Opening the Realm:
The Role of Communications in
Negotiating the Tension of Values
in Globalization

A Report of the 2004 Annual Meeting of the
Aspen Institute Forum on Communications and Society

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THE ASPEN INSTITUTE

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The reader should note that this report is written from the perspective of an informed observer at the conference. Unless cited to a particular person, none of the comments or ideas contained in this report should be taken as embodying the views or carrying the endorsement of any specific participant at the conference.

Foreword

The Washington Consensus of the post-Cold War 1990s suggested that a diet of free enterprise capitalism and democratic governance would lead to a peaceful and prosperous world. But Amy Chua, a Yale Law professor, suggested a thesis in *The World on Fire* that the simultaneous export of democracy and free market capitalism fueled ethnic conflict in post-autocratic societies. Unfettered capitalism allowed wealthy ethnic elite classes in these countries to expand their relative position against the rest of the country. And the new democracy allowed demagogues to rail against that wealthy minority, exacerbating existing prejudices and exploding into ethnic violence.

The Aspen Institute Communications and Society Program has as its focus the impact of information and communications technologies on societal questions. As a way of exploring Chua's topic in 2004—and applying the communications media and technology to it—we created a "value triangle," which, as one will see in the text of the following report, could also be considered a triangle of forces. The point was and is that the values of peace, prosperity and fairness, or the forces of security, capitalism (or free markets), and democracy can all be in tension with each other.

Globalization & Democratization: A Value Triangle

Security

Democracy   Capitalism
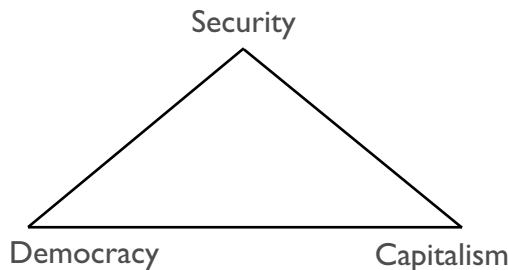
The goals of peace, prosperity and good governance can be applied to every society. They can come from better security, some form of capitalism (or other economic system, as some suggested at the conference), and a fair system of governance which most, but not all, agreed is some form of democracy.

Yet each value point of that triangle can conflict with each of the others. One example: a society that allows unfettered capitalism may find that the day-to-day workings of its democratic government are impeded, and the country could be insecure—for example when an entrepreneur sells nuclear weapons secrets to potential enemies of the state. A very secure state may be repressive in ways that are neither "democratic" nor "capitalistic" by being very restrictive of liberties and stifling the ability of companies to operate freely in the marketplace. Furthermore, democratic governments can be highly restrictive of capitalistic forces, and heavily tilted toward civil liberties in such a way that it creates tensions with the forces of security.

FOCAS Roundtable. Within this context, the Aspen Institute Communications and Society Program convened its annual Forum on Communications and Society (FOCAS), a CEO level roundtable of 22 leaders from government, business, academia, media and the non-profit sector, to address how the communications media and information technologies can be used to ameliorate or exacerbate the tensions among the values of peace, prosperity, and good governance, or among the forces of security, capitalism, and democracy. That is, can the media help a society gain the simultaneous benefit of all three values or forces? How does one prioritize how the media go about doing that in a free society? What is the role of the new media, which has so much promise to involve the individual in new ways?

The discussion on these issues was exciting and far-ranging. By the nature of these roundtables, there are few concrete conclusions that can be acted upon instantly, but many good insights that come from respectful dialogue among participants with creative intellect and divergent points of view, coming from different cultures. We hope, however, that the following report of the sessions by rapporteur

Michael Suman will inspire new thoughts and actions in the reader, that they will kindle an effort to promote media and new communications technologies in ways that foster peace, prosperity and good governance, and that they will lead to actions that move along the right path towards those goals.

This report benefits from some rather unusual dynamics at our conferences. First, FOCAS co-chair Reed Hundt was unusually provocative in suggesting some rather far reaching proposals on the first day as a way of addressing the need for the world to come to grips with our failures in security, development and good governance. This created an atmosphere of candor and creativity on the part of the participants.

On the last day of the roundtable, our other co-chair, Marc Nathanson, led the group through a very enlightening simulation of the national security process in the United States. This is not directly reflected in the report, as we seek to give you the results of the dialogue, not a fly-on-the-wall recounting of the process. Being fortunate to have a very experienced and distinguished group around the table, this simulation had the Chancellor of UCLA as the President, a former Secretary of State as the National Security Advisor, an FCC Commissioner as Secretary of Defense, and the Philippine Secretary of Education as Head of Public Diplomacy. The discussion was spirited, and we hope the report is useful in thinking about how the communications sector can be a positive force in the world going forward.

Report. Some of the conclusions, as recounted inside, include, first and foremost, the need for any national communications policy, particularly that of the United States, to be two-way. We need to listen and observe the sensibilities of others as well as "transmit" our values. Measures that seek to do this will have the best chances for success. This includes having humility in world affairs, seeking the opinion of others, encouraging exchanges in media and education, among other sectors, and employing the new communications technologies, which are inherently interactive.

To succeed in having a safer, more prosperous and better governed world of nations, we will need to build up local institutions, including free media, throughout the world, engage the private sector in partnership with governmental initiatives, involve the non-profit sector (NGOs), and create alliances with the goal of fostering a world where people have more choices over their lives, economically and politically. In all of this, new and old media will play a crucial, hopefully positive, role.

I should point out that the role of the rapporteur is not to record all comments made in the three days of roundtable exchange, but rather to pull from the dialogue a series of themes, punctuated by participant comments, that advance the reader's understanding of the topic. In this case, given the variety of perspectives around the table, that task was particularly difficult. From the beginning, discussion ranged from the value of the "values" to the nature of the political systems worldwide. To that end, I will take responsibility for any confusion that a reader might encounter. In the desire to bring an Aspen "values" seminar methodology to a policy discussion, I created the value triangle using concepts from Amy Chua's book, i.e., democracy and free market capitalism, and those terms were used during much of the discussion. In fact, one could substitute the goals of good governance, peace and prosperity for "democracy" "security" and "capitalism" in order to get at the underlying concepts we were aiming for: the role of the communications sectors in ameliorating the conflicts among the security, economic and socio-political goals. Inherent in the report is the assumption that democracy and capitalism are the best ways toward good governance and prosperity, though we must recognize that there are many variants of both throughout the world. As one participant observed, the Chinese are not convinced that their brand of socialism is not superior—especially for their unique society.

Acknowledgments

We want to thank each of the members of the FOCAS for supporting this activity and participating in the conference and activities. The members are listed in the Appendix to this volume. Particularly, I would like to thank Reed Hundt and Marc Nathanson for co-chairing FOCAS in 2004 and making it successful in every way. I also thank Jane and Marc

Nathanson for generously hosting a dinner at their home for the FOCAS and friends. We also thank Michael Suman for deftly writing this report, Maria Medrano for managing the project, including editing background readings and managing the conference details, as well as bringing this report to fruition, and our assistant director, Patricia Kelly, who supervised the operations and report.

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March 2005

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OPENING THE REALM:
THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATIONS IN NEGOTIATING THE TENSION OF VALUES IN GLOBALIZATION

Michael Suman

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Michael Suman

Introduction

We live in an era in which security concerns have become paramount, the forces of capitalism have dealt a death blow to socialist command economies, and the United States is aggressively promoting democracy in the Middle East. In this context, what does the future hold for the values of security, capitalism, and democracy? Historians tell us we also are in the Digital Age—increasingly so with the advent of new communications technologies such as the Internet. What role can the media play in fostering the values of security, capitalism, and democracy?

The 2004 meeting of the Aspen Institute Forum on Communications and Society (FOCAS) addressed the role and impact of media and communications technologies in negotiating among the values of capitalism, democracy, and security throughout the world. Can societies realize these values simultaneously, or do any of them take precedence over the others? The values undoubtedly are related to each other. Does realization of one of the values cause tensions with the others? If fulfillment of each of these goals creates tension with the others, how can and do the media exacerbate or ameliorate these tensions?

The FOCAS meeting was held in Aspen over three days, August 11–14, 2004. The starting point of the discussion was based loosely on the contention by Amy Chua, in her book *World on Fire*, that simultaneous export of universal suffrage (democracy) and unfettered free markets (capitalism) has led in many cases to violence against dominant ethnic minorities (security). The ultimate goal of the discussion was to create policy suggestions for the use of media

and communication technologies to foster prosperity (essentially through capitalism), good governance (essentially through democracy), and security throughout the globe, while minimizing the potential problems that might arise from tensions between and among these sometimes competing values.

The Value Triangle: Democracy, Capitalism, and Security and the Tensions among these Values

Before discussing the fate of democracy, capitalism, and security, we need some understanding of what these terms mean. What is democracy? The classical definition, at least as it has emerged from the United States, is rule by the majority, with protection of minority rights. Madeleine Albright, former U.S. Secretary of State and now principal of the Albright Group, asserted that despite some differences in how democracy is practiced from place to place, the term refers to a process in which people have power to make significant choices that affect their lives.

