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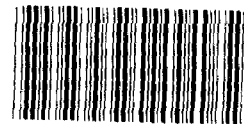
BY THE U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE  
**Report To The Director,**  
**U.S. International Communication Agency**

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**U.S. International Communication  
Agency's Overseas Programs;  
Some More Useful Than Others**

The U.S. International Communication Agency--the focal point of information programs abroad--employs the same array of programs such as American Participants, cultural events, films, videotape recordings, and publications in about 125 countries. The Agency also presides over a dwindling number of libraries and binational cultural centers engaged in the teaching of English.

GAO questions the proposition that each country *needs the same set of communication methods*. To promote economy and efficiency of operations, GAO recommends changes in the *programming methods used in the overseas missions* as well as improvements in the support provided to the missions by Agency headquarters. GAO also recommends greater attention to the running of libraries and cultural centers abroad.



117496

ID-82-1  
FEBRUARY 11, 1982

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UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

INTERNATIONAL DIVISION

B-205598

The Honorable Charles Z. Wick  
Director, United States International  
Communication Agency

Dear Mr. Wick:

This is our report on "U.S. International Communication Agency's Overseas Programs; Some More Useful Than Others."

This report contains recommendations to you on pages 22, 24, 26, 30, 32, and 37. As you know, section 236 of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 requires the head of a Federal agency to submit a written statement on actions taken on our recommendations to the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs and the House Committee on Government Operations not later than 60 days after the date of the report and the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations with the agency's first request for appropriations made more than 60 days after the date of the report.

We are sending copies of this report to the Director, Office of Management and Budget; cognizant congressional appropriation and authorization committees, and to others upon request.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Frank C. Conahan".

Frank C. Conahan  
Director



D I G E S T

This report examines some of the U.S. International Communication Agency's (USICA) overseas programs. It covers the information programs administered by the missions. It does not include the International Visitor Program, Fulbright academic exchanges, or the Voice of America.

THE PROBLEM OF  
COMMUNICATING OVERSEAS

In the past two decades, radical changes altered the traditional relationships among nations. While the United States became dependent on others for supplying its essential energy needs, it watched the proliferation of satellite communication technology instantly linking all parts of the globe. Also, much of the developed and developing world improved and increased its access to media resources (radio, television and press) where, in many cases, they equal those available in the United States.

The programs and staffing patterns used by USICA to operate overseas in this changed communications environment have basically remained the same in each of the approximately 125 countries in which USICA operates. For example, generally USICA missions have a Public Affairs Officer, Cultural Affairs Officer, and an Information Officer. These missions have International Visitor, American Participant and Fulbright Exchange Programs as well as information programs. (See pp. 3 and 4.)

DIFFERENCES IN  
PERSONAL CONTACT ACTIVITIES

Without exception, GAO was informed at each of the overseas missions visited that direct and substantive personal contact was the missions most important activity because it provided a way for Public Affairs Officers to engage

influential foreign leaders in talking, listening, and communicating about the United States. GAO found, however, differences in the personal contact activities of the missions visited. In some countries, it appeared that personal contact was not substantive but mostly facilitative. Equally apparent was the ambiguity of the justifications for and the benefits of personal contact. This condition seems to stem from a lack of definition as to what is to be accomplished by Public Affairs Officers in conducting personal contact. It appears to GAO that in some countries personal contact could serve as an important communication vehicle. Unfortunately, it is expensive. Substantial amounts of time and money were invested in programs/activities aimed at establishing or improving personal contacts with a limited audience.

GAO noted that there are a number of factors which can impede Public Affairs Officers from making personal contacts: post administrative burdens including participation in mission activities unrelated to USICA, the lack of language proficiency, and the lack of continuity in staffing. (See pp. 11 to 16.)

#### WASHINGTON SUPPORT LIMITED IN MEETING MISSIONS' NEEDS

Most of USICA overseas missions have mixed praise for the quality of resources and services furnished by Washington. In view of the diminishing levels of real dollar funding, the posts request resource support determined as much by their realistic expectations of what Washington can supply as by their actual program needs. Moreover, the posts recognize that USICA Washington retains ultimate planning authority in its control of post budgets, staffing levels, and scheduling of officer assignments. There is general praise in the overseas missions for the International Visitor and Fulbright Exchange Programs. American Participant speakers are generally of high quality but there are some problems in acquiring speakers for some countries. Availability, usefulness, and quality of videotape recordings and films receive mixed praise. Changes in publication formats are too narrowly targeting audiences and threatening through oversophistication to lose an existing broad-base of readers.

GAO believes that USICA could reduce costs by eliminating some of the least-effective communication methods in some countries rather than simply shaving some funds from each program and continuing with each communication method, albeit reduced, in each country. (See pp. 17 to 22.)

#### CULTURAL PROGRAMS OFTEN IRRELEVANT

USICA cultural program support, with few exceptions, is apparently failing to satisfy the overseas missions' planning requirements. Some cultural events are largely superfluous and duplicative of those already available in-country. The least-favored elements of Washington's cultural activity assistance is the Arts America program. USICA officers at posts throughout the world repeatedly characterized this program as Washington's attempt to force unnecessary, unwanted, and irrelevant programs on the missions. (See pp. 22 and 24.)

#### LIBRARIES RECEIVE DECLINING SUPPORT

Over the years, as a result of increasing demands on a shrinking supply of resources, USICA has often turned to library budgets as a first source for cuts. Between 1946 and 1978, libraries and/or reading rooms were set up in 426 foreign cities. Of these, 129 (119 American centers and 10 reading rooms) were in operation in fiscal year 1981. The rest, about 68 percent, have been discontinued for essentially budget reasons.

Similarly, USICA has let the number of American professional librarians drop from a high of 53 in the mid-1950s to 18 in 1979. The lack of Washington support for some of the libraries does not result from a deliberate decision to phase them out, but the apparent neglect of their needs has created such deterioration of their condition that their maintenance may no longer be justified. (See pp. 24 to 26.)

#### BINATIONAL CENTERS NEED POLICY GUIDANCE

USICA's involvement with Binational Cultural Centers--private, autonomous, foreign associations established to promote mutual understanding between the United States and the host

country--has shown a continuing trend toward less USICA support and control. With no clearly stated policy regarding the purpose of the Centers, their relationships to USICA have often been uncertain and difficult for the post to understand. Moreover, the lack of coherent and uniform programming policy and administrative controls has allowed the overseas missions to ignore the Centers. Overall, USICA's lack of a clear objective for its relationship with the Centers has produced a "benign neglect." (See pp. 26 to 30.)

#### "SECOND MANDATE" IS NEGLECTED

The Second Mandate--USICA's responsibility to assist Americans in enhancing their understanding of other societies--has failed to fulfill its promise largely because the mandate lacks focus. Since USICA has not defined the audience of Americans it wishes to inform about other countries, it has rested on its old programs--the International Visitor, Amparts, educational exchanges--to satisfy the new mandate. USICA has not designed new programs to reach out to Americans beyond those in academia, government, and business who are already interested in foreign affairs and other countries. (See pp. 30 to 32.)

#### DELAYS AND SKEPTICISM HINDER DISTRIBUTION AND RECORD SYSTEM

The Distribution and Record System (DRS) was developed as a management tool to record USICA personal contacts with key members of the foreign public. Depending on the equipment available at each mission, DRS will be either automated, mechanized or fully manual. GAO learned that DRS, as presently constituted, is severely handicapped because it has failed to convince a significant number of Post Officers of its utility and that it will not be used by USICA headquarters to assess the performance of field offices. DRS has also been plagued by delays in delivery, installation, and operational readiness of equipment and necessary training for DRS operators. Furthermore, USICA has had little success in persuading Department of State and Agency for International Development overseas staffs to record personal contacts in DRS. (See pp. 32 to 37.)



## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director of the U.S. International Communication Agency should:

- Reassess the need for each mission to have all of the various communication methods, and direct overseas missions to discontinue programming of those methods they believe irrelevant to their needs or even significantly less useful than others to their needs. (See p. 22.)
- Determine through the monitoring of foreign receptivity to changes in publication formats those which are too narrowly targeting audiences and threatening through oversophistication to lose an existing broad-base of readers. (See p. 22.)
- Seek more mission input for planning the Arts America program in order to better match the cultural programs to the needs of the individual posts. (See p. 24.)
- Examine the usefulness of overseas libraries as they are currently maintained and eliminate those that are no longer useful. (See p. 26.)
- Develop a policy outlining the responsibilities of the overseas missions toward the Binational Cultural Centers, particularly those Centers where USICA has invested funds but has maintained no direct management control of those funds. (See p. 30.)
- Establish a policy for the overseas missions concerning the role to be played, if any, in carrying out the "Second Mandate." (See pp. 32 and 37 for further recommendations.)

## VIEWS OF PROGRAM OFFICIALS

USICA officials commented that most of GAO's recommendations merited serious consideration and that the Agency is already taking action regarding several of them. GAO was informed that a special USICA working group will be established to follow up on the recommendations. The USICA officials did express concern that several examples used in the report may not represent the 18 country posts included in the review or the total Agency field operation. Also, the views of Washington officials were in some cases at variance with the views of field officials.



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ABBREVIATIONS

GAO	General Accounting Office
USICA	United States International Communication Agency
DRS	Distribution and Record System

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### ORIGINS OF THE U.S. INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION AGENCY (USICA)

USICA has its antecedents in several information and cultural exchange bodies formed during World War II and the early postwar years. Among these bodies was the Office of International Information and Educational Exchanges, a peacetime successor to the World War II Office of War Information under Department of State jurisdiction. The Office of International Information and Educational Exchanges had resulted from the Fulbright Act (Public Law 79-584), passed by the Congress in 1946 as the first legislative authorization for a U.S. international educational exchange program. Later, however, the Office split into separate bodies, one each for the educational exchange and the information functions.

Heightening cold war tensions prompted passage of the U.S. Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 (Public Law 80-402), also known as the Smith-Mundt Act for its sponsors, which established a permanent U.S. information and cultural exchange program in order to combat Soviet propaganda efforts throughout the world. This same anti-communist concern caused the U.S. cultural exchange and information program to be restored to a single International Information Administration in 1952.

