

BROADCASTING: THE REVIEW OF PRIORITIES

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COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
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CONTENTS

	Page
Kaufman, Hon. Edward E., Governor, Broadcasting Board of Governors, Washington, DC	7
Prepared statement	7
Responses of Edward Kaufman and Alberto Mora to additional questions from Senator Jesse Helms	32
Responses of Edward Kaufman and Alberto Mora to additional questions from Senator Russell Feingold	40
Mora, Hon. Alberto, Governor, Broadcasting Board of Governors; accompanied by: Tom Korologos, Governor, Broadcasting Board of Governors; Sanford Ungar, Director, Voice of America; Thomas A. Dine, President, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty; Dick Richter, President, Radio Free Asia, Wash- ington, DC	3
Prepared statement	7
Responses of Edward Kaufman and Alberto Mora to additional questions from Senator Jesse Helms	32
Responses of Edward Kaufman and Alberto Mora to additional questions from Senator Russell Feingold	40
SaveVOA Committee, statement submitted for the record	41

BROADCASTING: THE REVIEW OF PRIORITIES

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 2000

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 3:03 p.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Rod Grams (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Senators Grams and Feingold.

Senator GRAMS. Well, good afternoon. I would like to bring this hearing to order.

And I want to welcome everybody here today. I want to especially welcome our witnesses from the Broadcasting Board of Governors, Mr. Edward Kaufman and Mr. Alberto Mora. We want to thank you for coming to testify before us today.

Now, as the co-chairmen of the subcommittee of the Board, which recently completed the congressionally mandated language services review on broadcasting priorities, they are particularly well suited to discuss the relevance of U.S. Government supported international broadcasting in the post-cold war era.

Now, since this is the Foreign Relations Committee's first hearing devoted to broadcasting since USIA was folded into the State Department and the Broadcasting Board of Governors became an independent agency, I hope our witnesses will feel free to express their personal views on matters outside the confines of the language review.

I know they are both well-versed in all aspects of our Nation's broadcasting operations.

And as you are well aware, there is a significant difference between the role of VOA and that of the surrogate services, which now seek to fill a void in countries where a free press does not exist.

Surrogate services provide independent news and cultural information about a targeted nation, operating in place of indigenous news stations. VOA has a different mission.

It is charged with presenting "a balanced and comprehensive projection of significant American thought and institutions," "the policies of the United States clearly and effectively," and "responsible discussion and opinion on these policies."

Mr. Kaufman, Mr. Mora, I am interested in hearing from our witnesses on how well you both believe VOA is carrying out these missions.

I am pleased the Broadcasting Board of Governors designated your subcommittee to supervise a thorough review of language services. And I appreciate your efforts to prioritize our expenditures and provide focus to our international broadcasting efforts.

While the results of your review have been controversial, that is hardly surprising. And in my experience, any time budget cuts are recommended, of course, controversy follows.

So I look forward to your testimony and a discussion of international broadcasting priorities as we now enter a new century.

So, again, I want to thank you both for taking time to join us today.

We are joined by Senator Feingold of Wisconsin. And Senator, did you have opening remarks?

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank you and Senator Boxer, also, for this hearing today, and thank the witnesses for being here to testify.

As many of you know, I have a long history of interest in the nature and oversight of our overseas broadcasting programs.

I have fought for streamlining, for consolidation and above all for fiscal responsibility. I have consistently—and some have even said relentlessly—pressed for the elimination of obsolete services and for the inclusion of fiscal independence in our understanding of what a truly independent broadcast would mean.

I do remain concerned about the self-perpetuating nature of programming established to deal with a specific time and set of circumstances, which, I think, we would all agree have changed dramatically over recent years.

With that said, I am no enemy of broadcasting. As the ranking member of the subcommittee on African Affairs, I have been impressed by the excellent work of Voice of America in the region.

Low literacy rates and underdeveloped infrastructure throughout sub-Saharan Africa make radio a remarkably powerful mode of communication.

And I know that the VOA has in many cases made the most of the possibilities, helping to reunite families separated in civil strife, exploring the possibilities for conflict resolution, and introducing ideas of democratic accountability to its listeners.

I look forward to hearing more about the Broadcasting Board of Governors' plans for Africa, as well as their efforts to eliminate redundancy and to phaseout obsolete programs during today's hearing.

The process of reforming overseas broadcasting for the post-cold war era is by no means finished. This hearing is a good opportunity to identify and discuss the many challenges that remain.

And I, again, thank the Chair.

Senator GRAMS. All right. Thank you very much, Senator Feingold.

Gentlemen, I would like to hear your opening statements. Mr. Mora, we will begin with you.

Mr. MORA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

STATEMENT OF HON. ALBERTO MORA, GOVERNOR, BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS; ACCOMPANIED BY: TOM KOROLOGOS, GOVERNOR, BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS; SANFORD UNGAR, DIRECTOR, VOICE OF AMERICA; THOMAS A. DINE, PRESIDENT, RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY; DICK RICHTER, PRESIDENT, RADIO FREE ASIA, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. MORA. Mr. Chairman, Senator Feingold, on behalf of Chairman Mark Nathanson and our other colleagues on the Broadcasting Board of Governors, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify on the Board's efforts relating to language service review.

My name is Alberto Mora. I am accompanied by my fellow Governors, Ted Kaufman, to my left, and Tom Korologos, as well as by VOA Director Sanford Ungar, RFE/RL Director Tom Dine, and RFA Director Dick Richter, among other colleagues in international broadcasting.

Following my testimony, which condenses our longer written statement, Governor Kaufman, with your indulgence, shall make a brief statement. We ask that a full version of our written statements be included in the record.

Senator GRAMS. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. MORA. As this is the first time the Board will testify since celebrating our independence on October 1, 1999, it is also an opportunity to thank this committee for its work in creating the new independent BBG in the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998.

Independence is an embrace of the idea that all of our broadcasters are journalists who are accurate, objective and comprehensive in their approach to the delivery of news and information.

The creation of this new entity also reaffirms the role of international broadcasting in the new century as a voice of human rights and democratic freedoms with new global challenges and priorities to address.

The creation of an independent BBG also belies statements that we are a cold war institution whose work is done. International broadcasting will continue to be vital as long as segments of the world's population are denied access to a free press and hunger for alternative sources of news and information.

As far as we are concerned, the end of the cold war did not bring an end to history, nor did it bring an end to repressive regimes.

U.S. international broadcasting reaches out to the world in 61 different languages, touching well over 100 million listeners, viewers and Internet users.

Freedom House estimates that more than 4 billion people live in societies where governments severely control or suppress print and broadcast media, or where the media is only partially free.

The Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia, WORLDNET Television, and Radio and Television Marti, our constituent elements, provide these populations with news, balanced analysis, insights into American policy, and the straight story on what is going on in their own countries.

In the past year, we fulfilled our mission during the crisis in Kosovo, as we did in Iran, Iraq, Korea, Cuba and many other places.

And we were on the ground in Chechnya during the efforts—through the efforts of RFE/RL correspondent, Andrei Babitsky, whose courageous and celebrated coverage of that crisis was ultimately ended by the Russian Government.

And I may take a moment, Mr. Chairman, to thank this committee and the Senate for their support of Andrei Babitsky during the past year.

Congress has mandated that the Board “review,” evaluate, and determine at least annually, after consultation with the Secretary of State, the addition or deletion of language services.” The process we call language service review implements this mandate through a methodology that assesses both the priority and impact of our 61 language services.

Stated succinctly, this process seeks to ensure that U.S. international broadcasting is present and effective where U.S. strategic interests are most pressing.

Language service review has led us to make some tough decisions. As a result of this process, we have decided to reduce 16 language services, enhance 13 services, and further review 12 others.

We would note here that the reductions have principally affected VOA broadcasting in Polish, Hungarian, and Czech, as well as RFE/RL broadcasting in Romanian and—and Bulgarian.

In essence, we have reduced broadcasting to areas where we were a mainstay during the cold war, but are newly democratic. And we have or will reallocate resources to other areas of the world that are still repressed or struggling to establish democracy.

These decisions are particularly important, given that the funding environment for broadcasting is static. But the political and strategic environment offers new challenges. The Board recognizes the seriousness of this exercise. Adjustment to language services have direct implications for personnel, budget and foreign policy.

We have not sought to impose such change from the top, but rather have sought consensus with the heads of the broadcasting services. And we have not sought to duplicate the existing program review function of the broadcasters.

Language service review is an overarching, strategic analysis, whereas program review evaluates the specific programming of each language service for content and presentation.

Two questions form the basis of language service review: Where should we broadcast, and how well are we broadcasting it? We answered the first question by evaluating and ranking all language services in order of priority, using the criteria of U.S. strategic interest, press freedom, political freedom, economic freedom and population size.

We answered the second question by assessing impact through a service by service review, using the criteria of audience size, both general and elite, programming quality, transmission effectiveness, budget, broadcast hours, in-country awareness and media environment and use.

This analysis yielded a number of compelling findings as we classified our language services in terms of higher and lower priority and higher or lower impact.

One key finding was that the cold war priorities continued to fade. The importance of broadcasting to Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, for example, has sharply diminished as these nations have become members of NATO and developed free and open media.

In contrast, a host of existing and new priorities stand out, including China, Russia, the Middle East, Serbia, Nigeria, India and Pakistan and Iran and Iraq, among others.

U.S. international broadcasting, as expected, has the greatest impact in terms of percentage of adult listening in denied or information poor areas such as Central Africa, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Haiti and many other countries. However, it is our objective to increase the impact of these other services as well.

When we looked at budget outlays, there also emerged significant mismatches of priorities and resources. For example, our combined allocation for VOA and RFE/RL broadcasting to Romania totaled \$2.9 million and ranked tenth dollar-wise of our 61 language services. However, Romania figures in the lower tier of services in terms of priority. In contrast for our higher priority Kurdish service ranks 53rd among all services.

The goal of the Board in providing a strategic direction for U.S. international broadcasting and in spending the taxpayer's dollars wisely is to ensure that we have sufficient impact in our higher priority language services.

Toward this end, it is the Board's duty to reallocate resources as necessary among our language service and ultimately to decide if we must delete or add specific languages.

We also expect to begin selected enhancements in the near future and other enhancements in fiscal year 2001 as funds from the reductions become available after accounting for severance costs.

For example, these enhancements include establishing a robust advertising and marketing program in Russia and the Ukraine to support RFE/RL broadcast services and also by enlarging the VOA affiliate's network in Colombia and enhancing VOA reporting there by expanding news and information directly related to that country.

It is precisely through this type of reallocation of resources away from the priorities of yesterday and toward the priority of today and tomorrow that the Board seized a concrete utility of language service review.

Thus while VOA programming may be reduced in Eastern Europe, the savings from these reductions will eventually flower as new programming in Indonesia, Africa, and other parts of the world.

The language service review process, as noted, looked at transmission effectiveness as one of the criteria in assessing impact. It is imperative that our broadcast be readily available to our target audiences. We are committed to succeeding in an increasingly multi-media world.

There are two basic issues in achieving this success. The first concerns the selection of the medium to use, whether radio, tele-

vision, Internet or a combination of these. Because we broadcast worldwide, we confront every type of media environment. There is no one-size-fits-all solution to any specific area.

The second issue concerns how well we distribute our broadcast in the chosen medium. Although the role of television was not specifically addressed during the language service review process, the parenthetical word about the future of television would be appropriate here.

It is not news that TV is on the rise everywhere. It has been so for many years. However, the growing consumer preference for television in key markets relative to radio is an important factor in our language service review deliberations.

WORLDNET television has been a part of U.S. international broadcasting now for two decades. For nearly half that time, selected VOA language services have offered TV simulcasts of their radio shows.

Now, we find that a visually enhanced television product in vernacular languages could well fill an important niche in many media markets, allowing us to reach new audiences.

We believe the way to structure ourselves to produce this new TV programming is through a reorganization of WORLDNET. We have proposed a merger of WORLDNET into VOA to launch a serious, sustained television effort with a single editorial operation. This would leverage VOA's language capabilities and brand name with WORLDNET's technical capabilities.

Similar considerations apply, I should add, to the Board's consideration of the Internet. As the Internet explodes around the world, it increasingly allows us an efficient and effective synergy with our traditional radio broadcasts and will meld perfectly with enhanced TV programming.

The Board has made our expanded use of the Internet a top priority. However, we fully understand the limitations for reaching mass audiences of this medium and will not sacrifice our other delivery methods as we pursue this opportunity.

One of the unfortunate results of language service review is that some of our broadcast services will lose funded positions, and we will be forced to conduct a reduction in force to downsize these language services.

As the Board shifts priorities from some parts of the world to others, we need to realign personnel resources accordingly. Unlike some other government agencies where jobs may be easily transferred to other positions, it is more difficult to move Voice of America broadcasters from one language service to another, given the high level of language skills and knowledge of the audience that are required.

For example, as a result of language service review, broadcasting to Poland will be reduced, while broadcasting to Indonesia may be enhanced. But we cannot transfer easily a Polish broadcaster to the Indonesian service unless he or she has the required language skills.

While this is a regrettable situation, we can assure you that we will be working diligently to provide affected employees with appropriate counseling, assistance in pursuing employment leads and consideration in matching their skills against vacancies that may

occur within our organization or elsewhere in the Federal Government.

Mr. Chairman, we are proud of the recent accomplishments of each of our broadcasting entities under our supervision, and we are proud to be part of broadcasting's long history of achievement.

We thank you and the committee for your historic support.

Senator GRAMS. Thank you very much, Mr. Mora, for your statement.

Mr. Kaufman.

**STATEMENT OF HON. EDWARD E. KAUFMAN, GOVERNOR,
BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS, WASHINGTON, DC**

Mr. KAUFMAN. Mr. Chairman, Senator Feingold, I would like to add just a few words to what Governor Mora has delivered this afternoon.

Historically, nations have had three main types of tools they have used to advance their foreign policy. They are political, which is primarily diplomacy and the State Department; strategic, which is primarily the Defense Department and military; and economic, which is used in many ways, but, of course, the most popular way today, which is most controversial, is economic sanctions.

However, in the modern world, we need a strong fourth option, in addition to diplomacy, Armed Forces and economic sanctions. I suggest Thomas Friedman's book, "The Lexus and the Olive Tree," where he goes into great detail about the interrelationship between these three and the media.

We need the ability to use the media, radio, television, and the Internet, to effect decisionmaking worldwide and to explain our policies abroad.

Globalization may be making the world more inter-dependent, but it does not mean we understand each other better than before. Many of our modern international involvements are caused by the rise of ethnic, racial, religious and regional conflicts. Often, these are started by hate radio or by a dictator who uses state radio to inflame the radical elements in the country.

We must be able to help counteract these activities, to minimize the conflict. U.S. international broadcasting does that.

The language service review effort by the Broadcasting Board of Governors was an effort to focus our limited resources on areas of the world where we need to have impact, to meet foreign policy challenges.

