BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS: AN AGENCY "DEFUNCT"

HEARING

BEFORE THE

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BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS: AN AGENCY "DEFUNCT"

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 2013

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 o'clock a.m., in room 2172 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Edward Royce (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Chairman ROYCE. The committee will come to order. The committee is pleased to see that we have representatives of the BBG, including seated governors, like Victor Ashe, with us today. And we look forward to working together and continuing our dialogue as we move forward with legislative reforms.

The title of this hearing is "Broadcasting Board of Governors: An Agency 'Defunct.'" And today we meet to discuss how best to reform the Broadcasting Board of Governors, the agency which oversees U.S. international broadcasters such as the Voice of America and such as Radio Free Asia.

Our international broadcasting has very rich history. East Europeans have told us how critical Radio Free Asia was, Radio Free Europe was at the time in clipping away at the Iron Curtain, in the ability, as Vaclav Havel says, to get information out, to operate as a free surrogate radio, to give the people the facts about what was actually happening on the ground in Eastern Europe that otherwise they would not have been able to obtain.

And what is interesting in listening to the dialogue, the conversations about those at the time who were privy to listening to those broadcasts is to hear their explanations about their own thought process as they begin to question the totalitarian regimes that were controlling information. It indeed had a profound impact on the course of human events. It was quite an achievement with the end of the Cold War.

And while the Voice of America aims to provide listeners with objective news and information about United States foreign policy, the purpose of the surrogate broadcasts, such as Radio Free Europe/Radio Free Asia, is very different. And that is to beam this information into closed societies, giving those citizens the information that otherwise they would never be able to access. Each broadcasting service is full of enterprising reporters who literally risk their lives for what they do. They risk life and limb. And I think all of us have followed stories about individual reporters who were killed in the line of getting the story in totalitarian regimes or re-

porting on human rights abuses. Reporters from these services really deserve to work under an organization that makes the most out of their talents. Unfortunately, more and more, it seems that the structure of international broadcasting clips their wings.

Legislation in the 1990s established the Broadcasting Board of Governors as an independent Federal agency responsible for all U.S. non-military international broadcasting. Today, the BBG exercises authority over five distinct broadcasting services. Managed by a bipartisan and a part-time presidentially appointed board of nine individuals, the board is supposed to set the priorities and overall strategic direction of the U.S. international broadcasting. It is supposed to do it to allocate the resources and safeguard journalistic integrity. But plagued by vacancies and infighting, the BBG has trouble accomplishing any of that.

In January, the State Department Inspector General depicted an agency with a dedicated staff attempting to serve, in their words, a dysfunctional structure. The BBG's "dysfunction stems from a flawed legislative structure and" stems from "acute internal dissension," the report concludes, noting that a part-time board "cannot, cannot, effectively supervise" operations.

Indeed, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton testified before the committee. And we recall her words, that the BBG "is practically defunct agency in terms of its capacity to be able to tell a message around the world." She went on to regret that, in her words, "We are abdicating the ideological arena." I agree with her assessment. The stakes are very high.

As we speak, governments around the world have stepped up efforts to influence opinion abroad and to stifle dissent back at home. In Pakistan, small local radio stations broadcast messages that promote extremism and incite violence against every other minority group in Pakistan.

The fight against terrorism and other threats to our national security must include a fight against bad ideas. If done well, the payoff of broadcasting is tremendous. With an information war underway, U.S. international broadcasting must be as sharp as ever. We must relearn some of the techniques. And this includes the broadcast entities themselves. The former head of Radio Free Europe once summed up their mission this way, "Irritate authoritarian regimes, inspire democrats, and create greater space for civil society." Our goal here is to figure out how to do more of just that.

And I will now turn to Ranking Member Engel for his opening remarks.

Mr. ENGEL. Chairman Royce, thank you for calling this very timely hearing on an issue that impacts millions of people around the world, which is U.S. international broadcasting.

Last month, I had the opportunity to speak at the 70th anniversary of the Voice of America's Albanian service. That event was a reminder that providing unbiased views and news to those who are denied access to information in their own countries remains as relevant today as it was when VOA began broadcasting during World War II.

U.S. international broadcasting endures because it has maintained a commitment to journalistic integrity. The first principle of

our broadcasting is to provide news that is "consistently reliable and authoritative, accurate, objective, and comprehensive."

In the years since the dawn of U.S. international broadcasting, the structures and technologies to deliver the news have changed dramatically. What began as VOA radio has evolved into five distinct organizations housed within the Broadcasting Board of Governors, or BBG. Today, these entities reach over 200 million people per week in 61 languages, radio, TV, the internet, and even mobile phones.

While the BBG and its various sub-entities continue to play an important role in U.S. foreign policy, some questions have been raised about the management of the agency. An Inspector General report issued earlier this year found that the BBG was "failing in its mandated duties," and it attributed that failure to a flawed structure and strong internal dissension.

One problem highlighted by the report is that the BBG board, originally intended to operate on a part-time basis, has in practice assumed full-time responsibilities of supervising a massive media organization with broadcasts to more than 100 countries.

This problem has been compounded by the large number of board vacancies, which has left the BBG without a quorum necessary to make official decisions. Currently, only four of the nine board slots are filled. These vacancies increase the pressure and responsibilities of the sitting governors to supervise the BBG. I hope the Senate will soon take action on the three nominees now being considered and that the President will nominate additional board members.

In addition, questions have been raised about the lines of authority at the BBG. Voice of America, which is a Federal entity, reports to the head of the International Broadcasting Bureau while Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, a private grantee, reports directly to the board of governors. This can create confusion about who is in charge, resulting in unnecessary duplication and undermining accountability.

Finally, many of us are concerned about the consistently low morale among employees at the BBG. Year after year, Federal surveys show that the BBG ranks among the bottom of all Federal agencies in terms of job satisfaction.

In response to these and other issues, the administration has proposed the creation of a chief executive officer. The CEO would be selected by the board and be delegated some of the board's responsibilities, including the day-to-day management of the agency. This approach is supported by the Inspector General.

As we examine ways to improve the governance of international broadcasting, it is vital that any reforms maintain the journalistic integrity that has been built over the last 70 years. This means maintaining a strong firewall between journalism and politics.

I look forward to hearing a frank assessment from our witnesses on the challenges facing the BBG and on the board's proposal to create a CEO as well as other recommendations they might have for improving U.S. international broadcasting.

I am a big supporter of VOA. I am a big supporter of U.S. broadcasting. Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen and I many years ago had to fight for Radio Marti. I really think this makes a change.

I have done a lot of work in Albania. The interesting thing for me is when Albania first opened up when I was here in the early 1990s and I went there, I asked them, what happened during the Cold War when you had the most repressive dictatorship? How did you know what was going on? And they said that the Voice of America was important, they all listened to it, they listened to television from Italy, but Voice of America was instrumental. I believe it was instrumental then. It was instrumental during the Cold War. And it is instrumental now.

So, as the VOA adage goes, "Tell the truth and let the world decide." I believe that.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Engel.

We are going to go now to our witnesses. We have been joined by three, who all previously served on the Broadcasting Board of Governors. The Honorable James Glassman served as Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs before he became chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors from 2007 to 2008.

Mr. Wimbush, the Honorable Enders Wimbush, is the Executive Director for Strategy and Development of the National Bureau of Asian Research. He was a member of the board from 2010 to 2012, but he was also Director of Radio Free Liberty from 1987 to 1993 as the Iron Curtain fell.

The Honorable D. Jeff Hirschberg, his 8-year tenure on the Broadcasting Board of Governors began in 2002. Before that, he worked at the Department of Justice, where he was special attorney to the deputy attorney general.

So we welcome all three of you. And I am going to ask you to summarize your opening statements. And, without objection, the witnesses will have their full prepared statements made a part of the record. Members have 5 days to submit your statements or additional questions.

And, Mr. Glassman, we will begin with you.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JAMES K. GLASSMAN, FOUNDING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GEORGE W. BUSH INSTITUTE (FORMER CHAIRMAN OF THE BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS, AND FORMER UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS)

Mr. GLASSMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Engel, members of the committee, congratulations on this hearing. Now is the time to think big about reforming not just the BBG but the entire public diplomacy effort of the U.S. Government.

Today I want to make four points. First, this hearing's title refers to former Secretary Clinton's statement that the BBG is defunct. It is not. The BBG is one of the largest news-gathering operations in the world. Last week, it announced a total audience of more than 203 million, a new record.

The Inspector General said in January, U.S. Government broadcasting is characterized by "journalism of the highest caliber." Second, while the BBG is alive and well, its mission is contradictory and confused. The law asks it both to be a tool of U.S. foreign pol-

icy and an independent, unbiased journalistic organization protected from government interference. In fact, the BBG's mission should be the same as that of the State Department itself: To achieve the specific strategic goals of U.S. national security and foreign policy.

Good journalism is not the end but the means. This is my most important message to you. You need to resolve the contradiction by law and clarify the mission. It is simply unfair to call the BBG defunct or even dysfunctional when Congress and the Executive Branch have not provided the BBG with a clear sense of what they want it to be and what they want it to do.

Third, structure. The BBG must be fully integrated into the foreign policy apparatus of the U.S. Government. The modern BBG was created in 1999 after the functions of the U.S. Information Agency were mostly folded into the State Department and international broadcasting was consolidated as a separate body: The BBG.

The best way to remove any confusion about the BBG's mission is to put it back into the State Department under an Assistant Secretary playing close to the CEO role that the current board and the administration envision or as part of a resurrected USIA. You would have an advisory board composed of members with expertise in media technology and in disseminating ideas in general.

High journalistic standards must be maintained for this new BBG. Propaganda simply does not work. All current broadcasting functions should be subsumed within the State Department, including those of the so-called grantees, such as Radio Free Europe. The distinction and functions among BBG entities has largely evaporated.

At any rate, as a 2012 Hudson Institute report says, it should be made "clear to the various broadcasting services that they are in the public sector and are part of the U.S. foreign policy team." This does not simply mean performing in a manner "consistent with the broad foreign policy objectives of the United States," as the law states, but, instead, following actual strategic directives, for example, to convince the Pakistanis that they face an existential threat from al-Qaeda.

Fourth, in examining the BBG, this committee should broaden its sights and encompass the government's soft power function as a whole. In her statement to this committee in January, Secretary Clinton focused on the BBG in describing her frustration, as you noted, Mr. Chairman, with America's "failure to tell a message around the world." She said, "We are letting the jihadist narrative fill a void. We need to get in there and compete."

That is true, but it is wrong to single out the BBG, which is only ambiguously part of the public diplomacy apparatus, for this failure. It is also disingenuous to point outward in assigning the blame when the responsibility "to get in there and compete" should lie within the State Department and the White House.

When I was a State, we had a clear mandate from the White House, backed by support from the National Security Council, to wage a war of ideas and information and ideological struggle against the "jihadist narrative" to which Secretary Clinton refers. Now the term "war of ideas" has become anathema. The fact is we

will never thwart our enemies and win the world's respect if we don't stand up for our values and oppose the ideology of violent extremism, just as we addressed communism during the Cold War.

What we need is what I call a strategic public diplomacy; that is, soft power directed to achieve specific national security aims with the full commitment of a President and Congress that understand that these nonviolent efforts are as important as warfare.

My own interest in this area began in 2003, when I was appointed to the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Glassman follows:]

Beyond Tinkering

Reform of the Broadcasting Board of Governors Requires Full Integration Into the U.S. Foreign Policy Apparatus

James K. Glassman
Founding Executive Director, George W. Bush Institute
Former Chairman, Broadcasting Board of Governors
Former U.S. Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs

Committee on Foreign Affairs
United States House of Representatives
"The Broadcasting Board of Governors: An Agency 'Defunct'"
June 26, 2013

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee:

My name is James K. Glassman. I am currently executive director of the Bush Institute, a policy institute that is part of the George W. Bush Presidential Center, which recently opened in Dallas and includes a library and museum. The Bush Institute aims to remove constraints on human potential across many endeavors, from fighting cervical cancer in Africa to improving the quality of public school principals in America. We also work to advance the cause of dissidents and freedom advocates in oppressed nations, mentor Egyptian women in their efforts to build civil society institutions and work with American organizations that serve veterans of the post-9/11 war and their families. I am speaking today not as a representative of the Bush Institute but as a private citizen.

Between 2007 and 2009, I had the unique honor of serving my country in two critical foreign policy roles: first as chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, or BBG, and then as Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. In that latter role, I represented the Secretary of State on the BBG board.

I congratulate the committee for holding this important hearing. Now is the time to think big about reforming not just the BBG but the entire public diplomacy effort of the U.S. government, which, at this crucial time in history, is not being deployed as extensively or effectively as it could be. The BBG, as the largest single public diplomacy program, is the right place to start. You said last week, Mr. Chairman, that "it is time for broad reforms; 'tinkering' and 'Band-Aid' solutions are not an option because the stakes are too great."[1] I completely agree. My testimony offers recommendations that are broad and deep. They may be controversial, given my position as a former chairman of the organization, but I believe they are absolutely necessary.

'Congress Needs to Reexamine the Legislation'

My own interest in public diplomacy – that is, informing and persuading foreign publics with the aim of achieving America's national security goals – began in 2003 when I was appointed to the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World, a congressionally mandated bipartisan panel headed by Edward Djerejian. I served on the committee that examined U.S. international broadcasting and received the assignment from Ambassador Djerejian of the writing the full report itself.[2]

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[1] http://foreignaffairs.house.gov/press-release/chairman-royce-announces-hearing-reforming-broadcasting-board-governors
[2] "Changing Minds, Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World," Submitted to the Committee on Appropriations, U.S. House of Representatives, Oct. 2003, at

At the time, a decade ago, my eyes were fresh. I knew little about public diplomacy, but from my experience both as a media entrepreneur and a think tank fellow, I knew something about mission, strategy, organization, and evaluation. I was shocked – there is no better word for it – to find that international broadcasting, so important to American foreign policy, operated outside the government's foreign policy apparatus. As the report stated:

> **Broadcasting represents nearly half the spending on public diplomacy, and it must be part of the public diplomacy process, not marching to its own drummer with its own goals and strategy, sources of funding and board. Congress needs to reexamine the legislation that created the BBG to ensure that broadcast operations support the strategic mission of U.S. public diplomacy… |B|roadcasting must fit into the overall public diplomacy strategy of the United States.**

With this in mind, here is a summary of my testimony to you today:

1. The BBG is far from "defunct." It is performing an important function, but its mission is contradictory and confused.
2. Clarify the mission, and the structure becomes evident.
3. The mission should be to achieve the specific strategic goals of U.S. national security and foreign policy. For that reason, the BBG should be part of the State Department or of a reconstituted USIA controlled by that department.
4. Journalistic standards of truth-telling are essential to effective achievement of the mission, but, primarily, the BBG should not be in the journalism business but in the foreign-policy business.
5. BBG reform must fit within reform of the nation's overall public diplomacy and strategic communications effort – which is urgent.

The BBG's Problem Is a Confusion in Mission

The BBG's primary mission today is *not* to achieve the specific goals of U.S. foreign policy. For example, one cannot imagine the Secretary of State instructing the BBG's governors that the broadcasts of Radio Farda and Persian News Network must be geared toward persuading their Iranian audience to pressure the regime to drop efforts to build nuclear weapons. Or, if the Secretary did give such instructions, it is unlikely the governors would feel constrained to follow them.

