against the United States. However, information strategies and programs, by themselves, won't be enough to win over the Muslim world as the disdain and distrust runs too deep. The USG must support its information programs with other, more tangible efforts designed to bridge the gap between the U.S. and Islam. Just as bullets and bombs are not likely to win wars by themselves, information programs alone will not win the "hearts and minds" of the Muslim world.

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