Date: Tue, 08 Feb 2011 11:23:37 -0500
To: "Dr. Baruch Fischhoff - Chair, National Academy Committee on Improving Intelligence" <baruch@cmu.edu>
From: Lloyd Etheredge <lloyd.etheredge@policyscience.net>

Subject: 224. <u>Notes on Egypt, Google, Secretary Clinton's support for new ideas, and Henry Kissinger's question</u>

Dear Dr. Fischhoff and Colleagues:

Earlier, I wrote to suggest that the National Academy of Sciences should be cautious about accepting, at face value, a news story that US intelligence agencies made serious professional mistakes and thereby left senior US officials surprised by spontaneous uprisings to change the governments of Tunisia and Egypt. [The message and the 2/7/2011 NYT story are archived online, # 217 at www.policyscience.net at II.D]. The purpose of this message is simply to note several further pieces of information, now publicly reported. They are dots that may not be connected. However, one could *imagine* a way to connect them that would outline an answer to Henry Kissinger's rhetorical question on television, "Who is behind [this] . . . " -i.e., providing and supporting new communication technologies like Facebook, Twitter, and the Internet for regime change.

News reports point to several individuals with activist histories who apparently acted from their own motives and values (which have been *sympatico* with US foreign policy objectives) and whose salaries currently are being paid by Google. A senior official at Google, Mr. Jared Cohen, assumed his position (and an adjunct Fellow position at the Council on Foreign Relations, with an expertise in terrorism; radicalization; the impact of connection technologies on 21st century statecraft and Iran) in October 2010 after serving on the Policy Planning Staff of the State Department from 2006-2010. He received two Meritorious Honor Awards, from Secretaries Rice and Clinton (2008 and 2010), and was active in keeping Twitter services available in Iran during recent election protests. Mr. Cohen's <u>Wikipedia</u> page notes that he was in Egypt during the recent January 25 protests.

The head of Google marketing in the region, Mr. Wael Ghonim (an Egyptian living in the United Arab Emirates), has now disclosed that he was the organizer and (previously anonymous) administrator of the Facebook page that brought together an online community of 460,000 human rights supporters in Egypt, a core of the protest movement. He departed to Egypt at the beginning of the protest and now, happily, has been released unharmed by the state security services.

- I also attach, below, a technical news report from AP, "How Google Removed the Muzzle on Twitter in Egypt," concerning a fast-response international engineering team at Google (linking with former Google employees/executives at Twitter) that devised a technical work-around in Egypt. [The Google project leader has denied any personal political motivation for organizing this rapid solution or an initiative from his superiors; and Google employees are encouraged to use 20% of their time for personal projects.]

- Mr. Cohen's strategic article, "Diverting the Radicalization Track" (2009, below) on supportive, youth-oriented policies, has good psychological insights, behavioral science, and organizing theories that should be in the repertoire of the DNI, if they are not already. They are consistent with some of the theories, new ideas, and recommendations that also have circulated in the National Academy process. My perception is that there are some interesting experimental tests underway.

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How Google removed the muzzle on Twitter in Egypt

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE, AP Technology Writer Michael Liedtke, Ap Technology Writer
Fri Feb 4, 5:32 pm ET

SAN FRANCISCO – Even before his first day on the job at Google, Ujjwal Singh was trying to figure out how to use his passion for the spoken word and the company's technological prowess to help Egyptians bypass government efforts to muzzle the massive protests there.

Singh, 38, helped start an online service that lets fans share voice messages with the likes of Miley Cyrus and the Jonas Brothers. Google bought the startup Jan. 25, and a Google product team leader trying to figure out a way around Egypt's recent Internet blackout asked Singh for help before he reported to work.

A weekend of brainstorming and programming later, Speak2Tweet was born — a service that lets people call a phone number and leave a message, then posts a link to the message to Twitter.

It allowed Egyptians to communicate even as the regime of President Hosni Mubarak cut Internet and cell phone services for days, trying to squelch furious protests in the streets of Cairo demanding an end to his three decades of authoritarian rule.

By the time Singh started his job Monday, his service was already part of the uprising.

"He designed, built and launched his first product before he started at Google, which is now our all-time record," says Steve Crossan, a Google product manager who has been working at the Internet search leader for five years.

