

“I’d Better Damn Well Be There for the Takeoffs”:  
Reinvigorating U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Hashemite  
Kingdom of Jordan in the Wake of the Arab Spring

by

Amy Davis  
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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Former director of the United States Information Agency (USIA) Edward R. Murrow famously said to President John F. Kennedy, “If they want me in on the crash landings, I’d better damn well be in on the takeoffs.”<sup>1</sup> Murrow used this metaphor to demand that he—as guardian of the U.S.’s image and the government’s ultimate authority on public diplomacy—be included in all Cabinet and National Security Council (NSC) meetings. Murrow demanded that he be included because he knew that there would be little point in shaping public diplomacy around the outcomes of American policy—“the landings”—unless some thought was given to how particular actions and policies would affect international perception of the U.S. during the policy process—“the takeoffs.” Murrow’s demand and his famous saying are characteristic of a particular attitude toward foreign policy, that formulating policy is not only about using hard power to pursue the country’s economic and political interests, but about considering how an action will be received that those outside the U.S. Though Murrow made his mark on the U.S. government and the history of public diplomacy many decades ago, the attitude that he began to articulate has not yet fully permeated the American foreign policy establishment.

However, current international and domestic conditions demand that American policymakers accept Murrow’s ideology. The Arab Spring is the most recent development that demands a new direction in American foreign policy. In fact, this new direction has been nearly a decade in coming after the U.S.’s disastrous attempt at forced democratization in Iraq that turned the region against the West and

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<sup>1</sup> Kelley 2011, 60

plunged the U.S. into debt. The renewed drive for democracy in the Middle East, the U.S.'s extremely poor image abroad, and the country's economic difficulties all demand that the U.S. move away from aggressive, unilateral foreign policy and adopt a new attitude toward communication and compromise with the international community. Throughout the Cold War, public diplomacy was a well-used and much appreciated tool in American foreign policy; it was during those decades that the icons of public diplomacy such as the Voice of America (VOA), USIA, the Peace Corps, and the Fulbright Program were born. Today, public diplomacy still has its place in the State Department, but it is not as central an objective as it was during the Cold War. While many Foreign Service officers are designated officers of public diplomacy and the State Department has newly elevated the status of the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy, public diplomacy has never been given first priority; this has been especially true since the U.S. achieved sole superpower status with the fall of the Soviet Union because the U.S. government and American people felt it was their right at that point to shape the world as they wished with little regard for the preferences of others. However, the U.S.'s vulnerability to acts of terror by those it has alienated combined with its current weakness and the Arab people's newest push to be heard has shown that this attitude is unsustainable. Therefore, this thesis seeks to make recommendations about how best to reinvigorate American public diplomacy and reorient foreign policy thinking within the U.S. government to make public diplomacy a major priority. These recommendations are specific to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan because this country is well-poised to transition to democracy peacefully along a path of reform rather than revolution, as well as

because the Jordanian narrative is intimately connected to two of the thorniest issues weighing on American relations with the Arab world: the War in Iraq and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Hence, there are both great opportunities and great challenges for American public diplomacy in Jordan, and these make Jordan an especially interesting case worthy of examination.

### Lessons Learned from the Arab Spring

One of the lessons to be drawn from the Arab Spring of 2011 is that democracy can take hold in the Middle East. It is debatable whether incremental movement towards democracy or continual change caused by overwhelming public sentiment in favor of democracy will in fact result in fully-fledged democracy in the near term, but the idea that democracy will take hold in one or more countries in the region is a fair bet to make and a legitimate eventuality to prepare for. At the very least, the demands and desires of Middle Eastern populations are likely to matter more and more in the politics of the region compared to the preferences of the West and the ruling minority.

A second lesson is that the West may have limited control over what happens in the region in the future. The Arab Spring was homegrown, which indicates a strong desire for democracy among the majorities of Arab populations that cannot be ignored. This series of homegrown revolutions also indicates that the desire for change is strong enough that these populations will act on their own. Though the Libyan opposition required help from the international community to finally oust Muammar Gaddafi, the peoples of Tunisia and Egypt successfully overthrew their authoritarian leaders with an ease that demonstrates just how powerful these

populations are when acting in unison. The people of Syria began their own revolution without outside interference and have not given up their efforts to oust the al-Assad regime despite massive casualties, which shows how enduring public pressure for change can be even with no prospect for help. The fact that the Arab Spring was not initiated by outside forces and continues to sustain itself with minimal outside help demonstrates that the power of popular revolution in the name of democracy could very well be something the outside world cannot control or would be ill advised to attempt to control. Hence, it is now necessary for the U.S. to begin legitimately supporting democracy in the Middle East instead of attempting to maintain unstable alliances with undemocratic leaders. In order to be prepared to deal with democratic Arab societies, the U.S. must align itself with the people of the Arab world; to not do so would mean betting that authoritarianism will remain dominant in the region at the expense of freedom and create potential conflicts down the road.

A third lesson learned from the Arab Spring is that popular uprisings are messy; one need only consider the massive loss of life in Syria, legal troubles for American NGO workers in Egypt, and the deaths of U.S. citizens in Benghazi. Even without considering the potentially massive loss of life and disruption to normalcy that affects citizens of a country undergoing revolution, it is very much in the interest of the U.S. and the rest of the international community outside the region to avoid further violent revolutions in the Middle East. The unpredictable economic and political disruption of revolutions makes pursuing a different direction worthwhile. The challenge for those outside the region—a challenge that falls significantly on the U.S. as the sole superpower and because of its intimate involvement in the region—is

to manage the process of democratization so that it is less likely to create instability and violence. Therefore, the preferable path toward democratization is constitutional reform “that shifts power away from the king toward an elected parliament and an independent judiciary” rather than revolution that demands a complete overthrow of the government.<sup>2</sup> While it seems that many governments in the Middle East are reforming themselves, progress is not coming quickly enough, and leaders in and beyond the region “seem to still think they can offer half-measures to appease their people.”<sup>3</sup> However, the time for change has come, and “the lesson of Tunisia and Egypt—as well as Yemen, Jordan, and many others—is that Arab populations, after waiting and waiting, have run out of patience,”<sup>4</sup> which means that the U.S. must do what it can to ensure that change can come about via the constitutional reform model rather than through revolution. This will require a massive effort in the form of dialogue and capacity building from the highest levels of government down to the streets beginning immediately because the Arabs may not be willing to wait much longer.

### Lessons Learned from 9/11 and the War on Terror

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 were the result of a decade of failed public diplomacy by the U.S. Though public diplomacy helped the U.S. win the Cold War, it was largely neglected during the 1990s. The 9/11 terrorists were educated citizens of a U.S. ally, Saudi Arabia, and thus would have been the target of

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<sup>2</sup> Hamid “In the Middle East” 2011

<sup>3</sup> Hamid “In the Middle East” 2011

<sup>4</sup> Hamid “In the Middle East” 2011

public diplomacy had the U.S. put proper effort into it.<sup>5</sup> One lesson to be taken from these attacks is that if the U.S. does not constantly strive to maintain a positive image in the eyes of the rest of the world, only a few disgruntled individuals could use modern technology against innocent civilians with massive consequences.

The War on Terror shows how adept terrorist organizations are at using cyberspace to spread their influence through their own reserves of soft power.<sup>6</sup> If the U.S. hopes to win the War of Terror, it will have to learn to play on the same turf as its enemies and utilize soft power to win the world's allegiance. Together, 9/11 and the War on Terror demonstrate what happens when the U.S. neglects public diplomacy while its enemies excel at it.

#### Lessons Learned from the War in Iraq

The War in Iraq taught the U.S. lessons about both public diplomacy and democracy promotion. This war was an example of using hard power to force democracy on a society with the end goal being a country more in line with U.S. interests. This initiative failed to produce a viable democracy and succeeded only in causing internal strife and severe damage to Iraq, and dragged the U.S. into a costly war it could ill afford. Democracy by definition must come from the people and be sustained by the people; any attempt to force a transition amounts only to a new kind of authoritarianism. Furthermore, the war in Iraq created overwhelmingly negative public sentiment toward the U.S. in the Middle East and throughout the world. Since the use of force generated largely negative results, an alternate option is to use soft

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<sup>5</sup> Taylor 2011

<sup>6</sup> Taylor 2011

power to shape the process of democratization and pursue American foreign policy objectives.

### The Case for Public Diplomacy

Though the image of the U.S. in the Arab world has suffered since the founding of Israel in 1948 and especially so in the last decade, it still possess valuable reserves of soft power. The unique ideals of popular government espoused by the U.S. Constitution and the U.S.'s image as defender and promoter of them are the country's greatest reserves of soft power. Polls and scholarship indicate that most Arab publics understand and appreciate American democracy and free market values, but that their dislike of the U.S. comes from U.S. policy.<sup>7</sup>

The extent of cultural and economic flowering in the U.S. provides additional soft power. Despite the financial crisis beginning in 2008 and some elements of American culture that many in the Arab world find objectionable, American popular culture and standards of living still find admirers in the region. Much American soft power is also derived from American democratic ideals, and is especially useful and conducive to democracy promotion. Even aside from the U.S.'s apparent advantage in possessing significant soft power to deploy through public diplomacy, public diplomacy is far less costly than using hard power to achieve foreign policy goals, both in terms of American lives and American dollars. Considering the current budget crisis, the high costs of military action make a soft power campaign much more attractive. Thus, the best course for managing democratization in the Middle East is to undertake a concerted public diplomacy effort in order to utilize American

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<sup>7</sup> Kelly 2011, 67

soft power to assist the spread of democracy in order to ingratiate Arab population and manage democratization.

### The Case for Jordan

Democratization is certainly a long way off for many of the most authoritarian countries in the region. Though Bahrain saw protests in 2011, these were easily put down by the regime with the help of Saudi Arabia. The wealthy monarchies of the Gulf are not likely to be challenged any time soon, and it is not in the U.S.'s interest to do so: the U.S. relies on the goodwill of the al-Khalifa regime in Bahrain to be able to base its Fifth Fleet in Manama in case of conflict in the Gulf or along oil routes, and oil monarchies simply have such vast economic resources that can be used to dampen direct demands for democracy and the U.S. cannot hope to use economic assistance to bargain with those regimes.

In contrast, Arab states with fewer resources than their oil-rich neighbors may be less internally stable or immune to American influence. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is an example of just such a monarchy that saw protests during and after the Arab Spring but has managed to stave off revolution with promises of reform. Jordan is the subject of this paper because popular revolution threatens there but has not yet come to pass, which means that there is still an opportunity to avert disaster in favor of successful democratization along the constitutional reform model. The U.S.'s main interests in Jordan include the country adhering to its peace treaty with Israel, which the monarchy is likely to do, and maintaining a military alliance with the U.S. for the sake of combating terrorism and other potential conflicts in the Levant and the rest of the region. These interests are balanced by large amounts of American aid

flowing into Jordan; though the U.S. certainly has a stake in the alliance, Jordan has few resources and a weak economy that lead it to rely heavily on foreign aid.

Therefore, Jordan is an excellent candidate for testing the ability of U.S. public diplomacy to help smooth a democratic transition and maintain U.S. interests in the face of political change.

In the next four chapters, this thesis will examine public diplomacy as an essential tool in international relations, the history of American public diplomacy in Jordan, the status of democratization in Jordan, and the possible ways American public diplomacy can assist the current drive for democratization in Jordan. Chapter 2 uses a wide variety of sources on the general theory of public diplomacy to highlight the roles of specific actors in public diplomacy, the utility of certain activities, as well as many of the challenges and limitations that affect public diplomacy. Chapter 3 uses firsthand accounts from American Foreign Service officers who have taken part in public diplomacy in Jordan to judge the effectiveness of American public diplomacy in Jordan as well as derive several lessons that will be useful moving forward. Chapter 4 examines the current political situation in Jordan two years after the beginning of the Arab Spring. Lastly, Chapter 5 makes specific recommendations for using American public diplomacy to assist the process of democratization while improving Jordanians' perception of the U.S.

## **Chapter 2: Actors and Activities in Public Diplomacy**

### Defining Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy is the tool countries use to exercise their soft power. Soft power is made up of cultural values, political values, and moral foreign policies; the U.S.'s major soft power resources include a culture of tolerance, diversity, rule of law, peaceful and regular transfer of power, wide political participation, and foreign policies that promote these values in other countries.<sup>8</sup> U.S. public diplomacy seeks to advertise that the U.S. upholds all of these elements of soft power and that they contribute to the U.S.'s most widely admired attributes: high standards of living, high innovation, and international prestige that begets international leadership.

At its most broad, public diplomacy includes all of the initiatives taken by American actors to positively engage a foreign public in the aim of accomplishing foreign policy objectives. Though the State Department and other government agencies are the central actors in public diplomacy, it is crucial to remember all American organizations with international reach have a role to play in public diplomacy because their actions will be associated with the U.S. and contribute to a foreign public's relationship with the U.S. This paper is most concerned with the State Department's role in public diplomacy as a coordinating body, as it conducts its own activities and as it assists other organizations in their activities. The State Department defines the goal of public diplomacy as such:

“The mission of American public diplomacy is to support the achievement of U.S. foreign policy goals and objectives, advance national interests, and enhance national security by informing and

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<sup>8</sup> Nye 2008

influencing foreign publics and by expanding and strengthening the relationship between the people and the government of the United States and citizens of the rest of the world.”<sup>9</sup>

One of the key elements of public diplomacy is that its ultimate goal is to realize foreign policy objectives. This involves a two-step process: first American actors exercise soft power, and then it is on a foreign public to receive the impact of soft power and act in a certain way to induce their government to act in a certain way. While many public diplomacy activities have their own stated objectives, the overarching objective is to ease the path toward achieving U.S. interests. It is important to note that public diplomacy itself is not the ultimate tool a government uses in achieving its aims—that is direct negotiation—but that public diplomacy is a “lubricant for foreign policy.”<sup>10</sup> Public diplomacy ensures that the conditions are right for pursuing foreign policy objectives.

Another key element of public diplomacy is that it does not involve coercion. Public diplomacy helps the U.S. accomplish its goals because other states want to do what the U.S. would prefer they do, not because they are forced to.<sup>11</sup> This means that public diplomacy involves persuasion, and that “successful public diplomacy is being able to merge the interests of others with those of your own.”<sup>12</sup> This notion ties into the idea that public diplomacy is about making the conditions right for pursuing foreign policy objectives; when interests merge and become the same, it is easier to reach a mutually acceptable agreement. Public diplomacy is “about influencing the likelihood of a community adopting a behavior [...] rather than exerting control over

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<sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of State 2012

<sup>10</sup> Taylor 2011, 19

<sup>11</sup> Nye 2008

<sup>12</sup> Scott-Smith 2011, 105

their behavior"<sup>13</sup>; with this in mind, the State Department should define the goal of a public diplomacy initiative as a specific behavior by a specific group of people. And then in place of coercion, public diplomacy uses communication and relationships to achieve that goal. Public diplomacy also uses communication to fill an "information and explanation void."<sup>14</sup> U.S. policies impact many people throughout the world, and it is crucial that they be explained properly to those they affect. However, public diplomacy is not only about one-way communication, but also about two-way engagement. Short-term public diplomacy goals may be to manage and spread accurate information for the sake policy explanation and advocacy, but in the long-term it is about building trust through two-way dialogue with foreign publics<sup>15</sup> such that they feel involved in the policy process.

Lastly, public diplomacy is intended to entice other societies and governments to imitate the U.S.<sup>16</sup> This is similar to the idea of leading by example, which does not have to be strategy of all public diplomacy initiatives, but is especially relevant to the U.S. as the superpower hoping maintain its leadership role in world politics.

#### Differentiating Public Diplomacy from Propaganda

While public diplomacy involves sending a carefully constructed message to the people of another country, it differs from propaganda in that it is always honest and constructive. Unlike one-directional propaganda, public diplomacy is marked by mutuality and reciprocity where both countries involved share and receive

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<sup>13</sup> Fisher 2011, 271

<sup>14</sup> Taylor 2011, 20

<sup>15</sup> Kelley 2011

<sup>16</sup> Nye 2008

information about their societies somewhat equally.<sup>17</sup> Public diplomacy is meant to create lasting relationships between countries, which dishonesty and negativity can only hinder. Propaganda may paint a foreign government or certain aspects of a foreign society negatively, but public diplomacy generally does not do this unless the criticism is extremely warranted. Propaganda may also give an inaccurately favorable impression of the country that created it, but public diplomacy should not do so for the sake of maintaining credibility and forging an honest relationship. Public diplomacy seeks to present the most positive aspects of a country without relying on falsehoods.<sup>18</sup>

In fact, the age of state propaganda may have passed. First, the amount of information available to an individual via the Internet means that dishonest propaganda will certainly be revealed eventually; it is too easy for individuals to fact-check for themselves something they are already disinclined to believe for a government to attempt to rely information that is not true. Second, American credibility in the Middle East is in such miserable condition that no message sent from the U.S. government is likely to be believed if it is not confirmed by another unbiased source.

### Motives for Public Diplomacy

The most basic justification for using public diplomacy to accomplish foreign policy goals is the belief that public sentiment has an effect on a state's foreign policy. The wave of democratization that occurred during the 1990s shows that public sentiment is becoming more and more important in world politics, and states

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<sup>17</sup> Taylor 2011, 19

<sup>18</sup> Taylor 2011, 19

are now competing to be the most liked rather than the most powerful.<sup>19</sup> Whether a country is democratic with a somewhat regularized system for incorporating public opinion into foreign policy, or authoritarian and dependent on a relatively broad coalition to avoid rebellion, the argument holds that popular sentiment has the potential to effect foreign policy decisions.

A second reason for choosing to engage in public diplomacy is that military intervention and other coercive measures do not always work and are not always available. Military intervention with any goal in mind is costly in terms of both money and lives. Non-violent, persuasive strategies for achieving foreign policy goals do not put soldiers' lives in danger and do not cost as much because they use only information rather than material resources. Furthermore, persuasion done nonviolently does not produce lingering resentment.<sup>20</sup> Despite that the U.S. military dwarfs all other states' military capabilities several times over, the U.S. does not have the power to coerce every other state in the world to do its bidding, so persuasion campaigns will always be necessary.

Third, in the globalized age it is all too easy for foreign publics to obtain information about the U.S. and American culture that may not present the most accurate or flattering picture. While public diplomacy does not seek to promote idealistic falsehoods, as one would imagine true propaganda doing, it seeks to present the best image possible and edit out what might be unnecessarily offensive to other societies. Market forces make it easy for American films and other pop culture to make their way around the globe even if they do not present the right image, so it is

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<sup>19</sup> Scott-Smith 2011, 101

<sup>20</sup> Copeland 2011, 184

up to the government and other conscientious actors to undertake a concerted effort to present the right image of the U.S. to the global audience.

