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WITHDRAWAL SHEET

Ronald Reagan Library

Collection Name Raymond, Walter: Files

Withdrawer

KML 2/28/2012

File Folder U.S.-SOVIET PUBLIC DIPLOMACY (10/01/1985-12/31/1985)

FOIA

M10-326/2

Box Number 11

PARRY

65

ID	Doc Type	Document Description	No of Pages	Doc Date	Restrictions
132403	CABLE	RE AGREEMENT	5	10/1/1985	B1
132404	MEMO	WALTER RAYMOND, JR. FOR THE RECORD RE DISCUSSION	2	11/7/1985	B1

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

B-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]

B-2 Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]

B-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]

B-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]

B-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]

B-7 Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]

B-8 Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]

B-9 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

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OF CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE(S)

22 2/28/12

C
CLASSIFICATION

F-50. PR
Add's

WR -
lead for you

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
CROSSHATCH ACTION SHEET

85 OCT 4 A 9: 58

MESSAGE # 1713
DATE TIME: _____

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COMMENT OFFICER TO CLEAR WITH THE
DEP EXEC SEC PRIOR TO THE ASSIGNED DUE DATE.

ACTION OFFICER

COMMENT OFFICER

INFO

PEARSON

Matlock
Raymond - Steiner FOR
Pearson

ACTION: CONCUR TO DEP EXEC SEC VIA PHONE AND/OR COMMENT HERE AND HANDCARRY
TO DEP EXEC SEC DUE DATE: 10/4

ACTION OFFICER COMMENTS:

CLEARED BY: Matlock DATE: 10/4 TIME: NOON

CLEARED TO: _____ DATE: _____ TIME: _____

C
CLASSIFICATION

RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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S/S #

2/28/12
UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL
OF CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE(S)

001713

MESSAGE NO. 001713 CLASSIFICATION ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ No. Pages 5

FROM: BMCKINLEY S/S 632-3126 7224
(Officer name) (Office symbol) (Extension) (Room number)

MESSAGE DESCRIPTION MOSCOW: CONCLUDING US-USSR EXCHANGES AGREEMENT

TO: (Agency) NSC DELIVER TO EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT Extension Room No.

NSC

NSC

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

MARTIN

FOR CLEARANCE ☒ INFORMATION ☐ PER REQUEST ☐ COMMENT ☐

REMARKS PLEASE CLEAR BY: COB 7 October

4 October

Clarence Matlock, Raymond, Pearson

Once NSC staff clear, return
to WEP for RCM/JMP.

S/S Officer: BMCKINLEY

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CROSSHATCH

RETURN TIME-STAMPED COVERSHEET TO S/S.

WITHDRAWAL SHEET

Ronald Reagan Library

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Raymond, Walter: Files

Withdrawer

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F- In P.P. Action
~~F-OR~~ 8004

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Raymond

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

INFORMATION

October 7, 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR ROBERT C. McFARLANE

FROM: WALTER RAYMOND, JR. *WR*

SUBJECT: Wick Letter to Zamyatin

RCM HAS SEEN

Attached at Tab I is the letter from Wick to Zamyatin. For your information, I have also attached a letter at Tab II that Wick received from 66 Congressmen endorsing the Wick initiative, plus Charlie's transmittal note to the President (Tab III) concerning the Zamyatin letter.

Attachments

Tab I Wick to Zamyatin Ltr, Jan 25, 85
Tab II Ltr to Wick fr 66 Congressmen, March 21, 85
Tab III Wick Transmittal Ltr to President, Apr 6, 85

cc: Jack Matlock

**United States
Information
Agency**

Washington, D.C. 20547

Office of the Director



January 25, 1985

Mr. Leonid M. Zamyatin
Chief, International Information Department
Central Committee, Communist Party of The Soviet Union
Staraya Ploshchad' 4
Moscow, USSR

Dear Mr. Zamyatin:

In recent months Soviet media have levied a number of attacks on U.S. public diplomacy and the U.S. Information Agency, especially on the Voice of America and our new WORLDNET satellite television service. Your article in Literaturnaya Gazeta ["Impasses of Confrontations and Horizons of Cooperation," November 28, 1984] summarizes most of the charges and typifies the underlying mindset. I am prompted to respond at this time to the continuing stream of attacks because in a period when our two governments are engaged in serious exploration of vital issues, such attacks are a disservice to more positive relations.