Almost 2,900 spoken tweets had been posted as of Friday afternoon on the Twitter account (at)speak2tweet. Some of the heaviest volume came after access to both Twitter and the Internet was restored in Egypt earlier this week. The alternative method of tweeting has turned into a forum for longer-form expression because the voice recordings aren't confined to Twitter's 140-character limit.

Another Twitter account, (at)AliveInEgypt, has been set up to transcribe the messages, which are mostly in Arabic, into text. An Internet radio station also is playing the voice recordings at http://egypt.periszkopradio.hu.

The service has been used to express outrage, indignation, fear, exhilaration and pleas for help in the fight to oust Mubarak. "This corrupt regime must be eliminated," said one of the translated tweets on AliveInEgypt. Another said: "For all our Arab Brothers, for all the men in Tahrir

Square. Please help us, stand with us, if you abandon us we will die."

One woman, speaking in English, said it would take more than an Internet blackout to silence her. "The last time when they did this I was completely freaked out," she said. "I was so scared that they are going to, like, shoot us all and nobody would know about us. This time I am not scared at all. I feel like I want to tell them, `Bring it on.'"

There is no way to verify that every tweet came from the site of the protests, or even from Egypt. When the service can trace the country code of the call, it adds a note, or hashtag, specifying the location.

The service's use was limited by the very problem that created it: Without Internet access, most Egyptians didn't know Speak2Tweet existed, says Jillian York, a project coordinator for the Berkman Center for Internet & Society in Harvard University.

Even so, it provided a vital link between Egypt and the rest of the world, says Cynthia Wong, director of the Center for Democracy & Technology's Project on Global Internet Freedom. As the word of the service spreads, York expects it to attract more voice messages because only about one-fourth of Egypt's population has Internet access.

"It's important for activists and companies to do everything they can to keep the channels of communication open when a government is trying to shut them down," Wong says.

The service got its start Jan. 28, when Crossan began to wonder how people might be able to get their messages out to a mass audience without the help of Internet or text messaging on mobile phones.

Crossan says he wasn't interested in making a political statement — he just wanted to tackle a complex problem that also might further Google's crusade to "organize the world's information and make it universally accessible."

So Crossan contacted a former Google colleague, Katie Stanton, who now oversees Twitter's international services. She referred him to Benjy Weinberger, another former Google employee who is now a Twitter engineer. The two men spent the rest of Friday swapping ideas through instant messages and e-mail.

Cooperating with Google on the project was a no-brainer for Twitter. "Twitter is more about human communications than technology," Stanton says. "We want people's voices to be heard."

Initially, Crossan and Weinberger tinkered with a system that would interpret the tones of a telephone keypad and translate the sounds into tweets. After that idea proved too complicated, Crossan remembered something he had read earlier in the week: Google had just acquired a Palo Alto, Calif., startup called SayNow, which developed technology that lets teens exchange spoken messages with celebrities.

Crossan, 39, decided to contact SayNow's founders, Singh and Nikhyl Singhal, about the problem before they were scheduled to start work for their new parent company.

Crossan was helping his 2-year-old son ride a bike for the first time in a neighborhood park Saturday morning when he heard back from Singh. The two men figured they might be able to develop a voice-to-tweet service by building on the same technology SayNow used.

"Voices capture emotion, personality and the moment," Singh says. "It gives you the intangible that you can't get through text and data."

The idea had another appeal: It would work whether the person was calling on a rotary telephone or a smart phone.

With the help of Google employees in Switzerland and Australia, the new tweeting service was taking shape late Saturday night when Crossan realized he had overlooked one detail: He hadn't even told Google what he was doing.

That wasn't a major oversight because Google co-founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin have always encouraged engineers to devote 20 percent of their time to pet projects. In theory, the freedom is supposed to foster new ideas and drive employees to work harder so their pet projects might turn into actual products more quickly.

The formula worked well in Google's early days, but the pace of innovation has slowed as the company grown to more than 24,000 employees. Google CEO Eric Schmidt is stepping aside from that job in April and handing the reins to Page as part of an effort to weed out bureaucracy and accelerate decision-making.

