MODERN COMMUNICATIONS AND FOREIGN POLICY

REPORT NO. 5
TOGETHER WITH PART X OF THE HEARINGS
ON
WINNING THE COLD WAR: THE U.S. IDEOLOGICAL OFFENSIVE

BY THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND MOVEMENTS
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PURSUANT TO
H. Res. 179

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO CONDUCT THOROUGH STUDIES AND INVESTIGATIONS OF ALL MATTERS COMING WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE COMMITTEE

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON : 1967
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FOREWORD

House of Representatives,
Committee on Foreign Affairs,

This report, the fifth submitted to the Committee on Foreign Affairs by Representative Dante B. Fascell, chairman of the Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements, is concerned with modern communications and foreign policy, and forms a part of a continuing study of ideological operations in U.S. foreign policy.

The findings and recommendations in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the membership of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. This report is filed in the hope that it will prove useful to the Congress in its consideration of legislation.

Thomas E. Morgan, Chairman.
Hon. Thomas E. Morgan,  
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs,  
House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am pleased to transmit herewith the report on “Modern Communications and Foreign Policy,” prepared by the Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements. This report, and the attached set of hearings held by our subcommittee, form a part of the subcommittee’s continuing study of the ideological and psychological components of U.S. foreign policy.

It is hoped that the information contained in the report will be useful to the members of the committee, to the Congress, and to the executive branch.

DANTE B. FASCELL, Chairman,  
Subcommittee on International  
Organizations and Movements.
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VII
MODERN COMMUNICATIONS AND FOREIGN POLICY

A. Major Findings

The 20th century breakthrough in communications ranks with the great forces which have shaped mankind's progress through history. Its impact on human behavior and on world affairs already exceeds that of the atom bomb. In the relatively brief span of four decades, modern communications technology has changed the way-of life of the developed societies, rent centuries-old customs and traditions in the developing ones, and substantially altered the relationships between the two. In years to come, it may become an even more dominant factor in transforming the human condition—and in enabling mankind to achieve lasting peace with freedom.

Many of us in the United States do not fully appreciate the upheaval wrought by electronic communications. The radio—the telephone—the teletype—the television set—and now the communications satellite—exert profound influence on our daily lives. They condition our thinking, affect our conduct and facilitate our work. They also help to transform our outlook toward our own society and towards the external world.

Our restless, pragmatic society has managed to take all of these changes in stride. We have adapted to them with ease. And we have enjoyed considerable success in employing mass media in the task of fashioning a more affluent and progressive environment for our people.

The impact of modern communications technology on the rest of the world—particularly on the developing countries—has been quite different.

Forty years ago, the average Indian farmer expected to live out his days without ever seeing anyone born more than 20 miles away from his village. His daily routine was governed by tradition and devoted to the search for the bare essentials of life. Millions of his compatriots—and their counterparts in other lands—lived and died without giving much thought to what was happening beyond their immediate horizons. Indifference to external developments, a sense of isolation and resignation were their steadfast companions.

The breakthrough in communications accelerated the process of change and introduced significant movement into this situation.

The mass media were particularly effective in breaking down the barriers of distance which formerly isolated rural settlements from each other and from the city. With the help of radio, television and modern newspapers, the Indian farmer, the African tribesman, and the Latin American barrio dweller became aware of each other. Their private "reality worlds" began to interact.

New images and ideas began to challenge habits of thought, long shaped by local traditions. The sense of mankind's interdependence and proximity began to spread, with disruptive consequences for the
existing order. The stage was set for the economic, social, and political revolutions of our age.

It is astonishing, indeed, that the United States—the country which adapted internally to the 20th Century breakthrough in communications with ease and contributed so much to the development of the art and the science of communications—has not paid more attention to the impact of these developments on world affairs.

These, in brief, are the major conclusions which emerge from the recent series of hearings held by the Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. Entitled "Modern Communications and Foreign Policy," these hearings were part of the subcommittee's continuing study of the intangible—the ideological and psychological—dimensions of U.S. foreign policy.

A discussion of our findings, and our recommendations for remediating what we consider some vital deficiencies in the overseas operations of our Government, constitute the substance of this report.

B. THE COMMUNICATIONS BREAKTHROUGH

Before the first international cable was laid; it required 2 weeks for word of something happening in London to reach New York City. It took even longer for the steamship to bring news from Africa, the Middle East, or Asia.

Today; military actions in Vietnam are reported by U.S. mass media in considerable detail several times daily, even though nearly 11,000 miles separate that war torn land from Washington.

Developments in Murmansk in Buenos Aires/ or in Tokyo seem as close to us as events occurring in Boston, Chicago, or Dallas.

Each and every day, from morning until night, news of the Nation and of the world is being broadcast almost as rapidly as it occurs. The speed with which news travels throughout the world is, however, only one product of the revolutionary advances in communication technology.

The concurrent expansion of communication networks is another. Today, electronically transmitted messages reach countless millions of people who formerly lived in virtual isolation from the rest of the world.

The increasing influence of communications on public attitudes and behavior patterns also warrants attention. For in the process of developing the technology of communications, we discovered a new dimension of the art of persuasion: man has learned that mass media can be used not only to disseminate news and to sell soap and refrigerators, but also to teach skills, to convey ideas, and to motivate man to action—even to violence. And we have applied this knowledge for the purpose of achieving specific, measurable responses from mass audiences.

C. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

In spite of these far-reaching changes, it appears certain that we stand merely at the threshold of a world transformed by electronics, a world in which further developments in communications will magnify both our opportunities for progress and our problems.
How will this happen? Some of the precursors of future changes are already at hand.

Within the next 2 years, for example, the “Early Bird” type communication satellites which presently link the United States to Europe and Japan will be expanded into a worldwide system, capable of relaying a tremendous volume of information to and from the most distant parts of the globe.

Within 5 years, that system will be augmented by new distribution satellites which will open the way to direct broadcasting to individual receivers on all continents. Neither physical nor political boundaries will provide barriers to the flow of communications channeled through such a system.

During the coming decade, television promises to become the most widely used and influential mass medium of communication. Already important in the United States, Europe, the Soviet Union, and Japan, television offers unrivaled opportunities for the advancement of mass education, and for the fostering of economic and social change in the developing countries.

In sight, too, are prospects that the use of computers in communication will produce developments as startling as those which followed the invention of the printing press. The age of mass communication—of sending a single message at a time to a numerically large audience—may give way to an era of personalized communication in which individually tailored messages will flow simultaneously to the disparate units of a given population.

The potential for molding public attitudes, and influencing human conduct, of a personalized communication system serving a mass audience, needs little elaboration.

We should always remember, of course, that advances in communications may come to serve not only the cause of human enlightenment and freedom but also improve the effectiveness of totalitarian control systems. Active Soviet experimentation in this field warns us to be on our guard.

D. IMPACT ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The impact of the communications breakthrough on international relations has been of particular interest to our subcommittee. Since World War II, developments in communications have served to alter both the form and the substance of international diplomacy.

On the positive side, by increasing the speed, the volume and the reliability of international reporting, technological advances in this field have enabled governments to respond more promptly, and often more effectively, to external developments.

Simultaneously, by overcoming the barriers of distance, modern communications have increased the sense of the interdependence of all nations, thereby aiding the task of building an international community out of the diversified complex of isolated and historically antagonistic local and national populations.

The rapidly expanding network of international organizations and programs which facilitate international cooperation both on the private and governmental levels, would not have developed without modern communications.

Unfortunately, advances in communications have had some less favorable consequences as well.
For example, they have multiplied the opportunities for misunderstandings and increased the pressure on those trying to resolve international crises. In addition, local conflicts which before the advent of modern communications remained isolated, today are immediately thrust on the world scene. The fact that the major powers almost automatically become involved in such conflicts further complicates the situation.

Modern communications technology has also contributed to the creation of informational bottlenecks and gaps. At times, too much information—including mountains of trivia—is channeled to policymaking bodies. Given the antiquated state of most governmental information-handling systems, the making of the right decisions has become increasingly difficult.

E. Improving Human Environment

Perhaps the most far-reaching effect of the communication revolution on international affairs comes from its success in disseminating the notion that man is capable of changing his environment and of improving his material condition.

Given global currency by mass media, this uniquely Western concept has become the catalyst of change in the developing countries. It serves today as a potentially of the social reformer—as well as of the demagogue and the dictator.

And it provides the key to a better understanding of the profound social, economic, and political revolutions of our age.

F. The Factor of Public Opinion

Going hand-in-hand with the widespread acceptance of this concept is another noteworthy consequence of the communications age: the emergence of public opinion as one of the determining factors in the pattern of relations between nations.

In contrast with the situation which prevailed until a few decades ago, no responsible government today can risk making a major foreign policy decision without taking into consideration public reaction at home and abroad.

At times, public opinion becomes decisive in the disposition of international issues. Its role in shaping U.S. policy toward the conflict in Vietnam has been cited as a case in point.

Even the Communist countries are not immune to the influence of public opinion on government policy. Their leaders are experts in the art of manipulating public reactions abroad to advance Communist international objectives. At the same time, in the domestic realm, they have been forced to sanction deviations from rigid orthodox Communist doctrine and to accommodate their programs to the pressure of public opinion and discontent at home.

G. U.S. Government's Response

How has the U.S. Government responded to the new requirements and opportunities presented in the area of foreign policy by recent advances in communications?

The answer to this question is mixed. By and large, our governmental institutions and bureaucracy have proved much less adaptable
to changes generated by the communications breakthrough than has our society as a whole.

For one, the Executive Branch has reacted sluggishly to the increasing public involvement in foreign affairs. Many of our diplomats and policymakers continue to visualize international diplomacy in terms of formal relations between governments—rather than of much more complex relations between entire nations. As a consequence, 20th century problems have been tackled on many occasions with 19th century tools and attitudes. The resulting image projected by our Government has been out of step with the urgent realities of our times.

