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O'Dwyer's

The Inside News of Public Relations
& Marketing Communications odwyerpr.com

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September 6, 2022 Vol. 55 No. 36

PARK CITY UTAH SEEKS PR AOR

Park City Utah, the Beehive State's premier ski location and home of the Sundance Film Festival, is seeking an agency to come on board as its agency of record.



park city

The Summit County city, known as a tourist hot spot due to its ski resorts, is also home to the annual independent film festival, the Sundance Film Festival.

The city's Chamber of Commerce/Convention and Visitors Bureau is looking for a full-service agency that can provide strategic guidance and creative and media services establishing the resort town as a sustainable destination.

Scope of the work includes developing, managing and measuring marketing campaigns; developing a brand advertising plan, including devising and producing creative materials and campaign elements; planning, buying, placing and measuring media; reporting and analytics; and research.

Anticipated start date for the work is January 2023, with terms of a resulting contract slated to end on June 30, 2025, with the option to renew for three one-year extensions.

Proposals are due by p.m. (MT) on September 29 and should be submitted via e-mail to gingerwicks@icloud.com.

All proposals should be submitted in PDF format.

Agencies should announce their intent to bid no later than 5 p.m. (MT) on September 13.

Questions should be directed to RFP coordinator Ginger Wicks gingerwicks@icloud.com, by 5 p.m. (MT) on September 13.

[Download the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

ISRAEL'S UN MISSION SEEKS CCO

Israel's United Nations' Mission is looking to hire a chief communications officer.

The CCO will manage the international communications of Ambassador Gilad Erdan and the rest of the Mission.

He/she will understand the fields of diplomacy and public policy, possess strong oratory skills, have experience in writing press releases, handing briefings and penning op-eds.



The job requires collaboration with foreign media outlets in the US, primarily in New York.

The Mission requires a CCO to have native-English language fluency.

Send CV, portfolio, writing sample and cover letter to IsraelUNjobs@newyork.MFA.gov.il.

Responses are due Sept. 16.

PFIZER NAMES PANAYIOTOU GLOBAL CMO

Pfizer appoints Drew Panayiotou as its first global chief marketing officer, effective September 19.

Panayiotou comes to Pfizer from Verily, Alphabet's life sciences research arm, where he was CMO. He was previously president of Red Wagon Ventures, Chick-Fil-A's new business incubator, and has also served as president and CEO at BBDO ATL and senior vp/US chief marketing officer Best Buy.



Drew Panayiotou

At Pfizer, Panayiotou will be responsible for building commercial infrastructure for the company, including engagement channels, tools, and digital solutions. He reports to Angela Hwang, head of Pfizer's biopharmaceuticals unit.

"Drew's insights and diverse thinking will help us elevate the cutting-edge customer channels, skills and capabilities we need to deliver" new medicines to patients, Hwang said in a LinkedIn post.

CHARTWELL PUSHES US-KOSOVO COALITION

Chartwell Strategy Group has signed to represent the American Friends of Kosovo coalition on issues concerning US relations, regional development and economic aid.

The US recognized Kosovo's independence from Serbia in 2008 and has been a staunch supporter of the Balkans nation.

Serbia considers Kosovo an autonomous province and cradle of Serbian civilization. It rejects Kosovo's independence.

Tensions rose between Serbia and Kosovo early last month as Kosovo declared Serb-issued identity papers and license plates would no longer be valid in its territory.

The US and European Union mediated a settlement to the identity document issue on Aug. 27.

Many unresolved issues remain between Serbia and Kosovo.

"Serbia's refusal to recognize the sovereignty of its former province lies at the crux of the problems between the countries," according to the Aug. 31 Voice of America.

Chartwell founding partners Ozzie Palomo, Matthew Epperly and David Tamasi handle the Kosovo coalition account with director Megan Greeley.



EMPLOYEES TRUST EMPLOYERS MOST

Employees trust their employers more than they do either the government or media, according to the newly released Edelman Trust Barometer.