What is capitalism? Is capitalism driving our global economy today, or might "free markets" or "economic development" be a better term? Christine Loh, chief executive officer (CEO) of Civic Exchange, asked whether, in focusing on capitalism, we are rejecting other, non-Western economic systems, such as socialism. James Dobbins, director of the International Security and Defense Policy Center at the RAND Corporation, suggested that the terms originally presented should merely be considered and accepted as archetypes. Capitalism is the "capitalism of Carnegie and Rockefeller," and democracy is the "democracy of Socrates." Similarly, are democracy, capitalism, and security actually values? Might they be more accurately described as forces? As typically happens in such discussions, these definitional matters were never fully resolved. For the purposes of this report, democracy, capitalism, and security are referred to as both values and forces.

One of the fundamental problems in fostering democracy, capitalism, and security in the world today is the tension that often can exist between and among these values. These tensions can be illustrated with a value triangle (see figure).

Globalization & Democratization:
A Value Triangle

Security

Democracy   Capitalism
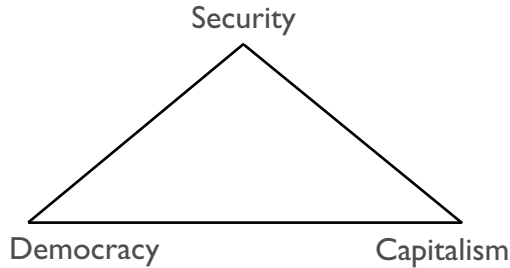
Security and democracy goals can clash. Security requires nation-states, and such nation-states need to be powerful. However, the security-promoting aspects of these states can counter some aspects of liberty and responsive republican government that are essential to our vision of democracy. This tension is evident in certain aspects of the USA PATRIOT Act, for example, which some critics regard as seriously limiting the civil liberties of Americans.

The goals of capitalism and democracy also can come into conflict. In democratic societies, majorities can vote to reallocate wealth and in the process undermine the property rights of the economic elite—rights that are vital to our notion of capitalism. Conversely, Italian Prime Minster Silvio Berlusconi controls the private Italian media and now is in a position to exert control over the government media in Italy as well. This exercise of economic power has obvious implications for the health of Italian democracy.

As for security versus capitalism, the process of globalization seems to undermine state power, which is used to ensure the rule of law, maintain order, and ensure domestic security. Nation-states have limited power over multinational organizations that operate outside any one state's controls and laws. At the same time, depending on its level and character, internal security could promote or

dampen the spirit of enterprise upon which capitalism thrives. Another example of tension between these forces is the case of the Pakistani nuclear physicist Abdul Qadeer Khan, who, in the spirit of capitalism, sold nuclear secrets for profit—with obvious and serious security ramifications.

The tensions often entail complex relations among all three values. For example, one key democratic value is freedom of expression. In capitalistic economies, businesses—including media companies—are largely free to maximize profit. Yet programs resulting from the drive for profit and products created in a democratic atmosphere largely free of censorship can have negative repercussions for security.

In the capitalistic, democratic United States, for example, shows such as *Baywatch* are created and then exported to other parts of the world. Conservative Muslims in the Middle East see this show and similar shows, which encourage some viewers to consider the United States a godless and hedonistic society. This dynamic fosters feelings of antipathy, fear, and even outright hostility toward the encroaching cultural impact of United States—possibly even terrorism, undermining America's security interests.

There is no universal agreement regarding the incompatibility of the three triangle values. Each value, pushed to its extreme, probably would undermine the other values. Nevertheless, judicious management in balancing these values—a particularly difficult task in developing societies that are still struggling with governance issues—is a desirable good.

Some observers think tensions among theses values are inevitable. For example, Albert Carnesale, chancellor of the University of California–Los Angeles (UCLA), argued that whereas democracy tends to redistribute resources broadly, capitalism naturally tends to redistribute resources narrowly; thus, there is a natural tension between these forces.

There is a newly emerging view, however, that capitalism need not distribute resources narrowly. According to the ideas of economist Hernando DeSoto (frequently cited by discussants), if property rights are well defined and properly understood, individuals at the bottom

of the economic scale can have adequate resources, and there could be a lessening of the wealth divide. In this context, capitalism could be an equalizing force. "Democracy combined with property rights would in fact then create the world's most secure societies. Democracy in many ways could be seen as the most stable form of government. Everyone has a chance to participate in it," Madeleine Albright observed. On the other hand, extrapolating from Chua's book, in situations in which democratic, social, and economic rights are not well distributed, resentment of the "haves" by the "have-nots" could lead to security problems and exacerbation of tensions between the triangle points.

The focus on the forces of democracy, capitalism, and security is especially relevant given the current state of the world. Yet we must keep in mind that the applicability of these values changes from time to time and place to place. Tribalism and nationalism, which are intricately entangled with these three forces, were thought to be on the way out several decades ago but are now back with a vengeance. Globalization has done anything but quash tribalism and nationalism. Albright explained how globalization has actually encouraged people to identify with ever-smaller units as a means of establishing a self-identity that is threatened by the larger global forces. Similarly, despite earlier predictions the nation-state is stronger than ever. In large part because of security issues, people have not been willing to hand over the power to protect themselves to international bodies.

"There has been a resolidification of the state to deal with security," Albright noted. She said that when she was the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations she shared with others a vision of gradual integration of nation-states. In her mind, she placed nations into one of four categories. The first and largest category included states that believe in an international system and are willing to give up some of their sovereignty to act according to treaties. The second group was composed of new countries that do not yet have developed infrastructures to operate like states in the first category. The nations in this second category, however, aspire to be first-category countries. The third category consisted of states that are very poor and had no infrastructure. The fourth category included rogue states that want to destroy countries in the first

group. The goal, from the perspective of Albright and like-minded peo-
ple, is to bring everyone into the first group.

This view of the world has broken down, however, with the shift-
ing international situation. "Nonstate actors" were especially instru-
mental in bringing about this shift. Moreover, citing U.S. government
antipathy toward several treaties in recent years, Albright noted that
she might no longer even consider the United States a member of the
first category. "I used to say that the United States was the major play-
er in the first group. I now would question whether we are members
in good standing in the first group." The point is that we live in a
dynamic world, and the triangle will relate to the world situation in
different ways at different times.

In the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, the United States cer-
tainly places more emphasis on security than it did five years ago. John
Clippinger, senior fellow at the Berkman Center for Internet and
Society at Harvard Law School, pointed out that the drift toward
focusing more on security also is related to the fact that weaponry has
gotten smaller and more lethal. It is becoming increasingly easy for
small, disenfranchised groups to destabilize the world with bioterror
weapons, backpack nukes, and the like. In a sense, then, we are seeing
the democratization of weaponry and the emergence of small- and
medium-scale capitalist ventures in the arms trade, which intensify
security concerns.

As any one country will relate to the triangle values in different
ways at different times, each country also will have its own unique
relationship with the values. Christine Loh, chief executive officer
(CEO) of Civic Exchange in Hong Kong, explained that China has a
"fundamentally different organizational principle" than the United
States. China represents a different worldview and has a very different
take on the values of democracy, capitalism, and security. As China
develops and becomes more successful economically, it is likely to
articulate and advocate more comprehensively its alternative world-
view, which emphasizes a form of "limited democracy." This alterna-
tive vision may be a key element of the world dialogue for the future.
Loh added that the Islamic worldview needs to be brought in as well,

so that we have a "dialogue of cultures" on how best to organize society. More thought also should be given to Hong Kong, which could function as a link among the alternatives in this debate because there was a lively debate on Hong Kong's constitutional and political evolution in the next few years that would be translated into implementation in 2007–2008 and beyond.

In this light, countries might concentrate on values other than the three that are the focus of this report. For example, Imam Feisal Rauf, founder and CEO of the American Sufi Muslim Association Society, said he did "not quite subscribe to the three points of the triangle." He accepted the elements of democracy and capitalism, but for the third element of the triangle he suggested that "values" would be more appropriate. A key unanswered question in the world today involves which set of values to embrace—resolution of which involves matters of ethics and religion. "This actually defines the very nexus of the clash between the Western civilization and Islamic civilization," states Rauf. Different answers to the question of what is right, what set of values should be subscribed to, are especially evident in the contrast between more secular, humanistic, and science-based societies and societies that are based more on traditional religious values.

These viewpoints, along with Christine Loh's observation on capitalism, remind us that there are culturally variable perceptions of the values of democracy, capitalism, and security. Moreover, we should keep in mind that the value triangle, based on the contemporary forces of globalization and democratization, is just one of many possible frameworks.

Sequencing Values

As we take differing cultural perspectives into account, we also must recognize differential development of the forces of democracy and capitalism in different countries and parts of the world. Edilberto de Jesus, secretary of education for the Philippines, pointed out that the United States and Europe had the luxury of slowly evolving democratic systems over centuries. On the other hand, many nations are now being asked to develop democratic and capitalistic institutions within a very short

time frame. How realistic is it for societies organized according to long-standing ties on the basis of language, blood, or religion—ties that often do not mesh neatly with the forces of capitalism and democracy—to jump into a global society without problems?

This matter of development also raises the issue of the sequence in which values are adopted. The chronological ordering seems to be variable, as do the reasons one value is adopted before another. James Dobbins of the RAND Corporation pointed out that sequencing of values "depends on whether you are talking about pulling a failed state together, or…developing a newly ordered society in more benign circumstances." After pointing out that societies first must shore up their basic security and safety, Dobbins argued that most Western democracies developed democracy first and prosperous economies second. On the other hand, most of the developed East Asian countries became prosperous first, then democratic. As for most of the Middle Eastern countries, they have not yet become either prosperous or democratic.

