

WEAPON OF WAR, TOOL OF PEACE:  
U.S. FOOD DIPLOMACY IN  
POSTWAR GERMANY

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by  
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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines U.S. food diplomacy in occupied Germany. It argues that the origins of food aid as an anti-communist strategy are located in postwar Germany. Believing a punitive occupation was the best insurance against future conflict, Allied leadership agreed to enforce a lower standard of living on Germany and did not allow relief agencies to administer aid to German civilians. Facing a growing crisis in the U.S. Zone, President Truman authorized food imports and permitted voluntary agencies to operate in 1946. This decision changed the tenor of the occupation and provided the foundation to an improved U.S.-German relationship. It also underscored the value of American food power in the emerging contest with the Soviet Union. Food served as a source of soft power. It bridged cultures and fostered new relationships while reinforcing notions of American exceptionalism.

Officials recognized that humanitarian aid complemented foreign policy objectives. American economic security was reflected in their abundance of food, and the dispersal of this food to war-torn Europe, especially a former enemy, made a strong statement about the future. As relations with the Soviet Union soured, policymakers increasingly relied on American food power to encourage German embrace of western values. Occupation officials portrayed food relief as an expression of democratic ideals, emphasizing the universality of Freedom from Want and focusing on well-nourished German children as the hope for future peace. American food fostered the spread of liberal democracy but its dispersal also contained communism.

This work bridges diplomatic history and food studies to investigate the consequences and significance of the transnational food exchange. Food aid had layered political, cultural, and emotional implications. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach, this dissertation examines the role of compassion in diplomacy and the symbolism inherent in food to demonstrate the lasting political currency of humanitarian aid. Paying close attention to the food relationships that emerge between Germans and Americans allows one to better gauge the value of U.S. food aid as a propaganda tool. Food embodies American power; it offers a medium for understanding the experience and internalization of the occupation by Americans and Germans alike.

Food aid began as emergency relief in 1946, reflecting the transition from a punitive to rehabilitative occupation policy. Recognizing Germany's need for stability and self-sufficiency Military Government officials then urged economic recovery. Food aid was an important piece for German economic recovery, with supporters emphasizing Germany's potential contribution toward European recovery. The positive press generated by the Marshall Plan and Allied airlift of Berlin contributed to the growing significance of propaganda in the emerging Cold War. Food relief was both good policy and good public relations, providing a narrative that cast the United States as a benevolent power in a rapidly changing world. Food aid to Germany underscored America's humanitarian obligations, conscripted emotion into the Cold War, and swayed public opinion on the home front and with the former enemy.

For Omi and Pop-pop.

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Researching and writing is largely a solitary endeavor. Over the many years I devoted to this project, however, I built a network of friends and colleagues to whom I am greatly indebted. This dissertation brought me both joy and frustration, but it also helped me grow as a scholar and more importantly as a person. It opened the door to many fantastic opportunities. I quite literally traveled the globe. I rekindled relationships with family in Germany; I visited the International Committee of the Red Cross Headquarters in Geneva; I read love letters in dusty archives; I rifled through photos that made my heart heavy; I toured presidential homes; I charmed my way onto military bases; I climbed mountains made of WWII rubble; I drank too many Radlers; and I even hung out with the Candy Bomber. The last eight years were an adventure.

It took a village to get me here and at the heart of that village was my committee, who were endlessly patient with me. Petra Goedde was more than an advisor. She knew when I needed to be pushed, she let me despair when I needed to despair, she celebrated all my victories, and her confidence in me never wavered. In the final weeks before submission, when I thought it wouldn't happen, Petra ensured it did. Petra is the MVP. Richard Immerman made me a better writer. He reminded me that less is more and simplicity is always more convincing. It took a while, but I even reduced my reliance on passive voice. I joined Temple to work with Richard at the Center for the Study of Force and Diplomacy (CENFAD). CENFAD's vibrant intellectual community molded me into the scholar I am today. I'd also like to acknowledge Beth Bailey, David Farber, Rita Kruger, Jay Lockenour, and Ben Talton for their insights and tutelage. Vangie Campbell deserves special recognition for all the work she does as department coordinator.

Beyond Temple's walls I was fortunate to build relationships with several people who served as mentors and friends. This project began as a research paper in Susan Carruther's Media at War class at Rutgers-Newark. Susan had never heard of the Candy Bomber and her genuine interest led me to pursue the topic in my MA thesis. Research on the airlift spawned the dissertation. Along the way, I was fortunate to meet Kurt Piehler and the amazing group behind the Institute on World War II and the Human Experience at Florida State. Kurt's enthusiasm is infectious. He has been a champion of this project from the very beginning. Likewise, my membership in the Society for the Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) exposed me to a sea of genuine, engaging, supportive colleagues. Amy Sayward has been particularly kind and insightful, serving on several panels with me, introducing me to behind the scenes work with SHAFR, and graciously agreeing to serve as my outside reader.

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CENFAD, the Institute on World War II and the Human Experience, and the Roosevelt and Truman Presidential Libraries provided travel grants. The German Historical Institute in Washington, DC, and SHAFR awarded fellowships that allowed me to travel across the country and the Atlantic to gather valuable source material. CENFAD's Thomas Davis Fellowship eased me into graduate school that first year without the stress of teaching. Meanwhile, the Center for the Humanities at Temple (CHAT) provided me with financial support at the end of my graduate career and even a part-time job. The Leibniz Institute of European History (IEG) granted me a desk and bed, so that I could simmer in my sources and draft the early chapters.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat;  
if he is thirsty, give him water to drink.

--Proverbs 25:21

Attending Christmas Eve mass in 1945, eleven-year-old Dagmar Weiss Snodgrass was approached by an American soldier, who, smiling, presented a giant duffel bag of wrapped gifts. The young girl selected a package and raced home to open the prize. Inside was a chocolate bar; not just any chocolate bar, but her first chocolate bar in memory. Three years later, she was once again the recipient of American generosity, stumbling upon a parachute of half-melted chocolate dropped by the Candy Bomber over blockaded Berlin in the summer of 1948. For Dagie and other children in postwar Germany, the sweets gifted them by American soldiers and airmen came to represent freedom. Meeting Gail Halvorsen, aka the Candy Bomber, for the first time in 2015, Snodgrass gifted him a Hershey bar and told him, “you were the Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, all of the things we had been missing in the years that were wartime.”<sup>1</sup> Countless young Berliners had similar stories, shared in fan mail sent to Tempelhof and Rhein-Main Air Base, recorded in personal memoirs, and even published in children’s books decades later.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kimberly Barker, “Berlin Woman Shares Stories of ‘Candy Bomber,’” *The Joplin Globe*, 8 November 2018; Dagmar Weiss Snodgrass, conversation with the author, 7 April 2019. For more see Dagmar Weiss Snodgrass, *Uncle Wiggly Wings: My Love and Admiration for Berlin’s Candy Bomber* (Middletown, DE: A Writer for Life LLC, 2018).

<sup>2</sup> Halvorsen returned to Berlin as commander of Tempelhof Air Base in the early 1970s where he reconnected with several Berliners who remembered his candy drops

The children of '48 were not alone. German children throughout the U.S. Zone found themselves the recipients of American kindness and compassion in the postwar period. American benevolence appeared in the form of a Hershey bar or stick of Wrigley's chewing gum shared by a passing G.I., the cocoa provided in school feedings orchestrated by the American Friends Service Committee, or the pound of raisins included in CARE packages. In addition to sweets consumed by children, the U.S. government shipped countless tons of wheat, corn, lard, and soybeans in an effort to prevent disease and unrest in the occupied territory.

Germans and Americans alike credit the occupation for providing the foundation to an improved U.S.-German relationship, one that reverberated throughout the trans-Atlantic community.<sup>3</sup> Navigating the rubble of postwar Europe, the United States

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from their childhood. He remained an advocate for similar goodwill acts in retirement, including drops of candy over Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo in the 1990s. His zeal for humanitarianism never wanes, and the 98-year-old maintains a busy schedule of appearances in the United States and abroad, his service continuing to inspire. His papers, housed at Brigham Young University, include countless colorful fan letters from German children.

<sup>3</sup> The literature on German-American relations is vast. For a broad sampling see John H. Backer, *The Decision to Divide Germany: American Foreign Policy in Transition* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1978); Eugene Davidson, *The Death and Life of Germany: An Account of the American Occupation* (New York: Knopf, 1959); Carolyn Eisenberg, *Drawing the Line: The American Decision to Divide Germany, 1944–1949* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Camilo Erlichman and Christopher Knowles, ed., *Transforming Occupation in the Western Zones of Germany: Politics, Everyday Life and Social Interactions, 1945–55* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018); Brian C. Etheridge, *Enemies to Allies: Cold War Germany and American Memory* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2016); Detlef Junker, ed., *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War, 1945–1990: A Handbook*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Frank A. Ninkovich, *Germany and the United States: The Transformation of the German Question since 1945* (Boston: Twayne, 1988); and James McAllister, *No Exit: American and the German Problem, 1943–1954* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002).

assumed a leadership role in relief and recovery, investing in the future rather than retreating from the world stage. Arguments for German food relief coalesced around a concern for future generations, relying on rhetoric and imagery that united nutritional needs with democratic intentions. U.S. policymakers recognized that not only would food win the war, but it would play a key role in shaping the peace. The Cold War increased policymakers' reliance on food aid as a diplomatic tool, recognizing that "freedom means nothing to a man with an empty stomach."<sup>4</sup> American agricultural surplus provided emergency relief to devastated populations and stabilized European economies, but it also served as an invaluable source of propaganda. Food was a source of soft power; its dispersal accomplished military and political objectives, reinforced notions of American exceptionalism, and encouraged emotional connections that won hearts and minds on both sides of the Atlantic.

While the success of German food relief appears a forgone conclusion, it almost failed to materialize. The Airlift and accompanying stories of American benevolence were predated by a dramatically different narrative that cast the United States in a much harsher light. Many Americans—policymakers and civilians alike—supported a hard peace, believing a punitive occupation that stripped the nation of its ability to wage war was a necessity. Supporting this policy was an existing ban on the import of food, established from the outset of the conflict and enforced by the World War I era Trading with the Enemy Act. Postwar relief was not extended to Germany, with neither the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) nor private aid

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<sup>4</sup> Eleanor Roosevelt, "My Day, July 24, 1950," *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Digital Edition* (2017), George Washington University, <https://erpapers.columbian.gwu.edu/my-day>.

agencies permitted to provide food or other assistance to German civilians. Germany had never been self-sufficient. Hitler's food policies coupled with the unprecedented destruction of cities and transportation networks resulted in widespread food shortages. The growing crisis threatened military security, and, in early 1946, President Truman authorized food imports and permitted voluntary agencies to work with German civilians. Yet shortages continued to plague the western zones of occupation throughout 1947, with official rations providing inconsistent calorie counts and, more problematically, insufficient nutrients.

American humanitarian assistance strengthened the bond between the United States and Germany. However, existing scholarship fails to address the central question of *why* American policymakers and military leadership reversed course and endorsed relief efforts for German civilians.<sup>5</sup> Popular memory reinforced this paradox, with scant attention paid to the early occupation when ration cuts, nutritional deficiencies, and hunger posed serious threats to public health, military security, political stability, and economic recovery. Failing adequately to analyze American motives undervalues the significance of this policy change.

This dissertation remedies that omission by exploring the symbolic power of foodstuffs alongside practical concerns over health, safety, and economic recovery. It

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<sup>5</sup> German historians have written about the significance and legacy of organizations such as CRALOG and CARE. Few works, however, examine Military Government's food policy during the occupation. See Philipp Baur, "From Victim to Partner: CARE and the Portrayal of Postwar Germany," in *Die amerikanische Reeducation-Politik nach 1945: Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven auf "America's Germany,"* ed. Katharina Gerund and Heike Paul (Bielefeld: Verlag, 2015), 115–140; and Heike Wieters, *The NGO CARE and Food Aid from America, 1945–80: 'Showered with kindness?'* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 1–42.

argues that the origins of food aid as an anti-Communist strategy are located in the American response to Germany's postwar food crisis. Food relief, both its dispersal and consumption, was conditioned by the geopolitical circumstances of the early Cold War. Historians identify the 1950s as a watershed for development, with U.S. food aid emerging as a viable tool of containment.<sup>6</sup> American surplus, accompanied by technical assistance and economic aid, was used to promote the development of nations across the Global South. This project complicates that narrative, arguing that U.S. occupied Germany served as the test case for Cold War era development programs. American food represented stability, prosperity, and strength; it was used to reward anti-Communists while reinforcing the image of America as a land of plenty.

The experience in Germany strengthened the awkward relationship between American humanitarian aims and security interests, and cast it in a new light, eschewing

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<sup>6</sup> Scholarship on modernization and development is flourishing in recent years. See Begüm Adalet, *Hotels and Highways: The Construction of Modernization Theory in Cold War Turkey* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018); Nick Cullather, *The Hungry World: America's Cold War Battle against Poverty in Asia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010); David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); Daniel Immerwahr, *Thinking Small: The United States and the Lure of Community Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015); Ethan B. Kapstein, *Seeds of Stability: Land Reform and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Michael Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution: Modernization, Development, and U.S. Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the Present* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011); Amanda Kay McVety, *Enlightened Aid: U.S. Development as Foreign Aid Policy in Ethiopia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Stephen J. Macekura and Erez Manela, ed., *The Development Century: A Global History* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Timothy Nunan, *Humanitarian Invasion: Global Development in Cold War Afghanistan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016); and Corinna R. Unger, *International Development: A Postwar History* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018).

the moralist tone of earlier humanitarian endeavors. Food was freedom. American responses to the German food problem underscored the political, economic, and most importantly, cultural significance of U.S. food diplomacy. Tracing the evolution of food aid from emergency relief to propaganda tool and psychological weapon in America's Cold War arsenal, this project argues that the experience in Germany emphatically demonstrated the potential of food relief, leaving a legacy that informs current debates over USAID and the United States military's role in disaster relief. With the future of foreign assistance programs uncertain, there is much we can learn from experiences in occupied Germany where the U.S. cultivated an image that relied as much on beneficence as military might.<sup>7</sup>

### **Food and War**

Food's importance in the postwar era was due in large part to its wartime significance. As historian Lizzie Collingham deftly illustrated, food was one of the primary causes of World War II, driving Japan and Germany to pursue aggressive expansionist policies in an attempt to improve self-sufficiency. Both Allied and Axis nations implemented strategies intended to deny their enemy access to foodstuffs, reorganizing their economies and exploiting existing resources in an unprecedented

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<sup>7</sup> In a speech before the United Nations General Assembly in September 2018, President Trump reiterated concerns previously laid out in his State of the Union that the recipients of U.S. foreign assistance may not "have our interests at heart." While the U.S. remains the largest foreign aid donor in the world, Trump highlighted the asymmetric nature of this relationship, bemoaning that "few give anything to us." Donald Trump, "Address to the United Nations General Assembly," 19 September 2017, Presidential Speeches: Donald Trump Presidency, The Miller Center, University of Virginia, <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/september-19-2017-address-united-nations-general-assembly>.

fashion. Food was at the core of the wartime economy, with shortages threatening not only military operations, but also labor productivity and civilian morale on the home front.<sup>8</sup> In his study on the First World War, Avner Offer emphasizes the relationship between food supplies and civilian morale, citing Ivan Bloch's six-volume *The War of the Future*, published in St. Petersburg in 1898. Bloch argued that advances in weaponry gave an advantage to defenders, resulting in stalemates with the potential to last for years, testing civilian endurance and economic capacities: "I regard the economic factor as the dominant and decisive element in the matter. You cannot fight unless you can eat, and at the present moment you cannot feed your people and wage a great war."<sup>9</sup> Unlike other Allied nations, the United States was uniquely positioned to face this challenge, possessing the requisite resources and technology to increase agricultural output.<sup>10</sup> Devised of necessity but guided by President Franklin D. Roosevelt's economic vision, the U.S. government's food programs transformed American society.

The latter half of the nineteenth century witnessed a dramatic change in the food habits of both Europeans and Americans thanks to technological advances and improvements in transportation. The price of foodstuffs declined, the middle-class grew, and diets shifted from primarily potatoes and grains to meat and dairy.<sup>11</sup> Nutritional

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<sup>8</sup> Lizzie Collingham, *The Taste of War: World War II and the Battle for Food* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2012), 8.

<sup>9</sup> I.S. Bloch, *Is War Now Impossible?*, being an abridgement of *The War of the Future in its Technical, Economic and Political Relationships* (1899), lx–lxi. Quoted in Offer, *The First World War: An Agrarian Interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 11.

<sup>10</sup> Collingham, *The Taste of War*, 9.

<sup>11</sup> Offer, *The First World War*, 40.

science emerged as a field around the same time, with physiological chemists identifying the roles of macronutrients and gradually learning the importance of vitamins. French chemist Nicolas Clément identified the calorie as a unit of energy in 1824, but it was introduced to Americans in the late 1880s by Wilbur Olin Atwater.<sup>12</sup> Officials quickly seized on calories as a way to politicize eating habits. “Americans constructed the calorie,” explains historian Nick Cullather, “by giving it practical value, standardizing it and embedding it in systems of distribution and administration.”<sup>13</sup> The discovery of vitamins similarly changed Americans’ relationships with food, complicating the notion that calories were the most significant measure of a diet and highlighting the importance of fruits and vegetables. Food scholar Harvey Levenstein refers to this period in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century as the Newer Nutrition, when scientists and medical professionals drew connections between specific diseases and vitamin deficiencies.<sup>14</sup>

Food reformers and progressives rallied around a balanced diet as a necessity for both the individual and the nation. World War I served to augment the patriotic implications of proper nutrition, with many advocating a rational diet as essential to the war effort, promoting foods based on caloric content and nutritional value rather than

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<sup>12</sup> Atwater invented the calorimeter in 1896, sealing a graduate student inside while the device recorded his food intake and labor output in units of thermal energy. His experiments garnered national attention. Nick Cullather, “The Foreign Policy of the Calorie,” *The American Historical Review* 112, no. 2 (April 2007): 340.

<sup>13</sup> Cullather, “The Foreign Policy of the Calorie,” 339.

<sup>14</sup> Harvey Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 147–160. See also Helen Zoe Veit, *Modern Food, Moral Food: Self-Control, Science, and the Rise of Modern American Eating in the Early Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 44–50.

taste alone.<sup>15</sup> Historian Helen Veit argues that the origins of current American food understandings are rooted in the bureaucratic and social change that accompanied American participation in World War I, including the creation of the Food Administration and the implementation and widespread support of voluntary conservation. Under Herbert Hoover's leadership, the Food Administration launched a campaign to convince Americans to reduce food waste. Comprised of nutritionists, agricultural scientists, and home economists, the Food Administration promoted meal alternatives and challenged Americans to 'Meatless Mondays' and 'Wheatless Wednesdays'. The Food Administration was disbanded after the Armistice and its team of experts found new platforms for their arguments on a balanced diet in universities, restaurants, food manufacturing, and the USDA's Bureau of Home Economics.<sup>16</sup>

The American diet underwent similar transformations during the Second World War, with nutrition and agricultural surplus intimately connected to national defense. Officials recognized that they must "make America strong by making Americans stronger."<sup>17</sup> The war pulled American agriculture out of depression, requiring unprecedented levels of production and faith in the democratic nature of food dispersal and consumption.<sup>18</sup> American propaganda often portrayed sacrifice and duty in individual

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<sup>15</sup> Veit, *Modern Food*, 50.

<sup>16</sup> Jane Ziegelman and Andrew Coe, *A Square Meal: A Culinary History of the Great Depression* (New York: HarperCollins, 2016), 48, Kindle.

<sup>17</sup> M.L. Wilson, "Nutrition and Defense," *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 17 (January 1947): 13–14. Quoted in Harvey Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty: A Social History of Eating in Modern America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 64.

<sup>18</sup> For more on changes in American food culture during and after the Second World War see Anastacia de Salcedo, *Combat-Ready Kitchen: How the US Military*

terms, however, food offered an opportunity to highlight the communal aspects of democratic obligation. The war demanded austerity measures, but food rationing contradicted the notion of America as a land of plenty. Conserving food and complying with government regulations provided citizens with an opportunity to fulfill their civic obligations but it also, as food historian Amy Bentley demonstrates, instilled in them a sense of patriotism.<sup>19</sup> Ration books boldly declared, “This is your Government’s guarantee of your fair share of goods made scarce by war.”<sup>20</sup> This guarantee reflected Roosevelt’s vision for the future where Freedom from Want was more than an ideal; it was a contractual obligation between a government and its citizens. By war’s end, the United States was producing one-tenth of all the world’s food, with production of wheat, meat, milk, and rice at all-time highs.<sup>21</sup>

While Americans marinated in postwar abundance—and some would argue extravagance—American allies faced a dramatically different set of circumstances.

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*Shapes the Way You Eat* (New York: Current, 2015); Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty*; Laura Shapiro, *Something from the Oven: Reinventing Dinner in 1950s America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005); Brian Wansink, “Changing Eating Habits on the Home Front: Lost Lessons from World War II Research,” *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing* 21, no. 1 (2002): 90–99; and Mei-ling Yang, “Creating the Kitchen Patriot: Media Promotion of Food Rationing and Nutrition Campaigns on the American Home Front during World War II,” *American Journalism* 22, no. 3 (2005): 55–75.

<sup>19</sup> See Amy Bentley, *Eating for Victory: Food Rationing and the Politics of Domesticity* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998). For more on wartime sacrifice and citizenship see Mark H. Leff, “The Politics of Sacrifice on the American Home Front in World War II,” *Journal of American History* 77 (March 1991): 1296–1318.

<sup>20</sup> United States Office of Price Administration, “War Ration Book Two,” Ration Coupons on the Home Front, 1942–1945, Digital Collections, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University Libraries, <https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/r3mk65j8m>.

<sup>21</sup> Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty*, 96.

European nations, devastated by years of war, struggled to regain control over food supplies in peace. Not only did total war disrupt the production and consumption of food, it drastically altered the allocation and distribution of food resources.<sup>22</sup> The stark contrast between the United States and its Allies was not lost on Americans, nor were the long-term complications posed by the threat of global famine. Congress and the American public, however, were hesitant to assume the financial burden of relief and recovery. Nevertheless, by the end of 1947 the United States pledged millions to European emergency relief and economic recovery, projecting food power abroad and cultivating “American alimentary exceptionalism.”<sup>23</sup> Many recognized that, “the United States is not loved or hated because it is a citadel of political liberty . . . [but] by its ability and willingness to contribute from its own comfortable fat to strengthen Europe’s thin and shivering frame.”<sup>24</sup> Others saw Europe’s material problems as an opportunity to underscore links between America and abundance, calories and capitalism, with bread made from Midwest grain serving as a symbol of democracy’s promise.

The food crisis in postwar Germany was particularly acute and propelled the nation to the forefront of international debates on relief, recovery, and rehabilitation.

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<sup>22</sup> For more on Allied food experiences see Ian Mosby, *Food Will Win the War: The Politics, Culture, and Science of Food on Canada’s Home Front* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015); William Moskoff, *The Bread of Affliction: Food Supply in the USSR during World War II* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990); and Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain: Rationing, Controls, and Consumption, 1939–1955* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

<sup>23</sup> Aaron Bobrow-Strain, “Making White Bread by the Bomb’s Early Light: Anxiety, Abundance, and Industrial Food Power in the Early Cold War,” *Food and Foodways* 19, no. 1–2 (2011): 74–97.

<sup>24</sup> Hamilton Fish Armstrong, “Europe Revisited,” *Foreign Affairs* 25, no. 4 (July 1947): 538.

There is excellent scholarship on U.S.-German relations during the occupation and Cold War, exploring how changing postwar circumstances shaped identities and forged new alliances. These histories are grounded in a rich documentary record, but few examine food's role cultivating these relationships—the emotional and cultural consequences of food exchange.<sup>25</sup> There remains a glaring omission in the historiography, with few scholars exploring how existing policy contributed to the food crisis in the first year of occupation.<sup>26</sup>

The U.S. occupation witnessed food's transition from weapon of war to tool of peace and back again. The shifting Allied response to German hunger signaled the emergence of a global language of human rights, applied to friend and foe.<sup>27</sup> Blending the personal with the political, historian Atina Grossmann argues that food rations calibrated

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<sup>25</sup> For more on the relationship between the U.S. military and German civilians see Petra Goedde, *GIs and Germans: Culture, Gender and Foreign Relations, 1945–1949* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003); Atina Grossmann, *Jews, Germans, and Allies: Close Encounters in Occupied Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); Maria Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins: The German-American Encounter in 1950s West Germany* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Thomas W. Maulucci, Jr. and Detlef Junker, ed., *GIs in Germany: The Social, Economic, Cultural, and Political History of the American Military Presence* (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute, 2013); Adam R. Seipp, *Strangers in the Wild Place: Refugees, Americans, and a German Town, 1945–1952* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013); and John Willoughby, *Remaking the Conquering Heroes: The Social and Geopolitical Impact of Post-war American Occupation of Germany* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

<sup>26</sup> Richard Dominic Wiggers has approached this topic from the perspective of international humanitarian law, arguing that the U.S. should have provided aid sooner. Wiggers, “The United States and the Refusal to Feed German Civilians after World War II,” in *Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe*, ed. Steven Béla Várdy and T. Hunt Tooley (Boulder: Social Science Monographs distributed by Columbia University Press, 2003): 441–466.

<sup>27</sup> Alice Weinreb, “For the Hungry Have No Past nor Do They Belong to a Political Party: Debates over German Hunger after World War II,” *Central European History* 45 (March 2012): 50–78.

shifting standards of victimization and entitlement in occupied Germany.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, Alice Weinreb examines the relationship between food, hunger, and the modern state, exploring how German food security shaped political discourse during the twentieth century.<sup>29</sup> Both historians identify significant links between food policy, hunger, and identity during the messy transition from war to peace. Food and hunger did more than shape individual experiences in the postwar period, it facilitated the creation of new relationships and new power structures between Germans and Americans.

### **Food Aid**

The American relationship with food aid can be traced to the early years of the Republic, when political debate was rife with questions surrounding the moral obligation and constitutional legitimacy of state-sponsored aid.<sup>30</sup> The first official record of American relief activities occurred in 1794, when residents of Baltimore requested

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<sup>28</sup> Atina Grossmann, “Grams, Calories, and Food: Languages of Victimization, Entitlement, and Human Rights in Occupied Germany, 1945–1949,” *Central European History* 44, no. 1 (March 2011): 118–148.

<sup>29</sup> Alice Weinreb, *Modern Hungers: Food and Power in Twentieth-Century Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

<sup>30</sup> The classic work on American humanitarianism is Merle Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad: A History* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1963). For more see Julia Irwin, *Making the World Safe: The American Red Cross and a Nation’s Humanitarian Awakening* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Rachel M. McCleary, *Global Compassion: Private Voluntary Organizations and U.S. Foreign Policy since 1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Stephen R. Porter, *Benevolent Empire: U.S. Power, Humanitarianism, and the Worlds Dispossessed* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017); and Oliver Zunz, *Philanthropy in America: A History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012). For a recent overview of American food aid initiatives see Barry Riley, *The Political History of American Food Aid: An Uneasy Benevolence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

federal reimbursement for assistance provided to French refugees fleeing the slave revolt in Saint Domingue. Some of the most impassioned congressional debates surrounding early food aid concerned the American response to the Irish potato famine of 1845–49.<sup>31</sup> Those in favor of American intervention remarked that existing agricultural surplus could be used in a relief capacity and noted that private organizations lacked the financial and structural organization to provide aid on a large scale and in a timely manner. The opposition was quick to point out that while no one wanted to deny starving people food, this was a question of precedent, and ultimately the bill was voted down. Similar Congressional debates occurred during the Russian famine of 1891–92 and the Indian famine of 1897–99.<sup>32</sup>

Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, U.S. food aid was characterized by a reluctance to commit American dollars to foreign populations, but the arguments in favor of relief emphasized the United States' moral obligation as a Christian nation to intervene on behalf of the less fortunate. American political, economic, and cultural expansion at the turn-of-the-century was aided by the actions of missionaries and moral reformers who helped create conditions that facilitated American imperial ventures, with missionary charity enhancing the reputation of the U.S. abroad.<sup>33</sup> Historian Heather Curtis writes that

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<sup>31</sup> For more on American efforts during the Irish Potato Famine see Curti, *American Philanthropy*, 41–64.

<sup>32</sup> See Riley, *The Political History of American Food Aid*, 8–18.

<sup>33</sup> Ian Tyrrell, *Reforming the World: The Creation of America's Moral Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 4. For more on American expansion at the turn-of-the-century see Victoria de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006); Kristin Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Paul Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the*

for many, the United States' global power was rooted in a "belief in the country's special obligation and singular ability to aid the afflicted and advance the rights of humanity."<sup>34</sup>

Humanitarian assistance was linked to nationalism at a critical juncture in American history, with reformers arguing that the United States was divinely ordained to help the world's impoverished.

The turn-of-the-century also marked a growing political interest in international relief, with growing attempts to harness the diplomatic benefits and foreign trade incentives of U.S. humanitarian ventures. American relief efforts surged during World War One, with the American Red Cross assuming a leadership role in relief, the beginning of the American Friends Service Committee in 1917, and the creation Hoover's Commission for Relief in Belgium (CRB) providing aid to German occupied Belgium and France. The United States continued to provide food and other resources to Europe after the war, seeking greater political and economic stability under the guise of humanitarianism. Hoover later led the American Relief Administration (ARA), which provided aid to European nations recovering from the war and conducted politically

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*United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Louis A. Pérez, *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); and R. W. Rydell and Rob Kroes, *Buffalo Bill in Bologna: The Americanization of the World, 1869–1922* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

<sup>34</sup> Heather D. Curtis, *Holy Humanitarians: American Evangelicals and Global Aid* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018), 284. For more on the Protestant humanitarian tradition in the United States see David A. Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad: How Missionaries Tried to Change the World but Changed America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017).

controversial operations in Russia during the Civil War.<sup>35</sup> These efforts opened markets for American agricultural surpluses, but faced criticism when aid was withheld for political reasons, i.e. the refusal to feed Bolshevik states.<sup>36</sup>

The humanitarian impulse in U.S. foreign aid policies reflected a Judeo-Christian tradition, but food aid was also used for political leverage, and as the Cold War progressed it was increasingly embraced as a psychological weapon. The professionalization of the agriculture industry, birth of nutritional science, and technological advances all contributed to what Amy Sayward identified as a “growing transnational consensus” regarding agriculture’s importance in international relations.<sup>37</sup> Increased lobbying led to Roosevelt’s call for a United Nations Conference on Food and Agriculture in 1943, laying the groundwork for an organization that would improve agriculture production and provide greater accessibility to proper nutrition, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).<sup>38</sup> In the first decade of the FAO’s existence, the

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<sup>35</sup> For more on Hoover, the famine in Russia, and the politicization of food aid see Bertrand M. Patenaude, *The Big Show in Bololand: The American Relief Expedition to Soviet Russia in the Famine of 1921* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002).

<sup>36</sup> For more on American private aid in the interwar years see Daniel Roger Maul, “The Rise of a Humanitarian Superpower: American NGOs and International Relief, 1917–1945,” in *Internationalism, Imperialism and the Formation of the Contemporary World*, ed. M.B. Jerónimo and J.P. Monteiro (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 127–146.

<sup>37</sup> Amy L. Sayward, *The Birth of Development: How the World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization, and World Health Organization Have Changed the World, 1945-1965* (Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2006), 64.

<sup>38</sup> For a more detailed history of the FAO and UN World Food Programme see D. John Shaw, *The UN World Food Programme and the Development of Food Aid* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2001); and D. John Shaw, *World Food Security: A History since 1945* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007).

organization tried to ensure that the movement of food was determined by human need, rather than economic and political pressures. When the organization failed to achieve this objective, they focused efforts on modernizing Third World agricultural production methods, with improved health and greater agricultural stability deemed essential for peace and prosperity.<sup>39</sup>

While Roosevelt shepherded Freedom from Want from an American ideal to international aspiration, it was Harry S. Truman who institutionalized foreign aid as a key feature of U.S. foreign policy.<sup>40</sup> Truman believed the United States—guided by American values of generosity, empathy, and goodwill towards those in need—was uniquely positioned to use its economic and military strength to assist in the recovery of Europe. His support of foreign aid, however, was shaped by humanitarian principles *and* national security concerns. Truman and the State Department believed prosperity served as a bulwark to Communist influence. Foreign aid, whether it be in the form of food, funding, or technical assistance, helped contain communism. The Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan, both born in the early months of 1947, laid the foundation for a transformation in U.S. foreign policy that was realized in Truman’s 1949 inaugural address, where he introduced Point Four, “our program for peace and freedom.”<sup>41</sup> Point Four provided

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<sup>39</sup> Sayward, *Birth of Development*, 83.

<sup>40</sup> For a broad look at Truman’s foreign aid initiatives see Raymond H. Geselbracht, ed., *Foreign Aid and the Legacy of Harry S. Truman* (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2015).

<sup>41</sup> Harry S. Truman, “Inaugural Address,” 20 January 1949, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project* (hereafter cited as *TAPP*), <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/229929>.

technical skills, knowledge, and equipment to developing nations in an attempt to secure economic prosperity for the postcolonial world.

Eisenhower's State Department inherited the foreign assistance framework devised under Truman and quickly grasped the psychological significance of humanitarian assistance in Cold War battlefields across Europe and the developing world. Arguments in support of foreign assistance programs expanded to include economic self-interest alongside questions of national security. In July 1954, Eisenhower signed the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act (Public Law 480), commonly known as Food for Peace. PL 480 authorized the president to sell up to \$700 million in agricultural surplus to friendly nations. The foreign currencies used to pay for this surplus would then be used "to expand international trade, to encourage economic development, to purchase strategic materials, to pay United States obligations abroad, to promote collective strength, and to foster in other ways the foreign policy of the United States."<sup>42</sup>

Government-subsidized food exports solved the long-standing problem of American surplus, receiving widespread support in Congress. PL 480 also appealed to groups who advocated for expanding foreign assistance to counter Soviet aid in the developing world. When writing about Public Law 480, economist Vernon Ruttan introduces food aid as one of the most popular, yet controversial, programs of U.S. assistance, guided by the belief that, "a more prosperous and democratic world would

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<sup>42</sup> *Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954*, Public Law 480, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 68 (1954): 455, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-68/pdf/STATUTE-68-Pg454-2.pdf>.

also be a more secure world.”<sup>43</sup> Political economist Walt Rostow explained that it was ultimately a 1958 proposal for aid to India, written by Senators John F. Kennedy and John Sherman Cooper, which compelled the Eisenhower administration to acknowledge the importance of development aid to non-aligned nations.<sup>44</sup> In response to growing Cold War confrontations throughout the Global South, domestic agriculture policy was absorbed by foreign policy.<sup>45</sup> Campaigning for the presidency in 1960, John F. Kennedy introduced his plans for a radically expanded food aid program. Food for Peace offered an ideal platform to develop a permanent food aid program that addressed the dual problems of American agricultural surplus and global hunger, while checking Soviet expansionism.

### **Food Power**

This project explores the political, cultural, and emotional significance of American food relief in occupied Germany, providing the first in-depth study of U.S. food policy during the occupation. Postwar Germany served as the site of complex food negotiations between former enemies, former allies, and even former neighbors in

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<sup>43</sup> Vernon Ruttan, “The Politics of U.S. Food Aid Policy: A Historical Review,” in *Why Food Aid?*, ed. Vernon Ruttan (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 9.

<sup>44</sup> Walt Whitman Rostow, *Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Foreign Aid* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985). For more on U.S. aid to India see David C. Engerman, *The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).

<sup>45</sup> For more on PL 480 see Kristin Ahlberg, *Transplanting the Great Society: Lyndon Johnson and Food for Peace* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2008); and Riley, *The Political History of American Food Aid*, 168–212.

divided Berlin. Food is indicative of more than just “who we are,” writes food scholar Warren Belasco, but also “what we want to be,” and one sees this in occupied Germany.<sup>46</sup> Experiences with hunger and humanitarianism during the occupation contributed to the emergence of new ideas about ally and adversary, villain and victim. Food aid was both good policy and good public relations, providing a narrative that cast the United States as a benevolent power in a rapidly changing world. When Kennedy announced his plan for Food for Peace in 1960 he stated, “We recognize that food is strength, and food is peace, and food is freedom, and food is a helping hand to people around the world whose good will and friendship we want.”<sup>47</sup> The experience in Germany emphatically demonstrated the potential of food relief.

U.S. food relief restored stability and improved relations between the former enemies. This reliance on food aid reflected a growing acceptance of the merits of foreign assistance and humanitarian aid among policymakers. They recognized that the American cornucopia offered an alternative method for reconciling political differences, overcoming cultural barriers, and advancing security interests. Political scientist Bryan McDonald explains that Americans were “conditioned to see food as a critical component of national security efforts and to understand that security at home required deploying

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<sup>46</sup> Warren Belasco, “Food Matters: Perspectives on an Emerging Field,” in *Food Nations: Selling Taste in Consumer Society*, ed. Warren Belasco and Philip Scranton (New York: Routledge, 2002), 2.

<sup>47</sup> John F. Kennedy, “Remarks of Senator John F. Kennedy, Corn Palace, Mitchell, SD,” 22 September 1960, *TAPP*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=74154>.

American abundance abroad.”<sup>48</sup> Food exports strengthened American allies and increased American prestige. Food not only signified strength, but it also promoted peace, emerging as a valuable anti-Communist strategy.

In line with new scholarship in food studies that uses Foucault’s power concept, this project explores both the power of food, and the power relationships that developed as a result of specific feeding practices.<sup>49</sup> I adopt Paul Rockower’s definition of gastrodiploamacy to examine the intersections of food and public diplomacy, with food serving as a medium to bridge cultures. Rockower explains that like other forms of cultural diplomacy, “gastrodiploamacy also seeks to create a tangible, emotional and trans-rational connection . . . a transcendent connection that can be felt even across language barriers.”<sup>50</sup> Simply put, gastrodiploamacy wins hearts and minds through stomachs.

Food exemplified wartime for soldier and civilian alike—its presence necessary for supplying troops on the war front, fueling labor on the home front, maintaining morale, and preventing disease. However, food also offered emotional sustenance in both war and peace. Belasco explains that eating lies “at the core of our most intimate social relationships.”<sup>51</sup> Writing about the British Army in World War I, historian Rachel Duffet

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<sup>48</sup> Bryan L. McDonald, *Food Power: The Rise and Fall of the Postwar American Food System* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 28.

<sup>49</sup> See Jürgen Martschukat and Bryant Simon, ed., *Food, Power, and Agency* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017); Katharina Vester, *A Taste of Power: Food and American Identities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015).

<sup>50</sup> Paul Rockower, “The State of Gastrodiploamacy,” *Public Diplomacy Magazine* 11 (Winter 2014): 13.

<sup>51</sup> Warren Belasco, *Food: The Key Concepts* (Oxford: Berg, 2008), 1. See also Sidney Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Power, and the Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996).

states that food was the site of complex and contradictory emotional responses, “each and every day it provided a locus where the men were confronted with both the disturbing breaks and the reassuring continuities of their new environment.”<sup>52</sup> In the final weeks of the conflict, and extending for many months after, food served as a conduit between conqueror and conquered. Historian Katarzyna Cwiertka writes that, “war creates extraordinary circumstances of multicultural encounter for soldiers and civilians . . . The potential meaning of food at the front sharpens – it can become a weapon, an embodiment of the enemy, but also a token of hope, a soothing relief.”<sup>53</sup> One must consider the reception of aid and consumption of food just as much as its provision.

Food helped rehabilitate Germany—it reinforced efforts at democratization while providing proper nutrition for a new generation of young Germans eager to consume American foodstuffs. Key to this analysis is a discussion of the imagery Americans associated with defeated Germany and an exploration of the relationship between sentiment and humanitarianism. Examining the rhetoric and iconography of U.S. relief efforts enhances our understanding of the motives behind this momentous change in policy. Subjecting this imagery to further scrutiny yields important insights on shifting patterns of identification and representation. Images of smiling children receiving Hershey bars and chewing gum proved as compelling as photographs of malnourished children with distended bellies.

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<sup>52</sup> Rachel Duffet, *The Stomach for Fighting: Food and the Soldiers of the Great War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), 21.

<sup>53</sup> Katarzyna J. Cwiertka, “Sustaining and Comforting the Troops in the Pacific War,” in *Food in Zones of Conflict: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Paul Collinson and Helen Macbeth (New York: Berghahn Books, 2014), 133.

## Method and Organization

This dissertation adopts an interdisciplinary approach to explore the role of compassion in diplomacy and the symbolism inherent in food relief, while simultaneously underscoring the political power and cultural significance of food aid in the early Cold War. As a result, it is in conversation not only with foreign relations historians exploring aid policies and food diplomacy, but also scholars engaged in food studies, emotions, and humanitarianism. Utilizing Susan Sontag’s “iconography of suffering” and building upon historian Heide Fehrenbach’s recent discussion of humanitarian imagery, I explore American responses to the German food crisis and the role of compassion in diplomacy.<sup>54</sup> Arguments in favor of German relief frequently appealed to Americans’ natural humanitarian instincts, relying on stories of deprivation to stir empathy and provoke moral outrage. It was also important that recipients recognize this was American aid freely gifted. German expressions of gratitude confirmed their “buy-in” to this relationship and offered valuable publicity. Nutritional surveys offered one assessment of the success of U.S. food programs in Germany, but policymakers frequently pointed to the reception of these programs as an alternative measure.

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<sup>54</sup> Heide Fehrenbach, “Children and Other Civilians: Photography and the Politics of Humanitarian Image-Making,” in *Humanitarian Photography: A History*, ed. Heidi Fehrenbach and Davide Rodogno (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 165–199; Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Picador, 2003). For emotions in diplomacy see Frank Costigliola, “‘I Had Come as a Friend’: Emotion, Culture, and Ambiguity in the Formation of the Cold War, 1943–45,” *Cold War History* 1, no. 1 (August 2000): 103–128; and Todd H. Hall, *Emotional Diplomacy: Official Emotion on the International Stage* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015).

Much of the existing work on food aid provides a top-down analysis, exploring various administrations' policies and politics as they enlisted humanitarian aid in the ideological struggle against communism. There is great value in this literature. Food relief, however, is more than a policy—it is a complex transaction involving many different individuals. Rather than concentrate on policy-makers, the occupying forces, or relief workers, this project surveys the relationships that emerge among all parties—including the recipient population—resulting in a history that is both top-down and bottom-up and builds upon the work of anthropologists, like Margaret Mead, who first studied these feeding practices in the 1940s.<sup>55</sup>

This dissertation draws on material offering several perspectives of the food situation in Germany. Much of the research was conducted in the National Archives and presidential libraries of Roosevelt, Truman, and Eisenhower. These government archives housed documents that traced the evolution of occupation policy and presented the official perspective of the food problem and proposed solutions. The personal relationships that developed between Germans and Americans add another layer. Memoirs, autobiographies, oral histories, and correspondence provided a number of heartfelt reflections, amusing anecdotes, and painful truths. The records of CRALOG and CARE filled useful gaps on the logistics of American aid efforts and highlighted the growing significance of publicity. Equally important is the response of the American public to aid initiatives. U.S. newspapers, magazines, and public opinion polls chart the spectrum of disdain, indifference, hesitation, and finally widespread acceptance of food

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<sup>55</sup> Margaret Mead, "Food and Feeding in Occupied Territory," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 7, no. 4 (Winter 1943): 618–628.

programs in Germany. And finally, the inclusion of German sources, culled from city archives throughout the U.S. Zone and Berlin, as well as the collections at the *Deutsches Tagebucharchiv* in Emmendingen, Germany, provide a more intimate perspective of the situation in Germany. These personal accounts lay bare the physical and psychological significance of hunger as it affected one's daily life.

The chapters that follow span roughly ten years and are organized chronologically, beginning with the Roosevelt administration's postwar plans and ending with the East German uprising in June 1953, when the Eisenhower administration relied on a food assistance program to further destabilize the East German government. The conversation about American aid began long before the U.S. declared war in December 1941. Not only was food essential to the war effort, it offered a cornerstone for peace, with Freedom from Want established as a guiding principle for FDR's vision of the postwar peace. Throughout the summer of 1944, disagreements over occupation policy revealed stark divisions in Roosevelt's cabinet and threatened to undermine negotiations on the international stage. The unprecedented intervention into the realm of foreign relations by the Department of the Treasury, including Secretary Henry Morgenthau, Jr.'s plan for the pastoralization of Germany, further exacerbated the situation.

Enforcing a hard peace proved more complicated than anticipated, with the hands-on experience with hunger in occupied territory complicating individual notions of what it meant to be both victor and conqueror. As summer turned to fall, food scarcity threatened military security, forcing officials to address the problem directly and drastically change the course of the American occupation. Truman approved food imports for the U.S. Zone and publicly endorsed the Council of Relief Agencies Licensed to

Work in Germany (CRALOG) alongside other humanitarian agencies, with the first food shipments arriving in April 1946.

Events in 1947 served to harden the ideological and geographical lines of the Cold War. Consequently, Truman's reliance on foreign aid as an anti-Communist tool increased. Facing criticism from political opponents and an American public increasingly unhappy with the financial burden of the occupation, Truman requested that former President Herbert Hoover study the economic situation in Germany and Austria. Hoover believed German reunification was necessary to restore stability and emphasized economic recovery over short-term relief. In pursuit of greater economic stability, the U.S., Great Britain, and France took steps toward German economic unification in the spring of 1948, including currency reform. The Soviet Union responded to the new currency by barring all road and rail traffic into West Berlin. Rather than buckle to Soviet demands, the Allies initiated an airlift of the beleaguered city. Often lauded as an early victory in the Cold War, the Berlin Airlift remains one of the most successful humanitarian missions in United States military history, with more than 200,000 flights delivering 2.3 million tons of cargo between June 1948 and May 1949.<sup>56</sup> Americans were mobilized for the Cold War under the guise of humanitarianism, with food symbolically serving as evidence of democracy's promise. The Soviets lifted the blockade on May 11, 1949, and two weeks later the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) was established in the West and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) was formed in the East.

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<sup>56</sup> Roger Miller, *To Save a City: The Berlin Airlift, 1948-1949* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2000), 186.

When Eisenhower assumed the presidency in 1953, he quickly adapted existing foreign aid programs to meet his own style and political needs, embracing food aid as a form of psychological warfare during the East German uprising in 1953. Rather than intervene militarily or covertly, Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles implemented a food package program. Later that year, Eisenhower signed Public Law 480, arranging for the distribution of surplus commodities in ways that would further both domestic and foreign interests. While the threads of humanitarianism ran throughout the legislation, the Eisenhower administration placed the emphasis on economic development, price stabilization, and improved trade relationships.

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Food aid to a conquered enemy cast the United States as a benevolent power in a rapidly changing world. The motives behind the policy change, nevertheless, were never purely altruistic. The political circumstances of the emerging Cold War contributed to the growing acceptance of food and feeding as diplomatic tools, used to reward anti-Communists while reinforcing the image of America as a land of plenty. The burden of agricultural surplus was repackaged as American abundance, a gift shared with the less fortunate to rebuild Europe, contain Soviet influence, and boost morale on both sides of the Atlantic. Food relief in Germany was rooted in a desire to appear compassionate, to promote American prestige along the Iron Curtain, and stimulate economic recovery.

The problem of world hunger was not new in 1960, nor was the uncomfortable marriage between humanitarianism and U.S. foreign policy aims. Yet, the history that most informed Kennedy's Food for Peace program was inextricably entangled with the

Cold War, specifically early debates over food policy in occupied Germany. U.S. food aid in Germany stabilized the economy, built trade relationships, offered a market for agricultural surplus, and furthered national security interests. The experience in Germany was overwhelmingly positive. Policymakers met with mixed success, however, when they attempted to apply the German model indiscriminately throughout the developing world.

Food aid to Germany, whether it be in the form of school feedings, Marshall Plan aid, or CARE parcels, was meant to promote democracy and alleviate suffering, creating a bond remembered for years to come. While the decision to feed Germany was influenced by a combination of military necessity and charitable feeling, the political and cultural ramifications were manifold. World War II was a turning point for food diplomacy, giving credence to the Department of Agriculture's WWII slogan 'Food Will Win the War and Write the Peace.' Feeding defeated Germany accomplished multiple objectives: it provided proper nutrition, reinforced democratic teachings, boosted morale, improved the United States' international reputation, and offered soft power resistance in the early struggle against communism. A full stomach not only made German children more receptive to reeducation, but food also conveyed the power of democracy. The food negotiations that occurred in postwar Germany demonstrated that American power need not be measured by bombs alone; food cultivated national prestige.

## CHAPTER 2

### FOOD WILL WIN THE WAR AND WRITE THE PEACE

It is the manifest duty of this country to undertake to feed all the people of the world . . . For every dollar we spend on armaments, we should spend at least a dime in a gigantic effort to feed the world – and all the world should know that we have dedicated ourselves to this task.

--Henry Luce, 1941<sup>57</sup>

In the summer of 1942, Walt Disney Studios released a six-minute propaganda film at the behest of the Department of Agriculture. *Food Will Win the War* highlighted the enormity of American agriculture, emphasizing the contributions of American farmers to the war effort and seeking to assuage fears of food shortages in the United States. The opening scene revealed a world in turmoil with a narrator relaying the doom and gloom for viewers: “Towns are ravaged, country sides laid waste by ruthless Axis hoards. Farms, cattle, and crops have been destroyed. Ruin, destitution, hunger stalk the helpless victims of the cruel aggressor.” But, there comes a “light of hope” which “must and will grow stronger”—that light was American agriculture. Viewers were then inundated with a parade of impressive statistics, presented in an authoritative yet humorous fashion. The narrator describes the 52 billion 800 million pounds of wheat reaped by American farmers in the last year, enough wheat that if turned to flour could “snow under the Panzer Army.”<sup>58</sup> The one billion bushels of vegetables harvested would

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<sup>57</sup> Henry Luce, “The American Century,” *Diplomatic History* 22, no. 3 (Spring 1999): 170. Originally published in *Life*, 17 February 1941.

<sup>58</sup> *Food Will Win the War*, directed by Ben Sharpsteen (Walt Disney Studios, 1942). Available at the Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/details/FoodWillWinTheWar>.

line the Great Wall of China, while the 125 billion pounds of milk produced in a year could generate enough electricity to power New York City factories for an hour, and still supply free milk for student lunches across the United States.<sup>59</sup>

These statistics are impressive, but the film was not intended as a celebration of production—it served to remind Americans on the home front of their unparalleled contributions to the war effort. The U.S. remained a land of abundance throughout the duration of the conflict. The film reminded viewers that American agriculture was responsible for supplying more than soldiers in the fight against fascism; American farms also filled countless Victory ships with “food for freedom.”<sup>60</sup>

Rather than close with the image of farmer-soldier, or yet another statistic, the film stressed the importance of feeding American allies. Walt Disney, like most of Hollywood, was conscripted into the war effort to produce military training films, animation for documentaries, and propaganda pieces.<sup>61</sup> The government relied on animated propaganda shorts to educate the public on pressing wartime matters and inspire action. *Food Will Win the War* ends with the Victory ship scene, zooming in on the Lend-Lease emblem, designed by Disney, that adorned the countless crates shipped to

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<sup>59</sup> The film’s narrator does not provide exact numbers but refers to the number of American farmers *and* their families outnumbering the Axis forces.

<sup>60</sup> Victory ships were the successor to Liberty ships, merchant marine cargo vessels known for their low-cost and quick construction, built for delivering lend-lease aid to Great Britain and the Soviet Union. Victory ships were larger and faster, with the new name reflective of America’s entry into the war.

<sup>61</sup> Richard Shale, *Donald Duck Joins Up: The Walt Disney Studio during World War II* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1982), 24. Quoted in Richard Leskosky, “Cartoons Will Win the War: World War II Propaganda Shorts,” in *Learning from Mickey, Donald and Walt: Essays on Disney’s Edutainment Films*, ed. A. Bowdoin Van Riper (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, Inc., 2011), chap. 3, Kindle.

American allies. This is an interesting, perhaps deliberate choice. Originally entitled *Food Will Win the War and Write the Peace*, Disney borrowed the Department of Agriculture's slogan. The Office of the Coordinator of Information recommended shortening the title, however, "to avoid suggesting that the United States planned to take the lead in shaping the postwar world."<sup>62</sup> Historian Katherine Jellison explains that the relationship between the war effort and agriculture was highlighted in several propaganda films, including *Food for Freedom* (1941), *Farm Battle Lines* (1942), and *Food for Fighters* (1943).<sup>63</sup> Relying on a montage of images, *Food Will Win the War* tells a story that is rooted in statistics but relies on emotional language to convey the facts, reminding viewers that the wartime economy necessitated sacrifice.<sup>64</sup>

Food featured prominently in propaganda efforts, with campaigns urging Americans to "Dig for Victory" by growing their own vegetables and "Help Win the War on the Kitchen Front" by avoiding waste and conserving wheat. American audiences quickly grew accustomed to newsreel footage and documentary/propaganda shorts accompanying their double features, reminding the home front of the war front and underscoring the sacrifice demanded by both.<sup>65</sup> Food was vital for victory, but it was also essential for future peace and economic stability.

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<sup>62</sup> Leskosky, "Cartoons Will Win the War," chap. 3, Kindle.

<sup>63</sup> Katherine Jellison, "Get Your Farm in the Fight: Farm Masculinity in World War II," *Agricultural History* 92, no. 1 (Winter 2018): 7.

<sup>64</sup> Leskosky, "Cartoons Will Win the War," chap. 3, Kindle.

<sup>65</sup> In June 1942, a month before *Food Will Win the War* was released, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9182 and created the Office of War Information (OWI), consolidating earlier offices to create a centralized agency for distributing wartime information to the public. For more on the OWI and its complicated

Food's emergence as a political tool coincided with the growing acceptance of American hegemony in the postwar period.<sup>66</sup> Publisher Henry Luce gave expression to this new internationalism when he called on Americans to forgo isolationism in his now famous editorial on the "American Century." Believing American should use its economic and military power to promote democracy across the globe, Luce pressed Americans to assume the role of "Good Samaritan." Farmers were integral to Luce's vision, and he urged increased agricultural production, creating a surplus that could be "dispatched to the four quarters of the globe as a free gift, administered by a humanitarian army of Americans, to every man, woman and child on this earth who is really hungry."<sup>67</sup> While victory in the war would pave the way for American global dominance, historian Justin Hart acknowledges that, "how that world would look and how the United States could wield its influence remained decidedly uncertain."<sup>68</sup> With a global hunger crisis looming, food offered a unique opportunity to wield American influence in the immediate aftermath of war.

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existence see Allan M. Winkler, *The Politics of Propaganda: The Office of War Information, 1942–1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 1978.

<sup>66</sup> For more on war propaganda and U.S. internationalism post-WWII see Susan A. Brewer, *Why America Fights: Patriotism and War Propaganda from the Philippines to Iraq* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 87–140; and Justin Hart, "'In Terms of People Rather than Nations': World War II Propaganda and Conceptions of U.S. Foreign Policy," in *The United States and the Second World War: New Perspectives on Diplomacy, War, and the Home Front*, ed. G. Kurt Piehler and Sidney Pash (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 68–98.

<sup>67</sup> Luce, "The American Century," 170.

<sup>68</sup> Hart, "In Terms of People," 93.

Advances in nutritional science and agricultural production radically changed American relationships with food in the first half of the twentieth century. This chapter explores those changes and illuminates why and in what ways food set the terms for both war and peace. Included in this discussion is a reflection on American food and war experiences in the previous global conflict. Secretary of Agriculture Claude Wickard modeled many of the Department's WWII programs on those created by Herbert Hoover as head of the U.S. Food Administration during World War I. Additionally, it was Hoover's humanitarian work throughout Europe both during and after World War I that set the bar for post-WWII recovery efforts.

This relief was spearheaded by the newly created United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), an international organization founded to "plan, co-ordinate, administer or arrange for the administration of measures for the relief of victims of war."<sup>69</sup> While created with the best intentions, UNRRA's mission was complicated at the outset by the scope of the operation, the financial burden posed on members, and disagreements over who deserved assistance. This chapter provides insights on how American policymakers approached the tenuous relationship between food and war during the early years of the conflict and then planned for the monumental task of relief in the aftermath. Food evolved in the American political conscience from a motive and weapon of war, to a prerequisite for relief, recovery, and reconstruction in the peace. The United States' unparalleled ability to produce an agricultural surplus equated food with power in the postwar international order.

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<sup>69</sup> "Agreement for UNRRA," 9 November 1943, in George Woodbridge, *UNRRA: The History of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration*, vol. 3 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), 23.

## **“Famine is the Mother of Anarchy”: World War I and the Origins of Modern Food**

### **Aid**

Prior to World War One, American foreign aid was dispensed in response to isolated incidents, often at the behest of church groups or business men with financial interests at stake. While efforts to enlist government aid were occasionally successful, Merle Curti finds that “the voluntary pattern of giving predominated.”<sup>70</sup> All this changed dramatically during the First World War when new patterns of philanthropy rose in popularity alongside new humanitarian organizations.<sup>71</sup> Bruno Cabanes writes that a “shift towards ‘scientific philanthropy’ . . . took place in the United States between 1890 and 1910 but it was with the outbreak of the Great War that humanitarianism truly changed.”<sup>72</sup> This was particularly true of the American experience with relief during the

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<sup>70</sup> Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad*, 21.

<sup>71</sup> For an overview of humanitarianism during World War I see Branden Little, “An Explosion of New Endeavors: Global Humanitarian Responses to Industrialized Warfare in the First World War Era,” *First World War Studies* 5, no. 1 (January 2014): 1–16. For more on philanthropy and the Progressive era see Alan Dawley, *Changing the World: American Progressives in War and Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); *Charity, Philanthropy, and Civility in American History*, ed. Lawrence J. Friedman and Mark D. McGarvie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); and Zunz, *Philanthropy in America*.

<sup>72</sup> Bruno Cabanes, *The Great War and the Origins of Humanitarianism, 1918–1924* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 4. There is, however, debate over the significance of World War One to histories of humanitarianism. Fabian Klose glosses over the period, writing, the “first half of the twentieth century seemed to experience a complete halt in the further development of the concept of humanitarian intervention.” Fabian Klose, “The Emergence of Humanitarian Intervention: Three Centuries of ‘Enforcing Humanity’,” in *The Emergence of Humanitarian Intervention: Ideas and Practice from the Nineteenth Century to the Present*, ed. Fabian Klose (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 24. I agree with Elisabeth Piller’s more nuanced approach. Warning against sweeping statements, she writes, “The era of the Great War is best characterised as a *transitional period*, when *traditional* and *modern* humanitarian

war, which witnessed a change in the scale, scope, and nature of aid. Writing about the American Red Cross (ARC), Julia Irwin explains that humanitarian assistance during World War One provided Americans with new opportunities to engage with the world, “The new American internationalism required all Americans to accept a novel set of civic obligations, a common commitment of their minds and their money to improving the health and welfare of the wider world.”<sup>73</sup> Humanitarian assistance offered an alternate method of engagement during the conflict when neutrality remained the official position of the U.S. government, and officials quickly seized on the value of this aid as a tool of diplomacy. Administered by private citizens rather than churches and charities, this relief offered evidence of American benevolence, sincerity, and superiority. Civilian aid was a patriotic obligation, “an American civic duty” essential for achieving strategic objectives and a key component of the Wilsonian vision for the future.<sup>74</sup>

The United States was not the only nation engaging in humanitarian relief during the Great War, but many of the largest and most well-known organizations were affiliated with Americans, including the Commission for Relief in Belgium (CRB), an American-

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actors, techniques, and concepts stood side by side.” Peter Gatrell, Rebecca Gill, Branden Little, & Elisabeth Piller, “Discussion: Humanitarianism, 1914-1918,” *International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, ed. Ute Daniel, et. al. (Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin, 2017), [https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/discussion\\_humanitarianism](https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/discussion_humanitarianism).

<sup>73</sup> Irwin, *Making the World Safe*, 2.

<sup>74</sup> Irwin, *Making the World Safe*, 89. For more on Wilsonianism see Thomas J. Knock, *To End All Wars: Woodrow Wilson and the Quest for a New World Order* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); and Robert W. Tucker, *Woodrow Wilson and the Great War: Reconsidering America's Neutrality, 1914–1917* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007).

dominated international organization led by Herbert Hoover.<sup>75</sup> The German occupation resulted not only in the requisition of crops and other food supplies, but effectively cut off the small nation from the food imports upon which it was dependent. The Commission negotiated with the German military, who allowed food to be imported and dispersed by the organization among Belgium's civilian population, extending aid to northern France in early 1915. Hoover assembled a team of businessmen and academics—all unpaid volunteers—to secure financing, locate food, and arrange transport. The majority of these volunteers served for the duration of the CRB and followed Hoover to the American Relief Administration, with several later playing prominent roles in post-WWII relief programs.<sup>76</sup> Although the CRB began as a “purely philanthropic enterprise,” it quickly “received the financial support of the Allied and American governments.”<sup>77</sup> The American government provided diplomatic support and officially backed the CRB in the U.S. “as the only agency authorized to carry charitable

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<sup>75</sup> At the time he accepted the position, Hoover was assisting the American ambassador in London with the repatriation of thousands of Americans who had been abroad in Europe when the conflict began in the summer of 1914 and found themselves trapped behind enemy lines without the necessary means to return home. For more on the creation of the CRB see George Nash, *The Life of Herbert Hoover: The Humanitarian* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1988), 15–33. For more on the CRB's activities see Branden Little, “Band of Crusaders: American Humanitarians, the Great War, and the Remaking of the World” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2009); and Thomas D. Westerman, “Rough and Ready Relief: American Identity, Humanitarian Experience, and the Commission for Relief in Belgium, 1914–1917” (Ph.D. diss., University of Connecticut, 2014).

<sup>76</sup> Riley notes that CRB alumni included future secretary of state Christian Herter, future head of UNICEF Maurice Pate, and future Ohio senator Robert Taft. Riley, *The Political History of American Food Aid*, 20.

<sup>77</sup> Frank M. Surface and Raymond L. Bland, *American Food in the World War and Reconstruction Period: Operations of the Organizations under the Direction of Herbert Hoover 1914 to 1924* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1931), 3.

aid to the Belgians,” but the U.S. Treasury did not provide financial support until America’s declaration of war in April 1917.<sup>78</sup> Hoover was recalled to the United States following American entry in the war, and the CRB was managed by the Spanish and Dutch governments. While the mission was not without controversy, the Commission remained active well beyond the armistice, concluding operations in August 1919.