Second, the United States Government has achieved only limited progress in applying modern communications to the advancement of our international objectives. For example, we have not succeeded in making our national experience and achievements relevant to the aspirations for a better life of some two-thirds of the human race. We also have found it difficult to overcome the barriers of language and culture, of ideological and philosophical differences, of racial and religious tensions, and the social and technological "time gaps," which separate us from the peoples of the newly independent countries.

Third, we have not learned to cope within our own Government with the byproducts of the changing communications technology. In the Department of State, which receives upward of 2,000 cables a day from all parts of the world, information contained in those communications is still registered, duplicated, distributed, filed, and, when necessary, retrieved by hand.

As a result, informational bottlenecks and gaps continue to proliferate—and, as shown in the case of the Bay of Pigs invasion, information of a critical nature at times does not even reach those responsible for making policy decisions.

These and other shortcomings detailed in the record of our hearings have produced some startling results.

Not long ago, for example, the world was treated to an unusual experience in connection with the visit of the carrier U.S.S. Franklin D. Roosevelt to Capetown, South Africa.

Our Government's uncoordinated, inept handling of that matter managed to antagonize both the liberal and the conservative elements in our own country; to offend the newly independent black nations of Africa as well as the apartheid-supporting white minority in South Africa; to give the U.S. Navy a black eye, and to disappoint our battle-weary servicemen who were looking forward to a few days of well-earned shore leave; and to embarrass our diplomatic representatives throughout the world.

Seldom has a single governmental action produced such diverse results!

H. SOME CAUSES OF THE PROBLEM

Part of the reason for our Government's frequently undistinguished response to the challenge and the opportunities presented by modern communications technology can be traced to three factors:
First, indecision about foreign policy goals. The Executive Branch often seems unable—or unwilling—to decide what it is that it wants to achieve in the world arena.

At times, instead of defining the substantive objectives, assessing the psychological requirements for their success, and then moving on to devise appropriate strategy, our executive agencies skip the first two steps and concern themselves immediately with plans and tactics.

More often than not, the results make a marginal contribution to the success of our foreign policy undertakings.

On occasion, they work counter to our declared goals, leaving foreign observers confused about the reasons for a given U.S. initiative—and our long-range intentions.

The second factor relates to our Government's failure to organize for effective use of communications in support of our foreign policy.

In spite of our perennial reorganization efforts, our cumbersome governmental machinery has not been adapted to the task of dealing effectively with some 130 countries, and some three-score international organizations to which we belong, in an age of instant communications and rapidly breaking crises.

Our official information services and related cultural and educational programs continue to be operated out of some two dozen separate agencies. Coordination is sporadic and not always effective. Most importantly, there is no one at the highest level of our Government who concerns himself with these activities on a continuing basis.

In addition, there is insufficient recognition in our Government of the fact that effective communication is indispensable to the success of the more traditional—military, economic and diplomatic—operations in foreign policy.

Neither do our policy-makers appreciate the extent to which specific objectives overseas can be attained through intelligent, informed, and effective use of modern communications.

It is here, in the realm of attitudes which govern our officials' outlook on modern communications, that reorientation is particularly needed. Our officialdom, in the words of one witness who testified before our subcommittee, needs to become sensitized to the psychological requirements of successful foreign policy and to the role which communications play in that process.

The third factor centers on the failure to assign the necessary priorities to foreign policy-oriented international communications.

We mentioned earlier that United States relations with other countries are made difficult by a multitude of barriers—linguistic, ideological, psychological, social and economic.

Our knowledge of ways and means to overcome those obstacles is limited. We make little use even of that knowledge—and we are not doing enough to enlarge it.

Too few of our policymakers are provided with the professional assistance of communications experts and specialists in cross-cultural communications.

Because of the failure to give them the appropriate priorities, the allocations of resources to our information services—especially the U.S. Information Agency—have been subject to wide fluctuations. In addition, such allocations generally have been insufficient to attract and keep exceptional talent.
Further, the Executive Branch applies too little effort to the task of obtaining information necessary to improve the quality and effectiveness of our international communications.

Less than one-tenth of Federal funds devoted to research in the social and psychological sciences is used to support research pertaining to foreign areas and foreign populations.

Less than one-half of that amount is being spent by civilian agencies charged with the responsibility for our foreign policy operations.

We spend more in one day on our admittedly necessary defense establishment than we do in 1 year on the kind of research which can help us to head off international conflicts and to multiply the effectiveness of our peace-oriented economic aid programs.

I. THE IMPACT OF PRIVATE MEDIA

There is an additional factor which has an important bearing on our Government’s performance in the field of foreign policy: it is the dominant role in international communications of private media.

The bulk of communications between nations is of a private character. The private mass media—radio, television, movies, and printed matter—reach much larger audiences than do governmental instrumentalities. They are also more pervasive and influential.

The U.S. image abroad is to a large extent determined by our movies, our television output, and our music. Since the private media tend to emphasize the unusual and the sensational, the impressions which they convey are not always flattering to us—or conducive to the attainment of our foreign policy objectives.

Upon his recent return from Europe, for example, Vice President Humphrey reported that the Europeans’ picture of America is that of a society steeped in violence, with “bombs dropping, riots taking place, crime and corruption.”

Our Government’s ability to counteract such distorted impressions is admittedly limited. It is all the more important that the communications tools which are at our Government’s disposal be used with foresight, intelligence, and professional skill to counteract such impression-making.

J. THE TRIPLE TASK

What are some of the tasks which call for improved use of communications by our Government?

The first of these is the need to maintain effective communication with our friends and allies. It stands to reason that a nation which consists of only 6 percent of the world’s population should not become overly isolated from the remainder of the human family. Our self-interest dictates that we try to maintain good working relations with other countries.

The two geographical areas which have been and continue to be of particular importance to the United States are Latin America and Europe. Our stock in both of them could be improved. The sense of common purpose which until recently permeated many of our joint and mutually beneficial undertakings is beginning to ebb. “We find ourselves increasingly at odds with our friends.” And our reaction to these developments has not been particularly encouraging.
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For example, at the time when the affairs of the North Atlantic alliance are showing evidence of growing dissension among the partners, we are reducing our informational, cultural, and related activities in Europe.

Instead of trying to expand and improve our communications with our European allies, we are in effect closing down a number of channels through which two-way communication could flow across the Atlantic.

In so doing, we are exacerbating our difficulties. We are allowing misunderstandings and misinterpretations to multiply and to play an exaggerated role in our relations.

In any impartial appraisal of our overseas posture, it is of small consequence whether or not our Nation is loved and admired in other parts of the world. What is important, however, is the impact of attitudes abroad on the success of our foreign policy undertakings. And it seems to us that we are doing all too little to counter the hardening of foreign attitudes which are antagonistic to our foreign policy objectives—even on those continents whose future is intimately entwined with our own well-being and security.

We are pleased to note that President Johnson's recent actions at the Punta del Este Conference, and Vice President Humphrey's visit to Europe, provide an encouraging contrast to the above mentioned. We were also interested to learn that one of the leading resolutions which emerged from the Punta del Este Conference approved the establishment of an inter-American telecommunications network.

Our second major task abroad arises from the challenge of ideologies which are incompatible with the preservation of our way of life, but which appear to some to be relevant to the solution of the economic and social problems of our day.

Those who have had firsthand experience with capitalism—the participants in free enterprise undertakings—need no reassurance about the superiority of a system based on individual initiative, self-responsibility and freedom.

Unfortunately, they constitute a small minority of the world's population. The ability of our system to advance the solution of the complex economic and social problems which haunt the world remains to be proved to the majority of the members of the human family.

The increasing number of those who clamor for change—be they Communist Party members in Italy or Christian Democrats in Chile—attests to the magnitude of the job before us. That job cannot be done by material aid alone. It demands better understanding of the varied aspirations of those who do not participate in the benefits of 20th-century industrialization; ability to relate those aspirations to available resources; and success in marshaling human energy and talents for the tasks of economic, social, and political development.

Communications play a key part in these processes. Their role in promoting development requires further elaboration.

K. COMMUNICATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT

Development in the broadest sense requires a change in people's attitudes and habits. Such change does not occur in a vacuum. It is
MODERN COMMUNICATIONS AND FOREIGN POLICY

initiated and fostered by the transmission of new ideas, new skills, and new technology—in short, by communications.

One of the principal problems of the underdeveloped countries is that they lack communications systems sufficiently developed to relay the proper kinds of information to the people whose decisions are critical to the success of the development process.

The planners and other officials in the national and provincial capitals frequently know little about the condition of life in the countryside and tailor their development plans to the requirements of the more populous urban centers.

Too often the needs, the aspirations, and the capabilities of the peasants who comprise nearly three-fourths of the population of the developing countries, and who produce one-half of their income, are not adequately communicated to their governments and thus are not reflected in the centrally designed development formulas.

The reverse flow of communications, from the capitals to the countryside, is also subject to blockages and interruptions. Information, instructions, and assistance intended for the hamlet and the village often go astray.

Such communications systems as do exist in the developing countries are usually urban centered and elite oriented. Rarely are they integrated with the educational system, with agricultural extension work, or with other undertakings which play an important role in the development process.

The developing countries' communications with the outside world are also notable for their shortcomings.

The shortage of communication facilities is being gradually overcome by the increasing production and expanding distribution of publications, radio receivers, television sets, and other instruments capable of conveying information to every village and hamlet.

The situation is less encouraging when we analyze the techniques used by the industrialized countries in communicating with the developing countries.

The barriers of language, custom, and tradition are not being overcome on any mass scale. In addition, in spite of some promising research undertaken during the past few years, we still know too little about the internal dynamics of the developing societies to be able to employ communications effectively in helping them to fulfill their aspirations.

This leads to a dual problem:

On the one hand, aid provided by the industrialized countries is not always responsive to the most urgent needs of the developing ones.

