

Tech Hosts Wanted!

As PDCA transitions to in-person programming, it is seeking volunteers of all ages and backgrounds to serve as Tech Hosts for First Monday Forums and other programs to help ensure all technical aspects of the programs run smoothly, including audio, visual, and streaming components.

Serving as Tech Host for hybrid events requires approximately three hours on the day of the First Monday Forum, in addition to logistical planning via email in the weeks leading up to the event. Hybrid events require the Tech Host's presence at the venue, usually the Elliott School at GWU.

Additional Tech Hosts for fully virtual forums involve a smaller time commitment, with no in-person requirements. All Tech Hosts will receive training at their convenience.

Tech Hosts are eligible for PDCA membership, and those who serve as Tech Host at least four times in a year will have their membership fees waived for the following year. This is also a great opportunity for anyone interested in learning more about Public Diplomacy, nonprofit organizations, or event planning.

If interested, please contact Claudia Del Pozo at fellow@publicdiplomacy.org.

Capturing the Legacy of Public Diplomacy: ADST's Oral History Program

PDCA's first hybrid program combining an in-person discussion with the option of participating in the program via Zoom will take place on March 6 at noon Eastern Time. It will focus on the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training's Oral History Program.

Amb. Susan Rockwell Johnson, President of ADST; Donald M. Bishop, holder of the Donald Bren Chair of Strategic Communications at the Marine Corps University and President Emeritus of the Public Diplomacy Council; and Judith R. Baroody, former Executive Director of ADST, will discuss the oral history program and its relevance for Public Diplomacy.

The event is being presented in collaboration with George Washington University's Institute for Public Diplomacy and Global Communication. As with all PDCA

programs, the FIRST MONDAY FORUM is also cosponsored by the USC Annenberg Center for Communication, Leadership, and Policy. Sandwiches will be provided at the in-person program, and RSVPs are required by March 3. It will take place in the Lindner

Family Commons of GWU's Elliott School of International Affairs. The event will also be presented by Zoom, for which a separate RSVP is required. See PDCA's [home-page](#) for RSVP links. ☐



Recent visit to ADST: Rising Professional Daniela Suarez, Amb. Susan Johnson, "Cool Ben," and PDCA Tuch Fellow Claudia Del Pozo. (Photo: Sherry Mueller)

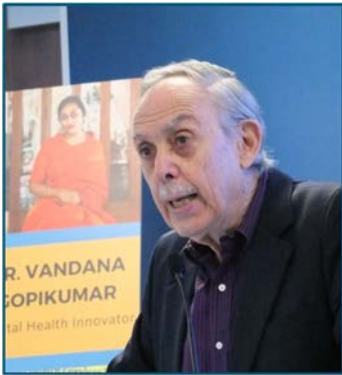
Nominations Open for PDCA Awards

PDCA is accepting nominations for the 2023 AWARDS FOR ACHIEVEMENT IN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY. The awards recognize outstanding contributions to the conduct of Public Diplomacy by Department of State employees who are members of the Foreign Service (FS) and Civil Service (CS), or who are local staffers, as well as U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) employees, American Spaces or Fulbright Commission staffers, and EducationUSA advisors. Award recipients will be offered cash awards, certificates of achievement, and

one-year memberships in PDCA. They will be recognized at a web-based special awards ceremony and asked to describe the projects or activities for their awards as a part of this online ceremony. The ceremony will be held in June. The deadline for nominations is

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The mission of the Public Diplomacy Council of America is to encourage excellence and honor achievement in the professional practice, academic study, and advocacy for public diplomacy.



Joel Anthony Fischman
Co-President

Obituaries...can communicate our unique mission as Public Diplomacy professionals and tell of our many notable accomplishments. They bring out the humanity in our professional (as well as personal) lives and fill in some gaps of what it is like to live a life imbued with the importance of Public Diplomacy.