With regard to American priorities, Dobbins noted that we "don't usually invade [places] to make them prosperous, we invade them to make them democratic." After Word War II, our plans in Japan and Germany were sequential. Our first priority was making these countries democratic, and in fact they became democracies while they were "still on their knees" economically. They subsequently became prosperous and consequently identified their prosperity with democracy. Thus, their prosperity, in a sense, consolidated the democratic model for them. Economic prosperity did not contribute to the placement of the democratic system, however. The Latin American countries have followed the Western model in becoming democratic first, but for the most part they have remained poor. The same holds true for India.

> **"The only *sine qua non* for democracy is the existence of a middle class."**
>
> *Madeleine Albright*

There are differences of opinion, however, with regard to the sequence of adoption of values. Philippine Secretary of Education Edilberto de Jesus took exception to Dobbins' outline, arguing that if democracy is more than simply elections—particularly if democracy is considered primarily a system of regularly scheduled elections with universal suffrage—capitalism came to the Western countries before democracy. Madeleine Albright noted that it is very difficult to map out a single model for this sequential development. Culture and history make a big difference. "For me, the only *sine qua non* for democracy is the existence of a middle class," Albright said—which obviously is the result of economic development. Imam Feisal Rauf argued that the United States and Europe moved ahead of the rest of the world in the development of the triangle values because of economic superiority—namely, the capacity to develop enormous pools of capital.

> **"Values don't drive our policies, interests do."**
>
> *Albert Carnesale*

Values versus Interests

American values often conflict with U.S. interests. When this tension occurs, does the United States typically remain true to its values? Unfortunately not, UCLA Chancellor Albert Carnesale argued. The United States supports Arab regimes, he suggested, because if the Arab people in those countries chose their own governments we would not like the results. Hence, we espouse democracy, but there clearly is an antidemocratic impulse. We espouse and promote capitalism and free trade—but oppose it when it threatens to harm our steel industry or farmers. We say we want freedom of religion and that people should be able to choose their religion—but only as long as that choice is favorable to the United States, and we certainly do not want any hostile theocracies. Ultimately, what is most important to us is our national defense, our national security. According to Carnesale, "We can't simply promote what we see as our idealistic positive values. We have to also recognize also the realities of some of the trade-offs we have to make."

"Values don't drive our policies, interests do," Carnesale asserted. "What we care for most in regard to other countries is that they do not

threaten our security. Secondly, we are interested in our financial well-being, so we promote markets and free trade. Thirdly, we promote democracy because we believe it will enhance our security and foster those markets. We do not start out on the noble mission of bringing democracy to the world. This is why we so often prop up authoritarian regimes when it is in our financial and security interests to do so."

The issue of resources and interests and their relationship to the values of the triangle is important. One major criticism of the United States is that it often supports regimes that do not uphold basic American values merely because these governments serve its economic or geopolitical interests. Humanitarian activist and United Nations expert advisor Queen Noor of Jordan argued that the United States should be strengthening civil society and organizations by encouraging and supporting, through its policies, American democratic values that are consistent with Arab and Muslim values of equality, social equity, consultation, and consensus-building—which are weak or nonexistent in all Arab states. Instead, the widespread perception is that U.S. economic and politic self-interest act in opposition to values that traditionally have been a beacon of hope and source of admiration for people throughout the world. Queen Noor asserted there is a need to promote "those American values that are not present in pretty much every regime in the region [of the Middle East]." Designations by the United States of good and bad regimes in the Middle East typically are not based on American values. There are "massive contradictions that exist in terms of which regimes are 'good' regimes and which are 'not good' regimes," she said.

That the United States does not consider other nations' national interests before its own should come as no surprise. Moreover, it is naive to think that other countries are not considering their own national interests first and foremost. This is not to say, however, that values play no role in U.S. policy, said Madeleine Albright. Values are still an important part of the U.S. policy equation.

To what extent, however? One example of the United States propping up an authoritarian regime was its support of the Marcos administration in the Philippines. Melinda Quintos de Jesus, executive direc-

tor of the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility in the Philippines, explained that there had been a long history of democracy-building in the Philippines that was interrupted by this dictatorship, which was supported by the U.S. military until it became "unworkable and no longer acceptable." Since the reemergence of democracy, many problems have been encountered. There has been corruption in the government and in the press. Journalists investigating powerful but corrupt interests have been killed. Some observers have even questioned whether democracy was introduced too quickly. Yet in this context the United States has offered little help.

The United States seems to have turned away from the Philippines as that country deals with the difficulties of its transition to a real, mature democracy. The U.S. position seems to be that once a country becomes free and has moved into the democratic camp, it is on its own. If the U.S. policy is value-oriented, Quintos de Jesus asserted, it needs to face up to the difficulties involved in realization of its ideals. The United States needs to take more of an interest in the difficult, long-term unfolding of democracy in diverse and challenging situations. If it is not willing to do so, maybe it should "move way from all this democracy-selling." Maybe "the whole democracy-building industry should just fold up."

Thus, there is a fundamental challenge for a nation to seriously live up to and support its values, especially when those values might run counter to important interests.

The Media's Role in Fostering and Prioritizing Values and Mediating Tensions

The world's media systems obviously influence people's values and beliefs. How can the media affect the spread of democracy, capitalism, and security? How can they promote or undermine these values? As tensions can occur between and among these values, what role do the media play in exacerbating or mitigating these tensions? Do the media bias cultures in favor of capitalism at the expense of democracy or even security? Can the media promote democracy, capitalism, and security simultaneously? What are the roles of advertising-based systems, public service broadcasting, and state-owned media? What is the effect of

one country, such as the United States, sending broadcast messages to other nations? How might the media suggest positive roles that governments and creative individuals can play with regard to promoting the triangle values?

The media can be used to foster or hinder each of the triangle values. Reed Hundt, senior advisor at McKinsey & Company, pointed out that a nation's "media can be biased for or against democracy." In the United States the media historically have been the ally of democracy. Similarly, Pat Mitchell, president and CEO of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), illustrated how radio in Afghanistan is being used to get women to register to vote, thereby fostering that country's nascent democracy. Melinda Quintos de Jesus related how the alternative "mosquito" press helped topple the Marcos regime and investigative journalism helped reveal the corruption of the Estrada administration—each fostering democracy in the Philippines. Madeleine Albright explained that the media can be crucial to democracy as alternative sources of information supply people with choices that are the very basis of a democratic system. On the other hand, for much of history the media have not fostered democracy in countries with more authoritarian regimes, such as Russia.

Hundt continued that "the media can be biased for or against capitalism." In the United States the media are very pro-capitalism, with advertising and licenses sold to the highest bidder. This is not the case in countries where "licenses aren't sold, aren't transferable in a private market, and in which there is no advertising." Furthermore, Hundt explained, "the media can be biased for or against security." The media can be used to help terrorists and undermine security, or they can cooperate with or be used by the government to enhance public safety.

The goal is to get the three points of the triangle in harmony. For this task, the role of the media is crucial. Democracy, capitalism, and security *can* be developed simultaneously, and the media can play a key role in explaining to people how there can be a complementary relationship between and among the forces.

The United States, primarily through its mass media, is the most powerful cultural diffusion machine on the planet. It also is the leading proponent of democracy and capitalism in the world. Furthermore, the way it is viewed by the world is key to making it secure. In this light, the FOCAS participants unanimously agreed that the media are essential to the United States for transmitting its values to countries around the world.

America in the Eyes of the World

American media today are operating in a context of anti-Americanism. Recent findings of the Pew Global Attitudes Project show that fewer people have a favorable view of the United States today than at almost any time in history. One fundamental question is, How can the American media foster the spread of the triangle values in this context? Certainly it is more difficult for the United States to influence the world and bring about democracy and economic reform when it has significant reputation problems.

Historically the United States has been quite successful using the media as an effective tool of public diplomacy and in the process effecting political change around the world. Madeleine Albright compared the present problematic situation with the sizeable impact of Voice of America and Radio Free Europe during the Cold War. These media were very successful in positively shaping listeners' views of the United States. This success was accomplished not just with news but also with programming such as baseball and jazz. In the later stages of the Cold War, CNN, MTV, and other media outlets played a role as well. Leslie L. Vadasz, a retired executive with Intel Corporation, supported Albright's points by recalling his experiences listening to Sarah Vaughn and Ella Fitzgerald when he was living in Hungary in the 1950s.

Why is the situation so different now? Queen Noor argued that audiences are much more aware of the United States today, with day-to-day monitoring of news that is available 24 hours a day. Jonathan

Wolman, editorial page editor of the *Denver Post*, posited that issues are much messier today because the black-and-white "Cold War clarity" is gone.

Imam Feisal Rauf argued that in the Cold War conflict the United States was regarded as lobbying for the freedom of people living under communism. From the Islamic perspective, however, since the United States supported a coup in Iran in 1953, America has not been regarded as promoting freedom in the Muslim world. In fact, with the demise of the Soviet Union, some observers, such as Samuel Huntington, have pointed to Islam as the next enemy of the West. This viewpoint "aroused a very strong [negative] reaction in the Muslim world," Rauf observed.

