

Setting the Tone for Cold War Rhetoric: *Time* Magazine's Coverage of the Soviet Union  
1945-1949

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In light of the Cold War, it is often difficult to remember that the U.S. and the former U.S.S.R. were allies during World War II. This temporary marriage of convenience ended the moment the two met as victors in the ruined streets of Berlin. By the end of the 1940s, the two were locked in a monumental and enduring enmity. It is the change in the Soviet role with which we are concerned here. More specifically, we are asking how this change is manifested in the press coverage of a major American publication: *Time* magazine.

According to Robert T. Elson (1968), in 1941, *Time* was fifth among American magazines in dollar business volume (Elson, Vol. I, pp. 66-69). By 1950, *Time* had almost twice the circulation of its nearest direct competitor, *Newsweek*. (p. 205) In that same year a poll of newspaper editors voted *Time* the most useful of U.S. magazines. Mixed with this success were the continuing criticisms of the magazine as flippant, biased, partisan and too powerful. W.A. Swanberg, perhaps *Time's* sharpest critic, noted that it was "studied regularly as a horrible example of the distortion and coloration of news" by journalism or political science college classes. (Swanberg, p. 259)

During the 1940s, *Time's* editorial perspective reflected, to a great extent, the views of its publisher and co-founder, Henry R. Luce. Part of Luce's policy making during the war years was the hiring of several reformed Communists whose politics had taken a turn toward the right; these included Willi Schlamm, who wrote for *Fortune*; William C. Bullitt, who worked for *Life*; and Whittaker Chambers, a *Time* editor. Chambers, who had written for both the *Daily Worker* and *New Masses*, became virulently anti-communist in 1937. "He was, in fact, a man consumed by the passionate conviction that the greatest foe of the United States was Communism. He

had waited impatiently for five years for an opportunity to edit the Foreign News section" (Elson, p. 101).

In *Witness* (1952) Chambers described his own views of foreign news: "I held certain facts to be self-evident on the basis of almost every scrap of significant foreign news: 1) the Soviet Union was not a 'great ally'—it was a calculating enemy making use of World War II to prepare for World War III." (Chambers, p. 497)

Chambers' tenure as the Foreign News editor was a rocky one, with his foreign correspondents as his chief adversaries. They openly rebelled, Elson wrote, as Chambers consistently ignored their cables. Walter Graebner, in charge of the London office, sent heated objections to the magazine's new implication that Soviet-America relations were deteriorating. Luce supported Chambers but criticism continued. John Hersey in Moscow became so frustrated that his work was not being used that he told the New York office he might as well come home. He resigned in July of 1945. Fillmore Calhoun, cable editor in *Life's* news bureau, wrote a furious memorandum: "Hell, I read the incoming cables and week after week. I am amazed to see how they are either misinterpreted, left unprinted or weaseled around to one man's way of thinking." While Calhoun granted that he admired Chambers' slickness, he wrote that he "wouldn't trust him with any set of facts concerning Russia anymore than I would trust John L. Lewis to ask for less wages for his coal miners." (Elson, p. 107)

Chambers's highhanded editing was recalled by Dorothy Sterling, employed as a writer for *Time* Inc. from 1936-1949, in a letter to the *New York Times* (2/28/84). Protesting Chambers's designation (posthumously) for the Medal of Freedom, Sterling wrote:

From Paris, Charles Wertenbaker protests *Time's* story of "Red riots" which had been substituted for his cable describing France's orderly new local governments... So many of John Hersey's stories from Moscow were suppressed that he stopped sending political news and confined his cables to accounts of Shostakovich's newest

symphony and other cultural events...Theodore White saw his criticisms of Chiang Kai-shek's autocratic regime replaced with encomiums of Chiang as a defender of democratic principles.

In the present article, *Time's* coverage of the Soviet Union is examined through a systematic analysis of content. From June 1945 through December 1949, the first issue of every month was perused. The material before the magazine proper--before the masthead page--was not examined, nor were the advertisements.

All references to the Soviet Union were recorded on a coding sheet with two parts: (1) A section for recording all references as favorable, unfavorable, or neutral. (2) A section for recording the occurrence of particular journalistic and propagandistic techniques.

