Okay, I’d like to welcome everybody to our annual Walter Roberts’ lecture. My name is Sean Aday; I’m the director of the institute for public diplomacy and global communication here at George Washington University. IPDGC is a co-branded effort with the Elliott School of International Affairs and the college of arts and sciences specifically the school of media and public affairs and we are very proud to be able to host this event. This is our fifth iteration of the Roberts’ lecture. The Roberts’ lecture is co sponsored by IPDGC and the Walter Roberts endowment fund, the chair of which is Barry Fulton who is in the front row over here and the Walter Roberts’ lecture is named for the person who really founded this institute Walter Roberts.

Walter as many of you know was one of the original broadcasters for Voice of America and had a long illustrious career in public diplomacy at US information agency and elsewhere and also near and dear to our heart here at GW. Walter taught what we believed to be the first class on public diplomacy right here at the Eliot school back I believe in the late 1980s and has always been a champion or was always a champion for not only public diplomacy but specifically teaching and research in the area of public diplomacy. We are very happy to have his son Bill and his daughter in law Patricia here with us and this lecture is something that we established several years ago and we’ve had quite an array of speakers. We’ve had Prince Cocroft, Tara Sonenshine, Robert Ford, Thomas Pickering and of course tonight’s distinguished speaker David Ensor.

As many of you know David Ensor is… has been of course an award winning journalist for I think more than 30 years. He was also the director for communications and public diplomacy of the US embassy in Kabul. He was of course the director of Voice of America and he is currently the executive vice president of the Atlantic council; and David’s going to come up and give a few introductory remarks about some things that he’s been thinking about. He just finished a stint at the Shorenstein center, wrote a very interesting and provocative piece that you can find online that I had to recommend for those of you who haven’t already read it and then he’ll be joined in conversation with our own Frank Sesno who is the director of the school of media and public affairs. Many of you know him from his long career as an award winning journalist at CNN and other places. Some of you may not be aware however that Frank I believe your career began at Voice of America? Yes Journalistic career began yes not his [IB] his journalistic career began at Voice of America so this is a subject near and dear to his heart. Frank is a great champion of IPDGC, has done a lot for us over the years and does a lot with something that he calls planet forward which is a really exciting initiative at GW that looks at sustainability issues among other things.
[00:03:28] So we… without further ado we have a great evening. Tonight we are going to have plenty of time for questions from you the audience later and without any more of my wasting of time I’d like to introduce David Ensor.

David: [00:03:47] Thanks very much Sean, it’s great to be here to see many friends in the audience and I hope people who will become friends here as well and it’s an honor to have been invited to give the Walter Roberts lecture here at George Washington university. Walter was as you said an extraordinary person. His was one of the first voices that was heard on the air in 1942 when Voice of America first went on speaking in German. 70 years later at a celebration of VOA’s anniversary, I asked Walter what were the most memorable stories that he recalled covering. He did not hesitate. The most important he said was the liberation of Stellan Grad in 1943 because it was the first major defeat suffered by Nazi Germany and the hardest story for him to tell, the death of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

[00:04:42] I know Walter would be pleased to see you all, here tonight for a discussion about an aspect of American foreign policy that he strongly believed needs to be a higher priority, so do I. I speak, as mentioned from the perspective of someone who was the 28th director of the Voice of America for four years after 16 months working in public diplomacy efforts at the US embassy in Kabul Afghanistan and having been a broadcast journalist for 30 years before that but just this month, I started a new job at the Atlantic council which I would describe as a forward thinking… forward leaning think tank that develops policy ideas. Really lively place, I’m still drinking form a fire hose over there.

[00:05:25] We live in a world where Vladimir Putin himself admits that he “Weaponizes information.” It’s also a world where terrorists use head chopping violence porn and slickly produced Jihadist propaganda to recruit terrorists from our own midst on the internet. How should we respond? What should we do in the information space? Its clear and not only from our recent history in Iraq and Afghanistan that America cannot prevail with hard power alone. But I believe the nation’s capacity to participate meaningfully in the global contest of ideas has been allowed to decline in recent years even as the information challenges we face grow and change. The United States has no one in overall charge of its information efforts. It’s often cut the budget for public diplomacy and also for spending in real terms on international broadcasting.

[00:06:25] Back in 1999, The US information agency was disbanded as a peace dividend. At the end of the Cold war public diplomacy efforts were moved to the State department. International broadcasting was put under a bipartisan board. In the 17 years since then, public diplomacy has frankly suffered from rather anemic budgets in my view and often from excessive
leadership turnover. Public diplomacy has frankly not always been valued at the State department as highly as conventional diplomacy and I believe in the digital age that way of thinking is out of date [00:07:00].

[00:07:02] In recent months both president Obama and presidential candidate Hillary Clinton have called for American digital technology companies to help the government prevent terrorists from using social media and internet to propagandize and recruit and there is also the ongoing public debate, the post Edward Snowden debate about encryption tools, what’s the proper place on… for our country on the scale between, on the one side security and on the other side privacy? Should Apple help the F.B.I to get into the iPhone of the San Bernardino attackers or not? These are big complicated topics and not my subject today but their complexity I think underscores the nation’s need for full time sustained high level leadership on information policy.

[00:07:53] There is a counter messaging aspect of this too; I’m just going to get water… [00:08:00]

[OFF MIC CONVERSATION]

[00:08:08] There is a counter messaging aspect of this too; the state department has a 5.8 million dollar effort to counter ISIS recruiting online. This is critically important work but the effort in my view is much too small so I’ve actually come to the view that it may be just as well in the upcoming defense authorization budget. The Pentagon has given permission to launch a bigger effort of its own; after all they have the money. Maintaining civilian control however and high level co-ordination over such efforts will be key as will strong partnerships with allies in the region and I frankly think that the actual efforts of that sort on… in website chat rooms and on social media should be done by Arab partners in the region, not here in Washington but those efforts should be robust. In fact I am not squeamish here. I… [00:09:00] our executive branch should be working to aggressively shut down sites interfere with Hate Speech, and make it so that ISIS web recruiters find when they reach out to a kid in Los Angeles or Minneapolis or anywhere else in the world, there is usually an American funded Arabic speaking counter messenger in that same chat room or on that same Facebook page responding and counter attacking against their efforts.