> **Since the United States supported a coup in Iran in 1953, America has not been regarded as promoting freedom in the Muslim world.**
>
> *Imam Feisal Rauf*

The average man and woman on the Arab street regard the United States and the West as pushing religion out of the public sphere with their embrace of secularism and their emphasis on the separation of church and state. These Arabs see the "empty values" of the West in the media content exported from the United States. Shows such as the internationally popular *Baywatch*, which often emphasize characters' sexuality, are considered dangerous and potentially corrosive to the well-being of Muslim youth. Rauf contends that things could be different. "The Islamic ethic is itself the Judeo-Christian ethic," he said. The core values of these two civilizations are actually "fundamentally in sync," and this relationship could be emphasized. This new emphasis could be actively related to promotion of democratic, capitalist Islamic states, which need not look too different from capitalist democracies in the West. This promotion, however, must avoid a variety of pitfalls. For example, he suggested, the knee-jerk identification of Islam with terrorism must stop.

U.S. International Broadcasting Efforts

Shining a spotlight on what is arguably the most challenging and problematic part of the world for the United States, Norman Pattiz, chairman of media corporation Westwood One Inc. and member of the U.S. Broadcasting Board of Governors (USBBG), explained how Radio Sawa—the U.S. government's 24/7 music, news, and information radio service—and Alhurra Television, the U.S.-sponsored, Arabic-language satellite TV channel that broadcasts to the entire Middle East, operate to present American values to the Arab and Muslim world. Pattiz pointed out that the first and primary goal of Radio Sawa, which targets listeners under age 25, is to promote democracy, freedom, and the free flow of information. The second goal is to present U.S. policy, along with "pro" and "con" views about that policy; Radio Sawa definitely does not function as a mouthpiece of the U.S. government, Pattiz observed, which would leave the station "dead on the air." Alhurra Television, which was launched in 2004, has been "a civics lesson in American democracy" with its coverage of issues such as the U.S. presidential election, the speeches of President Bush, and the U.S. reaction and response to the prisoner abuse scandals in Iraq.

These media operate in the context of an indigenous media that presents a very negative picture of the United States and its values. Moreover, they are operating in a period when the reputation of the United States is at an all-time low. Pattiz argued that both of these stations, which are trying to be "examples of the free press in the American tradition," have been quite successful. In fact, they illustrate how a free market system can be used to promote democracy, even during a worldwide war on terror. Actually, he contended, these media promote all three points of the triangle in a symbiotic way. According to Pattiz, the media's role in shaping and sharing opinions and promoting the triangle values has never been greater.

There are three basic kinds of media over which the United States transmits its ideas and values. There are the private, free market media such as the American broadcast networks of Fox, NBC, ABC, and CBS. There are the government-funded and supported media such as Voice

of America, Radio Sawa, and Alhurra Television. And there are the public service media such as PBS and National Public Radio (NPR) in the United States and the BBC abroad.

Each of these three types of media has a role in spreading the triangle values around the world. Pattiz said that the public service media can and should be used to tell people in the United States more about other cultures of the world. These media have a domestic role. Commercial broadcasters, on the other hand, operate outside the domestic sphere, but they must not be solely entrusted with the role of telling the rest of the world about the United States because they are first and foremost concerned with their own financial interests. Commercial broadcast programs can inform others about American values, but there will be the bad mixed in with the good.

With regard to government-supported media, whereas the public broadcasting systems of the public service media cover the domestic scene, the USBBG handles international communications and should continue to do so. Pattiz argued for the continued role of the government-funded and supported media, particularly the USBBG, in sending messages about the United States to the rest of the world.

The media outlets of the USBBG can have real impact, even in the context of relatively unchanging American policies in the Middle East. Pattiz argued that "we can have an effect on how people feel about the United States of America by engaging in the marketplace of ideas." The Arab media focus primarily on the Israeli/Palestinian issue and Iraq. The undercurrent of both of these topics is "Arab humiliation." Pattiz pointed out that with regard to these issues most Arabs hate U.S. policy toward the Middle East. There are "popular misconceptions" about the United States that can be countered, however. There also are values that can be presented that the average Arab man or woman can relate to, such as "individual choice and freedom."

Pattiz explained that a key goal is to get listeners and viewers to compare Radio Sawa and Alhurra Television with the media they already have. They can then see what a free press—often disagreeing

with its own government's positions and actions—is like in a free and pluralistic society. Arab audience members also can see how policies can be changed or retained by people in democratic societies as they vote in elections. They can see what it means to be able to change governments periodically so that people can change and improve the quality of their lives. Pattiz strongly believes that Radio Sawa and Alhurra Television do help audience members in the Middle East better understand and appreciate pluralism, democracy, who Americans are, and our common humanity. In the process, they foster the triangle values.

The Role of Nongovernmental Media

All too often the media do not serve our noblest purposes. The private media, in the world of capitalist competition, typically aim at the lowest common denominator to attract the largest possible audience for maximum profit. Can these media help us move toward peace, prosperity, and democracy? This ideal certainly has not been their primary emphasis. "The traditional practice of journalism doesn't…think of itself as value promoting," asserted Melinda Quintos de Jesus of the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility. Ratings and circulation traditionally have been most important to the private media. Achievement of the triangle values has not been part of "the traditional canons of journalism" to which these media adhere. "They're looking for the scoop story…. There's a bias for bad news," says Quintos de Jesus.   Media traditionally have been concerned with looking for marketable stories, especially stories featuring conflict, to beat the competition in attracting large audiences. In the Philippines, Quintos de Jesus explained, this focus on conflict has hindered the goal of achieving peace as well as integration of marginalized communities, which typically are featured only when they are involved in some dramatic conflict such as a hostage-taking.

Another problem involves the messages being sent out by the American media. "What types of messages are our entertainment media sending out about the United States?" Pat Mitchell of PBS asked. Madeleine Albright agreed, asserting that the messages from some of the U.S. entertainment media too often strengthen the view that the

United States is a "modern-day Sodom and Gomorrah." This material clearly provides fodder for audiences who dislike America. Should this material be removed from the international airwaves and cables? How can the United States censor its own media, Albright asked, when one of the main messages it wants to impart is the importance of freedom of the press and free media systems?

Maybe we are expecting too much of the media, Albert Carnesale of UCLA observed. In light of the contradiction between our values and our interests, we cannot expect the media to make everything right. Moreover, other factors clearly are more important in influencing the rest of the world's embrace of the triangle values, asserted Imam Feisal Rauf. "In a population where people have gripes against their own government, when they see that the United States is close to [President Hosni] Mubarak [of Egypt] or close to the House of Saud, this creates resentment." He asserted that if the U.S. government would just dissociate from Mubarak and the House of Saud, such action would do far more than any media policy to win the hearts and minds of the people in the Arab world. Similarly, helping the Arab world get access to capital to build the economies of these countries would be much more likely to bring about healthy change than anything the media can do.

Entertainment programming from the private media sometimes does contain messages about the kind of free and open culture America has, Norman Pattiz of Westwood One said. Yet the role of programming from these media clearly is limited. Achievement of democracy, capitalism, and security are simply not their focus. On the other hand, we might be expecting too little of government media in this regard. To do their job adequately, however, they need more money—and funding for government supported media is significantly lower than it was 10 years ago.

"Sometimes when you try to connect to the higher nature (of human beings), the man or woman turns the dial off," said Patricia de Stacy Harrison, acting under secretary of state for public diplomacy and public affairs. The media are functioning in an "instant gratification" environment, where there is a constant urge for "quick results." Speaking of

U.S. government-funded media, Harrison added that "what we are and should be doing is going to take a very long period of time.… What we are doing has to be sustainable…[and]move beyond image and sound bite." This long range perspective is hard to sell today, however—especially with contemporary security concerns ("the clock is ticking").

In light of negative views of the United States today, one alternative strategy to spread democracy would be to support independent media in other countries. Pat Mitchell of PBS asserted that the United States must work to ensure that people in emerging democracies have access to free and independent media of their own. Good governance and economic stability depend on informed citizens, and toward this end "we need to be strengthening and building independent media in these countries, both old media and new media."

> **Good governance and economic stability depend on informed citizens… "we need to be strengthening and building independent media in these countries, both old media and new media."**
>
> *Pat Mitchell*

Lessons from Hong Kong

Of course the United States is not the only country influencing the spread of the triangle values. In East Asia—another attention-garnering spot undergoing considerable change and challenges—the commercially driven media of Hong Kong are influencing the authoritarian society of China. The Chinese government has used capitalistic policies to spur economic growth, but democratic measures have been slower in coming. Correspondingly, the Chinese government has supported media to the extent that they foster economic growth, but it has been more restrictive when the media have been used for democratic politics. The example of Hong Kong, however, does provide new possibilities.

In southern China (Guangdong province), Christine Loh explained, the people are acquiring a great variety of lessons from the Hong Kong media, which they can view. They learn "respect for personal autonomy" and individual choice from many types of programs, from situation comedies to talk shows. People are getting "all kinds of information…a much wider variety of stuff." They learn respect for the rule of law from news of court cases and other daily programming. People also see criticism of the government and dissent that is considered legitimate. "But what's also interesting," according to Loh, is that all of this information "has not fomented the revolution that the Chinese government feared"—although, as Sean Maloney, executive vice president and general manager for Intel Communications Group, said, this lack of political unrest might have something to do with the fact that the people of southern China have been undergoing a period of great economic expansion.