The confusion is this: Is the BBG a journalistic organization, like CNN or PBS, or is it a foreign policy agency, like, for example, the U.S. embassy in Ankara or the former U.S. Information Agency? The law is confusing and contradictory.[3] On the one hand, it says that "international broadcasting is, and should remain, an essential instrument of United States foreign policy,"[4] but on the other it establishes an organization steeped in the values of independent journalism. It states: "The Secretary of State and the Board, in carrying out their functions, shall respect the professional independence and integrity of the International Broadcasting Bureau, its broadcasting services, and the grantees of the Board."[5]

The fact is that the BBG has done an admirable job of trying to reconcile the contradiction. It does take foreign policy goals into consideration in allocating resources. It is represented on interagency groups involved in public diplomacy. Its strategic plan, one of the best in the federal government, is built on national security

[3] http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/USCODE-2010-title22/html/USCODE-2010-title22-chap74-subchapIII-partB.htm
[4] http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/22/6541
[5] http://uscodebeta.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-prelim-title22-section6204&num=0&edition=prelim

priorities. It has, for example, recently been increasing its broadcasting in the Sahel in response to requests from the U.S. Africa Command. It has been part of planning for major – and secret – contingencies.[6] But it is not, with the exception of emergencies, part of the chain of command. No one in the State Department, Defense Department, or White House, for instance, orders the chairman of the BBG to increase broadcasting about the fate of Afghan women to influence talks with the Taliban or to produce documentaries about Chinese cyber-attacks. The BBG's role in U.S. foreign policy is constructive but independent and almost voluntary, like the role, say, of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The reason for the reticence toward giving the BBG a clear and direct part to play in strategic foreign policy stems from fastidiousness about its journalistic function. That's understandable. From the nation's founding, Americans have been averse to government meddling in the journalistic process. Unlike most countries, we don't have a Ministry of Information. Still, a major responsibility of public diplomacy is informing and influencing the world with the written, spoken, and visualized word, and the BBG is a unique and valuable asset. With the BBG, however, we want to have our cake and eat it too; that is, we want to persuade foreign publics to support our policies, but we want the organization that does that work to have the independence, balance, and lack of bias of an idealized media organization.

The founding statute, the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998, creates a firewall that restricts State Department personnel from directly contacting or influencing BBG journalists. But, more important, the law and the culture at the BBG stress the same kinds of principles that journalists in the commercial sphere adhere to (or are supposed to). For instance, the BBG's activities must "be conducted in accordance with the highest professional standards of broadcast journalism" and present a "clear and effective presentation of the policies of the United States Government and responsible discussion and opinion on those policies" and "a balanced and comprehensive projection of United States thought and institutions" and "news which is consistently reliable and authoritative, accurate, objective, and comprehensive."[7]

As BBG chairman, I was often asked by members of Congress why we were broadcasting opinions that opposed U.S. policy in, say, Iran, China, or Israel. The first answer is that the law tells us to do that. The second is that broadcasts that might seem negative or in opposition to U.S. policy help enhance long-term credibility. John Houseman, the first director of Voice of America,[8] explained:

> **Inevitably, the news that the Voice of America would be carrying to the world in the first half of 1942 was almost all bad news. We would have to report our reverses without weaseling. Only thus could we establish our reputation for honesty, which we hoped would pay off on that distant-but-inevitable day when we would be boasting of our own invasions and victories.**[9]

It is completely understandable, however, that members of the Congress and the public have a difficult time comprehending why taxpayer resources are expended on airtime for opponents of drone flights over Pakistan or our embargo against Cuba. As this committee addresses questions of structure, it needs, first and foremost, to make a clear decision about mission.

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[6] The law does refer to the BBG being responsible for "the capability to provide a surge capacity to support United States foreign policy objectives during crises abroad."

[7] http://uscode.house.gov/download/pls/22C71.txt

[8] This is the same John Houseman who, 31 years after launching VOA, won an Academy Award for portraying the grumpy but lovable Professor Kingsley in the movie "The Paper Chase." Houseman was a movie producer, born in Romania.

[9] http://www.voanews.com/content/a-13-a-2002-05-08-48-actor-66282682/540764.html

The BBG is Far From Defunct

This hearing takes its title, "The Broadcasting Board of Governors: An Agency 'Defunct,'" from a statement by the former Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton. The relevant text, from a hearing before this committee on Jan. 23 mainly concerned with the Benghazi attacks:

> **Our Broadcasting Board of Governors is practically defunct in terms of its capacity to tell a message around the world. So we're abdicating the ideological arena, and we need to get back into it. We have the best values. We have the best narrative.... And we're letting the jihadist narrative fill a void. We need to get in there and compete, and we can do it successfully.**[10]

Let's be clear. By no stretch of the imagination is the BBG defunct, if the meaning of that term is "dead," "no longer existing," or even "moribund." The Secretary's statement was made shortly after the release of a report on an inspection of the BBG by the Office of Inspector General. That report notes, "The BBG is one of the world's largest newsgathering and reporting operations, with 50 news bureaus and offices worldwide. The five broadcast entities it supervises employ more than 3,500 journalists, producers, technicians, and support personnel full time in Washington, Miami, and Prague. It employs approximately 1,500 freelancers around the world."[11]
The BBG broadcasts in 59 languages – more than twice as many as any other democratic-nation broadcaster[12] -- in more than 100 countries.[13] On June 20, the BBG announced its total audience was more than 203 million, a new record and a 23 percent gain from 2010.[14] The agency's fiscal 2013 budget is $720 million.[15]

The Jan. 23 OIG report began with a "Key Judgments," and the first item was this:

> **U.S. Government broadcasting is characterized by journalism of the highest caliber and a widespread devotion to supporting democracy and freedom. This ongoing achievement is due to the commitment of the broadcast entities and professional staff.**[16]

Hardly the sort of judgment that would be rendered about a "defunct" organization.

In addition, the BBG is using advanced technology to thwart censorship and deploy the best broadcasting signals in its history into such countries as Iran, North Korea, China, Afghanistan, and Libya. Voice of America's Persian TV, radio, and Internet programs reach an estimated 22 percent of Iran's adults, and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty reaches 5 percent of adults weekly on radio and Internet. Programming that has recently won awards includes a Radio Free Asia documentary on human trafficking titled "An Invisible World: The Lives of Slaves in Modern Asia," with focus on China, and an 18-part series on RFE/RL's Radio Farda titled "Solitary Confinement" that recounts the depredations faced in Iranian prisons by dissidents. "'Defunct,'"

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[10] http://www.usnews.com/opinion/blogs/world-report/2013/02/26/hillary-clintons-unfinished-business-at-the-broadcasting-board-of-governors

[11] "Inspection of the Broadcasting Board of Governors," Office of the Inspector General, United States Department of State and Broadcasting Board of Governors, January 2013, at http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/203193.pdf

[12] The BBC, for example, broadcasts in 28 languages.

[13] "Broadcasting Board of Governors: Additional Steps Needed to Address Overlap in International Broadcasting," U.S. Government Accountability Office, Jan. 2013, at http://www.gao.gov/assets/660/651621.pdf

[14] http://www.bbg.gov/blog/2013/06/20/bbg-broadcasters-earn-record-breaking-audience-topping-200-million-a-week-worldwide/. The independent survey firms that the BBG engages use the international broadcasting standard for audience measurement, counting those who respond to surveys of whether they have listened or viewed in the past week.

[15] http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/203193.pdf

[16] Ibid.

as the blogger Kim Andrew Elliott has written, "is a wildly inaccurate description of U.S. international broadcasting."[17]

Structural Changes Would Improve Effectiveness

There are, however, serious problems that must be addressed. No organization can function without an accountable chief executive officer, but the BBG has none. Instead, the head of the agency is the nine-member board collectively. That can be a recipe for disaster, with individual governors, who work part-time, creating their own fiefdoms and acting without oversight.

During my own tenure as chairman, I had a committed, responsible, and cooperative board, but that is not always the case. The recent OIG report concluded in its inspection of the current board:

> **Board dynamics are characterized by a degree of hostility that renders its deliberative process ineffectual. Board meetings are dominated by one member whose tactics and personal attacks on colleagues and staff have created an unprofessional and unproductive atmosphere.[18]**

The current BBG also suffers from the absence of a chairman since the resignation of Walter Isaacson a year and a half ago. There are three other vacancies due to resignations, and the OIG report comments on high absentee rates.

To its credit, the board developed a reform plan under Chairman Isaacson and included in its fiscal 2014 budget request a legislative proposal to establish a CEO. The governors would then serve as a traditional board of directors, providing advice and oversight and making a limited number of high-level decisions, with executive authority residing in a full-time leader. All this is not new. Proposals to restructure the BBG date back at least to 2006, when Booz Allen was engaged to examine Voice of America and the International Broadcasting Bureau (the BBG's support-services and management arm).[19]

Elsewhere, I have called the BBG "structurally a mess,"[20] but, while I support a rationalization of the BBG structure under a CEO,[21] this reform should not occur in a vacuum. It is a basic management principle that structure follow mission, and when the mission of the BBG is resolved, the structure will be evident.

The BBG Must Be Part of the Foreign Policy Apparatus

I discussed the conflict that is at the heart of the current mission in a previous section. It is the obligation of Congress, not the current BBG board or management, to resolve that conflict. It is simply unfair to call the BBG "defunct" or even "dysfunctional" when Congress and the executive branch themselves have not provided the BBG with a clear sense of what they want it to do and be.

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[17] http://www.kimandrewelliott.com/?id=14095

[18] http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/203193.pdf

[19] "Review of the Voice of America and the International Broadcasting Bureau," Booz Allen Hamilton for U.S. Broadcasting Board of Governors, July 2006. The report was supposed to be confidential, but it is posted publicly at http://www.technewslit.com/USIAAA/BAH_Vol_1.pdf

[20] http://www.examiner.com/article/bbg-that-runs-voice-of-america-is-structural-mess-says-former-chair-glassman

[21] A study by the Heritage Foundation states the case for reorganization well, though I do not agree with all of its judgments. See "Time to Rethink the Broadcasting Board of Governors, Web Memo, Helle Dale and Nick Zahn, March 16, 2011, at http://thf_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2011/pdf/wm3192.pdf

The 1994 International Broadcasting Act, which set the stage for the current BBG, called for an organization that adhered both to the "broad foreign policy objectives of the United States" and to the "highest professional standards of broadcast journalism."[22] But, as a 2012 Hudson Institute study put it,

> **In the absence of strong central leadership, however, the broadcasting services' day-to-day operation tilts toward one of these objectives at the expense of the other – that is, toward journalism conducted without reference to U.S. foreign policy goals.[23]**

My own view is that the BBG must be fully integrated into the foreign policy apparatus of the United States Government. There should be no equivocation or confusion about its role. The 1998 act created the modern BBG primarily by eliminating the U.S. Information Agency and folding most of its functions into the State Department.[24] The main VOA function that did not end up at State was international broadcasting, which was consolidated into a separate body, the BBG, which in turn was further endowed with protections for its role as an independent journalistic organization.

The best way to remove any confusion about the BBG's mission is to put it back into the State Department – either as its own Office of International Media Outreach (the term "broadcasting" is hopelessly outdated in an Internet age), under an assistant secretary (playing something close to the CEO role that the current board envisions), or as part of a reconstituted USIA. In either of these cases, this new BBG agency should have an advisory board composed of members with expertise in media technology and in disseminating ideas in general.

There is no doubt that high journalistic standards would need to be maintained for this new BBG. Propaganda simply does not work in an age of intense media awareness and competing sources of information. The Hudson Report, whose lead author was Douglas Feith, former Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, says it well, "We recognize that without credibility as a source of reliable information, U.S. broadcasting can achieve none of its stated objectives."[25]

In fact, I would go one step further. During my tenure at the State Department, I started an approach called Public Diplomacy 2.0, which held that the best way to communicate with foreign audiences (and thus persuade them) was not through traditional means of broadcasting U.S. policy positions – a technique I called "preaching" – but rather through using our convening power to develop a broad and deep international conversation, thus creating an amenable environment for our messages. Social media is the perfect vehicle for such an approach, which was pioneered by my predecessor Karen Hughes, when she set up the Digital Outreach Team at the State Department, whose members go into online chat rooms and similar venues, identify themselves as U.S. government employees, and engage in conversations, often pushing back against inaccurate information about American policy.[26]

Activities of what we now called U.S. international broadcasting will almost certainly become more controversial in the future for not strictly adhering to the "telling America's story" or "explaining America's policy" model – which is all the more reason for the BBG to be directly part of the foreign policy apparatus.

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[22] http://www.bbg.gov/wp-content/media/2012/01/BroadcastingAct.pdf
[23] "Organizing for a Strategic Ideas Campaign to Counter Ideological Challenges to U.S. National Security," Douglas Feith, William Galston and Abram Shulsky, Hudson Institute, April 2012, at http://www.dougfeith.com/docs/2012_04_Feith_Galston_Shulsky_Paper.pdf
[24] http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/203193.pdf

[25] http://www.dougfeith.com/docs/2012_04_Feith_Galston_Shulsky_Paper.pdf
[26] http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1734850&download=yes

My preference is for all current broadcasting functions to be subsumed within the State Department, including those of the so-called "grantees" – the non-profit organizations funded with taxpayer money that are under BBG control: RFE/RL, Radio Free Asia, and Middle East Broadcasting (Radio Sawa and Alhurra, the Arabic language networks). The distinction in functions among BBG entities has largely evaporated, and the five separate networks (the other two are VOA and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting) and their own language operations should be seen as brands, adapted to meet the needs of their target audiences. In some cases – as currently in China and Iran – several brands are covering the same market. (A recent report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office urges the elimination of some of this overlap as a cost-saving measure.[27])

At any rate, as the Hudson report says, it should be made "clear to the various broadcasting services that they are in the public sector and are part of the U.S. foreign policy team."[28] And being part of the team does not simply mean performing in a manner "consistent with the broad foreign policy objectives of the United States," as the law states, but instead following actual strategic directives – for example, to convince the Pakistanis that they face an existential threat from Al Qaeda or to encourage Cubans to protest the imprisonment of political dissidents. Again, such objectives need to be accomplished with honesty, sensitivity, and subtlety – not, for example, with a radio editorial or a statement of policy beamed by the President of the United States. As the Djerejian Group put it,

> **[A]ll broadcasting must fit into the overall public diplomacy strategy of the United States. It is critical, however, that news and opinion programs be accepted as credible and reliable. The truth is our ally.**[29]

A Full Reform of Public Diplomacy Is Needed

Clarifying the mission and structure of the BBG is an exercise that requires context. The BBG is part of something bigger: the achievement of America's national interest through the use of soft power, or non-coercive means of persuasion. Joseph Nye, the father of the term, makes it clear that the objectives of soft power are far from squishy. The goal is not simply to get people to like us. "Soft power," he writes, "is not just a matter of ephemeral popularity; it is a means of obtaining outcomes the United States wants."[30]

In examining the BBG, this committee should broaden its sights and encompass the government's soft power function as a whole – a function we generally call public diplomacy or strategic communications and extends not just to the State Department but to the Pentagon, the intelligence community, and at least a dozen other agencies. In her statement to this committee in January, Secretary Clinton focused on the BBG in describing her frustration with America's "failure to tell a message around the world." I can understand the sentiment. "We have the best values," she said. "We have the best narrative.... And we're letting the jihadist narrative fill a void. We need to get in there and compete."

All true, but it is absurd to single out the BBG, which is only ambiguously part of the public diplomacy apparatus, for this failure. It is also disingenuous to point outward in assigning blame when the responsibility "to get in there and compete" should lie within the State Department and the White House.

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[27] http://www.gao.gov/assets/660/651621.pdf
[28] http://www.dougfeith.com/docs/2012_04_Feith_Galston_Shulsky_Paper.pdf
[29] http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/24882.pdf
[30] http://faculty.maxwell.syr.edu/rdenever/PPA-730-27/Nye.pdf

In the waning years of the George W. Bush administration, the President assigned the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs (first, Karen Hughes; then, me) to be the interagency lead for coordinating public diplomacy and strategic communications, with emphasis on countering violent extremism.[31] We built a structure across government to get this job done, centered at State. But, more important, we had a clear mandate from the White House, backed by support from the National Security Council, to wage a war of ideas against the "jihadist narrative" to which Secretary Clinton would later refer.