[00:09:26] And of course there is much more to public diplomacy than countering ISIS on the internet. One of the most effective US efforts in Afghanistan has been to strengthen the independent media there. While serving as a diplomat in Kabul I was proud to help fledgling Afghan news organizations to get onto their feet and it was also exciting to bring the first broadcast of Sesame Street to the Afghan people and to know that so
many children and frankly also parents would be learning to read with the help of big bird. And so American soft power is obviously created by many more actors than the government. It’s helped or at least shaped by everything from Hollywood to Harvard, from George Washington University to Google to Apple to Facebook to [IB], the Male clinic, rock and roll, a lot of things that attract people to America.

[00:10:19] The global perception of American life and values is probably more shaped by Hollywood movies and T.V shows than anything else. Someone that… some people in the room know well a scholar named Martha Bayless has recently written about this in a book she titled; Through a Screen Darkly: Popular Culture, Public Diplomacy and America’s Image Abroad. In her view the increasingly violent and sexual content of Hollywood is reducing America’s ability to influence others. But there are still movies being made like Spotlight or The Martian for example two that I liked and that I think help America’s image.

[00:11:00] So the US should perhaps seek ways to broaden international audiences for such films. But I can’t think of a better way for our country to project American values and help our friends around the world and by exporting our most fundamental value, freedom of speech. Because the US is one of the relatively few nations where there is no state broadcaster on the air here, few Americans realize that the voice of America is actually among the world’s most influential media organizations. In November the VOAs parent agency, the broadcasting board of governors issued its annual report on global audiences and that showed that in the last four years, VOAs audience has grown 40% to almost 188 million people worldwide each week. They listen, watch or read VOA on everything from shortwave radio to satellite T.V, from Smartphone apps to Facebook Twitter and the Chinese micro blogging site [00:12:00] Webo.

[00:12:03] This growth came despite budget cuts in real terms and despite basic problems in my view with the governance structure over VOA and its sister entities. I mean the idea behind the creation of the bipartisan BBG, the broadcasting board of governors is laudable and there was a need to put something there in place when USIA was abolished. The BBG was designed to create a firewall protecting the independence of the journalism of VOA and its sister entities from interference by policy makers. But I’ve come to the conclusion that it’s just incredibly difficult and understandably so for nine busy people to successfully run a large complex collection of media companies as a part time activity.

[00:12:54] The BBG has had difficulties sometimes playing an effective executive decision making role [00:13:00]. It’s not helped that the White House and the Senate have often left seats unfilled for long periods. My criticism of the BBG is certainly not about the individual serving on it.
There are distinguished Americans on the BBG now and have been in the past. The current board understands well the structural problem and is addressing it. They rightly want to get out of the business of running US international broadcasting month to month and have appointed a full time executive officer which I think is a very good first step because what’s really needed is a full time professional boss. But the man who has been appointed, John Lansing, a seasoned media manager in my view also needs legislation now giving him clear authority over all budgets and personnel which he does not clearly have at the moment.

[00:13:54] Unfortunately there is a bill currently before the house of representatives which unless amended could actually make things worse. [00:14:00] The current draft of HR 2323 would create yet another board and yet another C.E.O to oversee three of VOAs sister entities, Radio free Europe, Radio free Asia and The Middle East Broadcasting Network. So now there would be two separate and competing US civilian international broadcasting efforts. There would be needless duplication of oversight and management layers, there would... it would also exacerbate an already I think unhealthy rivalry over market roles and money between the radio frees and the Voice of America. Furthermore, the bill has language in it ordering VOA which has always been a full service news broadcaster to only cover news relating to the US or US policies. In my view that would be a poison pill, a recipe for declining audiences and declining impact worldwide.

[00:14:55] Instead of confrontation and divorce, what we need is a model of collaboration [00:15:00] between VOA and its sister organizations. We need more projects like the Russian language T.V show Nastoyashchee Vremya or current time which was created after the seizure of Crimea by the Russians with anchors in Washington and in Prague. It’s co-produced by RFE and VOA and it’s seen on 25 stations in nine countries and then beyond that about 2 million people within the Russian federation tune into it every week on their computers. So it has reach into the Russia, even though Putin is trying to keep programs like Nastoyashchee Vremya out. And the point of this, the point is this; neither RFE nor VOA could have done this quality of program alone.

[00:15:47] Let me turn now to what I think is a key question, which is really, what should VOA and its sister entities be in a crowded digital media space where broadcasters like RT pedal half truths and disinformation? [00:16:00] Is journalism done with the old fashioned goals of objectivity and balance still the answer; or is it time to simply advocate for government policies to spin as many of the newer state broadcasters are already doing? In other words, should VOA be turned into a full throated advocate for American policy rather than a journalistic enterprise?
[00:16:25] I spent last semester at the end of last year up until Christmas at Harvard’s Kennedy school of government as was mentioned and I looked for my project, my research project at the two main models that are in the market place today. Comparing VOA and the BBC world service on the one side, the Deustche Welle and one or two others with newer channels that advocate for their governments. I looked at some data on Russia’s RT on China’s CCTV and at the coverage by Al Jazeera Arabic of the events in places like Egypt. It was... I can tell you it was an interesting exercise. While influence is a very difficult thing to quantify, you can rest assured that without measurable audience, you won’t have it. RT’s, Russia’s RT for example claims a worldwide reach of 700 Million people. That claim is deliberately misleading. The Russians use potential audience reach as their metric. In other words every single person who might conceivably see their programming because it’s coming down from a satellite that’s going overhead or because it’s on a cable menu with perhaps hundreds of stations that is available to them in their home. No one uses that metric. It is meaningless.

[00:17:48] Professional broadcasters measure actual audience. The VOA audience estimate of 188 million is based on careful polling by the Gallup organization and others as is the BBC world service estimate that it has a worldwide audience of 300 million people a week. After the shooting down of a Malaysian air jet over Ukraine, the world’s media reported on the mounting evidence that the weapon used was Russian made and could have been fired from a town held by Russian backed rebels. Perhaps you all remember that time. For almost every new cycle in those early days, RT offered some new theory on who could have been responsible for almost as I say almost every new cycle there was something... were the Ukrainians trying to shoot down Putin’s plane? Was it all a CIA conspiracy? If you watched RT, there was a new one every three or four hours. If the goal was confusion, RT may have been partially successful but if the goal was credibility, not so much.