Conceived as a philanthropic endeavor, the CRB was dependent on public support and contributions to survive. Barry Riley places total contributions from the American public at \$34.5 million, which represented two-thirds of “worldwide private donations.” While impressive, this was less than five percent of the total cost of the CRB’s programs in Belgium and France.<sup>79</sup> To raise funds, Hoover created an office of propaganda specialists whose task was to not only convince Americans and others across the globe to donate more but also eat less.<sup>80</sup> Relying on carefully crafted narratives in the American press and imaginative advertising campaigns, Hoover garnered massive public support for relief in Europe. As Edgar Rickard, Hoover’s Administrative Assistant, wrote, “In one way or another—by contributions in money, gifts of commodities in form of food and clothing, in saving food, in personal service—practically every American was involved in

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<sup>78</sup> The American government approved large credits in favor of the Allies immediately after entering the war. Hoover and the CRB ensure this included relief loans to Belgium and France, “out of which \$7,500,000 and \$5,000,000 monthly were to be advanced to the Commission for its program in Belgium and Northern France.” George I. Gay and H.H. Fisher, *Public Relations of the Commission for Relief in Belgium: Documents*, vol. 1 (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1929), 282.

<sup>79</sup> Riley, *The Political History of American Food Aid*, 18.

<sup>80</sup> Riley, *The Political History of American Food Aid*, 16–17.

these enterprises.”<sup>81</sup> Hoover frequently appealed to an American public concerned about the nation’s international reputation. Helen Veit points out that this was a powerful argument precisely because it was a moment when Americans were taking stock of themselves anew.<sup>82</sup>

Following American entry into the war, President Wilson requested a meeting with Hoover to discuss the fate of the global food supply. The United States had to ensure American troops were well supplied and prevent the spread of food shortages among its allies in Europe, an issue that achieved even greater urgency following the revolution in Russia. The United States Food Administration was established with Hoover appointed Food Administrator, coordinating food production, sales, and consumption.<sup>83</sup> For Hoover, the war was a question of “starvation or sufficiency,” with victory resting with whomever “can organize this weapon—food.”<sup>84</sup> Once established, the major problems confronting the Food Administration included “ek[ing] out the exceedingly short crop in this country in 1917 by the most rigid conservation and prevention of waste, to see that hoarding of

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<sup>81</sup> Edgar Rickard, “Foreword” to Surface and Bland, *American Food*, vii.

<sup>82</sup> Veit, *Modern Food*, 58.

<sup>83</sup> The Food and Fuel Control Act (aka Lever Act), which created the U.S. Food Administration did not become law until August 10, 1917. Nevertheless, beginning in May, Hoover was authorized to take necessary action under the war powers of the president, including organizing the voluntary conservation of food, and working with businesses to conserve and direct supplies for the Allies. For more on the Food Administration see Neil O. Buschman, “The United States Food Administration during World War I: The Rise of Activist Government through Food Control during Mobilization for Total War,” (Master’s thesis, Auburn University, 2013); and George H. Nash, *The Life of Herbert Hoover: Master of Emergencies, 1917-1918* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996).

<sup>84</sup> Herbert Hoover, “The Weapon of Food,” *National Geographic Magazine*, September 1917, 197.

supplies and profiteering by dealers was prevented, to maintain sufficient supplies to feed our own population and at the same time to direct the largest possible amount of food to the Allied Governments.”<sup>85</sup> In other words, the Food Administrator was responsible for both “anticipating and preventing a world food shortage.”<sup>86</sup>

Remarkably, Hoover, convinced Americans to voluntarily regulate their food consumption, urging them to “go back to the simple life” and “be contented with simple food.”<sup>87</sup> Playing on patriotic sentiments, Tanfer Tunc writes Hoover stressed “good old American self-sacrifice and selflessness that would save the nation and possibly the whole world.”<sup>88</sup> The Food Administration relied on unprecedented federal power alongside extensive volunteer networks.<sup>89</sup> Many of the Food Administration’s elaborate poster campaigns advanced Hoover’s notion of food as a weapon. The posters similarly drew connections between hunger and socialism, echoing Hoover’s fear that hunger posed a threat not only to human lives but also freedom and democracy, “compelling

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<sup>85</sup> Surface and Bland, *American Food*, 15.

<sup>86</sup> Surface and Bland, *American Food*, 15.

<sup>87</sup> Maxcy Robson Dickson and American Council on Public Affairs, *The Food Front in World War I* (Washington, DC: American Council on Public Affairs, 1944), 24. Quoted in Veit, *Modern Food*, 24.

<sup>88</sup> Tanfer Emin Tunc, “Less Sugar, More Warships: Food as American Propaganda in the First World War,” *War in History* 19, no. 2 (2012): 197.

<sup>89</sup> Both Tanfer Tunc and Helene Veit discuss Hoover’s ability to tap into a pre-existing women’s network, “positioning wartime food conservation as a ‘natural’ extension of women’s efforts in the domestic sphere and in the club work and moral reform with which they engaged in the public sphere.” Tunc, “Less Sugar,” 199. See also Veit, *Modern Food*.

starving masses to seek socialist alternatives.”<sup>90</sup> Hoover ran the Food Administration like a business and his model not only secured the U.S. as a powerful creditor in Europe, providing the loans necessary for the Allies to pay for American food, but also resulted in a massive profit that allowed him to return the \$150 million that Congress allocated and then some, with Hoover bragging “the Administration cost the government over \$50,000,000 less than nothing.”<sup>91</sup>

Hoover’s success during the war carried over into the peace where he remained an advocate for international relief. Hoover anticipated “distress in the liberated and enemy countries” and prior to the end of hostilities, he prepared for a survey of world resources.<sup>92</sup> He sailed for Europe in November 1918, tasked by Wilson to “determine what action is required from the United States and what extensions of the Food Administration organization or otherwise are necessary in order to carry out the work of participation of the United States Government . . . and to take such steps as are necessary in temporary relief.”<sup>93</sup> In addition to calculating the needs of Europe and the logistics of relief, Hoover and his team needed to divorce conversations about relief from arguments

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<sup>90</sup> Tunc, “Less Sugar,” 203-4. Tunc offers a detailed discussion of many of these posters.

<sup>91</sup> Herbert Hoover, introduction to *History of the United States Food Administration, 1917–1919*, by William Clinton Mullendore (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1941), 9. Quoted in Veit, *Modern Food*, 59.

<sup>92</sup> Surface and Bland, *American Food*, 4.

<sup>93</sup> Hoover to Wilson, 12 November 1918, Document #112 in Gay and Fisher, *Public Relations*, vol. 1, 207.

over war guilt and reparations, which meant first and foremost convincing the French and British to lift the naval blockade of Germany.<sup>94</sup>

The Allied blockade of Germany began in 1914 when the British opted to employ the “weapon of starvation,” deeming food “as essential to the forces as bullets and therefore equally seizable.”<sup>95</sup> Prewar Germany depended on imports for one-third of the nation’s food, and the blockade not only cut food imports but also prevented German farmers from purchasing much needed fertilizer. Scarcity reduced the German diet to bread, potatoes, and turnips, with limited access to much needed proteins and fats, leaving one German noblewoman to write in January 1917, “The rounded contours of the German nation have become a legend of the past . . . we are all gaunt and bony now.”<sup>96</sup> Food shortages hampered the German army and undermined civilian morale, thereby contributing to growing unrest on the home front.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Riley, *The Political History of American Food Aid*, 37.

<sup>95</sup> Margaret Jourdain, “Air Raid Reprisals and Starvation by Blockade,” *International Journal of Ethics* 28, no. 4 (July 1918): 551. Quoted in Weinreb, *Modern Hungers*, 16. Winston Churchill used the phrase “weapon of starvation” in March 1919 while British Secretary of State for War. See *The Blockade of Germany after the Armistice 1918–1919: Selected Documents of the Supreme Economic Council, Superior Blockade Council, American Relief Administration, and Other Wartime Organizations*, ed. Suda Lorena Bane and Ralph Haswell Lutz (New York: Howard Fertig, 1972 Reprint), 744.

<sup>96</sup> Evelyn Blücher, *An English Wife in Berlin* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1920), 158. Quoted in C. Paul Vincent, *The Politics of Hunger: The Allied Blockade of Germany, 1915–1919* (Ohio: University of Ohio Press, 1985), 127.

<sup>97</sup> For more on the German experience with total war and the demands placed on the civilian population see Belinda J. Davis, *Homes Fires Burning: Food, Politics, and Everyday Life in World War I Berlin* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); and Weinreb, *Modern Hungers*, 13–48.

The blockade was upheld following the Armistice in November 1918, in order to strong-arm negotiations in Paris. Throughout 1918 reports filtered out of Germany documenting the dismal situation and prompting an international effort to pressure the Allies into lifting the blockade. Death by starvation did occur, but the greater problem was malnutrition, which lowered the body's resistance to diseases like tuberculosis, rickets, and of course influenza.<sup>98</sup> As the situation grew desperate, one member of the American delegation to for the Armistice Commission recorded in his diary, "Food won the war and food may win the peace—if the hungry had more food and less promises."<sup>99</sup>

Hoover served as one of Germany's few champions during the armistice, and thanks to his negotiations food did finally arrive in March 1919, but only after the Treaty of Versailles was signed.<sup>100</sup> For Hoover, famine bred anarchy, "from the inability of governments to secure food for their people, grows revolution and chaos."<sup>101</sup> He was not alone in these sentiments; many observers feared that continued blockade would "drive Germany into a condition of fanatical socialism and instability . . . mak[ing] her a center

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<sup>98</sup> For a more detailed discussion of malnutrition and disease, including data sets, see Alyssa Cundy, "A 'Weapon of Starvation': The Politics, Propaganda, and Morality of Britain's Hunger Blockade of Germany, 1914–1919" (Ph.D. diss., Wilfrid Laurier University, 2015), 79–89.

<sup>99</sup> Samuel G. Shartle, *Spa, Versailles, Munich: An Account of the Armistice Commission* (Philadelphia: Dorrance, 1941), 74. Quoted in Vincent, *Politics of Hunger*, 108.

<sup>100</sup> Vincent, *Politics of Hunger*, 65. Veit offers a more critical take on Hoover's motives, arguing that there were practical as well as humanitarian considerations at play: "All winter, Hoover lobbied vehemently for permission to liquidate his surpluses—especially a huge supply of high-priced pork—in Germany." Veit, *Modern Food*, 74.

<sup>101</sup> "Mr. Hoover's Address to the Special Conference of Federal Food Administrators," 12 November 1918, in Bane and Lutz, *Blockade of Germany*, 16.

from which the infection of discontent will spread to other parts of the world, and to the Allied countries as well.”<sup>102</sup> British troops in Germany believed food to be the determining factor in the emergence and growth of Bolshevism. They fretted that “the Allies were sowing hatred for the future.”<sup>103</sup> Even the U.S. State Department urged providing food “in support of those who were working for order.”<sup>104</sup> Alyssa Cundy writes, “The installation of prominent socialists in Max von Baden’s provisional government, along with the growing threat of Karl Liebknecht’s radical left-wing Spartacus movement, was proof enough for many Anglo-American politicians that postwar Germany was rife with Bolshevism.”<sup>105</sup> In the end, Hoover’s Food Administration delivered approximately \$300 million worth of food to Germany, with additional shipments made to Poland, Austria, and Czechoslovakia.<sup>106</sup>

The Armistice brought about the end of the Food Administration, but it was far from the end of American relief activities in Europe. Days after the signing of the Versailles Peace Treaty, the American Relief Administration (ARA) was created, with

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<sup>102</sup> “Mr. Anderson of the War Trade Board, Stockholm, Objects to the Blockade,” 10 January 1919, in Bane and Lutz, *Blockade of Germany*, 29–30.

<sup>103</sup> David Lloyd George, quoted in Herbert Hoover, *The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover*, vol. 1, *Years of Adventure 1874–1920* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), 343.

<sup>104</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Weekly Report on Matters Relating to the Countries of the Central Powers* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office), 1237. Quoted in Vincent, *Politics of Hunger*, 81.

<sup>105</sup> Cundy, “Weapon of Starvation,” 16. For more on the Revolution in Germany see Klaus Schwabe, *Woodrow Wilson, Revolutionary Germany, and Peacemaking, 1918–1919* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985).

<sup>106</sup> Surface and Bland, *American Food*, 9.

Hoover reminding his staff, the “war has been brought to an end in no small measure by starvation itself, and it cannot be our business to maintain starvation after peace.”<sup>107</sup>The problem of European relief “was far too big for public charity, too big even for any one government; it must of necessity be a responsibility upon the Allied and Associated Governments.”<sup>108</sup> On February 25, 1919, accordingly, Congress approved an act appropriating \$100,000,000 for relief and designated the ARA “to handle the allocation and distribution of relief furnished by the United States Government.”<sup>109</sup>

The ARA provided more than food relief, contributing to the rehabilitation and economic and political recovery of Germany, Poland, Austria, and more. The Congressional legislation that allowed for the creation of the ARA was, however, limited and the program of American government food aid came to an end in the fall of 1919. The ARA transitioned from a governmental agency to a private organization, pooling its remaining resources to create the European Children’s Fund (ECF) in August 1919—a program designed to address the lingering problem of malnutrition across the European continent. It was then resurrected in 1921 to provide aid to famine-stricken Russia. Hoover, now Secretary of Commerce, proposed using the ARA to send private food relief, negotiating an agreement with the Bolshevik government that mirrored earlier

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<sup>107</sup> “Mr. Hoover’s Address to the Special Conference of Federal Food Administrators,” 12 November 1918, in Bane and Lutz, *Blockade of Germany*, 15.

<sup>108</sup> Surface and Bland, *American Food*, 23.

<sup>109</sup> Surface and Bland, *American Food*, 5.

relief programs.<sup>110</sup> The need, however, proved too great for private donations and a bill was passed in Congress to appropriate funds for Russian relief. This \$20 million aid package was the last episode of official American foreign aid until the Second World War.

Hoover created the ECF believing that love of children was a “biological trait common to all races,” and hopeful that concern for children’s well-being could lessen “consuming hates.”<sup>111</sup> The ECF was responsible for feeding “some 10,000,000 children in these stricken countries” and included operations in Germany, where their work was augmented by that of the Society of Friends.<sup>112</sup> The focus on children as recipients of aid reflected a growing trend in humanitarian photography and propaganda to depict “the lone suffering child.”<sup>113</sup> Images of children’s suffering manipulate viewers’ emotions, arousing their anger while simultaneously prompting an outpouring of sympathy. It is this two-pronged response that results in humanitarians’ frequent reliance on images in their campaigns, echoing Susan Sontag’s assertion that “sentiment is more likely to crystallize

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<sup>110</sup> For more on the ARA and the famine in Russia see H.H. Fisher, *The Famine in Soviet Russia, 1919–1923: The Operation of the American Relief Administration* (New York: Macmillan, 1927); and Patenaude, *The Big Show in Bololand*.

<sup>111</sup> Hoover, *Memoirs*, vol. 1 *Years of Adventure*, 321–322.

<sup>112</sup> Surface and Bland, *American Food*, 4. The child feeding program in Germany was administered on a charitable basis by the Quakers with a total of \$9,237,788.00 spent on food and clothing. Hoover, *Memoirs*, vol. 1 *Years of Adventure*, 390. For more on the child-feeding program in Germany see Elisabeth Piller, “German Child Distress, US Humanitarian Aid and Revisionist Politics, 1918–24,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 51, no. 3 (2016): 453–486; and Tammy M. Proctor, “An American Enterprise? British Participation in US Food Relief Programmes (1914–1923),” *First World War Studies* 5, no. 1 (2014): 29–42.

<sup>113</sup> Fehrenbach, “Children and Other Civilians,” 167.

around a photograph than around a verbal slogan.”<sup>114</sup> The tendency to portray recipients of American aid as children also contributed the infantilization of Europeans, casting them as impotent and weak, in need of American bounty and guidance.<sup>115</sup> The hungry, disillusioned minds of Central and Eastern European children represented a future menace, but American food aid neutralized this threat and boosted American prestige.<sup>116</sup>

From 1914 to 1924, Herbert Hoover directed numerous organizations responsible for the delivery of an unprecedented quantity of food to European nations. His achievements remain remarkable, providing Europe with food and related supplies “to the value of more than \$5,234,000,000.”<sup>117</sup> These funds came from charitable donations, foreign countries and organizations, and the United States Treasury, which donated relief and approved loans to other nations. Americans enthusiastically embraced humanitarian action in postwar Europe, especially when recipients were depicted as innocent children, leaving Veit to conclude that they “romanticized their food program, preferring to think of it as humanitarian aid rather than as a function of geopolitics.”<sup>118</sup> Few voiced concerns about the debts accumulated by Allies buying American food or questioned the manipulation of markets to serve American agricultural interests.

World War I remade the international food economy ushering in changes that placed food at the core of the wartime economy. But food shortages during war also laid

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<sup>114</sup> Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, 85.

<sup>115</sup> Veit, *Modern Food*, 71.

<sup>116</sup> Proctor, “American Enterprise,” 36.

<sup>117</sup> Rickard, “Foreword” to Surface and Bland, *American Food*, vii.

<sup>118</sup> Veit, *Modern Food*, 75.

the foundation for future political radicalization “provided fertile ground for political radicalization.<sup>119</sup> World War I made clear the fact that hunger was a global problem and provided an opportunity to demonstrate American superiority, while simultaneously experimenting with food as both a weapon of war and tool of peace, distributed and withheld to achieve desired political outcomes.<sup>120</sup>

### **“The Great Green Battle”: Mobilizing the Land of Abundance**

The July 30 issue of *Life* magazine, published between VE Day and VJ Day, offered a surprisingly blithe take on current events. The cover featured a child at play on the beach, while inside the magazine included articles on the DP problem, the redesign of the Jeep for civilian use on farms, and a striking editorial on U.S.-Russian relations that reminded Americans that, “the U.S. is the most productive country the world has ever seen, and our economic power of persuasion can be used to generate its own propaganda.”<sup>121</sup> Filed under ‘Medicine’ was a report on Dr. Ancel Keys’s hunger experiments at the University of Minnesota, where thirty-four conscientious objectors volunteered for the study in the hopes of finding “the best way to rehabilitate the hunger-

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<sup>119</sup> Weinreb uses Paul Koistinen’s political economy of war definition and includes food in the “interplay of economics, politics, the military, and technology.” Weinreb, *Modern Hungers*, 14.

<sup>120</sup> For more on hunger as a global problem see Frank Trentmann, “Coping with Shortage: The Problem of Food Security and Global Visions of Coordination, c. 1890s–1950,” in *Food and Conflict in Europe in the Age of the Two World Wars*, ed. Frank Trentmann and Flemming Just (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 13–48.

<sup>121</sup> “America and Russia,” *Life*, 30 July 1945, 20.

wasted millions of Europe.”<sup>122</sup> Above the stark title “Men Starve in Minnesota,” were photos of two men who lost a combined 65 pounds subsisting on a diet of 1600 calories a day, mostly bread, potatoes, and turnips. The men stand shirtless, belts cinched at their tiny waists, faces gaunt, ribs protruding from their chests. Additional photos reveal not only the physical effects of malnutrition, but the psychological effects as well, swollen ankles photographed alongside hoarded cookbooks, and grown men licking their plates and silverware clean. A letter to the editor the following month praised the “guinea pigs” for “doing a brave and humanitarian work.”<sup>123</sup> Keys’s experiment propelled nutritional science forward. It also clearly highlighted the practical applications of such advances: offering concrete findings to aid in the rehabilitation of Europe and the world.

Similar to the First World War, the demands of a wartime economy led to greater government interest in and financial support for the field of nutritional science in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Nutritionists found themselves in demand as food was recognized to be a necessary tool in shaping the effectiveness of America’s fighting men.<sup>124</sup> The U.S. military also contributed to several technological advances in the food industry, especially regarding the transport and preservation of food supplies.<sup>125</sup> In the summer of 1936, a government directive issued by the Quartermaster General established the Subsistence Research Laboratory (SRL), precipitating research on the combat ration.

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<sup>122</sup> “Men Starve in Minnesota,” *Life*, 30 July 1945, 43.

<sup>123</sup> “Letters to the Editor,” *Life*, 20 August 1945, 3.

<sup>124</sup> Collingham, *The Taste of War*, 10.

<sup>125</sup> Anastacia Marx de Salcedo explains that complications supplying the U.S. Army during the Spanish American War paved the way for the creation of the United States Food and Drug Administration in 1906. de Salcedo, *Combat-Ready Kitchen*, 52.

Initially allotted a mere \$300, the SRL was established in an effort to improve existing subsistence plans.<sup>126</sup> As World War II progressed, the SRL's work accelerated, placing greater priority on the acceptability of military rations rather than nutritive value. Of top concern was the Army's desire for a more compact version of the C ration developed in 1938.<sup>127</sup> The solution was the K ration, created specifically for mobile units as a short duration, individual ration.<sup>128</sup> Devised by Dr. Ancel Keys, it provided 2,830 calories a day and contained not only foodstuffs, but four cigarettes and later toilet paper, evidence that the Army was gradually recognizing a need to provision the soldier with "not only physical but also emotional fuel to fight the war."<sup>129</sup> Gradually it was accepted that a food's nutritional value meant nothing if it was not eaten—to be effective, military rations needed to be palatable as well as portable.<sup>130</sup>

The Committee on Food Habits was established by the National Research Council at the request of the National Defense Advisory Commission with the goal of identifying effective ways of altering American food habits.<sup>131</sup> In operation from 1940 to 1947, the

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<sup>126</sup> For more information see Alissa Hamilton, "World War II's Mobilization of the Science of Food Acceptability: How Ration Palatability Became a Military Research Priority," *Ecology of Food and Nutrition* 42, no. 4–5 (2010): 325–356.

<sup>127</sup> C rations consisted of six 12oz cans, with three containing a meat and vegetable component and three containing a biscuit, coffee, and sugar component.

<sup>128</sup> Hamilton, "World War II's Mobilization," 333–334.

<sup>129</sup> Hamilton, "World War II's Mobilization," 342.

<sup>130</sup> For more on the science of food acceptability see Hamilton, "World War II's Mobilization," 337–342.

<sup>131</sup> For more on the history and research of the Committee on Food Habits see National Research Council (US) Committee on Food Habits, *The Problem of Changing Food Habits: Report of the Committee on Food Habits 1941–1943* (Washington, DC:

Committee brought together a varied group of psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, food scientists, dieticians, and home economists to study dietary change. Anthropologist Margaret Mead served as Executive Secretary for the Committee from 1942 to 1945. Mead was arguably the face of cultural anthropology in the 1930s and, as Peter Mandler explains, she, along with others, sought to “apply these insights in the area of ‘culture and personality’ . . . to questions of international relations, especially to show how different character structures in different cultures would condition the interaction between cultures, and how knowledge of these differences could be used to establish more or less co-operative modes of communication.”<sup>132</sup> Under Mead’s leadership the Committee on Food Habits initiated or supported more than 200 studies.<sup>133</sup> These studies sought to improve domestic nutrition, but ultimately helped the United States combat malnutrition and starvation throughout postwar Europe.<sup>134</sup>

Keys was similarly affiliated with the War Department, charged with determining the physiological and psychological effects of a limited diet on a civilian population in an effort to discover the most effective way to administer postwar relief. Keys proposed a human experiment, subjecting a group of male volunteers to a semi-starvation state before then refeeding them. The results of the Minnesota Starvation Experiment—published in a two-volume text entitled *The Biology of Human Starvation*—offered the

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National Academies Press, 1943). Available at the NCBI Online Library, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK224356/>.

<sup>132</sup> Peter Mandler, “One World, Many Cultures: Margaret Mead and the Limits to Cold War Anthropology,” *History Workshop Journal* 68 (Autumn 2009): 152.

<sup>133</sup> Wansink, “Changing Eating Habits on the Home Front,” 91.

<sup>134</sup> Wansink, “Changing Eating Habits on the Home Front,” 97.

first comprehensive study of the physiological and psychological effects of starvation. While the results were not published until 1950, the team did prepare a manual on the psychological effect of starvation for relief workers. Keys's work was directly responsible for changing the conversation about malnutrition and starvation, acknowledging how deficiencies altered the mind as well as the body.<sup>135</sup>

The transition to a wartime economy influenced all American industries and agriculture was no exception. Throughout the 1930s, farmers struggled to adjust to the flailing economy and environmental upsets, with the U.S. government attempting to reduce surpluses for greater stability.<sup>136</sup> The war spearheaded a reversal in agriculture policy, with the government encouraging maximum production through a series of new federal regulations. But the war also exacerbated an already difficult situation, contributing to a labor and equipment shortage throughout the United States.<sup>137</sup> Under Secretary of Agriculture Claude Wickard's guidance, American agriculture confronted this new reality with unprecedented grit and determination, providing enough food to feed American civilians and soldiers, America's Allies, Axis victims, and even the enemy itself.

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<sup>135</sup> For more on Keys and the starvation experiment see Leah M. Kalm and Richard D. Semba, "They Starved so that Others Be Better Fed: Remembering Ancel Keys and the Minnesota Experiment," *The Journal of Nutrition* 135 (2005): 1347–1352; and Todd Tucker, *The Great Starvation Experiment: The Heroic Men Who Starved so that Millions Could Live* (New York: Free Press, 2006).

<sup>136</sup> For more on agriculture in the 1930s and 40s see Douglas R. Hurt, *Problems of Plenty. The American Farmer in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2002); and Walter W. Wilcox, *The Farmer in the Second World War* (New York: DaCapo Press, 1973 Reprint).

<sup>137</sup> Collingham, *Taste of War*, 66.

To assist in production and transport of American food, the Department of Agriculture created several new divisions, with the Food Requirements Committee handling food production and the War Food Administration developing policies for distribution. The Office of Price Administration worked with Congress to set prices for farm goods and manage retail distribution and the War Production Board regulated the manufacture of farm equipment. Rather than rely on voluntarism, the Department of Agriculture established price ceilings on food products and created a food-rationing division within the Office of Price Administration, with price controls remaining for two years following the end of the war. In 1943 the Department of Agriculture ordered all citizens to establish Victory Gardens in an effort to ease shortages and cope with war rationing.<sup>138</sup> These federal regulatory efforts garnered criticism, but American farmers were praised, with *Time* magazine remarking in April 1942 that farmers, “had the food situation well in their plow-calloused hands . . . doing better than the Washington food bureaucrats.”<sup>139</sup> The citizen farmer was reminded in a 1943 book by Howard R. Tolley, head of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Bureau of Agricultural Economics (BAE), that Freedom from Want was a task largely left to him and his family.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> For more see Bentley, *Eating for Victory*.

<sup>139</sup> “FOOD: The Farmers Come Through,” *Time*, 6 April 1942. See Melissa Amateis Marsh, “Enough Food to Feed an Army,” *America in WWII*, October 2013, 34–39.

<sup>140</sup> Howard R. Tolley, *The Farmer Citizen at War* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1943).

The Office of War Information underscored farmers' contribution as "soldiers of the soil," with farmers often depicted in propaganda posters as fighting men.<sup>141</sup> Recognizing the singular importance of American agriculture to the war effort, the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 provided exemptions for farm workers, classifying these men as II-C in an effort to stem possible labor shortages in agriculture.<sup>142</sup> While the war propaganda machine turned out material praising farmers, agriculture still grappled with a severe manpower shortage. As a result, new sources of labor were tapped including women, children, Mexicans, and POWs.<sup>143</sup> American agriculture surpassed production expectations, but the federal government still took steps to regulate.

Prior to American entry in the conflict, Wickard updated the World War I slogan, "Food Will Win the War," with "Food will win the war and write the peace." Wickard believed hungry nations would be more willing to accept U.S. peace terms alongside American food, and thus launched the campaign that featured farmers as key contributors

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<sup>141</sup> Katherine Jellison argues that the soldier of the soil campaign provided "an alternative way to perform masculinity." Jellison, "Get Your Farm in the Fight," 18.

<sup>142</sup> Jellison, "Get Your Farm in the Fight," 6.

<sup>143</sup> For more see Stephanie A. Carpenter, *On the Farm Front: The Women's Land Army in World War II* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2003); Erasmo Gamboa, *Mexican Labor and World War II: Braceros in the Pacific Northwest, 1942–1947* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000); Duane Ernest Miller, "Barbed-Wire Farm Laborers: Michigan's Prisoners of War Experience during World War II," *Michigan History* 73 (Sept. 1989): 12–17; Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 127–166; and Michael Snodgrass, "The Bracero Program, 1942–1964," in *Beyond the Border: The History of Mexican-U.S. Migration*, ed. Mark Overmyer-Velásquez (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 79–102.

to the war effort.<sup>144</sup> He maintained that the task ahead was unprecedented and would continue well beyond any armistice, with reconstruction looming as large as the more immediate concern of relief. Indeed, he frequently called on farmers as exemplars of American democracy. Farmers, Wickard stated, “believe[d] in peace more strongly perhaps than any other group” because they knew of war’s destructive qualities, thus “farmers are the most passionately devoted to democracy and individual freedom. Once they are convinced that their freedom is in danger, they will not rest until that danger is removed.”<sup>145</sup> Food was not only an “arsenal of weapons,” but it was also America’s “fifth column,” threatening to undermine democracy.<sup>146</sup>

Wickard reminded Americans in his speeches that it was “a political necessity that starvation disappear in any country we reoccupy . . . We must see to it that populations delivered from Axis bondage are given a real deliverance, for they have been told many times by our enemies that democracy means freedom without bread.”<sup>147</sup> Like Hoover before him, Wickard strongly believed that hunger bred revolt, and adopted militaristic rhetoric to drive home his fears and belief that food was the “strongest weapon of

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<sup>144</sup> “Again, food will win war, and write the peace, adds Secretary Wickard,” *Life*, 11 August 1941, 59.

<sup>145</sup> “Address by the Secretary of Agriculture, Claude R. Wickard, over the Columbia Broadcasting System,” 19 April 1941, Speech and Article File 1934–1966, Box 46, Folder: Speeches Mar.–Apr. 1941, Claude R. Wickard Papers, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, NY (hereafter cited as FDRL).

<sup>146</sup> “Indices of Speeches,” 5, Speech and Article File 1934–1966, Box 45, Folder: Index to Speech and Article 1940–1944 w. Correspondence (Catherine Loose, Sec. to CRW), Claude R. Wickard Papers, FDRL.

<sup>147</sup> “The Problem of Food—America’s Responsibility,” 16 November 1942, Speech and Article File 1934–1966, Box 47, Folder: Speeches Nov.–Dec. 1942, Claude R. Wickard Papers, FDRL.

defense” available in the American arsenal.<sup>148</sup> Ultimately, the war pulled American agriculture out of the Depression, and transformed American farms from “small, horse-powered operations without electricity to mechanized mass-producers capable of feeding nations and armies,” making possible the massive humanitarian action necessary to provide relief and rehabilitation.<sup>149</sup>

### **“Uncle Sam or Uncle Patsy?”: The Limits of Relief**

Memories of World War One also guided postwar planning in Washington, with a firm conviction that the mistakes of the previous war were not to be repeated. While Hoover’s work with the ARA was heralded as a great success, those in government circles acknowledged the many flaws in post-WWI relief, the most egregious being the absence of a single organization capable of coordinating the massive project of postwar relief and recovery. As historian Jessica Reinisch writes, “[F]ailures in the organization of relief after 1918 appeared as part of a much bigger cluster of failures concerning inadequate reconstruction programmes, insufficient international agreement and an unstable international architecture, all of which had disastrous consequences.”<sup>150</sup> Who would be responsible for feeding, housing, and clothing the multitudes of displaced individuals? How would this relief be administered? And, most importantly, who would finance the operation?

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<sup>148</sup> “Food Wickard’s Answer to War,” Scrapbooks 1940–41, Boxes 74–75, Claude R. Wickard Papers, FDRL.

<sup>149</sup> Marsh, “Enough Food,” 39.

<sup>150</sup> Jessica Reinisch, “Internationalism in Relief: The Birth (and Death) of UNRRA,” *Past and Present*, Supplement 6 (2011): 262.

Postwar relief was an international problem requiring an international solution, specifically an organization that could coordinate the logistics of a relief operation the scale of which the world had never seen. The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) was created to solve a number of postwar problems. When UNRRA was established in the final months of 1943, “it drew upon a curious amalgam of interwar lessons, war-time experiences and conflicting priorities for post-war reconstruction.”<sup>151</sup> Heralded as an unprecedented and ambitious experiment in internationalism, the agency was not without critics. Plagued by financial woes, logistical complications, charges of corruption, and the crumbling wartime alliance, the great experiment was ultimately short-lived. Unable to maneuver itself into the Cold War framework, UNRRA disbanded in 1947. The organization’s mission, however, persisted, with relief work assigned to various agencies of the newly birthed United Nations, while the recovery of western Europe became a chief concern of the State Department.

Questions surrounding the rehabilitation and recovery of Europe reflected the emergence of a growing human rights agenda in the 1940s, including global human rights—universal guarantees with the potential radically to alter relationships between citizens and their government, as well as the global community.<sup>152</sup> Throughout the early half of the twentieth century, nongovernmental groups served as the key advocates for human rights.<sup>153</sup> Individuals affiliated with these nongovernmental organizations, the

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<sup>151</sup> Reinisch, “Internationalism in Relief,” 260.

<sup>152</sup> Mark Philip Bradley, *The World Reimagined: Americans and Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 3.

<sup>153</sup> *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History*, ed. Akira Iriye, Petra Goedde, and William I. Hitchcock, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 4.

doctors, students, lawyers, activists, etc., made this dialogue accessible and believable.<sup>154</sup> The increasing circulation of human rights lingo did not occur in a vacuum, but emerged alongside a very specific wartime rhetoric crafted by Roosevelt, with both languages informing and shaping the other.<sup>155</sup> While there existed little consensus over the meaning, scope, and practical application of global human rights, it was clear they would figure prominently in the postwar period. Historian Mark Philip Bradley writes that, “[W]artime rights talk had a scale and scope that went far beyond the promises of the Four Freedoms, the Atlantic Charter, and the UN Declaration, which had first situated the language of human rights at the center of World War II’s aims and purposes for the United States and its allies.”<sup>156</sup>

Roosevelt included human rights in his January 1941 State of the Union address—the speech where he introduced the Four Freedoms—defining freedom as “the supremacy of human rights everywhere.”<sup>157</sup> Recognizing the American opposition to war, Roosevelt crafted a message designed to assuage American fears and insecurities, offering a vision for the future that he hoped would both comfort and inspire. In simple terms he outlined the Four Freedoms, a combination of individual rights and welfare obligations that made America unique. These freedoms—freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from fear, and freedom from want—were essential to national security.

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<sup>154</sup> Bradley, *The World Reimagined*, 6.

<sup>155</sup> Bradley, *The World Reimagined*, 69.

<sup>156</sup> Bradley, *The World Reimagined*, 46.

<sup>157</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, “Annual Message to Congress on the State of the Union,” 6 January 1941, *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/209473>.

The Four Freedoms served as a rallying cry, appearing in American propaganda and seeping into American culture, but FDR's true purpose was to garner public support and Congressional approval for aid to Great Britain.<sup>158</sup> Only a month prior, Churchill had written to Roosevelt with "candour and confidence" to express his fear that "the moment approaches when we shall no longer be able to pay cash for shipping and other supplies."<sup>159</sup> During a press conference the week before Christmas, Roosevelt introduced the idea of lending rather than selling weapons to Great Britain. Presenting his plan in easy to understand terms, he described lending a garden hose to a neighbor whose home was on fire. The average person would not negotiate a fee for this aid but expect a "gentleman's obligation to repay in kind."<sup>160</sup> Jeremi Suri writes that the "garden hose analogy made intervention in Europe and Asia sound neighborly and self-protecting . . . small steps to help friends fight dangerous threats were wise, even cost-effective."<sup>161</sup> Roosevelt made clear the need for continued aid in a December 29<sup>th</sup> fireside chat: "If

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<sup>158</sup> Elizabeth Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World: America's Vision for Human Rights* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005), 48.

<sup>159</sup> Letter Winston Churchill to Franklin Roosevelt, 8 December 1940, Churchill Archive for Schools (Online), <http://www.churchillarchiveforschools.com/themes/the-themes/anglo-american-relations/just-how-special-was-the-special-relationship-in-the-Second-World-War-Part-1-1939-41/the-sources/source-2>. For more on FDR's efforts to assist Great Britain despite opposition from U.S. isolationists see Warren Kimball, *Forged in War: Roosevelt, Churchill and the Second World War* (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1997); and David Reynolds, *The Creation of the Anglo-American Alliance, 1937-41: A Study in Competitive Co-operation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982).

<sup>160</sup> Franklin Roosevelt's Press Conference, 17 December 1940, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library and Museum Digital Collections (hereafter cited as FDRDC).

<sup>161</sup> Jeremi Suri, *The Impossible Presidency: The Rise and Fall of America's Highest Office* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), 168.

Great Britain goes down, the Axis powers . . . will be in a position to bring enormous military and naval resources against this hemisphere. It is no exaggeration to say that all of us, in all the Americas, would be living at the point of a gun—a gun loaded with explosive bullets, economic as well as military.” Roosevelt ended the speech in dramatic fashion, declaring “we must have more ships, more guns, more plans—more of everything. We must be the great arsenal of democracy.”<sup>162</sup>

The 1940 State of the Union was the denouement, where FDR unveiled his plan for Lend-Lease, a program designed to provide food, oil, and weapons to Allied nations free of charge—thus a speech celebrating American freedoms and espousing a peaceful future, was actually a request for greater production, whether it be munitions, ships, or food. The “arsenal of democracy” was composed not only of standard military weaponry, but also aid in all its various forms. Roosevelt relied on his powers of persuasion and carefully constructed a vision for the postwar future that necessitated a flourishing transatlantic alliance rooted in shared values. American public opinion increasingly favored the Allies, but many still clung to neutrality. The dream of isolation risked “a nightmare of a people without freedom—the nightmare of a people lodged in prison, handcuffed, hungry, and fed through the bars.”<sup>163</sup> Roosevelt was attuned to the power of

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<sup>162</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Fireside Chat," 29 December 1940, *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/209416>.

<sup>163</sup> Address at the University of Virginia, 10 June 1940, in Samuel I. Rosenman, ed. *Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt [PPA]*, 13 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1941), 9:261. Quoted in Susan Dunn, *1940: FDR, Willkie, Lindbergh, Hitler; The Election amid the Storm* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 44.

words—he needed a call-to-arms without a formal declaration of war.<sup>164</sup> Aid to Britain strengthened national security and demonstrated a belief in the superiority of democracy, thus working to safeguard freedom at home and abroad. “The happiness of future generations,” Roosevelt stated, “may well depend upon how effective and how immediate we can make our aid felt.”<sup>165</sup> Many in the Roosevelt administration, Secretary of State Cordell Hull included, feared this discussion was premature, but it paved the way for Lend-Lease and, ultimately initiated a conversation on postwar planning that contributed to the formation of UNRRA.<sup>166</sup>

Roosevelt designed the Four Freedoms speech to sway the American public in favor of aid for Great Britain. Yet it also championed a future where social security was a priority. Freedom from Want specifically alluded to an economically prosperous and healthy democratic society. Matt Jones writes, the “evocative but ambiguous phrase ‘freedom from want’ represented ordinary aspirations for a brighter future, where painful memories of the Depression could be scourged and material abundance and prosperity enjoyed by all.”<sup>167</sup> Freedom from Want was arguably apolitical, “holding a job, providing

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<sup>164</sup> *The Four Freedoms: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Evolution of an American Idea*, ed. Jeffrey A. Engel (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 18.

<sup>165</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, “Annual Message to Congress on the State of the Union,” 6 January 1941, *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/209473>.

<sup>166</sup> For more on postwar planning and the relationship between FDR and the State Department see Christopher D. O’Sullivan, *Sumner Welles, Postwar Planning, and the Quest for a New World Order, 1937–1943* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 33–60.

<sup>167</sup> Matthew Jones, “Freedom from Want,” in Engel, *The Four Freedoms*, 128–129. In her discussion of the June press conference that laid the foundations of the Four Freedoms, Borgwardt reveals that Freedom from Want was actually suggested by a reporter. Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World*, 48.

for one's family, and aspiring to greater material well-being were all ideas that could unite Americans."<sup>168</sup> It was an ideal with far-ranging appeal, particularly following the global experience with depression in the 1930s.

Economic concerns dominated debates over the postwar not only in the United States but in Britain as well, where a series of surveys were commissioned in 1941. The resulting Beveridge Report (1942) specifically warned that "freedom from want cannot be forced on a democracy . . . It must be won."<sup>169</sup> Freedom from Want was the only freedom that lent itself to easy calculations, with an improved standard of living clearly evinced by numbers: money earned, money spent, grams of food purchased, and calories consumed. Freedom from Want was quantifiable in ways that Freedom from Fear, Freedom of Religion, and Freedom of Speech were not. Like the others, nevertheless, it tacitly acknowledged that *quality* of life, particularly an American lifestyle, was as important as standard of living.

Nothing better illustrated this than Norman Rockwell's Four Freedoms illustrations that originally appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*, before they were enlisted by the propaganda machine. Rockwell's folksy interpretation took Roosevelt's words and elevated them to an iconic status in the United States, with Freedom from Want portrayed as a classic Thanksgiving dinner, featuring a well-fed, white family,

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<sup>168</sup> Jones, "Freedom from Want," 130.

<sup>169</sup> "Social Insurance and Allied Services, Report by Sir William Beveridge," Papers of William H. Beveridge (1<sup>st</sup> Baron Beveridge), Archives of the London School of Economics and Political Science, Part 8, File 46, "Summary and Guide to [Beveridge] Report and Related Papers, 1941–44," 78. Quoted in Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World*, 49.

salivating over an equally well-fed roast turkey.<sup>170</sup> The Four Freedoms were not “merely lofty ideals,” as Jeffrey Engel explains, but were “tangible and enjoyed by everyday Americans in their daily lives.”<sup>171</sup> Freedom from Want readily entered the lexicon in 1941, reiterating the importance of economic security not only in a postwar world, but more immediately in post-Depression America. The Four Freedoms quickly took root in American popular culture, appearing in murals, sculptures, comics, and even postage stamps. For example, the headquarters for Marvel Comic’s Fantastic Four is Four Freedoms Plaza. Matthew Jones mentions that the working title for Aaron Copland’s famed composition *Fanfare for the Common Man* was actually *Fanfare for the Four Freedoms*.<sup>172</sup>

Given the mass appeal of the Four Freedoms, it made sense that these ideals eventually were codified. In August 1941, four months prior to Pearl Harbor and American entry in the war, Roosevelt and Churchill secretly met off the coast of Newfoundland to discuss the war and their plans for a postwar international system, drafting a list of eight principles later known as the Atlantic Charter. The Atlantic Charter was not a binding treaty (Roosevelt never signed it), but it did serve to reaffirm the Anglo-American alliance and outline a shared vision for the postwar world, including free trade, self-determination, a general security system, and several social welfare

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<sup>170</sup> Borgwardt quotes Rockwell acknowledging that hungry and displaced Europeans “sort of resented” the abundance on display in Freedom from Want. Norman Rockwell, *My Adventures as an Illustrator*, 338–341. Quoted in Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World*, 46.

<sup>171</sup> Engel, *The Four Freedoms*, 27.

<sup>172</sup> Jones, “Freedom from Want,” 130.

provisions. Elizabeth Borgwardt convincingly argues that the Atlantic Conference marked a “bold attempt on the part of Roosevelt and his foreign policy planners to internationalize the New Deal,” with the Charter serving as a blueprint. She writes that the Atlantic Charter, effectively nothing more than a publicity stunt, “was soon best known for a resonant phrase about establishing a particular kind of postwar order—a peace ‘which will afford assurance that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want.’”<sup>173</sup>

The Four Freedoms provided the perfect wartime rhetoric prior to an actual declaration of war. Despite remaining wary of entering another European conflict, many Americans found the Four Freedoms a cause worthy of support, one that was intimately connected to their personal lives yet could easily be projected on the international stage as a model for an engaged global citizenry, “as much elements of man's needs as air and sunlight, bread and salt.”<sup>174</sup> A non-binding, and linguistically unimpressive document, the Atlantic Charter became a “cultural as well as political icon.” It was the “star” that guided future efforts at a liberal internationalism, including the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, which included the Four Freedoms in the document’s preamble: A “world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed the highest aspiration of the common people.”<sup>175</sup> The

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<sup>173</sup> Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World*, 3–4.

<sup>174</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Radio Address on United Flag Day," 14 June 1942, *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/210730>.

<sup>175</sup> United Nations, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 10 December 1948, preamble, <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>. See also Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World*, 45.

Atlantic Charter offered a blueprint for the postwar, but it was the language of the Four Freedoms that led the American public to gradually embrace a vision for the future where the United States played an active and compassionate role on the international stage.

Roosevelt knew he needed more than abstract values to facilitate the transition from isolationism to internationalism; he needed an institution that could promote and reinforce those values. Conceived as a national security necessity, UNRRA was intended to be the international embodiment of the Four Freedoms, but it also allowed American policymakers to reconstruct Europe (and Asia) as a paradigm of American values.<sup>176</sup> UNRRA's primary purpose was to provide the resources necessary for rehabilitating a war-ravaged globe, continuing the work of the joint Anglo-American committee for postwar relief that it replaced.<sup>177</sup> This included providing food, clothing, and shelter, as well as assisting with the repatriation of hundreds of thousands of displaced persons (DPs).

In Roosevelt's eyes, future peace and prosperity depended on international cooperation and collaboration. He first coined the term United Nations during the Arcadia Conference held in Washington in December 1941. The Arcadia Conference was the first official meeting of the United States and Great Britain to discuss strategy following the U.S.'s entry into the war earlier that month. Originally referred to as the

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<sup>176</sup> Amanda Melanie Bundy, "There Was a Man of UNRRA: Internationalism, Humanitarianism, and the Early Cold War in Europe, 1943–1947" (Ph.D. diss., The Ohio State University, 2017), 7.

<sup>177</sup> The Inter-Allied Committee on Post-War Requirements was created to foster collaboration between British and American relief planners. In 1942, the British formed the Council of British Societies for Relief Abroad (COBSRA), while the Roosevelt administration established its American counterpart, the Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations (OFFRO).

Declaration of Allied Unity, Roosevelt suggested renaming the document on the morning of January 1<sup>st</sup> with the title “Declaration by United Nations.”<sup>178</sup> The document bound signatories against making a separate peace and reaffirmed the “common program of purposes and principles embodied in the . . . Atlantic Charter.”<sup>179</sup> Originally signed by the U.S., Great Britain, Soviet Union, and China, the following day an additional 22 nations pledged themselves, “convinced that complete victory over their enemies is essential to defend life, liberty, independence, and religious freedom, and to preserve human rights and justice in their own lands as well as in other lands.”<sup>180</sup>

Founded in November 1943, the organization was created to assist with the immediate relief needs of territory under Allied control, allowing for a smoother transition, “when victory comes there can certainly be no secure peace until there is a return of law and order in the oppressed countries, until the peoples of these countries have been restored to a normal, healthy, and self-sustaining existence.”<sup>181</sup> Relief was essential to restoring order, particularly with regards to infrastructure and public health. “It would be supreme irony for us to win a victory,” Roosevelt reminded Americans,

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<sup>178</sup> “Draft Declaration of Allied Unity,” 1 January 1942, Document 228 in *FRUS: The Conferences at Washington, 1941–1942, and Casablanca, 1943*, ed. Frederick Aandahl, et al. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1958), <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1941-43/d228>.

<sup>179</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, “Joint Declaration of the United Nations on Cooperation for Victory,” 1 January 1942, *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/209934>.

<sup>180</sup> Roosevelt, “Joint Declaration of the United Nations on Cooperation for Victory.”

<sup>181</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, “Address on the Signing of the Agreement Establishing the U.N.R.R.A.,” 9 November 1943, *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/209679>.

“and then to inherit world chaos simply because we were unprepared to meet what we know we shall have to meet.”<sup>182</sup> Without the proper foresight and coordination, the victors faced obstacles to the peace, the greatest fear being a disease outbreak more devastating than the 1918 influenza pandemic.

UNRRA would be different, drawing “upon a curious amalgam of interwar lessons, war-time experiences and conflicting priorities for post-war reconstruction,” it was an experiment in international collaboration never before attempted, let alone achieved. UNRRA was “a magnificent unprecedented feat [sic],” wrote Susan Pettiss, with men and women of all backgrounds and from numerous nations uniting to combat the challenge of peace with a “pervasive idealism.”<sup>183</sup> UNRRA’s ambitions were largely bankrolled by the United States, fueling concerns that the U.S. was acting as a Santa Claus for the world, throwing money around with little to show in return. Grace Fox points out in her history of the organization, however, that “relief to the suffering in Europe” was a “dominant concern” among Americans, with several hundred agencies for foreign relief already registered with the War Relief Control Board, the organization

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<sup>182</sup> Roosevelt, “Address on the Signing of the Agreement Establishing the U.N.R.R.A.”

<sup>183</sup> Susan T. Pettiss and Lynne Taylor, *After the Shooting Stopped: The Story of an UNRRA Welfare Worker in Germany, 1945–47* (Victoria, BC: Trafford, 2004), 6–7.

established by Roosevelt to coordinate relief needs.<sup>184</sup> By May 1942, more than \$96,000,000 was raised by registered and non-registered agencies.<sup>185</sup>

UNRRA leadership worked tirelessly to underscore that this was not charity, but instead an attempt to help people help themselves, with Roosevelt explaining to Americans, “it will be the task of U.N.R.R.A. to operate in these areas of food shortages until the resumption of peaceful occupations enables the liberated peoples once more to assume the full burden of their own support.”<sup>186</sup> The self-help mentality was first championed by Roosevelt in his New Deal promise to Americans, with charity offering “true sympathy and wisdom [that] helps men to help themselves.”<sup>187</sup> In addition to providing immediate relief in the form of food, shelter, and clothing, UNRRA also assisted in the repatriation of Displaced Persons, operating hundreds of DP camps across Europe and providing welfare assistance, vocational training, and medical care.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Grace Fox, “The Origins of UNRRA,” *Political Science Quarterly* 65, no. 4 (December 1950): 567. For more on the War Relief Control Board see President’s War Relief Control Board, *Voluntary War Relief during World War II: A Report to the President* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1946).

<sup>185</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Report of the President’s Committee on War Relief Agencies,” *Bulletin*, 1 August 1942. Quoted in Fox, “Origins of UNRRA,” 567.

<sup>186</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt: “Address on the Signing of the Agreement Establishing the U.N.R.R.A.,” November 9, 1943, *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/209679>.

<sup>187</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, “Acceptance Speech for the Renomination for the Presidency, Philadelphia, Pa.,” 27 June 1936, *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/208917>.

<sup>188</sup> For more on the DP camps and the refugee crisis in postwar Europe see Gerard Daniel Cohen, *In War’s Wake: Europe’s Displaced Persons in the Postwar Order* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Michael Marrus, *The Unwanted: European Refugees in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); *The Disentanglement of Populations: Migrations, Expulsion and Displacement in Post-War Europe, 1943–1949*, ed. Jessica Reinisch and Elizabeth White (London: Palgrave

Former New York Governor Herbert Lehman accepted the position of first Director General of UNRRA a year after he agreed to lead the Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations (OFRRO).<sup>189</sup> In his address at the Atlantic City conference that inaugurated the organization, Lehman reminded attendees of the urgency inherent in their mission, “We have been called upon twice within the span of a lifetime to devise a peace in which all men can live in freedom from fear and want. We failed once. We dare not fail again.”<sup>190</sup> Lehman appealed to Americans by highlighting that the relief provided by UNRRA was not a gift, but rather an investment, albeit he conceded that gift-giving may sometimes be in the best interests of the United States.<sup>191</sup> Lehman had a champion in First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who warned in her *My Day* column that to approach peace unprepared was a risky endeavor: “Mr. Lehman points out . . . that our object and that of the United Nations must not merely be the relief which must first be given, but the provision of such things as will make the populations self-sustaining as quickly as

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Macmillan, 2011); Ben Shephard, *The Long Road Home: The Aftermath of the Second World War* (New York: Random House, 2010); and Mark Wyman, *DPs: Europe’s Displaced Persons: 1945-1951* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989).

<sup>189</sup> OFFRO was under the supervision of the State Department and funded by the Lend-Lease administration, with many of its activities and responsibilities folded into UNRRA. Bundy, “There Was a Man of UNRRA,” 14.

<sup>190</sup> “Address by Herbert H. Lehman at Council Meeting of United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration,” 11 November 1943, in *Clippings and Pictures*, vol. 3, December 1, 1943 to December 31, 1943, Box 1382, Herbert H. Lehman Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York, NY (hereafter cited as RBMLCU).

<sup>191</sup> Reinisch, “Internationalism in Relief,” 271.

possible.”<sup>192</sup> Economic self-interest was one of the chief motivations for this aid, with relief to Europe offering a market for American surplus and creating jobs for returning soldiers, while simultaneously stabilizing the global economy.<sup>193</sup> Assistant Secretary of State Dean Acheson reminded Americans that UNRRA was an important step towards assuring “the liberated peoples an opportunity to regain their strength and vigor for the common tasks of peace.”<sup>194</sup>

Many Americans feared the United States “intended to try single-handedly to feed the world,” prompting Roosevelt to address these concerns in a message to Congress where he admitted that a “small percentage” of American foodstuffs would be used in areas liberated by the United Nations. Drawing on the experience in French North Africa, Roosevelt explained that the plan was “to help nations to help themselves, after preliminary emergency relief,” which meant providing seed, fertilizer, farm machinery, and agricultural experts.<sup>195</sup>

UNRRA’s mission demanded political neutrality, but this neutrality proved difficult to achieve when the organization relied on the United States for financial support. American politicians grew frustrated by the constraints of neutrality.

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<sup>192</sup> Eleanor Roosevelt, “My Day,” 26 August 1943, in Clippings and Pictures, vol. 3, August 15, 1943 to November 14, 1943, Box 1382, Herbert H. Lehman Papers, RBMLCU.

<sup>193</sup> Reinisch, “Internationalism in Relief,” 271.

<sup>194</sup> “Need to Aid Freed Peoples is Cited by Dean Acheson,” *The Sun*, 19 December 1943, 13.

<sup>195</sup> James Marlow and George Zielke, “We Will Help Out, But Won’t Feed the World after War,” 3 November 1943, in Clippings and Pictures, vol. 3, August 15, 1943 to November 14, 1943, Box 1382, Herbert H. Lehman Papers, RBMLCU.

Increasingly, they expressed a preference for an organization that actively sought to serve American interests abroad. UNRRA leadership and mission chiefs championed internationalism and reiterated their commitment to humanitarianism, but they could not prevent the politicization of relief. Acheson, one of UNRRA's early champions, slowly distanced himself from the organization citing concerns that governments "bitterly hostile to us" were receiving aid paid for or supplied by the United States, allowing them to "entrench themselves."<sup>196</sup> The American embrace of aid as a political tool promoting U.S. security and national interests spelled the end of UNRRA.

Historian Jessica Reinisch writes that this new assessment of foreign aid and U.S. national interest "meant an overhaul of the whole geography not just of relief, but of the American presence in the world," with "all of this hing[ing] on a new approach to Germany."<sup>197</sup> While the Allied powers agreed "to provide relief and help in rehabilitation for the victims of German and Japanese barbarism," they opted not to extend charity to the aggressors.<sup>198</sup> UNRRA's charter indicated that any victim of Axis aggression was eligible for relief. Both Italy and Austria applied for aid under these terms, which the Soviet Union opposed, arguing the two nations were clearly collaborators. The U.S. and Britain believed that for rehabilitation to occur, both nations needed aid. Hungary and

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<sup>196</sup> Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* (New York: Norton, 1969), 201.

<sup>197</sup> Reinisch, "Auntie UNRRA," 87.

<sup>198</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Address on the Signing of the Agreement Establishing the U.N.R.R.A.," 9 November 1943, *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/209679>.

Finland were included later as well.<sup>199</sup> Under the “disease and unrest” formula, Allied authorities provided meager food assistance for Italian civilians, but it was not enough to sustain the population, and in the summer of 1944 the UNRRA Observer Mission arrived in Italy to assess relief needs. The Observer Mission’s report “proposed a total expenditure estimated at \$94,800,000 on the provision of supplementary food for 2,500,000 needy, nursing women and expectant mothers, and children up to fifteen years of age,” along with medical and sanitary supplies, and assistance with resettlement and repatriation.<sup>200</sup> The Council approved the proposals, following the lead of the U.S. and British governments, albeit with the proviso that the program not exceed \$50 million.<sup>201</sup>

This agreement was not easily reached, with many feeling strongly that aid should not be extended to an ex-enemy country until the needs of all liberated nations were met. Lehman’s “general attitude towards an Italian operation was lukewarm,” whereas other officials voiced misgivings that applying already strained resources on a limited program hampered its effectiveness.<sup>202</sup> By VE Day, it was apparent that if Italy were to be economically independent in the future, continued assistance was necessary. At Potsdam, Allied leadership acknowledged Italy as “the first of the Axis Powers to break with Germany, to whose defeat she had made a material contribution, and has now joined with

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<sup>199</sup> See Bundy, “There Was a Man of UNRRA.”

<sup>200</sup> Woodbridge, *UNRRA*, vol. 2, 259.

<sup>201</sup> The U.S. feared a Communist electoral victory in Italy. See Kaeten Mistry, *The United States, Italy and the Origins of the Cold War: Waging Political Warfare, 1945–1950* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

<sup>202</sup> Note, meeting between the Director General and Keeny *et al.*, 24 June 1944. Quoted in Woodbridge, *UNRRA*, vol. 2, 259.

the Allies in the struggle against Japan.”<sup>203</sup> Later in the summer, the U.S. proposed that UNRRA be “authorized and directed to initiate . . . a program of relief and rehabilitation assistance on the same standards and basis of priority as applied to liberated areas of the United Nations and their nationals.”<sup>204</sup>

German civilians, however, remained beyond UNRRA’s scope, with Allied military authorities responsible for food and other relief requirements in occupied Germany and Japan.<sup>205</sup> The mission in Germany was confined to DP camps where aid was administered only to non-ethnic Germans, “with its limited resources, UNRRA can scarcely more than begin to meet the overwhelming relief and rehabilitation needs of the many United Nations directly dependent on its aid.”<sup>206</sup> German expellees arriving from the East, displaced by the new borders agreed upon at Potsdam, found themselves similarly excluded from UNRRA aid. American public opinion viewed this favorably, “The Germans can wait. This is not to suggest that we intend to starve the 80,000,000

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<sup>203</sup> Berlin Declaration. Quoted in Woodbridge, *UNRRA*, vol. 2, 266.

<sup>204</sup> *Journal*, Third Council, p. 68; Resolution 73. Quoted in Woodbridge, *UNRRA*, vol. 2, 267.

<sup>205</sup> The food situation in Japan bore striking similarities to the food crisis in Germany. For more on the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers’s (SCAP) response to the food problem in occupied Japan see Steven J. Fuchs, “Feeding the Japanese: MacArthur, Washington, and the Rebuilding of Japan through Food Policy” (Ph.D. diss., SUNY Stony Brook, 2002).

<sup>206</sup> “50 Facts about UNRRA,” 8, in UNRRA Reports 50-2, UNRRA Reports and Directories, Box 1074, Herbert H. Lehman Papers, RBMLCU.

men, women and children in Germany but they must not be treated on the same generous plane as the war-torn states.”<sup>207</sup>

Not everyone was opposed to German aid, with a prescient editorial in the *Worcester Gazette* fearing “we may be creating conditions beyond our wisdom to foresee . . . The determinations of today do no always write the history of tomorrow. A thousand envies, prejudices, greeds, created by personalities yet unborn, writ it letter by letter, also.”<sup>208</sup> Nevertheless, Lehman reaffirmed UNRRA’s stance on Germany throughout the spring and early summer of 1945. He stated, “if and when the UNRRA feeds Germany it will do so only upon the decision of the majority of the members of its Council.”<sup>209</sup> Germany was not to be “coddled,” and it was expected that they not only feed themselves, but contribute to the feeding of the displaced persons and prisoners scattered across the former Reich.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> “Feed Germany Last,” 1 December 1943, in Clippings and Pictures, vol. 5, December 1, 1943 to December 31, 1943, Box 1382, Herbert H. Lehman Papers, RBMLCU.

<sup>208</sup> “‘Never’ is a Long Time,” *Worcester Gazette*, 1 December 1943, in Clippings and Pictures, vol. 5, December 1, 1943 to December 31, 1943, Box 1382, Herbert H. Lehman Papers, RBMLCU.

<sup>209</sup> “UNRRA Aid to Reich Denied by Lehman,” *New York Times*, 11 May 1945, in Clippings and Pictures, vol. 8, February 8, 1945 to August 21, 1945, Box 1382, Herbert H. Lehman Papers, RBMLCU.

<sup>210</sup> “Feeding the Germans,” *Bridgeport Telegram*, 12 May 1945, in Clippings and Pictures, vol. 8, February 8, 1945 to August 21, 1945, Box 1382, Herbert H. Lehman Papers, RBMLCU.

## Conclusion

In 1940, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill promised that “food, freedom, and peace” would follow Nazi defeat and be available to all of Europe, including Germany and Austria, but Roosevelt was less generous.<sup>211</sup> Roosevelt understood the symbolic power of food, and while believing benevolence to be an admirable American trait, he cautioned, “[W]e may take pride in the fact that we are softhearted; but we cannot afford to be soft-headed.”<sup>212</sup> Concerned that the people of Germany would be treated the same as liberated populations, Roosevelt stressed the importance of defeat. Hunger was one way to ensure the German population would be reminded daily of their loss.

In describing the rationale behind UNRRA, Lehman identified three motivations for providing relief: “[B]ecause common humanity demands that we feed the starving . . . because of military security: the safety of our soldiers depends on civilian conditions . . . and because of enlightened self-interest: the knowledge that the world’s future will be in constant peril if the areas liberated by our armies fester with disease, unemployment, inflation and unrest.”<sup>213</sup> Both haunted and inspired by the experience with humanitarian

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<sup>211</sup> Churchill, House of Commons, 20 August 1940, p. 1162. Quoted in Johannes-Dieter Steinert, “Food and the Food Crisis in Post-War Germany, 1945-1948: British Policy and the Role of British NGOs,” in *Food and Conflict in Europe in the Age of the Two World Wars*, ed. Frank Trentmann and Flemming Just (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), 269–270.

<sup>212</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, “Annual Message to Congress on the State of the Union,” 6 January 1941, *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/209473>.

<sup>213</sup> “Address by Herbert H. Lehman, Director General, UNRRA, at ‘I am an American Day’ Day, Central Park Mall, New York City,” 20 May 1945, in *Clippings and Pictures*, vol. 8, February 8, 1945 to August 21, 1945, Box 1382, Herbert H. Lehman Papers, RBMLCU.

relief in the aftermath of World War One, policymakers pursued a rigorous plan for post-WWII Europe. While not everyone believed the U.S. should assume the mantle of world's breadbasket, it was apparent that food was the cornerstone in the foundation for world peace.<sup>214</sup> Construction of the postwar international order began with food, and the United States' continued ability to produce a surplus equated food with power.<sup>215</sup> Food aid offered an alternate path for global engagement, improving diplomatic relations, stabilizing the world economy, creating new markets for American agricultural surplus, and elevating the United States' international reputation. Food was power in both war and peace, but in 1944, it remained unclear just how willing U.S. policymakers were to use American abundance in pursuit of geopolitical objectives.