President's Column

Claude Porsella, former VOA correspondent and PDAA Board member, has been preparing obituaries for [PUBLIC DIPLOMACY TODAY](#) and its PDAA predecessor for several years. This edition of the newsletter features his final obituary list. Claude has provided a valuable service to our PDCA community. He will be missed.

Obituaries have always been a popular feature of the newsletter, for some readers the first thing they look for. Yes, they are, understandably, a particular fascination for our older readers, and a reminder of our origins. Both the Public Diplomacy Alumni Association and the Public Diplomacy

Council were founded by retired foreign service officers wanting to keep in touch with each other. Obituaries served that purpose.

But obituaries can be more than that. They can communicate our unique mission as Public Diplomacy professionals and tell of our many notable accomplishments. They bring out the humanity in our professional (as well as personal) lives and fill in gaps of what it is like to live a life imbued with the importance of Public Diplomacy. Friends and family – and strangers – reading obituaries over time can learn quite a bit about Public Diplomacy.

This leads me to a wonderful comment made by the wife of a colleague during a memorial gathering of another. "Why," she asked from the podium, "do we wait until someone dies to say all these good things?"

PDCA is now more of a professional organization than a fraternal one. Even so, one pillar of our mission statement refers to "Fellowship among members, an esprit de corps encouraging pride in the profession." Knowing more about each other, sharing our successes or simply developments in our lives, bond us into more of a team. It is this team that

enhances our capability to pursue the other pillars of our mission "offering new insights and understanding of the concept and practice of Public Diplomacy": public programs, networking events, mentoring and training, advocacy, awards, and other modes to encourage excellence.

In the coming months we will be looking at ways we can facilitate a sharing of what we can call "transition items," professional and personal achievements, job opportunities and changes, awards, marriages, news of children and grandchildren, items of personal interest that keep us abreast of each other. We are a professional organization but fraternal is still in our DNA. If you, our members, are interested in this, we can make it happen.

Obituaries will continue to be a feature of this newsletter **Domenick DiPasquale**, former PDAA board secretary, has agreed to take on the role of Interim Member News Editor. We look forward to Domenick's contributions and express our deep thanks and best wishes to Claude.

Joel

Awards

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Tues., Feb. 28. Information on the format for nominations may be obtained from PDCA Awards Committee co-chairs Pat Kushlis and Mike Korff at Awards@publicdiplomacy.org.

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connect PDCA with the next generation of Public Diplomacy professionals.

We consider our members our most important partners. We count on your support and participation, and invite your comments and suggestions.☐

Sherry Mueller, Ph.D., is Co-President of PDCA; Claudia Del Pozo is Hans "Tom" Tuch Graduate Fellow at PDCA.



Annual CAA Dinner in honor of the Davis Fellows 9/15/22
Former Assistant Secretary of State Marie Royce, Amb. Philip Hughes, Davis Fellows Colleen Smith and Anna Dupont, Sherry Mueller. (Photo Credit: Grayce McAllister) The Council of American Ambassadors is a PDCA partner

The Power of Partnerships

By Sherry Mueller and
Claudia Del Pozo

The impact of a vibrant organization can often be measured by the quality of the partnerships it has forged. As noted by Leslie R. Crutchfield and Heather McLeod Grant, authors of the seminal work entitled *Forces for Good: The Six Practices of High-Impact Nonprofits*, one of those practices is working in coalitions – building partnerships.

As the leaders of PDCA work with our members to deliberate and establish policies for our newly merged organization, we embrace three guiding principles:

1. We are committed to developing multigenerational leadership and subscribe to the notion that leadership is giving ownership to the maximum number of people. (This idea is explored by Sherry Mueller and Olivia Chavez in the inaugural issue of the [PDCA Newsletter](#), [PUBLIC DIPLOMACY TODAY](#), in an article entitled "Rising Professionals: Building Multi-Generational Leadership" from May 2022.)
2. We believe that maintaining active partnerships is essential to maximize impact.
3. We are building an inclusive, diverse, and dynamic professional association dedicated to the PDCA mission of promoting excellence and honoring achievement in the professional



December 7 First Monday Forum Hosts and Panelists at Zoom program co-sponsored by partner USC Annenberg Center on Communication Leadership and Policy, a PDCA partner.

practice, academic study, and advocacy for Public Diplomacy.