I am not assigning blame myself, and I am certainly not saying that the Bush Administration was waging this war of ideas perfectly, or even well. What I am doing is repeating what the bipartisan Djerejian Group concluded 10 years ago:

> **First and foremost, public diplomacy requires a new strategic direction informed by seriousness and commitment that matches the gravity of our approach to national defense and traditional state-to-state diplomacy. This commitment must be led by the political will of the President and Congress and fueled by adequate financial and human resources.[32]**

This effort can be structured with the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy as the lead or with a special office within the White House providing direction or through the resurrection of USIA. But whatever the choice, international broadcasting, whose budget is roughly the same as that of the State Department's public diplomacy activities as a whole, must be part of overall apparatus, taking direction from its leader.

Most crucially, public diplomacy must have a major strategic component – that is, it must try to achieve specific goals, not just try to make foreigners like us better. I have discussed the concept of "Strategic Public Diplomacy" at length in my testimony three years ago before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

> Some of the conclusions may be worth repeating here:
>
> **1. Make public diplomacy a top priority. The entire government should know that the President sees public diplomacy as a critical part of America's overall national security strategy.**
> **2. Make a distinction between what I call Strategic Public Diplomacy –that is, PD with clear objectives that can be achieved in a definable period, such as war-of-ideas goals – and long-term ongoing public diplomacy, which may be shaped strategically (with emphasis on exchanges with Muslim-majority nations, for example) but which is more general in its effects….**
> **7. Establish a culture of measurable results. All public diplomacy programs must be assessed and evaluated to see how well they "move the needle." Measuring can be difficult and expensive, but, without it, we can't tell whether work is succeeding or failing.[33]**

Nye divides public diplomacy into three temporal categories: in the short term, it should correct inaccuracies about the U.S. and explain policy; in the long term, it should help key foreign audiences learn about America and its culture, mainly through exchanges; in the medium term, it should provide support to other national security elements to achieve specific two-to-five-year goals, such as preventing Iran from getting a nuclear weapon. U.S. international broadcasting can help across this spectrum of time, but it is the medium term that has been most neglected in current public diplomacy and that needs the most support.

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[31] A good discussion of the benefits and pitfalls of interagency coordination in this sphere is available here: http://www.au.af.mil/info-ops/iosphere/iosphere_summer06_josten.pdf

[32] http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/24882.pdf

[33] http://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/GlassmanTestimony100310p.pdf

Mr. Chairman, you said in your letter inviting me to testify that this hearing is an opportunity to "explore meaningful and significant reform."[34] Now is the time.

You can certainly improve the BBG with structural changes that are long overdue – introducing a CEO, reducing the board's authority to a traditional corporate role, breaking down the distinctions among the entities, and treating language services as brands.

With only these changes, however, you will be back here planning another reform in a few years. It is the *mission* of the BBG that needs clarifying. The BBG must be part of the foreign policy team in a direct way, contributing to the achievement of discrete national-security goals. With such a mission, it cannot continue to sit outside as an independent agency but must become integrated into the foreign policy apparatus.

Thank you.

[34] http://foreignaffairs.house.gov/press-release/chairman-royce-announces-hearing-reforming-broadcasting-board-governors

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Glassman.
Mr. Wimbush?

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE S. ENDERS WIMBUSH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR STRATEGY & DEVELOPMENT, NATIONAL BUREAU OF ASIAN RESEARCH (FORMER GOVERNOR OF THE BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS)

Mr. WIMBUSH. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

Mr. Engel, thank you for this opportunity. I also want to applaud the effort of this committee to take a good look at the BBG and its relationship to international broadcasting.

I have spent a long time on both the front lines and the back lines of international broadcasting. So let me give you my assessment clearly and succinctly. The BBG was a bad idea when it was created. And it is dysfunctional today.

With five of its eight governors, including three of its four Republican members and both its chairman and his replacement as well as the alternate presiding governor, having resigned in frustration or disgust. The BBG cannot now function legally as intended because it now lacks an operating quorum.

The BBG in my estimate has failed to provide U.S. international broadcasting with effective strategic guidance, with good governance, with economic efficiency, or any credible link, as Governor Glassman has just said, to U.S. foreign policy goals and strategies. And these are built into the BBG system.

The BBG is dysfunctional in three but overlapping and interrelated ways. First, it is, as Mr. Engel pointed out, a mélange of different kinds of organizations: Three Federal agencies and three 501(c)(3)'s. They operate on totally different sets of laws, conventions, and practices. They cannot be made to work. The only thing they have in common is that they do media.

Second, the BBG's governance model could hardly be worse or more debilitating. It has no real leadership. The chairman's role is more honorary than functional, and his powers are nowhere spelled out. Congress originally intended the board of governors to oversee it but not to manage. But this has morphed into the BBG becoming a collective CEO, which has resulted in confused lines of responsibility and authority, oversight, and management. And the BBG is dysfunctional strategically. And this is the most important point. Our competitors have multiplied while their allies have retreated. One would think that American strategists would begin to sharpen their spears to compete in this world. Yet, the opposite seems to be happening, again due in large part to the incoherence of the BBG. Let me illustrate with an example.

Nearly every year, the BBG receives requests from concerned Ibo-speaking Nigerians to inaugurate a broadcast service in their language. Ibo is spoken by 18–20 percent of the Nigerian population of 175 million, which means a media audience of somewhere between 30–35 million in an energy-rich, demographically young, geographically salient country. This would seem to be a no-brainer, but every year, it is refused. And why is this? Because rampant duplication of effort across the five networks vastly reduces the funding opportunities for new ventures, however strategic.

I am confident that members of this board know that the Voice of America has a Russian broadcasting service. And you probably even know that Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty also have a Russian broadcasting service. But the voice also has a Burmese broadcasting service, as does Radio Free Asia. Now, if this were the end of the list, we might find a reasonable explanation, but it is just the beginning. U.S. international broadcasting now operates two language services on different networks in each of the following languages: Albanian, Bosnian, Macedonian, Serbian, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Georgian, Russian, Ukrainian, Uzbek, Arabic, Dari, Pashto, Persian, Burmese, Cantonese, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, Tibetan, and Vietnamese. And the VOA and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting both broadcast in Spanish, too. If you are counting, that is 23 duplications.

Now, advocates of duplication say it is necessary because they do different things. I have been hearing this canard since I ran Radio Liberty. There is no location for surrogate or non-surrogate broadcasting these days.

Think about the new technologies. Think about crowd sourcing, crowd sourcing, which is the gathering of information through mobile devices. It is the classic surrogate instrument. Are we going to tell the Voice of America that it can't be doing this? It uses it everywhere. We need to get rid of this distinction between surrogate and non-surrogate.

My four conclusions. One, get rid of the BBG as the organizing organization for U.S. international broadcasting. Two, separate oversight from management. Three, put one unified full-time professional management in place with jurisdiction over all U.S. international broadcasting. Four, create conditions for strategic decision-making. And, five, abandon the simplistic distinction between telling America's story and surrogate broadcasting. There are ways to get there. I would be happy to expand on those if asked.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Wimbush follows:]

House Foreign Affairs Committee
Hearing on the Broadcasting Board of Governors
"Broadcasting Board of Governors: An Agency 'Defunct'"
June 26, 2013
Testimony by S. Enders Wimbush

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Engel, Members of the Committee, my name is Enders Wimbush. I am honored to be asked to testify before you today on this important issue. I wish to applaud the Committee for initiating this long overdue inquiry into the Broadcasting Board of Governors specifically and its relationship to U.S. international broadcasting more generally. I have served on the front lines of US international broadcasting as Director of Radio Liberty at the time the Berlin Wall came down and the Soviet Union dissolved. More recently, I was honored with a nomination to the BBG, on which I served as Governor from 2010-2012. This broad and deep experience has led me to a stark assessment of both the BBG and US international broadcasting, and the link between the two.

Allow me to state my assessment clearly. The BBG was a bad idea when it was initiated and it is dysfunctional today, with five of its eight governors—including three of its four Republican members and both its Chairman and his replacement as well as the alternate presiding governor—having resigned in frustration or disgust. The BBG cannot function legally as mandated—which may be a good thing—because it now lacks an operating quorum. Moreover, in my view the BBG's prospects for acquiring new life simply by changing its board members is a losing proposition.

The BBG has failed to provide US international broadcasting with effective strategic guidance, good governance, economic efficiency, or any credible link to U.S. foreign policy goals and strategies. These failures are built into the BBG system. Most of the governors are fine, smart individuals who seek to serve their country in this demanding capacity. But their influence is limited because the BBG is a ship that cannot be turned more than a degree or two in any direction, let alone a full course correction. I believe that radical re-construction of U.S. international broadcasting is necessary, and I am heartened by this Committee's willingness to entertain it. Some believe that the BBG can be fixed. I do not share that view. The BBG has survived against common sense, as assessments by government agencies and outside experts have documented repeatedly.

The BBG is rightfully called dysfunctional. And so it is. But it is dysfunctional in two different but related ways.

First, is dysfunctional organizationally, incorporating six different media enterprises. Three of these are public enterprises—the Voice of America, the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (Radio and TV Marti), and the International Broadcasting Bureau—meaning that they are part of a federal agency and subject to its special federal rules, guidelines and conventions. Three others—Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, the Middle East Broadcasting Network, and Radio Free Asia—are private, 501(c)3 organizations—

each with its own board of directors which have the same membership as the BBG thereby creating yet more confusion and incoherence—funded with grants from the federal government and subject largely to organizational norms, laws and conventions common to the private sector. These two distinct parts of the BBG have little common ground in law or practice. The BBG is tasked with balancing the many contradictory elements.

Second, it does so badly. The BBG's governance model could hardly be worse or more debilitating. It has no real leadership; the Chairman's role is more honorary than functional, and his powers are nowhere spelled out. Any single governor can dominate the board's discussions and paralyze action on any issue. In fact, we have seen individual governors stymie much needed strategic reforms advocated by the current board when it was at full strength. Below the BBG level, the heads of the media enterprises are consumed in competition for resources with the heads of the other media enterprises, thereby reducing necessary focus on what is important: namely the critical external mission of U.S. international broadcasting. Little cooperation takes place, and the BBG lacks the power to force it to take place. When individual governors align with heads of the broadcast enterprises to promote that network's special interests and goals—as frequently happens—dysfunction is multiplied.

On top of all this, the media enterprises themselves often lobby members of Congress to support their special interests as a way to head off BBG action that might interfere with their own objectives and strategies and indeed their own privileged positions. Thus BBG governance suffers a triple whammy: poor leadership that cannot control the competition between and among the media enterprises, who therefore take their issues to friends in Congress whom they hope will protect them from the BBG.

Congress originally intended the Governors of the BBG to oversee but not manage the VOA (then part of the U.S. Information Agency) and RFE/RL, a non-profit grantee. With the abolishment of USIA, the BBG became an operating agency incorporating the VOA, the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, with their support services grouped into the International Broadcasting Bureau, while providing grants to Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and Radio Free Asia (established in 1996). The agency had no head; the nine governors—four Democrats, four Republicans and the Secretary of State—have acted as "collective CEO". The consequence has been confused lines of responsibility and authority and of oversight and management. Problems were compounded with the establishment of the Middle East Broadcasting Network as the third grantee under the BBG. The BBG as "collective head of agency" forces almost everything into the lowest common denominator. It also facilitates the promotion of personal agendas and conflict of interest both among BBG governors and network executives.

Can anyone on this Committee identify another three-quarter of a billion dollar activity trying to balance federal requirements and private sector conventions that is both overseen and operated by a board of part-time volunteers? Why would the U.S. government wish to treat an expensive activity of such strategic importance so cavalierly?

I stress the strategic importance. During the Cold War, America's international broadcasting was powerful and effective because it practiced an optimal formula for breaking authoritarian regimes' monopoly of information, not least about those societies' own realities. Where do such monopolies exist today? Indeed, they are rare. A few places like North Korea are still capable of controlling the flow of information to its inhabitants, but the larger part of global humanity has access to vast volumes of media outputs via TV, radio, the internet, and new social media. Drive through most parts of the Middle East or Asia, Latin America or Africa and the visual impact of satellite dishes—often two or three to a balcony—is staggering. Most are capable of bringing in several hundred channels of something. Cell phones and mobile devices are ubiquitous. Even Cuba has a growing internet culture.

Today's problem is not enough information but the opposite. Most places, even some enduring the repression of nasty regimes, get plenty, much of it junk. This is the new competitive landscape for US international broadcasting. The amount of time individual consumers spend watching or listening to something from any source is now measured in minutes and seconds rather than hours. TV is by far the medium of choice; old fashioned shortwave is all but obsolete except in a few places. Our competitors, too, have multiplied, while our allies have retreated. China now spends billions on its soft power public diplomacy, much of that devoted to media. Russia is back, has invested heavily in media and has upped its game. Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting has branches in 45 countries and broadcasts in 30 languages. Meanwhile Western broadcasters like the BBC, Deutsche Welle, Radio France Internationale, Radio Canada International, and Radio Netherlands Worldwide have all reduced service significantly to accommodate reduced spending.

One would think that American strategists would sharpen their spears to compete in this world. Yet the opposite seems to be happening, again due in large part to the incoherence of the BBG. It is incapable of articulating a set of media strategies, and it has no way to attach whatever measures it does adopt to larger U.S. national objectives.

How else can one explain the following? Nearly every year, the BBG receives requests from concerned Ibo-speaking Nigerians to inaugurate a broadcast service dedicated to their community and interests. Ibo is spoken by about 18-20 percent of the Nigerian population of 175 million. This translates into a media population of somewhere between 30-35 million in a demographically young, critical state. Energy rich Nigeria, of whom the US is a significant client, is one of the keys to sub-Saharan Africa stability. Broadcasting in Ibo would seem a no-brainer, given Nigeria's strategic importance.

Yet every year the request is refused. Why? Because the BBG's strategic priorities call for funding the broadcast services in its existing media enterprises first, a pattern largely fixed during the Cold War. Over time, this has resulted in rampant duplication of effort, as the broadcast services of the Radio Frees were introduced to buttress the work of the VOA. Thus, the VOA has a Russian broadcast service. So does

RFE/RL. The Voice has a Burmese broadcast service. So does Radio Free Asia. If this were the end of the list, we might find a reasonable explanation, but it is just the beginning. U.S. international broadcasting operates two language services in each of the following languages: Albanian, Bosnian, Macedonian, Serbian, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Georgian, Russian, Ukrainian, Uzbek, Arabic, Dari, Pashto, Persian, Burmese, Cantonese, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, Tibetan, and Vietnamese. VOA and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting both broadcast in Spanish, too.

So the 35 million Ibo-speaking population will get no US broadcast service despite Nigeria's strategic importance because Armenia (population under 3 million) gets two services; Georgia (population 4.5 million) gets two services; Laos (population 6.5 million) gets two services; Macedonia (population 2 million) gets two services; and so forth. Moreover, Greek still gets its own broadcast service. Thankfully it is only one, but how can we justify wasting money broadcasting to a country enjoying every conceivable media advantage, in the heart of Europe no less? No justification is possible, but the explanation is simple. For example, every year the BBG zeros out Greek broadcasting, and every year someone up here on the Hill puts it back in.

Worse, when cuts are inevitable the targets are usually single service languages of great importance. Few on this Committee, I anticipate, will know much about broadcasting in Tatar and Bashkir. This small RFE/RL service is the only broadcaster to the significant Islamic population in the center of Russia that will have a strong voice in the future of that ailing state. Similarly, broadcasts to the North Caucasus—ancestral home of the Boston Marathon bombers—are constantly on the chopping block. Good strategy would double down on these unique assets. BBG strategy, or lack of, is to put them out of business.