In Crossan's case, he saw that one of his bosses, Bradley Horowitz, happened to be online late Saturday. Crossan e-mailed him about the new service. Crossan said Horowitz told him the idea was "awesome." Crossan and Singh spent the rest of the night spent coding.

Although the speak-to-tweet service was available before dawn Sunday morning, it didn't attract a lot of attention until Google announced it on its corporate blog Monday afternoon.

Now, Crossan and Singh are hoping the speak-to-tweet survive will survive long after Egypt quiets down. If nothing else, they say it will serve as a reminder that phones still can serve another purpose besides texting and surfing the Web.

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Online:
http://egypt.periszkopradio.hu

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Diverting the Radicalization Track

by Jared A. Cohen

Promoting alternatives among the Middle East's youths

   The struggle against violent extremism is the most significant national-security challenge of the 21st century. It is the challenge that makes all the threats we face — e.g., nuclear proliferation, chemical and biological weapons — that much more dangerous. The ungoverned spaces, urban slums, and impoverished regions of the Middle East, Asia, and Africa, along with the poorly integrated immigrant communities in Western Europe, are the epicenters of vulnerability around the world that al Qaeda and other terrorist groups actively exploit.

There has been a great deal of debate about how we address these vulnerable populations and effectively challenge the threat posed by violent extremists; it is an argument fueled by the larger question of how we "win hearts and minds." This continuing discussion notwithstanding, most can agree that the end goal is to create a world in which the use of terrorist tactics to achieve political or other objectives is no longer acceptable or personally lucrative; in which extremists' efforts to radicalize and recruit new members are no longer successful; and in which the perpetrators of violent, extremist acts are isolated and marginalized by society at large. We have achieved this in America, as our domestic terrorist groups — Ku Klux Klan; Army of God; United Front; Aryan Nation; the Covenant, the Sword, and the Army of the Lord; the Weather Underground; and lone-ranger terrorists like the Unabomber — have little to no following and are rejected by American society.

It takes us in the wrong direction to assume the U.S. has failed to counter the extremist ideology because we do not understand Islam.

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We have a long way to go to achieve this situation on a global level. Scattered and clandestine terrorist networks, groups, and leaders continue to inspire followers. These networks maintain strong bases of support and constituencies that legitimate their mission. In Iraq and Afghanistan, counterterrorism efforts have undoubtedly weakened al Qaeda and related groups, but pockets of instability still pose challenges by serving as frontiers for foreign fighters and nascent terrorist organizations looking to gain notoriety. Both countries are places where the ambitious yet impoverished go to fight in the name of Allah and to brand and market themselves for future extremist opportunities. Despite the work that remains to be done, though, we continue to see positive results in our kinetic operations to break up terrorist networks.

Where we face more difficult challenges is in breaking the stream of new recruits that replenish violent and radical movements and severing the links between extremists and their target audience. This is the key to winning the long struggle against violent extremism. Our initial approach after September 11 was limited to a traditional public-diplomacy paradigm and failed to expand to broader elements of American power. This miscalculation was largely a legacy of how public diplomacy was used during the Cold War, when much of America's effort to win "hearts and minds" was directed at the elites within society. We were successful then, in part because of the nature of that time's more-centralized media, but also because of the nature of the debate. In the Cold War, the "foot soldiers" on both sides of the equation were intellectuals, and the main battlegrounds (with some exceptions) were journals and coffee houses. Today the "foot soldiers" are more likely to be young, disaffected males (and, increasingly, some females); they are not the elite of society. This means America's target audience for public diplomacy needs to be disaffected youths and those who influence them.

This shift in whom we seek to influence presents a challenge that traditional public diplomacy alone cannot surmount. Some of these young people are in places like Hezbollah strongholds, al Qaeda havens, and ungoverned spaces — i.e., places we cannot reach through traditional public-diplomacy, democracy programs, or development assistance. Others are in urban slums, poorly integrated immigrant communities, or rural frontiers where we have some access but where local conditions render our efforts relatively ineffective. It takes us in the wrong direction to assume the U.S. has failed to counter the extremist ideology because we do not understand Islam; we

have failed because we don't understand the youth.

Many young people in Muslim communities around the world are born into humiliation and then recruited by extremists.