“Trust in the Workplace” surveyed 7,000 employees across seven countries (US, UK, Brazil, Germany, Japan, India and China) and two-thirds (66 percent) of them said that they trust their employer. While that number represents a three-point dip from May 2022, that’s a smaller drop than was experienced by NGOs (58 percent, down six percent), government (52 percent, down 11 percent) or media (51 percent, down eight percent).



Employers also come out on top when it comes to judging how believable a piece of information is. More than six in 10 respondents (63 percent) said that if they see a piece of information from their employer two or fewer times, they will be inclined to believe it. That number drops to 55 percent when the source of that information is the national government, and 54 percent when it is from media reports that cite named sources.

Survey respondents said that trust is a two-way street between employers and employees. For the 71 percent of those surveyed who said that they feel their CEO trusts them, 92 percent trust their employer in return. Only 46 percent of those who think their CEO does not trust them said the same.

Employers seem to be doing a little better at keeping partisan politics out of the workplace than one might expect. Globally, over half (54 percent) said their workplace feels less politicized than last year, a jump of four percent. And the US outscored all but India (69 percent) in that regard, with 65 percent saying that the presence of partisanship has dropped.

But even though partisanship may not be a desirable workplace attribute, survey respondents still voiced a strong preference for employers taking a stand on current issues. A majority of both Democrats and Republicans said they would be more likely to work for a company if it were to publicly support addressing such issues as healthcare access, racial justice and climate change.

The survey was conducted in late July and early August.

JOELE FRANK REPS FORMA THERAPEUTICS

Joele Frank is handling Forma Therapeutics as the Waretown, MA-based biopharmaceutical company focused on sickle cell disease and other blood disorders is acquired by Novo Nordisk for \$1.1B cash.



The Danish company has developed Etavopivat, which is currently being evaluated in global trials to treat sickle cell disease.

“Novo Nordisk has worked for more than 40 years to develop and deliver transformative medicines to patients around the world with rare and devastating diseases,” said Ludovic Helfgott, EVP and head of rare disease unit.

The addition of Forma’s ‘differentiated approach’ to address unmet needs for patients is a step forward in enhancing our sickle cell disease pipeline.” added Helfgott.

Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher’s Jamie Moser and Greg Klassen represent Forma Therapeutics.

NEWS OF FIRMS

ICR introduces its SPAC Liquidation Communications Services offering, which will providing SPAC sponsors with strategic advice and the necessary support to help them properly communicate with investors during the liquidation and de-listing of a SPAC. Having worked on more than 120 SPAC transactions since the start of 2021, ICR is positioned to advise those sponsors that choose to, or are unable to, execute a business combination in the current market environment.

Klick Health launches Klick Brands, a health-centric brand and design offering; Studio K, an in-house broadcast and 360-degree production facility; and Klick Influence, an influencer marketing group. Klick Brands will work across creative design, brand strategy and medical strategy to better position brands to resonate with patients, caregivers and healthcare providers. Based in Klick’s downtown Toronto headquarters, Studio K will include a sound stage, edit suite, audio recording booth, talent green room and technical store. Klick Influence will provide clients with influencer outreach, negotiation, contracting and management, as well as content approvals, moderation and analytics.



PAN Communications unveils its PAN CyberPulse dashboard, a resource for real-time cybersecurity monitoring. Exclusively offered to PAN clients as part of the firm’s value-added data set, the dashboard provides a live view of cybersecurity topics across social and traditional media sources, serving as a first stop to trending data, along with the influencers and sources that are driving the conversations

Ken Scudder Training & Consulting is moving from Philadelphia to the Washington, DC metro area. The firm, which offers media, presentation, and crisis training and consulting, along with writing and editing services, will set up shop in DC in September. “My business truly is nationwide,” Scudder said, “so I will still be able to work with my clients at their location or mine after this move.”

Leon Communications, a strategic communications consultancy focused on the financial and professional services sectors and fintech in the Asia Pacific region, is launched by Tim Williamson, who was most recently managing director, Asia Pacific at Singapore-based Telum Media. Leon Communications will offer corporate communications services that include strategy and messaging, reputation management, media relations, integrated communications and media training. The agency will be headquartered in Singapore and will be supported by a network of senior independent communications experts and partners in APAC and globally.