The unit of analysis used in coding was the word or the phrase; that is, what counted as a reference could be a word or a phrase. Let us use a fictional sentence to illustrate this point. "The Soviet leader was a rather stupid individual, given to violent rages, and one who didn't take his professional duties seriously." According to the coding procedure, there were three references to the Soviet leader in this sentence.

References to the Soviet Union were broken down into four categories; "Stalin," "Communism," "High-Ranking Military and Civilian Leaders," and "The Soviets" and/or "Russians." The latter category would include, for instance, any Soviet citizen--peasant, artist, soldier--any objects or aspects of Soviet life, as well as references to the Soviet Union as a country or a political or cultural entity.

When appropriate, all references were also coded under the following categories of journalistic or propagandistic techniques.

1. Attributional bias, as defined by J.C. Merrill (1965). For instance, "Stalin raged," would be considered a negative attributional bias.
2. The anonymous attribution also known as veiled attribution of critical quotations.

3. Questionable headlines: i.e., those which were negative or sarcastic in tone and/or were contradicted by the content of the article itself.

4. Photographic and caption bias; i.e., putting the subject in a particularly favorable or unfavorable light through the use of photographs, sketches, cartoons or accompanying labels or captions.

5. The attributing of American or un-American characteristics. Sociologist Robin Williams' (1960) list of major American values were originally selected as a general reference point here. They include: achievement and success; activity and work; moral orientation; humanitarian mores; efficiency and practicality; progress; material comfort; equality; freedom; external conformity; science and secular rationality; nationalism/patriotism; democracy; individual personality; and racism and related group-superiority themes. Clearly, several of these areas overlap and others involve a great deal of subjectivity. Also, some of these values are so general as to apply to people of all nations. Given this, the researcher narrowed this list down to include the following: moral orientation; humanitarian mores; efficiency and practicality; nationalism/patriotism/ democracy, and individuality. The opposite of these traits were of course coded as un-American characteristics.

6. Shared goals, which are often used to solicit support for former enemies, as social psychologist David Myers noted. A shared goal necessitates cooperative effort and overrides people's differences from each other. (Myers, 1983, p. 517).

7. Ridicule, which Webster defined as "the arousing of laughter, mockery, or scorn at someone or something."

8. Excessive brutality; i.e., sadistic behavior such as torture, rape, infliction of starvation, murder of civilians, children, and so forth.

9. Vignettes illustrating positive human qualities, a variation of what Alfred McClung Lee and Elizabeth Briant Lee referred to as “the plain folks” propoganda technique (Severin and Tankard, 1979, p. 123).\*

*Time's* Postwar Coverage of the Soviet Union

In considering *Time's* coverage of the Soviet Union, a major generalization may be made: As the decade progressed, the Soviets—in keeping with their new “enemy” role—were seen in an increasingly unfavorable light. For instance, 16 percent of the references to the Soviets for the latter months of 1945 were unfavorable. This figure jumped to 41 percent for 1948 (the year of the Berlin Blockade) and 32 percent for 1949 (See Table #1).

As always with *Time's* “personal” style of journalism, references to individuals were important. In 1945 16 percent of the references to high-Soviet leaders (exclusive of Stalin) were unfavorable. In 1948 this figure jumped to 41 percent and stood at 31 percent in 1949 (See Table #3).

There were, of course, many aspects to this negative or unfavorable coverage. Outstanding among them are: The frequency and function of the words “Communism” “Communitic,” or “Communist(s),” the association of the Soviet Union with two “evils,” the American Communist Party and the Nazis, and the use of propogandistic and questionable journalistic techniques. Let us consider each in turn.

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\*The researcher's reliability and consistency in coding were checked by a panel of independent coders. For results, please see the Appendix.