Many young people in Muslim communities around the world are born into humiliation. This state results from economic deprivation, restrictions on civil liberties, social scrutiny, unstable security environments, and in some cases, lack of integration into mainstream society. But this humiliation alone does not lead young people to violent extremism. When they come from broken families, are social pariahs, or lack structured activities, the humiliation can become alienation. This alienated segment of the youth demographic is precisely the group extremists target for membership in their club. With virtually no alternatives available to humiliated and alienated young people, extremists can provide such youths a group dynamic, recreational activities, and informal education structures. For example, the back-alley religious madrassahs give their students a hot meal and a teacher who actually shows up, and they teach the highly respected skill of memorizing the Qur'an. For a primary student in an impoverished part of Pakistan, where many public schools are either downtrodden or virtually unattended by both teachers and students, the madrassah isn't a bad option.1 When extremists control the only educational alternatives available to faulty, state-run institutions, they can preach anti-Western ideals to some of the most impressionable populations.

In order to influence the target population (alienated young people and their teachers), we need to reflect a better understanding of the psychology of humiliation by shifting the paradigm and rethinking our objectives. We should not focus on simply persuading populations among which anti-Americanism is rampant to adopt more favorable views toward America and its policies; instead, we should try to ensure that negative sentiments toward America and day-to-day grievances do not manifest themselves in the form of violent extremism. This is a crucial shift. While winning hearts and minds would be a tremendous feat if achieved, it remains an idealistic goal and one that mustn't distract from the immediate and realistic objective of diverting impressionable segments of the population away from the extremists' recruitment process. To accomplish such a diversion, we need to look for ways to drain the swamp of potential recruits by

overwhelming the target populations with alternatives, opportunities, and choices that are driven and disseminated by local vehicles and credible voices.2 These alternatives need not necessarily be pro-U.S. — so long as they unshackle populations from a situation in which a turn to extremism is the sole viable option. In some cases we can provide these alternatives directly, but the bulk of our efforts should be driven by empowering local entities and individuals. And as young people around the globe are becoming more tech-savvy, the U.S. could provide much of its own alternative education in the digital space. In this sense, we should look at the road ahead less as a war of ideas and more as a challenge of alternatives.

The challenge of alternatives

The challenge of alternatives is not about promoting democracy; it is about diverting at-risk populations from the grip of extremist actors so that such populations have space to experience the freedom to choose. In many cases, the violent extremists exert their grip through religious arguments, which disguise their own extremist goals by hiding them behind religion and the supposed religious battle. Exploiting religion in this way helps extremists. And while religion is of course not irrelevant in the fight against extremism, and while we must understand Islam so as to reflect sensitivities in the religion and its cultural milieus, it remains true that extremists would love nothing more than to engage us in a religious debate we cannot win. We should not play into their aspiration; instead, we should engage at-risk groups based on the needs of the people — young people — who comprise them.

Al Qaeda has an effective youth strategy. The group offers youths a sense of empowerment, opportunity, status, an outlet for adventure, and the promise of a heroic identity and afterlife. It is not alone, either. Hezbollah, Hamas, and the various insurgent groups in Iraq and Afghanistan have their own youth strategies as well. The U.S. government could attempt to combat these organizations by speaking more positively about Islam and making sure every word it uses is appropriately vetted, but is such an approach really going to compete with extremists who are on the ground meeting the basic needs of young people? Will it compete with the religious madrassahs in Pakistan; the flashiness of Hezbollah television and video games; and the chance Hamas offers for young people to be videotaped and, if they die while engaged in terrorist activities, immortalized in their communities as heroes?

There are clear openings that offer potential opportunities for America to positively engage global, at-risk youth. But we are arriving late in many of the realms where extremists are active. For instance, the Saudis have already built madrassahs across South Asia, and Hezbollah and Hamas have already formed aid distribution monopolies in their respective regions. We must chip away at this dominance, which will be a long and difficult task. But openings exist, and as previously mentioned, the digital space is one area where America can still make substantial progress. It has barely been pioneered and, even without our diplomatic influence, it already offers an important outlet for youth looking for alternatives.

The violent extremists exert their grip through religious arguments that disguise their own extremist goals.