Vendilli Digital Group acquires inbound marketing agency **Horseshoe & Co.** Horseshoe & Co.’s four agency team members, including founder and CEO Andrea Moxham, will join Vendilli Digital Group. Horseshoe clients who will now be served by Vendilli include software firm Trainual and CAPA: The Global Education Network, which assists institutions of higher education in building programs to meet their goals for learning abroad. Vendilli founder and CEO Chirs Vendillin said that the acquisition “enables us to expand our capacity and capabilities for both new and existing clients.”

SHOULD YOUR COMPANY HAVE A SOUL?

As communicators, we've written countless mission, vision and purpose statements in an effort to differentiate companies in the market and develop a guiding light for their decision-making. These values have become the cornerstone



Ryan Barr

of corporate narratives and the foundation of communications programs for decades. In today's world, it's not enough to simply put words to paper. Companies must act more human. Companies need to take a stance on issues that connect with all their stakeholders. Companies can and should have a positive, lasting impact on society.

Whether you call it Stakeholder Capitalism, ESG, CSR or countless other terms, it's about doing better for all, not just a few. Business leaders have begun to adopt this philosophy and we've seen it play out in a variety of ways from carbon offsetting to stances on human rights to community reinvestment. However, at the end of the day, it's simply the soul of a company.

The challenge facing executives and, ultimately, communicators, is: How do you balance the needs of so many different stakeholders that often can't see the forest through the trees? Consumers want to get the best product from companies. Investors want to maximize shareholder value. Employees want to thrive within an organization. Communities want to trust their corporate neighbors. Meeting all these needs can be challenging. But if we accept the notion that companies are more than just profit centers, job creators or product manufacturers, we can see a path forward that creates lasting brand loyalty and investor affinity.

Let's first look at investor sentiment as it relates to stakeholder capitalism. Any investment rationale starts with the concept of maximizing shareholder value. It's a simplistic and often myopic point of view. Some believe that a company must do what is best for its bottom line and if anything varies from delivering maximum profitability it should be terminated. Marketers and communicators know this isn't true. How do they know? Sales teams constantly ask for new ways to engage consumers and create deeper, more meaningful connections that differentiate their brand in the market. This, in turn, sparks increased brand loyalty, driving revenue growth and profitability. To make this happen, companies must invest in consumer relationships and not just put out superior products. According to a recent Gartner report, the benefits of investing in ESG goes beyond Wall Street. Companies that invest in ESG-driven activities more easily access capital, increase shareholder value, experience cost savings and create superior brand loyalty. Additionally, companies that invest in ESG also report higher levels of employee satisfaction, retention and recruitment.

In today's global marketplace, with thousands of options available to consumers, brand loyalty is earned through the actions of companies. Consumers want to feel good about the brands they buy and not just the products. According to a PwC survey, 76 percent of consumers say they'll stop buying from companies that treat the environment, employees or the community in which they operate poorly. Microsoft is globally recognized as one of the most influential and successful brands in the world. And according to The Motley Fool's

ESG Compounder Checklist, Microsoft might not be perfect, but it did score a nine out of 10 while ranking as the third most valuable company in the world. Even small businesses recognize the power of social responsibility. Would Bombas sell as many socks if they didn't donate a pair to a homeless shelter for every pair purchased? These purpose-driven initiatives deliver on so many levels and do not sacrifice profits. In fact, they increase loyalty and drive bottom-line results.

It's not just investors and consumers that companies need to focus on. Employees are the greatest asset of any organization and the scarcest in today's workplace. Companies are competing for talent across industries and geographies as the traditional workforce becomes blurred. Like other stakeholders, employees want to feel good about the company they work for and hold more power in the relationship. Employee engagement is critical to a company's success. According to a recent Gallup Poll, companies with high levels of employee engagement see an 18 percent boost in productivity, 43 percent less turnover and 23 percent higher profitability.