New Media

The "new media" (as opposed to older print and broadcast media) constitute an important part of the overall media equation. What role do the new communications technologies play in supporting the triangle values or mediating the tensions between and among them? For example, what effect do the Internet and cell phones have on fostering economic development, democracy, and security? As Norman Pattiz of Westwood One said with regard to the role of the United States, the first challenge is to get people to listen to us—and for that you need 21st-century communications technology.

The new media are transparent, decentralized, and empowering for the individual, explained Esther Dyson, editor for *Release 1.0* and editor at large for CNET Networks. The most fundamental distinction from the old media is that the new media are interactive (although, of course, some aspects of the old media, such as radio talk shows, have two-way elements). Whereas the old media were ideal for propaganda—government or commercial—the new media are ideal for conspiracy. According to Dyson, the new media are "disruptive by nature" and can confuse people and make them uncomfortable. There is an established idea of media literacy for the old media as a way of understanding possible biases, but no such thing has been established

yet for the new media. Hence, in the "confusing world" of the new media, conspiracies run rampant. There is little fact checking, and little analytic distinction is made between one blogger and the next. The nature of the new media also makes it very hard for authorities to control and manage any official story for better or worse.

The Role of the Internet

What role can these media have in fostering democracy? The track record to date is mixed. According to Dyson, most attempts at using the Internet for voting have been an "utter failure." Online discussion generally is not effective for deciding on policy. The Internet is ideal, however, for fomenting excitement, involving people, getting them together, and turning conspiracies into movements. For doing what representative government does, however—such as handling conflicts and reaching compromises—the Internet is "almost useless," Dyson insisted. It is very hard to have any kind of closure and very easy to disrupt any online discussion. "People tend to speak louder and louder and more and more forcefully rather than to listen more when they engage in online discussion," Dyson said.

> **"Old media were ideal for propaganda … new media are ideal for conspiracy."**
>
> *Esther Dyson*

The Internet appears to have three main types of influence on mass opinion outside the United States: It can lead to questioning of authority; it can spread stories that gradually get picked up by the general media; and it can influence expectations about what it's like to deal with authority. In economic transactions, where there is one-to-one communication, authorities listen and respond to individuals in a meaningful way. This two-way communication will happen to most people online in a commercial relationship rather than a political one, but it can change people's general expectations of what dealing with authority figures is like.

Other participants argued that there are more beneficial uses of the Internet. Marc Nathanson, vice chair of Charter Communications and chairman of Mapleton Investments, asserted that the Internet "causes a globalization and a dialogue which…is very positive." Individuals can connect with people who share their interests in an intimate way, and then meet with them. The traveling and meeting aspect of this equation is vital. Esther Dyson emphasized that one can create an interpersonal intimacy on the Internet, but that relationship usually must be followed up by actual physical contact, so that the virtual and physical reinforce each other.

Patricia de Stacy Harrison of the U.S. Department of State agreed that communication through the new media is important but that human meetings remain essential. Although communicating and meeting are important, however, those phenomena are not going to solve the world's major problems. "It's not the phenomenon that's going to get the Jews and the Palestinians together," Dyson said. "But," Nathanson replied, "if a Jew and a Palestinian youth were corresponding by e-mail, back and forth, and got to know each other…wouldn't that help?" It might not solve major problems or lead to a change in policy, but it could very well plant important "seeds of peace."

Mobile Telephones

Cell phones also have been having an impact on democratic processes around the world. Christine Loh of Civic Exchange explained that cell phones have been used to get out the vote in Hong Kong. More nefariously, their picture-taking function also has been used as a means of proving how one has voted. Similarly, Philippine Secretary of Education Edilberto de Jesus said that the cell phone was having more of an effect than the Internet on the political and social scene in the Philippines, in part because of the lack of infrastructure for the Internet and the affordability of cell phones. Melinda Quintos de Jesus of the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility related that text messaging was used in the Philippines as a political instrument for rallying and mobilizing protests against President Estrada. She added, however, that first a civil society must exist for such uses of new communications technologies to be possible. Only in a context of trust and various associations could text messages be used this way.

One key to grasping the potential of the new media might be understanding the rule of unintended consequences. Sean Maloney of Intel Communications Group wondered who would have thought that digital phones would come equipped with a camera and expand the world of photography. One reason there will be so many unintended consequences is that the users of the new communication technologies are disproportionately young (under age 25), who are more willing to be influenced laterally—that is, by peers—and less willing to be influenced hierarchically. The new users of the new technologies also will be disproportionately non-American. With this context in mind, Maloney insisted that the "overwhelming economic imperative of the United States is to pay 10 times more attention to what is going on overseas." The nexus of economic power also might change with the advent of the new media. Maloney pointed out that the consumer electronics industry, the computer industry, and the new media in general are all becoming centered in northern Asia.

Several challenges must be met for the new media to play a significant role. One challenge is that these technologies must be made available to the people of the world. Another is developing an economic model to sustain the new technologies.

New Media and the State

New media have been used to overcome controls placed on the old media—controls that often have been used to stifle capitalistic initiative and, especially, democratic activity. In Iran and among members of the Iranian expatriate community, for example, many blogs have been started as the religious authorities have closed newspapers in that country. In China the government has exercised strict control over print and broadcast media. The new communications technologies are much harder to control, however. The Chinese government has enacted a variety of innovative measures to control the Internet, but these moves typically have been met with even more creative countermoves by Internet users. In Singapore the Internet is largely exempt from content restrictions placed on other media. This lack of regulation, explained Robert Sachs, president and CEO of the National Cable and Telecommunications Association (NCTA), can be attributed to the government's realization of the limits of possible

control, pride in the Internet's role in providing educational information, and not wanting to deter students who have studied and experienced freedoms abroad from coming back.

These new communications technologies, then, are creating conditions that lead to fewer restrictions. In many countries the traditional media are enjoying an increasing degree of freedom to operate as well. In China, for example, the government has become more open to the flow of information for business uses. Liberalization of the media in authoritarian countries, Jonathan Wolman of the *Denver Post* stated, often starts with business journalism, as in China. Sean Maloney added that "the media [in China] will be liberalized to the extent that it does not threaten stability, and stability is a function of economic growth. So if the economy keeps growing, some small degree of liberalization and experimentation" will continue.

> **"The good news today, is even when you do go over [the line of what is acceptable], you don't get thrown in jail straight away. "**
>
> *Christine Loh*

"The good news today," Christine Loh observed, "is even when you do go over [the line of what is acceptable], you don't get thrown in jail straight away. You might get reprimanded. You might just be told, 'Look, just don't pursue this story anymore.'" Loh, who is active in the Hong Kong political scene, explained that she herself was on a "grey list." She would not be surprised if her phone had been tapped and her movement while in China had been tracked. Yet she is accepted as part of the ongoing discussion in Hong Kong regarding what is and is not acceptable in politics and the media. Mainland journalists are now given permission to report on some potentially problematic stories (from the government's point of view) that they would not have been allowed to cover before, as long as they "don't go overboard." Thus, there has been significant progress—although still within a highly controlled environment.

The media in Hong Kong are significantly less controlled. One important question is whether China in general will adopt a Hong Kong–style system in time as the country opens up.

Governing New Technologies

Although the Internet brings economic, social, and political value, it also is a conduit for fraudulent information, pornography, and hate speech. To what extent can and should governments control this aspect of the Internet? Marc Nathanson of Charter Communications and Mapleton Investments wondered whether people have more trust than they should in the Internet and what role, if any, government regulation should play. "Or should we leave this all alone," Nathanson asked, because "people will filter this out? They'll learn the good sites and the bad sites." Sean Maloney pointed out that technology always runs ahead of the law. Because new communications technologies are never 100 percent beneficial, it can be very appropriate for the government to take a role in regulating these technologies.

Yet new authorities and standards might not be adequate to guide and control the new media. This issue is of central importance given the new media's increasing role in fostering the spread of democracy, capitalism, and security. For the media to play its role it must be trustworthy and reliable. James Dobbins of the RAND Corporation argued that information itself is neutral, neither good nor bad. Accordingly, more information is neither good nor bad. Information, he asserted, can be true or false. Information also can be "pernicious or benign." These dichotomies are not the same. "It is possible for information to be true and pernicious." Accurate information can motivate people to commit genocide, for example. It also is "possible for information to be false and benign." For example, Dobbins said, "most nations are in part held together by national myths that are for the most part false."

Traditional media policies have helped people sort through the true and the false. There are journalistic standards stipulating that people should be given enough information to determine the likely bias of a source and that equal treatment should be accorded to both sides of an issue. These standards allow a reader, listener, or viewer to judge

the truth of a given story. This is how one sorts through truth and falsity. With regard to sorting through the benign and the pernicious, there are traditional techniques, such as licensing, to promote media that support some concept of the public interest. Dobbins expressed concern about whether similar sorting techniques can be applied to the new media.

Yet there do seem to be developing ethics and procedures that address these concerns. The de facto authority of the Internet now, some observers say, is Google. Esther Dyson of CNET disagreed, saying that Google and its ilk *abdicate* authority, sending people to other authorities and make "almost a religion of not interfering." New procedures, such as contracts in peer-to-peer networks, are emerging to bring order to this new environment. There can be self-governance of these new technologies, John Clippinger of the Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard Law School argued, without relinquishing rights or powers to governmental or corporate authorities. New structures are emerging, "driven by the edge," in which people will be able to assert their rights, achieve privacy, and participate in the economy outside traditional governmental controls.