Lastly, successful public diplomacy will endow the U.S. with the kind of legitimacy necessary for it to continue to be a leader in world politics. An pertinent question is: “Is it enough for powerful countries like the U.S. to advance agendas seemingly impervious to foreign public opinion?”<sup>21</sup> The answer to that question is a resounding negative. U.S. policy from 2000-2008 was too nationalistic and caused the U.S. to lose legitimacy in the eyes others.<sup>22</sup> If the U.S. continues to pursue a unilateralist agenda with no regard to the feelings of others, other nations will cease to be reassured about the righteousness of American intentions and the U.S. will not be able to rely on their support in tackling common problems.<sup>23</sup> Confronting global problems like climate change and terrorism requires every state and every individual to solve, so the U.S. must shift away from its realpolitik philosophy toward a new one that respects interdependence.<sup>24</sup>

### Public Diplomacy and Democracy Promotion

Democracy promotion is a stated goal of the U.S. government. Actual policy has not and very likely will not always reflect this goal, but the idea still sits behind every policy generated by the State Department. There is a general consensus that a more democratic world is a world safer for Americans. In the long term a democratic world may be safer, but in the meantime the process of achieving democracy will be

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<sup>21</sup> Kelley 2011, 69

<sup>22</sup> Scott-Smith 2011

<sup>23</sup> Lucas 2011

<sup>24</sup> Scott-Smith 2011, 105

messy and threaten some American interests. Within the State Department, democracy promotion is in the hands of the Bureau of Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights. Part of their justification for promoting democracy is that doing so spreads “fundamental American values,” which shows the public diplomacy and democracy promotion are so intimately connected as to be one and the same. In addition to this, the State Department generally relies on the tenets of democratic peace theory to justify its democracy promotion efforts, including the belief that democratization will:

“[...] create a more secure, stable, and prosperous global arena in which the United States can advance its national interests [because] democratically governed nations are more likely to secure the peace, deter aggression, expand open markets, promote economic development, protect American citizens, combat international terrorism and crime, uphold human and worker rights, avoid humanitarian crises and refugee flows, improve the global environment, and protect human health.”<sup>25</sup>

Such things as securing the peace and expanding open markets are essentially the U.S.’s interests in most parts of the world, which shows that the State Department’s democracy promotion effort is truly based on pursuing American interests. The Bureau of Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights is primarily charged with assisting new democracies and democracy advocates around the world in “implementing democratic principles” as well as with a duty to “identify and denounce” regimes that do not adhere to democratic principles. There are important uses for public diplomacy in these tasks because implementing democratic principles, behavior, and methods involves spreading knowledge of those things in foreign

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<sup>25</sup> U.S. Department of State 2012

societies, training officials and advocates, and issuing statements that are consistent with a commitment to democracy.

While public diplomacy is a general tool of foreign policy that can be used to achieve a variety of goals, when it comes to ongoing democratization in the Middle East, public diplomacy has a special relationship with democracy promotion.

Thomas Carothers wrote that states use public diplomacy to “spread the idea of democracy, to support the development of civil society, and to help open some political space or widen what space does exist.”<sup>26</sup> Since the U.S. prides itself on its democratic government and is more than anything else defined by its democratic government, any public diplomacy designed to curry favor for the U.S. will mean sharing and promoting the ideals of democracy such as universal human rights, free press, free and fair elections for top government officials, and the rule of law, among others. By implanting these in the minds of foreign publics, public diplomacy increases appreciation of the U.S. and contributes to the process of democratization by altering foreign norms, opinions, and expectations about governance. In this sense, U.S. public diplomacy is useful both for aiding democratization and for preparing for democratization; spreading the ideals of democratization in various ways helps encourage the transition and increasing international appreciation for American society ensures that the U.S. will be treated well by democratic government, which in turn enables the U.S. to encourage democracy and combat authoritarianism in other ways because it will not have to fear the consequences of a more democratic world.

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<sup>26</sup> Carothers 1999, 95

## **Actors in Public Diplomacy**

Anyone and everyone can participate in public diplomacy merely by consciously trying to make a good impression, set an example, or personally engage foreigners. There is a certain mindset for public diplomacy—a mindset that values compromise over conflict, and dialogue above all else—and any individual capable of adopting that mindset becomes an asset to public diplomacy. However, there are several important groups of actors whose roles are particularly nuanced or especially important to public diplomacy: governments, private corporations, the military, religious institutions, and allies.

### **Governments**

Governments are the most important actors in public diplomacy; while the participation of other actors is vital as well, assistance and coordination by a government is necessary. Some critical responsibilities that governments have in public diplomacy is managing foreign aid, organizing events and exchanges, and explaining policies to the foreign public via the media. Though managing foreign aid and organizing events and exchanges certainly present their own challenges, navigating the relationship between government and the media is even more difficult. One of the basic challenges for governments participating in public diplomacy is that they cannot always rely on the media to fully or accurately explain policy decision; this has led government officials to try to communicate with the public more directly by establishing their own media outlets.<sup>27</sup> Though having complete control over the media allows for clearer communication of the government's message, such media

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<sup>27</sup> Taylor 2011, 26

sources are rarely considered credible in the eyes of the public. Though the temptation for government to compete with private media is strong, it is generally better in terms of credibility for government officials to work with those in the media to gain the opportunity to explain their policies fully and candidly.

An important actor in U.S. public diplomacy is the Bureau of Public Affairs at the State Department. The mission of the Bureau of Public Affairs is to engage “domestic and international media to communicate timely and accurate information with the goal of furthering U.S. foreign policy and national security interests as well as broadening understanding of American values.”<sup>28</sup> In that aim, this bureau oversees press briefings, web pages, social media, scheduling speakers, producing audio-visual products for other bureaus in the department, and preparing historical studies on U.S. foreign policy. The most important duty of officials in this bureau must be policy explanation, because that is one of the best ways to keep foreign publics engaged in the policy process and aware of the actions the U.S. government takes to stand by American values. However, American policy sometimes does not represent American values well, and it is at those times that public affairs tends to become less about pure explanation and more about rhetoric. A challenge that is particular to the work of public affairs officials, then, is to constantly be aware of using empty rhetoric because doing so will fail to keep the foreign public engaged. A second, related challenge that both the Bureau of Public Affairs and those at the highest levels in the U.S. government must confront together is the difficulty public affairs officials will have explaining policies that reflect only American interests to the international audience; to remedy this, the bureau must have constant contact with policymakers

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<sup>28</sup> U.S. Department of State 2012

and policymakers must continually consult public affairs officials for advice on policy. A third challenge that is apparent in this bureau's mission statement is reconciling the needs of the domestic audience with those of the international audience. Occasionally, these two constituencies make opposing demands on foreign policy, and when that occurs it may be tempting for policymakers and public affairs officials to choose policies that serve the domestic audience and explain these policies in such a way that pleases the domestic audience. However, this can have disastrous consequences for American credibility, so it is vital that public affairs officials not shy away from displeasing the domestic audience in order to better uphold American and democratic values abroad.

Another important actor in American public diplomacy is the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. This bureau "fosters mutual understanding between people of the United States and the people of other countries to promote friendly and peaceful relations"<sup>29</sup> by arranging education or professional exchanges and organizing cultural events. Exchanges are an extremely valuable tool for public diplomacy because they help spread American values and information about the U.S. through exchange participants who are the most credible sources for their countrymen. This bureau has achieved significant success as evidenced by fifty Nobel Laureates and 350 heads of state among their alumni. One difficulty this bureau may encounter is the need to be separated from policymakers. Ideally cultural activities can go on even if there are political disagreements between the U.S. and a particular country, so the particulars of U.S. policy are not as important. Exchanges and cultural activities must seem to be separate from policymaking in order to be

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<sup>29</sup> U.S. Department of State 2012

credible and seem authentic; if exchange participants see too overwhelming a government hand in their experience, they may not return with a good impression of the U.S.

The final set of actors involved in public diplomacy by the U.S. government are officials in American embassies. These men and women conduct the majority of public diplomacy activities such as generating press reports, providing material for the local media, interacting with civil society leaders, hosting social and cultural events, and making public appearances. These are the true public diplomacy experts because they have the opportunity to observe the minute nuances of their community and its overall perception of the U.S. Officers on the ground also have the greatest stake in public diplomacy being successful because they are less accountable to the domestic audience or the policy system in Washington. Unfortunately, because public diplomacy officers abroad in embassies are low in the government hierarchy and removed from the centers of power they are rarely listened to by policymakers, and this leads the interests of foreign communities to be forgotten in the policy process.

### Private Corporations

American companies also conduct public diplomacy for the U.S. Corporations can assist public diplomacy efforts by advertizing the benefits they bring another country—such as quality products, jobs, or investment—as long as these activities are consistent with the values of that society and represent the best the U.S. has to offer. In terms of democracy promotion, corporations play a valuable role by respecting human rights—a core expectation in a democracy—which conditions

locals to the idea, and sets a precedent for other international corporations, locally owned corporations, and even the local government. Foreign Service officers in the economic section constantly engage with American corporations operating overseas, so it is up to these officers to remind corporations of their duty to represent the U.S. well and work with them to advertize the good things they do for the foreign country they operate in.

### The Military

The American military undertakes public diplomacy by training foreign militaries, assisting with disaster relief or development projects, and through their behavior during conflicts. Training and assistance contribute to human and economic development, and that is generally the official justification for these activities, but they also contribute to public diplomacy when military personnel interact positively with locals and the entire population is aware enough of the assistance to appreciate it. During armed conflict it is crucial to public diplomacy that military personnel are aware of their role as representatives of their country. The treatment of prisoners at Abu Ghraib is an important example of misbehavior by military personnel who likely were not told it was part of their job to show respect to Iraqi prisoners and set an example for how military officers should behave. Abu Ghraib proved to the Arab audience that Americans are “exactly the sexually obsessed, crude, arrogant, godless occupiers that our enemies say we are,”<sup>30</sup> and ended up becoming a huge public relations crisis for the U.S., which demonstrates how crucial it is that the American military be engaged in public diplomacy. When it comes to conducting the kind of

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<sup>30</sup> Khitab 2011, 142

public diplomacy that assists democracy promotion, the military can play its role by setting an example for how an army should conduct its work by treating prisoners and especially non-combatants with respect, even if the realities of armed conflict make doing so difficult.

While it is vital that the military be engaged in public diplomacy and aware of their responsibilities, another mistake the American military made during the war in Iraq was to undertake ‘psychological operations’ via broadcasting and print media. Military personnel have a role in public diplomacy in their interactions with civilians while they are doing their job, but distributing information is not traditionally the purpose of the military, so strategic information campaigns conducted by military personnel seem too forced to be credible. Hence, the best role for the military in public diplomacy is to go about its business with the dignity befitting Americans and leave information distribution up to those whose job it is to interact with the media and the public.

### Religious Institutions

Religious institutions can engage in public diplomacy as well. These institutions may have their own goals for recruiting new members or providing charity, but the way they conduct these activities has a profound effect on how their country of origin is perceived. Religious institutions must be very conscious of how they relate to the local population because offensive practices will alienate people. Religious activities can also be extremely valuable avenues for public diplomacy because of the importance of religion in society; and because discussing religion requires discussing underlying values rather than superficial politics it offers a crucial

opportunity for spreading ideals and finding common ground despite political disagreement. As long as religious institutions are keenly aware of their role in public diplomacy, make an effort to be tolerant and culturally sensitive, and allow interaction to go both ways; they can be extremely helpful allies in public diplomacy. Religious institutions are valuable for democracy promotion because they can help spread democratic values such as tolerance and the separation of church and state. Where fundamentalist groups co-opt religion for political purposes, foreign religious institutions have the opportunity to spread the message about divorcing religion from politics in order to maintain spiritual purity. If this message were to be successful, it would be an invaluable boon to democracy promoters in the Middle East because it would lessen the threat of Islamist groups taking power or causing violent disruption. Tolerance is also crucial to democratic society because people must be conditioned to accepting opinions that differ from their own.

### Allies

Allies can be helpful in conducting public diplomacy. If the recipient population has a good relationship with an ally, that ally can use some of their soft power to spread information about the U.S. Ideally, the ally's support lends some credibility because the ally is considered a trusted, impartial third party by the local population. There is some risk to the U.S.'s relationship with the ally because aid in a delicate matter such as public diplomacy could cost them their relationship with the local population. However, support from allies offers credibility that is critical for traditional public diplomacy as well as democracy promotion; the ally is likely to be

democratic as well and thus can share best practices and promote their own ideals about democracy.

### NGOs

NGOs are essential actors in public diplomacy because they can carry out activities that are not credible when conducted by government or that the government does not have funding for, and because foreigners who would be unwilling to interact with government agents are more likely to trust someone from an NGO. NGOs participating in public diplomacy may undertake a variety of activities such as education, development and capacity building, political organizing, charity, or cultural activities, among others. Like governments, NGOs must be mindful of maintaining their credibility by backing up their rhetoric with action and leading by example. If NGOs are able to maintain their credibility, co-programming with them can offer a useful credibility boost to actors from government. When the government co-sponsors an event with a trusted NGO, or contributes a valuable speaker to an event, or officials merely attend, this is a valuable way to begin to make contact with sectors of the local audience that may not otherwise wish to interact with a foreign government; not only that, making a positive contributing to the event may increase the government's credibility in the eyes of local participants.

### **Public Diplomacy Activities**

Nearly any activity that involves interaction with a foreign public constitutes public diplomacy; people constantly form and revise impressions of a particular country, and many factors from political statements to popular music can influence

those impressions. According to the State Department, public diplomacy includes such activities as “communications with international audiences, cultural programming, academic grants, educational exchanges, international visitor programs, and U.S. Government efforts to confront ideological support for terrorism.” The last item in this list allows for a very broad interpretation of what activities are considered public diplomacy, meaning that there will always be new innovations in public diplomacy and that some activities may not fit the accepted theoretical molds but still constitute public diplomacy. For the most part, public diplomacy activities break down into listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy, international broadcasting, and education.

### Listening

Listening entails collecting data on public opinion and using that data to redirect policy and public diplomacy programs.<sup>31</sup> Listening is done by government officials, primarily by examining survey data or by speaking with local government officials, civil society leaders, opposition leaders, or average citizens on the street. NGOs, religious institutions, or companies may also conduct listening efforts to direct their own programming. It is important for any of these institutions as well as the government to collect data on public approval of their activities if they wish to conduct public diplomacy most efficiently and effectively, however the U.S. government rarely does this. It is crucial that governments incorporate listening data at the highest level of policymaking in order that local concerns be taken into account. Listening activities are especially useful for public diplomacy and

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<sup>31</sup> Cull 2008

democracy promotion if they are advertized and it is known to the general population that the American government desires to know their opinion. This conveys respect, initiates dialogue, and sets a precedent for local governments to seek out the opinions and desires of their citizens. When a foreign government or public knows they are being listened to, this can lubricate the policy implementation process and hopefully produce a more effective and widely acceptable policy.<sup>32</sup>

### Advocacy

Advocacy is actively promoting a policy or idea, and includes embassy press releases or other communication directly from government agents relating to policy.<sup>33</sup> Advocacy allows governments to explain their policy choices directly to a foreign public in hopes of persuading them that the choice was based on relatable goals and values. This can help counter statements by rival governments or other actors that might wish to paint a particular policy choice as nefarious. The best strategy for taking full advantage of advocacy is for government officials to actively pursue opportunities to speak on radio and television or be interviewed by the press. Often audiences especially in the Middle East will be exposed to lengthy discussion of U.S. policy, but rarely hear from a U.S. government official, which means that there is an important information void to fill. Policy advocacy also helps foreign publics feel engaged in the policy process. Charlotte Beers' "Shared Values" campaign during the war in Iraq failed in part because it did not make policy explanation a focus.<sup>34</sup> Beers focused solely on advertizing Arabs living the American lifestyle, but this was

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<sup>32</sup> Kelley 2011, 69

<sup>33</sup> Khitab 2011

<sup>34</sup> Kelley 2011, 66

not the right approach because American foreign policy is the primary grievance of most Iraqis, not the American lifestyle. Furthermore, when the U.S. has boots on the ground and one country consumes its foreign policy vision as Iraq did during the war, policy is too highly relevant and change happens too quickly to avoid explaining decisions. While officials advocating unpopular policies will not always be popular, having dialogue and an opportunity to explain is better than the alternative. Furthermore, when government officials take time to explain their policies to the public, doing so aids the spread of democratic ideals by getting citizens accustomed to the idea that government should explain its decisions to the public and that decision makers in the government should be accessible to the public.

### Cultural Diplomacy

Cultural diplomacy means exporting examples of culture—such as literature, art, or music—that are meant to inspire admiration.<sup>35</sup> Cultural diplomacy is considered more useful in the long term than the short term because it creates general appreciation but does not address immediate policy concerns.<sup>36</sup> Cultural diplomacy can also be used to repair a relationship that may have been tarnished by political disagreement. An example of successful cultural diplomacy is the success of a US Navy band playing at the Guca Trumpet Festival in Serbia in 2009. The legacy of the NATO bombing and the Kosovo conflict has left many Serbians resentful toward the U.S., or believing that Americans hate Serbs. The State Department successfully targeted the Guca Trumpet Festival because its attendees tend to come from the

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<sup>35</sup> Khitab 2011

<sup>36</sup> Taylor 2011, 27

demographic with the most resentment toward the U.S. Despite past policy disagreement, the band was very well received and eagerly covered by the press.<sup>37</sup>

Strategic cultural diplomacy is extremely useful to the U.S. in countering negative impressions that American culture is all about violence, drugs, divorce, and sex.<sup>38</sup> Depending on the culture of the recipient country, there may be some strategy to choosing which elements of culture to export. Moral values that are reflected in examples of culture may find resonance with the recipients, but even without particular moral relevance examples of creativity and artistic skill help build relationships based on respect, admiration, and aesthetic appreciation.

It is important for cultural diplomacy to go both ways. While American society is large, diverse, and affluent enough to support myriad artists, it is important to bring artists from abroad home in order to avoid the awkward situation where public diplomacy succeeds only in spreading American influence without increasing American appreciation for foreign artists at home. Literature is an important facet of cultural diplomacy as well as an excellent vector for spreading ideas about democracy. Any American novels or even political science texts that contain theory about good governance, government by and for the people, tolerance, or any other theme are powerful tools of democracy promotion.

