

**TERM PAPER**

British and US Public Diplomacy in Russia

SUBMITTED TO PROFESSOR WILLIAM A. RUGH

DHPD-204: Seminar on United States Public Diplomacy

SPRING 2008

BY ALEKSEY DOLINSKIY

2008

## Table of contents

Introduction.....	3
British Public Diplomacy in Russia.....	5
Russian – British Diplomatic Relations.....	5
History of the public diplomacy .....	7
Image of Britain in Russia .....	8
Activities of the Embassy .....	11
British Broadcasting Corporation in Russia .....	15
Cultural and Educational Exchanges .....	16
US Public Diplomacy in Russia.....	19
Diplomatic Relations .....	19
History of the US Public Diplomacy .....	21
US Image .....	24
Embassy’s Activities.....	28
American Broadcasting in Russia.....	31
Cultural and Educational Exchange Programs .....	34
Conclusion .....	37
Bibliography .....	41

## Introduction

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America are probably the two nations that have the most sophisticated public diplomacy in the world. For decades the Soviet Union was the main target of their broadcasting, cultural and educational activities but with the end of the Cold War their priorities changed. However, both London and Washington still continue their broadcasting in Russia, fund cultural and educational agencies, arrange events within the embassy. This research paper is aimed at answering the question what determines the attitudes of the Russian population to these two nations and to what extent these attitudes are influenced by their public diplomacy efforts. In order to compare British and US public diplomacy in Russia we have to

- Overview their diplomatic relations with Russia;
- Analyze popular perceptions of the two countries in Russia;
- Look at the history of public diplomacy during the Cold War;
- Research their current broadcasting, cultural and educational exchanges and activities of the embassies in Russia.

Russian public diplomacy efforts in the West have not been included in the research as Moscow is just trying to shape its policies to improve brand “Russia” and its uncoordinated and often inconsistent public diplomacy efforts are hardly comparable to those of the United States and the United Kingdom.

In order to conduct this research project we have used monographs of Russian, British and US scholars, scholarly articles on public diplomacy, newspaper articles from the Russian press, official websites of the embassies, foreign ministries, broadcasting stations

and cultural agencies. In order to estimate the public attitudes towards the United States and Britain Russia, we have also used results of sociological surveys and public polls. Another important source of information to understand the deeper perception of the US and the UK in Russia was Russian blogosphere which is currently the main place for political discussions in the country. Finally, an important source for the research paper were interview with British, Russian and American former and current diplomats, journalists and public diplomacy officers.

# **British Public Diplomacy in Russia**

## ***Russian – British Diplomatic Relations***

Relations between the United Kingdom and the Russian Federation have always been one of the most important foreign policy issues for both countries. After the end of the Cold War the two countries increased their cooperation in international organizations, resolving security issues, trade and investment. In the late 1990s leaders both British and Russian leaders stated that the relations between Moscow and London “have never been better since the end of the World War II”<sup>1</sup>. In the late 1990s both countries have undergone the change of leadership with the young generation of politicians coming to power. Vladimir Putin and Tony Blair seemed to establish a very good personal relationship and the bilateral economic cooperation was also developing. After the attack of 9/11 Britain and Russia fought together against international terrorism and up until 2003 the relationship between the two countries was nearly perfect.

However, after 2003 the relationship between the two countries started deteriorating due to a disagreement over the war in Iraq and different views on other international issues and, more importantly, due to arising of some issues in the bilateral relations. Russia demanded extradition of a prominent leader of the Chechen militants Akhmed Zakayev living openly in London. Britain refused to extradite him and granted him asylum. After that London became a safe haven for nearly everybody seeking protection from the Russian criminal prosecution. Businessmen Boris Berezovsky and Yuliy Dubov charged in Russia for fraud also settled in the United Kingdom. Another

---

<sup>1</sup> Kapitonova Natalya, *Prioritety Vneshney Politiki Velikobritanii (1990 - 1997)* (Moscow: ROSSPAN, 1999). P. 120.

alleged criminal, a former FSB (Federalnaya Sluzhba Bezopasnosti – Federal Security Service) officer Alexander Litvinenko also was granted asylum by Britain. Despite repeated extradition requests and extensive evidence reportedly presented by Russian government officials the United Kingdom refused to extradite anybody. This issue became a major cause of irritation of Russian government officials because all those granted asylum by the British government increased their cooperation between each other and extensively criticized the Russian authorities.

Later, the deterioration of the Russian-British relations continued with a spy scandal after several British diplomats in Moscow were declared persona non grata. An even greater spy scandal came in the fall 2006, when Alexander Litvinenko, a former FSB officer granted asylum in the United Kingdom, was poisoned with a radioactive substance. The UK prosecution accused of this murder a Russian citizen and demanded his extradition. The Russian government refused to do so saying that the Russian Constitution prohibits extraditing citizens of the country. In 2007 the alleged murderer of Alexander Litvinenko was elected to the Russian Parliament which caused even greater dissatisfaction of the British side.

Finally in 2007 the Russian government demanded closing of the British Council in Russia. The British Council had 16 regional departments in the Russian Federation (more than in any other country) which, according to the Russian authorities, were not properly registered as the Russian legislation demands it. The decision to close the British Council in all the Russian cities except Moscow came after two years of constant requests to register all the BC branches as NGOs in accordance with Russian law. The two sides tried to negotiating on the status of the BC in Russia but without any success. According

to the British side, all the branches of the BC were parts of either the embassy or the consulates. Meanwhile the Russian government claimed that, according to the bilateral agreement, Britain was allowed only one cultural agency as a part of the embassy in the capital meaning that branches in all other cities were literally illegal. According to unofficial comments by the Russian diplomats dealing with the situation, the motivation behind this decision was the overall dissatisfaction with the British approach to the bilateral relations, not an attempt to limit UK public diplomacy in Russia.<sup>2</sup>

### ***History of the public diplomacy***

The start of British public diplomacy in Russia is connected with the Cold War which was defined by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as “a struggle for men’s minds. Struggle to determine whether the mass of mankind will look for hope towards the Soviet Union or towards the Western democracies”.<sup>3</sup> In 1948 in the FCO there was established the Information Research Department (IRD) which was responsible for the peacetime propaganda against communism.<sup>4</sup> One of its main functions was what John Jenks described as “information factory”: bringing in facts from around the world with which to create a variety of anti-Communist news and information products.<sup>5</sup> In the early 1950-s the IRD was spending 75% of its budget for articles and other operations that “which could not possibly be acknowledged by Her Majesty’s Government”.<sup>6</sup> After Stalin’s death and a start of a “thaw” in the relationship between the USSR and the West,

---

<sup>2</sup> Interview with a Russian Foreign Ministry British Department officer. 03.20.08

<sup>3</sup> Philip M. Taylor, *British Propaganda in the 20th Century : Selling Democracy*, International Communications (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999). P. 227.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. P. 237.

<sup>5</sup> John Jenks, *British Propaganda and News Media in the Cold War*, International Communications (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006). P. 62.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. P. 63.

British public diplomacy turned to “reflexive anti-Communism” and followed that pattern until the late 70-s.<sup>7</sup>

Probably the most important part of the British public diplomacy in the Soviet Union during the Cold War was BBC broadcasting. President Eisenhower insisted that Voice of America broadcasts would follow the BBC standard<sup>8</sup> meaning this was precisely what was required to be efficient in public diplomacy. Soviet bloc audiences considered BBC the most trustworthy Western media<sup>9</sup>, often listening to BBC broadcasts to confirm Radio Free Europe news (Radio Free Europe is a US public diplomacy broadcaster). However, in the late 70-s BBC changed its policy. According to its charter, the BBC does not take sides; however, in its broadcasts to non-democratic, oppressive states it should be seen as an emanation of a free, pluralistic, and democratic society that upholds and publicizes its values.<sup>10</sup> As a result BBC was popular and it was considered the most reliable Western source of information as well as freedom supporter. However, in general the British public diplomacy during the Cold War was considered elite-oriented.<sup>11</sup>

### ***Image of Britain in Russia***

The image of Britain in Russia has attracted a number of researches in recent years due to the increasing complications of the bilateral relationship. According to a research conducted in 2007 by one of the most respected Russian polling agencies

---

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. P. 8.

<sup>8</sup> Gregory Mitrovich, "Cold War Broadcasting Impact: Conference Summary," (A Conference Organized by the Hoover Institution and the Cold War International History Project of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars at Stanford University: 2004). P. 9.  
[http://wwics.si.edu/news/docs/ref\\_october.pdf](http://wwics.si.edu/news/docs/ref_october.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> These are our personal observations based on interviews and literature about BBC operations during the Cold War.

<sup>10</sup> Mitrovich, "Cold War Broadcasting Impact: Conference Summary." P. 12

<sup>11</sup> Carnes Lord and Helle C. Dale, "Public Diplomacy and the Cold War: Lessons Learned. ," (2007),  
[http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/upload/bg\\_2070.pdf](http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/upload/bg_2070.pdf).



