The Rhetorical Factors Applied to the Reorientation of American Public Opinion Toward the Soviet Union Immediately After June 22, 1941

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THE RHETORICAL FACTORS APPLIED TO THE REORIENTATION OF AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION IMMEDIATELY AFTER JUNE 22, 1941

by

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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ABSTRACT

THE RHETORICAL FACTORS APPLIED TO THE REORIENTATION OF AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION IMMEDIATELY AFTER JUNE 22, 1941

Stanley Paul Berry
Old Dominion University, 1982
Director: Dr. Lorraine M. Lees

This thesis asks the question: what rhetorical factors were applied to the reorientation of American public opinion toward the Soviet Union immediately after June 22, 1941. A brief review of American diplomatic trends leading to June 22, 1941 is provided. The term *rhetoric* is operationally defined and the limits establishing causation between persuasion and opinion are delineated. The national communication process is explained and a national opinion profile, as it existed in the spring of 1941, is described. Initial persuasive responses to the Russo-German war are addressed and analyzed. The primary persuasive goals are identified as improving the public's image of the Soviet government and people and generating public belief that the Soviet Union could avoid defeat. The persuasive appeals applied toward these goals are identified in publications that represented the majority of publications that supported increased American aid to the Soviet Union.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At this time it is indeed a pleasure to acknowledge those who provided help and counsel and who made the completion of this project possible. I am most appreciative for the guidance and enthusiasm from Dr. Lorraine M. Lees and for her cheerful and inexhaustable willingness to accommodate my awkward schedule and to read numerous drafts. A debt of gratitude is also owed to Mrs. Pat Ways, whose able assistance enabled me to complete this thesis this year. Finally, my greatest debt is to my closest friend and wife, Robin, without whose confidence and support, this project would not have been started.
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I. INTRODUCTION

On June 22, 1941, German ground and air forces engaged the armed forces of the Soviet Union in the largest conflict in the history of the world. Though America recognized the magnitude of this engagement, there was no consensus as to a proper response. The United States viewed Germany as having undeniably violated international law in another vicious campaign of territorial expansion, yet America did not perceive the Soviet Union as a purely innocent victim of German aggression. Memories of Russia's neutrality pact with Germany and subsequent partition of Poland in 1939, followed closely by the Soviet assault on Finland in 1940, were added to America's traditional suspicions of communism and precluded much sympathy for the Soviet Union when it too was attacked. Consequently, during the six months prior to America's official entry into World War II, its citizens were faced with the perplexing problem of whether or not the United States should aid the Soviet Union in its struggle with Germany, and if so, to what extent.

In June 1941, Americans were far from reaching a consensus regarding most aspects of international affairs, especially concerning the war in Europe. Americans held many opinions about the Soviet Union, its war with Germany, Germany's war with Britain, and the extent to which America

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should become involved with or might become affected by any of these matters. An apparent and seemingly irreconcilable difference of national thought and will resulted in no real sense of unified purpose.

For example, in the Neutrality Act of 1939 and its subsequent amendments, Congress repealed the long-standing arms embargo to belligerents and replaced it with legislation which permitted Britain and France to buy arms as well as raw materials from the United States, provided those nations paid in full and transported the materials in non-American ships. This increased the amount of material Britain and France could procure. However, the Neutrality Act also prohibited the entry of American ships into arbitrary danger zones that were established in European waters and thus reduced the number of ships available to the European supply line.

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2 George H. Gallup, ed., The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion, 3 vols. (New York: Random House, 1972), vol. 1: 1935 - 1948, pp. 65-310. Surveys taken between 1938 and December 1941 indicate that the vast majority of Americans opposed America's entry into the war. That majority never slipped beneath 63 percent. While these surveys suggested American unwillingness to go to war, other surveys revealed that Americans believed they would eventually have to. By April 1941, approximately 82 percent of the nation believed that the war was inevitable; Ibid., p. 276.