The current generation of young people is the first generation to grow up in societies in which satellite televisions, mobile phones, and the internet are prevalent. Furthermore, the expansion of information technologies in the developing world is more than anecdotal; it is confirmed and reinforced by statistical data. The telecommunications market itself has grown to $3.5 trillion worldwide, with projections to increase by at least $1.4 trillion over the next three years.3 In just the past eight years, the number of worldwide internet users grew from 400 million to 1.3 billion, and mobile-phone subscriptions rose from 300 million to 4 billion.4 With laptops now costing just a few hundred dollars and technological developments allowing for cheaper connectivity, the growth of information technology is likely to continue.

The demographics of this expanding market reflect change in some of the world's most impoverished and unstable places. While the fastest-growing market is the Asia-Pacific region, South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa are not far behind. In 2000, Pakistan had only 750,000 mobile-phone subscribers in a population of 164 million.5 In just the past eight years, according to the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority, the number of subscribers there has grown to 78 million. In neighboring Afghanistan, where just seven years ago the Taliban did not permit televisions or mobile phones, close to 60 percent of the country is wired with broadband and there are 10.5 million mobile-phone subscribers.6 In Iran, where satellite television is illegal, people can nonetheless pick up some 17,666 satellite channels, 3,000 of which have clear

reception. These include 380 music channels, 74 fashion channels, 316 pornographic channels, and also 32 Persian-language channels belonging to opponents of the Iranian establishment.7 Nigeria, another country critical to the struggle against violent extremism, is one of Africa's most illustrative examples of mobile-phone growth. In mid-2001, the oil-rich, West African nation had fewer than 500,000 active, fixed telephone lines. Since 2001, the total number of its connected, fixed, and mobile telephone lines has increased to about 42 million. Another noteworthy element of the Nigeria experience is the explosion of Nollywood, the Nigerian movie industry, which produces almost 2,000 films annually. Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Nigeria are just a handful of examples, but they are part of a larger trend of technological expansion occurring from Casablanca to Jakarta.

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What is more remarkable than the increase in technological access is the impact that access is having on the critical demographic that extremists try to capture. While adults certainly use these new technologies, they use them primarily for traditional communications. It is the youth that use technology in different ways and for different purposes, and this actually makes their networks of communication different. For them, new technologies are sources of entertainment, expression, and life-enhancement. The tens of thousands of satellite channels, for instance, offer more perspectives, more exposure to other cultures, and some recreational fulfillment through movies, game shows, and sports. More importantly, the airwaves are saturated with programs that allow viewers to call in, vote, and actually generate their own media. In Afghanistan, where televisions did not exist prior to 2001, satellite dishes are now widespread and the most popular television show is Afghan Idol, a spin-off of American Idol, the popular American program that encourages viewers to call, text, and email their votes for the best emerging singer. Even more remarkable, one of the finalists, Lima Sahaar, wore in front of millions of Afghans an elaborately colored blue and yellow headscarf pushed to the back of her head. This sartorial statement signified a move beyond the past to promote women's empowerment in Afghanistan. Since her near victory, Sahaar has been threatened by pro-Taliban elements, but more remarkable is the response of her adoring fans who have sent mass text messages, and who have commented on

television and online expressing their support for her.

The 2007 Star Academy competition is the Middle East version of American Idol. A 25-year-old Iraqi woman, Shada Hassoun, won it. She was backed by both Sunni and Shia communities, and her performance and success gave many Iraqis an opportunity to forget their own troubles.8 Since her victory, she has served as an inspiration and role model to young male and female Iraqis who hope to become heroes to their country through music rather than guns.

While satellite television has its innovative programs, mobile phones offer a more interactive platform. Mobile devices do more than simply allow users to talk to each other, especially for young people who can't afford to purchase an actual mobile-phone plan. The phones can also be used for playing video games, sending text messages, sharing photos and music, and using peer-to-peer wireless Bluetooth, which allows users to email or text complete strangers. The ability to contact complete strangers in one's vicinity has proven to be a convenient way for young people to organize everything from parties to underground book-clubs, political meetings, protests, and strikes.

Youths in closed societies are far more proficient at using technology than are their American counterparts.