### Exchanges

Exchange diplomacy is sending and accepting citizens for study and acculturation.<sup>39</sup> The U.S. government runs a wide variety of exchange programs,

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<sup>37</sup> Bajzer 2011, 7

<sup>38</sup> Taylor 2011, 27

<sup>39</sup> Cull 2008

most of which are educational programs for younger citizens, but professional programs are also popular and useful. Many exchange programs are educational programs in name, but the experiences that participants have while visiting another country are just as important as the actual skills they learn or the knowledge they gain. Exchange diplomacy can be risky, because if a participant has a bad experience he or she will return home to spread unfavorable messages that will counteract other public diplomacy efforts. A classic example of this is Sayyid Qutb's visit to the U.S. in 1948-1950. Qutb returned to Egypt to write *The America I Have Seen*, which criticized Americans for materialism, inappropriate sexual behavior, and racism, to name only a few. However, the vast majority of modern exchange participants return with overall positive impressions, and their testimonials are especially powerful tools of public diplomacy because they are the most credible sources of information for their countrymen. For example, before coming to the U.S., Serbian students thought that Americans hated them on account of the NATO bombings and American support for Kosovo, but their interactions with Americans demonstrated to them that this was very much not the case.<sup>40</sup> The key to exchanges is to make sure that visitors have a good experience in the U.S., which means finding the right balance of making sure that Americans the visitor interacts with are on their best behavior and letting the visitor have an authentic experience in the U.S. It is dangerous to public diplomacy for foreign visitors to have unfortunate experience with too many Americans who are not on their best behavior, but it is equally dangerous for visitors to return home feeling that they have only witnessed a performance and were kept away from any and all unsavory aspects of American society. Exchanges are valuable for democracy

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<sup>40</sup> Bajzer 2011

promotion because visitors return home from the U.S. with a first hand experience of how democracy works in practice, and they may even have the opportunity to participate in governance or activism training with American professionals as part of their exchange program.

### Broadcasting

International broadcasting is the use of radio, television, or the Internet to broadcast news and cultural or educational programs.<sup>41</sup> According to Robert Satloff, the task of public diplomacy broadcasting is “providing alternative sources of credible, factual, relevant information, especially about the wider world but also about the local countries in which listeners and viewers live” in addition to candidly explaining American policy as part of the American ideal of transparent government.<sup>42</sup> The media is extremely important to governments when it comes to maintaining and image and explaining policy; hence, governments find themselves competing over not only airtime, but also “over the construction and meaning of the media.”<sup>43</sup> Governments can gain an advantage over their opponents by launching their own networks, but this advantage must be balanced against the need to maintain credibility as an impartial news source.

The Voice of America and Radio Free Europe are examples of successful international broadcasting. The Voice of America was very successful in the Soviet Union because many citizens trusted it as an impartial news source more than broadcasts by their own government, which helped impart an important American

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<sup>41</sup> Cull 2008

<sup>42</sup> Khitab 2011, 140

<sup>43</sup> Khitab 2011, 136

value—free and unbiased press—to those peoples as well as fill a niche. It is vital to note that the VOA was successful in the Soviet Union because it had a purpose other than persuading Soviet citizens to favor democracy over communism.

Unfortunately, the U.S. does not enjoy that kind of credibility in the Middle East, so American broadcasting cannot fill the niche of trusted news source. For example, Radio Sawa and al-Hurra television were not successful because according to survey data Arab audiences may listen and watch, but they either pay no attention to news between popular songs or do not believe the content.<sup>44</sup> These broadcasting attempts were unsuccessful in Iraq because it was created for the purpose of combating al-Jazeera, which was and is a legitimate and unbiased news source compared to broadcasts by the Soviet government, and thus al-Hurra did not serve a real purpose for the Iraqi people, only for the U.S. government.

Even without establishing its own media networks, the U.S. government can utilize news broadcasting for accomplishing short-term public diplomacy goals of keeping people aware of events and policy<sup>45</sup> by making officials available to the media to accurately explain American policy and give the American perspective on events the U.S. government is involved in. American voices are much more credible when they appear on an impartial, private news network. Public diplomacy officers can further cement their positive relationship with local media by offering American educational and cultural programs. Often local radio stations need material to fill airtime, which makes the relationship mutually beneficial. When cultural programs are involved, broadcasting becomes a tool for accomplishing long-term public

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<sup>44</sup> Khitab 2011, 137

<sup>45</sup> Taylor 2011, 28

diplomacy goals because these programs raise awareness of American values and increase international appreciation of American culture outside the context of politics. International broadcasting has also become more difficult because of the increased variety of programs available; programs designed as public diplomacy by the U.S. government, American NGOs, or other organizations may not be able to draw a significant enough audience to justify them. It is expensive for governments to run their own media networks, and competing with the private sector is simply too difficult. Therefore, it is generally the responsible choice for governments to contribute individual programs and make their officials available rather than establish their own media networks.

### Training and Education

Training and education are at the intersection of public diplomacy and development assistance. Training programs increase the number of skilled workers able to contribute more to the economy and better support their families, or depending on the type of training, a program could be classified as governance assistance by training officials and others in good governance practices. Training programs are valuable to democracy promotion because government officials and civil society leaders require certain skills to help them do their jobs better. When training programs are more along the lines of development assistance, they—like monetary assistance—show that the donor country cares about the wellbeing of the local population, instill admiration in trainees for the skills and techniques shared by the donor country, and allow trainer and trainee to bond and become acculturated to one another. When training programs are focused on good governance, this shows that

the donor country cares that the local population has a voice in their own governance and that their human rights are protected.

### Monetary Aid

While the most important impact of monetary aid may be improving the economic and living conditions of a recipient country or cementing good relations with the foreign leaders, monetary aid constitutes public diplomacy because it also shows the recipient citizens that someone outside their borders is concerned for their wellbeing. If the U.S. uses broadcasting and other media tools to advertize its development projects and aid grants, this will go a long way toward generating good will. A constant concern in public diplomacy is the say-do gap between how a country represents itself via public diplomacy and what its actual policies are. Since monetary aid entails tangible benefits for recipients, it is an excellent backstop for public diplomacy, especially where credibility or positive public opinion may be lacking. Of course, if aid is mismanaged or allowed to collect in authoritarian coffers, then it can have no effect or a negative effect as well as undermine public diplomacy because the population sees the U.S. supporting authoritarianism.

### Limitations on Public Diplomacy

Several of the principle difficulties that impact public diplomacy include: difficulty producing tangible results in the near term, maintaining adequate infrastructure and skilled labor, maintaining or regaining international credibility, keeping public diplomacy and policy in step, reaching international constituents despite many other sources of information vying for their attention, and

individualizing public diplomacy to the specific needs of each community. Some of these limitations—such as maintaining credibility—are constant concerns in public diplomacy that there is no one solution. Other limitations—such as consistency with policy, or dealing with the obligation to produce results—derive from the way the American public diplomacy establishment interacts with the rest of the U.S. government and can be solved or mitigated with specific actions.

### The Difficulty of Producing Results

An argument that is often used against public diplomacy is that it does not produce tangible results in the near term and is very difficult to evaluate at any point.<sup>46</sup> However, “the truth is that important parts of public diplomacy are often more an act of faith than an act of science.”<sup>47</sup> The dynamics of every country, every community, and even between individuals are so diverse and complex that it is generally impossible to identify specific strategies that can be applied cookie-cutter-like to every situation. Similarly, public opinion is so dynamic and complex that it cannot always be quantified in a meaningful way, and the attempts to quantify it may lose vital nuance. Therefore, officials in country who are well attuned to the local situation can create the best public diplomacy program based on their instincts and unique perception of the local climate. Washington simply has to have faith in its public diplomacy officers in the field even though it is an enormous difficulty for government institutions focused on strict transparency and accountability when it comes to spending public funds. Educational exchanges, for example, may target individuals likely to hold positions of power in the future, but this is neither

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<sup>46</sup> Laqueur 2008

<sup>47</sup> Cull 2011, 130

guaranteed nor immediately useful. Public diplomacy by nature takes time to work because each program or campaign only builds on and maintains a relationship already under construction. Public diplomacy is not a foreign policy tool that is useful for achieving goals immediately; rather it is an insurance policy for the future. This difficulty has been one of the primary causes of public diplomacy's lack of support at home,<sup>48</sup> but public diplomacy simply cannot be both effective and tangible to the domestic audience. If public diplomacy officers are hoping to please their audience in government, they will undoubtedly choose methods that produce some kind of demonstrable, quantifiable results immediately<sup>49</sup>—such as training a large number of political activists poorly versus training fewer to be extremely effective—and these are not usually the methods that build the kind of long-term relationships that public diplomacy aspires to. The solution to this issue is for the rest of the federal government—including Congress, and the State Department's Office of Management and Budget—to realize Albert Einstein's famous adage that “all that counts cannot be counted, and not all that can be counted counts,” and learn to trust our public diplomacy officers enough to give them the latitude they need.

### Maintaining Infrastructure and Skilled Labor

Many public diplomacy activities such as radio and television require infrastructure and skills outside the normal range of diplomacy. Building infrastructure and employing professionals is too costly, especially when the government must compete with private corporations for an audience. Public diplomacy's relatively weak support coalition at home means that it does not receive

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<sup>48</sup> Laqueur 2008

<sup>49</sup> Cull 2011, 128

a large amount of funding, which only exacerbates the State Department's inability to produce high quality programs.<sup>50</sup> Lack of high quality programs leads to reduced effectiveness and fewer results, which in turn lead to less support for public diplomacy at home. Therefore, efficient and effective public diplomacy requires some degree of public-private partnership in order that public diplomacy and policy professionals in the government can direct the content of radio and television programs while leaving the technical work up to private corporations.

### Gaining and Maintaining Credibility

Credibility is a significant issue in public diplomacy; there is a fine line between public diplomacy and propaganda, and if foreign publics suspect public diplomacy of being dishonest or having too overt or nefarious an agenda, it will be counterproductive. Certain programs—especially news broadcasts—have to be divorced from government, which means that practitioners of public diplomacy must pay careful attention to finding the correct balance between public and private activities. Where at one time the state was considered the most reliable source of information, the official voice is no longer the only voice for news, nor the most credible.<sup>51</sup> For example, al-Jazeera is considered much more credible than al-Hurra in the minds of Arabs because al-Jazeera is not an arm of the state.<sup>52</sup> Where al-Jazeera is not state owned and was founded solely for the purpose of distributing accurate news, it is obvious to the Arab public that al-Hurra was founded for the sake of changing minds in the middle of the invasion of Iraq.

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<sup>50</sup> Laquer 2008

<sup>51</sup> Scott-Smith 2011, 102

<sup>52</sup> Khitab 2011, 141

Actions help maintain credibility more than anything else, meaning that for public diplomacy to be successful, it must be backed up by action. For example, Hezbollah brands itself as defender of Islam against Israel and can back this up through its albeit extreme, violent, and illegal actions, whereas the U.S. attempts to sell itself as defender of democracy through rhetoric alone while failing to actually promote democracy in the Arab world.<sup>53</sup> Simply talking about democratic ideals is not enough to maintain credibility in public diplomacy without actions that tangibly stand by and promote democratic ideals, and this is where foreign aid, capacity building, and actual policy change come in to support all other public diplomacy initiatives.

Exchanges—whether they are academic, professional, or cultural—are an excellent way of maintaining credibility because they allow Americans who are not affiliated with the government to visit a particular country and interact with locals on their own terms just as they allow foreigners to visit the U.S., form their own opinions, and return home as a trusted and informed sources for their countrymen. Exchanges are also credible because have tangible value in terms of educational or professional opportunity for participants, which in a sense categorizes them as actions that back up American rhetoric. The inherent credibility of exchange diplomacy highlights an important lesson about maintaining overall credibility in public diplomacy: that people are more likely to trust the messenger than the message,<sup>54</sup> and

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<sup>53</sup> Khitab 2011, 146

<sup>54</sup> Scott-Smith 2011, 248

the less control the government has—or seems to have—over a program, the more credible and engaging it will be.<sup>55</sup>

A second lesson about credibility is that in order to be credible, programs must have a specific purpose other than advertising the U.S. and American values. This lesson helps explain the success of exchanges and aid in backstopping American rhetoric. There are three questions that should be asked about every public diplomacy initiative: Why are we spending public funds? What behavior do we hope will result? And why is it important to be telling a certain group about ourselves?<sup>56</sup> These questions are important because they remind public diplomacy practitioners that in order to be credible, programs must benefit the recipient society in an identifiable, worthwhile way while the spread of American values and appreciation of the U.S. is merely a fortunate side effect.

#### Keeping Policy Consistent with Public Diplomacy

The best public diplomacy is not a substitute for bad policy.<sup>57</sup> If a policy is clearly not in line with local interests there is little point in using public diplomacy to spin it, and attempting to do so will only amount to propaganda and reduce the credibility of all other public diplomacy efforts. In order for public diplomacy to be effective, policymakers must keep it in mind through the entire policy process<sup>58</sup> and evaluate each policy on the basis of whether it could be legitimized in the eyes of all of the people it affects. This is the basic point Edward R. Murrow made by saying, “If they want me in on the crash landings, I’d better damn well be in on the

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<sup>55</sup> Zaharna 2011, 226

<sup>56</sup> Fisher 2011, 272

<sup>57</sup> Cull 2008

<sup>58</sup> Peterson 2008

takeoffs.”<sup>59</sup> When policymakers do not consult public diplomats whose primary concern is the perception of the local population, they are more likely to follow policies that will result in “crash landings,” but if concern for public diplomacy is included during the “takeoff,” this will help avoid the worst public relations fiascos. American public diplomacy efforts during the War in Iraq are an example of a crash landing that occurred in part because public diplomacy officers were not consulted during the takeoff. In a 2003 survey, 62% of public affairs officers felt that U.S. policy was in the way of public diplomacy, and 71% reported that they were not consulted by anyone in the upper echelons of policymaking.<sup>60</sup> Similarly, Iraqis were polled on their approval or disapproval of American policy during the war with overwhelmingly negative results, but this did not affect policy.<sup>61</sup> This shows that at least during the War in Iraq American policy was unacceptably out of sync with American public diplomacy because even when the right kind of listening was conducted by surveying the Iraqi population on their opinion of American policy, the results were not taken into account when forming future policy.

The best way to keep policy and public diplomacy in agreement is matching American interests with American values. Historically, American interests in the Middle East have looked something like “economic access supported by military action,”<sup>62</sup> which does not match American values of freedom, justice, and equality. When public diplomacy officers responsible for spreading, advertizing, and utilizing

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<sup>59</sup> Kelley 2011, 60

<sup>60</sup> Kelley 2011, 67

<sup>61</sup> Lucas 2011, 71

<sup>62</sup> Khitab 2011, 142

American values are included in the policymaking process, American values are more likely to be expressed in decisions about what American interests and policies are.

### A Paradox of Plenty

In the information age there is a “paradox of plenty” in public diplomacy, meaning that when information about any country in the world is readily available to anyone with a television or Internet connection it is difficult to send the right message and impossible to avoid being caught spreading falsehoods.<sup>63</sup> One problem with this is that “familiarity can breed contempt,”<sup>64</sup> meaning that there is a large amount of negative information about the U.S. and American culture available on the Internet that can reverse the effects of public diplomacy or predispose audiences against American public diplomacy. Therefore, one of the reasons governments undertake public diplomacy is that the private sector and individual citizens cannot always be trusted to put forward a positive or even accurate image of the U.S., especially in the era of modern technology.

A second issue that foreign publics may be overwhelmed by too much information, which means that public diplomacy must strive to capture the public’s attention. In order for American public diplomacy to stand out as the most attractive and most credible form of information about the U.S., American public diplomacy must propound the most appealing narrative<sup>65</sup> and appear in the most popular media sources.

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<sup>63</sup> Nye 2008

<sup>64</sup> Taylor 2011, 24

<sup>65</sup> Scott 2011, 249

## Reconciling Public Diplomacy with the Domestic Constituency

Public diplomacy—specifically U.S. public diplomacy in the Arab World—tends to be at odds with demands from the domestic constituency, both in government and in the public. Domestic and international stakeholders often make competing claims on public diplomacy, and in the age of digital media it is impossible to separate these two audiences.<sup>66</sup> This is especially true in the case of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Where significant parts of the American audience wish to see unequivocal support for Israel and condemnation of Islamist terrorist groups, the Arab audience demands the opposite. As of yet, scholars have come up with few techniques for managing this kind of conflict between stakeholders.<sup>67</sup> An example of the consequences of crafting public diplomacy for the domestic rather than the foreign audience is former Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy Karen Hughes' first listening tour of the Middle East when she spent the majority of her time advocating for the second George W. Bush administration rather than having dialogue with her Arab audience.<sup>68</sup> Coming off an election, Hughes was more surrounded by American than international media, and she ended up spending more time advocating her president's policies than listening to the demands of her audience. This generated good press in the U.S., but only further alienated the audience in the Middle East and demonstrated that the U.S. did not care about their views, only about its own victory.

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<sup>66</sup> Cull 2011, 125

<sup>67</sup> Zaharna 2011, 229

<sup>68</sup> Cull 2011, 128

## Individualizing Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy must be individualized to each society, if not to each community. Programs must address the specific dynamic between that particular population and the U.S. in order to be inoffensive and effective. To do this, public diplomacy officers must be aware of how the host society breaks down politically, economically, and socially, and then must be able to adjust the message and type of programming to meet the “shared and specific interests” of different sectors of the population.<sup>69</sup> Public diplomacy officers must be experts in gaining and maintaining the attention and allegiance of a particular group, and they can do this by asking:

“Why would a stakeholder group benefit specifically, concretely, or even eventually from a particular public diplomacy initiative? Does the initiative have enough significance for sustained stakeholder engagement?”<sup>70</sup>

An important observation to be drawn from these questions is that successful public diplomacy programs cannot be designed simply for the sake of spreading American values and gaining foreign publics’ approval; they must have some more concrete value in order to keep foreigners engaged long enough to gain their favor. An example of successful public diplomacy with a concrete purpose beyond shifting perceptions is the success of VOA broadcasting in Serbia under Milosevic. Milosevic censored all private media, and government media outlets refused to report on controversial issues, leaving the VOA as Serbs’ only source for reliable information about the conflict in Kosovo. The VOA had a very concrete purpose here—supplying unbiased, uncensored news—so Serbs were likely to listen and appreciate the value of

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<sup>69</sup> Zaharna 2011, 225

<sup>70</sup> Zaharna 2011, 225

this public diplomacy effort while it changed their perceptions about the U.S. Though the VOA still broadcasts in Serbia, it does not achieve quite the same impact because all of Serbian media is now free, leaving no niche for the VOA to fill. This ties into the difficulties encountered by Radio Sawa in Iraq because the prior good experiences with broadcasting in contexts similar to Serbia under Milosevic led American officials at high levels to believe news broadcasting would work anywhere there was an oppressive dictator—Saddam Hussein in the case of Iraq—without taking into account many more details about Iraqis’ perception of the U.S. Any regional or public diplomacy expert could have told American policymakers that broadcasting would be unlikely to work in Iraq because the U.S. government lacked credibility in the eyes of the Iraqi population, but the bureaucratic structure of the U.S. government did not give latitude for individualizing public diplomacy. In the future, public diplomacy must have a high degree of bureaucratic flexibility that allows officials in country to design and execute programs with minimal interference from Washington. This runs counter to bureaucratic need for strict accountability that favors the ‘cookie cutter’ approach to public diplomacy programs, but the relatively intangible nature of public diplomacy means that some accountability will have to be sacrificed for the sake of effectiveness.