3 This lack of unity of purpose was exemplified in several surveys. One, taken in December 1940 revealed that 88 percent of those surveyed opposed U.S. intervention but that 60 percent believed helping Britain more important, even though such intervention would increase the likelihood of war; Ibid., p. 256. Lack of clear direction prevailed as late as May, 1941 and was revealed in a survey which indicated that 80 percent of those surveyed opposed going to war while at the same time 61 percent favored helping Britain despite the increased risk of war such help would entail; Ibid., pp. 281-82.


5 Ibid., p. 36.
Additionally, the danger zones imposed by Washington in some ways actually worked directly in Germany's favor. Not wishing to arouse the American public, Hitler had forbidden U-boat interference with U.S. trade and shipping. Often this required U-boats to linger in dangerous waters while they attempted to establish positive identification of potential targets. In the areas delineated as off-limit combat zones, positive identification was no longer necessary and any surface ships could be sunk on sight. Not only would the absence of American ships from European waters substantially lessen the number of ships in Britain's oceanic lifeline, the risk of drawing America into the war by the sinking of an American ship was reduced.\(^6\) Such conflicting effects of American involvement reflected Washington's desire to help those countries at war with Germany and the public's intention to avoid open belligerency.\(^7\)

Any illusions the nation held as to its own impregnability were dashed after Hitler's stunning defeat of most of western Europe.\(^8\) By mid-1940, most Americans felt that the nation's armed forces should be increased\(^9\) and that the country was not safe from attack.\(^10\) Yet polls


\(^7\)Herring, p. 6.


\(^9\)Gallup, p. 225. A survey reported on May 22, 1940 that 90 percent of those polled thought the country's armed forces should be increased.

\(^10\)Ibid., pp. 226-27. In a survey reported on June 9, 1940, 85 percent of those polled feared that America was not safe from attack by any foreign nation.
taken in the spring of 1940 indicated that a majority of Americans feared Germany would initiate war with the United States if Britain and France were defeated. This fear prevailed as late as May 1941, but failed to translate into a unified purpose or action. For example, the polls conducted in 1940 and 1941 revealed that a large and persistent percentage of the American public opposed increased aid to Britain and France.

By 1941 most Americans recognized the peril Hitler represented and wanted him stopped. Nevertheless, they also hoped their country could remain out of the war. Interventionists opposed isolationists with groups such as the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies quarreling with their opposite number in the America First Committee.

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11 Ibid., pp. 220, 282.

12 Ibid., p. 233. A survey reported on July 19, 1940 that though 53 percent of those surveyed wanted the U.S. to do more for Britain, 41 percent believed the U.S. was already doing enough and 6 percent believed too much was being done; Hadley Cantrill, ed., Public Opinion, 1935-1936 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), p. 973. A Fortune poll conducted on July 1 suggested that 40.6 percent of the population believed the U.S. should support the allies but should never enter the war. Only 4.7 percent favored entering the war and only 19.2 percent advocated going to war should the allies seem sure to lose. This was approximately the same percentage as those who preferred taking no sides. By September, only 52 percent of the population indicated they would help Britain win if such help risked the nation going to war. See Gallup, p. 243. In October this percentage had diminished to exactly 50 percent. See Cantrill, p. 973.

13 Divine, p. 30; Herring, p. 4.

14 Gallup, pp. 287-88, 290. Surveys for June and July 1941 reveal that fully three fourths of those responding opposed America's entry into the war.

and of course, the Republicans argued and contested most issues with the incumbent Democrats.\textsuperscript{16} This divergence revealed that though Americans were unified in their abhorrence of and opposition to Hitler, no such unanimity existed as to how he could be opposed while the country simultaneously remained out of the war.\textsuperscript{17} On the eve of Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union, America seemed unable to reconcile its desire to defeat Nazi aggression with its hope of noninvolvement.