VCIOM (Vserossiyskiy Centr Isucheniya Obschestvennogo mneniya – Russian Public Opinion Research Center), one third of the Russian public considered Britain a strategic and economic partner (25%) or, moreover, a state friendly towards Russia (9%). However, some 34% of the population responded that they view the United Kingdom as a political competitor to Russia, while 12% even called it a potential enemy. Only 4% of the Russia population called the bilateral relations friendly, 5% said they were “good”, and 30% characterized them as “normal”. According to all other answers, the relations between the Russian Federation and Britain were “chilled”, “tensed” or even “hostile”. At the same time over one third of the population had not heard about the controversies between the two countries prior to the poll and 51% of the Russians were sure there would be no serious consequences of the conflict.<sup>12</sup>

The current situation in Russian – British relations attracts a lot of attention of the public and is being widely discussed in blogs. The Russian blogosphere is currently divided: some Internet users support the actions of the Russian government aimed at closing the British Council saying that this is a way of protecting Russian sovereignty.<sup>13</sup> However, most bloggers write about the situation with sarcasm explicitly showing that they do not approve the idea of forcing the British Council to leave.<sup>14</sup> Graduates of the British Council’s programs are pursuing a joint effort to defend the organization. They have blogs and websites advocating the British Council and demanding to seize all the

---

<sup>12</sup> "Press-Vypusk 743. Rossia I Britaniya: Novoy Holodnoy Voyni Ne Budet!," <http://wciom.ru/arkhiv/tematicheskii-arkhiv/item/single/8594.html>.

<sup>13</sup> "Anglischanka"-Geopoliticheskiy Protivnik Nover Odin, <http://a-eliseev.livejournal.com/414187.html>.

<sup>14</sup> Knigi - Nicht!, <http://virtual-mk2.livejournal.com/49368.html>.

governmental activities against it.<sup>15</sup> Hundreds of Russian students joined an online group named “Hands off from British Council” at a Russian social network vkontakte.ru.<sup>16</sup>

A distinguished Russian public relations agency conducted in 2007 another research project aimed at in-depth understanding of the Russian elite’s attitude towards the United Kingdom. The focus group included some 20 Russian members of executive and legislative branches of government, businessmen and political analysts. According to the research, despite the recent deterioration of relations, the elite retained the same attitude towards the country in general. The United Kingdom is viewed as a leading sea power, an important country politically and economically. The fact that Britain is a democratic and a multi-ethnic state is also viewed positively. It is associated with culture, science and traditions. At the same time there are some negative points in the image of Britain: focus group participants called it arrogant, manipulating and Byzantine. Russian elite is very well informed about the British history, literature, music, sports. Britain is considered as one of the architects of the contemporary world and is an important actor of world politics. The focus group participants named two main reasons for the problems in the bilateral relations:

1. The United Kingdom does not understand Russia’s intentions and therefore cannot decide if Russia is its ally, partner or competitor.
2. Russia’s domestic political situation remains an obstacle to the development of Russian – British relations.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> "We Are for British Council in Russia!," <http://weareforbritishcouncil.wordpress.com/>.

<sup>16</sup> "Ruki Proch Ot Britanskogo Soveta," <http://vkontakte.ru/club1218805>.

<sup>17</sup> "Image Velikobritanii V Vospriyatii Rossiyskoy Politicheskoy Elity," [http://www.nikkolom.ru/2007/enland\\_.htm](http://www.nikkolom.ru/2007/enland_.htm).

## ***Activities of the Embassy***

One of the main advantages of British public diplomacy is the fact that it has been very well institutionalized in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. In order to sell a policy you need to get the public diplomacy people into decision making as early as possible. According to the Press Secretary and Head of News at the British Embassy in Washington Nick Allan, one cannot have a successful career in the FCO unless he had a public diplomacy position. This change was introduced after 1997 with Blair's government. The United Kingdom has also recently changed its public diplomacy objectives. Instead of promoting Britain, public diplomacy officers at all the embassies now promote the four issues that are considered most important by the UK government: counter-terrorism, environment, conflict resolution and international institutions.<sup>18</sup> This is a relatively recent change which has seemingly not yet been incorporated into strategic documents. In the UK public diplomacy strategy 2003 promoting the country as a business partner and a tourist destination was still the main target.<sup>19</sup> This strategy was reviewed in December 2005 by Lord Carter of Coles and a small secretariat from the FCO, but the review only came with a conclusion suggesting establishing a Public Diplomacy Board headed by the Foreign Minister that would be responsible for working out a new strategy. In 2006 British public diplomacy was reviewed again, this time by the parliamentary committee which came with exactly the same conclusion: the Public

---

<sup>18</sup> Washington Nick Allan Press Secretary and Head of News British Embassy, D.C. February 25, 2008 at the Fletcher School.

<sup>19</sup> "Public Diplomacy Strategy,"

[http://www.fco.gov.uk/Files/kfile/Annex%20C%20Public%20Diplomacy%20Strategy%20\(May%202003\).pdf](http://www.fco.gov.uk/Files/kfile/Annex%20C%20Public%20Diplomacy%20Strategy%20(May%202003).pdf).

Diplomacy Strategy has to be revised.<sup>20</sup> Apparently, the result of this revision has not yet been publicized but the fact that the FCO now promotes the four key issues, not the country itself, is a good indicator the new strategy is already being applied. As Lord Triesman put it in his speech in 2007, despite the fact that foreigners felt warm about the United Kingdom, it was not necessary that they felt the same way about Britain's role in world politics and this was the reason for the shift.<sup>21</sup> Apparently, the shift for the British public diplomacy is from promoting the good attitude to the nation in general to winning support for its policies, especially foreign policy which is obviously not the same.

All the four issues even get separate funding so each event or policy has to be assigned to a particular issue to get its budget. However specifically in Russia, the British Embassy outlines three major issues for public diplomacy: climate change, economic governance and liberal democracy. According to our observations, the United Kingdom does not promote international institutions in Russia which may be explained by the fact that the Russian Federation is by no means less devoted to the idea of multilateralism in the world politics than the UK so there is simply no need to advocate this issue.

The Embassy sponsors "projects costing £5k-30k (more in exceptional cases), which aim to inform and engage individuals and organisations, in order to improve understanding of and influence for the United Kingdom in a manner consistent with governmental medium

---

<sup>20</sup> (Third Report from the Foreign Affairs Committee. Session 2005 – 2006. Public Diplomacy. Response of the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs.), <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm68/6840/6840.pdf>, "Third Report from the Foreign Affairs Committee. Session 2005 – 2006. Public Diplomacy. Response of the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs," <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm68/6840/6840.pdf>.

<sup>21</sup> "Public Diplomacy: Steps to the Future," (2007), <http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029391647&a=KArticle&aid=1176969284086>.

and long-term goals”.<sup>22</sup> Besides, there are several other funds affiliated with the FCO and operate through the Embassy: Global Opportunities Fund Economic Reform, Global Opportunities Fund (Human Rights), Global Conflict Prevention Pool, Global Opportunities Fund – Climate Change and Energy Programme, Bilateral Project Programme, all of them also providing finance for projects in Russia.<sup>23</sup> Meanwhile, currently it is not really clear if being sponsored by the British Embassy would make a project more popular among the Russian audience. According to the recent changes in the Russian legislation, nonprofits have to report to authorities about all the money they received from foreign organizations or foreign nationals. This is especially important for the British Embassy since in 2005 the Embassy was involved in a spy scandal and one of the alleged spies working for the Embassy was responsible for relations with Russian NGOs. As a result, some Russian NGOs were also suspected of participating in spying activities.<sup>24</sup>

According to Mr. Allan, there is no need for the British to promote Europe, since other European nations do it and there is no need for the embassies to promote just the United Kingdom as it is being promoted by private tourist agencies, universities attracting students etc. Besides, the BBC and the British Council also conduct public diplomacy in its traditional sense including promoting the Foggy Albion itself.

Since public diplomacy instruments are generally unable to reach the entire population, they target specific influential individuals. Thus the embassy’s role is focused on the

---

<sup>22</sup> "Public Diplomacy Fund. British Embassy, Russia ",  
<http://www.britishembassy.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1166534302266>.

<sup>23</sup> "Embassy Project Activities. British Embassy, Russia.,"  
<http://www.britishembassy.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1115138318632>.

<sup>24</sup> Elena Mayakova, "Shpionskiy Scandal," *Russkiy Journal*, no. 01.30.2006.

carefully selected target audiences. According to Mr. Allan, one has to identify who the players are. As Mr. Allan put it, “we are looking for the key people. We find the influencers and then look for what influences the influencers. It’s advocacy work similar to that one of the NGOs.”

The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office is one of the most advanced foreign ministries in the world in terms of the use of Internet technologies. Currently they have several bloggers from the Office constantly posting about their experience during the service. It is important to mention that those bloggers include both top ministerial officials and young diplomats so the audience gets a balanced view of what’s going on in the Foreign Service.<sup>25</sup> The blogs are located on the official FCO website and linked to other pages so it is definitely an official public diplomacy effort which still has a major drawback as it hasn’t been translated into foreign languages. The website of the British Embassy in Russia also does not have any blogs in Russian which seems especially strange given the amount of attention the United Kingdom has recently attracted in the Russian blogosphere. Mr. Allan also admitted the FCO currently is not doing well on the Internet as just posting new Prime Minister’s messages and interviews seems to him a little bit passive.

