PROLOGUE

The Foundations of U.S. Information Overseas

Telling America's Story to the World
Motto of the United States Information Agency, 1953–99

In the north of Luxembourg, surrounded by the steep, wooded hills of the Ardennes, lies the small market town of Clervaux. The town is dominated by an imposing castle, one wing of which is home to a lovingly restored photographic exhibition. The show comprises 500 images made by professional and amateur photographers from around the world, documenting the breadth of the universal human experience, encompassing birth, death, love, work, faith, community, and more. Half a century ago this exhibition triumphantly toured the globe under the auspices of the United States government. Audiences from Guatemala City to Moscow waited in line for hours to view it. The exhibition's images associated its sponsors with the universal values of what the show's title called "The Family of Man" and thereby challenged the claim that any one political approach had a monopoly on the celebrating humanity. The restored exhibit is today presented as a tribute to its locally born creator – photographer Edward Steichen – but the exhibit also speaks to the best of the U.S. government's postwar cultural and informational engagement with the world and is a living memorial to the institution that brought it forth: the United States Information Agency.

This book is a history of the U.S. government's attempts to explain itself to the world from 1945, when it considered large-scale peacetime international information for the first time, to 1989 and the heady months of political change in Eastern Europe that marked the conclusion of the Cold War, when the USIA dared to talk of victory. But the story does not begin in 1945. Since its birth, in time of crisis, the United States had sought to present its image to the world.

It all began with the American Revolution. The United States was born from a surge of ideas and a war that demonstrated the power of propaganda to rally men and women to those ideas. The stirring prose of political writers such as Thomas Paine sustained morale in its darkest moments. Propaganda figured on the battlefield, as American forces wrote messages to encourage British troops and Hessian mercenaries to desert. The colonials even attempted what would now be termed international disinformation. During the peace talks at the end of the Revolutionary War, Benjamin Franklin arranged for a fake supplement to the *Boston Independent Chronicle*

to circulate in Britain. It contained a lurid account of a shipment of American scalps collected for the English by their Seneca Indian allies.[1] Given such beginnings, with the battle won, ideological projection remained high on the agenda of the new republic.

New and radical governments have always needed to explain their politics to the world, and hence America's Declaration of Independence was crafted with an international audience in mind, and introduced its catalog of grievances against the British crown with the memorable phrase, "let facts be submitted to a candid world." As the revolution gathered momentum, Franklin led the international campaign. Franklin had spent the fifteen years leading up to the revolution working in Britain as a publicist for his home colony of Pennsylvania. As the new republic's minister in Paris from 1776 to 1784, he paid close attention to issues of image and worked to correct misunderstandings about America and its revolution. His successor in Paris, Thomas Jefferson, also spoke widely about American law and politics and wrote *Notes about Virginia* to deepen French knowledge of his homeland.[2]

Despite the achievements of Franklin and Jefferson in Paris, the revolutionary period did not lead to a permanent U.S. effort to address international opinion. For the time being, the corollary of American exceptionalism was to preserve the nation at home rather than to extend its ideas overseas. This required not only a physical but also an ideological defense. The French Revolution produced a new breed: the ideological diplomat. In 1793, the French minister, "Citizen" Edmond Genêt, scandalized America by organizing Jacobin clubs to promote the revolution, recruiting for the French army, and attempting to outfit vessels to raid British shipping. Enraged, President John Adams became the first in a long line of American leaders to move to insulate their country from the propaganda of others.[3]

The nineteenth century saw a massive expansion in the print media. In the United States, journalists urged westward expansion, opposed or defended slavery, and campaigned against corruption and office-seeking. In Europe, the electorates grew and with them both the potential and rationale for international propaganda. With the exception of religious missions, the great campaigns of the era were domestic, but the network of newspapers and political meetings provided a mechanism that could be used in an emergency. During the American Civil War both the Union and Confederacy conducted propaganda campaigns in Europe, sending out touring lecturers

[1] Eric Foner, *Tom Paine and Revolutionary America*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976; Carl van Doren, *Benjamin Franklin*, New York: Viking Press, 1938, p. 673; Lyman H. Butterfield, "Psychological Warfare in 1776: The Jefferson–Franklin Plan to Cause Hessian Desertions," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 94 (1950), 233–41; and William E. Daugherty and Morris Janowitz, *A Psychological Warfare Casebook*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1958, p. 60.