The BBG's inexplicable failure to rationalize this nonsensical strategic soup by eliminating unnecessary duplicate services in order to sharpen its strategic focus on areas of important U.S. strategic interest provides more than enough justification to reorganize US international broadcasting. But if more proof of strategic mismanagement is wanted consider that each of the networks supports management and administrative services—human resources and communications, for example—that cry out to be consolidated yet never have been.

But Wait! Wait! advocates for keeping all these duplicates scream. They are necessary because they do different things. I have been hearing this canard since I ran Radio Liberty in the 1980s and '90s. And I repeated it shamelessly because Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe were the only "surrogate" broadcasters. Surrogate meant that we attempted to provide the kind of local radio services that countries to which we broadcast might expect if their own media had been free. In contrast, the Voice of America was supposed to be America's official voice, which "told America's story."

During the Cold War while there were only two U.S. international broadcasters, this distinction had some validity. But it was never definite or clear cut. One of Radio Liberty's most popular programs was called "Broadway 1776", which was broadcast

from our New York studio. It was created, over my objections, because a member of the Board for International Broadcasting, our oversight body at that time, insisted on, in his words, "a program on the United States" to be broadcast over Radio Liberty. I explained that RL did "surrogate" broadcasting, that we concentrated on what was going on in the Soviet Union. He won. "Broadway 1776" followed new Russia émigrés around New York as they managed their transitions through typical American institutions and activities like the PTA, stores and shopping, intellectual life, and so on. Its powerful underlying message was all about America's uniqueness, its honesty, and freedom. The program thus was totally "surrogate", as it was all about them, and it told America's story wonderfully.

I was reminded of this recently when I received a notice that the Voice of America's English to Africa service was creating a special focus on South Sudan. Here is how the services chief editor describes this offering on the BBG website: "With South Sudan in Focus as its flagship program, the English language service will offer news 'for South Sudan, about South Sudan and by South Sudan reporters'...Listeners are hungry for breaking news and cultural information that VOA is well-placed to provide because we have a team of South Sudanese reporters around the country, a bureau in Juba, and an editorial staff in Washington D.C., where we also cover U.S. foreign policy and diaspora angles to the South Sudan story.'"

For the country, about the country, by country people. It's hard to get more "surrogate" than that.

These examples could be multiplied many times. My point is simply this. The Cold War division of labor between VOA telling America's story abroad and RFE/RL or any of the other grantees as surrogate domestic media no longer holds. All the networks cover both developments in the countries to which they broadcast and help tell America's story to the world. Creating media organizations defined by these narrow missions is to permanently constrain U.S. international broadcasting's flexibility and synergistic power. This is not to say that surrogate broadcasting is unnecessary or no longer needed. It is indeed, in places like Cuba, China, Iran, North Korea and elsewhere. We can and must continue to supply it. But we can supply it from anywhere, as we have been doing for a very long time. Once one rejects this largely artificial distinction, reorganizing U.S. international broadcasting will be more rational, more efficient, and more strategic.

Allow me to summarize my main points:

1. Get rid of the BBG as the guiding organization for U.S. international broadcasting.
2. Separate oversight from management, -- that is, keep the board and perhaps more importantly, individual board members out of operations by creating and enforcing a strong firewall between them.
3. Put one professional management in place with jurisdiction over all U.S. international media enterprises.
4. Create conditions for strategic decision making with regard to what we broadcast, to whom, and on what media platforms.

5. Abandon the simplistic and inaccurate "tell America's story" vs. "surrogate" dichotomy.

I believe that the Committee might entertain a number of different pathways to accomplish these goals. For me, one stands out as far and away the most logical, and coincidentally the pathway that is likely to avoid recreating the dilemmas associated with the BBG system. This is to create a single stand-alone media organization incorporating all of the existing media enterprises. This would require de-federalizing the Voice of America and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting. The different brands have value, at least for the short term, so they could be continued as needed, even within a single organization. The objective is a single organization, with professional leadership and management, and strong connective tissue to America's strategic center—logically the National Security Council with strong input from Congress. The new organization could eliminate duplication and competition for resources, choose targets and methods strategically, establish moving and creative balances of surrogate and non-surrogate approaches, and become nimble in responding to new challenges.

I fear that measures short of this radical change—e.g., tinkering with the existing structure to see if can be made to work—ultimately risk another BBG fiasco. I urge the Committee to swing for the fence.

Meanwhile, to generate a sense of urgency to fix this very sick organization I urge all members of the Committee to watch reruns of BBG meetings for the last few years. It won't take you long to see what's wrong.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Wimbush.

We go now to Mr. Hirschberg.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE D. JEFF HIRSCHBERG, CHAIRMAN, THE NORTHEAST MAGLEV, LLC (FORMER GOVERNOR OF THE BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS)

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Engel, members of the committee, thank you for holding the hearing.

I share some of the things that my colleagues have said up here. And a lot of it I just flat don't. My experience on the broadcasting board I think is a little bit different. I served there for roughly 8½ years. And during that period of time, we served for 2 years without a chairman because we were basically down to the final four, as we called ourselves.

And, before that, the board actually did work collegially to really address major strategic issues and initiate certain services, such as Alhurra Television, which were much needed. There were no votes on that sort of thing. It was done by consensus. Democrats and Republicans agreed that it was needed, created a promotional video, took it in to the White House. The President of the United States bought it. And we were up and running within 5 months of funding through the appropriations process. And we went on the air February 14th, Valentine's present, 2004.

So the board actually can work if you have a first-rate chairman and seven other people of good will who are willing to work together to accomplish the strategic goals of the BBG.

Now, having said that, I understand that it looks like to me, at least, things have changed over the course of time. And now there is a push for reform.

The current board and my successor board put out a strategic plan. And the President has accepted part of that strategic plan. OMB has supported it. And they have offered up a CEO of U.S. international broadcasting. While I may not believe it is necessary, I can support it. And I can support it as long as the CEO of U.S. international broadcasting is beyond and behind the firewall with the rest of the BBG board, must remain behind the firewall.

The most important thing that U.S. international broadcasting has in its favor around the world is its credibility. So my suggestion to you—and I urge you that when you are considering making certain changes, keep in mind that the most thing that we have going for us is our credibility. I don't think you get that by destroying the broadcast entities in any way, shape, or form. I don't believe you get that by putting VOA and the rest of the entities into the State Department. I am not in favor of that.

While there is so much to talk about, it is hard to know where to stop. I want to leave you with just one more thing before we answer questions. Assuming you get this 100 percent right and the structure is 100 percent correct and everybody is satisfied with whatever structure you come up with, it still only addresses half of the problem. The other half of the problem after structure and whatever reforms you want to put into place is that U.S. international broadcasting is substantially under-funded to do what it needs to do.

Just one example, if you look at Al Jazeera in the United States today, they are welcome here because we have a First Amendment. They are spending roughly $750 million or $800 million to stand up and network in the United States alone. That is over 100 percent of U.S. international broadcasting's worldwide budget.

So my last thing that I want to share with you is that while there may be some need for reform in the Broadcasting Board of Governors itself, which I can support, the broadcast entities themselves are performing their jobs as well or better than they ever have. And, quite frankly, Voice of America MBN on one side, the surrogates on the other are just two sides of the same coin. And what you are talking about in mission statements is merely matters of degree.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hirschberg follows:]

House Foreign Affairs Committee
Hearing on the Broadcasting Board of Governors
"Broadcasting Board of Governors: An Agency 'Defunct'"
June 26, 2013
Testimony by D. Jeffrey Hirschberg

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Jeff Hirschberg, and I had the pleasure of serving on the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) for eight and a half years, from 2002 to 2010. It was an honor to help advance the interests of an organization of committed and courageous journalists who share a deep and abiding sense of mission.

The title of this hearing, "Broadcasting Board of Governors: An Agency 'Defunct,'" conveys a fundamental misunderstanding. There is nothing defunct about the BBG. Its work is more relevant than ever, and its broadcasting services are performing better than ever.

The five BBG organizations – Voice of America, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia, Middle East Broadcasting Networks (Radio Sawa and Alhurra Television), and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (Radio and Television Marti) – now operate in 61 languages in more than 100 countries on every conceivable media platform. Their broadcast signals, from shortwave to satellite, are the best in the agency's history. So are the results: BBG audiences are at record levels – now more than 200 million weekly.

This is hardly the sign of a "defunct", or moribund, enterprise.

Yet I recognize there is a perception of the BBG as being dysfunctional, if not defunct. A core problem is that only four of the nine seats on the board are currently filled. This means there's no quorum to make decisions on critical issues. As things stand, the BBG won't be able to submit its budget request to OMB in September. The Senate needs to confirm the three BBG nominees named by President Obama to serve on the board.

I urge the committee not to conflate the performance of the BBG broadcasting services with difficulties experienced by the BBG's governing board, or to use the circumstance of such problems to mount a too aggressive overhaul of our international broadcasting services.

We can debate the merits of a structure in which a part-time board manages the affairs of a complex government agency. Personally, I believe there isn't much wrong with the BBG that a first-rate BBG chairman and full complement of board members, committed to working together, could not solve. That said, the BBG strategic plan calls for creating a CEO position; the President's FY14 budget request includes this provision. I can support this, provided the CEO operates behind a firm editorial firewall protected by the board. The proposed legislation does that. I note,

however, that this will add still another layer of management and create possible additional conflict within the agency.

Safeguarding BBG editorial content from outside political pressure is the board's first duty, as credibility is the BBG's greatest asset.

There is greater value, however, in the concept of a BBG board than defending the firewall. Private citizens from various walks of life, including media, foreign affairs, and government inject fresh ideas, practical experience, and enthusiasm. I witnessed firsthand during my tenure how the board helped to energize the bureaucracy and motivate needed change, and was the driving force behind the creation of Alhurra television. Indeed, I would argue that the BBG board represents the type of beneficial public-private partnership public diplomacy studies over the last decade have frequently recommended.

While the world is awash in media, people still do not have free access to news and information. Despite the information revolution – the Internet, mobile phones, Facebook, Twitter, etc. – only just over one tenth of the world lives in a country with a free press, the lowest level in more than a decade, according to Freedom House, on whose board I serve.

In the Middle East, there are hundreds of satellite television channels, and yet the region ranks last in the world in press freedom in the 2013 Reporters Without Borders survey. In China, there are 600 million people online, but the government systematically censors their access to news and monitors their activity. In Russia, almost everyone has a TV and watches it, but all the major channels are controlled by the Kremlin.

It is no coincidence that in the areas where extremists are most active – the Middle East, South Asia, and increasingly in the Sahel region of sub-Saharan Africa – strong, indigenous, independent media are largely absent.

Fostering free, open, democratic societies is critical to U.S. strategic interests. BBG nurtures such societies, and thus plays its part in our country's security.

But just as the BBG targets those countries that most need support for a free press, many of those same countries are mounting deliberate, well-financed, and increasingly sophisticated campaigns to drive information flows and influence global public opinion. This includes China and Russia, in particular, but also Qatar with its expansion of Al Jazeera in English, as well as Iran and Venezuela.

Because we in the U.S. endorse free flows of information, and there is a First Amendment to our Constitution, we support the right of any state or company to publish or broadcast just about whenever and wherever it likes, including on our domestic airwaves. Yet we have to face what we're up against, and we have to make a commitment as a nation, with adequate levels of focus and funding for our own

international broadcasting services, to compete effectively.

We don't have to look far to observe our global competitors in operation. We see their publicity inserts are in our newspapers, their channels on our cable TV networks, and their neon signs in Times Square.

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was right when she said a couple of years ago that there was as an "information war" under way. It is my belief that we will lose that information war unless the U.S. is committed to resourcing our broadcast entities sufficiently to meet the challenge.

Two weeks ago, Vladimir Putin celebrated the work of Russia's global TV network, Russia Today, with this remark: "'When we were devising the concept (Russia Today) in 2005, we wanted to see one more player on the global information scene which would not only objectively talk about events in our country, Russia, but would also try – I want to emphasize this – try to break the monopoly of the Anglo-Saxon media on global information flows. And I think we have succeeded.'" What viewers of Russia Today notice, both in the U.S. and overseas, is routine anti-American content, albeit well produced.

China is investing billions in its long-term global information effort. In places such as sub-Saharan Africa, where its programs have yet to enjoy a mass audience, China takes the tack of buying media properties and funding media infrastructure to ensure it has a permanent place in the media landscape. Its investments in information are in sync with its investments in trade and commerce. For China, the two go hand in hand: information is an integrated component of national power projection.

Al Jazeera outspends the BBG by at least three to one in the Middle East. In the U.S. alone, it has committed $750 million, equivalent to the BBG's entire budget, to buy the Current TV network and build out its U.S. news operation. It remains to be seen how Al Jazeera's news coverage in America in English compares in style and tone to its news coverage in the Middle East in Arabic, which since the Arab Spring has closely tracked Qatar's foreign policy, including support for the Muslim Brotherhood.

Unlike the United States, none of these countries – Russia, China, Qatar – believes in press freedom as a matter of principle or fundamental right. If they did, they would respect press freedom at home, and none does. Instead of truly seeking to expand information choice, as BBG does, our competitors' international media efforts are ultimately designed to advance their policy agendas.

The United States would be myopic not to see the current reality and possible future consequence of rapidly shifting global information flows. Our government should not, in my view, cede any territory on the information battlefield.

When increasingly people in the world lack access to credible, accurate news and information and when state-sponsored media of competitor nations that do not embrace our values are increasingly active, now is the time to strengthen, not weaken, the BBG.

As this committee meets to consider the future of U.S. international broadcasting, there are proposals to break up the BBG. Some believe the work of the Voice of America and the other broadcasters is so different they cannot successfully coexist within the same organization.

I reject this view and believe it further reflects a fundamental misunderstanding of what the BBG is about.

None of the BBG broadcasters is engaged in public relations work or propaganda. They're journalistic organizations. VOA and MBN expressly cover the United States. They do so to open a window on the American democratic experience. The aim is not to make people like us; it's to let them see democracy in action. Doing so directly supports the mission of fostering free, open, democratic societies.

Coverage of this country that shows how democracy works complements coverage of societies that are struggling to establish or consolidate democracy. U.S. and local news coverage are thus inherently compatible. They can and do co-exist naturally within one integrated BBG organization.

At the same time, none of the BBG broadcasters advocates regime change or other efforts to produce certain desired effects. Such an approach is not consistent with objective journalism.

The only way for U.S. government-funded broadcasters to have success is to retain credibility with audiences. And the only way to ensure credibility is to play the news straight up – to report the facts as they are, and let audiences make up their own minds about what the facts mean.

Audiences are smart. They know spin when they see it. They'll reject impostors.

VOA, RFE/RL, RFA, MBN, and OCB are all news organizations. They practice objective journalism. They don't do advocacy (beyond the VOA editorials, which are clearly labeled as such) or act to bias coverage towards pre-set desired outcomes. Either of these activities would jeopardize their credibility with audiences and nullify any long-term benefit they can have.

As news organizations, BBG broadcasters must be seen as independent actors. Congress wisely incorporated VOA and the other broadcasters into the independent BBG in 1998 with passage of the Foreign Affairs reform and Restructuring Act, the same legislation eliminated the U.S. Information Agency.

I urge the Committee to harness the best of our broadcast entities and address the other half of the equation, which is the fact that the BBG and its broadcast entities is substantially under-resourced.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Hirschberg.

I do think, as we look at this issue, there isn't any question but that during the Cold War, we were particularly effective during a period of time. I remember I was in East Germany for a while and saw the impact of these broadcasts and saw how you did them wrong and how you did them right. The old bombastic West Germany broadcasts, people weren't interested in that. But when we recruited East German stringers and began to put those young reporters on the line, people were fixated on what they had to hear.

