

# Washington's Troubling Obsession with Public Diplomacy

David M. Edelstein and Ronald R. Krebs

'Public diplomacy' has become the holy grail of American foreign policy. In a Washington polarised by sharp partisan divisions, few issues have generated as much consensus.<sup>1</sup> All have agreed that the United States has done a poor job of convincing the world, developed and developing alike, of its benevolence. But most seem equally convinced that it could be done right 'if only...' – and here the agreement breaks down.<sup>2</sup> Yet, like the Holy Grail of legend, public diplomacy is the object of a never-ending, ultimately futile quest. Other countries are not going to buy what the United States is selling. It's not the packaging that others dislike. It's the product.

## The Washington consensus

Well before the attacks of 11 September, US government figures regularly noted the atrocious results of the country's efforts to sway public opinion in the Muslim world.<sup>3</sup> Afterwards, the United States redoubled its efforts in this regard. The Bush administration decided to establish a permanent White House office of global diplomacy. The State Department hired Charlotte Beers, who had headed two of the world's ten largest advertising agencies and had been the first female product manager for Uncle Ben's Rice, as Under-Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. However, the Pentagon's ill-named Office of Strategic Influence was abandoned only after word leaked that, while waging 'information warfare', it might lie.<sup>4</sup> Searching for a silver bullet to the dilemma of American power, the Bush administration thought it had found one in stepped-up public diplomacy – that is, overt government-

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sponsored programmes intended to shape public opinion in other countries.<sup>5</sup>

Though the practical impediments were known to be considerable, the theory was simple enough. As Beers put it in November 2001, in many countries America's message is often 'distorted', 'one-dimensional', or 'simply not heard'.<sup>6</sup> If only the rest of the world enjoyed unfettered access to accurate information and independent media, they would understand that the United States does not seek an empire, that the 'war on terror' is in every civilised nation's interest, and that America's values are universal. If only the United States clearly articulated its message, then surely the rest of the world would jump on the American bandwagon. As evidence of mounting anti-Americanism accumulated, Beers' critics quickly pointed out that selling Uncle Ben's was a lot easier than selling Uncle Sam. She resigned in frustration and under fire in March 2003 and was not replaced until ten months later by Margaret Tutwiler, an old Washington hand who had previously served, among other positions, as ambassador to Morocco and State Department spokesperson. But, regardless of who was at the helm, the fundamentals of the underlying theory were unchanged.

Unfortunately, it has not worked. In 2003 the US General Accounting Office concluded that the almost \$600 million the United States was spending annually to improve its image around the world was largely ineffectual.<sup>7</sup> Surveys by the Pew Research Center have documented exhaustively the precipitous decline in favourable views and trust of the United States across large swathes of the globe. The downward drift was already under way before the invasion of Iraq, but that decision clearly gave the trend new impetus. US favourability ratings, which were above 60% in France and Germany as late as the summer of 2002, had plummeted to below 40% by March 2004; only a slim majority of Britons still looked favourably on the United States by this past spring. Views of the United States were already unfavourable in much of the Muslim world in the summer of 2002, and have only worsened since then. These same surveys, however, have found that Americans, as people, garner more favourable opinion than does their government and that many (though not all) American values as well as its democratic institutions are admired abroad, particularly among younger Muslims and Arabs.<sup>8</sup> US public diplomacy has clearly failed to exploit these potential areas of agreement to forge mutual respect.

Rather than reject public diplomacy's premise, however, the Beltway response has been to criticise its implementation.<sup>9</sup> Some have focused on the Bush administration's tendency to step needlessly on other's toes, from Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's notoriously dismissive