We hope that this committee can support this effort and the funding that we require to implement. Thank you, both.

Senator GRAMS. Thank you very much, Mr. Kaufman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Mora and Mr. Kaufman follows:]

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF ALBERTO MORA AND EDWARD E. KAUFMAN, GOVERNORS,
BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the committee, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify on the Board's efforts relating to language service review. As this is the first time the Board will testify since celebrating our independence on October 1, 1999, it is also an opportunity to thank this committee for its work in creating the new, independent BBG in the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998.

Independence is an embrace of the idea that all of our broadcasters are journalists who are accurate, objective, and comprehensive in their approach to the delivery of

news and information. The creation of this new entity also reaffirms the role of international broadcasting in the new century as a voice of human rights and democratic freedoms with new global challenges and priorities to address.

The creation of an independent BBG also belies statements that we are a Cold War institution whose work is done. International broadcasting will continue to be vital as long as segments of the world's population are denied access to a free press and hunger for alternative sources of news and information about their own countries and the rest of the world. The end of the Cold War was not the end of history; it was not the end of repressive regimes. Our mission is growing as are our methods of delivering news and information to people around the globe.

U.S. international broadcasting reaches out to the world in 61 different languages, touching more than 100 million listeners, viewers, and Internet users. Freedom House estimates that more than four billion people live in societies where governments severely control or suppress print and broadcast media or where the media is only partly free. The Voice of America, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia, WORLDNET Television, and Radio and TV Marti provide these populations with news, balanced analysis, insights into American policy, and the straight story on what is going on in their own countries. In the past year, we fulfilled our mission during the crisis in Kosovo, providing an accurate source of news and supplying information leading to the reunification of refugee families. We are present in Iran, Iraq, Korea, and Cuba. And we were on the ground in Chechnya through the efforts of correspondent Andrei Babitsky, whose coverage of that crisis was ultimately ended by the Russian Government.

LANGUAGE SERVICE REVIEW

U.S. international broadcasting needs to be present where U.S. strategic interests are the most pressing and where credible news and information are restricted or otherwise unavailable. Congress has mandated that the Board "review, evaluate, and determine, at least annually, after consultation with the Secretary of State, the addition or deletion of language services." The process we call "language service review" implements this mandate through a methodology that assesses both the priority and impact of our 61 language services.

Language service review has led us to take some tough decisions. We have reduced broadcasting to areas where we were a mainstay during the Cold War but are newly democratic, and will reallocate resources to other areas of the world that are still repressed or struggling to establish democracy. These decisions are particularly important given that the funding environment for broadcasting is static, but the political and strategic environment offers us new challenges.

The Board recognizes the seriousness of this exercise. Adjustments to language services have direct implications for personnel, budget, and foreign policy. We have not sought to impose such change from the top but rather have sought consensus with the heads of the broadcasting services.

Methodology

Two questions form the basis of language service review—Where should we broadcast? and How well are we broadcasting? We answer the first question by evaluating and ranking all U.S. international broadcasting language services in order of priority, using the criteria of U.S. strategic interests, press freedom, political freedom, economic freedom, and population size. We answer the second question by assessing impact through a service-by-service review, using the criteria of audience size (both general and elite), programming quality, transmission effectiveness, budget, broadcast hours, in-country awareness, and media environment and use.

Through language service review, we are able to sort our language services in terms of higher and lower priority and higher and lower impact. The goal of the Board in providing a strategic direction for U.S. international broadcasting, and in spending the taxpayers' dollars wisely, is to ensure that we have sufficient impact in the higher priority areas. Toward this end, it is the Board's duty to reallocate resources as necessary among our language services and ultimately decide if we must delete or add specific language services.

Results

As a result of the Board's language service review this year, we have taken decisions to reduce 16 language services, enhance 13 services, and further review 12. The details of these actions are complex. We would highlight here that the reductions have principally affected Voice of America broadcasting in Polish, Hungarian, and Czech as well as Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty broadcasting in Bulgarian and Romanian. These VOA services reach countries that are now NATO members

and possess free and open media. The two RFE/RL services have had unsustainably high budgets, reflecting Cold War priorities.

The Board expects to begin selected enhancements in the near future and other enhancements in FY 2001 as funds from the reductions become available after accounting for severance costs. These will include:

- establishing a robust advertising and marketing program in Russia and the Ukraine to support RFE/RL broadcast services;
- acquiring 24-hour FM frequencies in Jakarta and Dili to serve the capital and East Timor, respectively;
- reinstating 13.5 broadcast hours across a range of services for Africa; and
- enlarging the VOA affiliates network in Colombia and enhancing VOA reporting for Colombia by expanding news and information directly related to Colombia.

It is precisely through this type of reallocation of resources, away from the priorities of yesterday and toward the priorities of today and tomorrow, that the Board sees the concrete utility of language service review.

Consultation with the Department of State

We welcome the Secretary of State as an ex officio member of the Board. We have always recognized that U.S. international broadcasting exists to further the broad foreign policy objectives of the United States. Through the Secretary's designee to the Board, Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Evelyn S. Lieberman, we have quickly established an excellent working relationship. We acknowledge our respective roles. We determine what and how we broadcast. The Department of State offers guidance on where we should broadcast and advises us on foreign policy priorities as these relate to U.S. international broadcasting. Early in this year's review process, the Board formally requested the Department's views on these priorities and received a detailed briefing by its Office of Policy Planning. We will be implementing actions regarding Russia, Indonesia, the Ukraine, Africa, among other areas that are fully consistent with Department guidance.

Technology

The language service review process, as noted, looked at transmission effectiveness as one of the criteria in assessing impact. It is imperative that our broadcasts be readily available to our target audiences. We are committed to succeeding in an increasingly multi-media world.

There are two basic issues in achieving this. The first concerns the media we choose to use—radio, TV, Internet, or a combination of these. Because we broadcast worldwide, we confront every type of media environment. There is no “one size fits all” for use of media to reach our target audiences. What we seek to do is accommodate the media market, do what we feel we can be competitive at, what the priority of the language service requires, and what we can afford. We seek synergies across media. In markets where two of our language services operate, we seek to balance the use of media between the two. It is not news that TV is on the rise everywhere; it has been so for many years. However, the growing disproportionate access and use of TV in key markets relative to radio is an important factor in our language service review deliberations. WORLDNET TV has been a part of U.S. international broadcasting for two decades. For nearly half that time, selected VOA language services have offered TV simulcasts of their radio shows. Now we find that a visually enhanced TV product in vernacular languages offering timely and relevant news and information could well fill an important niche in many media markets, allowing us to reach new audiences.

We believe the way to structure ourselves to produce this new TV program is through a reorganization of WORLDNET. We have proposed a merger of WORLDNET into VOA to launch a serious, sustained television effort with a single editorial operation. This would leverage VOA's language capabilities and brand name, and WORLDNET's technical capabilities.

As the Internet explodes around the world, it increasingly allows us an efficient and effective synergy with our traditional radio broadcasts, and will meld perfectly with enhanced TV programs. Together, our broadcasters now stream real and archive audio in over 30 languages and archive text in nearly all languages. RFE/RL Web sites, which provide the very best news and information anywhere on the states of the former Soviet Union, receive over 15 million hits per month. The Board has made our expanded use of the Internet a top priority. However, we fully understand its limitations in reaching mass audiences, and are therefore in no way sacrificing our other delivery methods as we pursue this effort.

The second issue concerns how well we distribute our broadcasts via the chosen medium. For both radio and TV we have essentially two options—direct broadcasts

and broadcasts via affiliate stations. Since the end of the Cold War, as media markets in Central and Eastern Europe and elsewhere have opened, FM radio has generally become the medium of choice among radio listeners. To make our programs available on FM, we have had to develop an aggressive radio affiliates recruitment effort. This remains a priority.

At the same time, we have not forsaken direct radio broadcasts via shortwave and medium-wave. Shortwave remains key to reaching audiences in rural areas and across many under-developed nations. Medium-wave, or AM, provides us with yet a third modality that is very effective for shorter-distance yet cross-border situations, and is more amenable to listeners than shortwave. Our shortwave and AM are also the backbone of our essential surge broadcasting capability.

Distributing TV products likewise offers the affiliate option as well as direct-to-home, via satellite. The latter might seem to offer relatively low penetration, but in key areas such as the Gulf states in the Middle East, per capita ownership of satellite dishes is very high. Given that these same households hardly use radio, reaching them at all necessitates a TV product distributed via satellite. In less-developed areas, such as Albania and Kosovo, satellite ownership is surprisingly high. It was to reach the Albanian speakers in these areas that VOA debuted a new Albanian-language TV simulcast program last fall.

Choosing the appropriate medium and distribution means is, therefore, a complex undertaking. In the end, it's a market-by-market determination. Language service review will increasingly focus on the opportunities and trade-offs that this situation demands.

Reductions in Force

One of the unfortunate results of language service review is that some of our broadcast services will lose funded positions and we will be forced to conduct a reduction-in-force (RIF) to downsize these language services. As the Board's review determined a shifting priority from some parts of the world to others, we need to realign personnel resources accordingly. Unlike some other government agencies where jobs may be easily transferred to other positions, it is more difficult to move Voice of America broadcasters from one language service to another, given the high level of language skills and knowledge of the audience that are required. For example, as a result of language service review, broadcasting to Poland will be reduced while broadcasting to Indonesia may ultimately be enhanced. But we cannot easily transfer a Polish broadcaster to the Indonesian service unless he or she has the required language skills.

While this is a regrettable situation, we can assure you that we will be working diligently to provide affected employees with appropriate counseling, assistance in pursuing employment leads, and consideration in matching their skills against vacancies that may occur within our organization or elsewhere in the Federal Government. We expect to be able to provide new employment opportunities within the BBG to some of the 51 employees who will be displaced by the pending RIF. Some others are eligible for retirement. But we are committed to providing the best possible assistance to these employees that we can.

Mr. Chairman, we are proud of the recent accomplishments of each of the broadcasting entities under the supervision of the BBG and we are proud to be a part of broadcasting's long history of achievement. Language service review is not an exercise designed to penalize a service or to augment one broadcast entity to the detriment of the other. Each service has a specific mission to accomplish and each must refocus its broadcast targets to preserve its greatest impact on a changing world. Savings gained from reductions in a broadcast entity will be used to bolster its programs to other areas of the world. For example, while VOA's programming may be reduced in Eastern Europe, the savings from these reductions will eventually flower as new programming in Indonesia, Africa, and other parts of the world.

RECENT BROADCASTING CHALLENGES

While the focus of this hearing is devoted to the process for identifying the priority and impact of our language services, we would also like to take this opportunity to stress some of the recent challenges and accomplishments of each of the broadcast entities. Perhaps the most dramatic story of recent months has been in Russia with respect to RFE/RL's coverage of the war in Chechnya. As this committee well knows, RFE/RL correspondent Andrei Babitsky was detained by the Russians because of his on the scene coverage of that conflict, telling the Russian people and others in the region the facts behind the war, including the carnage in the Chechen civilian population, the drama of the refugees, and the death toll among Russian soldiers. Mr. Babitsky's own human drama brought to light the work that is being done around the world by the correspondents of each of our serv-

ice entities, bringing news and information to societies that do not enjoy the free flow of information.

In the past several years, broadcasting has tackled many challenges, both technological and ideological. Broadcasting to the former Yugoslavia was dramatically expanded during the NATO airstrikes and mass killings of Kosovar Albanians by the Serb militia. Both VOA in Albanian and Serbian, and RFE in its South Slavic service, rose to meet the challenge. We established new services to the Balkans, with RFE in Albanian and VOA in Macedonian, leading the way in establishing the "Ring around Serbia" of FM stations broadcasting news from British, German, and French international broadcasters. A network of more than 30 affiliate stations was created in Bosnia which carries a two-hour Bosnian language program and a Serbian language newscast that updated audiences on Kosovo throughout the day.

We are working to update and streamline our technical capacity to better meet future challenges. A VOA-TV and WORLDNET pilot program demonstrated that we can take advantage of VOA's global network of foreign and U.S. correspondents for radio and television in a multimedia approach. We are continuing to work toward the conversion to digital systems that can allow a single digital journalistic product to be available via radio, TV, or the Internet without costly conversion. We have refined and expanded websites to provide Internet access to news, information, and analysis.

Voice of America

The events of 1999 were challenging for the VOA as it launched its 53rd language service by initiating broadcasts in Macedonian to the Balkans. When the Kosovo crisis led to NATO bombing, VOA was on the air to give accurate and objective information to Albanians and Serbs. As Milosevic cracked down on indigenous private media, VOA stepped up its broadcasting and transmissions to the region in conjunction with sister stations RFE/RL, BBC, Radio France International, and Deutsche Welle. Special programming in Albanian helped families separated by the fighting to find each other in the refugee camps. Newly trained video journalists were able to capture the Kosovo story and give an honest picture of events to audiences in the Balkans, Russia, and China who had been receiving misleading information from their governments.

As VOA moves into the new century, it is diversifying the ways audiences can choose to access its news and information programs. While still primarily a radio network, VOA is increasingly making programs available for television and Internet broadcasting. These media help us reach a broader and more diverse audience in certain countries where the reliance on international radio and shortwave is declining. This was demonstrated during coverage of the recent elections in Taiwan, as VOA's China Branch provided live Mandarin updates and analysis, simulcast for radio, TV and the Internet and viewed by large audiences in Taiwan and Mainland China.

Last January, VOA won its first silver medal in the category of Television News Special at the New York Festivals, taking the prize for a feature on a young woman's search for her family among the thousands of refugees crossing into Albania during the Kosovo war. In addition to authoritative news broadcasts, VOA offers its listeners music, education, cultural and call-in shows. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, VOA is on the air to bring America's story and America's point of view to an estimated 91 million regular listeners worldwide.

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), on the air for half a century this year, broadcasts more than 800 hours a week in 26 languages providing daily news, analysis and current affairs programming for a coherent, objective account of the events in their region and the world.

As a surrogate radio, or "home service" to countries where the media are struggling amid chaotic economic conditions and often dictatorships to achieve financial and editorial independence, RFE/RL's mission remains the promotion of democratic values and institutions by disseminating factual information and ideas. Based on the conviction that the first requirement of democracy is a well-informed citizenry, RFE/RL strives to provide objective news and analysis; help strengthen civil societies; combat ethnic and religious intolerance; and provide a model for local media.

RFE/RL maintains 22 bureaus and has regular ties with more than 1,000 local freelancers and stringers. It uses shortwave broadcasts to reach its listeners, but increasingly is utilizing AM/FM stations through 98 affiliate partners in all its broadcast countries except Belarus, Iran, Iraq, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. In addition, RFE/RL maintains an active presence on the Internet.