The United States, to mention one example, has tended to base many foreign assistance programs on the successful experience of the Marshall plan, emphasizing commodity aid in preference to the development of the human resources of the aid-receiving countries. At long last, we are beginning to discover that our experience in Europe is not the universal blueprint for the achievement of coordinated economic and social development on other continents.

On the other hand, the developing countries, having been exposed to the material achievements of the industrialized world, find it difficult to relate realistically to their own prospects for development.

Frequently, their aspirations tend to outpace their capacity to accom-
plish the desired results. This makes them vulnerable to extremist influences and at times leads to irresponsible behavior which only compounds their difficulties.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS: GENERAL POLICY

Considering these complex issues, what should our Government do in order to respond more fully and effectively to the challenge and the opportunities presented by the communications revolution?

First, we recommend that the Government continue its present policy of promoting an open dialogue with all foreign nations, and that we assign much higher priority to this task.

In our view, the pursuit of this course is necessary if the likelihood of dangerous behavior by foreign states is to be reduced. By attempting to provide the peoples of all countries with access to factual information about each other, and about us, we are encouraging a more rational appraisal of the world environment on their part and, hopefully, more rational international conduct.

We recognize that this course stands in sharp contrast with the policy of information control practiced by the Soviet Union, Communist China, and other totalitarian states. We realize that, in the short run, the latter policy has paid certain dividends to the governments of those countries. Nevertheless we believe that, in the long run, freedom of information is much more effective and absolutely necessary to the attainment of the kind of world in which we want to live.

It also appears important that the dialogue conducted by the United States be sufficiently broad to include free discussion of different concepts of social and political organization and development. Our initiatives in this respect would be helpful in demonstrating the relevance of our national experience to the solution of many of the basic problems confronting the developing countries.

Second, we urge the executive branch, particularly those agencies involved in the dissemination of information abroad, to confine their activities to undertakings which complement rather than compete with the private media.

We noted earlier that private American communications directed abroad greatly exceed the volume of those initiated by our Government. We believe that this is a good thing. Government information activities should be designed to fill voids left by private media, to provide depth coverage of significant news events, and to encourage the dissemination of accurate information regarding the policies and actions of the U.S. Government.

In this regard, we see an urgent need for the distribution of U.S. Agency-sponsored publications in such countries as the Soviet Union in which private American publications are not circulated generally. At the same time, we can find no justification for the dissemination of similar Government-financed magazines in areas adequately served by American and other free world materials of private origin.
Third, we find that both the form and the fact content of information relating to foreign affairs are in need of improvement and we recommend that appropriate steps be taken to remedy this situation.

The achievement of this goal will require action on several fronts. For one, the executive branch ought to release promptly more information on crises developing on the international scene. The spasmodic performance of our governmental information services during certain phases of the deepening crisis in Vietnam provides an excellent example of the kind of approach which should be avoided at all costs.

Further, our Government ought to sponsor more sound research relevant to foreign areas and foreign populations. As we indicated earlier, public resources currently devoted to this type of research are thoroughly inadequate. Much of the research presently conducted under government auspices has too narrow a base by being tied to the mission needs of specialized agencies, or is peripheral to the basic problems confronting us on the world scene.

While it may be informative and even useful in the long pull to compile information about the Australian aborigines' proclivity to perspire under strain, there are certainly many pressing problems which would appear to have a more valid claim on our available research resources.

Finally, although we are mindful of the excellent work being done in this field by the U.S. Advisory Commission on Information, we recommend a thorough reappraisal by a group of communications experts of the entire range of international communication techniques and instruments employed by our Government.

And we urge both the Executive Branch and the Congress to assign a higher priority in the allocation of available resources to the financing of this highly specialized worldwide communications system in an age in which communications are increasingly determining the course, and the cost, of international relations.

Fourth, we recommend that an expanded effort be undertaken to assure a systematic, coordinated use of international communication tools available to our Government.

Whether we refer to Voice of America broadcasting, to the dissemination of educational films by the Agency for International Development, to the exchange of scientific publications by the National Institutes of Health, or to the presentation of a special overseas exhibit by the U.S. Information Agency, we are in fact talking about communicating with foreign nations.

As we said on previous occasions (see, for example, "Ideological Operations and Foreign Policy," Report No. 2 on Winning the Cold War: The U.S. Ideological Offensive, 1964), in order to produce maximum effect, these diverse activities must at some point be related to each other and to clearly defined foreign policy objectives. In many instances, this is still not the case.

In addition, we believe that the division of responsibility between the Department of State and the U.S. Information Agency for the administration of the cultural presentations program, and the fragmentation of authority with respect to educational exchanges, are not conducive to best performance.
Fifth, we recommend that the Department of State and related agencies directly involved in foreign policy operations stop procrastinating and gear up for effective handling of the huge flow of information resulting from the 20th century breakthrough in communications.

Studies of information-handling by governmental agencies have been going on for years. In the area of foreign policy administration, concrete improvements resulting from these efforts have been minimal. In the meantime, the failure to obtain vital information, to assess its relevance to a rapidly developing crisis, and to bring it to bear in making policy decisions, has on a number of occasions resulted in considerable costs to our Nation. A critical analysis of our foreign policy operations would undoubtedly reveal many more cases than those cited in the record of the hearings appended to this report.

We recommended previously, and do so again, that no time be lost in applying advanced automatic data processing techniques to the information-handling tasks in the Department of State and related agencies.

Sixth, we consider it important that officials of our Government concerned with the conduct of foreign affairs—particularly those in positions of responsibility—become "sensitized" to the psychological and public information aspects of foreign policy.

This task will not be accomplished overnight. We believe, however, that increased emphasis on this subject in the training of Government personnel, and increased attention to the performance of individual officers, can help us avoid such politically costly embarrassments as that which resulted from the poor handling of the recent visit of the U.S.S. Franklin D. Roosevelt to South Africa.

M. RECOMMENDATIONS: COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Turning now to the task of communicating with the developing countries, particularly those which are or may become beneficiaries of our foreign assistance, we recommend the following:

First, that our Government employ modern communications on a broad scale to launch a frontal attack on the basic problems of the developing countries, altering as necessary the scale of priorities which until now has dominated the structure of our foreign aid program.

Testimony presented in the record of our hearings stressed time and again that the primary task confronting the less-developed countries is the development of their human resources. Until those resources come to be utilized in the processes of development, there will be no lasting solution to the problems of hunger, disease, and poverty which are the daily lot of nearly two-thirds of the human race.

There isn't enough food in the world, or enough aid that can come from the industrialized countries, to improve materially the condition of life of the majority of people of the developing countries. Only they can do that job. And modern communications offer us the opportunity to help them get started.

Modern communications can be used to stimulate achievement motivation, to spread innovation which is necessary for growth, to teach skills, and to help in the establishment of cooperative and community institutions which can multiply the product of development efforts.
Communications are being used for those purposes today—but on a very modest scale. During one recent period, more than 30 percent of our economic aid to Turkey, for example, was devoted to transportation; less than one-half of 1 percent to the improvement of communications. And the story apparently is not much different in other countries.

Last year, in enacting Title IX (Popular Participation in Development) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1966, as well as the related amendments to sections 211 (Assistance to Educational Institutions in the United States) and section 601 (Collection and Dissemination of Information Relating to the Development Process), the Congress pointed the way toward a new emphasis in foreign assistance.

This new emphasis is consistent with, even demands, greater support of communications in our foreign aid undertakings.

Second, we recommend that our Government exert special effort to make the content of our communications responsive to the aspirations and conditions of the people in the developing countries. We should also strive to discover and employ the combination of media best suited to promote the process of development in each given case.

Many of our present-day communications bear little relation either to the aspirations or to the condition of the people in a particular developing country. As a result, we have encountered repeated difficulties in trying to associate ourselves with their hopes for a better future, and in helping them to attain it.

The usefulness of talking about industrialization in a country whose primary job is to find a source of food for its people; or of broadcasting the advantages of labor-saving machinery in a country which has a labor surplus; or of teaching concepts of social and economic organization which will not become relevant to a given society for decades if ever, is, to say the least, questionable. The wasted effort expended in trying to sell in other cultural environments concepts and slogans which are only pertinent in a setting of Western institutions, should have taught us this lesson once and for all.

The job of communicating with people raised in a different culture is not easy. We must be prepared to do much more listening, and learning, before we arrive at a given formula for successful communication. And this formula will differ from country to country, even from group to group in a single country.

Also, in order to maximize the effectiveness of our communication, we may have to resort to transmitting it through different media. The mass media, for example, offer the immediate advantages of extensiveness and rapidity. Yet American researchers have found that for improved effectiveness, they should be supported by personal communication.

Finally, we recommend that the United States endeavor to assist the developing countries in organizing and developing their internal communications systems in order to advance their development objectives.

Until now, the development of internal communications in the developing countries has proceeded largely in a haphazard manner, without any conscious plan or deliberate connection with the task of development.

This has meant a loss of a resource which those countries can ill afford to misuse.
HEARINGS
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS AND MOVEMENTS
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
NINETIETH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION

PART X
Winning the Cold War: The U.S. Ideological Offensive

FEBRUARY 8 AND 9, 1987

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Affairs
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MODERN COMMUNICATIONS AND FOREIGN POLICY

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1967

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES;
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS;
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND MOVEMENTS;

WASHINGTON, D.C.

MORNING SESSION

The Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements met, pursuant to notice, at 10 a.m., in room 2200, Rayburn Building, Hon. Dante B. Fascell (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. Fascell. The subcommittee will please come to order.

We are meeting this morning to open a series of four hearings—two sessions today and two tomorrow—on the general subject of "Modern Communications and Foreign Policy".

This is a part of our subcommittee's continuing study of what has been called the fourth dimension of foreign policy—of those programs and activities which comprise our psychological and ideological offensive on the world scene.

