

**Post World War Two Germany:  
American Correspondents in the Emerging Cold War**

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# Post World War Two Germany: American Correspondents in the Emerging Cold War

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## I. Introduction: American Media in the post-World War II Era

The role of the media in shaping perceptions of foreign policy has been a critical focus of debate during the latter half of the 20th century. According to historian Bernard Cohen, an ongoing conflict exists between the press and foreign policy makers. The media advocates the notion that full exposure and free expression facilitate true democracy and is a necessary feature within the United States. American foreign policy makers, however, stress the importance of secrecy and non-disclosure on certain issues in order to ensure national security and thereby maintain a democratic government.<sup>1</sup> Though these two groups often have opposing views about access to information, with different political goals, both the press and officials rely on one another in order to document events and mobilize support respectively. War policies are especially susceptible to this conflict due to their inherent controversy. The Vietnam War, a particularly poignant period in American history, reflected the undeniable power of the media to both express and influence public opinion while exposing the weaknesses in official policy. Indeed, press coverage in Vietnam marked a significant rift between the media and government. Daniel C. Hallin notes that "as political divisions increased in the United States, journalists shifted along the continuum from a more cooperative or deferential to a more 'adversarial' stance toward officials and their policies."<sup>2</sup> In contrast to the broad cleavage that developed between the government and the media in the 1960's, post-World War II reporters traditionally advocated and rallied behind America's Cold War policies. Journalists in the early Cold War years were convinced that the

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard Cohen, The Press and Foreign Policy (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1963) pp. 262-266. Further discussion of this competition can be found in Joseph Mathew's, Reporting the Wars (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957).

United States represented the "right" cause in their stance against Communism.

Journalists in the Vietnam era, however, were unable to apply this conventional mentality to the Asian arena.

In order to interpret the media within the Cold War context, it is necessary to examine the two schools of thought that dominate scholarly discourse in this field. Until the 1960's, a traditional or orthodox interpretation of events dictated historical opinion. According to traditionalists, the Soviet Union contributed to the collapse of co-operation among the Allies following World War II. Soviet political aggression and ideological zeal, traditionalists assert, prompted the nation to seek global domination, thus starting the Cold War. Although allied in World War II, the United States and the Soviet Union emerged as opposing global superpowers following the war. Their political and economic differences once again surfaced, as the two nations vied for world hegemony. An abrupt shift in alliances occurred by 1947. The Soviets, once viewed as "like America" and friendly allies, became the evil enemy often compared to Nazi Germany. Hitler's Germany of World War II meanwhile, became an important ally to the West.<sup>3</sup> Thomas Paterson and Robert McMahon define this new view of Russia as "The Soviets acted: the Americans reacted. Moscow exploited: Washington saved."<sup>4</sup> The United States, forced to stand up against the "evil" communists, fought the Cold War in the name of saving post-war peace and freedom, according to early scholastic thought.

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<sup>2</sup> Daniel C. Hallin, The "Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1986) p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> For more detailed accounts of the emerging Cold War, see Charles Maier's The Cold War In Europe (New York: Markus Weiner, 1991) and The Origins of the Cold War and Contemporary Europe (New York: New Viewpoints, 1978) and Uew Nerlich and James A. Thomson's The Soviet Problem in American-German Relations (New York: Crane Russak, 1985).

<sup>4</sup> Thomas G. Paterson and Robert Mc Mahon, eds., The Origins of the Cold War (Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1991) xix.

Traditionalists typically focus on the Revolutionary and expansionist rhetoric surrounding Soviet communism. Such efforts to spread communist ideology, they argue, caused the outbreak of the Cold War and placed America in a defensive position. Historian Walt W. Rostow states that contrary to the United States' policy, the Soviet Union's political doctrines stressed that "the distinctions between political orientation and military control is false and that security for the major Communist power can lie only in the extension from Moscow of total control over societies."<sup>5</sup> Rostow cites Stalin's election speech of 1946 as evidence of the Soviet Union's threatening expansionist aims. Voiced one year after the close of World War II, Stalin emphasized the emerging tension between communist and capitalist worlds. Further signs of this aggression surfaced during the Soviet Union's involvement in communist uprisings in Indochina, Burma, China, and North Korea.<sup>6</sup> Although critical of the Soviet Union's fervent efforts to catch-up with the U.S. in the nuclear build-up, Rostow heroizes the United States' stance in the weapons race, claiming that the nation "never exploited its monopolistic position in nuclear weapons." Further, he argues, the U.S. practiced "restraint" and exhibited "moral inhibitions."<sup>7</sup> In portraying the United States as the "good team," Rostow implies that the Soviets failed to exercise restraint and were thus immoral in their aim to match the nuclear power of the United States.

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<sup>5</sup> Walt W. Rostow, "The Offensive of the International Communist Movement," The Origins of the Cold War, eds. Thomas G. Paterson and Robert McMahon (Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1991) 6. Other traditionalist analyses of the Cold War include Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.'s "Communist Ideology, Stalinist Totalitarianism, and American Universalism,," The Origins of the Cold War, eds. Thomas G. Paterson and Robert McMahon (Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1991), John Lewis Gaddis' The United States and the Origins of the Cold War (New York: Columbia UP, 1972), and John Spanier's American Foreign Policy Since World War II (Washington, D.C.:CQ Press, 1988).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p. 13.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 13.

Most politicians during the 1940's, on both the Left and Right, concurred with the traditionalist notion that the "evil" Soviet Union instigated the Cold War. Differences in foreign policy stances were virtually eliminated from post-war politics. This political cohesion also transferred to a journalistic consensus in support of the Cold War. Still bounded by the ideals of the "righteousness" of the United States following the defeat of Nazi Germany, both reporters and the government maintained a sense of common purpose. Though at times critical of the "periphery" of American foreign policy objectives, journalists did not question the "core" tenets the nation's Cold War position and supported these policies through their articles. According to Joyce Hoffman, "the political consensus that had swept away ideological distinctions gave birth to a reportorial style that might be considered the journalism of consensus. In its unquestioning acceptance of the cold war theology and in its apparent unwillingness to explore alternatives," Hoffman continues, "[reporters] helped to limit the range of debate on America's foreign policy options."<sup>8</sup>

While some historians, the post-war media, and both Rightist and Leftist politicians during the 1940's supported the traditionalist view towards the Cold War, a new analysis of the tensions emerged in the 1960's. Revisionist scholars viewed the first "draft" of history as inaccurate and in need of reform. The new interpretation of history re-examined the role and motives of the United States in the origins of the Cold War. William Appleman Williams, one of the first revisionists, initiated this scholarly and

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 9. Another criticism of this one-sided press may be found in James Aronson's The Press and the Cold War (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970). Aronson defines the media as "the balance of news inevitably was weighted in favor of United States policy; the other side rarely received a full hearing" (p. 6). He further defines the press as "increasingly paranoid and parochial," and that "the press continued to fan the war fever" (pp. 36-37).

radical debate in his book, The Tragedy of American Diplomacy (1959).<sup>9</sup> Rather than placing the blame of the origins of the Cold War on Russia, Williams and others, viewed the United States as the instigator of the Cold War. The U.S., revisionists maintain, perpetuated the war in order to maintain its hegemony as the capitalist superpower.<sup>10</sup> The United States, therefore, not the Soviet Union, played the role of the aggressive expansionist.

Revisionist interpretation arose with the decline of McCarthyism, criticism of the Vietnam War, and the subsequent questioning of the "domino effect."<sup>11</sup> This school of thought believed that traditionalists exaggerated Soviet threats in order to justify American imperialist drives. Cold War journalists within Vietnam reported within this framework of historical interpretation of the origins of the conflict. While the consensus-style journalism of the post-war years supported traditionalist thought and blamed the Soviet Union for the Cold War, the next generation of journalists rejected this interpretation of history, forging their own distinct path.

Most historians concur that the post-war media, unlike the journalists covering Vietnam, served as promoters of the ideas of the Cold War and that a "tough, pragmatic, anti-Communist liberal consensus prevailed within the liberal Establishment during much of the Cold War."<sup>12</sup> Scholars have examined how and why anti-Communism came to the forefront of global concern following the war through varying methods. Shirlye Keddie

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<sup>9</sup> William Appleman Williams, The Tragedy of American Diplomacy, 2nd ed. (New York: Dell Publishing, 1959).

<sup>10</sup> Joyce and Gabriel Kolko, "American Capitalist Expansion," The Origins of the Cold War, eds. Thomas G. Paterson and Robert J. McMahon (Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1991) 21. Other revisionist works include Thomas McCormick's America's Half-Century (Baltimore: John Hopkins UP, 1989) and Walter LeFeber's America, Russia, and the Cold War (New York: Wiley, 1985).

<sup>11</sup> Paterson and McMahon, xi.

<sup>12</sup> Daniel Allan Koger, "The Liberal Opinion Press and the Kennedy Years in Vietnam: A Study of Four Journals." DAI-A44/09 (1984): 1430 (Michigan State University).

examines *Time* magazine's coverage of Germany and the Soviet Union during the 1940's in the attempt to discover the magazine's method of "renaming" the relationship between the United States and these nations. Keddie concludes that *Time* effectively portrayed friends of the United States as "like us" and often ignored the negative qualities of the nations. When allied with the Soviet Union, news coverage during World War II failed to emphasize the limited amount of personal freedom and liberty that existed within Stalinist Russia. Keddie further deduces that the newsmagazine often used propagandistic methods in order to define "friends" and "enemies" of the United States.<sup>13</sup>

Reporters indeed played a crucial role in shaping American perceptions of political conditions and tensions both within the Soviet Union and the world. The press, defined by Bernard Cohen as printed media, "may not be successful in telling people what to think, but it [print media] is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think *about*."<sup>14</sup> Cohen asserts that how well reporters write is an indicator of the degree to which citizens remain informed and therefore involved in political processes. The journalists of the Cold War era indeed propelled the issue to the forefront of political discourse and even political purging. Cohen further suggests that the *New York Times*, the *New York Herald Tribune*, and the *Christian Science Monitor* served as opinion leaders and guides to the smaller papers in asserting political policies.<sup>15</sup> While the

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<sup>13</sup> Shirley M. Keddie, "Naming and Renaming: *Time* Magazine's Coverage of Germany and the Soviet Union during the 1940's," *DAI-A46/06* (1985): 1430 (University of Massachusetts). Joel Dark's PhD dissertation also examines the political shift of the pictorial magazine *Heute* from an emphasis on eliminating Naziism to an emphasis on anti-Communism in *Pictorial Journalism and Propaganda: The Role of Heute in the Democratization of Germany, 1945-1949*, diss., Vanderbilt University, 1991(Nashville).

<sup>14</sup> Cohen, 53.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, 129.



*Capital Times* devoted 2.6% of total news space and 438 column inches to foreign news, the *New York Times* devoted 10% or 4, 081 column inches to foreign news.<sup>16</sup>

According to James Baughman, by the 1940's, the government, rather than newspaper owners exerted more of an influence on reporters. Baughman describes post-war journalism as a period when "in one sense, government oversight of the news media was superfluous. Reporters routinely reported uncritically the statements of government officials . . . Columnists might on the editorial page attack a policy but news stories on page one and elsewhere publicized rather than scrutinized government action."<sup>17</sup> Like Koger, Baughman believes that this "partnership" between the media and government caused reporters to shape their stories through American eyes in a conflictual context. This, accordingly, influenced American journalism in evaluating emerging Cold War tensions. While the "interpretive press, "including newspaper columnists and scholarly magazines, originally interpreted American policy with skepticism," by the late 1940's, according to Baughman, "the doubters had become true believers"<sup>18</sup> in line with the official political stance of the United States.

This study will examine three prominent journalists of the Cold War era to further understand the emergence and growth of this partnership in ideology between the media and foreign policy. Although reporting from different political backgrounds, Drew Middleton, Theodore White, and Marguerite Higgins ultimately bolstered the traditionalist point of view that believed in the righteousness of America's fight to stop the spread of Communism. These three reporters show that "consensus" journalism may fit different molds and patterns. While Higgins and White criticized policy more than

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, 117.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, 12.