[2] Jonathan R. Dull, *Franklin the Diplomat: The French Mission*, Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1982. For a text by a USIA insider claiming Franklin and Jefferson as predecessors see Fitzhugh Green, *American Propaganda Abroad: From Benjamin Franklin to Ronald Reagan*, New York: Hippocrene Books, 1988, pp. 6–10.

[3] Harry Ammon, *The Genet Mission*, New York: Norton, 1973; Linda Frey and Marsha Frey, "'The Reign of the Charlatans is Over': The French Revolutionary Attack on Diplomatic Practice," *Journal of Modern History*, 65 (Dec. 1993), 706–44. As Linda and Marsha Frey have noted, the new diplomacy, like the radical internationalism of Republican French foreign policy, soon gave way to the familiar forms of power politics, but public opinion had moved onto the diplomatic agenda.

and placing articles in the press to rally support. The U.S. minister to Belgium, Henry Shelton Sanford, bribed journalists and even subsidized the European newspapers that supported his cause. Britain became a key theater for the Union's propaganda war with the American South, as the North, represented by Ambassador Charles Francis Adams, argued that Britain needed to defend its cotton supply and worked to hold His Majesty's government to the letter of its neutrality. The Confederate agent in London – Swiss-born Henry Hotze – being a gentleman, eschewed outright bribery. Hotze merely fed material to the British press and founded a pro-Southern journal, *The Index*, which purported to be an entirely British publication. Hotze proved a master at spreading his side's interpretation of military events, and the London *Times* obediently minimized Confederate defeats, but he was unable to persuade London editors to carry arguments in defense of slavery. The Union view of the moral case, aided by Abraham Lincoln's eloquent written appeal to the cotton workers of Manchester, prevailed and Britain remained neutral.[4]

The United States also became the focus of international image policies. The Mexican dictator Porfirio Díaz, who seized power in 1876, paid propagandists in the United States to promote his regime and encourage investment in Mexico.[5] The Ottoman Sultan Abdül Hamid II, who also came to power in 1876, sought to promote the image of Turkey in the United States and elsewhere. His tactics ranged from bribing Western journalists in Istanbul to presenting photographic collections depicting his preferred view of the modern Ottoman Empire to the Library of Congress. Turkish embassies also protested against unflattering or overly exotic representations of Turkish culture. This included objections to a Dutch skit set in a harem and the presence of a group of dervishes performing for money in the streets of New York.[6]

The clearinghouses for international image-making in the second half of the nineteenth century were the great World's Fairs, starting with the Great Exhibition in London in 1851. Here the abstract desire for prestige and the concrete quest for trade intertwined. The United States organized fairs of its own, most notably the centennial exhibition in Philadelphia in 1876 and the Chicago World's Fair of 1893. Although these reflected no shortage of American self-confidence, one had to travel to the United States to experience the emerging sense of an American global cultural mission.[7]

In the 1880s, the European states, with their more developed sense of cultural vulnerability, produced private societies committed to international cultural projection. In 1880 French citizens established the Alliance Française to teach the French

[4] Joseph A. Fry, *Henry S. Sanford: Diplomacy and Business in Nineteenth-Century America*, Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1982; Burton J. Hendrick, *Statesmen of the Lost Cause*, Literary Guild of America, New York, 1939, pp. 389–99.

[5] Later Mexican regimes followed similar policies; see John A. Britton, *Revolution and Ideology: The Image of the Mexican Revolution in the United States*, Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1995.

[6] Selim Deringel. *The Well Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876–1909*, London: I. B. Tauris, 1998.