But continuing dissatisfaction with this arrangement produced another split and the creation of the U.S. Information Agency on August 1, 1953. Under President Eisenhower's Reorganization Plan No. 8, the Agency became an independent body under State Department policy direction responsible for U.S. information and cultural activities abroad; the State Department's newly formed Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs was responsible for all educational and cultural exchange programs. The Agency's Cultural Affairs Officers overseas administered the U.S. cultural and educational exchange program under State Department direction. Thus, Agency employees were subordinate to both their own agency and to State.

While this structure endured for 25 years, suggestions for further reorganization continued. Several studies and reports--most notably those by the Brookings Institution (1960); the "Stanton" Panel of International Information, Education, and Cultural Relations (March 1975); and the "Murphy" Commission on the Organization of the Government for the Conduct of Foreign Policy (June 1975)--proposed changes ranging from abolishing the Agency and returning its function to the State Department, to removing Cultural Affairs' exchanges operations from State and placing them in the Agency. Most of the major recommendations of these reports were not accepted until October 1977.

On October 12, 1977, President Carter submitted to the Congress Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1977, which consolidated several functions of the Agency and Cultural Affairs into one agency. Other significant changes authorized retaining the Voice of America as one of four directorates within the new Agency and replacing the two Agency and Cultural Affairs advisory commissions with one U.S. Advisory Commission on International Communication, Cultural and Educational Affairs (later renamed the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy). The President's Executive order of March 27, 1978, implemented the provisions of the plan and the new U.S. International Communication Agency came into being on April 1, 1978.

#### PURPOSE AND ROLE OF USICA--COMMUNICATION

With the President's Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1977, USICA was charged to engage in public diplomacy, a "continuous communication process" which strives "to inform, to make international understanding more probable, and to influence the world wide context in which U.S. foreign policy is conducted."

President Carter, in his October 12, 1977, letter to the Congress transmitting the Reorganization Plan, also charged USICA with two mandates:

"\* \* \* To tell the world about our society and policies--in particular our commitment to cultural diversity and individual liberty.

"To tell ourselves about the world, so as to enrich our own culture as well as to give us the understanding to deal effectively with problems among nations\*\*\*."

This "Second Mandate" enlarged the scope of the U.S. Information Agency's purpose from one-way discourse to two-way communication for USICA. Some programs, notably the Fulbright and International Visitor exchange programs, had always addressed the mutual nature of bilateral communication, but for the first time, a U.S. Government agency was directly charged with attending to this purpose.

Today, USICA has a role to serve in four specific areas: (1) explaining official U.S. Government policies to people overseas; (2) portraying American society as accurately and completely as possible to the people of other nations; (3) advising and informing the President and the U.S. Government adequately as to foreign public opinion and foreign cultures; and (4) assisting to develop American understanding of other nations.

## OVERVIEW OF THE OVERSEAS MISSIONS

The USICA operates several specific programs to provide informed public opinion abroad about the policies of the United States. These programs include the Voice of America; the Fulbright exchange programs, embracing both academic participants and influential leaders; film and videotape showings; television and radio presentations; magazine distribution; and personal contact, i.e., the direct exchange of information by American officials abroad with important segments of the private community.

To carry out these activities, USICA budgeted 201 posts in 125 countries. The overseas posts formulate and administer annual country programs which seek to address specific bilateral issues and concerns. Of USICA's amended fiscal year 1981 appropriation of \$458 million, the missions' share amounted to \$139 million.

Each post is directed by a Public Affairs Officer who is often assisted by a Cultural Affairs Officer and an Information Officer, and by foreign national employees. At larger posts, the Public Affairs Officer supervises a proportionately larger staff of Americans and host-country nationals in administering exchange programs and informational and cultural activities. Materials used for mission activities are either locally produced or Washington-supplied. While American officers and foreign national employees maintain some contacts with various host-country leaders in government, media, academia, and the arts, the Public Affairs Officer has chief responsibility for establishing "direct and substantive" links--personal contact--with influential leaders.

## THE PROBLEM OF COMMUNICATING OVERSEAS

The character of information and cultural exchange conducted by the U.S. Government overseas has not basically changed in the past 15 to 20 years. At the same time, three important changes have occurred: (1) the increasing interdependence of nations, including their communications environments, has made the world smaller; (2) the structure and missions of the U.S. Government's public diplomacy agency have been altered by a reorganization; and (3) the availability of USICA resources has diminished in real terms.

In the past two decades, radical changes altered the traditional relationships among nations. While the United States became dependent on others for supplying its essential energy needs, it watched the proliferation of satellite communication technology instantly linking all parts of the globe. Also, much of the developed and developing world improved and increased its access to media resources (radio, television, and press) where, in many cases, they equal those available in the United States.

Yet, the programs and staffing patterns used by USICA to operate overseas in this changed communications environment basically have remained the same. As one ambassador informed us, USICA uses the "cookie cutter approach" in staffing and in programming the same kinds of activities in each of the approximately 125 countries in which USICA operates. For example, generally all USICA missions have a Public Affairs Officer, Cultural Affairs Officer, and an Information Officer. These missions generally have International Visitor, American Participant and Fulbright Exchange Programs, as well as information programs.

With the Reorganization Plan of 1977 and the creation of USICA in April 1978 with its new mandate and mission, there was also a promise of new and better things to come. Every indication by the President and USICA's first director signaled a forthcoming rebirth of U.S. public diplomacy efforts in a revitalized and innovative context. But the promise has not been realized; activities have continued much the same as before.

Over the past 10 years there has been a decline in real operating resources available to USICA even though appropriations have doubled in actual dollars. Funding levels for USICA programs have actually declined in real dollars by 13 percent over the past 10 years.

#### OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

This review examined some of USICA's overseas programs. We established several broad objectives for the review, to

- examine the role, operations, and impact of the overseas missions with emphasis on their efficiency and effectiveness and
- determine the adequacy of support which Washington provides the missions.

In our discussions with USICA officials in Washington, we further identified several specific issues of importance for the missions' operations:

- Role of Personal Contact. Because USICA officials emphasize executing their communications role through direct personal contact with targeted influential people in the press, academia, and the arts and humanities, we examined "personal contact" as a means of communications, how it is achieved, and how it is working to fulfill USICA objectives.
- Washington-Field Relationship. We examined the relationship between the overseas missions and Washington headquarters and whether Washington-directed systems, planning procedures, and practices



help or hinder the field missions in their operations. In addition, we reviewed the adequacy of Washington support for the missions for requested resources and assistance.

--Field Mission Planning. We sought to find out whether the overseas missions adequately plan for their program needs with reference to long-term goals, and, consequently, the amount of time officers devote to implementing programmed as opposed to ad hoc activities.

--Binational Cultural Centers. The USICA missions have an often ambiguous relationship to these private, tax-exempt institutions which teach English and organize bilateral cultural activities. Our purpose was to review the operations of the Centers in order to determine the adequacy of USICA representation in Center decisionmaking and support for programming.

--The "Second Mandate." Part of USICA's mandated mission is to tell Americans about other countries and cultures. We set out to identify what USICA and its overseas missions are doing to fulfill their role of mutual communication.

In order to make accurate observations relevant to overseas missions on an USICA-wide basis, we interviewed USICA officials and reviewed USICA documents, particularly budget reports, program descriptions, and inspection reports. In addition, we made preliminary visits to posts in Mexico and Canada to gain firsthand experience of mission activities. In consultation with our consultant, we selected and visited 18 countries--the minimum number we believed necessary to draw conclusions about mission activities as a whole. The missions in the following countries represent about 14 percent of all USICA missions.

Australia	The Netherlands
Brazil	Nigeria
Costa Rica	Pakistan
France	Peru
Greece	Poland
Guyana	South Africa
Indonesia	Tanzania
Kuwait	United Kingdom
Malaysia	Yugoslavia

In Washington, to assess the extent of Washington headquarters management of the overseas missions, we interviewed USICA officials at the Area offices and relevant Country Desks, in the Educational and Cultural Affairs directorate, and in the Office of Systems Technology. We reviewed pertinent documents, including internal memoranda from the Director, operations manuals, computer

printouts of all USICA programming, staffing patterns, and cables to the field. We discussed the role of USICA overseas with the Acting Staff Director of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy.

In order to assess the operations and impact of USICA's overseas missions, we interviewed appropriate USICA employees abroad, including Public Affairs Officers, Cultural Affairs Officers, Information Officers, various program officers and foreign national employees, as well as Ambassadors and Deputy Chiefs of Mission. Records we reviewed included program event descriptions, monthly and quarterly reports, and American Participant speakers' evaluations.

In addition, in order to assess the extent of mission management of overseas facilities financed by USICA, we made onsite inspections of USICA libraries, reference centers, and Binational Cultural Centers and attended USICA-sponsored events, such as a Chicano literature conference in Mexico and a film showing in Poland.

We did not review the Fulbright Exchange Program as this was examined in detail in our previous report. <sup>1</sup>/ Also, we did not review the International Visitor Program. We conducted no work concerning the Voice of America because the missions have little or no direct, ongoing involvement with the Voice other than using the Voice's recordings and/or facilities on an adhoc basis.

In this report, we examine the USICA methods of communicating which are employed overseas with the view toward showing the need to make improvements in planning and operations. We also reviewed USICA's efforts to recognize and adjust to changes in the modern international communications environment and the problems encountered in these efforts.

USICA officials commented that most of our recommendations merited serious consideration and that the Agency is already taking action regarding several of them. We were informed that a special USICA working group will be established to follow up on the recommendations. The USICA officials did express concern that several examples used in the report may not represent the 18 country posts included in the review or the total Agency field operation. Also, the views of Washington officials were in some cases at variance with the views of field officials.

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<sup>1</sup>/"Flexibility--Key to Administering Fulbright-Hays Exchange Program" (ID-80-3, Dec. 10, 1979).

## CHAPTER 2

### SOME OBSERVATIONS ON PLANNING

#### AND CARRYING OUT THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS OVERSEAS

According to the former Director of USICA in writing to the Public Affairs Officers in the overseas missions on May 4, 1979,

"\* \* \* the one central document in your work and Washington's is the Country Plan. Writing it offers an opportunity to review the truly important, continuing, underlying communication problems and opportunities between your society and the United States \* \* \*. You and your staff (not Washington) are responsible for defining our communication efforts in your country \* \* \*."