Table #5

Occurrences of Certain Propagandistic or Journalistic Techniques in References to the Soviet Union

	June-Dec.				
	<u>1945</u>	<u>1946</u>	<u>1947</u>	<u>1948</u>	<u>1949</u>
Attributional Bias (Positive or Negative)	P=1 N=4	P=0 N=7	P=2 N=18	P=1 N=5	P=1 N=6
Photographic Bias (Positive or Negative)	P=0 N=0	P=0 N=1	P=0 N=2	P=0 N=4	P=0 N=0
Caption Bias (Positive or Negative)	P=1 N=0	P=0 N=2	P=0 N=3	P=0 N=5	P=0 N=1
Anonymous Attribution	6	8	1	2	5
Questionable Headlines	1	6	6	6	8
Attribution of American Characteristics	2	7	12	0	0
Attribution of Un-American Characteristics	4	24	73	30	44
Shared Goals	7	6	0	0	0
Ridicule	2	9	4	22	17
Excessive Brutality References	1	0	11	10	4
Vignettes Illustrating Positive Human Qualities	0	0	9	0	0

## I. THE FREQUENCY AND FUNCTION OF THE WORDS "COMMUNIST" AND "COMMUNISM"

As the decade progressed, these words were used more and more often and in an increasingly negative context. Thus the increasingly negative references to Communism--the chief political aspect of the Soviet Union--literally paralleled the cooling of US-USSR relationships. In the latter months of 1945, the period immediately following their wartime alliance, only three references occurred in the seven-issue sample--all neutral. In the twelve-issue 1946 sample the term was used somewhat more often--ten times--and basically negatively: eight of the ten references were unfavorable. In 1947, 24 of the 33 references were unfavorable and nine neutral. In 1948, 49 were unfavorable, 19 neutral, and three favorable. In 1949, 42 were unfavorable and 24 neutral (See Table #4).

## II. THE ASSOCIATION OF THE SOVIET UNION WITH TWO "EVILS," THE AMERICAN COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE NAZIS, PARTICULARLY THEIR LEADER, HITLER.

*Time* frequently called the readers' attention to what it saw as the American left-Soviet connection. In the fifty-five issue sample of the postwar years, this connection was made twenty-one times. In ten of these instances, the implication of ties between domestic Communism or Communists and the Soviet Union were general ones. For instance, in the October 4, 1948 issue headlined "The Atomic Spy Hunt," a connection was made between the Soviet Union and "misguided and treacherous domestic sympathizers and stooges" (*Time*, 10/4/48, p. 22). However, occasionally the Soviet Union was connected to specific people or organization; e.g., Communist activity in the American labor movement, particularly in the CIO.

Another example of this approach is noteworthy as it combined a damning headline, an anonymous attribution, and guilt-by-association of domestic and Soviet Communists. Quoting what is called "samples of the Red-eyed views" of the CIO's United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers Unions, *Time* wrote: "A right-winger protested: 'It sounds like Mr. Vishinsky,' A left-winger defended: 'It merely reflects

the views of Henry Wallace.' Many an observer could agree with both" (*Time*, 10/6/47, pp. 22-23). Henry A. Wallace, perhaps the chief of the left-wing Democrats in the years before he left that party and became the standard-bearer of the Progressive Party, was connected with Russia on three other occasions in the sample.

*Time* also attacked Senator Claude Pepper. Like Wallace, Pepper was an outspoken critic of the new get-tough-with-Russia policy. One article (*Time*, 4/1/46, pp. 19-20) was headlined "Red Pepper." A photo of Pepper was captioned: "SENATOR PEPPER/For Russia, a loud apologist." In the article Pepper was quoted as saying that Russia was being "denied the atomic bomb, denied warm water outlets, denied the common courtesy of economic negotiations with her greatest ally...." *Time* then quoted Senator Joseph H. Ball who "had a caustic reply: the Pepper speech was right down the Communist line." Other Russian-linked Americans were Paul Robeson, referred to as a communist-liner "who likes the way Russia does things" (*Time*, 5/5/47, p. 47); a State Department secretary called in by the FBI because she had been "hobnobbing with local Reds and the Soviet embassy staff for months" (*Time*, 7/7/47, p. 12), and, of course, Communist Party leader William Z. Foster who was twice referred to as furthering Russian interests (*Time*, 6/7/48, p. 22 and 9/2/46, p. 18).