[7] Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876–1916*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984; John E. Findley and Kimberly D. Pelle, *A Historical Dictionary of World's Fairs and Expositions, 1851–1988*, Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1990.

language overseas. In 1881 private citizens in Germany established the Allgemeiner Deutscher Schulverein für das Deutschtum im Auslande (General German School Society for Germanism Abroad) to run schools overseas for expatriate Germans. In 1889 Italians founded the Dante Alighieri Society to promote Italian culture. The French foreign ministry entered the picture with the Service de Oeuvres des Français à l'Etranger (French Overseas Works Service), which originally funded schools in the Middle East and East Asia, but by 1906 extended this to French schools in Europe and the Americas.[8] In contrast, the United States trusted its international image to private enterprise, which at this time meant missionaries, touring "blackface" minstrels, and Buffalo Bill's Wild West show.[9] Even so, mounting contact around the world with American economic power carried a powerful message, prompting works such as William T. Stead's prophesy of doom from 1902: *The Americanization of the World or the Trend of the Twentieth Century*.[10]

Although the United States entered the twentieth century without an official mechanism for cultural projection or policy advocacy overseas, currents of the age laid the foundations for later developments. The nineteenth century had sharpened ideas of American exceptionalism, ethnic chauvinism, the missionary drive of the American churches, and the reformist impulse of the social campaigners. Such currents would profoundly shape American foreign policy.[11] By the 1890s these notions had coalesced with economic thinking in the United States into what the historian Emily Rosenberg has termed the ideology of liberal-developmentalism, and codified as

> 1) Belief that other nations could and should replicate America's own developmental experience; 2) faith in private free enterprise; 3) support for free or open access for trade and investment; 4) promotion of free flow of information and culture; and 5) growing acceptance of government activity to protect private enterprise and to stimulate and regulate American participation in international economic and cultural exchange.[12]

The combination of public emotion and policy logic propelled the United States into the Spanish-American War of 1898 and the acquisition of what amounted to an American empire.

The reformist impulse proved particularly significant, dominating the politics of the so-called Progressive era and reaching its apogee in the careers of Presidents

[8] Philip M. Taylor, *The Projection of Britain: British Overseas Publicity and Propaganda, 1919–1939*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, pp. 126–7. R. E. McMurray and M. Lee, *The Cultural Approach: Another Way in International Relations*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1947, pp. 9–15, 43.

[9] John G. Blair, "First Steps towards Globalization: Nineteenth-Century Exports of American Entertainment Forms," in Reinhold Wagnleitner and Elaine Tyler May (eds.), *"Here There and Everywhere": The Foreign Politics of American Popular Culture*, Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2000, pp. 17–33.

[10] William T. Stead, *The Americanization of the World or the Trend of the Twentieth Century*, London: Horace Markley, 1902.

[11] Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and US Foreign Policy*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987.

[12] Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890–1945*, New York: Hill and Wang, 1982, p. 7.

Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. The implications for the development of U.S. cultural and political projection overseas were twofold. First, the era saw the emergence of a generation of Americans who assumed that the problems of the world were solvable and that the sort of planning and regulation that worked to fix a slum at home might also work overseas. Second, the era gave a new significance to the domestic media in the United States. The American press and progressive reform developed in tandem. Campaigning papers such as Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World* led the way in the 1880s and 1890s. In the 1900s magazines such as *McClure's* became platforms for the new breed of "muckraking" investigative journalism and demonstrated the power of the media to effect political change. At the same time, the advertising industry demonstrated the malleability of the domestic consumer. The power to persuade for profit or social progress seemed to be everywhere.[13]

The first foray of the United States government into cultural projection was in the field of international education. The nineteenth century had seen the beginnings of international educational exchange. This was not simply "thrust upon" the non-European world, but in many cases was actively sought. The case of the United States and China displays a mix of American religious zeal (a missionary brought the first Chinese students to the United States as early as 1847) and a Chinese desire for "modern" and especially military knowledge. A Chinese educational mission arrived in 1871, only to withdraw in 1881 amid fears that the students might acquire American political ideas as well as technical know-how.[14] The U.S. government did not become a significant player in educating Chinese students until the aftermath of the antiforeign Boxer Rebellion of 1900. When the great powers imposed a punitive indemnity on the Chinese, the U.S. government resolved to return its share to China in the form of scholarships to U.S. universities and funding for schools in China. President Theodore Roosevelt signed the legislation liberating some $10 million for this purpose in 1908.[15] The decision was a milestone. The Boxer scholarships did double duty for the United States, boosting America's image in China and disseminating American ideas through the returned students.