reference to 'old Europe' to Secretary of State Colin Powell's condescending, even emasculating, observation that French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine had developed a case of the 'vapours and whatnot' in response to the 2002 State of the Union.<sup>10</sup> Others have ridiculed the clumsiness and transparency of the American-sponsored media in Iraq and elsewhere in the Arab and Muslim world – from the State Department's 'Shared Values' television spots that many Arab countries refused to run to the one-sided reporting on the American-sponsored radio stations broadcasting in Arabic and Persian. Others have pointed to the absurdity of developing websites to influence people in regions with highly restricted Internet access, while others have called for making far greater use of satellite and information technologies, including the Internet. Still others have fingered the lack of continuous leadership, as Tutwiler herself, though an experienced Washington insider, lasted just five months before she announced that she would bolt to Wall Street. Others have called the nation's public diplomacy programmes dangerously underfunded and understaffed, and have criticised the level of coordination among the many relevant arms of government. Others have noted the absence of solid measures of program effectiveness and have urged Washington to exploit private sector expertise more fully. And so on. Think tanks and government agencies have issued a stream of reports on how to fix American public diplomacy and boost America's image abroad.<sup>11</sup>

Whatever the criticism *du jour*, the Washington consensus has survived, and the essence of the public diplomacy enterprise has remained intact.<sup>12</sup> Some have recommended bureaucratic and procedural overhauls, such as the initiation of a Quadrennial Public Diplomacy Review and the formation of a not-for-profit Corporation for Public Diplomacy and a Public Diplomacy Reserve Corps. Others have advised more substantive reforms, including more training for ambassadors, greater reliance on local moderate voices to spread America's message, the expansion of student and cultural exchange programmes and the creation of more accessible information centres. According to Democratic partisans, the problem has been as much stylistic and personal as anything else, and the election of Democratic presidential candidate Senator John Kerry, a New Englander less prone to shooting from the hip, would have given the United States a fresh start. Like other doctrines before it, persistent failure has done nothing to dull public diplomacy's lustre. Better image management alone, however, will not allow the United States to exercise its power without provoking opposition abroad. It is substance that is at issue, not style: lasting change

in image will come only with meaningful and difficult changes in the way that the United States conducts itself.

### **The limits of public diplomacy**

One need not spend much time surfing the Internet to discover that misinformation about US foreign policy, past and present, is rife. But foreign critics are not buying what the United States is selling – not because the message has failed to penetrate, but because it has come across all too clearly. Contrary to the Washington consensus, America's detractors are not misled by ignorance or by a fixation on superficialities. Nor is it simply the fact of overwhelming American material power, both economic and military, that rankles – though insecurity undoubtedly plays a significant role as well.<sup>13</sup> What they find disturbing is this hegemon's vision, its conception of what the rules of the international political and economic system should look like.

Feelings about the United States run a truncated gamut from European distaste to Muslim rage, and America's critics (and, more occasionally, its admirers) have united around the language of imperialism.<sup>14</sup> But this term obscures more than it reveals. This is partly because it has become a slogan more than a tool for analysing contemporary global politics, and partly because it evokes the sprawling formal imperial projects of the late nineteenth century, and the United States today has neither the interest nor the will, nor likely the capacity, to erect such an empire.<sup>15</sup> But, more importantly, it is because what one means by 'empire' and what one finds threatening

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in an American empire depends on where one sits. While the American vision of world order looks very different when viewed through the separate prisms of the industrialised and developing worlds, many have agreed that it is deserving of their ire. Better public diplomacy might help at the margins, but it should not be deemed a critical part of the solution to America's problems abroad.

For people in industrialised nations, the American quest for empire manifests itself in the United States' penchant for unilateralism, in its pursuit of its own freedom of action as its highest priority. Whether this can properly be called empire is certainly debatable, but it is not debatable that this is a very real trend – though admittedly one that first budded in the Clinton administration before it fully bloomed under Bush. President Bill Clinton went to war in Kosovo without the UN's imprimatur; Bush arguably had a stronger legal basis for launching the invasion of Iraq. Clinton was at best equivocal about the International

Criminal Court (ICC), a major sticking point in the Bush administration's relations with Europeans in particular. Other prominent international accords – from the Kyoto Protocol to the land-mine ban – have met with a cooler reception in the Bush White House than they did in its predecessor. Despite talk of the 'coalition of the willing,' the sum total of the Bush administration's actions bespeaks a hegemon that is perfectly happy to collaborate when doing so furthers short-run US interests but which does not see the nurturing of a cooperative international environment as valuable in the middle to long term. Nor would a Kerry administration's foreign policy likely have differed markedly, if the candidate's pronouncements on issues from pre-emption to Kyoto to the ICC can be taken seriously.