During our review we examined the country plans at 20 posts and found them to concentrate on developing issues to be addressed which are often so broad they allow almost any activity to be programmed. In the development of these issues the Public Affairs Officers do not include the program results to be achieved in carrying out the "communication efforts," and which would permit subsequent evaluation of these efforts. It is these issues which are addressed in the carrying on of the direct and personal links with influential leaders in foreign countries (personal contact). Thus, the impact of conducting personal contact goes largely unmeasured as an activity which is justified for the most part as the reason for having the overseas missions. The problems experienced by USICA in establishing measurable program outputs were discussed in one of our earlier reports. 1/

#### PREPARING THE COUNTRY PLAN

USICA looks on the preparation of the country plan as an opportunity to organize the overseas Public Affairs Officers and their staffs to deal with "the important problems of communication" in a particular country. It is intended to represent the major focus on the Public Affairs Officer's work throughout the year. It does not cover the Voice of America, the Fulbright or the International Visitor Program. The plan represents the major call for Washington headquarters support in supplying speakers and exhibits. If circumstances change during the period after the plan has been prepared, the plans can be amended. The planning process is designed to point the Public Affairs Officer in the direction of issues and selectivity of programs. According

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1/"Telling America's Story to the World" (B-118654, Mar. 25, 1974).

to USICA officials, the plan is prepared with the embassy's overall objectives and strategy in mind. The embassy's strategy is prepared by the ambassador and other embassy elements, including the USICA staff and cleared by the Department of State. The country plan is the basis, the rationale, and the overall guide to USICA programming in the overseas missions. USICA officials believe that USICA's country plan is a recapitulation of that part of the overall Department of State strategy applicable to USICA's part of the mission effort and a detailed listing of the things the Public Affairs Officer plans to do to fulfill his/her part of the mission's business.

"Issue" versus "objective"  
oriented planning

Most significantly, USICA directs the posts in the "Country Plan Instructions" on the preparation of missions' fundamental planning document. For example, the instructions for the fiscal year 1981 country plan emphasize that the posts should draw the issues and concerns they will address and that:

"\* \* \*the statement of each issue should be a specific description of one concern, misperception, distortion or gap in knowledge you will address. It should not (a) cover a range of such matters, (b) deal with operational approaches or (c) be generalized. It should not be stated as a goal or objective."

Issues in country plans are enumerated without stating specific measurable goals or objectives to be accomplished in addressing those issues in a particular country. Many of the USICA officials we talked to did not find this to be a problem and seemed satisfied to solely address issues and not be concerned with accomplishing or measuring the overall achievement of any objective in the country. These officials often referred to issues and believed that they knew what USICA hoped to accomplish in these issue areas.

Public Affairs Officers no doubt were echoing what was contained in the USICA headquarters instructions to the overseas missions for preparation of the fiscal year 1981 country plans. In discussing the need for specific descriptions of issues, USICA headquarters admonished the Public Affairs Officers not to state an issue as a goal or objective.

These same officials expressed doubt that USICA's product or end-results can ever be quantitatively measured. One Deputy Chief of Mission told us that he believes USICA sometimes sees its programs and personal contact activities as "ends-in-themselves" and loses sight of the real purpose.

The broadness of issue area descriptions permitted Public Affairs Officers to program almost any activity and rationalize its relationship to an issue category. For example, we examined the fiscal years 1980 and 1981 country plan issues for Nigeria and found not only were the issues broadly stated but varied little in those 2 fiscal years.

<u>Fiscal year 1980</u>	<u>Fiscal year 1981</u>
1. Strengthen evolving democratic processes	1. Promote a fuller knowledge of U.S. Government, education and social models
2. Increase U.S.-Nigeria economic relations	2. Communicate the importance of a more equitable trade balance with Nigeria and a continued supply of petroleum to the United States
3. Emphasize usefulness of higher educational relationship	3. Articulate U.S. foreign policy (esp. Southern Africa)
4. Increase understanding and appreciation of U.S. foreign policy (esp. Southern Africa)	
5. Fortify mutual appreciation of cultural events	

As shown above, the number of issues addressed in the fiscal year 1981 country plan decreased by two issues from its predecessor, although the activities related to previous issues of "higher education" continue as a part of other program plans or separately through Fulbright and other academic exchanges. The other issue which dropped out of the fiscal year 1981 plan was the area relating to mutual appreciation of cultural needs. We found nothing in the bilateral essay of either country plan which would support this area as a program plan activity.

USICA planning generally  
reflects Public Affairs  
Officer's thinking

If one person can be considered an author of country plan issues, it is unquestionably the Public Affairs Officer. Ambassadors and other embassy officers and even foreign national employees may review, comment on, and suggest ideas and changes, but invariably, these issues receive the Public Affairs Officer's concurrence before incorporation in a country plan. Embassy involvement generally did not push USICA missions into issues not of their own choosing.

We analyzed changes to country plans from fiscal year 1980 to 1981 for the countries we visited. We observed some major program redistributions and found that many of these were linked to the rotation of Public Affairs Officers. Countries experiencing recent Public Affairs Officer changes (France, South Africa, Netherlands, Peru, and Greece) had or planned major shifts in country plan issues. Changes occurred at all posts, but these seemed minimal where Public Affairs Officers remained constant.

Changes also occurred in audience focus as a result of Public Affairs Officer rotations. The former Public Affairs Officer in Yugoslavia wrote in March 1979 that the military audience was not important to USICA--as its bilateral essay was defined. The present Public Affairs Officer disagreed and has instituted some programs to at least facilitate contact between mission officials and the Yugoslavian military.

Planning directions were always toward the "elite" and capital cities

The focus of USICA's plans are dictated by (1) analysis of country power or influence centers and (2) limited resources. Public Affairs Officers generally agreed that USICA's efforts are and should be targeted at persons of influence. They stated that resource limits preclude directing agency activities at mass audiences. A few ambassadors believed that USICA efforts are too concentrated among the elite located in the capital cities. It was apparent to us that this elite, capital city focus was commonplace (for example, in Paris, London, Athens, Lima, and Lagos). South Africa, Indonesia, Brazil, and Yugoslavia were exceptions we noted perhaps because of unique ethnic regional structures within those countries.

After preparation of the country plan, the next general step at the posts is to identify those in the country with whom the Public Affairs Officer wishes to communicate, especially through personal contact. USICA has established a structured approach to the audience identification process for Public Affairs Officers.

DEFINING AUDIENCES IN THE HOST COUNTRY

The first Director of USICA intended that the overseas missions have greater weight than in any previous administration since 1950. In a letter addressed to all Public Affairs Officers in September 1978, the Director of USICA wrote:

"From the beginning I have said--and have meant--that roughly 80 percent of this Agency's work should stand or fall on the basis of what happens in the field."

Further along in the same message he explained:

"\* \* \*the Agency expects no more or no less of its principal field representatives than that they have a rationale, a thoughtfully identified audience, a sense of communicating (as opposed to 'programming') and that they make a detectable difference."

#### The audience identification process

USICA's audience identification process involves defining and identifying key institutions and individuals by relevance to American interests.

As a general proposition, USICA believes it should engage those individuals and institutions in a country who create, communicate, and debate ideas, etc. According to USICA's former Director:

"For better or worse, it is the intellectuals--broadly defined--who set the agenda in virtually every society. Our purpose should be to stimulate their thought, refresh it where we can, understand the 'pictures in their heads' and be certain that they understand our own. It is the 'agenda setters' whom we are after."

This rationale is supposed to have relationship to U.S. Government interests in the country. It is the Public Affairs Officer who must design a plan to address, through the communication process, these audiences which he believes to be within his grasp. As the key ingredient in this process, it is the use of personal contact which becomes, according to the Public Affairs Officers, an all-important tool in reaching the targeted audiences.

#### USING PERSONAL CONTACT IN THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Without exception, we were informed at each of the posts visited by us that personal contact was their most important activity because it provided a direct and substantive way to engage influential foreign leaders in the communication process. We found, however, that there was a significant difference in the intensity and types of personal contact conducted by the Public Affairs Officer and the American staff.

In our view, personal contact activities need to be examined on a country-by-country basis to determine if the resource investment is worthwhile. We believe personal contact could serve as an important communication vehicle in some countries, less so in others. Unfortunately, it is expensive in all countries. According to USICA officials, total post expenditures for fiscal

year 1981 for those countries included in our review totaled \$35 million and included general operating expenses and the salaries of American personnel. We believe that a substantial part of these expenditures were directly related to establishing or improving personal contacts.

In some of the countries visited we found that this investment bore little resemblance to U.S. host-country communication needs. One Public Affairs Officer observed that USICA resource investment paralleled that of the Department of State and was not related to communication issues as contained in the country plan-- for example, the handling of press and public affairs activities of visiting U.S. Government officials. Generally, many Western-oriented nations had larger mission staffs and controlled more USICA resources than countries where relations with the United States were more uncertain. It followed that the larger the U.S. Embassy the larger the USICA staff. We believe that the greater the number of American officers and facilitative resources, the greater the personal contact activity should be. We found, however, that this was not always the case.

#### What is personal contact?

In our discussions with some 20 Public Affairs Officers and their American staffs in the overseas missions, we sought an understanding of the role of personal contact. We asked "What is personal contact?" As one Public Affairs Officer observed, "ask a dozen USICA officers this question, and you are apt to get a dozen answers." Needless to say we did receive an abundance of different responses. Perhaps a Public Affairs Officer said it best in his description of personal contact:

"\* \* \* personal contact is the life's blood of our effort; it is an end in itself; it is also a means to every end, every purpose we have."

In our meetings with the Public Affairs Officers and other USICA officials, it was evident that they considered themselves engaging in at least two kinds of personal contact: first, those personal contacts which they considered to be substantive, that is, those in which the discussion with the targeted audience is an end-in-itself and thereby imparts and/or collects information related to a bilateral issue that is defined in the country plan; second, those personal contacts which are largely facilitative in that they are made in order to transmit the information through another vehicle (such as visiting Americans, videotape recordings, articles, or international visitors to the United States).