[00:18:53] RT has not put out detailed backed up audience estimates. But there are some numbers available if you search and if you have a good Harvard graduate student looking for you. In the UK for example in May of 2013 when the Ukraine story broke, RT was 175th out of 278 channels in the United Kingdom. As RTs coverage became increasingly shrill and one sided, that number dropped to 90,000 one year later less than two tenths of 1% of the U.K viewing population. Another example China’s CCTV with a budget in the multiple Billions of dollars has poured money into broadcasting in Africa yet the results also appear to have been relatively disappointing thus far. For example data gathered for the BBG from Kenya in 2013 showed that just 2% of the television audience were watching CCTV, many, many more were watching the BBC, CNN and
local Kenyan broadcasters. One more example [00:20:00] in Egypt when Al Jazeera Arabic moved to heavily biased content in favor of the Muslim Brotherhood, it lost a substantial share of its audience there in Egypt, much of it to some new Egyptian stations admittedly that were just starting up but much of it also to BBC Arabic. So looking... after looking at these numbers up there in Cambridge, I’m now even more convinced that if the goal is to seek to influence public in strategic places around the world, then honesty on the air, honesty on the air is not only the right thing to do it’s also the best business strategy. Now of course that does mean telling the truth even about ourselves.

[00:20:47] When Edward Snowden revealed details about the surveillance capabilities of the NSA to eavesdrop on communications worldwide, we all remember many in Europe were outraged, VOA covered the story thoroughly. [00:21:00] And when there were weeks of protest and fracas in Missouri and elsewhere against police killings of young African-Americans, VOA was there covering it multiple languages for the global audience. VOA’s coverage of these and other stories amounted to an ongoing civics lesson; this is how a democracy confronts its challenges, openly. It was not flattering, it was sometimes embarrassing but it was more powerful in my view than any propaganda could ever be.

[00:21:37] For that matter, when Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu spoke to a joint session of Congress denouncing the nuclear deal with Iran made by President Obama’s team, VOA broadcast it live with Farsi translation to Iran, where an enormous audience watches VOA television each week, something like almost a quarter of the country watches at least one VOA television show per week. [00:22:00] An amount... that’s a number I would just let you think about that, the amount of impact that Voice of America has in Iran is quite large. If VOA had been a propaganda station for the administration of the day, I think we can all rest assured Netanyahu would not have made air. And I think it was good thing that he did. Again, it was a way of showing the Iranian people how a serious country debates serious issues, and that we listen to everybody. We’re open.

[00:22:37] So summing up, I strongly believe in the impact of honest journalism and the contrast it offers with propagandas out there. As Secretary of State John Kerry said recently when he was at an event where they were opening the new Washington Post building here in town, he said, “A country without a free and independent press has nothing to brag about, nothing to teach and [00:23:00] no way to fulfill its potential.” And I think back to 1961, President John F. Kennedy recruited the fame journalist Edward R. Murrow in that year to advise him on information policy and to run USIA.
In my view the next president should consider hiring an Information Advisor with a similar heavyweight background. In this digital age, it’s time to put information strategy higher on our list of foreign policy priorities. And it’s time to confront authoritarian propaganda, terrorist lies and ignorance head on. Thank you.

[00:23:52] Well David thank you very much and thank you Sean and thanks everybody for being here. It’s a great privilege to have you and it’s a great pleasure to hear you layout a case as succinctly and clearly as you have.

Male Speaker: [00:24:08] Thank you.

Frank: [00:24:09] I’m wondering if you could talk a little bit more then to start with about why you think as you said at the outset of your remarks we have in effect disinvested in this very important enterprise, public diplomacy.

David: [00:24:27] Well it’s broader than that I think Frank. I mean Washingtonians there’s a problem, is there not? The government is not functioning very well right now. And actually the institution that’s in the most difficulty I would say is the legislature. It’s not passing budgets, it’s not passing laws, it’s not working very well. So this is... I’m afraid that this is one of the areas where we’re not getting the countries business done in the way it should be in my view. So there’s the larger piece. I think the other thing is that there’s an assumption... first of all there’s a lot... people don’t understand what Voice of America is or what these broadcasters are. And we’re not saying that’s the only... I try to talk about other areas. I mean if you will the White programs, there should be gray and black programs too. But all of this has not gotten enough attention. I think partly because we have a tendency to assume that everything will be handled just fine by the private sector. And we have this rollicking Silicon Valley extraordinary changes in the way human being communicate led by Americans and American companies, and one has a sense of well we sort of... that’s handled, but it isn’t.

[00:25:44] People sometimes used to say to me in VOA what’s the point of VOA when there’s a CNN right, where you and I used to work. But CNN doesn’t broadcast in Hausa or Farsi. And CNN broadcast where there’s an audience that they can make a pretty decent income out of. The US has an interest in talking to the people of Northern Nigeria and of Iran and providing them with honest information that they won’t otherwise get. That’s a national interest. It’s a huge national interest which I think the country should be investing more money and time and effort into and it should be worked on at a higher level.
Male Speaker: [00:26:22] How do you get that to happen. I’m sure that you made the runs on the hill in your four years as VOA director and you made this very cogent case, you know what you’re talking about, you’ve been to all these places and you heard the argument in return, right? So how do you cut through at a time when the country frankly is disengaging from the world in some disturbing ways?

David: [00:26:41] Yeah. Well, I think we have to just keep speaking for soft power. I mean Bob Gates, Secretary of Defense, was one of the biggest fans of increasing the State Department budget and he was willing to give up some of the State Department’s budget to get it. He understood the power of conventional diplomacy and I’m arguing we should also understand the power of public diplomacy.

Male Speaker: [00:27:01] Should we reconstitute the US either?


Male Speaker: [00:27:05] Would that make a difference?

David: [00:27:07] I think it would.

Male Speaker: [00:27:08] How would that be done?

David: [00:27:09] But I’m not... I’m not sure that necessarily has to be what we do. I think there should be a high level grown up person who reports to the president, talks to the president frequently on this kind of subjects, someone who is respected and serious in the White House. I think there also should be as far as the broadcasting is concerned an empowered CEO, like professional fulltime. John Lansing is a great person, I’d like to see him be that person, but Congress needs to give him more power than he has right now.

Male Speaker: [00:27:36] Well I’m nominating you for the White House job whoever the president is.

David: [00:27:40] What’s the pay? No, I’m just kidding.

Male Speaker: [00:27:43] What’s the prospect...

David: [00:27:44] I’m just kidding.

Male Speaker: [00:27:44] Okay. The other question... you see this... I mean should this be part of a national security apparatus, should this be separate from that? How would you... I mean if you actually imagine this happening and
having some impact how would you see that playing into the structure there?