While there is a certain logic to the Soviet Communist/American Communist connection, this is hardly the case with the Nazism/Communism connection. Nevertheless, the latter association was made repeatedly by *Time* and occurred in seventeen separate articles in the fifty-five issue sample.

Frequently the allusion connecting the two was brief but pointed. An anonymous student in East Berlin was quoted directly. "If this is democracy," said one of them last week, "I'd rather be a Nazi" (*Time*, 8/5/46, p. 33). *Time*, describing a witness's comments on the American Communist Party as "a conspiracy, an agency of Russia designed to weaken the U.S.," concluded that "it is far better organized than anything the Nazis had" (*Time*, 4/7/47, p. 25). A *Time* correspondent concluded an

article comparing Soviet and Polish communists with these words: "The last time I had met that sort of block supervisor was in Soviet Russia. The time before that was in Nazi Germany" (*Time*, 12/1/47, pp. 38-40).

The most pointed connections in this regard were made between Stalin and Hitler and his Nazi henchmen. An October, 4, 1948 article, a *Time* think piece entitled "How Close to War" (pp. 28-29), drew a comparison between "Hitler's drive for Poland" and "Stalin's for Berlin." The point was made more vividly in a cartoon appearing in that same issue under the *Time* masthead, the first page of the magazine proper. In the cartoon Stalin appeared to be dozing over his desk, clutching a paper labeled "Soviet Policy of Deliberate Provocation." Leaning over his chair was Adolf Hitler, a swastika on his armband. The hammer and sickle was drawn on the curtain behind two figures. The caption read: "I, too, believed democracy was decadent."

The tendency of *Time* to connect the two men was exemplified with the most clarity in the February 2, 1948 issue (p. 17). Appearing in the International section, the piece was headlined "For the Record" and accompanied by a photo of Stalin shaking hands with German diplomat Joachim von Ribbentrop. The photo was captioned: "FRIENDSHIP IN THE KREMLIN, 1939/Hitler balked." To depict a warm, smiling contact between Stalin and Ribbentrop was particularly damning in 1948, shortly after the latter had been tried and executed as a war criminal.

The article described how the U.S. State Department had published captured German documents describing "Stalin's deals with Hitler." The article began:

Much of the unlovely story had been told before but last week for the first *Time* the U.S. State Department published the record in full.

Since the records had been "captured," it must be assumed that the capturing took place before the surrender of the German army in spring of 1945. Thus the story was roughly three years old. As the content dealt only with events before 1941--all of which had been common knowledge for several years in 1948--the purpose of

the article and the accompanying photo could only have been to once again connect the Stalin evil with the Hitler evil merging them in the minds of the public into evil personified.

In the penultimate paragraph *Time* emphasized the “devil connection” on the photo:

“None of the dry texts recalled the past quite so vividly as the old photographs: Stalin and Ribbentrop clasping hands in the Kremlin, faces gleaming with private smiles (see cut).”

While Stalin did not have an inordinately high number of unfavorable references—an average to twenty-five percent for years 1946 through 1949—the Communist leader was most frequently seen as a man of incredible power, a force to be reckoned with. In the cover story of its first issue of 1949, *Time* referred to Stalin “As boss of all the world’s Communists, Russia’s Stalin was the free world’s great single antagonist.” In the next few paragraphs the writer referred to how “he” [Stalin] had seized Czechoslovakia, how “his devoted apostles” were winning in China, how “his Communists” had suffered electoral defeats in France and Italy (*Time*, 1/3/49, p. 10). Stalin’s omnipresence was also apparent in a reference to France in 1947 where “Frenchmen” were “not yet impelled to choose between DeGaulle and Stalin.”

Even when Stalin talked peace, *Time* framed it in terms of war. An article under the subsection “Strategy” in the International section was headlined “Coo” (October 7 1946) and dealt with a *London Times* interview with Stalin. The lead read: “Whatever his chief target may have been, Generalissimo Joseph Stalin’s peace talk, like a swivel-mounted gun, raked world affairs from a variety of interesting angles last week.” Further down in the piece, *Time* damned him with faint praise. “Even most skeptics believed that Stalin really wanted peace, for the time being.”