My hope is to generate a constructive dialogue. To initiate that dialogue I extend two concrete offers. First, I ask that you offer your good offices to facilitate using broadcast media to further mutual understanding. In this regard, I suggest that you arrange for Soviet television to carry an address by one of our top leaders which would be reciprocated on American television by one of your top leaders. There is a precedent for this: Mr. Brezhnev and Mr. Nixon made such speeches several years ago with considerable positive effect.

Second, I propose that we carry further the dialogue by having you and other Soviet officials and journalists take part in the WORLDNET program of which you are so critical. Let us jointly plan a one- to two-hour satellite television dialogue on WORLDNET in which Soviet journalists interview senior U.S. officials on issues of mutual concern. At the same time, you should plan with U.S. media a similar program in which American journalists freely and spontaneously question senior Soviet officials. Coming at this important time in our relations, such ventures could help make communication more reasoned and reciprocal.

Incidentally, I am not surprised by your unwarranted criticisms of WORLDNET and of our Agency. I have come to expect it. However, you should understand that our country does not claim, as you do, that opposing ideas "subvert" our system. We recognize instead that diversity of public opinion is one of the great strengths of America. Thus, our society freely permits Soviet spokesmen

to state their views on American television and in print. In this regard, I might note that Soviet journalists and Soviet officials are interviewed on American television literally dozens of times per year. Surely the time has come for greater equality of treatment.

If the United States can confidently tolerate opposing views without fears of "loosening" the system, why then should the Soviet government act so restrictively, even to the point of jamming our broadcasts in direct violation of several international agreements to which the USSR is a signatory? Why not allow greater independent public inquiry about your government's decisions and policies? Why should American officials, in turn, not be permitted to state their views on Soviet television and in the Soviet media? Our society has never walked away from a fair challenge, and we look forward to engaging in a peaceful contest of ideas with the USSR.

Your article is evidence of the need for this reasoned and open dialogue. Charges of "piracy of the air," "radio warfare," "subversive purpose," and "television propaganda aggression" only exacerbate the "impasses" and "confrontations" to which you allude and delay our search for "horizons of cooperation." Coming at this time, when the leaders of our two countries are seeking new means for considering meaningful arms reduction efforts and ways to stabilize relations, your attacks are most unfortunate. Surely, everyone concerned about U.S.-Soviet relations has a right to expect greater restraint and accuracy.

Although I will not attempt in this letter to deal with the many errors and distortions in your article, I would like to clarify the role and purpose of the U.S. Information Agency, particularly the Voice of America and WORLDNET.

- USIA is not in the business of misrepresenting Soviet foreign policy, as you allege. Its primary purpose is to present America to the rest of the world and to explain U.S. foreign and domestic policies to people around the world. In so doing, we present the news, good and bad.
- The Voice of America is a distinguished source of news and information about the United States -- our policies, society, culture, and values. By U.S. law, VOA is required to present "accurate, objective, and comprehensive" information, to be truthful, and to be "seen as a consistently reliable and authoritative source of news." Over 100 million people throughout the world listen to VOA each week, all voluntarily, many of them at risk to their safety.
- In modernizing and improving our communication facilities and seeking a wider audience, our purpose is to allow a greater proportion of the world's population to know what is going on in the world and be better able to reach independent judgments on these events.
- WORLDNET is a modern television system linking Washington via satellite with U.S. embassies, information centers, and a number of TV studios throughout the world. WORLDNET is not forced on receiving nations.

Journalists in the participating nations freely choose the programming that they wish to broadcast or write about or not use at all.

- WORLDNET enables foreign journalists to ask probing, unrehearsed questions instantaneously, via satellite, directly to high-level American officials. Your representatives from TASS, Pravda and other Soviet publications are welcome at official U.S. press conferences. They are welcome, too, as observers in our WORLDNET studio.