All of this creates opportunities for communications professionals. Business leaders are relying on communications more than ever. Like many senior roles within an organization, the evolution of communications has been profound over the past decade and accelerated during the pandemic. Communicators need to engage multiple stakeholders, address ESG issues, navigate volatile market conditions and motivate a mostly virtual workforce. This all starts and ends with the corporate narrative. One that embraces an inclusive storyline that builds affinity and loyalty. One that takes advantage of new channels of communication that engage stakeholders where they are and how they want to consume content. And, most importantly, one that bares the soul of the company in a transparent and genuine tone that demonstrates a company's commitment to doing better.

If you want to truly add value to your company or clients, be the agent of change. Challenge companies to do better and communicate with all stakeholders. Celebrate brands that are making the world a better place. Build brand loyalty through action and be rewarded for doing the right thing.

Ryan Barr is Managing Partner, Global Financial Services Practice Leader, at Finn Partners.

ASC REPS LIGHT ST. MOVE VS. ZENDESK DEAL

ASC Advisors represents Light Street Capital as it opposes Hellman & Friedman and Permira's \$10.2B cash deal to acquire Zendesk, San Francisco-based customer relationship management company.

Zendesk on June 24 agreed to a \$77.50 per share offer, which represented a 34 percent premium on its closing stock price.

Light Street said in its Aug. 29 letter to Zendesk's board the proposed transaction materially undervalues the company and is detrimental to shareholder interest.

The owner of two percent of Zendesk's shares offered an alternative plan to the H&F/Permira acquisition, a program that includes a recapitalization, tender offer, stock buyback and revised corporate operating plan.

ASC Advisors' Steve Bruce and Taylor Ingraham handle Light Street Capital.

FGS Global's John Christiansen and Zachary Tramonti represented Zendesk in the H&F/Permira deal.



ROCKLAND COUNTY LOOKS FOR TRAVEL PR

New York's Rockland County plans to hire a firm to promote tourism to the "Gateway to the Hudson Valley" region.

Situated on the western bank of the Hudson River, Rockland estimates that without tourism-generated state and local taxes, the average household would have to spend an additional \$422 a year to maintain the same level of government revenue.



It says economic development from tourism does not end with visitor spending. Travelers may like what they see in Rockland and decide to buy a home, move their businesses there, or enroll their children in the area's colleges, prep schools and summer camps.

Rockland plans to award a one-year contract with options to renew for four additional one-year periods.

Proposals are due Sept. 15 at [Rockland's electronic portal](#). [Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

TENEO TAPS IKEA'S SUSTAINABILITY GURU

Teneo has tapped Pia Heidenmark Cook, former chief sustainability officer for IKEA, as a senior advisor in its London office.



Pia Heidenmark Cook

As CSO of IKEA/Ingka Group, Cook led a team of more than 100 professionals and spearheaded development of the Sweden-based retailer's IKEA People and Planet Positive strategy.

Since exiting IKEA on a full-time basis in 2021, Cooke has held non-executive advisory roles at MAX Burgers (a top Swedish hamburger chain), BUPA (healthcare organization) and Origin Materials, which helps companies transition from petroleum-based materials to sustainable ones).

At Teneo, Cooke will work closely with Huw Maggs, sustainability strategy leader, and Debbie Howard, sustainability lead in Teneo's UK strategy and communications practice.

Nick Claydon, Teneo UK CEO, said Cook was responsible for driving IKEA's sustainability agenda, setting bold goals and engaging its 160K people in the process.

BANKING PRO LAI JOINS BRUNSWICK GROUP

Paul Lai, who was CEO of Hong Kong and head of corporate and institutional banking for the Greater China region at Westpac, Australia's first and oldest bank, has joined Brunswick Group.



Paul Lai

He has more than two decades of corporate finance and investment banking experience, advising companies and governments in the Asia-Pacific region, Europe and the US.

Prior to Westpac, the former Bank of New South Wales, Lai was senior managing director and head of corporate and investment banking at BBVA. He also had big jobs at CITIC, HSBC and UBS.

Based in Hong Kong, Lai will counsel Brunswick clients on financial situations, including mergers/acquisitions and other capital market transactions.

ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

[Bob Gold & Associates](#) picks up **Vidgo**, a streaming platform focused on college football. The agency will help drive awareness for Vidgo and promote the company's position as the best value for sports lovers. The new app is available on CTV and streaming devices including Roku, Amazon Fire TV, VIZIO and Apple TV, as well as on Android and iOS mobile devices and the web. "We have a new story to tell, and we need Bob Gold & Associates to tell it. With their deep-rooted sports and entertainment relationships and breadth of experience, no one is more qualified than Bob Gold & Associates," said Vidgo CEO Derek Mattsson.



Source Outdoor Group signs on as agency of record for **Lithium Pros**, which makes lithium-ion batteries for racing, marine boating and the LSEV (low-speed electric vehicle) markets. The agency will be tasked with overseeing public relations, influencer management, and media planning for the brand. "Source Outdoor Group will be entrusted with transforming the organization's product initiatives into communications strategies to reach our ever-growing customer base," said Lithium Pros owner Kevin Bennett.

Junapr scoops up US PR duties for **Switzerland's Le Gruyère AOP Consortium**, which has produced cellar-aged, raw cow's milk cheeses for over a thousand years. Junapr will lead all US-focused strategic communications, media relations and strategic partnerships for the brand. "Junapr's experience in the specialty food public relations arena and their understanding of complex business challenges helped us select them as our partner," said Le Gruyère AOP Consortium managing director and international marketing manager Denis Kaser.

[Clarity Global](#) forms a long-term partnership with **Opening Doors**, the largest UK charity providing services and activities specifically for LGBTQ+ people over 50. Working on a pro bono basis, the agency will work to raise the profile of Opening Doors and boost awareness of its offerings, which include a buddy system, trained volunteers that prioritize safeguarding, and dedicated groups for people of color, trans members and those affected by dementia. Following global Pride month, Clarity began working with Opening Doors as part of its commitment to provide impactful support to the LGBTQ+ community year round.



APO Group is selected as public relations and communications partner in Africa for global humanitarian organization **Mercy Ships**. Mercy Ships and APO Group have been working together since January on a media campaign to raise international awareness of the organization and several key events, including an international symposium that focused on developing a roadmap to accelerate access to surgical, obstetric and anesthetic care in Africa by 2030.

[Firecracker PR](#) is handling PR for restaurant management software company **MarginEdge**. The Arlington VA-based company works with over 3,000 restaurants in all 50 states, handling such tasks as data-entry of invoices, updating pricing on inventory sheets and keeping ingredient prices up to date. Firecracker works with clients in such sectors as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, renewable energy and consumer technology.

APCO GAUGES PERCEPTION OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE

[APCO Worldwide](#) has signed on to provide strategic communications services and opinion research for Africa's Côte d'Ivoire in the US.



The goal is to gauge the perception of the Ivory Coast for development of a creative brand for the country.

That brand will “concretely materialize in the form of a description, set of messages and creative concept,” according to APCO’s agreement.

Secretary of State Anthony Blinken on August 7 wished the Ivorian people a happy 62nd National Day.

He said the US appreciates “that the government and people of Côte d'Ivoire will remain our steadfast allies against those who seek to repress fundamental freedoms and undermine the international rules-based order.”

APCO Worldwide ranks [No. 5 on O'Dwyer's roster of independent firms](#) with 2021 fee income of \$172.4M.

AXICOM'S KERNS MOVES TO BIG VALLEY

Steve Kerns, a 22-year Silicon Valley PR veteran, has joined Big Valley Marketing tech communications shop as its first chief marketing officer.



Steve Kerns

He joins from WPP's AxiCom tech firm, where he served as executive VP & managing director for North America for the past two years.

Kerns also was senior VP/San Francisco GM for WE Communications and SVP at Text100, Edelman and FleishmanHillard.

Big Valley CEO/founder Tim Marklein said Kerns “has a unique perspective on what's right and what's wrong

with the traditional agency landscape.”

Kerns will report to president Huang Shin, the former AxiCom chief who joined Big Valley in April.

WORDHAMPTON'S HAWEELI DIES AT 68

Steve Haweeli, founder and president of WordHampton Public Relations, died August 23 from complications of COVID-19. He was 68.

The former bartender at Nick & Toni's restaurant launched WordHampton in 1992. The East Hampton shop grew into one of the biggest PR firms on Long Island's East End.

