

THE POLITICS OF FAMINE: AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND PRESS RESPONSE TO THE UKRAINIAN FAMINE, 1932–1933*

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Abstract — The Soviet Ukraine suffered a man-made famine in 1932–1933 during which millions died. This was part of the central government's attack on Ukrainian nationality and culture. The United States Government received numerous contemporary intelligence reports on the famine from its European embassies, but chose not to acknowledge the famine publicly. Similarly, leading members of the American press corps in the Soviet Union willfully covered up the famine in their dispatches. In both cases, political considerations relating to the establishment of diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. seem to have been critical factors in this cover-up.

In 1932 and 1933 an artificially created famine made the Ukrainian S.S.R., the contiguous and largely Ukrainian North Caucasus Territory to its east, and the largely German and Tatar regions of the Volga Basin, in the words of Robert Conquest, 'like one vast Belsen. A quarter of the rural population, men, women, and children, lay dead or dying, the rest in various stages of debilitation with no strength to bury their families or neighbors. At the same time (as at Belsen), well-fed squads of police or party officials supervised the victims.'¹

In the Soviet case, the enemy was defined in terms of class rather than nationality, race, or religion. However, the Communist Party held itself up as the embodiment of the class consciousness of the proletariat: anything it sanctioned was by definition proletarian, and anything it found inconvenient was by definition infected with hostile class content. Its ideology classified 'nationalism', as distinct from the party-sanctioned Russocentric 'Soviet patriotism', as 'bourgeois nationalism', that is, a form of bourgeois ideology. This allowed Stalinism to imbue class categories with national content. According to Stalin, the social basis of nationalism was the peasantry.² Soviet ideology also posited the division of the peasantry into bourgeois and proletarian strata, which were never precisely defined, and thus, at Stalin's discretion, any segment of the peasantry could at any given moment be declared either proletarian and worthy of survival or bourgeois and worthy of 'liquidation'. Those whose relative wealth did not qualify them as class enemies could be easily classified as 'agents' of the class enemies.³

The New Economic Policy (NEP), beginning in 1921 and ending somewhere between 1927 and the end of 1929, was basically a series of concessions to the peasants.⁴ From 1923, NEP was accompanied by a policy of concessions to non-Russians known as indigenization. Since in 1926 about three-eighths of the Soviet Union's non-Russians were

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Ukrainians, who outnumbered the next largest non-Russian group by about 6.5 to one, the nationality problem was to a great extent a Ukrainian problem. It is thus hardly surprising that the Ukrainian version of indigenization, Ukrainization, went much farther than its counterparts elsewhere in the U.S.S.R.⁵

The forced collectivization of agriculture was actually a war in which the regime forced the peasantry, much against its will, into state controlled estates from which the authorities could seize more produce more easily. By the end of 1931 in the Ukraine, the state had won its war. Seven-tenths of the peasants had 'signed up' for collective farms, comprising four-fifths of all arable farmland in the Ukrainian S.S.R. At the same time, grain seizures had wiped out reserves from previous years and led to localized outbreaks of famine. Moscow's representatives were warned of the situation as early as July 1932.⁶

The essence of collectivization was the replacement of individual farms by large collective farms in which the agricultural population planted and harvested as a group. The latter was particularly important: since the entire harvest of a given collective farm was brought to a single point and placed under state control, the state could dispose of it as it pleased. Obligations to the state, as the state determined them, and to the collective farm administration had to be completely fulfilled before any produce whatsoever was distributed to those who had produced it. If the harvest fell short or merely equalled the amount demanded for other obligations, the peasants received nothing, and thorough searches were made of members' homes for anything which might make up for the shortfall. Even if a given collective met its quota, it was often assigned a supplementary quota to make up for others that had not.⁷ Those remaining outside the collective farms also had 'firm tasks' and household quotas, and they too were assigned 'supplementary tasks'. Their houses and gardens were similarly searched. In the early 1930s the state thus took complete control of all crops grown and was in a position to seize any or all of them. Thus Stalin had the power to starve the actual producers of foodstuffs, and in 1932 he made use of it.

After the 1932 harvest, the Ukrainian party organization went over to a virtual war footing in 'the struggle for bread'. Officials found wanting were replaced, including a quarter of the Ukraine's 494 *raion* (district) government heads by 1 October. Entire *oblasts* (regions) were censured for 'temporizing' in the struggle.⁸ As the situation worsened, various appeals were made to Stalin, who dismissed them.⁹ Stalin responded in October 1932 by 'strengthening' the Ukrainian party organization through the appointment of Mendel Khataevich and Ivan Akulov to the Ukrainian leadership. Khataevich, who had won a reputation for brutality in combating 'kulak sabotage' in the Middle Volga Territory, became Second Secretary of the Communist Party (bolshevik) of the Ukraine. Akulov, hitherto first deputy of the OGPU (secret police), became head of the Donbas *obkom* (regional party committee).¹⁰ Any difficulty in seizing the grain was blamed on the ubiquitous class enemies in the countryside, the kulaks, and their 'agents', surviving supporters of Petliura and Makhno. At the same time, a new enemy was added, the 'tightwads' (*tverdozdavtsi*).¹¹ By 13 December more than one-fifth of the Ukraine's *raions* were 'blacklisted', that is, placed under complete economic blockade and thoroughly purged of 'class enemies'.¹² In December, arrests began of local officials found wanting in the struggle for bread, and in one *raion* the entire leadership was arrested.¹³

The starving were left to their fate and all traffic between the Ukraine and the areas immediately to the North was closely controlled. They were not allowed to travel to Russia where food was available, and those few who managed to do so by stealth saw any food they might have purchased confiscated at the Russo-Ukrainian border.¹⁴

Stalin took advantage of the famine created by his policies to withdraw the conces-

sions earlier made to the Ukrainians. On 14 December 1932 he ordered a halt to the 'mechanistic' implementation of Ukrainization and the initiation of a campaign 'to disperse Petliurists and other bourgeois nationalist elements from the Party and Soviet organizations' in the Ukraine.¹⁵ On 24 January 1933 Stalin took direct control of the Ukrainian party organization by appointing Pavel Postyshev Second Secretary and head of the Kharkov *obkom*. Khataevich, who now became third secretary, was also given the Dniepropetrovsk *obkom*, and Evgenii Veger, a Central Committee functionary from Moscow, was appointed to head the Odessa *obkom*.¹⁶ With Akulov retaining the Donbas, Stalin controlled through his new appointees two of the three secretaries of the Ukrainian Central Committee and four of the Ukraine's six *obkoms* (not counting the small Moldavian ASSR). In addition, Postyshev brought with him thousands of clients who in the succeeding months took over responsible posts throughout the Ukrainian S.S.R., including the top party and state posts in about half of all the Ukraine's *raions*.¹⁷

Everything that happened subsequently could only have happened under Stalin's direct mandate. In the late winter and spring of 1933, efforts to seize food from the starving were intensified.¹⁸ In succeeding months the autonomist wing of the CP(b)U, led by Ukrainian Education Commissar Mykola Skrypnyk, was thoroughly purged. With Skrypnyk himself committing suicide in July, Ukrainization became a dead letter, and virtually everything associated with the national revival of the preceding decade was banned. Ukrainian arts and letters were virtually banned for a generation. Ukrainization gave way to Russification. All this together could only mean an attempt to destroy any hint of Ukrainian cultural or political self-assertion as part of a deliberate policy calculated to neutralize the Ukrainians as a political factor and social entity, in other words, a form of genocide.

The famine, accompanied by a broad campaign against every manifestation of Ukrainian self-assertion, dealt a body blow to the basic constituency of Ukrainian national identity, starving to death millions of Ukrainian peasants. As with other government-sponsored atrocities, the exact number of victims can only be estimated. But we know that the 1926 Soviet census counted 31.2 million Ukrainians and that the probably inflated census of 1939 counted only 28.1 million, an absolute decline of 3.1 million, or 10%.¹⁹ Once probable population growth for the period is considered, the probable number of victims is in the range of *five to seven million*, more probably closer to the higher end of this range than to the lower.²⁰

The U.S. Government knew a great deal about the man-made famine of 1932–1933 in the Ukraine and chose not to acknowledge what it knew or to respond in any meaningful way. Some members of the American press corps also knew a great deal which they chose not to report, and, in some cases, actively denied in public what they confirmed in private.