Middleton, this thesis will prove that overall, all three, despite their differences, remained supportive of America's "core" objectives in the Cold War. Germany, as the "battlefront" of the Cold War provides an appropriate context in which to assess Cold War consensus journalism.

Foreign correspondents covering the American occupation of Germany confronted a nation torn apart economically, politically, and socially. World War II drastically altered not only Germany, but Europe as a whole. On June 5, 1945, Allied victors, the United States, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Socialist Republics, agreed to divide Germany into four zones of power. While the Morgenthau plan was never formally adapted, the harsh measures set forth continued to influence American policy following the close of the war. The original goals of American military officials and policy-makers, as defined in the Joint Chiefs of Staff Policy Directive, JCS 1067, aimed to de-mobilize and weaken the German nation through de-nazification and reeducation. Policy-makers, military officials, and Allied citizens viewed the defeated nation as an enemy that could be a potential threat to future world order. After two World Wars, both American and European victors stressed that stripping Germany of her economic and political power would deprive it of the influence it had once yielded within Europe. JCS 1067 remained the official policy of the Occupied Military Government until 1947.<sup>19</sup>

In 1947, JCS 1779 became official policy, replacing JCS 1067 with a milder rhetoric and a new focus on reconstructing the German nation. This shift in policy occurred because the "enemy" in Europe had shifted from Germany to the USSR. The

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 33.

United States and the Soviet Union, as the two new world powers, now vied for political control of Europe. While capitalist democracy and Soviet Communism had banded together to fight Nazi fascism, a post-war alliance proved impossible. As the United States sought to establish Germany as its ally, it gradually began to abandon the harsher policies based on the Morgenthau plan, replacing them with "softer" policies aimed at returning power to Germany. Ultimately, American officials sought to strengthen the German nation politically and economically in order to build a defensive coalition against the Soviet Union. The Soviet attempt to blockade Berlin from necessary goods, between 1948 and 1949, marked the official split in co-operation between the Soviet Union and the United States. The Berlin Blockade not only confirmed growing tensions between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, but it also intensified the depth of American commitment in West Germany.<sup>20</sup>

Journalists reporting these events within post-war Germany encountered a psychologically and physically altered society controlled by the policies of four foreign governments. Early accounts focused on efforts to eradicate Nazi ideology from the occupied area and portrayed the German nation in a negative tone, as an enemy and threat to global stability. As American policy shifted towards reconciliation with Germany, some journalists resisted defending the newly formed American directives. For many former war correspondents, the horror of World War II could not easily dissipate. They feared the re-emergence of Nazi ideology and often mistrusted the new German allies.

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<sup>19</sup> For a personal account and interpretation of JCS 1067, see General Lucius Clay's Decisions in Germany (Garden City: Doubleday, 1950).

<sup>20</sup> Harold Zink provides an excellent analysis of these policies, categorizing them into three distinct phases. He further presents the positions of scholars critical of American policy, supportive of policy, and scholars who recognize both the strengths and weaknesses of American policy in Germany in The U.S. in Germany (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1957) 92-102. Edward Peterson also establishes this newly emerging policy within occupied Germany in Germany: The Many Faces of Defeat (New York: P. Lang, 1990) 16.

As time passed, however, foreign correspondents, including Middleton, White, and Higgins, evolved into ardent supporters of the Cold War policies aimed at both building up the German nation and containing the spread of Communism. In the context of these policy shifts, journalists struggled to reconcile their own views with those of the American government.

## II. Drew Middleton

An ardent supporter of America's Cold War policies, Drew Middleton entered the European arena in 1939, as a young and inexperienced journalist. For nearly fifty years thereafter, he reported what he labeled, " 'the huge, changing, kaleidoscopic world of international affairs.' " <sup>1</sup> Middleton examined foreign issues, forming strong and insightful opinions often revealed in his writing. As early as 1946, reporting from post-war Europe. Middleton recognized the potential for the emergence of extremist politics within Germany. He not only feared the resurgence of National Socialism, but came to see the perils of a new threat: "Red Fascism." Although he fundamentally mistrusted the Germans, Drew Middleton became convinced that Germany could be a powerful ally in the increasing Cold War. After spending one year in the Soviet Union, Middleton confirmed his political dedication to containing the spread of Soviet-communism and maintaining a strong American presence in Europe. Drew Middleton's unquestioning stance towards America's Cold War policies easily molded him into a consensus journalist.

Born October 14, 1913, Drew Middleton grew up in New York City and the surrounding areas. His father, E. Thomas Middleton, served as the American director for William Ewertand Son. Limited, of Belfast, Ireland. His mother, Jean Drew Middleton, linked him to one of America's most respected theatrical families, among them, John Drew Barrymore. Of English-Irish and Scotch-Welsh descent, Middleton easily fit into mainstream America. He represented a "main-line" orthodox point of view throughout his career. As a white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, accepting the status-quo did not pose a

major ethnic or moral dilemma for the reporter. It was less difficult for Middleton, as opposed to Higgins or White, to defend the American system that had reaped rewards on himself and his family and did not obstruct his path towards success.

Drew Middleton modestly began his life-long career in journalism as a sports editor at Syracuse University's school of journalism from 1933-1935. While his memoirs do not explain his motivation for choosing the journalistic field, he does defend his choice not to serve in the military. Soldiers and sailors rarely entered his ordinary life, and his father regarded them as "misfits who had failed to make a place in a business society."<sup>2</sup> This "raucous, sophomoric young New Yorker"<sup>3</sup> rather, aimed to rise quickly in the journalist ranks, setting his goal on becoming a foreign correspondent. By 1939, Middleton, at the age of 26, reached his aspiration and joined the ranks of the Associated Press London Bureau. Middleton later reflected on this new position in his 1973 memoir. "I was elated, as young men are by the prospect of change. But I had no overwhelming psychological commitment to my new job. Nor was my academic background adequate."<sup>4</sup> Though foreign correspondence appealed to the reporter, he acknowledged his youth and inexperience upon his arrival in London.

Reaching Europe at the outset of the war, Middleton's early days there acutely shaped his later reporting both during and after World War II. Middleton reflected on his youthful political tendencies in his memoir:

In retrospect I count myself fortunate that I came to Europe without deep political commitments. . . I had not been stirred, as had many of my more politically developed friends, by events in Spain. I had never demonstrated for or against any-

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<sup>1</sup> Pace, Eric, "Drew Middleton of The Times Dies at 76," *The New York Times*, January 22, 1990, A24.

<sup>2</sup> Drew Middleton, *Where Has Last July Gone?* (New York: New York Times Books Co., 1973) 2.

<sup>3</sup> "Drew Middleton," *Current Biography* (1943) 529.

<sup>4</sup> Middleton, *Where Has Last July Gone?* 3.

thing. . . I thought fascism evil and that the world would be better off without Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco. What I knew of Communism repelled me. . . I was not, as they say today, committed.<sup>5</sup>

Thus unimpassioned politically at the start of his career, Middleton's convictions became pronounced not while living within the United States, but within Europe. Dressed in British officers' uniforms and adorned with press armbands, he was among the few reporters to cross to the channel and cover the early military activities on the Western Front.<sup>6</sup> During these early days, Middleton gained extensive experience as a combat journalist, reporting on the fall of France, the Battle of Britain, and the August 1942 Dieppe raid. The chief of the *New York Times* recognized this youthful talent, and hired him to join the staff of the respected bureau in September 1942.

One of Middleton's first assignments for the *Times* included the coverage of North Africa. In this field, Middleton's superiors regarded him as "a coolheaded military strategist and an acute political observer."<sup>7</sup> After serving as a war correspondent for four years, Middleton could not remain removed from politics. His views on foreign policy began to reflect hatred toward the Germans and suspicion toward the Russians.

Middleton described his notion of the Germans in 1943:

At the outset of war I had not hated the Germans. In the intervening years my attitude had changed. I had seen, heard, and read too much about the Germans. Now I knew they must be beaten, here, in Europe, anywhere they fought. I don't believe I was bloodthirsty. My feelings struck me as entirely natural.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>6</sup> *Current Biography*, 529.

<sup>7</sup> *Current Biography*, 530.

<sup>8</sup> Middleton, *Where Has Last July Gone?*, 110.

The horrors of war convinced Middleton even more strongly of the evils of Nazi Germany and the need to destroy the Third Reich and its' military. His crusade for the patriotic and "righteous" cause for which United States was fighting would later transcend into his Cold War reporting.

Though the evils of Nazi fascism did not escape many. Middleton, rather than praising the Soviet allies as many of his reporters did, remained skeptical of the Soviet-communists. Even when fighting with the capitalist West to eradicate Nazi Socialism. Middleton questioned the depth of Soviet commitment to the West:

I had no great faith in the Russians. In my encounters with Soviet diplomats I found they put their national interests first. . . I wondered whether this same conclusion on national interests might not lead them the Soviet Union to separate peace negotiations with Germany. After all, Stalin had made one deal with Hitler; why not another?<sup>9</sup>

While many of Middleton's fellow reporters portrayed the Soviets as our "friends" and similar to Americans. he challenged this depiction. Rather, Drew Middleton remembered fearing and suspecting the Soviets instead of embracing them as comrades-in-war.

In the summer of 1943. Middleton returned to London where he continued to cultivate his admiration of British culture. Witness to German attacks on the British Isle. Middleton praised the nation's strength. "Wherever they slept." he wrote, "despite short tempers and frayed nerves, despite the death of a child or a loved parent or a wife. the Londoners stood and fought together with . . .the type of bravery at which the British excel, that of accepting the danger and ignoring it."<sup>10</sup> Britain's dogged determination stood in stark contrast to America's isolationism, Middleton thought. Though the United

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<sup>9</sup> Middleton, Where Has Last July Gone?. 117.

<sup>10</sup> Drew Middleton, Our Share of Night (New York: Viking Press, 1946) 128-129.



States certainly struggled during the Depression, the nation had never experienced the horrors of a foreign invasion. Middleton praised the national unity exhibited by the English in times of crises and saw it as their greatest strength. In his 1957 book, These Are the British, Middleton identified the Brits as not only determined, but described their characters as, "a basic, stubborn, toughness of mind, bravery, tolerance, a belief in democracy, kindness, decency."<sup>11</sup> Middleton argued that the British were not only vital allies for the United States, but served as examples of national character for the United States. In addition to praising the United Kingdom's citizens, Middleton also enjoyed their culture. Though often closed to outsiders, British society welcomed Middleton into their exclusive clubs. Middleton, in turn, emulated their style of dress and at times demeanor, while continuing to support the idea that the United States, like Great Britain, should " 'play the leading role in the post-War world.' "<sup>12</sup>

Middleton's coverage of Aachen, one of the first German cities captured by the Allies in the fall of 1944, revealed both a belief in American supremacy and a deep resentment of the German people. Writing on October 20 in the *New York Times*, Middleton described how "the savagery of enemy resistance remains undiminished" even as civilians cursed soldiers giving the Hitler salute.<sup>13</sup> Middleton further reported in Aachen that German surrender seemed unlikely as "this is too good an opportunity for the Nazis to miss. Dr. Joseph Goebbels, Propaganda Minister, will try to make Aachen a rallying cry in the Reich akin to . . . what Pearl Harbor has been in the United States."<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Drew Middleton, These Are the British (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1957) 287.

<sup>12</sup> Middleton, Our Share of Night, 531.

<sup>13</sup> Drew Middleton, "Battle of Aachen Moving to a Close: Americans Steadily Expanding Grip on City, Despite the Bitterness of Defense," *New York Times*, October 20, 1944.

<sup>14</sup> Drew Middleton, Offer Handed Foe: Test of Reich Seen," *New York Times*, October 11, 1944. Middleton further reports on the final Battle at Aachen in "Battle of Aachen Moving to A Close," *NYT*, October 20, 1944.