American foreign policy was under the direction of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who had been an internationalist even before his first election to the White House in 1932 and who believed that international peace was inexorably linked to international prosperity. To Roosevelt, America's well-being was tied to the well-being of the international community and to world peace.\textsuperscript{18} After Munich, he was fully aware of the disaster that would inevitably result through isolation and appeasement.\textsuperscript{19} As a result, he stressed a course which he hoped provided "many methods short of war, but stronger and more effective than mere words, of bringing home to aggressor governments the aggregate sentiments" of the American people.\textsuperscript{20}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{17} Herring, p. 5.
\bibitem{18} Dallek, p. 20; Divine, pp. 1-23.
\bibitem{19} Divine, p. 25.
\bibitem{20} Franklin D. Roosevelt, \textit{The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt}, 13 vols. (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1941),
\end{thebibliography}
Roosevelt's first major action along this course came in the spring of 1939 with an attempt to alter the neutrality laws in the form of the "Peace Act of 1939." Although it was introduced by Senator Key Pittman, it was Roosevelt's proposal to repeal the arms embargo, to permit American trade with belligerents on a cash-and-carry basis, and to enable the president to establish restrictive combat zones into which ships of the United States would be forbidden. However, just as there was no public consensus on such matters neither was there a consensus in the Congress of the United States. Of the twenty-three Senators in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, eighteen submitted alternative proposals and eventually voted to postpone consideration of Roosevelt's bill until the following session. In the House of Representatives, Roosevelt's efforts met solid Republican and isolationist Democrat resistance and were defeated in June.21

Less than three months later, on September 1, 1939, the international situation changed dramatically as German forces poured across the Polish frontier. Calling Congress into special session, Roosevelt once again argued for a repeal of the embargo. On September 21, in an address delivered to Congress, he argued that a repeal of the embargo and a return to international law was necessary if America was to be kept out of the war and that these actions combined with the designation of restricted zones could alone offer sufficient safeguards for American

neutrality and security. Despite the lengthy debate which followed, neutrality reform legislation passed into law in November. Congress repealed the embargo on arms shipments to belligerents, adopted a cash-and-carry trade arrangement, and authorized the establishment of oceanic combat zones.

In 1940 and 1941 Roosevelt pursued an even firmer course of indirect involvement. Under his direction foreign governments-in-exile were recognized, the assets of those governments were frozen in American banks, thereby depriving their conquerors of wealth, and a joint military arrangement was made between the United States and Canada, an active belligerent. Surplus American army material was sold to Great Britain.

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24 Bailey and Ryan, p. 46.


and France and destroyers were traded to Britain for naval bases. Perhaps the most significant of Roosevelt's actions was his adoption of the lend-lease policy which enabled the democracies to borrow the materials of war now and to pay for or return them later.

On the high seas, the distance between Roosevelt's policies and hostilities with Germany decreased. By June 1941, German merchant ships were located and shadowed by American naval vessels and seven were forced to scuttle themselves to avoid capture by British warships. German and Italian ships resting at berths in American harbors were requisitioned by the United States government. Ten coast guard cutters were transferred to the British navy, and American ships escorted British convoys between Iceland and North America. U.S. naval vessels were ordered to seek out and report the positions of all German ships in the Pan American Security Zone. Axis-American relations continued to deteriorate until only a


28 Drummond, pp. 166-69. Drummond provided an excellent review of the legal technicalities around which Roosevelt had to weave his destroyers-for-bases deal. See also Bailey and Ryan, pp. 81-96.


30 Bailey and Ryan, pp. 40-46; Drummond, p. 219.


32 Drummond, pp. 218-19.


34 Ibid., p. 135.
few days before Germany's invasion of Russia when Roosevelt ordered the
freezing of Axis funds not already frozen but remaining in U.S. banks.35
On June 16, 1941, Roosevelt directed that the German and Italian
consulates in America be closed and ordered their staffs to leave the
country by July 10.36 A review of these actions reveals a clear trend
in Roosevelt's foreign policy. Although American foreign policy had
steered away from war, it had terminated its experiment in neutrality and
had moved toward the Allies.37

To this point, American efforts had been generally directed towards
underwriting the war and supporting Britain and France on a strictly
limited and indirect basis.38 Nevertheless, it must be remembered that
these policy decisions had not been achieved amidst a sea of indivisible
unity. The nation did not share Franklin Roosevelt's decisiveness. Most
Americans remained anxious to avoid entering another war,39 and many
were opposed to new policies or actions which appeared likely to draw the
country closer to war's brink.40 Thus, in June 1941, the attitudes in
America about an overseas war, which was having an increased impact at