RFE/RL, with its extensive news coverage of events in Serbia, Kosovo and Montenegro, was able to penetrate the information blockage imposed on Yugoslav citizens by President Slobodan Milosovic during last year's military conflict with NATO. A dramatic example of the effectiveness of RFE/RL broadcasts was reported by NATO and US officials. On May 19-20, 1999 NATO spokesman Jamie Shea and U.S. State Department spokesman Jamie Rubin gave RFE/RL credit for breaking the news that police units loyal to Serbian President Slobodan Milosovic had used water cannon against 600 women and children in the town of Krusevac who were protesting the fact that their husbands and fathers were fighting and being killed in Kosovo. When Serbian troops heard these and other reports of police brutality against their families, they deserted the battlefield to come home and defend their loved ones.

In Armenia, an RFE/RL correspondent was on the scene when gunmen attacked the Parliament building on October 27, 1999, and killed the Prime Minister, Vazgen Sarkisyan, the speaker of the Parliament and six other Armenian political leaders. The correspondent telephoned Prague headquarters from the Parliament building and broke the story.

Radio Free Asia

Like RFE/RL, Radio Free Asia (RFA) is a surrogate radio service broadcasting to areas where the media is controlled. For over three years RFA has been broadcasting via short wave to China, Tibet, North Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and Burma. With the help of Congress, seven months ago RFA completed its build-up to 24 hours of daily programming to China in multiple languages and dialects. Programming is in Mandarin at 12 hours a day, Tibetan in three different dialects at 8 hours a day, three hours of Cantonese, one hour of Uyghur, and an hour-and-a-half a week of Shanghaiese. RFA strives to reach the largest and most diverse audience possible. Listener response indicates that RFA has been successful in reaching across age groups and all walks of life.

RFA continues to break stories in its target countries, such as unrest in Xinjiang's Hotan region reported by the Uyghur service. Aggressive reporting on events in North Korea is carried almost weekly by South Korean newspapers and news agencies. RFA continues to cover extensively the Vietnamese government's crackdown on the United Buddhist church and the Hoa Hao Buddhist sect. The recently inaugurated Tibetan call-in program is the only forum of its kind where Chinese and Tibetan callers have the opportunity to discuss with each other social and political issues. In Cambodia, RFA broadcasts about the existence of secret illegal marijuana plantations led to the public burning of the fields by Prime Minister Hun Sen. The Mandarin Service obtained the first interview with Dickinson College scholar Song Yongyi following his release from a Chinese prison. He had been accused of purchasing "intelligence for foreigners" during a trip to China to gather information on the Cultural Revolution. And since RFA's first broadcasts to China, it has reported on worker protests that went unreported by the Chinese and Western media.

Broadcasting to Cuba

The Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB) provides coordinated management of the Radio Marti and TV Marti programs from its headquarters in Miami, Florida. Radio and TV Marti are dedicated to the promotion of freedom and democracy in Cuba, with a programmatic strategy based on the promotion of human rights. Last year, Radio Marti provided coverage of: the Ibero-American Summit in Lisbon, Portugal, interviewing 17 presidents; the Rio Group Meeting; the Caribbean Summit in the Dominican Republic, the First Lady's visit to Nicaragua and Honduras; and the U.N. Human Rights Commission. Radio and TV Marti continue to provide information to the people of Cuba through reports of the most important U.S. news stories, digests of world news, stories related to Cuba. Among these reports are information on political repression in Cuba, stories on the plight of dissidents, coverage of the U.S. presidential race, and of the events surrounding the case of Elian Gonzalez. This year, TV Marti will develop two new programs. The first, designed to reach women in Cuba, will feature in-depth analysis and discussion of political changes in Cuba and women's health and medicine. The second will feature a political analyst and an economist who will analyze and discuss local and international issues that affect Cuba.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to share with you the results of the first language service review and to highlight some of the accomplishments of each of the service entities over the past year. We would be glad to answer any questions you or other Members of the committee might have.

Senator GRAMS. Gentlemen, just some brief questions today. As I noted in my opening statement, there is significant difference be-

tween the role of VOA and that of the surrogate services, which seek to fill a void where a free press does not exist. However, I would like you to compare the services under the Board's supervision in another respect.

Will you compare the management, the cost effectiveness and the impact of the operations run within the Government, such as the VOA, and compare those with those run as independent private entities? Those would be Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia. Can you give me a comparison of those?

Mr. KAUFMAN. Clearly, the Government—because it is the Government—has special requirements. These have been developed over the years by the Congress and by the President and require special considerations of all kinds to meet objectives and to make sure there is no waste, fraud and abuse.

Our surrogate organizations, which are independent grantees, are not required by law to meet a lot of these same requirements. Primarily, because of the efforts of Senator Feingold earlier in this decade, we have tried very hard to have our surrogate broadcasters meet the same requirements as the Government, especially when it comes to requirements of comparability and pay for employees and operations, to make sure that we are maintaining the policy requirements of the Congress and the President.

And, again, Senator Feingold was the author of the legislation to do that. In this area we have tried to go beyond the letter of the legislation and really tried to get to the spirit of what Senator Feingold had in mind when he wrote that legislation.

So I think many people would say it is easier to operate if you are not part of the Federal Government. I think that is a fair statement.

But I also think that there are requirements that we have in terms of our employees and in terms of the way we operate that require us to run our surrogates as much as possible like they were part of the Federal Government.

Senator GRAMS. Mr. Mora, would you like to—

Mr. MORA. I think I would echo Governor Kaufman's answer and emphasize what we all have discovered on the Board of Governors, that when you are operating more in the private sector as RFE/RL does and Radio Free Asia, there is greater agility and greater management flexibility that is otherwise not found in a government bureaucracy.

Senator GRAMS. Now, I have been told the number of VOA listeners per week has dropped by some 20 percent in the last 5 years.

How do the trends in VOA audience levels in the last 5 years compare to the surrogate services run on a more independent basis from that of the Government? Would you care to compare those numbers?

Mr. MORA. Mr. Chairman, frankly that statistic takes me by surprise. I am not aware that that number has come to the attention of the Board, and perhaps we can hear from the VOA director later with respect to that question. But I am simply not familiar with a drop in listenership to that extent.

Having said that, there is no question that audiences in Central Europe, the former denied areas that have now begun to democ-

ratize, the former Soviet Union and these other countries, that the listenership not only for Voice of America, but for other international radio services has dropped.

As media becomes more free and more diverse, there is a greater choice of indigenous media available to local listeners. The trend worldwide has been for a decreased listenership for international radio services, not only Voice of America and RFE/RL.

Having said that, though, we retain a significant audience particularly among elites in many of those formerly denied territories.

Senator GRAMS. Mr. Kaufman.

Mr. KAUFMAN. There is a basic difference here, as you so eloquently stated in your opening statement. Surrogate broadcasting is broadcasting that would be carried on if there was a free press in that country.

If you do research around the world, you find whether it is in Minnesota, Wisconsin or right here, if you ask people what they are most interested in, they are most interested in what is going on in Minnesota, Wisconsin or right here.

They are not as much interested in what is going on in the world at large; so that obviously surrogate radio in places where it exists has a big leg up over the Voice of America.

But the other point is that we have a mission that goes beyond just what people want to hear. We have to make it palatable, but we have an obligation to bring the foreign policy considerations and the opinions of the United States around the world.

It is very important for us to provide local news. Surrogate broadcasting provides a very real need, but I think it is like the ying and the yang. I think you need both in order to do well. And we have countries literally side by side where VOA will have a higher listenership than Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty has in the same area and vice versa.

The reality of reduced resources is driving our language service review.

But we really believe that VOA and the grantees provide very distinct and needed services. For instance, there is no doubt that in places like China and Russia you need both of those services. You need the Voice of America presenting the view of the United States, and you need the local surrogate service providing what is going on in the local country.

Whether, in times of reduced funding, we can afford to have both in some other countries is a question that we plan on dealing with in the second round of language service review and on out into the future.

Senator GRAMS. Which governments devote the most effort and resources to trying to jam American broadcast, and how effective are these jamming devices? Are there more areas that work harder to keep us out, and what are the effective ways they do that?

Mr. MORA. Mr. Chairman, the—let me see. The current governments that jam our international broadcast services include Cuba, China, and Vietnam. Iran, for a period of time during the Iranian elections, jammed services. The Chinese Government is jamming, of course not only Mandarin service, but the Tibetan service and other vernacular services there.

Jamming radio is not an exact science. Jamming—even the most determined jamming is ultimately permeable. We find that we have audiences in all these countries, notwithstanding the efforts by the local governments to jam.

The quality of the jamming varies, depending upon the location and atmospheric conditions, but ultimately, we find both Voice of America and Radio Free Asia, that the signals are getting through and that the audiences are not only sustained, but in the case of Radio Free Asia and Voice of America growing in those specific countries.

Senator GRAMS. So you would say that they are not that effective in jamming, or they are at times, but you find ways to get around?

Mr. MORA. Well, that is correct. Now—I mean, there is a lot of detail involved here. For example, the jamming efforts of the Cuba regime in Havana are quite effective. Radio Marti, for example, has great difficulty penetrating the localized jamming in the capital city of Havana. But you find that Radio Marti is effective in communicating its message outside of the capital city elsewhere.

But I do not mean to say that it does not create a trouble—a great trouble for us and that it is not a hindrance to the effective communication of our message.

Senator GRAMS. Is it cost effective to try and do the broadcasting, even if the jamming is going on? I mean, are we getting enough penetration to make it worthwhile?

Mr. MORA. I think the answer to that is unquestionably yes, Senator.

Senator GRAMS. OK. Mr. Kaufman, would you—

Mr. KAUFMAN. Yes. Just two points: One is we cannot allow dictators to know that if they jam our radio broadcast they will be successful in ending them. It is a little like negotiating with hostage-takers. In the short run, we may have to broadcast into some places and spend money without getting through, but we have to let the dictators know they cannot stop us.

The second point is—and I know the Foreign Relations Committee is considering a number of issues with regard to China—it would be very helpful if China understood that, in a time when they are trying to promote free trade and trying to promote freedom of transmission of ideas, they should not be allowed to continue to jam us the way they do.

And I think it should be an objective of this foreign policy to support negotiation with China to stop the jamming.

Senator GRAMS. Thank you.

Senator Feingold.

Senator FEINGOLD. Mr. Chairman, thank you for acknowledging my interest in this over the years, and I appreciate your report.

The legislation that we enacted in 1994 mandated that RFE/RL prepare themselves for a cutoff of public funding, and were required to either find private sources of funding or accept elimination.

Last year, these surrogate services were given a reprieve by Congress, one that I did not entirely agree with, but I just wonder if you can answer: Over the past 6 years, did RFE/RL ever make any steps toward fiscal independence?

Mr. KAUFMAN. Absolutely. There was a major effort to try to privatize. As you know, we went ahead and privatized the Polish, Czech and research services. When the BBG first came in, it was one of the first things on our agenda, because of your legislation, to make sure that it was done.

They made major efforts trying to privatize. I do not know whether to quote Governor Korologos or ask him to say it himself, but we propounded the Korologos rule when it comes to this, after several years of trying to privatize. The problem with privatization is nobody is going to privatize and then broadcast what we want them to broadcast, or what is the U.S. foreign policy.

You cannot go into a country like Serbia and broadcast into Serbia, if you want to sell Nikes and say the kinds of things we say about what Milosevic is doing to the country. We found that the people who might be interested in buying the name of RFE/RL were not interested in projecting U.S. foreign policy or doing any of the things that we think are important.

Again, to get to the Korologos rule—the Korologos rule is: If it is worth doing, it is worth paying for. And that is kind of what we came up with as the way to approach this.

Mr. MORA. Mr. Chairman, if I might add to amplify the question a bit, it is well worth remembering that RFE/RL has suffered a two-thirds reduction in personnel and budget since 1995, from about 1,200 employees to approximately 445; and from a budget of—at that time of approximately \$225 million to its current approximately \$75 million.

But as we have seen particularly in the situation of Russia recently and specifically the situation of Andrei Babitsky and the efforts of the Russian Government to choke off information about what is actually happening in that area of the world and disquieting policy and pronouncement by President Putin and others in the current administration to suggest that the regime may be reconsidering prior policy of openness with respect to the media, RFE/RL and particularly our RL transmissions to Russia remain vitally important. And that serves as a symbol for the continuing importance and vitality of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty broadcasts to the region.

Senator FEINGOLD. I understand that, but my question had to do with the privatization aspect—

Mr. MORA. Where the—

Senator FEINGOLD [continuing]. Whether it is privatized or—I heard—I heard your answer. Well, could you talk a little bit more specifically about what you have done to eliminate redundancy in countries that are served both by VOA and RFE/RL?

Mr. MORA. Mr. Chairman, we—in the course of the language service review, Governor Kaufman and I constituted the subcommittee entrusted by the Board with the responsibility recognized earlier on that, first of all, in terms of analyzing the expenditures to particularly the broadcasting to specific areas, the only fair way to do so would be to aggregate both VOA and RFE/RL expenditures toward the same country in order to reach a correct assessment of the totality of the U.S. broadcasting investment to that country.

So all of our analysis and our description that we have described to you today is based upon that premise.

We also operate from the premise that in an area of shrinking budgets, one of the closest and most—the hardest looks that we had to give to our expenditures was precisely to those countries in which there is an overlap between RFE and RL broadcasting.

Some of the cuts that were announced this year by the BBG reflect our assessment that economies can be made in several of those countries where there is duplicate broadcasting. And the subcommittee and the entire BBG has to take a much closer look at all those countries in which there is duplicate broadcasting next year.

Now, as Governor Kaufman said, even though we think there are further economies that are available to us, I think we will be recommending some of them next year. In some countries like, for example, Russia and China, it makes great good sense to have two robust services broadcasting, simply because it is so much in the American interest that there be a clear communication with the populations in those countries.

Senator FEINGOLD. Let me follow on the question of jamming that the Chairman got us started on, with specific reference to Cuba. You indicated that the Cuban Government was significantly successful in jamming Radio Marti, but not entirely successful, is that correct?

What about TV Marti? I am told that virtually no one ever sees that, and are we sure that is such a great concession to Castro to not have that, if we were to continue, let us say, Radio Marti?

Mr. KAUFMAN. Absolutely, Senator. The way I like to think about it is if you are in some country, and we are broadcasting into your country things you do not want to hear.

An aide comes in, and the leader says, we want to stop them. How much will it cost to jam the broadcast coming in?

And the aide says, you know, \$1 million a month, or whatever it costs.

And then the dictator is going to say, well, how long do we have to do this? Will we have to do it for 1 month or 10 months or a year or 2 years?

And the answer would come back, we would have to probably do it indefinitely, because there is no case where America has shut down a broadcasting service because a dictator has blocked it or jammed it.

So I think, as I said earlier, it is the cost of doing business. I do not think we can say to Castro that, because you decide you are going to spend the money to block TV that we should stop broadcasting television. I think that is the reason we should continue.

And I think we are trying to find more and different ways to try to get our television signal into Cuba. But I guess it gets back, like I said to the hostage thing. In the short term, is it expedient to negotiate with hostage-takers? Yes.

