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“IT’S YOUR WORLD”

AMBASSADOR EDWARD DJEREJIAN
AMBASSADOR PHYLLIS OAKLEY

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MS. WALES: Good afternoon. I'd like to welcome you to today's program on New Directions for Public Diplomacy, and we are being joined today by two extraordinary leaders, so let me start by just saying a word about the co-sponsorship of this program. It's sponsored by the World Affairs Council of Northern California and I'm Jane Wales, president and CEO of the Council. But importantly, it is the result of a partnership with the American Academy of Diplomacy, which received a grant from the Honorable Hoshang Ansari (ph) in order to have an exploration of the role of public diplomacy. This program is also co-sponsored by the Goldman School of Public Policy at UC-Berkeley, the International Diplomacy Council, and the San Francisco Bar Association.

For those of you who don't know the World Affairs Council, our mission is to engage the public in an exploration of issues and opportunities that transcend borders, and you can learn about our programs by checking our web site, www.itsyourworld.org. That's also the name of our weekly radio show in KQED FM, which is uplinked on National Public Radio for nationwide broadcast.

I want to say a word about a few upcoming programs and then turn your attention to today's program. On Wednesday, December 1st, Ambassador Thomas Graham will come to the council to talk about issues of controlling the spread of weapons of mass destruction. That will be at the council at 6:00 p.m. He was acting director of the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and special ambassador for nuclear disarmament issues.

Then on the next day, on December the 2nd, the council is presenting a panel on the role – the impact on military families of current events. I really do urge you to come to that program. It is going to be a combination of people who have recently returned from Iraq, family members, and a bit of an intimate conversation about what their lives are like. That is going to be co-sponsored with the San Francisco Chronicle. It will be moderated by a journalist who was an embedded reporter, John Coopman, and it will take place at the council. That will be the evening of December the 2nd.

Also in December we'll be hosting the new ambassador of India to the United States, Ambassador Ronen Cen. That will be December 6th at noon at the council. And then on December 13th we will be hearing from Mark Malloch Brown. He is the head of the UN Development Program and he will talk about the relationship of poverty to security, which may be part of our conversation today.

We're just about to start taping for KQED, so I would like to ask you to turn off your cell phones and beepers and anything else that screeches at you, and call your attention to question cards that are at your seats. We're going to begin this program as a conversation among us, and then we're going to move to your question cards.

Virtually all international public opinion polling is showing that there is a rise in anti-Americanism, an erosion of popularity of the United States and its policies around the globe. This has been a trend in the Arab and Muslim worlds, but it has not been limited to those regions. It is – this loss of legitimacy has been more widespread, and it has affected the government's ability to provide for our own national security, our own economic security, and so we are going to have a discussion today about the role of public diplomacy in trying to reverse that trend.

We're joined by two very distinguished diplomats who are going to help us assess the role of public diplomacy, the role it can play in shifting public views around the world not only toward the United States in general but towards its policies in particular.

The first is Ambassador Phyllis Oakley. She has served twice as assistant secretary of the Department of Defense. She was a career Foreign Service officer – Department of State. She's a career Foreign Service officer and so would have felt somewhat misplaced if I'd put her on the wrong side of the river there. She headed the Bureau of Intelligence and Research. She also led the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration for three years, and she was the first woman to serve as spokeswoman, or spokesperson for the State Department. And she currently teaches at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.

She is joined by Edward Djerejian, who was the first director of the James A. Baker Institute for Public Policy at Rice University. He assumed that position in 1994. He is one of our country's most experienced diplomats. His career has spanned the administrations of eight presidents. He is a leading expert on the Middle East. He served both as ambassador to Syria and as ambassador to Israel. He was assistant secretary for Near Eastern affairs, and deputy assistant secretary of Near Eastern and South Asian affairs.

I am going to begin this conversation by posing a couple of questions to both of our speakers. Let me just note that Ambassador Djerejian headed up a task force, an advisory group that took a little – that was mandated by Congress, if I understand correctly, and appointed by the Secretary of State to take a look at attitudes toward us, particularly in Arab and Muslim worlds, and take a look at the question of how public diplomacy might better serve us in those regions.

But I'm going to start, Ms. Oakley, by asking you to define public diplomacy for us, and ask the question if we might have neglected soft power in favor of hard power in recent years and months.

AMB. PHYLLIS OAKLEY: Thank you very much, and thank you for inviting me out to San Francisco for this absolutely fabulous day. And if my eye wanders, you will excuse me.

I have never spent a lot of time trying to define public diplomacy. It's a little bit like defining sin or pornography. I mean, you can get very hung up on it. But it basically, I think we would all agree, and Ed may want to refine this, but it's the public outreach of the United States around the world. It's what we do to talk with others about our own society and to show them how we live as Americans, how we think, how we study, how we fulfill our roles as students – or citizens.

I think we've always prided ourselves on being a very open society. We are not trying to hide anything and so we are really eager to share with others around the world what we stand for and what we're trying to accomplish in the world. And needless to say, I think most Americans like to think that we want to accomplish good things, not only for ourselves but for others.