Table #1

References to The Soviet Union, Soviet(s) and Russian or Russians  
(By number and percentage)

	Favorable		Unfavorable		Neutral		No. Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
June-Dec							
1945	29	7.8%	61	16.4%	282	75.8%	372
1946	35	5.4%	208	32.1%	405	62.5%	648
1947	40	6.2%	223	34.3%	386	59.5%	649
1948	14	2.6%	224	41.5%	302	55.9%	540
1949	17	3.8%	142	32.0%	285	64.2%	444

Table #2

References to Stalin (By number and percentage)

	Favorable		Unfavorable		Neutral		No. Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
June-Dec							
1945	11	18.9%	3	5.2%	44	75.9%	58
1946	6	11.8%	14	27.4%	31	60.8%	51
1947	13	28.9%	11	24.4%	21	46.7%	45
1948	4	6.7%	15	25.0%	41	68.3%	60
1949	1	2.0%	12	24.0%	37	74.0%	50

Table #3

References to High-Ranking Soviet Civilian and Military Leaders  
(By number and percentage)

	Favorable		Unfavorable		Neutral		No. Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
June-Dec							
1945	30	7.5%	66	16.4%	306	76.1%	402
1946	35	5.2%	213	32.0%	424	63.0%	672
1947	40	6.2%	223	34.4%	386	59.4%	649
1948	14	2.5%	231	41.2%	313	56.1%	558
1949	18	4.0%	143	31.6%	291	64.4%	452

Table #4

References to Communism or Communists (By number and percentage)

	Favorable		Unfavorable		Neutral		No. Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
June-Dec							
1945	0	0%	0	0%	3	100%	3
1946	0	0%	8	80%	2	20%	10
1947	0	0%	24	72.7%	9	27.2%	33
1948	3	4.2%	49	69%	19	26.8%	71
1949	0	0%	42	63.6%	24	36.4%	66

### III. *TIME'S* USE OF PROPAGANDISTIC AND QUESTIONABLE JOURNALISTIC TECHNIQUES

In the latter half of the 1940s, *Time* frequently used such techniques to put the Soviets in a bad light. Of the nine such techniques studied here, five stand out: anonymous attribution; questionable headlines; ridicule; negative attributional bias, and references to un-American characteristics. (see table #5).

The anonymous attribution of critical quotations was a hallmark of *Time*.

Swanberg noted that

*Time* was famous for its ability to find unidentified politicians or bystanders who would make statements on new events providing the very point of view *Time* sought to promote, usually in memorable language.... Newspapermen called *Time's* unidentified witness the Delphic Oracle or Disembodied Voice and got a kick out of going through an issue to count the Voices." (pp. 261-62)

There were twenty-two occurrences of anonymous attribution to the Soviet Union in the sample, nineteen of them with quotes negative in connotation. Some of the quotes were mild: "Said one engineer, 'Give me two American MP's, one on each side, and I'll have faith in the Russians.'" And some dangerously reckless: "By last week some cocktail party pundits were beginning to mutter, 'Why not drop the bomb on Russia now?'" (4/5/48, p. 17).

A third anonymous spokesman sounded very much like Swanberg's description of the "Disembodied Voice." The quote appeared in an article headlined "Don't Leave Us" (*Time*, 2/2/48, p. 21).

One demonstrator was asked by a correspondent whether he thought it would be better for the Americans to pull out of Germany. Said the worker: 'For God's sake, don't leave us. Of course we strike to try to get unity and some food. Who wouldn't? But we don't want the Americans to leave. *So dof ist keiner* [nobody is that cracked.] Then we would have only the Russians.'

*Time's* anonymous spokespeople included a "diplomat in Paris," a "Soviet diplomat," "an unimpeachable source," "a high U.S. official," and "a Chinese friend." The anonymous spokesman might hint at some high-level decisions about to be made or

prattle about Molotov's tendency to keep a pistol under his pillow (*Time*, 10/1/45, p. 26).

