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# Testimony before the US House Subcommittee on National Security, Emergency Threats and International Relations

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Hearing on the 9/11 Commission Recommendations on Public Diplomacy: Defending Ideals and Defining the Message

## Keith Reinhard

President, Business for Diplomatic Action, Inc., Chairman, DDB Worldwide  
 Monday, August 23, 2004, 1:00 pm  
 Room 2154 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515, USA



Keith Reinhard is Chairman of DDB Worldwide, which ranks among the largest global advertising agency networks in the world with 206 offices in 96 countries. In 1986, Keith was one of the architects of the advertising industry's first and only three-way merger, creating Omnicom, one of the world's largest advertising and marketing services holding companies. Concurrent with the creation of Omnicom, Keith accomplished the merger of Doyle Dane Bernbach and Needham Harper Worldwide, first known as DDB Needham Worldwide and now DDB Worldwide. Keith's vision as Chairman-CEO was to create a new DDB capable of bringing to life the insights of DDB founder Bill Bernbach and applying them broadly to the modern world.

*Advertising Age* has referred to Keith Reinhard as the advertising industry's 'soft-spoken visionary' and in 1999 named him among the top 100 industry influentials in advertising history. *The Wall Street Journal* has included Keith in its well-known 'Creative Leaders' campaign.

Written and oral versions of this testimony are available at [www.businessfordiplomaticaction.org](http://www.businessfordiplomaticaction.org).

"Good afternoon. Chairman Shays and members of the subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to appear before you here today.

I would first like to emphasize that I claim no expertise in government, foreign policy or international affairs. My field is marketing and communications. My professional life has been dedicated to the building of brands and their reputations. I grew up in Indiana, I live in New York City, and I travel extensively throughout the world. I am a US citizen and I love my country, and it sickens me to realize that the decline in the reputation of America, 'brand that I love', has reached the point that it has now become fashionable, in many if not most regions of the world, to dump on the United States of America.

But if such a realization sickens many

of us, it also inspired some of us to form and incorporate a nonpartisan, not-for-profit organization called Business for Diplomatic Action subtitled 'a new brand of American diplomacy'. Let me emphasize at the outset that this effort is not about making ads or 'selling' America. It's about actions, and during my testimony today, I will be presenting a specific five-step process for your consideration.

We believe there is an urgent need for Congress to act now to dramatically overhaul the management of our public diplomacy efforts so that we as a nation can work not only to rebuild bridges of trust abroad, but also to help defuse the hatred that spawns terrorism. As bleak as the outlook seems, we believe positive change can be achieved and we believe the US business community can play an important role.

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## WHY PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IS THE BUSINESS OF BUSINESS

Business-for-Diplomatic Action (BDA) is a private sector task force directed by preeminent professionals from the fields of global communications, marketing, political science, research and media. The mission of BDA is to sensitize American companies and individuals to the rise of anti-Americanism, its root causes and its implications, and to enlist the US business community in specific actions aimed at addressing the issue and reducing the problem.

Reasons for US corporations to be concerned about rising anti-American sentiment include the well-documented erosion of trust in American brands, the threat to sales including the risk of boycott, and the rising cost of security.

Beyond purely business reasons, BDA believes that US corporations, especially multinational firms, have a responsibility to leverage their enormous reach and influence to improve the overall reputation of our country.

Further, BDA believes that there are at least four reasons business can augment the work of the government and in some cases speak more credibly and effectively. First, American companies, their representatives and their brands directly touch the lives of more people than government representatives ever could. Second, foreign representatives of US companies abroad are more likely to be representative of local views and perceptions than are Americans working in embassies. Third, once corporations decide to act, for the most part, they can move forward without bureaucratic entanglement, and fourth in a corporation, policy is not automatically up for grabs every four years. This means, if a program gets up and running, and there is senior corporate leadership behind it, there is a good chance it will be sustained in the long run.