While the comparison between the VOA in Serbia and Radio Sawa in Iraq illustrates the importance of individualizing programs at the broadest level, individualization also needs to happen at the lowest possible level of personal interactions between American officials and locals. In order to have effective dialogue with diverse foreign publics, public diplomacy officers must be allowed to

take risks and go off-message.<sup>71</sup> Public diplomacy officers must occasionally go off-message in order to adapt the American narrative to fit the narrative of a specific group or individual and appeal to them emotionally and gain their allegiance. While adapting the narrative does not definitely entail lying or contradicting messages from other parts of the U.S. government or other public diplomacy efforts, there will always be some contradiction. In the age of digital media this will undoubtedly lead to some statements being taken out of context, but for the sake of effective public diplomacy that is a difficulty the U.S. government must bear and be prepared for.

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Five key aspects of public diplomacy are as follows: successful public diplomacy is based on cultural and political values that are not only upheld at home but also in foreign policy; public diplomacy achieves its objectives when foreign publics follow American preferences because they find it is also in their own interest, not because they have been coerced or misled; public diplomacy is honest and constructive; the age of globalization makes public diplomacy more necessary than it has ever been in human history; and American public diplomacy cannot exist separate from democracy promotion because democratic government is the U.S.'s greatest source of soft power. There are a variety of actors that conduct public diplomacy: private corporations, the military, religious institutions, allies, and NGOs, all of which are assisted and coordinated by government. Within the U.S. government, the State Department is the most important actor in public diplomacy, should be the actor most dedicated to public diplomacy, and should generally be in charge of public

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<sup>71</sup> Scott 2011, 232

diplomacy, though it is useful to work with actors outside government and necessary for the State Department to coordinate with other actors in government. One overarching lesson that can be applied to all types of actors is the importance of leading by example; if all others lessons are to be forgotten, this general guiding principle can transform the behavior of most actors into effective public diplomacy. Most activities that constitute public diplomacy fall into the categories of listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy, broadcasting, and development or monetary assistance. The most critical lessons that the U.S. has learned with respect to certain types of activities is to abandon broadcasting where it lack credibility; that listening with a focus on public opinion of American foreign policy needs to be incorporated into the policy process at the highest level; and that American public diplomats cannot shy away from discussing and advocating policy even where there is tension. Lastly, there are certain limitations on public diplomacy, including: dealing with subjective or delayed results; maintaining the necessary skilled labor and infrastructure to be competitive; maintain credibility; keeping policy consistent with the demands of public diplomacy; competing with myriad other sources of information; and increasing the effectiveness of public diplomacy programs by individualizing them to the needs of specific audiences. The most troublesome of these limitations can be solved by increasing the importance of public diplomacy to the U.S. government, just as Edward R. Murrow demanded more than half a century ago. Were American politicians and policymakers to place more value on public diplomacy with the international audience, they would be more likely produce policies that promote American values and take the interests of foreign

communities into account, thus eliminating the issue of consistency between policy and public diplomacy. This in turn increases the foreign public's impression that American policy upholds American values, which increases American credibility. Furthermore, elevating the status of public diplomacy would mean more trust for public diplomacy and less pressure for results, just as trusting public diplomats more would allow these professionals to cast of bureaucratic constraints and conduct more effective programs by individualizing them to their communities.

This paper hopes to bring all of these lessons to bear on American public diplomacy in Jordan because Jordan is at a critical stage in its democratization, and the dynamics of the entire Middle East region demand that the U.S. begin to put effort into repairing its relationship with Arab populations. The U.S. has been conducting public diplomacy in one form or another since Jordan's independence in 1946. Any American visiting Jordan is sure to see that public diplomacy has been successful in many ways in Jordan because Jordanians admire the U.S. and readily socialize with Americans, but there are also lessons to be learned from the history of American public diplomacy in Jordan, which will be the subject of the next chapter.

### **Chapter 3: Assessing the Success of American Public Diplomacy in Jordan**

Overall, American public diplomacy in Jordan has been successful in creating widespread appreciation of American culture, values, and economic success. While Jordanians will never approve of current U.S. policy toward the Middle East and particularly the Arab-Israeli conflict, this has not precluded Jordanian appreciation of American culture. Major efforts by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and huge foreign aid receipts provide a helpful, tangible backstop for public diplomacy in Jordan.

Brooks Wrampelmeier, who served in the political section in Amman from 1960 until 1964 describes how public diplomacy has been successful in creating a nuanced attitude toward the U.S. at least among educated Jordanians:

“I think there was at that point a fair degree, at least among the upper class, of friendliness towards America. There were people who obviously didn’t like our Middle East policies but I think there was a general feeling that the U.S. was doing what it could to help Jordan, especially through various AID projects operating in the country. That was something that brought us into contact with the people.”<sup>72</sup>

Wrampelmeier’s words describe the best of realistic outcomes of public diplomacy; while minds were not changed when it comes to U.S. policies, the Jordanian public realized that in the balance the U.S. has good intentions toward them. Jordanians admire American culture and society for many reasons and can accept that politics and foreign policy are complex, and that sometimes politics produce results that seem incongruent with intentions. Richard Undeland described similar nuance in Jordanian attitudes toward the U.S.:

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<sup>72</sup> Wrampelmeier 2000

“[Jordanians were] predisposed to think the worst of our intentions, actions and policies whenever Israel was part of the equation. [But] if that issue were the whole picture, the Arab World would not have been a very satisfying place to be and work in, but fortunately it wasn’t, for most Arabs have a great deal of respect for the United States, for Americans, for what we stand for, our institutions and ways, our products and outlook.”<sup>73</sup>

Undeland’s statement echoes Wrampelmeier’s in noting that Jordanians are capable of maintaining a clear distinction between the aspects of the U.S. that they admire and the aspects they find unacceptable. In many ways, Jordanians may have a better grasp of nuance in politics than Americans do. This attitude of accepting American good intentions while rejecting American policy is still fairly common, though it is a constant struggle to maintain; a common sentiment heard from the numerous and opinionated taxi drivers of Amman is along the lines of, “Welcome to Jordan and give my love to the American people, but tell your government to go to hell!” Aggressive and innovative public diplomacy through genuine engagement will be necessary to keep Americans outside government in Jordanians’ good graces. If policy does not begin to change to better take into account Jordanian concerns about American support for Israel, engagement with the rest of the region, and American popular attitudes toward Islam, Jordanians may become tired of humoring the U.S. and turn away.

### Listening

Listening is part of the routine business of Foreign Service officers in the political and public diplomacy sections of the U.S. embassy in Jordan. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) also maintains a station in Jordan, and the agency’s

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<sup>73</sup> Undeland 1994

intelligence collection efforts fall in the domain of listening. The primary purpose of listening is to predict political crises<sup>74</sup> by monitoring popular attitudes primarily toward the regime<sup>75</sup> and sometimes toward the U.S. As Jordan is a critical ally to the U.S. in maintaining stability in the region, ensuring peace for Israel, and in the War on Terror, the State Department is extremely concerned about “what are the risks that something is going to happen to turn the situation upside down,”<sup>76</sup> or the possibility of a rebellion in Jordan along the lines of the Black September crisis in 1970. Were the monarchy appear to be losing power in Jordan, or if any anti-American faction appeared to be gaining too much power, this would have a dramatic effect on U.S. policy toward Jordan and in the region. In this sense, listening efforts in Jordan are essentially self-interested because the U.S. government is not interested in obtaining information Jordanian attitudes as the basis of policy, but merely to check that major changes in the political landscape are not brewing. Similarly, the CIA’s pre-9/11 work in Jordan focused on predicting major changes, and post-9/11 focuses mainly on ferreting out terrorist activities. Even in the State Department, unless a report includes evidence of significant threat, it is unlikely to make it to the ambassador’s desk or back to Washington.

Between the 1940s and 1960s, listening by both the CIA and Foreign Service was primarily conducted by reading translated newspapers, talking to officials in the Jordanian government, and sharing notes with counterparts at the British, French, or Egyptian embassies.<sup>77</sup> At that time, no one at the CIA station in Amman spoke

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<sup>74</sup> Seelye 1995

<sup>75</sup> Parker 1989

<sup>76</sup> Parker 1989

<sup>77</sup> Seelye 1995

Arabic, they relied on paid sources, and agents rarely went digging for information from radicals,<sup>78</sup> though the CIA did have contact with members of the underground Ba'ath Party in Jordan.<sup>79</sup> Newspapers are a good source for public opinion if the press is relatively free; if the press is not free, newspapers may only contain the regime's perspective. Relying on government officials for an accurate picture of the political landscape is generally a mistake because many will not be honest with foreign officials, paint an unrealistically rosy picture, or only give a standardized response.<sup>80</sup> In a country like Jordan, members of the opposition are scarce in government, so it impossible to accurately monitor national opinion by speaking only with government officials. However, government officials are a necessary and useful source for determining the political state of the country and it is common diplomatic courtesy to consult them regularly, but they should not be the only source. If the CIA's Ba'ath contacts were the U.S. government's only opposition contacts, this is telling of the importance of political parties when it comes to monitoring the political situation in a particular country. Political parties are extremely useful in listening because their stances codify and standardize political opinions, and their networks lead to new contacts.

Since the 1970s, more Foreign Service and CIA officers are fluent in Arabic and spend more time talking to people of every class and from the opposition on the street. It is essential that public diplomacy officers be fluent in Arabic in order to be able to have genuine conversations with Jordanians from all classes. Since the 1970s, listening has become less about maintaining relationships only with government

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<sup>78</sup> Curran 1998

<sup>79</sup> Keeley 1991

<sup>80</sup> Parker 1989

officials, but also about maintaining relationships with labor leaders and opposition leaders. This highlights the importance of Foreign Service officers being social and at ease enough in the Jordanian context to forge and maintain relationships with locals; were officers left in country longer than the customary two years, they would be able to hold on to their relationships longer and deepen their relationships for better information. Forming relationships with key individuals is a legitimate method of listening because if these individuals trust a particular officer they will be honest, offer nuance and detail in their explanations of popular attitudes, and available in times of crisis. However, to effectively judge public opinion at large, the State Department should undertake surveys of political attitudes in the Jordanian populace, or utilize surveys taken by private organization or NGOs.

Engaging the opposition in Jordan has been difficult because Jordan lacks organized political parties, though this is due less to suppression by the regime, and due more to tribal loyalties overcoming political ideology in the minds of most voters. In the 1950s, the lack of political parties made it difficult for political officers to identify the best sources for alternate opinion, and secretive groups often did not want to be seen talking to Americans,<sup>81</sup> which was a consequence of American policy toward Israel and close relationship with the monarchy. Where there are open, organized political factions, it is easier for the American officers to find the best individuals to talk to. Additionally, in a more dynamic political environment, the opposition is more likely to be honest with Americans because they do not fear being silenced. The Palestinian opposition is especially reluctant to speak with Americans because of the alliance with Israel; the U.S. is perceived as the ultimate enemy to Palestinian

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<sup>81</sup> Parker 1989

political organization. Some American officers have managed to gain the trust of Palestinian political leaders, and this demonstrates the importance of individual Foreign Service officers being able to empathize and maintain trust no matter what. Jordan's internal security apparatus, the *mukhabarat*, also represents an obstacle to listening efforts because it keeps the opposition quiet and hidden from foreigners effectively but not brutally; many of the most outspoken members of the opposition in Jordan have been held indefinitely by the *mukhabarat*, and foreigners are not given access to these individuals.<sup>82</sup>

The problem with U.S. listening efforts in Jordan is that the State Department only conducts listening as a cursory check on policy, and not as if public opinion were an essential ingredient in policy formation. Often, the reporting on public opinion done by officers in the embassy does not make it past the ambassador's desk, and the officers generating these reports have no idea of the reports' fate.<sup>83</sup> Richard B. Parker, a former political officer in Amman and Jordan desk officer in Washington, described trying to push through Arab concerns, but found that the pro-Israel voices in the capital were too strong to tempt policymakers to give any concessions to Jordan except aid. This shows that while there are people in the State Department and Foreign Service who will try their best to get the results of listening incorporated into policy—and the numbers of these individuals have certainly increased in recent years—the American lean toward Israel is simply too strong; American public opinion and the opinions of powerful stakeholders in Washington will continue to outweigh Jordanian public opinion.

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<sup>82</sup> Walker 2001

<sup>83</sup> Killgore 1988

An important part of what makes listening true public diplomacy is showing interest and respect; merely collecting information is not likely to gain American much credit with any local population, but asking questions out of genuine curiosity is much more likely to. Parker offers valuable insight on how to approach listening in this manner:

“I think the most important thing you have to do is to be open to the idea of contact. And be willing to sit and talk with anybody. [...] In the third world, [you have] to let people realize that you are not looking down on them, that you are interested in them and their culture and their language, and you are interested in what they have to say, and you are open to their ideas. As soon as they feel that you are talking down to them, they will shut up, and you won't hear anything from them. But if you are sympathetic, I think you can get a lot out of people. And that you have a much better understanding of what is going on in the country.”<sup>84</sup>

Parker advocates the value of talking to people on the street as a listening technique; American political and public diplomacy officers must not be afraid to go out and socialize with locals in order to gain their trust and assess their opinions. In the 1950s and 1960s it was very difficult for the Western elite to socialize with average Jordanians, and much more common for embassy staff to regularly socialize with the king and his court,<sup>85</sup> which undoubtedly skewed their perspectives. Considering the success of higher education in Jordan, it is now much easier for Western elite to social with a wider proportion of Jordanians, though the lowest classes are still difficult to access. Increasing the number of officers fluent in Arabic has certainly helped. Parker's words are important advice to officers talking to locals because he points out that there is no better way to get information out of someone than to show that you respect them. One of the issues many Arabs have with American foreign

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<sup>84</sup> Parker 1989

<sup>85</sup> Keeley 1991

policy is its arrogance and apparent disregard for others, so when individual officers show proper respect to average Jordanians this goes a long way not only toward increasing their ability to collect information, but also constitutes public diplomacy in and of itself because the Jordanian will leave the conversation with a better impression Americans.

### Advocacy

Policy advocacy by embassy officials has not been used to a great extent in Jordan because it is unlikely that the Jordanian audience will have any sympathy for American policy in the Middle East. While that is true, it does not mean that American officials should not explain policy thoroughly and often, because avoiding the issue and appearing to gloss over tension with other kinds of programming will only taint those programs and cut off dialogue. In lieu of bolder kinds of policy advocacy that would have American officials appearing often in the media and in public forums to discuss policy on a routine basis, advocacy mainly takes the form of providing daily information bulletins to government officials and the media.<sup>86</sup>

Throughout the 1950s, the U.S. embassy in Amman attempted to advocate for the Baghdad Pact and explain the U.S.'s reasons for promoting the pact but not joining by "trying to change perceptions of the United States and perception of our role in the Baghdad Pact."<sup>87</sup> This effort was not successful because the Jordanian audience was skeptical of communications from the embassy and easily saw through American rhetoric to the realist, geostrategic intentions behind promoting the pact that had little to do with Jordanian interests and everything to do with superpower

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<sup>86</sup> Undeland 1994

<sup>87</sup> Parker 1989

competition. This instance demonstrates that audiences may not trust statements from a government they are predisposed against, and that the Jordanian audience is smart enough to see through false rhetoric. When it comes to policy advocacy, the U.S. is the most reliable source on *what* its policy is and what went into forming that policy, but when dealing with a skeptical audience, it is best to have other sources confirm the policy's benefit to the audience. Also, our failure to promote the Baghdad Pact proves that policy advocacy must be honest. There was little of benefit to Jordan in joining the Baghdad Pact, and U.S. officials should have realized this and not used public diplomacy to attempt gloss over misaligned interests.

Since the failure of the Baghdad Pact, American officials have actively avoided discussing policy as part of public diplomacy, and this is equally a mistake. In the words of Philip R. Mayhew, who served in Amman as a political officer in 1978-1980, "if you're in Jordan there is only one foreign policy issue, the Arab-Israeli problem."<sup>88</sup> Indeed, the Arab-Israeli conflict trumps most other issues Jordanians might wish to discuss with American officials, not just other foreign policy issues. David Nalle, who served as a public affairs officer for the United States Information Service (USIS) in Amman from 1963 until 1965, describes the difficulty of any kind of policy advocacy in Jordan:

"Out policy towards the Arab-Israeli situation was unacceptable to all Jordanians, so we had to leave that aside. There was no way of justifying our bias in favor of Israel—and explaining it was no help—so, by and large, we had to leave questions of policy aside. So the cultural activities, and the basic informational, rather than policy, work of the information officer, became more important. The cultural aspect was the channel through which you could communicate—maybe not a political message, but communication in any case."<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Mayhew 1995

<sup>89</sup> Nalle 1990

When Nalle served in Jordan before two wars drastically changed the geography and dynamics of the conflict, perhaps it was possible to avoid discussing American policy toward the conflict. However, after decades of ‘process’ without action, there is simply too much pressure in the region to imply that a solution is forthcoming in the near future by acting as if the topic did not need to be discussed in the present.

Richard Undeland, who served in Jordan in from 1970 until 1974, gave an example of how he handled discussing the conflict:

“[This is] the story of the IV (International Visitors’) grant for Munther Anabtawi, the chairman of the Department of Political Science at the university. [...] At the time of the ’73 war, he protested our support for Israel by cutting off all contact with us and asked that we take him off our publications and activities lists. A few months later, he relented to let us know he would again like to get the publications, but he still didn’t want to see me. More time passed, and I indirectly got word to him about a possible IV grant to attend the American Political Science Association’s annual conference and then visit selected American universities. He jumped at the opportunity, and our contact resumed. Shortly before he was to depart, he asked to see me urgently in order to say, ‘I want to make sure you and everyone else knows that in accepting this invitation, I am not in any way approving of your one-sided policy in the Middle East, which I continue to wholeheartedly oppose.’ I could only smile and reply, ‘Dr. Anabtawi, if I dealt only with people here who supported U.S. Middle East policy, I would have very little to do with anybody. I will always listen to your views and only ask that you hear out mine.’ That broke the tension.”<sup>90</sup>

Undeland handled this situation by accepting Dr. Anabtawi’s views, acknowledging that there was tension between them, and asking only that dialogue continue; ideally these should be the general guidelines behind handling advocacy of controversial policies. However, acknowledging tension does not completely relieve tension, and consequently American-Jordanian relations are likely to remain fraught and unstable

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<sup>90</sup> Undeland 1994

until U.S. policy toward the conflict changes to better reflect Jordanian, Palestinian, and Arab attitudes. In attempts to apply strategies similar to the one Undeland described, a few courageous ambassadors and embassy officials have gone on speaking tours around Jordan, Palestine, and elsewhere in the Levant.<sup>91</sup> These tours involved face-to-face contact between locals and American officials, often involved youth, and drew fairly large crowds. The American officials who conducted these tours left with overall positive impressions about the high level of interest among locals in hearing about American policy, and felt that they positively influenced impressions of the U.S. by candidly explaining policy face to face. Recently, events such as these have been discouraged because of the security risk, but clearly they are extremely valuable because they are an opportunity to get concerns out in the open and because an American official in person answering questions town hall-style is a highly credible form of advocacy.