The Progressive era also saw the foundation of the first formal – if private – structures of American cultural diplomacy. The story began with the establishment of internationally minded philanthropic foundations, such as the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, established in 1910, or the Rockefeller Foundation. These organizations supported academic exchange in the name of liberal internationalism. Particular achievements included the foundation of the Pan-American Union, which

[13] For growing U.S. government attention to domestic public opinion in foreign affairs see Robert C. Hilderbrand, *Power and the People: Executive Management of Public Opinion in Foreign Affairs, 1897–1921*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1981; on "muckraking" see Louis Filler, *The Muckrakers*, University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976; on Progressive America in general see John Whiteclay Chambers, *The Tyranny of Change: America in the Progressive Era, 1890–1920*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992.

[14] Chih Meng, "The American Returned Students of China," *Pacific Affairs*, IV, 1 (January 1931), 1–16.

[15] Carroll B. Malone, "The First Remission of the Boxer Indemnity," *American Historical Review*, 32, 1 (October 1926), 64–8.

in turn created its own Division of Intellectual Exchange. The men behind these organizations were idealists who sought to build horizontal links with the intellectual elite of other nations. They emphasized mutual enlightenment rather than patriotic tub-thumping.[16] Theodore Roosevelt sought a wider audience with less subtle methods.

TR did much to redefine the international image of the United States. He associated the country with principles of justice and organization as expressed in the International Peace Conferences of the era, but he also understood the ideological power of the deed. In 1907, Roosevelt dispatched the "Great White Fleet" on a two-year global goodwill tour. It was the epitome of Roosevelt's motto "speak softly but carry a big stick." En route the fleet paid ceremonial visits to major ports and stopped to assist victims of an earthquake in Sicily. Humanitarian aid has since proved a perennial public relations gambit.[17] Propaganda did not fit the mood of Roosevelt's successor in the White House. William Taft never broke free from his dogmatic emphasis on international law. In contrast, concerns for international image and an intense belief in the global relevance of the American political system burned brightly in the mind of the man who sat in the White House from 1913: Woodrow Wilson.

The outbreak of the First World War in August 1914 brought a great explosion in international propaganda. The neutral United States became a major theater for the war of words and images as Britain, Germany, and the other belligerent powers struggled to secure American support. President Wilson crafted his appeals for peace and negotiation with a global audience in mind. But entry into the war in April 1917 required more. The journalistic campaigns in progress in early 1917 included one for a radical reform of American diplomatic practice. Arthur Bullard, writing in the *Atlantic Monthly* and elsewhere, demanded open American "democratic diplomacy" overseas addressed to the public and not merely professional diplomats, and a crusade to rally patriotic support for the war effort at home. Woodrow Wilson took note and acted accordingly.[18]

Woodrow Wilson swiftly established a substantial propaganda apparatus to sell the war to the U.S. public: the Committee on Public Information (CPI) under George Creel. The CPI combined the idealism of the Progressive journalists and the communication skills of the emerging advertising industry.[19] The CPI is best known for its often strident work at home, but from the autumn of 1917 the Committee also addressed world opinion. Creel called it "the fight for the mind of mankind" and characterized

[16] Frank A. Ninkovich, *The Diplomacy of Ideas: US Foreign Policy and Cultural Relations, 1938–1950*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, esp. pp. 8–14, 24.

[17] James R. Reckner, *Teddy Roosevelt's Great White Fleet*, Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1988.

[18] Stephen Vaughn, *Holding Fast the Inner Lines: Democracy, Nationalism and the Committee on Public Information*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1980, p. 11. Arthur Bullard, "Democracy and Diplomacy," *Atlantic Monthly* CXIX (April 1917); 491–99. Bullard went on to direct CPI activities in Russia for much of the war. United States Committee on Public Information, *Complete Report of the Chairman of the Committee on Public Information 1917: 1918; 1919*, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1920 (hereafter *Creel Report*) pp. 1, 212.