America's troubled relationship with the developed world is rooted in the problem of power: the world today is unipolar and will probably remain so for the foreseeable future.<sup>16</sup> The countries of the industrialised world, particularly America's NATO allies, are used to, and feel entitled to, more influence than the United States has of late been willing to grant them. During the Cold War, the structure of the Atlantic Alliance ensured that allies would have some say in American foreign policy.<sup>17</sup> They became accustomed to such consultation, and even after the Soviet Union's collapse, they still expect a seat at the table. Yet their aspirations do not accord with their capabilities.<sup>18</sup> As much as the French or Germans dislike the United States' decision to opt out of the Kyoto Protocol or oppose its commitment to develop a national missile defence, most conceivable strategies to counter American hegemony would hurt the Europeans more than they would hurt the United States. The formation of a traditional balance of power, the prescription of classical *realpolitik*, is out of the question. As their opposition crystallised over Iraq, they were limited to hindering the US quest for UN approval. 'Soft balancing' – perhaps. A 'weapon of the weak' – most certainly.<sup>19</sup> They have found themselves in a position akin to that of the conspirators against Julius Caesar: as Cassius whispers in Brutus' ear (in Shakespeare's rendering), 'Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world/Like a Colossus, and we petty men/Walk under his huge legs and peep about/To find ourselves dishonourable graves.'<sup>20</sup> But murdering or deposing this new Caesar is impossible.

In contrast to the Europeans, the Russians and the Chinese have never expected a seat at the American table: they have either headed or desired their own table. With their power in decline but their pride intact, the Russians now want a seat – as an honoured guest. As America's only foreseeable peer competitor, the Chinese are reluctant to sit at any table where they cannot be at least co-host. While transatlantic relations have

soured over the last three years, the opposite has occurred with these past, present, and perhaps future rivals – persistent differences over key hot-spots, such as Iraq and Iran, aside. President Bush has been almost chummy with Russian President Vladimir Putin and, in exchange for the latter’s support in the ‘war on terror’, has turned a blind eye to Russian brutality in the Caucasus and to Putin’s anti-democratic arrogations of executive authority. A similar quid pro quo was arranged with China with regard to the separatist Uighurs, and the success of US efforts to bring North Korea into the non-nuclear fold hinges on China’s special relationship with that country and on its taking a lead role in bringing Kim Jong Il to heel. Nevertheless, the Chinese have, as much as the French, decried the American ‘hyper-power’ – not its dominance per se, but the way in which it has exercised that power.

Better image management cannot massage away fundamental tensions, though it would no doubt loosen some aggravating knots. Kind words and warm gestures will not make the Europeans forget that, at the end of the day, the United States need not show them the deference it displayed during the Cold War. Without a history of friendship with the United States, Russia and China are even more wary of American power and even less likely to be swayed. Only control over the unbridled exercise of American power could bring a measure of serenity to these unsettled relationships. Rather than seek to maximise its autonomy in the short run, the United States could willingly bind itself, sacrificing short-run gains for the creation of an international milieu from which it would in the long run profit, perhaps disproportionately. As John Ikenberry has argued, this is what American statesmen so wisely did in the wake of the Second World War.<sup>21</sup> And it is the sort of visionary leadership so lacking in Washington today.

The architects of international terrorism, however, hail not from Europe, but from the developing world. Poverty, both absolute and relative, is not the key driving factor: the impoverished residents of urban slums are less militant and less capable of organised action than are the underemployed graduates of universities. Hatred of the United States among the denizens of developing countries is rooted in the conjunction of two all-too-real facts. First, globalisation has yielded an explosive love-hate relationship with the West. While people in developing nations admire the West’s economic prowess and its strong democratic institutions, globalisation poses a distinct threat to traditional ways of life, modes of economic organisation and politics, gender relations, and cultural practices. The transition to a market economy in Europe posed a similar threat; as Jews in industrialising Europe were the pre-eminent symbols of global capital, the late nineteenth and early

twentieth centuries bore witness to the rise of virulent anti-Semitism. As other regions are today undergoing wrenching change, they focus their resentment on the West. And no nation better epitomises the neoliberal vision – both its economic prescriptions and the attendant cultural patterns – or has done more to spread it worldwide than the United States.<sup>22</sup>