Though he witnessed the misery of the German refugees and captured soldiers in Aachen, it was difficult for Middleton to feel sympathy. Middleton recounted these feelings in

Where Has Last July Gone?:

One should be compassionate. Compassion is difficult when you think of the roads of France and Belgium black with frightened, tired people, the gray faces of Londoners leaving their shelters to start another day's work, the Arab woman holding her dead baby outside.<sup>15</sup>

These early first-hand encounters with German citizens and soldiers helped shape Middleton's disdain for and fear of the people. Middleton later described his attitude towards the Germans as, "I dislike the Germans. I have seen enough atrocities in Western Europe to envisage what they did in Russia [sympathy?]. I have seen the blind allegiance they give to war and the war ideal."<sup>16</sup> Middleton both abhorred the political policies of Germany and saw German citizens as determined to gain global power through any means necessary, including embracing an authoritative dictator.

After witnessing the fall of Aachen, Drew Middleton continued to cover the final days of Allied victory throughout Europe. He returned from Frankfurt, where he reported on the proclamation of Four-Power rule to a defeated Berlin in 1945. He recorded the destruction of the city's morale and the interaction between occupied soldiers and German citizens. Middleton spent the first year following the close of the war in the defeated country, reporting on official policy and occupied German society from Berlin, Frankfurt, and Nuremberg. With growing sympathy for the people he claimed to abhor, he wrote of the absence of young men and the destruction of land. Most significant, Middleton felt, was the hopelessness and psychological defeat that permeated German

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<sup>15</sup> Middleton, Where Has Last July Gone?, 142.

<sup>16</sup> Drew Middleton, Our Share Of Night, p. 371.

society. Many years later Middleton remembered the grim and depressing situation he encountered in Germany:

Indelibly stamped on my memory is one last impression, that of Berlin as it was in the winter of 1945-46: a combination of garrison town, wide-open mining camp, espionage center sprawled across acre after acre of dark and frozen desolation. The soldiers of four nations brawled in the streets. Shots sounded in the night. Dives catering to raw sex, and, for those so inclined, every perversion flourished. . . There were German women everywhere, and the soldiers of four armies made free of them.<sup>17</sup>

Such pessimism led Middleton to the awareness that a political vacuum existed within Germany as early as July 1945. Faced with these harsh realities, Middleton ominously feared the emergence of extremist politics as solutions to the desolate conditions. Rather than supporting the strict measures as set forth in the Morgenthau plan, designed to weaken Germany, he saw the need to build a cautious alliance with the Germans. Though he mistrusted German citizens, he recognized that the nation would be the "battlefront" of the superpower struggle between communism and democracy. As a result, Middleton strongly supported the Psychological Warfare Division of the United States Forces European Theatre's plan to abate the non-fraternization policy as a method of increasing American-German interaction. Middleton argued that such a plan would "begin positive measures in the ideological war that will be waged in Germany over the next ten years, between communism on the one hand and democracy on the other hand."<sup>18</sup>

Middleton believed that the key to gaining the alliance of the Germans and avoiding the spread of either communism or renewed fascism, not only demanded

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<sup>17</sup> Middleton, *Where Has Last July Gone?*, p. 148.

<sup>18</sup> Drew Middleton, "GI's May Take Part in De-Nazifying Foe: U.S. Plan Drafted to Use Army to Indoctrinate Way of Life in Germany," *New York Times*, July 19, 1945.

interaction between Americans and Germans but also required economic aid and stimulation. In 1946, Middleton outlined the major mistake made by the Allies. He wrote, "the Big Three confined themselves to showing the Germans not that war is wrong, but that losing a war is costly business."<sup>19</sup> Rather than destroying Germany, Middleton favored re-building Germany and educating the nation on the benefits of democracy. These efforts would not only return Germany to a position of strength, but it would weaken the appeal of such disciplined and authoritative ideologies as communism and fascism.

Middleton framed this "ideological war" between Western democracy and Soviet communism as a "struggle for the German mind."<sup>20</sup> He not only feared that psychological conditions could provide ripe conditions for the growth of communism, but also that as economic hardships increased, extremist ideology of the left or right could appeal to many. Middleton, in his memoirs, remembered the potential he saw for the re-emergence of National Socialism. He wrote in 1946, "Nothing has convinced me that Fascism, which in Germany found its flowering in the National Socialist German Workers' Party, has been killed in Germany. Badly wounded perhaps, but, dead, no!"<sup>21</sup> This revival, Middleton reported, could occur "because the hardships of life in Germany this winter will encourage those advocating extreme measures."<sup>22</sup> Middleton, still wary of the Germans by early 1946, had perceived the rising threat of extremism and the challenge it could pose to Western democracy and stability.

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<sup>19</sup> Drew Middleton, *The Struggle for Germany* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1949) 51.

<sup>20</sup> Drew Middleton, "U.S. To Lift Ban on Reich Politics," *New York Times*, August 28, 1945.

<sup>21</sup> Drew Middleton, *Our Share of Night*, 363.

<sup>22</sup> Middleton, "Extremists Lead German Politics," *New York Times*, August 8, 1945.

In 1946, Drew Middleton left Germany to serve as a foreign correspondent in the Soviet Union, where he remained until 1948. Middleton reported during this time a resolve to support a strong Western alliance in the face of Soviet threats. Fearing the spread of communist influence, Middleton remained convinced, as he wrote of U.S.-U.K. relations in March 1946 that, "only a common policy can serve to check Soviet ambitions in the Middle East, Europe, and Asia."<sup>23</sup> Middleton praised this Western alliance and viewed it as a necessary step in curtailing communist expansion. Though Middleton lived among the Soviets, he clearly supported American policy and reported on the heightened tensions between the East and the West."<sup>24</sup>

Drew Middleton identified two main lessons he learned from the period he spent in Russia that "have not been altered essentially by time."<sup>25</sup> Middleton viewed the Soviets as warm and hospitable, eager to provide visitors with vodka and personal anecdotes. While fond of the Soviet people, however, Middleton determined that they were ruled by "a corrupt, inefficient, and xenophobic system that is steadily eroding the essential decency of the average Soviet citizen." The second lesson he extracted from his time there was that "the leaders of Communist Russia have never, even during the worst days of World War II, when they desperately needed American help and friendship, regarded the United States and the Americans as anything but enemies."<sup>26</sup> Drew

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<sup>23</sup> Middleton, "British Link Steps With Us On Russia," *NYT*, March 10, 1946.

<sup>24</sup> Middleton reports on increasing East-West tensions from the Soviet Union in, "Molotov Demands Speed-Up In Demilitarization of Germany," *NYT*, March 12, 1947, "Pravda Denounces Two Byrnes Talks," *NYT*, October 7, 1946, "Molotov Urges a Review of Big Three's 1945 China Program," *NYT*, March 11, 1947, "Bevin Sharp In Big 4: Cites Report That Soviet Is Enlisting Germans in Armed Forces," *NYT*, March 13, 1947, "Russia Queried on Clearing of Nazis Who Join Red Party," *NYT*, March 14, 1947, "Russia Asserts She Holds 890, 532 German Captives," *NYT*, March 15, 1947, "Russian Condemns West ON Federal German Plan," *NYT*, March 16, 1947, "Smith Asks the Russians About It," *NYT Magazine*, March 16, 1947, and "Soviet Asks Share In Ruhr and End of Bi-Zonal Unity," *NYT*, March 18, 1947.

<sup>25</sup> Middleton, *Where Has Last July Gone?*, p. 163.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 163.

Middleton's experiences in the Soviet Union consolidated his view that the communist nation threatened Western democracy and aggressively perpetuated East-West hostilities.

Drew Middleton returned to Germany in 1948 and continued to report on Soviet aggression. By 1948, the United States was on the brink of forging a political merger with the other democratic zones. The Soviets suspected that this economic integration would solidify hostility towards their efforts to dominate Germany politically. Thus, the Soviet Union sought to maintain a unified Germany. On May 21, 1948, as tensions between the East and West heightened, Middleton wrote of the Soviet attempt, in retaliation, to integrate East Germany's economic zone into the larger Soviet economy. This economic build-up indicated, according to Middleton, yet another sign of Soviet expansionist aims.

Later in May, Middleton reported on the Soviet propaganda aimed to garner support within the German population against the Western allies. While the Western powers were meeting in London to discuss a merger of the British, French, and American zones into a trizonal state, Soviet communist leaders sought to rally the German public to their "side" in the Cold War battle. In their efforts to elicit support, the Soviet Union pledged to remove their occupied troops from their zone, while promising to unite Germany. Middleton mistrusted the Germans and feared that they could be tempted by promises of unity. He feared that the Russians were using this ploy to draw the Germans away from the Allies. While the West provided economic security, the Soviet Union appealed to the nationalistic Germans' desire for unity. Middleton wrote that the motives of the Soviet Union were not as democratic as their propaganda would suggest. He observed that "the Soviet Union, espousing German unity on its own terms and as a cloak

for the Russian objective of political domination of Germany, has organized a movement for that unity. . .in the hope of hindering the formation of a Western German state."<sup>27</sup>

Middleton pointed out that Russian withdrawal from their zone encompassed forty miles, while an American withdrawal of troops covered four-thousand miles.

Middleton concluded that the Soviet portrayal of themselves as proponents of an all-German government was a pretext to induce an Allied withdrawal from Berlin. In reality, Soviet leaders feared that a formation of a Western trizonal area would threaten future expansionist plans. A permanent division of Germany into two zones would certainly result in an economically prosperous Western zone that would weaken political support in the Russian zone. Though both the East and West expressed sincere desires for economic unity, neither was willing to subordinate to the other's plans. Middleton wrote that Germany remained at the fore-front of Soviet foreign policy concerns: to maintain economic domination of this region was vital to their political strength and influence within the occupied nation. He concluded that "the establishment of a Western German state will do much more, therefore, than put the seal on the partition of Germany. It will inaugurate the fiercest and noisiest propaganda campaign of the 'cold war' in Germany."<sup>28</sup>

Middleton concretely established the conflicting relationship between the two new superpowers, both in his earlier reports in Germany and his reporting from the Soviet Union. He continued to stress the need to build an alliance with the West Germans in order to counteract Soviet aggression and insure democratic stability. Middleton, in line with official goals of the Marshall Plan and American foreign policy,

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<sup>27</sup> Middleton, "Trizonia Plan to Face Russian Counter-Move: Puppet 'All-German Government' Will Work to Undermine New Regime," *New York Times*, May 23, 1948.

recognized the need to increase monetary allocations to the Allied zone in order to increase capital development, currency improvement, and political oversight.

Middleton's ominous predictions of Communist expansionist efforts, by 1948, had become a clear political reality.

In addition to analyzing Soviet attempts to rally the German nation behind unification, Middleton also examined the German reaction to such propaganda efforts. In his initial reports, Middleton concluded that the Soviet campaign to gather signatures on their petition for unity lacked citizen support. On May 24, 1948, Middleton determined that despite German devotion to unity, "the rather clumsy political tactics of the Communists in the capital and the shocking state of industry and agriculture in the Soviet zone appears to have dampened enthusiasm."<sup>29</sup> While Soviet propaganda attempts included mass demonstrations, parades, and rallies, Middleton asserted that citizens within their zone of occupation remained more interested in Western Allied negotiations taking place in London. Three days later, Middleton again addressed the German response to Soviet efforts to gain advocates for their petition. Within the Eastern zone, citizens cynically compared the communist propaganda techniques to Hitler's attempt to rally support of National Socialist ideology. One resident within the Soviet zone dejectedly commented, " 'It is all like things were before the war, bands and speeches and then for us hard times.' " while another Berliner similarly noted, " 'the young boys and girls are on fire, they sing songs and shout slogans. So they were singing and shouting ten years ago. For what?' "<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Middleton, "Berliner's Ignore Petition on Unity," *New York Times*, May 24, 1948.

<sup>30</sup> Middleton, "Berlin Shrugs Off Soviet Unity Plea," *New York Times*, May 27, 1948.