Though the impetus behind it began immediately after 9/11, Business for Diplomatic Action was officially incorporated as a non-profit organization in January 2004. Our effort has received wide support from foreign policy and public diplomacy experts in various organizations, including the Council on Foreign Relations, the National Committee on American Foreign Policy, the US Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, the United Nations Business Council, and the Public Diplomacy Council, among others. We have also received support and advice from some of the most respected foreign policy experts in academia. Specific actions that are either underway or proposed will be summarized later in this report. BDA is privately funded and is just beginning the process of seeking additional funding from corporations and foundations for specific programs.

## PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS SHOULD BE EMBRACED AND ACTIVATED

Your invitation to testify noted that the purpose of this hearing is to 'examine US Government efforts to conduct public diplomacy in the Middle East and to determine the status of efforts to adapt public diplomacy to the post 9/11 world'. You also noted that the 9/11 Commission report recommends that 'the US government ... define what the message is and what it stands for'. The invitation further highlighted the Commission's statement, 'If the United States does not act aggressively to define itself in the Islamic world, the extremists will gladly do the job for us.'

The problem of America's reputation, of course, is significantly larger than the Middle East and I would

paraphrase the Commission's statement as follows: 'If the United States does not act forcefully and intelligently to define itself in the post 9/11 world, our enemies and detractors across the globe will gladly do it for us.' One small example is the illustration on the front page of a recent issue of the German edition of the *Financial Times*. It showed the Statue of Liberty with a 'Do Not Enter' sign in place of the torch of freedom.

In the marketing world, we know that a brand — its positive or negative images and reputation — exists in the minds of consumers. In the same way, the image and reputation of the United States exists in the minds of citizens — our own citizens and the citizens of other nations.

of any country

The task of positioning America in a post 9/11 world is one of great urgency, but not a task that can be accomplished overnight. According to experts, anti-American sentiment has been building for at least the last two decades. Geopolitical events have ignited and exacerbated those negative feelings, but it has taken us a long time to get to this point and it will take a long time to restore our country's reputation and influence in the world. It will require patience, persistence, coordination and consistency of message across all the disparate voices that speak on behalf of the US government and the American people abroad.

That being the case, we strongly agree with many of the recommendations that have already been offered in detail to various government bodies by the GAO, the US Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, Ambassador Edward Djerejian, Helle Dale and Stephen Johnson, Congressman Frank Wolf and the Independent Task Force at the CFR chaired by Pete Peterson, among others who have urged the following in one form or another.

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**The establishment of an overall US communications strategy and a mechanism for coordinating and administering it**

As the threats to our nation continued to escalate post 9/11, the government responded appropriately by prioritizing, reorganizing and significantly restructuring the management of homeland security.

In our view, we need a similarly bold reorganization of the management of our public diplomacy efforts.

Though BDA is intended to activate business in a parallel effort to government activities, it is in many respects what the Council on Foreign Relations first envisioned as a Corporation for Public Diplomacy. Should the government decide to support and proceed with the CFR's recommendation — and we very much hope that it does — there are tools, methods, expertise, and leadership that we would happily lend to this effort.

Reviewing the various proposals, we believe the idea of a high-level communications counselor supported by experts from the private sector seems the most sensible, but we would agree with those who say the leadership should not go to a political appointee. The person who heads this effort should have extensive experience in global communications and a working knowledge of all tools and resources available.

**More support for public diplomacy, both in funding and human resources**

We join the many others who have testified to the need for more funding and more accountability for public diplomacy efforts. Advocates for more support often cite the spending ratios for public diplomacy at about four per cent

of our international affairs budget, three per cent of our intelligence budget, and less than half of one percent of our defense spending.

In the private sector, we can't force people to eat McDonald's hamburgers, drink Coca-Cola or wear Nike shoes. And so we spend money to invite people to engage with our brand and try our products. In fact, both McDonald's and Coke spend more money (approximately \$1.2 billion each) to make friends around the world than does the US government. What's more, both companies have someone in charge of the total expenditure and at both companies, someone is held accountable for every dollar spent.

X On the point of accountability, we agree with the statement in the 'Report of the Subcommittee on Public-Private Partnerships and Public Diplomacy' to the ACIEP in June of 2003 to the effect, 'It would be useful to obtain from the Administration an inventory of current programs in place that are specifically designed to promote the image of the United States abroad. We have found no single source of this information, and programs and initiatives are spread out across multiple agencies.'