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<sup>214</sup> "U.S. Cannot be World Breadbasket as it Was Arsenal," *Union City Dispatch*, 4 June 1945, in Clippings and Pictures, vol. 8, February 8, 1945 to August 21, 1945, Box 1382, Herbert H. Lehman Papers, RBMLCU.

<sup>215</sup> Collingham, *Taste of War*, 88.

## CHAPTER 3

### HUNGER AND THE HARD PEACE

What can be done for Germany in the way of giving her a good life must be measured not in terms of what is desirable but in terms of what is left over after the claims of her victims and our Allies are met.

--*New York Times*, 1944<sup>216</sup>

Allied planning for the military occupation of Germany gained momentum following the first meeting of the Big Three in Tehran in late November 1943. In Iran, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin broached the topic of postwar partition and occupation of Germany, agreeing that the question of dismemberment required further study by the newly created European Advisory Commission (EAC).<sup>217</sup> Secretary of State Cordell Hull and Great Britain's Minister of Foreign Affairs Anthony Eden hoped the Commission would foster greater collaboration with the Soviet Union, developing strategies for both fighting the war and then maintaining the peace. The EAC wrote proposals related to the zones of occupation in Germany, the administration of Berlin, and control machinery in Germany. The organization "considered it essential to agree in advance on machinery through which the Allies could carry out . . . policies," with the Agreement on Control

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<sup>216</sup> Joseph C. Harsch, "A 'Hard' or a 'Soft' Peace for Germany?," *New York Times*, 9 July 1944, SM8.

<sup>217</sup> The EAC was created following the Tripartite Conference of Foreign Ministers in Moscow October–November 1943. Bohlen Minutes, 1 December 1943, Document 379 in *FRUS: Diplomatic Papers, The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943*, ed. William M. Franklin and William Gerber (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1961), <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1943CairoTehran/d379>.

Machinery signed a year after the EAC's creation in November 1944.<sup>218</sup> Conceding that “many difficulties would inevitably rise between Russia and ourselves,” Hull believed “these difficulties could be solved and an era of fruitful working together come to pass.”<sup>219</sup>

Meanwhile, the Germany Country Unit, located within the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), planned for American military government. Included in this planning was the production of a military government manual for Germany, similar to the manuals created for Sicily and Italy. The handbook was designed to be compact yet comprehensive; it anticipated problems in Germany and provided an officer of military government with the necessary knowledge to solve them, rather than have general procedures adapted to conditions in Germany.<sup>220</sup> SHAEF completed the third draft in mid-June 1944 and distributed several hundred copies to military and civil agencies in advance of a final draft. The revised edition was submitted for final approvals on August 15.

Secretary of Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr. got his hands on a copy at roughly the same time. In London to oversee financial issues related to the liberation of Europe, Morgenthau obtained a State Department memorandum on reparations that he read “first

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<sup>218</sup> “Report on the Work of the European Advisory Commission,” Document 380 in *FRUS: Diplomatic Papers, 1945, European Advisory Commission, Austria, Germany*, volume 3, ed. William Slany, et al. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1968), <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v03/d380>.

<sup>219</sup> Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, vol. 2 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948), 1471.

<sup>220</sup> Earl F. Ziemke, *The U.S. Army in the Occupation of Germany, 1944–1946* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1975), 83.

with interest, then with misgivings, finally with sharp disagreement.”<sup>221</sup> He returned to Washington with a draft of the handbook and passed it, along with a list of criticisms, to President Roosevelt. In a memo to Secretary of War Henry Stimson, Roosevelt demanded information: “This so-called ‘Handbook’ is pretty bad. I should like to know how it came to be written and who approved it.” Concerned that the people of Germany would be treated the same as liberated populations, Roosevelt stressed that Germans must recognize defeat. He suggested, “if they need food to keep body and soul together beyond what they have, they should be fed three times a day with soup from Army soup kitchens.” This was a just punishment in Roosevelt’s eyes; it would “keep them perfectly healthy,” but it also provided an experience they would remember “all their lives.”<sup>222</sup> What remains unclear, however, is whether Roosevelt advocated for this punishment because it resulted in hunger, humiliation, or a combination of both.

In his response to the president, Stimson did damage control, pointing out this was a working draft, not yet approved by General Eisenhower. He also specifically addressed the question of food, writing, “the directive states that ‘German food and other supplies will be utilized for the German population to *the minimum extent* required to prevent disease and unrest.”<sup>223</sup> The “disease and unrest” formula was first formulated by

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<sup>221</sup> John Morton Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of War 1941–1945*, vol. 3 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1967), 334.

<sup>222</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, “Memorandum for the Secretary of War,” 26 August 1944, Box 22, Entry 463, RG 165, National Archives and Records Administration (hereafter cited as NARA).

<sup>223</sup> Italics mine. The memorandum is stamped “Not Used” and in pencil it states the matter was handled informally. Henry L. Stimson, “Memorandum for the President,” 29 August 1944, Box 22, Entry 463, RG 165, NARA.

the British in early planning for postwar relief, and later adopted by the United States. Nutrition experts believed normal consumers needed 2000 calories daily to prevent the spread of disease and maintain order. Many policymakers, however, assumed the world food supply was unlimited. The 2000 calorie minimum shifted dramatically once officials recognized that indigenous food supplies in Germany could not support it.<sup>224</sup>

UNRRA's creation laid bare the need and significance of food in postwar relief, but food also shaped conversations about maintaining and enforcing a just peace. This chapter traces that evolution. It explores how the pursuit of a hard peace shaped public opinion, influenced policy debates, and ultimately altered the tenor of the occupation. Debates over occupation policy occurred in conferences held in Moscow, Casablanca, Tehran, Quebec, Yalta, and Potsdam, but also within the Oval Office and at kitchen tables across the United States. Roosevelt's perception of Germany stiffened throughout 1943 and 1944, but the American public continue to view Germany benignly, with the Office of War Information reporting in May 1944 that, "Only a minority believe that harsh postwar treatment will provide the answer to the question of national security."<sup>225</sup>

News that Roosevelt and Churchill supported the Morgenthau Plan, the Secretary of Treasury's plan to pastoralize Germany, met sharp criticism in the American press and the State and War Departments. For many Americans it was difficult to approach the question of a hard peace absent emotion. The Nazi war machine laid waste to Europe for

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<sup>224</sup> For more on US/UK planning and nutritional requirements see Jane C. Ebbs, *The Hidden War* (Edinburgh: The Pentland Press Ltd., 1991), 22–43.

<sup>225</sup> Office of War Information, "Information Roundup," No. 8, 30 May 1944, pp. 19–21, Box 1712, Entry 149, RG 44, NARA. Quoted in Steven Casey, *Cautious Crusade: Franklin D. Roosevelt, American Public Opinion, and the War Against Nazi Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 160.

years, disrupting the food supplies of occupied nations and utilizing hunger as a weapon of war. Regardless, public backlash to the Morgenthau Plan tempered the push for a Carthaginian peace in the fall of 1944. Questions surrounding the German standard of living persisted, nevertheless, and the German food supply became ensnared in international disputes, framing deliberations at Yalta on reparations, zones of occupation, and the dismemberment of Germany. Food lay at the core of some of the most controversial and divisive debates over occupation policy both domestically and on the international stage.

### **“Can the Nazis be starved into submission?”: Food as a Weapon of War**

Just as American policymakers implemented strategies guided by memories of World War I, Nazi officials pursued an ambitious overhaul of the German food system in an attempt to avoid the shortages that accompanied the previous conflict.<sup>226</sup> Food played a central role in Nazi politics, with campaign posters portraying votes for Hitler and the Nazi Party as votes “against hunger and despair.”<sup>227</sup> Once in power, Hitler established the *Reichsnährstand*, a political office designed to regulate and control the food economy. Building on memories of scarcity and deprivation post-WWI, food figured prominently in

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<sup>226</sup> For a more detailed discussion on Nazi food and agriculture policies see Mark B. Cole, “Feeding the Volk: Food, Culture, and the Politics of Nazi Consumption, 1933–1945” (Ph.D. diss., University of Florida, 2011); Gustavo Corni, *Hitler and the Peasants: Agrarian Policy of the Third Reich, 1930–1939* (London: Bloomsbury, 1990); and Gesine Gerhard, *Nazi Hunger Politics: A History of Food in the Third Reich* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).

<sup>227</sup> Weinreb, *Modern Hungers*, 49.

political propaganda, justified expansion eastward, and perhaps most significantly laid the foundation for a racial ideology that starved millions.

Food propaganda rallied the masses in support of Hitler and stoked fears rooted in long standing food insecurities. Germany lacked the agricultural output necessary to sustain its large population. Hitler drew explicit connections between food and war in *Mein Kampf*. He wrote on the opening page, “the sword is then the plow; and from the tears of war grows the daily bread for generations to come.”<sup>228</sup> The “blood and soil” ideology popularized by Nazi agriculture expert Richard Walther Darré placed the emphasis on rural communities and German farmers, promoting agrarian communities as the heart of the economy and German society. Influenced by racial science, Darré interpreted blood as race, and envisioned a new agrarian ruling class.<sup>229</sup> Grain cultivation was one of the primary justifications for German expansion, with propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels describing the 1941 invasion of the Soviet Union as a quest “for grain and bread, for an overflowing breakfast, lunch and dinner table.”<sup>230</sup> Expansion eastward, in search of *Lebensraum* (living space), made the threat of British blockade hollow and allowed Germany to establish itself as a key player on the world stage. As historian

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<sup>228</sup> Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Mariner Books, 1999), 3.

<sup>229</sup> For more on Darré’s ideas see Gerhard, *Nazi Hunger Politics*, 115–118.

<sup>230</sup> Gustavo Corni and Horst Gies, *Blut und Boden: Rassenideologie und Agrarpolitik im Staat Hitlers* (Idstein: Schulz-Kirchner, 1994), 451. Quoted in Weinreb, *Modern Hungers*, 67.

Timothy Snyder explained, “The East was the Nazi Manifest Destiny,” with plans drawn up to establish German farming communities throughout eastern Europe.<sup>231</sup>

Food was unquestionably a cause of war, but it was also a weapon of war perfected by Herbert Backe, Reich Minister of Food and Agriculture. Devised as part of Operation Barbarossa, Backe’s *Hungerplan* (hunger plan) was an engineered famine: seizing Soviet food for the German army resulting in the starvation of several million Russians.<sup>232</sup> The program called for the requisition of farmland, eradication of local inhabitants, and establishment of German settlements. It wasn’t food itself that served as weapon of war, but hunger and starvation directed at populations considered racially inferior. Hunger, Alice Weinreb explained, was “easily translated into a racial threat,” with expansion eastwards rooted in a desire for self-sufficiency, but self-sufficiency also understood as a necessity for racial survival.<sup>233</sup> The *Hungerplan* anticipated the demise of tens of millions, but the program was never fully implemented, with the German military discovering, as Snyder put it, that it was “easier to conquer territory than to redistribute calories.”<sup>234</sup>

The implementation of strict food-rationing program coupled with the exploitation of conquered lands provided German civilians with a reliable food supply for

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<sup>231</sup> Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010), 160.

<sup>232</sup> For discussion of the Hunger Plan see Snyder, *Bloodlands*, 155–186. For more on Backe see Gerhard, *Nazi Hunger Politics*. Gerhard had unprecedented access to Backe’s personal papers and the diary of his wife, Ulrike Backe.

<sup>233</sup> Weinreb, *Modern Hungers*, 51.

<sup>234</sup> Snyder, *Bloodlands*, 168. Estimates place total Soviet deaths by starvation at four to seven million, Gerhard, *Nazi Hunger Politics*, 100.

most of the war, with studies estimating that one third of the food in Nazi Germany was taken from German occupied Europe.<sup>235</sup> Prior to U.S. entry into the war, news outlets reported changes to the food system implemented by the Nazi war machine, often betraying a sense of awe at the innovation in food science supported by the regime. In addition to rationing and ersatz options for German consumers, Americans also read about synthetic food products created to support German soldiers. These included special energy drinks designed to increase an individual's endurance, reportedly used by Rommel's Afrika Corps.<sup>236</sup>

Stories about looting, malnourishment, and hunger gradually replaced reports on Nazi advances in food science, reinforcing Americans' moral outrage and fueling support for a hard peace. German soldiers bragged about "living like Gods in France." They regularly crowded French food shops to supplement or replace their own rations, resulting in shortages for the civilian population. France was supposed to be the "richest country in Europe . . . capable of nourishing both the occupying army and civilians more than adequately."<sup>237</sup> Yet the German war machine quickly recognized there were limits to the food supply. Shortages in France continued throughout the summer of 1940, prompting a Red Cross official to declare that the situation "is worse than in Belgium after the World War and is growing still worse." Acknowledging that winter would be

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<sup>235</sup> Weinreb, *Modern Hungers*, 70.

<sup>236</sup> "Nazis Drink Energy Foods," *The Baltimore Sun*, 4 October 1942, CH2; "Nazi Chief Studies Ersatz Food," *New York Times*, 3 March 1940, 37.

<sup>237</sup> "France Feels Impending Famine's Grip," *The Washington Post*, 14 July 1940, 5.

difficult, the Minister of Agriculture in Vichy responded that shortages were “dramatized” and the food supply was plentiful.<sup>238</sup>

American agricultural experts and economists, pointedly blamed Nazi Germany for draining conquered lands in an attempt to compensate for German shortages and supply deficiencies. They forecast “a ghastly outlook” for the winter of 1940–41. Europe was “not yet starving” but winter brought the “spectre of the beginning of slow starvation.”<sup>239</sup> The refugee problem only complicated matters, with “towns and cities denuded of food overnight as though from the ravages of swarms of locusts.”<sup>240</sup> The situation grew worse in the winter 1941–42 with “acute undernourishment” predicted in many areas, and the “vitality” of children ranked as low in Belgium and other occupied nations.<sup>241</sup> Nazi propaganda admitted a state of “general misery” in occupied territory but attributed it to the British blockade. An American in Vichy reported that food was the “only topic of conversation,” relaying a story of a mother and her “manifestly undernourished” son. The son begged for his afternoon snack and the mother, defeated, explained her son was always hungry, “The food we get now seems merely to blow us up without nourishing.”<sup>242</sup> Seven hundred children were evacuated from Paris and Le Harve to recuperate in Switzerland for a few weeks, with similar evacuations occurring in

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<sup>238</sup> “Red Cross Expert Sees French Peril,” *New York Times*, 15 August 1940, 7.

<sup>239</sup> Robert G. Nixon, “British Food Outlook Bright, Nazi Lands Face Famine,” *The Washington Post*, 4 August 1940, B4.

<sup>240</sup> Nixon, “British Food Outlook Bright,” B4.

<sup>241</sup> “Occupied Europe Fast Losing Food,” *The Washington Post*, 21 October 1941, 16.

<sup>242</sup> “People Know Nazis Get Food,” *New York Times*, 26 March 1942, 11.

occupied Belgium.<sup>243</sup> Several people fainted when Marshal Henri Philippe Pétain visited a town, which the government declared was normal for such an event with emotions getting the best of people. Murmurs among the public, however, snickered that “empty stomachs make for fainting.”<sup>244</sup>

At the same time, the Nazi propaganda machine made sure U.S. radio audiences knew Berlin was enjoying a Bacchanalian feast, with Nazi propagandist Jane Anderson relaying the scene from a Berlin cocktail bar: “On silver platters were sweets and cookies . . . My friend ordered great goblets full of champagne, into which he put shots of cognac to make it more lively. Sweets and cookies, not bad!”<sup>245</sup> Many grew frustrated at the contradictory information coming out of German occupied areas. Germany publicized their looting of French, Belgian, Dutch, and Danish food reserves, but blamed food shortages on the British blockade. The German propaganda machine wanted the world to know that “Germany had plenty of food in reserve,” championing the “wise and provident” food supply and frequently contrasting German abundance with Allied food shortages.<sup>246</sup> Tired of the contradictions, *The Baltimore Sun*, asked correspondents in neutral countries to report what they knew of food conditions in Germany: “The German food ration today is ample for efficient health, according to the Nazi boast, but suitable only for reducing jockeys or slimming women, according to complaints of unsympathetic

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<sup>243</sup> For more on child evacuations of Nazi occupied territory see Chelsea Sambells, “Humanity in times of war?: The Evacuation of French and Belgian Children to Switzerland, 1940–1945” (Ph.D. diss., University of Edinburgh, 2016).

<sup>244</sup> “People Know Nazis Get Food,” *New York Times*, 26 March 1942, 11.

<sup>245</sup> “Germany: Sweets and Cookies,” *Time*, 6 April 1942.

<sup>246</sup> “Europe’s Food Supplies: The Facts,” *The Observer*, 11 August 1940, 8.

non-Nazi. The truth appears to be between these two views.”<sup>247</sup> Citing an anti-Nazi dietic expert, the article warned the psychological strain of food shortages could lead to nerve exhaustion. Predictions of German defeat due to food scarcity, however, were “sheer guesswork,” with “victory still depend[ent] on the hardness of the Allied fist, not the weakness of the German stomach.”<sup>248</sup>

The Red Cross favored extending relief to German occupied areas of Europe, but the British flatly refused to lift the blockade and allow humanitarian aid to reach occupied Europe. The Germans condemned this action while also stating that Germany “had no obligation to feed the people in occupied territories.” Portraying the British as enemies of Europe, German representatives highlighted the “humanitarian” aspects of German occupation, noting that Germany “already has done much and certainly much more than the governments [of the occupied territories].”<sup>249</sup> As early as 1940, former president Herbert Hoover proposed the creation of a neutral nongovernmental organization to handle food aid for civilians in territory occupied by Germany. Hoover appealed to American values, asking “Will not future Americans have lost something if we do not hold to American ideals and American faith now?”<sup>250</sup> Hoover was not alone. In a Christmas radio address, Anne Morrow Lindbergh, wife of famed aviator Charles

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<sup>247</sup> Philip Whitcomb, “What is the Truth about Nazi Food?,” *The Baltimore Sun*, 7 June 1942, 1.

<sup>248</sup> Whitcomb, “What is the Truth,” 10.

<sup>249</sup> “Red Cross Expert Sees French Peril,” *New York Times*, 15 August 1940, 7.

<sup>250</sup> Herbert Hoover, “The March of Hunger in Europe,” Chicago, 16 February 1941, in Herbert Hoover, *Addresses upon the American Road*, vol. 3 1940–1941 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1941), 155.

Lindbergh, advocated for food aid for German occupied territories, arguing that aid could be provided without fear it would be appropriated by Nazis. She cited the relief work of the American Friends Service Committee, arguing that their record in Europe was proof “that such aid can be confined to civilian populations.”<sup>251</sup> Following American entry in the war, Hoover’s arguments intensified, stressing that such aid was not only “imperative in the continuation of the democratic nations of Europe,” but that these people would be needed “during and after the war.”<sup>252</sup> Not only did food aid offer immediate relief for hungry victims of Nazi aggression, but it also served as a powerful tool for rebuilding postwar Europe according to American political and economic interests.

Economists and experts in the Department of Agriculture prepared several reports on the German food situation that predicted growing shortages of essential foodstuffs as early as the winter of 1940–41. These reports noted deficiencies in fats, vitamins and minerals, writing that, “the effects of malnutrition may be postponed, but workers’ efficiency and staying power will decline.”<sup>253</sup> Malnutrition, rather than the immediate pang of hunger, posed the more serious threat to Germany war aims, evidence that Hitler recognized “want is a hidden enemy.”<sup>254</sup> Experts predicted the winter of 1942–43 would carry serious consequences, with a poor harvest in Nazi territory and occupied countries

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<sup>251</sup> “Anne Lindbergh Asks Food for Europeans,” *New York Times*, 25 December 1941, 14.

<sup>252</sup> “Hoover Advises Lehman Food Should Go to Starving Europe,” *Los Angeles Times*, 4 December 1942, 12.

<sup>253</sup> Ovid A. Martin, “Food Lack Seen Due to Impair Nazi Effort,” *The Washington Post*, 23 February 1941, 3.

<sup>254</sup> Merryle Stanley Rukeyser, “Blitzkrieg Booty,” *The Washington Post*, 17 May 1941, 19.

unable to supplement Germany due to existing shortages.<sup>255</sup> Yet, Nazi propagandists heralded the arrival of trainloads of food from the Ukraine, “proof of the material utility of recent conquests” and evidence of Germany’s logistical skill and military prowess. Unsurprisingly, these same radio broadcasts failed to identify an exact quantity of food.<sup>256</sup> At the same time, the Inter-Allied Information Committee reported that Germany “plundered the food stocks of occupied countries to such an extent that peoples, many of whom formerly exported food, now are existing on a starvation diet.”<sup>257</sup> In their calculations, Allied leadership considered whether poor food supplies throughout Europe offered a military advantage. Could the Nazis be starved into submission? J.H. Richter of the Office of Foreign Agriculture Relations explained that while food in Germany was “not plentiful, an adequate supply is still in sight.” Believing military rations could fall to 1800 calories in 1945, *The Baltimore Sun* concluded that, “The Germans could probably fight on that diet, but most Americans will hope to spare them the trouble.”<sup>258</sup>

Many Americans found it difficult to differentiate between subsistence and starvation, hunger and satiety. It was news of “inhuman” food policies—including “pillage masquerading as purchase,” unfed children, starvation rations for Soviet

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<sup>255</sup> “Report Europe Facing Serious Food Shortage,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 24 July 1942, 5.

<sup>256</sup> Harold Callendar, “Nazis Say Ukraine is Providing Food,” *New York Times*, 4 October 1942, 9.

<sup>257</sup> “Conquered Peoples Starve as Nazis Plunder Food,” *Los Angeles Times*, 7 October 1942, 4.

<sup>258</sup> “Germany is Neither Feasting But Neither is She Starving,” *The Baltimore Sun*, 23 February 1944, 8.

POWs—that reinforced support of a hard peace.<sup>259</sup> As the war raged on, it grew increasingly evident that, “some starvation and disease exists because the Nazis want it to exist.”<sup>260</sup> In Poland specifically, Wallace R. Decel wrote, the Germans “deliberately set out to use starvation, freezing and disease as implements of a national policy to destroy the Polish people.”<sup>261</sup> The decision by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture to feed Russian prisoners inferior rations was equally abhorrent to Americans.

At the heart of debates over a hard or soft peace for Germany was the question of victimhood, and editorials frequently relied on food imagery to illustrate their points. “What can be done for Germany in the way of giving her a good life must be measured . . . in terms of what is left over,” wrote Joseph Harsch in the *New York Times*.<sup>262</sup> Harsch deconstructed arguments in favor of a ‘soft’ peace, asserting that Germans needed to accept responsibility for sharing in the spoils even if they did not support Nazi policies: “They accepted the fruits of guilt when those fruits shimmered with promise.”<sup>263</sup> By the fall of 1944, surveys found Americans sharply divided on German policy, with 32% in favor of supervising and controlling the country, 34% in believing it needed to be

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<sup>259</sup> “Nazi Food Pillaging Pictured as Inhuman,” *Los Angeles Times*, 27 February 1942, 3. For more on the theoretical and philosophical arguments for and against a ‘hard’ peace see Casey, *Cautious Crusade*, 130–161; Goedde, *GIs and Germans*, 1–41; Michaela Hönicke Moore, *Know Your Enemy: The American Debate on Nazism, 1933–1945* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 177–270.

<sup>260</sup> Wallace R. Decel, “Pestilence Confronts Nazi-Ruled Nations,” *Los Angeles Times*, 16 January 1941, 7.

<sup>261</sup> Decel, “Pestilence,” 7.

<sup>262</sup> Joseph C. Harsch, “A ‘Hard’ or a ‘Soft’ Peace for Germany?,” *New York Times*, 9 July 1944, 8 and 27.

<sup>263</sup> Harsch, “A ‘Hard’ or a ‘Soft’ Peace,” 27.

destroyed it as a political entity, and only 12% opting for rehabilitation.<sup>264</sup> These conflicting viewpoints mirrored conversations occurring within the Oval Office, resulting in a public controversy over Roosevelt's war aims and peace policies.

### **A Carthaginian Peace?: Morgenthau and the Pastoralization Germany**

Roosevelt's response to the handbook in August 1944 was indicative of his hardening attitude toward Germany. When announcing the principle of unconditional surrender at Casablanca in January 1943, Roosevelt explicitly stated it "does not mean the destruction of the population of Germany . . . but does mean the destruction of the philosophies . . . which are based on conquest and subjugation."<sup>265</sup> He elaborated on this distinction in an address to the White House Correspondents Association in February, but advocated punishment for Nazi leadership: "In our uncompromising policy we mean no harm to the common people of the Axis nations. But we do mean to impose punishment and retribution in full upon their guilty, barbaric leaders."<sup>266</sup> In his fireside chat on Christmas Eve 1943, Roosevelt once again explained that the Allies did not intend to "enslave the German people," but instead wished "them to have a normal chance to develop, in peace, as useful and respectable members of the European family."<sup>267</sup> Like

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<sup>264</sup> "Germany," 20 November 1944, in George H. Gallup, *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1935–1971*, vol. 1 (New York: Random House, 1972), 470.

<sup>265</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Joint Press Conference with Prime Minister Churchill at Casablanca," 24 January 1943, *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/210111>.

<sup>266</sup> Hull, *Memoirs*, vol. 2, 1571.

<sup>267</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Fireside Chat," 24 December 1943, *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/209748>.

many in his administration, the president believed that public declarations for fair treatment would weaken German resistance and foster reintegration into the new world order.<sup>268</sup>

As FDR's attention turned from winning the war to planning the peace, his image of the enemy evolved, and he increasingly favored a harsh peace. Historian Steven Casey argues that the "old fears and hopes" that led the president to differentiate between the Nazis and the Germans faded, replaced by "a greater tendency to conceive of the German nation as a monolithic whole in which everyone shared a degree of culpability."<sup>269</sup> Conversations at Tehran in November 1943 revealed a powerful current of anti-German sentiment among Allied leadership and reaffirmed their commitment to the policy of unconditional surrender. Roosevelt believed that Prussian militarism lay at the core of the Nazi war machine. He found an ally in Stalin, who voiced concern that proposals for the control and disarmament of Germany were "insufficient to prevent the rebirth of German militarism." While disclosing his belief that there could be no differentiation between Nazi leadership and the German people during this war, Churchill did muse that "with a generation of self-sacrificing, toil and education, something might be done with the German people."<sup>270</sup> The Big Three also discussed deindustrialization, with Stalin and Roosevelt seemingly in favor and Churchill displaying some reluctance. Existing political

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<sup>268</sup> Steven Casey, "The Campaign to Sell a Harsh Peace for Germany to the American Public, 1944–1948," *LSE Research Online* (2005): 6, available via <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/archive/00000736>.

<sup>269</sup> Casey, *Cautious Crusade*, 130.

<sup>270</sup> "Tripartite Dinner Meeting," Bohlen Minutes, 28 November 1943, Document 362 in *FRUS: The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran*, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1943CairoTehran/d362>.

tensions and suspicions made it impossible, however, to articulate any serious plans for postwar Germany beyond a general agreement on dismemberment. Nevertheless, Roosevelt “acted as if everything had been settled,” with German occupation and dismemberment receiving support from all three leaders.<sup>271</sup> Specifics would be decided at a later date after the EAC prepared the appropriate reports and recommendations.

Throughout the spring and summer of 1944, Roosevelt, perhaps distracted by preparations for the cross-channel invasion, planning for the UN on one hand and campaigning for reelection on the other, or even illness, appeared hesitant to issue concrete policy directives regarding postwar treatment of Germany.<sup>272</sup> When pressed by Hull to define more explicitly the terms of unconditional surrender in spring 1944, Roosevelt offered a history lesson: “Lee surrendered unconditionally to Grant but immediately Grant told him that his officers should take their horses home for the Spring[sic] plowing. That is the spirit I want to see abroad—but it does not apply to Germany. Germany understands only one kind of language.”<sup>273</sup>

Roosevelt’s lack of direction resulted in competing occupation plans from the State and War Departments. The War Department plan focused on maintaining law and order, sidestepping long-term questions regarding economic responsibilities and political planning. Although the War Department plan did not pursue blatantly vengeful policies,

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<sup>271</sup> Warren Kimball, *Swords or Ploughshares? The Morgenthau Plan for Defeated Nazi Germany* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1976), 19.

<sup>272</sup> Casey, *Cautious Crusade*, 162–210.

<sup>273</sup> Roosevelt to Cordell Hull, 1 April 1944, in *The Roosevelt Letters: Being the Personal Correspondence of Franklin Delano Roosevelt*, vol. 3, ed. Elliott Roosevelt assisted by Joseph P. Lash (London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1952), 498.

historian Warren Kimball notes that, “military men had no inclination to simply let bygones be bygones.”<sup>274</sup> The State Department plan, conversely, reflected Secretary Cordell Hull’s belief that the Treaty of Versailles was unjust and provided one of the primary motivations behind the rise of Hitler and the Nazi Party. Not only was Germany’s economic rehabilitation essential for the recovery of Western Europe as a whole, but Hull and his advisors understood American prosperity to be reliant on European recovery.<sup>275</sup>

In August 1944, Morgenthau inserted the Treasury Department into conversations on postwar planning, exploiting his personal relationship with the President to advance controversial plans for an agrarian Germany. Prior to Morgenthau’s reading of the handbook, Treasury officials at the EAC reported that both American and British diplomats appeared to be operating under an assumption that German industry would be rehabilitated. Once in London, Morgenthau sought out Eisenhower to gauge his opinion on postwar treatment of Germany. Eisenhower was “very positive that he was going to treat them rough . . . perfectly willing to let them stew in their own juice.”<sup>276</sup> Interestingly, Morgenthau also recalled Eisenhower suggesting that those in favor of a soft peace wanted Germany to serve as “a bulwark against Russia.”<sup>277</sup> Yet, Eisenhower’s

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<sup>274</sup> Kimball, *Swords or Ploughshares*, 5.

<sup>275</sup> For a summary of the alternative plans see Kimball, *Swords or Ploughshares*, 4–7.

<sup>276</sup> Henry Morgenthau, Jr., “Trip to European War Zones Discussed with Treasury Group, 17 August 1944,” *Morgenthau Diary*, Book 763: August 16–18, 1944, p. 93, Diaries of Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Henry Morgenthau Jr. Papers, FDRDC.

<sup>277</sup> Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries*, vol. 3, 335.

memoir recounted the same conversation with no mention of Russia. Instead he told Morgenthau he was “far too busy” to be concerned with the German economy which resulted in a conversation on Germany’s future. Eisenhower agreed “the German people must not be allowed to escape a sense of guilt,” with Nazi leaders punished, war making capabilities eliminated, and reparations paid. Eisenhower suggested controls on industries, but conceded, “The Germans should be permitted and required to make their own living, and should not be supported by America. Therefore choking off natural resources would be a folly.”<sup>278</sup> James McAllister writes that Morgenthau “mistakenly thought that proponents of a ‘soft’ peace for Germany were largely inspired by the idea of turning her into a bulwark of containment against the Soviet Union.”<sup>279</sup> But Morgenthau was also interested in maintaining good relations with the Soviet Union, reflecting Roosevelt’s own hopes for preserving a working relationship with Stalin after the war. An economically and politically stable Germany posed a threat to the Soviet Union and ultimately the Grand Alliance.<sup>280</sup>

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<sup>278</sup> Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (Garden City NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1948), 287. Blum alerted me to this discrepancy. Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries*, vol. 3, 335.

<sup>279</sup> James McAllister, *No Exit: America and the German Problem, 1943–1954* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), 53.

<sup>280</sup> McAllister quotes a paper written by one of Morgenthau’s colleagues, Arthur Goodhart, entitled “The Situation in Europe in Twenty Five Years,” which argued, “The surest way of making the U.S.S.R. militant would be by threatening her with a strong Germany.” McAllister, *No Exit*, 53. For more on Roosevelt’s desire for a postwar alliance that included Stalin see Frank Costigliola, *Roosevelt’s Lost Alliances: How Personal Politics Helped Start the Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 205–258.

Following conversations with Churchill, Eden, and members of the EAC, Morgenthau returned to the United States and met with Roosevelt. He highlighted British economic instability as the primary justification for deindustrialization. Morgenthau argued that British hesitation to support a harsh occupation was due to their desire to collect reparations, which would necessitate a rebuilt German economy. The state of the British economy deeply disturbed Roosevelt, who remarked, “We have got to be tough with Germany and I mean the German people, not just the Nazis.”<sup>281</sup>

Morgenthau also met with Hull, to whom he admitted this “wasn’t my responsibility, but I am doing this as an American citizen . . . I am going to stick my nose into it until I know it is all right.”<sup>282</sup> A Cabinet Committee on Germany, comprised of Morgenthau, Hull, Stimson, and Harry Hopkins, was created in early September to further discuss Germany. Morgenthau’s plans were deeply personal, but he was careful to portray them as the natural consequence of his American patriotism rather than Jewish rage. Stimson did not buy it, writing in his diary the night before the Committee’s first meeting: “Morgenthau is, not unnaturally, very bitter and . . . it became very apparent that he would plunge out for a treatment of Germany which I feel sure would be unwise.”<sup>283</sup>

Officially titled the “Program to Prevent Germany from Starting a World War III,” the Morgenthau Plan targeted industry as the heart of the German war machine. A

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<sup>281</sup> Henry Morgenthau, Jr., “Memorandum of Conversation with Roosevelt, 19 August 1944,” *Presidential Diary*, vol. 6 July 1, 1944–April 12, 1945, p. 1386, Morgenthau Presidential Diaries, Henry Morgenthau Jr. Papers, FDRDC.

<sup>282</sup> Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries*, vol. 3, 341.

<sup>283</sup> Henry L. Stimson, *Diary*, 4 September 1944, in Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, *On Active Service in Peace and War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947), chap. 22, Kindle.

pastoral state could not support a modern military or further feed aggressive nationalism. The Morgenthau Plan reflected an array of diverse interests; it simultaneously addressed questions of global peace and prosperity, British economic stability, the Soviet threat, a short vs. long occupation, and German guilt and punishment. Morgenthau's plans grew from a belief that German industry fueled militarism and nationalism in pursuit of genocidal expansion. Modeled on the Jeffersonian ideal of democratic yeomen farmers, he envisioned an agrarian Germany in all its positive connotations—bucolic and pastoral—not a destitute countryside populated by peasants. Broadly understood as economic and political reform, the Morgenthau Plan was also inherently psychological—it intended to rebuild the character of Germany and the Germans. Morgenthau hoped that by removing the temptations of industrialism, farmers could remake German society, eerily echoing Darré's "blood and soil" beliefs. He portrayed his plan as constructive rather than destructive. Believing that a country of hard-working farmers could bring self-sufficiency, Morgenthau drew parallels to New Deal programs such as Rural Resettlement and Farm Security Administration.<sup>284</sup>

Only Stimson raised objections to the memorandum advanced in the Cabinet Committee, with the President firmly stating, "I believe in an agricultural Germany" and reiterating his conviction that "Germany could live happily and peacefully on soup from soup kitchens."<sup>285</sup> Stimson agreed with most of the memo except the final paragraph,

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<sup>284</sup> Kimball, *Swords or Ploughshares*, 26.

<sup>285</sup> Henry Morgenthau, Jr., "Memorandum of Conversation with Roosevelt and Stimson, 9 September 1944," *Presidential Diary*, vol. 6 July 1, 1944-April 12, 1945, p. 1431, Morgenthau Presidential Diaries, Henry Morgenthau Jr. Papers, FDRDC. Stimson and Bundy, *On Active Service*, chap. 22, Kindle.

which proposed the conversion of the German economy from industry to agriculture. Given Germany's history as the center of industry on the continent, he could not fathom its transformation into a non-productive "ghost territory." Holding the German population to a subsistence level meant "condemning the German people to a condition of servitude in which, no matter how hard or how effectively a man worked, he could not materially increase his economic condition." Stimson passionately argued that such methods of economic oppression "do not prevent war; they tend to breed war."<sup>286</sup> A divided and agrarian Germany posed an obstacle to global economic recovery, stability, and prosperity.

Roosevelt opted not to make a decision before he embarked for Quebec, where he met with Churchill on September 12. He then cabled for Morgenthau to join the conference after he broached the topic of deindustrialization with Churchill. Absent any State Department representative (Hull was not invited), Morgenthau guided discussions on postwar Germany. Churchill initially responded negatively to Morgenthau's plan. Claiming that he did not want to chain England to a dead body, the Prime Minister harangued Morgenthau and declared the Treasury Plan "unnatural, unchristian, and unnecessary."<sup>287</sup>

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<sup>286</sup> Henry Stimson, Memorandum for the President, 5 September 1944, Box 22, Entry 463, RG 165, NARA.

<sup>287</sup> Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Office of European Affairs, 20 September 1944, in *FRUS: Diplomatic Papers, Conferences at Malta and Yalta, 1945*, ed. Bryton Barron (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1955), p. 134, [https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945Malta/pg\\_134](https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945Malta/pg_134). Memorandum by Harry Dexter White, 25 September 1944, Document 181 in *FRUS: Conference at Quebec, 1944*, ed. Richardson Dougall, et al. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1972), <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1944Quebec/d181>.

Morgenthau countered that his plan would provide Britain with new steel markets and was not intended to starve the German population. The next day Churchill made a complete reversal and helped draft the Quebec Memorandum. The draft included a line stating, “This programme for eliminating the war-making industries in the Ruhr and in the Saar is looking forward to converting Germany into a country primarily agricultural and pastoral in its character.”<sup>288</sup> In addition to deindustrialization, the document identified disarmament, demilitarization, denazification, dismemberment, and reparations as goals of the occupation. Dictated by Churchill, the Quebec memorandum was notably short, and failed to elaborate on the methods or mechanisms needed to achieve these objectives.

Shortly after signing the memorandum, FDR cabled Hull. Hull wrote in his memoirs that he was “astonished” to receive a memo from FDR dated September 15 that indicated both he and Churchill were in agreement with the Morgenthau Plan and that the president had not consulted him prior to arriving at that decision. It was at this moment that Hull took a firm stance against the Morgenthau Plan alongside the War Department where Stimson and assistant secretary John J. McCloy challenged the pastoralization program. Hull believed that partition and pastoralization not only punished Germany but hurt all of Europe, “Seventy million Germans could not live on the land within Germany.

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<sup>288</sup> “Treatment of Germany: Memorandum Initialed by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill,” September 15, 1944, in *FRUS: Conference at Quebec, 1944*, 467, [https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1944Quebec/pg\\_467](https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1944Quebec/pg_467). Churchill’s reversal was likely due to his desire for an agreement on postwar Lend-Lease aid to Britain. Kimball writes that in Churchill’s memoirs he “causally dismissed his acceptance of the Morgenthau Plan as something done in haste.” Kimball, *Swords or Ploughshares*, 39.

They would either starve or become a charge upon other nations.”<sup>289</sup> Hull met with Roosevelt shortly after his return from Quebec, and pled his case for keeping Germany under military control but allowing for modifications, such as raising the standard of living “gradually to the rate of change on their part away from Nazism, racial superiority, and the like, toward ideas of human rights, individual liberty, freedom, and peace.”<sup>290</sup> Hull worried that FDR did not recognize the “devastating nature” of the Quebec Memorandum.

Stimson responded to news out of Quebec by issuing another memo to the president that sought to appeal to Roosevelt’s humanitarian instincts:

The question is not whether we want Germans to suffer for their sins. Many of us would like to see them suffer the tortures they have inflicted on others. The only question is whether over the years a group of seventy million educated, efficient and imaginative people can be kept within bounds on such a low level of subsistence as the Treasury proposals contemplate. I do not believe that is humanly possible. A subordinate question is whether even if you could do this it is good for the rest of the world either economically or spiritually . . . Enforced poverty . . . destroys the spirit not only of the victim but debases the victor.<sup>291</sup>

Stimson ended his memo by insinuating that the Morgenthau Plan contradicted the principles established in the Atlantic Charter: Both victors and vanquished were entitled to freedom from economic want. The spirit of the Morgenthau Plan not only deprived the

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<sup>289</sup> Hull, *Memoirs*, vol. 2, 1611.

<sup>290</sup> Hull, *Memoirs*, vol. 2, 1617.

<sup>291</sup> The memo was drafted largely by Stimson’s assistant secretary John J. McCloy. “Third Memorandum for the President,” in Stimson and Bundy, *On Active Service*, chap. 22, Kindle. For more on McCloy and Germany see Thomas Schwartz, *America’s Germany: John J. McCloy and the Federal Republic of Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991).

German people of the right to freedom from want, but it would call into question guiding American principles. Stimson needed Roosevelt to think in the long-term and feared that not only would pastoralization embitter future generations of Germans, but it would damage American prestige on the world stage.

Roosevelt now faced a serious controversy within his cabinet at a critical moment in an election year. The president requested a meeting with Stimson, but on September 21, before the meeting could take place, Drew Pearson published a story about the cabinet split over the handbook. This was followed by Arthur Krock's column in the *New York Times* that reported the State Department was edged out of Quebec by Morgenthau, as well as subsequent articles and political cartoons in the *Wall Street Journal* and *Washington Post*. The press largely misrepresented the Morgenthau Plan by focusing attention on the agricultural aspects alone. The publicity garnered by the controversy was damning for all involved, with Assistant Secretary of War John McCloy noting in his diary that he "couldn't be more depressed."<sup>292</sup> Ultimately, domestic politics forced Roosevelt to back down. FDR was running for a fourth term on a campaign that stressed continuity from war to peace and highlighted the significance of the postwar settlement. The Morgenthau Plan provided Republicans with valuable ammunition. Republican candidate Thomas Dewey publicly challenged Roosevelt's decision to include the Secretary of Treasury in matters of military strategy and foreign affairs, and he also questioned how and why the Morgenthau Plan was publicized when other key aspects of

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<sup>292</sup> John J. McCloy, *John J. McCloy World War II Diaries*, 21 September 1944, John J. McCloy Papers, Box DY1, Folders 16–19, Archives and Special Collections, Amherst College Library, Amherst, MA, <https://www.amherst.edu/library/archives/holdings/john-j.-mccloy-world-war-ii-diaries>.

postwar planning were kept secret. Dewey, as did others, bemoaned that this was exactly what German propagandists needed, it was “as good as ten fresh German divisions . . . it stiffened the will of the German nation to resist.”<sup>293</sup>

When the story came out in the press, FDR lamented to Hull, “No one wants to make Germany a wholly agricultural nation again.”<sup>294</sup> Morgenthau met with aides in advance of a press conference on September 25, who advised that he keep discussion on the “merits of the hard peace versus the soft peace, rather than any personalities.” Treasury worried that the “Cabinet split” is “where the gravy is as far as the Republicans and the newspaper stories are concerned.”<sup>295</sup> Meeting with Stimson on October 3, a chastened Roosevelt “grinned and looked naughty and said ‘Henry Morgenthau pulled a boner.’”<sup>296</sup> The president claimed he had no intention of turning Germany into an agrarian state but wanted to help avert an economic depression in England after the war. Stimson read aloud from the Quebec Memorandum, and remarked Roosevelt appeared “staggered” by the document, claiming he must have initialed it “without much

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<sup>293</sup> “Text of Address by Gov. Dewey at Rally Here,” *New York Times*, 5 November 1944, 42. Morgenthau’s son, Henry Morgenthau III, wrote that the public allegations were “excruciatingly painful” for his father, but Dewey’s statement was the lowest blow and “hurt deep down to the father of two sons on active duty.” Henry Morgenthau III, *Mostly Morgenthaus: A Family History* (New York: Ticknor & Fields, 1991), 390.

<sup>294</sup> Hull, *Memoirs*, vol. 2, 1620.

<sup>295</sup> Henry Morgenthau, Jr., “RE: Press Conference, 25 September 1944,” *Morgenthau Diary*, Book 774: September 22–25, 1944, pp. 129–130, Diaries of Henry Morgenthau, Jr., April 27, 1933–July 27, 1945, Henry Morgenthau Jr. Papers, FDRDC.

<sup>296</sup> Lunch with FDR, 3 October 1944, in Stimson and Bundy, *On Active Service*, chap. 22, Kindle.

thought.”<sup>297</sup> Stimson reiterated his support of a punitive punishment but felt the language in the Treasury document was problematic and vengeful. Disagreements over occupation policy persisted, but Roosevelt backed away from any further engagement with occupation policy, writing to a recently retired Hull on October 20: “I dislike making detailed plans for a country which we do not yet occupy.”<sup>298</sup> FDR wanted to be tough with Germany but increasingly believed “we have no way of knowing what we shall find,” a statement that became eerily prescient in the spring of 1945.<sup>299</sup>

### **“Our policy is not revenge”: Civil Affairs, Reparations, and the German Standard of Living**

In anticipation of the military administration of occupied areas Stimson established a School of Military Government at the University of Virginia in the spring of 1942. The School was designed to “remedy a potential deficiency by providing the Army with a nucleus of trained military government officers.”<sup>300</sup> The War Department planned for an occupation in two phases: a period of military necessity run by the armed forces and a second phase run by a civilian authority. The size and duration of civil affairs

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<sup>297</sup> Lunch with FDR, 3 October 1944, in Stimson and Bundy, *On Active Service*, chap. 22, Kindle.

<sup>298</sup> Hull, *Memoirs*, vol. 2, 1621.

<sup>299</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, by the Special Assistant to the Secretary of State (Pasvolsky), 15 November 1944, Document 209 in *FRUS: Diplomatic Papers, 1944, General*, vol. 1, ed. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1966), <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1944v01/d209>.

<sup>300</sup> Ziemke, *The U.S. Army*, 8.

operations in World War II was unprecedented, and its joint nature as an Anglo-American venture, required reconciling conflicting short-term and long-range goals. Planning for military government, however, quickly came under scrutiny within government circles. Earl Ziemke explains, “Deliberate planning seemed to suggest cold-bloodedness, disregard for the traditional civil-military relationship, and disdain for the presumed natural superiority of civilians in the art of government.”<sup>301</sup> Roosevelt believed that the political aims of the occupation required civilian rather than military expertise, and desired a quick shift in control from military to civilian agencies.<sup>302</sup>

The experience in North Africa tested military government, and the War Department expanded its planning to address the needs of civilian populations—including food, housing, and sanitation. The Civil Affairs Division (CAD) under the leadership of Major General John H. Hildring was also established in March 1943. CAD was responsible for “making certain that all plans to occupy enemy or enemy-controlled territory included detailed planning for civil affairs.”<sup>303</sup> Civilian populations, regardless of their national affiliation, were victims of war, with their administration “seen as a humanitarian, not a punitive or even precautionary, obligation.”<sup>304</sup> The Manual of Military Government and Civil Affairs explicitly stated that treatment of civilian

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<sup>301</sup> Ziemke, *The U.S. Army*, 12.

<sup>302</sup> Harry L. Coles and Albert K. Weinberg, *Civil Affairs: Soldiers Become Governors* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1964), xi.

<sup>303</sup> Ziemke *The U.S. Army*, 15 and 17.

<sup>304</sup> Ziemke *The U.S. Army*, 21.

populations “must be just and reasonable,” with “reprisals to be avoided.”<sup>305</sup> The welfare of civilian populations needed to be safeguarded in accordance with international law, but this also worked to prevent unrest and promote order. There were psychological benefits to a benevolent occupation as well; they provided a “favorable influence upon the present and future attitude of the population toward the United States.”<sup>306</sup> Prestige was important, as was the potential for turning former enemies into allies.

The directive for Operation Husky, the invasion of Sicily, codified a magnanimous occupation policy: “The administration shall be benevolent with respect to the civilian population so far as consistent with strict military requirements.”<sup>307</sup>

Following the security of occupying forces, the second objective was to restore law and order as well as normal conditions, which meant supplying food and other relief.<sup>308</sup> Critics of benevolence cited that it was difficult to “create a fighting spirit among the troops in the general atmosphere of benevolence.”<sup>309</sup> This echoed concerns that first arose in North Africa, when the military realized it could not simultaneously provide relief for liberated areas and wage a war. Writing to Assistant Secretary of State

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<sup>305</sup> *United States Army and Navy Manual of Military Government and Civil Affairs, FM 27-5*, 22 December 1943, p. iii, U.S. Army Field Manuals, Training Circulars, Technical Manuals, Military Legal Resources, Library of Congress, [http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military\\_Law/pdf/mil\\_gov-civil\\_affairs.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/pdf/mil_gov-civil_affairs.pdf).

<sup>306</sup> *FM 27-5*, 7.

<sup>307</sup> “CCS Finally Ends Debates with a Directive for Sicily,” in Coles and Weinberg, *Civil Affairs*, 177.

<sup>308</sup> “The First Organization for Allied Military Government, 1 May 1943,” in Coles and Weinberg, *Civil Affairs*, 182.

<sup>309</sup> “Vindictiveness versus Benevolence, 3 July 1943,” in Coles and Weinberg, *Civil Affairs*, 185.

Dean Acheson, Hilldring lamented that the Army was not a “welfare organization.” Still, he recognized that civil affairs “are of paramount importance, as any lack of a condition of social stability in an occupied area would be prejudicial to the success of the military effort.”<sup>310</sup> Altruistic acts, including the provision of food, would “facilitate military operations and save lives of soldiers.”<sup>311</sup>

Food posed one of the greatest obstacles to law and order in Sicily and Italy. When German and Italian troops vacated an area, they destroyed transportation systems, raided food stocks, and laid waste to farmland. A report from late July identified the food problem as “the most difficult, the most pressing and the most time consuming” issue for Civil Affairs.<sup>312</sup> Military planners underestimated the effect war had on Italian food supplies, and quickly found themselves devoting personnel, resources, and funding to support civilian relief. Civil Affairs nutrition advisor Jane Ebbs recalled that the Allies found “unexpected food shortages both in Sicily and on the mainland . . . The façade of Italy’s economic success, self-sufficiency and prosperity under the fascists was a fake one.”<sup>313</sup> Italy’s agricultural system had broken under the strain of war. Bombings, shortages in manpower, poor harvests, and Germany’s scorched earth policy depleted food supplies, with the Italian bread ration down to 150–200g a day—the lowest in

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<sup>310</sup> “Civilian Affairs Military Reasons, 9 November 1943,” in Coles and Weinberg, *Civil Affairs*, 153.

<sup>311</sup> “Divergent Views on the Exchange Rate, 10 May 1943,” in Coles and Weinberg, *Civil Affairs*, 176.

<sup>312</sup> “Improvisations in the Food Problem, 31 July 1942,” in Coles and Weinberg, *Civil Affairs*, 197.

<sup>313</sup> Ebbs, *Hidden War*, 46.

Western Europe. Food for Italy became a priority in December 1943, with Allied forces relying on military stocks and special food imports to succor the defeated nation.<sup>314</sup> At Yalta the following year, Roosevelt expressed to Churchill that it was in both their best interests to guide Italy down a democratic path, “To this end I believe we are both agreed that we must give her both spiritual and material food.”<sup>315</sup>

The experience in occupied Italy offered a blueprint for Germany. Military officials updated FM 27-5 in December 1943, with the conversion of enemies into friends no longer included as a goal of military government. The revised document did, however, suggest that military government could “minimize belligerency, obtain co-operation, and achieve favorable influence.”<sup>316</sup> The trend toward German collective guilt was apparent in these revisions. Following Roosevelt’s order that the handbook be withdrawn, officials working for the Cabinet Committee on Germany agreed to draft an interim directive for Germany to send to Eisenhower. JCS 1067, reflected the numerous disagreements, debates, and compromises reached among Treasury, War, and State. The document provided the military commander with considerable autonomy and allowed for liberal interpretations, while largely preventing the any form of economic rehabilitation. JCS 1067 acknowledged, however, that starvation posed a threat to peace, and advocated for

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<sup>314</sup> For a detailed account of food and agriculture in Sicily and Italy see Stanley Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, Boxes 30 and 31, Stanley Andrews Papers, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, MO (hereafter cited as HSTL). Andrews served as an agricultural officer with American Military Government in Italy and later Germany.

<sup>315</sup> President Roosevelt to Prime Minister Churchill, 11 February 1945, Document 494 in *FRUS: Conferences at Malta and Yalta*, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945Malta/d494>.

<sup>316</sup> Ziemke *The U.S. Army*, 85.

“the production and maintenance of goods and services required to prevent starvation or such disease and unrest as would endanger [the occupying] forces.”<sup>317</sup> The inclusion of the disease and unrest formula was phrased in a manner that allowed for an interpretation favoring relief if need be, but it was motivated by concerns for U.S. troops and not German civilians.

Morgenthau’s attempts to reinforce Roosevelt’s support for his plan following reelection ensured that bickering between State and Treasury continued in the months leading up to the Yalta Conference. In a memo to the State Department, Morgenthau provocatively targeted advocates of a ‘soft’ peace. The secretary of the treasury wrote, “Any program which has as its purpose the building up of Germany as a bulwark against Russia and communism will inevitably lead to a third World War.”<sup>318</sup> Citing poor health, Cordell Hull resigned as Secretary of State in November 1944, with Under Secretary of State Edward Stettinius filling the role. Stettinius differentiated between short and long-term goals of the occupation and called for Germany’s eventual reintegration “into a liberal world economy.”<sup>319</sup> He sent Roosevelt a draft memorandum on the economic treatment of Germany that highlighted the different paths of economic development in the British and Russian zones of occupation. The memorandum contrasted the Russian

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<sup>317</sup> “Directive to Commander-in-Chief of United States Forces of Occupation Regarding the Military Government of Germany,” 10 May 1945, 3, Papers of Harry S. Truman: White House Central Files-Confidential File, Document 3 in *Documentary History of the Truman Presidency* vol. 3 *United States Policy in Occupied Germany after World War II: Denazification, Decartelization, Demilitarization, and Democratization*, ed. Dennis Merrill (Bethesda, MD: University Publications of America, 1995), 3–17.

<sup>318</sup> Memorandum from Morgenthau to the President (not sent), 19 January 1945, in Kimball, *Swords or Ploughshares*, 145.

<sup>319</sup> Kimball, *Swords or Ploughshares*, 50.

zone, “a food surplus area, with little bomb damage, and under energetic Russian exploitation,” with the British zone, “a food deficit area, with extensive bomb damage, and with limited markets.” Stettinius advocated “the establishment of machinery to assure inter-zonal movement of foodstuffs, industrial materials and finished goods, in order to foster production for reparation and to prevent large inter-zonal disparities in diet and employment.”<sup>320</sup> Roosevelt once again proved unwilling to commit himself to details of partition and dismemberment, a position that he upheld at the Yalta Conference.

Days after his fourth inauguration Roosevelt embarked for Crimea for what would be the last meeting of the Big Three. At Yalta, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin discussed Soviet participation in the Asian theater and the future of postwar Germany, agreeing to include France in the occupation. Debates over reparations proved the most divisive issue pertaining to Germany. The Soviet Union proposed removing industrial plants along with a ten-year reparations-in-kind program. Churchill expressed reservations, balking at the potential costs associated with feeding a starving Germany, “If eighty millions[sic] are starving are we to say, ‘It serves you right.’ And if not, who is going to pay for feeding them?”<sup>321</sup> The Prime Minister concluded, “if you wished a horse to pull a wagon [that] you would at least have to give it fodder.” Stalin agreed, but noted, “care should be taken to see that the horse did not turn around and kick you.”<sup>322</sup> Roosevelt reflected on the

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<sup>320</sup> Memorandum for the President: Economic Treatment of Germany, 10 November 1944, Document 127, in *FRUS: Conferences at Malta and Yalta*, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945Malta/d127>.

<sup>321</sup> Notes on Meeting at Yalta between the Big Three, 4-8pm, 5 February 1945, p. 13, Box 4, Entry WWII Conf., RG 43, NARA.

<sup>322</sup> Memorandum of Conversation – Crimean Conference: Second Formal Meeting, 5 February 1945, p. 17, Box 4, Entry WWII Conf., RG 43, NARA.

previous World War when the United States “lost a great deal of money” in Germany. He supported Soviet claims for reparations, but “did not wish to contemplate the necessity of helping the Germans to keep from starving.”<sup>323</sup>

Soviet Ambassador to Great Britain Ivan Maisky offered a more nuanced response to Churchill. Characterizing the doubts of the Prime Minister as “unfounded,” Maisky explained that Germany was “free to develop light industries and agriculture” without the “burden of military expenditures.” Even with a reduction in the standard of living to meet the middle European standard, “Germany will be able to live a decent life.”<sup>324</sup> The Big Three postponed reaching a final decision regarding the postwar settlement of Germany. But the language of the Morgenthau Plan all but disappeared from their discussions, with the Soviet insistence on a lowered standard of living replacing pastoralization as the preferred measure of German economic recovery. The statement issued at the conclusion of the Conference reiterated that the Allies did not intend to “destroy the people of Germany,” but believed “only when Nazism and Militarism have been extirpated will there be hope for a decent life for Germans, and a place for them in the comity of nations.”<sup>325</sup>

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<sup>323</sup> Memorandum of Conversation – Crimean Conference: Second Formal Meeting, 5 February 1945, p. 17, Box 4, Entry WWII Conf., RG 43, NARA.

<sup>324</sup> Notes on Meeting at Yalta between the Big Three, 4-8pm, 5 February 1945, p. 14, Box 4, Entry WWII Conf., RG 43, NARA.

<sup>325</sup> Secretary of State’s File – The Defeat of Germany, Box 4, Entry WWII Conf., RG 43, NARA.

## Conclusion

On March 1, 1945, President Roosevelt outlined the accomplishments of the Yalta Conference in a lengthy speech before Congress. He stressed that compromise was necessary to ensure a strong foundation for postwar security. Elaborating on the terms of unconditional surrender, Roosevelt reaffirmed that, “We do not want the German people to starve, or to become a burden on the rest of the world.”<sup>326</sup> Only three weeks prior, the German Ministry of Food and Agriculture ordered farmers to surrender all grains for bread production.<sup>327</sup> In spite of rigorous German planning, Allied advances in the summer of 1944 placed increased pressure on an already stressed food supply. February’s grain proclamation followed a series of ration reductions designed to accommodate territorial losses on the eastern front and the resulting influx of German refugees fleeing Soviet armies.

While Nazi leadership scrambled to stem the burgeoning food crisis, the Big Three indulged in caviar and champagne, lifting their glasses for a gluttonous forty-five toasts in the summer palace of the Russian czars.<sup>328</sup> Perhaps guided by Wilson’s difficulties attempting to rebuild a liberal world order in 1919 Paris, Roosevelt confided in Churchill a year earlier that, “I have been worrying a good deal of late on account of the tendency of all of us to prepare for future events in such detail that we may be letting

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<sup>326</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt: "Address to Congress on the Yalta Conference," March 1, 1945, *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/210050>.

<sup>327</sup> “Reich Seizes Grain as Hunger Spreads,” *New York Times*, 9 February 1945, 1

<sup>328</sup> Notes on Meeting at Yalta Between Big Three, Box 4, Entry WWII Conf., RG 43, NARA. Frank Costigliola identifies 45 toasts at the farewell banquet. This excess was not reserved for the final meal. Minutes from the Conference identify similar instances at meals throughout the week. Costigliola, *Roosevelt’s Lost Alliances*, 249.

ourselves in for trouble when the time arrives.”<sup>329</sup> Roosevelt preferred to postpone major decisions on the postwar future, desiring a peace conference where the Big Three could meet and negotiate face-to-face. The President never repudiated the Morgenthau Plan nor did he endorse any long-term policy for Germany, with Harry Truman signing off on JCS 1067 in May 1945.

Punishment lay at the heart of the Morgenthau Plan, but it was also about reform, proposing a radical reconstruction of Germany modeled after the Jeffersonian ideal. This would effectively rebuild Germany from scratch, eradicating the militarism that had infected generations of Germans. Henry Morgenthau’s proposal for the pastoralization of Germany was lambasted in the press as an attempt to starve German civilians, but his motives and rationale were complex. For Stimson, however, it was never “a question of a soft treatment of Germany or a harsh treatment of Germany. We are all trying to devise protection against recurrence by Germany of her attempts to dominate the world.”<sup>330</sup> Controversies surrounding postwar planning fixated on questions of dismemberment and deindustrialization. Food, specifically Germany’s failure to attain self-sufficiency, lay at the core of these debates.

Optimistic about the postwar future, FDR was notably exhausted by the deliberations in Yalta, and left Washington for his Warm Springs home. Recuperating from his overseas journey, Roosevelt drafted a Jefferson Day speech that highlighted his

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<sup>329</sup> President Roosevelt to the British Prime Minister (Churchill), 29 February 1944, Document 99 in *FRUS: Diplomatic Papers, 1944, General*, vol. 1, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1944v01/d99>.

<sup>330</sup> Stimson Memo to Roosevelt, 9 September 1944, Box 22, Entry 463, RG 165, NARA.

optimism and sought to assuage fears of the future. He wrote, “We seek peace—enduring peace. More than an end to war, we want an end to the beginning of all wars . . . We must go on to do all in our power to conquer the doubts and the fears, the ignorance and the greed, which made this horror possible.”<sup>331</sup> The methods, structure, and tenor of that peace remained inchoate in the spring of 1945, but the rapid collapse of the thousand-year Reich along with Roosevelt’s untimely death would force American policymakers to take decisive action.

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<sup>331</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, “Undelivered Address Prepared for Jefferson Day,” *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/210105>.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE FRUITS AND OTHER EDIBLES OF VICTORY\*

...for the umpty-ninth time I cursed the Germans with deep and bitter feeling. What untold suffering those dumb, non-thinking, egotistical, goose-stepping klouts have inflicted needlessly on untold innocent thousands. Greek children dead of starvation in the ditches, little hungry Dutch urchins, Poles and Russians raped and enslaved, the smoke of cremation for the executed of all nations rising without a break for month after month, the pillage, the death and the ruin . . . I am sometimes made to wonder if any judgment or penalty can be too severe for them.

-- Capt. Orval Eugene Faubus, 1945<sup>332</sup>

On April 11, Emanuel Lamb wrote to his parents from somewhere in Germany and apologized for his lack of communication, explaining that his unit was on their own *blitzkrieg* since crossing the Rhine. The 83<sup>rd</sup> Division, he wrote, had a reputation for moving quickly and frequently outpacing their supplies; thus rations were often difficult to acquire. Quick to address parental concern about his well-being, Lamb assured them “we didn’t starve,” explaining that when he and his comrades stopped at a German home, “we took the food we wanted, slept in the rooms and beds we wanted and did what we wanted . . . on Germany we have no pity.” Lamb concluded the letter by inquiring after the family’s Passover celebrations. The Seder planned by his unit’s chaplain had fallen

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<sup>332</sup> Orval Eugene Faubus, *In This Faraway Land: A Personal Journal of Infantry Combat in World War II* (Conway, AR: River Road Press, 1971), 545. Faubus later served as Governor of Arkansas (1955 to 1967).

through as they were “rolling into Germany” on the first night of Passover. “That’s war,” he wrote as he reassured his family that he would be home to celebrate next year.<sup>333</sup>

The following day, while sitting for a portrait in his Warm Springs home, President Roosevelt complained of a headache before slumping over in his chair. The President, recuperating from his Yalta trip, suffered a fatal cerebral hemorrhage, passing away only weeks before the German surrender. “The President’s great tragedy,” wrote journalist Anne McCormick, “was not that he died on the eve of victory but that he did not live to make the peace. The role he dreamed of, that he accepted the fourth term to play.”<sup>334</sup>

Roosevelt foresaw peace on the horizon, and in his final, undelivered, speech, he urged Americans to embrace an active role in the postwar world, reminding them, the “mere conquest of our enemies is not enough.” For peace to be lasting, Americans needed to recognize their duty as members of a global community, because “if civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the science of human relationships—the ability of all peoples, of all kinds, to live together and work together, in the same world, at peace.”<sup>335</sup>

Roosevelt’s vision of a new world order relied not only on American acceptance of internationalism but also a willingness to engage with individuals, not governments alone. His emphasis on human relationships would assume a new level of importance in

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<sup>333</sup> Emanuel Lamb to Parents, 11 April 1945, Emanuel Lamb Papers, Institute on WWII and the Human Experience, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL (hereafter cited as IWWII).