Though Middleton reported on public disdain toward the Soviet petition for unity, later reports indicate that he feared Soviet propaganda efforts could eventually gain mass appeal. At times he seemed to accept the sincerity of a German alliance with the West; at other times, however, Middleton continued to mistrust Germans. Middleton asserted that with the release of Allied plans for a trizonal unification, Soviet propaganda could intensify as a counter-measure and sway the Germans. Were Allied negotiations to become public, Middleton predicted, Soviet strategy would focus on portraying the Western leaders as dismembering the nation. Ardent in their desire for unification, such accusations could prove effective. Middleton wrote that Germans accept statements "as facts so long as they are written enough and with enough emphasis." He continued, "As in the case of the German unity slogans, the Russians have been careful to disguise the real meaning of the withdrawal of troops from Germany."<sup>31</sup>

Middleton did not hesitate to compare the communist Soviets to the fascist Germans. By 1948, his focus had shifted from an anti-Nazi position to an anticommunist one. Middleton feared that the nationalistic Germans who once succumbed to the propagandistic measures of the Third Reich could once again be swayed through patriotic appeals and rhetoric. Just as Hitler struck a chord with a socially and economically weary nation, Middleton feared that Soviet-communism could succeed in Germany through similar tactics. He further argued that by guaranteeing a withdrawal of troops, Soviet leaders could also attempt to taint the Western zone as corrupt and lacking political liberty. According to Middleton, residents in the Eastern zone were told that United States soldiers forced German girls to shine their shoes and British soldiers

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<sup>31</sup> Middleton, "Russians in Germany Score in Propaganda: They Find Favor by Emphasizing the Theme of German Unity," *New York Times*, May 28, 1948.

quartered Indian soldiers in German homes.<sup>32</sup> Such fabrications, Middleton concluded, could lead to a passive acceptance of Soviet dominion.

While Middleton initially assured his audience that the Soviet petition lacked support, just three days later, he contradicted these reports with heightened concern. Middleton compared the new enemy to the former and realized the potential impact sustained propaganda could have over a population psychologically and morally resigned. Middleton's rhetoric turned even more anti-Soviet on May 30, 1948. He not only suggested that Russian leaders were trying to "brainwash" the citizens like Hitler, but accused them of painting a false picture of the West in their attack. He assumed, correctly or not, that the Soviets had no intention of withdrawing their troops permanently and were likely to establish a semi-sovereign government. He suspected instead that, "the establishment of a Soviet-sponsored German government in Berlin would result in increased pressure on the Allies to leave the city."<sup>33</sup> The new enemy in Europe emerged as "Red Fascism." Middleton feared that the communist threat, like dominos, could spread to all of Eastern Europe.

The Berlin Blockade of June 1948 heightened Middleton's fears of Soviet aggression and expansion. According to John Gimbel, current interpretation of the blockade believed it was "designed to bring pressure to the West to stop its rehabilitation of Germany: to discontinue its contribution to social and economic stability in central Europe; and to abandon Berlin, thereby providing a symbolic demonstration of the Soviet

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Middleton, "8,663,461 Germans Said to Ask Unity: Russians Expected to Employ Communist Data to Offset Move for State in West," *New York Times*, May 31, 1948.

Union's dominance in central Europe."<sup>34</sup> Middleton's reporting revealed that the goals of the Soviet Union were not met; indeed, the opposite occurred. The Allied nations did not abandon their German citizens, but rather banded together to protect not only occupants within their own zone but refugees from the Soviet zone as well. Just as he reported on American bravery during the war, he praised the efforts of the Allied nations uniting against their foe to prevent the spread of an ideology, this time communism. Middleton, inserting personal editorializing in his early reports during the blockade predicted that "it is difficult to see how the Russian propagandists, no matter how adroit, will be able to explain away the fact that the Soviet Military Administration is systematically starving 2,500,000 persons in Berlin. Such slogans as 'the solidarity of the working classes' are said to be in sharp variance with the brutality of the Russian measures."<sup>35</sup>

Middleton noted the failure of the Soviet efforts to gain ideological support within Germany even during the "well-intentioned" events such as their blockade. In addition to the Berlin blockade, Soviet leaders sought to strengthen their political ranks by eliminating non-radicals from authoritative ranks in the Eastern zone of Germany. Middleton wrote that as a result of these "purges," opposition mounted not only within the population of the Soviet zone but among its own ranks. The resistance varied from letter writing to desertion. According to Middleton, these notes, sent to German

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<sup>34</sup> John Gimbel, The American Occupation of Germany (Stanford, 1968) 202. Gimbel identifies this dominant interpretation of the motives of the Berlin Blockade as part of the "containment school." Though recognizing this view as prevalent among scholars, he also notes a critic of this theory, Hans-Peter-Schwarz. Gimbel further argues that the blockade was initiated in response to the Allied decision to form their own German government in London in 1948.

<sup>35</sup> Middleton, "U.S. Mobilizes Planes in Europe to Supply Berlin," *New York Times*, June 27, 1948.

policemen under Soviet control, were nationalistic in their rhetoric, stating, "He who works with the Russians works against Germany."<sup>36</sup>

Along with these "thousands" of notes written by Germans in protest, Middleton also noted the increased number of German refugees fleeing into the West as a result of the economic and political turmoil affecting the area due to the blockade.<sup>37</sup> The Western zone not only offered political asylum, but a better standard of living. According to Middleton, optimistic Western leaders pointed to this influx in desertion as an indication that "there exists within the Soviet Union [within Germany] a strong desire for freedom from the overbearing bureaucracy of that police state."<sup>38</sup> In response to the outpouring of citizens, Soviet Military Administration officials tightened their control along the borders of the Allied zones. The measures, however, did not eliminate the desire for many to escape the repressive Soviet zone.

Drew Middleton's reporting, beginning as early as 1944, indicated his unquestioning acceptance vis-a-vis American post-war policy toward the Soviet Union. Middleton shifted from a fascist hater to a Cold Warrior. He recognized the potential for communist expansion within Germany and ominously reported on Soviet threats. He championed and legitimized the American cause as he had during World War II. As a military reporter strongly swayed by British politics, Middleton captured the essence of the "battle" between the East and the West, using German fascism as a template for comparison to Soviet-communism. He swiftly reacted and found the "pulse" of government policy toward the Soviet Union. Middleton recognized the potential for

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<sup>36</sup> Middleton, "Germans Opposing Soviet Zone Police: Popular Resistance to Force Rising," *NYT*, November 2, 1948.

<sup>37</sup> Middleton, "Soviet Morale Deteriorates In Germany, U.S. Aide Says," *NYT*, November 8, 1948.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

extremist political suasion within defeated Germany and eventually accepted the nation as an ally against the Soviet Union but always with mistrust. The powerful idea of the Cold War and the fear of the "domino effect" toned down Middleton's German suspicions. Thus, the one-time sports editor and prominent war correspondent, set the journalistic precedent for Cold War reporting for future generations through his strong rhetoric and consistent stance.

### III. Theodore White

Though both Drew Middleton and Theodore White may be labeled consensus journalists, their degree of support of America's "core" policies differed rather dramatically. Since the beginning of World War II, Drew Middleton's reporting championed American causes, whether in fighting the Germans and eradicating Nazism or in building an alliance with Germany in an effort to contain the spread of communism. Theodore White's accounts, in contrast, reveal a more critical thinker that questioned the "periphery" of American Cold War goals. An examination of both journalists and their works provides a broader definition of Cold War journalism.

Theodore White enjoyed a long and successful career as a foreign correspondent, domestic journalist, and political commentator. Former editor of *Reader's Digest* and friend of White, Edward T. Thompson described White as a man who possessed "an extraordinary grasp of history [and] a brilliant sense of emerging issues and political trends." Thompson continues, "he nearly *always* had a message."<sup>1</sup> White's deftness at honing in on political tendencies transferred not only to the domestic arena, but the foreign field as well. His colorful prose and detailed accounts reflect his acute insight into the future. Though a leftist sympathizer, White remained a fervent American patriot and supporter of communist resistance. White worked in four main fields during his career: China (1939-45), Europe (1948-54), domestic politics (1954-60), and domestic and world politics (1960-86).<sup>2</sup> Theodore White also coined the infamous "Camelot" phrase that came to represent the Kennedy era. His reporting on domestic politics made him a celebrity journalist by the 1960's.

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<sup>1</sup> Edward T. Thompson, Theodore H. White At Large: The Best of His Magazine Writing, 1939-1986 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1992) xiii.

Theodore White, born on May 6, 1915, grew up in a predominately Jewish area of Boston. The descendent of Russian-Jewish immigrants, his parents' ideological beliefs acutely shaped his own personal political orientation. While his father preached the teachings of Karl Marx, his mother fervently followed the Jewish faith. She encouraged her sons to learn Hebrew and recognize America as a " 'grand and glorious country.' "<sup>3</sup> Growing up, Theodore White faced the challenge of accepting the burdens of both poverty and anti-Semitism while trying to appreciate America's glory. These factors profoundly shaped White's leftist sympathies and patriotic nature. While Middleton defended a nation that catered to his ethnicity, White often faced the obstacles of being a Jewish, Eastern European in America. By the height of the Cold War, White reconciled these prejudices and eventually joined the elite Establishment that had once rejected him.

Following the death of his father during the Depression, the young White took on the responsibilities of supporting his family. His experiences with journalism did not begin in a prestigious journalism school, like Higgins, but rather in the streets of Boston. In an effort to provide for his family, White, after his completion of high school, sold newspapers on the street corners. White writes of his experiences as a newspaper boy as "the very beginning of learning-- when to fake it with a yodeled subhead, and when to let history dictate the yell."<sup>4</sup> Thus, at an early age, White learned to make a living, albeit on the street, by defining the most newsworthy stories and proclaiming them in a shout for customers. After a year of selling newspapers, Harvard granted White a \$220 scholarship. This, combined with the \$180 college grant from the Burroughs Newsboy

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid, xiv.

<sup>3</sup> Hoffmann, Joyce, Theodore White and Journalism as Illusion (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1995) p.14. Hoffman cites this quote from Mary W. White's letter to her son, Theodore, November 26, 1938.

Foundation, provided the financial means necessary for White to fulfill his desire for a higher education.<sup>5</sup>

Encouraged by his mother's belief that education was the primary means of escaping poverty, he rejoiced at the notion of studying at the prestigious university. He recognized, however, the distinction between himself, a poor Jew, and his classmates, many the sons of wealthy aristocrats. A self-described "meatball," or scholarship student, White was excluded from many of the privileges at Harvard.<sup>6</sup> In contrast to his affluent classmates including Kermit Roosevelt, Joseph P. Kennedy, and Marshall Field, "the meatballs. . . carried their lunch to campus in brown bags and shared each other's company in the spartan confines of Dudley hall, then the commuter students' paltry counterpart to the comforts of Harvard's seven newly created houses. . . where the upperclassmen lived in suites, were served their meals in oak-paneled dining halls, and studied in their own libraries."<sup>7</sup> Even more reflective of this exclusion, Harvard denied him residential living on-campus, placing Jewish candidates in the "column labeled X."<sup>8</sup> Thus left out of the "inner-society" and established elitist core, White vigorously focused on his academic pursuits. Although White would later be labeled a Communist in the post-war years, during his time at Harvard he rejected the student communists there.

White described these activists as:

the rich boys. . . They tried to organize us poor boys very clumsily as if we were a minority race or depressed proletariat- many of us were Jewish- and we reacted as all poor and ambitious students did by saying "Fuck you." I was saved from Commu-

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<sup>4</sup> Theodore H. White, In Search of History: A Personal Adventure (New York: Harper & Row, 1978) p.7.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p. 40.

<sup>6</sup> White, In Search of History, p. 42.

<sup>7</sup> Hoffman, p. 17.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 17.



nism because I was jealous of their good fortune and the girls they could take out to parties.<sup>9</sup>

While patronized by the wealthier student communists at Harvard, White also denounced the political tenets of Soviet communism. Writing in the 1930's, he described Russia as a " 'Socialist state doing evil.' " He continued, " 'I think the reason is that socialism without democracy leads to vicious ends and that democracy comes first in the list of human necessities.' "<sup>10</sup> Thus, the Harvard which Theodore White attended not only rejected him socially because of his religion, but also helped shape his political orientation.