### **Enlisting the creativity, expertise and the involvement of the private sector**

It is on this latter point that I will focus today. In particular, I will first center on the actions that BDA has initiated in the private sector and our plans going forward. I will then suggest how some of our findings and proposed actions might directly relate to your questions with respect to the Middle East. And finally, I will suggest a framework within which you might consider the further discussion of how best to position America in the post 9/11 world.

### **WHAT BDA HAS LEARNED AND WHAT WE HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH**

The founding precepts and principles of BDA are as follows:

- 1 Much resentment of America results from the misunderstanding of, or disagreement with, US foreign policy. But much does not.
- 2 Given its reach and resourcefulness, US business is uniquely qualified to address certain root causes of anti-Americanism.
- 3 Actions speak louder than words.
- 4 There is nothing wrong with America that can't be cured by what's right with America.
- 5 Listening is the most important part of the communication process.

Our Research Committee has reviewed every study and recommendation on public diplomacy that we know about and continues to monitor every study related to the issue. I'm sure you are aware of these studies, as many relevant excerpts were attached in our hearing briefing package. In addition, we have conducted qualitative research on our own and have now sent requests for proposals to three prominent research companies to fill in certain gaps in our knowledge.

We further culled and then combed through every recommendation we could find in the public diplomacy realm and divided those recommendations into two columns — those that were clearly in the purview of the federal government and those that we felt could be undertaken by the private sector.

Once having identified recommendations that business could undertake, both in the long and short term, we developed action proposals, which are attached to this report. The wide variety represented by our menu of programs reflects our belief that winning

back friends for America will require many actions on many fronts. There is no one remedy that will magically transform negative attitudes to positive. Nor will one approach work in every region.

The negatives are well known. You see and review the same surveys that we do — each survey showing a further decline in America's reputation.

As you know, the image of our country is a montage of our foreign policy, the brands we market, and the entertainment we export. It could be referred to as a cocktail of 'Rummy' [Secretary Rumsfeld] and Coke with Madonna on the side.

Should there be any doubt that government and commercial actions are irrevocably linked, one need only to review the political cartoons in the foreign press the day after Saddam's statue was toppled. In at least half a dozen we saw, Saddam had been replaced by Ronald McDonald.

### ROOT CAUSES OF ANTI-AMERICAN SENTIMENT

Based on our careful and continuing analysis of all available information, the four root causes of anti-American sentiment appear to be:

- 1 **US Foreign Policy.** People either disagree with it or don't identify with it.
- 2 **Effects of Globalization.** People feel we have been exploitative in our global expansion. Many feel left out, lacking the basic tools to participate.
- 3 **Pervasiveness of American Popular Culture.** Research shows a definite cooling to our popular culture and in many regions our cultural product is seen as a threat to the local culture. Many feel that our culture promotes values that are in conflict with local mores or social norms. It is

also true that many populations, especially in the Middle East, are inundated with the worst of our entertainment product. A deeper resentment towards American culture, values and society has been persistent and growing in many regions of the world.

#### 4 **Our Collective Personality.**

Although Americans are still admired for their openness, their creativity and their can-do approach, we are also broadly seen as arrogant, insensitive, ignorant and loud.

While misunderstanding or disagreement with US foreign policy may represent a significant proportion of the problem at the moment, there are still considerable challenges over the long term presented by the other outlined root causes that the private sector can address.

### THE AMERICAN PERSONALITY, AS OTHERS SEE US

Let's take America's personality quandary as an example. The first step in our process was to truly see ourselves as others see us and to listen on a massive global scale. Listening — a trait Americans are not identified with according to almost every region we surveyed — must be the first step in any communications process. It is, in fact, the most important step. In the commercial world, we know that listening means not only recording what people say, but hearing what is meant by what is said. Hours of listening to insurance prospects, some 25 years ago, revealed that a friendly nearby agent was more important than a low-cost policy. Thus, State Farm changed not only its message but its corporate ethos to back a new promise: 'Just like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.' Likewise, hours of listening to housewives, as they were

called in the late 60s, revealed that what they were looking for wasn't a cheap hamburger, but a respite from the drudgery of meal planning. Thus our permissive response to them, 'You Deserve a Break Today.'