We found the two kinds of personal contact were being practiced in all the countries visited. Through discussions held with various embassy and USICA officers, however, we found that substantial differences existed in personal contact activity. In countries such as France, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom



where there existed a wealth of information about the United States, we found the nature of the USICA officers' contacts to be mostly facilitative. In contrast, in other countries where information about the United States was restricted, such as in Poland and Yugoslavia, the need for substantive contact (that is, contact in which the conversation was an end-in-itself) was greater.

Besides the availability of information, factors such as similarity in cultures, values, political ideologies, and sophistication, as well as the expertise and initiative of USICA officers, all affected the degree and type of personal contact activity at a post. No other aspect of USICA's operations was more dependent on the individual skills of officers.

### FACTORS IMPEDING PERSONAL CONTACT

As noted, personal contact is the primary vehicle for engaging in what USICA likes to call "effective communication." During our review we noted that there are a number of factors which can impede Public Affairs Officers from making personal contacts, such as: post administrative burdens, including participation in mission activities which are not related to USICA; the lack of language proficiency; and the lack of continuity in staffing. For the most part, some or all of these impediments were present in each of the 20 posts we visited.

#### Post administrative burden

At one post in South America, the Public Affairs Officer showed us a composite time study of a fairly typical week of a Public Affairs Officer and his/her American staff. It showed the staff spent over 70 percent of their time involved in administrative duties as follows:

	<u>Percent</u>
Office administration	37
Work-related reading, cables, etc.	20
Housekeeping chores	8
Meetings	$\frac{7}{72}$

The Public Affairs Officer concluded that the post had to find a way to reduce the administrative load if personal contact activities were to be increased. In the near future, however, the time available for personal contacts may be further reduced. The new ambassador intends to be an active spokesman for the United States and plans to use USICA staff for writing his speeches.

## Lack of language proficiency

USICA has a requirement that the Public Affairs Officer, Cultural Affairs Officer and Information Officer speak the language of the country to which they are assigned. These requirements are met by either assigning officers who are proficient in a foreign language or providing foreign language training in a Foreign Service Institute language training program.

Generally speaking, USICA requires a minimum professional proficiency in those posts where a language capability is required. Skills in comprehending, speaking, reading, and writing foreign language are measured according to the standardized proficiency scale of one (no practical proficiency) through five (native or bilingual proficiency). USICA usually requires its officers to have a proficiency rating of S-3/R-3 which means that an officer could both speak (S) and read (R) a foreign language with minimum professional proficiency. There are, however, a number of exceptions where only a rating of S-2/R-2 is required and which demands only a limited working proficiency for officers in certain countries. For example, in Greece the Public Affairs Officer and Cultural Affairs Officer are required to have an S-2/R-2 proficiency level. The same is true for the posts in Finland, the Netherlands, and Kuwait. An officer with a level three rating is generally considered to be able to effectively communicate. Although the officer may speak with a strong accent and make errors, he/she can usually be understood.

In our discussions with Public Affairs Officers and Cultural Affairs Officers we found that, in some cases, officers arrived at their overseas post with less than S-3/R-3 proficiency level. Some of the officers expressed an initial reluctance upon arriving in country in establishing personal contact in the host-country language because of a low level of proficiency. Some officers admitted that there is a 3- to 6-month period after arriving at post where little substantive personal contact takes place unless they can converse in English.

Also, some officers believe a high proficiency level beyond S-3/R-3 should be required in some languages in countries where English is not known and greater credibility with the targeted audience is needed. We found that assigning personnel to language-essential positions is usually a highly individualized procedure involving a multitude of factors, of which foreign language proficiency is but one. The fact is that the ability to speak or read a foreign language with proficiency is generally treated by

USICA as a secondary requirement. The primary requirement is for placing officers based on job skills as well as the officers' own preferences for an overseas assignment. 1/

### Lack of continuity

We found that generally Public Affairs Officers and Cultural Affairs Officers do not overlap with their predecessors when re-assignments are made. Thus, continuity in maintaining personal contact is interrupted. Even Public Affairs Officer positions in major posts have remained vacant for months at a time. This gap in assignment apparently results from USICA's "open assignment" policy under which Public Affairs Officers and other principal officers interested in upcoming vacancies make their interest known. Often the departure date of the Public Affairs Officer at one post does not coincide with the arrival of his/her successor at another. Although most Public Affairs Officers and Cultural Affairs Officers with whom we discussed this matter did not find small gaps in continuity (2 weeks or less) to be a serious problem, it was generally agreed that the longer the gap the more serious the difficulty in maintaining personal contact. In cases of prolonged delay it appears to us that overall personal contact must frequently be curtailed or postponed or even discarded, for when there is a subordinate capable of filling the vacancy temporarily, his or her moving into the position often means trying to operate under makeshift conditions. Although it is not necessary to recite recent problems of this kind in each of the posts we visited, the recent situation in the long vacancy in the Brazilian post is but one example. There, in a major USICA post, the Public Affairs Officer vacancy lasted from January until July 1978.

### CONCLUSIONS

USICA overseas missions do not set forth measurable objectives to be achieved in their plans and in carrying out of their most important activity--personal contact. According to USICA officials, there is no practical way to quantify the results of its activities in terms of impact achieved or goals sought and accomplished. Rather, USICA officials seem content to plan and program activities and engage in personal contact as "ends in themselves" without reference to any measurable goals to be attained.

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1/For detailed information on the general problem of assigning language qualified Americans abroad, see our earlier report on "More Competence in Foreign Languages Needed by Federal Personnel Working Overseas" (ID-80-31, April 15, 1980).

We found vast differences in the personal contact activities of the posts we visited. In some countries, it appeared that personal contact was substantive, in others it was mostly facilitative. Equally apparent was the ambiguity of the justifications for and the benefits of personal contact. This condition seems to stem from a lack of definition as to what is to be accomplished in conducting personal contact.

There are a number of factors which impede personal contact, including inordinate post administrative burdens, especially those not related to the carrying out of USICA country plans. The lack of language proficiency and staffing continuity are further hindrances to personal contact as well.

### CHAPTER 3

#### WASHINGTON SUPPORT LIMITED

##### IN MEETING THE OVERSEAS MISSIONS' NEEDS

Most of USICA's overseas missions have mixed praise for the quality of resources and services provided by Washington. In view of the diminishing levels of real dollar funding, the posts request resource support determined as much by their realistic expectations of what Washington can supply as by their actual program needs. The posts recognize that USICA Washington retains ultimate planning authority in its control of post budgets, staffing levels, and scheduling of officer assignments.

The praise for International Visitor and Fulbright Exchange Programs seems unanimous at the posts. Further, the American Participant speakers program was generally judged to be of high quality, although the speakers are not always willing to travel to all USICA posts. Availability, usefulness, and quality of videotape recordings and films receive mixed praise. Some posts generally complain that cultural programming, particularly the Washington-directed Arts America program, is not relevant to program needs or country plan issues. The same kinds of programming are not equally applicable to all posts and we believe USICA could reduce costs by eliminating some of the least effective communication methods in some countries.

USICA continued to deemphasize the use of overseas libraries and the Binational Cultural Centers as vehicles for communication. Although the "Second Mandate" or mutuality concept has been formally enunciated, the posts are confused about their roles in fostering "Second Mandate" activities and feel the need for additional Washington guidance.

The introduction of the Distribution and Record System for managing and recording personal contact activity by the overseas mission staff has produced complaints and skepticism because of Washington headquarters' repeated delays in delivering and installing the system's equipment.

##### ALL POSTS DO NOT NEED ALL COMMUNICATION METHODS

As noted in chapter 1, each of the approximately 125 countries in which USICA operates employs the same array of programs including American Participant speakers, cultural events, films, videotape recordings and printed materials. The complaints of USICA personnel raise questions as to the value and need of some of the programs in some of the countries.

Acquiring American Participant  
(Ampart) speakers is a problem  
for some posts

Amparts are visiting American experts in a wide variety of fields who engage in discussions with their foreign counterparts. They also discuss various aspects of American life in order to enhance foreign perceptions of the United States and to establish informal international networks of professional relationships. Although there is general satisfaction with the quality of these Amparts speakers, some posts complain that speakers do not relate to country plan issues. This problem seems to be a result of USICA Washington's mixed success in supplying post requests for Amparts. Because Paris and London are attractive sites for the most desirable speakers, USICA missions there have little trouble in either fulfilling their requests through Washington or enticing influential Americans traveling privately--so-called "target-of-opportunity speakers"--through France or the United Kingdom to speak at USICA programs. In addition, these posts can rely on USICA's Regional Resource Unit in London and the frequency of international airline service for a myriad of highly respected American experts. Because USICA Washington requires that a headquarters-supplied speaker be sent to no less than two countries, smaller posts in less attractive, less easily accessible, or less significant countries have greater difficulty attracting desired top-level speakers.

Although speaker cancellations are not within headquarters control, continuing cancellations could affect USICA's credibility with target audiences. For example, the post in Nigeria requested 17 Ampart speakers for fiscal year 1980 of which 10 eventually canceled. The last Ampart at the post for the fiscal year was in early July 1980. The Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer for programs at USICA Nigeria noted that the problem with cancellations results partly from the post's requesting specific prominent speakers who probably carry a higher degree of risk of canceling than lower level speakers.

The Public Affairs Officer in Poland, citing some reservations over speaker quality and availability, said that part of the problem may rest in Washington with programming personnel who are not sufficiently knowledgeable and up-to-date on subject areas to effectively program speakers. In addition, he said that in some cases, USICA Washington seems to take whichever speakers indicate an interest in becoming Amparts, rather than to actively recruit high-quality speakers.

Videotape recordings and films  
may be irrelevant in some countries

USICA both acquires and produces videotape recordings and films for distribution through overseas posts. In 1980, over 70 videotape programs were produced in USICA's own studios. Many more copies of public affairs shows were acquired from the U.S.

broadcast media and about 200 films and videotape recordings were acquired from private U.S. sources. These products were shown by USICA posts to audiences overseas and were also distributed through foreign television media and commercial theaters abroad. For fiscal year 1981, the total costs for films and videotape recordings amounted to about \$10 million.