Following his completion of undergraduate studies at Harvard in 1938, White traveled the world with the aid of the Frederick Sheldon Traveling Fellowship, at the same time serving as a foreign journalist for the *Boston Globe*. Recognized by *Time* magazine for his reporting in 1945, Theodore White remained in Asia as a wartime correspondent within China. There White learned to define for himself the functions of a foreign correspondent: "a collector of impressions of whatever could be typed or pasted into a dispatch. I collected sights, sounds, personalities, famous names, episodes."<sup>11</sup>

Theodore White's reporting in the Asian arena contained both subtle admiration for the Chinese Communists and blatant criticism of American policy in China. Prior to China, the only Communists White knew patronized him and seemed to live in a world far removed from the struggles of the working class. In the Asian arena, however, White saw the positive effects of Communism among a lower class. Though he did not declare

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<sup>9</sup> Hoffman, p. 19. This quote was taken from Theodore White's letter to Mary, Gladys, and Robert White, written August 24, 1940.

<sup>10</sup> Hoffman, p. 19. This quote was taken from Theodore White's letter to Mary and Gladys White on October 17, 1939.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p. 103.

himself a Communist. White understood and sympathized with the ideology. Unlike Middleton, whose experiences within the Soviet Union made him even more anti-communist. White did recognize some of the merits of the political beliefs when he lived in China. White, writing in 1944, described the Communist Party of North China as "a vital, integrated military and political movement that has, provisionally at least, solved the most vexing problems of Chinese peasant society."<sup>12</sup> White identified the party as the source of aid and organization for Northern Chinese peasants. He encouraged an alliance with the Chinese communists, declaring that "in proclaiming their friendship with the U.S. the communists at present are sincere and if their friendship is reciprocated it can become a lasting thing."<sup>13</sup>

Theodore White in his first book, Thunder Out of China and later in the liberal magazine, *The Reporter*, admonished the United States' role in China. According to White, American involvement in the Chinese civil war was unwarranted and hampered compromise between the right-wing Chiang Kai-shek and the Communist party. White harshly wrote, "the history of American policy in China reads like a page torn from the Great Book of Errors. It brings to focus all the fuzzy-minded, half-hopeful, half-sinister elements of our attitude to the world."<sup>14</sup> Unlike Middleton, who seemed to universally encourage American involvement in world affairs in order to contain communism, White questioned American interference in some domestic political affairs. White accused the

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<sup>12</sup> Theodore White, "Inside Red China," *LIFE*, December 18, 1944. This article is extracted from Thompson's collection of White's most famous magazine articles. All further references to articles from this text will be followed by Thompson's name.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, Thompson.

<sup>14</sup> Theodore H. White, "Lost: American Policy in China," *New Republic*, December 16, 1946. Thunder Out of China (New York: William Sloane, 1946), is a compilation of Annalee Jacoby and White's experiences as Asian correspondents.

United States of not only "halting a civil war, [but] we have supplied it."<sup>15</sup> Though writing at a time when anti-communism dominated intellectual and political discourse, White deemed American alliance with Chiang Kai-shek an obstacle to peace in China. Unlike Middleton, who experienced anti-communism in Britain and divided Germany, White first fully encountered it as hysteria in post-war America.

White was unprepared for his unsolicited position as the liberal leader of the Americans "who lost China to the Reds"<sup>16</sup> following the success of his novel, Thunder Out of China. Returning to New York as a "rebel" journalist, White was startled to discover his new label as a "left-wing" journalist. A self-declared non-communist, White defended his liberal views and the political circumstances in America in the midst of the emerging Cold War:

In American politics, one had to be either *for* Chiang and *against* the Communists, or *for* Mao and *against* the "fascism" of Chiang. White [he] felt uncomfortable with either category of thinking, but caught between two factions. . .he unhesitatingly chose the liberal left.<sup>17</sup>

By 1946, White's left-wing rhetoric made him politically suspect within the fervently anti-Communist Establishment. Challenged by *Time* editor Henry Luce to tone down his positions and write positive accounts of Chiang Kai-shek, White resigned in 1946, confident that he could find work in another highly acclaimed news agency. White, however, burdened with the "leftist" label, found work difficult to find. Finally, White assumed work for the first six months of 1947 as editor for the *New Republic*. Though

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Theodore H. White, In Search of History, p. 7.

<sup>17</sup> White, In Search of History, 255. White labels himself in these political categories twenty to thirty years after his reporting. It is clear that such hind-sighted explanation is a retrospective analysis that could be questioned.

accused by many of being a "communist," White, in fact, resigned from the *New Republic* out of disdain towards the Editor, Henry Wallace because of his political views. According to Thompson, White realized that "Wallace was not only using the magazine to bolster his campaign to be president, but had as his chief advisors a group of American Communists."<sup>18</sup> Assigned to Paris with the Overseas News Agency in 1948, White once again resumed work in a foreign society. This time, however, his subject matter would not be Asia, but a Europe struggling to rebuild itself following World War Two.

While critical of U.S. policy in China, White later supported, like Middleton and Higgins, American policy aimed at rebuilding post-war Europe to contain communism. He indeed shifted from criticism to acceptance of American policy in the international sphere. Though his entrance into the European arena at such a late date perhaps explains this shift, a marked change in reporting still occurred. In China, White was able to see the benefits of Communism, but outside of the Asian context he was unable to see the merits of the ideology. White returned to his original college belief that Soviet communism perpetuated evil and hampered democracy. While Chinese Communism held some appeal to White, he agreed that Soviet Communism needed to be contained. By 1953, White not only advocated a strong position against the Soviet Union, but even suggested that the Allied government strengthen its defense against the Red threat. Eric Pace, writing White's obituary, quotes a reference he once made to his time in Europe, " 'it convinced [me] of American virtue during the years of reconstruction after World War Two.' "<sup>19</sup> White underwent a transformation based on his interactions with

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<sup>18</sup> Thompson, xix.

<sup>19</sup> Eric Pace, "Theodore White, Chronicler Of U.S. Politics, Is Dead at 71," *New York Times*, May 16, 1986: A1.

European society. He shifted from a political rebel against American policy, to an ardent supporter of the Cold War and critic of Communist ideology.

After spending months in Paris, White began reporting from Germany during the winter of 1948-49. White described how he felt when he arrived in Berlin in February 1949. Like Middleton, White ". . .cherished the British, was delighted by the French, feared and hated the Germans."<sup>20</sup> Though in hindsight he described his feelings towards Berliners as hatred, his work from the era suggest sympathy and pity. He depicted the German nation he found in both moral and economic decay. The massive malnutrition of the citizens was apparent to him: the starving population was focused not on politics but on food. He bleakly described the situation he found in Germany as a place where:

Values withered. Girls roamed the streets, sleeping with the conquering soldiers for a candy bar, a cake of soap, a tin of Quaker Oats, coming home to once-chaste beds now dirty with disease. Money was meaningless: cigarettes were currency; two cartons of American cigarettes bought a set of Meissen china, three cartons bought a Leica camera, two cigarettes were a tip. Businessmen became pirates. Families dissolved.<sup>21</sup>

White witnessed a Germany amidst the economic turmoil of the "Winter Years." His first, bleak glimpses of Germany left him little room to envision a nation becoming strong and democratically minded.

Theodore White personally saw not only the moral and economic decay of Germany, but also the resentment of other nations toward it. The journalist reported in 1949 that "hate underlies the emotions of Germany's neighbors as bedrock underlies

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<sup>20</sup> White, In Search of History. 309. White further discusses the conditions he found in the winter of 1948-49 in Germany in "Germany: Year Six of the Peace," *The Reporter*, June 12, 1951: 12-16.

<sup>21</sup> White, Fire in the Ashes, 135.

topsoil."<sup>22</sup> White reminded his readers that while Germany wallowed in self-pity and seemed to forget the horrible effects of their war initiatives, the surrounding nations had not. Between 1939 and 1945, the Germans had killed one fifth of the citizens alive in Poland in 1939. This gruesome statistic could not be forgotten with ease. Indeed, nations surrounding Germany still clung to the war-time horrors. They commemorated the dead with memorials or at the Auschwitz museum where "the endless silent bins of human hair, the babies; boots, the tons of leather suitcases, the mounds of wrenched eyeglasses testify to the three million people who were butchered there by German officials."<sup>23</sup> White recalled his emotions in 1978, as a Jew visiting the concentration camp, "Now, after seeing Auschwitz, I hated all Germans with animal ferocity."<sup>24</sup>

The United States, White wrote never victim of German occupation, had downplayed the reality that for many European nations Germany served as more of a threat than the Soviet Union. While the bitter hate for Germany would not easily dissipate from the minds of her neighbors, Eastern Europeans also recognized the need to become economically independent from Germany in the post-war years. They had to accept that Germany would again be built up economically and politically by the Allied powers. Germany could become strengthened once again, re-instilling the fear of war and hatred that still dominated the minds of the citizens of Europe.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Theodore White, "Germany as Seen by Her Neighbors," This is Germany. Originally published as "The Ring of Hate Around Germany" in *The United Nations World*, 1949, it later appeared as this book, a collection of the recollections and reports of American and British correspondents during the occupation years. Introduced by General Lucius D. Clay, he describes them as "while I may not always agree with their [the journalist's] conclusions, I have respect for their knowledge of their subject, for their power of observation, and for their presentation of facts. To see Germany through their eyes is to truly see Germany" (Introduction, ix).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 360.

<sup>24</sup> White, In Search of History, 309.

<sup>25</sup> White, "Germany as Seen by Her Neighbors," 364.

White cautioned the United States against isolating Eastern Europe from economic aid beginning in 1947. If America failed to include Eastern Europe in the recovery program, he warned, diplomatic alliances could become difficult. "But if we slam the door of economic cooperation on them now," White wrote, "they will depend more and more on Russia."<sup>26</sup> Rather than accusing the Eastern nations of "turning Red" because of their acceptance of Soviet aid, White called on the American government to aid Eastern Europe and prevent its further isolation. According to White "playing politics" was not a wise policy. Instead, he encouraged the United States to "play" friendly neighbor. While White agreed with the "core" objectives of containing the spread of communism, he criticized Cold War policy at the "periphery." He pointed out weaknesses in America's policies that could further perpetuate tensions between the East and the West. White offered two solutions to the American government. "We can turn our backs on Europe and make no more loans to people who persist in voting left. Or," he continued, "we can support economic cooperation in the economic field and thereby make whatever capital is available go furthest in terms of economic progress and development."<sup>27</sup>

Theodore White warned that Poland, a nation destroyed morally, physically, and economically by the Third Reich, could extend their hatred toward the Germans to the United States. In 1949, White recorded his encounter with a Polish woman. Inquiring about her position towards the United States, the woman responded, " 'You Americans' she said. 'What choice do *you* leave us? Every day we hear over the radio about the airlift to Berlin. Do you expect us to love you because you feed the Germans? They let

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<sup>26</sup> Theodore H. White and Editors "A New Deal With Russia: III," *New Republic*, January 27, 1947: p. 26.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, p. 30.

us starve; now you will fight in order to feed them. They killed my father at Auschwitz and my brother in a labor camp. What do you leave us to hope for?"<sup>28</sup> White warned that this hatred could propel Poland, and indeed many of Germany's former victims, into a stronger alliance with the Soviet Union in the Cold War. However, he remained convinced that economic aid from the West was ultimately necessary to prevent the perpetuation of a political and economic bloc between Eastern Europe and Russia and to improve America's relations with the area.<sup>29</sup> The Cold War would not only pit democracy vs. socialism, he cautioned, but capitalism vs. state-control.

In a June 1951 article in *The Reporter*, Theodore White described the new Germany lifted from the ruins of 1945, reporting the boosted morale of the Germans and their improved economic conditions as well. With increased currency reform, the German people no longer appeared malnourished; a new focus centered on massive reconstruction efforts and strengthening the political sovereignty of Germany. While White preciously noted that cigarettes were used for currency, by 1951, they were sold out of vending machines in all major German cities. In his June 1951 article, White cited statistics indicative of an improved economy: "West Germany grinds out twenty-five percent more industrial products than it did in 1936, when Hitler had established his 'prosperity.' Germany is producing steel at the rate of 12 million tons a year."<sup>30</sup> While he noted the discrepancy in economic improvement among classes, he nevertheless wrote in an optimistic tone. In order to maintain such improved economic incentives, White reported, the German industry needed to continue to use their industry to its full potential.