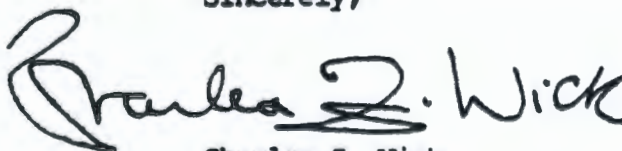
Permitting a free flow of information is in the best interests of both our societies and a necessary response to the times. The irreversible revolution in communications, enabling prompt and comprehensive dissemination of news, will make it increasingly harder to limit peoples' access to information.

All nations should ultimately welcome this: misunderstanding and ignorance only serve to exacerbate tensions in the conduct of international relations. Our nations need to know more about each other; we Americans are firmly committed to providing the peoples of the Soviet Union -- and the world community -- with an accurate picture of the United States. Similarly, we hope to broaden our nation's understanding of the USSR.

I hope that you will enable Soviet journalists and television commentators to participate actively, and very soon, in WORLDNET interviews of U.S. leaders to be broadcast in the USSR. In turn, American journalists should have an equal opportunity to interview your leaders for broadcast in the USA. This direct dialogue would broaden the "horizons of cooperation" that you did not discuss in your article, but that you, too, must want to see attained.

I look forward to your response to my offers that we exchange televised interviews by top U.S. and Soviet leaders and that Soviet journalists and officials participate in a WORLDNET dialogue with senior U.S. officials on issues of mutual concern.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Charles Z. Wick". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a stylized "Z".

Charles Z. Wick
Director

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

March 21, 1985

Dear Mr. Wick,

We are writing to you today to express our support for your recent proposal to Mr. Leonid M. Zamyatin, Chief of the International Information Department of the Soviet Union, to initiate a constructive dialogue with the United States to further mutual understanding.

We are convinced that increased communication between the United States and the Soviet Union will reduce the chance of conflict caused by misunderstanding. A program to increase communication could be effectively implemented through the following two proposals outlined in your letter to Mr. Zamyatin.

First, the offer to use your offices to arrange for a high level Soviet official to appear on American television if Mr. Zamyatin would do likewise for a top American official on Soviet television.

Second, your proposal to begin the joint planning of a one-to-two hour satellite television dialogue on USIA's Worldnet satellite facilities in which Soviet journalists would interview U.S. officials on issues of mutual concern. This would be reciprocated by a similar program in which American journalists would freely and spontaneously question Soviet officials.

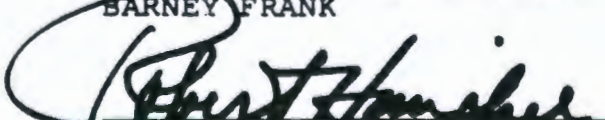
In conclusion, we strongly agree with your statement that, "permitting a free flow of information is in the best interests of both our societies and a necessary response to the times."

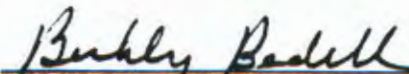
We, the undersigned Members of Congress, would like to lend our support to further the implementation of your proposal. Only by opening new avenues of communication can we hope to establish a more peaceful and open relationship with the Soviet Union.