Mr. Allan said that there is not enough connection between the government and the diplomatic service. This may present a challenge since the FCO is not the only governmental agency involved in public diplomacy. Public diplomacy is also being conducted by the BBC World Service which is fiercely independent. Situation is a bit different with the British Council that does agree with the FCO’s priorities but its relationship with the embassy may be different depending on the country oversees. In

---

<sup>25</sup> "Fco Bloggers: Global Conversations.," <http://blogs.fco.gov.uk/>.

Russia this relationship is relatively close due to the complexity of the intergovernmental relations of the two countries and the problems that the British Council is currently experiencing. However, the Embassy's ability to regulate

### ***British Broadcasting Corporation in Russia***

Russia remains one of the target audiences for the British overseas broadcasting. However, the Russian Federation is apparently not the top priority, as there are no British television channels broadcasting in Russian. Meanwhile, the government of the United Kingdom has recently established a new TV-channel that works both in English and Arabic and is aimed mostly, although not only, at winning the hearts and minds of the Arab and Muslim world. <sup>26</sup>

The only British broadcasting station targeting Russian is the Russian service of the BBC World Service. Established over 60 years ago, it still remains an important source of information for many Russians. However, its importance has now significantly decreased as there are many other independent sources of information and AM Radio has become less popular in general. Still, the BBC Russian Service broadcasts several hours in the morning and several hours in the night in Russian, filling the gap during the afternoon by the BBC World broadcast in English.<sup>27</sup> Currently BBC Russian Service can hardly compete with numerous news radio stations broadcasting in the FM spectrum and therefore its significance is very low. For example, in Moscow it has only about 47,000

---

<sup>26</sup> "British Satellite News (Bsn). ," <http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1106750245959>.

<sup>27</sup> "Rapisaniye Peredach Russkoy Sluzhby Bbc. ," <http://www.bbc.co.uk/russian/Programmeswinter2007.htm>.

daily and 142,000 weekly listeners.<sup>28</sup> Besides, it uses basically the same sources as other news services (mostly news agencies) which leaves it no competitive advantage except for the power of the brand and an opportunity to listen to the English language for learning purposes. The latter, however, becomes less and less popular with the rapid spread of Internet access in Russia. Apparently the service is also no longer considered oppositional to the Russian government as it cooperates with some of the Russian state-owned media and state universities.<sup>29</sup> However, the website of the radio station remains rather popular and it is more popular than the radio station itself. Still, it is definitely not in the top 20 of the Russian news websites.<sup>30</sup> In 2006 the budget of BBC Russian Service was nearly 6 million pounds, making it the third best funded after the Arabic and Persian/Pushtu services.<sup>31</sup>

### ***Cultural and Educational Exchanges***

The British Council is the British cultural exchange agency which works in 110 countries and territories including the Russian Federation.<sup>32</sup> Just like BBC World Service, the British Council is being funded by the British government and is monitored by the Public Diplomacy Board retaining its operational independence. Its official purpose is “to build mutually beneficial relationships between people in the UK and other countries and to increase appreciation of the UK’s creative ideas and achievements”.<sup>33</sup> Until recently, the British Council operated in 16 Russian cities. However, currently there are only three

---

<sup>28</sup> "Comcom Radio Monitoring. ," [http://www.radioportal.ru/download/ratings/msk\\_jan2008.pdf](http://www.radioportal.ru/download/ratings/msk_jan2008.pdf).

<sup>29</sup> "Partnery. ," <http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/russian/partners/default.stm>.

<sup>30</sup> "Rating Novostnih Smi," <http://www.superjob.ru/research/articles/613/>.

<sup>31</sup> "Third Report from the Foreign Affairs Committee. Session 2005 – 2006. Public Diplomacy. Response of the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs."

<sup>32</sup> "Contact Us in 110 Countries Worldwide - Contact Us - British Council," <http://www.britishcouncil.org/home-contact-worldwide.htm?mtklink=corporate-homepage-contact-us-worldwide>.

<sup>33</sup> "Our Purpose and Direction. ," <http://www.britishcouncil.org/home-about-us-purpose-and-values.htm>.



offices left and two of them were also forced to cease their activities due to the problems with their legal status. The main office of the British Council in Moscow still operates in three major areas:

1. English language instruction and examining;
2. Promotion of the British education and providing scholarships;
3. Local cultural and educational projects.

According to the official information of the British Council, in 2006 nearly half a million of the Russian people participated in its events.<sup>34</sup> There are still a couple of scholarships provided by the British government for the Russian students to study in the British universities.<sup>35</sup> However, the number of Russian students funded by the British government is very limited – not more than 20 students every year, and the programs are only targeted at master programs. Besides, the funding is usually not enough to cover top-level universities, which also decreases the efficiency of the programs. Apparently, this scarcity of resources allocated by the British government can be explained by the fact that some “2,000 Russians studied full-time in the UK last year (2006), with a further 21,000 enrolling in shorter courses”.<sup>36</sup> With this number of Russians studying in the United Kingdom and paying their own expenses, probably there is no need for the British government to invest more resources in paying for the tuition. Among the cultural events organized by the British Council in 2007 there are art exhibitions, cultural exchanges, school libraries festivals etc.<sup>37</sup> Another interesting project organized by the British Council was an attempt to bring together Russian and British football fans. The two

---

<sup>34</sup> "Tsifry i Fakty," <http://www.britishcouncil.org/ru/russia-about-us-press-room-facts.htm>.

<sup>35</sup> "Chevening Stipend ", <http://www.britishcouncil.org/ru/russia-scholarships-chevening.htm>.

<sup>36</sup> Tony Brenton, "Disagreements between Moscow and London Needed to Be Overcome," *Nezavisimaya Newspaper*, no. 14/09/07.

<sup>37</sup> "Art," <http://www.britishcouncil.org/ru/russia-projects-arts.htm>.

countries had to face each other in the European Football Cup Qualification and the British Council tried to use an event which usually separates nations to bring them together.<sup>38</sup> The British Council also fosters cooperation between the scientists of the two nations. It runs an International Network for young scientist which allows them to communicate and arrange scientific exchanges.<sup>39</sup> Since May 2005 the BC has been running in Russia a Climate Change program aimed at educating broad public about the consequences of the global warming<sup>40</sup>, fully complying with the four major issues for British public diplomacy. Among the coming projects there is journalist training program<sup>41</sup>, Russia-UK young film-makers project<sup>42</sup> and a theatre festival<sup>43</sup>.

---

<sup>38</sup> "Football Unites," <http://www.britishcouncil.org/russia-science-football-unites.htm>.

<sup>39</sup> "Scientist-to-Scientist Links." (Place Published), <http://www.britishcouncil.org/russia-science-projects-network-young-scientists.htm>.

<sup>40</sup> "Climate Change," <http://www.britishcouncil.org/russia-science-projects-climate-change.htm>.

<sup>41</sup> "Building Trust, Challenging Stereotypes," <http://www.britishcouncil.org/russia-projects-education-building-trust.htm>.

<sup>42</sup> "Under the Skin," <http://www.britishcouncil.org/russia-arts-under-the-skin.htm>.

<sup>43</sup> "Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Moscow," <http://www.britishcouncil.org/russia-arts-edinburgh-fringe-festival.htm>.

# US Public Diplomacy in Russia

## *Diplomatic Relations*

For the Russian Federation, the Russian-US relationship has always been the most important issue while for the United States it is not the key foreign policy priority. This fundamental difference in approaches to the bilateral relationship results in numerous contradictions between the two countries.

Russia changed its attitude towards the United States in the late 80-s when, after a series of meetings, Gorbachev and Reagan declared the two countries were no longer enemies. From the Russian perspective this was the end of the Cold War while for the Americans the Cold War only ended with the breakup of the Soviet Union. This crucial contradiction has very important consequences: both the Russian government and the Russian public believe the Cold War was ended by both nations while the US side believes it won in the Cold War. According to the Russian view, the war was over by 1987 – 1988 when the two parties said they did not see each other as adversaries anymore.

After the end of the Cold War, the United States indeed no longer treated Russia as an enemy rather like a problem. The US had to ensure Russian nuclear weapons remained under control and the country followed the democratic path, not return to communism and would remain a partner for the US not an adversary again. By the year 1995, all the nuclear arsenals from the former Soviet Republics were brought to Russia and it became clear that Moscow is not turning back to communism. At this point Russia's role in the US foreign policy became less important and the American leaders

started paying less attention to the opinion of their Russian counterparts. This coincided with the start of the

NATO enlargement process - the issue that caused serious contradictions between the two countries. According to the Russian side, when Germany was re-unified the Soviet Union and the West reached an informal agreement that stated NATO would not be expanded further to the East. In 1995 NATO started discussing the enlargement process and Russia strongly objected to it. The first Russian President Boris Yeltsin even changed the country's foreign minister appointing a hawk Primakov instead of a dove Kozyrev. NATO's expansion was seen by the Russian side as an extremely unfriendly act. The tension between the two countries then grew tremendously in 1999 as a result of the US-led operation in Yugoslavia. Russia used all the possibilities it had to express its dissatisfaction with the bombings of this country and cut all its cooperation with the United States in the security field. At the same time the United States fiercely criticized Russia for the war in Chechnya.<sup>44</sup>

The change in the relationship came as a result of the 9/11 terrorist attack. Russia was one of the first countries to offer its help and support to the United States and it did support the US in Afghanistan. The leaders of the two countries established a good personal relationship which also contributed to the increase if cooperation between the two nations. Russia joined the US in the anti-terrorist coalition but the coalition itself didn't last too long as Moscow strongly opposed the idea of the new invasion into Iraq.