David: [00:27:57] I’d like to see this person I’m trying to create sitting in on [00:28:00] cabinet meetings and serving on a senior level in the NSC staff and seeing the president every month or so or writing... as Edward R. Murrow did. It’s fascinating to read some of these things. I mean he wrote to Kennedy. He wrote one, very blunt one and said “You kept me out and in front of The Bay of Pigs and now look what you got. Wouldn’t it have helped a little if I’d known what you’re going to go into there? We could have at least have planned for the various contingencies.”

Male Speaker: [00:28:25] This is not new, this tension.

David: [00:28:27] No it’s not.

Male Speaker: [00:28:28] And the idea... in fact when I was at the Voice of America which is more years ago than I’d like to count, but Alan remembers, right, we were there together. But the tension was there then too, you know commentary and telling the government story and the government policy versus the straight news. And that’s been a tension there.

David: [00:28:46] Sure.

Male Speaker: [00:28:48] To what extent does do you think the country need to tell and explain its policies and spin, because in the world of spin you have to counter-spin don’t you?

David: [00:28:57] Yeah

Male Speaker: [00:28:57] To counter this growing international trend. [00:29:00]

David: [00:29:01] Well when I was in Kabul I ran a sizeable and robust and well funded public diplomacy effort there. And I very... yeah I spun for my country and I’m proud of it. I argued for American policies. I argued for American leadership. I tried to help the Afghan government because that’s who we were there to try and help, win hearts and minds in their own country. to help them build the perception and the reality that things were getting better, that there was hope for the younger generation so they shouldn’t leave. We did a lot of things. I very strongly believe in public diplomacy and in advocating for your country and it’s the role of the State Department and the foreign policy area to do that. And I’d like to see them further empowered.

[00:29:47] Then there’s the gray and the black. We should be bringing down websites and just fearsome... and red toothed about it when it comes
to ISIS recruiting. I don’t care how many dirty tricks are used to stop people from being killed by ISIS [00:30:00] and that kind of thing. But that’s different and separate from broadcasting which I believe we’ve got it basically right after making some mistakes in our history. We have the VOA charter which says to the broadcasters, “Tell the truth”

Male Speaker: [00:30:19] But how do... okay that’s fine. But when the VOA charter was written, when the VOA was established, it was shortwave, this is a cold war world, there was no... God forbid, there was no internet, there was no Social Media, there was no CNN, there was none of this. How do you think that VOA and other international broadcasting must change to accommodate this very changed world or shouldn’t do at all?

David: [00:30:45] Well what I tried to do while there and what I hope my successor will also work on is just to be as on top as possible of the changes in the way human beings are communicating, absolutely platform agnostic. I mean if there is a new device invented and they’re starting to buy them and the package, you got to be on that thing, right now, you know. And so ready to try anything to reach audiences and going where the audience is. And I always like to use a surfing metaphor, “You got kind of ride the wave. You don’t want to get too far ahead of it either.” People would say “Oh do everything digital” well in some markets they hardly have any digital. And TV is great, and radio is even quite good you know. Or North Korea, I mean shortwave radio is kind of great in North Korea, it’s about all there is. So you know you got to be agnostic with the platforms, use whichever one works. Be adventurous, be creative about the way you use them. I mean the digital media now we can engage with audience, this is fantastic. We get information from them. We have a conversation with them. It completely changes the nature of what VOA and what the other organizations could do in some very exciting ways.

[00:31:54] However, journalism has to be done by the old-fashioned values where we have the goals [00:31:54] of objectivity, balance, fairness and if... and my feeling is if you don’t have those goals, you aren’t doing journalism anymore, people can smell the difference. And audiences... the reason VOA has such a big audience and the reason it grew 40% over the last four years is because we had credibility with those audiences. They thought we were worth listening to, we had something to say. Radio Moscow had the most powerful radio signals on earth for most of the Cold War but almost nobody listened. They had nothing to say that wasn’t predictable and often wasn’t untrue.

Male Speaker: [00:32:36] So that’s the part of your speech that gives me the most encouragement, warms my heart, is to hear the ratings of CCTV and RT…

David: [00:32:46] Are not that great.
Male Speaker: And Al Jazeera are not that great and maybe even decline when they are less credible. Could you tell us a little bit more about some of that research you were doing and what else you found if anything, conclusions you drew because that actually is...

David: [00:32:59] Well they’re not putting out. [00:33:00] CCTV and RT are not putting out real numbers. So you get them occasionally in little places like the UK which very strenuously collects whether they like it or not.

Male Speaker: [00:33:10] How much have they cut into VOA?

David: [00:33:13] How much have they cut into VOA?

Male Speaker: [00:33:13] Yeah. Have they cut into VOA?

David: [00:33:15] Who do you mean by “they?”

Male Speaker: [00:33:16] CCTV, these other international broadcasters that come to the market.

David: [00:33:18] Well I mean look, they have... I mean CCTV has a multi-billion dollar budget. They can hire some of the best television producers, people you and I used to work with and I envy them having them. They can create compelling visually-compelling programming, and they will in the long term. Watch the Chinese, watch that space. They’re going to make something out of this. RT I honestly think the goal is more to confuse people than to inform them. It’s to create... as I said about the air jet that was thrown down, we had a new theory every four hours. You know they were just trying to throw dust in the air basically. And if that was their strategy it worked. But it’s not a strategy for long term impact, credibility, being a respected voice, forget it. They’re not even slightly respected even in their own sphere. The only place where that kind of stuff really works is in a country which is closed off from other voices, and unfortunately Russia is pretty largely closed off...

Male Speaker: [00:34:24] Increasingly so. It’s really very disturbing. You talked about excessive leadership turnover.

David: [00:34:30] Yes, too many undersecretaries of public deployments.

Male Speaker: [00:34:34] What do you do about that?

David: [00:34:36] That’s a question for the president and for the Secretary of State to...
Male Speaker: [00:34:39] Do they value the position enough so that…

David: [00:34:41] No, they don’t, let’s be honest. It’s a very important job that should be more… it should have a larger budget that it does. The budget is not as much as it was under USIA, and that’s bad. I mean in real dollars I’m talking about… Dan you’re turning away. I’m not sure whether that’s right. I can see him turning away. Is that [00:35:00] right? In real dollars, okay, which is I think the only thing that matters. So I think that public diplomacy should be properly funded, properly leveraged, it means let your Under Secretary stay for a while and pick people that you are really going to listen to and have them in your inner circle and take it seriously.