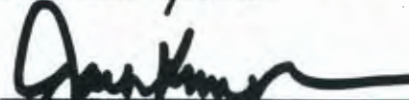
Sincerely,

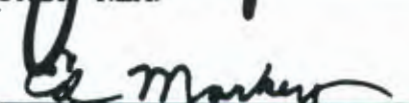

DICK ARMEY


BARNEY FRANK


ROBERT H. MICHEL


BERKLEY BEDELL


JACK KEMP


EDWARD J. MARKEY

Jim Jeffords
James M. Jeffords

Silvio O. Conte
Silvio O. Conte

Frank Horton
Frank Horton

Helen Delich Bentley
Helen Delich Bentley

Arlan Stangeland
Arlan Stangeland

Harry M. Reid
Harry M. Reid

Bill Lowery
Bill Lowery

John E. Grotberg
John E. Grotberg

Jim Saxton
Jim Saxton

Austin J. Murphey
Austin J. Murphey

Trent Lott
Trent Lott

Michael DeWine
Michael DeWine

Nancy L. Johnson
Nancy L. Johnson

Tom Loeffler
Tom Loeffler

Bill Frenzel
Bill Frenzel

Jim Courter
Jim Courter

Ed Markey
Edward V. Markey

Ben Gilman
Benjamin A. Gilman

Jim Leach
Jim Leach

Beau Boulter
Beau Boulter

Tom DeLay
Tom DeLay

Robert J. Lagomarsino
Robert J. Lagomarsino

Connie Mack
Connie Mack

Dan Lungren
Dan Lungren

John W. Porter
John W. Porter

Bill Archer
Bill Archer

Bill Dannemeyer
Bill Dannemeyer

Duncan Hunter
Duncan Hunter

Lynn Martin
Lynn Martin

William M. Hendon
William M. Hendon

Carroll Campbell

Mark D. Silander

Rod Chandler

Hal Rogers

Robert R. Dornan

Vin Weber

David Dreier

Jim Moody

Bruce A. Morrison

John R. Miller

Marcy Kaptur

John M. Spratt, Jr.

William O. Lipinski

Robert J. Mrazek

Bruce A. Morrison

Chris Smith

Stephen L. Neal

Robert S. Walker

Candiss Collins

Howard L. Berman

Steve Bartlett

Raymond J. McGrath

George E. Wortley

Jack Fields

San Coats

James V. Hansen

Tim Valentine

Mickey Leland

Bob McEwen

Martin Frost

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A. Kingen

**United States
Information
Agency**

Washington, D.C. 20547

#501 218

2885
Director



April 5, 1985

Dear Mr. President:

I wish to apprise you of a recent development concerning the proposal made by me to Mr. Leonid M. Zamyatin, Chief of the International Information Department of the Soviet Communist Party, for a constructive dialogue via international satellite television.

On January 25, I extended two concrete offers to Mr. Zamyatin:

1. To arrange for a top level Soviet official to appear on American television if Mr. Zamyatin would do likewise for a top American official on Soviet television;
2. To plan a one-to-two hour satellite television dialogue on USIA's WORLDNET satellite facilities in which Soviet journalists would interview U.S. officials on issues of mutual concern. This would be reciprocated by a similar program in which American journalists would freely and spontaneously question senior Soviet officials. (See Tab A)

As you may recall, this proposal was in response to an article published by Mr. Zamyatin in the Russian language magazine Literaturnaya Gazeta entitled "Impasses of Confrontations and Horizons of Cooperation." In this article, Mr. Zamyatin sharply criticized the international activities of USIA and charged it with "television propaganda aggression."

In response, I said that "permitting a free flow of information is in the best interests of both our societies and a necessary response to the times." And, for this reason, I urged him to respond favorably to my proposal.

To date, we have received no reply.

The President
The White House

111

However, domestic support is beginning to grow. On March 28, I received in my office a letter signed by 66 members of the U.S. House of Representatives. This letter, bipartisan in nature and representative of a broad political spectrum, expresses strong support for the Zamyatin initiative. (See Tab B).

I shall keep you informed of other developments on this matter as they unfold.

Sincerely,

Charles Z. Wick

(Dictated but not signed by the
Director in his absence from the office.)

~~SECRET~~

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

SN PPAZ

9016

11

F-RR

~~SECRET ATTACHMENT~~
INFORMATION

November 7, 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR ROBERT C. McFARLANE

FROM: WALTER RAYMOND, JR. WZ

SUBJECT: Discussion with Mikhail Vozlensky

Attached at Tab I is a background memorandum based on a talk with Mikhail Vozlensky, author of the book Nomenclatura.

Attachment

Tab I Background Memo

cc: Steiner
Sestanovich
Mandel
Matlock

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OF CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE(S)

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**United States
Information
Agency**

Washington, D C 20547

Office of the Director

9267

USIA

November 15, 1985

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F-Su Prop

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable
Robert C. McFarlane
Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs
The White House

FROM: Charles Z. Wick
Director

SUBJECT: Soviet Media Attack on USIA

The upcoming meeting in Geneva between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev is not keeping the Soviets from attacking some of their favorite targets -- USIA, Worldnet and me personally.

I thought you would be interested in seeing the attached cable (See Tab A) which reports on an article from Izvestiya entitled "USIA's Trojan Horse." The author, Izvestiya's Washington correspondent, says that Worldnet is a "system of global telepropaganda" that I use to "heat up further the ideological war declared on the socialist countries."