[19] On the CPI's link to "muckraking" see Filler, *The Muckrakers*, p. 375; on advertising see Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920–1940*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1986, p. 6.

the effort as a response to Germany's international propaganda effort. The CPI established a Foreign Section, which successfully introduced the world to Wilson and his vision of an international order. The Foreign Section had three divisions: the Wireless and Cable Service, the Foreign Press Bureau (or Mail Feature Service), and the Foreign Films Division. The Wireless and Cable Service provided "Compub," the U.S. government's answer to allied news agencies such as Reuters and Havas. From September 1917, Compub cables carried U.S. news and presidential speeches in what Creel called "a liaison between the United States government and the peoples of the world." The wires contained both general stories and material crafted for particular audiences. The Foreign Press Bureau, under the novelist Ernest Poole, created longer features for distribution by mail, introducing U.S. law, culture, and society, by such authors as Booth Tarkington and Ida Tarbell. Later, the CPI Foreign Picture Service provided news photographs. CPI officers around the world fed this material into the local press. Newspapers that failed to carry CPI stories suddenly found it difficult to obtain supplies of paper from the United States. Creel drew U.S. businesses into his network and found that companies such as Ford and Remington Typewriters were happy to display and distribute U.S. government propaganda and to use their advertising as a lever in support of the presentation of the United States in the local press. The CPI also arranged for numerous groups of foreign journalists to visit the United States and see American military and industrial strength first hand, which Creel considered "one of the most effective ideas" for countering German propaganda about U.S. weakness. Some press delegations met Woodrow Wilson in person.[20]

The CPI's Foreign Film Division oversaw the export of the Committee's own propaganda films and in agreement with Hollywood assumed "full control of the foreign distribution of American dramatic and comedy pictures." This, Creel noted in 1919, enabled the U.S. government "to dominate the film situation in every country." Foreign distributors found that if they wanted screen Hollywood films they had to stop showing German films and also screen CPI films with titles such as *Pershing's Crusaders* and *America's Answer*. The tactic shut German films out of Norway, Sweden, and even Holland. Moreover, working through the War Trade Board, the CPI denied export licenses to films that "misrepresented" America. Characters such as Jesse James stopped at the water's edge. Creel also intervened against films likely to be offensive to allied nations, and American courts rallied to the cause. In 1917 one Robert Goldstein, an associate of D. W. Griffith, produced a virulently anti-British Revolutionary War film: *Spirit of '76*. The film passed the wartime censorship board but only because Goldstein cut a scene featuring British massacre and rape. When he restored the offending scene for release he fell foul of the Espionage Act. The U.S.

[20] Creel supervised the CPI's foreign activity personally until January 1918 and thereafter first Will Irwin and then Edgar Sisson took charge. James R. Mock and Cedric Larson, *Words That Won the War: The Story of the Committee on Public Information*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1939, esp. pp. 235–47. *Creel Report*, pp. 104–8, 117. For a detailed treatment of CPI activity in Switzerland, Italy, Spain, and Russia see Gregg Wolper, "The Origins of Public Diplomacy: Woodrow Wilson, George Creel and the Committee on Public Information," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1991. On the journalist delegations see Creel, *How We Advertised America*, pp. 227–32, 262.

government seized the film and Goldstein received a sentence of ten years in jail. He served only one year.[21]

Closer to the battlefield, the CPI conducted operations to undermine enemy morale in cooperation with the Military Intelligence Branch (which also received CPI estimates of the state of public opinion around the world). American tactics included floating messages into enemy territory using cloth or paper balloons filled with coal gas, and innovations included water-resistant paper and ink to prevent leaflets from becoming illegible after a few hours on the damp earth of Flanders. The CPI worked hard to ensure that Germans knew exactly the terms being offered by President Wilson and not just the censored version released in the German press. The CPI also infiltrated information into Germany through its offices in Holland, Denmark, and most especially Switzerland, run by a redoubtable woman named Vira B. Whitehouse.[22]