35 Code of Federal Regulations, Executive Order No. 8785, June 14,
1941, pp. 948-51.

36 United States, Department of State, Department of State Bulletin,
1941, vol. 4, p. 743.

37 Divine, p. 25.

38 Dawson, pp. 3-12.

39 Gallup, p. 287.

40 Franklin Roosevelt was a president who, on most given issues,
was attuned to public opinion and could accurately assess the public’s
willingness to favor and support a given policy decision. See Dallek,
p. 151, 214, 229, 253, 264-65.
home, were mixed. National policy shifted in favor of the Allies but that shift was the result of compromises between several opposing factions. As the war rapidly approached epic proportions, America appeared to be floating along, albeit in a relatively consistent direction, at drift speed.

However, questions about American-Soviet relations were brought to the center stage of national attention as colossal events began to unfold on the Russian steppes in June 1941. 41 Though Hitler's invasion of Germany was seen by Americans as at least a temporary reprieve for Britain, they were not certain about what should be done to capitalize on it. If the Red Army could tie down Hitler's war machine, Britain might be able to build its defenses sufficiently for the next German assault and America would be provided additional time in which to prepare as well or to be able to stay out altogether.

Washington's first official response to the new development suggested this view:

... any defense against Hitlerism, any rallying of forces opposing Hitlerism, from whatever source these sources may spring, will hasten the eventual downfall of the present German leaders, and will therefore rebound to the benefit of our own defense and security. 42

Logically, if Soviet resistance was beneficial to the Allies, then should not the Allies provide the Soviet Union whatever they could in support to insure continued resistance?

41 Dawson, p. 167.

Unfortunately for the Soviet Union, Hitler's invasion came at a low ebb in that nation's relations with the United States. Under the most favorable circumstances, American-Soviet relations had been characterized by suspicion and opposed purposes since 1917. More recent events such as Stalin's pact with Hitler and eventual partition of Poland, the invasion of Finland, and the non-aggression pact with Japan, were fresh in the minds of many Americans. The extent to which this ill feeling could be reflected in official policy was revealed on June 14, 1941, when Roosevelt froze all Soviet assets held in the United States. What may very well have been logical policy in American-Soviet relations after June 22, providing aid to the Soviets, was not at all the policy most Americans were willing to accept, for fully half the population opposed America assisting the Soviet Union to the same degree it had assisted Britain.

Nevertheless, in November 1941, Franklin Roosevelt declared to the country that the defense of the U.S.S.R. was vital to the defense of the

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44 John Lewis Gaddis, Russia, the Soviet Union, and the United States: An Interpretive History (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1978). Gaddis' history traces the significant differences and consequent disharmony between American-Soviet interest and policies. For American-Soviet relations between 1917 and 1941, see pp. 57-119.


46 Cantril, p. 411. Reported an American Institute of Public Opinion (AIPO) survey conducted June 24, 1941 which asked whether the U.S. should supply Russia arms, airplanes, and other war materials on the same basis as was being supplied Britain. The results were: yes, 41 percent; no, 54 percent; no opinion, 11 percent.
United States and he announced that the Soviets would receive American aid through Lend-Lease. Thus the United States committed the first billion dollars of aid to the Soviets only four months after the German invasion. Although this support appears slight in comparison to levels of aid Washington later allocated to Moscow, it marked an obvious departure from earlier American-Soviet relations and could not have continued but for a unification, albeit gradual, of American public opinion and a shift in the public's willingness to work with the Soviets.

As suggested in the works of several historians, public opinion was an important and at times crucial factor in the development and continuance of national policy during the Roosevelt administration. That public opinion was a vital ingredient in the formulation of policy towards the U.S.S.R. during the final six months of 1941 is a basic assumption of this thesis. A variety of sources bombarded the American people with massive amounts of information regarding the war, the tactics, the politics, the suffering, the philosophies involved, and the significance


48 Herring, p. xiii.


those subjects had on their nation. At the same time, American opinions toward the U.S.S.R. formed and modified, and eventually coalesced into a national consensus. As this consensus was forming, strenuous efforts were made by national and international leaders and organizations to persuade, convince, or otherwise reorient the American public to accept a course of action actively supportive of the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{51} These efforts were evident in the information provided to the American public. They provide the subject matter for this study which will analyze such persuasive efforts to discover the rhetorical factors that were applied to the reorientation of American public opinion toward the Soviet Union after June 22, 1941.