And so BDA listened closely to every response we received from abroad. We heard positives about America, about the opportunity we offer and the freedoms we provide. There were positives about our wealth and good business sense, our competitiveness, enthusiasm, benevolence, creativity and innovation. But even as early as 2002, we heard disturbing negatives from every region, citing our arrogance, insensitivity, our lack of curiosity and knowledge about other cultures, and our lack of respect for them. We next asked respondents in 130 countries for advice that they would give Americans traveling abroad — guidance they would give Americans on how they could be better global citizens. We listened again. Their response was robust and consistent. *'Learn to listen instead of talking all the time.'* *'Don't assume that everyone in the world wants to be exactly like you.'* *'Stop comparing everything we do to the way you do it.'* *'If you can't stop talking, at least turn down the volume.'* *'You might try learning a few words in our language, and maybe learn a little bit about our culture.'* *'The Super Bowl doesn't mean that much to us.'* and *'If we had an athletic competition called the World Series, it would occur to us to invite other nations.'* And so on. Page after page about what Americans might do to become a little more humble, a little more curious, and a little more knowledgeable about the larger world.

### A GLOBAL MINDSET

With the intent of sharing this content with American youth in an impactful way, BDA turned it over to a group of

students at Southern Methodist University who created a 'World Citizens Guide' for students. PepsiCo is paying for the initial printing of this guide, which will be in the hands of 200,000 US young people who will study abroad next September. One page is headlined, 'You're not in Kansas anymore' and suggests to the reader, 'It will be better if you don't spend your entire trip comparing everything to the States. Take the opportunity to love where you are.' There is a visual reminder that if the world were shrunk to 100 people, only five would be Americans. There is a paragraph reminding US travelers that not everyone loves us. The copy reads in part: 'Be proud of where you come from. Just try to be a little humble.' There are country-specific tips throughout the guide; eg, 'In Colombia, people may think you are rude if you laugh in public places.'

This little passport-sized booklet, a prototype of which we will make available during the hearing, is not a travel guide for young Americans; rather it's a compendium of insights that arouse their interest in the world and move them further toward a global mindset. It comes complete with a mini-CD that guides the traveler to other sources. It will also be available online at a micro-site where students can not only glean additional information but share experiences with others. Tests of the 'World Citizens Guide' with students produced a resounding response — they not only loved what they read but even more important, they *wanted to learn more*.

The next step in our world citizenship program will be the production and distribution of an abridged version of the guide, which we intend to distribute to the 55 million Americans who travel abroad each year. We expect airlines and travel agencies to help us with the distribution. Then, based on the

experience we gain from the feedback we get from users of these guides and from working with experts on the subject, we hope to develop a World Citizens Curriculum for colleges and even secondary schools. Finally, we envision a comprehensive World Citizens briefing program for top executives of US multinational companies. Such a briefing program might also be of interest to new Ambassadors as well as foreign and civil service officers before they leave for service in our embassies abroad.



### GOING FORWARD: ENGAGING THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

We are intent on having a rigorous intellectual and policy framework for our efforts. We are already engaged in developing a series of academic conferences and publications that would pull together and crystallize the ideas and insights of thought leaders with regard to the issue of engaging the private sector in public diplomacy efforts.

### Encouraging and expanding existing exchange programs

Other BDA projects on the drawing board acknowledge the importance of personal exchange in order to engender understanding and respect. We commend Ambassador Kenton Keith and the Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange's leadership in these initiatives. As Ambassador Keith expressed in his testimony before you this past April, 'By engaging a very broad array of American individuals and institutions in the conduct of our foreign affairs, exchange programs build both enhanced understanding and a web of productive contacts between Americans and the rest of the world. Changing minds — or merely opening them — is a long, painstaking process. There are no quick fixes. If we are to win the war on terrorism, there will be no avoiding the need to build bridges between the American people and the people of the Muslim world. We must begin this process now.'