For the past 4 years, this subcommittee has been concerned with the efficacy of a wide range of undertakings, both governmental and private, which contribute to the shaping of the U.S. image abroad, and which influence the attitudes and actions of foreign nations.

These undertakings play a decisive role in the implementation of our foreign policy. They can help us to achieve our goals abroad or, when improperly used, they can hinder us.

This morning we will begin by examining "The Role of Public Opinion in International Relations."

All of us know that communication is one of the basic and most vital functions of private and governmental activity. Communication links the individual to his fellow men. It is the process which magnifies the results of individual effort by transmitting it and joining it to the output of other individuals. And, on the governmental plane, it is the process whereby facts, ideas, judgments, even emotions, produce policies, actions, and reactions.

Parenthetically, I believe it was Edward R. Murrow who said that, with all the modern technology of communication, the most difficult space to traverse is the 2 inches between the ear and the brain.

What we want to look into this morning is the way in which one type of communication—public opinion—influences the making of our foreign policy—and determines the success or the failure of our activities on the international scene.

To help us with this undertaking, we have invited a panel of four experts. We are happy to welcome them this morning: The panel consists of Lloyd Free, of the Institute for International Social Research at Princeton, N.J., who has assisted us with our work in the
past; Ambassador George V. Allen, one of our leading diplomats who is currently serving as Director of the Foreign Service Institute; and Dr. W. Phillips Davison, an eminent scholar who is associated with the Columbia University Department of Sociology and Graduate School of Journalism.

Earlier we were advised that the fourth member of this morning's panel, Mr. John Mecklin, associate editor of Fortune magazine, was detained by the snow in New England and will not be able to participate in our discussion. We have his statement, however, and we will make it part of the record.

I am glad to welcome all of you gentlemen, and to commend you for braving the elements in order to be here. I think it is only fair to say that, though this has been a long, slow road in many respects, this subcommittee is beginning to make progress in an area that all of us consider absolutely urgent and vital to the security and to the best interests of the United States, if not the entire world.

Recently, for example, the academic community, the government, and other interested parties were able to come together in a conference to grapple with some of the problems that relate to the social and behavioral sciences and their applicability to government policy. That conference produced an enlightening report on "Foreign Area Research" which I shall place in an appendix to this hearing. This conference and the report constitute a very significant step in the right direction.

Equally significant, I think, is your willingness to be here with this subcommittee to explore further one aspect of this broad subject. I thank you, and so does the committee, for making yourselves available for this purpose.

We will follow the usual procedure by receiving first the opening statements from the members of the panel. That ought to stimulate everybody. We will then get into a round table discussion.

Without objection, I would like to insert in the record at this point a short biographical sketch of each panelist, not only for the information the record will provide, but also to indicate that our witnesses are experts in the area we are discussing.

(The biographical sketches are as follows:)

Lloyd A. Free, "The Role of Public Opinion in Implementing U.S. Foreign Policy."

Dr. Free, Director of the Institute for International Social Research of Princeton, N.J., was formerly lecturer in the School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University; Associate Director of the Princeton Public Opinion Research Project, and Editor of Public Opinion Quarterly. He was Senior Counsellor of UNESCO in charge of mass communications; Acting Director of the State Department's world-wide information program; Director of USIS in Italy; consultant to President Eisenhower on the psychological aspects of international affairs; and for two years consultant to USIA. Among other books and monographs he is the author of "Six Allies and a Neutral"; "Attitudes, Hopes and Fears of the Dominican People"; "The Political Psychology of Brazilians"; and "Attitudes, Hopes and Fears of Nigerians."


Ambassador Allen was formerly the Director of the United States Information Agency (1957-1960) and Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs. He was also successively U.S. Ambassador to Iran, Yugoslavia, India, and Nepal, and Greece. He participated in the Moscow, Cairo, San Francisco, Potsdam, and other international diplomatic conferences. Prior to becoming Director of the Foreign Service Institute, he was President and Executive Director of the Tobacco Institute.
Dr. W. Phillips Davison, "Private Channels of Communication."

Dr. Davison, Visiting Professor of Sociology and Coordinator of the Russell Sage Program in Journalism and the Behavioral Sciences at Columbia University, was editor of Public Opinion Quarterly for three years and then was associated with the RAND Corporation as Senior Research Scientist. From 1961 to 1966 he was Senior Research Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations. He also taught at Princeton University, American University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is the author of The Berlin Blockade (1958); International Political Communication (1963) and numerous articles and book reviews in the field of public opinion and communication.


Mr. Mecklin, Associate Editor of Time-Life since 1943. During World War II he was a civilian war correspondent in the Mediterranean and European theaters, and later was Rome correspondent for CBS. In 1949 he became chief of Time's Ottawa news bureau. This was followed by service in various posts including Hong Kong, Singapore, and Lebanon. On leave from Time in 1961 he went to Paris as Deputy Public Affairs Advisor for the State Department, and then to Saigon in 1962 as Public Affairs Officer and Counsellor of the U.S. Embassy. He returned to Time in 1964 as bureau chief in San Francisco. He assumed his present position in 1966. He is the author of Mission in Torment which deals with his experiences in Vietnam.

Mr. Fasanill. We would like to start with Mr. Free.

STATEMENT OF LLOYD A. FREE, INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL RESEARCH, PRINCETON, N.J.

Mr. Free, Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, I have supplied a rather lengthy statement for the record. I will try to summarize it here, but in doing so, without the documentation and the examples given in the statement, I am going to sound rather simple, and perhaps simple minded.

I am pleased to appear again before this committee and I would like to assure you that those of us who think the psychological aspects of international relations are important, are heartened by the fact that Members of Congress are taking an interest in this subject. This isn't generally true in our government, I am sorry to say. John Foster Dulles once said, and I quote, "If I so much as took into account what people in other countries are thinking or feeling, I would be derelict in my duty as Secretary of State."

Just to show my bipartisanship, another great former Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, denied not long ago that such a thing as world opinion exists, and strongly implied that if it did exist we damn well better not pay any attention to it.

After reviewing the evidence listed in my statement, I have come to the conclusion that world opinion does exist, at least on certain occasions, and under certain circumstances, and that in addition there are widely shared attitudes in various regions and nations of the world that must be taken into account and can't be ignored by governments of those nations or by other governments dealing with those nations.

There is in each country a climate of opinion which imposes limits, sometimes very broad, and sometimes very narrow, on each government's area of maneuver. This applies even in the case of totalitarian governments to a certain extent. In terms of implementing our foreign policy, this means that many, if not most, of the substantive policies or objectives adopted by the United States presuppose that certain psychological conditions exist in various parts of the world.
If these psychological requirements are not met, are not already in existence, or can't be brought into being, then the subversive holding or objective fails. Most of the time, on day-to-day issues, these psychological requirements are limited to the attitudes of officials of foreign governments who make the decisions in the direct sense. But often national and corporate elites have power of influence over these decisions, and quite often, at least the dominant elements of the public come into the picture—informed opinion, as we refer to it.

An accurate opinion of the mass media, it is a very murky picture. A very large proportion of the world's population today is far less informed than we are accustomed to think of as informed on international issues. But the public, or elements of the public, sometimes make foreign policy issues a feature of public interest and, when this happens, the public goes into action, so elements of the public, by way of protest, demonstration, strike, or as well as by way of political pressure, in which foreign policy decisions are made, central to this problem.

So, it is this issue today that some form of the problem may be important to understanding new attitudes and opinions, fronting on officials of foreign governments, above, beyond that, third world governmental elites, or beyond that, third world political parties, usually consisting of their middle, educated, elites, and sometimes, indeed, that, forms; the general public, in the mass media.

Usually the best way and often the only way to influence such attitudes and opinions is through the use of the techniques of modern communication, as we said earlier saying. But to utilize these intelligently, we must know about the nature and psychology of the mass media. What are the key individuals and what are the groups whose decision or influence is necessary. To what extent are the general mass influenced by the media in this country? How do the mass media make the decisions and influence attitudes? Are there other aspects that are critical and influential? Is there any way of tightening the control of the political, or are some of the decisions of mass media decisions, it is difficult to control. To these questions, the public relations, the mass media, and the political system are lettered.

To answer these questions, questions related directly, given these interests, if understood and analyzed, are important here to be considered very important for a better understanding of mass media and control profits. In the introduction, the interest, and the attitudes of the public should be considered very important for a better understanding of the mass media and control profits.
only way modern communications can do this is by intermediation; that is, by influencing the attitudes and opinions of individuals and groups in other countries. Before dealing with techniques for accomplishing this, a very basic question arises that I will address myself to this morning—namely, whether attitudes and opinions at the public level, even if successfully influenced, have any real bearing on the behavior of governments. In short, what is the role of public opinion in international relations, and is that role of importance to the United States?

The assumption that public opinion is somehow important in international relations is borne out by the efforts of political leaders to woo it and by the practices of governments. Every major government in the world today, and many of the minor ones, spend varying amounts of time, attention and money on attempting to influence opinions on international matters among citizens of their own and other countries. Oddly enough, judging from the colossal efforts they expend on propaganda at home and abroad, the modern totalitarian governments—from Hitler to Mussolini to Communist Russia and China—are the most fervent believers of all in the idea that public opinion really counts.

There is another side to this story, however, much less pleasing to those of us interested in public opinion research. It has to do with the built-in "blind spots" toward the psychological aspects of world affairs exhibited by foreign offices and diplomatic corps the world over. For the most part, this includes our own State Department, and particularly most of its older officials high in the pyramid of power and influence. The late, great John Foster Dulles once remarked: "If I so much as took into account what people in other countries are thinking or feeling, I would be derelict in my duty as Secretary of State."