The article also refers to a piece in Washington Monthly (See Tab B) as implying that, in some Europe capitals, nobody watches Worldnet except American diplomats. This is another example of how Soviet propagandists cull comments from minor periodicals and replay them as if they came from prestigious, national journals.

It is worth keeping in mind as the Geneva meeting approaches that the Soviets seem never to let anything interfere with their continuous barrage of attacks on the United States.

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UNITED STATES
INFORMATION AGENCY

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

PAGE 01

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ACTION OFFICE EU-03
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VBXC-01 VBXX-01 VBE-01 VBU-02 VBR-01 VOA-02 PPMI-02
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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO RUEHIA/USIA WASHDC 2354
INFO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6268
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~~LIMITED OFFICIAL USE~~ MOSCOW 14898

USIA FOR EU (RUTH), P/RSE, P/G, VOA/BRU

STATE FOR EUR/SOV

E. O. 12356: N/A
SUBJECT: IZVESTIA ON WORLDNET TO EUROPE

1. IN A FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE TITLED "USIA'S TROJAN HORSE," PUBLISHED OCTOBER 18 IN IZVESTIA, THAT NEWSPAPER'S WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT, ALEKSANDR PALLADIN, WRITES: "DON'T LOOK A GIFT HORSE IN THE MOUTH. BUT IF THE HORSE IS TROJAN, THEN IT IS PROPER AND EVEN SENSIBLE TO GAZE DEEP INSIDE, WHICH IS WHAT WESTERN EUROPEANS HAVE DONE WITH THE NEW PROJECT OF THE U.S. INFORMATION AGENCY (USIA) -- THE SYSTEM OF GLOBAL TELEPROPAGANDA 'WORLDNET.'"
 2. WORLDNET, ACCORDING TO PALLADIN, IS "THE CHILD OF CHARLES WICK, BORN WITH THE KING OF 'YELLOW JOURNALISM,' RUPERT MURDOCH, IN THE ROLE OF MIDWIFE." HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH MURDOCH, PALLADIN CLAIMS, "OPENED NEW HORIZONS FOR WICK... WITH THE AID OF 'WORLDNET,' THE USIA CHIEF RESOLVED... TO HEAT UP FURTHER THE IDEOLOGICAL WAR DECLARED ON THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES ('WORLDNET,' IN THE EXPRESSION OF C. WICK, IS AN "ECONOMICAL SUBSTITUTE FOR WEAPONS") AND AT THE SAME TIME TO HITCH WESTERN EUROPE TO THE CHARIOT OF WASHINGTON PROPAGANDA."
 3. BUT WESTERN EUROPEANS, IF ONE CAN BELIEVE PALLADIN, ARE LESS THAN ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE NEW TELECASTS: "ALTHOUGH THE WASHINGTON PROGRAM IS OFFERED FREE OF CHARGE, IN THE OLD WORLD THOSE WILLING TO MAKE USE OF USIA'S SERVICES ARE FEW INDEED. NOT A SINGLE MAJOR WESTERN EUROPEAN TV COMPANY HAS AGREED TO CARRY OUT THE ROLE OF TRANSMITTING THE WHITE HOUSE'S PROPAGANDA. SO THAT, AS THE MAGAZINE 'WASHINGTON MONTHLY' OBSERVES, IN PARIS, GENEVA, AND BONN THE ONLY VIEWERS OF 'WORLDNET' ARE AMERICAN DIPLOMATS."
 4. PALLADIN CONCLUDES BY INFORMING HIS READERS THAT THE DIRECTOR OF THE MOST POPULAR TV NEWS PROGRAM IN WEST GERMANY HAS DECREED THAT "THERE IS NOT TO BE EVEN A WHIFF OF 'WORLDNET' IN MY BROADCASTS."
 5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH PREVIOUS SOVIET ATTACKS ON 'WORLDNET' HAVE CONCENTRATED LARGELY ON THE DANGERS POSED BY DIRECT SATELLITE TRANSMISSION, PALLADIN IN THIS CASE COULD NOT RESIST REVERTING TO THE TRIED-AND-TRUE THEME OF ALLEGED CRACKS IN THE WESTERN ALLIANCE. HARTMAN
- BT
#4898

WATCHING?