The second part of your question, I think there is general agreement that we've done a poor job recently, and there are a lot of reasons for this, and certainly there are a lot of things that we can do. But let me stop there and turn it over to Ed and I'll be glad to come back to some very specific things that I think we can do about the public image of the United States around the world.

MS. WALES: Ambassador Djerejian, you talk in your report about the importance of transforming the way we communicate our policies, but in a world awash in information, where people do have a lot of access to information about our policies, what if they perceive our policies as dead wrong? Or our approach as high-handed? What if they have a developed view? Can public diplomacy in fact address honest disagreements as to the direction of a policy?

AMB. EDWARD DJEREJIAN: I think we have to be honest about what public diplomacy can and cannot do, first of all. I agree fully with Phyllis in terms of it's hard to define – it's a terrible term, public diplomacy. Nobody really knows what it connotes or means, but we're stuck with it.

The State Department's definition of public diplomacy is basically to inform, engage, and influence foreign audiences as to American values and policies. When we conducted our report, our congressionally mandated report that Secretary Powell asked me to chair a bipartisan group – we published our report in October of 2003 – the Congress was really upset over what Jane and Phyllis have said, is that American public opinion in the Arab and Muslim world is at an all-time low. I mean, it's hard to see how it could get worse. And Congress of course asked a question, you know, why do they hate us? Why has America's stature plummeted to these low depths? Let's create an advisory group and find out, and the wonderful American reaction – create a commission, create a task force and try and find out.

So my good friend, a man I respect a great deal, Colin Powell, I cannot say no to him. He asked me to chair this and we did. And we added two precedents to the definition of public diplomacy that I mentioned, things that we Americans do very badly and poorly in our relationships with the outer world if you will, outside of our continent. And that is the first thing is to listen, and secondly, to understand the cultures and the societies and the political systems that we're dealing with out there. And then, after you've made the analytic effort to listen and understand, to start informing and engaging and trying to influence. But those two precedents are sadly missing, and this is one of the major recommendations we made is that we have to gear our whole public diplomacy effort, to answer your question, Jane, in order to start at the right place, start with the listening and understanding and knowing these cultures, and then beginning to inform and engage.

And this means a great deal. This means reorganizing the way that we deal with these issues, reorganizing our whole public diplomacy apparatus in Washington and in the government. It means tremendous new approach toward human resources, getting the experts and the linguists that are needed, putting more financial resources into a strategic challenge of communicating.

The last thing I want to say in answer to your question is, public diplomacy is only about 20 percent of the effort that's needed in terms of changing minds and winning peace, which is our report, if I could do a little publicity here.

MS. WALES: Of course.

AMB. DJEREJIAN: Here it is. Here it is. "Changing Minds and Winning Peace." I truly recommend it. If this subject interests you, read this report. It's on our www.bakerinstitute.org web page. It's also on the State Department's web page. You've got to dig a little to get it in the State Department web page, but it's right there on our front web page if you – if you're interested in reading that.

But fundamentally what is needed is a reorganization from top to bottom of our – of the government in public diplomacy and communications. But the 20 percent of public diplomacy, behind that the 80 percent is America's value system and our policies. And what we found is that in the Arab and the Muslim world there is very high favorable ratings by all polls on American values, American education, American scientific and technological achievement, and basic political principles such as freedom, liberty, equality before the law, equality of opportunity. And in the Arab world, depending on what country you're thinking about, women's rights. And that goes up and down. For example, in Turkey almost a coincidence of interest, but in Saudi Arabia you'll find it quite different.

But again, our values are seen to be universal values and Islamic values. Part of Islamic values. Where the opposition comes, where the problem is is how they perceive our policies. And they see a great gap between American values and American policies. They see us as biased in the Arab-Israeli conflict, biased toward Israel. This is their

perception. They see us as occupiers in Iraq, not liberators. And on the issues of political and economic governance, almost each one of these countries, in the Arab world especially, live under what I call electoral autocracies. They're not democratic countries. The people do not have real political participation. Nor do they have real economic and social opportunities, unless you're part of the ruling elite.

Why do we get hit with that? Because we support these regimes. So it's what I call the triple whammy – Arab/Israeli, Iraq, and political and economic governance. And that's the reason why our opinion is at such a low – public opinion polls all put us at such a low rate.

MS. WALES: Can we afford right now to be pushing for social and political liberalization in countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt and others in the region, bearing in mind that transitions are inherently unstable? What is the right tradeoff there between stability on the one hand and advancing fundamental American values on the other, Ambassador Oakley?

AMB. OAKLEY: Let me just say that I think we have to take that risk. It is a little riskier in the short term, but for the long term it is absolutely what we have to do. But again, there are ways to do it. And if I were the mistress of the universe, the first thing that I would do in foreign policy is to change the tone and the style in which we conduct our foreign policy. And I would go back to what Ed said about listening and trying to understand foreign cultures.

Getting ready to come out here on Saturday, I read through the Washington Post and they had a very long article on the anniversary, 25 years ago, of the takeover and storming of our embassy in Islamabad. I don't know whether any of you remember that. It was a traumatic experience. Mobs came into the embassy compound, the people that were left had to go up on the roof in smoke and flames, two Marines were shot. Basically we closed down our operations in Pakistan after that.