But as a society and civilization, we say it is not good to give in to hostage-takers, because it increases the chance that they will pick somebody else up off the street. And I think that is kind of our approach with TV Marti.

But clearly that is in the discretion of the Congress. It is not our decision whether we do TV Marti or not.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, I think it is an interesting argument which I am listening to, but I question whether the argument is—can be rigidly applied.

Let us say we had three services vis-a-vis Cuba. And one was completely ineffective, as it appears that TV Marti may be. I hope we will at least consider the possibility that something that is entirely ineffective that we continue, let us say, Radio Marti. And that would not necessarily be a signal to Mr. Castro that he can frustrate our objectives.

It might even be a signal to him that we are efficient and can focus our money on things that work, but I do think it is an interesting argument. And I want to think about it.

The language service review appears to have much more cutting of VOA programming than that of RFE/RL programming. Could you explain to me why that choice was made?

Mr. MORA. I think the simple answer is that RFE/RL endured its cuts back in 1995. But notwithstanding that, I think a budgetary and programmatic fact, RFE/RL is cutting back certain services. In fact, the ballpark estimate of savings that are anticipated from the RFE/RL cuts that were put into place by this cycle of language review total approximately \$1 million.

And we will be looking, as I mentioned earlier, at reductions again next year in RFE/RL programming as well.

Senator FEINGOLD. Mr. Chairman, if I could just clarify something before—

Senator GRAMS. That is fine. Go ahead.

Senator FEINGOLD. Did you say one of the reasons that it was done is because RFE/RL had cuts in the past?

Mr. MORA. Yes, sir. There was a two-thirds reduction in the VOA budget, RFE/RL budget and RFE/RL personnel in 1995.

Senator FEINGOLD. Let me just suggest those cuts were made on purpose and it was not the intention that the money would come from another source, so—

Mr. MORA. No, Senator.

Senator FEINGOLD. I just want to be sure you understand what the intent was.

Mr. MORA. No, No, Senator. I mean, just to suggest—whatever the intent, the cuts were made.

Senator FEINGOLD. As they were intended to be.

Mr. KAUFMAN. This was before the Board was set up, but I think it is a model of how cuts can be made and maintain service.

What went on there is absolutely incredible. When you look at what was done, that move and the way it was done, and the way the morale was maintained, I think the guidance by the Congress was excellent and I think the implementation by the people on the ground was excellent.

But I think they did really get cut to the bone. They have had a cap on how much they can spend for a while now. Meanwhile, costs and everything else have gone up. I think they are really in rough shape, not that VOA is not. VOA is in the same position.

But they are still recovering from some rather amazing work that was done through your legislation.

Senator FEINGOLD. I appreciate your answers.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator GRAMS. Thank you very much, Senator.

Gentlemen, I am also concerned VOA is becoming less of a voice of things American and more of a multi-cultural voice of news about the various countries of the world, inverting again its intended purpose as Mr. Kaufman, you know, pointed out before, the role of VOA.

Certain requirements under the VOA's charter appear to have fallen by the wayside in the course of this administration.

For example, what non-news program does the Voice of America currently carry to explain U.S. foreign policy and to explain significant currents in American thought today?

Mr. MORA. Mr. Chairman, that question is at a level of specificity that we would invite the VOA director to come and testify with respect to that specific question, if you would desire.

Senator GRAMS. Sure, that would be fine. We can also get more details in writing later, and we would like that as well.

Mr. KAUFMAN. Of course.

Senator GRAMS. Mr. Ungar.

Mr. UNGAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am Sanford Ungar, Director of the Voice of America since last June.

If I understand your question correctly, you wanted to know what non-news programs we present that explain U.S. foreign policy and American culture.

Senator GRAMS. That is correct.

Mr. UNGAR. We continue to have, as VOA has for many, many years, a very broad selection of programs; for example, presenting the music of the United States and other aspects of American culture.

We now have a 24-hour music service. We have for years—in fact, many people will tell you that in Eastern Europe one of the major factors during the cold war years was the jazz programs on the Voice of America.

Senator GRAMS. I thought you meant country and western.

Mr. UNGAR. Well, we also do country and western, as a matter of fact. We make a major effort in country and western and other contemporary music.

There is a woman named Judy Massa, who is one of the best-known advocates and presenters of American country music in the world. She has a program called "Border Crossings," as well, which is quite popular in many places.

We provide a great deal of information about American foreign policy, about American policies in general, about the States of the United States, and what is happening across this country.

We have recently compiled a report that will be submitted to the committee, demonstrating—it is this thick [indicating]—demonstrating our coverage of American culture, American society and events across the country.

Senator GRAMS. Would you say these are random programs then on various topics, or are there appointed times for certain type of programming to do certain things?

Mr. UNGAR. Well, there are, in addition, editorials on the Voice of America, which are not prepared by the Voice of America staff

itself, but by the Office of Policy of the International Broadcasting Bureau.

And 1 minute per hour there are editorials in all 53 of our language services that represent the official view of the U.S. Government, primarily on foreign policy issues.

But I would not say our programming is random at all. I would say that we are making a particular effort to modernize, streamline, make our programming crisper and make it appeal to a younger audience around the world as well.

And I think we could demonstrate convincingly that it represents accurately the policy debate in the United States.

Senator GRAMS. So do you disagree with the statement I made or my concern that VOA is becoming less of a voice of things American rather than becoming more of a multi-cultural voice?

Mr. UNGAR. I do disagree with that statement, Senator. I would say, Mr. Chairman, that VOA has always regarded it as part of its mission to provide balanced, neutral, reliable, trustworthy information about the world for the world.

And we continue to cover international events in a broad sense. And that, too, is part of VOA's purpose. But I would not say that we are becoming less a voice of things American.

Senator GRAMS. OK. I can appreciate your answers, but I still would like to maybe submit this question in more detail and writing, and then have more of a detailed response and examples, if we could, that we could look at and study.

Mr. KAUFMAN. By the way, section 2420 of the law requires us to give you information on how we are giving products of the 50 States. We have compiled that report, and we will be sending that up to you shortly.

Senator GRAMS. OK. I used to be in radio. And I know we had to keep logs, so there is nothing—

Mr. UNGAR. Yes. We are well aware of your excellent record in broadcasting, Mr. Chairman.

Senator GRAMS. All right. Well, thank you very much. Thank you.

The language service review has led to plans to rely more heavily on Internet streamlining of radio transmissions as well. Is this actually likely to reach many people given the event that in fairly highly developed Central European democracies, only a tiny sliver of the population is affluent enough to have some Internet access?

I understand, for instance, that less than 2 percent of the people in Poland now have Internet access. So is this, again, getting the bang for the buck, so to speak?

Mr. KAUFMAN. Yes. First of all, Internet is the future. If you were to try and design something for us to help international broadcasting, you could not do any better than the Internet. What happens in so many countries as you go through Europe, nationalities are not all together.

There are Russians all over Eastern Europe. When we have the Internet up and running, Russians will be able to get Russian services off the Internet no matter where they are. And the same thing with Romanians and Hungarians and so on.

So first off, the future is the Internet. People can get it now, but eventually more will be able to get streaming of our radio and TV broadcasts.

Senator GRAMS. Yes.

Mr. KAUFMAN. Is this going to replace radio and television? Absolutely not, not in the foreseeable future. But for instance, we just finished a survey in Estonia and found that 90 percent of the elites in Estonia use the Internet regularly.

I do not say that is typical of every place, but if there are 90 percent in Estonia, you just have to wonder where it is going.

In Beijing, 5 percent of the people in Beijing say they have regular access to the Internet.

So I think our interest in the Internet is forward looking. But I think right now it provides a wonderful supplement to the other things that we are doing.

We are going to be doing a lot more on the Internet, and we are going to be coming to ask you for help in doing some of the things we are going to have to do in terms of infrastructure to make that real.

Senator GRAMS. I realize this about China and other parts of Europe, but what about Africa? Is that also—

Mr. KAUFMAN. No. In Africa, we have wonderful listenership to short wave. Twenty-four percent of the people in Nigeria, almost that many in Ethiopia, listen to Voice of America regularly.

So, as Governor Mora said, in areas that are not served by popular media, short wave works just great. In addition we are developing more medium wave and FM.

But when you get to Europe it becomes a very, very competitive marketplace. At the same time, these countries are the ones that are entering NATO.

Senator Feingold put in his legislation that we have to look at each one of these countries in terms of what competitive media exists and what is the media environment that we are broadcasting into, to consider whether we should continue to broadcast there.

Senator GRAMS. I am just interested, when you say 24 percent listenership, how do you measure that? Do you have a Nielsen's—

Mr. KAUFMAN. No, we do our own surveys.

Senator GRAMS [continuing]. That sort of thing? Yes.

Mr. KAUFMAN. We do more and more research. One of the big things that Congress has done for us the last 2 years is to give us more money for research.

And, you know in broadcasting, without some way of knowing what your listeners think, you can be fooled to believe anything.

Senator GRAMS. Yes.

Mr. KAUFMAN. Thanks to Congress, we have a very rich research service, which we want to expand. And we actually poll in Nigeria—and in Nigeria, it is not difficult. You can poll in Nigeria fairly easy. When you get to places like China, it gets a lot more difficult.

Senator GRAMS. Mr. Mora.

Mr. MORA. Mr. Chairman, this also goes back to the issue that the focus of language service review and of the Board is to increase the effectiveness of our broadcasting services. I think the feeling

among the Board is that perhaps for too long we were broadcasting this year because we broadcast last year.

Through research in all the countries in which we were broadcasting, that now enables us to gauge with a much greater level of precision whether or not we actually have an audience and are having an impact in the intellectual discourse of that country.

The point is that the Board is determined to ensure that our broadcast services have an impact. If they do not have an impact, then we will analyze the measures that are required to ensure that we do have an impact.

And if that means that we have to reallocate funds from lower priority language services to ensure impact in the higher priority services, the Board is prepared to do that, but so the point being that we look at every country separately. We analyze what the media preferences are. We analyze what it will take to become effective in that country.

And then the Board will tailor our broadcasting strategies and our choice of media to that specific country and that specific set of circumstances.

Senator GRAMS. OK. It is my understanding that the Board refused to follow through on a request by VOA's leadership to get \$4.5 million transferred from the State Department's budget as specifically permitted by the appropriations legislation that we passed, to cover mandated cost of living increases.

So the question is: Would you explain the reasons the Board makes that decision, including any concerns that acting otherwise would further delay the need to make hard choices about RIF's at VOA?

Mr. KAUFMAN. Yes. The language service review process is a strategic process. It is not a budget driven process.

No matter what we had done on that decision of the \$4.5 million, we still would have had these RIF's, because the changes are being made in the services based on strategic considerations as Governor Mora pointed out in his original request.

The second point is that the decision on the \$4.5 million was based on the promise that we would not have any RIF's. And clearly, since this is strategic driven service, and we were going to go ahead with the RIF's, it would have been improper for us to have taken the \$4.5 million based on no RIF's, when in fact, we were going to have RIF's.

Senator GRAMS. Yes. Is it true that some 33 RIF's that should have taken place under the previous director were deferred, and does this make your job even more difficult now?

Mr. KAUFMAN. I think what happened in that year was we were able to use funds from IBB to pay for those 33 positions that VOA had projected they had to RIF, so we did not RIF. That would have been a budget-driven RIF.

No, I would say that the decision we make on these RIF's was based on the language review process, which Governor Mora laid out, where we are trying to decide what our priorities are in each country, what we can do, and then generate funds to be used in the places where we are having less impact or in our higher priority countries.

Senator GRAMS. Yes. Mr. Mora, any—

Mr. MORA. Senator, I think I would just add to that answer, that when the language service review was underway, as Governor Kaufman has indicated, the focus of the subcommittee and ultimately of the committee was on strategic redirection for our language services.

It was only after the decision was made on how to redirect the language services that an assessment was made as to what, if any, RIF's would be entailed as a result of these decisions.

So the initial planning was not based on whether it would or would not produce RIF's. That came after the fact and was a secondary element—not an element at all in our initial decisions to make these kinds of changes.

Senator GRAMS. OK. Have any of the broadcasting services absorbed entire offices or any large groups of lawyers who used to work at USIA before USIA was folded into the State Department by the reorganization legislation developed by this committee?

Mr. MORA. Mr. Chairman, as a former general counsel of USIA, let me say that the Broadcasting Board of Governors absorbed a general counsel's office as part of the separation of personnel and functions between the former USIA and now the new BBG.

But the ratio of attorneys to staff was, to my knowledge, something that was consistent with the similar division of personnel between the two agencies.

It does not appear to me, at least, based upon my current experience and my past experience as general counsel to be anything out of the ordinary in any Federal agency.

Senator GRAMS. That was going to be my followup question. Is there any ratio of lawyers to staff now that is out of whack? I mean, do we have some high-price lawyers and need some staff that we are not able to hire or have to let go?

So is that ratio, do you think, in balance, or could we use fewer lawyers and more staff?

Mr. MORA. Well, we have—

Senator GRAMS. Nothing against lawyers, of course.

Mr. MORA. We—yes, yes. Thank you.

We have, I believe, currently three attorneys on staff. And we will be hiring two more, which represents a relatively small complement of attorneys, given the various legal skills that are required to effectively operate a Federal agency; for example, personnel, procurement, as well as just general telecommunications expertise are three sets of legal skills that are absolutely required.

Once you fill those, there is not really a lot more room for other general skills. So my personal opinion is that we do not have too large a staff of attorneys at the BBG.

Mr. KAUFMAN. We took the office at USIA and said some portion—I think it was almost half the office—goes with USIA to State and a little less than half the office comes to do our support work.

So the lawyers essentially who were doing our support work before independence were doing our support work after independence. And it was just that they are sitting in a different office than the one they were sitting in previously.

Senator GRAMS. But there would not be an increase in numbers or—

Mr. KAUFMAN. No increase in numbers.

Senator GRAMS. OK.

Senator GRAMS. All right. There is a proposal being considered to merge WORLDNET TV with Voice of America. Have any developments or problems at WORLDNET led to the proposal for this merger?

Mr. MORA. Mr. Chairman, this is an important point of the testimony. And I think if we are going to leave the committee with one message, it would be to allow us to retain the flexibility to tailor our television services as the needs of the local target audiences or country would require.

Any efforts, however well intentioned on the budgetary side to restrict our ability to reshape our television broadcast services—thank you—could end up being counter-productive in the sense that it would hamper our efforts to communicate effectively with target audiences.

Some countries, for example Indonesia, surveys indicate that 73 percent of Indonesians take their primary news and information from television.

Surveys in China indicate that 90 percent of the Chinese would say that their primary source of news and information is television, as opposed to much lower—much, much lower percentages for radio in those two countries.

And these two countries are not idiosyncratic. We find a trend toward a consumer preference of television as opposed to other media services in country after country.

International broadcasting has to meet this kind of challenge. We have to do better television. We have to have the ability to broadcast in television if local audience preferences state that.