Antipathy toward the United States is not the product of misunderstanding. Nor is it simply a sign of frustration, as people lash out against the leading symbol of economic and cultural change they feel powerless to slow. Advocates of globalisation today admit its human and cultural costs, but the conceit is that globalisation is an inexorable process, the product of no one's design. But globalisation is not the work of anonymous corporate agents.<sup>23</sup> Since the end of the Second World War, the United States has been more responsible than any other country for shaping the global economy, deploying its economic and military might to sustain, deepen and extend it. Those whose values and interests are threatened by the installation of a market economy know at whom to cast the first stone.

Thanks to the information and telecommunications revolution, people in the developing world are today more aware than ever of the chasm between their standard of living and that of the West, and they are consequently more aware than ever of their relative deprivation. Political violence often erupts not in poor egalitarian societies but in those that are deeply unequal, regardless of the absolute level of wealth. If all are poor, poverty is not cast in sharp relief, and the objective situation may not seem subjectively so dire. But inequality makes those who are poor in relative terms aware of their plight, and their mounting frustration and wrath eventually bubble over in a paroxysm of violence directed against those with the capacity to close the gap.<sup>24</sup> As a Gallup survey concluded in 2002, 'the citizens of Islamic nations are – at least outwardly – not as much envious or covetous of the success of the West as they are resentful – resentful that the powerful West does not help ... [and] seemingly does not care'.<sup>25</sup> Hegemony is a double-edged sword: with greater capability comes greater responsibility. As the leader of the West and as, far and away, the wealthiest and most militarily powerful country, the United States is seemingly most capable of narrowing inequity, yet it has been perhaps least willing to do so.

Secondly, the prevalence of state authorities unresponsive to their populaces has also contributed to loathing of the United States. While the United States cannot be held mainly responsible for the Middle East's and other regions' democratic deficits, myopic American policies, both during and after the Cold War, have helped sustain illiberal client

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regimes, from Pakistan to Egypt, Saudi Arabia to Zaire. The promotion of democracy has been a regular feature of American presidents' rhetoric, but the lack of actual promotion of democracy, combined with tangible moves to undermine popular anti-American regimes, has bred cynicism. The past and present of US policy weigh heavily: even when replacing a brutal authoritarian regime with legitimate democratic institutions has seemingly been a primary goal, as in the case of Iraq, the world doubts America's sincerity.

Americans generally see themselves as generous to a fault, tolerant of religious and cultural diversity, and supportive of the common man's ambition to boost his standard of living. They believe themselves to be exemplars of liberal and democratic values and that their country's benign worldview is apparent to all. If others have failed to grasp this, Americans reason, it is because the United States in its naïveté and good faith has assumed that truth would win out in the end and has therefore failed to confront the sources of disinformation seeking to promote a clash of civilizations where none should exist. The ensuing recommendations come from the build-a-better-mousetrap school of public diplomacy: promote open access to multiple news sources as a corrective to government-sponsored organs that spew anti-American venom; design government institutions to project a unified voice, so that the American message is not drowned out by noise; be responsive to local mores and sensitivities; and draw on private sector know-how. But these proposed solutions misunderstand the sources of animosity toward the United States.

**What is to be done?**

With regard to the developing world, the United States' options are limited. Socialised within a laissez-faire economic discourse, Americans typically view economic globalisation and the concomitant expansion of global markets as a trend to be embraced, not feared. From the American perspective, markets are the natural order of things, and other modes of economic organisation are doomed to obsolescence. Moreover, globalisation has made possible the US rise to hegemony, and few would support abandoning a project so intertwined with America's values, its self-image and its material interests. Americans have, in recent years, become more sensitive to the human costs of globalisation, but, though welcome, increased development assistance to help cushion the blow cannot render globalisation any less threatening to cultural norms and practices.