The utility of films and videotape recordings supplied by Washington vary according to several factors: appropriateness to the host country audiences, quality, and timeliness of delivery. Overall, posts in countries such as France, Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom which have sophisticated communications networks demonstrate little need or opportunity for USICA films and videotape recordings. They would merely get lost in the barrage of information continuously assaulting targeted audiences and stand little, if any, chance of making any discernible impact. Conversely, in countries with less developed, less sophisticated or less active communications channels (Third World countries) or even those closed societies which rigidly control the information flow (Eastern European nations), a carefully selected and targeted videotape recording or film has a chance to stand out and have its messages or ideas noticed.

Washington support for posts, however, has drawn some severe criticisms. The Information Officer in the Netherlands post said that videotape recordings and films are no longer vital to the mission because of the 2-week lag in time for acquiring new materials from Washington. During that time, the desired information has probably already been on Dutch radio, television, or in the newspapers. A Netherlands post report to Washington laid the blame for delay on the current procedure for ordering videotape recordings and films; the posts must first receive a cable or a circular listing available items, select an item from the listing, and cable back the selection. USICA officials informed us that, since the completion of our review, they have introduced a new system that "markedly speeds up and makes more efficient the provision of current TV programs."

Although we were unable to ascertain the validity of one occasionally mentioned complaint, officers at posts as diverse as Malaysia and Poland stated that Washington-produced films and videotape recordings are amateurish and do not hold the interest of target audiences. In addition, they said other films supplied by Washington are generally not current. High expense and generally poor condition of films were cited by the Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer in USICA South Africa for officially discontinuing film distribution.

Posts partially satisfied with support for USICA publications

USICA publishes, at a cost of about \$12 million in fiscal year 1981, 10 magazines and some commercial bulletins in 20 languages. Most of the items are printed at the Regional Service Centers in Manila and Mexico City, and at a few major posts. The contents consist of reprints from the best of American periodicals as well as staff written and commissioned articles. Pamphlets, leaflets, printed exhibits, and posters are also distributed in more than 100 countries. The principal publications originating in Washington are: America Illustrated, a monthly magazine in Russian distributed in the U.S.S.R.; Topic, published six times a year in English and French for sub-Saharan Africa; Al Majal, a monthly published in Arabic for Near East and North Africa countries; Dialogue, a quarterly journal of American thought and culture, in French and Spanish, with additional language versions published by field posts; Economic Impact, a quarterly in English and Spanish; and Problems of Communism, a scholarly bimonthly magazine in English.

Some of the posts' opinions of Washington's record in providing quality publications were critical, reflecting the controversy over USICA's trend toward consolidating country-specific magazines into broader regionally based publications. This effort has resulted partially from the drive to cut the costs associated with producing many types of magazines. The Public Affairs Officer in Poland was critical of this effort because of the alteration of the bimonthly Polish-language magazine, Ameryka, which the post distributes to 4,000 people by mail and 30,000 by newsstand sales. Without consulting the Mission, Washington headquarters decided that Ameryka will assume the format and content of the new Dialogue publication and will be published only quarterly. The Public Affairs Officer objected that the new magazine would lose its broad-based appeal and cease to be an effective communication vehicle. Agreeing with this view, all the East European USICA Public Affairs Officers and several ambassadors protested the decision.

Although USICA Tanzania had no complaints over the quality of printed materials it receives for distribution, officers did question the quantity of materials, especially in relation to other communication resources:

"We could easily use three times the current amount of quality print material we get. It can be argued that we should spend more time ourselves trying to locate such materials, but a field post on the east coast of Africa is not a particularly advantageous point from which to conduct such an exercise and we would urge that this become a major focus of [Program Management] PGM activities. We have not seen the outcome of this year's program design exercise, but with the massive



piles of paper generated in previous years still in our minds we would urge that even if half of the effort that went into program designs went into a search for good material in the forms of article reprints and presentation books we would be ahead of the game."

## CONCLUSIONS

The specific problems described above result, in some measure, from the use of each of the various communication methods in each overseas mission. As noted in chapter 1, each of the approximately 125 countries in which USICA operates employs the same array of programs, i.e., American Participants, cultural events, films, videotape recordings, and printed materials. Because of the many differences among countries, the proposition that each country needs the same set of communication methods is not plausible.

The complaints of USICA personnel set forth earlier in this chapter raise questions as to the value of some of the programs in some of the countries. Where it is difficult to find quality speakers willing to travel to certain countries coupled with frequent cancellations, the mission may find it more useful to terminate its speaker programs in favor of other programs. Those missions where videotape recordings and films are deemed irrelevant would find it useful to use funds available for them for other communication methods.

Each mission should use its resources in the most effective manner. USICA could reduce costs by eliminating some of the least-effective communication methods in some countries rather than simply shaving some funds from each program and continuing with each communication method, albeit reduced, in each country.

Theoretically, an overseas mission need not program a communication method if it does not wish to do so; as a practical matter, the bureaucratic impulse is to program some resources for each communication method. It is difficult to pinpoint reasons for this, but the fact that it has always been done this way accounts for part of it. So does the fear that the elimination of a communication method from a plan will result in the elimination of the funds for that method from the mission. And too, the desire to eliminate a method may be perceived by others as a personal weakness in effectively using that method. Also, if a communication method is the sole preserve of an individual or group of individuals in the mission, eliminating that method necessarily poses severe personnel problems for the mission.

Finally, if overseas USICA mission officials were to exercise choices among the array of Washington-provided communication resources by types, a sense of competitiveness among those managers in Washington responsible for supplying the resources for the different types could operate to enhance the overall quality of the resources.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Director:

- Reassess the need for each mission to have all the various communication methods, e.g., speakers, films, videotape recordings, and printed matter.
- Direct overseas missions to discontinue programming of those methods they believe irrelevant to their needs or even significantly less useful than others to their needs.
- Determine, through the monitoring of foreign receptivity to changes in publication formats, those which are too narrowly targeting recipient audiences and threatening through oversophistication to lose an existing broad-base of readers.

#### CULTURAL PROGRAMMING BY WASHINGTON IS NOT MEETING THE MISSIONS' NEEDS

Working in conjunction with the National Endowment for the Arts, USICA supports international tours by representative American performing artists and fine arts exhibitions. This support cost about \$2.3 million in fiscal year 1981. Both individuals and groups in the fields of music, drama, and dance participate in the performing arts program. Artists, commentators on the arts, and examples of fine arts are also sent abroad. USICA also produces an average of 16 major exhibits a year, including solo exhibitions and participation in international trade fairs and special international promotions. For fiscal year 1981, the cost of exhibits totaled about \$6 million.

USICA cultural program support, with few exceptions, is apparently failing to satisfy the overseas missions' planning requirements. The least-favored elements of Washington's cultural activity assistance is the Arts America Program which was inaugurated in fiscal year 1981. USICA officers at posts throughout the world repeatedly characterized this program as an attempt by Washington to force unnecessary, unwanted, and irrelevant programs on the missions.

Although USICA officers in Paris admitted that the major advantages of the Arts America program--removing costs from the post's budget and permitting programming in branches not ordinarily reachable--may be helpful to smaller posts, the program is

probably not needed in France. The Cultural Affairs Officer noted that American performers and shows are so eager to appear in Paris, that they are even willing to lose money to do so.

Another post officer was concerned about the Arts America selection process and program management. This officer cited, as an example, a California video arts show which was selected by Washington for a very important French event even though (1) the French, heavily exposed to American video, no longer find it exciting and (2) the person whose work was selected was inexperienced.

The post in Lagos, Nigeria, had equally severe criticism of Washington's cultural programming support. While the post praised the professionalism of one of the performing presentations in fiscal year 1980--a jazz group called Clark Terry and his Jolly Giants--USICA officers reported to headquarters that of publicity materials arriving merely one week before the performance, only one was usable for a press document. In addition, thousands of programs and invitations had to be redone and major breakdowns in coordination and scheduling occurred. Furthermore, the post reported that: "Any reasonable cost benefit analysis makes it difficult to justify the massive expenditures of time and money (at a post critically short of both) \* \* \*." Officers estimated that they spent 180 hours of their time preparing for the presentation, plus 350 hours of the foreign nationals' time, as well as \$23,000 from the post's general operating expense account. The post report concluded that of the four performances:

"Only two can be considered fully successful in attracting any significant participant/recipient audience. Further, it is open to question what Country Plan program gains were addressed by a cultural presentation of the Clark Terry type."

In Yugoslavia, an officer questioned the ability of Washington to centralize the planning of cultural events for all posts. He said that occasional political pressure put on the Washington staff to program certain groups or types of groups were responsible 2 years ago for requiring the post to accept, despite its objections, a "chicano" theater group. According to the Cultural Affairs Officer, the group was untalented and Yugoslav audiences could not relate to it.

#### CONCLUSION

Washington headquarters is not properly judging the cultural programming needs of the overseas missions. Efforts at centralizing cultural planning have produced negative post perceptions that the missions are "forced" to accept inappropriate programs, such as the Arts America program.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Director eliminate redundant USICA cultural program efforts within a given host country. We also recommend that the Director seek more mission input for planning the Arts America program in order to better match the cultural programs to the needs of the individual posts.

## SUPPORT FOR USICA LIBRARIES IS DWINDLING

USICA maintains and/or supports libraries in American centers, reading rooms, and binational centers in 88 countries. These activities provide materials that will help people in foreign countries learn about the United States, the American people, and U.S. history and culture. In fiscal year 1981, USICA spent about \$9.5 million for salaries and related costs of American and foreign national employees associated with the libraries. Additionally, USICA spent about \$6.5 million for the purchase of books and periodicals, rent, and other support for the libraries.

Over the years USICA officers have debated what aspects of America the libraries should show, what books and sources they should distribute, and what audience they should serve. Their supporters contend that a USICA library is a key in the door to approach a foreign community and that a library justifies a U.S. presence in certain areas (particularly Eastern Europe); where the United States closes a library, it may have to terminate operations entirely. Others suggest that the growth of national library systems and of universities overseas renders U.S. libraries redundant and superfluous. They denigrate the "shotgun" approach of aiming unfocused book collections at large mass audiences and prefer gearing collections and services to narrowly targeted groups.