> **"Centralized authority cannot preclude what information and technology permit."**
>
> *Reed Hundt*

Along these lines, Clippinger explained that the old idea of expertise is being challenged. A different notion of authority is emerging whereby it will be "more laterally distributed," and reputation will be earned in new ways. There will be much wider and more open competition among ideas, he suggested, and we will not rely only on sanctioned experts. Clearly the old, centralized controls will no longer work as they have in the past.

"Centralized authority cannot preclude what information and technology permit," summarized Reed Hundt of McKinsey & Company. That centralized authority can be the state, a newspaper monopoly, an

oligopoly of media conglomerates, or centralized capital. "Information technology…has distributed already such tremendous power, rooted in information…on such a vast level that people can…link to each other through and about that information. Therefore, they create sources of power that are greater than the power of centralized authority," Hundt said.

Hence, the new media offer new possibilities for the spread of democracy, capitalism, and security throughout the world by escaping old methods of control. In the process, however, they also raise some new problems and challenges, some of which are just beginning to be addressed.

There are problems relating to the digital divide, for example—meaning that some target audiences around the world are cut off from the dialogue. Websites cannot reach people who do not have access to the Internet. Similarly, to the extent that the new media are replacing the old, these "new media do not quite promote what we got out of the old media," explained Melinda Quintos de Jesus of the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility. Newspapers, now plagued by declining readership, have been very significant to the extent that they are credentialed, reliable, and widely read and referenced. The content of newspapers historically has brought people together in communication. This role does not seem to have fallen to the new media, which in many cases seem to make people less capable of assessing information and tend to cut people off from face-to-face communication.

One of the hopes for the new media is that they will create a level playing field in the realm of discussion and debate and allow for many new points of view to be heard. Some observers have promised that the Internet would open up and foster the democratic process, leveling inequalities in the process. Pat Mitchell of PBS pointed out, however, that this ideal remains only a hope in the context of the considerable consolidation of power and ownership that we have seen on the Internet.

The mass media, new and old, are powerful tools that can be used to spread and foster the values of democracy, capitalism, and security. They can help overcome the tensions between and among these values. There are challenges, however, with both the old and new media, that must be met to maximize their power.

Policy Proposals

The ultimate goal of the Forum was to develop new policy proposals for communications media and technologies to foster positive values that promote the spread of prosperity (via capitalism), good governance (via democracy), and the desire for peace and security throughout the world. The emphasis was on the role of the United States. What policies in public diplomacy and other realms should the U.S. government pursue to effect change? What policies should American corporations and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) adopt?

The Hundt Proposals

Reed Hundt of McKinsey & Company introduced this endeavor by offering some bold suggestions aimed at stimulating a creative discussion of the issues. He proposed that the United States create a private trust account of $1,000 for each child born anywhere in the world over the next 10 years (at an overall cost of $1–2 trillion dollars). The money would be invested in U.S. stocks and Treasury bonds, and at the end of the 10 years the accumulated assets would be handed over to the children. This fund would foster capitalism throughout the world. This scheme also would represent a complete embrace of economist Hernando DeSoto's idea of that it is essential to vest people with property rights. There also should be matching grants for the $1,000 trust accounts, with poor countries raising a small proportion of the amount and rich countries making up the difference.

Second, Hundt suggested a global election should be organized and held whereby the Secretary General of the United Nations and a related 10-person council, functioning like a senate, would be elected. Every adult in the world could run, and everyone could vote. This arrangement would foster democratization on a global level.

Third, the elected Secretary General would be given the power to issue warrants and arrest terrorists all over the world. This authority would foster global security.

Fourth, to put media in place that could promote capitalism, democracy, and security, the World Bank should build a global Internet infrastructure and make the Internet available to everyone on the planet. The World Bank should halt all its current programs and put all its resources behind this initiative, which would be cheaper than the economic development projects already in place—and vastly superior to them. Moreover, programs now in place are largely failures; if China is taken out of the equation of world growth, there are more poor people in the world today than there were 20 years ago.

Hundt noted that these ideas are bold, yet achievable. The United Nations has asked McKinsey & Company to work out a plan to achieve worldwide literacy by the year 2015. The firm has determined that this goal is quite achievable, both on a cost and practical basis. Similarly, Hundt claims that his "bold" proposals could be achieved as well.

According to Hundt, the single realm in which the United States can show the most leadership is working for the global economic development of literally everyone in the world. Although this effort would require "a complete rethinking of economic development strategies on a global level," it would significantly bolster security and lay the groundwork for individual liberty and democratic elections. He argued that U.S. trade policy ought to be centered on the idea of trading information, not just goods and services. A world of free trade and information is a goal that would require a new round of negotiations at the World Trade Organization (WTO) and modification of the Global Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). If information is exchanged, communication protocols would be opened up. Freedom of speech would be a corollary of a free trade and information policy.

How realistic are Hundt's ambitious proposals? Esther Dyson of CNET argued that "financial machinations just lead to more" of the same and that we cannot just throw money at problems. According to Dyson, the real challenge is building social infrastructure—behavior patterns, market rules, management skills—which must be grown organically and through the exchange and interaction of people as well as money. Federal Communications Commissioner Kevin Martin and James Dobbins of the RAND Corporation contended that Hundt's proposals were examples of "extremism" in the pursuit of the featured values. Retired Intel executive Leslie Vadasz argued that better solutions to the global problems presented by the triangle would be local instead of global. Trust is key to solving these problems, Vadasz asserted. Accordingly, "people need to identify with something, some organization, some individual they can see and can understand, rather than some body many, many thousands of miles away." Nevertheless, Hundt's proposals certainly served the intended purpose of provoking thought and stimulating a host of related proposals.

Support for Existing Programs and New Communications Technology

An obvious first step that received much support is increasing the financial backing of organizations that have already shown that they can be successful in fostering the values of democracy, capitalism, and security. For example, among the FOCAS participants there was considerable support for increasing the budget of the USBBG. A second clear step that many participants supported is providing people with new communications technology to foster the spread of information and education.

Two-Way Dialogue and Mutual Understanding

Among the sentiments expressed at the Forum, the one on which there was most agreement was the need for two-way dialogue and mutual understanding. All proposed policies must embody this ideal.

"We have to listen to others and put ourselves in their shoes in some form or another," said Madeleine Albright. She explained that a two-way flow has been lost in the realm of public diplomacy. Public diplomacy must be a dialogue between the United States and the rest of the world, rather than the spouting of propaganda.

Pat Mitchell of PBS put it differently. "The question for all of us is what are we importing in terms of the rest of the world…and what are we exporting." This question is key with regard to the media's role in public diplomacy. What messages are we sending to the rest of the world with regard to the values we hold? As important "is the other piece, which is, 'What are we importing from the rest of the world?'" According to Mitchell, we have "massive misperceptions of the rest of the world." We don't even know, for example, how the Middle Eastern media covers itself. In this light, American media such as PBS can be used to find out what other people in the world are thinking.

> **"We have to listen to others and put ourselves in their shoes in some form or another."**
>
> *Madeleine Albright*

Policy must be based on the principle that "we are as much a listener as we are a message sender," said Albert Carnesale of UCLA. We must be eager both to spread our message and to hear others. The two-way aspect of our policies must be clear from the beginning. In this regard, if we want to get our message across we must focus on what is most important to people in other countries and express our messages in the least threatening ways possible. We do not want to put their governments on the defensive. "So we do not want to start out with, 'what we want to do is spread democracy,'" Carnesale said. We don't want others to think that our primary objective is to overthrow their governments. We should focus on what "democracy stands for: individual choice, economic opportunity, quality of life"—all of the things that "we believe are enhanced markedly by democracy." We want them to be eager to participate in discussion and even believe that they may be able to change our minds about some issues. We need to be ears, not just messengers.

Queen Noor agreed that current U.S. public diplomacy efforts toward the rest of the world do not involve any two-way dynamic. She asserted that democracy in the Middle East "will only be enabled in an environment in which there is a mutually beneficial, respectful, and dynamic exchange of values…an effort to find and identify a common ground upon which all of these efforts can be built."

"As an Arab and a Muslim sitting here," Imam Feisal Rauf of the American Sufi Muslim Association Society pointed out, "it is noteworthy that there is much greater concern in a circle like this with how the United States is viewed in the Arab/Muslim world, and less attention paid to how" the United States views Arabs and Muslims. Perhaps the United States needs to reexamine its assumptions and perceptions of the Arab/Muslim world. Rauf asserted that as much as we need to improve the image of the United States abroad, this imperative is linked with how the United States sees other countries. Moreover, the way the United States sees Arab countries is very important to the Arabs. This perception plays a major role in how the Arab world reacts to the United States.

> **Democracy in the Middle East "will only be enabled in an environment in which there is a mutually beneficial, respectful, and dynamic exchange of values."**
>
> *Queen Noor*

The United States needs to understand the Arab/Muslim world from the inside, not from the outside looking in, Rauf said. Quoting Robert McNamara's lesson number one from the documentary *The Fog of War,* U.S. leaders must "put themselves inside the skins of the other" and come to understand "their thought processes through which they arrive at their decisions." Rauf argued that "the number one issue that America has not really put its arms around…[is] understanding from the inside the aspirations, the emotions, the psychology of the Arab/Muslim world." This ability to empathize is the key. Hence, what is needed initially is a group of people who have an inside understanding of Arab/Muslim culture. We need a group of people

who can understand "not only the words themselves but the intentions behind the words" as well.