Where advocacy has achieved success in Jordan is in respect to American development projects. Public diplomacy officers have successfully advertized these projects by producing films on USAID's irrigation project in the East Ghor Valley as well as others,<sup>92</sup> and by publishing various articles about USAID projects in Arabic and English language magazines popular in Jordan.<sup>93</sup> The programs were highly successful and a great boost to Jordanian public opinion of the U.S. because average Jordanians who are all too aware of American policy toward Palestine were also made aware of the good things that the U.S. was doing for the country. In addition to publicizing American efforts at developing Jordan, American public diplomacy

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<sup>91</sup> Curran 1998

<sup>92</sup> Ransom 2000

<sup>93</sup> Nalle 1990

officers also publicized development projects undertaken by the Jordanian government.<sup>94</sup> In a case like Jordan, where popular sentiment against the monarchy may be growing, advocating ways in which the monarchy is helping the people will ease the situation. Furthermore, if the U.S. intends to begin occasionally criticizing human rights abuses and governance failures by the monarchy in order to ally itself with the people and their quest for democracy, assisting the monarchy in ensuring its citizens know what good it does for them could save the relationship.

A similar example is the success of American public diplomacy officers in publicizing American aid to Palestinians during the Black September conflict in 1970. Despite secretly arming the Jordanian army against the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), the U.S. army delivered supplies to a hospital in a Palestinian neighborhood in East Amman. American officials were on hand to take pictures of the scene and conduct interviews with American military personnel and aid workers.<sup>95</sup> Because this event was so widely publicized, it became a favorite anecdote of American benevolence toward Palestinians. This was a rare, ideal situation because the U.S. was able to follow its own interests by supporting the monarchy, but also remedy the situation by offering assistance to victims of the conflict; such actions could easily have been seen as contradictory and caused further damage to the U.S.'s reputation. Though a situation like this one is unlikely to arise again, it shows the power of advocating American assistance even where political disagreement persists.

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<sup>94</sup> Nalle 1990

<sup>95</sup> Undeland 1994

Overall, American policy advocacy in Jordan has done well advertizing development projects, and the U.S. certainly reaped the benefits of these efforts because Jordanians are aware of and appreciate American assistance. However, the main weakness in American advocacy is a tendency to shy away from discussing the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and other issues in regional politics that are sure to produce disagreement. Avoiding difficult topics is not doing to endear Americans to Jordanians are further—and may alienate some—but if Americans begin discussing controversial policies, the pressure to change these policies will certainly begin to mount. Therefore, in order to allow American public diplomacy officers to advocate the full range of American policies, American policy may have to change to reflect Jordanian concerns.

### Cultural Diplomacy

Though American and Jordanian cultures are quite different, Jordanians are curious about American society and generally admire American values and culture. American cultural diplomacy takes advantage of the many ways Americans express their creativity and talent: athletics, music, literature, and the visual arts. Cultural diplomacy in Jordan uses all of these mediums by showcasing American talents to gain general appreciation among the Jordanian population, though the best programs go a step further by encouraging American and Jordanian artists or athletes to work together in order that they learn from one another and build relationships. Certain celebrities are also valuable assets in American culture, and cultural diplomacy in Jordan has been able to capitalize on the fame of a few, such as John F. Kennedy, Duke Ellington, and Buzz Aldrin. Cultural diplomacy can also come in the form of

larger projects that do not fall into either of these categories, a few of which will be discussed below.

In the realm of athletics, basketball has become a popular sport in Jordan, for both men and women, and some schools have their own teams organized much the same way American schools organize athletic teams. Basketball is particularly popular in the Palestinian camps, and in the early 1960s Ambassador William B. Macomber organized teams of younger Foreign Service officers and Marines to play against teams from the camps,<sup>96</sup> and later the embassy arranged for the Philips Oilers to come to Jordan and run clinics in the Palestinian refugee camps.<sup>97</sup> Sports are a very valuable arena for interaction because they offer American officials and Palestinian youth an opportunity to form relationships and find common ground separate from politics. Time on the court demonstrates the humanity of American officials and policymakers.

Jordanians, like much of the world, are fond of American popular music and musical traditions. In the early 1960s, the Florida State University marching band performed in Amman along with bands from Jordan. This was an immensely popular event that filled the national stadium with many more spectators being turned away; the king attended this event, and it was talked about with great appreciation and admiration for months.<sup>98</sup> The success of this event demonstrates the high level of interest and appreciation Jordanians have for American talent. The band's performance clearly generated positive feeling toward a very American tradition, and probably sparked interest in other aspects of American culture. This was also a good

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<sup>96</sup> Wrampelmeier 2000

<sup>97</sup> Curran 1998

<sup>98</sup> Undeland 1994

chance for Americans in the band to experience Jordan first hand and interact with Jordanian musicians, because like sports, music is an excellent way for Americans and Jordanians to form relationships outside the context of politics.

During the Cold War, USIA maintained American libraries all over the world, including in Jordan. However, after combining with the State Department in the late 1990s, the funding for these libraries was no longer available. This is somewhat of a loss, but being unable to maintain its own libraries has led the State Department to adopt a more efficient system of public diplomacy officers maintaining contacts with librarians around the country and encouraging their purchase of American books.<sup>99</sup> This system is more efficient because it cuts costs for the State Department, allows materials to be spread to more libraries around the country, and increases the likelihood that even a Jordanian reader who would be unlikely to come in to an American library because of his or her distrust of the U.S. government might pick up an American publication at a local library. Jordanian students begin learning English at an early age because Transjordan was originally colonized by the British, which makes American literature popular. Jordanian culture also places high value on education, which means there is a market there for the highest levels of academic and popular literature. Literature is an excellent way of increasing awareness of the more positive, intellectual aspect of American culture that perhaps television and film leave out, as well as an excellent way of spreading American perspectives on international politics and democracy.

In the early 1990s, USIA had a worldwide program to bring together painters from around the world, and though Jordan is a poor country able to support few

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<sup>99</sup> Undeland 1994

artists, Barbara J. Good, a Cultural Affairs officer, was able to find a Palestinian painter and encouraged him to attend. The artist, Ali Jabri, was extremely grateful for being included, and was one of the first modern Jordanian painters to gain international renown.<sup>100</sup> Cultural programs like this one with worldwide scope are useful in maintaining credibility in cultural diplomacy because they are not solely aimed at advertizing one country's culture in order to impress a another but are more clearly about encouraging cultural exchange for it own sake.

The State Department sponsors one Jordanian writer to attend a conference in the U.S. every year. The selected writer attends a conference with American and other international writers for three or four weeks at an American university. Like the painters' conference, this effort is credibly aimed at encouraging cultural exchange for its own sake because it brings together influences from around the world rather than focusing on relations with only one strategic country. This effort brings even more credibility to cultural diplomacy because many of the writers invited to the program are critical of the U.S. The fact that the U.S government welcomes writers who criticize the U.S. demonstrates how much Americans respect free speech, a key democratic value. Furthermore, these writers return to Jordan with a more nuanced perspective on the U.S., which they use their influential voices to spread through their work.

Jordanians are generally quite aware of politics and culture in the U.S., and John F. Kennedy was quite popular there. Just as he was a hero to many Americans, many Jordanians admired him for the same reasons. Following his assassination, public diplomacy officers in the embassy put together a commemorative film of

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<sup>100</sup> Good 1993

Kennedy's life that toured Jordan with great success.<sup>101</sup> Granted, the political situation in the Jordan, the U.S., and the entire Middle East region is very different at the beginning of the twenty-first century from what it was in 1963, as is the cultural situation, but the success of this film demonstrates that tapping into Jordanian interest in American heroes is a good strategy. Admiration for Kennedy was not something public diplomacy officers campaigned to achieve or attempted to force on the Jordanian population, rather Kennedy earned their admiration, and American diplomats encouraged and capitalized on that. A noteworthy point here is that cultural admiration only went one direction in this case. While it is understandable that people in a small country like Jordan would know more about the leader of a superpower such as the U.S. and not vice versa, considering the resentment toward the U.S. that Jordanians sometimes express on account of American power and support for Israel, it may be a good idea to spread knowledge among the American people of a Jordanian hero such as King Hussein.

In 1963, USIS brought Duke Ellington to Amman for a concert. Ellington and his band played for a full house at the Roman amphitheater in downtown Amman, one of Jordan's most popular historical sites. This concert was an excellent demonstration of jazz music as a truly American genre that hopefully impressed the Jordanian audience. Perhaps more importantly, though, jazz music is associated with African American culture, so by choosing Duke Ellington to represent American musical talent to the Jordanians, the State Department showed that American society and government were becoming more inclusive even in the early 1960s. By honoring

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<sup>101</sup> Nalle 1990

Duke Ellington this way, the State Department set an example for Jordan of how to include with pride citizens of different racial backgrounds.

An interesting episode in American cultural diplomacy toward Jordan was Buzz Aldrin's visit to Jordan when he presented the king with the Jordanian flag he had brought to the moon and a piece of moon rock. The astronaut's decision to bring a Jordanian flag with him and to present it to the king himself was a good way to make Jordan feel included in the U.S.'s triumph, as was its presentation by an American astronaut in person to the people of Jordan at the national stadium. Flattery like this is a useful tool in public diplomacy, especially concerning public diplomacy from a very powerful country to a much weaker but very proud country; Aldrin's visit certainly flattered the Jordanians and made them feel like they had a significant role in history. However, what is most interesting about Aldrin's visit is the somewhat controversial speech he made at the national stadium, and the Jordanian reaction to it. Aldrin gave a philosophical speech about worshiping God being superior to worshiping a piece of moon rock such as the one he had brought back with him and had just finished presenting to the king. Aldrin was likely attempting to find common ground between Jordanian and American faiths and flatter them further by highlighting the superiority of their culture to his gift, but he clearly was not aware that the Kaba'a—the most sacred site in Islam—in fact contains what may be a piece of a meteor. Fortunately, the king was able to spread the message that the astronaut meant no harm fast enough after the speech that the mistake was never mentioned in the press.<sup>102</sup> The grandeur of the event was likely enough that most Jordanians did not fault Aldrin for not knowing enough about Islam. Their forgiveness shows that

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<sup>102</sup> Undeland 1994

audiences can be flexible when it comes to cultural missteps, but also that the State Department would do well to ensure that visitors to Jordan are more aware of the culture, because Jordanians may not be so forgiving in the modern political climate.

A triumph of cultural diplomacy in Jordan was a colloquium on Arab studies in the U.S. and American studies abroad organized by Brooks Wrampelmeier in the early 1960s. The colloquium took place in Ramallah and boasted a huge turnout of five hundred people from Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan.<sup>103</sup> This is a shining example of cultural diplomacy not only because of the wide impact it had based on the number of attendees, but even more so because it combined themes of educating Arabs about American culture with equal curiosity on the part of Americans about Arab culture and history. Just as some listening activities should demonstrate American interest in Jordanians' opinions, cultural diplomacy is not only about advertizing American culture, and so much include an effort to let Jordanians educate American about their culture as well. Therefore, encouraging dialogue with events like this colloquium rather than only using one-directional advertizing of American culture is essential to public diplomacy because it conveys a certain respect and preempts accusations of Americans being self-centered and ignorant of the outside world.

Beginning in the 1960s, USAID and the National Park Service began developing a number of historical sites in the West Bank and Jordan into tourist attractions.<sup>104</sup> Though sites in the West Bank were soon taken over by Israel, visitors to Petra and Wadi Rum in southern Jordan still use facilities designed and built with the help of the National Park Service and USAID. These projects were valuable in

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<sup>103</sup> Wrampelmeier 2000

<sup>104</sup> Wheeler 1998

terms of public diplomacy because tourism would bring Jordan significant revenue and honor the Jordanians by putting their country on the map as an important destination, and the involvement of the National Park Service allowed the U.S. to demonstrate conservation of land and shared history as a core American value. One risk inherent in a project such as this is reduced engagement on the part of Jordanian stakeholders because the plans were designed and built by American experts with little Jordanian input. While it was true at the time that Americans offered far greater expertise on a project like this one than Jordanians could have, aid projects intended as public diplomacy need to be more about working together and building capacity.

One of the cornerstones of cultural diplomacy between the U.S. and Jordan is the American Center for Oriental Research (ACOR) in Amman. Though ACOR is now flourishing as its own non-profit entity separate from government, it was founded in 1968 on USIA grants to facilitate archeological projects and offer lectures and fellowships.<sup>105</sup> Jordan boasts many valuable archeological sites—some dating father back even than Roman occupation of the region—and the warm, arid climate is ideal for archeological work and preservation. Possession of these sites is a point of pride for Jordanians, and the U.S. government conveyed respect to Jordan by founding ACOR to draw attention to Jordan's treasures and its role in global human history. Scholars from all over the world study at ACOR, which makes it a valuable forum for fostering relationships between scholars from many different countries and cultures.

Lastly, an important lesson to take away from cultural diplomacy in Jordan in particular is that while cultural diplomacy seeks to foster relationships between

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<sup>105</sup> Good 1993

peoples outside the political context, it cannot ignore the political context. The U.S. embassy in Amman paused their cultural programs during the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, because to “have continued as if nothing was happening would have been imprudent and a psychological mistake.”<sup>106</sup> This generated positive feedback because many Jordanians felt it was respectful of American officials to acknowledge the conflict rather than attempt to gloss over it with distractions. Instead of conducting cultural programs, American officers went out into the streets to talk to people about the political situation. The report they generated was appreciated by those in Washington,<sup>107</sup> and it is also likely that the Jordanians interviewed by the Americans appreciated the extra attention and felt respected when asked for their opinions. The success of this strategy shows that public diplomacy can never gloss over political crises, and they paying them due attention is more productive.

### Exchange Diplomacy

Educational exchanges have been enormously successful in Jordan because education is highly valued in Jordanian culture, and as a resource-poor country, Jordan’s economic prospects lie in information technology. Educational exchanges for youth account for the largest share of American public diplomacy with Jordan and enjoy extremely positive reviews from participants. Some exchanges overlap the distinction between professional and educational exchanges, and these have met with similar success as purely education exchanges. Purely professional exchanges undertaken by professionals from certain fields—including government—have been less successful than educational exchanges because they are more sensitive than

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<sup>106</sup> Undeland 1994

<sup>107</sup> Undeland 1994

educational exchanges and the U.S. government has generally shown less dedication to them

On the academic side, the Fulbright program has been operating in Jordan for over sixty years with great success. Fulbright participants are extremely valuable in Jordan as English teachers in secondary schools and universities. Because Fulbright scholars offer a very tangible service to Jordan, their efforts constitute a credible, legitimate form of public diplomacy. Fulbright scholars from Jordan in turn offer the U.S. an important service as Arabic language teach assistants at American universities. Other exchange programs sponsored and orchestrated by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs with high success rates include the American Field Service Program, the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange & Service Program, Eisenhower Exchange Fellowship Program, Hubert Humphrey Program, and the Global Undergraduate Exchange Program. Many private universities also conduct exchanges with the University of Jordan and private Jordanian universities.<sup>108</sup> As with the Fulbright example, all of these educational exchanges are highly credible because they offer a tangible benefit to participants' education while improving relations between Americans and Jordanians. Despite the apparent success of these programs as evidenced by overwhelmingly positive feedback and the constant proliferation of new exchange programs, there are two general problems with education exchanges: participants do not necessarily go on to hold influential positions later in life, and giving even what seems like a significant number of Jordanian students a positive experience in the U.S. may not be enough to alter the climate in participants home societies. Whatever experiences exchange participants

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<sup>108</sup> Undeland 1994

have in the U.S. or whatever relationships they build, they may return to a community that is more hostile to the U.S. and be powerless to have an impact on broadly held attitudes. Since the 1960s, the U.S. embassy in Amman has held gathering for Jordanians who have participated in exchanges programs in the U.S.,<sup>109</sup> and this may help participants maintain their appreciation for the U.S. even after they have returned home, but only slightly. With these difficulties in mind, though exchanges may be a popular and relatively effective method of public diplomacy, their power is certainly limited.

An example of the positive effect of exchanges comes from the earliest days of offering exchanges to Jordanians. Richard E. Undeland, who served as a USIA officer in Amman 1970-1974, described the success of the American Field Service exchange program in improving relations with the Palestinians. Undeland had selected a Palestinian boy to be one of the first from Jordan to participate in the program, which would send him to live with an American family for a year and attend an American high school. To Undeland's surprise, when he went to see the boy at his home, he was greeted at the side of the road outside the camp by cheering crowds from the camp. His impression of the Palestinians' reaction was:

“They were so pleased at the boy's good fortune, but at least as much for this recognition by the U.S., as a country and its people, and by me as the representative, who moreover had trusted them to the extent he had been willing to come the camp alone.”<sup>110</sup>

If Undeland's perception of the reasons for these Palestinians' reaction to his visit to the camp and the boy's scholarship is correct, this incident demonstrates that offering even one student a unique opportunity and positive interaction with an American

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<sup>109</sup> Curran 1998; Good 1993

<sup>110</sup> Undeland 1994

official goes a long way toward easing the burden of political disagreement. Political concerns over the conflict or the U.S.'s role in it were not mentioned once to Undeland during the hours he spent in the camp with the boy, and he later heard that the boy returned from the U.S. with only good things to say. The next year, when USIA chose a girl from a different Palestinian camp, the result was much the same, and “the fact that we selected a girl was not lost on her community,”<sup>111</sup> which shows that the girl’s community appreciated American attention to gender equality.