Nicole Castillo, executive VP at the firm, said she is “honored to continue his legacy as the owner of WordHampton” and plans to build on the groundwork he put into place.

Haweeli traveled to more than 30 countries, loved jazz, rooted for the New York Yankees, liked to cook, swam daily weather permitting at Maidstone Beach and began painting in 2007. His contemporary abstract works in oil and acrylic appeared in local galleries.

He is survived by son, Ned; and cousins Ellen and John Haweeli.

The family suggested that donations in Haweeli's name should go to the Springs Food Pantry, 5 Old Stone Highway, East Hampton, NY 11937 or [springsfoodpantry.com](#).



Steve Haweeli

ON THE MOVE

[imre](#) hires **Kristine Wobschall** as VP of client experience and **Sonal Adhav** as senior director of medical affairs. Wobschall most recently served as VP at H4B Chelsea, leading strategy, campaign development and launches for AOR relationships with brands in the rare disease, HIV, oncology and women's health therapeutic areas. At imre, she is responsible for client relationship management and overall business portfolio health. Adhav comes to imre from Fishawack Health, where she was senior scientific director. Her experience encompasses immuno-oncology and rheumatoid arthritis among others therapeutic areas.

The National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors names former POLITICO director of marketing and communications **Liz Shrum** as CCO. Shrum most recently ran her own consulting firm, LJSMedia. She has also served as senior advisor and spokesperson for the American Association of Consumer Credit Professionals. At NAW, Shrum is leading internal and external communications, brand, marketing, digital media and public affairs for the trade association.



Liz Shrum

Method Communications appoints **Martin Harkin** as SVP, global head of business development. Harkin joins Method from Red Havas, where he was practice head for technology and e-commerce. He previously worked at Haystac, part of the Dentsu Aegis network. In his new post, he will lead tech clients from his home base in New York City and coordinate new global business development opportunities between U.S.-based Method and its sibling agencies under the VCCP Business umbrella

TURNER PR brings on **Malcolm Griffiths** as a SVP in the firm's New York office. Griffiths was most recently country manager with VisitBritain's national tourism office in São Paulo, Brazil, leading integrated marketing efforts across paid, earned, owned, trade and UK Government partner channels. Before that, he was a VP at Development Counsellors International. At TURNER, Griffiths will lead a client portfolio that includes Tourism Australia and Tennessee Tourism.

Verily appoints **Alix Hart** CMO. Hart was previously head of content and digital strategy at the company. Before coming to Verily in early 2021, she was global head of digital marketing at NVIDIA. She has also held marketing leadership roles in companies including Symantec, Best Buy and Time Inc. At Verily, Hart will lead all brand, digital and product marketing efforts, as well as overall marketing operations.

The Ehrhardt Group promotes **Dominique Ellis Falcon** to VP of account services. Ellis was previously director of account services at the agency. Before coming to TEG, she ran Dominique Ellis Public Relations. In her new role, Ellis will foster opportunities for agency growth and continue to guide TEG staff in client development and agency operations. “She is an exceptional leader at TEG, providing solutions and fortifying relationships for two of our most valuable assets – our clients and our team,” said The Ehrhardt Group president Marc Ehrhardt.



Dominique Ellis Falcon

COMMENTARY



Will QAnon bail out Truth Social?

Donald Trump is busy fending off reports that the plan to take his Twitter knock-off public may be jeopardized by the financial woes suffered by its parent company, Trump Media and Technology Group.

Per usual, Trump says the opposite is true. In his mind, the “fake news media” are jealous about Truth Social’s raging success and are just devastated by how well it is doing. In the real world, Wall Street has bailed out on the stock of Digital World Acquisition Corp, the SPAC vehicle that is supposed to take Truth Social public.

DWAC’s stock is trading at \$25.53, which is far below its \$175 52-week high that was reached after the initial burst of the Truth Social hype.

The company announced on Aug. 26 that it may need a one-year extension beyond the original Sept. 8 target completion date to complete the merger with TM&TG.

It’s too bad for Trump that the gang at QAnon wasn’t in charge of taking Truth Social public.