If we are precluded from effectively implementing television services as an integral part of VOA's international operations or RFE/RL's or RFA's international operations, it would be equivalent to restricting us to, say, to the telegraph as a way of communicating with target audiences. Simply, it is an unnecessary and counter-productive decision.

Mr. KAUFMAN. They asked Willie Sutton, why did he rob banks. And he said, "That is where the money is."

Senator GRAMS. Yes.

Mr. KAUFMAN. The reason we have to get into TV is because that is where the listeners are.

Senator GRAMS. Well, the language service review appears to have concluded that we are living in more of a TV world now than we are in a radio world. However, questions remain as to whether VOA is the viable home for TV, and whether VOA is up to the task of running a television service. Would you agree with that or not?

Mr. KAUFMAN. Our core business is going out, obtaining the news, knowing the local language and culture, and being able to deliver the news in the local language. You know, "We speak your language," is our theme.

Nobody else in the world has the ability that U.S. International Broadcasting has to speak to so many people in their own language. That is all we want to do with TV.

Senator GRAMS. Yes.

Mr. KAUFMAN. This is not rocket science. What we want to be able to do is be able to broadcast on television the same as we do on radio.

The people that have the expertise almost unique in the whole world are our journalists, not just the ones in VOA and OCB, but RFE/RL and RFA. They know about how to get the news. And they know how to present it.

They did not know TV. But we hired a contractor who is excellent at bringing people in and training them how to use these small video cameras. We trained over 100 audio-journalists who are now photojournalists. They can now go out and get the news.

We should send you some of the results. One of our photojournalists won an award in New York.

What we want to do is be able to present the news. We want to be able to get to where the listeners are. People want to get the news on television. We want to present the news. What we do now in some cases, we just have a picture of a man or woman reading the news.

Senator GRAMS. Yes.

Mr. KAUFMAN. People are interested in receiving the news on television. We want to get way beyond that. But VOA is the place where this has to be, because they have the expertise in gathering and sending out the news.

Mr. MORA. As a point of clarification, Senator, our language service review did not come to the conclusion that television is overwhelmingly the medium of choice. What we did recognize in the course of the process was that in some countries it was overwhelmingly the medium of choice for consumers.

But we still recognize, for example, that television is not a factor in certain countries. For example, Afghanistan, there is neither any television nor is there any Internet.

But between an Afghanistan and, say, a Moscow where—another capital city in which television is the preferred medium of choice for news and information, there are many steps in between.

And we have to retain the flexibility and our broadcasters have to retain the flexibility for picking a point in the continuum, the right blend of media which will most effectively communicate our message to those audiences.

But having said that, let me turn it over to the VOA Director who otherwise I think would strangle me with this cord unless I give him a chance to speak.

Mr. UNGAR. Just a few words on this point, Mr. Chairman. As Governor Mora has stated, the language service review is an entirely separate process from the development of VOA TV.

I believe that my mandate in becoming the Director of Voice of America was to help turn the Voice of America into a modern multi-media organization. And I think that is what we are in the process of doing with radio, television and the Internet.

As Governor Kaufman says, our job is to get the information and then figure out how best to distribute it in one of these three media or all of these three media in each place.

We have had a pilot project in VOA TV that has been an enormous success, and it would give me the greatest pleasure to send you some of those programs. We are doing more and more simul-

cast programs, radio and television, in languages, in the foreign languages.

The key point here is that WORLDNET television, however wonderful a job it has done in many areas over the years, has very few language qualified employees. WORLDNET has the technicians and some of the technology. Voice of America has the language qualified people.

What this really does is to preserve jobs for the Voice of America and not in any way eliminate them.

Senator GRAMS. Other than diverse language capabilities of the VOA staff, would that staff be prepared to produce quality television broadcasts? And I guess from your answers, you feel that they have.

Mr. KAUFMAN. They have. Our pilot program has been wonderful. And if you do have a chance to look at some of their product, it is excellent.

Senator GRAMS. I would appreciate it if you could give me a couple of copies.

Mr. UNGAR. The videocassettes will come up with our answers to the other—

Senator GRAMS. Very good.

Mr. UNGAR. OK.

Senator GRAMS. I will look forward to that.

What advantages might there be to maintaining an independent television entity under the supervisory of the Board? And if that were to occur, what would you change from the WORLDNET enterprise as it stands today?

Mr. MORA. Mr. Chairman, We are looking at this. This is actually a work in progress at the Board. I am not sure that we have reached any hard and fast decisions as to absolutely final configuration of these various entities.

But I think the arguments we have articulated here today, particularly the statement that Director Ungar just made to the effect that we have to meld the technical television skills of our WORLDNET employees with the language capabilities of our broadcasters is the trumping argument, arguing in favor of a consolidation of these two services in a single broadcast entity.

I should add also that we are in the process of training and over time will train each of our VOA journalists in the use of the—kind of like a handycam as the basic reportorial tool.

No longer the microphone and the cassette deck, but it is going to be a video camera, which will capture digital video, as well as sound; and it will enable our newsmen and newswomen to produce video and sound and Internet from the same technological base.

Senator GRAMS. Yes.

Mr. MORA. It will give us enormous flexibility and is already bearing wonderful fruit at VOA.

Mr. KAUFMAN. It would require tremendous duplication. I mean, you would be delivering and gathering the news twice.

Our basic approach is to come up with what the news is, and then send it out.

If it goes out on television, that is fine, AM, FM, shortwave, Internet, whatever way it is, we would like to have all that consoli-

dated in one place. I think it is the most efficient way to do it, and I think you would get the best product that way.

Senator GRAMS. If and when you accrue savings from the reductions in service following this year's language services review, where do you expect to use those funds in order to increase your service? Where do you have the greatest need?

Mr. MORA. Well, there are several things. One there is some countries that we want to do some things in. We are going to do some interesting things in Indonesia, in the Middle East, places where we want to go into and do programs to try to really increase our impact.

This is all about: How do we get U.S. foreign policy out there—and we need impact. And we have to use some money to try to figure out how to do it. One of the biggest things we have never done, we have never spent money for promotion.

In many countries people do not know when we are on and what time, and what station. Things that you and your business do as a matter of course, telling people when you can watch—listen to your shows and the rest of it, we have no money for that.

We have never spent a dime, as far as I know, for any of those kinds of things. We have got to have a more effective promotion system, because we are going into modern media markets.

If you say, "Well, why are we in modern media markets?", Russia is a perfect example. We have got to have impact in Russia. And if you are in Russia right now, you are hit with all kinds of different modern media.

And if you do not know where to find Radio Liberty, and you want Radio Liberty, because when the elections come up, the only place that Russians can go to get objective reporting on the elections was Radio Liberty.

Or in Chechnya, the only place that Russians can go and get objective reporting of what was going on in Chechnya was through Radio Liberty, both—and Voice of America, for Chechnya and Voice of America for the elections. Both of these working together, hitting different audiences different ways. That is where they went. But they do not know where to find them many times.

Mr. MORA. Mr. Chairman, if I could amplify, this gets to the heart of the process, and it is quite a complex process, because it is akin to three dimensional chess.

We weigh so many variables with each of our language services. For example, the subcommittee knew at a certain point in our deliberations that we wanted to free up resources to be bolder in experimenting with the Internet.

We knew we wanted to free up resources to experiment with marketing as Governor Kaufman has indicated. We knew we wanted to enhance perhaps our broadcast capability to Colombia.

We were concerned about some reports that cultural trends in India may be indicating a turn away from Western traditions, with all that might imply. We wanted to communicate better to India. We knew we have to communicate better with Russia.

And when you posit these kinds of questions, "What does it take to become more effective in a particular country?" then you have a limited number of variables among which to choose.

It could be your programming is not adequate and that—the solution to that may not require resources, but maybe a readjustment of the programming mix to that particular country.

But it could be that you do not know what it is causing the problem, which would argue for investment of money into research.

It might be that the transmitting signal or the signal transmitting to the country is not effective, not a clear signal, which would mean an increase in broadcasting capability and transmission capabilities. It could be a marketing problem, which would argue for an increase in marketing funds.

The specific solution to a problem presented by a particular country in which we are not effective could be any one of a number of factors, most of which would require the investment of additional resources.

So the Board felt it incumbent to free up some of these resources so as to be able to make the investments that research would indicate were required, in order to increase the effectiveness of a country.

So this is a generic answer to your question. And the answer would depend upon the specific country in question and upon the actual hard data that we are able to generate concerning what would be required in order to increase the effectiveness and audience share of U.S. International Broadcasting in that country.

Senator GRAMS. What countries do you think have the highest listenership?

Mr. KAUFMAN. Nigeria and Ethiopia.

Mr. MORA. Bangladesh.

Mr. UNGAR. If I may, Mr. Chairman, the top five countries in number of listeners for VOA are China, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Ethiopia and Afghanistan. That is a very changed picture from the past. But those are our top five in absolute numbers.

In terms of percentage penetration, the top five might turn out differently.

Senator GRAMS. What about Europe? I suppose that has been a big difference, Eastern Europe.

Mr. UNGAR. Well, that is just the point. There are places in Europe where we have a very substantial listenership. For example, in the Balkans, during the Kosovo crisis last year, we got figures indicating that about 83 percent of Albanians in the refugee camps were listening to the Voice of America Albanian Service. And part of that was a family reunification program we were running.

We also had very high statistics in the Serbian service. Our colleagues in Radio Free Europe had similarly high statistics during the Kosovo engagement and in some of those services.

But there are places in Europe where our audience is way down. You mentioned before that there was perhaps 2 percent Internet usage in Poland. Well, at the moment, the audience for Voice of America in Poland is about 1.1 percent, lower than Internet usage.

Now, at some point, we have to notice that and understand that while we want to continue providing information, we have to shift where the emphasis is.

Mr. MORA. OK. Maybe we should have Tom Dine come up here and talk about Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. And while he is coming up, we want to ask Dick Richter from Radio Free Asia—

Radio Free Asia broadcasts into countries where it is almost impossible to find out what your listenership is.

Senator GRAMS. OK. I need you to speak into the microphone so we have got your—

Mr. DINE. OK.

Senator GRAMS [continuing]. Voice on record here.

Mr. DINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is Tom Dine. I am President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty.

You asked for a quantitative answer, so my answer is there are 148 million people in Russia. Our largest audience is in Russia, followed by Ukraine, and then Romania. But what we look at are the percentages, because we are not a mass audience radio.

We are trying to attract the influential persons in these countries. And in that case, the numbers look a little different. The highest percentage of listening elites in our area of broadcasting starts with Bosnia. And this spills over into Serbia. And by Serbia, I also mean Kosovo, Albanian Kosovars as well as Montenegrans.

The next highest percentage is Azerbaijan. Here we have a dictator who has clamped down on a free press consistently over the last 8 years and has not always been friendly toward us.

But our largest percentage beyond the southeastern Balkans is Azerbaijan, followed by Lithuania.

There is no pattern, except to pick up on what both of our Governors have said, you have got to have a good program. You have got to attract a listening audience and tell the listening audience where to find us. And you have got to compete in the local market. And that is what we are doing.

Senator GRAMS. OK. Well, thank you. Would you state your name and your title again, so we have that on the record?

Mr. DINE. Tom Dine, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's President.

Senator GRAMS. Thank you very much, Tom.

Mr. DINE. Thank you.

Mr. RICHTER. Dick Richter from Radio Free Asia.

Senator GRAMS. Again, would you state your name once more and your title?

Mr. RICHTER. It is Dick Richter, President of Radio Free Asia.

Senator GRAMS. Thank you.

Mr. RICHTER. Mr. Chairman, I would just like to take the opportunity to say a few things about Radio Free Asia. First, I would like to say a word about something that Mr. Kaufman mentioned a short time ago about trying to advertise where we are heard.

We actually have done, at the Board's behest, some advertising for our website on other websites at a very, very low cost, and in some newspapers. Actually, on other websites, there was no cost at all. Foreign language newspapers, we were able to do it at a low cost.

And we almost were able to get a Chinese mainland website to run a banner ad for us. Then at the last minute, they realized that it would not be such a good idea, so they decided not to. But it was really at the 11th hour that they pulled out, so it is not for want of trying that we have not done that.

The other thing is in Cambodia, which is one of the few countries—the only country that we broadcast to that we actually have

bureau on the ground in Phnom Penh—we have been able to advertise in some of the local newspapers our frequencies and our times at, again, a very low expenditure of money.

In terms of doing research and trying to figure out how many listeners we have in all of the countries that we broadcast to, China, of course, is very, very difficult.

And we did manage to have a three-site survey done about a year ago, which indicated that we were the third most listened to international broadcast medium after VOA and BBC.

We also are quite sure that many people were not willing to admit that they listened to us, because they were afraid of saying that they listened to us.

On the other hand, we have some very, very courageous listeners who will call us every single day on 800 numbers on talk shows that we have, and they are connected with a broadcaster sitting in Washington. They ask the most outrageous questions and bring up the most severe criticism of the Chinese Government that you could possibly imagine.

As a matter of fact, our broadcaster was saying that he was anticipating a bunch of questions the other day about Elian Gonzalez. And fortunately, he said, “I did not have to defend the attorney general or anybody else,” he said, “because I would have found it a little bit difficult, because I have had situations which were analogous to what poor little Elian went through.”

And he said, “I felt very nervous about trying to answer questions like that,” but fortunately he did not have to.

Just the other day, we got our second letter in Chinese Braille. It was a letter from somebody who was fulsome in his praise for our broadcasts. And then he went on to criticize the harsh, brutal treatment of handicapped people in China. All of this is to say that we do have very substantial feedback on the kinds of things that we do.

On jamming—to say that a broadcast service is jammed creates the impression, I think, understandably that it is just completely blocked out, that the signal just can’t be heard, which is not really the case at all.

And I would like to point out that in Korea, for instance, about 2 months ago the jamming became more intense on one particular frequency. But it still was not severe enough to block out that frequency, and the listeners were still able to hear our broadcast despite the fact that there was jamming.

That is frequently the way the situation is in China too, because we come in on so many different frequencies that we are able to be heard throughout the country basically all the time.

Senator GRAMS. Thank you very much, sir.

Just a couple of quick followup questions, and then I will let you go. With the planned diminution of radio broadcasting coverage being made in Central and Eastern Europe countries, will there then be a redirection of resources from radio to TV or from radio to the Internet?

Mr. KAUFMAN. No. In some places, we are going to go to the Internet.

But in terms of television what has happened is a bad coincidence. I mean, I do not generally believe in coincidences, but this

is a coincidence. And that is the whole movement between WORLDNET and VOA TV coming at the same time that we were doing the language service review, there is an impression that somehow the two are united. They are not.

What we would be doing in television is totally based on transferring resources from WORLDNET to VOA TV. It has nothing to do with the language service review.

In terms of the Internet, yes, we are using the Internet some places where we think it can be successful and places where we have very low listenership. And we are going to be looking at the Internet as a way to help us in a place like Poland, where our listenership is so low that the Internet looks attractive.