Another story interesting from Undeland that has already been mentioned is about Dr. Anabtawi from the Department of Political Science at the University of Jordan. This anecdote is roughly an example of a professional exchange, though it is clearly related to academics. Dr. Anabtawi parted ways with Undeland over American support for Israel in the 1973 war, but resumed contact sometime later and was very grateful when Undeland offered him an International Visitors’ grant to attend the American Political Science Association’s annual conference. When Dr. Anabtawi returned, “he surprised students and faculty colleagues alike with the positive things he had to say about almost everything American, save our Middle East policy.”<sup>112</sup> This exchange was successful because even though Dr. Anabtawi’s experience did not change his opinion of American foreign policy—which could hardly have been expected—he was able to see the many good things the U.S. has to offer and return to Jordan to remind those around him that there is more to the U.S. than support for Israel. This instance highlights that the U.S. has many things to offer Jordanians, and even if the U.S. cannot trade opportunities for political acquiescence,

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<sup>111</sup> Undeland 1994

<sup>112</sup> Undeland 1994

continuing to make offers ensures constant dialogue and prevents total alienation of those who disagree with U.S. policy.

Also on the professional side, the State Department has coordinated exchanges for Jordanian labor leaders, lawyers, and vocational students. During the 1960s, officers in the American embassy took interest in Jordan's nascent labor movement, and organized a trip to the U.S. for several labor leaders so that they could confer with the heads of American labor unions, and the ambassador at the time followed up with the trip with a Labor Day reception at his residence for union leaders and labor officials in government.<sup>113</sup> Both of these programs are excellent examples of public diplomacy because they increased the knowledge and capacity of Jordanian labor leadership, demonstrated American concern for Jordanian laborers, and showcased American egalitarianism embodied by a holiday dedicated to celebrating the efforts of the workingman. Though reactions from participants were positive, little came out of the exchange because the labor movement in Jordan is weak, organization is discouraged by the regime,<sup>114</sup> and the embassy only gave attention to this issue because officers in country at the time happened to be interested in it. Pursuing labor organizing as a part of the regular agenda for officers in the political and public diplomacy sections of the embassy would certainly assist Jordan on its path to democratization and ensure that the U.S. is engaged with though too zealous an effort would be an insult to the regime and create an uncomfortable diplomatic situation.

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<sup>113</sup> Wrampelmeier 2000

<sup>114</sup> Wrampelmeier 2000

Also during the 1960s, members of the House Judicial Committee visited Jordan and met with Jordanian lawyers and judges on their way to Jerusalem. The embassy then drafted a report on the Jordanian judicial system, though it may never have been seen and was not acted on, perhaps because the purpose of the committee members' trip had less to do with its stated goal of conferring with the Jordanians, and more with a paid-for visit to Jerusalem.<sup>115</sup> Again, this is an example of weak, sporadic interest in improving Jordanian professional capacity through exchanges.

Today, the State Department runs several exchange programs focused on leadership training, teaching training, and for technology professionals. Programs such as the Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program and the Study of the U.S. Institutes for Scholars program tap into Jordanians' affinity for education and American excellence in education as an important cultural and professional export. Programs such as the American Council of Young Political Leaders (ACYPL) and the Community Solutions programs are more highly relevant to the public diplomacy as democracy promotion because these programs focus on training and empowering grassroots activists to speed democratization. Though ACYPL has been operating since 1966, the many ups and downs in world democratization and global public opinion of the U.S. in that time show that while participants have valuable and positive experiences, the program is perhaps not producing enough trained leaders to make a significant impact. Community Solutions is a much newer program, founded in 2010, that is representative of a renewed drive by both the U.S. government and the private sector to make professional training through exchanges a more effective tool in promoting democracy through public diplomacy.

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<sup>115</sup> Wrampelmeier 2000

## International Broadcasting

International broadcasting by the U.S. in the Middle East has not had great success. The VOA reaches only a very small percentage of Arabs, and though U.S. policy is discussed on Arabic television for many hours per week, much of that is negative, and only rarely do embassy or other American officials appear on Arab news shows to explain their policies. The VOA has not been successful in Jordan because Jordanians are much more likely to choose Arab alternatives with a different political message. An example of this is the success of the Voice of Cairo in Jordan in the 1950s; Nasser's anti-Hashemite, anti-West, Arab nationalist rhetoric on that station was much more popular than any Western station could have hoped to be.<sup>116</sup> Considering the history of interaction between the U.S. and the Arab community, it is unlikely that a U.S. government-run radio or television station will ever gain credibility among Jordanians. As Undeland describes it:

“I have long felt that any paper or station that carries stuff supporting the policies of another government is rarely if ever worth reading, listening to or seeing unless the item is in itself newsworthy and the source fully identified. We fool ourselves if we do not recognize that many in our audiences have antennae out to detect such efforts and are pretty sophisticated in determining things as they are.”<sup>117</sup>

Undeland cautions against attempting to use broadcasting to present news in such a light that would be falsely complimentary toward U.S. policy or the policy of an ally; Jordanians will see through this, and all other American broadcasting will lose credibility. Undeland's words also highlight the importance of the source of information on radio and television, meaning that American broadcasts should

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<sup>116</sup> Keeley 1991

<sup>117</sup> Undeland 1994

confine themselves to explicating American policy and culture, not world news. This means that while American networks are unlikely to be successful in the Middle East, American programs will be much more successful when public diplomacy officers collaborate with credible Jordanian networks to run occasional educational and cultural programs, or make American officials available for interviews. The U.S. embassy in Jordan has been pursuing just such a collaboration with Radio Jordan since the 1970s by contributing cultural and educational programs to the station's regular programming.

An example of effective broadcasting is Barbara J. Good's appearance on Radio Jordan in 1987 while she was serving as a Cultural Affairs officer to explain the history of the Fulbright program.<sup>118</sup> The program had been operating in Jordan for forty years, and Good took this opportunity to ensure that the existence of this program and the many benefits it had brought to Jordan were widely known among the population. Good also explained the role of Senator Fulbright in founding the program, which is important because it is essential for democratic progress that Jordanians know how Congress works to put programs that benefit both Americans and foreigners into action. Senator Fulbright's story also demonstrated that Americans are determined to have positive interactions with the rest of the world. Because Good appeared as a guest on Radio Jordan, the station's credibility bolstered hers; this program was also credible because Americans are the natural source for information about the history of an American program like the Fulbright program. The lesson to take away from Jordan is that American broadcasting can be successful

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<sup>118</sup> Good 1993

as long as it is done in collaboration with private, credible Jordanian networks and American confine themselves to discussing topics that they are a credible source on.

### Training and Education

American training and education programs have been highly successful in Jordan. Training and education are at the intersection of public diplomacy and more traditional economic or development assistance because they tangibly increase Jordan's human and economic development, which indirectly assists democratic progress in the country and demonstrates that the U.S. genuinely wishes to help Jordan.

A significant portion of American training programs in Jordan are military programs. While military training may seem to only strengthen the Jordanian regime's main tool of oppression—meaning that American military assistance may undermine both public diplomacy and democratic progress—the military is a source of livelihood for a significant portion of the Jordanian population. Therefore, the money the U.S. pours into the Jordanian military indirectly supports a significant portion of the population, and its beneficiaries know this. Military programs are not generally publicized, but they are common knowledge in the country. The Jordanian internal security apparatus—the *mukhabarat*—are known for occasional torture and unlawful detainment, though the military is a separate institution, and Americans working with the Jordanian military do not claim knowledge or involvement in human rights abuses of Jordanian citizens. American association with the Jordanian military is not a great help to the U.S.'s image in Jordan, but many Jordanians are

aware of the extent to which their economy relies on American military aid, so the situation tends to balance.

In addition to military training, the U.S. also assists Jordan with police training. Like military training, it is fairly obvious that the U.S. does this in order to combat terrorism, but average Jordanians nonetheless benefit from American assistance. This, unlike military assistance, should be publicized because it genuinely builds capacity for democratization and day-to-day police activities are divorced from internal security. According to Joseph C. Wheeler, who served as the USAID mission director in Amman from 1965 until 1967, USAID was successful in getting “across ideas how in a democratic society you run a police department” because there was an “attitudinal” dimension to their training.<sup>119</sup> Ideals such as rule of law, equality under the law for all individuals regardless of race or personal connections, and equal protection of all citizens’ rights are among the essential ideals that a police force must be able to uphold in a democracy.

USAID has long maintained one of its best educational programs in Jordan and the West Bank, and the reason this program functioned so well was that Jordanian and Palestinian schools selected their own books and curricula to be paid for by the U.S.<sup>120</sup> The U.S. showed respect of Arab values and abilities in this instance by allowing locals to decide on their own material, which is valuable for public diplomacy because the U.S. does not wish to appear oppressive. However, education funded by the U.S. in the Palestinian camps turned out to be “very radical

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<sup>119</sup> Wheeler 1998

<sup>120</sup> Wheeler 1998

and all about chasing Israelis into the sea and that they had no right to be there”<sup>121</sup> because the U.S. did not have any influence on the content of the materials it was paying for. While it is valuable in terms of image and consistent with democratic ethics not to impose standards on education, the U.S. would ideally be able to use educational programs to spread knowledge about democratic values and participating in democratic society. Handling this tension is a difficult task for USAID and State Department officials, but ideally they should be able to suggest materials and techniques while making it clear that no suggestions are mandatory to maintain funding. Supplemental education programs—speakers, conference, exchanges, etc.—are also valuable ways that the State Department can utilize to ensure that Jordanian students are exposed to a full range of educational materials without impinging on the independence of Jordanians and Palestinian schools.

One way that the State Department has helped the Jordanian education system is to have American academics come to Jordan to help plan university curricula.<sup>122</sup> Programs such as this one that bring Americans who are successful in their fields to share best practices with Jordanians, and academics from both countries are able to form valuable, genuine relationships while Jordanian educators also improve their capacity to teach. According to one Jordanian professor speaking to a class of American students, he enjoys teaching Americans over Jordanian students because Americans have been taught to think critically, whereas the Jordanian school system does not encourage dissent in the classroom. Critical thinking and dissent are essential elements in a democratic society, and thus American educators play a

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<sup>121</sup> Wheeler 1998

<sup>122</sup> Good 1993

valuable a role in encouraging Jordanian democracy by assisting Jordanian educators in imparting these skills to their students.

Throughout the 1960s, USIS produced pamphlets written by American academics and translated into Arabic about various development issues and distributed them to “people who could make a difference.”<sup>123</sup> The recipients of these pamphlets could have been local government officials or tribal leaders, and it would have been very important for them to be knowledgeable of development issues from infrastructure maintenance to women’s empowerment. Today, the function of these pamphlets has been replaced with a variety of programs put together by American NGOs in collaboration with the State Department that are intended to increase Jordanians’ capacity to govern. The principle actors in American governance training are the National Endowment for Democracy, the National Democratic Institute, and the International Republican Institute, all of which were conceived by the State Department and continue to be at least partially funded by the State Department. Though the connection these NGOs have to the U.S. government is no secret, they are separate enough to have their own specific missions and attract participants who might be skeptical of working with the U.S. government. The International Republican Institute is especially active in Jordan in encourage women’s empowerment via small business and grassroots activism, and all three have occasionally worked with officials in the Jordanian government to increase their capacity to govern. While participants in these programs always give positive feedback, it is hard to find significant evidence that this kind of training is actually making an impact on democratization in Jordan. This may be because not enough

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<sup>123</sup> Nalle 1990

individuals receive training, because democratic ideals are not prevalent enough in Jordanian society for average citizens to be effective partners for professional activists, or because the conferences and training sessions are not held on a regular basis.

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There are several essential lessons to take away from the history of American public diplomacy in Jordan. First, though individual Foreign Service officers do very good listening by talking to many Jordanians and showing genuine concern for their perspectives, reports on listening to do not make it far enough up in State Department bureaucracy, much less in the entire U.S. government as a whole. The solution to this is changing attitudes within the U.S. government to place greater importance on public diplomacy and the demands of those outside the U.S. on U.S. policy. Second, American experience in Jordan has shown that while it can be painful and difficult to advocate American policy in a hostile environment, engaging in dialogue can be very rewarding and productive in terms of reducing alienation. Unless the U.S. changes its policy toward Israel, advocacy in the Arab world will always be difficult, but that is not a reason to avoid advocacy completely. Third, American public diplomacy cannot ignore the political context and hope to relieve tension with only cultural diplomacy. Though American public diplomacy officers in Jordan seemed to have realized this decades ago, the “Shared Values” campaign crafted under President George W. Bush tried and failed to do exactly that in Iraq. There must be a general realization within the entire government that the U.S. cannot avoid explaining its policies to those they affect. Fourth, it is not worth American resources to establish

our own radio or television networks in Jordan or elsewhere in the region, though Americans can still have an effective voice in the media by pursuing collaboration with local networks. It is both more efficient and more credible to partner with Jordanian networks by making officials available to explain policy and contributing educational programs. Fifth, effective development aid programs are essential in maintaining credibility for public diplomacy where there is policy disagreement. Though Jordanians cannot accept American support for Israel, American development programs in the country convinced them that the U.S. did in fact wish to do well by them. Without development projects, American public diplomacy in Jordan would have been nothing but empty rhetoric. Sixth, the education system in Jordan tends to suffer from anti-West bias and tribal culture that demands conformity over dissent. One of the purposes of public diplomacy is to fill informational voids and counter the spread of incorrect information. Though Jordanian and Palestinian schools must be able to teach as they wish, American public diplomacy is clearly very necessary to ensure that the whole story is being told without bias. Lastly, American public diplomacy in the form of training lacks consistency in Jordan. Americans have successfully run programs—whether in by American NGOs in Jordan, or as professional exchanges—that are helpful in training Jordanians to govern democratically, but these are not routine enough to have a significant impact. In order to make a real impact on democratization in Jordan, American governance training programs need to become part of a professional training track for activists and civil servants. Holding conferences and training sessions sporadically shows only a partial effort on the U.S.'s part where only clear, full commitment to helping

Jordan prepare for democratization is credible. With these lessons in mind, the next chapter will examine the political situation in Jordan to determine what specific problems American public diplomacy can potential help solve.

**Chapter 4: Assessing the Potential Impact of American Public Diplomacy on  
Democratization in Jordan**

In order to formulate recommendations for utilizing public diplomacy to aid democratization in Jordan, it is necessary to identify specific problems affecting the Jordanian political landscape; this chapter will discuss those problems and point out ways in which American public diplomacy may be able to help. Principal among impediments to Jordan's democratization are tribal cultural norms and division between Jordanians of East Bank (Transjordanian) or West Bank (Palestinian) origin. At its founding, Jordan was cobbled together out of Transjordanian tribes that pledged loyalty to the King Abdullah I. Abdullah I's successors have held the country together through a semi-rentier system of distributing foreign aid through tribal networks. Jordan's poor resource endowment, arid climate, and otherwise weak economy have caused the descendants of the Transjordanian tribes who still dominate rural Jordan to be almost completely dependent on the state via their powerful relations. Thus, the tribal power is reinforced by the country's economic weakness and lack of an effective universal welfare system. Many Palestinians were forced into Jordan in 1948 and 1967, and most were more highly educated than Transjordanian tribesmen, which led them to dominate the private sector at the exclusion of Transjordanians. The attempted coup by Palestinian Prime Minister Sulayman al-Nabulsi in 1956 and the Black September conflict of 1970 solidified distrust between Palestinians and Transjordanians and led to an unofficial policy of keeping Palestinians out of government. Therefore, the division between Palestinians and Transjordanians has both emotional and socioeconomic roots. These two issues touch

many parts of Jordanian society government in a variety of ways that this chapter will discuss, but their most important consequence is disunity. If the various groups vying for influence and patronage in Jordan do not show that they are willing and able to govern responsibly for the good of the entire country, King Abdullah II cannot loosen the reins of authoritarianism without risking the kingdom's security. Hence, the task of American public diplomacy in Jordan is to break down tribalism and cleavages between Palestinians and Transjordanians and replace both with norms and ideals that are more conducive to democracy than Americans are well versed in.

#### The Monarchy: U.S. Ally and Guarantor of Jordan's Security

Jordan is a constitutional monarchy in name if not always in practice, and thus the end goal for Jordan's democratization is for its government to function more like that of the United Kingdom, with a monarch that reigns more than rules. A near-term goal is for the parliament to begin choosing its own government, because this will signal a true reduction in the king's power.<sup>124</sup> This is unlikely in the short to medium term, and in the meantime the U.S. is likely to continue to support the current king. From an American perspective, Abdullah II is an excellent monarch to work with because he is socially progressive on account of his Western education, favors peace with Israel, and is likely to be on board with a Western global vision of democracy and free markets. Certainly, what the U.S. government believes is best for Jordan is biased, and some in Jordan may disagree that Abdullah II is a good monarch for Jordan, but assuming that the U.S. government does in fact wish that the Jordanian people prosper and find their political voice, American faith in Abdullah II is

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<sup>124</sup> "Evolutionary Monarchy" 2013

sufficient for choosing the proper direction for American policy. Abdullah II has made a great effort to modernize and diversify Jordan's economy; he has enacted reforms to streamline business start-ups, encourage foreign investment, and reduce bureaucratic red tape on the economy. Furthermore, despite misgivings and complaints, many Jordanians like having an all-powerful monarch,<sup>125</sup> because in times of change and strife, it is widely believed that the king will be able to hold the country together and rule from above politics.<sup>126</sup> Just as the West appreciates Abdullah II's tolerance and progressive outlook, so too do many Jordanians, especially when he is compared to many other rulers and regimes in the region.<sup>127</sup> For these reasons, Jordan's plan for democratization must be crafted around maintenance of the monarchy and based on the king's leadership.

While Abdullah II may be good for Jordan on balance, some of his actions have not helped the process of democratization. First, the Terrorist Acts Law of 2001, the Public Assembly Law of 2001, the Higher Media Council Law of 2001, the Economic Crimes Law of 1993, the Correction and Rehabilitation Centers Law of 2004, and amendments to the State Security Court Law and Appropriation Law of 2000 are all examples of laws that encroach on Jordanians' basic political freedom, yet are still upheld by the regime.<sup>128</sup> Abdullah II passed all but one of these in the name of maintaining the kingdom's security, but he has yet to use his power to rectify them even though they impede the democratic development of the country and are contrary to international standards. Though laws like these assure the kingdom's

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<sup>125</sup> Hamid "Jordan's Experiment" 2011

<sup>126</sup> Freer et al. 2011

<sup>127</sup> "Evolutionary Monarchy" 2013

<sup>128</sup> Jarrah 2009

immediate security, it rests with the king to take action to remove them for the sake of the country's political development. There is little American public diplomacy can do about these laws because it would strain the U.S. government's relationship with the king to criticize his policies publicly. It is more appropriate to use backchannels to privately encourage the king to loosen his grip on Jordanian society. Were the king to repeal offensive legislation, this would be an opportunity for American public diplomacy to reward the king with appropriate public praise.