Currently there are a few issues over which the countries still cannot agree. Russia strongly opposes the US plans to establish Anti-Missile Defense bases in Eastern Europe

---

<sup>44</sup> Eric Shiraev and V. M. Zubok, *Anti-Americanism in Russia : From Stalin to Putin*, 1st ed. (New York: Palgrave, 2000). P. 136.

saying that it might compromise the strategic parity and thus spark a new round of the arms race. Another issue which has remained on the table for a while is NATO enlargement. After the first enlargement in 1999, the organization expanded again in 2004 this time including among other new members three former Soviet republics and in 2008 further expansion of NATO to the East is again being discussed. This time NATO may include the post-Soviet nations that Russia traditionally considered part of its orbit: Ukraine and Georgia. The conflict in Kosovo still remains an issue in the Russian-US relations as the two sides cannot agree on the future status of the region. Besides, the United States fiercely criticizes Russia for the situation with the freedom of speech which Russia considers interference into its internal affairs. However, the two countries maintain close cooperation in the fields of counter-terrorism and non-proliferation. They work together, albeit not without some contradictions, to resolve the issues of Iran and North Korea. Economic collaboration between the countries has also been developing in the past years.

### ***History of the US Public Diplomacy***

During the Cold War public diplomacy was one of the main tools of the US foreign policy. According to Yale Richmond, who studied the American cultural exchange programs during the Cold War years, there were several reasons for the demise of the Soviet Union: the U.S. military buildup, and “Star Wars,” economic mismanagement, the introduction of glasnost, and the impact of Western radio broadcasts.<sup>45</sup> The cultural exchanges between the two superpowers were made possible

---

<sup>45</sup> Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange & the Cold War : Raising the Iron Curtain* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003). P. xiii.

by the “Agreement between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on Exchanges in the Cultural, Technical, and Educational Fields,” signed on 27 January 1958. According to Richmond, one of the first Russian citizens to travel to the US was a KGB officer while the United States Information Agency (USIA) decided not to use the cultural exchanges for the intelligence purposes. One of the cultural exchange initiatives was a program of USIA –administered exhibits in the Soviet Union that attracted tremendous attention.<sup>46</sup> The first American exhibition in Moscow in 1959 was attended by 2.7 million Soviet citizens. Surprisingly both to the Soviet hosts and the USIA, one of the most popular items of the exhibition were 75 young American guides. These were Russian-speaking volunteers that were asked question about all aspects of life in the US.<sup>47</sup> A similar Soviet program in the US was far less popular.

After the end of the Cold War the cultural and educational exchanges funding was immediately cut as Russia became less important for the US foreign policy. From 1995 to 2001, academic and cultural exchanges fell from 45,000 to 29,000.<sup>48</sup> During the Cold War years the USIA distributed magazines in the Soviet Union some of which were covered by the bilateral agreement and some were not. For example, the “America” magazine complied fully with the treaty while another magazine “Dialog” didn’t. Five thousand copies of the “Dialog” quarterly were distributed by the embassy and the consulate in Leningrad without any official blessing from the Soviet authorities. This was only possible as the Soviet Union did exactly the same and therefore did not interfere into the distribution of the “Dialog” magazine. The magazine was targeted at the Soviet

---

<sup>46</sup> James Critchlow, "Public Diplomacy During the Cold War: The Record and Its Implications," *Journal of Cold War Studies* Vol. 6, No. 1, Winter 2004. P. 77.

<sup>47</sup> Wilson P. Dizard, *Inventing Public Diplomacy : The Story of the U.S. Information Agency* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2004). P. 73-74.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* P. 84.

intellectuals and among its contributors were prominent American political writers George F. Kennan and Seymour Martin Lipset.<sup>49</sup>

American public culture was also an important tool of influencing Soviet public opinion. New York Times correspondent Thom Shanker, who worked in Moscow in 1980-s, remembers seeing significant numbers of Russians coming to movie shows at the American embassy and that the movies depicting the US everyday life were always more popular than the best science fiction.<sup>50</sup> The Russians were really interested in the United States and considered the movies as a way of learning more about the American way of life. According to Yale Richmond, the American movies, prior to being sold to the USSR, had to be approved by the State Department as the Soviet Union was always trying to purchase movies depicting social problems of the United States.<sup>51</sup>

One of the most important tools of US public diplomacy in the Soviet Union was radio broadcasting. Shortwave stations Radio Liberty and Voice of America could transmit to the Soviet audience from the Western countries therefore not requiring approval from the Russian authorities. To counter this broadcasting the Soviet Union established a vast network of jammers that was especially efficient in the big cities. However, it was less effective in the rural areas and even in the big cities if a listener had a decent radio it was possible to listen to American broadcasting.<sup>52</sup> VOA was trying to highlight the most controversial issues of the Soviet politics and even cause internal discontent. For example, in the early 1970-s, a decision was made to stop using the term Soviet when referring to the population of the USSR. Instead the VOA journalists would

---

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.. P. 79.

<sup>50</sup> Thom Shanker speaking at the Fletcher School. March 29 2008.

<sup>51</sup> Richmond, *Cultural Exchange & the Cold War : Raising the Iron Curtain*. P. 129 – 130.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. P. 185.

use the names of the ethnic groups inhabiting the Soviet Union thereby trying to increase the complexity of the interethnic relations in the country.<sup>53</sup>

## ***US Image***

The United States is the only superpower and it is natural that its policies attract a lot of public attention. Besides, during the second half of the twentieth century the US remained Russia's rival in world politics and today's attitude towards this country is partly shaped by the Cold War era experiences. However, the Russian public remains generally positive about the United States. According to public opinion polls, the Russian population has been having favorable opinion about the United States nearly all the time since 2001 till the present time. One of the most respected Russian independent polling centers Levada Center claims that the attitude of more than half of Russians is nearly always "very good" or just "generally good" while the number of those feeling "generally bad" or "very bad" towards the US remains relatively small. However, between February and July 2003 (during the start of the war in Iraq) the attitudes shifted and majority of the population felt negative about the United States. In 2007 there were two months when the net attitude was negative (44 negative / 45 positive in February and 44 / 47 in March).<sup>54</sup>

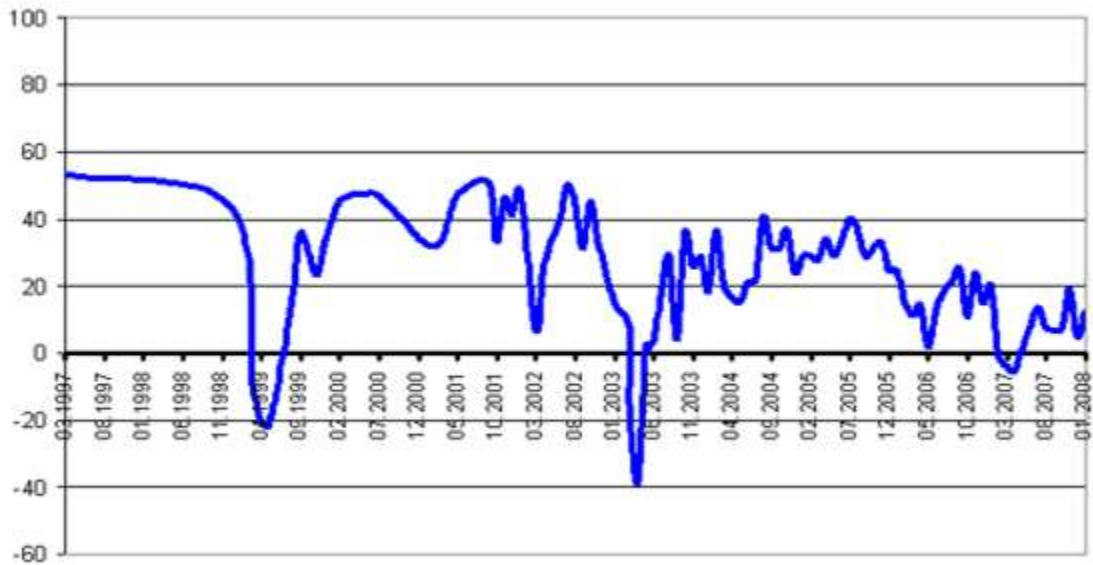
The graph below represents the shifts in the net attitude of the Russian public.

---

<sup>53</sup> Laurien Alexandre, *The Voice of America : From Detente to the Reagan Doctrine*. (Norwood, N.J. : Ablex Pub. Corp., 1988). P. 26.

<sup>54</sup> "Obschestvennoe Mnenie: Otnoshenie K USA," <http://www.iamik.ru/?op=full&what=content&ident=39957>.