This article focuses on the second principle. Legendary management consultant Peter Drucker was known for saying "Partner or die." In fact, the merger of PDAA and PDC in April 2022 would not have happened without first having a robust partnership (a Joint Program Committee, for example) as the basis of our merger discussions. We had already built trust among leaders of both organizations by working together.

Taking an inventory of an organization's partnerships is one way to engage in strategic planning. Which partnerships are essential and should be strengthened? Which are no longer useful and should be abandoned? Are there new partnerships that would help the association grow and provide more services and opportunities to its members? What steps

need to be taken to implement answers to these questions? By whom?

As part of a larger planning process, PDCA is taking an inventory of its partnerships that appears on our [website](#). It is an impressive list that gives us access to resources, provides training and mentoring opportunities for our members, and amplifies our programs as well as our advocacy efforts.

To illustrate: One partnership that is essential to our operations is the PDCA relationship with the **USC Annenberg Center on Communication Leadership & Policy**. That partnership was established thanks to former PDC President Adam Clayton Powell III more than ten years ago, when the FIRST MONDAY FORUMS were created to provide monthly programs on a wide range of Public Diplomacy topics.

The USC Center still co-sponsors the FIRST MONDAY FORUMS. Professor Nick Cull

serves on the PDCA Board as well as the Program Committee. He has organized programs including *My Place in the Sun: Life in the Golden Age Of Hollywood and Washington* featuring George Stevens, Jr.; *Gifts as Public Diplomacy*; and *Broadcasting to the USSR – History and Precedent*. The Center also provides tech hosts and space in DC to hold Board meetings and off-the-record informal luncheons.

As we prepare to resume in-person programs, we have developed another important partnership with the **Institute for Public Diplomacy and Global Communications** at George Washington University. As of February, the Institute will cosponsor the FIRST MONDAY FORUM, and for the March hybrid program will provide a venue in the Lindner Family Commons Room at the Elliott School.

Another example of a long-standing partnership is our relationship with the **Council of American Ambassadors**. Since 2013, first as PDC and now as PDCA, we provide mentors for the Kathryn W. Davis Fellows. The Davis Fellowship is awarded annually by CAA to two mid-career FSOs who have demonstrated the commitment and creativity to become leaders in the field of Public Diplomacy. These mentors advise the fellows on salient topics and

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From Journalism to Public Diplomacy

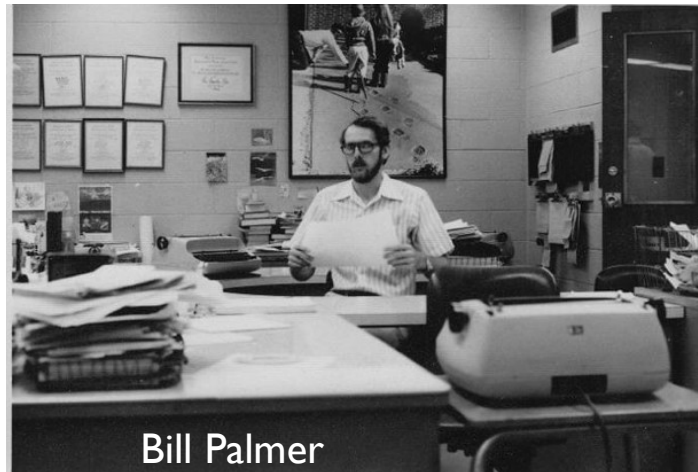
By Judith R. Baroody

Both journalism and Public Diplomacy involve communicating ideas persuasively, listening carefully, meeting deadlines, and building rapport with strangers. Many PDOs started out in the media, and I was among them. Having flunked the FS exam as a college student, I decided to become a journalist instead. After six happy years as a television reporter and anchor, I passed the exam and began my career with USIA.