Male Speaker: [00:35:19] So who… in your experience while you were on the inside, while you were VOA director, who got it? Did anybody lobby for this whether on the hill or in the administration, or is this just some kind of backwater and we’ve got make a lot more noise to bring those people’s attention?

David: [00:35:34] Well I don’t want to say nobody got it and I don’t want to sort of trash anybody or pick out any heroes because I don’t think there are any specially great heroes. The fact is the government is… there’s something new every day, right, and especially lately. And so, well meaning government officials serving at various levels do the best they can with the situation they’ve got. But it isn’t often that people stand back, [00:36:00] have time to stand back frankly and say “Wait a minute, we got the structure right and we got the funding right in a big sense.” And it’s very much the responsibility of Congress to get engaged and do that. And I think they’ve been failing in this, spectacularly failing it for years.

Male Speaker: [00:36:15] They have been. Yes they have. You also talked about the State Department’s $5.8 million. Is that right, 5.8?

David: [00:36:25] Yeah.

Male Speaker: [00:36:26] Yeah. And now the Pentagon maybe part of this.

David: [00:36:29] The Pentagon is coming in with a much bigger budget and it’s in the Defense Authorization bill.

Male Speaker: [00:36:34] How is that going to work? What is that all about? Why do we have competing power centers to do this job?

David: [00:36:41] Look, I mean frankly I… it really ought to be a State Department led effort but the State Department doesn’t have the money. 5.8 is not… I mean it should 508 or 5.8 billion or something for that kind
of, that level of importance compared to some of the other things we do. But reality is they don’t have the budget.

Male Speaker: [00:37:04] If they had that…

David: [00:37:04] And there are... our troop’s lives can be at risk whether in Iraq or elsewhere if this isn’t done properly. So it does matter to the Pentagon. It is a matter of defense.

Male Speaker: [00:37:15] Let’s say for a moment that the resources were there, what would you do with them, how would we effectively counter this?

David: [00:37:24] Well for example if we’re taking the Middle East, I would have a very robust program. I mean as I say seriously well-funded and well organized. I would have the counter effort online if you will done by friends of ours in the Arab world by... and this is something that Under Secretary Stengel and others have been working to achieve. There’s a center now in the UAE I believe and there are others that are going to be worked up, this is the right way to do it. It shouldn’t be done from Washington. It should be done on a scale. That means that you almost... if you’re ISIS recruiter sitting in Raqqa you almost can’t get on without somebody tracking you and finding you and following you and arguing against you and tearing you off the air. It should be quite red toothed is what I’m saying. And this not about journalism, this is about national security and it’s about... it’s something the executive branch should have properly funded and do well.

[00:38:20] And then on the other side, I would suggest in broadcasting terms for example my esteemed friends at the Middle East Broadcasting Network who is our sister network who does the Arabic broadcasting there’s some very fine journalism done on MBN. It doesn’t reach a very large audience frankly. They’ve got a model which I understand why but which is basically to have, to be a network constantly on a channel amongst the many channels you can get from your satellite dish if you’re watching in Arabic. The problem is that that market is completely saturated, whether it’s Al Jazeera or Al Arabiya or you know you name it. So, Alhurra which is the MBN network it’s a pretty small size frankly. They’re latecomers. They’re seen as a government voice. It’s... I personally would urge that the BBG look at using a model that was working increasingly well for VOA in the latter part of the time I was there which is then what I call the affiliate model, where you go to the existing broadcasters and just say look I’m not trying... “I’m not going to compete with you; I’d like to join you. What can I do to get on your air? You don’t cover Washington very well; let us help you do that.” You know, become part of the show. Get your people on the air. Become part of the conversation. Become part of the editorial conference call in the
morning where you’re discussing with the station what they’re going to cover. Get into the bloodstream, become part of the conversation and take advantage of the fact that they have audiences already built up.

Male Speaker: [00:39:57] Create partnerships. I mean everybody else in journalism…

David: [00:39:59] That’s right. And [00:40:00] we’re always doing that all over the world. I think NBN should give it a try too. Now, I've talked with my colleagues there, there are problems, it's not easy in the Arabic world to be the American broadcaster and find partners and you know, you say, "Well this one's tainted, that one's tainted." Well I wouldn’t be too worried about taint. If you’ve got audience I want to be on your air and I want to talk to you in public, and if you let me do it I'm going to, just would more [00:40:26]

Male Speaker: [00:40:27] David as Sean knows and Janet still colleagues here we have a visiting scholar whose been with us and has done quite a bit of research looking at all the ISIS media and their techniques and technologies. And his research is shocking because it shows how they have adopted very sophisticated media techniques, some of their videos look like video games and they’ve been very specifically targeted at Millennials, [00:41:00] especially in certain parts of the world very deliberately sort of a niche audience if you will.

[00:41:09] They don't have a network, a TV network, they're doing this online. This is real guerilla information, if you can call it information, I don’t think I would. Are we responding properly to that? I mean I get the VOA and the structure there and all the rest but this kind of sort of guerilla operation is that what we need more of too in our response?

David: [00:41:29] We need to point out what's wrong with their message. I don’t want… I saw something today which is going to be unveiled at the Atlanta council in a couple of weeks and I want to unveil it here. Let me see how much I can tell you about it. Let me see how much I can tell you about it. Let's just say that there's an effort being worked on that my little think tank is working on among with us to find the lies in the ISIS videos and there's lots of them and they're kind of obvious. They say they're in a city, they're not in that city, you can prove it. They say that they did [00:42:00] X or Y, you can prove they didn’t.

[00:42:03] So I think part of… do you know the… does any of you know the website stopfake.something, it's a Ukrainian effort I believe, fantastic effort to show the lies in the Russian propaganda. They say they don’t use cluster bombs, guess what, there's pictures, their own pictures that show their cluster bombs. Russia says, "This isn’t a cluster bomb." Yes it is, we can prove that. So there are lots of things like that that I would like to see VOA do more of and the other broadcasters do more of, and frankly the
government ought to be working everyday to produce the lies of the day out of these people.

[00:42:42] Because they make them… it's just a constant flow of falsehoods and the fake video… television has been shot in the wrong place and all of…

Male Speaker: [00:42:51] It's totally true but if the model applies that we see here, you know trying to correct the facts, all these fact check thing actually by themselves don’t move people. [00:43:00] People respond.

David: [00:43:00] Well because that’s defensive, which is why I talk…

Male Speaker: [00:43:03] What are you saying?