The most notable shift attitudes take place during the worst periods in the Russian-US relations due to: the war in Yugoslavia, and the war in Iraq. The latest change of attitudes in 2007 is connected with the tension in bilateral relations over US missile defense plans.<sup>55</sup> However, the good attitude towards the United States does not necessarily mean the same attitude towards the American policies. A majority of the Russian population believes the US is rather unfriendly, not friendly towards Russia. And the number of those believing that the US is rather friendly has only been close to the number of those not trusting the US between the 9/11 and February 2002 when the issue of Iraq invasion arose. About half of the Russian population thinks the United States impact on world affairs is negative and only about a third of this amount says it is positive.<sup>56</sup>

Coverage of the United States in the Russian media is very complicated. In many cases the US is being represented as the best example of a democracy and a market

<sup>55</sup> "Narodnie Imperialisty," <http://wciom.ru/arkhiv/tematicheskii-arkhiv/item/single/4191.html>.

<sup>56</sup> "11 Sentyabrya: 5 Let Spustya," [http://bd.fom.ru/report/cat/\\_west\\_rel/Russia\\_USA/dd063524](http://bd.fom.ru/report/cat/_west_rel/Russia_USA/dd063524).

economy. Many liberal journalists, economists, political thinkers would refer to the United States as the country they want Russia to be like. Jonathan A. Becker, who closely studied the way the US is shown in the Soviet and Russian media, says the American examples are often used as a platform to make points about the Russian politics. Becker mentions that in all the publications covered in his research the socioeconomic and political developments inside the United States are never viewed constantly critically or laudatory. Instead nearly always a Russian angle is found.<sup>57</sup> In covering US domestic affairs Russian media are relatively homogenous: journalists do admit the US successes in socioeconomic development but they are often happy to notice Americans also may have problems in internal politics. However, it may be explained by the fact that for a long period of time Russians have been viewing the United States as the most successful nation and comparing the situation in Russian to the situation in the US often makes their nation less attractive. As a result of this competitive approach, Russians often want to see problems in the US domestic politics to ensure they are not the only ones encountering challenges in the everyday life. At the same time Russians are always sympathetic to the US in the times of tragedies such as the terrorist attack of the 9/11 or the Katrina hurricane.<sup>58</sup>

The situation is completely different with foreign affairs though. In this case the United States is not being compared to Russia. Instead, most journalists try to estimate the impact of the US foreign policy on the world affairs and on the Russian Federation. Given the US unilateral approach to world politics, the attitude towards the American foreign policy is often negative. Liberal oppositional media, which mostly portray the

---

<sup>57</sup> Jonathan A. Becker. *Soviet and Russian Press Coverage of the United States*. P. 147.

<sup>58</sup> Mikhail Delyagin, "11 Senyabrya 2001 Goda: Zaversheniye Formirovaniya Postsovetskogo Mira," <http://www.voy.com/36093/659.html>

United States as a success story and the example to follow for Russia, try to be neutral or favorable in covering the US foreign policy<sup>59</sup> not to criticize its favorite best practices example. However, other media, especially those government controlled or leftist oppositional press, remains critical of the US foreign policy.<sup>60</sup> All the issues in Russian-US relations are being covered by the media and that definitely influences Russian public opinion. However, it is not that the government is intentionally trying to foster anti-Americanism in Russia because even the media that are not government controlled but are not liberal still remain largely critical of US foreign policy.

Eagerness to criticize the American foreign policy can be especially well seen in the Russian blogosphere. Political blogging has become extremely popular in Russia in the last years and international relations are one of the most discussed issues. Because of the US importance for Russian foreign policy and world politics, it gets most attention. The United States is blamed for the attempts to include Ukraine in NATO<sup>61</sup>, for the plans to build anti-missile defense facilities in Europe<sup>62</sup>, for the situation in Kosovo<sup>63</sup>. The New York Times has established its own blog in the Russian blogosphere and most of its articles featuring Russia are being translated and posted there. Some of the comments are translated into English and posted on the NYT website. The blog attracts tremendous attention of the Russian Internet users. For example, the article about Russian President Putin and President-elect Medvedev meeting the US Secretaries of State and Defense Rice and Gates over the anti-missile defense by a famous international correspondent and

---

<sup>59</sup> Dmitry Trenin, "America Esche Uverenneye Poydet Po Miru," *Novaya Gazeta* 2006.

<sup>60</sup> Vladimir Filin, "Ne Smotrite Holluwoodskie Filmy," 2006., Andrey Baranov, "Rossiya I Zapad Na Grani Novoy "Holodnoy Voyni"," *Komsomolskaya Pravda* 2007.

<sup>61</sup> "Ukraine," <http://n-a-g.livejournal.com/51369.html>,

<sup>62</sup> "Voyny Stanut Nevidimymi," <http://sofia-vb-888.livejournal.com/1399.html>.

<sup>63</sup> "Meeting V Podderzhku Kosovskih Serbov," [http://community.livejournal.com/politics\\_ru/1540611.html](http://community.livejournal.com/politics_ru/1540611.html).

a Fletcher alumnus Thom Shanker received over two hundred comments by the Russian Internet users. Most of the comments were very critical of US foreign policy and explicitly stating it contradicts the Russian interests.<sup>64</sup>

US domestic affairs are also monitored by the Russian bloggers, partly due to the fact that some of them live in the United States. They follow closely the presidential election campaign and often demonstrate very good knowledge of the American party politics.<sup>65</sup> Just like in the traditional media, the United States is often used as a platform for a point in the Russian blogosphere. Some of the bloggers remain extremely critical of the US, some are absolutely supportive but most of the Internet users treat the United States with respect although not approving the American foreign policy.

### ***Embassy's Activities***

Despite all the contradictions in the bilateral relations between the two countries, for the U.S. embassy, the year 2007 was marked by an increased workload due to the celebration of the 200-year anniversary of the establishment of the Russian-US diplomatic relations.

According to the website of the embassy, the English Language Office in Moscow, established in the Embassy's Public Affairs Section in 1993, cooperates with the Ministry of Education and local professionals on a variety of English language teaching programs and projects and provides resources throughout the Russian Federation. The English Language Fellows program provides qualified English language teaching professionals to institutions and universities for an academic year. The English Language

---

<sup>64</sup> "Bush Napravit Putinu Predlozheniye Po Systeme Pro," <http://community.livejournal.com/nytimesinmoscow/6880.html>.

<sup>65</sup> "Amerikanskije Politiki," <http://insie-ru.livejournal.com/194487.html>.

Office coordinates the distribution of U.S. government-produced English language teaching and American Studies books, cassettes, maps, and videos.<sup>66</sup>

The US embassy in Moscow supports a network of five American libraries in Russia known as the American Centers. Besides, there is a network of 26 American Corners meaning there is a US library in every significant Russian city from Kaliningrad in the West to Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy in the Far East.<sup>67</sup> Some of the programs offered by this network probably look very attractive to the Russian audience. For example, the center in St. Petersburg offers free Yale University courses on political science.<sup>68</sup>

Another important program run by the embassy is Book Translation and Publication. Since the start of the program in 1990 some two hundred books have been published in Russia with support of the U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Section.<sup>69</sup>

The embassy's Information Resource Center provides current and authoritative information about the United States of America on legislative, economic, cultural, and social issues. It offers reference and research services to Russian government officials, Duma members, journalists and researchers with professional interest in the United States. It also publishes an electronic quarterly magazine "Otkroy Ameriku" (Discover America).<sup>70</sup> The magazine publishes the ambassador's speeches, announces coming cultural events and provides readers with a couple of stories about life and politics in the US.<sup>71</sup> Given the quality of the stories and layout, apparently, it can hardly get any

---

<sup>66</sup> "English Language Office for the Russian Federation," [http://www.usembassy.ru/bilateral/bilateral.php?record\\_id=pa\\_english](http://www.usembassy.ru/bilateral/bilateral.php?record_id=pa_english).

<sup>67</sup> "American Centers and Corners in Russia.," <http://amcorners.ru/>.

<sup>68</sup> "Open Yale Courses - Democracy and Participation," <http://amcorners.ru/open-yale-courses-0>.

<sup>69</sup> "Book Translation & Publication Program," <http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/books.php>.

<sup>70</sup> "Information Resource Center," [http://moscow.usembassy.gov/us/us.php?record\\_id=irc](http://moscow.usembassy.gov/us/us.php?record_id=irc).

<sup>71</sup> "Otkroy Ameriku. October 2007," <http://moscow.usembassy.gov/files/discover4.pdf>.

audience at all. The website of the embassy also links to a Russian-language page with extensive reference information about the United States.<sup>72</sup> However, all the information provided at that website can be easily found in other online sources, where it is usually better organized.

Among other projects run by the public affairs section there is small grants program supporting Russian-registered non-governmental non-commercial organizations in developing grassroots democracy and civil society.<sup>73</sup> Another initiative in the framework of the small grants program is aimed at promoting greater understanding among different religious and ethnic groups in Russia.<sup>74</sup>

The embassy also hosts a lot of cultural events. During the last year there was a concert by an American Conductor Ira Spalding and Moscow Conservatory Choir Featured at Spaso House, a fashion show by Ralph Lauren, performances by the Dallas Brass jazz band and Ari Roland Quartet and Marion Cowings. Besides, the embassy hosts annually the American Film festival. One of the best evidences of the US embassy's success in hosting cultural events was the fact that it was the American cultural attaché that was invited first a radio program named Tea with Cultural Attaché. The program is featuring cultural activities of the embassies in Moscow and the American diplomat was the first to come to the studio.<sup>75</sup>

---

<sup>72</sup> "Domashnyaya Stranitsa – Vse O USA," <http://www.infousa.ru/>.