Perhaps the rest of the world already is ahead of the United States in this matter of mutual understanding. Queen Noor observed that the world outside the United States is more aware of the larger world context than the United States is. With regard to the Middle East, "people in the region are far more aware and conscious of this bigger picture" than are Americans in general. In part, Queen Noor said, this is because for most Americans the United States is "the world/a world unto itself." Esther Dyson agreed: "There is a big asymmetry between the United States and most of the developing world" in that "we don't generally speak any of their languages, and they read us.… They see what we are doing. They can look at not just what's on our coffee tables but what's in our bathrooms and our closets. And we know so little of the world outside." As for wanting to send our messages of democracy and capitalism to the rest of the world, Dyson reminds: "Any salesman knows you need to listen to your customer before you can sell to him."

> **We need a group of people who can understand "not only the words themselves but the intentions behind the words."**
>
> *Imam Feisal Rauf*

Part of this two-way dialogue, according to Dyson, involves being straightforward with each other. People do not like—and frankly do not believe—those who say that they want to "help you." More effective than patronizing people is straightforwardly acknowledging one's self interests and saying, "let's get rich together." In this regard, people are more open to "investment" than aid.

The issue of whom specifically to engage in these dialogues is fundamental. Focusing on all the usual suspects might not be the most productive way to go. Christine Loh of Civic Exchange asserted that those attempting to export democracy need to know and engage systematically and over time the "actors on the ground" in other coun-

tries—such as NGOs and civil society actors who are actually making things happen. Moreover, the focus must not be solely on those garnering the most media attention. Similarly, Melinda Quintos de Jesus of the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility asserted that we need to connect to communities in other countries that are already working on institution-building, good governance, and economic development. We need to identify communities on the ground in local areas and larger regions and work to bring them all together. Furthermore, the goal should not be simply to influence the thoughts of people in the government and the usual agencies and organizations. "The critical communication challenge is how to make these ideas part of the mainstream, part of how the man and woman on the street, the kids in the schools [think…so that they] can begin to absorb these ideas" and "make them part of how they look at the world," Quintos de Jesus said.

Madeleine Albright suggested creating an inventory of NGOs working in different parts of the world and figuring out how they actually and potentially could coordinate with each other. Efforts then should be made to link existing and developing community-based and grassroots organizations abroad through which the work could be carried out. In this light, retired Intel executive Leslie Vadasz asserted that the focus must be not only on the message that is to be sent but identifying sympathetic messengers in the areas we wish to influence.

Exchanges

Exchanges between and among members of the media could be an important component of these endeavors. Jonathan Wolman of the *Denver Post* advocated sustained interaction and dialogue between and among journalists from the United States and other countries. U.S. journalists should go on exchange programs abroad, and foreign journalists should come here. There is far too little of this type of exchange, Wolman said, especially between the United States and the developing world. Robert Sachs of the NCTA argued that increased funding of the USBBG should be contingent on its fostering this type of exchange program.

There are programs and organizations already in place that can be used. Philippine Secretary of Education Edilberto de Jesus pointed to successful ongoing exchange programs, such as the Peace Corps and the Fulbright scholarship program, which are important for developing leaders with the right type of values.

The burdens of increased security, however, may be hindering these types of exchanges. For example, de Jesus pointed out, it is much more difficult today to bring the world's best and brightest to the United States because of recently implemented visa restrictions.

Education

This idea of the two-way flow goes hand-in-hand with proposals to emphasize education—an element that was not specifically included in the original triangle model. Albert Carnesale of UCLA argued that this whole endeavor is essentially about education as a means of achieving the worldwide spread of democracy, economic development, and security.

Education, in the sense of teaching others about our values and learning from them in turn, is essential. Leslie Vadasz and Jonathan Wolman advocated teacher exchange programs—sending American teachers abroad and bringing teachers from other countries to the United States. In the process, participants would be exposed to the cultures and problems of other cultures. As investment capital flows, Esther Dyson of CNET emphasized, so does human capital need to flow. Madeleine Albright stated that even non-democratic countries believe in education, and promotion of education could help spread democracy because educated people like to make their own choices.

An Alliance of Democracies

If the community of democracies created an organization through which they could promote democracy, collect best practices, and help each other in times of stress, they could foster the triangle values. Marc Nathanson of Charter Communications and Mapleton Investments proposed creation of such an alliance of democratic countries that would work and fund locally oriented NGOs to train and educate

groups on democracy within certain nondemocratic nations. Getting the support of other democracies is important because such initiatives would be more successful if they have the support of countries besides the United States.

Madeleine Albright said that working with other countries in this fashion would be good for U.S. security, prevent the project from becoming U.S.-centric, and help deal with the fact that the United States might now have trouble advocating economic and democratic reform in the Middle East and East Asia on its own because of its low reputation. She warned, however, that such an organization "must not undermine the United Nations." Not only could the democracies of the world get together collectively to bolster burgeoning democracies, they also could aid more mature but not entirely stable democracies on a continuing basis. There also could be a democracy caucus within the U.N.

The main problem would be determining which countries would be members of the group. Which democratic countries would make the grade? Albert Carnesale of UCLA was uncomfortable with the idea of focusing solely on other democracies as alliance partners. This criterion would exclude countries that seem to be of greatest concern, such as China and Egypt, he said. Madeleine Albright replied that such countries would be included in the dialogue. Initially, however, the democracies should work together as partners, like Japan and Korea in East Asia, to develop strategy and messages. Then these democratic countries in different regions could aid in assisting neighboring or otherwise associated nondemocratic states toward the democratic path. For example, as Philippine Secretary of Education Edilberto de Jesus suggested, the largest Muslim democracy, Indonesia, could be of great help in influencing other Islamic countries. Regional organizations might prove problematic, however. James Dobbins of the RAND Corporation argued that any regional group in East Asia would isolate China and in the Middle East would contain only Turkey and Israel.

Edilberto de Jesus advocated doing as much as possible with other types of organizations already in existence. There are existing organizations, run by democratic countries working together, already involved in such endeavors, such as the National Endowment for Democracy. The Endowment creates multinational teams to work on the ground and makes hundreds of grants each year to support prodemocracy groups around the world. Money could be given to support these existing organizations. In addition, de Jesus suggested, U.S. corporations such as Intel and Microsoft already are disseminating new communication technologies and aid to schools in developing countries. To the extent possible, existing platforms should be used to promote such initiatives.

Public and Private Organizations Working Together

Edilberto de Jesus's point about Intel and Microsoft raises a related issue. Another type of alliance involves public and private organizations working together to foster democracy, capitalism, and security. Inclusion of the corporate sector would be vital because as such a public/private partnership appreciably enhances possibilities for success. In this regard, Robert Sachs of the NCTA suggested bringing corporate representatives into the USBBG.

Private-sector companies "are the engines of economic development," Esther Dyson of CNET observed: "They provide the channels over which all this information is going to flow. They provide the investment. They provide a lot of the training." Tax policy and other kinds of incentives could be used to get them on board, Dyson argued. The companies could be motivated by showing them what great markets these countries could be and how the companies are going to make a profit. In addition, Dyson said, these companies would foster free choice but at least in theory are "ideologically clean"—that is, they are happy as long as people buy from them. Some corporate activity already is occurring. Retired Intel executive Leslie Vadasz explained that Intel, operating out of enlightened self-interest, has taught more than 400,000 teachers how to use technology and include it in the educational mission in India, Brazil, Bangladesh, and other locations all over the world.

Economic tools to support the process of fostering security, democracy, and capitalism must be identified. Government funds are an obvious possibility, but these funds, of course, are difficult to collect. Financial resources might come from new technology companies that might profit from the proposals. Madeleine Albright emphasized that in this context the new information technology companies are "the gainers as well as the producers of the goods." Albright added, "Since communication, education, and information technology is part of all this, and ultimately the info tech companies gain from this," there need to be some mechanisms to tap these high-tech people. Esther Dyson suggested the possibility of tax credits to companies for foreign direct investment in educational and informational infrastructure. She explained that Oracle and Microsoft have done more for many developing economies and the people in them than government programs by teaching people to run businesses and training them to sell products. Companies such as these need literate and prosperous adults to buy their products. Hence, putting money into direct foreign investment rather than financial flows should make sense to these companies because it is a way to create markets in which these companies can sell their products. FCC Commissioner Kevin Martin questioned, however, whether giving companies tax credits to invest in foreign countries was a good idea: Sending jobs overseas, as through outsourcing, is not a popular idea among the American people.

Institution-Building and the Search for a New Paradigm

Overall, the United States wants countries to be democratic, but there is no single approach to make this happen. "We can't impose democracy," Madeleine Albright argued. "We can only offer it." The main problem today is that the United States still has "no paradigm for operating in the post communist world." It took 50 years to figure out how to deal with communism through containment and information infiltration, and we are still struggling to come up with a new paradigm. Whatever that paradigm comes to be, however, it must take into account the startling transformations of the information revolution.