Even lacking a diplomatic presence in the U.S.S.R., the State Department monitored Soviet developments through both the official Soviet press and a variety of other sources. Especially closely followed were issues dealing with grain production because of direct competition between American and Soviet wheat exports on the world market. Less notice was taken of developments in nationality policy, but here, too, information was certainly available.

Robert F. Kelley, chief of the State Department's Division of Eastern European Affairs from 1926 until its abolition in 1937, oversaw research and processed intelligence on the U.S.S.R. The single most important post for reliable and timely intelligence was the Russian affairs section at the U.S. Legation in Riga, Latvia, which had monitored the Soviet Union since its establishment in 1922.²¹

As early as 1931, the excessive seizure of agricultural produce had led to localized

outbreaks of famine in the Ukraine. An early indication of the hardships wrought by the Soviet state, the number of refugees fleeing to Poland and Rumania, was reported to the State Department.²²

In the summer of 1931, two letters reached the State Department from Zhashkiv, Ukraine, reporting brutal conditions there.²³ Kelley described one letter as 'apparently written from Russia, with regard to alleged conditions',²⁴ while the second concerned 'alleged conditions' in the Ukraine.²⁵ United States diplomats also forwarded reports of conversations with recent travellers to the Ukraine and North Caucasus.²⁶ One such memorandum from Riga reported a conversation with Professor Samuel Harper, who predicted that the 'very serious' food situation might become 'catastrophic' in a year.²⁷

Poland was a source on Soviet nationality policy, such as the analysis of Soviet agriculture written by the Polish Consul in Kiev and given to the American legation in Warsaw for forwarding to Washington.²⁸ On 15 November 1932, Robert Skinner sent the State Department its first report that the famine had actually begun, in the wake of another failed harvest.²⁹

This famine report was corroborated by other reports from various sources during the following months, including Hearst Press journalist Kendall Foss in late November 1932³⁰ and several reports from the United States Embassy in Riga in January and February 1933.³¹ A confidential memorandum on the famine by Duke University Economics Professor Calvin Hoover was forwarded to Washington on 1 March by Frederic Sackett of the Berlin Embassy.³² Kelley was so impressed by the report's prediction of impending 'ruin', in the Ukraine and elsewhere, that he recommended it to incoming Secretary of State Cordell Hull.³³

On 27 March, Skinner reported the execution of 35 Soviet agricultural officials and the imprisonment of 40 others in connection with the failed harvests and famine in the Ukraine. Skinner ascribed the failure of Soviet agriculture to 'the effects of the reaction of the peasantry as a whole . . . to a Government policy which deprived it of individual ownership in respect of most of its property . . .'.³⁴ Other reports reaching the State Department from its Warsaw diplomatic sources linked the trial of these 75 officials to 'a systematic persecution of the rural administration' in order to turn over the rural administration of collectivized agriculture to communist companies.³⁵

Famine reports continued to be forwarded to the State Department in the spring, summer and fall of 1933 from Vienna, Helsinki, Riga, Paris, Athens and elsewhere.³⁶ One Latvian diplomat in Moscow said in October that Soviet officials had privately admitted to the famine and had estimated that seven to eight million had died of starvation.³⁷ The American Embassy in Warsaw forwarded Polish journal articles which interpreted Soviet policies in the Ukraine as 'anti-peasant' and attempting a 'pacification' of Ukrainian nationalism.³⁸

The Polish journal *Rosja Sowiecka* reported in its 30 September 1933 issue that although the 1932 crop yield in the Ukraine was only 40% greater than in 1920, the Government claimed 300% the 1920 amount.³⁹ Approximately 70% of the Ukrainian crop and nearly 100% of the North Caucasus crop was seized. In addition, the collective farms set aside grain for reserves and expenses. 'What is then left for the peasants?', the journal asked.⁴⁰

Letters were sent to President Roosevelt from Ukrainian immigrants in the United States, Mennonites who had fled the Ukraine in 1917, and others.⁴¹ Most letters were handed over to Kelley at the State Department, others were apparently ignored entirely, while an occasional letter reached the Secretary of State or the President himself.⁴² All

implored Roosevelt to allow aid to be sent to victims in the Ukraine. Kelley's standard responses expressed 'sympathy for the sufferings of the persons referred to', yet regretted that 'there does not appear to be any measure which this Government can appropriately take at the present time to alleviate their suffering . . .'.⁴³

Since relations with the Soviet Union was a lively issue in the Roosevelt Administration in 1933, leading to formal recognition of the Soviet Government on 16 November, it is difficult to believe that the President was not briefed at least orally on the famine and the Soviet Government's role in it.

The Soviets did everything in their power to deny the existence of the famine. When the London *Daily Express* reported that the Soviets had purchased even a modest 15,000 tons of wheat abroad in order to alleviate the shortage of bread at home, *Pravda*, on 27 May 1933, published an indignant denial.⁴⁴ Had the Kremlin acknowledged the famine, it would have been expected not to sell grain, for want of which its own people were dying. Stalin denied the existence of famine and continued to export grain, albeit at a lower rate. In 1931, the U.S.S.R. exported 5.06 million metric tons of grain. In 1932 this fell to 1.73 million and in 1933 to 1.68 million.⁴⁵

The famine, however, could not be completely concealed. Early in 1933, Gareth Jones, a reporter and former aide to Lloyd George, travelled to the Ukraine, and in March talked about what he saw there: 'I walked alone through villages and twelve collective farms. Everywhere was the cry, "There is no bread; we are dying."' He also estimated that a million people had perished in Kazakhstan since 1930 and now in the Ukraine millions more were threatened.⁴⁶ Eugene Lyons, at the time the United Press Moscow correspondent, called this the first reliable press report in the English-speaking world. Moscow responded by forbidding journalists to travel there.⁴⁷

Jones had actually based his account primarily on what he had been told by Western correspondents and diplomats in Moscow.⁴⁸ Diplomats were forbidden to publish their observations in the press and the journalists were far more circumspect. For example, in January 1933, Ralph Barnes reported to the *New York Herald Tribune* from the then Ukrainian S.S.R. capital of Kharkov, under the watchful eye of the Soviet censor, about the officially acknowledged 'abuses' of the previous year:

Grain needed by the Ukrainian peasants as provisions was stripped from the land a year ago by grain collectors desirous of making a good showing. The temporary or permanent migration of great masses which followed, alone prevented real famine conditions. All those persons with whom I have talked, in both town and village, agree that the food situation in this vast area is worse than it was last year. It is inconceivable, though, that the authorities will let the bread shortage on the collective farms reach a stage comparable to that of the late winter and spring of last year.⁴⁹

Malcolm Muggeridge, Moscow correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian*, also observed and wrote about the Ukraine famine. Years later he recalled:

It was the big story in all our talks in Moscow. Everybody knew about it. There was no question about that. Anyone you were talking to knew that there was a terrible famine going on. Even in the Soviets' own pieces there were somewhat disguised acknowledgements of great difficulties there: the attacks on the kulaks, the admission that people were eating the seed grain and cattle . . . I realized that that was the big story. I could see that all the correspondents in Moscow were distorting it.