Over the years, we I think learned certain lessons. The State Department wanted us out of Yugoslavia on the broadcasting. I remember a young Croatian with tears in his eyes telling me that the hate radio dominated all over the former Yugoslavia. And it was one of the reasons, the fact that we had never really had effective broadcasting in there. I had legislation to try to do that. And I believe we finally got that through. And it got it up and running the day before we started bombing.

I think it is very clear over the years that also the concept of a mission of trying to offset the totalitarian and especially the hate broadcasts that are done in these societies, we tried to prior, far prior, to 9/11. We tried to get broadcasting up and running, the right type of broadcasting, in Afghanistan. I remember that struggle. I carried that legislation. Again, we didn't get that through until after the attack and after the death of the leader of the Northern Alliance.

And I think that, as we go forward, clearly we have to learn from what we did right. And that is why Mr. Wimbush's testimony is of tremendous interest to me because during his tenure, we did something right. And it wasn't partisan. It was a nonpartisan effort to try to disseminate the facts about what was actually happening in that part of the world.

Mr. Wimbush, would you like to extrapolate a little more? Because when you finished your testimony, you said if we wanted to hear more from you about specifics, you would be happy to give us those specifics.

Mr. WIMBUSH. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Like Jeff Hirschberg, I am not a big fan of putting it all within the State Department. It is one model. And I think you need to look at a number of different models.

But I really think that this committee needs to hit for the fence. I think it needs to entertain a number of pathways to the goal you want, but for me, the one that stands out as far and away the most logical and coincidentally the one that will lead inevitably to the fewest instances of backsliding into the current BBG dilemma is to create one stand-alone media organization incorporating all of these existing media enterprises.

Now, it puts a big load on your plate because that means defederalizing the Voice of America and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting. Frankly, this to me is, far and away, the best outcome that you could come up with.

There are other models that you could look at that might put the Voice of America off by itself and maybe it goes into State or stands alone and the radio frees, the grantees, go in something else. What I would not do is organize in a way that enhances this

distinction between telling America's story and doing surrogate broadcasting.

When I was the director of Radio Liberty, one of the most important programs we put on the air—and I resisted it because a member of the BIB at that time told me he wanted something that told America's story.

We put on a program from our New York office called Broadway 1776. It followed new emigres from Russia around the streets of New York into the PTA, into the stores, into the intellectual institutions, into the museums. It was the most fantastic piece of surrogate broadcasting because it was about them and it was one of the finest and most wonderful examples of telling America's story because it told how the whole thing worked.

But look in contrast. Here is an announcement from the Voice of America, which is not supposed to be a surrogate station, although it has been practicing surrogacy for a long time.

This is how they describe their new offering to South Sudan just 3 or 4 weeks ago, and I quote, "With South Sudan in focus as its flagship program, the English language service will offer news for South Sudan, about South Sudan, and by South Sudan reporters." That is for the country, about the country, by the country people. It is simply impossible to get more surrogate than that.

So the objective, your objective, I think, should be to create as many possible synergies as you can without creating these firewalls, these barriers, for the sharing of information, the creating of new images and messages, and the healthy function of the whole media organization as a single entity.

Chairman ROYCE. Any further suggestions as long as you are here as a witness?

Mr. WIMBUSH. In my written testimony, you will see that I make a number of suggestions, but I would defer to my colleagues at this point.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Hirschberg?

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. I believe in taking on fights that you can have a chance of winning. For the 8½ years when I was on the board, we sort of took on fights that we thought we could win. Defederalizing VOA and OCB had been considered by the previous board for a number of years. And at that point in time, we decided we could not do it. And so, therefore, we chose to do other things in out discretion.

I am not necessarily for a single broadcast entity. I think that the surrogates and VOA and MBN, on the other hand, do a very good job the way they are.

I think there are a lot of things that can be done with respect to synergizing what they do. I think there are a lot of things that can be done vis-à-vis a management structure. And you could actually consolidate back office operations, consolidate IT, consolidate other things. That certainly can be done.

Now, if you want to do that and create an entire broadcast or a single broadcast entity, that is your privilege. You can change the legislation to do that if that is what you want to do. I just don't see a need for it.

Chairman ROYCE. Well, you did speak about resources.

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. I certainly——

Chairman ROYCE. And our resources aren't infinite.

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. Correct.

Chairman ROYCE. So the concept of merging the two, as Mr. Wimbush articulates, might not only lead to the added efficiencies but might lead to the ability to do more programming effectively as he ticks off the different dialects and languages that we do the broadcasting in. And there are probably 170, I would guess, or so, at least, around the world. The reality is that there is certain duplication there.

So clearly if you can consolidate that, you might, especially given the fact that you do have a lot of information around the world in terms of straight news. This is a little different mission. And consolidating that with the personnel that have those abilities and that niche to speak to those audiences and having them in the same operation might be tremendously more efficient. I don't know.

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. It may be more efficient, Mr. Chairman, but in the meantime, the GAO report on this did not go far enough to analyze duplicated versus unduplicated audiences, who listens to which of those services, what the effect of those services is, what their audience reach is, what their credibility is. If you want to go that step and then make the judgment as to whether or not the language services ought to be eliminated one way or another, that is just fine.

Chairman ROYCE. I am out of time. I will go to Mr. Engel. Thank you.

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. Okay.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to ask all three of you broad-based questions based on your written testimony, which I have read and what you have said. All three of you have had different views on what the fundamental mission on U.S. international broadcasting should or should not be.

And correct me if I am wrong. Mr. Hirschberg, you said that our broadcasters don't do advocacy work.

Mr. Wimbush, you believe the differentiation in missions between surrogates and telling America's story is no longer relevant.

Mr. Glassman, you testified that the entity should be brought in line with U.S. strategic objectives.

So these all seem to be quite different opinions. So let me just throw it out and say, amongst the three of you, is there any common ground on the over-arching mission of U.S. international broadcasting? Is it possible for broadcasters to provide authoritative, accurate, and objective news while at the same time advancing U.S. interests? Any one of you care to?

Mr. WIMBUSH. Well, I would be happy to take the first crack at that. The mission, Mr. Engel, the mission of international broadcasting is to support U.S. foreign policy. I mean, I don't think anybody disagrees with that.

Today, the connective tissue between what the BBG does and the programs that its networks create and the overall aims of the U.S. foreign policy is almost nonexistent. I think Jim Glassman mentioned that in his testimony. Somehow that to be revivified. It has to be made a clearer, more concise connection.

And Jeff Hirschberg is also right that this has to be done within the context of good journalism. I think of it as journalism with an edge, but it is journalism.

We have a reason for doing it. It is to support U.S. foreign policy and U.S. foreign policy objectives to support human rights, to advance freedom and enterprise, all of those things. But it has to be done within the context of good journalism. Without that—and we learned at Radio Liberty during the Cold War without the credibility that comes with good journalistic practice, you are blown out of the water almost immediately.

Everyone can smell a bad story. And today if you drive through any village in the Middle East or Turkey or Asia and you look up at an apartment building and you see the satellite dishes, sometimes two or three, to a balcony, you understand that these people are not suffering from the regime's monopoly on information. They are receiving 200 to 400 channels of something. So credibility and context for U.S. international broadcasting is utterly critical in this explosion of media.

People are asking more and more and more, "All right. We have got the facts or what we think are the facts, but what does it mean?" That is U.S. broadcasting's niche.

Mr. GLASSMAN. Mr. Engel, as I said in my testimony, the mission of the BBG should be to help achieve the specific strategic goals of U.S. foreign policy. That is not true today. It is true that the BBG in many instances, most recently, for example, in the Sahel, where they are working with DoD and State to increase broadcasting or in Somalia. In many cases, they are working toward the strategic goals. But that is not the main function or the main mission of the BBG today.

And that is why I worry when Mr. Wimbush, with whom I agree in a lot of the things he said, talks about the BBG standing alone. It shouldn't stand alone. It should be part of the foreign policy apparatus.

The reason that things worked during the Cold War was the entire U.S. Government was mobilized in its soft power elements to fight Communism. And we did a great job. That is not true with our soft power today at a time when I believe the problem is as urgent as it was then.

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. Mr. Engel, let me answer it this way. It is not that the BBG is devoid of conversations with the State Department. That is not true. The BBG constantly sets its broadcast priorities in conjunction, the formal consultation, with the State Department once a year during the BBG language service process. And, indeed, it is more iterative than that over the course of years.

So yes, we have talked to the State Department. Yes, we have a mandate to coordinate how and where we broadcast with U.S. strategic goals. And the BBG actually does just that.

Mr. GLASSMAN. Could I just add, Jeff?

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. Yes.

Mr. GLASSMAN. I will never forget when I joined the BBG as chairman, our first consultation with the State Department. We go to the State Department, and there is the deputy. And we sit down with him. And he talks to us for a half an hour. And he said, "Well, okay. Iran is a priority this year. Turkey is not a priority," just

kind of listed things. That was the level of consultation we had with the State Department.

I am proud to say that because I later became Undersecretary for public diplomacy and public affairs, we had more of a tie, but, really, these conversations are not a kind of serious strategic coordination with the State Department or the Defense Department or otherwise, although more of it is now going on.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you.

We will go to Mr. Rohrabacher.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for holding this hearing. I remember quite well when you came to—I will make sure the chairman hears this. Mr. Chairman, I remember quite well when you came to Congress. Let me get the chairman's attention here.

Chairman ROYCE. Yes, Mr. Rohrabacher?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I am just reminding the witnesses that when you came to Congress, Radio Free Asia was your baby. And the chairman put an enormous amount of work in for a new Member of Congress to actually get a whole new system set up pass through Congress and in place was quite an achievement.

And what we are saying today is that we can't just start things, let them go. And a good idea can sort of go astray unless we keep a good grip on the direction and have good oversight. What we are hearing today is that there has been a breakdown in accountability across the board in America's broadcasting capabilities and in terms of our governance operations anyway.

And I think it is—look, I have had some experience on this as well. I mean, I was very concerned last year when the president of Radio Free Asia, for example, fired the head of the Tibetan Service. And here I am a senior member, Foreign Affairs Committee. And I tried to find out information about this. I was told by the RFA that they didn't have any responsibility toward Congress, that they were independent.

Well, let's see. The Federal Government is paying for it. And the elected representatives of the people who are trying to oversee how money is being spent don't have any rights to information about decisions made within the organization. Something is wrong there.

And what you are telling me today is that that type of oversight is broken down for the entire in terms of the broadcasting board is not functioning, much less functioning in our behalf.

So we have got some work to do, Mr. Chairman, to follow up on the work you started a number of years ago. We heard a suggestion today that we might be folding all of these surrogate efforts, stopping the duplication by folding in all of the surrogate units into the Voice of America. Is that something they could work? And if so, how do we start that process? Mr. Wimbush, you may go forward on that.

Mr. WIMBUSH. Yes. Thank you, Congressman.

I am not advocating folding everything into the Voice of America. What I am advocating is creating a new organization that contains all of the language services that currently exist minus their duplicates. We simply can't do broadcasting in Ibo or a dozen other strategic languages for us today that were not strategic a decade ago

because we have two language services that broadcast to Armenia, population minus——

Mr. ROHRABACHER. So you are not advocating that we fold it back into the Voice of America. But we have one system. So you are advocating we eliminate the Voice of America?

Mr. WIMBUSH. No, no. I am not advocating that either. I am advocating creating an organization where you have enough flexibility—you can keep the brands within the organization because the brands have value. Those of you who want to think about it, think of the NPR model, "The following program is brought to you by Radio International. The following program is brought to you by American Abroad Media." There is absolutely no reason we can't operate that way.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay.

Mr. WIMBUSH. But we need within the organization the flexibility to direct resources where it is strategically valuable at any given time and over the long period to eliminate duplication and to make sure that we get the balance between surrogate and non-surrogate right.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Also, I would add to that that we do need to eliminate the duplication. And we also need to make sure that whatever we set up has accountability and that we have a breakdown of accountability in this system right now. Let me just note we are compared to Al Jazeera. Look, Al Jazeera is financed by massive oil or massive gas assets of the State of Qatar, and we can't even build a pipeline here, much less finance new things based on energy.

How much do we spend totally on broadcasting? Do we know that anywhere?

Mr. WIMBUSH. The total budget?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Total budget for broadcasting with all of the surrogates, et cetera.

Mr. WIMBUSH. When I joined the board in 2010, it was about $765 million. Today, with all of the various cuts and things, I think we are down to around 730, but they are——

Mr. ROHRABACHER. That is all of them? That is with the duplicates?

Mr. WIMBUSH. That is everybody. That is the voice and the surrogates.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay. Thank you very much.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you.

I think in terms of languages, there are probably about 43 over at VOA. And we are probably duplicating most of that. So, you know, 80-some if you look at it from the standpoint of the duplication.

Mr. Sherman?

Mr. SHERMAN. We don't broadcast in Japanese or German because those are countries of the free press. And they get plenty of good information at their own cost. What strategic interest are we achieving by broadcasting both television and radio in Greek? Anybody have any insight? Mr. Glassman?

Mr. GLASSMAN. None.

Mr. WIMBUSH. None.

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. None.

Mr. SHERMAN. Good. There is this idea of putting the broadcasters in State. There was a big political wrangle over the Benghazi talking points, but it illustrated one thing that I have come to have known all too well. And that is it takes 20 drafts to get a few paragraphs out of the State Department. And by the time the process is done, most of the content has been leeched out. Imagine trying to run a radio service in which every broadcast has to be cleared by several different bureaus.

We need to maintain enough distinction between the State Department and the broadcasters so that every news report isn't considered an official statement of the U.S. Government subject to 17 reviews. I think we need one agency overseeing this to avoid the duplication. We can't afford to have six different duplicative approaches, although if we had unlimited money, I would be for it.

We need somebody, a chief executive, running this. I don't care whether he or she reports to a board or an Under Secretary. We have had some—Mr. Rohrabacher, he has just left—pointed out how there is a lack of accountability to Congress, which is quite distinct. I have spent the last 2 years trying to get broadcasts in the Sindh language.

Are any of you aware of a country more important than the world's only somewhat unstable nuclear power?

[No response.]

I don't see anybody responding because there is no response. You have got a large percentage of Pakistan that speaks in the Sindhi language. We are not broadcasting even in radio, but we are doing both Greek television and radio.

You gentlemen have been on the inside. What is the attitude of the bureaucracy and the boards to ideas from Congress? Is it actual not-invented-here hostility or just total disinterest? Mr. Hirschberg?

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. Neither one of those. Neither one of those.

Mr. SHERMAN. I have been here 17 years. I haven't seen any suggestion taken by the broadcasters unless it was passed by both houses of Congress and binding on them in law. But, Mr. Glassman, do you have a different view?

Mr. GLASSMAN. Well, I think you brought up Greek. I think one of the reasons that Greek continues to be broadcast is because there are Members of Congress who insist upon it. I can only speak for my tenure as chairman and when I was—when Jeff Hirschberg was on the board and we had a terrific board and a really committed board.

I think we paid a lot of attention to Congress. I know I did. And I think certainly Mr. Hirschberg did. That is where our money comes from. That is where there is a lot of brain power that is helpful to us. So I really think there is——

Mr. SHERMAN. I am more familiar with Mr. Rohrabacher's experience where you ask for information and you are just told, "Well, if you can get an act of Congress passed through both houses compelling us to give you the information, then we will give it to you."

Mr. Hirschberg, do you have a different view?

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. That just wasn't our attitude when I was on the board. It was just not—it just did not work that way. Congress

talked to us about and different Members about what their desires were.

Mr. SHERMAN. This committee——

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. And when we sent up a reprogramming notice, which was $750,000 or more, Congress got to say yes or no, in whole or in part to anything we wanted——

Mr. SHERMAN. If I can reclaim my time? This committee 2 years ago passed an amendment to broadcast in the Sindh language. No steps had been taken to do that, even to do it on the internet, by any of the broadcasters. I am sure that if we had enacted a State Department authorization bill through the entire process and it made it almost a criminal offense not to follow the law, then they would have followed it. But a mere vote of this committee got no response.