And one of the people who'd been involved there in the community school was interviewed for this article, and he talked about his experiences. And I underline what he said. And I quote, he said, "Americans just do not have a clue about how the rest of the world thinks." In other words, we couldn't understand what the motivating forces were behind that takeover. Now it was complicated, but until we understood what was behind that, until we had taken the time to listen, and until we could make at least people understand that we were listening to their concerns about their criticisms of our policy – it doesn't necessarily mean that we were going to change or would change – but we respected them well enough that we would stop and listen and try and understand what they think.

The other point I want to make is a little history because as a professor I tend to do this. The United States Information Agency, USIA, was set up after World War II and it was set up as an independent agency to take care of public diplomacy for the United States government. Now it was almost a part of the State Department but it was slightly

different. These were the people that ran the American cultural centers overseas, that oversaw the Fulbright programs, the exchange of students, helping people with student visas, bringing American artists and musicians to play.

I've served in lots of out-of-the-way African posts and we would have cultural events that would come through – musicians, sometimes even dancers and people like this. Now they were very small things, but to – it offered to those people an indication that the United States cared about them enough to send out these people and to share. The agency went through various permutations, but at the end of the Cold War there was this feeling, why do we need any more to influence hearts and minds? We've won.

There was a concern that the State Department and the administration were not doing enough to consolidate our foreign policy apparatus, and basically the State Department said, no, no, no, we won't do anything, and finally Jesse Helms said, yes, you will. And so they forced the amalgamation of the United States Information Agency into the State Department, and it has not been a happy result. The public diplomacy side has fallen off, and even though we didn't want it to be that way, there was never the serious management attention to seeing that USIA still has a role. It's different than it was during the Cold War, but many of the things that we learned about international exchanges still apply.

So I think this is what Ed, in shorthand, talks about organizational changes. We really do need to address this and to give greater attention, leadership, and money to what we need to do around the world, particularly in the Moslem world.

MS. WALES: Ambassador Djerejian, your report speaks to the importance of exchanges. It also speaks to the importance of access to higher education by students from all around the world. We've got the greatest university system, the greatest graduate school system, probably in the world. Yet applications are down. How important was that flow of foreign students to American universities, number one. And number two, what can you do about that reduction in applications?

AMB. DJEREJIAN: Well, we stressed education as perhaps one of the highest if not the highest priority in public diplomacy and in our foreign policy outreach in general, not only toward the Arab and Muslim world but throughout the world. But specifically in terms of the Arab and Muslim world we found that this type of what we call three-foot-away public diplomacy, that public diplomacy in which you are interacting with a human being, not through a television or some other communications, but you actually have people in the United States studying at, as you said, Jane, our best universities in the world, best graduate programs. This has been one of the greatest resources that the United States has had is our education system and these student exchanges.

One of the unfortunate aspects – and there are many – of 9/11 that we've had to deal with is balancing our security requirements with the access of foreigners to the United States, especially from this part of the world we're talking about. Unfortunately visas for graduate school research are down. I've heard some – some like 20, 22 percent,

which is very, very bad news. University applications from the Arab world to the United States universities is down significantly. People simply do not want to go through the process, the very intensive process of gaining a visa now, especially if you're an Arab. And also they're even pre-emptively not applying because they think they may be denied. And so European universities, even Australia, New Zealand, other countries are being opted for now for many of these students. I think that's a very bad trend.

Already the trend that Phyllis mentioned is – and I agree with her fully. With the end of the Cold War we thought that the ideological struggle was over. You know, books like Fukuyama's "The End of History," life was going to be just one wonderful universe of socio-democratic countries, we're not going to be – no more challenges, no more conflicts. The ideological struggle was over. Dead wrong. Dead wrong. I put both Fukuyama and Sam Huntington in the same box. Phenomenal popularity and adherence to their ideas, but I just find them very fatally flawed theses, both Huntington's clash of civilizations and Fukuyama's end of history. And yet we've been very impressed by this.

And at the end of the Cold War we thought, okay, we won the battle against fascism, we won the battle against communism, the Cold War is over. Who is the next enemy? We were in search of an enemy. But at that time we dismantled USIA, which was a terrible mistake in retrospect, and – in 1999 we dismantled USIA, and the integration of that function in the State Department has been difficult, to say the least.

There's a cultural issue there that the Congress told me when I took this job on. They said, Ambassador Djerejian, you've got a cultural problem in the State Department of integrating the USIA function and we want it fixed. Congress is very aware of this problem, and it's going to be fixed. I am sure this is going to be fixed but it's a real problem. But what we fail to understand as a country is that with the collapse of communism thoughts and theories were beginning in the early 90's that the new enemy would be Islam. All right, now this was getting into the Huntington thesis.

Now what's wrong with Huntington? Let me put my prejudices on the table. I'm a victim of a Jesuit education. I went to Georgetown University. So the Jesuits told me that St. Thomas Aquinas, the fallacy of composition. If the truth is this wide and you just focus on one aspect of the truth and magnify that to generalize the whole spectrum of that reality, you are distorting reality. And that's what Huntington does, is that he says that – he concentrates on the margins of cultures, be it Judaic, Christian, Hindu, Muslim societies. And you're going to find extremism in each one of these cultures. In all cultures. But if you magnify that and generalize it to be the whole, you're making a critical analytic error, that if you translate into policy formulation it's them against us and they all hate us. Well, that's not true.