Without making any kind of plans or asking for permission, I just went and got a ticket for Kiev

and then went on to Rostov . . . Ukraine was starving, and you only had to venture out to smaller places to see derelict fields and abandoned villages.⁵⁰

Muggeridge's account appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* at the end of March. He reported on the famine in both the Ukraine and the North Caucasus. In both,

it was the same story — cattle and horses dead; fields neglected; meagre harvest despite moderately good climatic conditions; all the grain that was produced taken by the Government; now no bread at all, no bread anywhere, nothing much else either: despair and bewilderment.⁵¹

In May Muggeridge described what he saw in the Ukraine and North Caucasus as a

battle that is going on between the Government and their peasants. The battlefield was as desolate as in any war, and stretched wider. . . . On one side, millions of peasants, starving, often their bodies swollen with lack of food; on the other, soldiers, members of the GPU, carrying out the instruction of the dictatorship of the proletariat. They had gone over the country like a swarm of locusts and taken away everything edible; they had shot and exiled thousands of peasants, sometimes whole villages; they had reduced some of the most fertile land in the world to a melancholy desert.⁵²

Despite mounting and increasingly irrefutable evidence that famine was raging in the Ukraine, two American correspondents in Moscow, Pulitzer Prize winner Walter Duranty of *The New York Times* and Louis Fischer of *The Nation* took the lead in publicly denying its existence.

Duranty's attitude vacillated as the famine developed. He initially viewed the developing crisis in foodstuffs with considerable alarm, and by the end of the summer of 1932 seemed to have hoped that Stalin would offer further concessions, perhaps even a return to something like the New Economic Policy of the preceding decade. In late fall, however, it became clear that there would be no new concessions, and Duranty began to minimize and explain away difficulties as 'growing pains' and the results of peasant lethargy in some districts and the 'marked fall in the living standards of a large number of peasants'. By mid-November he stressed that there was 'neither famine nor hunger'. While there were 'embarrassing' problems, they were not 'disastrous'. Two days later he wrote that there may be 'an element of truth' to reports of a food shortage, but the problem was 'not alarming much less desperate'. He suggested that Soviets might not eat as well as in the past, but 'there is no famine or actual starvation, nor is there likely to be'. 'The food shortage', Duranty took pains to explain on 26 November, 'must be regarded as a result of peasant resistance to rural socialization.' The situation would not have been serious if world food prices had not fallen, 'which forced the Soviet Union to increase the expropriation of foodstuffs at a time when the shoe was beginning to pinch and the distribution of the food at home would have corrected many difficulties'. Still, Duranty concluded, 'It is a mistake to exaggerate the gravity of the situation. The Russians have tightened their belts before to a far greater extent than it is likely to be needed this winter.' Duranty's own paper, *The New York Times*, editorialized on 30 November that collectivization was nothing but 'a ghastly failure'. As if in reply, Duranty reported that the Soviets could always release stockpiled grain if the problem became more acute.⁵³

Next to Duranty, the American reporter most consistently willing to gloss Soviet reality was Louis Fischer, who had a deep ideological commitment to Soviet communism dating back to 1920.⁵⁴ But when he travelled to the Ukraine in October and November of 1932, he

was alarmed at what he saw. 'In the Poltava, Vinnitsa, Podolsk, and Kiev regions, conditions will be hard', he wrote, 'I think there is no starvation anywhere in Ukraine now — after all, they have just gathered in the harvest — but it was a bad harvest.'⁵⁵ Initially critical of the Soviet grain procurement programme because it created the food problem, Fischer had by February adopted the official Stalinist view which blamed the problem on Ukrainian counter-revolutionary nationalist 'wreckers'. It seemed 'whole villages' had been contaminated by such men, who had to be deported to 'lumbering camps and mining areas in distant agricultural areas which are now just entering upon their pioneering stage'. These steps were forced upon the Kremlin, Fischer wrote, but the Soviets were, nevertheless, learning how to rule wisely.⁵⁶

Fischer was on a lecture tour in the United States when Gareth Jones's famine story broke. Asked about the million who had died since 1930 in Kazakhstan, he scoffed:

Who counted them? How could anyone march through a country and count a million people? Of course people are hungry there — desperately hungry. Russia is turning over from agriculture to industrialism. It's like a man going into business on small capital.⁵⁷

Speaking to a college audience in Oakland, California, a week later, Fischer stated emphatically: 'There is no starvation in Russia.'⁵⁸

The Jones story also caught Duranty by surprise, but he continued his public denial of the famine. Duranty claimed that Jones had concocted a 'big scare story' based on the 'hasty' and 'inadequate' glimpse of the countryside consisting of a 40 mile walk through villages around Kharkov. He then went on to write that he himself had made a thorough investigation and discovered no famine, although he did admit that the food shortage had become acute in the Ukraine, the North Caucasus, and the Lower Volga Basin. This he attributed to mismanagement and the recently executed 'conspirators' in the Commissariat of Agriculture. Still, he wrote, 'There is no actual starvation, but there is widespread mortality from diseases due to malnutrition.' And it was worth it: 'To put it brutally, you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs.'⁵⁹ Jones replied that he stood by his story and took to task the journalists whom 'the censorship has turned . . . into masters of euphemism and understatement', giving 'famine the polite name of "food shortage" and "starving to death" is softened down to read as "widespread mortality from diseases due to malnutrition"'.⁶⁰

The 'containment' of the Jones story is perhaps the most telling event in what Eugene Lyons called 'the whole shabby episode of our failure to report honestly the 'gruesome Russian famine of 1932-33'.⁶¹ The Soviets were able to gain tacit collaboration from the American press because of an upcoming show trial of British engineers employed by the Metropolitan Vickers corporation. When Jones broke the story of the famine, Lyons recalled how the matter was settled in cooperation with Konstantin Umansky, the Soviet censor. When the Jones story broke, American journalists faced a conflict between 'urgent queries from our home offices' and the upcoming trial of the British engineers. 'The need to remain on friendly terms with the censors at least for the duration of the trial was for all of us a compelling professional necessity.' The American press corps 'combined to repudiate Jones' at a meeting with Umansky, in the hotel room of a correspondent.

He knew he had a strategic advantage over us because of the Metro-Vickers story. He could afford to be gracious. Forced by competitive journalism to jockey for the inside track with officials, it would have been professional suicide to make an issue of the famine at this particular time. There was much bargaining in a spirit of gentlemanly give-and-take, under the effulgence of Umansky's gilded smile, before a formula of denial was worked out.

We admitted enough to soothe our consciences, but in round-about phrases that damned Jones as a liar.⁶²

Only in August 1933, in the course of a story denouncing 'exaggerated' *émigré* claims, did Duranty admit, 'In some districts and among the large floating population of unskilled labor' were there 'deaths and actual starvation'.⁶³ Later that month, he reported that while the 'excellent harvest' of 1933 had made any report of famine 'an exaggeration or malignant propaganda', there had been a 'food shortage' which had caused 'heavy loss of life' in the Ukraine, the North Caucasus, and Lower Volga Basin.⁶⁴ In September, Duranty was the first Western reporter allowed to go to the Ukraine and the North Caucasus after the imposition of the ban on travel there by journalists. William Stoneman of the *Chicago Daily News* had managed to find a way to get to the Ukraine without permission and had sent out an accurate account, leading the Soviets to send their most favored journalist to sweeten the pill.⁶⁵ Now able to report truthfully a good harvest, he also belatedly reported what he had known all along:

hard conditions had decimated the peasantry. Some had fled. There were Ukrainian peasants begging in the streets of Moscow last winter, and other Ukrainians were seeking work or food, but principally food, from Rostov on the Don to White Russia and from the Lower Volga to Samara.⁶⁶

Duranty, in short, admitted the truth only after others had done so more explicitly and always in a context designed to show his readers that things were not nearly so bad as other sources might indicate.

He was more explicit in private. As early as December 1932, he told an American diplomat in Paris he was deeply pessimistic because of 'the growing seriousness of the food shortages'.⁶⁷ In September 1933, following Duranty's visit to the Ukraine and the North Caucasus, a British diplomat reported to London that 'Mr. Duranty thinks it quite possible that as many as 10 million people may have died directly or indirectly from lack of food in the Soviet Union during the past year.'⁶⁸

Eugene Lyons, recalled that at dinner with Duranty,

He gave us his fresh impressions in brutally frank terms and they added up to a picture of ghastly horror. His estimate of the dead from famine was the most startling I had as yet heard from anyone When the issues of the *Times* carrying Duranty's own articles reached me I found that they failed to mention the large figures he had given freely and repeatedly to all of us.⁶⁹

Duranty also admitted then denied the famine to John Chamberlain, book critic for *The New York Times*, then a Communist fellow traveller.