Do any of you have any ideas on how I can get broadcasting in the Sindhi language?

Mr. WIMBUSH. Yes. You can cut some of the duplicate broadcasts that currently go out so that there is money to do it. I mean, we are talking about finite dollars here.

Mr. SHERMAN. Amen. Thank you. My time has expired.

Mr. WIMBUSH. Very easy to do.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN [presiding]. Thank you very much.

The Chair will now recognize herself for 5 minutes. The mission of the board of broadcasting, Broadcasting Board of Governors, is to inform, to engage, to connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy. And when analyzing the effectiveness of BBG programs, we must do so through the prism of those founding principles that are essential to fulfilling the mission of the Broadcasting Board of Governors. However, we must also be aware that BBG is created and operated in many closed societies, where they have dictatorial rule with marginal resources. So I understand that it is not a perfect system.

But I do believe strongly that the mission of the BBG is vital to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives, to promote democratic principles, and be a resource to those living under these repressive authoritarian regimes. And I have seen the success of BBG programs firsthand with Radio and TV Marti.

In '83, as we know, President Reagan signed the Radio Broadcast to Cuba Act. And when commemorating this event, President Reagan commented that "This action will finally let the Cuban people hear the truth from the outside world." Through Radio and TV Marti, we have been able to publicize and showcase to the world the atrocities that occur in Cuba and the people know their voices are being heard and that they are not alone because the United States will stand by them in their struggle for freedom. However, serious problems continue to occur in Radio and TV Marti.

Programming needs to improve. The transmission interference remains a major obstacle to getting the signal into all parts of the island. It is good in some area, not good in others. Radio is good overall, but TV continues to get jammed because we have not modernized the way that they we transmit that signal and have not been operating in the way that we should so that we can expand access of this broadcast throughout the island.

So one of my first questions when I finish is, what are we doing to improve the transmission into Cuba of the TV Marti signal so that everyone can receive it, understanding that Castro will, of course, do everything within its power to jam it and to block it.

And, staying in the Western Hemisphere, I am concerned that countries such as Venezuela and Ecuador continue to crack down and suppress independent journalists. I believe this gives BBG an excellent opportunity to strongly support a civil society and journalists who are trying to use the media to get the word out. In Venezuela, that is practically unheard of and Ecuador with the new media law that they have adopted, ironically enough, in the same week that Snowden writes a letter to Correa, the President of Ecuador, seeking asylum. And he is seeking asylum in the very country that does everything to suppress press freedom. But that is a fight for another day.

So do you think that VOA Latin America can fill the vacuum in these countries that have shut down independent media and that VOA can be a resource there? And we have seen instances that BBG has been unable to live up to its objectives and has greatly under-performed in its role to promote democratic reforms. In the hearing that I held just last week in Middle East and North Africa about the election results in Iran, one of our witnesses talked about the inadequacies of VOA's Persian News Network.

So if we could start with—I think we will just have time for Radio and TV Marti.

Mr. WIMBUSH. I would be delighted, Madam Chairman. I happen to be one of the big fans of Radio Marti for the very simple reason that Cuba is in a major transition. And sometime in the near future, it is going to pop back into its hemisphere. And it is going to be a major player.

It is very much in America's strategic interest to shape that transition and to aid it any way we possibly can.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. How can we fix the transmission problem so that the signal gets to the people?

Mr. WIMBUSH. This is something I can't answer. This is an engineering question. But if resources are available, I am sure that a way to do it can be found.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Gentlemen?

Mr. GLASSMAN. Madam Chair, I would just add that I understand, just from a press release, that the BBG is using other means to get into Cuba; for example, I have never heard of this before, but paper thumb drives that have recordings from Radio and TV Marti transmissions. I think this is a great idea. And, actually, it is a good example of how the BBG should work more broadly——

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. And Yoani Sanchez, the blogger, has been very active in trying to get more people to come in with those.

Mr. GLASSMAN. Absolutely.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much. My time is up.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Chairman?

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Yes?

Mr. CONNOLLY. I would ask unanimous consent that the panel be able to respond to the chairwoman's thoughtful questions——

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

Mr. CONNOLLY [continuing]. In such time as may be required.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Well, thank you very much.

So, then, I had asked about Venezuela and Ecuador just as examples of countries that have clamped down severely on press freedoms. Do you see an expanding role of VOA there?

Mr. WIMBUSH. Yes. And the current board, in fact, has made a real effort to expand its role into Latin America. I am a year away from the board. So I am not exactly sure where they are going, but the board's strategy director, Bruce Sherman, who came from Radio Marti and speaks fluent Spanish, identified almost immediately a 24/7 satellite that could be used.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. That is great.

Mr. WIMBUSH. The concept we have tried to put in place, which comes right to your point about how do we influence Latin America would be to use this wonderful facility in Miami, which is also the home of Latin American banking, Latin American media, use that as the hub for Latin America work and put Marti at the center of it, rather than on the periphery, and use that.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

And then the last question was on the inadequacies of our VOA Persian News Network so that even when the President was addressing the Iranian people, he opted to use BBC Persian because the VOA Persian News Network was not transmitting in the way that it should. What can we do for that?

Mr. WIMBUSH. Well, again, I am happy to address that one. When I joined the board in 2010, the very first effort I made was to analyze the Persian News Network. And I produced a fairly extensive report on it.

The Persian News Network can produce some startlingly good programming and some startlingly bad programming. The problem is it is going to be extremely difficult to fix within the VOA structure because of the employment laws and all of the conventions that go along with being part of a Federal agency.

It was not put together correctly in the beginning. And now they are paying the price because it is going to be very hard to change.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, gentlemen.

And now I would like to turn to Mr. Connolly—he is such a charmer—for all the time he wants.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Sorry, there, Mr. Yoho. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman, who is my friend. And welcome.

Stepping back just a little bit, you all served on the board. We have an IG report that says that the BBG is failing in its mandated duties and that that failure came from a flawed legislative structure and strong internal dissention. Would you agree with those findings?

Mr. WIMBUSH. Yes.

Mr. GLASSMAN. I would not agree with those findings if they were made about the board on which I served. I think the board on which I served had the mission problem, which I described, but we had dedicated, committed members, who showed up, who devoted tremendous amounts of their time. And Jeff Hirschberg is a good example, traveled a great deal minding the store at Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. So I don't think that is true.

Now, part of the problem is that this board has not had a chair for a year and a half. And whether the chair has stipulated powers

by law or not, you have got to have a leader. And there are numerous vacancies.

Mr. WIMBUSH. Fair point.

Mr. GLASSMAN. There are apparently according to the OIG report——

Mr. CONNOLLY. And I am not sure the OIG report was necessarily, Mr. Glassman, necessarily laying the blame at the BBG board. I think it was talking about the whole structure. And it was also, frankly, holding us accountable for inadequate or maybe inappropriate legislative structure, which I would want to come back to.

Mr. Hirschberg?

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. Well, if you want to change the legislative structure, you are more than welcome to do it. I didn't think there was anything the matter, really, with the BBG to begin with and still don't.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Okay.

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. All right? Two, vis-à-vis the IG's report, I can't speak to that. That is a current board issue. And I am not going to be critical of my successors in any way. There are enough people that are doing that now.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Well, okay. Let's step back. Listening to your testimony, looking at the IG report, looking at a GAO report, we have a lot of duplication. We have a lot of redundancy. We are in an era of contracting resources, not expanding resources, including for diplomacy. Is this not a time to restructure BBG, streamline it?

I mean, you all concurred with Mr. Sherman's question that we are still broadcasting in Greek, but we are not broadcasting in Sindh.

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. Right.

Mr. CONNOLLY. And that seems to be a misplaced priority.

Mr. Glassman?

Mr. GLASSMAN. Yes, sir. And I think that is true.

I wouldn't get carried away with the duplication issue. I think it is more a strategy issue. Someone needs to make a decision. If you have got $720 million to spend or whatever the number is, what are the important places that we should put our resources?

Mr. CONNOLLY. Well, let me interrupt you. The GAO report says two-thirds of the BBG's language services overlap with some other language service.

Mr. GLASSMAN. Right.

Mr. CONNOLLY. That is a big overlap. It identified 23 instances of overlap involving 43 of BBG's 69 services.

Mr. GLASSMAN. Right, Congressman. However, that does not mean that they are all saying the same words at the same time.

Mr. CONNOLLY. No.

Mr. GLASSMAN. You know, NBC has MSNBC, CNBC, NBC, the Golf Channel. They are trying to achieve different kinds of things. I am not saying there is not overlap. What I am saying is that there is a bigger problem here, which is a strategic problem.

Mr. CONNOLLY. A fair point. And sometimes overlap may actually be a good thing.

Mr. GLASSMAN. Right. Agree.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Certainly as somebody in the political profession, I have learned repeat, repeat, and repeat again if you want to penetrate consciousness, especially in today's diffuse media market.

Mr. GLASSMAN. Right. I see——

Mr. CONNOLLY. There could be a reason for that.

Mr. GLASSMAN. I see nothing wrong with having—if Iran is an important target of American strategy——

Mr. CONNOLLY. Fair point.

Mr. GLASSMAN [continuing]. I see nothing wrong with having Radio Farda, Persian News Network, VOA Radio beamed into Iran. I wouldn't mind having, actually, several other stations, including an entertainment station, beamed into Iran——

Mr. CONNOLLY. Right.

Mr. GLASSMAN [continuing]. But not into Greece, not into Turkey, not into some of the other places.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Right. Fair enough.

Mr. WIMBUSH. Mr.——

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Wimbush?

Mr. WIMBUSH. Yes. Congressman, I agree entirely with Jim Glassman on getting strategic. We simply don't have the flexibility within the board structure as it exists to get the right program to the right audience on the right platform. We don't have it. And I will back that up with the proof.

All of the duplication which you see today, virtually all of it, existed in 1998, when the board was created, 1994–1998. Not a single board has dealt with this in any systematic, any reformist fashion. I can't conclude anything but that the structure of the board has to relate to that failure.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Hirschberg?

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. I always found that in a time of declining resources, the biggest problem that the broadcasting board and its entities have is there are too many language services chasing scarce dollars. So I am for helping the board in helping the broadcast entities reprioritize some of this because you can't be all things to all people.

And even when we tried over the course of time, by the way, to cut some services from our broadcast entities, including some that were overlapping, you know, Congress said no to us. And in another case that I can recall very well when we didn't even ask for a service, Congress mandated it. All right? Now, that is your perfect right, but, nonetheless, I don't see that as necessarily a fault of BBG management.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Yes. And I want to repeat. The IG report said that some of the fault lies here with the legislative structures we have created, which I think confirms the point you are making. Now, we have to take responsibility for our own actions or lack thereof.

But let me end. I don't want to abuse the unlimited time I have. My colleagues are waiting. But can I just ask your thoughts about—okay. Let's take that legislative structure concept. If we were starting over again, if we were to look at legislative reform, taking cognizance of the changed world and contracting resources, what would you recommend Congress consider doing, Mr. Glassman?

Mr. GLASSMAN. Integrating the BBG into the overall foreign policy structure. You know, 10 years ago, I was on the Djerejian group, which looked at public diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim world. And we concluded this: "Broadcasting represents nearly half the spending on public diplomacy. It must be part of the public diplomacy process, not marching to its own drummer with its own goals and strategy sources of funding and board."

And that was true 10 years ago. It is true today. How you structure it, there are many different ways to do it. You could put it into the State Department. You could resurrect USIA. You could have it as a separate entity as Mr. Wimbush wants, as it is today, but directly reporting to somebody and responsible for someone who is in the foreign policy apparatus.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I was very struck by your testimony when you used the phrase "strategic drift" and you told that story about the strategy session with the Undersecretary or Deputy Secretary. It is an amazing story, actually, when you think about it.

Mr. Wimbush?

Mr. WIMBUSH. Mr. Connolly, I don't want to leave the impression that I think that U.S. international broadcasting should report to no one. I just don't think it should report to the State Department.

The challenge for this committee is going to be how to create the logical foreign policy anchor for international broadcasting within the foreign policy security community. My own view is this should be the National Security Council, but you have to figure out what that connective tissue looks like.

Your question, if you were going to start over, what would you do, it is a no-brainer. If you were going to start over, you would create one organization. And I urge you to start over.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Chair, would we allow Mr. Hirschberg to answer?

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Yes, absolutely.

Mr. CONNOLLY. And then I am done. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Okay.

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. I don't share Mr. Glassman's view of having this go to the State Department. I don't share Enders' view of having it go to the NSC. I do believe that you should have an independent agency and entity, no matter what you call it. And if you have to rebrand something, which is clearly needed here, it ought to be rebranded. The BBG really needs to be rebranded.

I think that there is enough connectivity to our strategic interests as a country now. If you want to change that legislatively, you can always do it, but I don't share the view that somehow this is broken, somehow it is not under foreign policy community. Its goals are a little different. Its objectives are a little different. But they are complementary to everything else. And if someone wanted to move the needle, all of these other programs in the State Department and all the rest of them haven't done much. Why add VOA to it?

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

Mr. CONNOLLY. And I owe you more chocolate.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Okay. Thank you.

Dr. Yoho is recognized. Thank you, sir. Thank you.

Mr. YOHO. Thank you, Madam Chairman. Thank you, guys, for being here today. And I would like to thank you all for being here today.

I have a healthy respect for the history of the Voice of America's related programs from World War II to the fall of communism. You can't help but feel nostalgic about these programs. And I commend that whole service.

However, in today's fiscal and technological climate, I want to make sure that we are maximizing the use of the hard-working Americans' tax dollars and ensuring that we aren't subsidizing the broadcasting of policies that are counter to our goals. And I have a few questions related to that.

And you are talking about we lack funding. And that would be one of the big things that help you, but, yet, in 2011, there was a study commissioned by BBG by Deloitte. And they recommended consolidation of the administrative elements of the surrogate broadcast services, RFE/RL, RFA, and MBN. And the proposal noted that that would save anywhere from $9 million to $14 million a year, but, yet, it hasn't been done the way I understand it.

When you commission a study, obviously that costs money. And then you get the recommendations. And we don't follow through. And we want more money. It seems like we would follow through on that. So I would like to hear your thoughts on that.

And then what kind of assessments are made of the listenerships? Is there an audience for these programs? Obviously we are broadcasting in Greece but not in the other areas where we need to be in the Arab world. And I understand the communication tools, like the internet, et cetera, that were granted, that we take for granted here, but may not be the most free and open in these other countries, hence the need for radio broadcasts. Has there been a recalibration of your distribution that takes into account newer, cheaper communication methods? And I would like to hear your thoughts on that.

Mr. WIMBUSH. Dr. Yoho, a couple of thoughts. Yes. On the board that I participated in, a study was done to look at consolidating the grantees the radio free, so to speak. To me, it was pretty conclusive. It makes not a whole lot of sense in my view to have Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, MBN, Radio Free Asia, all with their own HR departments, their own communications departments——

Mr. YOHO. Right.

Mr. WIMBUSH [continuing]. Their own newsrooms. I mean, this is just rampant duplication that should have been fixed a long time ago.

Mr. YOHO. Why hasn't that been followed up on?

Mr. WIMBUSH. It was killed by the board itself.

Mr. YOHO. Okay.

Mr. WIMBUSH. Within the board, there was a majority in favor of it. It was killed and delayed by one or two of the members.

Mr. GLASSMAN. Congressman, could I comment——

Mr. YOHO. Yes, sir.

Mr. GLASSMAN [continuing]. On your question about research? The BBG does an excellent job of audience research in some really

tough places. However—and this gets to the strategic question that I have been emphasizing. The real question is, what are you doing with these audiences? What is the point? Is it just to gather a big group of people or is it to do something with them? And it is my belief that it is to do something with them, which is to say to persuade them.