Not long ago, another of our great Secretaries of State, Dean Acheson, claimed that Americans have a "Narcissus psychosis": "An American is apt to stare like Narcissus at his image in the pool of what he believes to be world opinion." After making the point that the only honest answer people in the world generally could give to questions on specifics of foreign policy would be a "don't know," he concluded: "World opinion simply does not exist" on matters that concern us. Not because people do not know the facts—facts are not necessary to form opinion—but because they do not know the issues exist.

Does "world opinion" really exist?

Thus, we practitioners of the art of public opinion research are faced with some very basic questions: Does such a thing as "world opinion" exist? Do people in various parts of the world really have meaningful opinions on international issues?

To start with, we must face the fact that a very large proportion of the world's population today is far too ignorant to have meaningful opinions on international questions. First, illustrations from a study our Institute did in Brazil a few years ago. When our interviewers asked rural Brazilians, most of whom are illiterate, with which countries Brazil should cooperate, eight-out of ten could not name any. Ninety-five percent were unable to identify the President of the United States. And so it went. Under such circumstances, no government in its right mind would dream of consulting the views of these people when it came to framing foreign policy.

And this is a situation of worldwide dimensions. As President Johnson pointed out not long ago: "Today, more than 700 million adults—four out of ten of the world's population—dwelt in darkness where they cannot read or write. Almost half of the nations of this globe suffer from illiteracy among half or more of their people."

Looked at in this perspective, one can begin to see the validity of certain aspects of Dean Acheson's views: and to question, as W. Phillips Davison did in the Public Opinion Quarterly, the common assumption among Americans that if enough people are persuaded to adopt a given opinion, then the policy of their government will be affected, at least in a democracy.

Publics: Limited and mass.

Before we write off the importance of public opinion in international relations, however, let us introduce some other aspects of the problem. To start with, every country in the world, no matter how primitive, has some people, no matter how small the proportion, who do have meaningful opinions about international matters—at least in regard to issues they feel are related to their nation's purposes. This group in extreme situations of underdevelopment may be limited, to all intents and purposes, to those in the government who have responsibility
for conducting the foreign affairs of their country. Usually, however, it extends at least to a broader educated elite, which may be of lesser or greater size. We thus come to the concept of the "informed public." The fact that this elite may be small does not derogate from its power; we can meaningfully define "world opinion" in terms of the opinion of the publics which count in the particular situation, whether limited or mass.

Beyond this, however, the broader public, or elements of the public, can and often do get into the act, even in the underdeveloped countries. They may be "ignorant"; they may lack meaningful opinions on specific international issues. But at certain times and places, their broader basic or implicit attitudes may come into play in such a fashion as to make a given issue, fraught with international consequences, a matter of public concern. Often this applies only to a minority of the greater public; frequently their concern is whipped up and organized for ulterior ends, whether by the Communists or by local leaders.

But react they do; and often act they do.

This action may be as peaceable as signing a petition or writing a letter to one's Congressman or the editor. But increasingly, more extreme manifestations of public action in the form of demonstrations, picketing and rioting—reflecting strongly held attitudes by at least segments of the public—have become a phenomenon of worldwide scope. For example, rioting in Japan and Korea made it exceedingly difficult for the two governments to normalize their relations. Demonstrations and rioting in Panama were unquestionably instrumental in causing the U.S.—after a decent interval, of course—to agree to revise the Panama Canal Treaty. Anti-Communist violence in Indonesia strengthened the hand of the Army against the Communist Party in a struggle whose outcome has had the most profound international implications.

But the greater public also gets into the act in a more regular, generally more peaceable way, in the form of periodic elections in the democracies—and even some of the semi-democracies, if not the "guided" democracies. In such elections, international matters can, and often do enter as central issues of the campaign.

**World-wide consensuses**

Having a bit ago given half of the pollsters' defense against Dean Acheson away by admitting that on a wide range of international issues the greater public does not have meaningful opinions, I must now take at least partial issue, with his conclusion that "world opinion simply does not exist on matters that concern us." In general, this, no doubt, is correct; but in certain cases—admittedly rare—there are world-wide, or virtually world-wide, reactions or consensuses on matters that do concern us. One that comes to mind has to do with the Suez affair in 1956. I have little doubt that the well-plagued universal condemnation of the Israeli-British-French invasion of Egypt in the United Nations was supported by what can only be called a consensus of world opinion—a consensus shared by many people in the United Kingdom and France.

Another is the world-wide impact of Russia's launching of the first two Sputniks in 1957, followed by its subsequent achievements in space. These developments led to reevaluations of the relative standing of the two super-powers, extending not only through official circles and elites, but to, general publics as well, which helped to contribute, along with other developments, to the idea that a nuclear stalemate now exists—a notion which has affected the foreign policies of most of the nations of the world.

Another, more recent example of a completely different sort was the universal reaction of horror and outrage, among high, high and low, set off by the assassination of President Kennedy. My dollar example is one of potential impact on what could only be called world opinion. I have no doubt that a truly world-wide reaction of great intensity would be keyed up against any power which first resorted to nuclear weapons anywhere in today's world.

**Regional and national consensuses**

Short of these relatively rare global consensuses, there are certain basic attitudes so widely held in certain regions or areas of the world that they must be taken into account, both by the governments which rule them, and by others dealing with them. The phobia in Latin America against "American Intervention" is one example. Similarly, in almost all of Africa and Asia, basic attitude patterns opposed to "imperialism" and "colonialism" are deeply rooted. So, for example, is the anti-Israeli "set" of the Arab world; and, fortunately for us, the anti-Chinese bias in much of Southeast Asia.
In addition, there are many situations where there is a meaningful consensus of public opinion in particular countries, based on common assumptions and attitudes in regard to certain issues, that the public make matters of their own concern. One example is the widespread support in the United Nations by the public in the U.S. Another is the almost universal aspiration of West Germans for the unification of Germany. At present, too, one cannot help but believe that despite the 'ignorance' most villagers in India have of the outside world, the public has a genuine interest in the progress of the country. Some examples of this are the increased concern of the Japanese public to the Sino-Japanese situation and the increasing concern of the public in the United Kingdom. Another example is the growing opposition to the 'growth' of the Japanese public to the Sino-Japanese situation and the increasing concern of the public in the United Kingdom. Another example is the growing opposition to the 'growth' of the Japanese public to the Sino-Japanese situation and the increasing concern of the public in the United Kingdom. Another example is the growing opposition to the 'growth' of the Japanese public to the Sino-Japanese situation and the increasing concern of the public in the United Kingdom.

Public opinion

The time has come to put this matter into a perspective. To start with, let us admit that, as a rule, most of the time, public opinion, whether at home or abroad, has little relevance to the hundreds of day-to-day decisions on routine policy problems made by our Department of State and other foreign offices. Meaningful opinion on such specific issues either does not exist, or, where it does exist, is usually so weak or, weak, either as to the proportion of the public holding a given view or on the intensity of their feeling, that it has little significance. However, when it comes to the essence of a country's foreign policy and its international posture, government policy-makers themselves live in a certain climate of opinion. They are members of their own society, and they are not, as a rule, of the opinion-makers, but of the opinion-takers. Even so, the various governments in the world do realize the importance of their publics. Beyond this, when they show that the public supports a given policy, the decision-makers will usually be reassured and feel reinforced in their pursuance of that line of action.

On the other hand, in any particular country, there are programs and policies for which no leader, no matter how popular or expert, can engender popular consent. In other words, the climate of opinion imposes limits, sometimes very broad, sometimes very narrow, on each government's area of maneuver. In extreme, certain things are virtually taboo; in other cases, they are merely impolite; in others, anything is possible, particularly where public opinion is either non-existent, weak or divided.

Needless to say, strong leaders sometimes fly squarely in the face of domestic opinion. For example, President de Gaulle is pursuing policies opposed to the integration of Western Europe despite the fact that the French Institute of Public Opinion's figures have consistently shown overwhelming support for "Europe at the public level. According to a majority of observers, however, de Gaulle's paid a price for this obstinacy in the way of diminished popular support in the last presidential election.

Domestic opinion

In more often, governments do and, indeed, must fly in the face of public opinion. This is particularly true of the U.S. as it plays its role of world leadership. In particular, the simple cannot be helped, everyone cannot be pleased. If we fail India to rearm against the Chinese threat, we are bound to incur the wrath of the Pakistanis. We cannot seize Israel without provoking an anti-American uproar from the Arab world, or the world. We cannot fight the war in Viet Nam without alienating the 'doves' in many parts of the world. No responsible critic of current policies has suggested that we have seen consequences of our government, or any government, should simply follow foreign policy or that our foreign policy should be based, exclusively or primarily, upon counting popular popularity abroad. Our position is a much more subtle one. It is that, for the U.S., to be maximally effective in its role of world leadership, public opinion and other psychological factors should be taken into account, among other factors, in framing foreign policies and adopting and amending international positions.

Psychological factors

In short, although policy-makers sometimes appear blunt and blunder, they are not most of the international objectives adopted by the United States. Rather...
short- or long-range, assume for their accomplishment that certain psychological conditions already exist or can be brought into being in various parts of the world. If, in a given situation, these psychological requirements cannot be fulfilled, then it is futile to adhere to a policy which presupposes them. (For example, the U.S. for years supported the maintenance of French rule in Algeria despite the fact that the psychology of the Algerians—and of the French—made this goal impossible.) Thus, formulating sound policies requires, in the first instance, an assessment of what the psychological requirements are, and whether they have already been or can possibly be met in given situations.

Once a particular substantive objective has been adopted, these psychological requirements become psychological objectives, the achievement of which will facilitate the success of the substantive policy. These objectives may involve sustaining and reinforcing an existing psychological situation, on the one hand, or modifying or deflecting it, on the other. Only after psychological objectives have been clearly defined can the optimum strategy and tactics for achieving them through communication techniques be intelligently devised, and operations and programs planned.