Of the new technologies, the internet is the most interactive and offers the most room for expression and diversity of opinion. The World Wide Web is a place for youths to use online social networks, chat services, and online telephones that offer the freedom of assembly and freedom of speech they otherwise lack. In Saudi Arabia, for example, women are using online social networks to petition for driving rights and are uploading on YouTube videos of themselves driving in rural areas. In Egypt, young people are using Facebook to stand up for their political rights and organize nationwide strikes.9 Facebook now has more than 200 million members and allows its users to create profiles, share videos, post messages, blog, and expand their social networks. It also allows them to create causes, start groups, and foster grassroots movements. Through these platforms young people can do things they would not otherwise be allowed to do, such as expand their social networks, create groups, engage in recreational activities like playing

video games, and create and upload their own content for all to see. More importantly, the internet cannot be monopolized by any one actor or single opinion. Even though internet users may accept the status quo with which they are familiar, the internet provides an opening to challenge the perspectives they hear and thus leads to a questioning of what they previously believed to be fact.

The outlets described above offer a natural decoy from the path to extremism, but in some cases, they take on extremism directly. What young people previously viewed as technological toys have actually offered them unprecedented civil liberties. The freedom enjoyed in the digital space is still overwhelmingly recreational but is nonetheless increasingly taking political forms and translating into real-life action. As a result of what new technology offers, the current generation of youth is the most individually empowered generation yet. They can act one way at home and in their communities and have a completely different identity over the internet or through their mobile phones. Because the digital and technological world offers young people opportunities to generate their own media and entertainment, they are learning critical thinking through self-exploration, and they are practicing digital democracy on a daily basis, even if they claim to despise the very concept of democracy. Without their keyboards, remotes, and telephones, they assume a real-life political, religious, ethnic, or nationalist identity. Behind the technology, many of these "digital natives" are beginning to identify with a transnational youth identity. Call it a "youth party" or simply a trend. But many of these youths seem to embrace platforms that facilitate interaction, expression, self-generated media, and expansion of social networks as defining features.

Horribly, a young Saudi girl was murdered in an honor killing by her father after he caught her using Facebook.

Just as the prevalence, growth, and youth-oriented nature of new technologies offer opportunities for the U.S., they offer challenges, too. The first challenge is that connectivity to the outside world provided by the digital space exposes youth to the fruits of the world to which they do not have access. While this, in and of itself, is unlikely to drive young people to extremism, it is certainly exposure that the extremists can and do exploit. A second challenge is that extremists

are active in using technology to recruit and spread ideology from remote locations. Groups like al Qaeda plaster the web with videos of Muslims being killed in places like Palestine, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Other videos are used to glorify the murder of Americans and Jews. Or extremists may modify video games that are popular in Internet cafés around the world and turn an ordinary fighting game into one whose objective is killing Jews and Americans. Other multimedia formats are used to lure curious young people into chat rooms where they can receive guidance on how to be recruited by extremists, where to be trained, and what they can do for the extremist cause. A third challenge presented by the digital space is the risk it poses to its users. There are stories of bloggers, social networkers, and web hosters being arrested, intimidated, or even murdered. In one of the most horrific stories, a young Saudi girl was murdered in an honor killing by her father after he caught her using Facebook. Because these technologies are relatively new, young people are learning about the risks. They see and hear about people getting caught or getting punished for activities online, and so they exercise greater caution and adapt their usage.

There are drawbacks to the expansion of the internet, but the digital space is vast, and it is difficult for any actor to operate in an exclusive and monolithic environment. Furthermore, it is safer for young people to resist their governments online than in the streets. Before communications technologies became widely used, if a young person wanted to resist, he had to do so under his real identity and hope not to get caught. Today, technological platforms allow young people to determine how anonymous they want to be. If they create an online opposition group, they can choose to use their real names or interact under aliases. Extremists have tried to infiltrate social networking sites and other digital forums, but at the end of the day they have failed and will continue to fail in this venture. Even though they can propagate their message and espouse hatred, any user can counter them. The real-life fear tactics extremists use to silence dissent do not work online.