A number of future officers began reporting in college or soon after. **Bea Camp** worked on the *Oberlin Review* before moving on to the *Elyria Chronicle Telegram*, the *Washington Star*, and the first Dow Jones electronic news service. Another service, United Press, hired **Dick Curtiss** after graduation from USC. **Dick Virden** started as a cub reporter at the *Daily Transcript* in Little Falls, Minnesota. The student newspaper at Dartmouth gave **Gordon Winkler** his start in journalism, followed by the City News Bureau of Chicago and the *Chicago Tribune*.

Most worked in print journalism, but others, like me, in electronic media. **Stacy White** was a television news producer, anchor, and reporter in Texas and Oklahoma. **Mary Jo Furgal** worked at the TV station WGN before spending two years at a weekly newspaper.

For some future PDOs, reporting careers were relatively brief. **Kay Webster Mayfield** started at a weekly newspaper in Tem-



Bill Palmer

ple, Texas, and would later work for two years at another, *Tegucigalpa This Week*. **Terry Davidson** spent a collective seven years at the *Escondido Times-Advocate*, *Beijing Review*, *Chula Vista Star News*, and *Somerville Journal*. **Sherry Hall** worked at the *Ashland Daily Independent* in Kentucky, and **Michelle**

Schohn reported for the *Charleston Post and Courier*, as well as Syracuse newspapers.

Others toiled longer in the media, including **Barbara Zigli**, who was a reporter for

The Cincinnati Enquirer and *USA Today* for 12 years. In 1972, **Keith Peterson** began as a sports reporter for the *Mankato Free Press*, finishing as chief editorial writer for the *Daily Herald* in Chicago in 1986. **Bill Palmer** devoted a decade to reporting and editing at



Liz Colton interviewing Moamar Qadhafi in 1981



Stacy White

the *Anniston Star* in Alabama and *Capital Times* in Wisconsin. Other than Edward R. Murrow, perhaps the most experienced reporter-turned-PDO was **Liz Colton**. A columnist for the *Asheville Citizen-Times* by 16, she would later work for ABC, NBC, NPR, Reuters, *Newsweek*, and other media.

Why leave journalism to get a job with the federal government? One motivation: money.

As an intern at the *Chronicle Telegram*, **Bea Camp** was pleased to earn her first byline. As she recounts in her oral history, "One of the crusty old reporters commented to me: 'I see you got a byline.' 'Yes,' I responded, proudly. 'That's good,' he said, 'but you can't eat bylines.'" **Gordon Winkler** too realized that, as a newsman for the *Chicago Tribune*, he was being paid minimum wage, and "I simply could not afford the luxury of being a journalist."

Another was job security. As a TV reporter, I always worried there would be a pink slip on my desk when I came to work in the morning. I was never fired, but many of my colleagues were, often abruptly and for no discernable reason.

The goal of finding overseas employment drove others. **Bob Wozniak** confided to his boss at the Associated Press his ambition of working for a news agency overseas. When the bureau chief told him it might be possible "after six



Judith R. Barood

or seven years of seasoning in Detroit or someplace else in the boonies," Wozniak decided not to wait that long, and entered the USIA reserve FSO corps.

Certain skills and insights acquired as a journalist, such as appreciating the importance of accuracy, are applicable to the work of a PDO. At WVEC-TV, I was taught "better right than first." **Bea Camp** was uncomfortable

over a different mandate at the Dow Jones News Service, where "being first with any news was what counted." As a sportswriter, **Dick Virden** would take a lot of heat from coaches if he got it wrong: "Those were early lessons in accuracy."