Who hates us in the Muslim world? Who hates us in the Muslim world are the Islamic political radicals, the dead-end extremists on the fringe of Muslim society. They are a minority of Muslim society. But the mainstream, they may not love us but they respect our values and they have real problems with certain of our policies. But that's not

hate and there's room to maneuver there. And that's where policy formulation and public diplomacy comes into work.

I just want to say one last thing. We did not advocate in our report that America should change its policies in order to get higher public opinion polls in the Muslim world. That would be a foolish – but what we did advocate is that in each one of these three issues I mentioned, Arab-Israeli, Iraq, and the issues of political and economic governance, the United States has to take the lead in moving forward on an Arab-Israeli peaceful settlement between Israel and Palestine, Israel and Syria, Israel and Lebanon. We are the critical third party. We should do it with our European allies and others, but only when an American president takes the lead and has the political courage and the risks will it happen, in my view.

On Iraq, we must prevail. Forget about the debate about why we went into Iraq, if we should have gone into Iraq. It is critical that Iraq emerge with some semblance of a representative government and some semblance of security and go on its way. And on the issues of political and economic governance, we have to put our money where our mouth is and urge reforms, not in a stupid but in an intelligent way so that the political and economic issues can be addressed in these countries because what we have found out in 9/11 is that political and social and economic instability in a country, for example like Saudi Arabia, where 15 of the 19 hijackers came in 9/11, that that instability in that country and the frustrations that causes, and the extremists it can breed can affect our own internal security.

So we have to move forward on these three fronts. So policy is the issue, but our policies have to be done in a way in which we're addressing these critical issues that reduce the ability of extremists in the Islamic world to exploit for their own political ends.

MS. WALES: You wanted to add a word there, Ambassador Oakley?

AMB. OAKLEY: I would. Again, there have been so many recent articles about the decline in the number of foreign students coming over. Ten percent fewer foreigners attend area colleges. This was from the Washington area. Joe Nye in the New York Times has an article, an op-ed piece, where he talks about the decline across the board. Maybe it's just 2.5 percent, but it's keeping up. But that's the student aspect of it, and it's getting the visa.

The other thing that has been frankly so off-putting to so many foreigners is how they're treated when they come in at the ports of entry. And as far as I'm concerned, it is a national shame that we have seen what has happened to former students from the Arab world who said, look, I went to college here, I went to graduate school, and now I'm held, separated from my family for three hours at an INS post. I will never again come back to this country.

But it even goes beyond that. Recently I heard of some Chinese businessmen who usually came to the United States for their business meetings. Now they say it's such a hassle to get the visas and to get in. You Americans, you come to China.

Now think about this across the board. We're not changing major things, but we have got to be aware of what the impact is of – of the visa policy and INS. I will end on this issue by saying that last year the president of the student governing board of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies was a foreigner from Pakistan, and he was arrested on the street out in front of SAIS. And of course in the end it was a huge mix-up, but he was about to be carried off into detention when a couple of professors and students saw him. And I bet most of you have heard stories like this.

Well, now, this is just something that we have got to get under control and do a better job with.

MS. WALES: What has been the price of Abu Ghraib, Ambassador Djerejian?

AMB. DJEREJIAN: You know, this is a fascinating, interesting question. Abu Ghraib was obviously a terrible set-back for the US image in the region, but – and I have to underscore this but – and this is an unfortunate comment, to many people in the Arab world, they are living under regimes in which torture, imprisonment is common practice. And therefore, the impact of Abu Ghraib in our American eyes hasn't been as great in the region as it has been in the United States. It's fascinating. And again, this gets back to the governance in this part of the world and the autocratic regimes.

So the impact has been bad, but not as bad as you might think as an American.

MS. WALES: Was there to some extent – did your study take place after the pictures were out on Abu Ghraib?

AMB. DJEREJIAN: No, no. We published our report on October 1, 2003, well before Abu Ghraib. And so – but you know, we're keeping our hand in this and basically the reaction has been what I said. It's – it's a very negative development. There's no question about it. It certainly didn't help our image in the Arab and the Muslim world. It – it's – it decreased, but not as much as you would think because of what I said. They're unfortunately so well aware of what is going on in their own societies that it didn't come as that much of a shock and surprise.

MS. WALES: And of course Abu Ghraib was not a result of policy. It was an aberration –

AMB. DJEREJIAN: It was an aberration of our own system, and I would say it's certainly not American policy. Far from it. It's contrary to our values and our policy, but it is an aberration within our system that hopefully is being corrected.

MS. WALES: But my question, therefore, then is – however, is there a policy response to in fact address the perceptions that it caused?

AMB. OAKLEY: There is through the military justice, and I think people still do believe that the United States is going to take the steps to punish the people that were the perpetrators of the worst torture in Abu Ghraib. And that's the kind of thing that goes to credibility, and I think that still does exist. The fact that the pictures came out, the military took action, people have been moved, there have been these steps taken to correct that. Guantanamo was just as bad, but that gets into some other issues.