<sup>334</sup> Anne O’Hare McCormick, “Abroad: A Man of the World and the World’s Man,” *New York Times*, 14 April 1945, 14.

<sup>335</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, “Undelivered Address Prepared for Jefferson Day, 13 April 1945,” *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/210105>.

the spring and summer of 1945 as the U.S. military transitioned from a force of war to a force of peace. For the boots on the ground, argues historian Susan Carruthers, “victory was neither instantaneous nor felt in isolation . . . the sensations, privileges, and dissatisfactions of conquest were experienced in the course of interactions with defeated Germans.”<sup>336</sup> Thrust into a situation for which there was little precedent, American troops and German civilians survived the war but found peace required further perseverance.

The symbolism ascribed to food and feeding during war persisted in the postwar and was laden with new meaning during the occupation. In the final weeks of the conflict, and extending for many months after, food served as a conduit between conqueror and conquered: It could be used for trade, withheld for punishment, or gifted as a symbol of goodwill. In many instances, the sharing of food fostered a sense of fraternity and normalcy that made wartime and postwar conditions bearable for both victor and vanquished. Food scholar Carole Counihan explains that human beings rely not only on sufficient foodstuffs but also on “establishing meaningful and affirming relationships surrounding food.”<sup>337</sup> The act of breaking bread bridges cultures, offering a

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<sup>336</sup> Susan L. Carruthers, *The Good Occupation: American Soldiers and the Hazards of Peace* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 50. For more on the defeat of Germany see Rick Atkinson, *Guns at Last Light: The War in Western Europe, 1944–1945* (New York: Henry Holt, 2013); Richard Bessel, *Germany 1945: From War to Peace* (New York: Harper, 2009); Stephen G. Fritz, *Endkampf: Soldiers, Civilians, and the Death of the Third Reich* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2004); and Ian Kershaw, *The End: The Defiance and Destruction of Hitler’s Germany, 1944–1945* (New York: Penguin Books, 2012).

<sup>337</sup> Carole M. Counihan, “Introduction: Food and the Nation” in *Food in the USA: A Reader*, ed. Carole M. Counihan (New York: Routledge, 2002), 3.

shared experience rooted in commonality.<sup>338</sup> Everyday commensality—eating and drinking at a shared table—facilitates social bonding while also establishing new social hierarchies, with the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion set by participation in specific dining rituals.<sup>339</sup>

The unofficial exchange of food in conquered and occupied Germany provides an opportunity to explore informal acts of gastrodiplomacy, with food offering a “medium for cultural engagement.” Paul Rockower writes, “Because we experience food through our senses (touch and sight, but especially taste and smell), it possesses certain visceral, intimate, and emotion[sic] qualities . . . gastrodiplomacy understands that you don’t win hearts and minds through rational information, but rather through indirect emotional connections.” Eating is a sensory experience, which accords “certain visceral, intimate, and emotion qualities,” thus providing remembrances of what we eat along with “the sensations we felt while eating.”<sup>340</sup> Food creates a tangible, emotional connection that can transcend language barriers; the act of eating is about more than sustenance, it is conditioned by meaning.<sup>341</sup>

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<sup>338</sup> Tanfer Emin Tunc and Annessa Ann Babic, “Food on the Home Front, Food on the Warfront: World War II and the American Diet,” *Food and Foodways* 25, no. 2 (April 2017): 104.

<sup>339</sup> For more on commensality see *Commensality: From Everyday Food to Feast*, ed. Susanne Kerner, Cynthia Chou, and Morten Warmind (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015); and Romilda de Souza Lima, José Ambrósio Ferreira Neto, and Rita de Cássia Pereira Farias, “Food and Culture: The Exercise of Commensality,” *Demetra: Food, Nutrition, & Health* 10, no. 3 (28 July 2015): 507–522.

<sup>340</sup> Rockower, “The State of Gastrodiplomacy.”

<sup>341</sup> Sidney W. Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Power, and the Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 7.

GI-German relations were fraught in the messy early months of occupation, with soldiers warned to be “on guard,” that they were in “enemy country,” among people who “are not *our* allies or our friends.”<sup>342</sup> The military’s *Pocket Guide to Germany* and the short film *Your Job in Germany*, mirrored the language of JCS 1067, reaffirming the desire for a hard peace and reminding Americans that for peace to be lasting, this time it must be punitive.<sup>343</sup> The film and *Pocket Guide* were part of a campaign to educate occupation forces about the role they played in the peace. Americans arrived in Germany as conquerors, but as Carruthers noted, “wielding such power could be as uncomfortable for some men as it was gratifying to others.”<sup>344</sup> In addition to underscoring the need to maintain a physical and emotional distance, the U.S. military warned against further exacerbating the food supply: “Depriving the people further will create great hardship and in the end will cause conditions that will make your own job a harder one.”<sup>345</sup> However, it was evident early on that food served a dual purpose. Withheld from hungry populations food is restrictive and repressive, but once shared its power becomes constructive and fecund.

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<sup>342</sup> Italics in original. The Army Information Branch published the 43-page *Pocket Guide to Germany* in 1944. Army Information Branch U.S. Army, *Pocket Guide to Germany* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1944), 4. For more on the *Guide* see Goedde, *GIs and Germans*, 46–50.

<sup>343</sup> The film was produced by the Army Signal Corps in 1945, with Frank Capra directing and a script by Theodor Geisel, aka Dr. Seuss. *Your Job in Germany*, directed by Frank Capra (U.S. Army Signal Corps, 1945).

<sup>344</sup> Carruthers, *Good Occupation*, 51.

<sup>345</sup> Army Information Branch, *Pocket Guide*, 1–2.

In 1943, Margaret Mead, serving on the National Research Council's Committee on Food Habits, published an article advocating for research into the feeding practices of occupied areas. Mead emphasized the psychological aspects of feeding, writing that the provision of food is frequently associated with the actions of parents towards children: "thus whenever a people feels that its food supply is in the hands of an authority, it tends to regard that authority as to some degree parental."<sup>346</sup> Historian Atina Grossmann took this metaphor one step further in her analysis of rations and shifting standards of victimization in occupied Germany, writing, "the allied 'parents' discriminated among their . . . dependent 'children,' who in turn squabbled over who was more entitled or deprived."<sup>347</sup> The paternalist mission inherent in U.S. military action abroad has been well documented and analyzed by historians.<sup>348</sup> Yet, more must be done to assess how acts of official and unofficial food-sharing contributed to the emergence of new ideas

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<sup>346</sup> Mead, "Food and Feeding in Occupied Territory," 619.

<sup>347</sup> Grossmann, "Grams, Calories, and Food," 123.

<sup>348</sup> For more on American military occupations see Carruthers, *Good Occupation*; John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1999); Goedde, *GIs and Germans*; Kristin Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Alan McPherson, *The Invaded: How Latin Americans and Their Allies Fought and Ended U.S. Occupations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Mary Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism 1915–1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); and Naoko Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally: Reimagining the Japanese Enemy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007). For more on the relationship between military bases and civilians see Donna Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors: American Military Families Overseas and the Cold War, 1946–1965* (New York: New York University Press, 2007); and *Over There: Living with the U.S. Military Empire from World War Two to the Present*, ed. Maria Höhn and Seungsook Moon (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).

about victor and vanquished, friend and foe, villain and victim. These varied food relationships contrast images of dominance and discipline with care and guidance.

Food facilitated relations between victor and vanquished, but the food shortage immediately presented itself as an obstacle to peace, posing a threat to the health and safety of soldier and civilian alike. This chapter argues that official and spontaneous acts of feeding altered the character of the occupation, challenging existing policy, and eroding support for a punitive peace. Looking back to the American experience post-World War One, many Americans remained wary of committing American food, dollars, and troops to rebuild Europe as a whole, let alone Germany. International controversies at Potsdam further hampered the debate over food imports, where questions of food became ensnared in territorial disputes. At the same time, humanitarian organizations pressed Congress on the issue of food relief for German civilians. As summer turned to fall, food scarcity threatened military security, forcing officials to address the problem directly. Questions surrounding food and feeding revealed inconsistencies in postwar planning, with official policy confronted, contradicted, and circumvented during the awkward transition from war to peace.

### **“We Come as Conquerors not Oppressors”: Early Food Exchange in Conquered Territory**

American GIs accustomed to the cheers of liberated populations, crossed the Rhine to meet the solemn faces of defeat, “the women didn’t smile and they didn’t throw flowers at us and blow kisses. Only the kids were happy to see us . . . with happy squeals

of terror.”<sup>349</sup> Now that the army stood deep in Germany, the term “enemy” was extended to civilians, demanding that hostility “underlie all the casual little contacts in which all previous conditions prompt one to be considerate and polite.”<sup>350</sup> Occupying forces were the middle-men, tasked with enforcing the hard peace but acutely aware of German fragility due to their experiences on the ground. Early exchanges of food occurred before war’s end. The military anticipated fierce civilian resistance and warned soldiers not to accept food or drink for fear it was poisoned, with a Civil Affairs Division memo identifying Nescafé, sugar, and chocolate used “in connection with the terrorist phase of the German resistance program.”<sup>351</sup> American newspapers informed readers that retreating Germans sabotaged food stocks, while GIs reported canned fruit and preserves mixed with crushed glass and left in cupboards.<sup>352</sup> Suspicions lingered throughout the summer, with the Second Armored Division reporting three deaths, which the Division surgeon attributed to poisoned cognac.<sup>353</sup> Raymond Gantter acknowledged the

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<sup>349</sup> Raymond Gantter, *Roll Me Over: An Infantryman’s World War II* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1997), 293.

<sup>350</sup> Leo Bogart, *How I Earned the Ruptured Duck: From Brooklyn to Berchtesgaden in World War II* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2004), 122.

<sup>351</sup> Memorandum for Op-13-2 (Capt. L.S. Sabin, USN), 25 April 1945, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, Civil Affairs Division, General Records, Box 25, Entry 463, RG 165, NARA.

<sup>352</sup> Gene Currivan, “Poisoned Food Left by Fleeing Enemy,” *New York Times*, 1 April 1945, 3; Wilbur J. Myers, *Memories to Cherish*, typescript memoir, p. 60, Wilbur J. Myers Papers, IWWII.

<sup>353</sup> “Poison Liquor Kills 3 Men,” *Hell on Wheels*, 11 July 1945, p. 2, Clippings [scrapbook] (MS03), Hugh D. Matheson Collection (AFC 2001/001/54411), Veterans History Project Collection, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, DC (hereafter cited as VHP).

seriousness of sabotage, but still accepted cough syrup from an elderly German woman: “[Y]ou had to make a decision one way or another and then take your chances. It just happened that my decision was always, ‘This is an innocent gesture, well-meant. Accept it.’”<sup>354</sup>

The first food relationships to develop in enemy territory were not rooted in commensality. Instead, they emerged from Americans’ often visceral reactions to scenes of Nazi orchestrated genocide and destruction. GIs earliest encounters with images of deprivation and malnourishment at the hands of the Germans occurred in liberated territory. During the winter of 1944–45, the German Army stopped all food transports into western Holland in retaliation for rail strikes organized by the Dutch Resistance. Official rations fell from 1800 calories at the end of 1943 to a meager 600 calories during the *Hongerwinter* (hunger winter), which followed an excessively cold and wet autumn.<sup>355</sup> Watching starving Dutchmen pick through garbage, one American soldier wrote with disgust, “what untold suffering those dumb, non-thinking, egotistical, goose-stepping klouts have inflicted needlessly on untold innocent thousands.”<sup>356</sup> In the final

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<sup>354</sup> Gantter, *Roll Me Over*, 292.

<sup>355</sup> G.C.E. Burger, J.C. Drummond, and H.R. Sanstead, ed., *Hunger and Starvation in the Western Netherlands: September 1944–July 1945* (The Hague: General State Printing Office, 1948): 5–6. Quoted in Adel P. den Hartog, “Nutrition Education in Times of Food Shortages and Hunger: War and Occupation in the Netherlands, 1939–1945,” in *Food and War in Twentieth Century Europe*, ed. Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska and Rachel Duffet (New York: Routledge, 2016), 194.

<sup>356</sup> Faubus, *Faraway Land*, 545.

weeks of the war, British and American forces dropped food over Nazi-occupied areas of the Netherlands to help relieve famine.<sup>357</sup>

American empathy was boundless for the hungry victims of Nazi rule, but feelings of rage accompanied the liberation of German POW camps. The frail appearance of their brothers-in-arms, many of whom spent months subsisting on meager rations, embittered American GIs. Food shortages throughout Germany in 1944–45 resulted in starvation level rations in POW camps, including “soup with maggots in it, bread with sawdust, and . . . other horrible concoctions.”<sup>358</sup> As capitulation neared in the spring of 1945, German High Command decided to move Allied prisoners to prevent their liberation, with an estimated 2,500 to 3,500 POWs dying on these forced marches, leaving “many others . . . little more than sickly skeletons upon their liberation.”<sup>359</sup> Although Red Cross parcels were shipped to the camps, their distribution was frequently erratic, with the Tenth Armored Division discovering a cache of Red Cross packages in May addressed to Allied prisoners of war.<sup>360</sup> Glen Naze later recalled that the Germans

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<sup>357</sup> For more on the operation see Stephen Dando-Collins, *Operation Chowhound: The Most Risky, Most Glorious US Bomber Mission of WWII* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015). For more on the Dutch *Hongerwinter* see William I. Hitchcock, *The Bitter Road to Freedom: The Human Cost of Allied Victory in World War II Europe* (New York: Free Press, 2008), 98–124; and Henri A. van der Zee, *The Hunger Winter: Occupied Holland 1944–1945* (Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 1998).

<sup>358</sup> Ralph Sirianni and Patricia Brown, *POW #3959: Memoir of a World War II Airman Shot Down over Germany* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2006), 93.

<sup>359</sup> The death estimate is based on statistical research by John Nichol and Tony Rennell, *The Last Escape: The Untold Story of Allied Prisoners of War in Europe, 1944–45* (New York: Viking, 2002), 447. Quoted in Thomas Saylor, *Long Hard Road: American POWs during World War II* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2007), 150.

<sup>360</sup> “Red Cross Packages in a Pit,” *New York Times*, 18 May 1945, 11.

“used to tell us, we can’t give you Red Cross packages anymore because your planes are bombing our trains and we can’t transport . . . them to you.” When he was marched out, the Germans opened a warehouse full of packages and dispersed them to the prisoners, but “by that time, [they] were so weak [they] couldn’t carry them.”<sup>361</sup> In a press conference in April, General George Patton estimated POWs rescued by the Third Army had lost approximately 20% of their normal weight. He shared a conversation he had with two young men who escaped from a prison near Hammelburg. The “young, husky boys had lost about 30-lbs. apiece,” and subsisted on turnips during their journey.<sup>362</sup>

Encountering hunger among their fellow soldiers was a punch to morale and served to validate desires for punitive action. Nevertheless the most gruesome images of starvation confronted those U.S. troops responsible for liberating the work and death camps. On April 12, Generals Eisenhower and Patton toured Ohrdruf Nord, a forced labor camp near Gotha, west of Leipzig. Eisenhower was left sick by “the visual evidence and the verbal testimony of starvation, cruelty and bestiality.”<sup>363</sup> Patton recorded in his diary that it was “one of the most appalling sights” he had ever seen.<sup>364</sup> The “traumatic shock” that accompanied entrance into the camps “numbed” the senses: “While we were

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<sup>361</sup> Saylor, *Long Hard Road*, 151.

<sup>362</sup> “Press Conference Gen. Patton & Third Army Correspondents,” 13 April 1945, p. 2, Box 13, Folder: April 1–18, 1945, George S. Patton Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC (hereafter cited as LOC).

<sup>363</sup> #2418 Eisenhower to Marshall, 15 April 1945, in *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, ed. Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., et al. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), 4:2616 (hereafter cited as *PDDE*).

<sup>364</sup> George S. Patton, *George S. Patton Papers: Diaries, 1910–1945*, 12 April 1945, Digital Collection, Library of Congress (hereafter cited as GSPDLOC), <https://www.loc.gov/item/mss35634038/>.

accustomed to death, we were not able to comprehend the type of death that we encountered at Dachau.”<sup>365</sup> Upon discovery of the children’s block at Buchenwald, one Captain described the young inmates as “starving and hungry and cold and miserable. It was like a pack of wild beasts . . . I didn’t know what to say. It was unbelievable.”<sup>366</sup> Many of the liberators were left without the words to describe the horrors they saw, breaking down at the sight of fellow men, “nothing but skin and bone.”<sup>367</sup>

Eisenhower requested that journalists and members of Congress visit the camps “to leave no doubt in their minds about the normal practices of the Germans.”<sup>368</sup> *The Washington Post* attributed most of the deaths at Belsen to starvation, describing meager rations of “watery soup made with meal and a few vegetables” and again reporting undistributed Red Cross packages.<sup>369</sup> From Buchenwald came Margaret Bourke-White’s

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<sup>365</sup> Felix Sparks, “Tell Us Who Were There That It Never Happened,” (speech at United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC, 8 May 1995), <http://www.remember.org/witness/sparks>. Quoted in Dan Stone, *The Liberation of the Camps: The End of the Holocaust and Its Aftermath* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 77.

<sup>366</sup> Melvin Rappaport in Michael Hirsh, *The Liberators: America’s Witnesses to the Holocaust* (New York: Bantam Books, 2010), 86. For more on American responses to the Holocaust see Robert H. Abzug, *Inside the Vicious Heart: Americans and the Liberation of Nazi Concentration Camps* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); *1945: The Year of Liberation*, ed. Kevin Mahoney (Washington, DC: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1995); and Samuel Moyn, “In the Aftermath of Camps,” in *Histories of the Aftermath: The Legacies of the Second World War in Europe*, ed. Frank Biess and Robert G. Moeller (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 49–64.

<sup>367</sup> Both Ventura De La Torre and Eugene O’Neil used the phrase to describe survivors of Buchenwald. Quoted in Hirsh, *The Liberators*, 81.

<sup>368</sup> #2424 Eisenhower to Marshall, 19 April 1945, in *PDDE*, 4:2623.

<sup>369</sup> “Disease Ridden Prison Littered with Corpses,” *The Washington Post*, 19 April 1945, 2.

brutal photographs of “living corpses” and Edward R. Murrow’s unapologetically grim national broadcast, describing the “evil-smelling stink” as he stood surrounded by a mass of starving men while “well-fed Germans” ploughed the fields beyond the fence.<sup>370</sup> War correspondent Martha Gellhorn wrote of Dachau, “If we ever again tolerate such cruelty we have no right to peace.”<sup>371</sup> The images haunted those who saw them first-hand and hardened public opinion in an unprecedented fashion, especially when contrasted with reports on the seemingly high German standard of living. Soldiers frequently commented on the number of “surprisingly healthy” blond youngsters they encountered, while correspondents reported Germans “look[ed] fat and well fed.”<sup>372</sup> Bourke-White’s photos accompanying the Third Army included images of German housewives modeling hats looted from a railcar outside Frankfurt. She noted that their “good teeth show they did not suffer dietary deficiencies during the war,” and their smiles offered visual proof of their supposed health and well-being at the expense of the rest of Europe.<sup>373</sup>

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<sup>370</sup> “Atrocities,” *Life*, 7 May 1945; Edward R. Murrow, “They Died 900 a Day in ‘the Best’ Nazi Death Camp,” *OTR*, <http://www.otr.com/ra/450415%20CBS%20Edward%20Murrow%20On%20Buchenwald.mp3>. For more on atrocity images from the liberated camps see Mark Philip Bradley, *The World Reimagined: Americans and Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 70–91.

<sup>371</sup> Martha Gellhorn, “Dachau: Experimental Murder,” *Collier’s*, 23 June 1945, 30.

<sup>372</sup> Malcolm Fleming, *From War to Peace in 1945 Germany: A GI’s Experience* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016), 153; Virgil Pinkley, “Ruhr Area Aglow from Explosives,” *New York Times*, 12 April 1945, 5.

<sup>373</sup> Margaret Bourke-White, “Dear Fatherland, Rest Quietly”: *A Report on the Collapse of Hitler’s “Thousand Years”* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1946). The pages of photographs lack numbers.

Not every food encounter hung in the shadows, however. Private Elmer D. Jones, wrote a letter home remarking that the further his unit marched into Germany, the better civilians treated them, particularly when it came to sharing food: A, “woman slipped us a bowl of potatoe [sic] salad through the window of our room . . . The last place we were at the woman offered us milk and boiled potatoes.”<sup>374</sup> Sgt. Francis Mitchell described his unit’s arrival in Cologne, where residents “tossed Americans loaves of bread and brought out jam, preserved cherries, beer and pretzels,” and hosted a spontaneous party amid the rubble.<sup>375</sup> Writing to his sweetheart, another GI voiced his surprise that the children of Germany, like those before them in Belgium, France, and England, quickly learned to ask, “Chocolate, uncle?”<sup>376</sup>

American soldiers embraced German gifts of food and drink but also felt empowered to take what they pleased. UNRRA worker Francesca Wilson observed that except for alcohol, “American armies looted rather less than their allies,” but plunder remained an inescapable aspect of warfare.<sup>377</sup> “We are devastation,” Gantter wrote to his family in April 1945, “Where we have passed, little remains—no cameras, no pistols, no

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<sup>374</sup> Elmer D. Jones to Family, 6 April 1945, in *Book I-Part I*, 10, Elmer D. Jones Papers, IWWII.

<sup>375</sup> “Americans Ignore Army Ban on Fraternizing as ‘They Feel Sorry’ for Cologne Civilians,” *New York Times*, 9 March 1945, 3.

<sup>376</sup> Robert Easton to Jane Faust Easton, 6 February 1945, in Robert and Jane Easton, *Love and War: Pearl Harbor through V-J Day* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 296.

<sup>377</sup> Francesca M. Wilson, *Aftermath: France, Germany, Austria, Yugoslavia, 1945 and 1946* (New York: Penguin Books, 1947), 66.

watches, very little jewelry, and damn few virgins. We leave behind us a spoor [sic] of broken dishes, emptied fruit jars, and plundered, dirty houses.”<sup>378</sup>

While trophies in the form of Nazi memorabilia and weaponry figured prominently among war booty, equally common among looted goods was food. Soldiers had grown bored of the rations that accompanied them on their march into Germany and sought fresh food wherever they could find it, often helping themselves to local farms that were already picked over by the German Army.<sup>379</sup> One German girl noted in her diary that Americans always carried steel helmets filled with eggs on their way to new quarters.<sup>380</sup> Eggs were particularly popular due to the ease in which they could be cooked and digested. Writing to his wife, one soldier relayed the comical tale of his comrade, “who carried a jar of fresh eggs across a minefield, came under fire, ran for his life, spent all night in a hole, returned to us next morning in a farmhouse with the eggs still unbroken and cooked them for breakfast.” The soldier assured his wife, “Until you’ve gone months without a fresh egg, you can’t fully appreciate this.”<sup>381</sup> Eggs, according to historian Phillip Rutherford, served a psychological function, reminding soldiers of home, “embody[ing] the safety and security of faraway civilian life and the tranquility of

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<sup>378</sup> Gantter, *Roll Me Over*, 343.

<sup>379</sup> As Gantter explained, “The German High Command no longer provides food for the Wehrmacht, and the German soldiery is expected to live off the people.” Gantter, *Roll Me Over*, 311.

<sup>380</sup> Käthe G., *Über unser Leben in der Zeit des Zusammenbruches Deutschlands*, Rg. Nr. 3583 2, Deutsches Tagebucharchiv, Emmendingen, Germany (hereafter cited as DTA).

<sup>381</sup> Robert Easton to Jane Faust Easton, 6 February 1945, in Easton and Easton, *Love and War*, 297.

a prelapsarian innocence.”<sup>382</sup> Regardless of the seeming “innocence” behind the eggs, the young German girl feared an encounter with foraging Americans.

The real prize for GIs, however, was German beer. Writing to his parents in the summer of 1945, Earl Bailey raved about the “endless quantity of (8%) beer,” which he described as “pretty good.”<sup>383</sup> Robert Greivell recalled his assignment to the company *Bier Garten* fondly. The position came with several perks, including an apartment, but with great power came great responsibility. Supplying the *Bier Garten* was seldom an easy task, forcing managers to rely on unconventional methods of procurement. Greivell recalled one such visit to a nearby distillery, flashing forged documents and emptying the facility. “We must have taken a thousand bottles of cognac.”<sup>384</sup> Military Government enforced strict regulations regarding the manufacture and sale of beer and other alcohol, but soldiers often circumvented these rules when obtaining alcohol or selling it to civilians.

American GIs were awash in German beer, but Germans suffered the fate of prohibition. During the early months of the occupation, the Military Government banned

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<sup>382</sup> Phillip T. Rutherford, “On arms and eggs: GI Egg Mania on battlefields of World War II,” *Food and Foodways* 25, no. 2 (April 2017): 123. Studies of food and World War II are increasingly exploring the symbolism behind food. See also Bruce Makato Arnold, “‘Your money ain’t no good o’er there’: Food as Real and Social Currency in the Pacific Theater of World War II,” *Food and Foodways* 25, no. 2 (April 2017): 107–122.

<sup>383</sup> Military facilities in the U.S. and overseas began selling Army Beer (limited to 3.2%) in 1942 but demand unsurprisingly outpaced supply. Earl Bailey to Parents, 25 June 1945, Earl Bailey Papers, IWWII Digital Collections, <http://digital-collections.ww2.fsu.edu/scripto/items/show/431>.

<sup>384</sup> Robert Greivell, interview by Eric Tenbus, transcript, 13 April 2001, 39–40, Collection #1164, Reichelt Program for Oral History, IWWII.

the use of grain for brewing purposes. General Lucius D. Clay allowed some breweries to remain open as suppliers for occupation forces, but civilian consumption was banned. Stanley Andrews, in charge of Food and Agriculture in the U.S. Zone, considered this to be “the hardest blow of all against the civilian population . . . taking . . . the last shred of respectability away from the German people.”<sup>385</sup> The problem was particularly acute in Bavaria, where “beer is not only a beverage but a nutrient like bread.”<sup>386</sup> Plain water was an insufficient substitute, requiring fuel to boil it and eliminate the threat of typhoid. Speaking with John Dos Passos, one German woman gave a “deprecatory smile” as she explained there was “no use forbidding beer . . . When the German farmer couldn’t get beer, he just drank his milk.”<sup>387</sup> This tendency to drink milk as a substitute negatively affected the production of much-needed fats in the form of milk, butter, and cheese products, further exacerbating existing shortages.<sup>388</sup>

Conceding that Germans did not have much choice but to “be respectful of the victors,” J. Stanley Marshall discovered the trade of foodstuffs could be mutually beneficial—unable to get his hand on military issued bath soap, Marshall bartered eggs

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<sup>385</sup> Stanley Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, vol. 2, 526, Box 30, Stanley Andrews Papers, HSTL.

<sup>386</sup> “Military Government Ansbach,” 22 August 1945, Records of United States Occupation Headquarters, World War II, Office of Military Government for Germany, Records of the Office of Military Govt Bavaria, Records of the Food, Agriculture, & Forestry Div, Box 7, Entry 1046, RG 260, NARA.

<sup>387</sup> John Dos Passos, *Tour of Duty* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1946), 257.

<sup>388</sup> “Manufacture of Beer,” 18 October 1945, Records of United States Occupation Headquarters, World War II, Office of Military Government for Germany, Records of the Office of Military Govt Bavaria, Records of the Food, Agriculture, & Forestry Div, RG 260, Entry 1046, Box 7, NARA.

for a bar.<sup>389</sup> Not everyone had intentions as pure as Marshall's. Given the severity of the food shortage, the growth of black markets was inevitable, "which not only heightened inequalities in food consumption . . . but also eroded conventional moral and ethical standards."<sup>390</sup> The law forbade Allied soldiers to sell rations and personal possessions. Yet many did so anyway, and made a killing, with a 5 cent candy bar bringing in \$5 and a bottle of whisky or gin selling for \$75–\$100, "depend[ing] on the weather."<sup>391</sup> One officer estimated that before the November 1945 crackdown on black market activity, an officer selling his cigarette, candy bar, and liquor rations could make a minimum yearly profit of \$11,726.20, and that was before factoring in the sale of items shipped to soldiers from family and friends in the States.<sup>392</sup>

The rapid growth of black markets was a grave concern in late 1945 and early 1946.<sup>393</sup> Black markets in Germany, "one of the most shameful and degrading aspects of the military occupation" according to Andrews, provided an opportunity for soldiers and civilians to barter both personal possessions and looted goods.<sup>394</sup> Russian soldiers flooded

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<sup>389</sup> J. Stanley Marshall, interview by Dr. William Oldson, transcript, 3 April 2006, 14, J. Stanley Marshall Papers, IWWII.

<sup>390</sup> Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska and Rachel Duffet, ed., *Food and War in Twentieth Century Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 4.

<sup>391</sup> Julian Bach, Jr., *America's Germany: An Account of the Occupation* (New York: Random House, 1946), 57.

<sup>392</sup> Bach, *America's Germany*, 58–59.

<sup>393</sup> For a more detailed discussion of black markets see Paul Steege, *Black Market, Cold War: Everyday Life in Berlin, 1946–1949* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

<sup>394</sup> Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, vol. 3, 672, Box 31, Stanley Andrews Papers, HSTL.

the market with freshly printed occupation Marks. U.S. Military Post Offices converted these bills into a postal money order transferred to the United States in U.S. dollars. Andrews wrote that “millions upon millions were converted” before occupation authorities intervened. The “racket” involved not only the military, but even Truman’s civilian staff who accompanied him to the Potsdam Conference, “many of them boarded their planes home with everything sold but the shirts on their backs and their pants -- even shoelaces and neckties were absent.”<sup>395</sup>

Germans were similarly forbidden from participating in black market activities, but for many, these food exchanges offered the only means of supplementing the official ration. In the fall of 1945, the official ration was set at 1500 calories a day per typical consumer, but actual consumption varied greatly. Although hunger persisted, and malnutrition remained a threat, starvation was less prevalent. One German wrote, “obtaining food was as much a matter of having contacts as it was having a ration card,” while a woman added, “We are healthy, only both quite tired and always getting thinner.”<sup>396</sup> Personal possessions soon flooded the market, with Germans trading their belongings for coffee, cigarettes, and food. “Everybody,” Wolfgang Samuel remembered, “at one time or another had to fall back on the black market to obtain something to keep a family functioning, it was not a frivolous choice.”<sup>397</sup> The economy of postwar Germany

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<sup>395</sup> Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, vol. 3, 674, Box 31, Stanley Andrews Papers, HSTL.

<sup>396</sup> Wolfgang Samuel, *German Boy: A Refugee’s Story* (Jackson, University Press of Mississippi, 2000), 235. Gertrud B., “Sonntag, d. 10. Juni,” *Tagebuch für die Kinder aus schwerer Zeit 1945*, Reg-Nr. 1200 1, DTA.

<sup>397</sup> Samuel, *German Boy*, 346.

was rooted in an elaborate barter system, with chocolate, alcohol, and cigarettes serving as a currency. Arnim Krüger played the piano for a Russian soldier in Berlin in return for four bars of chocolate, which he traded for cigarettes on the black market. These cigarettes were worth more than the chocolate and allowed him to trade for something even more valuable: butter.<sup>398</sup> The Military Government struggled to control black market activities throughout late 1945 and 1946, but it was currency reform in 1948 that finally put an end to the barter system.

The exchange of chocolates and other food items was also ensnared in debates over the military's enforcement of non-fraternization. This policy that proved overwhelmingly ineffective, prompting writer and soldier Julian Bach to muse that, "by banning Yankee-Kraut dalliances, the 'furlines' become forbidden fruit, thus making them in the minds of many men all the tastier."<sup>399</sup> Bach explained the science of "fratting" as follows: "I. Soldier Sees Girl and Whistles II. Soldier Gives Girl a Hershey Bar (from the PX) and Fanny Farmer taffy (sent by mother, but not for this purpose) III. Soldier Goes to Bed with Girl (while girl tries to steal the rest of his candy)."<sup>400</sup> Food scholar Warren Belasco wrote that "connections between food and sex are primal," but it is important to remember that for many women, especially those with children, these relationships were a matter of survival.<sup>401</sup> The pack of cigarettes or can of coffee a

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<sup>398</sup> Arnim Krüger, "Arnim Krüger ~ Potsdam, Brandenburg," in *The War of Our Childhood: Memories of World War II*, reported by Wolfgang W.E. Samuel (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2002), 256, Kindle.

<sup>399</sup> Bach, *America's Germany*, 76.

<sup>400</sup> Bach, *America's Germany*, 76.

<sup>401</sup> Warren Belasco, *Food: The Key Concepts* (Oxford: Berg, 2008), 35. For more on the sexual politics of fraternization see Goedde, *GIs and Germans*, 42–79; Atina

woman received from a GI could be bartered on the black market for “the food she needed for her children or aged parents.”<sup>402</sup> Krüger recalled that in July 1945, when the Americans arrived in Berlin for the Potsdam Conference, his mother left and when she returned the next day, “she was loaded down with food, including lots of chocolate,” but “she didn’t talk about how she got the food.”<sup>403</sup>

*Life* magazine chided young German women who “flaunt[ed] themselves partly to taunt the Americans but chiefly in order to get ‘frau bait’ of candy, gum, and cigarets [sic].”<sup>404</sup> The trope was so widely known that it appeared in popular culture, including cartoons and Billy Wilder’s 1948 comedy on denazification, *A Foreign Affair*. In the film, two American GIs tempt a German girl to accompany them, singing a tune that mentions the promise of a candy bar while circling her on a bicycle.<sup>405</sup> Historian Werner Sollors reminds readers that the working title of the film was *Operation Candybar*, a

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Grossmann, *Jews, Germans, and Allies: Close Encounters in Occupied Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 48–87; and Maria Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins: The German-American Encounter in 1950s West Germany* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002). For a similar discussion in liberated France see Mary Louise Roberts, *What Soldiers Do: Sex and the American GI in World War II France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014).

<sup>402</sup> Samuel, *German Boy*, 346.

<sup>403</sup> Krüger, “Arnim Krüger,” 256.

<sup>404</sup> “German Girls,” *Life*, 23 July 1945, 36.

<sup>405</sup> They sing, “Fraulein, Fraulein, / willst Du ein Candy bar. / Schön fein, Fraulein. / You like G.I.s, nicht war?” This song is satirical, the lyrics in broken German translate to “young lady, young lady, do you want a candy bar? Beautiful, you like GIs, no? *A Foreign Affair*, directed by Billy Wilder (1948). For more on Wilder and the film see Gene D. Phillips, *Some Like It Wilder: The Life and Controversial Films of Billy Wilder* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2010), 89–108.

tongue-in-cheek nod to the power of sweets in postwar Germany.<sup>406</sup> Elisabeth C. was approached by an American on her walk home, asking where she was headed alone. Indignant that this was an attempt to pick her up, she responded in English that she was on her way to visit her mother and was stunned when the soldier gifted enough chocolate to share with her mother.<sup>407</sup>

Writing in March 1945, Jakob B. noted that fellow Germans spoke well of the *Ami*, with children especially looking forward to chocolate and other sweets.<sup>408</sup> Candy was an ice breaker, initiating interactions between soldiers and young Germans. Trudy Miller remembered when U.S. forces marched into her town, and a soldier tossed her a Hershey bar, which she promptly threw back. Surprised, the soldier tried again, this time the sway of the chocolate overpowered Miller's pride who could not throw it back.<sup>409</sup>

Sweets were scarce in Germany, but abundant in the pockets of American GIs, with the War Department commissioning candy companies to supply troops around the globe. Once considered a feminine extravagance, candy consumption by men was "culturally sanctioned" around the turn-of-the-century, with male indulgence privileged as a testament of their "endurance and power."<sup>410</sup> Chocolate, candy, and chewing gum

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<sup>406</sup> Werner Sollors, *The Temptation of Despair: Tales of the 1940s* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014), 169.

<sup>407</sup> Elisabeth C., *Wie ich das Kriegsende erlebte*, 9, Reg. Nr. 474/I, DTA.

<sup>408</sup> *Ami* was German slang for *Amerikaner* (American). Jakob B., "25.3.1945," *Tagebücher und Briefe*, Reg. Nr. 664 1-3, DTA.

<sup>409</sup> Trudy Miller, interview by Robin Sellers, transcript, 6 December 2000, 7, Collection #1222, Reichelt Program for Oral History, IWWII.

<sup>410</sup> Jane Dusselier, "Bonbons, Lemon Drops, and Oh Henry! Bars: Candy, Consumer Culture, and the Construction of Gender, 1895–1920," in *Kitchen Culture in*

were not as critical as protein sources, but they were necessary for upholding troop morale. Candy bars offered “concentrated carbohydrates, portable and palatable calories, [and] quick energy . . . candy wasn’t just delicious food; candy was essential food.”<sup>411</sup> Perhaps more importantly, sweets also served as universal symbols of American abundance, “GIs looked rich, and they had a swagger and a mouth full of gum.”<sup>412</sup> In many ways, candy was at the fore of a deluge of American processed foods that flooded European markets after the war, food that was cheap, compact, and convenient.<sup>413</sup>

Hershey bars and chewing gum were prized among German children, although not without some confusion. Wolfgang Samuel recalled the first piece of chewing gum gifted him by an American soldier, finding that while it “tasted strangely refreshing,” he could not understand why he would want to chew rubber over food.<sup>414</sup> Sweets were not the only novelty items gifted German children, although they were arguably the most sought after. Dieter Hahn remembered the moment he learned the difference between an orange and a grapefruit. On that particular day, American soldiers passing through his village tossed the children “giant oranges,” which they scrambled after only to discover later that they were not as they appeared, “the first taste was as disappointing as their size

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*America: Popular Representations of Food, Gender and Race*, ed. Sherrie Inness (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 2001), 34 and 40.

<sup>411</sup> Samira Kawash, *Candy: A Century of Panic and Pleasure* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013), chap. 9, Kindle.

<sup>412</sup> James J. Cooke, *Chewing Gum, Candy Bars and Beer: The Army PX in World War II* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2009), 2.

<sup>413</sup> Kawash, *Candy*, chap. 1, Kindle.

<sup>414</sup> Samuel, *German Boy*, 152–153.

had been impressive,” the bitter flavor of the grapefruit providing an ample metaphor for the taste of defeat.<sup>415</sup>

### **“Santa Claus is Dead”: Potsdam and the Punitive Peace**

At 9 AM on the morning of his sixty-first birthday, President Harry Truman delivered a radio broadcast to the American people declaring that “the flags of freedom fly over all Europe.” After three and a half years of war, Germany had finally surrendered. Truman urged Americans to “bind up the wounds of a suffering world--to build an abiding peace, a peace rooted in justice and in law.” Such a peace would demand “hard, toilsome, painstaking work” as well as cooperation “with our allies in peace as we have in war.”<sup>416</sup> The Missouri Senator had occupied the Oval Office for less than a month and adapted quickly to the steep learning curve given his lack of diplomatic experience and scant preparation for the massive job ahead. Truman declared continuity with Roosevelt’s vision for the postwar future, but in time the peace came to be shaped as much by Roosevelt’s internationalism as Truman’s pragmatism, particularly when it came to the problem of global hunger.<sup>417</sup>

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<sup>415</sup> Dieter Hahn, “Dieter Hahn ~ Posen, Wartheland (Poland),” in Samuel, *The War of Our Childhood*, 242.

<sup>416</sup> Harry S. Truman, “Announcing the Surrender of Germany,” 8 May 1945, Presidential Speeches: Harry S. Truman Presidency, The Miller Center, University of Virginia, <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/may-8-1945-announcing-surrender-germany>.

<sup>417</sup> The historiography on the Truman presidency is vast but can arguably be divided into two camps. Many accounts are critical, dwelling on Truman’s lack of experience and other negative traits, echoing the low approval ratings that haunted his exit from office in 1953 when his popularity plummeted in the wake of the Korean War, the Red Scare, and corruption accusations. Other scholarship seeks to contextualize his decisions as president, contrasting the markedly different governing styles and

Truman's inheritance was exacerbated by the many ways in which he was left in the dark on military and foreign policy issues, including the agreements at Yalta and the Manhattan Project.<sup>418</sup> This was not a reflection on the former haberdasher, so much as it was status quo for Roosevelt. FDR exercised tight control over policymaking even among his circle of trusted advisors, and unfortunately the "Juggler" failed to leave behind an operator's manual.<sup>419</sup> When Roosevelt returned from the Crimea in early March, neither he nor Secretary of State Edward Stettinius briefed Truman on the discussions had or agreements made. Correcting this error, Stettinius was the new

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personalities of Truman and Roosevelt, and providing a more judicial assessment of the political and diplomatic circumstances surrounding Truman presidency. See Albert J. Baime, *The Accidental President: Harry S. Truman and the Four Months That Changed the World* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017); Costigliola, *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances*, 312–358; Robert Dallek, *Harry S. Truman* (New York: Times Books, 2008); Robert H. Ferrell, *Harry S. Truman: A Life* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1995); Alonzo L. Hamby, *Man of the People: A Life of Harry S. Truman* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); David G. McCullough, *Truman* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002); and Arnold A. Offner, *Another Such Victory: President Truman and the Cold War, 1945-1953* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002).

<sup>418</sup> Michael Beschloss wrote, "For all but twenty-five of Harry Truman's eighty-two days as a number two, the President had been away on his trips to Yalta, Hyde Park, and Warm Springs." Michael Beschloss, *The Conquerors: Roosevelt, Truman and the Destruction of Hitler's Germany 1941–1945* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002), 216.

<sup>419</sup> Historian Robert Ferrell referred to Roosevelt's "Rube Goldberg machine" that was left without an "operator's manual." Robert H. Ferrell, *The Dying President: Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1944–1945* (Columbia: University of Missouri, 1998), 151. Quoted in Beschloss, *Conquerors*, 217. Roosevelt called himself a juggler, stating to Morgenthau in 1942, "You know I am a juggler, and I never let my right hand know what my left hand does. I may have one policy for Europe and one diametrically opposite for North and South America. I may be entirely inconsistent, and furthermore I am perfectly willing to mislead and tell untruths if it will help win the war." The phrase grew in popularity and served as the title for Warren Kimball's book on FDR's wartime diplomacy: Kimball, *The Juggler: Franklin Roosevelt as Wartime Statesman* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

President's first visitor on April 13, discussing existing plans for the United Nations Conference at San Francisco scheduled for later in the month and other diplomatic matters. Truman was aware of this massive handicap, and alongside the State Department's daily briefings, he requested outlines providing the background and current state of U.S. relations with other nations. He read all State Department memoranda, along with material from the Joint Chiefs of Staff before retiring for the evening, often spending hours poring over documents in Roosevelt's Map Room, "filling gaps in my information . . . they were indispensable."<sup>420</sup>

Stettinius also briefed Truman on the conversations at Yalta, noting that, "Churchill fully shares this Government's interpretation of the Yalta Agreements on Eastern Europe and liberated areas. He is inclined however to press this position with the Russians with what we consider unnecessary rigidity as to detail."<sup>421</sup> This warning foreshadowed the stalemate that occurred later in the summer at Potsdam. Truman reached out to James Byrnes, who led the Office of War Mobilization, in the hope that he could access Byrnes's notes from Yalta, wishing to read "his firsthand account of what had gone on . . . and all the information he had of the meetings between Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin."<sup>422</sup> Ten days later, Byrnes delivered a leather-bound transcript of

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<sup>420</sup> Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs*, vol. 1 *Year of Decisions* (New York: Signet Books, 1955), 24; McCullough, *Truman*, 371–372.

<sup>421</sup> "Special Information for the President from the State Department," 13 April 1945, in Truman, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, 25.

<sup>422</sup> In his memoirs, Truman writes that it was at this meeting that he first told Byrnes he was considering him for Secretary of State. Truman, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, 34.

his notes. On April 16, Truman upheld Roosevelt's war policies before a Joint Session of Congress, reaffirming strict adherence to unconditional surrender.<sup>423</sup>

While Truman publicly voiced continuity with Roosevelt's policies, his view of military occupations, and Germany specifically, was markedly different. Unlike Roosevelt, Truman's memory of the previous World War included combat experience. He enlisted in 1917 and served in a Field Artillery Regiment in France where he was elected lieutenant of his Battery. In a letter to his wife Bess near the end of the war, he wrote of the Germans, "I'm for peace but that gang should be given a bayonet peace and be made to pay for what they've done to France."<sup>424</sup> Following World War I, the United States participated in the military occupation of the Rhineland, with the Third Army occupying the area north of Koblenz.<sup>425</sup> Subsequent Truman letters joked about the war booty he could send home if he joined the occupation, whether it be German spoons and

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<sup>423</sup> Harry S. Truman, "Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress," *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/230621>.

<sup>424</sup> Harry Truman to Bess Truman, 30 October 1918, in *Truman's World War I Letters*, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum Online (hereafter cited as HSTLMO).

<sup>425</sup> In 1919, the Third Army disbanded and the reduced occupation force was renamed American Forces in Germany (AF in G). The AF in G withdrew from Germany in January 1923. For more on the Rhineland occupation see Alexander Barnes, *In a Strange Land: The American Occupation of Germany 1918-1923* (Schiffer, 2011); Peter Collar, *The Propaganda War in the Rhineland: Weimar Germany, Race and Occupation after World War I* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013); Johnson Hagood and Larry A. Grant, *Caissons Go Rolling Along: A Memoir of America in Post-World War I Germany* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2010); Erika Kuhlman, "American Doughboys and German Fräuleins: Sexuality, Patriarchy, and Privilege in American-Occupied Rhineland, 1918–23," *The Journal of Military History* 71, no. 4 (Oct. 2007): 1077–1106; Keith L. Nelson, *Victors Divided: America and the Allies in Germany, 1918–1923* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975); and Margaret Pawley, *The Watch on the Rhine: The Military Occupation of the Rhineland, 1918–1930* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

tableware or “just some plain loot in the form of graft money.”<sup>426</sup> At the same time, the future president was intimately acquainted with the feelings that accompanied defeat, his own family having fought for the Confederacy during the Civil War. Truman often referred to his mother as an ‘unreconstructed’ Southerner and years later reflected on how this shaped his approach to the peace settlement, “My mother hated the Yankees till she died, and I didn’t want hate to be this war’s gift to the future.”<sup>427</sup>

When Stettinius met with Truman on April 13, he divulged that no agreements were reached at Yalta on Germany’s treatment under occupation. He also informed the President that on March 23, Roosevelt approved a new document to replace the Draft Directive on Germany and sent a committee to Germany to prepare for its implementation. The committee’s findings were drawn up by Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy. The report explained that Roosevelt intended ultimately to leave the occupation government in civilian hands but suggested the need for military control in the first phase. In the memorandum, McCloy highlighted the extent of the destruction he witnessed: “There is complete economic, social and political collapse . . . the extent of which is unparalleled in history unless one goes back to the collapse of the Roman Empire, and even that may not have been as great an economic upheaval.”<sup>428</sup> In his diary, he wrote of Frankfurt, “The whole organization of the town and industry is destroyed and

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<sup>426</sup> Harry Truman to Bess Truman, 15 November 1918, in *Dear Bess: The Letters from Harry to Bess Truman, 1910–1959*, ed. Robert H. Ferrell (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1983), 282.

<sup>427</sup> Transcript, “The Stacked Deck: The Harry S. Truman Series,” Ben Gradus Films, Screen Gems, 1963, HSTL. Quoted in Beschloss, *Conquerors*, 230.

<sup>428</sup> Truman read McCloy’s memorandum on April 26. Truman, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, 119.

life is on a primitive scale. How the people get food, I do not know.”<sup>429</sup> Starvation on a broad scale was a legitimate possibility “unless rapid steps were taken to correct the situation.”<sup>430</sup>

Before the San Francisco Conference that established the UN at the end of April, Truman received a report from Stettinius that documented the global food shortage and warned that “the end of hostilities would aggravate an already critical situation.”<sup>431</sup> Food figured prominently in Churchill’s fears as well, and he cabled Truman to reiterate his concerns that the occupation zones were “hastily” drawn up at Quebec. The Russian Zone was home to the smallest proportion of people but contained the most substantial food supply, a fact that irked Churchill. It only made sense that the British and Americans “insist upon a fair distribution of food produced in Germany between East and West Germany.”<sup>432</sup> Truman did not immediately respond, opting to study the situation more closely and seek the advice of the Chiefs of Staff. That evening he wrote to his mother and sister that the last six days had been “most strenuous” and “hardly believable.”<sup>433</sup>

As the Nazi war machine unraveled, Secretary of Treasury Henry Morgenthau attempted to sway Truman in favor of his plan for pastoralization. Two days after Roosevelt’s passing, Morgenthau called upon Truman, explaining that he desired to “win the war and then I want to win the peace.” Truman agreed and was cordial when

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<sup>429</sup> John J. McCloy, *John J. McCloy World War II Diaries*, 8 April 1945.

<sup>430</sup> Truman, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, 123.

<sup>431</sup> Truman, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, 59.

<sup>432</sup> Truman, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, 77.

<sup>433</sup> Truman to Mamma and Mary, 18 April 1945, in Truman, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, 78.

Morgenthau expressed an eagerness to talk more about Germany and explain the Morgenthau Plan, about which Truman of course knew nothing.<sup>434</sup>

In late March, Morgenthau wrote to Roosevelt seeking approval for a book he planned to write that would persuade readers to support the Morgenthau Plan. And, in his final meeting with the President the night before his death, Morgenthau again pushed the book issue and his desire to weaken the German economy. The President told his friend, “Henry, I am with you 100 per cent.”<sup>435</sup> In late April, Truman was provided a draft of JCS 1067, and pressured by Morgenthau to sign off on it. Stimson remarked in his diary that Morgenthau, “is afraid that the least little bit of the ‘scorched earth’ policy toward Germany will be relaxed. I foresee hideous results from his influence.”<sup>436</sup> Regardless, Truman signed the Directive on May 10.<sup>437</sup> Morgenthau believed this to be a step in the right direction, even if the final version allowed for broad interpretations, including the disease and unrest formula. Nutrition experts believed 2000 calories were needed daily by normal consumers to ensure the prevention of disease and civil unrest, but this number would shift dramatically once officials recognized that food supplies could not support it.

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<sup>434</sup> Henry Morgenthau, Jr., *Presidential Diary*, vol. 7 April 12, 1945–July 13, 1945, 14 April 1945, p. 1548, Morgenthau Presidential Diaries, Henry Morgenthau Jr. Papers, FDRDC.

<sup>435</sup> Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries*, vol. 3, 418–419.

<sup>436</sup> Henry L. Stimson, *Diaries of Henry L. Stimson*, 8 May 1945, Henry Lewis Stimson Papers MS 465, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, New Haven, CT (hereafter cited as MAYUL). Quoted in Beschloss, *Conquerors*, 231.

<sup>437</sup> JCS 1067 was not made public until October 1945. Eisenhower warned that it would lead to confusion and perhaps embarrassment with the British, and Truman was wary of further alienating defeated Germans. Morgenthau, however, was incredibly disappointed it was not publicized. See Beschloss, *Conquerors*, 232–233.

While initially polite towards Morgenthau, Truman later took a firm stance against the Morgenthau Plan, believing the starvation of Germany was an act of revenge that would undercut efforts at peace, “I was never for the underdog . . . becoming the top dog with complete power to act.”<sup>438</sup>

On July 6, Truman departed Washington for Berlin where he met with Churchill and Stalin to discuss the fate of Germany. Prior to his departure James Byrnes was sworn in as Secretary of State, and a jilted Henry Morgenthau resigned as Secretary of Treasury, retiring to his farm where he continued to advocate for a pastoral Germany.<sup>439</sup> Arrival in Germany came as a shock for Truman, “Never did I see a more sorrowful sight, nor witness retribution to the nth degree.”<sup>440</sup> Allied leadership was aware of destruction strictly in numbers, having read the reports, but, “seeing it for themselves forced them to confront [the damage] on an emotional and personal level.”<sup>441</sup> Truman drove with Byrnes and Chief of Staff Admiral William Leahy from Potsdam to Berlin, touring familiar sites such as the *Tiergarten* and *Reichstag* which now lay in ruin. It quickly became apparent that this war hit home for the German people in a way the previous one had not, leading Byrnes to ruminate on “the suffering that total war now visits upon old folks, women, and

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<sup>438</sup> Truman, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, 263.

<sup>439</sup> Morgenthau released *Germany Is Our Problem* in the fall of 1945. Blum wrote that the book was published, “at a time when American public opinion was moving away from his point of view. Most reviews of the book took positions close to Stimson’s.” Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries*, vol. 3, 415.

<sup>440</sup> Truman, Diary Entry, 16 July 1945, in *Off the Record: The Private Papers of Harry S. Truman*, ed. Robert Ferrell (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 52.

<sup>441</sup> Michael Neiberg, *Potsdam: The End of World War II and the Remaking of Europe*, (New York: Basic Books, 2015), 118.

children.”<sup>442</sup> In his diary, Truman ruminated, “In that two-hour drive I saw evidence of a great world tragedy, and I was thankful that the United States had been spared.”<sup>443</sup>

Historian Michael Neiberg explains, “Berlin brought home to the delegates the realities of the problems of the postwar period with a suddenness for which they were emotionally unprepared.”<sup>444</sup>

After touring the capital, they settled into Potsdam, a small suburb known for its villas and parks that provided a sharp contrast to the destroyed city. Hosted in the rooms of Cecilienhof Palace, the conference immersed delegates in the comforts of victory. The contrast between the abundance in Potsdam and the deprivation found in Berlin was striking. Much like the conference at Yalta, participants feasted on delicacies imported from across Europe, and washed down their meals with an endless supply of vodka and champagne, “helped along by alcohol and fine foods, the atmosphere in the first few days at Potsdam struck many attendees as far more congenial than that of the recent conferences at Tehran and Yalta.”<sup>445</sup> There was an immediate sense of goodwill following the defeat of Germany, but once the banquets and pageantry ended the strong-arming began, and significant disagreements revealed themselves, particularly regarding occupation policy.

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<sup>442</sup> James Byrnes, *Speaking Frankly* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947), 68. Quoted in Neiberg, *Potsdam*, 118.

<sup>443</sup> Truman, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, 341.

<sup>444</sup> Neiberg, *Potsdam*, 118.

<sup>445</sup> Neiberg, *Potsdam*, 149.

Like Roosevelt before him, Truman believed that suffering served to remind the German people of the consequences of war. Nevertheless, a delicate balance had to be struck to keep the German standard of living low—as agreed upon at Yalta—but not so low that relief was required. Truman wanted to avoid repeating the past. He wrote to Bess that he “certainly [was] not going to . . . pay reparations, feed the world, and get nothing for it but a nose thumbing.”<sup>446</sup> Of chief concern was a reparations plan that limited the Germans to a standard of living no higher than other nations, but that avoided the need for sustained relief. Truman’s mantra was “Santa Claus is dead,” a nod to critics who bemoaned that Uncle Sam and Santa Claus were not the same.<sup>447</sup>

Churchill was particularly irritated by the Polish question and the repercussions on food production resulting from the loss of eastern German territories, which he feared “would throw an unfair burden of food and fuel and economic problems on western powers.”<sup>448</sup> The Prime Minister wanted the food supply of all Germany to be available to all Germans according to the 1937 borders and “irrespective of their zones of occupation.”<sup>449</sup> He feared that given the large population of the Ruhr, conditions in the

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<sup>446</sup> American loans to Germany were used to finance reparations in the 1920s before collapsing in the 1930s. Harry Truman to Bess Truman, 20 July 1945, in Ferrell, *Dear Bess*, 520.

<sup>447</sup> Harry Truman to Bess, 20 July 1945, in Ferrell, *Dear Bess*, 520.

<sup>448</sup> “5 p.m. July 21,” Records of International Conferences, Commissions, and Expositions, World War II Conferences, Potsdam Conference, General Records, 1945, Box 8, Folder: Potsdam Declaration, Entry 307a, RG 43, NARA.

<sup>449</sup> Cohen Notes, 21 July 1945, Unnumbered document following Document 710 in *FRUS: Diplomatic Papers, the Conference of Berlin (The Potsdam Conference), 1945*, vol. 2, ed. Richardson Dougall (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1960), <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945Berlinv02/d710a-55>.

British Zone could devolve to the point where they mirrored those of the concentration camps, “but on a far larger scale.”<sup>450</sup> Unimpressed by Churchill’s hyperbole, Stalin quipped the Germans should “buy more bread from Poland.”<sup>451</sup> They returned to the question of food and Polish boundaries a few days later, with Stalin asserting that “coal and metal from the Ruhr is more important than the food supply.” Churchill retorted that “coal will have to be paid for in food” and continued to press Stalin, demanding to know how he expected Germany to pay reparations. Vexed by Stalin’s answer that there was “much fat in Germany,” Churchill reiterated that he was “not going to consent to arrangements which will lead to starvation in the Ruhr, when the Poles have all the feeding grounds.”<sup>452</sup>

Frustrated by the stalemate, Truman wrote in his diary, “We are at an impasse on Poland and its western boundary and on Reparations . . . I want the German war industry machine completely dismantled . . . Food and other necessities we send into the restored

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<sup>450</sup> “Minutes, 21 July 21, 1945,” 12, Records of International Conferences, Commissions, and Expositions, World War II Conferences, Potsdam Conference, Minutes and Papers of Meetings, July 17–Aug. 2, 1945, Box 8a, Entry 307, RG 43, NARA.

<sup>451</sup> “Fifth Meeting of the Big Three—July 21, 1945,” 8, Records of International Conferences, Commissions, and Expositions, World War II Conferences, Potsdam Conference, Minutes and Papers of Meetings, July 17–Aug. 2, 1945, Box 8a, Entry 307, RG 43, NARA.

<sup>452</sup> “Meeting of the Heads of Government, Berlin, July 25, 1945,” 5–6, Records of International Conferences, Commissions, and Expositions, World War II Conferences, Potsdam Conference, Minutes and Papers of Meetings, July 17–Aug. 2, 1945, Box 8a, Entry 307, RG 43, NARA; “9<sup>th</sup> Meeting . . . Big Three Conference at Berlin . . . July 25, 1945, 2–3, Records of International Conferences, Commissions, and Expositions, World War II Conferences, Potsdam Conference, Minutes and Papers of Meetings, July 17–Aug. 2, 1945, Box 8a, Entry 307, RG 43, NARA.

countries and Germany must be first lien on exports before reparations.”<sup>453</sup> Truman remained wary of committing American dollars and resources to German relief. He allowed the debates to be guided by the language of JCS 1067, but questioned, “Are we going to maintain occupied zones until the peace or are we going to give Germany away piece-meal?”<sup>454</sup> Using surviving statistical records, Edwin Pauley, the U.S. Representative on the Allied Commission on Reparations, calculated pre-war German food supplies and identified a surplus in the zone now occupied by the USSR and deficiencies in the remaining zones of occupation. Pauley estimated that in the postwar period, Germany would need to import approximately 4,400,000 tons of food to offset its deficit over the following one to two years. In a memo to Byrnes, Pauley suggested that the Secretary of State mention the 12 ½% compromise when broaching this subject with Vyacheslav Molotov, Stalin’s foreign minister. The compromise proposed that “12 ½% of all equipment removed from the western zones should go to the USSR . . . a net and free delivery to Russia from Germany.” However, the food sent from eastern Germany to the western zones would be paid for in Reichsmarks, “the 12 ½% of removables that would thus be turned over to USSR in return for food and other goods would, in final analysis, cost the Russians nothing.”<sup>455</sup> The wrangling over food and the Polish question

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<sup>453</sup> Diary Entry, 30 July 1945, in Ferrell, *Off the Record*, 58.

<sup>454</sup> “Fifth Meeting of the Big Three—July 21, 1945,” 9, Records of International Conferences, Commissions, and Expositions, World War II Conferences, Potsdam Conference, Minutes and Papers of Meetings, July 17–Aug. 2, 1945, Box 8a, Entry 307, RG 43, NARA.

<sup>455</sup> The Representative on the Allied Commission on Reparations (Pauley) to the Secretary of State, 28 July 1945, Document 1047 in *FRUS: The Potsdam Conference*, vol. 2, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945Berlinv02/d1047>.

came to an end when Churchill returned to Great Britain for the election, finding himself replaced by Clement Attlee, the newly elected Labour Prime Minister.

After more than a week of debate, Truman, Stalin, and Attlee signed the Potsdam agreement on the evening of August 1. The document reaffirmed that the Allies never wanted to “destroy or enslave” the German people, but hoped to grant them an opportunity to “prepare for the eventual reconstruction of their life on a democratic and peaceful basis.”<sup>456</sup> In addition to establishing the goals of the occupation (demilitarization, denazification, democratization, decentralization), setting new German borders, and agreeing to four zones of occupation in Germany and Austria, the Declaration borrowed from JCS 1067 and stated that German standards of living would not exceed the European average. Considered a success in the summer of 1945, participants at Potsdam believed they avoided the problems that plagued Versailles twenty-five years earlier. Nevertheless, much remained unsettled, particularly when it came to the mechanisms necessary to implement and enforce occupation policy.

### **“We never intended to starve them”: Military Government and the Problem of Food Scarcity**

Berliner Ruth Andreas-Friedrich wrote of Potsdam, “It sounds almost too good to be true,” with the agreement on a joint policy for all occupied zones taking “a load off

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<sup>456</sup> “Communiqué - Report on the Tripartite Conference of Berlin,” 2 August 1945, Document 1384 in *FRUS: The Potsdam Conference*, vol. 2, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945Berlinv02/d1384>.

our minds.”<sup>457</sup> But not everyone felt the same sense of relief, with one young Potsdam resident wondering how many were like her, without a place to stay, without food, and sitting on the street.<sup>458</sup> Many Germans faced a similar predicament in the summer of 1945, as food shortages plagued the western zones of occupation. Earlier in the summer Eisenhower acknowledged the extent of devastation in Germany and warned that mass starvation was a possibility: “What are we going to do just to prevent on our part having a Buchenwald of our own, not in this case from intent, but because we wouldn’t be able to help it?”<sup>459</sup> German communities lacked food stocks, fields had been burned, and slaughtered cattle posed health risks. The German Ministry of Food and Agriculture maintained detailed records of food and nutrition needs throughout the war, and CAD anticipated using local personnel to administer and distribute food supplies. In the chaos of collapse, however, German food officials were nowhere to be found.<sup>460</sup> As a result, U.S. policy toward food remained inchoate throughout the summer, a series of trial and error.