CPI outposts developed links with local educational organizations. James F. Kerney in Paris worked closely with French universities. Elsewhere, charitable organizations including the Red Cross and the YMCA used their networks to get CPI propaganda into remote corners of China, Russia, and Latin America.[23] The CPI made excellent use of hyphenated Americans such as Fiorello La Guardia as propagandists in the ancestral homes. Other key figures included a young man who on the eve of the war had been making his way as a theatrical agent in New York: Edward L. Bernays. Born in Vienna and a nephew of Sigmund Freud, Bernays did not doubt the malleability of public opinion and after the war pioneered the field of public relations. Bernays worked in Latin America, directing CPI press work and liaison with U.S. exporters. In some countries the CPI offices became full-blown library and information centers. The best-known library was in Mexico City, where a former journalist named Robert H. Murray recruited the American expatriate community to offer English classes. As Creel recalled, the classes also "gave splendid opportunity to preach the history, aims and ideas of America."[24]

The cumulative effect of the CPI's international operation was palpable in the way in which newspapers around the world adopted President Wilson's rhetoric for the peace.[25] Even so, the CPI and its activities came to an abrupt end on 30 June

[21] *Creel Report*, pp. 140–49; Creel, *How we Advertised America*, pp. 276–7, 281; Mock and Larson, *Words That Won the War*, esp. pp.136–53. On *The Spirit of '76* see Bertil Österberg, *Colonial America on Film and Television*, Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2001, pp. 230–31. The British were not the only race defamed by the film. As with *Birth of a Nation*, on which Goldstein had worked, *The Spirit of '76* had a racially mixed archvillain, in this case a half-Indian woman who sought to manipulate George III into making her queen of the American colonies. The film is now lost.

[22] Creel, *How We Advertised America*, pp. 283–7; Vira B. Whitehouse, *A Year as a Government Agent*, New York: Harper Bros., 1920.

[23] Creel, *How We Advertised America*, p. 294; Mock and Larson, *Words That Won the War*, esp. pp. 235–47; Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, pp. 79–81.

[24] Creel, *How We Advertised America*, pp. 245, 266, 349; Mock and Larson, *Words that Won the War*, pp. 281, 287, 321–2; Edward L. Bernays, *Biography of an Idea: Memoirs of Public Relations Counsel Edward L. Bernays*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1965.

[25] Wolper, *The Origins of Public Diplomacy*, pp. 161, 349–50. The CPI's failures included the overselling of American friendship to Hungary. The later treatment of Hungary as an enemy power hastened the collapse of Hungarian democracy, pp. 361–2.

1919. Congress withdrew all of its funding amid allegations that the committee had been too partisan. The State Department was not sorry to see the CPI close. Yet the international operations of the CPI had shown what could be achieved by a concerted information policy and many of its activities would be recreated in later years. Half a century later, Creel's portrait hung in USIA headquarters at the start of the line of directors as the founder of American public diplomacy.[26]

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The experience of the war changed attitudes to propaganda within the United States. Writing in 1922, the historian F. H. Hodder observed, "It is one of the minor compensations of the great war that it enriched our vocabulary by giving us new words . . . and giving new meaning to old ones." In the first category he cited "camouflage." In the second he cited "propaganda."[27] In new popular usage the word propaganda now stood in relation to information as murder to killing. As the United States struggled to come to terms with the process by which it had become involved in the war, many blamed propaganda and particularly British atrocity propaganda. Memoirs of wartime propagandists and histories alike heightened the fear of propaganda and strengthened America's determination never to be bamboozled into war again.[28] Meanwhile, the commercial power of communications became even more palpable. Advertising came of age, feeding the boom economy of the 1920s, and public relations became an industry in its own right. Edward L. Bernays showed the way with books such as *Crystallizing Public Opinion* (1923) and *Propaganda* (1928).[29]

The years following the end of the First World War display a paradox. The public reaction to Woodrow Wilson's brand of internationalism committed the United States to a policy of political isolation. The break-up of the CPI in 1919 removed the U.S. government's apparatus for both cultural projection and policy advocacy, yet the world had never seen so much of American culture, thanks to the all-pervasive medium of the motion picture.[30] The drawback, from a foreign policy point of view, was that the United States government had no control over these images of America and could not count on Hollywood to serve the subtleties of the national interest.