It is also important to remember that youths in closed societies are far more proficient at using technology than are their American counterparts, largely because they rely on it for enhancement of civil liberties. In the U.S., we have freedom of speech and assembly, so it is not essential to learn all of the diverse ways that a mobile phone can be used for anonymous interaction. Along these same lines, most young people in America have little use for the instruction manuals that

come with their mobile phones. But for a young person in a closed society such as Syria or Iran, each page of the instruction manual offers information about using his mobile phone to circumvent regime restrictions. Given that these same youths are hardly swimming in job opportunities, they can take time out of their not-so-busy days to tinker with their phones. But it is this proficiency with technology that should remind us that we cannot begin to imagine the ways in which young people will use digital platforms. (They themselves can't predict the ways either, in fact.) But we can do things to increase the odds that technology will yield democratic results.

How we think about ourselves

America has an important role to play in both the process of network-building and in engaging youths around the world. If broader elements of U.S. society play a role, we can counter violent extremism and enhance our country's moral standing at the same time. Part of this is empowering our own American Muslim communities. Americans of Muslim faith are an integral part of our society and have demonstrated an incredible willingness to be part of our efforts to connect with different parts of the world. For example, the State Department's Citizen Dialogue program sponsors prominent Muslim Americans of varying political affiliations to share their experiences with Muslim communities abroad. But our societal engagement should not be limited to a single group; Muslims are not the only ones who can substantively engage with Muslim communities around the world. Furthermore, Gallup and other reputable polling outlets have noted that global Muslim communities overwhelmingly distinguish between the American government and the American people. This means that even at times when our government policies are unpopular, there remains within international Muslims a willingness to engage with our nation's citizens.

The American people should not be excluded from their nation's foreign policy. The digital divide has been bridged and we need Americans to engage with others around the globe. Students in their college dorm rooms, communicating over their computers; private-sector companies using their worldwide presence; and educational institutions as agents of critical thinking — we need all of them to interact with populations around the world. There is no better way to restore our moral standing in the world than to involve the American people in the

process of unprecedented engagement with the world's populations. The values and perspectives of Americans can convey an important message.

Working with whom?

While Americans themselves should play an important role in challenging extremists abroad, the main thrust of that challenge will come largely from local entities and individuals that the U.S. helps empower. These local vehicles can be ngos, foundations, and private-sector companies; basically, they should be entities and individuals whose actions are effective at discrediting violent ideology, isolating and marginalizing the extremists themselves, and creating alternatives for at-risk segments of the population (particularly the youth).

The notion of using third parties is not new, but there are more options for doing so today than there were during the Cold War. During the Cold War, civil society was strong in Europe, but there were not many ngos and foundations throughout the world. As a result, the U.S. created and sustained many of these organizations to help promote the spread of liberal-democratic values. Today, there are numerous ngos and foundations, most with funding independent of the U.S. government. Many of these entities do similar work and have overlapping missions, but they are unaware of each others' activities.

We need to network these local entities and individuals so they can provide on-the-ground or digital alternatives for young people. But we also need to involve these credible voices and networks in our strategic communications efforts. Strategic communications and messaging have fallen short as a tactic, largely because we have not given sufficient attention to the importance of both alternative messengers and local messages. During the Cold War, this was less of a challenge; the media environment was made up of a small number of influential newspapers and radio and television stations. But given the complexity of today's media environment — thousands of satellite channels, sophisticated and prevalent mobile technology, and the advent of user- generated platforms in the digital space — effective strategic communications has become a greater challenge. Government lacks penetration in today's media environment both because of the ubiquitous "new media" outlets and because it hasn't yet found the right local messengers.

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Former extremists, moderate clerics, and victims of violent extremism can all serve as local messengers. The American government could be supporting hundreds of thousands of individuals by investing in hundreds, if not thousands, of networks. They need not be surrogates for U.S. policies, and in fact some of them may criticize some of our policies, but their message has a better chance than does ours of discrediting extremists in the eyes of potential recruits.

Building lasting efforts

If we are to counter the state sponsors of terror and the organizations they support, we ourselves must become a state sponsor of anti-extremist networks; the U.S. must facilitate partnerships between like-minded entities and individuals who are able to effectively communicate an anti-extremist message to young people. Part of this is the empowerment of American society and the networking of third-parties, but we should also work to ensure that the networks we build and the efforts we seed are lasting. This transforms the U.S. government role from just that of implementer to that of convener, facilitator, and partner. The U.S. government has an important part to play in identifying credible civil society organizations and networking them not only with organizations doing similar work, but also with entities that can help build their capacity and thus increase their effectiveness and scope.