<sup>73</sup> "U.S. Embassy Small Grants Program Overview," [http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record\\_id=pa\\_democracy](http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record_id=pa_democracy).

<sup>74</sup> "Tolerance Grants Initiative: Overview," [http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record\\_id=pa\\_tolerance](http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record_id=pa_tolerance).

<sup>75</sup> "U.S. Cultural Events in Russia," <http://moscow.usembassy.gov/us/culture.php>.

## ***American Broadcasting in Russia***

The Voice of America was established in 1942 and remained the main US international broadcaster ever since.<sup>76</sup> Since the end of the World War II Russia remained one of its primary target audiences. However, after the end of the Cold War and the decrease of Russia's importance for the US foreign policy VOA Russian also became less important as a tool of the American public diplomacy. In 2006 some Russian oppositional groups and human rights organizations were really worried about the news that VOA could stop broadcasting in Russian. They even came out with a message to the US Congress to cancel proposed budget cuts and stressing how important VOA Russian is for supporting freedom of speech in the Russian Federation.<sup>77</sup> Of course currently VOA Russian is less important as an independent source of information than it was during the Cold War due to the existence of other independent media in Russia and rapid spread of the Internet access but the station is still rather popular. According to the latest surveys of the radio listeners' preferences in Moscow and St. Petersburg, over 40,000 people in the two largest Russian cities listen to the VOA Russian daily and some 120,000 do it weekly.<sup>78</sup> However, it is worth noticing that nearly all the listeners from the two cities were concentrated in Moscow (nearly 99%) despite the fact that the population of St. Petersburg has the same average education level and general political preferences. This may possibly mean two things: firstly, only professional human rights activists, foreign journalists and some Russian journalists that deal with international news listen to VOA

---

<sup>76</sup> Laurien Alexandre, *The Voice of America : From Detente to the Reagan Doctrine*. P. 3.

<sup>77</sup> "Obrashenie Rossiyskikh Pravozashitnikov K Congressu USA V Svyazi S Predlozheniyami Prekratit Radioveshanie "Golosa Ameriki" Na Russkom Yazyke I Sokrashenie Radioveshaniya "Svobody". Hronika Poloticheskikh Presledovaniy V Sovremennoy Rossii," <http://www.zaprava.ru/hronica/154.pdf>.

<sup>78</sup> COMCOM Radio Monitoring. [http://www.radiportal.ru/download/ratings/msk\\_jan2008.pdf](http://www.radiportal.ru/download/ratings/msk_jan2008.pdf) "Comcom Radio Monitoring. ."

Russian and these people mostly live in Moscow. Secondly, this may also mean that at least part of the survey participants were not completely honest and try to pretend to the Western radio stations more than they actually do.

Currently VOA Russian broadcasts several hours a day and has only four programs: “Okno v mir” (Window into the world), “Amerikanskaya panorama” (American overview), “Govorite s Amerikoy” (Talk to America), “Sobytiya i razmyshleniya” (Events and Analysis). Okno v mir is weekly program telling about the United States: news of medicine, science, culture and show business. Amerikanskaya panorama is a daily program that tells about the American political system, economy, science and technology, healthcare system, education etc. Govorite s Amerukoy is a talk show where listeners can express their opinions and Sobytiya i razmyshleniya is 30-minute analytical program that covers events in the United States and worldwide.<sup>79</sup>

All the programs are available for downloading on the website but the VOA Russian website itself is not very informative and is not very popular as an independent source of information among Russian Internet users as those that are really interested in the US news can usually visit pages in English. However, the website has an important feature allowing visitors to view video clips posted by VOA which they call VOA Russian Television.<sup>80</sup>

Another American radio station which is an important part of the US public diplomacy in Russia is Radio “Svoboda” (Liberty). This is a surrogate broadcasting station with the official mission to promote democratic values and institutions by

---

<sup>79</sup> "Voa News – Nashi Programmy," <http://www.voanews.com/russian/programs.cfm>.

<sup>80</sup> "Voa Russian Radio Tv Program Schedule," <http://www.voanews.com/russian/programs.cfm>.



disseminating factual information and ideas.<sup>81</sup> This radio station was also established in the beginning of the Cold War and has remained active till present time. In 1988 the station started expanding its informational broadcasting and turning it into a “live news” medium. Then Radio Svoboda increased the amount of air time making it three times longer than BBC Russian Service and VOA Russian.<sup>82</sup> Currently it broadcasts 24h<sup>83</sup> and approximately 70% of its broadcast is news and analytical programs and 90% of this informational broadcast is not repeated on air.<sup>84</sup> In the early 1990-s the station opened its newsroom in Moscow and established a vast network of Russian correspondents<sup>85</sup>, some of which are relatively popular journalists and bloggers.<sup>86</sup> Among the constant contributors of Radio “Svoboda” there are famous Russian human rights activists, writers, journalists.<sup>87</sup>

What makes Radio “Svoboda” really different from VOA Russian is the fact it broadcasts both in the shortwave and in the am bands in several major Russian cities including Moscow and it is also available through satellite broadcasting.<sup>88</sup> According to recent surveys, Radio “Svoboda” has over 160,000 daily listeners and some 350,000 weekly listeners in Moscow which means it is three much more popular than VOA Russian or BBC Russian Service and makes it one of the ten most popular Moscow news radio stations.<sup>89</sup>

---

<sup>81</sup> "Rfe/RI Mission Statement," <http://www.rferl.org/about/organization/mission-statement.asp>.

<sup>82</sup> Yuriy Afanasyev, "Problemno-Tematicheskaya Struktura Informatsionno-Analiticheskikh Program Radio “Svoboda” Na Russkom Yazyke" (St. Petersburg State University, 2005). P. 25.

<sup>83</sup> "Radio Svoboda Broadcast Schedule," <http://www.svobodanews.ru/BroadcastSchedule.aspx>.

<sup>84</sup> Afanasyev Afanasyev, "Problemno-Tematicheskaya Struktura Informatsionno-Analiticheskikh Program Radio “Svoboda” Na Russkom Yazyke". P. 21.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid. P. 26.

<sup>86</sup> "Vitaly Portnikov's Journal," <http://vokintrop.livejournal.com/profile>.

<sup>87</sup> "Sotrudniki Radio “Svoboda”," <http://www.svobodanews.ru/about/staff.aspx>.

<sup>88</sup> "Radio Svoboda," <http://www.svobodanews.ru/AffiliatesFlash.aspx>.

<sup>89</sup> "Comcom Radio Monitoring. ."

## ***Cultural and Educational Exchange Programs***

Cultural and educational exchange programs remain the core of the US public diplomacy in Russia which was once again illustrated by the fact that the ambassador organized in the summer 2007 a "Send Off" reception for Russian exchange students and scholars of the Fulbright, Humphrey, Muskie, UGRAD and FLEX programs for the academic year 2007/2008.<sup>90</sup>

Currently the US State Department runs nearly two dozen of exchange programs in Russia. The Fulbright Program Office in Moscow administers approximately a half of all US State Department grant programs in Russia and receives all grant applications from Russians. The first Fulbright Scholarship was granted in 1973 . For the academic year 2007/2008, the Fulbright Office also offered the special "John Quincy Adams Fellowships" in commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the establishment of U.S. - Russia diplomatic relations.<sup>91</sup> Most of the programs fund Russians' traveling and staying in the US:

1. a month-long Russian International Education Administrators Program,
2. Fulbright Visiting Student Program for Russians that funds two-year masters programs in the United States,
3. Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistantships for Russians,
4. Fulbright Faculty Development Program for Russians
5. Fulbright Visiting Scholar Program for Russians
6. Fulbright-Kennan Institute Research Scholarship Program for Russians

---

<sup>90</sup> "Educational & Cultural Exchange Programs,"  
[http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record\\_id=pa\\_exchanges](http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record_id=pa_exchanges).

<sup>91</sup> "The Fulbright Program,"  
[http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record\\_id=pa\\_exchanges\\_fulbright](http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record_id=pa_exchanges_fulbright).

## 7. Fulbright Scholar-In-Residence (SIR) Program for Russians

There is also a program for both Russian and Americans that annually brings together 25-30 research scholars and professionals from the U.S. and from participating countries around the world. Besides, there are a couple of programs aimed specifically at Americans:

1. Fulbright Student Program for Americans
2. Fulbright English Teaching Assistantships (ETA) for Americans
3. Fulbright Scholar Program for Americans
4. Fulbright Senior Specialist Program for Americans<sup>92</sup>

Another important organization that fulfils programs funded by the US Department of State is International Research and Exchanges board (IREX). IREX is a US-based nonprofit operating in Eurasia, Middle East and Latin America. The two educational exchanges programs it carries out are the Global Undergraduate Exchange Program in Eurasia and Central Asia and Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship. The former sponsors a year-long studying of Russian students at the US universities while the latter funds one- or two-year graduate programs in the United States for the Russian young professionals.<sup>93</sup> However, the program is aimed at nearly all the CIS countries and in 2007 there were only 19 Russians among 140 students from the CIS that were granted Muskie Fellowship. Among other projects carried out by IREX there were also volunteering opportunities for the Americans in the Russian Federation and for the Russians in the US.<sup>94</sup>

---

<sup>92</sup> "Fulbright Exchange Program in the Russian Federation," <http://english.fulbright.ru>.