So I think people have been aware that the United States government was taking the actions to prevent something like this from ever happening again. Its impact on the United States is something that I'm not quite so sure about. It really wasn't an issue in the election. My hope would be that it teaches Americans some humility, that we too can have aberrations and terrible things happen under us as well as others. And I think that sense of humility would go a long way to help our position in the world.

AMB. DJEREJIAN: I'd like to add on, and agree with what Phyllis said. The best public diplomacy on Abu Ghraib was the television and the press coverage of the punishment meted out to people involved in it. In other words, they saw that there is a justice – a military justice system in the United States and people who are accused and guilty of crimes are punished. So that – that is our best public diplomacy.

MS. WALES: Among your advisory group's recommendations, Ambassador Djerejian, was the creation of a senior level counselor to the president for public diplomacy, to be based in the White House, to advise the president directly. But if you have an administration that is inclined not to take foreign public attitudes into account as part of its policymaking, what kind of difference can such a senior advisor make? Somebody who is not the NSC advisor but has this separate role.

AMB. DJEREJIAN: Well, we thought it was very important – one of the major recommendations in our report, one of the over-arching recommendations is that United States public diplomacy needs strategic direction. And in any administration, strategic direction ultimately comes from the president of the United States. So we felt that a president, be it Democrat or Republican, would be well served to have someone he trusts next to him, close by in the White House, who would advise him on the message that America is sending out to the world and the messages it's receiving from the world, to get that feedback in terms of what US policy is. Not to be a creator of foreign policy. Leave that to the Secretary of State and the National Security Advisor and the president. But to basically inform them, to be literally whispering in his ear, saying, this is the way the message is going to be played, this is the way we should convey the message, this is what we're hearing.

JFK had that with Edward R. Murrow and it worked. Edward R. Murrow told him, he said, Mr. President, if you want me to do this job, I have to be in on the take-offs as well as the crash landings, as we saw in Cuba. So it was good advice to the president.

And that was sort of the model that we saw. We think that this person can then inform not only the president but give a sense of the president's own direction. It should be someone close to the president, someone the president trusts. And therefore that person is not going to substitute for the position or the role of the National Security Advisor or the Secretary of State, but be an added asset.

AMB. OAKLEY: Can I just offer a word of caution about this. Looking at what is happening to the creation of the NID, the National Intelligence Director, we have a tendency, you know, or if we think it's important and not being handled correctly, to put a special advisor in the White House. The question is, is the president going to use that. And in my own way of thinking, I would rather have it a more effective State Department operation funneled through Condoleezza Rice, who will be reporting to the president. We know he listens to her. And I'm just a little concerned about putting all these special people in the White House from an organizational viewpoint. It might work and I would hope it would. I'm just not sure.

AMB. DJEREJIAN: Well, our overall recommendation was not – we didn't put all our eggs in the special counselor basket. We recommended very highly that the National Security Council has a coordinating committee on public diplomacy. Hasn't been used for the last several years and that should be activated, where you get everyone under the same tent within the NSC – the Defense Department, the CIA, the State Department, et cetera.

The other thing that we recommended, to get to your point, Phyllis, on the State Department, there's this position in the State Department that's been created, the under-secretary of state for public diplomacy. Unfortunately the incumbents have come and gone with rapidity. There hasn't been anyone there for any length and period of time. We found that office to be an empty shell and we said that in our report. We said this office needs to be beefed up and considerably, to be given budgetary authority, given authority over – in a career who writes evaluations on ambassadors and embassies and assistant secretaries, that are you doing your job in public diplomacy. If you're in charge of Middle East affairs, is that bureau doing its job? The embassies, the ambassadors doing their job. And also to have its own human – its planning unit, for strategic planning.

So we asked for a reform within the White House, the NSC, and the State Department. And I'll be very happy if two out of those three are adopted, and we're hoping. By the way, this issue is far from – this is a very vibrant issue. During the campaign it was addressed in the inner councils of the Kerry campaign. The Bush administration, I know in my contacts with the administration during the campaign period and after, this is an issue that needs to be addressed. First of all, Congress isn't going to let it alone.

MS. WALES: In your report you note that the Defense Department dominates public diplomacy efforts when it comes to Iraq, which you refer to as the most immediate battleground in the struggle for ideas. And I want to ask you what one does about that

particular 300-pound gorilla, because that's where the money is. But I also want to ask a question that was sent up on a question card, and it reads, "Fallujah is a city revered for its mosques, but the city has been devastated. What is the public diplomacy done by a battle we – the battle we've waged with insurgents there. What is the damage of victory?"

AMB. DJEREJIAN: Well, I think on the latter question, which is a very pertinent one, I think the – one cannot assess the damage now on the military operations in Fallujah. If Fallujah is a success, quote unquote, in terms of being a first major step in diminishing the insurgency in Iraq, and it does also replay in other key areas where the insurgency persists and there are elections, then there is not going to be any considerable damage to America's image. But if this – these operations do not lead to sufficient public law and order in Iraq and the elections don't take place and the situation deteriorates then it will be very bad. So I think it's premature to judge the impact on our public diplomacy and Fallujah at this point.

Your first question was?