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<sup>457</sup> Ruth Andreas-Friedrich, *Battleground Berlin: Diaries, 1945–1948*, (New York: Paragon House, 1990), 79.

<sup>458</sup> Carola B., *Tagebuch 1945*, 5, Reg-Nr. 56 1, DTA.

<sup>459</sup> “General Eisenhower Press Conference, Washington, 18 June 1945,” Box 126, F: Committee on Germany, American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service Records, 1942–1984, Special Collections and University Archives, Archibald S. Alexander Library, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ (hereafter cited as ACVAFS).

<sup>460</sup> Jane Ebbs discusses the contradictions between planning and reality in great detail and includes several charts illustrating nutritional and caloric allotments. Ebbs, *Hidden War*, 85–113.

Officers in the Civil Affairs Division modeled their plans on the experience in Aachen during the winter of 1944–45. Aachen was the first major U.S. victory on German soil, falling to American forces on October 22, 1944. The city became a proving ground for Military Government, concerned primarily with the restoration of public utilities and the prevention of epidemics. John Boettiger, Roosevelt’s son-in-law, toured Aachen in the fall and reported that if officials planned to get nearby coal mines operational, they would need to rebuild the transportation network and provide food for the miners. Boettiger reported a diet of approximately 2000 calories in Aachen, with “bread, meat and potatoes in rations which were higher than under Hitler,” offering a stark contrast to scenes he witnessed in Belgium and Holland, where “women [dug] in garbage dumps.” Deeming the economics officer in charge “incompetent,” he questioned why these supplies were not sent to the hungry in liberated areas.<sup>461</sup> While Boettiger felt the Germans should be treated “tough,” he also believed that unless the economy was stimulated, all of Europe faced revolution.<sup>462</sup> Following a meeting at which Boettiger voiced these concerns, Morgenthau wrote to his sons, “Nobody is starving in Aachen, and the responsibility for what they get to eat and how they live is entirely up to the Germans. And if it doesn’t work, it is their fault and not ours.”<sup>463</sup> Initial reports stated that citizens

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<sup>461</sup> John Boettiger, *Wartime Diary*, 24 November 1944, John Boettiger Papers, Box 13, FDRL.

<sup>462</sup> Henry Morgenthau, Jr., “Interview with Mr. Boettiger – Treatment of Germany,” 19 December 1944, *Morgenthau Diary*, Book 804: December 19–22, 1944, p. 15, Diaries of Henry Morgenthau, Jr., April 27, 1933–July 27, 1945, Henry Morgenthau Jr. Papers, FDRDC, <http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/resources/images/morg/md1056.pdf>.

<sup>463</sup> Morgenthau to his sons, 21 January 1945, Henry Morgenthau III Private Archive, Cambridge, MA. Quoted in Beschloss, *Conquerors*, 173.

had “hoarded” enough food to make it through the winter, but the gradual depletion of food stocks eroded military control of the region. In addition to problems of supply and logistics, there was a pernicious “pass the buck” mentality that saw U.S. officials evading complaints and advising civilians to take up matters with an essentially “impotent” Bürgermeister.<sup>464</sup>

The complications faced by military personnel in Aachen tested the Civil Affairs Division and foreshadowed events the following summer. For one commander, the question of feeding the citizens of Aachen was an easy one, “the American soldier would not permit women and children to starve while he was well fed.”<sup>465</sup> At the same time, *Stars and Stripes* reported “slim pickings” available to German civilians who could not rely on the U.S. Army for food, and instead subsisted on “what German food they can get—mainly potatoes—brought in from the surrounding countryside by their own food committees.”<sup>466</sup> Army predications reported the city could survive the winter relying on local stocks and the surrounding countryside, but “privately the military government officers worried that the area might be picked clean before the winter came.”<sup>467</sup> In December, a meeting was held with the few remaining city leaders to discuss the food situation. Allied authorities promised the proper permits to get food and other supplies

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<sup>464</sup> “Political Situation in Aachen,” 3 February 1945, Box 50, Frank J. McSherry Papers, United States Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, Pennsylvania (hereafter cited as USAHEC).

<sup>465</sup> SHAEF, PsyWar Div, Mr. R-H. S. Crossman, Impressions of a Brief Tour of Occupied Germany, in Ziemke, *U.S. Army*, 147.

<sup>466</sup> Charles White, “Order Returns to Aachen Out of the Chaos of Defeat,” *Stars and Stripes*, 14 December 1944, 3.

<sup>467</sup> Ziemke, *U.S. Army*, 147.

moving but did not offer to supply food. German officials decided on “equal rations for all people . . . and labor will be exchanged among all communities to harvest the current vegetable crop.”<sup>468</sup> Officials attempted to create a barter system for food distribution between occupied villages and towns in the Rhineland, “but the most that such an arrangement could do . . . was equalize the shortages.”<sup>469</sup> Although German industry survived relatively intact, the transportation system and economy were destroyed, making it difficult to move the fall harvest.

It became apparent that Roosevelt and others in the State and War Departments failed to recognize the chaos that would accompany German collapse. Food scarcity affected urban areas much more than rural, and ration levels varied from place to place throughout the summer of 1945. The day after VE Day, Ruth Andreas-Friedrich wrote in her diary, “The world goes wild celebrating victory. Meanwhile, Berliners ponder where to find something to eat. There are no stores yet. They are either closed or looted.” Only the bakers were already at work, with crowds gathered outside their doors for bread that was “black and wet” and felt “like lead in the stomach.”<sup>470</sup> Writing to his mother in April 1945, Clifford Shirley relayed a macabre story about German cats and dogs “used for food,” echoing earlier rumors drifting out of Berlin and other large cities. Shirley did not question the veracity of such reports, explaining to his mother, “I can believe it after

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<sup>468</sup> “Leaders at Aachen Eye Food Problem,” *Stars and Stripes*, 18 December 1944, 3.

<sup>469</sup> Memo, Det G1H2, sub: Report of Conference of *Buergermeisters* in Monschau, 18 Nov 44, V Corps 205–5.1, in Ziemke, *U.S. Army*, 152–153.

<sup>470</sup> Andreas-Friedrich, *Battleground Berlin*, 20.

seeing them go thru [sic] the garbage we dumped.”<sup>471</sup> Shirley’s account betrays neither disgust nor empathy at what would become a common sight in U.S. conquered territory. *Stars and Stripes* reported food shortages in Berlin, but was quick to dismiss sensationalized accounts, remarking that “the supply situation is not that acute but the increasing difficulties are reflected in the black market.”<sup>472</sup> Newsreel footage and photographs from government and civilian employees associated with Military Government confirmed difficulties and deprivation but nothing sensational.<sup>473</sup>

Even the conquering Russian Army noted the sad state of Berlin’s food supply, “They are all fatally similar, they are thin and pale, not rich, of course, and the workers suffer terribly from hunger . . . [T]hey ask, without the slightest embarrassment, for bread or something to eat; they are well dressed, but they stand in the street and ask our soldiers for bread (silk on the outside, shit on the inside, as our people say).”<sup>474</sup> Another Red Army soldier wrote home, “our supply-service soldiers are distributing food to the starving people of the city. The Germans are emaciated and completely exhausted.”<sup>475</sup> Theo Findahl, a Norwegian journalist living in Berlin recounted how the Russians set up

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<sup>471</sup> Clifford B. Shirley to Gladys Shirley, 11 April 1945, Clifford Brooks Shirley Papers, IWWII.

<sup>472</sup> “Very Little Meat (if Any) and No Potatoes Top Berlin’s Food Woes,” *Stars and Stripes*, 26 February 1945, 2.

<sup>473</sup> See for example Humphrey Jennings, dir., *A Defeated People*, Crown Film Unit, 1946; *Germany’s Food – The Truth*, British Pathe, 1946.

<sup>474</sup> Alexei Kalinin in Walter Kempowski, *Swansong 1945: A Collective Diary of the Last Days of the Third Reich* trans. Shaun Whiteside (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2015), 260.

<sup>475</sup> Pyotr Zevlyov in Kempowski, *Swansong*, 184–185.

a field kitchen next door, “they’re constantly cooking lamb, baking aromatic, powerful rye-bread loaves, and are not shy of sharing.”<sup>476</sup> While individual Russian soldiers did share with the civilian population following the end of hostilities, Russian Command delayed the arrival of U.S. and U.K. military forces and civilian officials in Berlin until early July. The delay in establishing the Kommandatura, headed by four commanders each representing an occupying government, had “serious consequences for the US and UK for it had delayed the transit plans for the delivery of civil relief supplies needed for winter.”<sup>477</sup>

Military Government personnel spent most of the summer recalibrating consumer rations “to satisfy . . . the ‘disease and unrest’ formula” without the help of much-needed food imports, facing shortages in supply, manpower, and information.<sup>478</sup> A great burden befell the food and public health civil affairs personnel “to requisition military food stocks just enough and no more; or to convince a military commander that military food stocks must be released, with proof that they were essential to prevent civil unrest and disease.”<sup>479</sup> These men and women produced an elaborate system of quotas, collections, and distribution that underscored the need for food aid. They also played a pivotal role in German agriculture and land reform, obtaining seed and fertilizer to increase the cultivation of wheat and crop yields. Military Government banned wheat, rye, sugar beet, and potatoes as sources of feed for poultry and livestock, and chickens and pigs were

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<sup>476</sup> Theo Findahl in Kempowski, *Swansong*, 284.

<sup>477</sup> Ebbs, *Hidden War*, 91–92.

<sup>478</sup> Ebbs, *Hidden War*, 94.

<sup>479</sup> Ebbs, *Hidden War*, 87.

slaughtered. These decisions conserved grain and provided additional meat for the human population.<sup>480</sup> American and British staffs requested permission to use military stocks stored in the U.K. and North Africa “regardless of funding procedures.” Nutrition advisor Jane Ebbs wrote that this request was motivated in part by reports from military medical officers who warned of the possibility of epidemics “if sufficient food was not available to support the basic amount of food needed.”<sup>481</sup> 600,000 tons of grain were provided by the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) from military reserves.

In addition to shortages in fertilizer and seed, there was a reduction in the efficiency of labor, primarily resulting from the use of inadequate draft animals. Too often the work done on many German farms was completed by a single horse, or mismatched pairs of oxen, horses, or cows.<sup>482</sup> In July, Military Government reported several changes to stem future food shortages, including the use of captured Wehrmacht horses for agriculture work, the early release of former German farmers from prisoner-of-war camps, and the opening of farm-employment offices for idle labor in the cities.<sup>483</sup> The release of POWs was intended to ease the drain on rations. As Ziemke explains, “Registered prisoners of war were entitled to 2,000 calories a day, and working prisoners, 2,900 calories.”<sup>484</sup> Once released, they received the ration of a normal German consumer,

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<sup>480</sup> Ebbs, *Hidden War*, 101–2.

<sup>481</sup> Ebbs, *Hidden War*, 93.

<sup>482</sup> OMGUS, “Germany’s Agricultural Future,” *Information Bulletin*, no. 6, 1 September 1945, p. 12, Box 15, Papers of Bernard Bernstein, HSTL.

<sup>483</sup> OMGUS, “Press Comments on Military Government: Food,” *Information Bulletin*, no. 1, 25 July 1945, p. 24, Box 15, Papers of Bernard Bernstein, HSTL.

<sup>484</sup> Ziemke, *U.S. Army*, 292.

rather than the 2000 calories mandated by international law. Regardless, upon first glance, many German POWs appeared “ragged and haggard,” in stark contrast to “the well-fed figures in the occupying forces.”<sup>485</sup>

One of the many problems facing food personnel were contradictions between official rations and true consumption figures. Calories offered a “convenient means of measuring food consumption,” but this unit of was “sometimes misleading and susceptible of misuse,” with existing rations often failing to provide the proper amount of proteins, vitamins, and minerals.<sup>486</sup> A Combined Nutritional Committee was established by the U.S. and U.K. governments, with teams established to conduct regular surveys that included a personal interview in order to establish the individual’s actual food intake and physical examinations that recorded height and weight. Military physicians worked tirelessly to study the effects of malnutrition and semi-starvation on young and old alike, recording weights of civilians, comparing actual caloric intake with official allotments, and photographing the physical effects of years of malnourishment.

Surveys conducted in July found that official rations varied between 800–1300 calories per day for the normal consumer, with the average being 1100 calories.<sup>487</sup> The *Public Health and Medical Affairs: Monthly Report of Military Governor* published the findings of the nutrition surveys. It reported that “cases of nutritional deficiency are beginning to appear in increasing numbers . . . although this is the season of year when

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<sup>485</sup> Andreas-Friedrich, *Battleground Berlin*, 78.

<sup>486</sup> OMGUS, “What the Germans Will Eat This Winter,” *Information Bulletin*, no. 5, 25 August 1945, p. 5, Box 15, Papers of Bernard Bernstein, HSTL.

<sup>487</sup> Ebbs, *Hidden War*, 98.

food should be plentiful.”<sup>488</sup> The average body weights of children up to five years in age were determined to be normal, except in Berlin.<sup>489</sup> The interviews also confirmed that Germans supplemented the official ration with food grown by their gardens or purchased on the black market. In the final months of 1945, medical officers attached to the Public Health Division of OMGUS established facilities to continue their nutritional research, conducting physical examinations that included several tests to identify vitamin deficiencies and signs of edema or rickets.<sup>490</sup> Subsequent surveys in the fall offered a comparison of the British and French Zones. General consumption in the British Zone improved, and the surveys found that “for the time being the situation is not alarming provided the present official rations can be maintained.” The situation was markedly different in the French Zone, particularly the Saar where the primary problem was “a deficiency in calories” due to a lack of indigenous resources.<sup>491</sup>

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<sup>488</sup> Five teams conducted surveys over a period of ten weeks in 15 major cities: Wurzburg, Nurnberg, Regensburg, Landshut, Munich, Bamberg, Augsburg, Kassel, Stuttgart, Frankfurt, Giessen, Heidelberg, and Wiesbaden, with partial surveys in Berlin and Bremen. OMGUS, *Public Health and Medical Affairs: Monthly Report of Military Governor U.S. Zone*, no. 2, 30 September 1945, p. 3, Box 2, Albert Richard Behnke Papers, copyright Stanford University, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, CA (hereafter cited as HIA).

<sup>489</sup> From 5 to 12 years of age below average weights were recorded with the average 3 lbs. below the standard for girls in Frankfurt to 14lbs below average for boys in Stuttgart. Those aged 12 to 19 saw an average of 6 lbs. below normal. OMGUS, *Public Health and Medical Affairs: Monthly Report of Military Governor U.S. Zone*, no. 2, 30 September 1945, p. 3, Box 2, Albert Richard Behnke Papers, HIA.

<sup>490</sup> Ebbs, *Hidden War*, 105.

<sup>491</sup> OMGUS, *Public Health and Medical Affairs: Monthly Report of Military Governor U.S. Zone*, no. 4, 20 September 1945, p. 4, Box 2, Albert Richard Behnke Papers, HIA.

Arriving in Germany in the summer of 1945, Stanley Andrews feared that Military Government was bound to make the “same mistakes we made in Italy two years ago with the same old snags.”<sup>492</sup> Andrews served as U.S. Adviser to the Food, Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry operations division in Frankfurt and later Berlin. Having flown over southern Germany on his journey from Italy, Andrews personally viewed fields that had “been planted and were ripe with a good harvest,” and requested a meeting with Eisenhower’s chief-of-staff, Lieutenant General Walter Bedell “Beetle” Smith, whom he asked for a relaxation of transportation restrictions. Smith listened, but denied the request. Andrews reports that Smith told him, “Don’t get too worked up and concerned about these Germans; the policy is to make it hard on these SOB’s to get going again.”<sup>493</sup> Andrews faced an uphill battle, attempting to convince his superiors that starvation posed a threat to military security and American prestige. Returning to Frankfurt September 2 after traveling throughout the countryside, he noted in his diary, “People are getting desperately hungry—the kids do not shy away like they used to—they beg for candy or anything else they can eat.”<sup>494</sup>

Andrews’s travels throughout the western zones in the fall demonstrated clearly the disconnect between the objectives outlined at Potsdam and the situation in Germany. Appointed Deputy Director of the Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery Division of

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<sup>492</sup> Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, vol. 2, 402, Box 30, Stanley Andrews Papers, HSTL.

<sup>493</sup> Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, vol. 2, 407, Box 30, Stanley Andrews Papers, HSTL.

<sup>494</sup> Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, vol. 2, 431–432, Box 30, Stanley Andrews Papers, HSTL.

Military Government at the end of September, he wrote that the promotion was a responsibility he did not want, “because I do not want to see people starve, and they will starve unless there is a very definite change of policy.”<sup>495</sup> Andrews believed U.S. policy in Germany was guided “by as vicious a pressure campaign as anything that some of the dictators perpetrated,” and he questioned how Military Government planned to “develop a formula which would reduce Germany to a standard of living equal to the lowest in Europe.”<sup>496</sup>

Many in Military Government, as well as the average GI, still placed the blame firmly with German civilians. Civil Affairs officer and University of Michigan professor of political science James Pollock feared the food situation would foment unrest. He was quick to correct his German maid who complained of the Russians. The “Germans had done far worse in the Ukraine and elsewhere,” he reminded her, before “add[ing] for good measure that only hard work would save the Germans from starving.”<sup>497</sup> The *Weekly Information Bulletin* similarly placed the responsibility squarely on the shoulders of Germans and reported an increase in black market activity in Kaiserslautern. It warned that, “unless an overall effort is made through German police . . . to stop illegal buying

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<sup>495</sup> Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, vol. 2, 456, Box 30, Stanley Andrews Papers, HSTL.

<sup>496</sup> Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, vol. 2, 457 and 484, Box 30, Stanley Andrews Papers, HSTL.

<sup>497</sup> James K. Pollock, *Occupation Diary*, 28 August 1945, N 1014/1, *Bundesarchiv*, Koblenz. Originals located in the James K. Pollock Papers, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

from farmers there is little hope for fair distribution.”<sup>498</sup> Writing to his wife from Bremerhaven in July, Robert Easton declared that the civilians hired by the military were a failure: “They shirk on the job or don’t come to work, and when they do come spend most of their time trying to steal food, of which they are very short. We’ve arrested several score. One had a ham hidden in his trouser leg.”<sup>499</sup>

It was clear, however, that the want and suffering of young children would be a difficult thing for occupation forces to ignore, “a child’s cry is a powerful thing, and a child’s hunger is a terrible thing.”<sup>500</sup> Writing home in August, James Meeks sent a tracing of a little girl’s foot, asking that his wife send two pairs of shoes for the young daughter of his German hosts, admitting, “I do occasionally give them sugar I’ve swiped from the mess hall or white bread or butter just to see that they are doing alright.”<sup>501</sup> Even Andrews recounted the guilt he felt enjoying a lavish, seven-course dinner hosted by his French colleagues, “during our little feast a German boy was nabbed by the police for stealing crackers . . . he said he was hungry.”<sup>502</sup>

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<sup>498</sup> OMGUS, “Lessons from Operations,” *Information Bulletin*, no. 1, 25 July 1945, p. 21, Box 15, Papers of Bernard Bernstein, HSTL.

<sup>499</sup> Robert Easton to Jane Faust Easton, 6 July 1945, in Easton and Easton, *Love and War*, 352.

<sup>500</sup> Walter C. Krause, *So I Was a Sergeant: Memoirs of an Occupation Soldier* (Hicksville, NY: Exposition Press, 1978), 51–52.

<sup>501</sup> James Meeks to Wife, 20 August 1945, James Donald Meeks Collection (AFC 2001/001/1471), VHP.

<sup>502</sup> Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, vol. 2, 455–56, Box 30, Stanley Andrews Papers, HSTL.

As summer gave way to fall, the food situation in the U.S. Zone became increasingly tense. In cities like Stuttgart, small thefts increased, but the threat of civil unrest in the form of looting and riots existed only in rumors.<sup>503</sup> Complicating matters were conflicting reports on the severity of the food situation in U.S. news outlets. Sensational headlines in the nation's major newspapers—"Babies in Rags"; "Hunger and Death all Around Us"; "Pallor of Hunger Common Among Germans"; "Starvation Hospital"; "Save Children from Starvation Fate"; etc.—led many Americans to question existing policies. This "cleavage of opinion" was even recognized and acknowledged by the media, with journalists debating the morality of American action, or inaction, in print.<sup>504</sup> In October, Military Government published a food and nutrition survey that recommended "the importation of wheat, the increase of the daily ration for normal consumers to 2,000 calories a day and a simultaneous increase in the caloric ration for special cases, such as heavy workers, children and pregnant women." The survey, reported in the *New York Times*, found that the average weight of German adults had dropped, and children suffered from malnutrition, the effects of which are "cumulative and not at once apparent."<sup>505</sup>

Further straining resources was the deluge of refugees, including ethnic Germans displaced from eastern territories, who made their way to the U.S. and British Zones.

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<sup>503</sup> Manfred Enssle, "The Harsh Discipline of Food Scarcity in Postwar Stuttgart, 1945–1948," *German Studies Review* 10, no. 3 (1987): 481–502.

<sup>504</sup> "Some Compiled Notes on Needs in Germany," 4 December 1945, Box 126, Folder: Committee on Germany, ACVAFS.

<sup>505</sup> Drew Middleton, "Germans Health Continues to Drop," *New York Times*, 15 October 1945, 4.

UNRRA, hailed as an innovation in 1943, was increasingly hampered by the scope of its mission. Deemed the relief and recovery arm of the United Nations, the organization struggled to work as an international entity and was crippled by its financial dependence on a suspicious Congress. Congressional hostility stemmed both from isolationist leanings and multiple charges of ineptitude, corruption, and Communist infiltration.<sup>506</sup> The German unit was the largest assigned, yet UNRRA leadership upheld the decision not to extend aid to German civilians, “even destitute Germans, such as the bedraggled mass of German expellees arriving in the defeated rump of the country, did not qualify for their support or sympathy.”<sup>507</sup> As more refugees arrived from the East, UNRRA officials confronted an unexpected obstacle: many DPs refused to be repatriated to Communist governments. In addition to stateless persons and unaccompanied children,

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<sup>506</sup> The situation was so contentious that Fiorello LaGuardia, director of UNRRA after Lehman, engaged in a shouting match with reporters from the *Chicago Tribune*. Barry Riley, *The Political History of American Food Aid*, 97. For more on UNRRA’s growing pains see Jessica Reinisch, “‘Auntie UNRRA’ at the Crossroads,” *Past and Present* Supplement 8 (2013): 70–97; and Silvia Salvatici, “‘Help the People to Help Themselves’: UNRRA Relief Workers and European Displaced Persons,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 25, no. 3 (2012): 428–451.

<sup>507</sup> Jessica Reinisch, “‘Auntie UNRRA,’” 86. For more on UNRRA and DP camps in Germany see Bundy, “There Was a Man of UNRRA,” 154–169; Grossmann, “Grams, Calories, and Food,” 118–148; Grossmann, *Jews, Germans, and Allies*; and Adam R. Seipp, *Strangers in the Wild Place: Refugees, Americans, and a German Town, 1945-1952* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013). For personal accounts see Kathryn Hulme, *The Wild Place* (London: Frederick Muller, 1954); Hulme, *Undiscovered Country* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1966); Marvin Klemme, *The Inside Story of UNRRA: An Experience in Internationalism. A First Hand Report on the Displaced People of Europe* (New York: Lifetime Editions, 1945); Sir Frederick Morgan, *Peace and War: A Soldier’s Life* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1961); Pettiss and Taylor, *After the Shooting Stopped*; Wilson, *Aftermath*; and Wilson, *In the Margins of Chaos: Recollections of Relief Work in between Three Wars* (London: Macmillan Company, 1944).

*Life* magazine called these the “hard core” of the DP problem.<sup>508</sup> The “issues of distribution, repatriation, and immigration became highly political,” and were exacerbated by Sir Frederick Morgan’s (head of UNRRA operations in Germany) public criticisms of the relief organization’s personnel.<sup>509</sup>

Authorities in the British Zone faced similar scrutiny, and arrived at the conclusion that, “relief is as much a political necessity as it is a humane policy.”<sup>510</sup> The British recognized that the German food supply in their zone, which included the industrialized and urban centers in the north, could not sustain the population through winter. They revised food policies in the fall, motivated by a belief that increased rations would stabilize control of the region and make the occupation more “palatable” for Britons and Germans alike.<sup>511</sup> In early October, Field Marshal Montgomery offered a “somber” assessment of conditions in the British Zone, declaring that food must be imported on a large scale if there was to be any hope of preventing a global epidemic, “It is not part of my plan to pamper the Germans . . . On the other hand, I am not prepared to see widespread famine and disease sweep through Europe.”<sup>512</sup> Montgomery, like Clay, was a pragmatist, viewing the situation in stark black and white: The continued

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<sup>508</sup> “DPs,” *Life*, 30 July 1945, 18.

<sup>509</sup> Bundy, “There Was a Man of UNRRA,” 34.

<sup>510</sup> OMGUS, “Food for Stability,” *Information Bulletin*, no. 4, 18 August 1945, p. 27, Box 15, Papers of Bernard Bernstein, HSTL.

<sup>511</sup> Johannes-Dieter Steinert, “Food and the Food Crisis in Post-War Germany, 1945–1948: British Policy and the Role of British NGOs,” in *Food and Conflict in Europe in the Age of the Two World Wars*, ed. Frank Trentmann and Flemming Just (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), 266–288.

<sup>512</sup> “Montgomery in Warning,” *New York Times*, 3 October 1945, 5.

punishment of Germany would result in dire consequences for Europe and the world. Historian Johannes Dieter Steinert concludes that it was the plight of children, “whose starvation would not be tolerated,” that turned public opinion in favor of relief.<sup>513</sup>

On October 26, the House of Commons debated a motion expressing concern over the world food crisis, with special attention drawn to Germany. In “an atmosphere of charged emotionalism,” Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin spoke, “There are two kinds of hunger in Europe today. One is physical hunger. But I sometimes think that the awful blackout over Europe is creating a great spiritual hunger more devastating even than physical hunger.”<sup>514</sup> The speech was not devoid of geopolitics, alluding to Russia’s refusal to allow Allied control councils into the Danube River basin to clear inland waterways, improve transportation networks, and access potential food surpluses.<sup>515</sup> The arrival of British NGOs in Germany aided Military Government, but came at great cost for a country whose economy was still struggling to recover from the war, and met with little praise or gratitude from the German people.<sup>516</sup>

While the British decision signaled a shift, there were many Americans who continued to voice disgust that occupying forces had gone “soft.” Writing for the *New York Times*, Raymond Daniell placed the blame firmly within the large numbers of

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<sup>513</sup> Steinert, “British Humanitarian Assistance,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 43, no. 3 (July 2008): 429.

<sup>514</sup> Herbert L. Matthews, “Bevin Voices British Horror at Germany Misery, Asks Aid,” *New York Times*, 27 October 1945, 1.

<sup>515</sup> Matthews, “Bevin Voices British Horror,” 1.

<sup>516</sup> Steinert writes, “Perversely, the German population barely registered Britain’s generosity and willingness to make sacrifices for its former enemy.” Steinert, “Food and the Food Crisis,” 273.

civilian and military personnel arriving in the U.S. Zone who never experienced combat or witnessed first-hand the extent of Nazi destruction in liberated Europe. Daniell was angered by the “new arrivals” empathy toward Germans, including concerns that German women queued for upwards of nine hours waiting for rations or that German children were collecting acorns to eat. He reminded readers that shoppers wait in long lines at grocery stores across the continent and in London. And the acorns are not used for food, but ersatz coffee, something devised years earlier to accommodate coffee shortages “while the Germans were hoarding foreign credits to build their war machine.”<sup>517</sup> For Daniell, American emotions were “our Achilles heel,” and he warned that the shipment of food on credit was the “first step” toward repeating the errors of the last peace, echoing the same worries Truman had in Potsdam.<sup>518</sup> Writing to George Marshall in October, Eisenhower acknowledged the “growing storm of discontent” but felt the criticism came from columnists who had not spent time in Germany and wrote “without any knowledge whatsoever of the facts.”<sup>519</sup>

Eisenhower found himself moved by the plight of German civilians, especially when children suffered. While touring Mannheim in November, he was informed by medical officers that, “six hundred out of every 1000 children born in Mannheim would die before they were three months old,” the problem attributed to a lack of sugar for nursing mothers. The General replied, “My God, has it come to this?” Andrews reported

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<sup>517</sup> Raymond Daniell, “Pity for Germans Grows in U.S. Ranks,” *New York Times*, 5 October 1945, 6.

<sup>518</sup> Raymond Daniell, “We Talk Tough, But We Act Soft,” *New York Times*, 7 October 1945, SM3.

<sup>519</sup> #396 Eisenhower to Marshall, 13 October 1945, in *PDDE*, 6:433.

that orders quickly came down to “do something about the sugar ration to so-called lactating mothers.” The sugar beet crop was ready to be harvested, but the owners of the sugar mills identified with the Nazi party. Reopening the mills required “informal action” by agricultural staff to name the facility’s janitor as president of the corporation. The sugar processed allowed a ration of 250g per month for nursing mothers that winter, as well as additional supplies for children in hospitals.<sup>520</sup> In August, Eisenhower requested a statement of War Department policy to guide requests for relief in the U.S. Zone following an inquiry made by the American Friends Service Committee, and in October he permitted the Swedish Cross to distribute surplus food products to both displaced person and German civilians residing in the U.S. Zone.<sup>521</sup>

Aware of growing criticism, President Truman asked former director of the U.S. Office of Censorship Byron Price to study Allied policy in occupied Germany in August.<sup>522</sup> Following a ten-week tour of the defeated nation, Price published a report and urged a reassessment of existing policy, believing that, “The Army is doing good work with Military Government under conditions which are little understood in this country.”<sup>523</sup> Included in his recommendations was an increase in rations from 1550 to

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<sup>520</sup> Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, vol. 2, 524–525, Box 30, Stanley Andrews Papers, HSTL.

<sup>521</sup> #220 Eisenhower to Marshall, 1 August 1945, in *PDDE*, 6:237; #438 Eisenhower to Count Folke Bernadotte, 31 October 1945, in *PDDE*, 6:488–489.

<sup>522</sup> Harry S. Truman, Letter to Byron Price Requesting Him to Study Relations Between U.S. Forces of Occupation and the German People, 30 August 1945, *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/231213>.

<sup>523</sup> #412 Eisenhower to Marshall, 19 October 1945, in *PDDE*, 6:459; Byron Price, “Relations between the American Forces of Occupation and the German People,” *U.S. Department of State Bulletin* 13, no. 336, 2 December 1945, 885–892.

2000 calories a day, a bump that necessitated food shipments. Addressing critics, Price emphasized this increase would improve the safety of occupying forces and protect the fragile health of Allied populations who were susceptible to outbreaks of disease. Prior to the release of his full report, Price sent a preliminary outline to Eisenhower on October 4, writing that, “the American Army is organized and trained to win wars, not to administer civil governments.” At Eisenhower’s request, he submitted several “proposals designed to improve relations with the German people,” which Eisenhower found to be very “sensible.”<sup>524</sup>

A December 1945 survey on the food situation in American-occupied Germany found that 49% polled believed Germans in the U.S. Zone would receive enough to eat over the winter, whereas 34% responded to the contrary (17% had no opinion). When asked whether more food should be shipped 48% agreed, 35% said no, and 17% had no opinion. However, when the question was asked of WWII veterans, the numbers changed, with 46% responding that the U.S. should not ship more food, betraying a lingering hostility on the part of U.S. servicemen.<sup>525</sup> At a meeting in Stuttgart in December, Clay publicly stated that hunger and starvation “have never been a United States objective.”<sup>526</sup> As winter neared, the four D’s agreed upon at Potsdam (demilitarization, denazification, democratization, decentralization) were increasingly overshadowed by rehabilitative concerns. The food problem in Germany became the

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<sup>524</sup> #412 Eisenhower to Marshall, 19 October 1945, in *PDDE*, 6:459.

<sup>525</sup> “Food for Germany” 2 January 1946, in Gallup, *Gallup Poll*, vol. 1, 553.

<sup>526</sup> Kathleen McLaughlin, “U.S. to Send Food, Germans Are Told,” *New York Times*, 5 December 1945, 11.

most controversial aspect of American occupation policy, posing serious health and safety risks as well as damaging the reputation of the victors. Military officials recognized that existing food policies posed a greater threat to stability than previously thought. Individuals in Civil Affairs and Food and Agriculture, as well as military leadership, grew increasingly sensitive to criticisms of food policy because they damaged American prestige.

### **Conclusion**

The December 24, 1945 issue of *Life* magazine heralded the first postwar Christmas as a jubilant occasion, mirroring the sentiments of many Americans. In addition to the uplifting holiday-themed stories and advertisements, the issue included a poignant editorial directed at the American people. The piece contrasted the postwar extravagance of the United States—mink coats, perfumes, and “ferocious” Los Angeles shoppers—with the bleak situation facing cold, hungry Europe. American food consumption was on the rise (3300 calories daily) while the liberated nations struggled to meet 2000, with many barely meeting 1500.

This was the arithmetic of hunger. *Life* appealed to Americans’ conscience and expressed dismay that the average citizen felt helping Europe was “beyond his *personal* capacity,” relying instead on international institutions such as UNRRA and the newly formed United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization to solve the problem. The magazine urged Americans to recognize their postwar responsibilities and support private aid agencies, stressing person-to-person giving over financial donations and calling attention in particular to Germany. The writer went so far as to claim that the refusal to

allow private relief agencies to operate in the former Nazi state was “stupidly cruel.” The editorial concluded:

There is no single or simple solution to the tragedy of worldwide suffering this Christmas. But no American should feel impotent about it. So long as our government lags in its efforts, so long as the relief agencies need more money and help to do their proper job, just so long should the individual citizen question his own right to enjoy his Christmas dinner. For if we hold the individual German responsible for not investigating Belsen and doing something about it, will we not one day be judged for our present apathy?<sup>527</sup>

On Christmas Eve, a reporter from the *Chicago Times* approached Andrews. The correspondent was searching for a story that confirmed that Military Government was “babying these damned Germans.” Andrews spent the next hour lecturing the man about the critical food situation in Germany, even pointing out the window to “a lineup of fifty or more people standing in a howling wind behind an Army mess waiting for the scraps of food from the evening meal to be thrown out.”<sup>528</sup> The story was never printed, but *Newsweek* later quoted Andrews stating that he did not believe “the American people, no matter how bitter we were about the war, would want to see several million Germans starve.”<sup>529</sup>

*Life*'s Christmas issue broached a subject that many Americans grappled with in the closing months of 1945. Whereas debates in the late spring and early summer centered on how to best dismantle Nazi Germany, by fall many questioned the efficacy of

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<sup>527</sup> Italics mine. “Hungry Christmas,” *Life*, December 24, 1945, 20.

<sup>528</sup> Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, vol. 2, 530, Box 30, Stanley Andrews Papers, HSTL.

<sup>529</sup> Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, vol. 2, 531, Box 30, Stanley Andrews Papers, HSTL.

the punitive policies. Could the terms of the hard peace guarantee a bright future for all of Europe? While most, if not all, agreed that measures must be taken to prevent future aggression, preferred methods of German pacification varied greatly.

This chapter explored the physical and psychological dimensions of food and feeding in conquered Germany, juxtaposing policymakers' desire for a hard peace and the military's concern over security with the day-to-day realities of occupation. The food shortage and resulting images of hunger, deprivation, and malnourishment that soldiers encountered regularly eroded many of their preconceived notions of the German foe. Could a soldier be both warrior and humanitarian? Should the military embrace these dual roles? For many occupation officials, the question of food relief was guided by military necessity, not charitable impulse. Hunger was a force that drove individuals to commit dangerous acts, undermining military control. It was the pursuit of stability that led Clay to support increased rations for German civilians, before embracing the humanitarian mission writ large.

Cooperation with the Soviet Union remained a goal at Potsdam, but territorial disputes underscored the fragility of the Grand Alliance. The Soviet desire to redraw the map and cede Germany's eastern territories to Poland, not only resulted in the loss of valuable German farmland but also Silesian coal mines. This "Bolsheviki land grab," as Truman referred to it, increased German reliance on imports but cut access to resources needed to pay for said imports. Officials in both the State Department and Military Government viewed economic instability and hunger as breeding grounds for communism. Democratization was not possible if economic misery remained the status quo. "It is to the interest of the whole world," warned Stimson, "that [Germans] should

not be driven by stress of hardship into a nondemocratic and necessarily predatory habit of life.”<sup>530</sup> Truman’s approval of a formal inquiry into the German food situation at the end of 1945 signaled a shift away from the punitive occupation envisioned by Roosevelt and toward a rehabilitative occupation, fulfilling the inter-Allied goals of denazification and demilitarization while maneuvering German economic recovery.

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<sup>530</sup> Memorandum for the President, 16 May 1945, in Stimson and Bundy, *On Active Service*, chap. 22, Kindle.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE GERMAN PROBLEM IS A FOOD PROBLEM

This is America's Germany. In a very real sense, they are also our responsibility—one of the most ticklish commitments that Americans, as a nation, have ever undertaken. For within America's Germany, what we say goes. If we want them to starve, they will starve. If we want them to blow up aluminum plants, they will blow up aluminum plants. If we want them to read Thomas Jefferson and see Mickey Mouse, they will read Thomas Jefferson and see Mickey Mouse.

--Julian Bach, 1946<sup>531</sup>

The specter of global famine loomed large in the winter of 1945–46.

Congressional debate over the U.S. obligation to combat the hunger problem frequently alluded to contradictions in occupation policy in the U.S. Zone which exacerbated the situation. On December 15, 1945, senators from both parties presented Truman with a petition requesting that the military take immediate steps to alleviate famine conditions in Germany and Austria.<sup>532</sup> Following the holiday recess, several senators pushed for an investigation into starvation conditions across Europe, concerned that U.S. policies were “subjecting millions to mass starvation.”<sup>533</sup> Senator Kenneth Wherry (R-NE) proposed a joint inquiry into the European food situation in early 1946. He focused his statements on the plight of German nationals who remained outside of UNRRA's mandate. Senator Richard Russell, Jr. (D-GA) questioned why UNRRA “could take care of the needs of

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<sup>531</sup> Bach, *America's Germany*, 11.

<sup>532</sup> Investigation of Starvation Conditions in Europe, on 29 January 1946, 79<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., *Congressional Record* 92, pt. 1:516.

<sup>533</sup> Investigation of Starvation, *Congressional Record* 92, pt. 1:509.

sick persons, babies, and mothers in Italy but was powerless to do so in respect to the people of Germany.”<sup>534</sup> He challenged UNRRA’s policy to withhold relief from one former enemy and bestow it upon another. Senator Albert Hawkes (R-NJ) requested that Truman “help keep the women, babies, and children and the old men and women of Germany from starving.”<sup>535</sup> The president’s response, read on the Senate floor, conveyed that he had no “desire to be unduly cruel” but could not “feel any great sympathy for those who caused the death of so many human beings by starvation, disease, and outright murder.”<sup>536</sup> Yet, many in Congress wondered whether the United States was guilty of similar atrocities when “we permit the starvation of our conquered enemy?”<sup>537</sup>

The impassioned congressional debate included reports from individuals in occupied Germany alarmed by the high infant mortality rate. Following a trip to Berlin in November, sociologist Hans Speier estimated the infant mortality rate was 50% and praised the British decision to evacuate children out of their sector of Berlin and into the British Zone proper. “Why we did not do likewise,” he reflected, “I don’t know.”<sup>538</sup> The dire situation was not confined to the capital. Ruth Andreas-Friedrich noted in her diary, “the infant mortality rate in Brandenburg is about eighty to ninety percent. The city of Ruppin reports that of forty-five newborn infants, forty-one die within their first year of

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<sup>534</sup> Investigation of Starvation, *Congressional Record* 92, pt. 1:509.

<sup>535</sup> Investigation of Starvation, *Congressional Record* 92, pt. 1:510.

<sup>536</sup> Investigation of Starvation, *Congressional Record* 92, pt. 1:512.

<sup>537</sup> Investigation of Starvation, *Congressional Record* 92, pt. 1:511.

<sup>538</sup> Speier worked for the State Department. Hans Speier, *From the Ashes of Disgrace: A Journal from Germany 1945–1955* (Amherst, MA: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1981), 26.

life. Five months after the war ten thousand orphaned children roam about Germany subsisting exclusively on begging and stealing.”<sup>539</sup> German Quaker Hans Albrecht reported to a British Ambulance unit that, “no child born in Germany this year will survive the coming winter.”<sup>540</sup> Members of Congress appealed to one another’s humanity to push forward aid legislation, frequently invoking the image of the suffering child to stir emotions. This included sharing shocking statistics, eyewitness testimony, and even graphic photographs of malnourished children and infants taken by British humanitarian Victor Gollancz.<sup>541</sup> The focus on children as victims of American policy elicited not only sympathy but also provoked moral outrage and public condemnation.

Bemoaning the “series of affirmations and denials,” many in Congress believed it was impossible to determine whether Germans were subsisting on a maintenance diet or a starvation diet.<sup>542</sup> This problem was largely the consequence of Military Government’s inability to accurately gauge the scope and severity of food scarcity throughout the fall of 1945. The “disease and unrest formula” placed the safety of occupying forces before the health of the civilian population. There was a justifiable fear that a public health crisis in defeated Germany could snowball into a global epidemic reminiscent of the Spanish

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<sup>539</sup> Andreas-Friedrich, *Battleground Berlin*, 96.

<sup>540</sup> Investigation of Starvation, *Congressional Record* 92, pt. 1:515.

<sup>541</sup> Starvation and the Food Problem in Europe, on 5 February 1946, 79<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., *Congressional Record* 92, pt. 1:877. Victor Gollancz wrote numerous essays critical of Allied occupation policy and included 144 photographs in his book *In Darkest Germany* (Hinsdale, IL: Henry Regnery Company, 1947).

<sup>542</sup> Investigation of Starvation, *Congressional Record* 92, pt. 1:511.

influenza outbreak that followed World War I.<sup>543</sup> In addition to disease, Military Government identified hunger as a threat to military security, exacerbating existing tensions between victor and vanquished and potentially contributing to political unrest. Bound by the language of JCS 1067, occupation officials publicized steady increases in German rations, yet the calorie count for the average consumer remained below 2000.

While Congress harped on contradictions in military reports, similar inconsistencies appeared in print media. U.S. news outlets once scoffed at well-fed *fräuleins* and plump children, but these descriptions increasingly seemed the exception rather than the rule.<sup>544</sup> This contradiction, wrote Julian Bach, “is not surprising in view of the indigestible diet of information that American readers and editors have been fed.” For context, Bach described a cartoon in the *Herald-Tribune* that featured a sizeable German couple gorging on food, while the military’s own *Stars and Stripes* printed an illustration depicting an elderly and emaciated German woman who faced a hungry winter.<sup>545</sup> The extent of the crisis varied from one region to the next, but it was clear that existing supplies could not support the population through winter.

In anticipation of this policy change, the American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service (ACVAFS) created a committee composed of agencies

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<sup>543</sup> For a detailed analysis of the public health situation in all four occupied zones see Jessica Reinisch, *The Perils of Peace: The Public Health Crisis in Occupied Germany* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013).

<sup>544</sup> “It’s Got to Work,” *Time*, 25 June 1945, 23.

<sup>545</sup> Bach, *America’s Germany*, 87–88.

interested in assisting German civilians in the fall of 1945.<sup>546</sup> Representatives of the ACVAFS accompanied sympathetic Congressmen and other officials on highly publicized tours of the U.S. Zone throughout the fall. Their persistence paid off when the President's War Relief Control Board, motivated by the findings of the Price Report, approved an inquiry into the German food situation. A team was assembled to study the nutritional needs of defeated Germany, arriving in mid-January 1946. They met with military officials and leaders of German welfare organizations throughout the western Zones.<sup>547</sup> While the mission toured Germany, the ACVAFS Committee on Germany established the Council of Relief Agencies Licensed for Operation in Germany (CRALOG).<sup>548</sup> CRALOG served as an umbrella organization. Originally composed of eleven agencies, the Council organized overseas relief, acted as liaison between the federal government and members, and managed the campaign for German relief. The Mission to Germany wrote an emotional report that was circulated widely in early February. On February 19, Truman approved food imports for the U.S. Zone and publicly

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<sup>546</sup> The ACVAFS was organized in 1943 to coordinate private voluntary relief agencies. For more see Rachel M. McCleary, *Global Compassion*, 50–53.

<sup>547</sup> The team was comprised of James Read and Gilbert White of the American Friends Service Committee, Stewart Herman of Lutheran World Relief, James Flint of the Congregational Service Committee, Joseph Buttinger of the International Rescue and Relief Committee, the Reverend James H. Hoban of Catholic Relief Services, and Anthony Luchek of the Community Service Committee of the Congress of Industrial Organizations. Eileen Egan and Elizabeth Clark Reiss, *Transfigured Night: The CRALOG Experience* (Philadelphia: Livingston Publishing 1964), 23–24.

<sup>548</sup> For more on CRALOG's origins and operations see McCleary, *Global Compassion*, 61–71; Edward McSweeney, *American Voluntary Aid for Germany, 1945–1950* (Freiburg, Germany: Caritas-Verlag, 1950); and Henry Burke Wend, "The Council of Relief Agencies Licensed to Operate in Germany: American Voluntary Relief in Germany, 1946–1951" (Master's thesis, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1987).

endorsed CRALOG as “the only authorized agency for handling American contributions for civilian relief in Germany.”<sup>549</sup>

The decision to permit imports and allow relief organizations to provide civilian aid reflected growing security concerns, but it was also the product of vigorous campaigning by humanitarians. Several non-governmental organizations and religious aid societies pushed the question of German food relief in the fall of 1945, emboldened by the British decision to import food. Rather than present aid as an act of religious charity, they relied on rhetoric and imagery that underscored the moral responsibility of a democratic nation to restore the health of a defeated enemy, thus ensuring future peace and stability. Arguments in favor of German relief adapted humanitarian considerations to meet national security interests, highlighting the relationship between relief, rehabilitation, and democracy. American voluntary aid to Germany served U.S. foreign policy interests; it facilitated economic recovery and promoted Western values, thus diminishing the appeal of communism at the very moment the Iron Curtain fell across Europe.

### **“Irritations, frustrations, and bewildering conflicts”: Hunger Threatens Military**

#### **Security**

In his December 1945 report, Byron Price advised an increase in the basic ration to 2000 calories if the United States hoped to prevent starvation, epidemics, and rioting. He rejected the idea that the existing ration of 1550 calories daily was satisfactory. Calculating calories burned alongside those consumed revealed 1550 to be barely

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<sup>549</sup> “11 Relief Agencies to Help Germany,” *New York Times*, 20 February 1946, 3.

adequate for individuals living under normal circumstances, let alone those “expected to work, and who have no heat at home and no way to reach their places of employment except by walking.”<sup>550</sup> Price explained that food imports did not imply the U.S. would be “soft with the German people,” but would instead “represent protection to our own occupation troops against disease and disorder, and decency toward our Allies of Western Europe, themselves undernourished and easily susceptible to disease.”<sup>551</sup> The Price Report presented a rationale for aid that demonstrated the power of U.S. food to combat the triple threat of starvation, disease, and unrest. Food was necessary to keep the peace and protect American troops, appealing to both the State and War Departments. Price was also keenly aware of the propaganda value inherent in a food program. While his report did not employ humanitarian rhetoric, he did hint at the psychological benefits: “We can win converts to democracy only if we again find a way of instilling hope.”<sup>552</sup>

Occupation officials struggled to find a balance between instilling hope and enforcing JCS 1067. Consequently, military necessity *not* humanitarian impulse, guided discussions on food imports in military circles. As early as May, Clay acknowledged food shortages presented an obstacle, but he opted not to challenge existing policy. At the time Eisenhower’s chief deputy in governing Germany, Clay maintained food policy was to be dictated by the American people and Congress.<sup>553</sup> He wrote to McCloy in June, “Some cold and hunger will be necessary to make the German people realize the

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<sup>550</sup> Price, “Relations,” 890.

<sup>551</sup> Price, “Relations,” 891.

<sup>552</sup> Price, “Relations,” 891.

<sup>553</sup> “‘Starving’ in Reich Is Put Up to U.S.,” *New York Times*, 17 May 1945, 4.

consequences of a war which they caused.”<sup>554</sup> There existed a thin line between the hunger deemed necessary and that which posed a threat to order. Clay reiterated these concerns later in the summer, conceding that, “suffering should not extend to the point where it results in mass starvation and sickness.”<sup>555</sup> Devoting an entire chapter of his memoir to the food problem, Clay maintained that he “begged and argued for food” because he “did not believe that the American people wanted starvation and misery to accompany occupation.”<sup>556</sup> He was not alone in this line of thinking. Shortly after the Potsdam Conference concluded, Stimson met with Clay and Eisenhower in Frankfurt. The secretary of war acknowledged the difficulties that lay ahead, but gently reminded Clay that, “the American people will never tolerate an area under American control in which there is chaos and hunger.”<sup>557</sup>

Not only was American prestige at stake, but hunger undermined democratization. The United States could not expect to “arouse political interest for a democratic government in a hungry, apathetic population.”<sup>558</sup> Food and Agriculture officer Stanley Andrews noted that “people seemed to be far more interested in where they were going to

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<sup>554</sup> “14. Conditions in Germany,” Letter from Clay for McCloy, 16 June 1945, in *The Papers of General Lucius D. Clay, Germany 1945–1949*, vol. 1, ed. Jean Edward Smith (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), 24.

<sup>555</sup> “17. Conditions in Germany,” Letter from Clay for McCloy, 29 June 1945, in Smith, *Papers*, vol. 1, 42.

<sup>556</sup> Lucius D. Clay, *Decision in Germany* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1970), 263.

<sup>557</sup> Jean Edward Smith, *Lucius D. Clay: An American Life* (Henry Holt and Co., 1990), eBook 2013, chap. 15, Kindle.

<sup>558</sup> Clay, *Decision*, 263.

get food and fuel than they were about any kind of freedom or democracy.”<sup>559</sup> James Pollock wrote in his diary: “I am deeply concerned about the winter months. The army doesn’t seem to realize that it will be held responsible if civil government breaks down.” In addition to unrest, Pollock lamented that such a failure would throw German civilians “right into the arms of Communists.”<sup>560</sup> A few days before his removal as Military Governor of Bavaria, General George Patton wrote, “If we let Germany and the German people be completely disintegrated and starved, they will certainly fall for Communism.”<sup>561</sup> Earlier in the summer he openly criticized the deindustrialization of Germany, believing it “patently impossible for Germany to be an agricultural state.” Raging in his diary, the general asserted that not only was this “undemocratic,” but it “follow[ed] practically Gestapo methods.”<sup>562</sup> Humane considerations played a part in individual support for food relief, but Military Government’s embrace of aid was motivated primarily by fears that hunger would push Germany towards communism.

Military Government dispatched teams to study nutrition in the U.S. Zone, but the effects of malnourishment were not immediately recognizable. Few Germans died of starvation, but many succumbed to diseases like dysentery and tuberculosis, having “lost almost all resistance to disease.”<sup>563</sup> Military physicians worked tirelessly to study the

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<sup>559</sup> Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, vol. 2, 460, Stanley Andrews Papers, Box 30, HSTL.

<sup>560</sup> Pollock, *Occupation Diary*, 26 August 1945, N 1014/1, Bundesarchiv, Koblenz.

<sup>561</sup> Patton, *Diaries*, 22 September 1945, GSPDLOC.

<sup>562</sup> Patton, *Diaries*, 27 August 1945, GSPDLOC.

<sup>563</sup> OMGUS, “Many Will Survive, But . . .,” *Weekly Information Bulletin*, no. 12 (13 October 1945), 11, University of Wisconsin Digital Collection: Germany Under

effects of malnutrition and semi-starvation on young and old alike, recording weights of civilians, comparing actual caloric intake with official allotments, and photographing the physical effects of years of malnourishment. Medical professionals argued that the German diet of primarily bread and potatoes was not only 30% below the recommended intake, but deficient in protein, fat, calcium, and countless necessary vitamins.<sup>564</sup> Citing Dr. Ancel Keyes's starvation experiments at the University of Minnesota, critics deemed 1500 calories to be insufficient, and medical experts agreed. Commenting on the Minnesota experiment, the *Worldover Press* observed, "The significance of this for the rehabilitation of Europe and for the hope of democracy in Europe is obvious and appalling."<sup>565</sup>

Writing in October, Eisenhower admitted his job included "an unholy mixture of irritations, frustrations and bewildering conflicts."<sup>566</sup> He believed the United States made progress toward both Allied and national objectives but conceded "there is much to do and in a job such as this we are particularly vulnerable to day by day [sic] criticism."<sup>567</sup> The food problem vexed military leadership and politicians alike. Senator Alexander Wiley (R-WI) wrote to Eisenhower asking for clarification on the conflicting reports from Germany. Eisenhower attempted to mollify the Senator, explaining that predictions

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Reconstruction (hereafter cited as UWDC),  
<http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/History.omg1945n012>.

<sup>564</sup> Albert R. Behnke, "Nutritional, Health and Psychological Aspects of the Occupation of Germany," Box 1, Albert Richard Behnke Papers, HIA.

<sup>565</sup> Starvation and the Food Problem, *Congressional Record* 92, pt. 1:877.

<sup>566</sup> #369 Eisenhower to Hopkins, 3 October 1945, in *PDDE*, 6:406.

<sup>567</sup> #369 Eisenhower to Hopkins, 3 October 1945, in *PDDE*, 6:407.

were difficult to make given a lack of accurate information, but asked Clay to provide available statistics gathered by U.S. nutrition teams. “I assure you,” wrote Eisenhower, “that within the American Zone the mass extinctions that you fear by reason of starvation will not occur . . . we would never condone inhuman and un-American practices upon the helpless.”<sup>568</sup> Clay provided Wiley with statistics gathered from earlier surveys, which identified variations in geographic region and economic class but found nutritional deficiencies to be “widespread.”<sup>569</sup>

Clay also explained to Wiley that local public welfare organizations had been permitted to launch feeding programs in areas where nutrition was poor. This was most common in Berlin, where supplies of coal and food became entangled in conflicts between the United States and the Soviet Union. The U.S. and Britain expected the Soviet Union to supply the city from their zone since, historically, Berlin imported food from Silesia, Pomerania, and Prussia. The Soviets, however, demanded that the British and Americans “accept proportionate responsibility.”<sup>570</sup> Soviet General Georgy Zhukov informed Clay that eastern Germany lacked food and was supplied by Red Army food stocks. Clay wrote to his superiors that he had no choice but to provide food and coal to Berlin. The *Oberbürgermeister* (Lord Mayor) in Berlin worked with the Allied Kommandatura to negotiate and publicize school feedings for the city’s children in late

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<sup>568</sup> #451 Eisenhower to Wiley, 4 November 1945, in *PDDE*, 6:504.

<sup>569</sup> OMGUS, “Many Will Survive,” 11.

<sup>570</sup> “20. Quadripartite Administration of Berlin,” Letter from Clay for War Department, 9 July 1945, in Smith, *Papers*, vol. 1, 49.

1945 and early 1946. A lunch card was provided to supplement their daily consumption by 170–190 calories, with strict orders to ban adults from using the cards.<sup>571</sup>

Compounding the problem was military officials' staunch belief that calorie counts provided an accurate measure of nutritional health. Military Government decided to continue with the ration system established by the Nazis, "using the same format with the issues of each food item listed in amounts authorized for each ration period."<sup>572</sup>

Unable to meet the 2000 calories required to satisfy the "disease and unrest" formula, British and American officials revised the number downwards to 1500 calories per day, with the hope that 200–300 calories would be "available from unrationed food resources."<sup>573</sup> Rations set a minimum, but it was impossible to determine if consumers received and consumed the full 1500 calories, let alone calculate outside food resources. Nutritional science was still relatively new, and calorie calculations puzzled many. In occupied Vienna, children subscribed to the notion that too much of a good thing was deadly. They wondered how the 1100 calories allotted in Vienna could kill some people, yet Americans ate upwards of 6000 calories and lived.<sup>574</sup> Rations rooted in calorie counts also failed to account for nutrients, with many individuals suffering from a diet deficient in fats and proteins. Of the 1500 calories provided, 1200 came from bread and

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<sup>571</sup> B Rep. 010-02, Nr. 467, Film Nr. B909, Landesarchiv Berlin, Berlin, Germany.

<sup>572</sup> Ebbs, *Hidden War*, 94.

<sup>573</sup> Ebbs, *Hidden War*, 94.

<sup>574</sup> Douglas Charlwood, "Breadbasket in China," *Christian Science Monitor Magazine*, 8 February 1947, 2. Quoted in Curti, *American Philanthropy*, 478.

potatoes.<sup>575</sup> Germans joked that Hitler gave them vitamins, the U.S. gave them calories, but they wondered if and when they would ever receive food.<sup>576</sup>

Clay and others in Military Government collected data but lacked the formulas necessary to solve Germany's food problem. Hunger was impossible to measure; one could not assign a numeric value to it, with the *Weekly Information Bulletin* wryly noting the "ironical fact that public health and preventative medicine can be measured only by its failures."<sup>577</sup> It was, however, easy to identify: distended bellies, yellowed skin, or a child's cry. An employee in a German municipal labor office, spoke freely with U.S. intelligence officer Arthur Kahn, bluntly pointing out that workers barely received enough food to keep an inactive person alive. The German worried that winter would make the situation worse, predicting an influenza epidemic and possible food riots. Kahn noted that none of those he spoke with blamed Americans for the food situation, but "it was clear that they were convinced that the occupation forces were not making adequate provisions against a winter crisis."<sup>578</sup> He wrote home, "Unless basic changes are made in

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<sup>575</sup> The 1500 calorie ration consisted of 5 ½ slices of bread, 3 medium potatoes, 3 tablespoons oatmeal/cereal, 1 teaspoon fat, and 1 teaspoon of sugar. Ziemke, *U.S. Army*, 410.

<sup>576</sup> James K. Pollock, "Germany and the Great Powers," 4, N 1014/33, Bundesarchiv, Koblenz.

<sup>577</sup> OMGUS, "The Battle for Health," *Weekly Information Bulletin*, No. 8 (15 September 1945), 14, UWDC, <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/History.omg1945n008>.

<sup>578</sup> Arthur D. Kahn, *Experiment in Occupation: Witness to the Turnabout: Anti-Nazi War to Cold War, 1944–1946* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2004), chap. 10, Kindle.

our administration—which seems unlikely—there will be vast starvation, freezing, sickness next winter.”<sup>579</sup>

Mass starvation never came to fruition, but hunger was everywhere. It shaped the everyday lives and actions of Germans and was often all they thought about. A young Karl Heinz Strick walked two miles uphill every day, seeking out food on what he called his “sandwich route.” He learned to “[skip] the nearby farms because of the competing swarms of begging children.” He found it beneficial to devour food in the presence of its donor, writing, “Most people found it gratifying to watch a hungry boy eat food they had provided. A slice of dry bread was common. Jam, applesauce, buttered bread, or a cup of milk, were rare treats.”<sup>580</sup> Christa Glowalla recalled how teachers taught her to tie a rope around her waist, placing the knot tightly around her stomach, “It helped our hunger. We didn’t feel it anymore.”<sup>581</sup> Asked about the prospects of a harsh winter, a mechanic shrugged, “One lives from day to day . . . there will always be potatoes.”<sup>582</sup> The demand for cigarettes had as much to do with their ability to “stifle hunger,” as it did their value on the black market.<sup>583</sup>

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<sup>579</sup> Kahn, *Experiment in Occupation*, notes.

<sup>580</sup> Karl Heinz Strick with Frances L. Strick, *Boy with a White Flag: Memoir of WWII Germany and the Post-War Years* (self-published, 2011), 202, Kindle.

<sup>581</sup> Christa Glowalla, “Christa Glowalla ~ Berlin,” in Samuel, *The War of Our Childhood*, 73–74.

<sup>582</sup> Kahn, *Experiment in Occupation*, chap. 10, Kindle.

<sup>583</sup> Kahn writes that cigarettes were categorized as *Lebensmittel* (foodstuffs) because they helped with hunger. Kahn, *Experiment in Occupation*, Appendix 43, Kindle.

SHAEF supplied seeds for the fall planting, but fertilizer remained scarce, and farms lacked the equipment and manpower. Grain imports, approved in the summer, provided an extra 100,000 tons per month in the last quarter of 1945, but the need far outweighed supplies.<sup>584</sup> Recognizing the severity of the situation, Clay made a trip stateside in November 1945 to discuss the matter with Washington officials. Germany's needs, however, remained secondary to those of American allies. Unable to convince policymakers to increase the food supply, Clay worked with the Food and Agriculture Branch to rebuild Germany's food and agricultural offices with limited resources available. To conserve food and provide for those who lacked the fuel to cook, Military Government opened community kitchens, but recipients were required to turn over ration coupons and pay for the meals.<sup>585</sup>

On Christmas Day, with “a full stomach of wonderful turkey, dressing, cranberries, and the works—washed down with good German champagne supplied by the Army,” Stanley Andrews took a moment to reflect on the holiday season in Germany.<sup>586</sup> “German children,” he wrote, “have learned that the American soldier is the softest guy in the world for a touch of his candy ration.” GIs could not ignore the “white pinched faces with red chapped hands outstretched.” Two officers hoarded their candy rations for weeks, stuffing their pockets on Christmas Eve and riding the subway from one end to

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<sup>584</sup> Ziemke, *The U.S. Army*, 435.

<sup>585</sup> Hqs, USFET, Theater Commander's Weekly Staff Conference No. 14, 26 Mar 46, in Hist Div, Hqs, ETO, 97-USF9-0.5. Quoted in Ziemke, *U.S. Army*, 410.

<sup>586</sup> Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, vol. 2, 531, Box 30, Stanley Andrews Papers, HSTL.

the next, gifting chocolate to every child that boarded.<sup>587</sup> Similar events took place across the U.S. Zone, with Christmas parties hosted for children, extra rations of sugar and flour supplied by food offices, and chocolate and candy dispersed in schools by GI's. Rations stayed stable throughout the winter months. Combined with the mild weather, this stability contributed to a false sense of security. Distribution had improved, but food stocks did not, and the U.S. Zone continued to rely on a dwindling supply of imported food. Rations fell in the spring, reaching a low of approximately 1180 calories per day for normal consumers in May–June 1946, three months after Truman publicly endorsed relief activities in Germany.<sup>588</sup>

Clay believed a successful occupation necessitated food imports, but he was initially wary of relief agencies operating independently in Germany. Responding to a War Department inquiry in December, he expressed a preference for distribution by German welfare agencies under the supervision of Military Government.<sup>589</sup> Clay was upset by the ACVAFS mission's report in February and expressed his displeasure with superiors, warning he would speak out publicly if necessary. He felt the report contained information beyond the mission's purview: Relief "agents cannot be permitted to attempt to dictate or recommend policies for the treatment of Germany, particularly young

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<sup>587</sup> Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, vol. 2, 536, Box 30, Stanley Andrews Papers, HSTL.