A second technique *Time* used to help frame the Soviet Union as an enemy during the early years of the Cold War was the use of questionable headlines. In the context of the coding scheme used, a questionable headline was negative in tone, sarcastic, nasty or downright false. In considering this technique, one must keep in mind that *Time* writers, from the outset, prided themselves on what they saw as the well-turned phrase, frequently using puns, excessive alliteration, and literary allusions. This approach was often used where it got the most attention on any printed page: the headlines and the captions.

In the fifty-five issue sample, there were twenty-seven instances of questionable headlines. Many of these alluded, sometimes sarcastically, to the lack of freedom under Communists in the Soviet Union. For instance, an article headlined "Let Freedom Ring" dealt with the propaganda of Pravda, the MVD (secret police) and "some millions of your countrymen in...concentration camps." (*Time*, 9/1/47, pp. 33-34). A book review on forced labor in the Soviet Union was headlined "Nothing to Lose But Their Chains" (*Time*, 9/1/47, pp. 84-86). An article summing up the Soviet Union's "assault" on the West during 1946, emphasizing Molotov's propaganda and the "economic, political and moral gulf between Russia and democratic nations," was headlined "The Year of the Bullbat" (*Time*, 1/6/47, pp. 23-27). An article on the censoring of Russian writers was headlined "The Delights of Intellectuality" (*Time*, 9/6/48, pp. 22).

A third journalistic technique particularly emphasized by *Time* in the early postwar years was that of ridicule. And again it must be noted that *Time's* particular style of personal journalism will often encompass ridicule. That is, a reader might not be surprised to find ridicule in *Time*, but might be aghast at finding it in *The New*

*York Times*. Nonetheless, the frequency of ridicule was striking: fifty-four occurrences during the fifty-five issue sample.

Ridicule, the arousing of laughter, mockery, or scorn at someone or something, is an excellent weapon of derision, allowing the perpetrator to hide behind humor. Several of the instances of ridicule were jokes. A brief article under Russia in the Foreign News section (5/3/48, p. 30) was headlined "The Working Class." The article repeated the latest Soviet joke: Of three Soviet workmen one was five minutes early, one five minutes late, and the third on time. The three were tried for toadyism, sabotage, and the formalist-bureaucratic approach.

A second joke had Stalin murdering two rows of people because a person who sneezed during his speech refused to admit it. When the person in the third row owned up, Stalin said, "Gesundheit."

Another joke appeared in the "Atomic Age" subsection of International and was headlined "The Trick" (6/9/48, p. 29). The joke had Ivan saying how Russia will have atomic weapons in 1952 and will then carry five bombs in "stout suitcases" to "knock out Britain." Boris responded: "That will do the trick all right, if only by 1952 we will be able to make five suitcases." The Russians here also lacked an American characteristic: efficiency.

Sometimes the ridicule stemmed from the tongue-in-cheek tone of the piece. An example of this was a brief piece in the Music section (*Time*, 3/1/48, p. 34). The article told how a recalcitrant Soviet composer had recanted after being "spanked" by the party. The ridicule inherent in the piece was underscored by the headline, reading "Joyous New Opportunity."

In most instances, the ridicule found in the sample made the point that the Soviet Union was no place to be: the country was repressive, restrictive, murderous, inefficient, warlike, and dishonest. But, of course, it's all in fun....

As with ridicule, but to a far lesser extent, the use of negative attributional bias proved a convenient way of framing Russia in the light of "enemy." There were forty such instances in the sample.

No such tentativeness existed in terms of the attribution of American vs. un-American characteristics to the Soviet Union. As Table #5 indicates, nineteen attributions of American characteristics occurred in the sample versus 175 un-American characteristics. In the year 1947 alone there were seventy-three such attributions.

What was most un-American about the Soviet Union, according to *Time*, was its lack of freedom and democracy, the inability of the people to exercise their will. Over and over again references were made to censorship, to the lack of religious freedom, to purges, to concentration camps, to forced labor, to a slave and police state, and to the Soviet Union as violating the autonomy of other countries.

These references were sprinkled throughout *Time*. An article under the Music section called "Get in Tune" told of how Shostakovich had been dismissed from the Moscow Conservatory faculty because his music displeased Politburo powers-that-be (*Time*, 4/5/48, p. 64). Like musicians, writers and scientists were also described as under the control of the country's top leadership.