What struck me at the time was the double iniquity of Duranty's performance. He was not only heartless about the famine, he had betrayed his calling as a journalist by failing to report it.⁷⁰

The issue of Duranty's career raises extremely important issues of journalistic ethics. In 1932, when Duranty was awarded the Pulitzer Prize, the Committee said that 'Mr. Duranty's dispatches . . . are marked by scholarship, profundity, impartiality, sound judgment and exceptional clarity and are excellent examples of the best type of foreign correspondence.'⁷¹ James Crowl, who wrote the standard work on Duranty, found the Pulitzer Prize award remarkable because

for a decade, his reports had been slanted and distorted in a way that made a mockery of the award citation. Probably without parallel in the history of the prestigious prizes, the 1932 award went to a man whose reports concealed or disguised the conditions they claimed to reveal, and who may even have been paid by the Soviets for his deceptions.⁷²

Careful reading of Duranty's dispatches from Moscow shows that he attempted to represent the official point of view as he understood it, while at the same time trying to write in such a way as to cover himself. Muggeridge provided a telling vignette of Duranty in 1933:

He'd been asked to write something about the food shortage, and was trying to put together a thousand words which, if the famine got worse and known outside Russia, would suggest that he'd foreseen and foretold it, but which, if it got better and wasn't known outside Russia, would suggest that he'd pooh-poohed the possibility of there being a famine. He was a little gymnast . . . He trod his tightrope daintily and charmingly.⁷³

Half a century later Muggeridge put it less elegantly:

Duranty was the villain of the whole thing . . . It is difficult for me to see how it could have been otherwise that in some sense he was not in the regime's power. He wrote things about the famine and the situation in Ukraine which were laughably wrong. There is no doubt whatever that the authorities could manipulate him . . .⁷⁴

Why did Duranty engage in such gymnastics? Why did he adjust his reporting to each shift in Soviet policy? Duranty's own words make it clear that he was in fact a virtual public relations man for the Soviets, whether or not one credits his stated reason for it. In 1931, on one of his trips outside the Soviet Union, Duranty informed A. W. Kliefoth of the American Embassy in Berlin that "in agreement with *The New York Times* and the Soviet authorities", his official dispatches always reflect the official opinion of the Soviet regime and not his own.⁷⁵ No such disclaimer ever appeared in *The Times*.

Rumours of food shortages persisted, however. Writing in the *New Republic*, Joshua Kunitz, quoting Stalin almost verbatim, put the blame not on collectivization but on 'the lack of revolutionary vigilance' and the 'selfishness, dishonesty, laziness, and irresponsibility' of the peasants.⁷⁶

There was an additional flurry of publicity about the famine following the 19 August plea by Cardinal Innitzer of Vienna to the International Red Cross for international aid to the starving, announcing his intention of creating an interfaith relief committee, and urging all those currently negotiating for expanded ties with the Soviet government to make those negotiations dependent upon recognition of the necessity to help the famine stricken areas of the Soviet Union.⁷⁷

William Henry Chamberlin, the initially pro-Soviet Moscow correspondent of the *Christian Science Monitor*, had as early as July 1933 reported that while there was no actual starvation in Moscow, 'Grim stories of out-and-out hunger come from southern and southeastern Russia, from the Ukraine, the North Caucasus and from Kazakhstan, where the nomadic natives seem to have suffered very much as a result of the wholesale perishing of their livestock.'⁷⁸ Initially refused permission to visit the Ukraine and the North Caucasus until the famine ended, he was allowed to go a few weeks after Duranty. In April 1934, after leaving the Soviet Union, he published an article in *Foreign Affairs*, confirming yet again that the famine had taken place and giving ample 'refutation of the idea that as a result of collectivization, Russian agriculture will leap forward . . .'.⁷⁹ In May Chamberlin re-

ported that during the preceding year 'more than 4 million peasants are found to have perished . . .'.⁸⁰ In his book *Russia's Iron Age*, published in October, he estimated the death toll as a direct result of the famine of 1932–1933 to be not less than 10% of the population of the areas affected, according to the local officials with whom he had spoken.⁸¹

The State Department continued its silence. When Frank Roberts, Managing Editor of the Fort Wayne (Indiana) *Journal-Gazette* asked State about claims from responsible authors that 10 million Russians starved to death during one recent winter because the Stalin Government had withdrawn from them all opportunity to earn a livelihood, Hull's assistant responded simply that 'it is the practice of the Department to refrain from commenting on the accuracy of statements of this character'.⁸²

Meanwhile, Louis Fischer continued to deny the famine's existence and extol the virtues of Soviet life. 'The first half of 1933 was very difficult indeed', he admitted in August of 1933. 'Many people simply did not have sufficient nourishment. The 1932 harvest was bad, and to make matters worse, thousands of tons of grain rotted in the fields because the peasants refused to reap what they knew the Government would confiscate under the guise of "collection"'.⁸³ But Fischer, straining to justify the Soviet Government, wrote in January 1934, that 'during all those hard years . . . the state endeavored to beautify life . . .' with a wide range of cultural activities. He also adopted a line often used to justify evil:

All governments are based on force. The question is only of the degree of force, who administers it, and for what purpose . . . Force which eliminates oppressors and exploiters, creates work and prosperity, and guarantees progress and economic security will not be resented by the great masses of people.⁸⁴

In November and December 1933 the Ukrainian–American community initiated marches in a number of cities to protest against American recognition of a government which was starving millions of Ukrainians. American Communists sometimes resorted to violence in an attempt to silence the Ukrainians. On 18 November 1933, in New York, 8000 Ukrainians marched from Washington Square to Sixty-Seventh Street, while 500 Communists ran beside the parade and snatched the Ukrainians' handbills, spat on the marchers and tried to hit them. Five persons were injured. Only the presence of a police escort of over 300, a score on horseback, prevented serious trouble.⁸⁵

In Chicago, on 17 December, several hundred Communists mounted a massed attack on the vanguard of 5000 Ukrainian–American marchers, leaving over 100 injured in what *The New York Times* called 'the worst riot in years'.⁸⁶

The Ukrainian National Women's League (UNWLA), one of the most active Ukrainian–American organizations, unanimously adopted a memorandum to the Red Cross at its 12 November 1933 national congress.⁸⁷ An emergency relief committee was created, chaired by Nellie Pelecovich. She immediately began a letter-writing campaign to leading government officials, public figures and newspapers, as well as a fund-raising drive to send food to the Ukraine.⁸⁸ In response to a pamphlet the UNWLA sent to the Soviet embassy on 3 January 1934, Boris Svirsky, Embassy Counsellor, called the accusation that the Soviet Government was deliberately killing Ukrainians 'wholly grotesque'. He claimed that the Ukraine was experiencing the lowest death rate of all the constituent republics of the Soviet Union.⁸⁹ Attempts to gain congressional action also failed.⁹⁰

Meanwhile, the flow of information on the famine continued to reach the State Department unabated. One important source was the 30 November 1933 issue of *Rosja Sowiecka*, much of which was devoted to information and analysis of events in the Soviet

Ukraine. The U.S. Embassy in Warsaw sent a translation of the journal to the State Department in January 1934. The 24 January 1933 decree was interpreted as 'the beginning of the destruction of the independence of the Ukraine . . .', and Postyshev was called 'an autocratic ruler' imposed by Stalin.⁹¹ Mykola Skrypnyk's July 1933 suicide was seen as an outcome of a witch-hunt for 'counter-revolution wherever there are Ukrainian influences'.⁹² Postyshev's work in the Ukraine had led to the decimation of the local communist functionaries: three-fifths of the district functionaries had been purged, as had one-quarter of the party members and nearly all the personnel of the central offices of the Ukrainian commissariats.⁹³ In short, Moscow had imposed its own functionaries on the Ukraine, replacing local influence.⁹⁴ The 'systematic Russification of the communist parties of the various nationalities' of the U.S.S.R. involved not only agricultural conflict, but also the hierarchical reorganization of the party. The party organizers sent from Moscow bypassed the territorial bodies, reducing the national parties to organizations.⁹⁵ This 'denationalization' was especially pronounced in the Ukraine and Northern Caucasus, undermining the foundation of the official Ukrainization policy.⁹⁶