We hope to find new ways of bringing the transformations that occur in exchange programs to life and share them with mainstream mass audiences. One approach to this notion is a treatment we developed for a reality-based television program to be aired globally called 'The Exchange'.

### GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP, ENGAGING AMERICANS

Beyond raising the interest of the small percentage of Americans who travel abroad, we need to be committed to educating American citizens in a mainstream way about anti-American sentiment and why they should care about this issue. When we showed a video of people from around the world expressing negative feelings about America to 900 Americans (100 randomly selected in each of nine cities), only one in ten expressed the feeling that we ought to do something about it. On the other hand, one in four said, 'Who cares', or worse. One respondent said: *'These other countries are chicken crap. Let them say whatever they want. Who needs them?'*

As Joe Nye, former Dean of the Kennedy School at Harvard and one of our advisors, noted in his recent book 'Soft Power', 'Americans will have to become more aware of cultural differences ... To be effective, we must become less parochial and more sensitive to foreign perceptions. Americans need to listen.'

There is much work to be done and we are actively seeking partners to help build upon and magnify the 'World Citizens Guide' content.

Additionally, and in the spirit of the Alliance's leadership, we plan to encourage a number of US corporations to sponsor massive intern exchange programs. Letting bright foreign and American young people experience a business exchange on a massive level would go far, we think, toward changing attitudes and perceptions. Such a program would be especially important in light of the current visa environment in which many of the best and brightest minds from abroad are choosing not to study here or are having great difficulty obtaining visas to come to the US. As many others have observed, loss of such talent to other nations will eventually erode America's competitive edge.

#### Sharing best practices

American multinational companies are actively engaged in a variety of positive public diplomacy efforts to improve the lives of many throughout the world. These efforts are largely unknown, and we feel there is potentially tremendous power in sharing what they have learned with us and with each other. These could then be shared broadly as models for all US companies who do business overseas and wish to engage in public diplomacy efforts.

#### PRIVATE SECTOR-LED PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Let me next turn to your specific interest in the Middle East and the statement you highlighted from the 9/11 report: 'America and its friends have a crucial advantage — we can offer [Muslim] parents a vision that might give their children a better future ... the United States must stand for a better future.'

From all of our guidance gleaned from the region, we know the way to engage the Muslim mother and her child is not

to 'teach them American values.' The key is to be *responsive* to a need and desire that we can actually meet. As in all actions and especially in all messages, we must follow the old *Reader's Digest* headline writer's rule: '*Always start where the reader is.*' We all have a tendency to start where we are. We want the audience to know what we want to tell them. In the commercial world, we have learned that you can only get them where you want them to be if you start from where they are. Muslim parents wanting a brighter future for their children is the place to start. And the gateway to their child's brighter future is education and learning.

One example of a private sector initiative to facilitate ongoing dialogues and partnerships in educational programming is Sesame Workshop. The goal of 'Sesame Street' is not to teach American values but to facilitate learning, which it does in ways that are closely in tune with local culture and concerns. According to Gary Knell, President and CEO of Sesame Workshop and a member of the BDA board who is with me here today, 'No lesson could be more important than learning respect for others. It is a complex and multifaceted issue.' What Sesame has done to apply its technique in countries around the world is to create locally developed versions of 'Sesame Street' that are culturally and socially relevant in each locale. The South African production, 'Takalani Sesame', attempts to contribute to educational goals of humanizing and destigmatizing people with HIV/AIDS by introducing a 5-year-old Muppet, Kami, who is HIV positive. In Egypt, 'Alam SimSim' addresses the country's critical need to bolster girls' education through Khoka, a 'full of beans' Muppet who aspires to succeed in myriad professions. Also of note, USAID is a committed partner of Sesame's who

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understands the power of media in developing educational platforms in developing countries. They have been strong supporters in Egypt, South Africa, Bangladesh and now India.

Next spring, Sesame is aiming to convene the first annual Arab Educational Media Summit in the region, which we fully support and encourage. This summit will bring together broadcasters, business leaders, media professionals, researchers and educators with a single objective in mind, to improve children's television in the Arab world.