Each of these steps—(1) the assessment of substantive policies in terms of psychological requirements; (2) the adoption of psychological objectives; and (3) the devising of strategy and tactics—requires knowledge of the structure of the particular societies involved and of how they function, with special reference to their power and influence in structure, and of the political and social psychology of their members. Who are the key individuals and which the elite groups whose cooperation or at least acquiescence must be assured? To what extent is the mass public likely to get into the act by way, for example, of protests, demonstrations, or periodic elections? Considering the elements in importance in the particular situation—whether individuals, groups, or publics, limited or mass—are they favorably disposed toward the objective desired by the U.S.? If not, is their resistance too firm or can they be swung into line? And, if they can be, then how—that is, by the use of what themes, disseminated through what channels?

Research

In answering such questions, the informed intuition of policymakers and operators is important and essential. But it is my thesis that, for checking on intuitions and aiding in the decision-making process, there is no adequate, reliable substitute for the objective findings of policy-oriented social and psychological research. By “social research” I obviously mean studies of a sociological nature—directed particularly toward ascertaining in a realistic manner where power lies in particular societies and who wields influence. The term “psychological research” requires further elucidation. It includes public opinion surveys—where these are indicated, but is by no means limited to public opinion polling. In the first place, a charting of the power and influence structure of a given society will often show that, with respect to one issue in question, the opinion of the public in the mass sense is likely to be unimportant and of no consequence. Instead of a public opinion survey, what may be indicated is the interviewing of small numbers representing cross-sections of key individuals and elite groups. In the second place, whether dealing with individuals, groups or publics, the psychological research required may extend far beyond—or below—the level of “opinions” as such. The need will often be to investigate the assumptions, frequently latent or implicit, upon which attitudes and opinions are founded; and such factors as the aspirations, fears, preoccupations, awarenesses, values, frustrations and allegiances of the people studied—in short, the psychological dynamics that influence the opinions and political behavior of individuals, groups, peoples and governments.

Conclusions

I thus end up with these conclusions:

1. There are widely shared attitudes on international matters, whether global, regional or national, which governments simply must take into account and can ignore only at their peril.

2. Under many circumstances, attitudes and opinions at the public level do have a real bearing on certain basic aspects of the behavior of foreign governments.

3. Therefore, influencing attitudes and opinions of individuals and groups in other countries through modern communications can help to implement U.S. international objectives.
(4) But, before modern communications can be utilized intelligently and with optimum effect for this purpose, a great deal more knowledge, derived from policy-oriented psychological and social research is needed.

Mr. FASCHELL. Thank you very much, Mr. Free.

Ambassador Allen, may we hear from you next?

STATEMENT OF HON. GEORGE V. ALLEN, DIRECTOR, FOREIGN SERVICE INSTITUTE, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Chairman, you have a brief, one-page summary there of the main points that I plan to talk about.

(Mr. Allen's summary statement is as follows):

MODERN COMMUNICATIONS AND FOREIGN POLICY

"THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES IN INFLUENCING PUBLIC OPINION"

Public opinion is more important today than ever in history, due to communications and education explosions which have affected people in authoritarian and democratic societies alike.

We must accept the fact that any government information activity is suspect. The problem is to develop maximum credibility. Several methods of doing so are suggested.

The "Voice of America", should be as objective as humanly possible, particularly in its commentaries and selection of editorial comment. News handouts should be modeled on the best type of AP or UPI despatch, intended for publication in any newspaper, anywhere. In depth backgrounders are necessary, to put news of racial disturbances, student protests, etc., in focus, but should be used with care.

Encouragement of book publishing is a legitimate activity in such fields as simplified English editions of established authors, but full disclosure of Government support is essential.

Basically, the role of Government should be limited to activities which private enterprise will not undertake. The so-called slow media (books, exchanges of students, professors, cultural groups, etc.) are less suspect as propaganda than daily press and radio activity, but both are necessary because of the U.S. role in world affairs.

Mr. ALLEN. First of all, let me say that I associate myself fully with the view of Dr. Free that public opinion is much more important today than it has ever been in the past. I do not subscribe in any way to the idea that public opinion can be disregarded. I think this just as true, in some respects even more so, in totalitarian countries as in democracies.

As a matter of fact, almost all totalitarian governments today are based on ideologies of some sort. They appeal to their people under a Nazi or Communist or some other ideology, unlike old-style dictatorships which were based solely on keeping military or police power and disregarding platform statements or pronouncements or anything else. The latter have gone out of fashion.

I also want to say, in an entirely nonpartisan spirit, that I think we sometimes give the impression of too much concern with our image overseas. As specific illustration, I have in mind the last election when, as you may recall, Mr. Nixon campaigned on the assertion that General Eisenhower's administration had brought the United States to the highest peak of its prestige around the world. Mr. Kennedy campaigned on exactly the opposite note. He claimed that the prestige of the United States had hit an all-time low. And that became an important issue in the election.
The press around the world reported that the Americans were furiously debating the issue and that the country was torn apart over how we looked overseas. It tended to give the impression that we were "nervous Nellies," forever watching to see what other people thought about us, with few basic policies or principles of our own.

I may add, that indications have recently appeared that this might happen again during the 1968 election. I think it would be unfortunate to give the impression to foreigners that we are trembling like aspen leaves and that a presidential election in the United States might be decided on an issue of this kind.

Nevertheless, I repeat my view that world opinion is important and that the United States, in accord with our tradition, should pay attention to it. The first great document in our history, the Declaration of Independence, started by saying that when any people (the American Colonies) decided that they should break their bonds with the country, with which they had been associated, they had an obligation to explain to the world why they were doing so. It was a public relations document of the finest sort. That was its purpose from start to finish. It said we owed a decent respect to the opinions of mankind to say why we felt compelled to take action. I think we still do. I don't think the United States can ever do better than follow our first great document in this field.

With the spread of communications and education, public opinion has become more important today than ever because people are much more aware of what is going on. I will give you one illustration.

When I was in India, I was told that 40 years ago, the average Indian never expected to see anybody who was born more than 20 miles from where he was born. Today, with the building of roads, buses and jeeps, and the spread of communications, there is hardly a village in India that doesn't have motion pictures and a radio on the public square. The average Indian not only knows what Indians look, dress, and act like 20 miles from its village, but how people behave in Paris, or Hollywood, for better or worse.

The world is suddenly aware of itself. We hear of various kinds of explosions, but the communications explosion is as significant as any other. The amount of awareness of what is going on in the rest of the world is growing by leaps and bounds.

I have been asked to speak about Government information. Dr. Free has discussed the general subject of the importance of information. Let us now consider that particular segment relating to the Government.

I think we should accept the fact, to start with, that any information handed out by any government is suspect from the very fact that it came from government. It is suspected of being ex parte, of telling the side of the story favorable to the issuing government. The United States is not any more immune from that suspicion than any other government; so the problem is to try in such ways as we can to make any information handed out by our government as credible, as believable, as we can.

Many people have wrestled with the question of making our output believable. If it isn't believable, we are wasting our time and effort and money in putting it out. I will offer specific suggestions. For example, the Voice of America, which is the radio arm of the U.S.
Government overseas in projecting ourselves to foreign peoples should be as objective as humanly possible.

First and foremost, VOA must report all aspects of the news, not just the good. If people are going to tune to the Voice of America instead of the British Broadcasting Company or Radio Paris or Moscow or somewhere else in the competition for foreign listeners, they are not going to turn to our program if we omit important events that other radio and news media are talking about. If we ignore or delay such news as the famous U-2 incident, when the world was suddenly set abuzz with the report that an American airplane had been shot down over the Soviet Union, we lose our listeners. If the VOA had put off making any statement about it for 24 or 48 hours, the credibility of the Voice of America would have been attacked by people all over the world who were eager to hear what we had to say about it.

Radio Moscow often does delay news. As a result, it has relatively few listeners worldwide, and very low credibility. Those who do listen are often motivated by curiosity. People who want the news tune chiefly to United States or British stations.

I had a long discussion with the director of the UP when I was head of the United States Information Agency (USIA) on this subject. I knew that the Indian newspapers had sent him requests for 500 or 1,000 or 2,000 words every day on one thing, Little Rock, and only Little Rock. It was during the Little Rock integration crisis. The UP was not happy about the government being in the information field. I pointed out that there was a role for government since the Indian press was carrying great headlines about only one event in the United States at the very time when the Congress of the United States was debating a very important decision whether to give several hundred thousand more tons of wheat to India. Yet the newspapers of India didn’t want one line on that from the UP. “All they wanted was news about Little Rock. I pointed out that other stories of very great importance to India ought to be made available, whether the newspapers of local radio would carry it or not.” Since the UP could furnish only what they would buy, we had to do the rest.

Furthermore, while I insist that we should report Little Rock on the Voice of America and report it as straight as we can, nevertheless, stories of that kind should be placed in proper perspective. We should give background, pointing out, for example, that there were more Negroes in universities in the United States than in the rest of the world combined, more degrees being conferred on Negroes in the United States each year than in the rest of the world combined, and so forth.

We hear a great deal about how many Africans are sent to Britain to study every year by the Soviet Government. Very few people are aware that at the very time these stories were being published, more Africans from Africa were studying at a university in the United States which happens to be Howard, here in Washington, than in all the Soviet Union combined. All sides of these questions should be brought out. There is an important role for government in the information picture.

As you know, I have been in a constant battle with the book and periodical industry of USA. I should emphasize again that I am not speaking for
the information agency. I have no authority and haven’t even discussed the question with my former associates in that Agency. I think the encouragement of book publishing by government is also a legitimate activity. I am rather partial to the so-called slow media, which means books, libraries, exchange of students, professors, exhibits, and things of that kind, rather than the fast media, which means the day-to-day radio bulletins and the Voice of America, but that is a personal inclination of mine. They both are important.

Let me give you an illustration of the importance of book publishing that ought to be put in the record in view of attacks against USIA activity in this field during the past few days. The attacks point out that an agency of the U.S. Government hires authors to write certain books without any statement in the book itself that it was inspired or paid for by the American Government. I think there is a legitimate basis for bringing the subject to public notice and having an open discussion of it.