David: [00:43:05] We've got to be on offense for our own values and our own country and what it stands for and in a positive way. And I think that we've done that but I think, but I think in past history we've more successful at it than we are at the moment frankly. And how you go about that, I mean there's a public diplomacy side to that and it does partly just require money and people and time and effort at a level that unfortunately my colleagues at state who do wonderful work and I was proud to be one of them, you know don’t have.

[00:43:39] I'd like to see the level; you know the game upped greatly and become more aggressive. And as I said you could the Martian and translate it into about 30, 40 languages and distribute it all over the world and that’s a fictional story, but it's a [00:44:00] story about kind of the American spirit which I think is the kind of movie that is the sort of image we would like people to see that is one aspect of America.

Male Speaker: [00:44:13] I want to go to the audience for questions, just one last I think for you. David you're at VOA for four years, what are you proudest of?

David: [00:44:22] I'm proudest I think of bringing a place back from a pretty low spot. The team there was… felt battered and bruised and I think they now, I like to think, I hope that which speeches and blogs and communicating as you and I do for profession almost, I've helped clarify what the mission is and inspired I would hope another new young generation of journalists to join the Voice of America, to join other news organizations and to do [00:45:00] the work that you and I once did and are very proud of it.

Male Speaker: [00:45:04] Well thank you for your comments and thank you for your work at the Voice, it's really terrific, really terrific. Why don’t we open it up to your questions now, wherever you want to go with them? David
you're used to them so one in the back. And tell us who you are and fire away.

Bob: [00:45:24] I'm Bob Hosie, I'm a consultant. What can be done to raise some of the money for some of these efforts, getting together people over the internet and getting the local groups to come on into it and keep everything transplant?

David: [00:45:40] Are you talking about private funding?

Bob: [00:45:42] Yeah.

David: [00:45:44] Well, I mean there are various ways of structuring this kind of work and I guess it could be done in the private sector too, and it is bidding in a way. I mean there are NGOs that are... that stand... that do journalism. [00:46:00] Human Rights Watch is a wonderful organization and basically I know the leaders of it quite well and they said to me somewhat sadly journalism as we knew it 25 years is... it's a shadow, its former self now. Many of the major newspapers have closed; those that remain don’t have the number of correspondents covering the issues that they used to.

[00:46:29] If you want to get human rights covered as a subject by major news organizations you practically have to do it for them. So that’s what Human Rights Watch does, they basically run like journalists. They go out and get the stories, they get the video, they get the sound, they get the... they take you there. If you go on their website it's amazing and I think that kind of effort can bear real fruit. It draws attention to... it shines a light in dark corners in a way that private journalism used to do but now maybe it's going to have to be a [00:47:00] mixture which includes non-profit organizations with a point of view on a particular issue like Human Rights Watch.

Male Speaker: [00:47:09] Next well we've got one in the front but we'll get this last one from the back and then we'll come back forward.

Justin: [00:47:13] Hi, I'm Justin Schneider; I'm a former undergrad at GW. This is really illuminating particularly the discussion around your research at Cambridge, the state back television versus VOA type models. And I guess what I wanted to ask is let’s say we get the resources we need for public diplomacy, you get that we not necessarily but someone becomes that White House advisor of that information [IB] sort of speak, we do all that. What types of variables would we need to measure besides audience penetration in order to assess the influence on the success these types of programs, what's the next step?
David: [00:47:53] It's a really good question. Measuring impact is one of the most difficult things in public diplomacy and in broadcasting. It certainly not a science and you know it's very important to do it and you look for different ways and we intended to use just audience but everybody knows that doesn't mean necessarily impact. So with... the BBG is now looking at ways to try to measure impact and they ask different kinds of questions and the polling what they do which is quite extensive by the way.

[00:48:30] You know did you... they look for examples where somebody heard something on the air and actually did something or told someone else about it or whatever. So you look for ways to measure impact. I guess overtime you kind of get a sense of whether you're having an impact or not if you're broadcasting to a particular country for a sustained period of time. Some of the service chiefs you know at VOA just have an almost granular sense and they know when it's... when they haven’t been having impact for a while [00:49:00] as opposed to when they did and they change course because they can see it's not working what they're doing, whether it's the platform or type of journalism subject matter.

[00:49:10] In the digital world of course it's increasingly easy to know how many people you’ve reached and what they clicked on, right? So some of these things are getting easier, it's possible to know what subjects people are really interested in, in a way that we never used to have before. There is some progress we're making just because of the change of the technology just allowing us to have a better sense of impact and you know really what do people want and what do they... and you can also track what they do with in some ways digitally as well. But we're in the... that whole area is in infancy and then you're right to ask the question, that’s a huge area and the tax payers are quite right to ask with their representatives, "Why should I give you money, what did you get me for it?" It's a very good question.

Male Speaker: [00:49:55] Your number actually on your viewership [00:50:00] in Iran a quarter of the population is a striking number. What do you know about that audience, what do you... what's the granularity of impact with an audience because that's a very large audience?

David: [00:50:11] Very large audience. I used to say when I lived in communists Poland that I lived in the most pro American country on earth, and I did.

Male Speaker: [00:50:24] It's true.

David: [00:50:25] And there are several people in the room who can confirm that including my wife who is polish.

Male Speaker: [00:50:30] She was pro American she married one.
David: [00:50:33] It was a mighty charitable effort. But now I would tell you from having watched the kinds of broadcast and the kinds of audiences we have that Iran is the most pro American country on earth.

Male Speaker: [00:50:47] Cool, what?

David: [00:50:48] It is. The public, not the government, the public.

Male Speaker: [00:50:51] Alright, so what's your audience there? Who's your audience, is it young, is it old, do you know what the demographics are?

David: [00:50:55] The demographics are… yeas we do. They're good, [00:51:00] in other words they're quite mixed. Probably tend to little older and a little more male but still pretty good demographics. This is a country that when it wakes it and drinks its coffee in the morning wants to know what Washington is saying about it. I mean they have an addiction to knowing what is the great power saying about us, the great Satan or whatever you want to call us.

[00:51:21] They want to know what we're saying about them, they're deeply fascinated by the United States. And so VOA feeds them information about the United States and its policies towards Iran and yeah here's the [IB] speech you name it, we'll give it to you. We want a relationship with you as listeners and viewers. And in recent history there have been occasions when we've received video and still pictures from people on the ground in Iran and after cross checking them to make sure that they really were filmed where they said and so forth we've run them.