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<sup>28</sup> Theodore White, "From the Rubble," *Holiday*, June, 1949. Thompson, 167.

<sup>29</sup> White, "A New Deal With Russia: III," 30.

<sup>30</sup> Theodore H. White, "Germany: Year Six of the Peace," *The Reporter*, June 12, 1951: p. 12.



By 1951, Theodore White's reporting neither portrayed the German nation in hostile terms nor in a pitiful or sympathetic tone. His once dismal rhetoric shifted to one of hope and optimism. While the Germany once portrayed by White did not seem to be a viable ally its strengthened role in the global economy made it an attractive partner in the Cold War. White recalled in his memoirs the realization he made in 1950 that, ". . .being caught up in the American purpose. I could agree with the logic of it [allying with Germans]. . .the West needed Germany by 1950-- it needed German soldiers, German armies, German steel."<sup>31</sup> White, although a Jewish American, eventually came to see the potential benefits of an alliance with Germany in the fight against the Cold War in both Europe and Korea. This abrupt shift in views coincided with the swift alliance reversal that occurred after the war. Though the horrific deeds of the Third Reich could not easily be forgotten, the political and economic strength of Germany could not be ignored.

Theodore White optimistically reported in 1951 on the improved social and economic conditions within Germany. Such advances, he asserted, strengthened Germany and reduced the appeal of communism to the nation. Even though the United States could now rely on a new ally in the Cold War, White feared that the West lacked the proper military defenses to successfully combat communism. Although he suggested that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) had the potential to secure Europe, he was concerned that it lacked the necessary defensive strategies to arm against the Soviet Union. White blamed these short-comings on the lack of economic funding from member nations of NATO. White's emphasis on the struggling European economies seemed to be a call for the economically prosperous United States to accept more

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<sup>31</sup> White, In Search of History 325-326.

responsibility for the costs of rearmament and military build-up.<sup>32</sup> White concluded his article by encouraging an inter-allied counter-attack to the strong Soviet propaganda that promoted their ideologies throughout Eastern Europe. Once the necessary forces mobilized within NATO, the morale and spirit of the occupied soldiers in the Western zone. White asserted, needed to rally behind the causes of freedom and democracy.

Although still concerned about the military weakness of NATO, Theodore White was pleased to report on the peace negotiations finally reached between Germany and the Allied nations. The negotiations, not arrived upon easily, were plagued by "a series of headaches; aspirin, not champagne, kept it going."<sup>33</sup> In the end, however, the peace agreement gave Germany almost complete sovereignty: the nation could form its own peace treaties, appoint ambassadors, and subject all foreigners to their laws. White stressed that the only severe restriction placed on Germany was the monitoring of its relations with the Soviet Union. West Germany, as a new ally with the Western powers against the Soviet communism, could not pursue diplomatic negotiations with the Soviet Union. In addition, if a Nazi or Communist revolt should occur within Germany, the United States, France, and Great Britain retained the right to intervene and maintain democracy.<sup>34</sup> White highlighted the importance of this stipulation that he hoped guaranteed the containment of Soviet ideology. However, he worried that this aspect of the peace settlement was a "great gamble:" the United States was gambled on Germany

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<sup>32</sup> Theodore H. White, "The Job Eisenhower Faces: The Tangled Skein of NATO," *The Reporter*, February 6, 1951, p. 13.

<sup>33</sup> Theodore H. White, "Germany-- the Allies' Great Gamble," *The Reporter*, June 24, 1952, p.9.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

as a new ally that would support her if war with Russia broke out; France gambled on a powerful Germany that could once again threaten the sovereignty of their nation.<sup>35</sup>

By the end of his reporting in Europe in 1953, Theodore White maintained that "Germany is alive and vigorous again to the sight, to the ear, to the touch."<sup>36</sup> While his initial reports from Germany recorded decay and destruction, by this time, the focus of his reporting shifted to the strength of the German nation and its potential as an important Cold War ally. He was able to identify the successes of negotiations between superpowers, as well as point to the challenges these nations faced. Theodore White shifted from a journalist rebelling against American policy in China as a sympathizer of the Chinese Communists, to one in critical support of American goals in the fight against the Soviet Union. White came to view communism, not in a positive light, but as "the belief that pure logic applied to human affairs is enough to change the world and cure all of its miseries." He continued to assert that such ideology was doomed to fail because "human beings tend to be illogical."<sup>37</sup> White saw the Soviet message as a greatly flawed ideology susceptible to turning to methods of terror in order to enact their goals.

By the time White arrived in the European arena in 1948, the Cold War had already begun. White quickly rallied in support of containing the Soviet threat in Europe but did not refrain from critiquing America's methods of executing this policy. He pointed to the flaws in NATO, the French and German struggle, and the hatred that existed within Germany's neighboring countries. His reports reflected a truthful and insightful analysis of the late years of European reconstruction. Unlike Middleton, who

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid, p. 14. White further outlined the French gamble on Germany in "France vs. Germany Again: Europe's Unity in Peril," *The Reporter*, October 14, 1952.

<sup>36</sup> White, *Fire in the Ashes*, p. 155.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, p. 318.

almost always refrained from criticizing American policy, Theodore White represented a different type of Cold War journalist, a progressive Cold Warrior. Though he saw the need to maintain political and economic allies in the fight against Communism, he remained socially liberal, encouraging the United States to aid Eastern European nations, even though they often allied with the Soviet Union. He felt that isolation from the Soviet bloc would compel Eastern Europeans into resentment and anger. Theodore White acutely wrote what he saw as vital strategies for a successful battle waged within Europe against the Soviet Union. Indeed, "White's style of journalism fit a model established by a generation of influential columnists and reporters who had functioned as a subsidiary of government during World War II and the postwar years. . . His reports from Europe reflected the beliefs of this [journalistic and political] consensus: the nobility of American aims, the notion that economic stability would allow democracy to flourish, and the conviction that a united Europe could beat back the tyranny of communism."<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Hoffman, pp. 5-8.

#### IV. Marguerite Higgins

Like Middleton and White, Marguerite Higgins firmly believed in the righteousness of fighting Soviet communism. Through the years, her reports shifted from criticism of American occupational policy, to an idealist vision for America and the world. Holding the United States to a high moral standard, she vividly portrayed the evils of communism, at times to the point of gross exaggeration. Like the Jewish White, Higgins worked as a minority within the journalistic realm. While at times being a female was a disadvantage and excluded her from scattered media events, Higgins sought out different sources that distinguished her stories from others in the field. Her reports personalized the plight of Soviet victims, unlike Middleton and White. Marguerite Higgins set out to become a foreign correspondent; she did more than that: she became a journalistic star.

Marguerite Higgins, born to a World War I pilot and French woman in Hong Kong in 1921, grew up in Oakland, California. Eager to establish herself as a prominent female correspondent, she recalled in 1955 the appeal of a career in journalism: "[it] symbolized," she wrote, "the epitome of excitement and adventure. Foreign correspondents was particularly interesting, I thought, because it offered the stimulation of being in a perpetual intellectual race against history, one's competitors, and time."<sup>1</sup> Though winning considerable respect as a fearless reporter, colleagues, family, and friends recall a personality of contradictions. Antoinette May, in her biography of

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<sup>1</sup> Marguerite Higgins, New Is a Singular Thing (Garden City: Doubleday, 1955) 16. While Higgins' memoir indeed serve as an excellent primary source for analysis, she admits the flaws in hindsight in her memoir. "In this book are," she wrote, "a few clues [to history] offered, however, in full realization of how suspect hindsight can be, especially when your own motives are involved. Nobody, including me, can

Higgins. described these contrasting characteristics, "Sometimes there was the rough-and-tumble Maggie, a tough, hard, aggressive woman who lived like a man, insisting that men's rules work for her; she demanded, and received equality. At other times, there was the gentle, soft-voiced Marguerite-- feminine, elegant, and fragile as a painted fan."<sup>2</sup> Higgins' nature was both assertive and determined, fearful and insecure. It was perhaps this insecurity that fueled Higgins' ambition to succeed.

Marguerite, known as Maggie to many, completed her undergraduate degree at the University of California, Berkeley. Similar to White, Higgins' developed a political stance towards communism during her college years. In her earlier days, she recognized the merits of communist ideology, while deploring the terroristic aspects of the Soviet agenda. As she stated:

Politically I considered myself a liberal- if that word means anything anymore- in the sense that I believed in social and economic experiments to solve whatever had brought on the terrible decade [the Depression] of the breadline but with the reservation that these experiments should not impinge on traditional civil liberties as we know them.<sup>3</sup>

Unlike Middleton and White, Higgins continued her education at journalism school. At Columbia University, Higgins revealed the prevailing characteristics that continued to plague her journalistic career: a fiercely competitive nature that often alienated her from her colleagues. Described by Julia Edwards as "a tall blond with the face of a Barbie doll and the mannerisms one might expect of the little girls who owned it."<sup>4</sup> Higgins worked

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avoid the tendency to rationalize his own past in the most agreeable light. A rationalization is likely to slip in even when you think you're on guard" (12).

<sup>2</sup> Antoinette May, Witness to War: A Biography of Marguerite Higgins (New York, 1983) p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Higgins, News Is a Singular Thing, 127.

<sup>4</sup> Julia Edwards, Women of the World: The Great Foreign Correspondents (Boston: Houghton Mufflin, 1988). Additional biographies of Higgins include Antoinette May's Witness to War and Kathleen Keeshen's PhD dissertation, Marguerite Higgins: Journalist, 1920-1966.

as a campus correspondent for the *New York Herald Tribune*. Upon her completion of graduate school, Higgins married her former philosophy teaching aid, Stanley Moore and continued to work as a city reporter for the *Herald Tribune*. According to Edwards, Higgins was denied her persistent requests to serve as a foreign correspondent. Typical of her hard-line ambition, she went directly to the feminist wife of the publisher of the paper, pleading her cause. Sympathizing with the young, bold Marguerite, the publisher's wife appealed to her husband on behalf of Higgins. Thus, in August of 1944, Higgins went to London, embarking on a passionate love affair with British war correspondent, George Reid Millar, ending her brief marriage to Stanley Moore. After her romance with Millar failed, Higgins left London to become the Berlin bureau chief for the *Herald Tribune* in 1945. Describing her arrival in Germany in a 1945 *Mademoiselle* article, Higgins wrote:

The pattern of destruction in Berlin stood out clearly even from the air. But after the plane had glided in at Tempelhof Airdome and we began jeeping into town, it became evident that . . . Berlin has an atmosphere that sets it apart from the rest of Germany's ruined cities. This is mainly created by the presence in one city of four different powers-- Russia, France, the United States, and Britain.<sup>5</sup>

Though entering a new phase as a foreign correspondent, Higgins had previously reported in Europe in the final days of the war. She witnessed the liberation of both Dachau and Buchenwald concentration camps and the surrender of the SS guards to American troops. Watching American soldiers beat an SS guard, Higgins, true to her character, refused to adhere to the common practice of ignoring such violent behavior on the part of the Americans. She both reported the incident and compared the American behavior to the brutality of the German Nazis. Higgins believed that the United States

should be held to the highest standard of morality. She explained this reaction as, ". . . unconsciously, I must have swallowed our own propaganda. I'd assumed that because men fought a good cause they would also act in accordance with the principles that distinguished their cause from the enemy."<sup>6</sup> To other reporters, and most likely including Drew Middleton and Theodore White, the SS soldiers responsible for the death of millions, perhaps deserved such a beating.

Continuing to gain respect as a fearless and candid reporter within Germany, Higgins, at the age of 26, was appointed chief of the Berlin bureau for the *New York Herald Tribune* in 1947. While Higgins gained external rewards as a journalist and increased scholastic recognition, she failed to overcome the self-doubt that plagued her internally. She described, in her memoir, News Is A Singular Thing, her new position as chief of the Berlin bureau:

I did have moments of inner panic. I felt as if I made the slightest mistake my new job might be taken from me. I can't explain this continuing lack of self-confidence. But I'm not exaggerating it. . . For a long time when any one of my competitors produced a major scoop, I took it as a personal disaster. That sort of reaction makes for a chaotic emotional life, but it does generate lots of nervous energy. And this motivation-- partly fear-- kept me doggedly and single-mindedly occupied with my job.<sup>7</sup>

As a result of this inner turmoil, Higgins failed to work with other journalists as a "team player." Her fierce competition with both journalists from other newspapers and the *Herald Tribune* contributed to her isolation and her unpopularity among other correspondents in Germany. Among her many enemies within Germany was Drew

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<sup>5</sup> Marguerite Higgins, "Germany-- The Lesson of Belsen," *Mademoiselle*, November, 1945.