The U.S. Embassy in Riga also continued to be an important source of information for the State Department in 1934. In June, it sent a detailed 105-page report entitled, 'The Russian Peasant Policy, 1932 to 1934'. It, too, related famine conditions in the Ukraine and Northern Caucasus in the spring of 1933.⁹⁷

William Randolph Hearst attempted to use the famine to attack President Roosevelt by running a series of articles on the famine in his newspapers in 1935, in the style for which the term 'yellow journalism' was coined. Written by Thomas Walker, the articles may have been a 'reworking' of authentic material from 1933, which Hearst either bought or borrowed. Undoubtedly at Hearst's behest, Walker 'updated' the story by placing the famine in 1934 rather than 1932–1933.⁹⁸ Knowing an easy target, Fischer accused Walker of 'inventing' a famine. Fischer had been to the Ukraine in 1934 and, of course, saw no famine. He interpreted the whole affair as merely an attempt by Hearst to 'spoil Soviet-American relations' as part of 'an anti-red campaign'.⁹⁹

Fischer was challenged by John Chamberlin, who wrote from Tokyo, chiding Fischer for his failure to mention that 1932–1933 had seen 'one of the worst famines in history'. Fischer responded that he had not been in the U.S.S.R. during the famine, that he had mentioned it in his book, *Soviet Journey*, but that he, unlike Chamberlin, did not put all of the blame on the Soviet Government.¹⁰⁰ 'History can be cruel', he said. 'The peasants wanted to destroy collectivization. The peasants used the best means at their disposal. The government used the best means at their (*sic*) disposal. The government won.'¹⁰¹

Hearst then fell back upon more reliable accounts which had been available for some time. Harry Lang, who had earlier published an account of his 1933 journey to the Ukraine in the Yiddish-language *Jewish Daily Forward*, was serialized in April. Most interesting about Lang's account was that he reported being told by a Soviet official that six million had perished.¹⁰² Richard Sanger, later a distinguished career diplomat but a Communist in his youth, went with his wife to the Soviet Union in 1933 and gave the figure of four-and-a-half million. Hearst serialized his story after Lang's.¹⁰³

Perhaps the most interesting of these accounts, however, was that of Adam Tawdul, a Ukrainian-American whose family had known Skrypnyk in the Bolshevik underground before coming to the U.S. in 1913. Tawdul returned to the Ukraine in 1931 and, thanks to this acquaintance, was able to move in high circles. Tawdul claimed that before Skrypnyk committed suicide the latter had told him that eight to nine million had perished from starvation in the Ukraine and the Caucasus, and that another official had told him another million

or two had died in the Ural Region, the Volga Basin, and western Siberia.¹⁰⁴

All this led people to make inquiries to the State Department, which was of little help. An economics professor, R. W. France, wrote to the State Department regarding a statement by a popular lecturer that

due to the exactions of the Russian government more than 4,000,000 persons starved to death in the Russian areas affected by the drought in 1932. This seems to be a rather incredible statement since no such condition was reported in the papers at the time . . .¹⁰⁵

In spite of all the information which, as we have seen, was in State's possession, Kelley responded that 'insofar as the Department is aware, the Soviet Government has made no official announcement pertaining to the question of deaths resulting from starvation in connection with a drought in 1932', and enclosed a list of relevant English-language references.¹⁰⁶

Ignored, at the time it took place, the famine in the Ukraine was so quickly forgotten that it presents one of history's most successful cases of the denial of mass death by the perpetrators. 'Years after the event', Lyons wrote in 1937, 'when no Russian Communist in his senses any longer concealed the magnitude of the famine, the question whether there had been a famine at all was still being disputed in the outside world.'¹⁰⁷

As for those who denied the existence of the famine most strenuously: Fischer, who broke with the Soviets following the Spanish Civil War, later admitted that the Ukrainian famine had cost the lives of millions.¹⁰⁸ Looking back, he recalled that even at the time,

My own attitude began to bother me. Was I not glorifying steel and kilowatts and forgetting the human being? All the shoes, schools, books, tractors, electric lights, and subways in the world would not add up to the world of my dreams if the system that produced them was immoral and inhuman.¹⁰⁹

Duranty, never an idealist like Fischer, could not be disillusioned because he had no illusions in the first place. In later years, when Sovietophilism had gone out of fashion, Duranty lied about ever having lied in the first place. In his last book, published in 1949, he wrote 'Whatever Stalin's apologists might say, 1932 was a year of famine', and he claimed that he said so at the time.¹¹⁰ And, as we have seen, he had, but not in his dispatches to *The New York Times*.

The evidence indicates that both the State Department and the White House had access to plentiful and timely intelligence concerning the famine of 1932–1933 in the Ukraine and made a conscious political decision not only to do nothing about it, but never to acknowledge it publicly. For political reasons largely related to FDR's determination to establish and maintain good relations with the U.S.S.R., the U.S. Government participated, albeit indirectly, in the denial of one of the greatest government-induced mass deaths of modern times. And in this the United States was hardly alone. The British record, for example, has also been partially told and was, if anything, worse.¹¹¹

The U.S. Government was made aware of conditions in the U.S.S.R. by its embassies and legations throughout Europe, which sent extensive reports based on interviews with American workers and visitors to the U.S.S.R., Soviet officials, the foreign press, Soviet citizens, and foreign nationals, all of whom underscored the gross inefficiency of the Soviet system, the mediocrity of local Soviet management, and increasing hostility of the peasants. Long before diplomatic relations were established with the U.S.S.R., State Department officials were aware of thousands of Soviet citizens fleeing to Poland and

Rumania and of soldiers and civilian brigades being sent into the Ukraine to assist with the harvest. Washington even received letters from hungry Ukrainian peasants, asking for assistance. The official response to all queries regarding the horrors of life in the Soviet Union was to refer to them as 'alleged conditions'.

The term 'famine' was used in diplomatic dispatches as early as November 1932. Inundated by queries and information regarding the famine, the State Department sought and received confirmation from Athens and from Riga, the premier U.S. listening post for Soviet affairs, a month before FDR recognized the Soviet Government.

There can be little doubt that American journalists collaborated with the Soviets in covering up the famine. Duranty, who privately admitted his role as a semi-official Soviet spokesman as early as 1931, and who after the famine told British diplomats that as many as 10 million might have perished, seems to have played an especially crucial role. When he was still a Presidential candidate, FDR first publicly broached the issue of recognition with Duranty.¹¹² Duranty seems to have been determined that American public opinion not be negatively influenced on the eve of the Roosevelt-Litvinov negotiations. He thought it imperative that the United States and the U.S.S.R. establish diplomatic relations and the famine, especially if it was the result of Stalin's malevolence, was a stumbling block that had to be removed. His influence on Roosevelt's perception of the Soviet Union was profound. As Joseph Alsop wrote:

The authority on Soviet affairs was universally held to be the New York Times correspondent in Moscow, Walter Duranty . . . The nature of his reporting can be gauged by what happened in the case of the dire Stalin-induced famine in the Ukraine in the early 1930s . . . The Duranty cover-up, for that was what it was, also continued thereafter; and no one of consequence told the terrible truth.

This being the climate in the United States, Roosevelt and Hopkins would have had to be very different men to make boldly informed judgements of the Soviet system and Stalin's doings and purposes in defiance of almost everyone else who was then thought to be enlightened.¹¹³

Poignant, often agonizing pleas for some type of intervention or assistance for famine victims from the Mennonite, Russian, Jewish and Ukrainian communities in America were treated with courteous indifference. Reflecting the portion of the recognition agreement regarding mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, the State Department responded that since neither American citizens nor interests were involved, no action was possible and there was 'considerable doubt whether there is any measure which this Government could take at the present time which would be helpful'.