<sup>93</sup> "Irex Grant Opportunities," <http://www.irex.org/programs/grants.asp>.

<sup>94</sup> "Rossiysko-Amerikanskaya Volonterskaya Initsiativa," <http://www.irex.ru/programs/usrvi>.

The US embassy supports some other cultural and educational projects including an extensive the Future Leaders Secondary School Exchange Program (FLEX) which allows Russian school children spend a year at the United States. In the last fifteen years over 17,000 of Russian schoolchildren went to the US as FLEX participants.<sup>95</sup>

Approximately 55,000 of Russian citizens are alumni of all types of the US Government funded exchange programs.<sup>96</sup> However, it is rather hard to estimate how many of them remain in contact with the embassy. For example, only about 20 graduates out of a total of several hundred attended a recent meeting of the Muskie Fellowship alumni in Moscow.<sup>97</sup> However, the embassy tries to foster the alumni network and constantly organizes events for the graduates of its programs. Some of their efforts involve high level diplomats and even the ambassador himself met recently with the Muskie Fellowship alumni.<sup>98</sup>

---

<sup>95</sup> "Programma Dlya Starsheklassnikov "Flex", "  
[http://www.americancouncils.spb.ru/main.php?p=prog\\_flex&m\\_n=2](http://www.americancouncils.spb.ru/main.php?p=prog_flex&m_n=2).

<sup>96</sup> "Russia Alumni Central," [http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record\\_id=pa\\_alumni](http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record_id=pa_alumni).

<sup>97</sup> "Vstrecha Vypusknikov Programmy Edmunda Muskie," <http://www.irex.ru/press/news/2008/03/182>.

<sup>98</sup> "Morning Coffee with Us Ambassador to Russia William Burns," <http://www.muskieclub.ru/node/640>.

## Conclusion

British and American public diplomacy in Russia are very much alike and this is partly determined by the history of their relationships with the country and the public attitudes towards them in Russia. In terms of diplomatic relations with Russia, Britain and the US have a lot in common. Being strategic allies and often taking similar positions on the same issues, these nations naturally have more or less the same approach to their relations with Russia. However, despite some continuing contradictions between the two nations, Moscow's relations with Washington seem significantly better than those with London. To a certain extent this can be explained by the fact that Britain followed the US path in all the actions that sparked negative reaction in Russia (for example, the war in Kosovo and the war in Iraq) but it also had some other issues in its relationship with Russia that did not involve the United States. As a result, in terms of Russian public attitudes Britain bore all the negative consequences of some of the US foreign policy decisions which was not at all helped by the fact that it also had some bilateral problems with Russia. Surprisingly enough though, diplomatic relations did not have any direct impact on the public attitudes. It seems that Russian population reacts directly on other nations' foreign policies not on their impact on Russia's relations with these nations. For example, bombings of Kosovo and invasion in Iraq became major issues for the Russian public, but it did not pay that much attention to diplomatic scandals between Moscow and London. However, being of low influence on the public attitude, Russian-British diplomatic rows did influence the UK public diplomacy as they resulted in closing of nearly all the offices of the British Council. Since Russian – US relations are less

emotional and seemingly more pragmatic the US public diplomacy does not encounter that kind of resistance from Russian authorities.

Both Britain and the United States are broadly considered as successful nations that could be examples to follow by the Russian Federation. Despite all the unpopular actions in their foreign policies the two nations are still very much respected in Russia. Broad Russian public is familiar with the British and American music, literature and cinema. Russians closely follow the US election campaign and are aware of the US and the UK values and political systems. This is probably one of the reasons why the Russian public is so upset with their foreign policies as in their perception it does not really correspond to democratic values, human rights and the rule of law. In the view of most Russians, the US invasion in Kosovo in 1999 was illegal and so was the invasion in Iraq in 1999. As both of them resulted in massive deaths among the civilian population and human rights violations the following rhetoric aimed at justifying these actions as protection of the human rights and spreading democracy was very much treated as hypocrisy and it seems neither US nor British public diplomacy was able to address this issue.

British and the US public diplomacy in Russia are very similar in terms of the activities of the embassies as they host cultural events, give grants and are remain relatively open to journalists. However, there is a significant difference in the content of the embassies' public diplomacies as the US embassy does more to let Russian public get more information about the country while Britain aims at promoting certain specific policies. The US embassy seems to put a lot of efforts in translating general information about the country into Russian despite the fact that it is easily available in all kinds of

online encyclopedias. British diplomats do not do this trying to educate the public on issues of special importance to their country instead.

The Voice of America and the British Broadcasting Corporation have very similar results in Russia. They have nearly the same amount of daily broadcast and are very close in terms of the size of their audience. None of them can be compared though to the Radio Liberty which is one of the top ten news radio stations in Russia. The difference comes from the fact that Radio Liberty in Russian is effectively a Russian radio station with its newsroom in Moscow and reporters all over the country. Having an American or British radio station broadcasting in Russian and having a Russian radio station funded by the US Congress is definitely not the same and the successful example of Radio Liberty is a clear indication of that fact.

Another example of the US success is cultural and educational exchanges. The United States has had several times more exchange programs in Russia than the United Kingdom and by now it has developed a vast alumni network. Many alumni of the US government-funded educational programs now hold high positions in Russian private companies and governmental agencies and this is definitely a public diplomacy asset. Britain took a different approach by arranging most of its cultural exchange programs in Russia and bringing only a couple of dozens of students to the United Kingdom. The outcome of this approach seems controversial. On the one hand, British public diplomacy in Russia reached nearly half a million people in 2006 but their level of involvement was rather limited. Despite the fact that the US has over thirty American Centers and Corners and Russia there outreach and influence seems smaller than the one that British Council used to have when it still possessed 16 offices. On the other hand several dozens of

people were sponsored to get their education in the UK and this connection seems tighter. It was the alumni community of the UK government funded programs who tried to defend the institution when Russian government launched its campaign against it. The US public diplomacy did not have to face such a challenge of course but given the size of its alumni network it seems able to stand against it. Apparently, the US approach in terms of educational exchanges is more beneficial because it does establish viable connections between people. Given that educational exchanges mostly target talented young individuals that are potential Russian leaders they may have a great positive impact on the future of the US – Russian relations.

Overall, despite the changes in foreign policy priorities and paying now less attention to Russia in its public diplomacy the United States remains more successful than the British one. It does reach its target audience and to a certain effect it does change attitudes. The US funded Radio Liberty is one of the symbols of freedom of speech. However, it seems that the general public does not see any connection between promoting democratic ideas that both Britain and the US do and their actual foreign policies. Probably both these nations would have benefited from their public diplomacy efforts more if they were more connected to their actual foreign policies. There is no need to prove in Russia that the United States is a great society. What definitely needs further explanation is a number of US policies which disappoint, irritate or scare Russians.



## Bibliography

1. (Third Report from the Foreign Affairs Committee. Session 2005 – 2006. Public Diplomacy. Response of the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs.), <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm68/6840/6840.pdf>.
2. "11 Sentyabrya: 5 Let Spustya." [http://bd.fom.ru/report/cat/\\_west\\_rel/Russia\\_USA/dd063524](http://bd.fom.ru/report/cat/_west_rel/Russia_USA/dd063524).
3. Afanasyev, Yuriy. "Problemno-Tematicheskaya Struktura Informatsionno-Analiticheskikh Program Radio "Svoboda" Na Russkom Yazyke." St. Petersburg State University, 2005.
4. Alexandre, Laurien. *The Voice of America : From Detente to the Reagan Doctrine.*: Norwood, N.J. : Ablex Pub. Corp., 1988.
5. "American Centers and Corners in Russia." <http://amcorners.ru/>.
6. "Amerikanskie Politiki." <http://insie-ru.livejournal.com/194487.html>.
7. "Art." <http://www.britishcouncil.org/ru/russia-projects-arts.htm>.
8. Baranov, Andrey. "Rossiya I Zapad Na Grani Novoy "Holodnoy Voyni"." *Komsomolskaya Pravda* 2007.
9. "Book Translation & Publication Program." <http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/books.php>.
10. Brenton, Tony. "Disagreements between Moscow and London Needed to Be Overcome." *Nezavisimaya Newspaper*, no. 14/09/07.
11. "British Satellite News (Bsn). ." <http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1106750245959>.