<sup>6</sup> Higgins, News Is a Singular Thing, 80-81.

<sup>7</sup> Marguerite Higgins, News Is a Singular Thing, 161.



Middleton who continuously fought with the temperamental journalist. Though she described him as "jolly" and "personable," she also wrote:

At first Middleton gave the impression around Berlin-- and Berlin was such a close-knit community that it got straight back to me-- that he was a little put out that the *New York Herald Tribune* had not sent someone his own journalistic size to compete against. I gathered that Middleton's feelings were roughly equivalent to those of a first-rate tennis player being matched against a second stringer. I think it's fair to say that because of the manners and mores still persisting in our time, many men still tend to resent female competition. I was teased so thoroughly about Middleton's patronizing air toward his female competitor that it made me all the more determined to give him something to worry about.<sup>8</sup>

Not only did she feel put down by Drew Middleton, but another colleague of the *Herald Tribune*, Stephen White, described her as "a dangerous, venomous bitch and a bad reporter."<sup>9</sup> Whether these accusations were based on truth or were rooted in envy or scorn, Higgins competed in a male-dominated environment that often hindered her access to information. As a result of such disputes, Higgins was reassigned to Tokyo in mid-1950. From Tokyo, Marguerite traveled to Korea, covering the North Korean invasion of South Korea. She won a Pulitzer prize for her reporting there, gaining journalistic, if not personal, recognition.

Though an acknowledged accomplished journalist, Higgins, as a female correspondent in the 1940's faced many obstacles that men often did not encounter. James Baughman identifies these difficulties confronting female reporters of Higgins' era as:

Would-be female reporters suffered a different segregation

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 164.

<sup>9</sup> Edwards, 195.

[than African-Americans]. Editors hired women to cover fashion or homemaking. Those who sought to be political reporters or war correspondents had to overcome male resistance and resentment. During the war, when a female reporter or photographer got a "scoop," her male rivals assumed that it was because she had provided the newsmaker with sexual favors. . . Female reporters. . . at a National Press Club dinner had to wait until the meal had been served before entering the hall.<sup>10</sup>

Higgins was not protected from such difficulties during her tenure in Europe. Kathleen Keeshan relays an encounter Marguerite faced when a group of reporters were invited to have dinner with General Eisenhower when he visited Berlin. Though invited at first, Higgins was denied access at the last moment. Eisenhower's chief of staff excluded her from the gathering, stating, "I'd never trust those baby-blue eyes."<sup>11</sup>

Higgins recalled another instance of exclusion during an evening spent at the home of Ambassador Robert Murphy. After dinner, the men excused themselves to drink brandy and smoke cigars, leaving Higgins with the wives of the male reporters. She remembered hearing Middleton's booming voice asking vital questions. Higgins concluded that "that's one time Middleton got the story solely because he was a man."<sup>12</sup>

As Higgins reported on the political climate within Germany, she also often personalized these stories to a greater extent than Middleton or White. Following her reports on the surrender of concentration camps, Higgins covered the Nuremberg trials. While she outlined the political objectives of the Allied prosecution, she also humanized the defendants by honing in on their personal lives. In September 1945, Higgins reported that "[Hermann] Goering writes the longest and best letters, according to Army censors. He speaks of his loneliness and how much he misses his family. . . In contrast, Julius

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<sup>10</sup> James L. Baughman, The Republic of Mass Culture (Baltimore, 1992) 13.

<sup>11</sup> Keeshan, 103.

Streicher, who was married last March to his former secretary, writes only three or four lines in his weekly notes to his wife."<sup>13</sup> Almost like a gossip columnist, Higgins vividly described the prisoner's intimate lives. She also reported on many of the prisoner's last meetings with their families. Some war criminals, she wrote, tried to kiss their wives through the bars separating them, while others tried to valiantly proclaim to their families that they were still leaders. Higgins also described the daily chores of the inmates, including sweeping their cells each day, and the daily meals they received. Higgins reminded the readers that these war criminals, like Americans, had families and ate three meals each day.

Higgins acutely detected early signs of Soviet aggression in September 1945. In the preliminary stages of occupational negotiation between the victors, she noted that there existed, "inevitable clashes of views, particularly between the communist east and the capitalist west."<sup>14</sup> While the Allied forces desired the privatization of insurance companies within Germany, the Soviet Union pushed for government ownership of these companies. Higgins outlined the various obstacles that faced the four nations as they tried to re-construct Berlin. Though she noted the conflicts, Higgins' rhetoric also stressed the prospect of compromise.

Not always pro-American in her coverage of the occupational government, Higgins continued to write about the de-nazification efforts within Germany. On May 14, 1946, Higgins reported on the Allied issue for the seizure of " 'all anti-democratic,

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<sup>12</sup> Higgins, *News Is a Singular Thing*, 168.

<sup>13</sup> Marguerite Higgins, "Held in Solitary in a Sing Sing, the Arch-Nazis Wait for Trial." *The New York Herald Tribune*, September 8, 1945.

<sup>14</sup> Higgins, "U.S. and Russia Push Own Ideas In Ruling Berlin," *NYHT*, September 28, 1945.

militaristic, or Nazi' " literature and newspapers.<sup>15</sup> Higgins criticized this new order, comparing it to the methods employed by Hitler during his "burning-of-the-books." In addition to the seizure of books and newspapers, the order issued the removal of all military memorials built since 1914. In a subtle tone, Higgins appeared to view this confiscation order as a contradiction to the notions of democracy that the Allied nations were trying to instill within Germany. The Allied issue stipulated that each individual zone commander had the responsibility to determine which materials fell under the category of "anti-democratic." Higgins cited the objections raised by her fellow reporters to the Allied spokesperson, questioning if zone commanders could deem Socialist or even liberal books "undemocratic."<sup>16</sup> Another journalist, according to Higgins, testily commented how banned books often gained more popularity because of an increase in notoriety. The official statement of the Allies did not address these issues. Such measures were seen as necessary steps to eradicate Nazi ideology from German thought, and as a means of paving the way toward democratic politics. Marguerite Higgins, as she once compared the American soldiers to SS guards, again makes the comparison between American and German censorship initiatives. She fearlessly criticized American policy in the early occupation of Germany, though often without substantial forethought.

Later that month, Higgins reported another disturbing policy carried out by the occupational government. On May 17, 1946, she detailed the reduction in food rationing from 1,250 calories per day to 1,180 calories per day. Higgins pointed out that the original 1,250 calories already fell below the minimum level considered to be healthy by the Food and Agricultural Committee. Marguerite, however, did not place the blame on

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<sup>15</sup> Higgins, "Nazi Literature To Be Destroyed," *NYHT*, May 14, 1946.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

occupational officials, but rather, on policy-makers in Washington. She referred to the alarming statistic that out of the 150,000 tons of wheat promised by Washington to the occupational authorities, only 12,000 had been shipped to Germany.<sup>17</sup> Further, she reported, occupational officials had not received a commitment from Washington that the current wheat guarantees would continue to be allotted to them in the following months. While critical of Washington policy, Higgins remained sympathetic in her reporting on the predicament the occupational authorities faced. She wrote that these officials expressed concern over the new cut as well, quoting Colonel Hugh B. Hester, "it [the cut] is serious when you are dealing with a group already on a submarginal level."<sup>18</sup>

As early as 1945 Higgins reported on the early stages of Soviet and Allied tensions. By mid-1946, her rhetoric corresponded with the American thought that the Soviet Union sought to expand communist ideology throughout Eastern Europe. Higgins shifted her focus from a critique of the American occupation policies to attacks on the Soviet Union. Her reports until she left Germany in 1950, expanded to include articles in both popular and intellectual magazines, and in scholastic books on post-war Germany. An analysis of these articles and writings confirm Higgins' shift from critic of U.S. policy to supporter of American occupational policies during the height of the Cold War.

In August 1946, Higgins recognized Soviet potential for electoral abuses both within Germany and Eastern Europe. She reported that the Russians had confiscated American-licensed German newspapers from newsstands because they covered the resolution formed at the Social Democratic convention. This resolution blatantly attacked the forth-coming elections in the Soviet zone and criticized the occupational

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<sup>17</sup> Marguerite Higgins, "Germans' Food Is Reduced to 1, 180 Calories: New Cut in American Zone," *NYHT*, May 17, 1946, A1.

government's unfair electoral policies.<sup>19</sup> Higgins further cited complaints from oppositional parties within the Soviet zone. According to these party leaders, the Soviet authorities had delayed approving their requests to form election committees, a stipulation for campaigning in districts. Thus, Socialist Unity party candidates far outnumbered the candidates from other parties.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to denying other parties access to the electoral process, the Soviet Union banned German newspapers, books, and periodicals licensed by other zones in order to prevent the spread of political ideologies contrary to communist thought. Higgins reported with alarm that, "the Russians issued edicts threatening fines and other punishments to Germans caught reading the American-licensed *Tagesspiegel*. A poster to this effect," the journalist claimed, "was found in the Berlin suburb of Erkner."<sup>21</sup> The American government, she reported, saw this free press issue as yet another violation of the terms of the Potsdam Agreement.<sup>22</sup> While the other occupied zones encouraged the free exchange of information, the Soviet Union refused to uphold this form of interaction.

Marguerite Higgins reported on repression within Eastern Europe as further evidence of the threat of communist expansion. Higgins traveled to Poland in 1947 to report on the January 19 elections. Like those held in the Soviet zone within Germany, the Polish elections were tainted with fraud and bias. Perhaps even more extreme, however, the Polish regime conducted mass arrests in order to prevent opposition voters from going to the polls. While in the custody of the police, one witness claimed he was beaten with a rubber hose. Higgins, after interviewing many citizens detained or

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 14.

<sup>19</sup> Higgins, "Russians in Berlin Confiscate Two Issues of U.S.-Zone Papers," *NYHT*, August 22, 1946.

<sup>20</sup> Higgins, "Russian Zone to Vote," *NYHT*, August 26, 1946.

<sup>21</sup> Higgins, "U.S. General Demands Russians End Free Press Ban in Germany," *NYHT*, August 28, 1946.

arrested by the police, concluded that their objectives included, "persuading Peasant party candidates to change their minds and refuse to run for office, and 'crusading' for Peasant party members to withdraw their sponsorship of candidates."<sup>23</sup> Following the election results, Higgins confirmed her suspicions of a non-democratic election within Poland. The returns showed, "a smashing victory for the Soviet-sponsored officials."<sup>24</sup> Though the United States chose to recognize the fraudulently elected regime, Higgins defended their choice to support the Left-wing bloc. Even though the U.S. admitted that the party came to power through unfair and unrepresentative means, Higgins wrote that "the United States will not withdraw recognition for the simple reason that it wishes to retain as much influence here [in Poland] as possible."<sup>25</sup> Higgins, like the United States, feared that declaring the new regime illegitimate could push Poland deeper into the depths of the "iron curtain."

Returning from Poland in March 1947, Higgins informed her readers that the Soviet propaganda efforts indeed impacted the citizens there. The Polish increasingly believed the Soviets claim that the west was attempting to divide Germany and prevent unification. "Yet, in my opinion," Higgins wrote on March 3, "the facts show that the America and Great Britain have spared no effort to persuade the Russians to live up to the pledge made at Potsdam-- to treat Germany as an economic unit."<sup>26</sup> While Higgins reported that the Communists had won over many Poles, she optimistically cited a poll on March 23 that proved the Soviets efforts in West Germany failed to make the same headway. A majority of citizens within the American zone in Germany believed that the

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Higgins, "Polish Regime Insures Victory At Polls by Mass Arrest of Foes," *NYHT*, January 2, 1947.