Steven Brill’s NewsGuard misinformation monitor on Aug. 28 reported that QAnon followers, who have been banned by Twitter, have stampeded to Truth Social.

NewsGuard found that Truth Social has verified 47 QAnon-promoting accounts with more than 10K followers each and 88 users who promote QAnon ideas, slogans and graphics.

NewsGuard reports that the former president has “reTruthed” 30 different QAnon accounts a cumulative 65 times to his 3.8M followers. Those boosted accounts have about 772,000 followers overall.

QAnon fans should pass the hat and raise the funds needed to support their favorite social media platform.

More than two in five (43 percent) of Americans believe a Civil War is at least likely to happen in the US in the next decade, according to polling from *The Economist* and YouGov.

More than half (53 percent) of “strong Republicans” are bullish on the outbreak of a Civil War, while “not very strong Republicans” check in at 45 percent.

“Strong Democrats,” “not very strong Democrats” and “Independents” each weigh in at 40 percent.

One wonders if the poll respondents knew of the true horrors of the Civil War.

Until recently, it was estimated that 620K Union and Confederate soldiers died in the conflict.

A new analysis in 2021 based on digitized census figures upped that death toll to 750K and perhaps 850K.

Are we really trying to refight the Civil War? We shouldn’t throw those words around so lightly.

Jared Kushner gets a helping hand in promoting his “memoir.” Hope Hicks, a member of the Trump family inner circle, is helping the former first son-in-law promote his book, “Breaking History,” according to *Vanity Fair*.

She is helping Kusher handle logistics for his book tour of conservative outlets. A brutal *New York Times* review of

the book says it “entirely ignores the chaos, the alienation of allies, the breaking of laws and norms, the flirtations with dictators, the comprehensive loss of America’s moral leadership, and so on, ad infinitum, to speak about his boyish tinkering with issues he was interested in.”

Hicks, whom Donald Trump calls “My Hopey,” was recruited for the White House communications director spot to replace the ousted Wall Street player Anthony Scaramucci, who lasted 10 days in the job. Following her resignation, she landed a top PR job at—surprise, surprise—Fox Corp.

Hicks began her PR career at Zeno Group and represented Ivanka Trump at Hiltzik Strategies before joining the Trump Organization as communications director.

Kudos to the State Department for its “PRC Efforts to Manipulate Global Public Opinion on Xinjiang” report released August 24 about how China’s government is attempting to cover up its campaign of abuse and torture against its Muslim population in its Xinjiang province.

Here are some highlights: “The People’s Republic of China actively attempts to manipulate and dominate global discourse on Xinjiang and to discredit independent sources reporting ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity conducted against predominantly Muslim Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

“PRC-directed and -affiliated actors lead a coordinated effort to amplify Beijing’s preferred narratives on Xinjiang, to drown out and marginalize narratives that are critical of the PRC’s repression of Uyghurs, and to harass those critical of the PRC.”

China’s government works to silence dissent by engaging in digital transnational repression, trolling and cyberbullying.

Pro-PRC actors engage in “astroturfing,” or coordinated campaigns of inauthentic posts to create the illusion of widespread grassroots support for a policy, individual or viewpoint, when no such widespread support exists.

China also practices “whataboutism” or puts up false equivalencies to distract/deflect criticism with the goal of portraying accusers as hypocritical. “Their arguments do not advance the case that the PRC is innocent; rather, they make the point that other countries are equally guilty of abuses. Despite these efforts to distract from the situation in Xinjiang, independent media outlets, academics, and human rights activists have published multiple eyewitness accounts and verifiable data that the PRC has imprisoned an estimated one million people and that credible evidence exists of torture, forced sterilization, and other abuses.”

China increasingly is turning to private media companies to craft foreign-facing information manipulation campaigns. The State Dept. reports at least 90 PRC-based firms are creating manipulation campaigns to portray the PRC positively.

The PRC’s Cyberspace Affairs Commission and Central Propaganda Department directly employ an estimated two million people nationwide in this capacity and another 20 million working as part-time “network civilization volunteers.”

The US faces a powerful PR adversary. —Kevin McCauley