Kay Mayfield noted that journalism also teaches you to frame the message and tell a story: "The important thing is to present information in a way that will connect with people and make it seem relevant to their lives." She relied on the *Wireless File* for content when she was the managing editor at *Tegucigalpa This Week*. After she joined USIA, she produced articles for the File.

My first career as a reporter was rich in psychic salary if poor in paycheck. I enjoyed it and am grateful for the lessons learned in journalism that prepared me for the even more satisfying profession of Public Diplomacy.▣

Judith R. Barood is a retired Foreign Service Officer. Her most recent book is *Paris Gold: Ten Tales of Treasures Lost and Found*, published in 2022.

In Memoriam

Robert A. Catell, a Senior Foreign Service officer at the U.S. Information Agency, died Oct. 17 at age 93 of natural causes. Catell joined USIA after his Army service. Over the next 12 years he worked in the Republic of the Congo, Cameroon, Senegal, Lesotho, Swaziland, and Botswana, as well as USIA's Office of African Affairs. Subsequent assignments included Frankfurt, Bern, and Madrid. Following retirement from USIA in 1992, Catell worked as a staff aide to the chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and later as a senior executive employee with the EPA.

Candis Cunningham, a retired USIA and State Department Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 15 in Aldie, VA. She was 73. Born in Germany to Foreign Service parents, she earned bachelor's and master's degrees in journalism from the University of Ohio. After working as a reporter in Rome, Ohio, and Florida, Cunningham joined USIA in 1975 as a writer/editor with the Agency's Wireless File. Other USIA assignments included serving as press attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Bogota and as a special assistant to USIA Counselor Jock Shirley. In 1987 she transferred to State's Bureau of International Narcotics Affairs, where she served for the remainder of her career, including as director of the embassy's narcotics affairs section in both Panama and Peru. In retirement Cunningham worked on FOIA requests at State and later as a substitute teacher in Loudoun County. She is survived by her husband, retired Senior Foreign Service officer Morris "Bud" Jacobs, two daughters and sons-in-law, and one granddaughter.

Mofid Deak, a writer/editor and Arabic translator in the Near East/South Asia branch of the Office of International Information Programs (IIP), died in Amman, Jordan, Dec. 29 at age 67 of a massive heart attack. Deak was the head of IIP's Arabic language translation team and had previously worked at the Voice of America. He also served as press attaché at the U.S. embassies in Cairo and Riyadh prior to retiring to Amman.

John Edward Dixon passed away at his home in Chevy Chase Nov. 23 at age 89. After working for the Gallup Organization, Dixon joined USIA in 1966, serving in Washington, New Delhi, Saigon, and Peshawar. Following his assignment in Peshawar, where he assisted international press coverage both of drug-related activities in the region and of the war in nearby Afghanistan, he received the Agency's Superior Honor Award. After retiring in 1990, Dixon returned to Peshawar to work first

as coordinator for the USAID-supported Narcotics Awareness Center for Afghans from 1990 to 1994, and then as director of the International Rescue Committee's Afghan refugee relief office from 1993 to 1995. In retirement, he served on the Board of Directors of the Afghanistan Centre at Kabul University and as an advisor to the Afghan Media Resource Center and the Development and Ability Organization (People with Disabilities), both in Kabul. On several occasions, Dixon acted as director for the State Department-supported American Institute of Afghanistan Studies in Kabul.

Mary Elizabeth "Libby" O'Boyle Franko, former writer/editor for USIA's *Topic* magazine, died on Dec. 24 at her home in Alexandria, VA. She was 71. Franko began her career with the federal government as a clerk-typist but was quickly promoted to a writer/editor position at *Topic*. After USIA merged with State in 1999, she became a program manager for Fulbright scholarships to South America. Her final position was program analyst of educational programs.