Charlie Wick's latest flop

by Mark Schapiro

We should have been heroes. U.S. soldiers had just splashed ashore the sunny isle of Grenada and routed the cabal of local communists and visiting Cuban construction workers. But when Charles Wick, director of the United States Information Agency, visited Western Europe during the 1983 invasion, he encountered almost unanimous condemnation from America's allies and the European press. According to one of his USIA subordinates, "Wick came back and said, 'God, they're killing us over there! Maggie Thatcher is saying the U.S. should never have gone into Grenada. What can be done?'"

Following instincts finely honed during decades as a Hollywood agent and producer, Wick moved quickly. If the critics are taking you to the cleaners, why not make an end run and get your message to the audience directly? There was no time, however, for a full-fledged production number—cobalt blue waves lapping up against pearl white sands, Frank Sinatra in sunglasses and a flower print shirt, a "Let Grenada be Grenada" theme song. So Wick settled for rounding up Jeane Kirkpatrick, then U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, two Caribbean prime ministers, and a pair of State Department officials for an unprecedented intercontinental video press conference, simultaneously beamed to five European capitals.

Mark Schapiro is a writer living in Washington D.C., and an associate of the Center for Investigative Reporting.

In the eyes of White House and USIA officials, Wick's gambit worked; the European reaction quickly faded. Wick sensed that he was onto something. Soon, administration officials were appearing twice a month on a new intercontinental interview service. But why stop there? By the fall of 1984, Wick was seeking advice from top figures in the field of international telecommunications, including Rupert Murdoch, the Australian press magnate. An American diplomat familiar with the situation says Murdoch played a critical role in familiarizing Wick with the possibilities of new satellite technology. It was after meeting Murdoch, says the diplomat, that "Wick saw the potential for thinking big."

The result was WorldNet, a \$15 million-a-year, satellite-aided television network designed to bolster international support for American policy. In launching the project this spring, Wick warned that the Soviet Union was out-spending the United States in international propaganda by a margin of three to one, and was already sending TV broadcasts to Western Europe. WorldNet would help close the Broadcast Gap and counter Soviet disinformation aimed at our allies. "In the confrontation between our free world society and our totalitarian adversaries," said Wick, "WorldNet is a highly cost-efficient alternative to military hardware."

As initially conceived, WorldNet would beam an hour and a half's worth of news and feature

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reports to European networks—all at no charge to the customers. (Plans also were set in motion to supplement the flagship English language production with shows in Spanish, French, and Portuguese.) And from USIA's Washington headquarters came the marching order to the troops in the field: employees in Western Europe's embassies would serve as WorldNet field agents, convincing Europe's television networks to begin pulling the programming directly from the satellite.

There's just one small problem with WorldNet: almost no one is watching it. Since the first broadcast in April, only a handful of small cable stations in northern Europe has agreed to run WorldNet. No major European network, commercial or state-supported, has accepted the USIA's invitation to run any daily WorldNet programming. Some Europeans haven't exactly minced words about it, either. "Not a second of that will appear on my show if I have any say," says Hans Friederichs, who will soon be the news anchorman for West Germany's most-watched television station. "You have to see it this way: no self-respecting American network would take something like that from another government." Friederichs also echoes a widespread sense of surprise—if not shock—among European journalists that Washington would imitate Moscow's ham-handed techniques in trying to shape the truth for its allies.

I first caught up with WorldNet this summer during a visit to the American embassy in Paris. Embassy personnel had set up 30 or so chairs in a sober, wood-paneled room illuminated by a single chandelier. At precisely two o'clock, a bank of television monitors lit up with animated color pictures: a violin, a microscope, a baseball mitt, a cowboy hat, the U.S. Capitol. "Star Trek"-like theme music played in the background. An upbeat male voice announced, "Live from Washington, D.C., this is 'America Today.'"

The camera then cut to a man and woman an-

chor team, framed by oblong relief maps of the world. A half-hour news segment opened the show. It consisted of briskly paced news stories, many of which had played on the American network news the evening before, though in different form: the Supreme Court's decision against prayer in the schools, reports of Soviet air attacks in Afghanistan, U.S.-Japanese trade talks, and a glowing portrait of the new Grenadan prime minister's meeting with George Shultz.