The private sector can do this. But public-private partnerships can do it more effectively. Typically, public-private partnership has focused on what the private sector can do to help the U.S. government with specific tasks. This has led to some valuable public-diplomacy efforts — to provide relief after the earthquake in Pakistan, for instance, or corporate social responsibility that supports foreign-assistance efforts to provide better health care, new jobs, education, and important infrastructure. These efforts are no doubt important, but they are only part of the equation.

The entrepreneurial spirit of the private sector (especially technology companies such as Google, Yahoo, and Facebook) and its desire to expand into new markets offers a tremendous opportunity in that the U.S. government need not start efforts from scratch, create new forums, or even seek to influence the direction of these independent business enterprises. Its ambition should be to partner with companies that capture the imagination and attention of impressionable young

people by virtue of what they do for profit — profit which drives their creativity and success. Whether this is Facebook and the civil liberties, platforms, and global connectivity it provides; or Yahoo and its communication services; or Google and its expansive search engines, the private sector is offering alternatives that have global appeal and universal penetration. The U.S. government must work with these companies to expand the reach and scope of what they do.

For example, Howcast.com is an American focused company that serves as a one-stop shop for "how-to" videos. The U.S. government could use this website's platforms to make inroads into at-risk environments by creating "how-to" videos on, say, using social networks for protest and mobile phones for freedom of expression, and for providing instructions on how to get around Internet censorship. The U.S. government has, in fact, already started working with Facebook to build worldwide, grassroots movements against violence.

Moving forward

As we think about what initiatives to seed, what models to adapt, and what movements to foster, it is important that we look beyond extremist Islamism, which is one form of radicalization (one of particular concern, no doubt) but by no means the only example of global radicalization. For instance, in the United States, youth are radicalized through gangs like the Bloods and Crips; in Latin America, young people are recruited by gangs like Mara Salvatrucha (aka ms-13, which is also increasingly active in the U.S.), Primeiro Comando da Capital, and non-Muslim terrorist groups like Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (farc). In Asia, radicalization takes place through militants like the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, ethnic nationalists like the National Volunteers' Organization in India, and cults like Aum Shinrikyo in Japan. In Africa, radicalization occurs through a wide variety of criminal and terrorist activity, not to mention outright warfare; and in Eastern Europe, at-risk young people can be recruited into right-wing groups like the neo-Nazis or left-wing groups that seek to revive communism.

Essentially, radicalization is the process by which illicit actors of any stripe hijack impressionable young people for criminal purposes. Radicalization in the Islamist context is of greatest concern: It is more transnational, more effective for organizing, and more ideological. But by compartmentalizing different radicalization challenges, we have also compartmentalized our efforts and

models to counter them. If we think of extremists less as compartmentalized groups and more as pernicious people around the globe who use many of the same recruitment methods, we will be more successful in fighting them. If we accept the fact that young people need alternatives, we also accept that some of the best potential models for countering violent extremism in Muslim communities can be adapted from those found in our own country, say, or Latin America, Africa, Europe, and Asia. For instance, we could borrow anti- farc models to counter al Qaeda, or look to successful American education-reform programs as models for countering the extremist madrassahs in Pakistan.

Finally, we should not be looking for a few big initiatives. Instead, we should develop a diverse set of initiatives and "let a hundred flowers bloom"; the best flowers, as the saying implies, will bloom the brightest and longest, and after they demonstrate their hardiness, we can plant more of them. This is, in short, a private-sector mentality.

Another private-sector rule from which the U.S. government must learn: Identify the target market. If the U.S. is trying to reach young people, it must focus on inserting itself into new technologies. Furthermore, the private sector knows that where local stakeholders are more efficient implementers, it makes sense to outsource. So, too, must the American government begin to outsource to local alternatives (i.e., assist those third parties that are battling the influence of local extremists). We must overcome the reluctance to talk about video games, American Idol spinoffs, e-drassahs (madrassahs that operate online), virtual worlds like Second Life, and online social networks. The battle will be won not by winning the hearts and minds of youth, but by winning their attention, providing them with alternatives to extremist influence, and doing both under the auspices of a moderate ideology.

Condoleezza Rice.

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