This question is analyzed in two ways, (1) by describing the climate of public opinion in the United States as it related to the nation's increased involvement in the war in Europe and relationship to the Soviet Union; (2) by providing a clear understanding of the factors contributing to and the rhetorical processes involved in the persuasive attempts made to reorient public opinions. The result will not be the establishment of a causal relationship between persuasive efforts and the shift of public opinion, rather, it will result in educated speculation on the role of persuasion in fostering public support for foreign policy.

\textsuperscript{51}Herring, p. 15; Levering, p. 41.
II. FRAMEWORK

In addressing the central question of rhetorical influence, a certain framework is established. First, specific terms and concepts are operationally defined. Second, the process by which ideas were communicated nationally is explained. Third, the national opinion profile, as it existed in the spring of 1941, is described. These terms and concepts provide the groundwork on which a rhetorical approach to public opinion and foreign policy is made.

Fundamental to this thesis is the concept of rhetoric. Often, this term is relegated to a derisive role implying insincere or verbose qualities. In this study, however, rhetoric will be defined in the terms described in Aristotle's Ethics as the "faculty of discovering the possible means of persuasion" used to affect American opinion.¹ This Aristotelian approach provides for the analysis of the many primary persuasive attempts made to influence the public about American aid to the Soviet Union.

Available to each persuasive attempt were as many as four types of appeal or means of persuasion. One means was the ethical (ethos) appeal that was dependent on the moral character or credibility of the

¹Joseph Schwartz and John A. Ryeenga, The Province of Rhetoric (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1965), p. 122. This quote was taken from a reprint of a portion of Aristotle's Ethics, Book 1, Chapter Two.
persuader. Another was the affective (pathos) means which appealed to the emotions of the audience. A third means of persuasion available to each persuasive attempt was the use of valid arguments which, by their logic (logos), established the truth of whatever was being maintained. The fourth means available were arguments which only seemed to establish the truth but were in fact deceptions.²

While intending to remain close to the classical definitions of rhetoric and the means of persuasion, a literal adherence to such definitions is neither possible nor within the scope of this study. All the available means of persuasion that could have been applied in attempting to shift opinion cannot and will not be addressed here. Nor will rhetorical analysis be applied to only the words uttered in speeches or written in literature. Other means existed which also require examination. Equally relevant to public sentiment and opinion change were the historical circumstances leading to and surrounding persuasive attempts and the vehicles or modes of communicating used to convey those attempts. Together, the significant historical circumstances, the specific appeals of persuasion used, and the vehicles of delivery form the persuasive ensembles that will be the subject for study.

Although it will be relatively easy to identify various factors constituting specific persuasive ensembles and to gauge shifts in public sentiment, it will not be possible to verify the existence of absolute causal relationships between the two. No method is available which could positively identify and quantify the effects of specific persuasive

²Ibid.
attempts made in 1941 on the public. Rather, the causal relationships suggested in this study will reflect the dynamic and sustained patterns of persuasion and the trends of public response that were integral parts in the historical movement that existed as the United States neared its entry into World War II. Causation will therefore be defined in terms of the rhetorical movement contained in and responding to an even larger historical movement that was the trend in American opinion toward relationships with the Soviet Union.3

Another aspect of this rhetorical approach which requires explanation is the process by which ideas were nationally communicated. During the first eight years of Roosevelt's administration, Washington D.C. became the nation's focal point. As the government assumed increased control over the internal affairs of the nation, the public became increasingly dependent on the government for information. There were more government programs and agencies to operate them. There were many more events occurring which affected everyone. Consequently, there was an increased need on the part of the public to develop an awareness of what their government was doing.