MS. WALES: What do you do about the fact that the resources are in the Pentagon, not at State, not at the CIA, not in the White House?

AMB. DJEREJIAN: Well, believe it or not, the resources for public diplomacy are mainly in the State Department and the broadcasting board of governors is over – a little over \$1 billion, about \$600-odd million for the State Department and formerly USIA, and about \$540 million for the broadcasting board of governors, which was set up after the dismantlement of USIA, which ran the Voice of America, and they are in charge of our broadcasting – radio and TV broadcasting throughout the world. So the – the key financial resources are there between the State Department and broadcasting.

But in Iraq, when we were doing our report, I – I called Jerry Bremer, who at that time was our traditional head of the provisional authority, and his top public affairs man, Dan Senor, a very capable guy, and said, what do you need? How can we help? What do we need to do in Iraq to get the word across that we really are not occupiers, although we are perceived to be as occupiers, and perhaps under international law, whatever that is, we probably have that category. But what can we do to communicate what we're trying to do in Iraq and set it up on its own feet, its own governance, and brought prosperity after getting rid of Saddam Hussein? And the response was absolutely an impossible response. It was, Ed, we need 1,000 Arabic speakers, Iraqi dialect.

And that gets to a point – now he was – if I – if we could have produced 300 overnight, it would have been a great thing because our inability to communicate in the languages of the region, our inability – you know, when you learn a language you're also learning another culture and we are very short on the language and cultural competencies in the Middle East and Muslim world. And we hit this hard in our report. I'm a so-called Arabist. I learned Arabic in the 1960's in Beirut, and I know how important it has been

in my career to be an effective American diplomat. All the way up to negotiations, when you get into the senior ranks.

But I asked, and Secretary Powell gave us total access to the resources, information. Nothing was held back from us. And I asked how many – I asked my committee to look into what the language resource base was in the State Department and former USIA in the languages of the area – Arabic, Turkish, Persian, B’hasa Indonesian, Urdu, Pashtun. And so it was deficient in almost every way, but in Arabic, I honed in on Arabic and said how many do we have? We have 270-odd Arabists that speak at different levels. About 80 who speak at the professional level, can do business in Arabic.

I went back and said, how many of the 80 can the president, the Secretary of State, or an ambassador in the field, put on Al Jazeera tonight? This morning Al Jazeera came out with a blatant falsehood. How many proficient people do we have that we can put on Al Jazeera tonight to rebut and debate in Arabic? Five.

We are the United States of America and we need more than five people we can field in one of the most critical languages in the strategic struggle for ideas in the Muslim world. So we’ve got to go back to the drawing board and give language competence, language training, and continuity in assignments in that part of the world as a basic objective that we have to start on, and not only in Arabic but in many languages. You could talk about Chinese, you could talk about other languages.

AMB. OAKLEY: Let me bring up just one other side point to this. Now many or most of the redevelopment funds are in the hands of the State Department and Ambassador John Negroponte, who’s out there. So it’s not just the military. But one of my – I will say public affairs concerns was that after the fighting stopped, whether you call it mission accomplished or not, in early – you know, in the first half of 2003, Donald Rumsfeld as the Secretary of Defense kept on briefing. And if I had been running the public affairs for the US government, I would have taken him off the air because I didn’t want a militaristic continuation of this. We thought –

(END SIDE A, BEGIN SIDE B)

AMB. OAKLEY (in progress): – who did those briefings on what we were trying to accomplish in the sense of re-establishing security, but governance and health conditions, electricity, to get the oil flowing. If I were writing a critique of that that was seen around the world, we put for the last 18 months a very militaristic cast to what we were doing in Iraq, that I think augmented the feeling that we were the occupiers and just there for our own reasons.

MS. WALES: What is the role for development assistance, both official development assistance on the one hand, and for philanthropy on the other?

AMB. OAKLEY: Well, I think in the end everybody knows that it's going to be private enterprise that is going to put Iraq back on its feet. And they've got the natural resources – oil and other things that they can do it. Iraq also has a very educated workforce, probably one of the highest in the Arab world. The Ba'ath Party was basically a socialist party, so many of the industries in Iraq, oil and various other things, were all owned or controlled by the government. So I think that there has to be a real path of assistance from private enterprise to make those industries, to wean them away from the government sector and to bring in more private enterprise, which, you know, in my view is going to be the real driving force in the development. And I think that's true in most countries.

MS. WALES: Let me separate Iraq from other countries for the moment because in Iraq you have a very special situation in which because of the security, the lack of security, nongovernmental organizations are not operating, relief operations are not operating within Iraq because they cannot safely do so. So first, what is the price of losing that capability, not having that capability in Iraq? And secondly, how important are nongovernmental organizations to efforts in the region more broadly? And then third – I'm going to pile one here – what is the effect of supporting faith-based organizations to operate in the region that have as part of their mission, their core mission, proselytizing? Is that kind of undercutting our message?

AMB. DJEREJIAN: You mean state organizations that proselytize what? Religion?

MS. WALES: Yes, religion.

AMB. OAKLEY: Faith-based.

MS. WALES: Faith-based organizations.

AMB. DJEREJIAN: Okay, faith-based. Let me just make a point on – I'll take the top two and I'll leave faith-based – (Laughter) to Phyllis.