Senator GRAMS. One final question, what does the drop in listenership indicate about the News Now formula that VOA has been using in the last couple of years? Again, you would have to agree with my premise there has been a drop in listenership, and then we go from there.

Mr. UNGAR. Mr. Chairman, I would like an opportunity to examine those figures about the listenership, by the way, because we believe now that we have 91 million listeners a week around the world, and that that does not capture some of our impact on the Internet, on satellite television and on some of our affiliates.

Having said that, it is about a year—a little more than a year, I think, since VOA moved to the 24-hour-a-day News Now format for its English language programming.

And, of course, any change of that sort is always going to be controversial. It was made before I arrived at VOA, but for every complaint, there is also a compliment about the fact that VOA news—reliable news is available 24 hours a day in English around the world.

There is some repetition in it, needless to say, but I do not think that there is any correlation between an alleged loss of listenership in English and the VOA News Now format.

Senator GRAMS. OK. Well, thank you very much. Any final comments you would like to make?

Mr. KAUFMAN. Thank you for having us and giving us an opportunity to talk about international broadcasting, which we feel strongly can be incredibly helpful to the United States' future and the United States foreign policy.

Senator GRAMS. I would like to leave the business record open for 3 days in case other Senators would like to, you know, direct some questions to you in writing. Senator Biden might or others.

And then also if there is any other questions we would have to clarify what we have asked, we would like to submit to you, so we will leave the record open for 3 days. And, of course, we would appreciate a quick response. And I look forward to seeing those videos.

All right, gentlemen, thank you.

Mr. Mora, Mr. Kaufman, thank you.

Mr. MORA. Thank you.

Mr. KAUFMAN. Thank you.

Mr. UNGAR. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 4:19 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF EDWARD KAUFMAN AND ALBERTO MORA TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS
FOR THE RECORD FROM SENATOR HELMS

Question 1. Did the Agency proceed with the implementation of the VOA-TV project before authorization from Congress or approval of the reprogramming request for transfer of Worldnet assets to VOA-TV?

Answer. No. At this time, the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) has not proceeded with the merger of Worldnet into the Voice of America. We are still awaiting approval of our reprogramming request by oversight committees in Congress.

In terms of background on the genesis of this project, the conference report on the fiscal year 1998 appropriation encouraged the BBG to review current television programming and explore new ways to broadcast internationally in this medium. In response, the BBG informed the Congress of a pilot project called VOA-TV in September 1998 (letter attached). In August 1999, we sent our respective oversight committees another letter detailing the successes of the pilot project and our plans to expand the transition to VOA-TV (also attached).

In February 2000, the BBG sent a reprogramming letter to several congressional committees, including the Committee on Foreign Relations, proposing to merge Worldnet resources into the Voice of America, thereby creating a component within the VOA called VOA-TV. The rationale for this merger is to take maximum advantage of the 53 languages spoken by VOA employees by transmitting in the medium of television to target audiences that prefer to receive news and information via TV.

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS,
330 INDEPENDENCE AVE., SW,
Washington, DC, September 25, 1998.

The Honorable JESSE HELMS,
*Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
United States Senate.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN:

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) wishes to inform the committee of an amended proposal for application of savings identified within the Fiscal Year (FY) 1998 International Broadcasting Operations (IBO) appropriation. This letter supplements the August 20, 1998, letter which proposed planned redistributions within the IBO account, as well as an appropriations transfer to the Radio Construction account.

In our August 20th letter, we identified an estimated availability of \$9.014 million, resulting from a third-quarter review (through June 30, 1998) of IBO funds. Since then, we have conducted a final end-of-year review and identified additional savings of \$1.05 million that was earmarked for transmission costs of the surrogate Farsi broadcasts into Iran.

Earlier this year, we presented a plan to the Congress which identified a total of \$2.6 million to initiate a surrogate Farsi service in Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL). Of this amount, a total of \$1.55 million was allocated to RFE/RL for start-up and operations of the new service. The remaining amount, \$1.05 million, was allocated to the IBB's Office of Engineering for transmission costs into Iran. Since that plan was approved by the Congress in late May, 1998, we have moved forward in implementing the new service. We have recently hired a Service Director, secured office space for the Farsi service in Prague, and are in the final stages of hiring the appropriate staff and refurbishing the office. However, we project that Farsi broadcasting will not commence until early in FY 1999. As a result, we do not anticipate utilizing any of these transmission funds in FY 1998.

In light of the combined availability of \$10.064 million, Agency staff have been engaged in discussions with Appropriations Committee staff in both the House and Senate, concerning the most appropriate utilization of these funds. As a result, we have identified the total amount of favorable exchange rate gains realized within FY 1998 and would like to propose transferring the entire amount, \$4.828 million, to the Buying Power Maintenance account. We feel it would be prudent at this time to transfer these favorable gains so that potential downshifts in the U.S. dollar's value internationally could be negated to the maximum extent possible. The remaining availability, \$5.236 million, would be dedicated to the most critical of the projects identified in our August 20th letter. Specifically, the BBG would like to propose the following reprogramming and transfer actions:

Iran	Amount	Action
Audience Research	\$750,000	Reprogram from within IBO
VOA-TV Consulting Services	\$170,000	Reprogram from within IBO
Technical Operations Area Fire Safety Project	¹ \$1,450,000	Reprogram from within IBO
Solid State modulators	\$2,866,000	Transfer to Radio Construction
IBO Exchange Rate Gains	\$4,828,000	Transfer to Buying Power Maintenance account
TOTAL	\$10,064,000	Total surplus identified

¹ Please note that this cost estimate increased from the estimate of \$1,300,000 included in the August 20, 1998, letter.

We also wish to inform the committee of an initiative related to television. Last year, in the FY 1998 House Appropriations Committee report, H.R. 2267, the BBG and the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) were urged to develop a "streamlined, low-cost television component to news and information broadcasting in local languages . . ." (p. 129). In light of this direction and, in recognition of the changing world media consumption patterns, we undertook a comprehensive review of our television operations, changes in television technology, and of how best to use existing resources within IBB, WORLDNET television, and the Voice of America (VOA) to meet the objectives set forth by the Congress and to maximize the global audience for U.S. international broadcasting. In our review, we have identified a number of technological and broadcasting changes which create substantial and unique opportunities for U.S. international broadcasting. We now propose to hire consultants to conduct a television pilot project (our August 20th letter identified a reprogramming request of \$170,000 for this purpose). We believe, based on our assessments, that changes in broadcast technology and the extensive language and field network of the VOA provide an enormous opportunity to produce high-quality, low-cost television in local languages around the world. The Broadcasting Board of Governors will report to the Congress no later than April 1, 1999, on the results of the pilot project and will propose, at that time, any organizational changes relating to this initiative.

We have consulted with the Director of the U.S. Information Agency on the substance of this letter and he concurs in these proposals. Please refer to Enclosure A for the specific breakout proposed for funding shifts between accounts. As always, we appreciate the committee's support for international broadcasting.

Sincerely,

DAVID BURKE, *Chairman,*
Broadcasting Board of Governors.

[Enclosure A]

United States Information Agency—Summary of International Broadcasting Operations FY-1998
Reprogramming
[Funds in thousands]

	Current 1998 Estimate	Proposed 1998 Plan	Net Changes
Broadcasting Board of Governors	\$1,400	\$1,400	—
International Broadcasting Bureau:			
Voice of America	101,172	99,642	(1,530)
Unallocated Funds	1,347	—	(1,347)
WORLDNET Television and Film Service	21,559	21,470	(89)
Engineering and Technical Operations	114,264	108,907	(5,357)
Program Support	14,963	15,422	459
Administrative Support	12,854	13,024	170
Subtotal, International Broadcasting Bureau	266,159	258,465	(7,694)
Independent Grantee Organizations:			
Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty	69,969	69,969	—
Radio Free Iraq	5,000	5,000	—
Radio Free Asia	24,100	24,100	—
Total, International Broadcasting	366,628	358,934	(7,694)
Office of Cuba Broadcasting	24,882	24,882	—
Radio Construction	40,000	42,866	2,866
Buying Power Maintenance Fund	—	4,828	4,828
TOTAL	431,510	431,510	—

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS,
330 INDEPENDENCE AVE., SW,
Washington, DC, August 6, 1999.

The Honorable JESSE HELMS,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
United States Senate.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN:

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) wishes to update the committee on the pilot project we have been conducting to explore options of enhancing our television capabilities. As we informed you last September, based on our assessments, changes in broadcast technology and the extensive language and field network of the Voice of America (VOA) provide an enormous opportunity to produce high-quality, low-cost television in local languages around the world.

In October 1998, with your approval, the BBG launched a pilot program under the rubric of VOA-TV. While, prior to the pilot, VOA had produced some television broadcasts, this programming was generally limited to simulcasts of its radio shows and was somewhat basic in its scope. As you know, the VOA-TV pilot project has been designed to test three premises: (1) whether VOA could train journalists in the use of digital equipment and convergence technology to produce reports usable simultaneously on radio, television and the Internet, (2) whether the unique ability of the VOA's 53 language services to communicate with local audiences could be used to reach rapidly expanding audiences in television and on the Internet; and (3) whether the existing assets and funding of the Worldnet Television and Film Service and the VOA could be consolidated to create economies of scale that would produce, for the same amount of funding, more high quality television programming in additional languages worldwide.

To test these premises, the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB), using the existing resources of VOA, Worldnet, and the multi-year Digital Broadcasting Project, acquired small format digital cameras and digital editing equipment that have both broadcast quality video and audio elements. It also retained Michael Rosenblum Associates (MRA), a global leader in this medium, to train approximately 45 journalists, producers, and directors from VOA and Worldnet in the use of the new equipment and to supervise production of video journalist reporting.

The BBG believes the pilot project has been an immense success. The MRA training sessions have demonstrated that VOA and Worldnet journalists can, using this newly developed digital platform, "produce high quality reports that can be utilized alternatively for television, radio or the Internet, as internal production demand re-

quires. This ability, coupled with the unique language skills of VOA journalists and the extensive network of overseas bureaus and stringers, can lead to the creation of a unique global television network—one, which can produce in-depth news and information in dozens of languages. In addition, we have begun working with directors and producers to enhance the quality of simulcast radio shows, adding more video roll-ins and high quality graphics to make the shows more attractive to potential viewers: These simulcasts will produce a steady stream of programming for VOA-TV. Our discussions with potential rebroadcast affiliates ranging from Russia and Kosovo to Indonesia and Haiti indicate that there are enormous possibilities for placement of this programming. We believe, based on the results of the pilot project, that high quality productions in local languages could greatly expand the reach and audience for U.S. international broadcasting, through a shifting of base resources.

Our experience with VOA-TV thus far indicates that it is the best use for television broadcasting assets. While Worldnet continues to make important contributions to U.S. Government-sponsored international broadcasting, we believe that the impending independence of international broadcasting and the shift of Interactive Dialogues to the Department of State make FY 2000 an appropriate time to restructure our television operations. At the outset of FY 2000, we will submit a re-programming proposal, describing in detail our intentions to shift Worldnet assets to VOA.

Until then, we plan to continue and expand the VOA-TV pilot project. To date, we have begun the transition of our conventional radio studios to radio/TV simulcast studios, and we have initiated a pilot project for two-way interactive video and audio on the web. Our plans to continue the VOA-TV project include the following:

- Continue and expand the training of the videojournalists (VJs).
- Begin to modernize the VOA bureaus in London, New York and Los Angeles so that they can accommodate video journalism and T3 lines so that they can feed into Washington programming.
- Bring a robotic radio/TV simulcast studio on-line, to augment conventional television facilities.
- Expand the website toward video capability.
- Initiate a Russian Language Magazine program to test the audience market overseas.
- Continue to work closely with the AFGE union on affected employees throughout this period, engaging in an on-going dialogue on the implementation of VOA-TV.

The BBG, IBB, and VOA will be intimately involved in reviewing and modifying existing programming, in an effort to meet the needs of our current audience, while appealing to additional markets and viewers. Once approved by Congress, all current Worldnet employees will be transitioned into similar positions within VOA in an orderly manner, with re-training throughout the organization to take maximum advantage of the new technology available to these journalists. Through the use of this new technology, the IBB will be able to produce better, more directly “mission” related broadcasts within existing base funding.

We would like to assure the committee that throughout the transition from Worldnet to VOA-TV, Worldnet’s existing support for U.S. Government foreign policy initiatives will be maintained and access to IBB television studios facilities, and the satellite delivery system will continue unabated. VOA-TV’s global capability makes it uniquely suited to deal with surge broadcasting. The VOA will continue to place major figures on the air, not just in radio, but on television and the web as well. As with VOA radio today, the BBG is committed to establishing a system and infrastructure to make television broadcasting available on a 24-hour basis as needed.

Question 2. You speak about free and open media in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe as a justification of diminution of broadcasting there. How much programming does the media in those countries devote to U.S. foreign policy issues (as VOA’s Charter requires VOA to cover)? Given recent restrictions on domestic media in Hungary and government and party control of many stations in Poland, how fully independent are the media in the region?

Answer. Since 1990, Freedom House has rated the media of both Poland and Hungary as free. An independent and professional media is the best guarantor of coverage of all points of view, including the U.S. point of view. However, it would be rare that media anywhere would focus on U.S. foreign policy issues and provide congruence with that aspect of the VOA Charter. For instance, this does not exist in the United Kingdom or Germany, and we would not expect Poland and Hungary to be exceptions. VOA will still fulfill its Charter with regard to these countries by pro-

viding news feeds to affiliated radio and television stations and by providing news and information via the Internet to news outlets and individuals. We expect that with time, VOA will reach a larger number of people through these methods of program placement. Synopses of the media environments in Hungary and Poland follow.

HUNGARY. All the major print media—national and regional newspapers, magazines, and tabloids—are in private hands, some as part of foreign media companies. The print media enjoy considerable freedom, although journalists and opposition politicians are concerned that the expression of different views in the press may be circumscribed by the small number of owners who control most of the print media. Currently around 70 percent of radio and television are privatized. There are three national public television channels and 26 commercial channels. Approximately thirty private radio stations operate around the country, though no national stations are in private hands. As of 1997 (latest available data), forty percent of TV households had cable subscriptions and twenty-two percent had access to satellite television.

POLAND. The constitution provides for freedom of speech and the press, and the Government generally respects this right. There are ten commercial television stations. State-owned TVP channels 1 and 2 continue to dominate, holding about one-half the market share. Close to another third of market share is held by privately-owned POLSAT, and the remainder divided among smaller national and local networks. Radio remains influential in Poland and is a highly competitive market. There are 119 commercial radio stations, including six national stations, five of which are state owned. Many local radio stations have started to unite within networks to compete for nationwide advertising budgets with public and nationwide commercial stations. Poland's print media are led by several outstanding dailies and a few tabloids. Each publication presents a particular political and economic affiliation or stance. Relatively small in print runs, Poland's newspapers serve to frame the issues for the rest of the media, and hence the nation. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Poland's media has been the phenomenal growth of specialized publications, ranging from economic and trade journals, to specialized technical publications, to local versions of women's and men's magazines.