A major USIA book-publishing effort is known as the “ladder series.” Many foreigners who learn English have a very limited vocabulary. So, we have a volume by Mark Twain rewritten limiting the vocabulary to 1,000 words, 2,000 or 3,000 words. The various editions are used according to how much English the other fellow knows. We bring out some of our greatest classics, using 2,000 words. Nobody is going to do this except the U.S. Government. Our volumes have become textbooks in English language classes all around the world. That is one very important type of book publishing USIA can do. I will add that, in my own opinion, there should be full disclosure whenever the U.S. Government is involved in a book-publishing project. If taxpayers’ money goes into it, that fact should be made known publicly.

I have been responsible for so-called propaganda activity on two occasions—once when it was in the State Department, in 1943, when I was Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, and again as Director of the U.S. Information Agency, 1957–60. Both times I maintained, in public statements and in private meetings within the government, that the government’s role in information should be limited in principle to those activities which private media would not undertake. Many of you may know that the Voice of America itself was started during World War II because private shortwave broadcasting companies such as General Electric and Westinghouse, which had been broadcasting on an experimental basis, suddenly discontinued their activity and offered their transmitters to the government. Since that time, very little shortwave (or international) broadcasting has been undertaken by private firms. If the United States is to be heard, on international wavelengths, the government must do it because private industry will not. But to the extent private industry will do these things, it is my opinion that government should tend to withdraw.

As a specific illustration, USIA publishes a magazine called “America”, in Russian, which is sold in the Soviet Union. This activity is carried out under an exchange arrangement. We let the Soviets sell an equal number of copies of their magazine here, in English. We get 10 times the propaganda value from our copies sold in Russia as compared to their copies coming here because Russians have little opportunity to buy anything from abroad. This has led a few people in USIA to try to go from one success to another and press for a similar magazine in Arabic.
While entire freedom of information does not exist in Arab countries, Time, Life, Newsweek, Fortune, and Look and other American magazines could be bought in Egypt. It is true that these magazines aren’t published to put the best foot forward of the United States, and sometimes they say things that are embarrassing to our foreign policy or have cheesecake on the covers and the Egyptian public gets the wrong impression of the United States. However, I do not think the U.S. Government should enter into competition with private activity in the information field. That is the burden of my presentation, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Fasell. Thank you, Ambassador Allen.

Now we will be very pleased to hear from Dr. Davison.

STATEMENT OF DR. W. PHILLIPS DAVISON, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY, AND GRADUATE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK, N.Y.

Dr. Davison. Mr. Chairman, it gives me particular pleasure to appear before this committee because I have been an enthusiastic reader of the committee’s hearings now for some time, and I wish that all publications in this area were of equally high quality and were equally reasonably priced.

I share Dr. Free’s feeling about the importance of public opinion abroad when it comes to achieving national objectives, and share Ambassador Allen’s opinion that the work of the U.S. Information Agency is extremely important but should be specialized and confined to certain directions. The burden of my remarks is that the bulk of what people in other countries learn about the United States and U.S. foreign policy comes through private channels—that is, the private press and the electronic media take most of the facts about us abroad. Opinions are based on many things besides facts, but nevertheless facts are an important component in the formation of opinions. And therefore I think if we are going to improve public understanding of U.S. foreign policies in other countries we should do everything we could to improve press, TV and other coverage of foreign policy problems right here and wherever U.S. spokesmen are located. We cannot expect the private media to do everything but they are well fed and as factual a picture as they can and they do a good job in this regard. However, I think that in all cases the job could be improved, and want to suggest several ways in which this might be done.

First, it is important especially in regard to involved problems that the journalist have available for consultation a few good academic specialists who have studied a particular area or a particular problem in depth. We have such a body in the case of the Soviet Union and in the case of China, and by looking at reporting about the Soviet Union and China we can see the way in which the academic specialists interact with journalists so that the begins with the graft, the raw material on the part of the journalists and probably the appearance on the part of the academics. There is a process of informal argument and finding of experiences that goes on all the time.

However, we are seriously thinly covered in certain parts of the world when it comes to academic expertise. This is especially noticeable in the case of Vietnam, where our academic backup is very, very thin.
And when Castro came to power, there was not a single American academic specialist who had made contemporary Cuba the primary focus of his academic interest. I believe you could go around the world and find many similar bare spots.

This situation could be at least partially cured by an annual appropriation that was devoted to supporting specialists at universities around the United States. The purpose of this financial support would be to make sure that somebody in the academic world was looking at each part of the globe and would be available to consult with journalists when the area came into the news. Of course, these specialists would be available to consult with others as well. I think a program of this kind would involve very little expense, and its impact could be enormous.

The second suggestion I would like to make about improving foreign policy coverage is that more basic, factual material about foreign policy issues should be brought into the public realm. Far too much of this is classified at the present time. In several cases about which I have personal knowledge I have been alarmed to find that the picture of the world seen by the official reading classified documents can be quite different from the picture of the world seen by someone who has to rely on public sources. This is not true in every instance, but where it is true I think it is dangerous. It means that explaining U.S. policies to the public either here or abroad is extremely difficult, because the journalist and the government spokesman are really looking at two different pictures. I think this gap could be partially closed if this committee, possibly in conjunction with other interested committees, were to explore ways that more factual information could be safely released. In particular, I would like to see publication series somewhat like the Foreign Broadcast Information Service reports that would provide some of the background material on critical foreign policy questions that is not now available to journalists or academic specialists.

Coming back to the importance of private media, we should remember that they go in both directions. People in foreign countries learn most of what they know about the United States through private channels, just as we learn most of what we know about foreign countries through private channels. Therefore, it is in our interest to see that these channels operate as freely as possible abroad, as well as at home. Of course, our power to assure this is limited. But I think there are some things we can do. In particular I would like to suggest that one of the principal roles of the U.S. Information Agency should be to look at the situation in each country where it operates and to suggest ways in which the free flow of information from that area might be improved. I don't think the Agency itself can always take effective action, but I think it could often recommend action to our diplomatic arm, to the AID organization, or to the other branches of government.

These three points, Mr. Chairman, are the burden of my testimony. I apologize for not having the written statement here. It was detained by the storm even though I was not.

Mr. Forrest. Thank you, Dr. Davison. We will be glad to receive your statement and have it placed in the record in the manner which suits you.
The prepared statement by Dr. Davison follows:

PRIVATE CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION AND THE IMPORTANCE OF FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

(By W. Phillips Davison, Columbia University)

If you pick up a newspaper in almost any foreign country, or tune in on a radio or TV newscast, you probably will notice that the United States is given more attention than any other nation except those you actually are in at the time. A multi-nation survey in 1950 found that representative newspapers in Argentina devoted 41 per cent of their foreign news to the United States. In Australia the figure was 41 per cent, in Egypt 24 per cent, in France 49 per cent, in Japan 49 per cent, in the Soviet Union 38 per cent, and so on. Later surveys in individual countries have disclosed substantially the same picture.

Most of this news, on the order of 80 to 85 per cent, reaches foreign media directly through the wires of one of the great international news services, or is taken from these and rewritten by domestic news agencies. Much of the remaining foreign news carried by the media of other countries is picked up from the domestic press of the host country by correspondents stationed overseas, combined with their own observations, and sent back to their home office. This may be especially true of foreign correspondents stationed in Washington. I am reminded of the remarks of a lady from this city who lived near a very distinguished newspaperman from France.

"Poor M. P.---," she said, "he doesn't seem to have a job."

"Why do you think that?" I inquired.

"Because he just sits on his front porch all day, reading one newspaper after another. And after he finishes the Washington and New York papers he even reads some from Chicago, St. Louis, and Los Angeles."

In other words, most of the current information about the United States that reaches people in other countries flows through established news channels. By far the most important group that interprets this country to overseas audiences is composed of American and foreign journalists in Washington and New York. Similarly, most of the entertainment and cultural materials from the United States that reach people in other countries pass, at least initially, through private channels, but I do not propose to deal with entertainment and cultural materials at this point.

The overwhelmingly important part played by established news channels immediately suggests three corollaries, one of which I believe to be incorrect. The incorrect one is that government-sponsored information programs are no longer essential. An analysis of the fact that they account for only a very small percentage of news that flows from one country to another at least in the democracies. My view is that all nations should have government-sponsored programs, but that these should be of a special character and designed to fill the holes left by the commercialized press and other information media. In the case of news about the United States, the U.S. Information Agency supplies a relatively small part of the total flow, but it is an extremely important part.

The second corollary, and this one I believe to be true, is that the distinction between domestic and foreign information is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain. A story that is carried by the Associated Press today is likely to find its way into the international news wires and may reach the front pages tomorrow. As communication satellites make international live-broadcasting commonplace, the distinction will be blurred still further. The worldwide news network is tending to become a single organism that is less and less affected by national boundaries. Even though selective psychological processes may play a large part in determining what news is actually carried by the press of any country, and many nations still exercise restrictions that distort or limit information received from abroad.

The third corollary is the one to which I would like to devote most of my attention: the relationship of information about the United States that reaches other peoples to the way they see and understand the United States. I would like to illustrate this topic through the story of one of these diplomatic communications.

-John H. Kueney, assistant professor of government, University of Pennsylvania, and former director of the American Institute in Paris and the American Consulate in Mexico City, among others.
to the American domestic public. In deciding what to say and what to do at home, we would be well advised to keep probable foreign responses and repercussions in mind. Similarly, interpretations of our policies and actions made by domestic analysts are likely to play an important part in the understanding that public opinion abroad has of the United States and its foreign policies.