"America Today" is remarkable only in its quick American pacing and effervescent tone; the banter between the two co-anchors is reminiscent of a morning talk show. In addition to "America Today," an average week of WorldNet also includes a rotating series of mini-documentaries such as "Journey through the Solar System," which chronicles American space exploration. "American Images" presents the lives of average Americans in different occupations (a devotee of CBS News would expect Charles Kuralt to pop up at any moment). There is even a daily five-minute English language lesson. ("Many Americans eat dinner at a buffet: b-u-f-f-e-t.") The "interactive" interviews with American officials that launched the whole venture run twice a week. U.S. diplomats in each embassy are expected to arrange for European journalists to attend these latter sessions.

During several visits to the U.S. embassy in Paris, my sole company in the audience consisted of two bored-looking foreign service officers. That translated into not a single French viewer, since the only place in France receiving the program was the embassy itself. The same scene was repeated during several other visits to American missions in Geneva and Bonn.

Universal acclaim

WorldNet is only one example of Wick's impact on the USIA. A friend since their Hollywood days, President Reagan has consistently

supported Wick's plans for expanding USIA; the result has been a remarkable 75 percent budget increase since 1981, rivaling the percentage increase for the Pentagon. As Wick boasted earlier this year in an interview with *Parade* magazine, "I don't know anything about foreign affairs, and I don't know anything about journalism, but I do know how to make things happen."

He certainly seems to have demonstrated all three attributes in launching WorldNet. With strong White House backing, Wick's budget request for fiscal year 1986, including \$15 million for WorldNet, sailed through the Office of Management and Budget. Wick didn't get everything he wanted from Congress; the International Operations subcommittee in the House refused to approve a domestic version of WorldNet. But if anyone in Congress had any serious qualms about the goals or feasibility of WorldNet itself, they didn't voice them then.

The first sign of trouble came when the European Broadcasting Union, a clearinghouse for international news film and reporting, turned down a two-week trial tape before WorldNet even had begun official operations this spring. The Union has since carried only a few WorldNet products, such as footage from the space shuttle, when there has been no other source for the film. But aside from occasionally drawing on WorldNet as a library of film clips, foreign networks have shunned the service. "It's never difficult to establish the American viewpoint on something; we can do that through our Washington bureau," says Jim Akhurst, foreign editor for Britain's commercial Independent Television Network.

There are about 240 West European correspondents based in the United States, according to the the USIA. In addition to the Broadcasting Union's Euro-vision Exchange, most European television stations have their own exchange agreements with one or more of the four major American networks. Among these U.S. jour-

nalists and their editors and desk chiefs in Europe, there is little affection for WorldNet. Courtenay Tordoff, deputy foreign editor for BBC-TV in London, says the British television network "is not involved in a propaganda war for or against the Soviet Union. We are not putting out propoganda for anybody. . . . No one cares what the USIA thinks." Sven Kuntze, foreign news correspondent for ARD-TV in Bonn, observes: "We have the feeling that this news service is a way to kick our correspondents out of the business."

Allowing for a touch of hyperbole, Kuntz is not that far off about the USIA's motivation. John Walsh of the USIA's Office of European Affairs insists that the agency doesn't "want to suggest that the European correspondents are doing a bad job." But Walsh concedes that "WorldNet has the potential for presenting a U.S. viewpoint without the filter of the [foreign] correspondents here. . . . If we can get a message out directly, we want to do that."

So what exactly is the message? Well, things are a little unclear on this score. Working through the USIA's policy guidance office, the State Department informs the producers of "America Today" of the administration's "line of the day" on such issues as import quotas, support for rebel forces in Nicaragua, or Star Wars. The policy guidance staff can veto stories or ask that they be delayed until a particular administration spokesman is interviewed. But beyond these directives, the purpose of WorldNet gets fuzzy. Alvin Snyder, head of the USIA's television and film service, says that his goal is to illustrate that America "is the best society, people are the happiest, they dress better, they have more fun, their music is good. It's the Pepsi Generation!" Tim White, co-host of "America Today," concedes, "We're not sure yet who the audience is. . . . We hope to put it out there and wait for an audience to come to us." White is lucky that his job security doesn't depend on the ratings. ■