#### **The messenger must be credible**

Much as I suspect you are anxious to create effective messages from the US government to the Middle East, I respectfully suggest that even with careful planning, such an effort is likely to meet with failure at this time. Based on everything we know, the US government is simply not a credible messenger.

I quote from the 'Report of the Subcommittee on Public-Private Partnerships and Public Diplomacy': 'In many cases and situations, non-governmental actors may be better placed to achieve a given impact than the government. Official public diplomacy efforts need to be designed against this background. For example, in present circumstances in the Arab and Muslim world, the need to strengthen and elevate the voices of those within the Islamic faith and culture who oppose radical ideas is a task much more effectively performed by non-government actors than by the government. Much the same is true regarding the spread of the message of the advantages of free-market capitalism as a source of prosperity and the foundation for individual liberty. Government policies and resource allocations for public

diplomacy should explicitly address and embrace programs and approaches that provide incentives to private sector organizations to perform tasks in which the direct and obvious engagement would be counterproductive.'

In the commercial world, we know that people don't buy things from people they don't trust. By and large, in the Muslim world, the US government is not trusted.

When the State Department asked us to comment on its *Hi* magazine, designed for Arab youth, we conducted 'man on the street' interviews in Egypt and in Jordan. We also enlisted a young Egyptian studying in the US to help us gather comments from his Arab friends and family in the US. We culled the reactions and responses, noting that credibility issues were at the core of many of the negative reactions.

This is one of the young Egyptian's quotes: 'What makes it difficult to accept is that anything that the American government does is going to be dismissed as propaganda, before we even look at it. Many people [at home in Egypt] say that all this magazine is doing is trying to make the American government look good, when it really isn't.' He went on to say, 'It's a huge obstacle, even if the magazine was perfect.'

The 'credibility of the messenger' point is also made by Professor Fawaz Gerges, the Christian A. Johnson Chair in International Affairs and Middle Eastern Studies at Sarah Lawrence College and a frequent guest on ABC 'World News Tonight' and CNN. Professor Gerges is a Muslim, a historian and an advisor to Business for Diplomatic Action. He confirms what others have said, that far from being resentful and hateful toward America and Americans, Arabs and Muslims are deeply attracted to and fascinated with the American idea.

### **Bridges of trust**

Professor Gerges goes on to say: 'In the last few years, so much focus has been on foreign relations and on the opposing relations between the United States and the Arab world, that the basic challenge today is how to shift the debate from foreign policy to civil society on the American idea. I believe that regardless of what the American government does, its ability to positively influence public opinion is very limited.'

According to Professor Gerges, 'American civil society means universities, opinion makers, the media, and business — they have a vital role in rebuilding what I call bridges of trust — the broken bridges of trust between the United States and the Arab and Muslim world.'

The implication for this committee, then, is to guide the US government to give support and incentives to empower and activate credible messengers who can begin the process of bridge building.

As a mindset for bridge builders, whether in the private or public sector, I commend the eloquent advice of one of our young staffers in Cairo, who said: 'In investment, America must be presented as the facilitator, not the patron. In the realm of charity, as the partner and not the philanthropist. In business endeavors, as the courier of progress, and not the preachers of westernization.'

### **A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY POST 9/11**

Were BDA given the task of crafting a response to the challenge posed by the 9/11 Commission, we would basically invoke the same strategy-development process we in the marketing world would use to address any major global brand in trouble or any company being attacked by a competitor wishing to

destroy or diminish it. Applied to the United States, that five-step process would look something like this:

#### **Step I: Listen, ask questions, and analyze**

Question: How is the United States currently perceived by the world?

'O would that God the gift might give us  
To see ourselves as others see us.'

Robert Burns

Answering this question in the spirit of Scottish poet Robert Burns requires a careful review of all existing data, plus conducting any original research needed to fill remaining knowledge gaps. In truth, there are knowledge gaps with regard to issues of anti-American sentiment and public diplomacy programming — they are difficult issues to evaluate and quantify and we are only in the early stages of really understanding many of the complexities surrounding the issues at hand. A comprehensive answer to this first question, however, broken down by country and region, is essential to correctly answering subsequent questions that we would offer in our process.