From an American public policy point of view, however, a disturbing aftermath to the Roosevelt Administration's failure to come to terms with 'unenlightened' but accurate intelligence about the famine was a purge of the State Department's 'Russian hands' almost identical to the purge of its 'China hands' in the early 1950s. Disappointed with U.S.-Soviet relations, FDR came to dislike certain career diplomats, especially those who didn't share his views on the Soviet Union.¹¹⁴ First among them was Robert Kelley. Following Department policy to make no public acknowledgement of the famine, Kelley remained sharply critical of Soviet policies and methods and was never convinced that the U.S.S.R. was willing to abandon its revolutionary aims. William Bullitt, America's first ambassador to the U.S.S.R., went with high expectations of friendly relations but was quickly disillusioned. By 1935, he was describing it as 'a nation ruled by fanatics who are ready to sacrifice themselves and everyone else for their religion of Communism'. He reported to State that 'neither Stalin nor any other leader of the Communist Party has deviated in the

slightest from the determination to spread communism to the ends of the earth.' Bullitt was ostracized by both the Soviets and the State Department.¹¹⁵

Roosevelt attempted to improve sagging relations with the Soviets by replacing Bullitt with Joseph Davies in 1936 and, the following year, at Davies's insistence, eliminating the Division of Eastern European Affairs and sending Kelley into diplomatic exile in Istanbul. The Riga Legation's Russian affairs section was also downgraded. Even this failed to satisfy Soviet Ambassador Alexander Troyanovsky, who continued his complaints that all American service officers who dealt with the U.S.S.R. were 'reactionaries'.¹¹⁶

The big exception, of course, was Ambassador Davies who described Stalin as 'clean-living, modest, retiring' and a 'stubborn democrat' who insisted on rights for his people 'even though it hazarded his power and party control'.¹¹⁷ Davies never even believed Stalin's show trials of the late 1930s were staged.¹¹⁸ His last dispatch from Moscow went so far as to state: 'There is no danger from Communism here, so far as the United States is concerned'.¹¹⁹

The man-made famine, given the absence of internationally recognized human rights norms and an Administration committed to closer ties with the Soviets, was seen as an internal Soviet affair, viewed with skepticism, or simply not mentioned. The tragedy is that the reality of mass starvation and collective victimization became a political football. Politicians and opinion makers either turned a blind eye toward Stalin's famine out of expediency or saw sympathy for the Soviet Union as a litmus test of one's commitment to a more just society.

NOTES

1. R. Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 3. The problem posed by the story of the Ukraine famine and the attendant denationalization of the Ukrainians is whether this is to be considered genocide. A detailed discussion of this question is beyond the scope of this article. However, the author has addressed this issue in his article, 'The Man-Made Famine of 1933 in the Soviet Ukraine', in *Toward the Understanding and Prevention of Genocide*, ed. Israel Charny (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1984), pp. 67–83.

2. 'The national problem is, *by the essence of the matter*, a problem of the peasantry.' I. V. Stalin, *Sochineniia* (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1946–1952), VII, p. 72. While this is hardly a trans-historical truth, it was true of the early Soviet Union, where cities in the non-Russian periphery were still largely Russian and non-Russians were even more overwhelmingly rural than Russians.

3. The sources of the period are full of terms for such individuals: *podkulachnik* or *pidkurkul'nyk* (subkulak) or *pobichnyk hlytaia* (kulak sidekick); they too were subject to the official policy of 'the liquidation of the kulaks as a class' and their fates were identical to those of individuals classified as kulaks.

4. NEP was never officially abolished but rather faded away. Its end has been variously identified with the official adoption of the First Five Year Plan in 1927, the initiation in the spring of 1928 of an orchestrated witch hunt for class enemies surrounding the Shakhty Trial, and the beginning of the 'crash collectivization of agriculture on the basis of the liquidation of the kulaks as a class' in December 1929.

5. See James E. Mace, *Communism and the Dilemmas of National Liberation: National Communism in Soviet Ukraine, 1918–1933* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1983).

6. Most outspoken in his criticism was Ukrainian Education Commissar Mykola Skrypnyk, who bluntly described the effects of collectivization: 'The communists took the bread, and that's why

there is a difficult food supply situation, that's why there is famine in some localities.' 'III Vseukrains'ka partiina konferentsiia', *Visti VUTsVK*, 11 July 1933, p. 5. While rather less outspoken in their expression, virtually all Skrypnyk's colleagues in the Soviet Ukrainian government and party leadership mentioned the food supply difficulties for the benefit of Molotov and Kaganovich, Stalin's representatives, who were in attendance to enforce acceptance of the new grain quotas imposed by Moscow.

7. *Istoriia Ukrains'koi RSR* (Kiev: Vydavnytstvo Akademii nauk URSR, 1958), II, p. 371.

8. M. Khataievych, 'Zavdannia bil'shovykiv Ukrainy v borot'bi za khlib, za orhanizatsiino-hospodars'ke zmitsnennia kolhospiv i za pidnesennia sil's'koho hospodarstva', *Bil'shovyk Ukrainy*, 21–22 (1932), 1.

9. The best-known incident, in 1932, was disclosed in 1964 by Roman Terekhov, who had been Kharkov *oblast* party secretary. In response to Terekhov's request for bread for the stricken districts, Stalin accused him of being 'a fine storyteller' who had 'made up this story about famine' in order to frighten the leadership. K. Kuznetsov and R. Terekhov, 'Vazhnaia veka v zhizni leninskoi partii: K 40-letiu XIII s'ezda RKP (b)', *Pravda*, 26 May 1964, p. 3.

10. 'Plenum TsK KP(b)U', *Visti VUTsVK*, 15 October 1932, p. 1.

11. 'Pro perebih khlibozahotivel': Postanova Vseukrains'koho tsentral'noho vykonavchoho komitetu', *Visti VUTsVK*, 11 December 1932, p. 2.

12. I. I. Slyn'ko, *Sotsialistychna perebudova i tekhnichna rekonstruktsiia sil's'koho hospodarstva Ukrainy (1927–1932 rr.)* (Kiev: Vyd. Akademii Nauk URSR, 1961), p. 298.

13. 'Do suvoroi vidpovidal'nosti (Z postanovy Narodnoho Komisara iustytisii ta heneral'noho prokuratora respubliky)', *Visti VUTsVK*, 14 December 1932, p. 2; 'Postanova RNK USRR i TsK KP(b)U vid 21 hrudnia 1932 roku', *Visti VUTsVK*, 23 December 1932, p. 1; M. Ohurtsov, 'Neshchadnoi kary voroham z partkvytkamy v kysheni: Prysud u spravi kolyshn'oho kerivnytstva Kobeliats'koho raionu', *Visti VUTsVK*, 29 December 1932, p. 4.

14. The British Embassy in Moscow heard of this policy, which is confirmed by a number of eyewitness accounts. See, for example, Marco Carynnyk, 'The Dogs that Did Not Bark', *The Idler*, January 1985, p. 15; Leonid Plyushch, *History's Carnival: A Dissident's Autobiography* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1977), p. 41; I. M(ajstren)ko, 'Do 25-richchia holodu 1933 r.', *Vpered: Ukrains'kyi robotnychyi chasopys*, 7 (1958), 1–2 (the author was a high Soviet Ukrainian functionary during the famine); M. Verbyts'kyi (pseudonym), ed., *Naibil'shyi zlochyn Kremlia: Svidchennia pro vynyshvannia soviets'koiu Moskvou shtuchnyi holod v Ukraini 1932–33 r.* (London: Dobprus, 1951), pp. 89–90.

15. The unpublished decree was disclosed to the November 1933 plenum of the Ukrainian Central Committee by Pavel Postyshev, who referred to it as a 'historic decision', 'Sovetskaia Ukraina — nesokrushymyi forpost velikogo SSSR (Iz rechi P. P. Postysheva na plenum TsK KP(b)U)', *Pravda*, 6 December 1933, p. 3.