MS. WALES: Thought you might.

AMB. DJEREJIAN: On economic development and NGO's, our report leaned very heavily on the potential for both in the broader Middle East. First, we were very struck by every country we visited. We went from Indonesia through the Arab world, central Asia, all the way to Africa, Senegal, the Muslim world. And – but we were very struck by the role of NGO's in these countries. Indeed, I was heartened to see in a socialist Ba'athist country like Syria – of course I served there – but to see these nascent NGO's that were promoting small and medium enterprises, privatization. In Turkey, to see NGO's run by women on political and social issues.

Throughout the Arab world NGO's are burgeoning. Very small, small steps, but it's happening. And I think that we in our policy approach have to connect much more,

identify and connect with these NGO's because they are building blocks of civil society. Because to go back to one of your earlier questions, Jane, our approach toward these regimes, on the one hand if you topple a regime, an autocratic regime, you may get what you don't want at the other end, which is very well organized, the Islamic radicals.

But how do you build the middle? How do you build civil society? How do you build political parties? How do you build the rule of law? How do you build all these organizations that we as Americans are so – just see as second nature? And that is a generational challenge, but it's something that we need to build a strategic approach on, not a haphazard one, but really have a strategy in place. And economic development assistance is very much a part of that. And privatization of these state-run industries that Phyllis mentioned are a very key part of that because they're usually just artifices for official state corruption and paying people off and keeping them on jobs and salaries. So economic development and NGO's are extremely important and we need to craft a strategic approach to building them up.

And as for faith-based, I'm going to let you handle that, Phyllis.

AMB. OAKLEY: Well, this touches almost the most sensitive button in Islamic societies, and in many of these countries there have been missionary groups that have worked for years, but it was generally in areas of education or in health care. The American University of Beirut, the American University in Cairo, Roberts University in Ankara, there are a whole host of them, of groups that have worked there.

I think you will all remember reading about some American missionaries in Yemen who had been there for a very long time, and all of a sudden they were attacked. And I think what we have to realize is that activities that were perhaps certainly tolerated and welcomed as helps to their people are now more questionable because there is the growth of fundamentalism, and I say it's fundamentalism across the board. There is more fundamental Hinduism than ever before. There is more fundamental Islam. In my view there is more fundamental Christianity and Judaism.

So all of these movements, if you will, are now simply more sensitive to that. And I think that groups that go out for medical reasons or education or to help with democracy or things like this have simply got to be aware of the dangers and that they have got to abide by the guidelines that those countries set up. It is going to be extremely difficult and I think above all we have got to recognize the sensitivities of these issues.

MS. WALES: I have a few questions on AID and then I'm going to turn you to a discussion of broadcasting and Internet and magazines and the like. But on aid I've got three questions. The first questioner asked, does aid really win us friends? Egypt is the second largest recipient of US aid and our popularity is awfully low there. The second questioner notes that aid is invariably heavily earmarked by US Congress. Does the administration really have the latitude it needs to address the current problems. And then the third asks whether, and in particular this is directed to Ambassador Djerejian, whether

the millennium challenge account, which is less ear-marked and more politically free, whether that offers a new opportunity.

AMB. DJEREJIAN: Well, one of the things we cited in our report, and we actually have a photograph in our report, is the opera house in Cairo, built by the Chinese. The Egyptians talk about the Chinese helping Egypt because they built this beautiful opera house, which cost I think a couple of million – hundred millions of dollars. Beautiful opera house. The United States has virtually sponsored, supported, and helped build the basic infrastructure of Cairo, Alexandria – water, sewer systems, road systems, billions of dollars of assistance. Nobody talks about it because there is a silly – in addition by regulation that aid cannot promote itself and publicize what it's doing, which I think is absurd. But the point of the matter is that we don't get credit for what we do.

Now I must say an opera house is a prettier picture than a wastewater sewage system, but the fact is that we are really doing real things in a country like Egypt. But we have to do a much better job of informing people of what we're doing in this part of the world, and we just have to get out and – and if we have to change some rules and regulations, we should do it. But AID should be much more up front than the United States government on what we do.

The other thing is that on earmarks, that's part of our legislative political process. Everyone has their hobbyhorse. I'm not that idealistic to think that we're going to be able to change it. But things like the millennium account do make a difference. I think that a millennium account gives a president and the Secretary of State much more leeway in focusing money on where our political policy priorities are. And I would like to see more of that. In fact, it should be much more focused on things we've been talking about. Basic privatization, reconstruction, development assistance, and education. I mean, we really have to get into the education field. And also a millennium account can help on what we've been talking about on NGO's and building up civil society. So I'm a big fan of that.

MS. WALES: Let me then turn to questions I have regarding – you mentioned the broadcasting board of governors, and I think first you should tell folks exactly what that is and whether or not you feel it is doing a good job, whether it needs reform.

AMB. DJEREJIAN: You want to get me in trouble.

MS. WALES: Yes.