#### **Step II: Participate in a foundation-building process for a comprehensive communications strategy**

In this step, a special task force made up of knowledgeable representatives from all key public and private sectors that are responsible for message creation or delivery is assigned to work with us. First, they are given all the research and analysis conducted in Step I, and then asked to gather for two days to participate in what we call a foundation-building process. This is a

structured, facilitated and highly participative process by which, through a series of proven exercises, we draw out answers to several specific questions from each participant, answering for the United States as if the US were a person.

**Step III: Introduce a 'positioning concept' for the US in a post 9/11 world**

Professional planners, expert in the process, analyze the work of the task force members and present back to them a distillation of the foundation they created. Modifications are discussed and agreed to before the concept is disseminated to all who need to know. Often, a positioning concept can be expressed as the right combination of three Ps: *A point of view, a promise, and a personality.* Once the special task force approves the 'positioning concept' for the US in a post 9/11 world, we would proceed to Step IV.

**Step IV: Develop a comprehensive communications plan**

This plan typically takes the form of a multi-audience grid on which each relevant constituent group is given a column. For each group, eg Muslim parents, Muslim youth, Chinese business leaders, US citizens, etc, we list existing attitudes, desired attitudes, barriers standing between existing and desired attitudes, best incentive or motivation for achieving desired attitudes, and most relevant communications channels.

Obviously, answers to these questions will vary by the group being addressed, but all must be translations of the agreed upon 'positioning concept'. Importantly, all reflect the style or tone of voice determined and agreed to by the multi-agency task force. *The importance of*

*this element of style and tone cannot be overstated.* In the commercial sector, we know that it is not so much what you say, but how you say it. Similarly in diplomacy, style is often substance.

Because the US government has so many official messengers, the need to have all of them 'singing off the same sheet' is especially important.

**Step V: Put someone in charge**

Once the comprehensive communications plan is agreed to, someone needs to be empowered to make sure all activities, behaviors and messages are aligned to the new positioning concept. This same person, though not a political appointee, should oversee and coordinate the execution of the comprehensive communications plan across the varied stakeholders who are involved with carrying out the message and implementing public service programs. Without this function, the voice of America will be splintered and confused and, perhaps, contradictory.

**BUSINESS FOR DIPLOMATIC ACTION WANTS TO HELP**

I attended a Seeds of Peace gala earlier this year where Tom Friedman, the foreign affairs correspondent of *The New York Times*, observed that 'these days, all the creativity and imagination seems to be on the side of the terrorists'.

As someone who has worked in and with American business for 50 years, and traveled the world for many of those years, I can assure you there is a great deal more creativity and imagination in the US business community than could exist in the minds of a thousand terrorists. I invite you to tap into that reservoir of creativity.

Who better than the creative men and women who power the world's most

**Table 1:** America's most admirable qualities

Historic	New (by 2015?)
'Can do' spirit	Honesty/integrity
Enthusiasm to be best	Fairness
Technology	Empathy
Way of doing business	Courier of progress
Land of opportunity	Ethics model
Freedom	Multilingual, multicultural
Creativity	An inspiring world leader
Diversity	The model world citizen

successful enterprises — the business community of the United States of America.

*Business for Diplomatic Action is committed to mobilizing that power.*

We'd like to think that if you invite me back here say, 10 or 15 years from now, I could show you a slide confirming that America's historic positive qualities are still admired, but that a list of new positive perceptions has been added [see Table 1].

I'd like to close with a quote from the famous founder of DDB Bill Bernbach, who said:

'We are so busy measuring public opinion, we forget we can mold it. We are so busy listening to statistics, we forget we can create them.'

He went on to say:

'In this real world, good doesn't replace evil. Evil doesn't replace good. But the energetic displaces the passive.'

It's a mantra that should inspire us all. We stand ready to help in whatever way we can, to lend our energies and our experience to create better standing in the world for the United States of America."

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