16. 'Postanova TsK VKP(b) z 24 sichnia 1933 r. ta zavdannia bil'shovykiv Ukrainy', *Bil'shovyk Ukrainy*, 3 (1933), 3.

17. At the November 1933 plenum, Postyshev related the replacement of nearly half the Ukraine's district Party secretaries, more than half its district government heads and a third of the district control commission heads. In addition, '*A great detachment of tenacious, experienced Bolsheviks were sent to the village as organizers of collective farm construction.*' See *Pravda*, 24 November 1933, p. 3 [emphasis in original].

Hryhory Kostiuk described this as 'a wholesale occupation of key posts in the country by the staff of Stalin's satrap'. See Hryhory Kostiuk, *Stalinist Rule in the Ukraine: A Study in the Decade of Mass Terror (1929–1939)* (London: Atlantic, 1960), p. 28.

18. Postyshev attributed the difficulties not to a grain shortage, but to the presence of anti-Soviet elements in the Party who had 'sabotaged' grain procurements. P. P. Postyshev, 'Pro zavdannia sivby ta postanova TsK VKP(b) vid 24 sichnia 1933, r.', *Bil'shovyk Ukrainy* 3 (1933), 75, 82.

First Secretary Stanislav Kossior charged that lack of Party vigilance had allowed the peasants to steal and sell the grain. Figures on lower harvests were fabricated, and the Party had to expose the

kulak arithmetic, said Kossior. In other words, the sin had been to leave the peasants something to eat or plant. See S. Kosior, 'Pidsumky khlibozahotivel' i zavdannia KP (b)U v borot'bi za pidnesennia sil's'koho hospodarstva Ukrainy', *Bil'shovyk Ukrainy* 3 (1933), 23–50.

19. V. I. Kozlov, *Natsional'nosti SSSR: Etnodemograficheskii obzor* (Moscow: Statistika, 1983), p. 276.

20. See James E. Mace, 'Famine and Nationalism in Soviet Ukraine', *Problems of Communism* XXXIII: 3, May–June 1984, pp. 38–40; and the related discussion with S. G. Wheatcroft, *Problems of Communism* XXXIV: 2, March–April 1985, pp. 132–138.

21. Thomas Maddux, *Years of Estrangement: American Relations with the Soviet Union, 1933–1941* (Tallahassee, FL: University Presses of Florida, 1980), pp. 17–18.

22. On the refugees in Poland, see John C. Wiley, Chargé d'Affaires *ad interim*, U.S. Embassy, Warsaw, Poland, to Secretary of State, 13 April 1931, pp. 1–2; 861.48-Refugees-60C/4,T1249, Records of the Department of State, National Archives, Washington, DC (NA documents hereafter cited by file numbers).

On the refugees in Romania, see C. S. Wilson, U.S. Legation, Bucharest, to Secretary of State, 12 March, 1932; pp. 2–3; 861. 48-Refugees 71/2; T1249.

23. The first was written in semi-literate Ukrainian and was dated 24 June 1931. Enclosure to: Daniel E. Garges, Secretary, Board of Commissioners, District of Columbia, to Secretary of State, 13 July 1931; 861.4016/345;T1249.

A similar letter, dated 2 July and this time in semi-literate Russian, was sent to the State Department from the DC Commissioners a week later. Enclosure to: Daniel E. Garges to Secretary of State, 20 July 1931; 861.4016/346.

24. Robert F. Kelley, Chief, Division of Eastern European Affairs, to Daniel E. Garges, Secretary, DC Board of Commissioners, 20 July 1931; 861.4016/345.

25. Kelley to Daniel E. Garges, 24 July 1931; 861.4016/346.

26. Two such travellers, who had spent six weeks there, were cartoonist Jay Darling and Ivy Culbertson, who was fluent in Russian. U.S. Embassy, Berlin, 'Memorandum', 31 August 1931, pp. 1–2; 861.5017-Living conditions/319.

The impoverishment of the Ukrainian population was also confirmed in late October by Dr. Morris Ingall, who visited his sister in Vinnytsia (Vinnitza), Ukraine. Ernest L. Harris, American Consul General, Vienna, 'Stenographic Notes of Statements Made by Dr. Morns Ingall, M.D., of Russian Origin, of the Boston City Hospital, 29 October 1931'; 861.5017-Living Conditions/363.

There were, of course, occasional exceptions to this kind of report. Some Americans who travelled to the USSR returned singing its praises. See, e.g. 'Interview with Spencer Williams, 17 December 1931'; 861.5017-Living Conditions/401.

27. 'Notes on a Conversation with Professor Samuel N. Harper', p. 2; 27 October 1932; 861.5017-Living Conditions/550.

28. 'Grain Crops in the Ukraine and the Prospects for the Grain Reserves', 14 November 1932, p. 7; 861.6131/263.

29. Robert P. Skinner to Secretary of State, 15 November 1932, pp. 4–5; 861.6131/261. Skinner cited an August article by a German expert on Russian agriculture, Otto Auhagen, 'Wirtschaftslage der Sowjetunion im Sommer 1932', *Osteuropa* VII (1932), 645.

30. Raymond Geist, American Consul, Berlin, 'Memorandum of Conversation with Kendall Ross, Representative of the Hearst Press in Moscow', 22 November 1932, 861.5017-Living Conditions/569.

31. U.S. Legation, Riga, 'Economic Conditions in Russia in the Fourth Quarter of 1932', 27 January 1933, p. 3; 861.50/799; Clarence B. Hewes, Chargé d'Affaires *ad interim*, U.S. Legation, Riga, Latvia, to Secretary of State, 17 February 1933; 861.6131/270.

32. Frederic M. Sackett, U.S. Embassy, Berlin, to Secretary of State, 1 March 1933, p. 2; 861.5017-Living Conditions/595.

33. Kelley to Undersecretary of State William Phillips, 5 April 1933; 861.5017-Living Conditions/595. Stamped 'Noted by the Secretary of State, 27 April 1933'; Hoover, 'Memorandum', *op. cit.*, pp. 1–2, 8–9.