Jane Catherine Gaffney died Dec. 7 at her home in Bethesda, MD, from stomach cancer. Gaffney devoted her life to interpreting Middle Eastern politics and cultures, especially via Arabic-language television drama serials, and was an invaluable resource for diplomats and scholars interested in Arab culture. In 1975 Gaffney joined the faculty at Kuwait University, where she taught English for over a decade. She traveled often to India and became an expert on Indian cinema while also following Arab media and popular culture. In 1987, USIA recruited her through its mid-level entry Arabist program. Gaffney coordinated U.S. public diplomacy in Sudan from temporary offices in Nairobi, and served as director of the American cultural centers in Egypt and Morocco. Among the first to recognize the growing social and political significance of media and popular culture in the Middle East, she published one of the earliest scholarly treatments of Arab film, "Egyptian Cinema," in the *Arab Studies Quarterly*. Her newsletter "Expressions" offered incisive analysis of Arabic-language entertainment media and music.

Michael Hahn died Aug. 14 in Florida from multiple myeloma. Hahn joined USIA in 1981 after working as a political researcher and screenwriter in Washington and documentary. He served in Ankara, Guatemala City, Genoa, Rome, San Salvador, Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia, and Prague. After retiring in 2008, Hahn worked as a retired annuitant in Helsinki, Tegucigalpa, Tbilisi, Tel Aviv, Lisbon, and Washington, where he worked for the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs and, finally, as associate editor of *State Magazine*.

Shen-Yi (Henry) Hu, a former USIA officer, died Nov. 26 at age 88. Born in Taiwan during the Japanese occupation, he served in the Republic of China's armed forces during the 1958 Taiwan Strait crisis with mainland China. Hu came to the United States in 1964 and earned a master's degree in engineering. After working for the Department of Defense in Japan, he joined USIA and the State Department's Office of Overseas Building Operations. Following retirement in 2008, Hu volunteered at the Smithsonian as a tour guide.

James Edward Kenkel passed away at age 88 Jan. 8 in Fredericksburg, VA. A former captain in the Navy Reserve, he served three years as an aviation intelligence officer in California and deployed to the Western Pacific. Kenkel then earned a law degree from Georgetown University Law School, and after working for the Treasury Department, CIA, and USIA, embarked on a four-decade legal career in private practice and public service.

Merrill S. Miller died in Boulder, CO, March 26 from coronary artery disease. He was 93. Miller joined USIA in 1958 after attending UC Berkeley. Early assignments included New Delhi, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. Miller also served in Lahore, where he met his future wife Pat Hogan. He later returned to India for a series of jobs, including assistant cultural affairs officer in New Delhi and cultural affairs officer in Madras from 1970 to 1975. Miller worked in South Africa 1975-1978 as cultural affairs officer. During his Washington assignments he served in the inspectors corps and directed the book program at the Voice of America.

Edith G. Rosen died Dec. 12 at age 71. A graduate of the University of Maryland, she was a producer for USIA and Voice of America and also worked at FEMA. Rosen was deeply involved in causes such as women's rights, racial equality, and LGBT rights.

Frank Shakespeare, former USIA director, died Dec. 17 at his home in Deerfield, WI. He was 97. Shakespeare joined the 1968 Nixon presidential campaign while on leave as a CBS executive. As an adviser he was principally responsible for coming up with a novel way to present the candidate on television. Named USIA director in 1969, Shakespeare shifted the Agency's focus from film to television, arranging USIA coverage of the Apollo 11 moon landing that reached a worldwide audience of 154 million. A self-described "conservative's conservative," he ordered USIA libraries abroad to carry more conservative-leaning material. Shakespeare was famous for his contentious relationship with Senator J. William Fulbright, then chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; after calling the Senator "bad

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news for America," Fulbright retorted that the director was "a very inadequate man for the job." In 1981 President Reagan named Shakespeare chairman of the Board for International Broadcasting, overseeing Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. He later served as ambassador to Portugal from 1985 to 1986 and to the Vatican from 1987 to 1989.