Second, the king rarely goes through parliament to enact legislation, and instead uses royal decrees.<sup>129</sup> This and the continued existence of the acts mentioned above could very well speak more to the Jordanian parliament's ineffectiveness and the dominance of conservatives in parliament than to the king's wish to undermine democratization; if the route through parliament is too cumbersome or unlikely to produce a progressive outcome, the king may have no choice but to use royal decrees. However, Abdullah II will need to start using the parliament as his primary source for legislation in order to show that he is willing to give power to elected officials. American public diplomacy aimed at getting more responsible, progressive candidates elected to parliament will help rectify this issue indirectly, and American diplomats can use backchannels to encourage the king to test the ability of parliament by putting valuable legislation in their hands. This too, like repealing oppressive laws, would be an opportunity for American public diplomacy to praise Jordanian progress by congratulating parliament on successful use of the legislative process.

Third, King Abdullah II has regularly used his appointed government as a scapegoat or buffer between himself and the people by simply dismissing the

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<sup>129</sup> Jarrah 2009

government whenever popular pressure mounts. For example, Jordan has had five prime ministers since the end of 2009, all of which were asked by the king to step down amid protest. This method does not amount to actual change in policy or power distribution, merely a rotation of personalities. Thus, this system is neither sustainable nor democratic, and the king must allow his appointed ministers to be replaced with elected ones while the people must learn to eschew violent protest as a means of expression. American public diplomacy programs that promote patience and constructive dialogue between the government and the public and encourage Jordanians to take a second look at the cause of their dissatisfaction rather than picking one official to blame could help solve this issue.

Lastly, the Jordanian internal security apparatus—the *mukhabarat*, which the king is ultimately in charge of—has also played a role in the country’s inability to democratize, though its influence is not as overwhelming and its methods not nearly as harsh as under other regimes in the region. The *mukhabarat* may have some influence over policy and appointments at the highest levels of government, their actions limit freedom of expression and academic freedom even as it is allowed under law, and intimidation deters many of entering politics.<sup>130</sup> It is ultimately up to the king to reduce the *mukhabarat*’s influence on Jordanian politics by appointing impartial leaders and discouraging their interaction with politicians, though the internal avenues of influence could be too subtle and convoluted for even the king to control. Considering the U.S.’s alliance with the regime and occasionally the *mukhabarat* in the War on Terror, it is not advisable for American public diplomats to criticize the *mukhabarat* in name, barring an obvious crisis that would require a

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<sup>130</sup> Freer et al. 2011

statement. What public diplomacy can do to combat abuses of political freedoms is raise awareness about Jordanians' rights so the consequences for their trespass will be higher for the *mukhabarat*, as well as spread the idea of civilized political action that does not threaten the stability of the country so that the regime will have little enough to fear that harsh intimidation will become unnecessary.

It is clear that there are a number of things the king and only the king can do to help Jordan democratize: remove laws that impinge on political freedom, place more power in the hands of parliament, end the practice of faking change by dismissing the government when popular pressure calls for it, and keep the *mukhabarat*'s actions in check. The root cause of these behaviors on Abdullah II's part is his concern for Jordan's security if he were to give parliament greater power and loosen bonds on opposition groups. What will help encourage the king to live up to his promises of liberalization is to prove to him that the parliament can be trusted with greater responsibility and opposition groups can be given more freedom without tearing the country apart. American public diplomacy has a chance to help prove these things to the king by spreading norms about rule of law, peaceful transfer of power, and non-violent expression among many others to the Jordanian people, as well as by training parliamentarians and opposition leaders in the most responsible ways of playing their respective parts in a democracy.

#### Lower Down the Ladder: The Elite

At intermediate levels of government it is less the king who blocks political reform in Jordan than it is a group of "entrenched and ossified elites"<sup>131</sup> who have

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<sup>131</sup> Freer et al. 2011

turned against the king and have a vested interest in the status quo. First, the king's own ministers shield him from the real needs of the people in order to maintain the current system so that they may keep jobs and status earned through heredity rather than through merit.<sup>132</sup> To the king's credit, he has begun to use independent research teams for policy formation,<sup>133</sup> which is a step toward democracy in that it demonstrates the value of objectivity and the public good over favoritism, and allows the king to neatly sidestep the elite immediately even if ousting them will be a much longer process. The U.S. government and American NGOs are experienced in policy research, and so may be able to offer the king and his research teams valuable assistance in conducting and analyzing research. In order to remove dishonest ministers, the Jordanian people need to see that these individuals are not deserving of their support, and that it is within the people's power and the people's right to remove them from power. American public diplomacy can help accomplish this by spreading norms about what it means to be given the responsibility of a public position and about the importance of merit over tribal affiliation.

Second, corruption is significant issue throughout the Jordanian government, and one the public is especially concerned with. Courtiers, tribal leaders, and other influential individuals even in the legislature are constant targets of public accusations of corruption, though they successfully use their power to manipulate the system in order that they can continue their activities. In late 2011, parliament approved Article 23 allowing journalists to be fined up to 60,000 JD (equivalent to \$80,000) for false accusations of corruption, which severely deters outside criticism

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<sup>132</sup> Sadiki "En Passant in Jordan" 2012

<sup>133</sup> Sadiki "En Passant in Jordan" 2012

of dishonest practices by elite. The main consequence of corruption at the highest levels of government is loss of the public's trust; in order to gain that trust back, the king must hold his ministers, public servants, and aides accountable for their duties to achieve good governance for the people of Jordan.<sup>134</sup> Part of the solution to corruption in the Jordanian government is a change in attitude toward public service and realization that bribery is not an acceptable way of gaining access—though it has historically been *the* way of gaining access as part of Jordan's system of distributing state patronage via tribal networks—which is something American public diplomacy can help accomplish.

Third, elite influence has slowed the process of molding an electoral system that will fit the country's specific needs as a democracy. Jordan is currently in the process of scrapping the single non-transferable vote system for “an open proportional list system, which will give a boost to opposition parties.”<sup>135</sup> The 2012 Elections Law attempted to address opposition demands for a proportional list system, but the final version voted on by parliament failed to make significant headway. Though opposition parties requested that 50% of seats be chosen nationally, parliament only raised the number from seventeen to twenty-seven, and further diluted that percentage by raising the number of seats in the lower house from 140 to 150.<sup>136</sup> Furthermore, the national party list system described in this law allows groups of independents—who are generally understood to be tribal candidates—and even those who are explicitly affiliated with certain tribes to run for the nationally elected seats, which will reduce the number of seats going to legitimate political

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<sup>134</sup> Sadiki “En Passant in Jordan” 2012

<sup>135</sup> Freer et al. 2011

<sup>136</sup> Luck “Election Law Amendments” 2012

parties even more.<sup>137</sup> These changes to the electoral system are so minute that if there is any noticeable change in the composition of the new parliament, the new law will not have been responsible; parliament may continue to be dominated by conservative, tribal legislators who have “eroded the public faith in the political process” through their failure to legislate responsibly.<sup>138</sup> Though the switch to a national proportional list system is by no means certain or complete, it is a step in the right direction toward giving parties based on political ideology a fighting chance against tribally affiliated parties whose candidates are usually the first priority in a society in which tribal loyalty is very important. American public diplomacy can help increase the strength of non-tribal parties by encouraging average citizens to identify their own political ideologies and spreading norms about individualism, tolerance, and national unity that will help break down the tribal system.

Fourth, elite in the government practice gerrymandering to maintain their power. In the current system, rural tribal areas are given disproportionate weight compared to more progressive, majority Palestinian urban areas.<sup>139</sup> Tribal leaders are powerful enough in the state bureaucracy and upper levels of government to influence districting, and the king is willing to give them greater representation in order to placate East Banker fears that Palestinians are taking over the country. Broad public diplomacy strategies designed to break down tribal influence and bridge the East Bank-West Bank gap will help this issue at its core. American NGOs working with Jordanian NGOs can also raise awareness among both rural and urban populations

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<sup>137</sup> Luck “Amid Boycott Calls” 2012

<sup>138</sup> Luck “Election Law Amendments” 2012

<sup>139</sup> Freer et al. 2011

about gerrymandering by tribal leaders in order to generate public outcry against this practice in particular.

Jordan's two core issues—tribalism and Transjordanian-Palestinian disunity—make themselves felt through all levels of the Jordanian government, primarily in that they have produced a system dominated by elite who seek to exploit tribal power and keep Palestinians out of government. Because tribes were the original sources of political power in Transjordan, King Abdullah II inherited a system that pressures him to keep tribal elite in positions of power and makes it difficult to remove a significant number of them from power. These elites use their power and status to further secure their positions via manipulation of the electoral system. Part of the reason for tribes wishing to hold on to power is they fear Palestinian domination of government that could affect the distribution of welfare to their members. Therefore, American public diplomacy can indirectly help remove corrupt and dishonest individuals from the Jordanian government by encouraging trust between Palestinians and Transjordanians and convincing individuals to question the legitimacy of tribal power.

#### The Base: Civil Society and Political Parties

Before meaningful political reform happens in Jordan, the Jordanian people must elect more progressive representatives in order that these men and women will not turn back the tide if given power by the king. The best way to do this is by strengthening the political party system in Jordan. Nasouh Majali, former Minister of Information writing for *The Jordan Times*, states the issue as such:

“Most parties are new and not well organized. It takes time to organize and develop convincing social and political programs, but they are the most important component that, in the future, is bound to organize the public according to real national interest, regardless of geographical region or origin.”<sup>140</sup>

For political parties to take on their proper role in Jordan’s future, Majali points out that they need to have concrete, marketable platforms, and that people need to be able to articulate their visions of Jordan’s future in order to be able to attach themselves to their preferred party. The first point is relatively simple to achieve; American political parties and parties from countries across the globe can offer Jordanian parties expertise in outlining a coherent party platform. This involves working with a fairly small number of party leaders and ensuring that their platforms are presented to the rest of Jordanian society, which should not be too difficult a task considering Jordan’s high rates of literacy and technology use. The second point, however, may be more difficult to achieve because every registered voter will have to be encouraged—in schools, at the mosque, in church, by their employer, or in NGO working groups—to think carefully about what they see as the ideal role of government in Jordan. To a political scientist this task may sound simple, but for anyone lacking higher education in the social sciences and perhaps having rarely been encouraged to express unique preferences that contradict those of tribe and family, the exercise probably sounds unfamiliar and daunting. The State Department has in the past undertaken programs asking average citizens to articulate what democracy means to them in video format that can be shared around the country or around the world; this program and others like it would certainly be helpful and popular in Jordan. Something else that might be helpful would be a Jordanian partnership with American NGOs such as the Roosevelt

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<sup>140</sup> Majali “Time for Reform” 2012

Institute Campus Network that just produced a paper called “Government By and For Millennial America,” which brought together the concerns of college students across the country about the changing role of government in the U.S. A project such as this would be ideal to help Jordanians articulate a cohesive vision of what they want to see from their government that would then help voters align themselves with their preferred parties and help parties better understand the needs of the constituency.

Majali notes that Jordanians will have to vote “regardless of geographical region or origin,” which brings in tribalism and the Palestinian-Transjordanian rift in once again as root problems that weaken political parties from their members up. Part of getting more progressive and secular rather than Islamist or tribal candidates into parliament means tackling these conditions that lead individuals to vote as members of a certain exclusive group and hang on to the old order of things rather than as modern individuals with unique ideologies and perspectives. Furthermore, Islamist parties are disproportionately Palestinian,<sup>141</sup> which casts Palestinians as not only enemies of East Bank natives, but also as a threat to the regime and to the West. East Bankers are more dependent on government for economic support, so they are content with the king’s dominant role in politics as long as he uses his power to distribute wealth from land rents and foreign aid.<sup>142</sup> The Palestinians, however, are hungrier for political power, which is understandable considering their history. The challenge is to align East Bank and Palestinian narratives, agendas, and interests because only then will tribal and Islamist ideologies cease to be more salient than political ideologies, and only then will East Bankers cease to fear Palestinian

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<sup>141</sup> Freer et al. 2011

<sup>142</sup> Freer et al. 2011

domination of the country because they will have realized that Jordan is one country and one people working together for prosperity.

NGOs have an important role to play as Jordan democratizes, and they are essential partners for American public diplomacy efforts. The accepted role for NGOs in democratic civil society is to act as political mediators, mobilize public demands, and educate citizens about government.<sup>143</sup> However, Jordanian NGOs do not yet do this to a meaningful extent for two main reasons. First, NGOs' activities are limited by the Jordanian government, especially by laws concerning assembly and free speech,<sup>144</sup> but also by the ability of the government to spontaneously refuse or revoke recognition. The number of NGOs in Jordan has doubled in the last two decades, but their activities are primarily confined to charity work<sup>145</sup> in response to Jordan's worst economic difficulties beginning in 1989 and reductions in official state patronage. Because NGOs have merely replaced the governmental networks for distributing rents and foreign aid, their charity work has done little to encourage individuality and independence in Jordanian society, or to help Jordanian society transition away from its tribal structure. While it is legitimate for many NGOs to continue their charitable work, charity should not preclude political action by NGOs. The monarchy needs to allow and encourage more open political discussion in Jordan so that NGOs will not be intimidated out of the political sector. Second, NGOs in Jordan tend to lack a strong domestic constituency, reliable funding, organizational capacity, coherent goals, internal transparency and democracy, competent administrators, qualified staff, skilled organizers, and a clear professional training

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<sup>143</sup> Jarrah 2009

<sup>144</sup> Jarrah 2009

<sup>145</sup> Jarrah 2009

track for social activists.<sup>146</sup> In 2009, the regime passed a law requiring NGOs to regularly elect a board and have more transparent, credible internal processes, which is a step in the right direction, albeit a small one.<sup>147</sup> Progress has been made in recent years as aid organizations from around the world work with Jordanian civil society to build their leadership capacity, but the effect will not be immediate. Training for democratic activism is a key part of American public diplomacy; American civil society is one of the U.S.'s most admirable characteristics, and activism is a central tenet of American culture, so it is very much in line with the definition of public diplomacy that we share our success in activism with the people of Jordan. American NGOs like the National Endowment for Democracy, the National Democratic Institute, and the International Republican Institute play the most important roles in helping Jordanian civil society leaders build capacity, and the State Department should continue to support their funding and collaborate with their efforts in Jordan. The State Department should also undertake to encourage more American NGOs focused on political activism to participate in exchanges with Jordanian counterparts.

#### The Path Forward: Nascent Efforts for Change from Above and Below

Jordan has seen protests on and off since the beginning of the Arab Spring in 2011. Little real change has come about in that time, but there are a few promising recent developments. To represent some progress at the level of civil society, the Zam-Zam movement, named for the holy water from the well at Masjid al-Haram in Mecca, has emerged as a moderate Islamist party to compete with the Islamic Action Front (IAF), which is affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood. The IAF is Jordan's

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<sup>146</sup> Jarrah 2009

<sup>147</sup> Jarrah 2009

most consolidated political party, though its confrontational tactics do little to help the country democratize. The new movement favors “peaceful democratization through collective bargains jointly negotiated by state and society,”<sup>148</sup> which is in line with what the U.S., the monarchy, and many secular centrist parties would like to see happen in Jordan, except with the added bonus of having an Islamic flavor that may attract a new coalition. By offering a moderate, cooperative alternative to the IAF, Zam-Zam is “pulling the rug from under the established Islamists,” and creating a “new *modus operandi* of doing Islamist and democratic politics in Jordan” that favors participation over boycott, which is a pointed criticism of the IAF’s decision to boycott the January 23 elections.<sup>149</sup> The movement’s objectives highlight preserving Jordan’s national and internal security, fighting corruption, “championing democratic government within a civil state with Islamic values forming a key reference,”<sup>150</sup> and promoting freedom, social justice, and the dignity of all Jordanians. These objectives reflect both the concerns of the monarchy—security above all else—and the concerns of the populace expressed during the Arab Spring, mainly rooting out corruption and deepening social justice, so the Zam-Zam movement represents an appealing, plausible middle path forward. This is very much the kind of movement the U.S. should be looking to ally itself with, because doing so will show that the U.S. is accepting of Islam’s role in a democratic Jordan. The strategies Zam-Zam has proposed for implementing its objectives include using media, education, and think tanks, encouraging youth civic engagement, and participating fully in government.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Sadiki “Jordan: Arab Spring Washout?” 2012

<sup>149</sup> Sadiki “Jordan: Arab Spring Washout?” 2012

<sup>150</sup> Sadiki “Jordan; Arab Spring Washout?” 2012

<sup>151</sup> Sadiki “Jordan: Arab Spring Washout?” 2012

Many of these activities are relevant to American public diplomacy because it is within the State Department's duties to contribute American speakers to events and facilitate cooperation between Zam-Zam and relevant American NGOs and political institutions that can assist Zam-Zam in reaching its goals.

To demonstrate progress from the top, King Abdullah II has recently issued discussion papers on what he sees as Jordan's way forward. The first paper, published on December 29, 2012, laid out guidelines for national debate leading up to the parliamentary elections on January 23, 2013.<sup>152</sup> The king called for citizens to be fully engaged in the political process, reassess why they vote for certain candidates, avoid violence, remember how important Jordan's unity is at this time, and remember that no one group will get all of what they want. First, he asks citizens to participate actively in the political process by engaging candidates in discussion "on key issues related to the economy, the country's reform course and your vision for the future of our beloved Jordan," engaging each other in discussion "without restrictions," staying informed through the media, participating in community action groups, and holding representatives accountable for achieving specific goals. Similar to this, the king highlighted that Jordanians have a "right and responsibility" to participate, which is a pointed criticism of decreasing participation and increasing apathy about the political process in the last several years. Encouraging engagement and discussion among Jordanians is a good theme for the State Department to focus on in public diplomacy; this can be done via public statements, educational programs, or through facilitating cooperation between American and Jordanian NGOs that are concerned with grassroots activism and outreach. Second, the king reminded his citizens of their duty

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<sup>152</sup> Al Hussein "First Discussion Paper" 2012

to “vote on the basis of positions put forward by the candidates on key issues facing our country, and not on the basis of personalities or affinities related to geography or family.” This point addresses Jordanians’ past tendency to vote based on local issues and tribal associations, which has been harmful to creating a properly progressive, unified, and highly qualified legislature with legitimate blocs and coalitions. Heeding this request will require a major change in mindset for many Jordanians, which can be accomplished through campaigns to empower individuals to express views that may differ from their family members’, which is a second viable theme for American public diplomacy to focus on. Third, the king requested that citizens refrain from violence, which is another cultural shift. He writes that “disagreement [...] expresses itself ineffectively in political intransigence, violence, or boycotts,” and that even though protest is a right, it should be a last resort. He admonished Jordanians to “remember that once the boycott or strike is over, we will still have to work together to reach agreement.” Similarly, he writes that Jordanians need to work on “changing some of our most fundamental practices, chief among them are the way we disagree with each other in the public sphere,” which means learning to “focus on issues, not personalities,” “listen intently,” and “realize that understanding the opinion of others in the most crucial act of respect.” In an honor-driven society like Jordan, it will be extremely difficult for many to learn how to manage conflict unemotionally and without violence, but American public diplomacy can contribute to the effort because notions of team building, conflict management, and formal leadership and teamwork training are becoming more common in American society. Institutions dedicated to leadership and conflict management training exist in the

U.S.—a prime example being the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS)—though it would never occur them that Jordan would benefit from their assistance, therefore it is up to the State Department to realize this need in Jordan and search the U.S. for organizations willing to help. Fourth, the king reminds citizens of the “unshakeable fact that our unity and faith in this country transcends all differences,” and asks that the country “expands our circle of trust and respect, ” both of which are references to persistent divisions among tribes and between East Bank and Palestinian Jordanians. Encouraging unity in Jordan can be done by spreading norms about the equality of all races and ethnicities and the importance of treating all citizens equally. Though the dynamics between Jordanians of East or West Bank origin are not exactly the same as those between white Americans and African Americans, or between white Americans and Native Americans, American thinkers and activists have valuable experience to share when it comes to considering and promoting ideas about equality and unity in society. Lastly, the king used this first paper to reminded Jordanians that “democracy means that there are no permanent winners and losers,” and that no group will get all of what they want, which in effect is a demand for patience. Perhaps the U.S. has been asking for patience from Arabs for too long with respect to the peace process, but patience and compromise are both viable themes for American public diplomacy to promote by highlighting how American citizens exercise both. This first discussion paper from King Abdullah II is an extremely valuable source for deciding on a direction for American public diplomacy because it highlights a set of themes that public diplomacy officers can focus their programs on:

citizen engagement, individual empowerment, peaceful conflict management, social equality and unity, and patience with democratic process.