[00:51:51] So you now have this kind of engaged thing where the audience helps you collect news and so forth and we basically, I mean we're just a very important factor [00:52:00] in Iran, there's no question about. So is the BBC World Service I should tell you which has almost similar, not quite as large as ours but almost as large as our audience.

Male Speaker: [00:52:10] I saw a question up in front.

Stephen: [00:52:13] Hi, Stephen Salyer sales work global seminar and for many years in Public Radio International. I wanted just to pick up on the word you used earlier co-production and talking about the Russian corrected co-production. And it's always seem to me that we box our journalistic efforts up, so tightly as between the overseas broadcasting and the work we do domestically that often we're putting a very large investment into good journalism domestically which never sees much exposure internationally.
And I know when we try to start an international news program in 1995, '96 still on the air called The World, I had to go to the BBC World Service to strike a co-production agreement. It's been durable for 20 years and the show is I think had an impact, but when I try to then approach US overseas broadcasters to get it distributed internationally run into all sorts of legal and other difficulties and trying to make that happen. So my question, forgive the long windedness, it's really two-fold.

One what would it take to try to open the field of co-production in a much richer way so that we can more fully capitalize on all the great journalism that’s already being done and funded in the United States, particularly in a resource constrained environment and number two open up some of the distribution mechanism? So the diversity of opinion that we produce every single day in the United States could actually be shared more directly with people around the world.

Well it's a great question and one that I thought about a lot when I was director and tried to work on but I had some of the same frustrations you did. I'm still thinking that VOA should be taking advantage of the existence of a national public radio and of Public Radio International in one way or another. I had some conversations about music at least, you know if we couldn’t do news and I still think that there could be some rich kind of working together. The hesitation is more on the side NPR and PRI that it is on VOA side, I can tell you that.

The other thing you have to remember is that not everybody speaks English. I mean VOA honestly has English broadcasting and it's important in Africa, it's less and less important in other countries. And what really is the secret sauce for VOA is the fact that it's in 45 languages and when events became worry some in Mali we didn’t think French was enough anymore, we put Bambara on the air and that reached a huge new audience in Mali. So English has its… I know it's the global language but it's a… it has surprising limitations in some ways in terms of reaching... in many cases the key audience is that the United States would like to get to.

You got to reach them in their mother-tongue; at least it's more effective. I'm not dising English, I love English and I'd love to see us doing more with it. But in a limited budget environment I tend to put money into other languages other than English because it would achieve a pragmatic result in a particular place for the United States.

In the back or unless you saw somebody you were going to first.
Male Speaker: [00:55:59] Hi, thank you [00:56:00] for an insightful interview. So I'm PhD at... I'm doing a PhD on US diplomacy at Connell and I am from Tunisia. So I keep an eye if you want on the way VOA tries to reach out to my people in Tunisia and the Arab world in general and the way we receive it. And my question is does US public diplomacy and US foreign policy still treat the Arab world as one entity or does it treat it as separate countries? Because the way... where I want to go with this question is since Tunisia is now a democracy in the Middle East, it's known democracy, very proud of it.

[00:56:38] We hope it will continue and we hope we reach some great results, but that... this is also an opportunity for the US in a new country in the Middle East to improve its image. Because there's democracy, there's freedom of speech, there's multiplicity of opinion, so the US can actually talk to many people and let them decide whether they would like the Su or not. [00:57:00] So is there a policy for instance for Tunisia to improve the US image or do you still treat the Middle East as one entity because I don’t see... sometimes there are differences between countries and the US should like really consider that. Thank you.

David: [00:57:14] I mean you're in the Arabic space and I don’t... VOA didn’t broadcast in the Arabic during the time I was director, so it's a little bit off of my area. I would say that I know that my colleagues at Ahura at NBN, we're developing programs for specific countries, did a lot of very specific broadcast for Egypt for example. I'm not whether they did something special for Tunisia, do you know Dan?

Dan: [00:57:35] They started to work on them [IB] through our embassies it is clear we're focusing on...

Male Speaker: [00:57:47] Yeah, most scholarships and things like that, I like that.

Dan: [00:57:49] Tunisia and the opening and there's been great extension of [IB] programs [IB]

Male Speaker: [00:57:56] Okay.

David: [00:57:56] Dan's really...

Male Speaker: [00:57:56] I'm getting that people here will still talk about the air report.

Male Speaker: [00:58:00] Yeah, that’s the thing.

David: [00:58:02] Dan [IB] of the state department, a very distinguished foreign service... ex-foreign service officer was the conduit for our relationship
with the state department with the secretary for a number of years, we work closely together and eh know everything, so that’s why…

Male Speaker: [00:58:17] He knows everything. A question over here… oh sorry, right over here, yeah.

Harvey: [00:58:31] Thank you. I'm Harvey [Lyford]. I'm a retired USIA foreign service officer and I did several stint set VOA over those years. I really liked that you hinted that it would be a good idea to reconstitute something like a modern USIA. But in my experience at VOA they always shifted the fact that they were part of USIA or under USIA and [00:59:00] I doubt that a new USIA would be an effective control or whatever you want to call it, bureaucratic head over the Voice and the other radio stations. So I was wondering, if you could expand a little on what you think a new public diplomacy effort could be bureaucratically, what would the organization be?

David: [00:59:23] Yeah, I mean I'm not a… first of all I don’t have the answers. I can't draw you a flowchart, I don’t think it would be useful really. I just do feel that the president of the United States needs to be advised on these issues by somebody who really knows what they're talking about and is in the White House, I feel that. and I feel that the budget of public diplomacy and of efforts at the state department and other agencies needs to be better and then finally I feel that international broadcasting should have one boss who's empowered to get the radio freeze and the VOA to [00:00:00] collaborate to make the budget that it does have and hopefully we get a little more as effective as it can possibly be.

[00:00:09] And I think collaborations and working together on various things that’s the best way to make the broadcasting work. As to whether we need a whole bureaucracy with somebody at the head of it all the rest of it, I don’t know. Because I am conflicted I have to admit as a former VOA. I wouldn’t particularly… I liked the fact that the… I thought that the board, the fact that the board was there created a firewall between policy makers and journalists which was appropriate, which was needed. I, you know while I was director from time to time policy makers would reach out to me and say… I'm not mentioning any names or giving you any specifics, "Could you please tone down your coverage in country X because we're…

[Off Mic Conversation]

David: [00:00:50] They're helping, that country is very helpful to us." And I would say, "Well you have your job to do and I have mine. Are you telling me that the journalism is bad? [00:01:00] As the complaining government or can you give any information that allows me to say I've got
some work to do because editorially we're off base?" Because if so I'm all over this, but if you're telling me that another part of the US government doesn’t want us to be so quite tough on country X on human rights or whatever because there's some other interest, I think that America can work and chew gum.