Those Americans who believed their country stood for more than the Keystone Cops drew comfort from the work of private international foundations. The

[26] Creel, *How We Advertised America*, p. 427; Mock and Larson, *Words that Won the War*, p. 331; David Krugler, *The Voice of America and the Domestic Propaganda Battles, 1945–1953*, Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2000, pp. 19–22; Richard Arndt, *The First Resort of Kings*, p. 27.

[27] F. H. Hodder, "Propaganda as a Source of American History," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, IX, 1 (June 1922), 3–18.

[28] For a major analysis of intellectual responses to Great War propaganda see Brett Gary, *The Nervous Liberals: Propaganda Anxieties from World War 1 to the Cold War*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1999; also Nicholas J. Cull, *Selling War: British Propaganda and American "Neutrality" in World War II*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995, pp. 9–10; Harold D. Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, New York: Knopf, 1927, p. 2.

[29] Scott M. Cutlip, *The Unseen Power: Public Relations, a History*, Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1994; Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*.

[30] Frank Costigliola, *Awkward Dominion: American Political, Economic and Cultural Relations with Europe, 1919–1933*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984.

Rockefeller Foundation and the Carnegie Endowment flourished. The Institute of International Education, founded with Carnegie money in 1919, promoted global educational and cultural exchange. Speakers traveled through the auspices of the English Speaking Union (founded in 1918) and businessmen worked for international "understanding" through the Rotary Club (founded in 1905).[31] Such organizations provided what the U.S. government did not. In May 1928 a certain Dr. Cupertino del Campo, the president of the Rotary Club of Buenos Aires, founded the Instituto Cultural Argentino-Norteamericano (ICANA). It was the first of what became known as binational centers (or binational cultural institutes). The institute funded itself by teaching the English language, but its objectives extended to a comprehensive program of cultural interchange, in accordance with a series of resolutions at recent Inter-American conferences. Many such institutes followed across Latin America along the same lines as ICANA, as joint projects of enthusiastic U.S. expatriates and local citizens.[32]

Meanwhile, other states took a more active role in international advocacy and cultural projection. The Bolshevik regime in Russia claimed the leadership of world socialism and in 1919 established Comintern to spread the word. Soviet methods included international radio propaganda. The radio battle began during the closing months of the First World War. Woodrow Wilson's "fourteen points speech" of January 1918 had been relayed internationally in Morse code. Subsequently the U.S. and Soviet Russia broadcast rival Morse messages to world news organizations about peace terms. Now, the Soviet Union embraced radio as a means both to communicate with the "masses" worldwide and to associate the Bolshevik cause with new technology. The U.S.S.R. used radio to broadcast to Romania and to striking miners in Britain in 1926 and made a series of prestige propaganda broadcasts to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Russian Revolution in 1927. Radio Moscow began regular shortwave broadcasts in 1929. Other states, including Britain, developed major overseas services, but in the United States the private sector merely dabbled in small-scale shortwave services to Latin America.[33] This was not enough to make a difference but sufficient to ensure that commercial interests opposed later U.S. government initiatives.[34]

In the field of cultural diplomacy, the French launched an official program in 1923 with generous funding, whereas for the totalitarian regimes cultural projection was an increasingly important part of foreign policy. In 1925, the Soviet Union established the

[31] On IIE see Ninkovich, *The Diplomacy of Ideas*, pp. 18–19. On the ESU see William Griffin, *Sir Evelyn Wrench*, New York: Newcomen Society, 1950; on Rotary International see Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, p. 111.

[32] Martin Manning to author, 17 February 2002; J. Manuel Espinosa, *Inter-American Beginnings of U.S. Cultural Diplomacy, 1936–1948*, Washington, DC: Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State, 1976.

[33] For a survey see Donald R. Brown, *International Radio Broadcasting: The Limits of the Limitless Medium*, New York: Praeger, 1982, pp. 16–48. On Woodrow Wilson's use of radio to publicize his "fourteen points" in January 1918 see p. 39 and Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, p. 93.

[34] USIA Historical Branch, Bruce Gregory, *The Broadcasting Service: An Administrative History*, Washington DC: USIA, 1970, sections 1 and 2. For summary see Elizabeth Fox, *Latin American Broadcasting: From Tango to Telenovela*, Luton: University of Luton Press, 1997, pp. 15–19.