<sup>588</sup> Clay, *Decision*, 265.

<sup>589</sup> "73. American Relief Supplies," Letter from Clay for Adcock, 13 December 1945, in Smith, *Papers*, vol. 1, 135.

enthusiasts who are carried away with the prospects of a job.”<sup>590</sup> Similar concerns were raised over the operations of CARE in the U.S. Zone. Yet, Clay eventually found the “psychological effects of this aid” to be incalculable, especially when consumers knew of its American origins. Even “the bitterness of war had not destroyed our compassion for suffering,” he later reflected.”<sup>591</sup>

The decision to import food was not Clay’s to make. Yet he was left to combat criticisms that rations were “in excess of German needs.”<sup>592</sup> One of the most damaging critiques came from former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who visited the U.S. Zone in early February and reported that the nutrition situation was not as dire as initially portrayed, noting that German children appeared to be “fed as well as, if not better than, those in England.”<sup>593</sup> In a memo written in March, Clay cited *New York Times* articles publicizing Mrs. Roosevelt’s criticisms alongside other public figures. He wrote, “Our reduction in occupational forces has been based on a stabilized U.S. Zone in which reasonable food supplies were available for the German people. I do not believe that the reduced ration is sufficient to prevent disease and unrest. Therefore I shall have to reconsider the size of the occupational forces required to maintain order and security.”<sup>594</sup>

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<sup>590</sup> “86. U.S. Relief Activities in Germany,” Letter from Clay for Hilldring, 1 February 1946, in Smith, *Papers*, vol. 1, 156.

<sup>591</sup> Clay, *Decision*, 277.

<sup>592</sup> “99. Food Situation in U.S. Zone,” Letter from Clay for Berry, 16 March 1946, in Smith, *Papers*, vol. 1, 178–79.

<sup>593</sup> Kathleen McLaughlin, “Mrs. Roosevelt Advises Soldiers Against Hasty Marriages Abroad,” *New York Times*, 14 February 1946, 26.

<sup>594</sup> “100. Food Situation in U.S. Zone,” Letter from Clay for McNarney, 18 March 1946, in Smith, *Papers*, vol. 1, 181.

Clay knew how to appeal to war-weary Americans discontent with prolonged service overseas, drawing direct parallels between food imports and demobilization. Food imports stabilized the U.S. Zone, allowing for a reduction in the size of the occupying military, something with great appeal for Americans eager to return to ‘normal.’

Food scarcity was particularly acute in the densely populated industrial areas of the British Zone.<sup>595</sup> Shortly after Truman announced the start of food relief in the U.S. Zone, rations in the British Zone decreased from 1555 to 1014 calories. Riots broke out in Hamburg on March 19, with women leading looting parties. Newsreel footage revealed large crowds outside British Military Government Headquarters, with police linking arms to prevent the demonstrators from moving forward.<sup>596</sup> The events began when “150 housewives, carrying market baskets, attempted to break into a baker’s shop.”<sup>597</sup> Officials estimated that 70% of Hamburg’s population was without bread because they consumed the month’s ration in the first 14 days.<sup>598</sup> Similar incidents occurred throughout the city, including the storming of the Tiefsack railroad yards by a group of approximately 200

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<sup>595</sup> For more on the British occupation see John E. Farquharson, “The British Occupation of Germany 1945–6: A Badly Managed Disaster Area?,” *German History* 11, no. 3 (1993): 316–338; Christopher Knowles, *Winning the Peace: The British in Occupied Germany, 1945–1948* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017); Patricia Meehan, *A Strange Enemy People: Germans under the British 1945–50* (London: Peter Owen Publishers, 2001); and Peter Speiser, *The British Army of the Rhine: Turning Nazi Enemies into Cold War Partners* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2016).

<sup>596</sup> “Food Riots in Hamburg,” *British Pathé*, 1946, Film ID 2315.05, <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/food-riots-in-hamburg>.

<sup>597</sup> “Women Lead Food Riot Lasting 36 Hours in Hamburg,” *Daily Boston Globe*, 21 March 1946, 8.

<sup>598</sup> “Shots deter Mob in Hamburg Riot,” *New York Times*, 22 March 1946, 4.

women who broke into two rail cars. The *New York Times* reported children accompanied the rioters and that shots were fired.

Events in Hamburg alarmed American occupation officials and lent greater urgency to their efforts to stabilize rations. Led by women, the riots seemed to affirm Clay's belief that, "Laws and regulations mean little to those who see their loved ones suffering from hunger."<sup>599</sup> He worried that in addition to the adverse physical and psychological effects, ration decreases in the spring of 1946 risked further damaging American "prestige."<sup>600</sup> The German food problem not only undercut attempts at democratization, but it also threatened America's reputation in Europe at a critical moment in the early Cold War.

#### **"Christianity, common sense, and justice": Food Aid and American Values**

The report circulated by the ACVAFS mission to Germany painted a bleak picture in February 1946. Informed by both scientific data and interactions with the German populace, it documented inconsistent and insufficient caloric-intakes alongside gut-wrenching personal tales of hunger and deprivation. "There is an expressionless character about the faces of the people," wrote one team member in his diary.<sup>601</sup> The concluding document stated, "The bare statistics . . . do not tell the story of the hungry people we

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<sup>599</sup> Clay, *Decision*, 263.

<sup>600</sup> "118. Food Situation in U.S. Zone," Letter from Clay for Echols, 18 May 1946, in Smith, *Papers*, vol. 1, 208.

<sup>601</sup> James Flint Diary, Box 134, Folder: CRALOG – ACVAFS Mission to Germany, American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service Records (MC 655), Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries (hereafter cited as SCRUL).

have seen, the old who are not getting enough to eat, the children who need more than bread and potatoes for protective foods.”<sup>602</sup>

The report echoed the testimony in Congress, where the food debate was framed as a question of American decency. “Christian charity, common sense, and justice,” declared Senator Wiley, “demand that we prevent inhuman suffering among our former foes as among our former allies.”<sup>603</sup> This was not a question of a hard or a soft peace, but “a question of America’s honor, and the basic humanitarian impulse of the American people.”<sup>604</sup> It was this “humanitarian impulse” that slowly overpowered anti-German sentiments in the United States.

CRALOG coordinated among member agencies, Military Government, and local German welfare groups to arranged for the shipment and dispersal of relief products collected in the United States.<sup>605</sup> CRALOG then relied on local social welfare organizations to distribute the materials once they arrived in Germany. CRALOG’s early success remains both impressive and unique when one considers that the organization did not undertake a campaign for public support in the U.S. Not only did the program

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<sup>602</sup> Egan and Reiss, *Transfigured Night*, 27.

<sup>603</sup> Investigation of Starvation, *Congressional Record* 92, pt. 1:520.

<sup>604</sup> Investigation of Starvation, *Congressional Record* 92, pt. 1:518.

<sup>605</sup> CRALOG’s 11 charter agencies included American Friends Service Committee, Brethren Service Committee, Committee on Christian Science Wartime Activities of the Mother Church, Church Committee on Overseas Relief and Reconstruction of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ (Church World Service), International Rescue and Relief Committee Inc., Labor League for Human Rights of the American Federation of Labor, Lutheran World Relief Inc., Mennonite Central Committee, Community Service Committee of the Congress of Industrial Organizations, Unitarian Service Committee, and Catholic Relief Services.

succeed, it thrived. Membership soared with the addition of seven more organizations, and CRALOG figures quickly surpassed American assistance to other European nations.

CRALOG representatives in Germany reported to Military Government, which in turn provided for their welfare in the U.S. Zone.<sup>606</sup> According to political scientist Rachel McCleary, World War II was a turning point for the relationship between the U.S. government and private voluntary organizations, with compassion formalized as foreign policy. The substantial government oversight that accompanied wartime relief activities continued in the peace, with voluntary organizations providing much needed humanitarian aid and development assistance across the globe. The ACVAFS received governmental support for CRALOG because it “ensure[d] that relief work in Germany conformed to U.S. foreign policy.”<sup>607</sup> This allowed relief to be channeled through an organization with government oversight, circumventing the creation of private agencies by ethnic Germans residing in the United States and ensuring aid could not be used to achieve political ends. Operations commenced in March 1946, with the first shipments of food and clothing arriving in April. The following year, the military allowed CRALOG to bring teams to Germany to construct neighborhood centers and homes, as well as provide medical services.

CRALOG negotiated separate agreements with the French and British to operate in their zones and attempted to secure access to the Eastern Zone, but the Soviets denied

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<sup>606</sup> A similar umbrella agency organized by members of the ACVAFS, the Licensed Agencies for Relief in Asia (LARA), sent relief to occupied Japan, Okinawa, and Korea.

<sup>607</sup> McCleary, *Global Compassion*, 69.

them.<sup>608</sup> The Russian representative on the Allied Kommandatura attempted to block CRALOG activities in all four sectors of Berlin as well, but the agency gained access to the city after a Russian commander stated he was not opposed to the distribution of food in the Soviet Sector.<sup>609</sup> The relationship between CRALOG and the Soviets remained tense, with Soviet representatives in the Kommandatura frequently accusing the organization of advancing American political interests. For example, in March 1948, the Soviet representative of the Food Committee “discovered” that the Food Branch U.S. Military Government organized an additional feeding for Berlin school children with CRALOG. While Soviet High Command stated that it did not have objections to an extra feeding, it feared “parallel channels for supplying the population . . . would prevent the possibility of a quadripartite control and would create a situation whereby political profits will be derived.”<sup>610</sup> Soviet obstruction forced a shift in CRALOG’s attitude and activities in Germany, with the organization eventually adopting an anti-Communist stance.

The Cooperative for American Remittance to Europe (CARE), a joint organization created in late 1945 by several non-governmental aid societies, supplemented CRALOG’s efforts in Germany.<sup>611</sup> These NGOs, including leading relief

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<sup>608</sup> Wend writes that CRALOG did manage to send agents to the Soviet Zone working under the auspices of the International Red Cross which was permitted to operate in the eastern Zone. Wend, “The Council of Relief Agencies,” 75.

<sup>609</sup> Wend, “The Council of Relief Agencies,” 77.

<sup>610</sup> “Statement by the Soviet representative on the Food Committee concerning the illegal activities of the American organization ‘CRALOG,’” 5/59-1/13 Folder: CRALOG Supplies, B Rep. 036-01, Landesarchiv Berlin, Berlin, Germany.

<sup>611</sup> CARE was comprised of 22 private, nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations that worked in the field of relief and international affairs.

groups, labor organizations, and religious societies, offered a person-to-person package service for Europe. Original CARE packages were surplus Army 10-in-1 rations, designed to feed ten soldiers for one day or one soldier for ten days. The food consisted of stew, canned meat, cereal, biscuits, candy, coffee, evaporated milk, etc.<sup>612</sup> In addition to food, the original military surplus packages included soap, toilet paper, can openers, and cigarettes.<sup>613</sup> The preserved butter was “recalled with more than a little distaste,” while American chocolate proved immensely popular among Germans.<sup>614</sup> New packages launched in the spring of 1947 replaced precooked and prepared foods with staples like flour, shortening, and bread. CARE packages provided more than 40,000 calories for the price of \$10, fostering relationships between donor families in the U.S. and recipients in Europe.<sup>615</sup> The sturdy, nearly 50lb, cardboard box became a cultural icon, a symbol of American generosity.

CARE began operations in Germany in August 1946. Many of the earliest German recipients remained incredulous. Klaus Putter believed the box to be booby-

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<sup>612</sup> Wallace J. Campbell, *The History of CARE: A Personal Account* (New York: Praeger, 1990), 48.

<sup>613</sup> Designed for soldiers, each package contained 100 cigarettes. The Seventh Day Adventist Church was opposed to smoking and required that any package sent on their behalf included a letter urging recipients not to smoke. Wallace, *The History of CARE*, 48–49.

<sup>614</sup> “Fact Sheet: CARE Aid to Germany,” Box 4, Folder: Misc. Items Regarding CARE’s Founding and Early Years, CARE records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations, New York, NY (hereafter cited as MADNYPL).

<sup>615</sup> Packages initially sold for \$15 but the response was slow, so the price was cut, with ads illustrating the old price crossed out, signifying to Americans that they were getting a deal.

trapped and did not open it for several days.<sup>616</sup> The populace, however, was quickly won over, with many voicing a desire for an “Uncle in America.” Families opened packages with much fanfare. “I don’t think anyone who has not experienced it,” recalled Edith Williams, “can ever imagine what it was like when a CARE Package arrived. It added the one bit of color, of happiness.”<sup>617</sup> CARE launched a massive publicity campaign and benefited from free public-service advertising by the Advertising Council. The organization solicited anecdotes from field offices to be used in press releases, revealing the positive influence of CARE abroad. For example, in 1949 a Berlin cinema ran a contest searching for a “modern Garbo.” In a short interview, the winner “stated wistfully that a CARE package would have meant more to her than the money she won.” A woman in San Francisco read this, marched into a CARE office, and provided a “happy ending to the story.”<sup>618</sup>

Participation in the project grew as Americans felt the charitable impulse to help strangers less fortunate than themselves, often submitting undesignated orders, rather than remittances for family and friends. American soldiers were some of the biggest supporters of CARE, assisting in delivery and purchasing packages for friends and sweethearts in Germany following their tour of duty. Having developed a close working relationship with Josef Braun, the mayor of Mannheim, several U.S. soldiers sent CARE

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<sup>616</sup> David Morris, *A Gift from America: The First 50 Years of CARE* (Atlanta: Longstreet Press, 1996), 18. There is also the popular story that Germans believed aid from America was poison, with the word *Gift* in German translated to poison.

<sup>617</sup> Williams received CARE packages in Germany in 1946, shortly after she was reunited with her family. Morris, *A Gift from America*, 27.

<sup>618</sup> “Newsletter No. 12, 17 March 1949,” Box 4, Folder: Miscellaneous Background, CARE records, MADNYPL.

packages his way and asked that he provide the names of needy families in the city for future shipments.<sup>619</sup> Germany received more CARE packages than any other European nation, with estimates that 2/3 of the population received a CARE package.<sup>620</sup>

Members of both CARE and CRALOG not only pressured the American government to change existing occupation policy but also were instrumental in garnering public support for food relief in Germany. The success of these voluntary agencies lay in their ability to frame the food question as one of moral fortitude, and ultimately it was the portrayal of this charity as democracy-in-action that resonated with the American people. CRALOG and CARE underscored the democratic nature of the enterprise, emphasizing the importance of people-to-people aid and the responsibility of the U.S. as victor to ensure that Germany did not starve. These private voluntary organizations recognized policymakers' concerns that communism would gain a foothold in Germany and publicized the potential of humanitarian aid to contain communism.

CRALOG's strong religious background would lead one to believe that the organization relied on the American Christian tradition to appeal to the American public. In Eileen Egan and Elizabeth Clark Reiss's history of the organization, the women repeatedly refer to CRALOG activities as "works of mercy," explaining how this language shaped arguments in favor of food relief.<sup>621</sup> In Egan and Reiss's account, the American people were eager to help but, "their compassion was rendered totally

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<sup>619</sup> NL Braun 26/1981 Nr. 6, Stadtarchiv Mannheim, Mannheim, Germany.

<sup>620</sup> Morris, *A Gift from America*, 21.

<sup>621</sup> Egan was a member of the Headquarters Staff of Catholic Relief Services and Reiss was the Assistant Executive Director of the ACVAFS.

ineffective by a cold and compassionless law,” referring to the Trading with the Enemy Act.<sup>622</sup> Acts of mercy, it was argued, could not be considered a form of trade, “The CRALOG experience . . . will serve to remind Americans that no act of mercy is lost, and that mercy can put into motion a chain reaction more powerful than that of nuclear energy.”<sup>623</sup> Official documents charting the history and success of the organization similarly relied on Christian imagery, declaring that a combination of love of enemy and love of neighbor motivated American voluntary aid.<sup>624</sup>

Feeding Germany was hailed as more than an act of mercy, however. Advocates of food programs presented them as a potent expression of the power of democracy on the eve of the Cold War. In the ACVAFS’s mission report, the team emphasized the importance of private and public relief working together to aid in the “moral recovery” of Germany.<sup>625</sup> As early as 1944, individuals within the U.S. government, foresaw an opportunity to advance the ideology of the Four Freedoms through a combination of humanitarianism and public relations, “in the children of Germany it becomes almost an humanitarian duty to start at once to foster a new national pride – a national pride in personages and elements of their past which conform to the Allied conception of the

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<sup>622</sup> Egan and Reiss, *Transfigured Night*, 16.

<sup>623</sup> Egan and Reiss, *Transfigured Night*, ix.

<sup>624</sup> Ulrich Sonnemann, “Eleven Agencies found CRALOG: International Facts and American Motivations,” Box 137, Folder: CRALOG History 1962/63, American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service Records (MC 655), SCRUL.

<sup>625</sup> Report of Mission to Germany, Box 134, Folder: CRALOG – ACVAFS Mission to Germany, American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service Records (MC 655), SCRUL.

Four Freedoms.”<sup>626</sup> CARE delivered on this, describing packages as “an assurance of friendship . . . proof that Americans are willing to democratically share their plenty, in order to help build a better world.”<sup>627</sup>

Humanitarians like Dr. Charles R. Joy, who served first with UNRRA and later with CARE, understood that the present crisis must consider both past mistakes and future ambitions. In an article entitled “Disillusionment and Democracy,” Joy reflected on the legacy of World War I. He wrote, “After the first world war the German youth thought they learned what democracy was. It was hatred and hostility and hunger. It was defeat and despair and humiliation.”<sup>628</sup> Joy identified how past failures linked democracy with humiliation and hunger. Writing in 1951, he feared that without continued support for humanitarian aid, the values and ideals Americans hoped to instill in German youth would fail, and the American vision of democracy would be “warped.” The nutrition of children was of particular concern since it was clear that they were the workforce of the future. Military physician Albert Behnke found the “condition of enforced idleness” to be striking, especially “in a people possessing exceptional technical ability and the capacity and desire for work amidst a setting of semi-starvation and material ruin.”<sup>629</sup> Allowing

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<sup>626</sup> “Public Relations Film and Radio Bureaus in Allied Countries,” Captain Cecil Hind to Major Redefer, 6 January 1944, Box 20, Entry 463, RG 165, NARA.

<sup>627</sup> “CARE Facts Speech,” Box 4, Folder: Miscellaneous Background, CARE records, MADNYPL.

<sup>628</sup> Charles R. Joy, “Disillusionment and Democracy,” *Future*, May 1951, p. 1, Box 2, Folder: Germany-Notes on History, CARE records, MADNYPL.

<sup>629</sup> Albert R. Behnke, “Nutritional, Health and Psychological Aspects of the Occupation of Germany,” Box 1, Albert Richard Behnke Papers, HIA.

the food crisis to persist not only punished the innocent alongside the guilty but severely crippled the rehabilitation of the country in both the short and long term.

What distinguished the argument for food relief in Germany was the emergence of a philanthropic venture that united the military occupation's goals of reeducation and democratization with the universal application of the Four Freedoms—these various concerns often coalescing around the figure of the hungry child. In dire need of both proper nutrition and reeducation, food offered a solution to both problems and placed children at the fore of the nation's rehabilitation. As one General explained it, "We are here to show these people the ways of democracy—and what other way can you begin than by being kind to children?"<sup>630</sup> Humanitarians steered the conversation so that it was not a question of transitioning from a punitive to rehabilitative occupation, but rather a question of whether the United States would allow children to starve.

When originally petitioning the government for permission to import food, many agencies relied on reports of the needs of German children, "who could by no manner or means be covered with the mantle of collective guilt."<sup>631</sup> This focus on children as worthy recipients of humanitarian aid was not unique to the postwar era. As historian Heide Fehrenbach notes, child-centered humanitarian imagery evolved from a social and familial context in the late 19th century to an emphasis on child-as-civilian, a symbol used by both the Allies and Axis in the Second World War.<sup>632</sup> Fehrenbach identifies a

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<sup>630</sup> "British General Gives German Children Party," *New York Times*, 22 August 1945, 13.

<sup>631</sup> Egan and Reiss, *Transfigured Night*, 22.

<sup>632</sup> Heide Fehrenbach, "Children and Other Civilians: Photography and the Politics of Humanitarian Image-Making," in *Humanitarian Photography: A History*, ed.

trend towards images of the “lone suffering child” that was particularly prevalent in the photojournalism of the Second World War and dominated press coverage of later global conflicts as well as the publicity and fundraising efforts of NGO’s.<sup>633</sup>

Relying on personal descriptions of malnutrition, humanitarians galvanized public interest in the fate of German children. Remarking on the calorie deficiency, one observer wrote, “What attracts attention is not the thinness, not even the universal tiredness, but the color of the faces. . . Young children are yellow.”<sup>634</sup> The same observer then recounted a visit to a school in Freudenstadt where children aged 9-10, with bloated abdomens and skin infections, were found to still have the baby teeth they should have lost by age six.<sup>635</sup> A postmortem autopsy performed on a three-year-old girl at the Neumünster hospital revealed the presence of one hundred worms. Her doctor explained that given the scarcity of food, many consumed food that was not properly prepared.<sup>636</sup> These descriptions elicited a visceral response, stirring feelings of empathy and compassion in a way that data sets, charts, and scientific jargon could not. Philipp Bauer writes that CARE focused

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Heide Fehrenbach and Davide Rodogno (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 165–199.

<sup>633</sup> Fehrenbach, “Children and Other Civilians,” 167.

<sup>634</sup> Reiss and Egan quote this story but do not attribute it. Egan and Reiss, *Transfigured Night*, 56.

<sup>635</sup> Egan and Reiss, *Transfigured Night*, 56.

<sup>636</sup> “Horrible Conditions Among German Children,” March 1947, Box 135, Folder: British Zone-Reports, American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service Records (MC 655), SCRUL.

their German campaigns on victims rather than the perpetrators of Nazism, “the past was hardly ever mentioned while the overall perspective turned towards the future.”<sup>637</sup>

The first CARE packages arrived in Germany in the spring of 1946, but German children were noticeably absent from early fundraising campaigns, which instead featured victims of the German war machine. By 1948, however, radio spots regularly included appeals to help young “blonde haired and blue-eyed” Germans, with many ads emphasizing food’s role in reeducation. One such “special” message from General Clay remarked, “Learning is a little slow. Slow, because it’s hard for a child to think about democracy when he’s hungry.”<sup>638</sup> Ensuring that democracy was not equated with hunger would “lay the groundwork for a peace that could last forever” rather than “the groundwork for a new war to come.”<sup>639</sup> The “spiritual value of [this] demonstration of American good will [sic] towards Germany” proved “as important as the material value.”<sup>640</sup>

The focus on children extended beyond their role as recipients of aid. Food relief also provided an opportunity for children in the United States to “learn by doing.” The person-to-person exchange was something even young Americans could benefit from—teaching American youth about democratic ideals and the universality of Freedom from Want. CARE encouraged American youth to participate in the humanitarian venture,

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<sup>637</sup> Bauer, “From Victim to Partner,” 127.

<sup>638</sup> “IS 84-8-21, Here’s a special message to you,” Box 919, Folder: Radio Spots Oct-Dec 1948 vol. 2, CARE records, MADNYPL.

<sup>639</sup> United States Army, *Your Job in Germany*, 1945.

<sup>640</sup> “CRALOG A Brief Historical Description,” p. 7, Box 1, Folder: CRALOG A & B 1948 CLOSED, Entry 32058, RG 220, NARA.

organizing food drives, donating their allowance, and engaging in letter writing campaigns with recipients.

CRALOG, CARE, and other agencies did not operate in a vacuum. They worked alongside the State and War Department, as well as coordinated among more than a dozen private voluntary agencies, to overcome virulent anti-German sentiments and provide much needed humanitarian assistance. To illustrate the success, one need only look at the numbers. By 1949, one out of every three Germans had received some form of CRALOG aid, while 67% of all CARE packages sold within the first year were shipped to Germany.<sup>641</sup>

#### **“Democracy on an empty stomach is a luxury”: The Famine Emergency Committee**

On February 3, 1946, Under Secretary of State Dean Acheson acknowledged in a radio broadcast that there would be starvation throughout Europe despite the U.S.’s best efforts: “We’ve won the war and we can’t afford to let hunger and starvation defeat us now—even if it means a return to wartime conditions in some sectors of our economy . . . We cannot go on feeding wheat to our hogs and cattle while people die of hunger.”<sup>642</sup> Shortly after, Americans were asked to voluntarily cut food consumption to combat global famine. President Truman’s Famine Emergency Committee (FEC) asked citizens to eat 40% less wheat and 20% less fats, providing a list of 39 ways American consumers could conserve food. The war had ended, but peace proved elusive in the winter of 1945–

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<sup>641</sup> Egan and Reiss, *Transfigured Night*, 34. “Ch. 4: Overseas, 1946–1947,” Box 1, Folder: Charles Bloomstein’s History of Care (2 of 6), CARE records, MADNYPL.

<sup>642</sup> Starvation and the Food Problem, *Congressional Record* 92, pt. 1:877.

46, with starvation stalking not only the populations of Europe, but also China, India, South Africa, and most of the globe. Millions turned to the United States for relief.

Truman knew that a relief program was necessary, but he was himself wary of committing American dollars to recovery. Encouraged by Secretary of War Henry Stimson, Truman reached across party lines and sought the guidance and assistance of former President Herbert Hoover.<sup>643</sup> At Truman's request, Hoover served as chairman of the Famine Emergency Committee and conducted a world food survey. With a team comprised largely of former colleagues who served in the Commission for Relief in Belgium and American Relief Administration, the 71-year old embarked on a grueling tour of 38 nations in a span of two months. Hoover shared his recommendations with the president and then made another trip to negotiate with potential food exporting nations in South America. Truman pronounced the mission a success, with Hoover concluding that while "there would be millions of people who would be hungry until the next harvest, there would be no mass starvation."<sup>644</sup>

Shortly after VE Day, Stimson warned Truman of the likelihood of "pestilence and famine in central Europe," and feared it would be followed by "political revolution and Communistic infiltration."<sup>645</sup> He urged the president not to allow "emotional

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<sup>643</sup> For more on the relationship between Truman and Hoover see Brian Douglas Reese, "A Mutual Charge: The Shared Mission of Herbert Hoover and Harry S. Truman to Alleviate Global Hunger in a Postwar World," (Master's thesis, Portland State University, 2018).

<sup>644</sup> Herbert Hoover, *An American Epic*, vol. 4 *The Guns Cease Killing and the Saving of Life from Famine Begins, 1939–1963* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1964), 218.

<sup>645</sup> Stimson, *Diaries*, 16 May 1945, Stimson Papers, MAYUL. Quoted in Beschloss, *Conquerors*, 236.

thinking” and vindictive policies to facilitate starvation in defeated Germany. Stimson previously served as Secretary of State under Herbert Hoover and suggested reaching out to Hoover for assistance with the growing food problem, having met with the former president himself to discuss the rehabilitation of Europe and the challenge in Germany.<sup>646</sup> Truman invited Hoover to the White House “to talk over the European food situation.”<sup>647</sup> Hoover welcomed the opportunity to reenter Washington politics, but he could only offer a bleak assessment. He explained to Truman that most of the European population was subsisting on food from the previous harvest: “They were already on rations that left them hungry and unless something were done at once they would be more hungry.” He warned that “bare subsistence meant hunger; and hunger meant Communism,” echoing beliefs that shaped his food intervention in the Russian Civil War.<sup>648</sup> Truman continued to correspond with Hoover throughout the summer, but was non-committal about his plans, preoccupied with winning the war in Japan and preparing for the Potsdam Conference.

While mass starvation in Germany was narrowly avoided in the winter of 1945–46, the threat of famine did achieve global proportions. Following lengthy correspondence with British Prime Minister Clement Attlee, Truman requested that

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<sup>646</sup> Stimson, *Diaries*, 2 May 1945, Stimson Papers, The Manuscripts and Archives Digital Images Database, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives (cited hereafter as MADID), <http://images.library.yale.edu/madid/>. Stimson, *Diaries*, 13 May 1945, Stimson Papers, MADID.

<sup>647</sup> Truman to Hoover, 24 May 1945, Document 10 in *Herbert Hoover and Harry S. Truman: A Documentary History*, ed. Timothy Walch and Dwight M. Miller (Worland, WY: High Plains Publishing Company, Inc., 1992), 35.

<sup>648</sup> Hoover Notes of Meeting with Truman, 28 May 1945, Document 14 in Walch and Miller, ed., *Herbert Hoover and Harry S. Truman*, 38.

Secretary of Agriculture Clinton Anderson work with British counterparts to study the global food situation. In February, two weeks before approving food imports for Germany, Truman announced a nine-point emergency program to increase the availability of food exports, requested that Americans voluntarily cut consumption, and created the Famine Emergency Committee (FEC). After reading Anderson's preliminary numbers, Hoover met with Truman to discuss the shocking gap between available food supplies and world needs. Hoover believed the only solution to the enormous task that lay ahead was a coordinated effort enlisting the governments of the world and led by the United States. Truman agreed and asked Hoover to embark on a global tour to study the effects of famine and malnourishment.

For months, the White House had received letters urging the president to employ the "singular talent" of Herbert Hoover to address the growing food problem, worried that "Uncle Sam will be blamed and criticized if it is not adroitly solved."<sup>649</sup> While many Americans supported Truman's decision to enlist the aid of the "Master of Emergencies," Hoover's new position was not without its critics. Some lamented Truman's appointment of Roosevelt's political foe. Others were quick to recall Hoover's politicization of food aid in the Russian Civil War. In a damning editorial, Adam Lapin wrote that Hoover's

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<sup>649</sup> Charles Parker Harris to Truman, 12 May 1945, OF 315 Hoover, Herbert, Box 1136, Official File, Papers of Harry S. Truman, HSTL; Clarkson Dye to Jack Z. Anderson, 15 May 1945, OF 315 Hoover, Herbert, Box 1136, Official File, Papers of Harry S. Truman, HSTL.

appearance was a “cause for alarm.” Hoover’s use of food “as a major weapon on the side of reaction” endangered fledgling European democracies.<sup>650</sup>

Prior to his departure, Hoover reiterated the call that Americans eat less and conserve more, but he also drew direct connections between the American response to the food crisis and future peace. In a nod to critics, he asserted that this was “a time for cooperation not controversy.”<sup>651</sup> As he had done post-WWI, Hoover highlighted the plight of children, pleading with the American public to view the starving women and children of foreign countries as neighbors. Hoover concluded his broadcast with an appeal to Americans’ pity and mercy, “I know the heart of the American people will respond with kindness and generosity. Will you not take to your table an invisible guest?”<sup>652</sup> The language employed by Hoover emphasized American values, while his tone echoed that used by members of CRALOG in its appeals for German food relief.

Public relations were crucial in the creation and navigation of humanitarian spaces. Hoover regularly released statements underscoring the urgent need for grains. Press conferences were held in each nation visited to keep the famine in the news cycle. Truman, however, feared that Americans displayed a lack of enthusiasm. He requested the trip be cut short so Hoover could return to the United States and remind Americans of the significance of their sacrifices, “to bring forcibly and dramatically to public attention .

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<sup>650</sup> Adam Lapin, “Hoover hopes again to use food as weapon,” n.d., press clipping, OF 315 Hoover, Herbert, Box 1136, Official File, Papers of Harry S. Truman, HSTL.

<sup>651</sup> “On World Famine: Broadcast over the American Broadcasting Company,” 16 March 1946, in Herbert Hoover, *Addresses Upon the American Road*, vol. 5 1945–1948, (New York: D. Von Nostrand Company, Inc., 1949), 171.

<sup>652</sup> “On World Famine,” 16 March 1946, in Hoover, *Addresses*, vol. 5, 171.

. . . conditions in Europe.”<sup>653</sup> Hoover was in Cairo at the time and telephoned Truman to politely disagree. The two compromised and held a joint address, broadcast on all major American radio networks before Hoover continued onward to India and the Far East. From Cairo, Hoover opened with a special message that emphasized the significance of moral and spiritual reconstruction alongside economic recovery.<sup>654</sup> In Truman’s follow-up address, he bluntly declared, “The time for talk has passed. The time for action is here.” Echoing Hoover’s statements, Truman reminded Americans, “Long ago we promised to do our full part. Now we cannot ignore the cry of hungry children . . . We would not be Americans if we did not wish to share our comparative plenty with suffering people.”<sup>655</sup>

The broadcast not only mobilized the American people but lent greater international visibility to American relief efforts, working to combat anti-American propaganda. The food crisis was exacerbated by growing suspicion between the Soviet Union and the U.S. Both sides were eager to associate the other with hunger and recognized that power resided in whichever country had greater control of food dispersal and resources. The Soviet Union contributed to UNRRA administration costs, “but avoided any direct participation in the financial burden of relief, although she was a

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<sup>653</sup> Truman to Hoover, 18 April 1946, Document 36 in Walch and Miller, ed., *Herbert Hoover and Harry S. Truman*, 72.

<sup>654</sup> “On the World Food Crisis: Broadcast over Mutual Broadcasting Company from Cairo, Egypt,” 19 April 1946, in Hoover, *Addresses*, vol. 5, 193–198.

<sup>655</sup> Truman Address, 19 April 1946, Document 38 in Walch and Miller, ed., *Herbert Hoover and Harry S. Truman*, 75.

beneficiary of a large part of the supplies.”<sup>656</sup> Hoover was attuned to deteriorating relations with the Soviet Union and the allure of communism in a land of scarcity. He urged Truman to take a firm stance with the Soviet Union, and was particularly peeved to find “a very active propaganda campaign” crediting nations other than the U.S. with feeding Europe.<sup>657</sup> Maurice Pate accompanied Hoover on the trip and recorded in his diary a vexing story from Belgrade, where a Russian representative informed the local population that the aid they received was from Russia. When a woman countered that she thought UNRRA aid came from America, he responded that UNRRA was a town in Russia, to which the elderly woman replied, “we really should try to go to Russia and visit these wonderful people who live in the village of UNRRA and thank them for all they have done for us.”<sup>658</sup>

In Brazil, Hoover targeted the Communist press, ridiculing its criticisms that U.S. food aid was political by highlighting the simple fact that American aid was delivered indiscriminately, with even communists receiving American food. For Hoover it was obvious: The “universal party line of the Communist Party in every country is to try to break down the provision of food for hungry people, and thus produce chaos where they can fish in troubled waters.”<sup>659</sup> Hunger not only led to starvation and death, but it bred

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<sup>656</sup> Hoover, *An American Epic*, vol. 4, 116.

<sup>657</sup> Hoover to Truman, 21 April 1946, Document 40 in Walch and Miller, ed., *Herbert Hoover and Harry S. Truman*, 77.

<sup>658</sup> Maurice Pate, *Maurice Pate Diary*, 16 April 1946, Subject Files, Diaries-Maurice Pate, Box 148, Herbert Hoover Post-Presidential Papers, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

<sup>659</sup> “On Communist Press Practices,” 15 June 1946, in Hoover, *Addresses*, vol. 5, 254–255.

political unrest and civil disorder that stunted recovery. “Guns speak the first word of victory,” he warned, “but only food can speak the last word.”<sup>660</sup>

Clay credited Hoover with playing a vital role in obtaining increased shipments of food for the U.S. Zone. Clay met Hoover in Brussels, eager to discuss the German food situation. He found Hoover to be “sympathetic and understanding but insistent on supporting data.”<sup>661</sup> Clay made every effort to provide Hoover’s team with the necessary information upon their arrival in Berlin. Hoover responded positively to Clay’s plea and confirmed the German food shortage was more acute than other states in Europe. In his memoirs, Hoover reflected that “feeding the former enemy peoples required no debate with me.”<sup>662</sup>

Hoover’s team found the condition in Germany to be “appalling.”<sup>663</sup> Maurice Pate personally conducted interviews with Military Government representatives, civil authorities, and charitable agencies. He also spoke with Berliners in their homes. Witnessing a school feeding he commented on the “eagerness” with which small children “devour[ed] a thin cereal soup.”<sup>664</sup> Louis Lochner and Hugh Gibson went out to locate a former colleague from their CRB days and were stunned to find the 86-year-old living in squalor and surviving on starvation rations. They brought him to their lodgings and fed

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<sup>660</sup> “On World Famine: Statement before the Famine Emergency Committee,” 11 March 1946, in Hoover, *Addresses*, vol. 5, 166.

<sup>661</sup> Clay, *Decision in Germany*, 266.

<sup>662</sup> Hoover, *An American Epic*, vol. 4, 162.

<sup>663</sup> Hoover, *An American Epic*, vol. 4, 164.

<sup>664</sup> Pate, *Maurice Pate Diary*, 13 April 1946, Subject Files, Diaries-Maurice Pate, Box 148, Herbert Hoover Post-Presidential Papers, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library.

him sandwiches. Upon leaving, the elderly man asked if there was time for one more sandwich, leaving Gibson to worry his friend would fall ill from overeating.<sup>665</sup>

Hoover attributed the severity of the German food situation to Hitler's policies and the vengeful spirit of the Morgenthau Plan and spent an evening discussing the German food situation with a group of American publishers invited by the War Department to witness conditions in Germany first hand. Clay praised Hoover's recognition of "the menace of Communism" and the threat it posed in Germany. Importantly, Hoover believed, "there was no place for starvation where the American flag was flying," echoing Stimson's comments from the previous summer and underscoring the value of American prestige.<sup>666</sup>

In May, Hoover submitted his report, concluding that the "dominant need of the world" was cereals, followed by fats, and children's food. An estimated 3.6 million tons of food was needed to fill the hunger gap before the next harvest. The report expressed confidence that conservation in surplus countries along with greater cooperation among nations would help overcome the deficit, specifically naming Russia when discussing the need for collaboration.<sup>667</sup> While Hoover's report to the president relied on statistics, his speech to the American people was characteristically Shakespearean. Speaking of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse (war, famine, pestilences, and death), he declared the modern world had added four more: destruction, drought, fear, and revolution. In a bold

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<sup>665</sup> "12 April 1946," Hugh Gibson diary, volume 1, 1946-03-17/1946-04-26, Hugh Gibson Papers, HIA, <https://digitalcollections.hoover.org/objects/51424>.

<sup>666</sup> Clay, *Decision in Germany*, 267.

<sup>667</sup> "World Famine: Report to the President," 13 May 1946, in Hoover, *Addresses*, vol. 5, 210–220.

comparison to the crimes of Nazi Germany, Hoover stated, “We do not want the American flag flying over nationwide Buchenwalds.”<sup>668</sup> For Hoover and his team, this was about more than economic recovery, calories consumed, or tons of food shipped; it was about convincing the American public to support the project. They needed to know the stakes.

Upon his return to the United States, Truman invited Hoover to the White House where the Soviet Union’s combative nature toward relief dominated conversation. Hoover advised Truman to be “truculent.” He believed that food aid not only solved the problem of global hunger but promoted stability and stemmed the spread of communism. His proposals for emergency food relief supported Truman’s desire for economic recovery, while simultaneously working to promote democracy across the globe in the shadow of looming Cold War.

### **Conclusion**

On the one-year anniversary of VE Day, *Life* magazine excerpted Julian Bach’s newly published book reflecting on the first year of occupation. In the introduction, Bach wrote, “This is America’s Germany . . . one of the most ticklish commitments that Americans, as a nation, have ever undertaken. For within America’s Germany, what we say goes.”<sup>669</sup> But with great power comes great responsibility. For Bach, the food problem was never black and white, “Some Germans are starving, millions are suffering

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<sup>668</sup> “World Famine Situation: Address under Auspices Famine Emergency Committee, Sherman Hotel, Chicago,” 17 May 1946, in Hoover, *Addresses*, vol. 5, 226.

<sup>669</sup> Bach, *America’s Germany*, 11.

from malnourishment, while other millions are neither starving nor suffering.” These were the “cramps in the German belly.”<sup>670</sup> The U.S. gradually recognized, however, “that a democratic and peace-loving nation can only be built up with the support and active cooperation of a populace that has enough to eat.”<sup>671</sup> The winter of 1945–46 witnessed a transition as the United States adjusted from role of conqueror to occupier. Earlier debates over the hard v. soft peace, quickly faded as the welfare of the former enemy took on new significance in the shadow of the looming Cold War. Food aid was gradually accepted as a necessary step in the moral, spiritual, and economic recovery of the nation, but it also provided a buffer against expanding Soviet interests. Food aid was complementary not contradictory to Military Government objectives.

Humanitarians played a key role in this transition, adapting a moralist argument in favor of relief to highlight the positive influence of American values abroad. These arguments gained favor in military and government circles where officials increasingly advocated for food imports as a necessity to combat unrest, maintain military security, and boost American prestige. Humanitarians also recognized food’s value in the emerging contest with the Soviet Union. They quickly and seamlessly framed food relief as democracy-in-action, demonstrating the merits of democracy to German populations. Americans abandoned a “hard peace” in favor of a narrative that underscored the United States as a benevolent power and force of good in a rapidly changing world.

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<sup>670</sup> Julian Bach, Jr., “America’s Germany: An Account of the Occupation,” *Life*, 13 May 1946, 104.

<sup>671</sup> OMGUS, *A Year of Potsdam: The German Economy since the Surrender* (1945), 49, UWDC, <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/History.YearPotsdam>.

Changing the narrative surrounding food relief pressured American officials to modify existing policy and was instrumental in garnering public support for this aid, particularly when connections were explicitly drawn between food, or the lack thereof, and communism. Clay and others in Military Government recognized the psychological currency of food relief in occupied Germany, “There is no choice between becoming a Communist on 1500 calories and a believer in democracy on 1000 calories.”<sup>672</sup> It was tacitly accepted that the United States had a responsibility as victor to not only keep the peace in Europe but also ensure that relief would lead to recovery. Or, as another observer put it, “the fate of the world depends on the action America takes or fails to take. Seeds of war thrive in the soil of despair.”<sup>673</sup> The United States needed to prove that it was up to the task, and that meant promoting an image of abundance, not scarcity.

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<sup>672</sup> “103. Food Situation in U.S. Zone,” Letter from Clay for Echols and Petersen, 27 March 1946, in Smith, *Papers*, vol. 1, 184.

<sup>673</sup> Chaplain W. D. Kuenzli, “Hunger in Germany,” *The Washington Post*, 19 May 1946, B4.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE CULTURAL ECONOMICS OF AMERICAN BENEVOLENCE

If all the kids in Germany could have shared in that gardening job . . . I bet there'd be no danger of another Hitler in 15 or 20 years. Those youngsters need not only food for their stomachs but sustenance for their spirits.

--Birch Bayh, Pfc, 1948<sup>674</sup>

On September 6, 1946, Secretary of State James Byrnes announced a restatement of U.S. policy in Germany at a speech in Stuttgart. Byrnes's speech identified glaring contradictions between the agreements made at Potsdam and conditions in Germany. Cooperation among the occupying powers had proved elusive. Growing antagonisms between the United States and Soviet Union, as well as France's inability to compromise on certain issues, stymied progress in the Allied Control Council. Byrnes repudiated punitive economic policies and reaffirmed America's commitment to Germany. Speaking before a crowd at the Opera House in Stuttgart, he articulated the American desire for peace, "[Americans] have long since ceased to talk of a hard or a soft peace for Germany . . . What we want is a lasting peace."<sup>675</sup>

Recognizing that objectives laid out in the Potsdam Declaration were untenable, Byrnes offered the German people a chance at reform. The United States wanted to foster democracy in Germany, but that required cooperation with the German people, just as it

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<sup>674</sup> Karl Detzer, "GI Ambassador," *Reader's Digest*, November 1948, Birch Bayh Senatorial Papers, Modern Political Papers Collection, Indiana University Libraries, Bloomington, Indiana.

<sup>675</sup> James F. Byrnes, "Restatement of U.S. Policy in Germany, Address by the Secretary of State Delivered in Stuttgart Germany, 6 September 1946," (Washington, DC: U.S Government Printing Office, 1946), 2, available via HathiTrust Online.

did among their fellow occupying powers. Byrnes's speech repeatedly emphasized the German people rather than officials or governments. The United States had no desire to increase German hardships and supported opportunities for the German people, "so long as they respect human freedom."<sup>676</sup> Byrnes called for a federal constitution drafted by a provisional government. The mission in Germany was a people-to-people experiment in democracy. Action in Germany would be judged "not by Allied promises but by Allied performances."<sup>677</sup>

German rehabilitation necessitated measures to restore economic stability, rebuild transportation networks, and improve food production. Byrnes advocated for a "central administrative department for agriculture," that should be "allowed to function without delay."<sup>678</sup> In order to be effective, U.S. policymakers believed these initiatives needed to be "accepted and applied uniformly to all zones."<sup>679</sup> Germany must be "administered as an economic unit," with "zonal barriers . . . completely obliterated so far as the economic life and activity . . . are concerned."<sup>680</sup> The only occupier receptive to these proposals was Great Britain. Byrnes met with British representatives to discuss the merger of their Zones on September 5. The Stuttgart speech announced the creation of Bizonia—the economic and administrative merger of the U.S. and British Zones.

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<sup>676</sup> Byrnes, "Restatement of U.S. Policy in Germany," 17.

<sup>677</sup> Byrnes, "Restatement of U.S. Policy in Germany," 11.

<sup>678</sup> Byrnes, "Restatement of U.S. Policy in Germany," 8.

<sup>679</sup> Byrnes, "Restatement of U.S. Policy in Germany," 8.

<sup>680</sup> Byrnes, "Restatement of U.S. Policy in Germany," 6.

The Stuttgart speech invited Germans “to stand on Western democracy’s side.”<sup>681</sup> *Time* magazine called it the “boldest move yet towards leadership of the world.”<sup>682</sup> There was no doubt of the speech’s intent: This was propaganda aimed directly at Germany. The address was the State Department’s response to the Soviet declaration of policy toward Germany issued by Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov at the Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in July. Molotov issued a thinly-veiled attack on the Morgenthau Plan, stating that in the “interests of world economy and tranquility in Europe, it would be incorrect to adopt a policy of annihilating Germany as a state, or to agrarianise [sic] her.”<sup>683</sup> Instead, the Soviet Foreign Minister advocated “transform[ing] Germany into a democratic and peace-loving state which, next to its agriculture, will have its own industry and foreign trade.”<sup>684</sup> Byrnes responded to the Soviet declaration the following day, but decided to make a more significant statement following a “Soviet campaign of misrepresentations,” that steadily escalated throughout the summer.<sup>685</sup> Communist leaders in the Soviet Zone spread rumors that the United States was

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<sup>681</sup> “Foreign Relations: Journey to Stuttgart,” *Time*, 16 September 1946, *Time Vault* online access.

<sup>682</sup> “Foreign Relations: Journey to Stuttgart.”

<sup>683</sup> “Statement by Viacheslav Molotov (Paris, 10 July 1946),” in The Department of State, *Occupation of Germany, Policy and Progress 1945-46* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, August 1947). Available via Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l'Europe (CVCE), [https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2003/1/10/1a764b04-2068-4a44-97c5-38bd4e168fd1/publishable\\_en.pdf](https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2003/1/10/1a764b04-2068-4a44-97c5-38bd4e168fd1/publishable_en.pdf)

<sup>684</sup> “Statement by Viacheslav Molotov (Paris, 10 July 1946).”

<sup>685</sup> Byrnes, *Speaking Frankly*, 187.

“disgusted with the European situation” and would “withdraw its armed forces.”<sup>686</sup> The Soviets made frequent references to the Morgenthau Plan, which, Byrnes lamented, Molotov only knew about as a result of the press controversy in the United States. These actions coincided with “developments in . . . the satellites, which reinforced the power of the Soviet government within those countries.”<sup>687</sup> Molotov’s speech had “an electric effect on public opinion.”<sup>688</sup> Clay’s biographer, Jean Edward Smith, wrote that Molotov’s appeal was rooted in its maverick nature, “For the first time, one of the occupying powers had broken ranks and was offering the German people the prospect of swift recovery.”<sup>689</sup>

Prompted by Molotov’s statement, Clay wrote his own policy statement, believing there was an “urgent need for a summarized version of the United States policy and objectives” that could be circulated throughout the Army of Occupation and among the German people.<sup>690</sup> He acknowledged the guiding principles of Potsdam and JCS 1067, but feared they were “too bulky and perhaps too legalistic.”<sup>691</sup> Importantly, Clay felt the “some basic points in policy are only now being clarified by interpretation.”<sup>692</sup> His

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<sup>686</sup> Byrnes, *Speaking Frankly*, 187.

<sup>687</sup> James W. Riddleberger, interview by Jerry N. Hess, 26 April 1972, online transcript, Oral History Interviews, HSTL.

<sup>688</sup> Smith, *Lucius D. Clay*, chap. 22, Kindle.

<sup>689</sup> Smith, *Lucius D. Clay*, chap. 22, Kindle.

<sup>690</sup> “#137. U.S. Policy in Germany,” Clay to Echols, 19 July 1946, in Smith, *Papers*, vol. 1, 236.

<sup>691</sup> “#137. U.S. Policy in Germany,” Clay to Echols, 19 July 1946, in Smith, *Papers*, vol. 1, 237.

<sup>692</sup> “#137. U.S. Policy in Germany,” Clay to Echols, 19 July 1946, in Smith, *Papers*, vol. 1, 237.

statement addressed Molotov's comments on the American commitment to Germany, limits on industry, boundary disputes, and listed economic recovery as a goal of the occupation. The military governor faced numerous obstacles in Washington during the summer of 1946, frequently finding himself at odds with Congress and subordinate staff officers in the War and State Departments. Clay disagreed with Congress's wish to use money in the German food budget to purchase fruits and vegetables from European countries. Many in Congress saw an opportunity to stimulate the economies of Germany's neighbors and wanted to use U.S. dollars for the produce purchases. Clay prioritized the nutritional needs of the U.S. Zone and was adamant that the funds be used to purchase dense, high-calorie foods.<sup>693</sup> Throughout the summer, he worried that German sentiments were drifting eastward, with persistent food shortages doing little to serve the cause of democracy. His "Summary of United States Policy and Objectives in Germany" marked a clear break with JCS 1067, exorcising the lingering influence of the Morgenthau Plan.

Clay sent his policy paper to the War Department a week after the Molotov Statement. He advised that Military Government was in "urgent" need of an up-to-date summary of American policy in Germany that could be used in discussions with the German people. Aware of the publicity his statement would attract, Clay sought corroboration and affirmation from the War Department before publication. He was promptly shot down, informed by the Civil Affairs Division that State Department

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<sup>693</sup> Smith, *Lucius D. Clay*, chap. 22, Kindle.

objections prevented its publication.<sup>694</sup> Clay felt “more at sea than ever” and considered resigning.<sup>695</sup> His only recourse was a meeting with Byrnes in Paris. He invited the Secretary of State to tour Germany and speak with occupation forces about conditions on the ground. At Clay’s urging, Byrnes agreed to a statement on U.S. policy. It borrowed heavily from Clay’s own statement that the State Department previously found troublesome.<sup>696</sup> The resulting speech was a ringing endorsement of Clay and his vision for the future. Byrnes was confident that as a result of the statement of policy, “the sphere of influence the Soviets had hoped to extend into Berlin was moved back into Polish-controlled territory.”<sup>697</sup>

This chapter argues that food played a pivotal role in the economic and emotional recovery of Germany. Events in late 1946 and early 1947 cast the German problem in a new light. There was no longer a choice between either a punitive or rehabilitative occupation. Policymakers believed Germany must function economically and politically in order to regain its place “among the free and peace-loving nations” and serve as a bulwark of democracy in central Europe. While Byrnes’s speech laid the foundation for economic rehabilitation, the winter of 1946–47 hindered progress, with recovery literally

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<sup>694</sup> Smith notes that Clay’s memoir made no mention of his struggles with Washington in the summer of 1946. Smith, *Lucius D. Clay*, chap. 22, Kindle.

<sup>695</sup> “#146. U.S. Policy in Germany,” Clay to Hilldring, 15 August 1946, in Smith, *Papers*, vol. 1, 252.

<sup>696</sup> James Riddleberger, Chief of the State Department’s Division of Central European Affairs recalled that Clay supplied the original draft of Byrnes’s speech. Riddleberger, interview by Jerry N. Hess, 26 April 1972, online transcript, Oral History Interviews, HSTL.

<sup>697</sup> Byrnes, *Speaking Frankly*, 192.

frozen in a standstill. At the urging of the War Department, Truman once again requested Hoover's assistance. He asked that Hoover study the economic needs of Germany and Austria in an attempt to "relieve some of the burden on the American taxpayer."<sup>698</sup> Following his February 1947 tour, Hoover recommended continued assistance and urged greater Congressional funding. He believed reunification was necessary to restore stability, emphasizing economic recovery over short-term relief. Hoover warned that a "half-starved people . . . cannot work hard and assume civic responsibilities and may easily be enticed or driven to desperate forces."<sup>699</sup>

In early 1947, Byrnes resigned as Secretary of State, replaced by George C. Marshall.<sup>700</sup> Six months later Marshall proposed the European Recovery Program (ERP), an unprecedented economic assistance program to rebuild Europe. The Marshall Plan, as it came to be known, invested \$12 billion in Western Europe and institutionalized foreign aid programs. It also clearly captured the experiences and lessons in Germany—where the American response to the food crisis shifted from emergency relief to economic recovery—and applied them to all of Europe. Clay was a staunch advocate for German inclusion in the Marshall Plan, recognizing that economic development was needed if the country was to attain self-sufficiency.

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<sup>698</sup> Hoover Notes of Meeting with Truman, 22 January 1947, Document 55 in Walch and Miller, ed., *Herbert Hoover and Harry S. Truman*, 100.

<sup>699</sup> Herbert Hoover, *No Reconstruction without Food* (New York: Common Cause, 1948), 10.

<sup>700</sup> For more on Byrnes's short tenure as Secretary of State, his relationship with Truman, and the origins of the Cold War see Robert Messer, *The End of an Alliance: James F. Byrnes, Roosevelt, Truman, and the Origins of the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1982).

Discussion in the offices of Military Government, however, often focused on the best ways to help Germans help themselves, echoing the logic behind CRALOG and CARE activities. Officials in Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Munich, and Berlin embraced efforts to improve the lives of German children. Food helped teach German children about democracy. A full stomach not only made Germans, especially children, more receptive to reeducation, but food offered evidence of democratic plenty. The enthusiastic response to children's food programs was evidence to policymakers that American generosity served U.S. interests.

### **\$725,000,000: The Financial Burden of Peace**

The merger of the U.S. and British Zones on January 1, 1947, placed a strain on an already limited food supply. More than 60% of the food supplied from the United States was distributed in the British Zone.<sup>701</sup> The War Department directed Tracy S. Voorhees, Special Assistant to the Secretary of War, to manage logistical hurdles and devise a system for acquiring an “adequate food supply” that could “meet the requirements of Military Government in Germany, Austria, Japan, and Korea.”<sup>702</sup> Voorhees met with Clay in December to assess the situation in Germany. In a memo, he lamented the herculean task of “explaining to Congress that \$425,000,000 was nowhere near sufficient to provide for feeding the peoples who had been shooting at us up to

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<sup>701</sup> Confidential Memorandum for Hoover, 2, Box D, Folder U3, Tracy S. Voorhees Papers MC 1407, SCR.U.

<sup>702</sup> Louis P. Lochner, *Herbert Hoover and Germany* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960), 177.

eighteen months before.”<sup>703</sup> To further complicate matters, Republicans gained control of Congress during the midterm elections, providing a legislative obstacle to aid packages.

At Voorhees’s urging, Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson contacted Hoover in early January. He asked Hoover to study the food crisis in the U.S. Zones of Germany and Austria, similar to the survey Hoover conducted for the Famine Emergency Committee the previous year. Hoover had doubts “regarding the wisdom of the economic and political policies of our Government in Germany and Austria.”<sup>704</sup> He informed Patterson that he would agree to the study only if it assessed the economic situation in all three Allied Zones. Before Hoover accepted, the proposal was leaked to the press. In a cover story for the *New York Times*, Felix Belair, Jr. suggested the scope of the survey triggered “serious misgivings among career diplomats . . . who had been handling the German occupation problem and recently engineered the economic unification of the British and American zones.”<sup>705</sup> Critics believed Truman’s reliance on Hoover was a “political maneuver” to win over Republicans in Congress, guaranteeing that American taxpayers would continue to foot the bill for massive relief and recovery operations in the

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<sup>703</sup> Voorhees, Memorandum, December 1946. Quoted in Lochner, *Herbert Hoover and Germany*, 177.

<sup>704</sup> Hoover, *An American Epic*, vol. 4, 225.

<sup>705</sup> Felix Belair, Jr., “Hoover Weighs Bid to Study Germany,” *New York Times*, 22 January 1947, 1.

former enemy territories.<sup>706</sup> Hoover was disappointed by the criticisms, feeling they hinted at the “State Department’s official disapproval,” and could hinder his work.<sup>707</sup>

Hoover met with the president at the White House where Truman agreed to enlarge the mission’s scope to include all three western Zones. Truman guaranteed “complete freedom of inquiry,” but cautioned Hoover on the “prima donnas in the State Department.”<sup>708</sup> Hoover was accompanied by Hugh Gibson, Dennis FitzGerald, William H. Sebrell, Jr., Frank E. Mason, Gustav Stolper, and Louis Lochner. Voorhees joined the Hoover Mission as Patterson’s representative from the War Department. They left in early February and visited several major cities, including Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Stuttgart, and Vienna. The Hoover Mission met with representatives of American and British Military Government and German officials, as well as economic, financial, and nutritional experts. The team experienced the German reality first hand: coal shortages throughout Germany meant that most meetings were held in frigid rooms. Louis Lochner marveled at the stamina of 73-year-old Hoover, sitting indoors with an overcoat and swathed in blankets while listening intently to the information presented to him.<sup>709</sup> By the end of the survey, Hoover, and several members of the team had fallen ill.

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<sup>706</sup> James Reston, “Truman’s Choice of Hoover Called Political Maneuver,” *New York Times*, 24 January 1947, 8.

<sup>707</sup> Hoover, *An American Epic*, vol. 4, 226.

<sup>708</sup> Felix Belair, Jr., “Hoover Accepts Mission to Europe to Ease U.S. Taxpayers’ Burden,” *New York Times*, 23 January 1947, 1.

<sup>709</sup> Lochner, *Herbert Hoover and Germany*, 179–180.

Recognizing the severity of the situation, Hoover supplied Military Government with a list of recommendations prior to submitting his official report to the president.

These included:

- (1) an increase in the “average” ration to 1550 calories from levels as low as 1000 calories;
- (2) a supplementary ration for hard laborers, necessary to assure coal and other production;
- (3) a system of canteens serving a 500- to 600-calorie meal at midday, seven days a week, with special food for children, expectant mothers and the aged, to be conducted by devoted German women, mainly in schools (the Germans called it the *Hoover Speisung*);
- (4) an allotment of food to German and Austrian relief organizations for other distress cases; and
- (5) a food-import program to support these provisions.<sup>710</sup>

For Hoover, the Mission “demonstrate[d] the depth of misery to which the German people had been plunged by Hitler’s warmaking, plus the vengeance of the Morgenthau Plan, which had been carried out in spirit, if not in letter.”<sup>711</sup> He wrote two reports with his findings on Germany.<sup>712</sup> In the first, “German Agriculture and Food Requirements,” released to the press on February 28, Hoover acknowledged that the expense of the occupation may come as shock to American taxpayers: “[H]aving won the war over Germany, we are now faced for some years with large expenditures for relief to these people.”<sup>713</sup> Nevertheless, this was a burden Americans must accept “until the export

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<sup>710</sup> Hoover, *An American Epic*, vol. 4, 229.

<sup>711</sup> Hoover, *An American Epic*, vol. 4, 230.

<sup>712</sup> A third report was published on Hoover’s findings in Austria.

<sup>713</sup> “The President's Economic Mission to Germany and Austria: Report No. 1,” p. 20, Box 8, Folder 3, Reel 7, United States President's Famine Emergency Committee records, HIA.

industries of Germany can be sufficiently revived to pay for their food.”<sup>714</sup> The first step for economic revival was sufficient food to ensure the vitality of the workforce. Hoover concluded with a nod to Germany’s role in Europe, writing, if “Western Civilization is to survive in Europe, it must also survive in Germany.”<sup>715</sup>

Hoover’s second report, “The Necessary Steps for Promotion of German Exports, so as to Relieve American Taxpayers of the Burdens of Relief and for Economic Recovery of Europe,” released March 18, warned that the financial burden of occupation was likely to increase “unless the policies now in action are changed.”<sup>716</sup> The productivity of Europe as a whole “cannot be restored without the restoration of Germany as a contributor to that productivity.”<sup>717</sup> Hoover’s call for economic reunification echoed the beliefs of many in Military Government. In his earliest assessment of the German problem, Voorhees wrote, “revival of the German economy . . . is basically dependent upon an adequate food ration.”<sup>718</sup> Byrnes’s speech set economic recovery as a U.S. objective, with Clay’s statement on policy unequivocally stating that American objectives “can be accomplished only through the treatment of Germany as a political and economic

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<sup>714</sup> “The President's Economic Mission to Germany and Austria: Report No. 1,” p. 20–21, Box 8, Folder 3, Reel 7, United States President's Famine Emergency Committee records, HIA.

<sup>715</sup> “The President's Economic Mission to Germany and Austria: Report No. 1,” p. 21, Box 8, Folder 3, Reel 7, United States President's Famine Emergency Committee records, HIA.

<sup>716</sup> Hoover, *An American Epic*, vol. 4, 245.

<sup>717</sup> Hoover, *An American Epic*, vol. 4, 246.

<sup>718</sup> Voorhees, “Memorandum for the Secretary: Food Problems in Occupied Areas,” 15 November 1946, 3, Box D, Folder R, Tracy S. Voorhees Papers MC 1407, SCR.U.

unit.”<sup>719</sup> Hoover acknowledged the existing price tag of \$600,000,000 of Allied aid to occupied Germany and explained that without change, these costs would continue to soar and endanger peace. His report highlighted the harmful legacy of the Morgenthau Plan, the relationship between Germany and Europe, and Russian and French failures to carry out the terms agreed to at Potsdam.