Different regions might call for different policies, but there are commonalities that apply to the world as a whole. James Dobbins of the RAND Corporation argued that there cannot be an uncritical emphasis on information and the empowering of individuals, which could even have a destabilizing effect in the Middle East, East Asia, and elsewhere. "If there is any lesson regarding development it is that development requires good governance," Dobbins said. Good governance requires effectiveness, responsiveness to the needs and desires of society, and a lack of corruption. "Simply empowering individuals doesn't necessarily lead to good governance," Dobbins said. Individual empowerment could even weaken institutions that are developing in a positive direction. Dobbins favors more of an emphasis on institution-building. Societies need to be given frameworks to help them become more prosperous and develop democratic practices. Other participants also emphasized the universal importance of building institutions and infrastructure.

> **"If there is any lesson regarding development it is that development requires good governance."**
>
> *James Dobbins*

Conclusion

All participants agreed that the world would be a better place if each country had good governance, enjoyed growing economic development, and was secure. Everyone agreed that the United States would be much better off if this were the case and that the United States should do what it can to foster this situation. Short-, medium-, and long-term goals must be delineated. The overall message of the conference, however, relates to what is necessary for the long term. "Throughout the world it is important for individuals to have freedom of choice, that there be a civil society dialogue, economic development," the rule of law, an independent judiciary, civil liberties, and independence of the press, Madeleine Albright said. All point "to the idea that we are trying to raise the level of everyone in the world to insure our and their security." Policy options put forward to this end should constitute the foundation of continuing discussion.

Perhaps forums can be held in other parts of the world to carry on this discussion. In the quest for mutual understanding and carrying on the debate, Marc Nathanson of Charter Communications and Mapleton Investments suggested that the Aspen Institute convene these types of forums in the Middle East and East Asia. Imam Feisal Rauf heartily seconded Nathanson's idea, observing that this process is precisely how "micro-revolutions" are started. Philippine Secretary of Education Edilberto de Jesus added that such meetings could provide a platform to collect ideas from the different regions. "There is…a tremendous potential to take this dialogue and to…have it be physically progressing in different venues around the world, intellectually progressing over the next several years," said Reed Hundt of McKinsey & Company.

In a world plagued by terrorism and nuclear proliferation, security concerns have never been greater. Democracy's spread has been impressive, but some regions are stubbornly resistant and others are backsliding. The rewards of capitalism have trumped those of all other economic systems, yet the evolution toward a global free market economy has been anything but smooth. In such an environment, this debate must continue.

APPENDIX

Forum on Communications and Society (FOCAS)
Annual Meeting

Aspen, Colorado
August 11–14, 2004

List of Participants

Madeleine Albright
Principal
The Albright Group

Albert Carnesale
Chancellor
University of California–
  Los Angeles

John H. Clippinger
Senior Fellow
Berkman Center for Internet
  and Society
Harvard Law School

Edilberto de Jesus
Secretary of Education
Department of Education
Republic of The Philippines

James Dobbins
Director
International Security and
  Defense Policy Center
RAND Corporation

Esther Dyson
Editor
Release 1.0
  and
Editor-at-large
CNET Networks

Charles M. Firestone
Executive Director
Communications and Society
  Program
The Aspen Institute

Patricia de Stacy Harrison
Acting Under Secretary for Public
  Diplomacy and Public Affairs
U.S. Department of State

Reed E. Hundt
Senior Advisor
McKinsey & Company

Christine Loh
Chief Executive Officer
Civic Exchange

Note: Titles and affiliations are as of the date of the conference.

Sean M. Maloney
Executive Vice President
  and General Manager
Intel Communications Group
Intel Corporation

Kevin J. Martin
Commissioner
Federal Communications
  Commission

Pat Mitchell
President and Chief Executive
  Officer
Public Broadcasting Service

Marc Nathanson
Vice Chair
Charter Communications
  and
Chairman
Mapleton Investments

Queen Noor
Humanitarian Activist
and UN Expert Advisor

Norman J. Pattiz
Chairman
Westwood One Inc.
  and
Governor
U.S. Broadcasting Board of
  Governors

Melinda Quintos de Jesus
Executive Director
Center for Media Freedom
  and Responsibility

Feisal Rauf
Founder and Chief Executive
  Officer
American Sufi Muslim
  Association Society

Robert Sachs
President and Chief
  Executive Officer
National Cable and
  Telecommunications
  Association

Michael Suman
Research Director
Center for the Digital Future
Annenberg School for
  Communication
University of Southern California

Leslie L. Vadasz
Retired
Intel Corporation

Jonathan Wolman
Editorial Page Editor
Denver Post

Staff:

Maria Medrano
Project Manager
Communications and Society
  Program
The Aspen Institute

Note: Titles and affiliations are as of the date of the conference.

About the Author

Michael Suman is the research director of the Center for the Digital World at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication (previously the Center for Communication Policy at the University of California–Los Angeles). He served as project coordinator at the UCLA center's Television Violence Monitoring Project and co-authored several nationwide surveys the center conducted jointly with *U.S. News & World Report*. He is coordinating a study on the impact of the Internet. Suman holds a Ph.D. in sociology from UCLA and has taught sociology, anthropology, and communication studies in Japan, Korea, China, and the Marshall Islands. He is a member of the UCLA faculty in the Department of Communication Studies. He also is the editor of *Religion and Prime Time Television* and *Advocacy Groups and the Entertainment Industry*. His most recent publication is "Experience and Trust in Online Shopping" (with Bob Lunn) in *The Internet in Everyday Life.*

Previous Publications
from the Aspen Institute
Forum on Communications and Society

Media Convergence, Diversity and Democracy (2003)

Neil Shister, Rapporteur. In the summer of 2002, chief executive level leaders from the public and private sectors met at the Aspen Institute to address the underlying role of media in a democratic society and policies that may improve the ability of citizens to exercise their roles as informed sovereigns in that society. This publication, authored by journalist Neil Shister, examines the concern of many over the shrinking electorate in American elections and the possible role the mass media play in that trend, the debate over whether consolidation in old and new media raises "democratic" as opposed to antitrust concerns, and opportunities for new media to enable citizens to communicate—both in terms of gaining new information and exchanging their own opinions with others. He also addresses the concern that new media will become bottlenecked rather than continue the open architecture of the Internet. 56 pages, ISBN: 0-89843-374-6, $12.00.

In Search of the Public Interest in the New Media Environment (2001)

David Bollier, rapporteur. This report examines public interest and the role of the marketplace in redefining this concept with respect to educational and cultural content. It suggests options for funding public interest content when all media are moving toward digital transmission. The publication also includes afterthoughts from an international perspective by British historian Asa Briggs. 61 pages, ISBN Paper: 0-89843-333-9, $12.00.

Information Literacy: Advancing Opportunities for Learning in the Digital Age (1999)

Richard P. Adler, rapporteur. This report explores the barriers that impede acquisition of the knowledge and skills needed to effectively manage information in its myriad forms, especially digital. It explores six concrete initiatives that individuals and institutions might develop

to remedy this problem. The report includes a background paper on information literacy by Patricia Senn Breivik, dean of libraries at Wayne State University and chair of the National Forum on Information Literacy. 45 pages, ISBN Paper: 0-89843-262-6, $12.00.

Jobs, Technology, and Employability: Redefining the Social Contract (1998)
Richard P. Adler, rapporteur. This report examines the changing nature of the employee-employer relationship and whether the economic, technological, demographic, and social trends driving the global economy will lead to the development of a new "social contract" between employer and employee. 62 pages, ISBN Paper: 0-89843-241-3, $12.00.

Creating a Learning Society: Initiatives for Education and Technology (1996)
Amy Korzick Garmer and Charles M. Firestone, rapporteurs. The first report of the Aspen Institute Forum on Communications and Society, a group of 25 chief executives from business, government, and the nonprofit sector, addresses specific issues in the K–12 classroom, as well as broader issues of lifelong learning outside the classroom. The report offers a range of initiatives for overcoming barriers to funding technology in schools and training teachers to integrate technology into the classroom. 81 pages, ISBN Paper: 0-89843-197-2, $10.00.

About the
Communications and Society Program

www.aspeninstitute.org/c&s

The Communications and Society Program is a global forum for leveraging the power of leaders and experts from business, government, and the nonprofit sector in the communications and information fields for the benefit of society. Its roundtable forums and other projects aim to improve democratic societies and diverse organizations through innovative, multidisciplinary, values-based policymaking. They promote constructive inquiry and dialogue and the development and dissemination of new models and options for informed and wise policy decisions.

In particular, the Program provides an active venue for global leaders and experts from a variety of disciplines and backgrounds to exchange and gain new knowledge and insights on the societal impact of advances in digital technology and network communications. The Program also creates a multidisciplinary space in the communications policymaking world where veteran and emerging decision makers can explore new concepts, find personal growth and insight, and develop new networks for the betterment of the policymaking process and society.

The Program's projects fall into one or more of three categories: communications and media policy, communications technology and the democratic process, and information technology and social change. Ongoing activities of the Communications and Society Program include annual roundtables on journalism and society, international journalism, telecommunications policy, Internet policy, information technology, and diversity and the media. The Program also convenes the Aspen Institute Forum on Communications and Society, in which chief executive officers of business, government, and the nonprofit sector examine issues relating to the changing media and technology environment.

Conference reports and other materials are distributed to key policymakers and opinion leaders within the United States and around the world. They also are available to the public at large through the World Wide Web.