This need to know was met by the Roosevelt administration. By 1934, Washington provided four times the news to the United Press that it had in 1930. At the same time, one-fourth of the news carried by Associated

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Press wires flowed from Washington. Roosevelt wanted to create a line of communication between the government and the people and to do this he used the media.4

Subscribing to the theory that those who provided the most information could dominate a story, Roosevelt divulged enormous amounts of information. Stories flowed from the White House almost daily. One reporter stated that when compared to Roosevelt, "all previous Presidents were Trappists who didn't even talk to themselves."5 More than providing stories, however, Roosevelt made news. The information he provided would have been difficult to obtain from other sources; consequently, he enjoyed something of a monopoly. With little competition, Roosevelt shaped news so that it appeared sympathetic to him. Occasionally he suggested story lead-ins to correspondents.6 Heywood Broun called him "the best newspaperman who has ever been President of the United States." Raymond Clapper, United Press bureau chief in Washington, labeled the whole process "the White House school of journalism."7

Roosevelt was correct in assuming that those who provided the most information could dominate a story. Because the amounts and varieties of information being distributed were expanding and because reporters were continually in competition with time and each other, the importance of

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6 Halberstam, p. 9.
7 Heywood Broun and Raymond Clapper quoted in Halberstam, pp. 9-10.
reliable and authoritative sources that were quick to respond had increased. Reporters had to decide where the best informational sources were. In matters of national and international importance, Franklin Roosevelt became the most sought-after source.8

In addition to acquiring unlimited access to reporters, Roosevelt also had unlimited and direct access to the public. At no previous time in American history was a national leader so able to bypass the press to speak directly to the public. Previously, before national leaders could reach most Americans, their thoughts first had to be subjected to the judgments of the press. Not only could the press tamper with the original ideas or target them for ridicule, the press could elect not to publish them. Radio transcended this filtering mechanism and enabled the nation's leaders to enjoy direct and unedited communication between themselves and their public. Franklin Roosevelt was the first president to utilize this potential.9

Radio had become a powerful force during the decade preceding Roosevelt's first inauguration. It provided the nation's most important means of entertainment and offered new merchandising techniques that rivaled magazine advertising. Millions of Americans had made radio a feature around which they would schedule their day. It is not surprising that Franklin Roosevelt, at no cost, "was soon selling himself on the radio."10

9Levering, pp. 10-11.
10Halberstam, p. 15.
As president, Roosevelt had access to the air waves whenever he chose and networks eagerly sought his broadcasts. His messages were popular for a number of reasons. For example, he spoke in an informal manner and put his audience, who had the worries of a depression on their minds, at ease. He comforted them with his confidence. The clarity with which he expressed his thoughts and the common sense his thoughts appeared to contain also added to his popularity. Roosevelt's illustration of the Lend-Lease principle, that when a neighbor's home was on fire one loaned him a hose with which the fire could be put out, exemplified this. A third reason Roosevelt's radio broadcasts were popular was the same reason that enabled him to have access to it: he was the President of the United States. His position as president made him appear to be the most qualified speaker on issues affecting America.

Roosevelt's ability to speak directly to the population and his subsequent popularity for doing so changed the dynamics of the presidency. After the 1930s, presidents would not be as impersonal as they had been, nor would the American public be as distant from the seat of national power and decision making. By 1941, this fact was already well established and served as a crucial factor in the government's campaign to gain support for Roosevelt's intention to aid the Soviet Union.

Though radio emerged during the 1930s as the primary means of direct presidential communication to the people, the importance of other

13 Rosenau cited by Levering, pp. 10-11.
14 Halberstam, p. 16.
branches of the media must not be overlooked. Before the advent of radio, the nation's newspapers had been the primary means of national and international news delivery. Although the relative power of the press had diminished, it remained influential. Recognizing the importance of the press, Roosevelt established the Division of Press Intelligence. From its conception in 1933, its staff provided Roosevelt with analyses of the news reports and editorial comments concerned with government activities that were contained in approximately four hundred of the nation's largest daily newspapers.  

The process of reporting press reactions became even more systematized during Roosevelt's third term. Beginning in July 1941, Roosevelt received a succinct and accurate statistical compilation of the editorial opinions that were published on a host of subjects every week. Because these weekly reports were cumulative, Roosevelt was able to observe trends and shifts of influential opinions. To Roosevelt, knowing the drift of newspaper opinion was critical. Unlike radio, the presses were subject to the predispositions and prejudices of editors, and a presidential idea depended on their tender mercy and good will for untampered dissemination.  