Question 3. Based on estimates which the broadcasting organizations have no doubt made, could you give us figures on the number of listeners globally of VOA and RFE/RL per week for each of the last ten years? Has there been a decline in VOA listenership?

Answer. Research shows that the global audience for VOA listenership has remained relatively stable over the last five years. Prior to the creation of the IBB Office of Research in 1997, USIA's Office of Research was responsible for calculating VOA's global audience. During the period of 1990 through 1993, they produced no estimates for VOA's audience.

Drawn from estimates by both the USIA and IBB Offices of Research, VOA's global audience for the period of 1994 through 1999 remained fairly stable. The numbers are:

1994	92 million
1996	86 million
1997	83 million
1998	86 million
1999	91 million

Because there is a margin of error in calculating these global figures, statistically, VOA's audience has been stable for the past five years. (Note: USIA did not produce a global audience estimate for 1995.)

Within the global estimates, there have been significant trends. Listenership dropped considerably in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union from 1994 to 1999, from 21 million to 9 million. Other international broadcasters such as the BBC and Deutsche Welle experienced similar trends, due to circumstances within the target countries, principally competition from local media. During this same period, VOA's audience on the African continent grew from 20 million in 1994 to 36 million in 1999. In essence, each region comprised approximately 22-23% of VOA's global audience in 1994. However, in 1999, Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union made up 10% of VOA's worldwide audience, while African listeners comprised 40%.

RFE/RL has maintained a leading position among international broadcasters at a time when listenership to all international radios in the vernacular languages is declining throughout RFE/RL's broadcast region. Well over half of all regular listeners to international radio in RFE/RL's 24 country broadcast region are listeners to RFE/RL. This translates to between 13 and 18 million regular listeners weekly.

Of the total audience to international radio reached in the course of 12 months, almost two thirds—between 34 and 46 million listeners—listen to RFE/RL.

RFE/RL is particularly effective in reaching political, governmental, media, cultural and business decision-makers and opinion-makers. In studies of elites carried out in thirteen countries, RFE/RL has an average regular listenership of 28 percent and an average 12 month reach of 60 percent. The RFE/RL audience size has stabilized in most countries after the initial drop from the 1988 to 1993 period. Listenership has increased dramatically at times of political crisis such as the Russian government's financial collapse in August 1998 or the NATO-Serbia military conflict in 1999.

Available audience data for the past decade follows. In interpreting this set of data, it should be noted that numbers are not available for all years, and that in-country research began only in 1991. During this period, listenership to all short wave broadcasters declined. In those countries where RFE/RL has been able to get a significant number of reliable, in-country FM and AM rebroadcasters, its listening rates have risen.

[In millions, rounded]

Year	Weekly Listeners	12-Month Listeners
2000	16	40 (includes Iran and Iraq)
1999	13	38
1998	13	39
1996	24	61 (includes Poland)
1995	24	61
1994	25	60
1993	26	57 (includes Hungary)
1992	24	—
1990	—	65

Question 4. There is a significant difference between the role of VOA and that of the “surrogate services” which seek to fill a void where a free press does not exist. But could you please compare the services under the Board’s supervision in another respect. Can you compare the management, cost-effectiveness, and impact of the operations run within the government (as VOA is) and those run as independent, private entities (such as Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and Radio Free Asia)?

Answer. As with many federal and federal grantee organizations, direct comparisons on management and operations are difficult to make, given the specific organizational authorities and guidelines that differentiate and govern a federal entity and a federal grantee organization. This difference is particularly pronounced regarding the flexibility of procurement and personnel practices. Government organizations are required to work within and to meet the uniformed standards of the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) and the federal personnel system.

It is also important to note that a large portion of the budget of U.S. international broadcasting, approximately \$111 million for engineering and technical services, is administered centrally under the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) to provide transmission and other support for all of the international broadcasting services. Because nearly one-quarter of the BBG’s total budget resources are managed centrally to serve all transmission needs, most of the significant procurement contracts for transmission facilities administered by the IBB are administered according to Federal contracting procedures under the FAR. This allows all of the service entities to take advantage of BBG investments in transmission resources, benefiting from economies of scale in the critical areas of transmission, research, and marketing.

As you know, the Voice of America’s mission includes the mandate to represent America and present a balanced and comprehensive projection of significant American thought and institutions. VOA is also required to present the policies of the United States clearly and effectively. In conjunction with these mandates, it is logical that the VOA’s workforce would consist of Civil Service employees with all of the benefits that other federal employees enjoy. RFA and RFE/RL, as U.S. Government grantees, operate under personnel rules more closely aligned with private sector systems, although the Board encourages a policy of essential pay comparability among employees of all of the service entities.

The Voice of America’s budget for FY 1999 was \$106 million, employing 1,152 people to broadcast in 53 languages around the world utilizing 912 weekly broadcast hours. Radio Free Asia operated with \$22 million, employing 248, and broadcasting

in 10 languages for 225.5 hours per week. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, with a budget of approximately \$75 million (inclusive of one-time start up costs for Radio Free Iraq), employed 476 people in FY 1999, broadcasting in 26 languages for 830 hours per week. Although these figures do not invite a direct budget comparison, they do indicate some degree of comparability among the various service entities.

Please note that it's difficult to assess productivity levels based strictly on expenditures per broadcast hour. Each of the entities is unique in its mission, history, and target area. While Radio Free Asia might have a higher average cost per broadcast hour than Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty based upon total expenditures, it could be the result of higher rent costs (RFE/RL currently pays \$1/month in Prague). However, RFA also benefits from a lower average salary in each language service due to the relatively short tenure of employees in an organization that began its broadcasts in 1996. Conversely, RFE/RL and VOA have broadcast for over half a century and employ a workforce that has been with the organization longer, equating to higher salaries.

VOA's mission to broadcast about the world to the world creates inefficiencies due to the vast scope of its mandate. As non-profit, private organizations, RFA and RFE/RL have greater flexibility than federal entities in personnel management. Because RFA and RFE/RL staff are neither government employees nor unionized, employees can be hired when available. Conversely, employees are also "at will" personnel, meaning that either the employee or the broadcaster may terminate the employment contract with appropriate notice.

At the same time, RFA and RFE/RL must operate under the same budgetary and staffing limitations and regulations as any entity that receives an appropriation from the Congress. For example, RFA and RFE/RL cannot hire more than the authorized number of employees, and is accountable to Congress through the Broadcasting Board of Governors for spending their appropriated funds as Congress authorized. Unlike some other federal grantees, RFA and RFE/RL are also required to receive and expend funds as any federal agency does. They receive funding in monthly allotments based on an annual financial plan, and must spend annual appropriations by the end of each fiscal year, rather than carry forward remaining balances.

The Broadcasting Board of Governors is cognizant of the realities of these unique organizations and has taken steps to ensure uniformity wherever feasible and cost-effective. The Board continues to look across the organizations, public and private, to apply "best practices" in ways that make sense for overall efficiency and effectiveness. We are proud of each of our operations, the way they are managed respectively, and the impact they make around the world each day.

Question 5a. Who jams American broadcasts?

Answer. The BBG broadcasts of Radio Marti, Radio Free Asia and the Voice of America suffer from jamming of various types. The language services affected by this jamming include:

Broadcaster	Language	Source of Jamming
OCB	Spanish	Cuba
RFA	Korea	North Korea
	Mandarin	China
	Tibetan	China
	Uyghur	China
	Vietnamese	Vietnam
VOA	North Korea	North Korea
	Mandarin	China
	Tibetan	China

For approximately three weeks prior to the recent elections in Iran, VOA, RL and BBC Farsi/Persian broadcasts were heavily jammed. This jamming ended almost immediately after the elections and there is no jamming of Farsi/Persian programs from VOA, RL or BBC at present.

RFE/RL broadcasts are no longer jammed by any country in the RFE/RL broadcast region, which now includes Iran and Iraq. But, some of the region's governments do impose "restrictions" from time to time. During the last six months, there have been several examples of governments failing to rebroadcast RFE/RL programs on local state-owned medium wave of FM transmitters in Armenia, Russia, and Kazakhstan.

Question 5b. Which governments devote the most effort and resources to jamming?

Answer. If one assumes that it takes roughly the same amount of effort and resources to jam any one hour of programming without regard to the language or location of the broadcast, then one measure of resources required is the number of transmitter hours jammed by any given country.

The following is a table of the number of daily transmitter hours of BBG programming jammed by various countries. Each broadcast hour is broadcast from a number of transmitters simultaneously to combat jamming and changing radio propagation conditions:

Country	Total Daily Jammed Hours	Broadcaster	Language	Daily Transmitter Hours
China	242	VOA	Mandarin	92
			Tibetan	13
		RFA	Mandarin	100
			Tibetan	34
			Uyghur	3
Cuba	93	OCB	Spanish	93
Vietnam	14	RFA	Vietnamese	14
North Korea	13	VOA	Korean	7
		RFA	Korean	6

Question 5c. How is the jamming impeding the reach of our broadcasting?

Answer. In general, jamming hinders but does not prevent the public from listening to short wave broadcasts. The jamming is generally against all frequencies and all hours of a given language broadcast. The effectiveness of the jamming varies greatly in large geographic target areas, such as China and Tibet, but is fairly uniform in smaller target areas such as Korea and Vietnam.

In large cities in China, such as Beijing and Shanghai, where the BBG has a remote monitoring capability, jamming is particularly effective. Travelers outside large urban centers—where the primary mode of jamming is “skywave”—note improved reception. This has led to speculation that the Chinese may be employing “local” or “ground wave” jamming near larger cities. We have no direct evidence of this, but these same characteristics were noted in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe—where we know groundwave jamming was employed—before jamming ceased in 1987.

China jams 21 of RFA’s 24 hour per day broadcasts to China and Tibet. RFA’s three hours of daily Cantonese broadcasts are jam free. In spite of China’s jamming efforts, RFA is being heard throughout the country. RFA has received calls and letters from virtually every province and autonomous region in China.

Question 5d. In particular, could you report on the efforts and resources spent by China’s government to jam VOA or Radio Free Asia broadcasts?

Answer. We assume that the cost of jamming a single frequency is at least as much as the cost of broadcasting the original program on one frequency. We say “at least” because it is clear that most jamming involves multiple transmitters on each frequency but the power output of each transmitter is probably lower than that of the original broadcast.

The annual cost of transmitting all 192 daily transmitter hours of RFA and VOA Mandarin is \$5.4 million. We assume then, that if the Chinese were purchasing power and transmission resources at the same rate we are, that they would be spending at least \$ 5.4 million to jam RFA and VOA Mandarin language programs.

Anecdotal reports from several RFA listeners in China indicate the Chinese government has erected several new jamming stations and/or upgraded old facilities around major metropolitan areas in China. These jamming stations are expensive to operate because they require great amounts of electrical power and must be manned around the clock.

Question 6. Is VOA programming too long in form—a hold over from Cold War era format suited to the short wave listener and somewhat older listeners? Does a longer format make it hard to attract younger listeners and to place programming on radio affiliates around the world (increasingly the method of choice for broadcasting as compared to short wave)?

VOA broadcasts go to almost every country in the world except North American and Western European ones. Therefore, VOA is confronted with a wide variety of media markets, levels of competition, and newsgathering preferences. Throughout Europe, for example, audiences use television as their primary source of information. In Africa, radio is the dominant (sometimes only) means of newsgathering available in rural areas and some cities. Television, AM and FM are on the rise in African cities, however. Generally, most recent research has indicated that the average time spent listening to international broadcasts (across all media) is 15-30 minutes. VOA has found that longer programs do not always equate with more listeners.

Furthermore, the diversity of transmission options requires VOA to provide programs in a number of different formats. Some services (e.g., Thai, Brazilian) are exclusively "feed" services, delivering newsfeeds to affiliates several times a day and occasional features, but having no direct broadcasts on short wave or AM. Other services (e.g., Mandarin, Burmese, Farsi) have no affiliated stations in the target regions and must rely on direct short wave, AM, television/satellite or Internet broadcasts. The programs may be of different formats and lengths accordingly.

In Eastern and Central Europe, VOA has found that only smaller, less popular and less commercially viable stations are willing to take one- to two-hour long blocks of programs. And these programs may not be placed in high listenership time slots. This limits VOA's ability to reach a large or diversified audience in increasingly competitive markets. With the changes being implemented by VOA in FY2000 in several Eastern and Central European language services, shorter news feeds in radio and television will increase the attractiveness of VOA programs to larger, more powerful stations, and increase the number and variety of listeners with access to VOA's information.

RESPONSES OF EDWARD KAUFMAN AND ALBERTO MORA TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS
FOR THE RECORD FROM SENATOR FEINGOLD

Question 1. I know that there is some real enthusiasm within the BBG for possibilities presented by the Internet and television. But I also know that in sub-Saharan Africa, it will be a long time before any mode of communication besides radio makes sense. Please describe your long-term plans for broadcasting to Africa?

Answer. Radio remains the dominant newsgathering and entertainment medium throughout sub-Saharan Africa. In fact, approximately 40% of VOA worldwide audience is in sub-Saharan Africa. VOA will continue to devote the bulk of its African-targeted resources to radio. Short wave transmission stations in Botswana, Morocco, Sao Tome, Sri Lanka, Greece and North Carolina give VOA outstanding coverage across the continent. Medium wave (AM) in Botswana, Sao Tome, and Greece augment this coverage in certain regions of the continent. VOA plans to maintain these direct broadcast facilities serving African listeners.

Two affiliate marketing offices are planned for Africa, with the first, in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire already open. These offices will work closely with stations to support and expand our affiliate network. By the end of this fiscal year, for example, VOA will have a virtually unbroken string of affiliates along the densely populated coast line of West Africa from Abidjan in the West to Port Harcourt, Nigeria in the East. Other recent affiliate progress has been made in the Great Lakes region, including a powerful AM station in Mwanza, Tanzania that covers much of Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and parts of eastern Congo (DRC). A string of stations in Mozambique have also recently agreed to be VOA affiliates for Portuguese and English broadcasts.

In addition to affiliations, VOA will seek to purchase FM licenses in selected larger African cities. Recently, Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi agreed to let VOA broadcast 24-hours-a-day in Nairobi, and other similar deals will be pursued in high priority cities in Africa.

Finally, while radio is dominant, television and the Internet are not completely useless in Africa. Worldnet Television, in conjunction with VOA's Africa Division, has had a great deal of success placing a weekly public affairs program called Africa Journal on stations in larger cities across the continent. The relative dearth of well produced programs focussing on Africa makes this program extremely valuable to affiliates and popular with audiences. A radio/television call-in simulcast program hosted by VOA's popular Uganda broadcaster Shaka Ssali is planned for development later this year. In addition to these English programs, we are planning to create a simulcast program for Africa in French. Finally, experiments with placing Africa Division programs on the Internet and taking e-mail-questions from listeners

are showing some signs of success. Internet components of VOA programs to Africa will be expanded as necessary to reach the growing audience with access, especially at universities, NGOs, media outlets, and in larger cities.