Over the years USICA has often turned to library budgets as a first source for cuts. USICA's statistics indicate that between 1946 and 1978, libraries and/or reading rooms were set up in 426 foreign cities. Of these, 129 (119 American centers and 10 reading rooms) were in operation in fiscal year 1981. The rest, about 68 percent, have been discontinued for essentially budget reasons.

Similarly, trained staff have declined. The USICA has let American professional librarians drop from a high of 53 in the mid-1950s to 32 in 1967, to 23 in 1974, and to 18 in 1979.

The lack of Washington support for some of the libraries does not result from a deliberate decision to phase them out, rather the apparent neglect of their needs creates such deterioration of their condition that their maintenance may no longer be justified. For example, a 1980 library inspection report by the USICA Regional Librarian from Abidjan, Ivory Coast, found that:

- "Ninety percent of all [six] branch library collections [in Nigeria] are dated and cannot support the fiscal year 1981 Country-Plan issues;
- "The Post Purchased a total of 440 titles during fiscal year 1978 and fiscal year 1979, none of which were oriented to the Country Plan;
- "USICA branch libraries and staffs need extensive amounts of inhouse library training because of inadequate education; and
- "Insufficient funds were allocated in the Post's fiscal year 1979 and fiscal year 1980 budget to support the libraries in Nigeria."

The library in Lagos was closed as a circulating library in April 1980 and was scheduled to be relocated nearer the post and reopened in February 1981 as a reference center. However, from the time the move was conceived until its realization, 5 years elapsed. Consequently, during fiscal year 1978 and fiscal year 1979, only 36 titles were ordered for the Lagos library. This level of Washington support could make it difficult for the posts to make corrective actions which they have initiated in response to the Regional Librarian's study.

Library location is also important for use. The USICA Tanzania library's location and facilities--a shopfront on the first floor of the post's two-story building with large plate glass windows used to display books, exhibits, and the library's interior--seem to encourage use by the local nationals. Referred to as the most highly valued aspect of the post's operations, the library has a book stock of about 5,900 volumes and 75 periodicals and a membership of 5,700 with a monthly attendance of 4,000.

In contrast to this, the USICA library in Greece moved from downtown Athens in 1976 to the Hellenic-American Union Building located in a less-desirable section of the city. While location alone may not be responsible for a decline in circulation, it is significant that circulation dropped from 32,173 in 1976 to 10,400 in 1979.

#### CONCLUSION

Over the years USICA's support for the operation and maintenance of its libraries overseas has dwindled. The lack of Washington support for some of the libraries does not result from a deliberate decision to phase them out, but the apparent neglect of their needs creates such deterioration of their condition that their maintenance may no longer be justified.

## RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that the Director examine the usefulness of the overseas libraries as they are currently maintained and eliminate those that are no longer useful.

### THE LACK OF COHERENT POLICIES OR CONTROLS ALLOWS USICA TO IGNORE THE BINATIONAL CULTURAL CENTERS

The history of USICA's involvement with Binational Cultural Centers since their origins in 1941 has shown a continuing trend toward less USICA support and control. In fiscal year 1981 USICA spent about \$800,000 in support of the Centers. Because USICA has never clearly stated a governing policy regarding the purpose of the Centers, their relationship to the USICA has often been uncertain and difficult for the posts to understand. Moreover, the lack of coherent and uniform programming policy and administrative controls has allowed the overseas missions to ignore the Centers when this appeared convenient.

Overall, USICA's lack of a clear objective for the USICA-Center relationship has encouraged a tendency toward what could be called "benign neglect," i.e., encouraging the Centers to seek financial independence from USICA while bemoaning the decline of control over their activities and criticizing them for deficiencies and programmatic failures. As one Public Affairs Officer wrote in a 1973 critique of Centers:

"A major obstacle to the implementation of an overall policy on binational centers is USICA's failure to apply specific criteria on a consistent and worldwide basis. There is also no formulated policy on what binational centers are, what they can do, and what they should do. The Binational Center Handbook states simply that they are 'dedicated to the promotion of mutual understanding.' "

USICA's 1980 Manual of Operations for Centers says little more than that Centers are private, autonomous, foreign associations established to promote mutual understanding between the United States and the host country. The Centers have diverse programs involving the teaching of English, cultural exhibits, concerts, seminars, and a library. A BNC Board of Directors includes host country citizens, resident Americans, and Foreign Service Officers of the U.S. Department of State and/or USICA.

There are two types of Binational Cultural Centers: categories "A" and "B." The "A" Centers are directed by a USICA officer and often receive continuing support for program operations and capital improvements. The "B" Centers are not USICA-managed and generally receive financial or material assistance only on a project-by-project basis.

USICA guidelines for supporting Centers, however, go into far less detail in ascribing a goal to the Centers. In sum, "the specific goal of allocating USICA resources to any BNC is to make more understandable to local opinion leaders aspects of American society and policies." USICA is more explicit in instructing its officers to continuously assess the effectiveness of USICA support to the Centers, in dictating criteria for assessing category "A" status and eligibility for USICA assistance, and in establishing the forms of support available to the Centers. Nevertheless, throughout its guidelines to the field, the USICA exhibits an ambivalence in how to treat them. On the one hand, USICA assigns to them great importance. Its October 1980 Handbook for the posts stated:

"BNC's, [Binational Cultural Centers] by definition, aim at promoting mutual understanding between the United States and the host country. But not all BNC's are effective instruments for achieving USICA goals. Therefore, posts must continually assess whether the support they give and the program results achieved with it represent the most effective use of limited resources.

"In this assessment process, posts must remember that changes in support to existing BNC's and language institutions or plans to assist in the creation of new ones are not decisions to be made lightly. Unlike USICA operations, where expansion or contraction generally causes few problems in the host country, collaboration with BNC's and language institutions involves relations with foreign institutions that include among their leadership distinguished host country citizens. USICA legally cannot and does not commit itself to support beyond the current fiscal year. Yet a long USICA association with a given BNC or language institution implies in the minds of host citizenry a moral commitment which, if violated through withdrawal of support, could strain local relationships."

On the other hand, USICA clearly tries to avoid becoming trapped in an unending relationship:

"The granting of Category "A" status to a BNC does not constitute a commitment to sustain that designation perpetually. Continuation is dependent on the Center's maintaining a program that makes a contribution to USICA country objectives which is worth the agency resources invested \* \* \*."

It is understandable that USICA's confusion over what it wants the Centers to be, joined with the additional complications of dealing with a nonprofit organization, chartered under host country law, subservient to the vagaries of a binational Board of Directors, with a pay off that is long range, at best, filters down to the Public Affairs Officers and other officers in the field.

In fact, of the countries we visited which have Centers we found several examples of confusion and neglect and one of abuse of the financial relationship between the local Center and post officers. In Peru, there are nine Binational Centers with a total estimated enrollment of 13,565 students in English classes. Of the four major Centers in Arequipa, Trujillo, Cusco, and Lima, none have had a USICA employee as director since 1979. In the last few years, USICA financial support to these Centers has decreased and funding is projected to drop from \$125,329 (fiscal year 1978) to \$13,900 (fiscal year 1982). Now that USICA provides no officers as Directors of the Centers, and Center-building programs initiated under USICA guidance are completed, making the Centers financially self-sufficient, USICA had adopted as a general, long-range policy the phasing out of all direct financial assistance.

In this transition from full dependence to self-sufficiency, however, the Center in the Lima suburb of Miraflores has demonstrated the confusion of USICA's authority and status of its investment. Several years ago, according to the Public Affairs Officer, the post assisted the Center in designing a multi-purpose auditorium and awarded it a \$30,000 grant for theater seats and equipment. Although the necessary equipment was onsite at the time of our visit in December 1980, completion has been delayed because of:

- The Center Board's embarrassment over what local consensus considers a poorly conceived and constructed building.
- Violations of building codes.
- Acoustical problems whereby the noise level from adjacent classrooms makes any program impossible.
- The Board's lack of familiarity with the sound baffle system.
- The Board's own internal processes.

Consequently, the Public Affairs Officer has decided to invest no more money in this project and to give no other Center support until the Board acts to complete the auditorium. Denying funds, according to the Public Affairs Officer, is his only leverage because removing one of the six Americans from the Board would be



considered an insult; providing a USICA officer as Center director would offer little additional control over the Board equally composed of Americans and Peruvians.

In Indonesia, USICA's relationship to the 7,500 student Center in Jakarta, the Lembaga Indonesia--Amerika, is even more distant. According to the Public Affairs Officer, the Center's Executive Director, a USICA officer, was removed from his position because he had tried to introduce unpopular changes at the Center. Since his dismissal in March 1979, the Public Affairs Officer reported that he does continue discussions with the Center officials, he characterized post-Center relations as still sensitive. Despite this strained relationship, in 1980 USICA provided approximately \$2,500 in books and English-teaching materials to the Center.

We learned that a lack of sound administrative controls, likely to be found especially in the posts' undefined relationship to class "B" Centers, was the cause for serious abuse, for example, at the Instituto Mexicano-Norteamericano de Relaciones Culturales in Mexico City. According to a January 1981 USICA internal audit report, USICA Mexico City used the Center as a grant conduit to recycle approximately \$45,321 of fiscal year 1980 Center grant funds to the post's control. Post officers then used these funds for their program needs, including a portion for representation functions. The report concluded that the post appeared to have exceeded its limitations for representation and recommended that the practice be discontinued.

According to USICA officials, as of June 6, 1981, the post had notified USICA's Office of Audits that it concurred with the recommendation and would, in future grants to the Center, not control and disburse these grants for its own purposes.

#### CONCLUSION

Binational Cultural Centers are suffering from what must be called "benign neglect." USICA does not have a stated Center policy for guiding the overseas missions. Over the years USICA has consciously sought to disengage itself from the Centers, often leaving them to fend for themselves. Those overseas missions with Centers located in their country have had to develop their own individual policies and practices in dealing with the Centers. Some Public Affairs Officers see Centers as offering only problems, sometimes persistent, with very little resolution and very little USICA-acknowledged rewards. Consequently, the overseas missions often ignore problems which demand their attention. This is especially egregious when Centers are receiving USICA awards and grants.

## RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that the Director develop a policy outlining the responsibilities of the overseas missions toward the Centers, particularly those category "B" Centers where USICA has invested funds but has maintained no direct management control of those funds.