The lack of basic freedoms in the Soviet Union was also emphasized by references to it as a "police" or "slave" state. Often the references actually had to do with the Soviet Union by extension only. An article under France in the Foreign News section, dealt with the French Communists' political gains and referred to the possibility of France becoming a "Communist police state on the Russian model" (*Time*, 9/2/46, pp. 29-32). An article on foreign relations (*Time*, 9/2/46, pp. 15-16) referred to Soviet attempts to "bring Turkey within its orbit of slave states."

Russia as a slave state was a popular theme in the Books section. One example of this occurred in a piece entitled "Nothing to Lose but Their Chains," a review of

*Forced Labor in Soviet Russia* by David J. Dallin and Boris Nicolaevsky (*Time*, 9/1/47, pp. 84 and 86). A sentence in the lead paragraph read: "The reality is that the Soviet economy rests squarely on a basis of slave labor and that the Soviet Union is the greatest slave state in history." One author concluded that "Soviet slave-labor camps contain not less than 12,000,000 men, women, and children," but noted that other estimates "have soared as high as thirty million." Slave labor was recruited by the secret police who received arrest quotas from party leadership. The slaves were "political offenders" trying to exercise their rights: "A political offender need not be a man or woman who wants to toss a bomb at Stalin, but merely one who tells a disrespectful joke about him."

The point of this kind of coverage basically is the choice of focus. That is, *Time* here chose to review a book dealing with a negative aspect of Soviet life a decade earlier. *Time* could just as easily have reviewed a book on, for instance, the Bolshoi Ballet. As George Gerbner (1969) noted, in message systems "emphasis 'structures the agenda' of public conception and discourse" (Gerbner, 145). In framing an enemy, as in framing a friend, emphasis is everything.

In addition to the attributing of un-American characteristics, there are of course numerous other ways of putting an enemy in a unfavorable light. One of *Time's* most frequently used techniques in regard to the Soviet Union was that of alluding to it as aggressive, warlike or generally threatening. Often these references were phrased in terms of a contrast to a peace-loving, helpful United States.

Again and again the Soviet Union's capability if not preference for going to war was referred to. In an article under the Atomic Age subsection of the International section, Dr. Harold Urey, an American atomic scientist speculated, "When the Russians can make atomic bombs...war will be inevitable" (*Time*, 7/7/47, p. 24). The assumption underlying this statement was that the United States, already

in possession of the atomic bomb, would not, of course, make war. In an article headlined "Odds on Peace" (*Time*, 4/5/48, p. 17), Defense Secretary James Forrestal compared the situation in Berlin to the situation in Munich with Hitler. "But the odds are not yet on Russia or war," Forrestal said, "the odds are still on the U.S. and peace...." An article on the United Nations (*Time*, 7/2/45, pp. 20-21) noted that peace was what all nations wanted. The piece then concluded, "If it fails, there is always the Red Army."

Even when the situation being reported involved aggression potential on both sides, the choice of words helped frame the Soviet Union as the great aggressor. A good example of this was an article speculating that a civil war in China might draw both the Soviet Union and the United States into it (*Time*, 9/3/45, p. 25). "Russia and the U.S. might take sides, either in actual combat or the division of China into a Russian-*dominated* northern half and a U.S.-*protected* southern half." (Italics mine.) Later *Time* referred to "British-*influenced* Tibet," in contrast to "Russian-*dominated* Outer Mongolia."

Russia as a threat to the entire world was also a repeated theme in the Cold War rhetoric. Probably the most sustained use of a metaphor in the entire sample came in an article entitled "What Does Russia Want?" (*Time*, 4/1/46, p. 27). Russia's threat to the globe was pictured as a disease, the "Communist contagion," in text and graphics. The piece, which ran the entire page, had twenty-one unfavorable references to Russia. Russia's influence was seen even in a French election: "...a Communist victory in France would push the western world's frontier with Russia back from the Elbe to the Atlantic" (*Time*, 6/3/46, pp. 29-32). An article reviewing "the postwar Russian" assault, described as "a flood," framed Russia as an enemy to just about everybody. Noting that the "Russian flood" of 1946 had been contained, *Time* listed the many men who had labored on "the dam that held it." These included not only

the leaders of America, England, France, Austria, the Netherlands, and Belgium but also "MacArthur in Japan" and "Chiang Kai-shek in China."