And there is not a lot of research on that. It is not easy to do for one thing. But I also don't see it as the major mission of the BBG. And I think the mission needs to change. Then the research should follow.

Mr. YOHO. And you say that comes from the State Department on policy because if we look in the Arab world right now in the Arab Spring—and we have got a whole different dynamic over there. You know, in the old days when you had Mubarak, you could kind of I don't want to say predict, but you could predict how people were going to respond. But today it is a whole different message.

You know, your research should be tailored, I would think, to reaching that younger crowd and getting that message out. You know, I know it goes back to Mr. Hirschberg saying money, and I know that is one of the big problems up here is money, money, money. So we have got to be super efficient at everything we do.

One of the things that you guys touched about was, why isn't there more cohesion between the mission and our policy to help stimulate what you were talking about: The target population? Where is that being prevented? Is it in the management of the BBG or is it coming from the State Department or is it coming from us, the lack of that cohesion?

Mr. GLASSMAN. It is not part of the culture of the BBG except in certain instances. And I commend the BBG for that. I mentioned the Sahel, and there are several others where they are cooperating very well with State and with DoD, but overall the BBG does not see it as its mission. Let me just use one example.

It seems to me that it is in the national interest to persuade Iranians to oppose the development and deployment of nuclear weapons. We have got a lot of lines into Iran as a result of our BBG broadcasting. And, yet, no one is directing the BBG. And I think the BBG under the current system would be quite reticent to go along with a directive from the State Department or the NSC or elsewhere to try to persuade Iranians. But I think that is actually what should be done.

Mr. YOHO. Okay. Thank you.

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. Well, if you do that——

Mr. YOHO. Madam Chair, can I have——

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Absolutely.

Mr. YOHO. Thank you, ma'am.

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. If you do that, then you had better change the mission of the BBG and you had better change the——

Mr. GLASSMAN. That is what I have said.

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. Just let me finish, Jim. And you have to change—I know you did. And let's change the legislative intent and the legislative scheme because right now the BBG does not do messaging, does not do advocacy. It is a pure journalistic mission. Hard

truth and information will show people what a democratic society is all about.

And vis-à-vis the research question, at least for the years that I was on the board, every service, every language service, every change in language service, every change in programming was heavily research-driven, that there is a first-rate research department within the BBG.

Thank you.

Mr. YOHO. Thank you.

Go ahead.

Mr. WIMBUSH. Thank you, Doctor.

Two points that you raised. The first is I think one should be very cautious about using numbers as an indication of the success of these services. You can get 200 million or 250 million, but if it is the wrong 200 or wrong 250 million, you haven't really accomplished anything.

One of the things that U.S. international broadcasting must do is to develop other measures of effectiveness, as they would say in the military. We have to know how to measure impact——

Mr. YOHO. Right.

Mr. WIMBUSH [continuing]. Much better. And that gets back to Jim's point about getting more strategic in how we are getting there.

As to funding, Jim is absolutely right. It is not in the culture of the BBG to be strategic, to make these kinds of decisions, but there is a huge institutional impediment. When you begin your budget process every year and you have got all of these duplicate services and you know that if you start putting them out of business, you are going to have all kinds of people running to their congressmen claiming that, you know, "Armenian Service Number 2 has just been put out of business" or "This is going to cause human resource problems of massive proportions." You fund them. You continue them. And that has got to stop.

Mr. YOHO. It has got to stop.

Mr. WIMBUSH. It has got to stop.

Mr. YOHO. And that comes from a look from the top down——

Mr. WIMBUSH. Yes.

Mr. YOHO [continuing]. As a strong, clear mission statement of what we are trying to accomplish.

Mr. WIMBUSH. It has got to stop.

Mr. YOHO. I appreciate your time.

Madam Chair, thank you.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Dr. Yoho.

And now we will turn to another doctor, Dr. Bera. Doctor, Doctor, Doctor, Doctor.

Mr. BERA. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. It is a fascinating hearing here.

Information absolutely is critical to getting our message out. It is absolutely critical to our diplomatic strategy, to our security strategy, and so forth.

And I think the BBG's mission is pretty well stated. It is to promote freedom and democracy. Now, the BBG is not running a commercial enterprise. It is not about increasing your target audience. It is about getting a message out. And that is mission-critical, yes.

I have heard folks talk about effective boards, but I have not heard anyone say that the BBG is functioning is an effective manner today. And if we don't get that component together where we have a streamlined decision-making process where we are making strategic decisions in conjunction with our diplomatic corps, in conjunction with our DoD, in conjunction with our security apparatus, I think we are missing a key element. You know, let me cite a specific example.

The chairwoman, myself, and a few others were in Afghanistan recently visiting with our troops. The primary mechanism of getting information to the population in Afghanistan is radio. If we are not strategically communicating a message to these populations, we are going to be in a very difficult position to hold on to our gains.

I would challenge that it is critical to our mission in a very strategic way where State, where DoD, where our security apparatus are all working in conjunction to put a message out there to the public. It is a very effective way. We have seen how information has been used against us by jihadists, by al-Qaeda and others.

My question is, you know, we are all in agreement that it is not functioning in an effective way today. We need to move forward in this because if we lose the information battle, it is going to be very difficult.

Concrete suggestions on what the makeup and mission of the board should be? Should we keep the board in its current structure? And, you know, again, concrete recommendations to this body on what we should do to create a much more effective organization? Mr. Glassman?

Mr. GLASSMAN. Well, I think, first of all, that a board of part-time advisers is a good idea anyway with whatever structure you want to have, but there needs to be somebody who is a leader, who is a CEO.

Now, the real question I think is, where do you put this agency? And we were just talking about that.

If you don't mind, I do want to comment on this, the strategic matter that you had talked about. One of the very first things that happened to me when I was at the BBG was the head of counterterrorism at the State Department took me aside and said, "You know, we would really like you to broadcast 2 hours to Somalia, instead of one."

And I said, "Well, it sounds like a good idea to me, but I have got to convince the board. Do you have the money?" They did have the money.

The point is I could have said to him, "No. We are not going to do that. We are going to spend the money on Greece" or "We are going to spend the money" somewhere else.

It was a purely voluntary participation in U.S. strategy. That is what needs to end.

Mr. BERA. Therein lies the challenge.

Mr. WIMBUSH. Mr. Bera, a couple of things. I agree with Jeff. I am not a fan of messaging per se. I am a fan of strategic focus, which is where Jim has put the emphasis.

When you run one of these stations, as I have done, you learn very quickly that there are a lot of ways to get the right message or messages into a target area.

During the Cold War, the Radio Liberty Russian service, which was, arguably, one of the finest services ever created, had as one of its most potent programs film reviews that made all of the points that one wanted to get into this audience. So I think that where you are located is important and how you connect it to the foreign policy apparatus is important. There has to be congressional input, a lot of it, but I don't think it should go much beyond. I think it should be broad recommendations.

Our general foreign policy goals this year are to look at the following area. Please put special emphasis on those.

And then you have to do a lot of experimenting. There is no bureau anyplace in the United States that can write you messages that will work. It just won't work.

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. Actually, I share a lot of what both of these gentlemen have said. Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, for instance, and Russia after Dave Brubeck went there had a jazz program that was the most popular program in the Soviet Union at the time and Russia afterwards.

You can put a CEO of U.S. international broadcasting into this mix. I mean, that is what the board wants. That is what the administration has said that they support. And I can support that as long as there is a BBG still in place of private citizens with diverse backgrounds that can act as a firewall and provide some strategic overall help to the board. And I think with those things on the back office stuff, you can offer consolidation. All right?

But I don't think it makes a whole lot of difference in some ways what the structure is, whether or not it is an independent agency, whether or not it is something else, as long as it retains its credibility.

Mr. BERA. Would I be accurate if I said there is unanimous sentiment here that having a strong CEO that is managing the organization makes sense? Is that correct?

Mr. WIMBUSH. It makes a great deal of sense. I mean, CEO is one way to look at it. I would say professional management over the entire corpus of international broadcasting. There is nothing wrong with a board of advisers of some kind. I have no problem with that, but there needs to be a Berlin Wall put between them and the management of these enterprises.

Mr. BERA. Having a manager that can interact with State, that can interact with DoD, that can interact with Security, there is unanimous consent that that with a board whose function is an oversight role, is that a reasonable structure?

Mr. HIRSCHBERG. It is a reasonable structure, yes.

Mr. BERA. Great. You know what? I think this is an incredibly important topic for us to continue to discuss to win the information war, to win the—you know, we know based on our values as Americans, our values of freedom and democracy. When we get those values out there, they win. But if we are not effectively getting that message out there, then we face severe risks in losing to messages that want to harm us.

So thank you.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Dr. Bera.

Mr. Deutch, my Florida colleague, is recognized.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you, Madam Chair. To you and the ranking member, thanks for holding today's hearing. And I understand that you touched on this issue briefly, but I would like to just pursue a little further the role that we play in Iran. And while I believe public broadcasting is vitally important around the world, it is especially true there. We have got few opportunities to speak directly to the people to present accurate information about their government's choices and about American values.

And our primary tool for reaching out to the Iranian people is Voice of America Persian News Network. PNN has long been considered an ineffective diplomatic tool, however, plagued by poor programming, low-quality production, and mismanagement. It is tremendously unfortunate in a country where an estimated 90 percent of the populous gets their news from TV. The U.S. via the Persian News Network is missing an opportunity to have an influential role in Iran too often by presenting unprofessional, low-quality newscasts, often with an incoherent message.

Less than 2 weeks ago, the Iranian people went to the polls in historic numbers. BBC Persian provided 24/7 coverage of the elections. Yet, PNN chose to broadcast a music program and a show about historical maps, instead of continued election news. Unfortunately, none of these criticisms are new. As Iran remains a top foreign policy concern, I am seriously concerned that we are missing a vital opportunity to reach an estimated 25–30 million people in Iran.

So my question is this. Why is the production quality and editorial content of PNN so lacking? What barriers are there that are preventing the hiring and training of top journalists?

And then I will just also ask, in a hearing before the Middle East Subcommittee, Karim Sadjadpour of the Carnegie Endowment suggested that PNN become a public-private partnership. This was alluded to earlier in the hearing. If you could elaborate about your thoughts on that and help us understand what can be done to make this a more effective diplomatic tool?

Mr. WIMBUSH. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Deutch.

I agree with your assessment. I have not looked closely at PNN for about 6 months or so, but every characterization that you just made I would agree with.

PNN is a real tough nut to crack. It wasn't put together well in the beginning. It was rushed. It went from about an hour and a half of programming to 6 hours over a year period. I can't think of any commercial station that could do that.

I did a very thorough, I think a very thorough, study of PNN when I joined the board in 2010 at the request of Senator Coburn. I would be happy to share that with you. It addresses all of the questions you have just raised. But let me address one of the possible solutions for you.

PNN is unlikely to be fixed because the issues are largely connected to personnel. It is unlikely to be fixed as long as it remains within the Voice of America. If you want a solution to PNN, take it out of the Voice of America, like you did the Iraq broadcasting when you created the Middle East Broadcast Network, and attach

PNN to Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, where it will be with its sister station: Farda.

The entire legal regime that affects the management of personnel will change. And you will see, my guess is, something happen fairly quickly.

Mr. DEUTCH. I would be happy to look at the report, but if you could just give me the upshot of the conclusion? And I understand the suggestions to do what you just described, but what is it when you say that it is mostly personnel? So what does that mean? What needs to happen for that to change? Who makes the decisions to put programming on about historic maps on a day, on an election day, with very significant implications for the entire country and the world?

Mr. WIMBUSH. Those decisions are taken by the chief editor of the Persian News Network. And I don't know who that is these days. I mean, the stories like that are just legendary. And PNN doesn't seem to overcome them. I could tell you a bunch of them myself, but I won't waste your time with them.

Presumably a chief editor, a head of service is making those decisions.

Mr. DEUTCH. Do we have these problems anywhere in the world to this extent?

Mr. WIMBUSH. I would say from my experience—and, look, these are media organizations. So, every now and then, there is going to be a slip-up. And there is in almost every one of the services at one point or another. The big services, the most high-profile services, are the ones that get the attention.

And we all wring our hands, and we say, "My God. Why are we doing this so badly?" The reality is, in most cases, we do it really well. We are really good at this. But there are going to be slip-ups. I can't think in my experience of any component of U.S. international broadcasting that has been so consistently below the curve as PNN.

Mr. GLASSMAN. Mr. Deutch, I think your question reflects some of what I have been trying to say about mission and strategy. So imagine if the mission were clarified for the BBG. And, you know, forget about a restructuring, but if there were restructuring, it would be even easier.

But there is an election coming up in Iran. The National Security Adviser or the Secretary of State or both of them bring the CEO of the BBG into the White House and they say, "Hey, this is really important. We would like you to direct these resources at this issue." That doesn't happen now, and, in fact, it can't happen now in any way where the BBG actually has to take notice of that.

Mr. DEUTCH. Well, if I can just ask, is the mission so unclear, is it so muddled that it would be impossible for the editors, for the people who run the station to know that on an election day when the entire world is focusing on your country, that the news network might actually cover the news taking place in that country? And if so, how do we fix that? How do we clarify the mission? Who needs to do it? Who needs to be told? What has to happen so that they actually behave like a news network so that the Iranian people can get clear, real news from this outlet?

Mr. GLASSMAN. I think the clarification of mission has to be done by the U.S. Congress. There is no doubt about that. There are personnel problems within PNN. I have been out of it now for 4 years. So I can't really talk to it as well as my colleague here. But, you know, there is no doubt that that is part of the problem. I am trying to say that there is a bigger problem here, which is that there would be a lack of responsiveness on the part of the BBG and PNN to those directives because that is not what they do. They don't want to be told by somebody that "This is your role in achieving a national security end. You are supposed to do this, guys. Do it." That is not the way it works now.

Mr. DEUTCH. Just the last question, Madam Chair. What percentage of their funding comes from the United States Government?

Mr. GLASSMAN. PNN?

Mr. DEUTCH. Yes.

Mr. GLASSMAN. All of it.

Mr. WIMBUSH. All of it.

Mr. DEUTCH. Okay. Thanks. I yield back.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much. We thank our witnesses for this timely hearing. And I again remind our witnesses, our audience, and members that the mission of the Broadcasting Board of Governors is "to inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy." This is broadcast for freedom and democracy. If you think that this is an impartial broadcasting, then you are not fulfilling your mission because you are supposed to stand for freedom and democracy. That is a direction. That is what the BBG is supposed to do. We don't have to change the mission. We have to change the folks who are in charge of the programming who don't have any idea what their mission is. So this is an important mission. It is of great interest to this committee. Support for freedom and democracy, amen.

You have given us a lot of information for us to move forward. And this hearing is now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:44 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

Material Submitted for the Hearing Record

FULL COMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128

Edward R. Royce (R-CA), Chairman

June 26, 2013

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to be held in Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live on the Committee website at http://www.ForeignAffairs.house.gov):

DATE: Wednesday, June 26, 2013

TIME: 10:00 a.m.

SUBJECT: Broadcasting Board of Governors: An Agency "Defunct"

WITNESSES: The Honorable James K. Glassman
Founding Executive Director
George W. Bush Institute
(Former Chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, and Former Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs)

The Honorable S. Enders Wimbush
Executive Director for Strategy & Development
National Bureau of Asian Research
(Former Governor of the Broadcasting Board of Governors)

The Honorable D. Jeff Hirschberg
Chairman
The Northeast Maglev, LLC
(Former Governor of the Broadcasting Board of Governors)

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
MINUTES OF FULL COMMITTEE HEARING

Day *Wednesday* Date *06/26/13* Room *2172*

Starting Time *10:07* Ending Time *11:44*

Recesses *0* (____to____) (____to____) (____to____) (____to____) (____to____) (____to____)

Presiding Member(s)

Chairman Edward R. Royce, Rep. Ros-Lehtinen

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session [✓]
Executive (closed) Session [ ]
Televised [✓]

Electronically Recorded (taped) [✓]
Stenographic Record [✓]

TITLE OF HEARING:

"Broadcasting Board of Governors: An Agency 'Defunct'"

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

See Attached Sheet.