Insofar as globalisation has generated greater awareness of inequality, narrowing the gap between global rich and poor, between North and South, should become a priority. The United States has not historically made it so, but it is also not clear how it could use its extraordinary wealth to do so effectively. True, despite the Bush administration's increased commitment to overseas assistance, it remains less than 0.2% of US gross national product (GNP). By comparison, as a percentage of GNP, Japan and Germany give around twice as much, France and the United Kingdom almost three times as much, and the countries of Scandinavia around eight times as much.<sup>26</sup> But even increased amounts of foreign aid would fall short. Foreign assistance is no substitute for private investment, and the private sector has understandably shown little inclination to invest in unstable countries that lack the infrastructure to support industry. Nurturing an environment attractive to private investment is essential, but foreign assistance can help bring this about only in the very long run, if at all.

Nor can the United States do much to make regimes more responsive to their population's wishes. If the recent operations in Afghanistan and Iraq are typical – and it is hardly clear that other authoritarian regimes have equally weak foundations – deposing such regimes at relatively low cost is well within US capabilities. But it has now become commonplace to observe that winning the war is far easier than winning the peace. The American experiences in post-Taliban Afghanistan and post-Saddam Iraq make abundantly clear how daunting the challenge is to building a strong state and a working democracy. Though the record of occupation is not reason for optimism, its success rate still exceeds that of less ambitious alternatives.<sup>27</sup> Further, the construction of democracy in the absence of the proper liberal foundation might bring to power leaders with illiberal agendas.<sup>28</sup> The end result might be a regime that is not more responsive to its people's needs, but less so.

The difficulty of nurturing liberalism and democracy abroad should not, however, give the United States licence to bolster repressive governments whenever its short-run interests so demand. During the Cold War, when realists reigned, the United States supported pro-American tyrannies and democracies alike. What we have since learned, tragically, is that aiding such regimes – Saudi Arabia during the Cold War, for example – can have long-term consequences that are inimical to America's interests and that threaten its citizens' lives. Admittedly, the United States will sometimes have little choice but to support regimes, such as Egypt today, that are, at best, the lesser of two evils, but it should not be blind to the ramifications of such a policy.

With regard to the industrialised world, the corresponding policy recommendations are more clear – and have been widely endorsed by liberals and (some) realists alike since September 2001.<sup>29</sup> If it wishes to allay the fears of developed nations, the United States has to constrain itself by building a new array of multilateral organisations that institutionalise deliberative procedures, impose prohibitively costly penalties for unilateral behaviour and level the playing field. In the aftermath of the Second World War, confronted by a looming Soviet threat, the United States willingly enmeshed itself in economic and security institutions that empowered and secured its weaker allies and served as the basis for a stable Western order. Similarly, thanks in large measure to NATO and the then European Economic Community, the reunification of Germany in 1989 elicited hardly a peep from that country's long-time adversaries. The trends of the last decade – increasing American willingness to buck the international community over land-mines, chemical weapons, environmental regulations and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, and the resulting tensions – have demonstrated that the institutions designed to manage relations in the West during the Cold War are ineffective in an era of American unipolarity.

The United States has concerns that require multilateral solutions: combating terrorism, stemming the flow of illegal drugs, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and fostering sustainable development and good governance across the globe. Institutions designed to encourage collaboration and coordination among the world's most powerful countries would undoubtedly be in everybody's interest. Strict adherence would limit America's freedom of action: the United States might feel compelled to involve itself in military interventions and political disputes in which it did not perceive any national interest, and it might find its hands tied when it did wish to act. But these costly restrictions on American autonomy would be precisely the point, reassuring both allies and former adversaries that US power had been tamed while nonetheless leaving the United States in a position of primacy for decades to come.