34. Skinner to Secretary of State, 27 March 1933, pp. 3–4; 861.61/322.
35. See remarks to this effect in John N. Willys, Warsaw, to Secretary of State, 9 March 1932, p. 1; 860C.917/19; 'The Case of the 75 Employees', *Rosja Sowiecka* 39, 11 April 1933; 860C.917/44.
36. See: Enclosure; Ernest L. Harris, American Consul General, Vienna, to Secretary of State, 7 April 1933; 861.5017-Living Conditions/640; 'Memorandum of Conversation with Mr. (Leon Cackowski) on 24 April 1933, at the American Consulate at Helsingfors, Finland', pp. 2, 4; 861.5017-Living Conditions/655; 'Memorandum of a Conversation with a Member of the Staff of a Foreign Legation in Moscow on Russian Conditions', 8 June 1933, pp. 1–2; 861.5017-Living Conditions/671; Robert D. Murphy, Voluntary Report: 'Distress Conditions in the Ukraine', 5 September 1933, pp. 1–2; 861.5017-Living Conditions/710; Suzanne Berillon, 'L'effroyable détresse des populations de l'Ukraine', *Le Matin*, 29 August 1933; William Phillips, to Kelley, 25 September 1933, with accompanying radiogram; 861.48/2448; and Lincoln MacVeagh, American Minister, Athens, to Secretary of State, 14 October 1933, pp. 1–2; 861.48/2451.
37. 'Memorandum of a Conversation had by Mr. Cole and Mr. Lehrs with a Member of a Legation in Moscow', p. 1; 4 October 1933; 961.48/2450.
38. 'Forecasts on the Autumn Struggle for Grain in the Ukraine', *Soviet Russia and its International Organization*, No. 11, July 1933; 861.00/11538.
39. 'Forecasts . . .', Enclosure No. 1, pp. 8, 9; 861.00/11538; 'The Ukrainian Problem', *Soviet Russia and its International Organization*, No. 13, August 1933; 861.00/11538.
40. 'Agriculture in the Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus', *Rosja Sowiecka*, 30 September 1933; 860C.917/52.
41. See for example, Anna Witkopp to Roosevelt, 13 March 1933, 861.48/2432; P. C. Hiebert, Chairman, Mennonite Central Committee, Hillsboro, Kansas, to Hull, 27 March 1933, 861.48/2433; Hiebert to Roosevelt, 7 April 1933, 861.48/2433; Senator Arthur Capper to Roosevelt, 10 April 1933, 861.48/2433; Hiebert to Representative Randolph Carpenter, 20 May 1933, 861.404/358; Randolph Carpenter to Hull, 31 May 1933, 861.404/358; Randolph Carpenter to State Department, 1 June 1933, 861.404/359; Reverend Charles H. Hagus to Hull, 17 June 1933, 861.4016/358; Executive Board of the United Russian National Organizations in America to Roosevelt, 7 September 1933, 861.48/2446; Ukrainian National Council in Canada, Winnipeg to Roosevelt, 2 October 1933, 861.48/2452; Ukrainian National Council in Canada, Bulletin No. 1, Winnipeg, 15 September 1933, 861.48/2452 reported cases of parents murdering and cannibalizing their children. Details were given for one such case in the village of Oleshky. 'In crass contrast to this terrible condition of mass death from starvation is the real condition of the crops. Last year the wheat crop in our district was good, and this year it is even better still . . .'. See also: Paul Skoropadsky, Former Hetman of Ukraine (Berlin), to Roosevelt, 28 October 1933, 861.48/364; Dmytro Lewitsky, Chairman, Ukrainian Deputies and Senators in Poland, to Roosevelt, 3 November 1933, 861.4016/363; Yakovliv, President, Comité de Secours aux Affamés Ukraine en Belgique, Brussels, to Roosevelt, 11 November 1933.
42. See, for example, Kelley to Anna Witkopp, 3 April 1933, 861.48/2432; Kelley to P. C. Hiebert, 5 April 1933, 861.48/2433; Kelley to Hiebert, 26 April 1933, 861.48/2433; Kelley to Representative Randolph Carpenter, 1 June 1933, 861.404/359; Kelley to Reverend Charles Hittagus, 26 June 1933, 861.4016/358; Kelley to U.S. Consul General, Winnipeg, 20 November 1933, 861.48/2452; Kelley to U.S. Chargé d'Affaires *ad interim*, Warsaw, 24 November 1933, 861.4016/363; Kelley to U.S. Consul, Brussels, 23 November 1933, 861.48/2433; Roosevelt to Senator Arthur Capper, 14 April 1933, 861.48/2433; Hull to Senator Capper, 26 April 1933, 861.48/2433.
43. Kelley to U.S. Consul, Brussels, *op. cit.* See also Kelley to Hiebert, 26 April 1933, *op. cit.*, and Kelley to Hagus, *op. cit.*, for nearly identical wording.
44. Felix Cole, Chargé d'Affaires *ad interim*, Riga, Latvia, to Secretary of State, 2 June 1933; 861.6131/275; T1249.
45. *Vneshniaia torgovlia SSSR za 1918–1940 gg.* (Moscow, Vneshtorgizdat, 1960), p. 144.
46. 'Famine in Russia, An Englishman's Story: What He Saw on a Walking Tour', *Manchester Guardian*, 30 March 1933, p. 12.
47. Eugene Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1937), pp. 572, 576.

Lyons recalled: 'We were summoned to the Press Department one by one and instructed not to venture out of Moscow without submitting a detailed itinerary and having it officially sanctioned . . . such a rule had not been invoked since the civil war days. It was forgotten again when the famine was ended. Its undisguised purpose was to keep us out of the stricken regions. The same department which daily issued denials of the famine now acted to prevent us from seeing it with our own eyes. Our brief cables about this desperate measure of concealment were published, if at all, in some obscure corner of the paper. The world press accepted with complete equanimity the virtual expulsion of all its representatives from all of Russia except Moscow. It agreed without protest to a partnership in the macabre hoax.'

48. *Ibid.*, p. 574.

49. Ralph W. Barnes, 'Grain shortage in the Ukraine Results in Admitted Failure of the Soviet Agricultural Plan', *New York Herald Tribune*, 15 January 1933, sec. II. p. 5.

50. Marco Carynnyk, 'Malcolm Muggeridge on Stalin's Famine: "Deliberate" and "Diabolical" Starvation', in *The Great Famine in Ukraine: The Unknown Holocaust* (Jersey City, The Ukrainian National Association, 1983), p. 47. Originally published in *New Perspectives* (Toronto), 19 February 1983, pp. 4–5.

51. (Malcolm Muggeridge), 'The Soviet and the Peasantry: An Observer's Notes. II. Hunger in the Ukraine', *Manchester Guardian*, 27 March 1933, p. 10.

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87. 'Memorandum of the Ukrainian National Women's League of America, to the American Red Cross, concerning the Famine of the Ukrainians in Soviet Russia', Archive of the Ukrainian National Women's League of America, Inc. (hereafter UNWLA Archive), New York. These files are uncatalogued, and I am indebted to the organization's president, Mrs. Iwanna Rozankowsky, who graciously provided these documents to the U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine.
88. UNWLA Archive. See Alexander Archipenko to Mrs. Helen Lototsky, President of UNWLA, 6 December 1932; Nellie Pelecovich to Alexander Archipenko, 21 February 1934.
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90. See *ibid.*, pp. 3–4, for Representative Hamilton Fish's, 28 May 1934, proposed resolution in this regard.
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92. *Ibid.*, 'The Political Crises in Soviet Ukraine'.
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100. *The Nation*, 29 May 1935, p. 629.
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102. *New York Evening Journal*, 15–23 April 1935.
103. *New York Evening Journal*, 29 April–9 May 1935; on his subsequent career, see his obituary, *The Washington Post*, 30 March 1979.
104. Adam J. Tawdul, '10,000,000 Starved in Russia in Two Years, Soviet Admits', *The New York American*, 8 August 1935, pp. 1–2; *idem*. 'Russia Warred on Own People', *The New York American*, 19 August 1935, p. 2. The Tawdul series continued until 31 August.
105. R. W. France, Rollins College, Florida, to Secretary of State, 8 February 1935; 861.48/2472, T1249, Records of the Department of State, NA.
106. Robert F. Kelley to Prof. R. W. France, 6 March 1935; 861.48/2472.
107. Lyons, *op. cit.*, pp. 577–578.
108. In Richard Crossman, ed., *The God that Failed* (New York: Bantam, 1959), p. 188.
109. *Ibid.*, p. 189.
110. Walter Duranty, *Stalin and Co.: The Politburo — The Men Who Run Russia* (New York: Sloane, 1949), p. 78.
111. Marco Carynnyk, 'The Dogs that Did Not Bark: The Western Democracies and the Famine of 1932–3', *The Idler*, January 1985, pp. 14–20; February 1985, pp. 17–21.
112. Already in July 1932, soon after winning the nomination, FDR had lunch with Duranty, indicating that he was 'contemplating, in the event of being elected, a new policy toward the Soviets'. His stand was not clear, but 'the Governor's international advisers feel that the United States could profit by adopting an attitude different from that taken by the Republican administrations of the last decade . . . The Governor for some time has manifested deep interest in the Soviets' experiment and today he spent several hours asking Walter Duranty . . . about his many years of experience in Russia. "I turned the tables", said the Governor. "I asked all the questions this time. It was fascinating".' *The New York Times*, 26 July 1932.
113. Joseph Alsop, *op. cit.*, p. 249.
114. Maddux, *op. cit.*, p. 55.
115. *Ibid.*, pp. 46–47.
116. *Ibid.*
117. Joseph Davies, *Mission to Moscow* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1941), pp. 191–192.
118. Paul Hollander, *Political Pilgrims: Travels of Western Intellectuals to the Soviet Union, China and Cuba* (New York: Harper Colophon, 1983), p. 164.
119. U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: The Soviet Union, 1933–1939* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1952), p. 557.