In a personal message to Truman at the end of the survey, Hoover used biblical terminology to underscore his points. He advised, “We can carry on the Military Government of Germany by the tenets of the Old Testament of ‘a tooth for a tooth, and an eye for an eye,’ or we can inaugurate the precepts of the New Testament.”<sup>720</sup> Following publication of his reports, Hoover took it upon himself to ensure that his proposals were enacted. He “appealed to the conscience of the nation” with radio addresses and written articles, “building up a grass-roots movement to support him in this endeavor to influence Congress.”<sup>721</sup> He also testified before Congress and met with Senators and Congressmen to defend the allocation of \$725,000,000 as “the very minimum” needed to support the populations of Germany, Japan, and Korea.<sup>722</sup> In his conversations with Congressmen, Hoover suggested stockpiling certain commodities “for national defense” and insisting that recipients of aid “cooperate with us in measures to reduce the burdens upon us, to promote productivity and bring peace for the world at

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<sup>719</sup> “#137. U.S. Policy in Germany,” Clay to Echols, 19 July 1946, in Smith, *Papers*, vol. 1, 237.

<sup>720</sup> Lochner, *Herbert Hoover and Germany*, 186.

<sup>721</sup> Lochner, *Herbert Hoover and Germany*, 188.

<sup>722</sup> Lochner, *Herbert Hoover and Germany*, 188.

large.”<sup>723</sup> Despite opposition, Hoover met with success, securing a deficiency appropriation of \$300,000,000 to cover food, fertilizer, and seed in the occupied areas for the fiscal year 1947, and an appropriation of \$600,000,000 for 1948.<sup>724</sup>

Hoover’s success is all the more remarkable when placed in context. Two weeks after his second report was published, the president introduced the Truman Doctrine, committing the United States to an interventionist foreign policy. In March, the British had announced that they could no longer provide military and economic aid to support the Greek government’s battle against a communist insurgency. Angered by Stalin’s attempts to pressure the Iranian government for oil and Soviet efforts to strong-arm transit rights through the Turkish Straits, Truman adopted a hardline approach to Soviet expansion. The Truman Doctrine offered political, military, and economic assistance to democratic nations threatened by communism. In a speech before Congress, Truman requested an unprecedented \$400 million to aid the governments of Greece and Turkey.

While Washington policymakers debated the costs of containment, officials in Germany continued to press for additional food aid throughout the spring of 1947. Voorhees discovered a discrepancy between the amount of food reported and actual supplies. Food stocks were between 300,000 and 350,000 tons less than the amount reported to the Hoover Mission.<sup>725</sup> Collections of local food supplies failed to meet projections. Clay believed part of this problem stemmed from “difficulty in getting the

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<sup>723</sup> Hoover, *Addresses*, vol. 5, 118.

<sup>724</sup> Lochner, *Herbert Hoover and Germany*, 190.

<sup>725</sup> Voorhees Memorandum. Quoted in Lochner, *Herbert Hoover and Germany*, 191.

Bavarians—who had a food surplus—to cooperate in making that surplus available for distribution elsewhere.”<sup>726</sup> There was a global shortage of wheat at this time, however, and officials relied on corn to bolster food stocks.

Corn was a source of anxiety, however, for occupation officials culturally attuned to German food habits: “To the Germans outside Bavaria the use of maize for human consumption was wholly unacceptable.”<sup>727</sup> Germans were unaccustomed to corn and lacked the skills and knowledge to incorporate it in their diet. Voorhees recognized that corn was “not desired” but it was “far better than nothing.”<sup>728</sup> General John H. Hilldring, Secretary for Occupied Areas, organized a special mission to educate Germans on the proper use of the grain prior to its arrival and distribution. Through conversations with German millers and bakers, the Mission “discover[ed] that the corn products being milled in Germany in no way resembled the highly popular American products – the German products being a type of corn flour and a semolina type ‘gries.’”<sup>729</sup> The resistance to corn, they concluded, was unsurprising given the “unpalatable products” offered to consumers. The Mission worked with bakers to develop new ratios of corn to wheat flour. The final product yielded a denser loaf that was unpopular albeit edible and filling.<sup>730</sup>

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<sup>726</sup> Smith, *Lucius D. Clay*, chap. 22, Kindle.

<sup>727</sup> Ebbs, *The Hidden War*, 110.

<sup>728</sup> Voorhees Memorandum. Quoted in Lochner, *Herbert Hoover and Germany*, 191.

<sup>729</sup> Memo for Voorhees on Food Mission, 11 August 1947, 1, Box D, Folder P, Tracy S. Voorhees Papers MC 1407, SCR.U.

<sup>730</sup> Ebbs, *The Hidden War*, 110.

The Corn Mission reached out to nutritionists and food scientists at the University of Heidelberg, recognizing the “profound respect with which the average German listens to the words of the Heidelberg scientists.”<sup>731</sup> They also enlisted the help of food editors from major newspapers to disseminate information on the proper use of corn. The Mission published a booklet for the German housewife, educating her on corn’s popularity across the world and providing a collection of recipes “keyed to the Germans’ food habits using only foods known to be available.”<sup>732</sup> Recipes were shared and seeds were shipped by volunteer groups in the United States to support small family gardens, *Kleingärten*.<sup>733</sup> After learning that a shortage of glass jars and rubber rings limited vegetable and fruit preservation, the Mission devised new methods of dehydration using the limited tools available.<sup>734</sup>

In June, Assistant Secretary of War Howard C. Peterson visited the U.S. Zone, where he found the food situation to be “deplorable.” He noted the long queues waiting for “black bread which constitutes most of the diet,” with women lining up at midnight for bread that did not arrive until late in the afternoon. Driving through the ruin, he marveled at the “spindly legs of the kids playing on the street.” “[O]ne cannot help thinking of the great price Germany has paid and will continue for decades to pay for

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<sup>731</sup> Jane C. Ebbs, “Feeding the German People,” *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 24 (February 1948): 98, Box D, Folder P, Tracy S. Voorhees Papers MC 1407, SCRUI.

<sup>732</sup> Jane C. Ebbs, “Feeding the German People,” 99.

<sup>733</sup> Popular before the war, German municipalities assigned garden plots on tracts of land near railroads or factories.

<sup>734</sup> Ebbs, *The Hidden War*, 110–11.

Hitler's dreams of world conquest," he concluded.<sup>735</sup> Dennis FitzGerald, who accompanied Hoover on both food missions, was asked to provide a report on the food situation for the War Department. FitzGerald acknowledged that food consumption was higher than the previous year but noted a recent decrease. Daily consumption continued to fall short of the 1550 ration, with some in the War Department and Military Government advocating for an adjustment. FitzGerald argued against this, believing it was "bad psychology."<sup>736</sup> There was hope that in the coming months the ration could be met and greater stability achieved.

### **Garden Programs and Christmas Parties: German Children as Beneficiaries of American Benevolence**

Wolfgang Samuel vividly recalled the sensory experience of his first Coca Cola at the PX:

I was sure I had never had a cold drink that tasted this good. It was much better even than lemonade . . . I was overwhelmed by the new smells enveloping me, smells I had never experienced before. A strange mixture of pleasant odors emanated from boxes of candy bars and chewing gum, from brewing coffee, and from other things to eat such as donuts laid out under a glass counter at the snack bar . . . [Leo] went over to the snack bar, where he got himself a cup of coffee and a Hershey chocolate bar for me.<sup>737</sup>

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<sup>735</sup> "Statement by the Assistant Secretary of War Howard C. Petersen," 13 June 1947, Box 1, Folder: Occupied Area (Germany) Mission June 1947, Dennis A. Fitzgerald Papers, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, Abilene, KA (hereafter cited as DDEL).

<sup>736</sup> "Food Situation in Germany," FitzGerald to Secretary of War, 16 June 1947, Box 1, Folder: Occupied Area (Germany) Mission June 1947, Dennis A. Fitzgerald Papers, DDEL.

<sup>737</sup> Samuel, *German Boy*, 364.

The above passage comes from Samuel's memoir, *German Boy: A Child in War*, which describes his childhood in Germany during and immediately following the Second World War. Forced to flee the Soviet army in the East, his family lived as *Flüchtlinge* (refugees) in the west until his mother married Leo, an American airman, and moved the family to the United States in 1950. The memoir conveys the horror of war as it affected a child's daily life, felt in the most tangible of ways as a disruption in food consumption. Samuel's narrative is punctuated by the persistent ache of hunger: describing the shame felt when begging for food, the fear instilled by his mother's participation in the black market, the sharp pain of a burnt tongue when guzzling hot chocolate provided at school, and the glee accompanying his first Coca-Cola. He mentions food and/or hunger more than 150 times in 382 pages. Food guides the narrative but does not dominate it, allowing readers to empathize with a young boy navigating a world in constant flux. Samuel's story was neither the exception nor the rule.

Historian Martin Kalb writes that that the visibility of the young was "striking" in postwar Germany, where it was interpreted as a symbol of the nation's "larger decay."<sup>738</sup> Unaccompanied children were everywhere in the immediate postwar period, searching for families, scavenging for food, or bartering on the black market.<sup>739</sup> Soldiers' ability to quickly befriend young Germans was interpreted as an "expression of American good

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<sup>738</sup> Martin Kalb, *Coming of Age: Youth and Juvenile Delinquency in Munich, 1942–1973* (New York: Berghahn, 2016), 20. For more on German youth during the occupation see Goedde, *GIs and Germans*, 127–165.

<sup>739</sup> For an excellent discussion of unaccompanied children in Europe post-WWII see Tara Zahra, *The Lost Children: Reconstructing Europe's Families after World War II* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).

will and the American way of life.”<sup>740</sup> It was increasingly evident that interactions between GIs and children, “the hope of the long future,” offered a useful vehicle for reeducation.<sup>741</sup>

Military officials capitalized on the spontaneous food relationships that developed between children and the Army of Occupation, and they incorporated food in a host of programs and organizations designed with children’s welfare in mind. This interest was directly connected to efforts at reeducation, allowing young Germans to learn about democracy, “Not democracy in theory . . . but in practice.”<sup>742</sup> Focusing on children provided a break with the Nazi past. It shifted the American gaze to children in need who served as promising students of democracy.<sup>743</sup>

Sporadic efforts to create local youth groups began as early as July 1945. In October, a Zone-wide program was launched to encourage the formation of voluntary

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<sup>740</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Robert C. Hall, Chief, Army Assistance to GYA, Hq EUCOM, “The Army’s Role in GYA,” in *The Three R’s of Occupied Germany: Rebuilding a Peaceful Industry, Rehabilitating a Peaceful Economy, Re-educating a Defeated Enemy* (Washington, DC: Public Information Division, Department of the Army, 1948), 38. Quoted in Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors*, 48.

<sup>741</sup> Price, “Relations,” 886.

<sup>742</sup> “IS 846121 One of the wonderful things about Americans,” p. 2, Box 919, Folder: Radio Spots Oct–Dec 1948 vol. 2, CARE records, MADNYPL.

<sup>743</sup> Scholarship on children and childhood during the Cold War is growing. For a sampling of see Sara Fieldston, *Raising the World: Child Welfare in the American Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015); Jennifer Helgren, *American Girls and Global Responsibility: A New Relation to the World during the Early Cold War* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2017); Marilyn Irvin Holt, *Cold War Kids: Politics and Childhood in Postwar America, 1945–1960* (Lawrence, KA: University Press of Kansas, 2014); Mischa Honeck, *Our Frontier is the World: The Boy Scouts in the Age of American Ascendancy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018); and Margaret Peacock, *Innocent Weapons: The Soviet and American Politics of Childhood in the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

youth groups.<sup>744</sup> German Youth Activities (GYA) was formally established the following spring, designed to illustrate the benefits of democracy through sport, arts, and crafts. At local GYA centers, staffed by volunteer military personnel, German children “learned democracy by doing -- by debating in open forums, participating in athletics, learning trades in handicraft projects.”<sup>745</sup> GYA centers offered food, shelter, and warmth in the early years of the occupation. The official military history of GYA recounts the role food played in the origins of the organization, writing that small children frequently clustered around American GIs, attracting both attention and sympathy. Soldiers “enjoyed the smiles which came to the faces of the children when they were given candy, chewing gum, and bits of food from the military rations.”<sup>746</sup>

One of the major objectives of GYA during early operations in 1946 was to improve the welfare of German children. Congruent with non-fraternization, early policy forbade soldiers from sharing their rations with German civilians. *Stars and Stripes* openly mocked this policy, printing a cartoon that depicted a GI sharing food with a little German girl. The caption read: “Careful, Pete, Congress might hear about this.”<sup>747</sup> In October 1946, ten months after Truman approved food imports, American military personnel were finally permitted to voluntarily donate food to German children. The new

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<sup>744</sup> U.S. Army Historical Division, “The U.S. Armed Forces German Youth Activities Program 1945–1955,” (Headquarters Europe, n.p., 1956), 4, UWDC, <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/History.GerYouth>

<sup>745</sup> “‘CARE Helps Build Democracy’ Press Release,” Box 943, Folder: Germany, CARE records, MADNYPL.

<sup>746</sup> U.S. Army Historical Division, “The U.S. Armed Forces,” 1.

<sup>747</sup> Eugene Davidson, *The Death and Life of Germany: An Account of the Occupation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 86.

policy stipulated, however, that food and beverages be consumed in the presence of donors. Cooked and perishable foods that could not be used in left-over menus by the Army mess in Heidelberg were distributed to local orphanages.<sup>748</sup>

The military, alongside humanitarian agencies like CRALOG and the AFSC, worked to supply and distribute food to schools throughout the American Zone. Sabina de Werth Neu remembers the confusion of lining up in the school yard before American soldiers, armed with canteens and spoons rather than guns.<sup>749</sup> In addition to the school feedings (*Schulspeisung*), the Army distributed food to summer camps throughout the U.S. Zone, where children from urban areas “were given an opportunity to gain strength and weight.”<sup>750</sup> Slowly images of children rummaging through refuse were replaced by those depicting children queued for school feedings.

In early 1948, *Reader's Digest* published a story about Private First Class Birch Bayh who started a garden program for German youth in the village of Hungen outside Frankfurt. Bayh was studying agriculture at Purdue University when he was sent overseas to serve in the Army of Occupation in 1946. *Reader's Digest* humorously tells the story of how Bayh tried smuggling packets of vegetable seeds to Germany for a personal garden but was ordered to “get rid of ‘em!” by a sergeant. Bayh’s solution was to open every packet and pour the contents into his pockets, spending weeks picking them out of his pockets and “distribut[ing] the seeds into their 18 varieties,” much to the amusement

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<sup>748</sup> U.S. Army Historical Division, “The U.S. Armed Forces,” 26.

<sup>749</sup> Sabina de Werth Neu, *A Long Silence: Memories of a German Refugee Child, 1941-1958* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2011), 86.

<sup>750</sup> U.S. Army Historical Division, “The U.S. Armed Forces,” 26.

of his bunkmates.<sup>751</sup> Hungen was a small village that escaped the war relatively unscathed, but like the rest of Germany it was hungry. “Not only hungry for food,” explained Bayh, but “hungry for something else. Something to live for . . . and they just didn’t know what to make of us Americans.”<sup>752</sup>

The children Bayh encountered reminded him of the 4-H kids he worked with back in Indiana. He approached the officer in charge of German youth activities in the village and proposed a garden program, developing a plot of vacant land outside of town. The response was overwhelming. Ninety children showed up with their own tools, eager to participate. In preparation for the planting, Bayh put the children to work building a tool house with Army supplies. Rather than provide them with a shed, Bayh wanted them to see “how much they could accomplish if they worked together.”<sup>753</sup> The children worked diligently on their plots, motivated by friendly competition and the knowledge they could keep what they produced. Bayh explained, “These kids . . . found out that they were going to be less dependent on the government or any relief organization for food the coming winter if each did his part.”<sup>754</sup> This, Bayh concluded, was “the American way.” The *Reader’s Digest* article summarized for readers that “the American way” was demonstrated by the individual responsibility, team rivalry, and democratic community living evident in Bayh’s project.

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<sup>751</sup> Detzer, “GI Ambassador.”

<sup>752</sup> Detzer, “GI Ambassador.”

<sup>753</sup> Detzer, “GI Ambassador.”

<sup>754</sup> Detzer, “GI Ambassador.”

Bayh returned to Purdue after his service and later became an Indiana Senator. He downplayed his role in the garden program, attributing the inspiration behind the project to his friend George Rademacher who was engaged to a German girl from Hungen.<sup>755</sup> Information about the project was circulated after he submitted it to the National Vegetable Growers Association Production and Marketing Scholarship Program in 1947. In his report, Bayh wrote that GYA activities reflected the hope that Americans could teach young Germans the democratic way of life.<sup>756</sup> In his submission, he admitted the project may seem silly to some, with no way to calculate profit or loss, but believed the real profit came in knowing that he helped a few needy families and served as an ambassador of America.<sup>757</sup>

Hoover's Economic Mission similarly drew attention to German children with its proposal for a Child Feeding Program serving as one of his most popular and successful recommendations. The Child Feeding Program built on existing school feeding programs and was implemented on a much larger scale. At the conclusion of the Hoover Mission, Voorhees located "\$19,000,000 worth of stockpiled, highly nutritious food."<sup>758</sup> It was designated for Displaced Persons (DPs), but Voorhees knew that the International Relief Organization was scheduled to take over DP responsibilities in July, and he anticipated a

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<sup>755</sup> Bayh felt that the *Reader's Digest* article was the product of hometown pride and conveyed this in conversations with archivist Kathleen Cruikshank at Indiana University Libraries. E-mail correspondence with Cruikshank.

<sup>756</sup> 1947 NJVGA Report, Birch Bayh Senatorial Papers, Modern Political Papers Collection, Indiana University Libraries, Bloomington, Indiana.

<sup>757</sup> 1947 NJVGA Report, Birch Bayh Senatorial Papers, Modern Political Papers Collection, Indiana University Libraries, Bloomington, Indiana.

<sup>758</sup> Lochner, *Herbert Hoover and Germany*, 181.

surplus. After consulting with representatives, Voorhees shared his calculations with Hoover and the two contacted Clay urging the excess supply be released immediately for a school lunch program. Clay issued an executive order creating a special Child Feeding Program (*Hooverspeisung*) that supplied meals for 3,500,000 children. The food stock included Army surplus, dense in fats and protein, and “large quantities of chocolate.”<sup>759</sup>

Clay believed the child feeding program “did more to convince the German people of our desire to recreate their nation than any other action on our part.”<sup>760</sup> Clay’s assessment was based on the countless “expressions of gratitude from parents and children” that he found to be both “sincere and touching.”<sup>761</sup> Thousands of German youngsters wrote letters accompanied by portraits and “crude but expressive drawings and cartoons to *Onkel Hoover*.”<sup>762</sup> Written in English and German, the letters conveyed the children’s gratitude not only to Hoover but also to the American people in general. Thirteen-year-old Friedrich Langguth wrote from Coburg thanking Hoover for daily meals. “If every people [sic] will help the other, like you does[sic],” he wrote, “we should have lasting peace soon.”<sup>763</sup> Liselotte Massholder, 12 years old, of Heidelberg exclaimed she gained four pounds in eight days.<sup>764</sup> Gratitude even extended to the elderly, who

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<sup>759</sup> Voorhees, Memorandum. Quoted in Lochner, *Herbert Hoover and Germany*, 177.

<sup>760</sup> Clay, *Decision*, 168.

<sup>761</sup> Clay, *Decision*, 168.

<sup>762</sup> Lochner, *Herbert Hoover and Germany*, 197.

<sup>763</sup> Hoover, *An American Epic*, vol. 4, 258.

<sup>764</sup> Hoover, *An American Epic*, vol. 4, 258.

wrote to Hoover to thank him for remembering old and young after he recommended a supplemental feeding for the aged.<sup>765</sup>

Visiting Germany in 1959, Louis Lochner wrote a letter to Hoover expressing surprise at the impressive legacy of the Child Feeding Program. Lochner was struck by the marked “difference in the stature of the young German women and men in their late teens or early twenties as compared with that of their parents.”<sup>766</sup> Many of these “husky, healthy teenagers and young people” enthusiastically confirmed participation in the *Hooverspeisung*. Hoover’s response betrayed his pride: “I have seldom had so thrilling an account of our good deeds—and it goes in my Echoes of the Past.”<sup>767</sup>

Some of the most successful campaigns were those launched for Christmas. Efforts were made during holidays to increase rations, throw parties, and provide holiday meals and gifts for children throughout the U.S. Zone and U.S. Sector of Berlin. Festivities provided German children with an opportunity for a hot meal, and “for many of the younger children the first chance in their lives to taste ice cream, chocolate, and fresh meat of any kind.”<sup>768</sup> In Berlin extra rations for Christmas 1946 included dried fruit which was distributed throughout the American Sector. The following Christmas all four sectors of Berlin agreed to increase ration allotments of sugar and flour for holiday

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<sup>765</sup> For a rich sampling of letters see Box 5, Reel 4, United States President's Famine Emergency Committee records, HIA. Meeting of Mr. Hoover with Officers of UK Zone at British Headquarters, Hamburg, 10 February 1947, 3, Box D, Folder U3, Tracy S. Voorhees Papers MC 1407, SCR.U.

<sup>766</sup> Lochner, *Herbert Hoover and Germany*, 200.

<sup>767</sup> Lochner, *Herbert Hoover and Germany*, 201.

<sup>768</sup> U.S. Army Historical Division, “The U.S. Armed Forces,” 24–25.

baking and provide a special Christmas meal for children between 5 and 14 years of age. The compromise was not without some controversy: the Russians were “unwilling” to bring their contribution down to levels proposed by the U.S. and British, who due to lack of resources and funding could not meet Russian proposals.<sup>769</sup> Regardless of the petty competition, *The Berlin Observer* reported plans were underway for Christmas parties for 685 children. Each child received a gift “in the form of a box containing items from PX rations, toilet articles, 10-in-1 ration items, and gloves or socks.”<sup>770</sup>

CARE ran a special marketing campaign soliciting donations during the holiday season. Clay urged Americans to donate, reminding Americans that as children, German youth were not responsible for the war. But they would be the leaders of tomorrow, “perhaps our first line of defense.”<sup>771</sup> Celebrities joined the cause and appeared at fundraising events across the United States. For Christmas 1948, Hollywood actors Jean Hersholt and Margaret O’Brien signed boxes of sweets sent to Germany. Hersholt was familiar to children as Shirley Temple’s grandfather in the film *Heidi* (1937) and Margaret O’Brien achieved fame for her role as Tootie opposite Judy Garland in *Meet Me in St. Louis* (1944). While both well-known in the United States, it is doubtful that German children would value the autographs.<sup>772</sup> That same year, servicemen stationed in

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<sup>769</sup> “Special Issue of Food for Christmas,” Office of Military Government, 10 December 1947, Box 411, RG 260, Entry 411, NARA.

<sup>770</sup> “Parties for 685 Children Planned by Troops,” *The Berlin Observer*, 13 December 1946, 3.

<sup>771</sup> DC Jouett Shouse, “German Children,” *The Washington Post*, 22 December 1948, 14.

<sup>772</sup> “Leaders Back Club’s Plan to Fly Yule Candy to German Children,” *The Washington Post*, 16 December 1948, C6.

Berlin during the blockade launched Operation Santa Claus, soliciting Christmas packages from their hometown for dispersal among Berlin's children.<sup>773</sup> The operation was so successful that gifts continued to be dispersed well into February.<sup>774</sup>

It was important to American officials that Germans children understood that American gifts of food were more than a friendly gesture, "that they be brought up with a sense of appreciation of the efforts being made by the American people in their behalf."<sup>775</sup> Grateful for holiday milk donations from the AFSC in 1946, children in Darmstadt built toys with whatever scraps they could find and shipped them to AFSC headquarters in Philadelphia. Inside the containers that originally held milk were individual toys decorated with pine and ribbons. The toys were sent on a tour visiting the schools and churches that contributed to the holiday milk drive.<sup>776</sup> The Darmstadt schoolchildren also gifted handmade toys to dependent children living in the U.S. Zone. The American children were invited to an exhibition and invited to "select[ed] their gifts from the dolls, games, and assorted toys on display."<sup>777</sup>

Letters of gratitude and artwork created by German children were urged by German schoolteachers and welcomed by American officials and aid workers. The letters

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<sup>773</sup> Clay, *Decision in Germany*, 385.

<sup>774</sup> "Women's Club Notes," *The Berlin Observer*, 11 February 1949, 2.

<sup>775</sup> "Barkley Appeals for Aid to Children in Germany," *New York Times*, 23 December 1948, 7.

<sup>776</sup> "Children of Germany Send Toys," *The Washington Post*, 2 August 1947, 2.

<sup>777</sup> OMGUS, "Darmstadt Toy Project" *Weekly Information Bulletin*, no. 73 (December 1946), 18, UWDC, <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/History.omg1946n073>.

showcase a wide array of creative media and modes from the generic to the impressively imaginative. Occasional notes of dismay regarding unfamiliar foodstuffs and limited rations of cocoa appear, but most of the letters are laudatory, a chorus of praise—“*Schmeckt gut!*” (tastes good). Colorful sketches of chickens, Lifesaver candies, and a family of beans marching to a can for preservation were sent to the White House.<sup>778</sup> Artwork and thank-you notes confirmed to Americans that German youth both appreciated the gift of food and knew of its origins. But, I would argue, German children were also aware of the propaganda value of the school feedings at this critical moment in the early Cold War, as evident in a drawing “gifted” to Truman that depicted a queue of thin German boys receiving food from pots marked USA while a portly military official attempts to snap a photo.

This concern for gratitude extended to adults as well. Some Military Government officials worried that the German population on a whole did not fully appreciate the American “gift” of food. Stanley Andrews recounted that, “[H]igher-ups somewhere along the line thought that the individual German buying a loaf of bread at the local bakery should be told that he was receiving a gift from the American people.”<sup>779</sup> The Commanding General in Bavaria instructed his Agricultural Staff to correct this “lack of information.” The solution was a “series of charts which showed the journey of a bushel of wheat in Kansas to the loaf of bread picked up by the housefrau [sic] at the corner

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<sup>778</sup> “*Unseren Helfern aus Amerika in Dankbarkeit Volksschule Bickenbach,*” Box 829, Folder: O.F. 198 Misc. (1947), White House Central Files: Official File 198, Harry S. Truman Papers, HSTL.

<sup>779</sup> Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, vol. 3, 651, Box 31, Stanley Andrews Papers, HSTL.

bakery in Bavaria.”<sup>780</sup> Military Government held mandatory meetings in villages across Bavaria, where they explained bread was a gift from America. Stanley Andrews recounted how this “bewildered” German housewives who could not see how bread they paid for was a gift.<sup>781</sup>

### ***Ich und Mr. Marshall: Economic Recovery in the Shadow of the Cold War***

When *Reader's Digest* reported on Birch Bayh's garden project in 1948, the magazine repeatedly referred to it as one soldier's personal economic recovery program. The summer prior, Secretary of State George C. Marshall introduced the Economic Recovery Program.<sup>782</sup> Marshall recognized that while food shortages were a result of the physical destruction of war, their persistence threatened peace. Speaking at Harvard University, Marshall stated, “Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine, but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos.”<sup>783</sup> Economic stability in Europe

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<sup>780</sup> Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, vol. 3, 651, Box 31, Stanley Andrews Papers, HSTL.

<sup>781</sup> Andrews, *Journal of a Retread*, vol. 3, 651, Box 31, Stanley Andrews Papers, HSTL.

<sup>782</sup> The historiography on the Marshall Plan is dense. This study is concerned only with the Marshall Plan's impact on Germany's recovery vis a vis food, focusing primarily on the symbolic impact of Marshall Plan aid and the socio-economic recovery of the nation through food. For more on the Marshall Plan see Michael J. Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain, and the Reconstruction of Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Alan S. Milward, *The Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1945–51* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); and Benn Steil, *The Marshall Plan: The Dawn of the Cold War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2018).

<sup>783</sup> George C. Marshall, “The Marshall Plan Speech,” *The George C. Marshall Foundation*, <https://www.marshallfoundation.org/marshall/the-marshall-plan/marshall-plan-speech/>.

would foster the growth of democracy and stop the spread of communism. Food and fertilizer made up 29% of the 13.5 billion dollars in aid sent to Europe from 1948 to 1952.<sup>784</sup>

Marshall Plan aid was not originally offered to Germany, and Clay fought for German inclusion. The Herter Committee, whose findings were instrumental in the passage of ERP legislation, included Germany in its assessment of European damage and need. A young Richard Nixon served on the committee and visited Germany in 1947, calling it “among the most sobering experiences of my life . . . We found thousands of families huddled in the debris of buildings and in bunkers. There was a critical shortage of food, and thin-faced, half-dressed children approached us not to beg but to sell their fathers’ war medals or to trade them for something to eat.”<sup>785</sup> Marshall aid was ultimately extended to Germany, with food and funds providing the necessary tools and energy to revive the economy. In *Ich und Mr. Marshall*, a propaganda film produced for the series “Selling Democracy,” a German coal miner shares his story of Marshall Plan aid, noting how it improved working conditions.<sup>786</sup>

Writing for *Foreign Affairs* in the summer of 1947, Hamilton Fish Armstrong, Jr., offered a shrewd analysis of political and economic conditions across Europe. In the two years since VE Day, the continent continued to be plagued by shortages. For Armstrong, the absence of political activity was striking. He concluded, “Hopes and disappointments

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<sup>784</sup> Friedmann, “The Political Economy of Food,” 261. Quoted in Weinreb, *Modern Hungers*, 120.

<sup>785</sup> Smith, *Lucius D. Clay*, chap. 24, Kindle.

<sup>786</sup> *Ich und Mr. Marshall* (1948), available at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn1003764>.

are not linked to political principles or economic dogmas . . . they are measured in buckets of coal, ounces of bread, packets of cigarettes.”<sup>787</sup> Armstrong advocated for aid but warned it should be constructive rather than palliative.<sup>788</sup> Once economic stability returned to Europe, those nations would make a choice between East and West. If the U.S. hoped to gain friends, the nation needed to be less preoccupied with being paid back and more concerned about image. Americans needed to show Europe their “rugged visage,” “native confidence,” “warm heart,” “clear head,” and “spring-mindedness.”<sup>789</sup> Image mattered in the contest for hearts and minds.

Military officials calculated the success of food relief strictly in numbers, but the human response to U.S. food and feeding offers an alternative measure. The power inherent in American food aid is evident when one considers food’s role in both the economic and emotional recovery of the nation. A full stomach not only made German children more receptive to reeducation, but food relief also conveyed the power of democracy. As Americans increasingly embraced the humanitarian mission in Germany, military officials noted that hunger made German children less receptive to reeducation, and thus food became an increasingly important element in the rehabilitation of Germany. Occupation officials portrayed food relief as an expression of democratic ideals, emphasizing the universality of Freedom from Want. In dire need of both proper nutrition and reeducation, food offered a solution to both problems, and placed German children at the fore of the nation’s rehabilitation.

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<sup>787</sup> Armstrong, “Europe Revisited,” 538.

<sup>788</sup> Armstrong, “Europe Revisited,” 546.

<sup>789</sup> Armstrong, “Europe Revisited,” 548.

At the conclusion of his first report on Germany, Hoover reminded Americans: “[O]ur flag flies over these people. That flag means something besides military power.” Support for food relief was not universal, nor was it always warmly received; yet it proved a valuable contribution to lasting peace in Germany. In response to the Stuttgart Speech, or “Speech of Hope,” one newly elected German official declared, “Without the food the United States has given Germany it would have starved. This is the first time in history that a conqueror has given such help to the conquered. We stand before the winter solstice.”<sup>790</sup> The battle for food, and by extension Germany, would be won by image not statistics.

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<sup>790</sup> Douglas Botting, *From the Ruins of the Reich: Germany 1945–1949* (New York: Meridian, 1985), 288–289.

## CHAPTER 7

### THE BIG LIFT: FOOD, FRIENDSHIP, AND FREEDOM FOR BERLIN

There was much joy when our teacher told us that we could visit the air port today. Night and day you bring us food and coal with your planes. If you would not bring us our food through the air we all would have nothing to eat. I an sure that there will be trooble sometimes and some American pilots have lost their lives in order to care for us. I thank you very much for your help and remain with the best wishes for you.

--Inge S. <sup>791</sup>

On a sunny Sunday afternoon in September 1948, Lt. Gail S. Halvorsen found himself sitting in the stands at the Polo Grounds watching the New York Giants take on the Brooklyn Dodgers. The 27-year-old pilot from rural Utah attended the game as the guest of television producer Aubrey Williams. The situation would seem surreal under normal circumstances, but the circumstances were anything but normal. Only a few days prior, Halvorsen was flying food and coal from Rhein Main Air Base into Soviet-blockaded Berlin. The following morning Halvorsen arrived on the set of *We the People*, Williams's evening talk show. He consulted on the script, overseeing details related to Operation Vittles, the U.S. Air Force's mission to supply West Berlin with food and fuel from the air.

General William Tunner, commander of airlift operations, requested that Halvorsen embark on a publicity tour of the United States. Tunner saw an opportunity to provide information to a curious American public on the airlift and Halvorsen's special

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<sup>791</sup> Spelling and grammatical mistakes retained. Oversize Box, Gail S. Halvorsen Collection MSS 2220, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT (hereafter cited as HBLL).

project of dropping candy parachutes to the children of Berlin: Operation Little Vittles (OLV). Halvorsen maintained a busy schedule of appearances. In addition to consulting and appearing on several broadcasts, he also met with owners of American candy companies and the Pentagon's Public Relations Office. Following the whirlwind two-week tour, Halvorsen returned to Germany where he found his quarters overflowing with hundreds of pounds of donated candy.<sup>792</sup>

Germany's inclusion in the Marshall Plan redirected occupation policy in 1947. It underscored the necessity of economic recovery and highlighted Germany's growing importance in struggles with the Soviet Union. Clay was committed to German unity and believed Europe's future required German economic stability. Debates over Germany's economic future at the close of 1947, set in motion a series of events that culminated in the Soviet blockade of Berlin in June 1948. Writing to Under Secretary of the Army General William Henry Draper, Jr., on New Year's Eve 1947, Clay reflected on the change in American public opinion toward Germany, "All of this reminds me of my original prophecy. First we would be condemned for softness and then for hardness. I am afraid I am too hard-shelled now to care much about either."<sup>793</sup>

The creation of Bizonia, introduction of the European Recovery Program, and establishment of the Communist Information Forum (Cominform) heightened tensions among the occupying powers throughout 1947. The London meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers (Nov.-Dec. 1947) ended in a stalemate with no future meetings

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<sup>792</sup> Halvorsen, New York Trip Report to General Tunner, 29 September 1948, in Gail S. Halvorsen, *The Berlin Candy Bomber* (Springville, UT: Horizon Publishers, 2010), 276–277.

<sup>793</sup> Smith, *Lucius D. Clay*, chap. 25, Kindle.

scheduled. The U.S. and Britain decided to pursue economic reunification regardless of the breakdown in quadripartite government. Communist political gains in Italy and France in early 1948, followed by a coup in Prague, left many policymakers uneasy. The situation grew tense in Berlin, where Soviet authorities confiscated western literature, interrupted transportation, and launched a propaganda campaign against the United States. In a cable to Washington on March 5, 1948, Clay wrote, “For many months, based on logical analysis, I have felt and held that war was unlikely for at least ten years. Within the last few weeks, I have felt a subtle change in Soviet attitude which I cannot define but which now gives me a feeling that it may come with dramatic suddenness.”<sup>794</sup> The memo elicited a visceral reaction in Washington and contributed to public panic when it was leaked to the press.<sup>795</sup> Shortly after, the Allied Control Council met for the final time, and Soviet forces increased their harassment of military transports in and out of the eastern sector. To circumvent this behavior, the U.S. Air Force supplied military garrisons in Berlin by air, referring to this as the “Little Lift.”

Soviet intimidation continued throughout the spring, but the State Department directed Clay to proceed with currency reform. Policymakers believed currency reform was the necessary next step in economic recovery. It would restore consumer confidence, curb inflation, and eliminate the barter system that still flourished in the black markets. The Allies introduced the *Deutschmark* in the three western zones on June 18.. To avoid confusion in the divided city, the new currency was not extended to West Berlin. In

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<sup>794</sup> “#340 Berlin Situation,” Clay to Chamberlin, 5 March 1948, in Smith, *Papers*, vol. 2, 568.

<sup>795</sup> Clay was disappointed in the response to this memo and furious that it was leaked to the press. Clay, *Decision*, 354–355.

retaliation, the Soviets introduced their own currency on June 23, distributing *Ostmarks* in the Soviet Zone and all of Berlin. The following day, the Allies countered by extending the *Deutschmark* to Berlin and granting the *Ostmark* “equal status as legal currency,” with either accepted as payment in the western sectors.<sup>796</sup> The conciliatory gesture was futile, and the Soviets ordered a blockade of all surface traffic into West Berlin on June 24.

Collaborating with the British, the Americans supplied the city by air.<sup>797</sup> The stakes were high. “If we failed to maintain our position there [Berlin],” wrote Truman, “Communism would gain great strength among the Germans.”<sup>798</sup> Originally devised as a temporary solution “to stretch out the stockpile of rations in Berlin and . . . gain time for negotiations,” the operation proved remarkably successful.<sup>799</sup> More than 200,000 flights

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<sup>796</sup> Clay, *Decision*, 365.

<sup>797</sup> The literature on the Airlift is vast. For a representative sampling see Andrei Cherny, *The Candy Bombers: The Untold Story of the Berlin Airlift and America's Finest Hour* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2008); W. Phillips Davison, *The Berlin Blockade: A Study in Cold War Politics* (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Cooperation, 1957); Daniel D. Harrington, *Berlin on the Brink: The Blockade, the Airlift, and the Early Cold War* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2012); Roger G. Miller, *To Save a City: The Berlin Airlift, 1948–1949* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2000); and Ann Tusa and John Tusa, *The Berlin Airlift* (New York: Atheneum, 1998). For a more critical assessment see Steege, *Black Market*, 147–286; and William Stivers, “The Incomplete Blockade: The Soviet Zone Supply of West Berlin, 1948–49,” *Diplomatic History* 21, no. 4 (Fall 1997): 569–602.

<sup>798</sup> Truman, *Memoirs*, vol. 2, 124.

<sup>799</sup> William H. Tunner, *Over the Hump* (New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1964, reprint Air Force History and Museums Program, Government Printing Office, 1998), 159. Daniel Harrington writes that the airlift's overarching success was that Truman never had to “[choose] between withdrawal and war.” Harrington, *Berlin on the Brink*, 297.

delivering approximately 2.3 million tons of food, fuel, and other supplies.<sup>800</sup> During the airlift, rations in West Berlin rose to 2000 calories, higher than anywhere else in Germany. The Soviets lifted the blockade on May 11, 1949, with airlift operations continuing through the end of August, building a reserve of food and coal.

For decades, scholars and policymakers viewed the Soviet blockade as a benchmark in Cold War history. The events of 1948–49 resulted in the creation of two Germanies and formalized the Cold War political division of Europe.<sup>801</sup> While recent scholarship has deconstructed the overly simplistic Cold War narrative of good versus evil flowing through much of the blockade literature, it is important to recognize food's role in that narrative. The political, and more importantly the propaganda potential of the airlift was recognized by policymakers from the outset. Operation Vittles delivered more than coal and food—it represented democracy, freedom, and the American commitment to German recovery. Earlier food programs in the U.S. Zone highlighted the relationship between hunger and political unrest. Food restored hope and diminished communism's influence. In 1948, the fear was not that Berliners would be drawn to communism, but that the Soviets were starving democracy out of the city. The Soviet Union weaponized food against West Berlin in an attempt to force Allied withdrawal. The Russians believed western powers would concede rather than allow Berlin to starve. They never anticipated the harm the blockade inflicted on their own reputation.

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<sup>800</sup> Figures from Miller, *To Save a City*, 186.

<sup>801</sup> For more on the political division of Europe, see Timothy A. Sayle, *Enduring Alliance: A History of NATO and the Postwar Global Order* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019); and Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War: A World History* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), 71–128.

U.S. officials emphasized the emotional connections between Americans and Germans that derived from their shared experience in Berlin. Early food relationships in the U.S. Zone were predicated on dependency, with food provided or withheld according to desires to punish the German population. The German population relied on American food aid throughout 1946 and 47. During the airlift, this dependency was recast, with the negative connotations that accompanied the paternal occupation replaced by an optimistic avuncular style.<sup>802</sup> The German population was now a potential ally, while the conquerors embraced a new role as protectors. The airlift was more than a military operation; it was a powerful propaganda campaign directed at Berlin. In addition to reports praising the technical superiority of the U.S. Air Force, countless human-interest stories trickled out of blockaded Berlin. The public response and engagement with these stories demonstrated a shift in favor of a U.S.-German alliance. Food lay at the heart of these episodes.

This chapter argues that food served as the fulcrum for debates over U.S. objectives in and commitment to Germany. Food served economic and security interests, but it also manipulated public opinion. The humanitarian nature of the airlift eased Americans into the Cold War and convinced Germans that the United States had their best interests at heart. The German stomach was the key to hearts and minds on both sides of the Atlantic.

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<sup>802</sup> I previously explored the idea of avuncularism in “‘Uncle Wiggly Wings’: Children, Chocolates, and the Berlin Airlift,” *Food and Foodways* 25, no. 2 (April 2017): 142–159.

### Operation Vittles: American Engagement in the Airlift

Initial news coverage of the Blockade in the United States adopted a moderate rather than alarmist tone. It was evident to many American observers that, “the Communists hope to make the threat of starvation a level which will cause the Germans themselves to demand the departure of the western Allies.”<sup>803</sup> To alleviate the strain on German diets, the U.S. military promised to deliver “prunes and Army ‘C’ rations—biscuits, sugar and coffee or lemon powder.”<sup>804</sup> Newspapers reported that the Russians halted all deliveries of milk from dairies in the eastern Zone. Powdered and canned milk was desperately needed to feed infants. The American press also reported Russian propaganda campaigns designed to convince the Germans the blockade would continue through winter and bring misery.<sup>805</sup>

Berlin was home to several thousand Americans, including dependent family members. As early as April, military officials discussed options to evacuate dependents and nonessential personnel from the city. Clay worried that an evacuation would alarm Germans. Historian Donna Alvah explains, “In Clay’s view, American families in Germany symbolized the commitment of the United States to extend friendship, aid, and protection to ‘free’ Germans threatened by the communist enemy that lurked next door.”<sup>806</sup> The number of dependents in Berlin decreased over the course of the airlift, but

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<sup>803</sup> Marguerite Higgins, “U.S. Flies in Milk, Food for Germans,” *The Washington Post*, 27 June 1948, M1.

<sup>804</sup> “‘C’ Rations and Prunes Promised Hungry Berlin,” *Daily Boston Globe*, 27 June 1948, C1.

<sup>805</sup> “Reds Predict All-Winter Blockade,” *The Washington Post*, 6 July 1948, 1.

<sup>806</sup> Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors*, 72.

approximately 1000 of the 7000 Americans living in Berlin during the blockade were dependents, more than half of them children. Clay praised the families that remained for their courage. "I do not believe," he wrote, "that our families were ever as content as during the blockade when they felt themselves a part of the effort of the Western democracies."<sup>807</sup>

Clay's wife, Marjorie, founded the American Women's Club of Berlin, which led charity efforts and community programming. In addition to the organization's philanthropic contributions, it served as a cultural ambassador, exemplifying the "humane characteristics of the American people."<sup>808</sup> During the blockade, the Women's Club published a cookbook "spiced with the humor of the occupation."<sup>809</sup> The *Operation Vittles Cook Book* was, "dedicated to the happy group of wives who attempted to obtain American meals by slaying the dragons of language, old utensils, ovens sans thermometers, conflicting opinions, etc., ad infinitum."<sup>810</sup> The recipes, accompanied by illustrations and vignettes, offered a humorous spin on the cultural borderland of the kitchen. The cookbook recounted women's "struggles" in the early occupation, before the commissary expanded its inventory. The housewives were "delighted" by the "ingenuity of American industry," which yielded powdered milk, powdered eggs, and granulated yeast available for purchase in military commissaries.<sup>811</sup>

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<sup>807</sup> Clay, *Decision in Germany*, 386.

<sup>808</sup> Clay, *Decision in Germany*, 72.

<sup>809</sup> Clay, *Decision in Germany*, 72.

<sup>810</sup> *Operation Vittles Cook Book*, (n.p.: Deutscher Verlag, 1949), USAHEC.

<sup>811</sup> *Operation Vittles Cook Book*, 8.

The anecdotes in the cookbook rely on caricature to highlight differences in diet and taste between occupier and occupied. Fearing a revolt at the dinner table, the service wife intervened and instructed the German cook how to bake “good bread” and biscuits rather than dark, heavy, cold loaves.<sup>812</sup> Americans remained skeptical of bacon served cold, complained about the odor accompanying homemade sauerkraut, and failed to convince Germans that refrigeration extended the life of numerous food products. When asked if orange juice was fresh, a German maid responded, “Ja, we just opened the can.”<sup>813</sup> At first glance, the cookbook betrays a shocking lack of empathy on the part of these women. It was designed, however, as part of a fundraising campaign and was very popular with Americans serving overseas. Sales of the cookbook totaled more than \$10,000. The Women’s Club distributed the funds among children’s hospitals in Berlin. Clay opined that American women and children did not receive enough credit for their good work in Berlin, too much of what was said was devoted to “the few who lived lavishly in the midst of poverty.”<sup>814</sup>

For Americans in Berlin, life went on as usual, and usual meant uninterrupted access to a range of consumer goods, including imports like French champagne and Russian caviar, items “Germans had not seen in decades.”<sup>815</sup> Diplomat Robert Murphy recalled how Americans “expected an austere existence during the blockade” but instead

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<sup>812</sup> *Operation Vittles Cook Book*, 1.

<sup>813</sup> *Operation Vittles Cook Book*, 31.

<sup>814</sup> Clay, *Decision in Germany*, 72.

<sup>815</sup> Robert Murphy, *Diplomat among Warriors* (London: Collins, 1964), 319.

found that with money they “could buy almost anything.”<sup>816</sup> Those Americans who remained in Berlin seemed surprisingly ignorant of their comparative comfort and wealth. The dichotomy led one of Murphy’s aides to remark, “We are a capitalist oasis in a socialist desert!”<sup>817</sup> Visiting Berlin in March 1949, George Kennan overheard a military officer complain about the persistence of tuna on the menu, “We been feedin’ it to our dog. He don’t even like it any more. He jes’ looks at me and says: ‘Jeez, tuna fish again.’”<sup>818</sup> The following evening, dining with colleagues, Kennan wondered how much destruction and suffering needed to occur “before we could be brought to stop handing each other drinks and discussing through the long evenings the price of antiques, the inadequacies of servants, and the availability of cosmetics in the PX.”<sup>819</sup>

Back in the United States, however, Americans remained skeptical of the airlift’s necessity, duration, and efficacy. The airlift’s human-interest stories offered proof that the American mission in Germany was both welcome and just. Projects like Halvorsen’s Operation Little Vittles served a reassuring function. Struck by the pilot’s warmth and compassion, Americans clamored to learn more about the candy drops following an August 20 Associated Press blurb. The humble, handsome, young pilot caught the public’s eye. Halvorsen welcomed the attention and redirected it toward the plight of German children. He personified American humanitarian values and was promoted by the

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<sup>816</sup> Murphy, *Diplomat among Warriors*, 319.

<sup>817</sup> Murphy, *Diplomat among Warriors*, 320.

<sup>818</sup> George F. Kennan, *Memoirs: 1925–1950* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967), 430.

<sup>819</sup> Kennan, *Memoirs*, 432.

Air Force as the face of the airlift, demonstrating to Americans, “that there can be a warm side to a cold war.”<sup>820</sup>

Arriving in Germany in mid-July, Halvorsen was stunned by the pervasive squalor and privation. He felt ill as he watched grown men rummage through garbage in search of food. Here was “a fellow human being stripped of his dignity, relegated to animal instincts to survive, and totally oblivious to whoever might see,” he reminisced.<sup>821</sup> Other scenes left similar impressions on the young Mormon, whose prior service outside the major theaters of combat spared him exposure to the destruction of total war. A fellow ‘lift pilot whose wartime service included bombing runs over Berlin, resented his return to the city, but struggled with feelings of empathy for the former enemy:

“Somehow that faceless mass of people suddenly became individuals like my mother and sister . . . I didn’t feel good about the bombs. Now maybe I can do something about the food.”<sup>822</sup> The airman’s comments mirror the experiences of GIs in the summer of 1945, as they navigated the messy transition between war and peace and struggled to uphold a punitive peace.

Little Vittles was born from a spontaneous meeting with children near the runway at Templehof. The conversation’s normalcy puzzled Halvorsen. As he walked away, he realized that unlike other children he encountered, they did not ask for candy or gum: “Not one of almost 30 kids . . . was willing to become a beggar and ask, verbally or by

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<sup>820</sup> David Thomas Cottingham, “Down the Runway,” n.d., Box 1, Folder 9, Gail S. Halvorsen Collection MSS 2220, HBLL.

<sup>821</sup> Halvorsen, *The Berlin Candy Bomber*, 89.

<sup>822</sup> Halvorsen, *The Berlin Candy Bomber*, 46.

body language, if they could have some chocolate or gum.”<sup>823</sup> Reflecting in his memoir, Halvorsen wrote, “They were so grateful for freedom and our desire to help them with these meager food supplies that they refused to tarnish their feelings of gratitude for something so nonessential and so extravagant.”<sup>824</sup> He turned back and offered two sticks of chewing gum. Seeing the joy his instinctive gesture elicited, Halvorsen rashly promised to drop candy from the aircraft on his next flight into Berlin. Asked how they could identify his plane, Halvorsen explained he would wiggle the wings back and forth.

Halvorsen’s crew agreed to the drop and tied their candy rations to handkerchief parachutes dropped from the flare chute. As they taxied down the runway for the return flight to Rhein Main, they saw children waving the parachutes at every plane that passed—the drop was a success. The crew continued the drops in secret but were discovered when a candy bar landed at the feet of a reporter. Expecting to be reprimanded and possibly sent home, Halvorsen was only chastised for not informing his commanding officer. General William Tunner, head of airlift operations, recognized the propaganda value of OLV. He saw an opportunity to boost morale among airmen and Berliners alike. “The people of Berlin,” he wrote, “were fighting for freedom in their own way, with subsistence on minimum diets in constant cold.”<sup>825</sup> Tunner advocated for greater engagement between pilots and German civilians, hosting open houses on base and

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<sup>823</sup> Halvorsen, *The Berlin Candy Bomber*, 101.

<sup>824</sup> Halvorsen, *The Berlin Candy Bomber*, 101.

<sup>825</sup> Tunner, *Over the Hump*, 208.

organizing excursions for Berlin children.<sup>826</sup> He institutionalized the candy drops and arranged for Halvorsen's trip to New York.

Like the victory tours and war bond drives of World War II, the publicity tour provided the American public with a face to associate with the mission. Halvorsen seemed tailor made for the role. He was described as, "a 'regular guy,' with sandy hair, keen blue eyes, and a face that zips into a smile on the slightest provocation."<sup>827</sup> Newspapers underscored his Anglo-American features, and noted he was shy, yet personable.<sup>828</sup> The *Salt Lake Tribune*, from his home state, gently poked fun at a receding hairline, "disappearing rather rapidly at certain points."<sup>829</sup> When introducing the pilot to readers, newspapers also commented on Halvorsen's bachelor status. This underscored the motives behind Halvorsen's altruistic decision to volunteer for the airlift—taking the place of a married friend and new father. It also significantly increased his popularity among American women, who sent lacy, perfumed handkerchiefs to Berlin.<sup>830</sup> The media presented Halvorsen as an intelligent, good-looking westerner who fulfilled his civic duty during a time of war and remained in the service during peace. His appearance on one of *We the People's* earliest television broadcasts juxtaposed the image of an all-American

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<sup>826</sup> Tunner, *Over the Hump*, 208–209.

<sup>827</sup> DeWitt John, "Candy 'Chute Sweetens Air Lift," n.d., Box 1, Folder 2, Gail S. Halvorsen Collection MSS 2220, HBLL.

<sup>828</sup> "Former Rigby Boy Originated Candy Drop by Parachute to Children of Berlin, Germany," *The Rigby Star*, n.d., Box 1, Folder 2, Gail S. Halvorsen Collection MSS 2220, HBLL.

<sup>829</sup> "Uncle Wiggly Wings," *Salt Lake Tribune*, n.d., 2M, Box 1, Folder 2, Gail S. Halvorsen Collection MSS 2220, HBLL.

<sup>830</sup> Halvorsen, *The Berlin Candy Bomber*, 127.

boy with an uplifting story of benevolence. Donations poured in and Halvorsen returned to Germany with more than 300lbs of candy and 50lbs of handkerchiefs.

In New York, Halvorsen met with John Swersey of the Huyler Candy Company. Swersey expressed a strong desire to help and pledged the support of the American Confectioners Association. Swersey pressed Halvorsen for an estimate of the amount of candy he needed to continue OLV. Halvorsen tossed out an absurdly large figure. Shortly before Christmas, two railcars, each filled with more than 3000 pounds of candy, chewing gum, and chocolate, arrived at Rhein Main, courtesy of Swersey. The sweets surplus allowed airmen to throw several holiday parties for children in West Berlin. Swersey's generosity was punctuated by his Jewish background. He told Halvorsen that children were the future, "whatever had gone on before was now in the past."<sup>831</sup>

While German children chased parachuting chocolates, American children read about the Candy Bomber in *The Weekly Reader*.<sup>832</sup> School children became active participants in the volunteer effort: collecting candy, making parachutes, and even initiating a letter-writing campaign with the children of Berlin.<sup>833</sup> Chicopee, Massachusetts volunteered to process donated materials and serve as OLV headquarters. The town converted the old fire station into a twenty-four-hour assembly station and required that students in Chicopee schools donate an hour a week to the project. Volunteers processed donations, boxed candy, attached parachutes, and helped publicize

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<sup>831</sup> Halvorsen, *The Berlin Candy Bomber*, 137.

<sup>832</sup> See "C-H-I-P-S...by 'Chuck' Wood," *The Weekly Reader*, 13–17 December 1948, 51.

<sup>833</sup> "Little Vittles Might Grow Into Universal Letter Club," *Springfield Union*, 26 October 1948, Box 1, Folder 9, Gail S. Halvorsen Collection MSS 2220, HBL.

the “simple tale with a ‘love thy neighbor twist.’”<sup>834</sup> By-laws of the Chicopee Chapter identified the three-pronged purpose of the organization: to provide candy, serve as a reception center, and “promote good-will between the European children and the American children.”<sup>835</sup> Members of the organization recognized the symbolic value of their work, demonstrating “the full meaning of democracy” to German youth.<sup>836</sup>

It was the duty of Americans “to try to instill all the spiritual joys that children need for sound minds and a healthy Christian attitude toward their people, as well as toward other nations.”<sup>837</sup> OLV provided a platform for Americans to engage in world affairs in a non-militarized fashion.<sup>838</sup> Widespread participation in and support for OLV and the airlift at large boosted morale on the home front. The Berlin airlift was “a chance to show the world . . . how America lives and how America wants others to live in a world of peace.”<sup>839</sup>

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<sup>834</sup> *Operation Little Vittles* (scrapbook), Chicopee Archives, Chicopee Public Library, Chicopee, MA (hereafter cited as CACPL).

<sup>835</sup> “Constitution and By-Laws,” *Operation Little Vittles*, CACPL.

<sup>836</sup> “WSPR Broadcast–28 Jan. 1949,” *Operation Little Vittles*, CACPL.

<sup>837</sup> “The Other View of It,” *Operation Little Vittles*, CACPL.

<sup>838</sup> O’Connell, “‘Uncle Wiggly Wings,’” 143.

<sup>839</sup> Untitled press clipping, *Operation Little Vittles*, CACPL.

### *Luftbrücke: Berliners and the Blockade*

“It was one of history’s consummate ironies,” wrote *Time* magazine in July, “that, to stand firm, the West now had to consider the mood and mettle of the Germans.”<sup>840</sup>

What was the mood of the German people in 1948? Halvorsen anticipated a hostile reception, acknowledging in his memoir the media conditioning that led to this belief. He was therefore surprised to find little in the way of animosity.<sup>841</sup> Polled one month into the airlift, an almost unanimous 98% of West Berliners said that, “the Western Powers were doing the right thing by staying in Berlin.” Confidence in the United States had risen in the previous nine months, and five out of six West Berliners believed “that the air lift could supply enough food to maintain current rations.”<sup>842</sup> Regardless, nearly half of the those polled stated they “had not been making out as well with food during the previous few weeks,” with blame attributed to the blockade and currency reform.

Throughout early 1948, prior to the blockade, the food situation in Germany had been unstable. Although Clay worked alongside Voorhees to increase grain shipments, food collections in Germany failed to meet targets. Communists capitalized on reductions in rations, inciting wildcat strikes among the agitated population in the Ruhr. Writing to Draper in January, Clay doubted whether food collections could improve without currency reform. Washington policymakers urged Clay to employ more stringent

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<sup>840</sup> “The Nations: The Siege,” *Time*, 12 July 1948.

<sup>841</sup> Halvorsen, *The Berlin Candy Bomber*, 41.

<sup>842</sup> “Report No. 130 Berlin Reactions to the Air Lift and the Western Powers,” 23 July 1948, in *Public Opinion in Occupied Germany: The OMGUS Surveys, 1945–1949*, ed. Anna J. Merritt, and Richard L. Merritt (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970), 248.

methods, such as police collection. Not only did he find this repugnant, but also the solution was temporary and “at great expense to anti-communism which particularly resents Soviet collection methods.”<sup>843</sup> Reporting on food conditions a few days later, an exasperated Clay stated, “I cannot pull rabbits out of a hat. I still think food collections surprisingly good under existing conditions . . . I’ve done my best in Germany and if it is not enough, then my successor may be able to solve problems beyond me and perhaps he should be sent now to solve them.”<sup>844</sup> Clay believed part of the problem was Washington’s attempt to equalize food in Germany regardless of income. Large incomes had access to black markets while smaller incomes did not. German farmers had little confidence in the Occupation *Reichsmark*, choosing to hoard their crops to barter rather than sell them at market. Currency reform, Clay argued, was the best solution to existing food shortages.

In addition to push-back from Washington, Clay confronted growing criticisms from German officials. On January 6, 1948, Dr. Johannes Semler, Bizonal Director of Economics, delivered a speech openly criticizing Allied economic policies. Semler’s major grievance focused on the discriminatory policies that he believed made it impossible for Germany to achieve stability and self-sufficiency. In his biography of Clay, Jean Smith writes that, “Semler’s argument had considerable merit, and Clay did not basically disagree.”<sup>845</sup> The problem was Semler’s scathing comment that the United

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<sup>843</sup> “#313 Take-over of Military Government by State Department,” 9 January 1948, in Smith, *Papers*, vol. 2, 532.

<sup>844</sup> “#317 Conditions in Germany,” Clay to Draper, 13 January 1948, in Smith, *Papers*, vol. 2, 540.

<sup>845</sup> Smith, *Lucius D. Clay*, chap. 25, Kindle.

States fed Germans *Hühnerfutter* (chicken feed), a “pejorative reference to corn,” that insinuated the Germans were not worthy of American wheat.<sup>846</sup> Clay was outraged by the “malicious lies,” and Semler was dismissed.<sup>847</sup>

In 1948, the Information Control Division released a film entitled *Hunger*, which elicited complaints from German audiences across the U.S. Zone.<sup>848</sup> The film opens with scenes of women and children scrounging for food among rubble. The scenes led audiences to assume these are hungry Germans. The narrator explains, however, that they are the starving populations of Italy, Greece, and Poland. The film places the blame for European-wide food shortages squarely on Germany. German audiences heckled the film and wrote letters complaining about its inaccuracies. Criticisms received by the film’s director, “blamed the crisis on inefficiency, Morgenthauism, greed or downright cruelty.”<sup>849</sup> The Information Control Division pulled the film from theaters after only three weeks, evidence that the delicate food situation in Germany posed a threat to American interests.

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<sup>846</sup> Smith, *Lucius D. Clay*, chap. 25, Kindle.

<sup>847</sup> “#312 Johannes Semler,” 9 January 1948, in Smith, *Papers*, vol. 2, 528. For more on the Semler episode, see Gimbel, *The American Occupation of Germany*, 191–193.

<sup>848</sup> U.S. Army, *Hunger*, 1948. My discussion of the film relies almost exclusively on Cora Sol Goldstein’s analysis as I was unable to view a copy. Cora Sol Goldstein, *Capturing the German Eye: American Visual Propaganda in Occupied Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 58–59.

<sup>849</sup> Stuart Schulberg, letter to Sone and Ben, 7 May 1948, provided by Sandra Schulberg. Quoted in Goldstein, *Capturing the German Eye*, 59. Goldstein also includes several examples of the complaints lodged at the film.

Throughout the spring and summer, the food situation showed signs of improvement, largely a consequence of currency reform and increased food shipments from the United States. These improvements were documented in the Koenig Report, a September 1948 assessment of European food and agriculture written by Nathan Koenig for the Department of Agriculture. With the assistance of Stanley Andrews, Koenig visited German farms, city markets, and the Ruhr. He noted several signs of healthy economic activity that led him to marvel, "I could not help but feel that here before me was a frozen corpse that had suddenly come to life."<sup>850</sup> In addition to improved supplies, the people looked healthier with "more pleasant expression[s]" on their face and a quicker stride. Koenig reported an increase in the amount of food products moving through legal channels, with fewer Germans "scouring around for food in the rural areas" and noted black market operators "complaining they were being forced out of business."<sup>851</sup>

Morale in Berlin reflected this optimism and was high at the outset of the blockade: "Berliners have seen their city and their souls fought for for [sic] three years. We've been hardened as few others have been."<sup>852</sup> Before Clay made his final recommendation in favor of the airlift, he requested a meeting with Ernst Reuter, Mayor of Berlin. Reuter assuaged any fears Clay had about the Berlin population, "I can assure

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<sup>850</sup> Koenig Report, September 1948, 21, Box 7, Folder: Koenig Report, Papers of Charles P. Kindleberger, HSTL.

<sup>851</sup> Koenig Report, September 1948, 22, Box 7, Folder: Koenig Report, Papers of Charles P. Kindleberger, HSTL.

<sup>852</sup> Joseph E. Evans, "Reds' Berlin Blockade," *Wall Street Journal*, 10 July 1948, 2.

you, and I do assure you, that the Berliners will take it.”<sup>853</sup> Berliners worked for Military Government, unloading planes as soon as they landed. Tunner was impressed by the efficiency of the “sweat-drenched German civilians.” This was evidence of the Germans personal involvement: “[T]hey had their own well-being and freedom at stake, and they were working like beavers.”<sup>854</sup> Hoping to build up supplies before winter, Clay ordered new runways built at Tempelhof and an additional airfield to accommodate increasing traffic. 30,000 Berliners worked to clear rubble and grade runways at what is now Tegel International Airport.<sup>855</sup>

Communist newspapers urged Berliners to register for food in the East, averring, “that the fresh foods available were healthier than the dried and tinned foods” brought in by the airlift.<sup>856</sup> Many Berliners recognized the Soviet offer for food as the propaganda it was. They doubted the Russians’ ability to supply the city with food, with 40% of those polled stating they had no confidence after the Soviet offer was publicized and 38% answering “it would be physically impossible for the Soviets to feed all of Berlin.”<sup>857</sup> A university student phrased it this way, “The Russians can yell all they want about the air-bridge not helping Berliners—that it’s just an excuse to cover Allied plundering of

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<sup>853</sup> Smith, *Lucius D. Clay*, chap. 25, Kindle.