The practical barriers to creating such an institutional environment are imposing. While the United States sat alone atop the international (especially the Western) hierarchy during the Cold War, the unifying Soviet threat was the lock on the cage of the proverbial eight-hundred-pound US gorilla: it allowed the United States to commit credibly to abide by the decisions of these institutions. The dissolution of the USSR broke that lock, and many understandably fear that the gorilla could and would escape from any cage the world could construct. In the absence of

a comparable threat – and none, including terrorism, is on the horizon – and given the disparities in material power resources, building a stable international institutional order is no small task. And building an *unstable* institutional order would be worse than building no order at all: were the United States to go it alone whenever it so desired, it would add a reputation for capriciousness to the fear of its unrestrainable power. Even if the United States were far-sighted enough to collaborate in the construction of strong institutions, making them sufficiently strong to allay the fears of its industrialised allies and rivals may simply not be possible. But the Bush administration has not even tried. Just the opposite: it has sought to loosen the existing bonds, not create new sturdier ones.

### **The dangerous allure of public diplomacy**

The United States cannot afford to place all its eggs in the basket of public diplomacy: the challenges confronting the United States are multifaceted, and its foreign policy must be equally multidimensional. Thankfully, even public diplomacy's most ardent advocates are not so narrowly focused. But the consensus on the need for more sophisticated, better targeted, more clever public diplomacy has only grown since 11 September.

Like the call of the sirens, public diplomacy is alluring, yet it threatens so to mislead the country's foreign-policy helmsmen that they crash the ship of state. Focusing on public diplomacy is comforting, for it allows Americans to believe that there is a technical fix to the country's problems.<sup>30</sup> But there is not. While the Bush administration's lack of tact has provoked unnecessary spats, style alone is not what offends. Indeed, America's critics get the big picture right more often than they get the details wrong.<sup>31</sup>

While public diplomacy alone cannot transform rivalry and resentment into harmony and contentment, it does have a role in international politics. By publicly communicating their preferences, state leaders can make it more difficult for themselves to reverse course or renege and thus can improve their bargaining position. By publicising what they believe to be another country's violation of an alleged international norm, governments (as well as non-state actors) seek to mobilise populaces to shame the miscreant into compliance. Nor is this to suggest that traditional diplomacy plays only a minor role in the management of international conflict. The tools in the ambassador's kit have been critical in preventing flare-ups, overcoming apparent deadlock, and even converting zero-sum games into win-win situations. States use their emissaries to communicate their intentions and desires, link

seemingly disparate issues and clarify the meaning of international events.