Thomas "Tom" Talaat Turkman passed away at age 93 on Aug. 8 at the Arleigh Burke facility at Vinson Hall in McLean, VA, from pulmonary fibrosis. Turkman was one of four children born to Turkish immigrant parents in New York City. After graduating from college in 1951, he joined the U.S. Army and served in the Counterintelligence

Corps during the Korean War. After the war, he worked for USIA with postings to Milan and Sicily. In 1963 Turkman joined the Department of State to begin a career there of nearly three decades, reaching the Senior Foreign Service rank. His overseas posts with State included Stockholm, Tripoli, Milan, Dusseldorf, and Stuttgart, where he served as Consul General.

Grace Cotturo Valenti, 99, of Hyattsville, MD, passed away Nov. 25. Born in Valvatore, Italy, she immigrated to the United States through Ellis Island when she was five years old. Valenti began her career working for the federal government at the Department of Treasury in 1942. She eventually rose to the position of personnel di-

rector for the U.S. Information Agency, retiring in 1972.

Alice Uda Vetter died Dec. 16 at age 95 after a short illness. She was married for 49 years to former Foreign Service officer Charles "Chuck" Vetter, who passed in 2006. As a young girl, she survived an internment camp, an experience that shaped her life of service. Early in her career Vetter worked at the State Department and was assigned to Dhaka in East Pakistan. She retired in the 1980s. Vetter later became a leader in managing and creating low-income housing opportunities, both in the District of Columbia and nationally.▣

Public Diplomacy, USAGM, and the Firewall

By **John Lennon**

February marks the 81st birthday of the Voice of America, created just weeks after Pearl Harbor with a mandate to report the news of World War II. The first VOA broadcast said, "the news may be good or bad; we shall tell you the truth." The first VOA Director, John Houseman, defended this early commitment, saying, "we had little choice...the news was almost all bad"; only by straight reporting "could we establish a reputation for honesty."

Initially an element of the State Department, VOA was moved into the new USIA in the early 1950s. In the mid-90s, Congress created the Broadcasting Board of Governors, and VOA was joined by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Martí, and Radio Free Asia. The BBG's purpose was to "inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy" – a mission inherited in 2018 by the new U.S. Agency for Global Media.

USAGM multimedia programs reach out to targeted publics in English and more than 60 local languages. VOA's output is worldwide;

RFE/RL, RFA, and Radio Martí target regional audiences. All elements focus on economic and political issues, social and cultural topics, and human interest stories. On VOA, a standalone Editorial presents U.S. foreign and domestic policies. Separate missions require differences in presentation formats and production techniques, but all USAGM networks adhere to a joint operating principle known as the "firewall."

Congress has stressed to USAGM



U.S. AGENCY FOR
GLOBAL MEDIA

the importance of objective journalism – relying solely on facts in news reporting. This requires U.S. policymakers and journalists to operate separately. At VOA, the "firewall" separates policy-driven Editorials from news reports and discussion programs on policy issues.

From the post-war period into the 1970s and beyond, attempts to use broadcasting for propaganda purposes were resisted by news editors. They saw such efforts as antithetical

to VOA's original commitment to the truth – factual reporting of both good news and bad. After years of debate, in 1976 Congress approved a VOA Charter requiring "accurate, objective, and comprehensive" news reporting – as well as *separate* presentation, discussion, and opinion of U.S. policies. (Note: The Charter was first drafted in 1958 by Deputy VOA Director Jack O'Brien – an FSO.)

The original commitment to broadcast both bad news and good news is as firm today as it was 81 years ago. Congress has made clear that public diplomacy and straight news reporting are necessary, honorable, and related functions – that should remain separate.

The issue is settled – but only for now. In years to come, a new Congress and a new President might see things differently and take a wrecking ball to the firewall. It's an open question whether, as John Houseman warned, VOA's reputation and credibility would be tarnished.▣

John Lennon served as a producer, journalist, manager, and Senior Executive for the Voice of America. He retired in Dec. 2012.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY TODAY

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