In his second discussion paper, published on January 16, 2013, the king began to outline the steps and the timeline needed for transitioning to a parliamentary government.<sup>153</sup> He notes that Jordan has always been a constitutional monarchy—which may be somewhat self-congratulatory and optimistic considering the decades Jordan was governed by marshal law—and the fact that Jordan now has a Constitutional Court and Independent Election Commission, which are true achievements even if they are still in their fragile infancy. Moving to criteria and a timeline for transition, the king writes: “The key driver of the timeline for this transition is our success in developing national political parties whereby they capture the majority of votes by citizens and with competent leaders capable of assuming positions in government.” The king cites international experience—especially in former Soviet countries—indicating that it will probably take several election cycles for parliament to “develop and mature,” which cautions Jordanians not to expect him to completely relinquish control in the near term, but also asks them to maintain their faith that he will soon share his power with parliament. Perhaps in self-defense, Abdullah II also reminds readers that his prime ministers—those the populace demanded step down or be thrown out time and time again—were chosen for their leadership qualities and expertise. The king asks the political parties to form agendas based on national rather than local issues and develop four-year plans, because these steps will enable them to form blocs capable of uniting to appoint ministers. The call for stronger political parties is a familiar one, but the king does

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<sup>153</sup> Al Hussein “Second Discussion Paper” 2013

well to explain here precisely why parties must be stronger—in order to be able to lead—and how—by having qualified leaders—before they are capable of forming a government without his interference. The king also discusses how parliament must develop procedures for forming blocs and reaching consensus; there needs to be a “shared understanding of how such blocs agree on common policy platforms,” and “opposition parties will similarly need to agree on conventions for how they cooperate in holding the government to account and offer an alternative vision.” Lastly, the king pointed out the need for a more professional, non-partisan civil service. Corruption, nepotism, and apathy in the Jordanian civil service will have to be replaced with expertise and commitment to the public good. This will require a major attitude adjustment that can be achieved through setting quality standards and taking advantage of international expertise in professional training programs. This second paper, published just a week before Jordan’s landmark elections, is useful in guiding American public diplomacy because it highlights the places where Jordan lacks governance capacity: political parties, the parliament, and the civil service. American public diplomacy in the form of training and capacity building for party leaders, elected parliamentarians, and leaders in the civil service can help Jordan accomplish the goals the king set out in this paper.

In the king’s third and final paper to date, he elaborated on the steps toward transitioning to a parliamentary government in the aftermath of successful elections.<sup>154</sup> The January 23, 2013 parliamentary elections earned international praise for transparency, and achieved 57% participation, the highest turnout in Jordan’s history. Compared to 62% percent participation in Egypt and Libya, and 45%

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<sup>154</sup> Al Hussein “Third Discussion Paper” 2013

participation in Morocco, this election demonstrated that Jordan is doing well for the region. The hope for this election was that it would bring new faces to the parliament and demonstrate growing strength among political parties, and this hope was confirmed by the participation of 80% of political parties and 61% of elected MPs being new to parliament. In the king's words, this election succeeded in "showing that the country is more than capable of political renewal." In order to keep the country moving forward, the king outlined what he sees as the proper roles for political parties, for parliament, for himself as monarch, and for the citizens of Jordan. First, he again called for stronger, more consolidated parties, but added specific requests for them to take on the tasks of aggregating public opinion, creating blocs based on national issues, and maintaining consistent party platforms in order to maintain citizens' trust and loyalty. These requests are useful guidelines for choosing the best training programs that the U.S. government or American NGOs can provide to Jordanian political leaders. Second, the king repeatedly points out parliamentarians' roles as stewards of the public good. He writes that they must be able to "balance local and national interests"—meaning the interests of the country over the interests of tribe, region, or ethnic group—and that they have a "mandate to implement a program," which is a warning against the kind of gridlock and dysfunction that has strangled previous parliaments. He also reiterates a point from his second paper that it is the role of the minority blocs to constructively challenge the majority bloc and suggest viable alternatives; to date, however, this kind of mature discussion and debate is not something often seen on the floor of parliament. Achieving this goal for parliament requires more a change in attitude than an increase

in capacity; true dedication to the public good is not something that all Jordanian parliamentarians have shown in the past, which makes it a key theme for American public diplomacy to focus on. Third, the king did very well to outline what he sees as his own role in Jordanian democracy; doing this gave citizens an idea of what to expect from their monarch, and enables them to hold him accountable from here on out. King Abdullah II feels his primary objective is to “safeguard Jordan’s prosperity, stability, security, and unity.” He promised that the monarchy would “remain forward-looking,” a “unifying leader to prevent polarization,” and speak up for the poor and marginalized. In a perhaps overly self-congratulatory manner, the king pointed out that the monarchy “has constantly evolved with the times and people’s aspirations,” though this is true at least concerning the king’s dedication to economic development, women’s, and even gay rights in Jordan. Furthermore, he states that his “role as monarch must ensure that the army, security forces, the judiciary and public religious authorities remain neutral, independent, professional, and unpoliticized.” Clearly, the role of the king in Jordan is to stay above the fray; considering that much of the political corruption that goes on in Jordan is at the level just below the king, it seems reasonable that the king keep these powers for himself even if they are enormous. It is the duty of American public diplomacy to demonstrate that the U.S. fully supports King Abdullah II in fulfilling the roles he has outlined for himself here, because each one is conducive in some way to Jordan’s democratic development. Lastly, this paper again reminded citizens of the role they must play and the attitudes they must uphold in order to allow democracy to function. The king detailed four core principles for the role of the citizenry: respect for fellow

citizens, accountability to one another, constructive dialogue, and compromise in good faith. These core values are consistent with those he discussed in his first paper that American public diplomacy would do well to focus on as central themes. Furthermore, the king used this last paper to call on citizens to always vote, stay “informed of facts and not rumors,” get involved in civil society, express ideas to their representatives, and hold their representatives accountable via town hall meetings and social media. Overall, King Abdullah II’s discussion papers offer a spectacular blueprint for Jordanian democracy, and demonstrate that his is fully committed to seeing wider participation in his government. The U.S. should proudly support him as a voice of moderation and progress in the region as well as a force for stability. The question that remains is whether the Jordanian people will read and heed these papers; the king’s ideas are a start to solidifying democracy in Jordan, but American public diplomacy can certainly help reinforce his ideas by praising them, adding to them, and helping to implement them through education, training, media outreach, and exchange programs.

The emergence of the Zam-Zam movement and the king’s call for the country to take specific steps toward democracy outlined in his discussion papers are two of the most promising developments in Jordan since the beginning of the Arab Spring, and both offer great opportunities for American public diplomacy. Zam-Zam—along with Jordan’s other political parties—promises to be a valuable partner for the State Department in assisting Jordan’s political development and encouraging dialogue between Americans and Jordanians. The king’s discussion papers demonstrate that he, at least, is well versed in the ideals and norms of democracy, and provide a useful

plan for the U.S. to follow in using public diplomacy to aid our ally. While American diplomats help drive reform through backchannels, American public diplomacy can support their efforts by spreading norms about individualism over tribalism, national unity, conflict resolution and teamwork, the role of public servants in a democratic government, and the true meaning of individual freedom.

## **Chapter 5: Recommendations**

When constructing a plan for American public diplomacy in Jordan, the first step is to outline the specific behaviors the U.S. government would like to see from the Jordanian people and their government. First and foremost, the U.S. would like to see the Jordanian people cooperate with the peace process between the Israelis and the Palestinians and with American and international efforts to combat terrorism in the region. Specifically, the U.S. needs public diplomacy to convince Jordanians to refrain from violence for any reason, gain their support on a solution to the conflict, and guarantee that terrorist groups in the region will not find supporters in Jordan. Gaining Jordanian support for the peace process and counter-terrorism does not mean trying to force Jordanian support for a solution the U.S. government generates based on its own and Israel's preferences; that has not worked for the last fifty years, and similar attempts to advertize one-sided policy during the War in Iraq proved disastrous. Therefore, much of the onus is on the U.S. to find solutions to both the conflict and global terrorism that take Jordanian interests into account, because public diplomacy cannot make up for bad policy, only pave the way for good policy. One of the reasons American policy preferences have consistently been out of sync with Jordanian and Arab preferences is lack of knowledge among the American public about the Arab world and its many peoples; consider the strength of the Israel lobby compared to the absence of a Palestinian lobby. Hence, American public diplomacy in a sense needs to create a counter-lobby based on dialogue between as many Americans and Jordanians as possible. Dialogue is also a solution to terrorism, because constant dialogue between Americans and Jordanians will stave off the kind

of complete alienation and frustration that leads individuals to turn to extremism and express their demands through violence. This thesis does not hope to present specific strategies that the U.S. should adopt toward the conflict or terrorism, but for the purposes of designing a public diplomacy strategy it is sufficient to understand that in order to gain Jordanian support, American public diplomacy will have to initiate dialogue between Americans, Jordanians, Palestinians, Israelis, and the international community on the two major issues noted here as well as others as they arise.

A second category of goals the U.S. has for public diplomacy in Jordan include helping Jordanians move away from tribalism, bridge the East Bank-West Bank divide, and learn new behaviors and norms that will be conducive to democratization, such as placing value on merit over connections, renouncing violence as a form of expression, respecting differing opinions, and discarding archaic notions of tribal honor. These are the ways in which Jordanian culture needs to shift in order for the country to democratize, and the U.S. can assist this shift by constantly using public diplomacy to promote democratic ideals.

The third and final goal of American public diplomacy in Jordan is to help Jordanian citizens, activists, and politicians increase their capacity to participate effectively in democracy. Capacity building generally falls under the auspices of aid organizations, but there is no better form of public diplomacy than actually doing good for a country; actions speak louder than words and are more credible than rhetoric about abstract values. Furthermore, aid in the form training and education has always overlapped with public diplomacy because it involves spreading ideas to individuals who then act on those ideas through their own free will. By helping

Jordanians expand their skill sets for participating in democracy, the U.S. will show that it is truly dedicated to democracy in Jordan.

With these goals in mind, what are the basic tools the State Department has to work with? The State Department's traditional role is moving people across borders; hence, the department's main tools include arranging student exchanges, facilitating cultural and professional exchanges, arranging international conferences, and bringing American experts to Jordan to speak or hold training sessions. In the modern age—an especially when it comes to interacting with a tech-savvy country like Jordan—the State Department can increase the number of people it brings together by using video conferencing and social media. The State Department is also in charge of traditional diplomacy—defined as discussing, debating, communicating, and agreeing on state policy—which involves not only coming to agreements with counterpart officials at high levels, but also explaining and discussing policy with average citizens and in the media where it becomes public diplomacy.

Bringing goals and tools together, this thesis recommends that the State Department:

1. Work with more high schools, colleges, and universities in Jordan and the U.S. to arrange large numbers of student exchanges. Students must be taken from all regions and all demographics of both countries into order to truly change the climate and improve attitudes. These exchanges will create positive relationships between many Jordanians and Americans that will lead Jordanians to generally accept U.S. policy in the region, as well as teach Americans more about the Jordanian narrative and way of life so that the most

domestically popular policies will be those that take Jordanian interests in to account.

2. Work with NGOs to arrange international conferences on the skills required to run a democracy. Activists, bureaucrats, and politicians from democracies around the world have much to offer Jordan, and by arranging for all of these individuals to share best practices, the U.S. shows that it is both dedicated to democratization in Jordan and respectful of the progress the rest of the world has made in figuring out how to adapt democracy to fit different contexts. The U.S. should participate in these conferences prepared to learn as well, not just prepared to teach. The topics such conferences might cover include issue-activism, running a campaign, building a party platform, forming legislative coalitions, how to teach to engage students in politics, or entrepreneurship.
3. Hold policy forums in Jordan and the Levant for American officials to discuss American policy or other international issues (such as climate change or intellectual property) with students, activists, or average citizens. These forums ideally allow American officials and locals to interact face to face, allow Americans to explain U.S. policy fully and correctly, and show locals that they are listening to their opinions. Though forums like this were successful in the past, the security risks were apparently too high to continue them, which is a legitimate concern that must be assessed on a case-by-case basis. If security concerns prevail, utilizing video technology could be a valuable replacement for true face-to-face interaction.

4. Bring expert speakers to speak on a variety of academic topics relating to democracy and good governance. Events like these should be held not only in Amman, but in all cities and regional centers in Jordan so that a wider, more diverse percentage of the population has access. Speakers—whether they are speaking specifically about the Jordanian or American situation—will get Jordanians thinking about democracy and their role in it.
  
5. Contribute cultural, academic, and policy related radio programs to local stations. National Public Radio creates high quality programs that are excellent examples of American intellectual culture, and the State Department can select the programs that will be the most useful in Jordan by choosing ones that reflect the specific ideals that Jordanians need to work on, such as individual empowerment and citizen equality. The State Department should also participate actively in presenting U.S. policy on television and radio in Jordan. While forums are useful for allowing Jordanians to respond to American policy and for American officials to listen, utilizing radio and television allows a greater number of Jordanians to hear the American perspective. The U.S. still has low credibility in Jordan, so American officials should stay away from general news broadcasts and stick to what they are experts on, American policy.
  
6. Increase the number of cultural exchanges between the U.S. and Jordan. Innovation and creativity are low in Jordan for a number of reasons including tribal culture and the weakness of the economy, so the U.S. should encourage

creativity and vibrant expression of Jordanian culture through opportunities to interact with American artists, writers, and performers.

7. Work with USAID and NGOs to conduct training programs for activists and student activists. Training programs can focus on capacity building skills such as messaging or public speaking so that Jordanians can benefit from the skills and best practices Americans have accrued through many years as a democracy.
8. Conduct a video project asking Americans, Jordanians, and citizens from around the world what democracy means to them. Jordanians living at this point in the country's history are lucky to be at a point where they are able to determine the structure of their government, and to do so they must start thinking about what they see as the meaning of government by the people and what role they want government to have in their lives. This is a great project for Americans to undertake as well, and sharing thoughts from around the world will increase understanding of foreign societies as well as of the many forms that democracy can take. The State Department has already taken on a smaller scale video project about the meaning of democracy, but unless every Jordanian sees the final product or knows someone who participated, it is not likely to have a significant impact.
9. Work with NGOs to conduct teambuilding and conflict resolution training with Jordanian schools and community groups. In order to overcome tribalism and the East Bank-West Bank divide, Jordanians will have to learn

to respect and trust one another, and in order for democracy to function, Jordanians will have to be able to disagree with each other constructively. Teambuilding and conflict resolution training for community groups will allow those groups and their members to function better in democratic civil society, the same programs for students will create a generation of capable leaders, and teambuilding for parliament will help its members work together to govern more effectively.

10. Utilize contacts American Foreign Service officers in the Economic section have with American corporations operating abroad to encourage these corporations to participate in public diplomacy either by leading by example or by advertizing the benefits they bring to Jordan. Jordan is constantly gaining technological capacity, and one of King Abdullah II's first initiatives was to jumpstart Jordan's information technology sector, which means that American corporations specializing in technology have much to offer Jordan and vice versa. Public diplomacy can help advertize this relationship. Other corporations such as Gap Inc. have factories in Jordan's exclusive economic zones (EEZs); while these zones provide valuable employment, the State Department should monitor labor conditions and environmental standards there to ensure that the behavior of American companies does not have a negative impact on the U.S.'s image.
11. Work with the American military to ensure that all military personnel and personnel employed by military contractors are aware that they have a

responsibility to represent the U.S. well while they are working abroad. The behavior of American personnel in both Iraq and Afghanistan has contributed to the Arab public's distasteful impression of Americans and the U.S. government, and though the realities of conflict—mainly stress and frustration—may lead soldiers to act in ways they cannot control, constant reminders that respectful behavior is of the utmost importance can only help.

12. Facilitate contact between American and Jordanian religious institutions in order to increase exchanges and regular interaction. Religion is a major force in Jordanian society, which makes religious institutions an important vector for accessing and strengthening civil society. Interaction between American and Jordanian religious institutions can help individuals form personal relationships based on an understanding of one another's spirituality, spread norms about tolerance and secular government, educate Americans about Islam and Levantine Christianity, and demonstrate American interest in Islam to counter the belief held by some Jordanians that Americans hate Islam.
13. During the policy process, ask how American policies reflect American values and how each policy could be explained to those it affects, Americans and foreigners alike. If public diplomacy officers are given access to policymakers at the highest level, these men and women will ensure these questions get asked because they are essential to creating policies that are amenable to public diplomacy.

14. Begin to change American policy toward the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Though many others have demanded this for a variety of reasons, this thesis makes this recommendation because for the sake of public diplomacy the U.S. cannot continue to ignore Arabs' preferences and the rights of Palestinians.

The core ideas this thesis seeks to emphasize are, first, that public diplomacy must be given greater consideration by American policymakers, and second, that in order for public diplomacy to be effective, the State Department must show more consistent commitment to public diplomacy and utilize all possible conduits for public diplomacy. The modern context characterized by globalization, threats from non-state actors, and the continuing spread of democracy demands that the U.S. rethink its reliance on hard power and instead take full advantage of its reserves of soft power.

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