But selling foreign policy is harder than selling rice. Even the best marketing can accomplish only so much. Viewed from Paris or Berlin, or from Karachi or Tehran rather than from Washington or Peoria, America's power and foreign policy seem deeply threatening. Changing others' opinions of the United States requires not gestures and fine words but a transformation of America's approach to the world. 'To be great', Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, 'is to be misunderstood', but the United States cannot take consolation in this oft-quoted dictum. For while its power is great, it is certainly not misunderstood.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> In February 2002, before the House Committee on International Relations, Secretary of State Colin Powell testified to the importance of public diplomacy: "Right content, right format, right audience, right now" describes our strategic aim in seeing that US policies are explained and placed in the proper context in the minds of foreign audiences' (Hearing before the Committee on International Relations, US House of Representatives, 107<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 6 February 2002). While introducing a new public diplomacy broadcasting initiative, Senator Joseph Biden, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, expressed a similar desire: 'I just want the Muslim world and the rest of the world to understand as honestly as it can be portrayed: who we are, what we stand for, and what our motives are'. Senator Joseph Biden, press conference on public diplomacy, 29 September 2004. Available through FDCH Political Transcripts. And the final report of the 9/11 Commission simply states, 'The United States must do more to communicate its message' (*The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States* (New York: Norton, 2004), p. 377.)
- <sup>2</sup> The question of how to improve US public diplomacy has become a cottage industry among scholars and analysts. See Lamis Andoni, 'Deeds Speak Louder than Words', *Washington Quarterly*, vol. 25, no. 2, spring 2002, pp. 85–100; Antony J. Blinken, 'Winning the War of Ideas', *Washington Quarterly*, vol. 25, no. 2, spring 2002, pp. 101–114; James Critchlow, 'The Power of Public Diplomacy', *New Leader*, vol. 86, no. 5, September/October 2003, pp. 12–14; Jeffrey Gedmin and Craig Kennedy, 'Selling America—Short', *National Interest*, no. 74, winter 2003/2004, pp. 71–75; David Hoffman, 'Beyond Public Diplomacy', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 81, no. 2, March/April 2002, pp. 83–95; Edward Kaufman, 'A Broadcasting Strategy to Win Media Wars', *Washington Quarterly*, vol. 25, no. 2, spring 2002, pp. 115–127; Derk Kinnane, 'Winning Over the Muslim Mind', *National Interest*, no. 75, spring 2004, pp. 93–99; Mark Leonard, 'Diplomacy by Other Means', *Foreign Policy*, no. 132, September/October 2002, pp. 48–56; Christopher Ross, 'Public Diplomacy Comes of Age', *Washington Quarterly*, vol. 25, no. 2, spring 2002, pp. 75–83; Robert Satloff, 'How to Win Friends and Influence Arabs: Rethinking Public Diplomacy in the Middle East', *Weekly Standard*, 8 August 2003; and various essays in Adam Garfinkle, ed., *A Practical Guide to Winning the War on Terrorism* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2004). For a precursor to these debates, see Walter Laqueur, 'Save Public Diplomacy: Broadcasting America's Message Matters', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 73, no. 5, September/October 1994, pp. 19–24.
- <sup>3</sup> 9/11 Commission Report, p. 203.
- <sup>4</sup> This mission has reportedly been revived. See Thom Shanker and Eric Schmitt, 'Pentagon Weighs Use of Deception in a Broad Arena', *New York Times*, 13 December 2004.
- <sup>5</sup> This definition draws upon that of the State Department: 'Public diplomacy refers to government-sponsored programs intended to inform or influence public opinion in other countries; its chief instruments are publications, motion pictures, cultural exchanges, radio and television.' US Department of State, *Dictionary of International Relations Terms*

- (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1987), p. 85.
- <sup>6</sup> Press Briefing, Foreign Press Center, US Department of State, 9 November 2001, <http://fpc.state.gov/fpc/7533.htm>
- <sup>7</sup> US Government Accounting Office, 'US Public Diplomacy: State Department Expands Efforts but Faces Significant Challenges', GAO 03-951, September 2003.
- <sup>8</sup> See, from the Pew Global Attitudes Project, 'A Year After Iraq War', March 2004; 'Views of a Changing World', June 2003; 'America's Image Further Erodes, Europeans Want Weaker Ties', March 2003. For similar findings, see the other surveys reviewed in Hady Amr, 'The Need to Communicate: How To Improve US Public Diplomacy with the Islamic World', Analysis Paper No. 6, Brookings Project on US Policy Towards the Islamic World, Saban Center for Middle East Policy, The Brookings Institution, January 2004.
- <sup>9</sup> For an example, see Seth Cropsey, 'Opening Young Minds in Mideast: A Strategy for Public Policy that can Succeed', *Washington Times*, 12 July 2004, p. A19. Cropsey is director of the US government's International Broadcasting Bureau.
- <sup>10</sup> Transcript of interview with US Secretary of State Colin Powell, *Financial Times*, 13 February 2002.
- <sup>11</sup> See, among others, Stephen Johnson and Helle Dale, *How to Reininvigorate US Public Diplomacy*, Backgrounder #1645, Heritage Foundation, 23 April 2003; Phyllis D'Hoop, ed., *Strengthening US-Muslim Connections*, Center for the Study of the Presidency, July 2003; Independent Task Force on Public Diplomacy, Council on Foreign Relations, *Finding America's Voice: A Strategy for Reinvoigorating US Public Diplomacy*, 2003; GAO, 'US Public Diplomacy'; Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World, *Changing Minds—Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for US Public Diplomacy in the Arab & Muslim World*, submitted to the US House of Representatives, Committee on Appropriations, 1 October 2003; Hady Amr, 'The Need to Communicate'; and Defense Science Board, Task Force Report, *Strategic Communication*, September 2004.
- <sup>12</sup> For the most recent restatement of the public diplomacy agenda, see Report of the US Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, 28 September 2004, available at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/36625.pdf>
- <sup>13</sup> Such thinking would be consistent with John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: Norton, 2001).
- <sup>14</sup> See, among many others, Anonymous, *Imperial Hubris: Why the West is Losing the War on Terror* (London: Brassey's, 2004); Noam Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2003); Chalmers Johnson, *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire* (New York: Henry Holt, 2003); and Michael Mann, *Incoherent Empire* (London: Verso, 2003). For less critical views, see Eliot A. Cohen, 'History and the Hyperpower', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 83, no. 4, July/August 2004, pp. 49–63; Sebastian Mallaby, 'The Reluctant Imperialist: Terrorism, Failed States, and the Case for American Empire', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 81, no. 2, March/April 2002, pp. 2–7; and Niall Ferguson, 'A World Without Power', *Foreign Policy*, no. 143, July/August 2004, pp. 32–39. For a balanced analysis, see Stephen Peter Rosen, 'An Empire, If You Can Keep It', *National*