Question 2. What is the current status of the Radio Democracy for Africa initiative? What new approach does it represent?

Answer. President Clinton proposed Radio Democracy for Africa (RDA) in March 1998 during his trip to the continent. VOA sought reprogramming authority in FY1998 and FY1999 to create 13 hours of programs in the Africa Division (8 new hours plus 5 restructured hours) for RDA. This authority was granted by the House but was denied by the Senate. Funds for RDA were requested in VOA's FY2000 budget submission. However, while VOA was given permission to create RDA programming, it was not given additional funds to enhance Africa Division programs. Faced with a funding deficit in FY2000, VOA has been unable to fund RDA internally. While some services were able to expand broadcasting in response to particular outbreaks of violence or other crises in FY1999, all such expansions were scaled back to original programming levels at the start of FY2000.

VOA remains extremely interested in enhancing its programming to Africa by developing programs specifically designed to discuss violence prevention, conflict resolution, justice and reconciliation, and democracy building themes and topics. We feel that VOA is uniquely positioned to provide this programming and to combine it with training and other activities to strengthen the media and increase the chances that democracy will take root. Given our current funding limitations, such program enhancements are impossible at this time.

However, we have recently been awarded a grant from USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives to enhance programming in Hausa and English to Nigeria. This grant will allow VOA to develop special conflict resolution and democracy building programs, recruit and train stringers, and provide other training programs to Nigeria-based journalists. We are seeking other alternative funding sources to develop democracy building programming in the absence of appropriated funds to implement the Radio Democracy for Africa initiative.

STATEMENT SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SAVEVOA COMMITTEE

Mr. Chairman and Members of the committee, the members of the SaveVOA Committee, comprised of retired and present employees of the Voice of America, our country's broadcasting voice to the world, thank you for the opportunity to have our remarks included in the record of the April 26 hearing on Broadcasting Priorities before the Subcommittee for International Operations of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

QUO VADIS

In 1994, in a plan submitted to the President after the enactment of P.L. 103-236 which dealt with the consolidation of international broadcasting, the IBB Chairman of the Board stated that "the devil is in the details." Almost six years have passed since that statement was written. With the present situation at the Voice of America, faced with an apparently dwindling listenership in the English and language services, a deteriorating sense of mission and employee morale, those unresolved details have returned to bedevil an institution which, since its inception, has been a beacon of hope and freedom to the nations of the world as well as a most effective arm of U.S. public diplomacy.

In our opinion, programming changes for international radio should have been formulated ten years ago in the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the resulting changes in the media environment in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. With the consolidation of international broadcasting in 1994 and subsequently, the changed status of the International Broadcasting Bureau as an independent agency, there should have been serious research and discussion conducted as to potential changes in VOA programming. Indeed, Section 1323 of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 calls for the Director to organize and chair a coordinating committee to examine and make recommendations to the Board on long-term strategies for the future of international broadcasting. In addition to representatives of RFA, RFE/RL, the BBG as well as VOA, OCB and WorldNet on this coordinating committee, if indeed the committee is operative, we recommend the inclusion of other representatives, for example, experts from academia such as Ms. Ellen

Mickiewicz of Duke University who has written on the changing media environment in the former Soviet Union, Dr. S. Frederick Starr, formerly of the Woodrow Wilson Institute, Tulane University and Oberlin College and author of "Red and Hot: The History of Jazz in the Soviet Union," as well as former members of Congress such as Indiana Congressman Lee Hamilton and former California Congressman, Robert Dornan. This task force could also include, as appropriate, directors of various ethnic organizations such as the Polish-American Congress, the Central & East European Coalition, Joint Baltic American Committee as well as current members of congressional committees such as the Human Rights and the Central European caucus. This blue-ribbon bipartisan task force project which could make recommendations on present and future IBB programming could be funded through the IBB Office of Research.

RAISON D'ÊTRE

Section 1321 (2) of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act states that open communication of information and ideas among the peoples of the world contributes to international peace and stability and the promotion of such communication is in the interests of the United States. Section 1321 (4) states that international broadcasting is, and should remain, an essential instrument of U.S. foreign policy.

In this regard, The SaveVOA Committee believes that the diminution of broadcasts to the Central and East European Services, as well as the Baltic countries seriously compromises U.S. national interests in those countries as well as thwarting the role of VOA broadcasts as an essential instrument of U.S. foreign policy as defined by the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act.

Under the proposed plan of the Board of Governors, the affected services will be reduced to a bare-bones operation adding video and Internet functions. In essence, the Board's decision is tantamount to closing the services as the two or three remaining staffers cannot possibly prepare quality output five to seven days a week in radio, TV and the Internet in the plan submitted by the Board of Governors. As a result, the essential reason for the existence of these services—to serve U.S. national interests—will be compromised as well as destroying the credibility that VOA has built up over many decades in the affected countries. Radio, via the uniqueness of VOA, still remains the medium by which the American people can convey their ideals, values, policies and information to people in other lands in the most and direct and economical way possible.

To quote John Chancellor, VOA's director from 1965-67: "There is something magic about these studios, something that leads one to a deeper understanding of the basic significance of the Voice of America. Every day, almost every hour, from the second floor at 330 Independence Avenue, SW, there exists a link to someone in another country. The broadcasters at the Voice understand this magic link, because the reality they perceive is the reality of the listener. They realize the basic fact which makes the VOA important: that the studios in Washington are really foreign posts. They understand that micro seconds after they speak, what they say is communicated to people in bedrooms, living rooms, tents, cars, caravans, as they enter the world of the listener. The official corridors of Washington fade, and the broadcasters are with the listeners. It is essential that this connection be understood, for without this knowledge, no understanding is possible of what I unashamedly call the magic of the Voice."

The SaveVOA Committee does not view VOA as just another media outlet but as the voice of the American people, telling America's story to the world with the purpose of keeping American influence intact in the target areas. VOA tells America's story as no other radio can or will. We believe the Board's decision to curtail VOA broadcasts to countries where these broadcasts remain vital and transforming our Agency's mission will erode America's stature in the target areas.

Here, we argue for a *substantive* presence for VOA broadcasts in specific countries, something as yet undefined by the IBB Board of Governors. We believe that the Board, before eliminating VOA broadcasts should attempt to define the concept of what a substantive presence for U.S. international broadcasts in each individual country should be. Above all, new forms of communication such as TV and the Internet should be utilized to *supplement* rather than *supplant* the radio which remains the most cost-effective and dependable means for reaching people in the target area.

In its testimony, the Board said that it "reduced broadcasting to areas where we were a mainstay during the Cold War but are newly democratic and will reallocate resources to other areas of the world that still repressed or struggling to establish democracy." All the information at our disposal points to the fact that Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and the Baltic republics, after years of Soviet domination

remain fragile democracies struggling with the transition to democratic reforms and a market economy, the establishment of a free press, and the eradication of anti-Semitic and anti-foreign philosophies. Above all, the sabre-rattling from Russia and the uncertainties about the policies of the new Russian government demand a substantive informational presence for Voice of America broadcasts at this critical time.

In addition, the Board mentioned that the affected services are being cut because of the fact that they are new NATO members. Here there is an obvious discrepancy as Greece and Turkey have been NATO members for a number of years. However, the Board believes and we concur that it is important to continue to broadcast to Greece and Turkey notwithstanding the fact that they are members of NATO.

At the April 26th hearing, the representatives of the IBB Board of Governors testified that Congress “mandated that the Board review, evaluate and determine, at least annually . . . the addition or deletion of language services.” Since the Board insists that it is not eliminating the affected language services, we question why this wording was used to justify its decision to cut the broadcasts. Or, as we fear, the drastic reduction of the services is already seen as a prelude to their actual deletion.

Unfortunately, it appears that the Board’s decision to cut the broadcasting frequencies to the affected countries means that VOA radio, for all practical purposes, will cease to exist.

SURROGATE BROADCASTING

At the hearing, Senator Feingold asked why the Board elected to cut VOA programming and not RFE/RL’s. This is a question that the SaveVOA Committee asks as well.

Section 308 9g (4) of P.L. 103–236 states that “duplication of language services and technical operations between RFE/RL and the IBB be reduced to the extent appropriate as determined by the Board.” Section 1328 of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act asks the Board to make an assessment of the extent to which USG funding may be appropriate in the year 2000 and subsequent years for surrogate broadcasting, including an analysis of the environment for independent media, the extent of government control of the media, the ability of independent journalists and news organizations to operate and other indications of whether the people of such countries enjoy freedom of expression.

It is a fact that there is duplication of language services and overlap of RFE/RL and VOA programming which the Broadcast Consolidation Act was supposed to correct. For example, RFE Estonian continues to operate and compete with VOA Estonian disregarding the fact that the opening up of the media in that country has largely diminished the need for RFE’s surrogate programming. Overlap is also evident in Armenian and Georgian programming where RL has three times more broadcast time than VOA even though research shows that VOA broadcasts with less air time remain competitive. If the media climate has changed in Russia, the former republics, and Eastern Europe which the Board cites as a reason for cutting VOA, it stands to reason that the Board would begin to review the necessity for surrogate programming to other countries, as mandated by the Congress. In this respect, we would like to point out that in 1994, the Board cut the VOA Bulgarian broadcasts which far outranked RFE Bulgarian in popularity at that time. For this reason, it is difficult to understand what criteria the Board uses in evaluating the language services.

In determining the need for surrogate programming, it is difficult to imagine that the Board would put Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in the same category as Iraq or Iran as far as the need for surrogate broadcasts is concerned.

LISTENERSHIP PERCENTAGES

In its report, the Board quoted the drop in the percentage of listeners as a reason for cutting VOA broadcasts. The utilization of listener percentages in determining whether or not VOA programs will maintain a viable presence in a particular country is questionable since it seems as if all decisions on VOA broadcasting will now depend on commercial, mass audience figures. As we know, the audience for VOA broadcasts fluctuates depending on world events. During times of crisis, the audience is higher, at other times, it drops. If indeed VOA should have a substantive presence in other countries of the world in times of peace as well as conflict, as we contend, then cuts based solely on audience figures are not justified.

Regarding percentages, the SaveVOA Committee points out that National Public Radio which is subsidized by the U.S. Congress through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting registers from 0.5% to a 3 percent share of the listening audience. However, that low percentage of listenership does not affect the funding it receives

nor is it used to justify cuts in the programming. The SaveVOA Committee believes that the critical mission of VOA of explaining U.S. policy to the world is even more deserving of congressional financial support as an arm of U.S. public diplomacy.

If a drop in listenership was indeed a consideration, we find it curious that the Board would permit Radio Liberty Russian to broadcast 24 hours daily especially in view of the fact that RL Russian has dropped from a high of 21% of the listening audience to 0.8%. Indeed, the question arises about the need for surrogate broadcasts especially around the clock to Russia in view of the opening up of its domestic media.

These obvious inconsistencies in the Board's testimony are troubling. The SaveVOA Committee hopes that Senator Feingold will continue to pursue the question of the need for surrogate radio in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union in view of the changes in the media environment in those countries, as the Senator expressed at the hearing.

In this regard, we question why the Board plans to establish, as it testified, a robust advertising and marketing program in Russia and the Ukraine to support RFE/RL broadcast services if the need for surrogate programming there is diminishing and if the programs have ceased to attract listeners. In addition, we ask why a similar advertising and marketing program was not done for VOA services in Eastern Europe if the marketing program endeavors to increase listenership figures.

As an alternative to the costly advertising and marketing campaign contemplated by the Board, it may be more cost-effective to connect with the listeners by revitalizing the VOA Audience Mail section. In contrast to BBC which at one time employed over 30 mail assistants, VOA traditionally employed less than five staff people plus contractors to answer the volume of mail it receives. In order to strengthen contacts with the listeners, it might also be advantageous for VOA to reestablish its worldwide listeners' clubs, which played a vital role in the VOA's popularity in Bangladesh and Nigeria, expanding the club movement to other countries as well.

VOA-TV EXPERIMENT

At the hearing, Board members testified that a TV operation in vernacular languages could fill an important niche in many media markets. Although that may be true, to our knowledge there has not been any global demand for a VOA-TV product nor has the Congress shown any inclination to adequately fund such an endeavor.

Board member Mr. Kaufman testified that an outside consultant had trained over 100 IBB employees in video journalistic techniques. This outside contractor who was hired under a sole-source contract received over \$3 million dollars which roughly translated means that training each employee in video journalism cost the U.S. taxpayer over \$30,000 per student for a three-week training course. We have no idea how many of the people who were trained under this pilot project actually emerged as qualified video journalists.

The point is that the evidence shows that in 1998, the Board decided to go into TV and evidently began the process of abandoning radio. We do not know if this decision was made at the direction and with the consent of the Congress. In this respect, we trust that in funding the TV pilot project that the Agency met reprogramming notification requirements for the reallocation of funds.

Since the Board talks about more "bang for the buck," it might have been more cost-effective to utilize the talents of the employees we already have in WorldNet in training employees for TV rather than in incurring the considerable costs of an outside consultant in preparing TV feature material that might or might not ever be used.

The Board testified that it has not forsaken direct radio broadcasts via shortwave and medium-wave. We hope that this is true as simultaneous broadcasting on shortwave together with placement on affiliate stations should be a priority. For example, shortwave broadcasts to Poland reach not only listeners in the country but also are heard in surrounding areas which have a Polish population. The same is true for VOA Hungarian broadcasts. Before shortwave broadcasts were cancelled, Hungarian broadcasts were heard in Vojvodina and Romania which have a substantial Hungarian population. Unfortunately, with the Board's decision to cut the shortwave broadcasting to the target areas, the opportunity to reach these listeners has been lost.

Programming

The SaveVOA Committee urges the Congress to assure the Agency's compliance with Section 2420 of the 1998 Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act which calls for a daily program on U.S. states. This type of programming which is an ideal vehicle for the Voice of America to pursue, could very well stimulate the increase

in listenership which the Board endeavors to do as well as advance U.S. trade and tourism.

OVERHEAD COSTS

Since the International Broadcasting Consolidation Act of 1994 which was supposed to streamline international broadcasting operations, the managerial, administrative and Office of Personnel structures of our Agency have continued to stifle the organization by adding layer upon layer of wasteful bureaucracy. A plethora of needless non-broadcasting adjuncts and positions such as Chiefs of Staff, Special Advisors, Executive Assistants, budget analysts, strategic planners, have sapped the vital funds necessary for a more efficient operation of our Agency. If the Board is striving to prioritize expenditures and provide focus to our international broadcasting efforts, we believe it is essential to review the bureaucratic overhead strangling our Agency before attempting to effect cost savings by RIF'ing the lifeblood of our organization—the broadcasters.

CONCLUSION

The SaveVOA Committee thanks the members of the Subcommittee on International Operations of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for the opportunity to submit remarks on International Broadcasting Priorities.