Sometimes, in its zeal to frame the Soviet Union as a major threat to world peace, *Time* consciously or unconsciously departed from the truth. An article on the tense German situation in the August 5, 1946 (p. 28) noted that the Soviet Union had been "largely responsible for the split occupation of Germany." In fact, as *Time* itself had reported, the dismemberment of Germany had come under discussion at the highest levels of U.S. foreign policy decision-making long before the end of the war.

Part of the Soviet's threat, as with all threats, came from its "differentness," not only from the United States, but in general. *Time* particularly emphasized this "differentness" in its headlines, such as "The Other Sides of the World," "From the Other World," and "A Peek through the Curtain." Another way of emphasizing the Soviet Union as "other" was to report attacks on it by others. An example of this, headlined "Solidarity" (*Time*, 11/4/46, pp. 34-35), detailed British Prime Minister Clement Atlee's attack on Russia and Communism for the lack of liberty and democracy.

Several conclusions may be drawn from *Time's* coverage of the Soviet Union during the latter half of the 1940s. For one thing, the data indicates, that coverage was basically neutral. Allowing for the increases and decreases of positive and negative references from year to year, the majority of references during the four-and-a-half year period were neutral ones.

Nonetheless, a clear picture of Soviet enmity can be seen in the pages of the news magazine. This was accomplished in a variety of ways: by emphasizing the negative aspects of the Soviet Union; by specifically associating it with the negative, and by using propagandistic and other questionable journalistic techniques to put the newly disfavored nation in a bad light. One fact stands out: to a disquieting extent, *Time's* coverage of the Soviet Union paralleled the interests and intent of the

U.S. government as it embarked on a diplomatic policy of Cold War. And, in so far as *Time* presented that policy and position without truly examining and criticizing it for its readers, *Time* failed to fulfill the key role of the press in a democracy, that of adversarity with the government.

## APPENDIX

A panel of three independent coders was used to check the reliability and consistency of the researcher's judgments. The coders were given a random sample of articles from the entire study.

Overall intercoder agreement was computed with a scheme developed by Speigelman, Terwillinger and Fearing as seen in O.R. Holsti, *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), p. 14. In this scheme, complete agreement among all four coders (including the researcher), would be a 4-0 judgment and given a score of 1. Complete disagreement, a 2-1-1 judgment, would be given a score of 4. Thus 1 represented the greatest amount of intercoder agreement and 4 the least.

Intercoder agreement for coding references as favorable, unfavorable, or neutral was 1.39. Observed agreement between the researcher and each of the coders, also known as the Co-Efficient of Reliability (Holsti, p. 141) or C.R., was also determined. The researcher's C.R. with Coder #1 was .85, with Coder #2, .82, and with Coder #3, .81.

C.R. for questionable headlines was also determined. Between the researcher and Coders #1, 2 and 3 respectively, the C.R. was .98, .92, and .93. If these categories seem unusually high, one must remember Holsti's caution that agreement between coders should increase as the number of possible categories decrease. For references there were only three possible categories and for questionable headlines, only two ("yes" or "no").

Intercoder agreement on the judging of American characteristics was 1.211. C.R. between the researcher and Coders #1, 2 and 3 respectively were .96, .84, and .98. On un-American characteristics intercoder agreement was 1.64 with the C.R. between researcher and Coders #1, 2 and 3 being .74, .79, and .76.

Intercoder agreement on shared goals was 1.66. C.R. between the researcher and Coders #1, 2, and 3 respectively was .78, .74, and .82

Intercoder agreement on ridicule was 1.19. C.R. between the researcher and Coders #1, 2 and 3 respectively was .91, .85, and .94.

Intercoder agreement on excessive brutality was 1.55. C.R. between the researcher and coders #1, 2 and 3 respectively was .86, .79, and .81.

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