<sup>24</sup> Higgins, "Left-Wing Bloc In Poland Leads 8 to 1 in Voting," *NYHT*, January 21, 1947.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

occupation would and should continue for ten years. According to Higgins, "the reason most frequently given for desiring the continued presence of the Americans was that this would help to 'prevent communism.'" <sup>27</sup> Though the Poles increasingly accepted communist ideology, West Germany had not been swayed by Soviet propaganda efforts. Like Drew Middleton, however, Higgins clearly recognized the potential propaganda threat posed by the Soviet Union.

Marguerite Higgins continued to assert in her reporting that the Soviet Union was the first to break Allied Agreements, and thus began the start of the Cold War. She pointed out that the United States encouraged quadripartite co-operation, but continually confronted Soviet objections and indecision. <sup>28</sup> Despite attempts to negotiate, Sino-American hostilities remained unresolved. The tension mounted to a new phase of occupation policy by December. Higgins reported that the Soviet Union aimed to oust the Western Allies from Berlin in order to maintain complete control of the city. Six months before the "official" start of the Berlin Blockade, she recognized the importance of the West maintaining control of their sectors in Berlin. If the West failed to hold on to Berlin, she feared it "will [would] be a blow to Western influence not only in Germany, but in all Europe." <sup>29</sup>

On April 2, 1948, Higgins covered the early signs of what would become the Berlin airlift. As the Soviet Union began to impose inspection controls in Western zones

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<sup>26</sup> Higgins, "Soviet 'Scoops' Discredit Allies In Germany," *NYHT*, March 3, 1947.

<sup>27</sup> Higgins, "Germans Want Occupation to Exceed 10 Years," *NYHT*, March 23, 1947.

<sup>28</sup> Higgins, "Russian Charge That West Splits Berlin Rejected," *NYHT*, August 7, 1947. Higgins later reported that the Soviet Union referred to the bi-zonal agreement between the United States and Great Britain as "separatist" in "Russia Calls on U.S. and Britain To Drop New Bizonia Regime," *NYHT*, January 21, 1947.

<sup>29</sup> Higgins, "Russians Test Their Power to Control Berlin," *NYHT*, December 15, 1947. Higgins further described the importance of maintaining Berlin in "Soviets Imply Allies May Have To Leave Berlin," *NYHT*, December 20, 1947.



and detained U.S. civilians within the Eastern zone, the United States recognized the need to take action against the Soviet Union. Unwilling to be intimidated by the Russian attempts to assert authority in American areas of Berlin, the United States airlifted food to the Western sector on April 2, 1948. Higgins defined America's action as "part of a plan to exert control authority over traffic between Berlin and West Germany."<sup>30</sup> The Berlin Blockade continued for one year, serving as excellent material for Higgins. She once again found her name on the front pages of the Tribune and relished in the journalistic opportunity created by the crisis. Indeed, she remembered, "In day-by-day covering of a crisis of long duration, any correspondent gets a close-up view of how American policy is made."<sup>31</sup> Throughout the blockade, Higgins continued to criticize Soviet policy; her reports, at this point reaching an even broader audience.

Marguerite Higgins, in an article in *The Reporter*, wrote of the consolidation of Soviet power within Eastern Europe. She asserted that by 1949, the Soviet Union had abandoned all pretexts to allow "at least token shows of national independence and representative democracy in Eastern Europe" as defined in the Yalta and Potsdam agreements.<sup>32</sup> As evidence of this divergence from post war agreements, Higgins cited the ideological purges, economic measures, and military build-ups within the satellite regions. The Soviet Union began to centralize their power by sealing off the areas under their control. Borders between the East and West had become more secure and heavily guarded by Soviet troops. In Czechoslovakia, "ditches fifteen feet in width were being dug across all unguarded road crossings between Czechoslovakia and the American Zone

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<sup>30</sup> Higgins, "U.S. Flies Food to Berlin, Suspends Army trains As Russians Turn Back 2," *NYHT*, April 2, 1948.

<sup>31</sup> Higgins, *News Is a Singular Thing*, 173-174.

<sup>32</sup> Higgins, "The Barbed-Wire Curtain," *The Reporter*, January 31, 1950, p. 8.

of Germany."<sup>33</sup> Trenches had been built between East and West Germany in order to contain the communist population within their territory. In addition, Higgins reported, the Soviet Union deported thousands of citizens from the satellite areas and Russia's Western territories. The objective of these transfers was to remove potentially threatening populations within their regime away from western borders and into interior Russia. The deportation efforts strongly effected Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. In midsummer, she wrote, more than fifty-thousand Latvians, mostly intelligentsia or upper-class citizens, were deported from their homeland.

In June, in the Soviet Republic of Georgia, at 4 AM, Higgins wrote, "about seventeen-thousand Greeks [in Georgia] were ordered into waiting freight cars reportedly destined for central Asia. They had only a few hours' notice, and were not permitted to take anything except their clothing."<sup>34</sup> To the journalist, such dramatic evacuation methods greatly resembled the methods deployed by German soldiers herding Jews away in the night. And, like some Jews who were "fortunate" enough not to be exterminated, most of the deported individuals from the satellite regions were sent to work camps. The Soviet Union then repopulated the abandoned land with Russian citizens. Higgins cited perhaps the most alarming instance of deportation: Jews forced out of Poland. The thousands of Jews deported were forced to leave, according to a member of the Polish mission in Berlin, "not because [the deportees] are Jews, but because they are cosmopolites." Higgins defined this as "they put their loyalty to race or religion above the priority goal of building a socialist society."<sup>35</sup> Marguerite Higgins not only reported on Soviet attempts to seal their satellite nations from the West, but focused on the

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid, p 8.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p. 9.

atrocities committed by the regime. Increasingly engaging in terrorist activity, she identified their actions as an indication of their growing antagonism and determination to spread Soviet communist thought through whatever means.

In June 1950, Higgins explored another side of Soviet terror: the kidnapping of American citizens within the Soviet zone. In Berlin, a city of 3.5 million people, Higgins uncovered the disturbing fact that at least two-hundred Americans had been arrested or kidnapped since 1948.<sup>36</sup> Higgins focused her article on the recovery efforts of two liaison officers, Dave Krichevski and Michel Stcherbinine. These officers spent their days and evenings searching, investigating, and at times pleading for the release of American citizens from Soviet prisons. Linking together often minimal evidence, these officers had to establish enough proof that kidnappings had occurred before they approached Soviet officers demanding releases. The American victims of these acts of violence, which violated Allied agreement, became subject to extreme measures of terror. Higgins includes in her article the account of one American imprisoned for eleven months by the Soviets:

I will never forget the faces of the Soviet guards who almost killed us by beating us up. We had names for guards like Sing Sing or Devil's Island. I would ask for water and they would put me in the ice box or the hot box, where I stood for days at a time. . .we were treated like pigs. . . they tried to drive us mad. They would give us two cigarettes and no matches or two matches and no cigarettes. . .and tell us we were crazy.<sup>37</sup>

In addition to the torture, the detained Americans were endlessly interrogated; the Russian officers tried to gain information about American military strategy, arms build-

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid, p. 9.

<sup>36</sup> Higgins, "Night Raiders of Berlin," *Saturday Evening Post*, June 17, 1950, p. 33.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, p. 33.

up, or political strategies. Higgins questioned the motives of the Russians, seeking to find an explanation for their cruel deeds. She proposed that those kidnapped became Cold War hostages or perhaps they intended to use the kidnapes as spies for infiltration of American forces. Though such hypothesizing appears extreme, if not paranoid. Higgins remained convinced of the accuracy of her findings. Whatever the incentive, Higgins ominously concluded: "it is probable that the Soviets have far more Westerners in prisons in Germany or the Soviet Union proper than we can prove."<sup>38</sup>

Marguerite Higgins, as a young and ambitious reporter, sought not only to report truthfully, but to reveal the physical and social situations of post-war Germany. While her initial reports focused on war-crime stories and criticism of the occupied military government, Higgins' later articles reveal an in-depth analysis of the effects of the Cold War. Not only did Higgins recognize the goals of the Soviet Union but she sought to expose the brutality used against people both within and outside of the Eastern zone. Higgins, by dramatizing and personalizing Cold War events transformed often confusing political policies into gruesome realities. Thus, Marguerite Higgins provides a third unique perspective as a female to an analysis of Cold War reporters. Like White, Higgins confronted and defended a government that often excluded her from its inner-circle. As a female, she had to seek other avenues in order to access information, as interaction with mainstream information was often denied. Even though outside the "Establishment," Higgins, compelled by her conviction that Communism was evil, vigorously fought to defend America's Cold War position and portray the horrible effects of Soviet expansionism.

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid, p. 139.

## V. Conclusions

The role of the media in shaping American perceptions of historical events, both as they are occurring and for later generations, cannot be ignored. Fifty years ago, the press was not perceived as an adversary of governmental policies, but rather functioned as a type of “fourth branch” of the government. Post-war journalism, though at times somewhat critical and divergent from the policies of both Washington and the Allied occupation policy within Germany, did not seek to expose actions that would embarrass the nation internationally or radically challenge the government. This allegiance of the media to foreign policy is best illustrated during the dramatic shift in the American alliance with Germany and the Soviet Union when a parallel shift occurred in the reportings of Drew Middleton, Theodore White, and Marguerite Higgins.

Like patriotic World War II journalists, these post-war reporters banded together with the government in a common purpose that demanded teamwork. Drew Middleton viewed the Germans as unreliable and untrustworthy following the war. His strong conviction in the danger of the Cold War forced him to overcome this hesitation towards an alliance with Germany. Theodore White sympathized with the plight of Eastern Europe and recognized some merits of communism within the Asian arena. White perhaps overcame the strongest reservations, as a Jew and sometimes communist sympathizer, in order to support American policies. Finally, Marguerite Higgins held the United States to an impossibly high moral standard that made it difficult for her to accept an alliance with Germany, a nation that had certainly compromised her idealistic views. Ultimately, though, she was able to reconcile these differences. Though all three journalists confronted some personal objections to consensus journalism, they learned to

accept the fundamental objectives of America's policies. Middleton, White, and Higgins had all witnessed first-hand the potential danger of Soviet communism. The Soviets secrecy, propaganda, and press control especially provoked fear within these journalists. Each also realized that only the United States had the economic capacity to stop the Soviet Union.

Though they did not refrain from criticizing the effectiveness of policy and they varied in the strength of their convictions, all three reporters represent the Cold War "consensus" journalism of the post-war period. This form of reporting focused on the merits of American policy and emphasized that the Soviet Union was indeed a menacing threat to global security and Western democracy. The European arena generally, and Germany specifically, provided excellent "proof" for their case against Soviet communism. While some doubts in their reporting occasionally surfaced, all three reporters overcame these hesitations through the conviction that the United States was doing the "right" thing and was fighting the "evil" communists. These Cold Warriors set the precedent for future journalists covering the Vietnam War. In the new Asian arena, the "case" made against Soviet communism proved more difficult, and a new type of reporting, diverging from the Cold Warrior's consensus emerged.

Vietnam journalists struggled to find the moral justification, as Middleton, White, and Higgins initially had, for participation in Vietnam. As journalists such as Sheehan and Halberstam discovered, inconsistencies within government policies, made it difficult to defend war objectives. As this decline in trust between the media and government grew to an unprecedented degree, a severe rift occurred. Though referring to Higgins, the

following summation of the journalists' impression of post-war Cold War reporters aptly describes their rejection of the consensus style journalism:

The reporter in her had hardened into a Cold War ideologue-  
"a fire-eating quote Commie-hater close quote. . .feeding  
people [in United States] the whole line of crap. . .Higgins  
had sold out, become a propagandist."<sup>1</sup>

While future journalists may have condemned their professional predecessors for blindly supporting governmental policies, Drew Middleton, Theodore White, and Marguerite Higgins truly believed in the cause for which they defended, even overcoming personal objections in order to uphold and defend democratic ideals.

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<sup>1</sup> William Prochnau, Once Upon A Distant War (New York, Times Books, 1995) 332-333.

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