12. "Building Trust, Challenging Stereotypes." <http://www.britishcouncil.org/russia-projects-education-building-trust.htm>.
13. "Bush Napravit Putinu Predlozheniye Po Systeme Pro." <http://community.livejournal.com/nytimesinmoscow/6880.html>.
14. "Chevening Stipend ", <http://www.britishcouncil.org/ru/russia-scholarships-chevening.htm>.
15. "Climate Change." <http://www.britishcouncil.org/russia-science-projects-climate-change.htm>.
16. "Comcom Radio Monitoring. ." [http://www.radiportal.ru/download/ratings/msk\\_jan2008.pdf](http://www.radiportal.ru/download/ratings/msk_jan2008.pdf).
17. "Contact Us in 110 Countries Worldwide - Contact Us - British Council." <http://www.britishcouncil.org/home-contact-worldwide.htm?mtklink=corporate-homepage-contact-us-worldwide>.
18. Critchlow, James. "Public Diplomacy During the Cold War: The Record and Its Implications." *Journal of Cold War Studies* Vol. 6, No. 1, Winter 2004: pp. 75–89.
19. Dale, Carnes Lord and Helle C. "Public Diplomacy and the Cold War: Lessons Learned. ." (2007), [http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/upload/bg\\_2070.pdf](http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/upload/bg_2070.pdf).
20. Delyagin, Mikhail. "11 Senyabrya 2001 Goda: Zaversheniye Formirovaniya Postsovetskogo Mira." <http://www.voy.com/36093/659.html>
21. Dizard, Wilson P. *Inventing Public Diplomacy : The Story of the U.S. Information Agency*. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2004.
22. "Domashnyaya Stranitsa – Vse O USA." <http://www.infousa.ru/>.

23. "Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Moscow." <http://www.britishcouncil.org/russia-arts-edinburgh-fringe-festival.htm>.
24. "Educational & Cultural Exchange Programs." [http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record\\_id=pa\\_exchanges](http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record_id=pa_exchanges).
25. "Embassy Project Activities. British Embassy, Russia." <http://www.britishembassy.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1115138318632>.
26. "English Language Office for the Russian Federation." [http://www.usembassy.ru/bilateral/bilateral.php?record\\_id=pa\\_english](http://www.usembassy.ru/bilateral/bilateral.php?record_id=pa_english).
27. "Fco Bloggers: Global Conversations." <http://blogs.fco.gov.uk/>.
28. Filin, Vladimir. "Ne Smotrite Holluwoodskie Filmy." 2006.
29. "Football Unites." <http://www.britishcouncil.org/russia-science-football-unites.htm>.
30. "Fulbright Exchange Program in the Russian Federation." <http://english.fulbright.ru>.
31. "The Fulbright Program." [http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record\\_id=pa\\_exchanges\\_fulbright](http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record_id=pa_exchanges_fulbright).
32. "Image Velikobritanii V Vospriyatii Rossiyskoy Politicheskoy Elity." [http://www.nikkolom.ru/2007/enland\\_.htm](http://www.nikkolom.ru/2007/enland_.htm).
33. "Information Resource Center." [http://moscow.usembassy.gov/us/us.php?record\\_id=irc](http://moscow.usembassy.gov/us/us.php?record_id=irc).
34. "Irex Grant Opportunities." <http://www.irex.org/programs/grants.asp>.

35. Jenks, John. *British Propaganda and News Media in the Cold War*, International Communications. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006.
36. Mayakova, Elena. "Shpionskiy Scandal." *Russkiy Journal*, no. 01.30.2006.
37. "Meeting V Podderzhku Kosovskih Serbov." [http://community.livejournal.com/politics\\_ru/1540611.html](http://community.livejournal.com/politics_ru/1540611.html).
38. Mitrovich, Gregory. "Cold War Broadcasting Impact: Conference Summary." A Conference Organized by the Hoover Institution and the Cold War International History Project of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars at Stanford University, 2004.
39. "Morning Coffee with Us Ambassador to Russia William Burns." <http://www.muskieclub.ru/node/640>.
40. "Narodnie Imperialisty." <http://wciom.ru/arkhiv/tematicheskii-arkhiv/item/single/4191.html>.
41. Natalya, Kapitonova. *Prioritety Vneshney Politiki Velikobritanii (1990 - 1997)*. Moscow: ROSSPAN, 1999.
42. Nicht!, Knigi -. <http://virtual-mk2.livejournal.com/49368.html>.
43. Nick Allan Press Secretary and Head of News British Embassy, Washington, D.C. February 25, 2008 at the Fletcher School.
44. "Obrashenie Rossiyskih Pravozashitnikov K Congressu USA V Svyazi S Predlozheniyami Prekratit Radioveshanie "Golosa Ameriki" Na Russkom Yazyke I Sokrashenie Radioveshaniya "Svobody". Hronika Poloticheskikh Presledovaniy V Sovremennoy Rossii." <http://www.zaprava.ru/hronica/154.pdf>.

45. "Obschestvennoe Mnenie: Otnoshenie K USA."  
<http://www.iamik.ru/?op=full&what=content&ident=39957>.
46. Odin, "Anglischanka"-Geopoliticheskiy Protivnik Nover. <http://aliseev.livejournal.com/414187.html>.
47. "Open Yale Courses - Democracy and Participation." <http://amcorners.ru/open-yale-courses-0>.
48. "Otkroy Ameriku. October 2007."  
<http://moscow.usembassy.gov/files/discover4.pdf>.
49. "Our Purpose and Direction. ." <http://www.britishcouncil.org/home-about-us-purpose-and-values.htm>.
50. "Partnery. ." <http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/russian/partners/default.stm>.
51. "Press-Vypusk 743. Rossia I Britaniya: Novoy Holodnoy Voyni Ne Budet!"  
<http://wciom.ru/arkhiv/tematicheskii-arkhiv/item/single/8594.html>.
52. "Programma Dlya Starsheklassnikov "Flex"."  
[http://www.americancouncils.spb.ru/main.php?p=prog\\_flex&m\\_n=2](http://www.americancouncils.spb.ru/main.php?p=prog_flex&m_n=2).
53. "Public Diplomacy Fund. British Embassy, Russia ",  
<http://www.britishembassy.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1166534302266>.
54. "Public Diplomacy Strategy."  
[http://www.fco.gov.uk/Files/kfile/Annex%20C%20Public%20Diplomacy%20Strategy%20\(May%202003\).pdf](http://www.fco.gov.uk/Files/kfile/Annex%20C%20Public%20Diplomacy%20Strategy%20(May%202003).pdf).

55. "Public Diplomacy: Steps to the Future." (2007),  
<http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029391647&a=KArticle&aid=1176969284086>.
56. "Radio Svoboda." <http://www.svobodanews.ru/AffiliatesFlash.aspx>.
57. "Radio Svoboda Broadcast Schedule."  
<http://www.svobodanews.ru/BroadcastSchedule.aspx>.
58. "Rapisaniye Peredach Russkoy Sluzhby Bbc. ."  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/russian/Programmeswinter2007.htm>.
59. "Rating Novostnih Smi." <http://www.superjob.ru/research/articles/613/>.
60. "Rfe/RI Mission Statement." <http://www.rferl.org/about/organization/mission-statement.asp>.
61. Richmond, Yale. *Cultural Exchange & the Cold War : Raising the Iron Curtain*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003.
62. "Rossiysko-Amerikanskaya Volonterskaya Initsiativa."  
<http://www.irex.ru/programs/usrvi>.
63. "Ruki Proch Ot Britanskogo Soveta." <http://vkontakte.ru/club1218805>.
64. "Russia Alumni Central."  
[http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record\\_id=pa\\_alumni](http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record_id=pa_alumni).
65. "Scientist-to-Scientist Links." Place Published.
66. Shiraev, Eric, and V. M. Zubok. *Anti-Americanism in Russia : From Stalin to Putin*. 1st ed. New York: Palgrave, 2000.
67. "Sotrudniki Radio "Svoboda"." <http://www.svobodanews.ru/about/staff.aspx>.

68. Taylor, Philip M. *British Propaganda in the 20th Century : Selling Democracy*, International Communications. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999.
69. "Third Report from the Foreign Affairs Committee. Session 2005 – 2006. Public Diplomacy. Response of the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs." <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm68/6840/6840.pdf>.
70. "Tolerance Grants Initiative: Overview." [http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record\\_id=pa\\_tolerance](http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record_id=pa_tolerance).
71. Trenin, Dmitry. "America Esche Uverenneye Poydet Po Miru." *Novaya Gazeta* 2006.
72. "Tsifry I Fakty." <http://www.britishcouncil.org/ru/russia-about-us-press-room-facts.htm>.
73. "U.S. Cultural Events in Russia." <http://moscow.usembassy.gov/us/culture.php>.
74. "U.S. Embassy Small Grants Program Overview." [http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record\\_id=pa\\_democracy](http://moscow.usembassy.gov/bilateral/bilateral.php?record_id=pa_democracy).
75. "Ukraine." <http://n-a-g.livejournal.com/51369.html>.
76. "Under the Skin." <http://www.britishcouncil.org/russia-arts-under-the-skin.htm>.
77. "Vitaly Portnikov's Journal." <http://vokintrop.livejournal.com/profile>.
78. "Voa News – Nashi Programmy." <http://www.voanews.com/russian/programs.cfm>.
79. "Voa Russian Radio Tv Program Schedule." <http://www.voanews.com/russian/programs.cfm>.
80. "Voyny Stanut Nevidimymi." <http://sofia-vb-888.livejournal.com/1399.html>.

81. "Vstrecha Vypusnikov Programmy Edmunda Muskie."  
<http://www.irex.ru/press/news/2008/03/182>.

82. "We Are for British Council in Russia!"  
<http://weareforbritishcouncil.wordpress.com/>.