## HEADQUARTERS NEEDS TO ARTICULATE ROLE FOR FIELD FOR "SECOND MANDATE" ACTIVITIES

The former Director explained the meaning of USICA's "Second Mandate" in a letter to the Public Affairs Officers in the field dated September 26, 1979:

"What we are talking about is quite simple: it is the responsibility of this Agency to assist in enabling Americans to enhance their understanding of other societies--their histories, their cultures, their values and their aspirations, where they are coming from and why they believe as they do. It is not unlike our responsibility to increase foreign understanding of U.S. society and institutions."

Despite this straightforward declaration, we found that the overseas missions are unanimous in their confusion over the roles the posts should play in implementing the mutuality concept. Some officers agree that the "twin mandate" is something entirely new. Other officers believe that the "Second Mandate" is merely the formal enunciation of a concept and of activities which have existed for years. The former Director, in fact, confirmed this apparent contradiction when he wrote:

"And, while I note that the mandate is new with the new Agency, I also appreciate that many of you [Public Affairs Officers] have been doing good work in this area for years. We will build on this previous work; and we will break new ground. All elements of the Agency can and should participate--thoughtfully, imaginatively, and fully--in the generation of creative approaches to enhancing Americans' understanding of others."

The question remains as to what "new ground" has been broken to fulfill both USICA's mandate and the former Director's pledge. We found no officers in the posts we visited able to indicate any new USICA-wide efforts toward this end and few able to ascribe to the posts any meaningful role in the effort. One Information Officer lamented that the idea "has turned out to be much to do about nothing." A former Public Affairs Officer in Yugoslavia, assenting to this view in a March 1979 briefing to USICA's Deputy Director, warned of the potential consequences:

"When USICA was officially created it was stressed that a major difference between it and its predecessor organizations was that USICA would serve not only as an instrument of communicating American views and opinions abroad, but also the reverse. Many foreign governments took notice of the later pronouncement, including the GOY (Government of Yugoslavia). Yet the only implementation of this to date has been the announcement that USICA-sponsored speakers would engage in dialogues with their audiences in order to take the views of these foreign audiences back to the United States. Foreign governments expected more than this; they certainly expected at a minimum, facilitative assistance from us for their major cultural and informational exchange efforts, such as they render us. There's been disappointment on the part of representatives of the Yugoslav Government, and someone in USICA must address this problem. Alternatively, USICA should drop this bilateral relationship theme."

While officers, in many cases, expressed a willingness to engage in "Second Mandate" endeavors if Washington would provide specific guidance or additional funding for such purposes, it has not. In fact, Washington has failed to respond in some cases where the posts attempted to initiate action. For example, the Public Affairs Officer in Australia contacted Washington for guidance in providing facilitative assistance for an Australian art exhibit tour of the United States. Although he identified the tour as suited to fulfilling the "Second Mandate," he received no response and did not act further on the matter.

Even without clear Washington guidance, however, some USICA officers overseas have seized on facilitative assistance as a means for addressing the "Second Mandate." For example, USICA Poland helped arrange the "Extra Ball" jazz group tour of American jazz festivals, jazz clubs, universities, schools, and churches in the spring of 1980 and the "Fotographic Polska (1839-1979)" exhibit in New York City during October 1979.

But, on the whole, the overseas missions' role in fulfilling the second mandate has seldom gone beyond offering suggestions or criticisms. The Public Affairs Officer in Athens suggested that a joint working group to implement a recently signed U.S.-Greek agreement for cooperation in educational and cultural areas will devise new means to aid mutual exchanges.

A significant reason for USICA's failure to fulfill the second mandate is its lack of focus. Because USICA has yet to define which Americans it wishes to inform about other countries, it has been able to rest largely on its old programs--the International Visitor, Amparts, educational exchanges--as sufficient to satisfy the new mission. USICA has not attempted to design new programs to reach an American audience beyond the narrow segment of academia, government, and business which is likely already interested

to some degree in foreign affairs and other countries. While this may satisfy one conception of targeting, it does not seem to fulfill the broadly phrased purpose "to tell ourselves about the world, so as to enrich our own culture as well as to give us the understanding to deal effectively with problems among nations."

#### CONCLUSION

The pronouncement of a "Second Mandate" policy has not been translated into a specific program for the overseas missions. Therefore, no programs are being conducted and considerable confusion exists as to the role to be played by the overseas missions. Despite the failure of USICA headquarters to enunciate such a role, the overseas posts have indirectly contributed to fulfilling the intent of the "Second Mandate" by facilitating visits by host country cultural and performing artist groups to the United States.

#### RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that the Director establish a policy for the overseas missions concerning the role to be played, if any, in carrying out the "Second Mandate."

#### THE DISTRIBUTION AND RECORD SYSTEM IS OFF TO A POOR START

According to USICA officials, the Distribution and Record System (DRS) was conceived to replace the older system (the Audience and Distribution System or Audience Records System) which no longer adequately coordinated post resources. In an August 23, 1979, letter to the Public Affairs Officer in the field, the former Director outlined DRS's intended usefulness:

"One important purpose of the DRS is to distribute Agency magazines, invitations, and program materials to key institutions and individuals in your country  
\* \* \*."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Perhaps even more importantly, the DRS can be a basic management tool. Used well, it will help you and your colleagues to focus your limited resources (human, financial, and program) on establishing and maintaining a coherent process of communication about the issues identified in your Country Plan. This part of the system will be implemented by all posts next summer and fall. At that time, you will begin recording important contacts with key members of the public and will begin receiving standard management reports \* \* \*."

We learned that the DRS system, as presently constituted, is severely hampered in achieving these goals because it has failed to convince a significant number of post officers of its utility and has been plagued by delays in the delivery, installation, and operational readiness of equipment.

As conceived, the DRS will be implemented depending on equipment available at each mission: as an automated system, a mechanical system, or a fully manual system. For posts with the new automated systems, the Department of State and USICA began a 3-year plan for joint procurement of standard minicomputers for some 30 large missions. State was scheduled to fund the equipment for approximately 20 posts and USICA for the remaining 10. At posts with USICA-funded equipment, the Public Affairs Officer is responsible for the central facility including the staff; at posts with equipment not funded by USICA, the mission would have its own terminals for recording and displaying DRS data. In addition, USICA and the State Department would procure standard program-mable word processors (small minicomputers capable of some automated functions) for some 75 small- and medium-sized posts. While this equipment should be shared among several agencies, in most cases it would be necessary to procure separate equipment under a single contract for each agency.

The word processors would be used for all basic DRS operations such as addressing and producing DRS reports, as well as for word processing, and for receiving, editing, and printing the Wireless File. USICA promised indepth training at posts with minicomputers for a systems manager and an operator before the equipment arrived on-site and upon its installation. USICA planned training for posts with word processors at regional workshops and at the posts during followup visits by USICA personnel and contractors.

Central to the successful implementation of the system was the concept that other embassy elements would participate in the DRS coordination of personal contacts.

We found some USICA officers at posts we visited voicing criticisms of the DRS. The objections stated in a letter from the Desk Officer for Tanzania to the African Affairs Director were typical of those heard at posts.

- "When the number of participants is below 200, any PAO [Public Affairs Officer] worth his salt should know off the top of his head who the post (and Mission) is reaching and who it is not. If he cannot do this, he is not doing his job. A computer record should not be necessary for such a small audience.
- "The small post can adequately meet its own accountability needs quickly and efficiently by simply recording manually on the DRS card when a participant attends a major post event, receives a book presentation, etc. Or as appropriate, it can briefly note

on the DRS card that a participant is in close, regular contact with the PAO, IO, [Information Officer] Economic Officer, or whoever. These records, if kept properly, would provide Inspectors with a good feeling of the quality of post communication and would enable incoming officers to see who the post is focusing its efforts on.

--"The mechanical process of filling out the multiple forms, turning names into numerical codes, sending them off to a central computer, then decoding the print-outs when they come back, etc., will require staff time that a small post with 4 to 12 FNE's [Foreign National Employees] cannot spare without seriously detracting from its communication efforts.

--"The Program Record Form is in large measure a duplication of the reporting cable now required for each Ampart. The Contact/Outreach Form and the Program Coding Form would be additional reporting requirements. Our PAO's rightly wonder who we are trying to fool when we talk of reducing the reporting burden.

--"It is unrealistic to expect other Mission officers to faithfully record all substantive contact for the USICA computer. The lack of input from them would result in skewed computer records which might show zero communication with a given participant while in fact he is one of the Political Officer's key contacts in the Foreign Ministry."

In addition to worrying that DRS would be merely an additional administrative burden, officers at several posts questioned the system's purported accountability function. They feared that using the system to check the number and frequency of their personal contacts as part of their performance ratings would be a mistake. Such use of DRS would produce an unfortunate tendency toward merely quantifying their work and could encourage some USICA officers to inflate the figures in their favor by entering false data. This, of course, would invalidate the DRS and render its reliability worthless.

Officers raised another serious concern about the confidentiality of DRS information. Some USICA employees predicted that the mere knowledge among host-country nationals that USICA maintained systematic records on them could be enough to threaten continued personal contacts. In Poland, for example, the system was to have been unclassified until the Public Affairs Officer, Ambassador, and Deputy Chief of Mission made vehement arguments to headquarters against an open DRS.

We also found criticism among some posts for the quality of DRS training which headquarters was providing. USICA Yugoslavia's DRS operator, as are most assigned operators in the Field, has received 1-1/2 weeks of training on the Digital Equipment Corporation minicomputer and 3 weeks on computer systems management. Despite this amount of training plus opportunities to read manuals and to question representatives of the minicomputer company and USICA Washington computer experts, she would like additional training. She is not sure what to do when the machine malfunctions. At two other posts--Lima and Ottawa--we saw indications that DRS technicians considered even their formal training in Washington insufficient for solving system problems.

A major flaw developing in the Field's planned use of DRS seems to be the general unwillingness of other embassy elements--particularly Department of State personnel--to participate in the system. In the majority of Posts we reviewed, USICA officers reported reluctance or refusal of State Department Economic or Political Officers, Deputy Chiefs of Mission, or ambassadors to contribute contacts' names to DRS. In fact, in Nigeria and Yugoslavia, the State Department is considering instituting a personal contact recordkeeping system of its own.