- Interest* no. 71, spring 2003, pp. 51–61.
- <sup>15</sup> This is much to the consternation of some analysts. See Niall Ferguson, *Colossus: The Price of America's Empire* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004).
- <sup>16</sup> William C. Wohlforth, 'The Stability of a Unipolar World', *International Security*, vol. 24, no. 1, summer 1999, pp. 5–41.
- <sup>17</sup> Thomas Risse-Kappen, *Cooperation Among Democracies: The European Influence on US Foreign Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995).
- <sup>18</sup> Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003).
- <sup>19</sup> James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985).
- <sup>20</sup> William Shakespeare, *The Life and Death of Julius Caesar*, Act 1, Scene 2.
- <sup>21</sup> G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).
- <sup>22</sup> Michael Mousseau, 'Market Civilization and Its Clash with Terror', *International Security*, vol. 27, no. 3, winter 2002/03, pp. 5–29.
- <sup>23</sup> Manfred B. Steger, *Globalism: The New Market Ideology* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002).
- <sup>24</sup> Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970).
- <sup>25</sup> *The Gallup Poll of the Islamic World* (Princeton, NJ: The Gallup Organization, 2002), p. 5.
- <sup>26</sup> In absolute dollars, the United States remains the world's largest donor of overseas development assistance. Statistics from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *2003 Development Cooperation Report*.
- <sup>27</sup> David M. Edelstein, 'Occupational Hazards: Why Military Occupations Succeed or Fail', *International Security*, vol. 29, no. 1, summer 2004, pp. 49–91.
- <sup>28</sup> See Jack Snyder, *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict* (New York: Norton, 2000); and Fareed Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad* (New York: Norton, 2003).
- <sup>29</sup> See Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, 'American Primacy in Perspective', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 81, no. 4, July/August 2002, pp. 20–33; Joseph S. Nye, Jr., 'US Power and Strategy After Iraq', *Foreign Affairs* vol. 82, no. 4, July/August 2003, pp. 60–73; and Fareed Zakaria, 'Our Way', *New Yorker*, vol. 78, no. 31, 14–21 October 2002, pp. 72–78.
- <sup>30</sup> Stanley Hoffmann long ago suggested that this was characteristic of American thinking. See Stanley Hoffmann, *Gulliver's Troubles; or, The Setting of American Foreign Policy* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968).
- <sup>31</sup> Ironically, a congressional advisory group charged with fixing public diplomacy made precisely this point: '“Spin” and manipulative public relations and propaganda are not the answer. Foreign policy counts. In our trips to Egypt, Syria, Turkey, France, Morocco, and Senegal, we were struck by the depth of opposition to many of our policies'. (*Changing Minds – Winning Peace*, p. 18, and see also pp. 22–24). Nearly every major report on public diplomacy published within the last year has recognised the depth of opposition to US policy positions, but nearly all bracketed the question of policy reform – either because their mandate prevented them from recommending substantive foreign policy change or because it was presumed that

generating favourable opinion was not worth the (assumed) cost to the national interest.