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

None.

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes [✓] No [ ]
(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*

None.

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____
or
TIME ADJOURNED *11:44*

Jean Marter, Director of Committee Operations

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

"Broadcasting Board of Governors: An Agency 'Defunct'"

June 26, 2013

Present	*Member*
X	Edward R. Royce, CA
	Christopher H. Smith, NJ
X	Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, FL
X	Dana Rohrabacher, CA
	Steve Chabot, OH
	Joe Wilson, SC
	Michael T. McCaul, TX
X	Ted Poe, TX
X	Matt Salmon, AZ
	Tom Marino, PA
	Jeff Duncan, SC
	Adam Kinzinger, IL
X	Mo Brooks, AL
	Tom Cotton, AR
X	Paul Cook, CA
	George Holding, NC
	Randy K. Weber, Sr., TX
	Scott Perry, PA
	Steve Stockman, TX
	Ron DeSantis, FL
	Trey Radel, FL
	Doug Collins, GA
	Mark Meadows, NC
X	Ted S. Yoho, FL
	Luke Messer, IN

Present	*Member*
X	Eliot L. Engel, NY
	Eni F.H. Faleomavaega, AS
X	Brad Sherman, CA
	Gregory W. Meeks, NY
	Albio Sires, NJ
X	Gerald E. Connolly, VA
X	Theodore E. Deutch, FL
	Brian Higgins, NY
X	Karen Bass, CA
	William Keating, MA
	David Cicilline, RI
	Alan Grayson, FL
	Juan Vargas, CA
	Bradley S. Schneider, IL
X	Joseph P. Kennedy III, MA
X	Ami Bera, CA
	Alan S. Lowenthal, CA
	Grace Meng, NY
	Lois Frankel, FL
	Tulsi Gabbard, HI
	Joaquin Castro, TX

CHAIRMAN EDWARD ROYCE ON BEHALF OF DANA PERINO

Dana Perino and Company
25 Central Park West, #15R
New York, NY 10023

June 21, 2013

Chairman Edward Royce
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Royce,

As a former Governor who served on the Broadcasting Board of Governors and a former White House Press Secretary, I want to thank you and your staff for your efforts to preserve and improve America's important international broadcasting programs.

I have long believed that access to a free and fair press is the best way to ensure freedom. And despite the press corps driving me up a wall at times, I considered it the press secretary's job not only to defend the president to the press, but also to defend the press to the president when necessary. Ensuring reporters' access and answering their questions to the best of a government official's ability is critical to keeping our democracy strong through third-party accountability.

After I left the White House, I had an opportunity to travel on a diplomatic mission for the U.S. State Department. The goal of the trip was to try to get the government of Azerbaijan to be more willing to talk to the journalists who were struggling to do their jobs. It was the first time I'd ever spent a week alone under state-controlled media, and I did not like it. I was alarmed by that feeling of suppression from a government actively keeping the truth from its citizens. The information that was forced on people was of the government officials always looking perfect in every photo and doing all matter of good things always. Most of the people I met did not trust the government's news and they looked for other ways to get information, including from America's Voice of America and other programs.

When I was nominated to be on the BBG, I thought of all the people that have benefited from America's international broadcasting and I was honored to be a part of the board. After two years, my professional circumstances changed and I was no longer able to be a fully participating board member. I resigned in December 2012, though I have remained a supporter of BBG and promote the programs when possible.

As with any organization, time and competing visions and politics have caused the BBG often to struggle under the weight of uncertain budgets, constant leadership turnover and dysfunctional implementation. Congressional interest comes and goes with only a few Members of Congress taking an active role in oversight and participation in interviews with the BBG journalists.

The most vexing problem is the structure of the current BBG. If a person who did not know the background of how that structure evolved and saw the flow chart for the first time, they immediately would know that stagnation would be the best outcome.

The Board is able to attract top-notch people to serve. While there is an even split of Republicans and Democrats on the Board, I never once saw any partisanship that would impede progress. There are agreed upon goals and a desire to steer the organization with good advice and clear leadership; however, the structure of the Board was exasperating and many of the members struggled to manage their daily work responsibilities outside of government with the constant need for engagement and decision making by the managerial board. I believe that if the Board was more advisory than managerial, that problem would be alleviated and the good advice and creative ideas from the board members would rise above the problems.

Outside of structural changes, I would add that one of the most effective tools the BBG has used in recent years is helping to ensure access to the Internet in countries that have government censorship over search engines and electronic communication. Given how many different ways people have to find news – on a computer, a tablet or a phone – this investment could be the best bang for the taxpayer buck. There are many dedicated people in the USA who are working day and night to keep the technology one step ahead of the governments that want to keep access restricted, and the U.S. government should aid these technology warriors and encourage more of them.

Thank you for your efforts to address the concerns about the BBG's current structure. I believe there is broad agreement that the mission of the BBG is still as important today as it was in the past. While I do not have specific recommendations, I support the discussion and ideas generation. Please consider me as an avid supporter of improvements to the system to ensure its continued effectiveness.

Sincerely,

Dana Perino Inc

CHAIRMAN EDWARD R. ROYCE
INSERT FOR THE RECORD
"BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS: AN AGENCY 'DEFUNCT'"
June 26, 2013

Broadcasting Board of Governors: Absence of a Board Quorum

Due to the resignations of various BBG Governors since January 2012, the number of sitting Governors is down to four (4), which is below the quorum of five (5) Governors established by the International Broadcasting Act of 1994 (as amended). 22 USC § 6201 et seq.

Quorum Requirement. The International Broadcasting Act requires that "decisions of the Board shall be made by majority vote, a quorum being present," and specifies that "a quorum shall consist of 5 members." 22 USC § 6203(f). There are currently on four (4) currently seated members of the Board, less than the statutory quorum.

Loss of Decision-Making Authority. Because the Board of Governors no longer is able to meet its quorum requirement, its existing members, whether acting individually or collectively, have no legal authority to make decisions on behalf of the Agency. A federal board or other collective head of a federal agency which does not possess the minimum number of members necessary to satisfy a statutorily-prescribed quorum requirement loses its decision-making authority. In New Process Steel v. National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), 130 S.Ct. 2635 (2010), for example, the United States Supreme Court invalidated decisions taken by two (2) members of the NLRB, because the NLRB's statute required a quorum of three (3) members. The Supreme Court concluded that "the Board quorum requirement . . . should not be read as [an] easily surmounted technical obstacle of little or no import," adding that "[i]f Congress wishes to allow the Board to decide cases with [less than a quorum], it can easily do so." *Id.* at 2644.

In BBG's case, the lack of quorum will deprive the remaining members of the Board of authority to make final decisions. This incapacity extends to the exercise of the Board's non-delegable authorities, 22 USC § 6204(a), (b), notwithstanding the fact that such authorities may be exercised only by the Board. As the United States Supreme Court concluded in New Process Steel, "Congress' decision to provide for a board quorum . . . must be given practical effect rather than swept aside in the face of admittedly difficult circumstances." *Id.*

Effect of Absence of Board Quorum on BBG Operations. The absence of a Board quorum will have a negative long-term operational impact on the Agency because of the importance of some of the Board's non-delegable authorities to determine the Agency budget and to allocate resources among the elements of U.S. international broadcasting. Immediate operational impact is less likely, however, because of the extensive delegations of authority that have been previously made by the Board of Governors.

Non-Delegable Board Authorities. The Board's non-delegable authorities are listed in Attachment 1. These authorities are generally directed toward the overall supervision of United States international broadcasting, consistent with Congress' intent that the Board of Governors should act as a

supervisory Board, not an operational Board.[1] The non-delegable authorities that may have the most direct operational impact are budget-focused and include the following:

- Determination of the addition or deletion of language services;
- Making grants for broadcasting and related activities to RFE/RL and RFA;
- Allocating funds appropriated for international broadcasting activities among the various elements of the International Broadcasting Bureau and grantees; and
- Appointment of staff personnel for the Board and fixing of compensation therefor.

See 22 USC § 6204(a)(4), (5), (6), (11). Without a quorum, the remaining Governors will not be able to make decisions with respect to these matters.

Board Committees. Board committees may still convene and consider matters within their respective terms of reference. The BBG By-Laws clarify, however, that "Board committees have no authority to make decisions on behalf of the Broadcasting Board of Governors unless the Board delegates specific authority to them." By-Law 2.17. The Board made no relevant delegations of authority to any of its committees. The authority of Board committees is limited to reporting on Committee deliberations and formulating "recommendations for consideration and decision by the plenary Board." Id.

Prior Delegations Still Valid. While the absence of a quorum deprives the remaining BBG Board members of decision-making authority going forward, it does not nullify previous delegations of authority made by the Board so long as the delegations were otherwise validly adopted.[2] In the course of its tenure since July 2010, the Board of Governors made valid delegations of authority to the IBB Director, the VOA Director and the OCB Director. In each case, the Board's delegation was approved by a majority of Governors, a quorum being present, with respect to an authority the exercise of which the Board had the power to delegate. These delegees may continue to exercise the authorities so delegated notwithstanding the legal incapacity of the remaining Governors to issue exercise Board authority. See *id.*

Delegation to the IBB Director. In April 2011, the Board adopted an extensive delegation of authority to the IBB Director. Included in it are the following authorities:

- "To provide for the general administrative management of the federal agency known as the Broadcasting Board of Governors, including without limitation, by exercising any authority

[1] The March 19, 1998 Conference Report on the Foreign Affairs Restructuring Act (which made the BBG an independent federal agency) (Rep. 105-342) explains that Congress purposely did not give the Board authority to "direct" broadcasting activities. The Conference Report explains: "The word 'direct' implies day-to-day management responsibilities, a function that is incongruous with a part-time oversight board. The daily operations of the broadcasters are conducted by the Director of the International Broadcasting Bureau, and the presidents of the respective grantees, operating under the supervision of the Board."

[2] The United States Supreme Court recognized the ongoing validity of prior delegations in New Process Steel: "[O]ur conclusion . . . does not cast doubt on prior delegations of authority to nongroup members, such as the regional directors or the general counsel." 130 S.Ct. at 2642 n.4.

provided for in the International Broadcasting Act, except those non-delegable authorities reserved by §6204(b) of such Act to the Board";

- "To carry out all nonmilitary broadcasting activities supported by the United States government, other than those expressly reserved to the Board or its grantees";
- To provide "oversight and direction to . . . the Director of Voice of America, the Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, and other employees of the federal agency with respect to all functions specifically delegated by the Board";
- "To identify, evaluate and resolve strategic tradeoffs and conflicts among the broadcasting entities, consistent with the broad guidelines established by the Board and subject to the Board's continuing oversight."

The IBB Director is also empowered to appoint members of "a professional Board staff" for such positions as the Board may determine are necessary. The delegation qualifies the authority by stating that the appointment of "the Executive Director, chief financial officer and chief legal officer shall be subject to approval by the Board."

Delegations to the VOA and OCB Directors. In April 2011, the Board also adopted delegations of authority to the VOA and OCB Directors, respectively. The delegations authorize them to "supervise the development of programming" for their respective entities, to comply with their respective statutory mandates and to develop long-term strategies to improve the quality and reach of their respective entities. In March 2011, the Board decided that the VOA and OCB Directors "report to the IBB Director with respect to . . . day-to-day operational functions [namely 'key functions of the federal Agency, manage[ment] of the BBG's global distribution network and chair of the IBB Coordinating Committee.'] and report to the Board only with respect to their respective programming.

ATTACHMENT 1

BBG'S NON-DELEGABLE AUTHORITIES

The Board's full list of authorities is included in 22 USC §6204(a)(1)-(18). The Board may delegate the authorities provided in [§6204(a)(1)-(19)], except those authorities provided in paragraphs (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (9), or (11) to the Director of the International Broadcasting Bureau, or any other officer or employee of the United states, to the extent the Board determines to be appropriate. The Board has the following non-delegable authorities:

- §6204(a)(1) To supervise all broadcasting activities conducted pursuant to this chapter, the Radio Broadcasting to Cuba Act [22 U.S.C. 1465 et seq.], the Television Broadcasting to Cuba Act [22 U.S.C. 1465aa et seq.], and Worldnet Television, except as provided in section 6205 (b) of this title.

- §6204(a)(2) To review and evaluate the mission and operation of, and to assess the quality, effectiveness, and professional integrity of, all such activities within the context of the broad foreign policy objectives of the United States.

- §6204(a)(3) To ensure that United States international broadcasting is conducted in accordance with the standards and principles contained in section 6202 of this title.

- §6204(a)(4) To review, evaluate, and determine, at least annually, after consultation with the Secretary of State, the addition or deletion of language services.

- §6204(a)(5) To make and supervise grants for broadcasting and related activities in accordance with sections 6207 and 6208 of this title.

- §6204(a)(6) To allocate funds appropriated for international broadcasting activities among the various elements of the International Broadcasting Bureau and grantees, subject to the limitations in sections 6207 and 6208 of this title and subject to reprogramming notification requirements in law for the reallocation of funds.

- §6204(a)(9) To submit to the President and the Congress an annual report which summarizes and evaluates activities under this chapter, the Radio Broadcasting to Cuba Act [22 U.S.C. 1465 et seq.], and the Television Broadcasting to Cuba Act [22 U.S.C. 1465aa et seq.]. Each annual report shall place special emphasis on the assessment described in paragraph (2).

- §6204(a)(11) To appoint such staff personnel for the Board as the Board may determine to be necessary, subject to the provisions of title 5 governing appointments in the competitive service, and to fix their compensation in accordance with the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of such title relating to classification and General Schedule pay rates.

The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly (VA-11)

HCFA Full Committee Hearing: Broadcasting Board of Governors: An Agency "Defunct"
Wednesday, June 26, 2013
10am

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) oversees all U.S. government-supported, civilian international media. According to the BBG, its mission is to inform, engage and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy. Broadcasters within the BBG network include the Voice of America, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (Alhurra TV and Radio Sawa), Radio Free Asia, and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (Radio and TV Marti).

For FY 2014, the Administration requested $731.1 million—3% (or $20 million) below FY 2012 actual funding, for broadcasting. According to the Congressional Budget Justification, reductions result from the elimination of language services, such as the closure of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Balkan service, and increased efficiencies, including the consolidation of Voice of America's news gathering and programming as well as position reductions at the Office of Cuba Broadcasting. These unfortunate reductions are a reminder that budget cuts and disinvestment from our diplomacy have real-world consequences.

With regard to the BBG operations in general, a January 2013 GAO report found that nearly two-thirds of the BBG's language services—offices that produce content for particular languages and regions—overlap with another BBG service by providing programs to the same countries in the same languages. GAO identified 23 instances of overlap involving 43 of BBG's 69 services. For example, in 8 instances involving 16 services, a Voice of America service and a Radio Free Asia service overlapped. Almost all overlapping services also broadcast on the same platform (i.e., radio or television). Post-sequester funding levels present an opportunity for BBG to address duplicative services.

The aforementioned GAO report laid out two recommendations:

- Ensure that BBG's annual language service review includes systematic consideration of the cost and impact of internal overlap among BBG entities' language services.

- Ensure that BBG's annual language service review includes systematic consideration of the activities of U.S. commercial broadcasters and other democratic nations' broadcasters, such as the languages used and the countries served.

As we hear testimony from today's panel, an analysis of BBG's operations, including efficient use of limited resources, would be useful. A great power cannot disinvest from diplomacy. The BBG's role in public diplomacy is important, which means that all dollars allocated to broadcasting be used in the most efficacious way possible. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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