<sup>854</sup> Tunner, *Over the Hump*, 171.

<sup>855</sup> Smith, *Lucius D. Clay*, chap. 25, Kindle.

<sup>856</sup> Tunner, *Over the Hump*, 217.

<sup>857</sup> “Report No. 132 Some Aspects of Morale in Berlin,” 10 August 1948, in Merritt and Merritt, *Public Opinion*, 251.

Berlin—but even a moron in the western sector knows his food ration hasn't been cut.”<sup>858</sup>

In the fall, Clay announced that rations in Berlin would rise by 20% to two thousand calories a day, “more than anywhere else in Germany.”<sup>859</sup>

Berliners dubbed the aircraft flying overhead *Rosinenbomber* (raisin bombers) because of the unusually large quantities of raisins. Wallace Campbell, a founder of CARE, explained that there was a surplus of raisins that year. The raisin growers' cooperative in California donated one million pounds to CARE.<sup>860</sup> Airlift organizers welcomed the donation of the lightweight and popular fruit. CARE representatives arranged with military officials to “load CARE food packages into all unused space in the planes” flying into Berlin.<sup>861</sup> By the end of the airlift, CARE had delivered more than a half million packages in Berlin, “enabl[ing] hundreds of thousands of Berliners to add to their meagre store of food and other essentials, and thereby to maintain their personal dignity.”<sup>862</sup>

Berlin children also bestowed a number of interesting nicknames upon Halvorsen. These included Bon Bon Pilot, Chocolate Uncle, Lollipop Pilot, *Onkel Wackelflügel* (Uncle Wiggly Wings), and *Schokoladenflieger* (chocolate flier). As the beneficiaries of OLV, Berlin's children were the most ardent supporters of Allied efforts in the city, their

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<sup>858</sup> Joseph E. Evans, “Reds' Berlin Blockade,” *Wall Street Journal*, 10 July 1948, 2.

<sup>859</sup> Smith, *Lucius D. Clay*, chap. 25, Kindle.

<sup>860</sup> Campbell, *The History of CARE*, 60.

<sup>861</sup> Campbell, *The History of CARE*, 60.

<sup>862</sup> “Germany – Draft History,” 53, Box 2, Folder: Germany Draft History, Bloomstein, Chas “History of CARE,” CARE records, MADNYPL.

presence along the runway fence a constant for the duration of the airlift. For many children in Berlin, Halvorsen filled a paternal void, the result of years of war. His actions and the children's response represent a literal representation of benevolent paternalism. Children wrote countless letters to Uncle Wiggly Wings, echoing letters sent to Uncle Hoover.<sup>863</sup> As agents of American foreign policy abroad, these men were bestowed with avuncular nicknames, free from the connotations of domination and power that often accompany paternal authority.<sup>864</sup> American airmen, like the GIs before them, provided German children with a pseudo-paternal role model, offering, as historian Werner Sollors suggests, a "new and different adult figure they could then try to imitate."<sup>865</sup> The Cold War demanded a different approach, with Halvorsen's candy diplomacy fostering the evolution from a paternal to avuncular relationship.

The children in Berlin were active participants in the story. They did not merely chase parachutes and gobble chocolate, they recognized where the aid came from and responded to Halvorsen's charity in a variety of ways. Many wrote letters of gratitude, relaying the story of how they found a parachute. Mercedes Simon wrote to Halvorsen to tell him that she lived near Templehof and the low-flying planes startled her chickens, with some no longer laying eggs. Yet, she ended the letter asking if he could drop a parachute when he saw the "white chickens" and "all will be O.K."<sup>866</sup> The desire for sweets ranked above the lack of eggs. Peter Zimmerman explained that he ran slower

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<sup>863</sup> See chapter 6.

<sup>864</sup> O'Connell, "'Uncle Wiggly Wings,'" 154.

<sup>865</sup> Sollors, *Temptation of Despair*, 217.

<sup>866</sup> Halvorsen, *The Candy Bomber*, 121.

than other kids and drew a map to his home requesting a special delivery. Halvorsen followed the map, but once again Peter was not quick enough. Exasperated, he sent several letters and sketches to Tempelhof until Halvorsen sent a package via post.<sup>867</sup> Halvorsen also received letters from a Tuberculosis and Polio hospital in Berlin and made a special visit where he taught patients how to blow bubbles with gum. Facing a shortage of handkerchief chutes, Halvorsen obtained a dozen large silk parachutes. He asked a secretary to inscribe them with a request that the parachute be returned to Military Policemen for reuse. Surprisingly, they were returned along with some original handkerchief parachutes, as well as homemade ones.<sup>868</sup>

The chocolate and candy that parachuted to Berlin was not a necessity. Nevertheless, it served an inestimable symbolic purpose: proof of American interest in and commitment to the German people. American interest in German children appealed to German adults, appreciative of the joy it brought to their children. Karin Finell's grandmother believed that the candy drops were evidence of Americans big hearts, "They're generous. Would any other nation ever think of anything like this? Pilots making these little things with their own hands? Buying the candies with their own money and dropping them to children they would never meet? Children of the former enemy. Just think, unknown pilots to unknown children. That's America for you."<sup>869</sup> In a letter to Halvorsen, Klaus Rickowski explained that he arrived to school late and soaking

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<sup>867</sup> Halvorsen, *The Candy Bomber*, 120–123.

<sup>868</sup> Halvorsen, *The Candy Bomber*, 119–120.

<sup>869</sup> Karin Finell, *Goodbye to the Mermaids: A Childhood Lost in Hitler's Berlin* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2006), 266.

wet after chasing a candy parachute into a pond. Rather than discipline the tardy student, the usually stern teacher allowed him to return home for a change of clothing, where even his mother “rejoiced” over his good fortune rather than scold his reckless actions.<sup>870</sup>

Children in East Berlin also wrote to Tempelhof with stories about crossing into the West in search of candy parachutes. The letters often betrayed a regret that they lived on the wrong side of the city but since this was no fault of their own, they hoped Halvorsen would consider dropping some chocolates over East Berlin. The flight path took Halvorsen over East Berlin on his approach and he often saw playgrounds, churchyards, and schools. He decided to string out drops along that route but was stopped two weeks later when the Russians filed a complaint with the State Department. The complaint stated the candy drops were a “capitalist trick” devised to “influence the minds of the young people against them.”<sup>871</sup> News of the Soviet protest alarmed OLV organizers in Chicopee. They feared the entire operation “may be cancelled because of Russian disapproval of the obvious propaganda effect.”<sup>872</sup>

It was around this time that the American public voiced support for increased propaganda efforts in the contest against Russia. Fifty-eight percent of Americans polled felt, “the United States should spend as much money in telling our side of the story.”<sup>873</sup>

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<sup>870</sup> Halvorsen, *The Candy Bomber*, 130–131.

<sup>871</sup> Colonel Gail S. Halvorsen, Interview by Roger D. Launius and John W. Leland, 13 May 1988, U.S. Air Force Oral History Program, United States Air Force Historical Research Center.

<sup>872</sup> “Chicopee Will Fight to Keep ‘Little Vittles,’” *Springfield Daily News*, 16 October 1948, Box 1, Folder 3, Gail S. Halvorsen Collection MSS 2220, HBL.

<sup>873</sup> “Propaganda,” 8 December 1948, in Gallup, *Gallup Poll*, vol. 1, 772.

While the State Department denied an end to OLV, Little Vittles headquarters guaranteed that “there was none but an altruistic motive behind their organization.”<sup>874</sup>

### **“An Isle of Freedom in a Communist Sea”: Food as Propaganda**

It was evident to all involved that the Cold War contest for Berlin would be fought in the “hearts and minds of Berliners – but first in their bellies.”<sup>875</sup> In the classic narrative of the airlift, the Soviets assume the role of villain, determined to starve innocent Berliners. The United States is the hero, with American air power providing much needed sustenance and preventing a communist takeover. This was the melodrama that unfolded in the press and was supported by military officials. Clay wrote on the second day of the blockade that he doubted the Soviet plan was “to drive us out by starving Berlin.” Instead, he believed the more probable intent “was to frighten Berlin people so they would not accept Western currency.”<sup>876</sup> As Paul Steege explains, the blockade was less about access to the city and more a “contest between competing ‘spin doctors’” seeking to control the narrative.<sup>877</sup>

The decision to send Halvorsen on a publicity tour demonstrated the Air Force’s attention to public image. Tunner recognized the significance of good publicity early on,

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<sup>874</sup> “Little Vittles Is Said Not Halted by State Department,” *Springfield Daily News*, 21 October 1948, Box 1, Folder 9, Gail S. Halvorsen Collection MSS 2220, HBL.

<sup>875</sup> “The Nations: The Siege,” *Time*, 12 July 1948.

<sup>876</sup> “#441. Currency Reform,” Clay to Royall, 25 June 1948, in Smith, *Papers*, vol. 2, 699.

<sup>877</sup> Steege, *Black Market*, 210.

advocating that tonnage reports be made public. He believed that for the airlift to be successful, it needed to be more than just an airlift, “it would be a propaganda weapon held up before the whole world.”<sup>878</sup> He encouraged friendly competition among air crews to boost morale and productivity. The rivalry extended to the loading and unloading gangs, composed mainly of German civilians, whose enthusiasm was often rewarded with cigarettes. U.S. control of the narrative worked to amplify the stakes in Berlin and also convey the importance of new alliances. The food and fuel provided during the airlift was not emergency relief in response to a disaster. Nor was it intended to stabilize the economy and foster recovery and growth. Food was now offered as a token of friendship, offered to potential allies as evidence of U.S. interest in their well-being.

The reorientation films produced by the military in 1948 and 1949 reinforced American interest in the German people, not just the German nation. *Hungerblockade* (1948) highlighted the international dimension of the airlift. French troops are shown unloading cargo, while the narrator remarks that they “typify the spirit of all three powers working together to aid Berlin.”<sup>879</sup> The Soviet hunger blockade is a “crime against humanity,” requiring a unified global response.<sup>880</sup> The film included a speech by Hamburg’s mayor who urged Berliners not to surrender “their freedom and independence,” and called on the occupying powers to be steadfast in their support.<sup>881</sup>

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<sup>878</sup> Tunner, *Over the Hump*, 180.

<sup>879</sup> U.S. Army, *Hungerblockade*, 1948. Available at the Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/details/HungerBlockade1948>.

<sup>880</sup> U.S. Army, *Hungerblockade*, 1948.

<sup>881</sup> U.S. Army, *Hungerblockade*, 1948.

While *Hungerblockade* portrayed the airlift as an international effort to aid Berlin, *Die Brücke*, highlighted the U.S.-German relationship. The film follows two men: a German civilian who works on a ground crew unloading the cargo and an American pilot. The airlift brings the two together, teaching them that they can rely on one another. The narrator explains that the airlift delivers more than food and fuel—it also brings friendship and “a belief in tomorrow.” The message is clear, this is “a human bridge, linking together people who want to be free.”<sup>882</sup>

The military created similar films for U.S. audiences, educating the American public on the merits of food for Berlin. The Air Force produced a special documentary entitled *Operation Vittles*.<sup>883</sup> The film was nominated for Best Documentary Short Subject at the 21<sup>st</sup> Academy Awards, with Halvorsen in attendance on behalf of the Air Force. While it failed to win the Oscar, the film offers useful insights on the significance of propaganda in the early Cold War.<sup>884</sup> Human interest stories like those included in the documentary assuaged fears of a new war and garnered goodwill. The narrator of *Operation Vittles* remarks how some of his “buddies who bombed Berlin a short time ago, were risking their lives again. This time to keep the same city alive.”<sup>885</sup> The film supplied technical information and impressive statistics, but it also underscored the

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<sup>882</sup> U.S. Army, *Die Brücke*, 1948. A portion of the film can be viewed on YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=43X9-cly00A>.

<sup>883</sup> U.S. Air Force, *Operation Vittles*, 1948. Available at the Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/details/OperationVittles>.

<sup>884</sup> *Toward Independence*, a U.S. Army film about the rehabilitation of people with spinal cord injuries, won the Academy Award.

<sup>885</sup> U.S. Air Force, *Operation Vittles*, 1948.

humanitarian nature of the mission. Americans were “proud of their Air Force on a mission of mercy and international significance.”<sup>886</sup>

Accompanying the propaganda films were hundreds of photographs published in American newspapers and magazines. These included the iconic images of children playing amongst the rubble as American aircraft soar overhead. The photographs are striking. The skinny children in drab clothing wave and cheer at the military power largely responsible for the destitution surrounding them. Another well-known image depicts German children recreating the airlift using blocks and toy airplanes. The airlift was now a game in its own right. The game of *Luftbrücke* was as popular as cops and robbers in the United States, noted one newspaper.<sup>887</sup> A lesser known photo featured a young German girl leaving a bakery with her family’s weekly bread ration. The bread, baked with American wheat, is wrapped in an issue of *Neues Deutschland*, the Communist Party newspaper in the Soviet Zone. The headline reads “Airlift Useless.”<sup>888</sup> The image was likely a cleverly staged publicity stunt, but it failed to achieve the longevity the other images did.

Operation Little Vittles remained the most popular public relations campaign related to the airlift. OLV provided an opportunity for ordinary Americans to participate

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<sup>886</sup> U.S. Air Force, *Operation Vittles*, 1948.

<sup>887</sup> Max Cook, “Airlift is Berlin Kids’ Cops and Robbers,” *Birmingham Post*, 24 September 1948, Box 1, Folder 9, Gail S. Halvorsen Collection MSS 2220, HBLL.

<sup>888</sup> Several images can be found in the Digital Collection at the Harry S. Truman Library and Museum: <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/online-collections/berlin-airlift>. The image of the young girl carrying her bread ration can be found on the Department of Defense website: <https://dod.defense.gov/Photos/Photo-Gallery/igphoto/2001147946/>.

in the airlift and demonstrate their commitment to Berlin, “because we need bombs of candy parachuting to earth, not bombs of destruction.”<sup>889</sup> The goodwill campaign reflected a longstanding American humanitarian tradition, “the basis of a very old recipe—Democracy.”<sup>890</sup> Engagement in airlift activities, whether it was in the form of a CARE package, a letter to a German pen pal, or a donated handkerchief, served as an expression of democracy-in-action.

CARE recognized the popularity of Halvorsen’s candy drops and sought to mirror his success with a program of their own. CARE arranged to have balloon Shmoos dropped over West Berlin. A ten-pound package of lard was exchanged for every Shmoo returned to a CARE office. The Shmoo was a character in the popular *Li'l Abner* comic strip. He was a pear-shaped creature known to commit acts of self-sacrifice to satisfy the world’s wants. The Shmoo was a symbolic choice; it loved to be eaten, tasted like any food desired, and reproduced rapidly.<sup>891</sup> Of the 100 Shmoos dropped over Berlin, 91 were brought into a CARE office and exchanged for lard. Karin Finell read *Li'l Abner* in *Stars and Stripes* and was stunned to find a Shmoo floating from the sky toward her. Around its neck was a card that read: “A Shmoo will turn into anything you need it to be. For you it will turn into a CARE package.”<sup>892</sup> Finell clutched the Shmoo so tightly that it popped, but CARE honored the program. CARE believed “the injection of some typically

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<sup>889</sup> Jo Anne Young, “College Student ‘Little Vittles’ Worker Reviews Operation,” *Operation Little Vittles*, CACPL.

<sup>890</sup> *Operation Little Vittles*, CACPL.

<sup>891</sup> Tusa and Tusa, *The Berlin Airlift*, 269.

<sup>892</sup> Finell, *Goodbye to the Mermaids*, 266.

American humor into the deadly serious business of saving Berlin from starvation helped to release somewhat the tension that had been steadily growing.”<sup>893</sup> The program was “a huge hit” and like Halvorsen’s candy drops, the Soviets were reportedly frustrated by the publicity stunt, with one communist newspaper reporting that sandbags were being dropped over the city.<sup>894</sup>

The Air Force also lent support to a Hollywood production on the Airlift. *The Big Lift* (1950) was a love story set against the backdrop of the airlift. The film was shot on location in Berlin and included actual military personnel playing themselves. The film offered an interesting paradigm on American values apparent in the divergent narratives of two American airmen: Danny MacCullough (Montgomery Clift) and Hank Kowalski (Paul Douglas). Each man gets involved with a German woman, albeit under different pretenses and with different outcomes. Danny, the young, eager, handsome pilot falls for an intelligent German widow named Frederica. Danny plans to marry Frederica but is shocked to learn she deceived him. Her husband, a Nazi sympathizer, is waiting for her in St. Louis. Hank, the jaded veteran, believes Berliners deserve to suffer, and verbally abuses Gerda, the German girl he was dating.<sup>895</sup>

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<sup>893</sup> “Germany – Draft History,” 51, Box 2, Folder: Germany Draft History, Bloomstein, Chas “History of CARE,” CARE records, MADNYPL.

<sup>894</sup> *National Geographic* clipping, p. 613, Box 1, Folder 6, Gail S. Halvorsen Collection MSS 2220, HBLL.

<sup>895</sup> For more on *The Big Lift* see Ralph Stern, “The Big Lift (1950): Image and Identity in Blockaded Berlin,” *Cinema Journal* 46, no. 2 (Winter 2007): 66–90; and Ulrike Weckel, “Teaching Democracy on the Big Screen: Gender and the Reeducation of Postwar Germans in *A Foreign Affair* and *The Big Lift*,” in *Gender and the Long Postwar: The United States and the Two Germanys, 1945–1989*, ed. Karen Hagemann and Sonya Michel (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2014): 95–118. Also in Goedde, *GIs and Germans*, 192–195.

Throughout the film, the characters contemplate the Cold War rivalry by exploring the merits of democracy or communism. Ralph Stern writes that the film depicts Berlin as a “site of profound ideological and cultural competition.”<sup>896</sup> While Hank and Gerda are the supporting characters, their relationship explicitly underscores the film’s message. Gerda is ashamed of her family’s past and is eager to learn more about the United States and democracy. Hank responds callously that “[D]emocracy is democracy,” insinuating that Gerda is ignorant yet failing to articulate a definition himself. By the end of the film, Gerda challenges Hank to behave like a proper American, throwing cans of Spam at him and asserting her right to demand he leave her apartment. The outburst proves to Hank that Gerda “gets it” and the two reconcile.

*The Big Lift* recognized the complexity of U.S.-German relationships in 1948, but concluded that the German embrace of American virtues made the population worthy of American aid, protection, and friendship. Commenting on the potential for air power to translate to peace power, the *New York Times* remarked that, “it was an ‘expansive, politically shrewd’ maneuver to show both the helpless German civilian population of Berlin and the Soviet Government that the Western Powers do not intend to let Berlin either starve or freeze.”<sup>897</sup> Acknowledging that the airlift’s role increasing American prestige in Europe, journalist Drew Pearson wrote, “the Soviet government not only couldn’t suppress it, but was worried about it.”<sup>898</sup> The roar of aircraft overhead instilled

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<sup>896</sup> Stern, “The Big Lift,” 70.

<sup>897</sup> “U.S.A.F. – One Year Old,” *New York Times*, 19 September 1948, E8.

<sup>898</sup> Drew Pearson, “Airlift Appreciated by Russians,” *The Washington Post*, 11 May 1949, B15.

hope in Berliners. The press generated by the Airlift contributed to the growing significance of propaganda in the emerging Cold War and the symbolic power within benevolent diplomacy.

### **Conclusion**

The Cold War was a different kind of conflict, but it still required the mass mobilization of civilian populations. For a war weary American public, it was important to underscore the benevolent nature of the Airlift, emphasizing this was an operation for peace not prelude to World War III. One way to accomplish this was to demonstrate that the arsenal of democracy included more than weapons of destruction. American food power boosted American prestige and offered a platform for benign citizen engagement. Americans responded enthusiastically, participating in charitable campaigns and supporting Allied efforts in Germany.

Berlin became “the symbol of resistance to Communist authoritarianism, and the Berliners, in reversal of their previous position, found themselves in the forefront of the struggle for the preservation of individual values.”<sup>899</sup> Americans viewed Berliners as victims of communist aggression rather than a conquered enemy people. Historian Susan Carruthers writes, “As plucky underdogs in this confrontation between unarmed democrats and armed dictators, Berliners appeared thoroughly deserving of Americans’ sympathy and support.”<sup>900</sup> When *Life* published an article praising the men of the airlift,

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<sup>899</sup> “Germany – Draft History,” 53, Box 2, Folder: Germany Draft History, Bloomstein, Chas “History of CARE,” CARE records, MADNYPL.

<sup>900</sup> Carruthers, *The Good Occupation*, 309.

the Air Force was credited with earning respect among the Germans.<sup>901</sup> The airlift highlights the dual significance of humanitarian aid as both an instrument of statecraft and propaganda tool. Two weeks after the blockade was lifted, the Federal Republic of Germany was established in the West and the German Democratic Republic was formed later that year, solidifying the division between East and West.

The onset of the Cold War inscribed the occupation of Germany with broader implications. West Berlin was an island of democracy, but after the airlift Americans touted it as a bastion of freedom. The conversation was no longer about democracy's superiority, but about the freedom offered by democracy. Food aid reinforced democracy and it also was a token of friendship. In his inaugural address in January 1949, Truman stated, "Democracy alone can supply the vitalizing force to stir the peoples of the world into triumphant action, not only against their human oppressors, but also against their ancient enemies-hunger, misery, and despair."<sup>902</sup>

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<sup>901</sup> "The Big Lift: Our Airmen Deserve a Hand for a Magnificent Performance," *Life*, 20 August 1948, 35.

<sup>902</sup> Harry S. Truman, Inaugural Address, 20 January 1949, *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/229929>.

## CHAPTER 8

### CONCLUSION: FIGHTING COMMUNISM WITH CALORIES

Until we come to understand the widespread basic human need for food we are going to find that millions of people in other lands cannot understand the word “democracy.” It is not that communism is more successful at winning converts. Rather, we are losing potential friends by our failure to use the most effective weapon at our command.

--Paul Comly French, 1950<sup>903</sup>

In August 1950, the *New York Times* printed a letter to the editor written by prominent journalist and Executive Director of CARE, Paul Comly French. In the piece, titled “Hunger as Democracy’s Foe,” French, a known pacifist, lamented the amount of money and resources diverted for military purposes. Proponents justified this funding as a “bulwark” to the “freedoms we hold precious.” French believed this to be a gross misunderstanding of foreign affairs and the American mission. He identified hunger as the foundational threat to the spread of democracy, writing, “To people who are not sure of tomorrow’s meal, the democracy and political freedoms we feel are fundamental can have no meaning.”<sup>904</sup> This idea was not groundbreaking or novel. It echoed statements made by Clay and others in Military Government five years prior and reiterated what Hoover preached since the Russian Civil War.

French’s letter was persuasive, nevertheless, because of the human stories that shaped this worldview. He shared poignant anecdotes from his travels with CARE over

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<sup>903</sup> Paul Comly French, “Letters to the Times: Hunger as Democracy’s Foe,” *New York Times*, 18 August 1950, 18.

<sup>904</sup> French, “Letters,” 18.

the previous four years. He wrote of a man in Asia who saw no reason to fight the communists if they offered an extra bowl of rice a week. In Pakistan food prices “shot up 100 per cent since partition,” leaving many to “dip a wheat flour pancake into weak mutton gravy—if they can afford mutton.”<sup>905</sup> While people across the globe subsisted on meager meals, the United States stored millions of pounds of food as surplus. The cost of this storage, noted French, was upwards of \$237,000 daily, with many of these “life-giving” products spoiling in storage. French advocated for legislation allowing for the use of U.S. agriculture surplus in overseas relief. Forgoing a moralist or humanitarian argument in favor of the bill, French asserted that food was “the most effective weapon at our command.”<sup>906</sup> The United States could not hope to convince others of the superiority of democracy if their stomachs remained empty. This was not a question of guns or butter, but a recognition that in the Cold War, food was more powerful than a traditional weapon.

CARE played a substantial role in the Berlin Airlift, with more than 200,000 packages delivered alongside other supplies.<sup>907</sup> CARE missions throughout eastern Europe, however, faced increasing Soviet hostility. Publicly, the organization maintained purely humanitarian motives, but privately, leadership acknowledged its role as an instrument of foreign policy. Even without overt political backing, CARE’s operations “tend[ed] willy-nilly to destroy the authority of the Cominform and replace it with

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<sup>905</sup> French, “Letters,” 18.

<sup>906</sup> French, “Letters,” 18.

<sup>907</sup> Chapter 10 "Special Programs," p. 363, Box 1, Folder: CBHC (5 of 6) Chapter 10 "Special Programs" Chapter 11 "Relations with the US Government" Chapter 12 "Behind the Iron Curtain," CARE records, MADNYPL.

internationalism and a tolerant world outlook.”<sup>908</sup> Thus, it came as no shock when they were forced to end operations behind the Iron Curtain, withdrawing from Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Poland.

In the midst of these closures, however, CARE did, finally, negotiate access to the Soviet Zone. In October 1949, the organization announced it would accept designated remittances for delivery in Soviet-controlled East Germany. CARE deemed the program, limited to Thrift and Lard Packages, a success. More than 30,000 packages were mailed in the first five months with minimal interference by GDR authorities.<sup>909</sup> In 1951, CARE expanded the program to include general relief. 129,428 packages were delivered over the course of nineteen months, the packages “alleviating need and assuaging . . . worry,” but also, “keeping open some contact with the people of East Germany.”<sup>910</sup> The East German program operated until April 1953, when new customs regulations, increasing surveillance, and growing antagonisms made deliveries impractical.<sup>911</sup>

A survey conducted by the Office of Public Affairs in early 1950 found that eight of ten people in the U.S. Zone heard of CARE packages, with almost all of those

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<sup>908</sup> “Chapter 12: Behind the Iron Curtain,” p. 414, Box 1, Folder: CBHC (5 of 6) Chapter 10 “Special Programs” Chapter 11 “Relations with the US Government” Chapter 12 “Behind the Iron Curtain,” CARE records, MADNYPL.

<sup>909</sup> “Chapter 12: Behind the Iron Curtain,” p. 445, Box 1, Folder: CBHC (5 of 6) Chapter 10 “Special Programs” Chapter 11 “Relations with the US Government” Chapter 12 “Behind the Iron Curtain,” CARE records, MADNYPL.

<sup>910</sup> “Chapter 12: Behind the Iron Curtain,” p. 446, Box 1, Folder: CBHC (5 of 6) Chapter 10 “Special Programs” Chapter 11 “Relations with the US Government” Chapter 12 “Behind the Iron Curtain,” CARE records, MADNYPL.

<sup>911</sup> “CARE Quits East German Zone,” 17 April 1953, Box 906, Folder: Foreign Releases Bk. 6 Jan 1953-Jan 1954, CARE Records, MADNYPL.

surveyed “aware that the packages come from the United States.” When asked about the organization’s motives, an “overwhelming majority” of those polled believed CARE packages were sent to help; few “think the profit motive or a political reason is paramount.”<sup>912</sup> The survey confirmed the popularity of the program, as well as its inherent value as a propaganda tool.

Throughout the 1950s and 60s, the West German government encouraged citizens to mail food packages to East Germany, sharing the newfound consumer abundance of the Miracle Years with East Germans.<sup>913</sup> Advertisements encouraging the gifts suggested that the food packages contain luxury items, demonstrating the superiority of western capitalism. Alice Weinreb writes, “These carefully selected and, for the East German consumer, cost-free delicacies were intended to destabilize the East German market and stoke consumer dissatisfaction.”<sup>914</sup> Yet, like the CARE packages on which they were modeled, the power attributed to the food within depended more on personal tastes and desires, than political circumstance.

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<sup>912</sup> “The German Public Views the CARE Organization, Report No. 7,” 6 February 1950, Box 1123, Entry 368, RG 407, NARA.

<sup>913</sup> The Miracle Years refers to the rapid economic growth of West Germany in the 1950s. For a broad overview of the social and cultural impact of this economic prosperity see *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949–1968*, Hanna Schissler, ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

<sup>914</sup> Weinreb, *Modern Hungers*, 160. For more on East German consumption see *Consuming Germany and the Cold War*, David F. Crew, ed. (New York: Berg, 2003); and Katherine Pence, “Grounds for Discontent?: Coffee from the Black Market to the Kaffeklatsch in the GDR,” in *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe*, ed. Paulina Bren and Mary Neuberger (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 197–225.

## Food Aid and the Developing World

Truman took the ideas underpinning the Marshall Plan one step further in his 1949 inaugural address. He proposed a program for international development assistance called Point IV. The program sought to reduce poverty and increase the production levels of developing countries, thus creating new markets for American products and resources. Truman believed that economic prosperity would reduce the likelihood of Soviet interference in these nations. His introduction of Point IV highlighted the relationship between humanitarian aid and national security.

Historian Amy Sayward refers to this key moment as the “birth of development,” when “discrete groups of people with international stature, expertise, money, power, influence, and the best intentions began working to better the lives of other human beings.”<sup>915</sup> That summer, Congress appropriated \$45 million for the program, which focused primarily on technical assistance. Truman’s global program of development aid was quickly incorporated into U.S. foreign policy. In many ways, the experience in Germany made the birth of development possible. In U.S. occupied Germany, American policymakers gained the confidence necessary to pursue similar projects of social and economic improvement on a global scale. While Point IV set the stage for more elaborate nation building programs in the 1960s, it lacked the glamour and import of the Marshall Plan.

In a conversation with Stanley Andrews in 1952, Truman quipped, “If I’m ever remembered fifty years after I’m dead, it will probably be because my name is associated

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<sup>915</sup> Sayward, *Birth of Development*, 1.

with some of these [foreign aid] programs.”<sup>916</sup> The Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, and Point Four program were guided by his desire to not only win the peace but preserve it. Truman took Roosevelt’s liberal, internationalist vision for the postwar period and adapted it to meet the demands of the Cold War. Food aid in Germany began as a stability-seeking endeavor before it laid the foundation for economic reconstruction. Food security made Germans more receptive to democracy and boosted morale in the United States and U.S. Zone. Yet food aid was not merely a foreign policy tool used to encourage economic development, however. In the context of the Cold War, it served as an instrument of psychological warfare, highlighting the ideological, material, and symbolic differences between the East and West.

Two of the United States’ lesser-known foreign assistance programs—the Yugoslavia Emergency Relief Assistance Act of 1950 and the India Food Assistance Act of 1951—underscore the growing political significance of food aid programs in the Cold War.<sup>917</sup> Suffering from a drought, communist Yugoslavia, led by Josip Tito, requested food aid from the United States. Truman believed it was essential to use up to \$16 million of funds from the Mutual Defense Assistance Program to meet the immediate food needs of the Yugoslav armed forces. He warned that Yugoslavia, “is a nation whose strategic

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<sup>916</sup> Andrews, the former Chief of the Food, Agriculture and Forestry Division in the U.S. Zone, was appointed director of the Technical Cooperation Administration in 1952. Stanley Andrews, interview by Richard D. McKinzie, 31 October 1970, transcript, p. 56, Oral History Interviews, HSTL.

<sup>917</sup> For a cursory overview of both Acts see Riley, *The Political History of American Food Aid*, 152–158.

location makes it of direct important to the defense of the North Atlantic area.”<sup>918</sup> Aid to Yugoslavia was “in accordance with our national interests and with the American tradition of helping other peoples in time of dire need.”<sup>919</sup> Seeking to aggravate existing tensions between Tito and Stalin, Congress quickly authorized \$38 million in emergency aid to Yugoslavia.<sup>920</sup> A few months later, the government of newly independent and non-aligned India made a similar request following a period of drought and famine. Again, Truman urged aid “first to save human lives, and secondly, to strengthen freedom and democracy in an important area of Asia.”<sup>921</sup> Unlike Yugoslavia, passage of the bill was bogged down by acrimonious debate, with many Congressmen questioning whether aid to India served U.S. interests. The delay further damaged U.S.-India relations.<sup>922</sup> The legislation, designed to assuage those who feared aid was better spent on a known (or potential) ally, approved a \$190 million loan to purchase wheat. Passage of these two bills demonstrated policymakers firm embrace of food aid as an anti-communist measure, while highlighting the growing geopolitical importance of the developing world.

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<sup>918</sup> “Letter from the President to Chairmen of Pertinent Congressional Committees,” *U.S. Department of State Bulletin* 23, no. 596, 4 December 1950, 879.

<sup>919</sup> “Stop-Gap Aid Program Outlined,” *U.S. Department of State Bulletin* 23, no. 596, 4 December 1950, 879.

<sup>920</sup> For more see *FRUS: 1950, Central and Eastern Europe, The Soviet Union*, vol. 4, ed. William Z. Slany, et al. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1980), 1507–1509.

<sup>921</sup> “Immediate Legislation Urged to Provide Grain for India, Statement by the President,” *U.S. Department of State Bulletin* 24, no. 614, 9 April 1951, 592.

<sup>922</sup> For more see Robert J. McMahon, “Food as a Diplomatic Weapon: The India Wheat Loan of 1951,” *Pacific Historical Review* 56, no. 3 (August 1987): 349–377.

The introduction of the Point Four program in 1949 redirected foreign aid, placing the focus on technical assistance rather than overt humanitarian or food aid. By 1950, the geographic focus of these economic development programs also changed, with events in China and Korea redirecting attention to Asia. Alarmed by communist advances, Congress approved programs for Formosa, Korea, Indochina, Indonesia, Burma, and the Philippines.<sup>923</sup> In his 1955 reflection on the Marshall Plan, Harry Bayard Price wrote, “the basic dilemma was how to advance the security and well-being of these countries and their capacity to deal with their own problems, including the threat of Communist subversion, without inviting suspicion and resistance.”<sup>924</sup> Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) activities in southeast Asia were “designed primarily to bring Communist brushfires under control.”<sup>925</sup> In order to ensure the “survival of moderate democratic governments,” existing resources needed to be better distributed, food production increased, and trade expanded.<sup>926</sup>

In addition to addressing economic conditions, the development programs implemented throughout Asia also sought to improve social conditions and establish

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<sup>923</sup> Barry Riley writes that these programs, “would prove of little consequence, in terms of impact on economic development, agricultural development, poverty reduction, or improvements in the uncertain quality of governance.” Riley, *The Political History of American Food Aid*, 167.

<sup>924</sup> Harry Bayard Price, *The Marshall Plan and its Meaning: An Independent and Unbiased Appraisal of the Entire Record* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press under the auspices of the Governmental Affairs Institute, 1955), 203.

<sup>925</sup> Price, *The Marshall Plan*, 204.

<sup>926</sup> Price, *The Marshall Plan*, 205.

“relationships of mutual confidence.”<sup>927</sup> A successful aid program would foster “friendly and cooperative relations with the United States and other free nations.”<sup>928</sup> In a report to Congress, the ECA discussed the “creation of social and economic conditions and institutions under which the people feel that their basic needs and aspirations are being satisfied by their own free and independent governments.” This, in turn, would promote “confidence, good will, friendship for the United States among the governments concerned and among the masses of the people.”<sup>929</sup> Policymakers identified hunger and want as the primary drivers of communism, creating an environment where “people were ready to grasp at any new hope, any utopian promise.”<sup>930</sup> Yet, Price pointed out, even hungry men “do not live on bread alone.”<sup>931</sup> Despite the United States committing millions of dollars of economic and military aid into China, China still fell. Policymakers attributed this to the power of persuasion, with the communists investing in propaganda that “won the support that enabled them to take over the country.”<sup>932</sup>

To prevent repeating this error, the United States needed to combat Soviet propaganda that painted American aid as cultural, political, and economic imperialism. In a report to the president, the International Development Advisory Board highlighted the

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<sup>927</sup> Price, *The Marshall Plan*, 205.

<sup>928</sup> Price, *The Marshall Plan*, 205.

<sup>929</sup> ECA, *Twelfth Report to Congress* (Washington, 1951), 64. Quoted in Price, *The Marshall Plan*, 205–206.

<sup>930</sup> Price, *The Marshall Plan*, 369.

<sup>931</sup> Price, *The Marshall Plan*, 369.

<sup>932</sup> Price, *The Marshall Plan*, 369.

difference between economic development and economic subversion, urging an economic policy that worked to “strengthen the ties of cooperation which band the free peoples together.” The United States needed to craft a strategy that was “positive,” “constructive,” and rooted in “a genuine sense of humanity’s needs for common effort toward the future.”<sup>933</sup> Driven primarily by economic considerations, the aid programs undertaken by the Truman administration also served political, psychological, and strategic purposes.

Truman opted not to run for re-election in 1952. Having narrowly won in 1948, his approval ratings had sunk to an unparalleled low, dropping from a high of 87 % in June 1945 to a low of 22 % in February 1952.<sup>934</sup> Eisenhower rebuked Truman’s attempts to court him for the Democratic ticket, and ran as a Republican, easily winning the election. He inherited a growing agricultural surplus in 1953, as well as the framework for a vast foreign assistance program. Less than a year into his presidency, political unrest behind the Iron Curtain provided an opportunity to flex the United States’ growing food power in the city where its propaganda potential was fully realized only a few years earlier.

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<sup>933</sup> U.S. International Development Advisory Board, *Partners in Progress: A Report to President Truman by the International Development Advisory Board* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1951), 4, available via HathiTrust Online.

<sup>934</sup> These numbers reflected charges of communism and corruption in Truman’s administration alongside the unpopular Korean War. Gallup, “Presidential Approval Ratings – Gallup Historical Statistics and Trends,” <https://news.gallup.com/poll/116677/presidential-approval-ratings-gallup-historical-statistics-trends.aspx>.

## Food as Psychological Warfare

A month after Joseph Stalin died in March 1953, Eisenhower delivered a speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors entitled, “The Chance for Peace.” It was designed to be the start of an American peace offensive.<sup>935</sup> The speech highlighted the costs associated with the Cold War, emphasizing the economic burden of a continued arms race. It is often remembered for its imagery of “humanity hanging from a cross of iron.” These costs were more than financial, however, “[a world in arms] is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children.”<sup>936</sup> Hunger appeared four times in the speech, referencing the symbolic “hunger for peace,” as well as a physical hunger: “Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed.”<sup>937</sup>

Eisenhower and his advisors were presented with an opportunity to underscore the connections between hunger and security in June, following an uprising in East Berlin. East German General Secretary Walter Ulbricht’s had embarked on a program called “Constructing Socialism” to strengthen the GDR’s ties to the Soviet Union. This included the collectivization of agriculture, which contributed to food shortages throughout the winter of 1953. On June 16, 1953, workers in East Berlin

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<sup>935</sup> For more on Eisenhower’s approach to national security see Robert R. Bowie and Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Michael J. Hogan, *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State, 1945–1954* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 366–419.

<sup>936</sup> Dwight D. Eisenhower, “Address “The Chance for Peace” Delivered Before the American Society of Newspaper Editors,” 16 April 1953, *TAPP*, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/231643>.

<sup>937</sup> Eisenhower, “The Chance for Peace.”

demonstrated against increased production quotas.<sup>938</sup> The unrest spread quickly to cities across the GDR, with East Germans protesting political persecution, suppression of church groups, and food shortages, among a host of other complaints. On June 17, agitators converged on Berlin's city center, chanting slogans and carrying signs that aired their grievances, including *Butter statt Kanonen!* (Butter, not arms).<sup>939</sup> The Soviet authorities declared martial law and used force to suppress the riots. Rather than intervene covertly or in a show of military force, the State Department offered food. The U.S. provided millions of "Eisenhower packages" to any East German willing to cross the border and visit distribution centers scattered across West Berlin.<sup>940</sup>

Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles envisioned the food program as a form of psychological warfare. It was intended to prolong the unrest and incite similar disturbances in other Soviet satellites. The uprising set off a flurry of activity in the Psychological Strategy Board (PSB), which was instructed to explore a U.S. response by the National Security Council. PSB D-45, the resulting action plan, "envisaged aggressive psychological warfare to exploit and heighten the unrest behind

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<sup>938</sup> For a good overview of the uprising accompanied by primary sources see Christian Ostermann, ed., *Uprising in East Germany 1953: The Cold War, the German Question, and the First Major Upheaval Behind the Iron Curtain* (New York: Central European University Press, 2001). For more on the western response to the uprising see David Coleman, "Eisenhower and the Berlin Problem, 1953–1954," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 2, no. 1 (2000): 3–34; Valur Ingimundarson, "The Eisenhower Administration, the Adenauer Government, and the Political Uses of the East German Uprising in 1953," *Diplomatic History* 20, no. 3 (Summer 1996): 381–409; and Klaus Larres, "Preserving Law and Order: Britain, the United States, and the East German Uprising of 1953," *Twentieth Century British History* 5, no. 3 (1994): 320–350.

<sup>939</sup> Ostermann, *Uprising*, 164.

<sup>940</sup> Total figures place the number of packages delivered at 5.5 million. Ostermann, *Uprising*, 322.

the Iron Curtain.”<sup>941</sup> The State Department, along with the PSB, recognized that a program of food relief had the potential to accomplish multiple objectives: increase the visibility of the uprising, discredit the Soviet response, and provoke further unrest.

On June 30, a reporter asked Dulles if any thought was given to supplying the residents of East Berlin with food. Deeming it an idea “worth exploring,” Dulles asked aids to look into it.<sup>942</sup> The decision to distribute food in West Berlin fulfilled the PSB’s earlier objective to “exploit the fluidity of the East-West travel situation.”<sup>943</sup> Within a few days, the “scheme” was in order. State Department documents reveal a carefully orchestrated display. First, West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer would announce a food program for East Germany and then “approach” the president for additional support. Eisenhower would then contact Soviet officials and offer food for East Germany “in humanitarian terms.” U.S. relief would be provided in the West regardless of the Soviet response. Initial packages would be readily available Army C-rations, but the majority of the aid would come from U.S. surpluses, “including grain, oil lard, sugar, dry skim milk, and some meat.”<sup>944</sup>

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<sup>941</sup> Document No. 74: NSC 158, “United States Objectives and Actions to Exploit the Unrest in the Satellite States,” 29 June 1953. In Ostermann, *Uprising*, 332.

<sup>942</sup> Dulles to Merchant, 30 June 1953, 862B.49/6-3055, CDF 1950-1954, Box 5263, RG 59, NARA.

<sup>943</sup> “Psychological Strategy Board Memorandum from John M. Anspacher to George A. Morgan,” June 17, 1953, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library (FOIA release), in “Soviet Flashpoints” Collection, National Security Archive, Digital Archive, Wilson Center (hereafter cited as NSADAWC), <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111271>.

<sup>944</sup> Department of State to HICOG Bonn, 6 July 1953, 862B.49/7-353, CDF 1950-1954, Box 5263, RG 59, NARA.

The State Department's program was partly inspired by a "neighborly aid" program run by the Kreuzberg Borough, which sold "milk and fruits near [the] East Sector border to Eastern residents on [a] one DM East to one DM West basis."<sup>945</sup> The program was supported in Berlin by Eleanor Dulles, who worked in the State Department's Office of German Affairs and was the sister of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and CIA Director Allen Dulles. In her memoir, Eleanor wrote that both brothers reached out and inquired what the U.S. could do for East Berliners following the uprising, and it was she who suggested giving food. Eleanor assembled a committee and worked out the details of package assembly and distribution.<sup>946</sup> Eisenhower packages provided a week's supply of food, with a value of approximately \$15, similar in size and value to a CARE package.

On July 3, James Conant, Ambassador to West Germany reported that Adenauer was "agreeable" to the plan and would publicly issue a request for aid.<sup>947</sup> Announcing the food program on July 10, Eisenhower explained to the American people that he was responding to an appeal by the FRG to support their efforts combatting hunger among fellows Germans in the East. He publicized his overture to the Soviets and invited "other nations of the free world" to contribute.<sup>948</sup> "Touched" by Eisenhower's "generous offer,"

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<sup>945</sup> Berlin to Secretary of State, no. 71, 15 July 1953, 862B.49/7-1553, CDF 1950-1954, Box 5263, RG 59, NARA.

<sup>946</sup> Eleanor Lansing Dulles, *Chances of a Lifetime: A Memoir* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1980), 255–256.

<sup>947</sup> Bonn to Secretary of State, 3 July 1953, 862B.49/7-353, CDF 1950-1954, Box 5263, RG 59, NARA.

<sup>948</sup> Statement by the President, 10 July 1953, Box 14, F: Germany 1953 (3), International Series, Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower as President, 1953–61, DDEL.

Adenauer wrote the president, “This spontaneous demonstration of humane readiness to help, which is in the best traditions of the American people, has caused great joy in all Germany.”<sup>949</sup> Adenauer publicly praised U.S. aid as evidence of America’s commitment to humane causes. He knew the aid was not “spontaneous,” but with elections around the corner, this “scheme” was mutually beneficial.

Policymakers feared charges of exploitation and advised transparency so the U.S. could “maximize [the] impression humanitarian motives [are] playing significant role and . . . minimize impression that project [is] primarily propaganda move in Cold War.”<sup>950</sup> Conant was particularly mindful of potential obstacles that may embarrass or harm American interests. In a move contrary to previous aid programs, he advised against the use of Army C-rations and CARE packages, deeming them too “recognizable as American and subject to confiscation.”<sup>951</sup> Whereas previous aid ventures relied on recognition of food as a gift from the United States, this program explicitly sought to minimize publicity. Eisenhower packages originated in U.S. stockpiles in Berlin and were not to be confused with voluntary gift packages. The program launched on July 27, and Conant reported to Dulles the following day that the program appeared successful. He warned, however, that, “if the Russians retaliate by closing the Sector borders or by confiscating the food packages from the people who return, or by punishing those who

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<sup>949</sup> Bonn to Secretary of State, no. 244, 15 July 1953, 862B.49/7-1553, CDF 1950-1954, Box 5263, RG 59, NARA.

<sup>950</sup> Berlin to Secretary of State, no. 34, 7 July 1953, 862B.49/7-753, CDF 1950-1954, Box 5263, RG 59, NARA.

<sup>951</sup> Bonn to Secretary of State, no. 276, 17 July 1953, 862B.49/7-1753, CDF 1950-1954, Box 5263, RG 59, NARA.

cross, then we will be faced with a new set of problems.”<sup>952</sup> To ensure success, the program needed to avoid provocations and potential violence.

As expected, the Soviets rejected the offer of food aid for East Germany. The GDR pursued several strategies to counter the food program, including more rigid policing of the border, interfering with rail and bus traffic, confiscation, and even the introduction of their own food program. The Russians demanded an immediate end to the package program, but it met with praise in the international press. West German news outlets covered the joint “humanitarian gesture” as an effort to “aid hungry and enslaved human beings behind the Iron Curtain.”<sup>953</sup> French papers applauded Eisenhower’s offer of food, referring to it as “unquestionably the most powerful psychological weapon the West has thus far used against the Russians.”<sup>954</sup> *Le Monde* acknowledged the humanitarian spirit behind the operation, but also noted the dual psychological benefits: forcing the Soviet Union into an awkward position denying food to a satellite state and strengthening Adenauer’s position before general elections. Swedish news sources echoed these statements, remarking that the Russians could only blame themselves for creating this propaganda opportunity.<sup>955</sup>

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<sup>952</sup> “Letter from James B. Conant to John Foster Dulles,” July 28, 1953, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, NARA (FOIA release), in NSADAWC, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/112598>.

<sup>953</sup> “Second Monthly Report on Implementation of PSB D-21,” July 1953, Box 12, F: PSB 091 Germany (7), PSB Central Files Series, White House Office National Security Council Staff Papers, 1953–61, DDEL.

<sup>954</sup> Paris Embassy to State Department, 17 July 1953, 862B.49/7-1753, CDF 1950-1954, Box 5263, RG 59, NARA.

<sup>955</sup> Paris Embassy to State Department, 17 July 1953, 862B.49/7-1753, CDF 1950-1954, Box 5263, RG 59, NARA.

In the United States, the press reported widely on the program, highlighting the Russian refusal to accept aid and the subsequent scramble to import food from Soviet sources. *Life* magazine printed images of the “biggest breadline in the world,” with women shoving and trampling one another in the clamor for Eisenhower packages.<sup>956</sup> Photos showed East German women hiding the food packages in baby carriages and shielding their faces from the camera for fear of identification. The magazine praised the mobs who “defied Communist warnings and swarmed across the border for free food,” noting that it left communist authorities “furious and frustrated.”<sup>957</sup>

The GDR’s *Berliner Zeitung* labeled the act a “heinous American propaganda trick.” The paper also publicized the arrival of “high-grade foodstuffs” from the Soviet Union, Poland, China, and Albania.<sup>958</sup> Intelligence reports the first week of August reported several disturbances related to the aid program, including workers who “demanded permission to go to Berlin to pick up food packages.” They “staged a slow-down” when they were refused.<sup>959</sup> Some East Germans traveled nearly 100 miles to pick up food in Berlin, evidence, according to Eleanor Dulles, of “their solidarity with those in revolt.”<sup>960</sup> The Soviets launched a leaflet campaign claiming American food “contain[ed]

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<sup>956</sup> “Hungry Germans Scramble for West’s Food,” *Life*, 10 August 1953, 33–35.

<sup>957</sup> “Hungry Germans,” 33.

<sup>958</sup> Berlin to Secretary of State, no. 71, 15 July 1953, 862B.49/7-1553, CDF 1950-1954, Box 5263, RG 59, NARA.

<sup>959</sup> “CIA Information Report, 'Unrest over Food Packages',” August 07, 1953, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Central Intelligence Agency (FOIA Release), in NSADAWC, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/112605>.

<sup>960</sup> Dulles, *Chances of a Lifetime*, 256.

horsemeat intended for US Army dogs.”<sup>961</sup> Food seized by East German authorities was redistributed to welfare organizations in the Soviet Zone. Nevertheless, “all know the United States is footing the 15 million dollar bill.”<sup>962</sup> Ernst Reuter, Mayor of West Berlin, remarked that the program was “like an artillery attack” on the East, placing GDR authorities on the defensive.<sup>963</sup>

The positive reception highlighted the program’s psychological value. Historian Christian Ostermann argues that the success of the program confirmed to officials that, “there were innumerable means short of war that could . . . advance the liberation of Eastern Europe.”<sup>964</sup> Not only did the program “deeply embarrass the Soviet authorities and put them on a peevish defensive,” but it also served as “a demonstration of [Americans’] continued interest in [East Germany].”<sup>965</sup> By September, the food assistance program was deemed an overwhelming success, offering “further confirmation of Berlin’s influence as a western outpost.”<sup>966</sup> While the program was a hit with East

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<sup>961</sup> Bonn to Secretary of State, no. 494, 2 August 1953, 862B.49/8-253, CDF 1950–1954, Box 5263, RG 59, NARA.

<sup>962</sup> “Reds Hand Out U.S. Food Gifts as Soviet Aid,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 1 August 1953, A8.

<sup>963</sup> Berlin to Secretary of State, no. 177, 4 August 1953, 862B.49/8-453, CDF 1950–1954, Box 5263, RG 59, NARA.

<sup>964</sup> Christian Ostermann, “The United States, the East German Uprising of 1953, and the Limits of Rollback - Working Paper No. 11,” *Cold War International History Project* (December 1994): 36.

<sup>965</sup> Coburn Kidd to Geoffrey W. Lewis, “United States Food Offer to East Germany,” 29 July 1953, 862B.49/7-2953, CDF 1950-1954, Box 5263, RG 59, NARA.

<sup>966</sup> Dulles, “NSC Progress Report: US Policy and Courses of Action to Counter Possible Soviet or Satellite Action Against Berlin,” 10 September 1953, 1, Box 3, Folder: NSC 132/1 – Policy on Berlin, Policy Papers Subseries, NSC Series, White House

Germans, it did little to prolong unrest in East Berlin. The French and British did, however, voice concerns about the program's impact on the future security of Berlin. The Berlin office countered with their assessment that the Russians seemed preoccupied with world opinion, evidenced by their hesitancy to pursue a more violent suppression of the uprising.<sup>967</sup> Ultimately, it was this Allied apprehension that contributed to the discontinuation of the package program in early October, approximately 2 and a half months after the first packages were delivered.

### **Solving the Paradox of American Surpluses**

The Berlin food program may have been short-lived, but the logic behind it persisted. A White House memo in February 1954 reiterated the importance of food in the Cold War, stating, "We should be ever alert for opportunities to use food, which should be stored in Germany in advance and not require an act of Congress once a decision is made to go ahead."<sup>968</sup> Later that summer, Eisenhower signed Public Law 480, arranging for the distribution of surplus commodities in ways that would further both domestic and foreign interests. While the threads of humanitarianism ran throughout the legislation, the emphasis was placed on economic development, price stabilization, and improved trade relationships.

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Office, Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs: records, 1952–61, DDEL.

<sup>967</sup> Berlin to Secretary of State, no. 103, 22 July 1953, 862B.49/7-2253, CDF 1950-1954, Box 5263, RG 59, NARA.

<sup>968</sup> Top Secret Memo, 27 February 1954, Box 22, Folder: Jackson, C.D. 1954 (2), Administration Series, Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower as President of the United States, 1953–1961 (Ann Whitman File), DDEL.

Debate over a proposed surplus program predated events in Berlin. Discussion accelerated in early 1953 when emergency aid to Pakistan received widespread congressional support due to its ability to alleviate the mounting U.S. surplus. In January 1953, the State Department learned that Pakistan faced famine and lacked the funds necessary to purchase wheat.<sup>969</sup> As with India, the proposal for emergency assistance to Pakistan proved contentious. A significant, and growing, grain surplus loomed, however, and facilitated passage of the Pakistan Wheat Aid Act. Eisenhower signed the legislation on June 25, 1953, a week after the uprisings in Germany, and well before the launch of the food package program in Berlin. The experience in Germany, however, fostered support for a surplus program, paving the way for PL 480.

Ironically, the earliest use of PL 480 funds was in the GDR, in response to flooding along the Danube and Elbe Rivers in the summer of 1954. The U.S. pledged millions of dollars of surplus food to six European countries, many behind the Iron Curtain. Historian Julia Irwin writes that American policymakers seized an opportunity for a propaganda advantage in the aftermath of a natural disaster.<sup>970</sup> The State Department presented its proposed aid program as a purely humanitarian gesture. To “demonstrate the apolitical nature of their offer,” they invited the League of Red Cross Societies (LRCS) to distribute the food.<sup>971</sup> Officials believed the GDR would refuse the

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<sup>969</sup> See Riley, *The Political History of American Food Aid*, 170–173.

<sup>970</sup> Julia F. Irwin, “Raging Rivers and Propaganda Weevils: Transnational Disaster Relief, Cold War Politics, and the 1954 Danube and Elbe Floods,” *Diplomatic History* 40, no. 5 (2016): 899.

<sup>971</sup> Irwin, “Raging Rivers,” 901.

offer, just as they did the previous summer in Berlin, and were stunned by East Germany's acceptance on August 5, 1954.

Officials strove to maintain neutrality and avoid charges of propaganda or psychological warfare. Nevertheless, difficulties beset the program. Irwin recounts delays in delivery, controversies over labeling, and weevil infestations that “revealed, in stark detail, the fundamentally political character of this ostensibly apolitical humanitarian undertaking.”<sup>972</sup> GDR officials hassled the LRCS over labeling that identified the food as a “gift” from the United States. In East Germany, all food packages were relabeled to identify the food item and U.S. state of origin. The boll weevil infestation was a public relations nightmare and reignited the labeling debate. Following delays in shipment, East German authorities discovered grain weevils in a shipment of barley and ordered that it be fumigated and repackaged. Embarrassed, the State Department scrambled to preserve the sacks that identified the U.S. provenance. The episode fueled mistrust between the two nations, with American officials recognizing, as Irwin writes, that, it was better “to accept defeat in the battle over weevils and packaging and to focus on winning the war for hearts and minds through the actual distribution of food.”<sup>973</sup> Sustenance, regardless of bad publicity, was still the best way to convince populations in need of American superiority.

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<sup>972</sup> Irwin, “Raging Rivers,” 908.

<sup>973</sup> Irwin, “Raging Rivers,” 912.

American relief reflected, “the instinctive generosity and compassion of the American people.”<sup>974</sup> Reflecting on voluntary foreign aid since WWII in *The Department of State Bulletin*, Arthur Ringland, the founder of CARE, reiterated that food aid forged important people-to-people connections. “It created sympathy and good will,” wrote John Foster Dulles, “between our citizens and their fellow men in allied and former enemy countries, and has fostered an understanding of common problems.” Humanitarianism was a “force of enduring strength that [could] bind together the peoples of the world.”<sup>975</sup> It was this logic, goodwill as evidence of friendship, that inspired Kennedy’s overhaul of Food for Peace in 1960.

Kennedy introduced his overhaul for Food for Peace on the campaign trail. He envisioned a program that would distribute surplus food to countries in need, a program in which farmers could see themselves as key players in the global struggle against communism. Kennedy was not as well-versed on agriculture issues as his opponent in the Democratic primaries, Hubert H. Humphrey, who spent years attempting to build President Eisenhower’s food surplus legislation.<sup>976</sup> Kennedy did, however, share Humphrey’s vision for an aid program that could prove a valuable foreign policy tool. Invoking Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms, he spoke before rural audiences advocating for a more effective use of American abundance not surplus, “Tonight all the tables in America

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<sup>974</sup> Arthur C. Ringland, “The Organization of Voluntary Foreign Aid: 1939–1953,” *U.S. Department of State Bulletin* 30, no. 768, 15 March 1954, 383.

<sup>975</sup> John Foster Dulles, “Personal Aspect of Overseas Relief,” *U.S. Department of State Bulletin* 30, no. 768, 15 March 1954, 383.

<sup>976</sup> For more on Humphrey see Arnold A. Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018).

are only half set . . . and they will remain half set until we can begin to use our richness, our abundance and our great resources to drive want away from the tables of all men everywhere.”<sup>977</sup> Kennedy changed the language of Food for Peace so that it emphasized American abundance rather than surplus. His rhetoric echoed Hoover’s pleas that Americans invite an invisible dinner guest to their table back in 1946. Food for Peace stood alongside the Peace Corps as a key component of Kennedy’s foreign policy: bettering people’s lives while combatting communism.<sup>978</sup>

### **“Thanks Yanks!”: Conclusions**

George R. Quarles served as Chief of the Food, Agriculture and Forestry Division in Bavaria until mid-1948. In that time, he struggled to meet the challenges posed by postwar food shortages. Bavaria’s rich agricultural resources were strained by the devastation of war and the influx of refugees from the East, and Bavarians resisted Military Government’s attempts to coordinate planting, collection, and distribution.<sup>979</sup> In the summer of 1953, Quarles wrote to Eisenhower praising his food package program in

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<sup>977</sup> “Food for Peace,” Remarks of Senator John F. Kennedy (Dem.-Mass.) Howard County Court House --- Indiana, Friday Afternoon, April 29, 1960, Presidential Campaign Files, 1960, Speeches and the Press, Speeches, Statements, and Sections, 1958-1960, Agriculture: Food for Peace, Pre-Presidential Papers, Papers of John F. Kennedy, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Boston, MA. Digital Identifier: JFKCAMP1960-1028-012.

<sup>978</sup> For more on Kennedy and Food for Peace see George S. McGovern, *War against Want: America’s Food for Peace Program* (New York: Walker, 1964); and Kimber Charles Pearce, *Rostow, Kennedy, and the Rhetoric of Foreign Aid* (East Lansing: MI: Michigan State University Press, 2001).

<sup>979</sup> For more on Quarles and Food and Agriculture in Bavaria see John D. Hess, “Coping with Crisis: Military Government Officials, U.S. Policy, and the Occupation of Bavaria, 1945–1949” (Ph.D. diss., University of Kansas, 2017), 78–150.

Berlin and offering his services to assist with the project. He urged Eisenhower to “Send food. Stockpile it in the Western zone. Sell or give it away in Berlin. Get it to the peoples of [the] Eastern Europe in any way possible.” Quarles’s experience in occupied Germany profoundly shaped his belief in the power of food to serve U.S. interests, “food will win the cold war.”<sup>980</sup>

There is no concrete end date for German food relief: Marshall Plan aid ended in 1952, CARE operated in Germany until 1960, and CRALOG sent its final shipments in 1961. Food imports first intended to combat disease and unrest, now served to contain communism. Food was recognized as a primary cause of war and thus deemed essential to keeping the peace. In West Germany, however, food’s role in the economic recovery served to highlight the benefits of capitalism. Policymakers seized on the propaganda potential of food and feeding programs, designed to stabilize a nation’s economy while simultaneously boosting American prestige, extending “economic and political as well as ordinary human understanding.”<sup>981</sup> The passage of PL 480 in 1954 served domestic and foreign interests.

The Truman administration institutionalized foreign aid as a key component of U.S. foreign policy. Truman planted the seeds for the Marshall Plan when he announced his support of CRALOG and purchased 100 CARE packages in 1946. Subsequent administrations, from both sides of the political aisle, built upon his foundation. Like Truman, they believed the American people to be inherently humane. Yet, they also

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<sup>980</sup> Quarles to Eisenhower, 31 July 1953, 862B.49/7-3153, CDF 1950–1954, Box 5263, RG 59, NARA.

<sup>981</sup> Price, *The Marshall Plan*, 322.

recognized that American benevolence served national interests abroad. Americans' willingness to help others help themselves, combined with their characteristic empathy and generosity, offered a platform for engagement in an increasingly bipolar world. Humanitarian aims complemented the U.S. foreign policy agenda, which in the late 1940s sought to contain communism and encourage the spread of liberal democracy.

The Cold War was an ideological contest. It was about more than military might and economic power; prestige mattered. Food aid reinforced democratic rhetoric and encouraged a narrative that cast the United States as a benevolent world power. The symbolism behind American "gifts" of food cannot be overstated. One can calculate the tons of food delivered, the increase in calories consumed, or the decrease in diseases related to malnourishment. Yet, none of these figures accurately represents the power inherent in U.S. food relief for Germany. To gauge this, one need only to explore its reception and legacy in Germany, where fond memories of American benevolence serve as a testament to the strength of the U.S.-German relationship.

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The George C. Marshall Foundation

George S. Patton Papers: Diaries, 1910 to 1945, Library of Congress

Germany under Reconstruction, University of Wisconsin Digital Collections

Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum Online Collections

HathiTrust Online

Internet Archive

John F. Kennedy Presidential Library Digitized Collections

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Radio Days

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Wilson Center Digital Archive

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*The Big Lift* (1950)

*A Defeated People* (1946)

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*The Observer*  
*Reader's Digest*  
*Stars and Stripes*  
*Time*  
*Wall Street Journal*  
*The Washington Post*  
*The Weekly Reader*

### **Oral Histories and Interviews**

Harry S. Truman Presidential Library  
Stanley Andrews  
James W. Riddleberger

Institute on World War II and the Human Experience  
J. Stanley Marshall

Reichelt Program for Oral History, Florida State University  
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