The following table indicates which country posts included in our review do and do not have or expect to have complete State Department participation in DRS, and which have or expect to have only incomplete participation (some State Department officers contributing to DRS, others not contributing):

<u>Complete or potentially complete participation in DRS</u>	<u>No or potentially no participation in DRS</u>	<u>Incomplete participation in DRS</u>	<u>No data available</u>
Costa Rica United Kingdom	Greece Guyana Kuwait Malaysia The Netherlands Nigeria Poland	Australia France Indonesia South Africa Tanzania	Brazil Canada Mexico Pakistan Peru Yugoslavia

Perhaps the most significant problem confronting DRS is the continuous failure to meet delivery dates for computerized equipment. Posts have seen scheduled dates for delivery of both minicomputers and word processors repeatedly revised, pushed back, and even canceled. Although their initial confusion, according to the Director of the Office of Systems Technology, may have resulted from interpreting an original set of tentative dates as firm commitments, the missions have clearly not been supported by Washington. As a consequence, the experiences of several posts have soured their attitudes toward the whole DRS effort:

--USICA Lagos, one of two experimental or model DRS installation sites--with USICA Belgrade--had been scheduled to receive and install its computer equipment by July 1980. As of late November 1980, the equipment's arrival had just been completed and all of the machinery remained in the shipping crates.

--The Post at Jakarta, scheduled to share use of the Agency for International Development's minicomputer in August 1980, learned from AID Jakarta officials that there would be a 2-year delay pending development of software systems. At the time of our visit, a USICA officer said the post was reviewing the alternatives of renting time on a private computer facility or buying the minicomputer for itself.

--USICA Kuala Lumpur, by contrast, had received the minicomputer but a team of USICA computer technicians to install the necessary DRS software had not arrived. The Public Affairs Officer had expected the team in August 1980; with their failure to arrive, he was unsure when they would be rescheduled.

According to USICA's Office of Systems Technology, there are many reasons beyond its control for these scheduling revisions. USICA learned that the word processors' software did not operate as expected and needed to be upgraded so that USICA would not install "an inferior product." Also, the software manufacturer's language development for the more difficult languages--Chinese, Korean, etc.--has been slower than hoped. In addition, hardware support in some areas, particularly in Africa, is not good. With the minicomputers, a major problem has concerned staffing: too much time has been required of systems staff traveling in the field. To compound this, travel funds have been limited, thus requiring fewer staff to travel longer time periods, and prolonging the whole time frame involved. Perhaps most crucial, according to the Systems Technology Office, have been the problems implementing the sharing agreements and equipment purchase contracts between USICA and the State Department. USICA has encountered difficulties as follows:

--Hong Kong, where the State Department has been slow in installing word processor equipment because the Department needs a less sophisticated language capability than USICA requires.

--Kuala Lumpur, where the State Department has been slow in providing a USICA-required equipment upgrade.

--Madrid, the Hague, and Warsaw, where State refused USICA's offer to share word processor equipment and refused to upgrade equipment after USICA had made a commitment to install word processors. This could cause USICA to miss dates scheduled for operator training.



--Worldwide, where State has developed its own software which it "sprung on" USICA, thus rendering compatibility of USICA's and the Department's systems more difficult.

### CONCLUSIONS

The introduction of the new DRS has been plagued by delays in delivering equipment and in providing training for DRS operators. Moreover, USICA Washington's failure to clearly articulate the purpose and utility of the system to the overseas missions fueled confusion and suspicions over the system's ultimate use. That is, USICA officers feared that Washington headquarters would use the accountability function of DRS to evaluate the officers' performance emphasizing only their number of contacts. The prevalence of this suspicion could cause some officers to exaggerate the numbers of their personal contacts entered into DRS and, thus, invalidate the system.

In addition, the lack of coordination of USICA with the Department of State and the Agency for International Development threatens to prevent effective utilization of DRS. Because few embassy elements have indicated their willingness to participate with overseas missions in the DRS, the system will not be able to efficiently coordinate personal contacts and avoid their duplication among USICA and other embassy officers. Consequently, the system will not be a complete and credible accounting of personal contacts.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

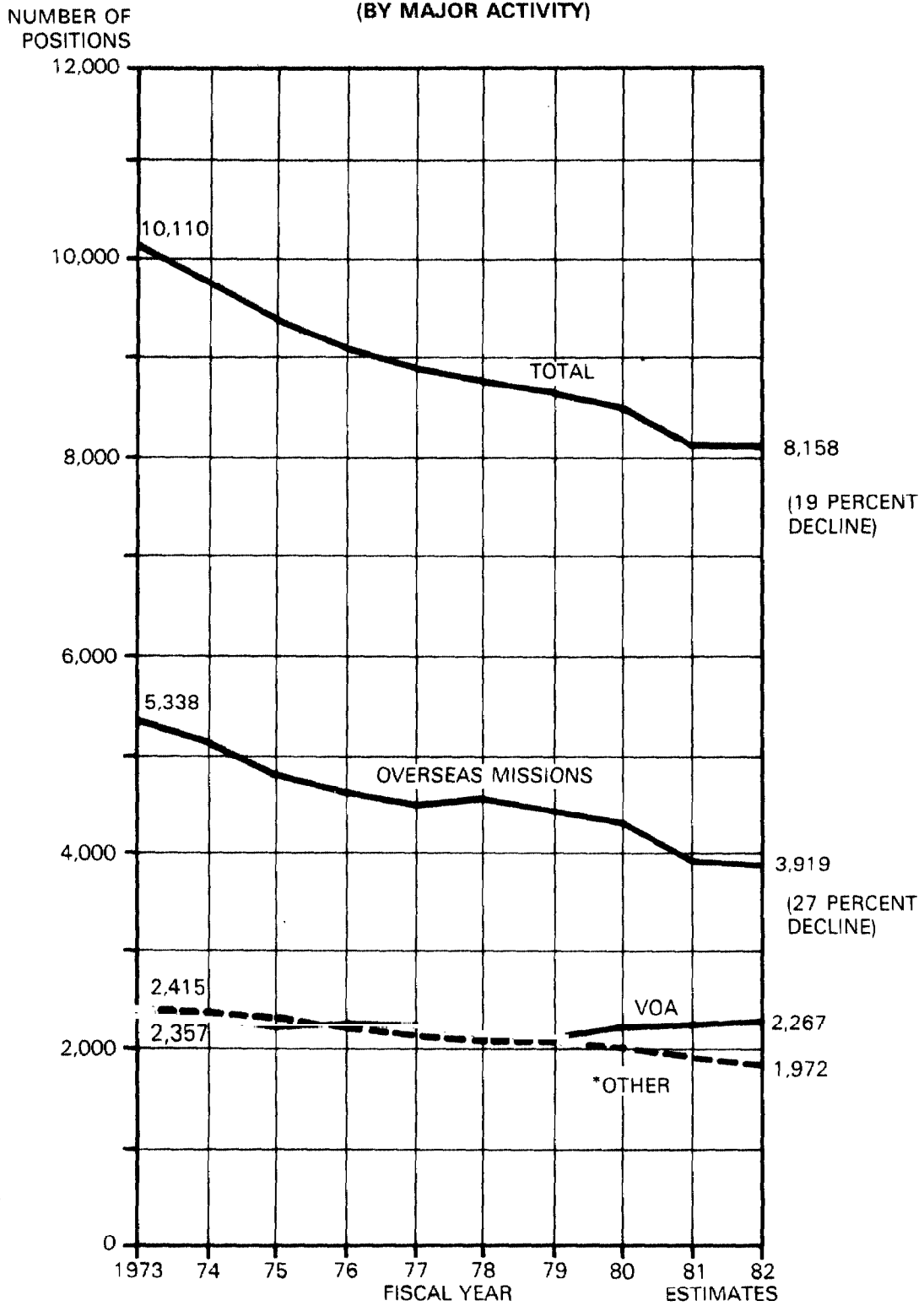
We recommend that the Director take necessary action to

- establish a realistic timetable for the orderly delivery of DRS equipment and the necessary training for system operators, and
- contact the Department of State and the Agency for International Development to solicit their cooperation in ensuring the recording of personal contacts in DRS.

SCHEDULE OF COUNTRIES VISITED BY GAO  
SHOWING ESTIMATED MISSION COSTS AND  
PERSONNEL ASSIGNED FOR FISCAL YEAR 1982

Area	Country	No. of employees			Cost (estimate)
		Americans	Foreign Nationals	Total	
East Asian & Pacific Affairs	Australia	6	24	30	\$ 1,167,498
	Indonesia	11	58	69	762,263
	Malaysia	4	28	32	748,951
African Affairs	Nigeria	14	52	66	2,838,462
	South Africa	9	29	38	867,193
	Tanzania	4	13	17	280,507
North African, Near Eastern, & South Asian Affairs	Kuwait	1	4	5	200,821
	Pakistan	16	-	16	1,858,982
American Republics Affairs	Brazil	27	117	144	3,594,230
	Costa Rica	3	10	13	307,729
	Guyana	2	8	10	221,769
	Mexico	16	82	98	1,956,397
	Peru	6	28	34	550,119
West European Affairs	Canada	6	11	17	401,498
	France	12	55	67	3,891,648
	Greece	7	37	44	1,086,689
	Netherlands	4	12	16	571,420
	United Kingdom	6	24	30	1,373,190
Soviet Union & East European Affairs	Poland	10	25	35	410,952
	Yugoslavia	<u>15</u>	<u>72</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>2,172,226</u>
TOTAL		179	689	868	\$ 25,262,544
TOTAL-USICA-wide				3,919	<u>\$146,194,000</u>
PERCENT OF TOTAL Overseas mission positions				22.15	
PERCENT OF TOTAL Mission costs					17.28

**DISTRIBUTION OF USICA POSITIONS  
(BY MAJOR ACTIVITY)**



\*"OTHER" CONSISTS OF THE ASSOCIATE DIRECTORATES FOR EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS, PROGRAMS, MANAGEMENT, AND OTHER DIRECTION AND SUPPORT ELEMENTS.

SOURCE: UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION AGENCY





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