Our principal international communication problem thus becomes how to convey as accurate a picture as possible of our foreign policies, and of the reasoning behind them, to those who are interested—both here and abroad. We obviously have to tell the same story to both publics because, ethical considerations aside, both publics have access to much the same information anyway. The only possible policy is that of telling the truth and telling it as fully and clearly as possible. But merely telling the truth is only part of the job; we should also take positive steps to make sure that it gets across and is understood.

In today's world it is not easy to present the truth about foreign policies in a 'comprehensive and understandable' form. One reason for this is the complexity of the problems facing us. Even if the necessary facts are made available it is often extremely difficult for journalists to handle them. Journalism is a profession that, by and large, adheres to the tradition of the general practitioner; any good journalist should be able to handle any story. There are relatively few specialized journalists in the foreign policy field. The result is that domestic and foreign publics are frequently presented with over-simplifications, partial explanations, and lurid but sometimes misleading details. I think we are making these rather hasty observations with the intention of being critical of journalists; my criticism is rather directed to the state of the art of journalism.

We have reached a point, in regard to many international problems and many domestic problems, where the general practitioner—no matter how able and how dedicated—is simply unable to do an adequate job of reporting and interpretation.

Another factor that makes accurate reporting of foreign policy problems difficult—and this, too, applies to many domestic questions—is the comprehensiveness of government security regulations. When part of the information on which a policy is based must be classified and withheld from the public, this can and does lead to a situation where different pictures of a given problem are seen by the policy maker and by interested citizens, including journalists. Under these conditions it is almost impossible to provide either domestic or foreign audiences with a coherent explanation of policy. I recently ran across the case of a professor, a former government employee, who had to break off in the middle of a lecture about urban problems in the United States because he realized that the background statistical information he was about to develop was still classified.

Even more striking examples of distortion induced by secrecy can be found in the realm of international affairs involving United States policies toward Vietnam. The detailed, factual information that plays an important part in policy formulation is often locked up, unavailable to either journalists or academic specialists. In the absence of this information, some segments of the domestic public may be willing to trust their government and assume that there is good and sufficient reason for the policies adopted, but we can scarcely expect foreign publics to do so.

Until these two interrelated problems of complexity and classification are at least partially solved, we will be hampered in explaining U.S. foreign policies to interested people in other countries. I do not think either problem is going to be solved completely at least not in the immediate future, but there are several steps that are now being taken in this direction, and more should be taken.

First, small but increasing numbers of journalists are being trained as specialists. Under programs supported by the Russell Sage Foundation at Columbia University and the University of Wisconsin mid-career journalists are being offered one-year fellowships so that they can familiarize themselves with the methods and content of the social sciences and use this background in reporting complex social problems. The Carnegie Corporation has recently inaugurated another program at Columbia which provides specialized training for a small group of journalism students in Far Eastern languages, politics, and cultures, and the Ford Foundation has supported advanced training for foreign correspondents at Columbia for several years. There are probably other privately supported programs of this general nature of which I am unaware. Most important, more and more journalists working in both print and electronic media are becoming convinced of the necessity for specialization, and a growing num
been of great importance and influence. Troubles may arise because of the governmental policies in the form of restrictions or regulations. The government may be concerned with the promotion of national interests or maintenance of public order. It's important to understand the potential consequences of such policies. When policies create difficulties, it's essential to seek legal remedies or engage in dialogue. Different approaches may be taken depending on the specific situation and the involved parties. It's crucial to consider all possible outcomes and make informed decisions. In conclusion, government policies can have significant impacts on society, and it's vital to address any issues that arise through appropriate channels.
sures toward secrecy are so great in any large governmental structure that counterpressures will somehow have to be built into the system, and the Congress is the only body that might be able to do this successfully.

Finally, I would like to shift gears rapidly and emphasize the familiar proposition that international communications is a two-way street. We will never be very successful in explaining U.S. foreign policies to other peoples unless we are well informed about the foreign policies of their governments, and about their own conditions of life and aspirations. Here again, we must rely primarily on private media of information to bring current news about other countries to us. Although we are bound to rely mainly on these private sources, however, the United States Government, and specifically the U.S. Information Agency, has a major role to play. Through all the resources that are available to our government we should try to ensure that freedom to gather and transmit news and other types of information is as great as possible in all parts of the world. In developing countries, this freedom is sometimes restricted by shortages of equipment and personnel. Here we should offer what material and training assistance we can. In many foreign areas governmental policies hamper legitimate news-gathering. Here we should constantly use diplomatic means to press for greater freedom of information. It should be one of the primary responsibilities of the U.S. Information Agency to identify barriers to the free flow of ideas wherever its personnel are stationed and to recommend action to increase freedom of information. It may be that sometimes this action can most appropriately be taken through international bodies.

All the barriers to the free flow of ideas—both domestic and foreign—were to fall tomorrow, this would of course not solve all our foreign policy problems, but it would certainly help in finding solutions to them. International understanding will not guarantee international peace, but it is a highly desirable prerequisite.

Mr. Fascell. At this point I would like to put into the record the statement of Mr. John Mecklin, associate editor of Fortune magazine, who couldn't be with us.

It might be interesting if I read at least two excerpts from that statement because they are rather challenging and we might want to discuss them. Mr. Mecklin's opening paragraph reads:

For a good many years we have heard about the mounting importance of public opinion in international relations, and of the need for the United States to give greater weight to this phenomenon in our foreign operations. The need is uncomfortably evident in the political shambles in which we find ourselves today with regard to Vietnam. For close to a quarter century, American policy toward Vietnam has been a series of public opinion trade-offs—to the point where the struggle there has been called "a public relations war"—and we have not always shown that we understood what was happening.

Mr. Mecklin then goes on to detail the various items of the tradeoff. He says:

Even the U.S. offer to negotiate a settlement with the Communists has the earmarks of a public relations maneuver, an attempt to jerry-build public support both at home and abroad for a war which the Administration has failed to sell on its merits. This is a dangerous gamble, in my opinion, because we have yet to achieve anything like the degree of control of the situation in South Vietnam that would be necessary to negotiate an honorable settlement with a treacherous enemy and then to guarantee its enforcement. Our position in this matter makes the Administration look like a captive of public opinion, rather than its leader. It also suggests that the Administration may lack the will to resist the enormous pressures for a fast, give-away settlement that will surely develop if and as negotiations are begun.

Altogether, Mr. Chairman, Vietnam has been an unpleasant lesson in the importance of public opinion, both at home and abroad, in making policy in this modern world of mass communications and hostile propagandists who are as sophisticated as they are cynical. In my opinion, there have been no unforgivable errors in American policy toward Vietnam over the years, and there are no villains to blame for our troubles today. I think the record also shows, however,
that repeated American failures to understand the psychological considerations relating to Vietnam, have hurt the application of our policy, often seriously. It is characteristic of our attitude that the U.S. Information Agency, the civilian organization primarily responsible for psychological operations in Vietnam, is reported right now to be cutting back its field staff there, just at the moment of a major new American effort toward pacification of the countryside.

We have every reason to be proud of our record in Vietnam, and of our objectives there today, yet we have often behaved as though we were ashamed of it, or had something to hide. We have permitted ourselves to become the captive of the doubters, the naysayers, and the timid, when we should have brushed them aside to rally the nation and our allies abroad to a just and honorable task. Too often we have been tempted to stoop to the devious propaganda of our adversaries, when candor and forthright statement of our deeds and intent would have been vastly more effective. It is by no means too late to try it the right way.

So ends Mr. John Mecklin. I am sure you will all be interested in the full text of that statement which we will place in the record at this point.

(The full statement of Mr. John Mecklin, associate editor, Fortune magazine, is as follows:)

PROBLEMS OF COMMUNICATION IN A CRISIS SITUATION: A CASE STUDY OF THE ROLE OF PUBLIC OPINION IN THE VIETNAM CONFLICT

(Remarks by John Mecklin, Associate Editor, Fortune Magazine, New York, N.Y.)

For a good many years we have heard about the mounting importance of public opinion in international relations, and of the need for the United States to give greater weight to this phenomenon in our foreign operations. The need is uncomfortably evident in the political shambles in which we find ourselves today with regard to Vietnam. For close to a quarter century, American policy toward Vietnam has been a series of public opinion trade-offs—to the point where the struggle there has been called “a public relations war”—and we have not always shown that we understood what was happening.

President Roosevelt made the first trade-off. He is known to have recognized the yearning of the Vietnamese and other peoples of Southeast Asia for independence from their colonial masters, but he was unable to push the idea because of the greater urgency of French, British and Dutch cooperation to win the war in Europe. Similarly President Truman could not reasonably oppose the reestablishment of French colonialism in Vietnam during the late forties because of the greater need to support anti-Communist forces in the political turmoil of postwar France—with the result that Vietnamese public opinion turned to the Communist alternative, Ho Chi Minh.

The fall of China in 1949 compounded the problem, generating the so-called “domino theory” which was based almost entirely on psychological considerations, and still dominates U.S. thinking about Southeast Asia today. This was the theory—and it is almost certainly correct—that any further Communist gains would create shock waves of fear of the giant to the north that would destroy such will to resist as still existed in Southeast Asia. So the United States in 1960 went to the aid of the French against the Viet Minh, rationalizing that French colonialism was the lesser evil. After the French collapsed in 1954, we shifted our support to Ngo Dinh Diem for the same reasons. There were no practical alternatives at the time, but both trade-offs tended to fix our image as the friend of reactionaries, has-been forces and the enemy of the aspirations of the Vietnamese people.

U.S. support for Diem also led us into a jungle of vitally important, yet unprecedented, psychological problems inside Vietnam. One was our “advisory” experiment to try to persuade the Vietnamese Government to take the steps that we thought necessary to defeat the Viet Cong—a virtuous but weak substitute for American command authority. Another was our first significant confrontation with a guerilla enemy whose greatest strength lay in his psychological hold on the illiterate, pathetic people of the Vietnamese countryside. A third was the maddening problem of the Buddhist rebel leaders who shrewdly achieved world