[00:01:23] I think we can cover news honestly on the one's hand and on the other have as close relationship as we need, to at the state department level or at the White House level on policy issues. And sure there are going to be governments that have complained about it but you can say, "Well I'm sorry we don't control VOA, they have this charter. Here I can show you what it says, they have to do this. They're supposed to tell the truth about things that are news worthy to an audience and the audience in your country is worried about human rights, sorry can't help you." So I'm conflicted, I don’t really know the answer.

[00:01:58] I just know that I feel [00:02:00] the president needs better… higher level of advice. This should be taken more seriously and funded better, the state department's effort should be better funded and as a country we should be taking this more seriously. We used to be really good at it, we're still not bad at it but we're allowing authoritarian state to spend billions, I mean literally 3 and 4 billion, 5 billion, you know fantastic budgets which although I wouldn’t change places with them because I don’t like their message much and I think it's got long term residence.

[00:02:35] Yeah, money helps, especially in complex television, in production or in the new digital media where the more assets you've got, the more you can do. So I'm not suggesting the reformation of the USIA, I wouldn’t oppose it necessarily, we just need to get more serious about this. It doesn’t necessarily mean a whole new bureaucracy, it means a different attitude [00:03:00] at the highest level.

Male Speaker: [00:03:05] One last question on the side.

Liam: [00:03:15] Hi, I'm Liam Goodwin, an undergraduate here at GW studying political communication. So earlier you addressed the need for things like in a big budget, like direct leadership with the White House but you also addressed civilian controls and the need for those. I was wondering to a certain extent can American values of speech kind of hurt our ability for the best in the most effective public diplomacy including things such as things that are not necessarily hate speech in America be interpreted as hate speech in other countries, so like how could we mitigate things like that? Thank you.

David: [00:03:53] Yeah, well…
Male Speaker: [001:03:56] That’s why we like our undergraduates so much.

David: [001:03:59] I'm think [001:04:00] I'm almost stumped by that question. Look, the latter part of it. Obviously what's happening in our country and how we talk to each other and what happens here speaks loudly around the world, and we're having a complicated time in our country right now. We're in election year which always makes it very interesting and very complicated and a lot of things get said that probably aren’t ideal from a public diplomacy point of view. I'm sure a lot of public diplomacy officers spending their time explaining what various candidates, "Well I think what he meant to say" or "Well he doesn’t... he's just a candidate" you just imagine, "He doesn’t run anything."

[001:04:43] I can almost hear them saying I would have been. So it's a complicated and difficult time but at the same time this kind of messy democracy that we have, everybody sees it warts and all and I personally [001:05:00] all of its fault... drawbacks I prefer it to many of the other systems of government I see around the world and I think most of the people watching do as well. Even now admittedly things are not good right now for us but you know the system's kind of being stretched to the seams. But... so that's the second half of your question, the first half was sort of about money and the concept of the... you were referring to my talking about the Pentagon getting into this game and so forth.

[001:05:36] The people at the state department are not comfortable with that idea, I'm not uncomfortable with it because I think, look first of all it's a serious matter, we need the money and they have the money plus they have an interest in doing it. And I have a lot of friends in the military who I would trust to put a real effort into this that might make some difference like trial and error, you know you learn. I personally would prefer to see an [001:06:00] effort to try to influence people overseas overseen by civilians. And I think some of the efforts the Pentagon have not been so successful because they haven’t always been. I... this is really public diplomacy work and it belongs under the control of the state department, whoever is doing it.

Male Speaker: [001:06:22] What is your name again? Liam. I want to follow Liam and we'll wrap right after this but it's just a fascinating thing and as a I think about everything you’ve said here tonight and I think about the presidential campaign that’s underway and the message that we're sending wittingly or unwittingly around the world it can undo everything that you have talked about. It can sound intolerant, it can sound short. As much as you want to talk about the... we're going to talk all Muslims, right? [001:07:00] How...
David: [00:07:02] Terrible damage done.

Male Speaker: [00:07:03] How can you responsibly manage journalistically covering the campaign in the free speech way that you must and contextualizing this to marry to the public trust, the global public trust that you have so that someone who's listening to this half a world away does not take it literally, but so you don’t take a position editorial that says pay no attention to that person because they're not serious? I mean they… the fact is they're a candidate. The fact is three-quarters of the people who voted in South Carolina the other night agreed with this idea of banning Muslims coming to America. I mean that's a tough story to report if you care about the opinion of the world.

David: [00:07:51] In deed and it's when things get the most difficult to explain and the most problematical from a sort of public diplomacy point of view that I evenly more strongly believe in honest journalism. That's when a Voice of America or a BBC World Service when a fact that they have credibility with the audience because they have been honest in the past is the most crucial when things like things are happening, when things like these are being said. But, I mean the job of Voice of America in an election campaign is to put the context there to explain to foreigners who don’t perhaps understand our wild and wicked system as well as we do, you know how it's supposed to work.

[00:08:40] And okay, you know it's messy, we admit that. Very public, very… sometimes embarrassing but in the end we end up with a president and more or less it works. Admittedly we've never seen an election like this one and some of the things that have been said by some [00:09:00] of the candidates are extremely regrettable and very irresponsible in my view. But they have the right to do that in a free country, they can say any don thing and they're doing so.

[00:09:17] It's difficult but it makes… I think the role of VOA in a year like this is absolutely critical to put the context there for the searching foreign audience that wants… that says, "He said what? What the heck… what's going on here?" And then tune into VOA and get this put into context explain who is this person, what does it mean when he says this, what doesn’t it mean and what is US policy on this matter as opposed to a candidate. You know you have… you can't say it enough times.

Male Speaker: [00:09:50] That’s right.

David: [00:09:51] So, it's very important work in a year like this and I'm proud of the people at the Voice of America who do it and of other broadcasters and other [00:10:00] journalists who do it, it's more important than ever.
But I… well let's hope our country metals through and finds itself a good president.

Male Speaker: [001:10:13] We'll leave it at that. Thank you very much. Sean anything else? Thank you all very much and thanks to the Institute of Public Diplomacy and Global Communication and thanks to all of you and especially thanks to David, so good evening.

[001:10:39] [RECORDING STOPPED]