AMB. DJEREJIAN: Well, the broadcasting board of governors is a group of American citizens. It's a bipartisan – every president has an opportunity to put people on the board – to really oversee and formulate the broadcasting policy of the official voice of America. I'm not saying the Voice of America, but the voice of America, what we want to say to the world through radio and television. Its budget is huge. As I said, it's over half a billion dollars. And they – we looked at their operations in the Muslim world. We

didn't look at their operations throughout the globe. Our mandate was the Arab and Muslim world.

When we published our report, the decision had not yet been made but was in the throes of being made, to establish an American government-sponsored satellite TV channel in the Arab world to compete with Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya and the others. And we looked hard at that and we said, bravo, if you can do it and do it successfully, this would be the first foreign language sponsored satellite capability in the Arab world. But first of all, you're not putting enough money into it, if you're going to do it. Al Jazeera's budget is at least \$150 million a year, and they were toying around 60, 67 million. But that was a minor note that we made.

Our basic critique was that one of our fundamental findings in the Muslim world, especially the Arab world, was that the populations in these countries are so skeptical of any government-run media capability, be it television, radio, or print journalism. They are living under autocratic systems in which propaganda by the state is fed to them on a daily basis. I remember when I first got to Syria, the evening news at 8:30 was about one half-hour of watching the president and the prime minister meeting delegations, with music in the background. That's the news. And then you'd have commentary by some government publicist, if you will, or propagandist who would just give you absolute pap.

All of a sudden you have the creation of Al Jazeera out of Qatar. And Al Jazeera, we called it electronic perestroika in the Arab world because what they did is that they brought through satellite TV the real world into the parlors and bedrooms of the Arabs, and they did this by putting journalists in Israel, journalists in New York and the UN, journalists in the West Bank, journalists all over the world virtually, and you got real news coverage of events. Now they have a very deep political bias, a lot of anti-Americanism, as we've seen, but fundamentally what they did is they cut through the state-sponsored TV. And then you had Al Arabiya coming out of the United Arab Emirates. So this is what any American satellite TV would have to compete with.

So what we recommended, rather than being labeled "this is being brought to you by the United States government," again because they'll look upon this, it's a high hurdle to overcome that this is going to be a credible channel of communication, we recommended a foundation. We called it a Corporation for Public Diplomacy, or foundation to be formed in which this foundation would be able to give to Arab existing television stations and the satellite TV's quality American content – the Discovery Channel, the History Channel, the talk shows on Sunday. I mean, just for the Arabs to see how we Americans criticize our own government and policies on the Sunday talk shows is enough of a lesson in democracy that no American government TV station could bullet point, saying, this is what we're doing.

We would provide this free of copyright fees, and the TV people in the Arab world told us they were dying of hunger for this type of thing.

Now the bad thing, the critique we got for that, which was a legitimate critique, is that in a crisis they probably wouldn't use our stuff. They'd use their own stuff. But I'm willing to take that risk because, believe it or not in the Middle East every day is not a crisis. I mean, there's a crisis going on in the Middle East, but the large amount of quality American content could be provided without the stigma of, or the hurdle, the credibility hurdle of "made by the US government."

We've gotten a lot of criticism for recommending that, by the way, by the BBG, by its advocates, and by private people here, especially in California, and we also noted that there's no mention of success in influencing minds. And that is something that – because, you know, you're not there just to gain an audience. You're there to influence people.

AMB. OAKLEY: The other thing that has to be taken into account is the Internet out there, and what's passing with e-mail and messages in the Net. And I'm sure that you've heard, as I did, that the American stations would not show the beheading tapes of some of these prisoners in Iraq. I understand from my students at SAIS that that was all on the Internet and they all knew how to dial it up and didn't I want to see it?

So it's infinitely more complicated than it used to be, and I think you're absolutely right that there is so much information out there that we really have to put our heads together, I think, with private industry here to think about where we're going in the next five or 10 years.

MS. WALES: And that gives me a natural segue to the final set of question cards I have here, that regard – that have to do with the role of commercial television, commercial media, commercial films. One questioner asked, can't Hollywood be asked to project a more attractive, less violent image of America? And this person notes, after all, Hollywood played a very positive and constructive role both during World War II and during the Cold War.

And the second questioner – I really have to use this question – asks, is Seinfeld completely messing with their heads? That show is confusing me and I'm from the Midwest. I cannot imagine its effect in the Middle East.

AMB. DJEREJIAN: Well, we got a lot of commentary on Seinfeld and Friends when we were in the Muslim countries, and they said – they asked us quite frequently, does this represent typical American family life? You know, we had humorous answers, but no, it does have an impact. It does have an impact.

But you know, as Phyllis said, this stuff is out there. I don't think Hollywood should be granted any specific role. Hollywood is Hollywood. It's out to make money, which is a legitimate – I mean, you can't mess with the commercial interests of the filmmaking industry. And Hollywood produces great films and Hollywood produces junk, and that's going to be out there for people to see whether – there's no way of limiting that or expanding it. It's there.

Now I think what we have to concentrate on is through the private-public sector foundation, or unit, entity, to get the quality stuff out there and make it available to them. And again, there's nothing better than showing Americans debating themselves on policy issues to inculcate what democracy is about.

MS. WALES: Please join me in thanking Ambassador Djerejian and Ambassador Phyllis Oakley for sharing their thoughts with us today.

(Applause)

(END OF RECORDING.)