Fortunately for Roosevelt, his foreign policy enjoyed widespread support by the press throughout most of his administration. That was important for two reasons. First, it meant that the president could rely

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16 Ibid, pp. 84-85.
17 Levering, p. 11.
18 White, pp. 87-88.
on friendly and reasonably accurate dissemination of his views about
foreign policy. Consequently, he did not have to resort wholly to radio
broadcasts to forward ideas, and thus he saved that vehicle for occasions
when the direct approach proved more effective.\textsuperscript{19} The second reason
newspaper support was important was that it often permitted Roosevelt to
avoid direct confrontation. If newspapers could be relied on to forward
Roosevelt's arguments on foreign policy and if editors were willing to
engage in the nasty business of tackling isolationist arguments, Roosevelt
was quite willing to let them and thereby avoid the direct line of fire
himself.\textsuperscript{20}

In addition to radio and newspapers, weekly and monthly publications
were also available to convey persuasive appeal. By 1940, there were two
general types of periodicals. The first type, and until the mid-1930s
the only type, was published for fairly specific audiences: this
included such periodicals as \textit{Fortune} for the businessmen, \textit{Foreign
Affairs} for the sophisticated and attentive portion of the public
interested in foreign relations, and \textit{Women's Home Companion} for middle-
class women.\textsuperscript{21} The second type of periodical available was that which
appealed to a much broader segment of the population such as \textit{Life}, first
published in 1936, and \textit{Look} published soon after in 1937.\textsuperscript{22} Though these

\textsuperscript{19} Roosevelt had declined an offer to broadcast once a week,
saying to a network official that, "people cannot stand the repetition of
the highest note on the scale for very long." See Halberstam, p. 15.

\textsuperscript{20} Levering, p. 43.

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., p. 28.

\textsuperscript{22} William Manchester, \textit{The Glory and the Dream, A Narrative
later types numbered fewer than ten, they were read by and thus influenced millions.  

Similar to the daily press, most publishers of widely circulated periodicals supported Roosevelt's foreign policy. Furthermore, periodicals offered certain features such as photographs in addition to news stories. In the 1930s, photographs had brought the images of bread lines, union riots, and military battles into the view of most Americans. Photographs portrayed the human side of these events as words could not, and they were to be a persuasive vehicle in the debate concerning aid to the Soviets. 

There were of course other branches of media, such as books and movies, which normally contributed to the flow of communication. However, these media were incapable of influencing public sentiment during the relatively brief time under study. Later, they certainly performed significant roles in providing depth of information and reinforcing attitudes and opinions. Nevertheless, by the time their efforts were available for the public, the processes of persuasion and opinion change regarding aid to Russia had essentially concluded.

In the summer of 1941, radio, newspapers, and periodicals, critical agents in the rhetorical war that developed, were the primary vehicles of communication used to convey persuasion. Roosevelt could speak directly to the people with radio. Roosevelt had allies within the press and periodicals which largely supported his foreign policy.

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23 Levering, p. 43.
24 Ibid., p. 50.
25 Ibid.
A description of the national opinion profile that existed in the spring of 1941 is necessary to complete the groundwork on which this study will be based. World events brought old familiar subjects of controversy to America in the late 1930s. The war clouds brewing in Europe and Asia appeared to many as storm fronts which could easily spread to American shores. Surveys revealed that from autumn 1938 to late spring 1941, roughly half of those surveyed feared the United States would be dragged into the war. By May 1941, 64 percent believed war was inevitable for America and an additional 9 percent believed that the United States was already engaged in a war.

Americans had crossed the Atlantic to fight once before. Then, they had been assured that their participation would assure victory in a war that was being fought to end all wars. As the threat of war appeared to close in once again, a sense of having been betrayed developed in a large segment of the population. This feeling of betrayal was revealed in a survey conducted in October 1939 which indicated that 34 percent of those surveyed suspected that America had marched off to war in 1917 as the victim of propaganda and selfish interest. From January 1937 to April 1941, a series of surveys further revealed that an even larger

This reflects twenty-five polls which asked whether or not those surveyed believed America would be forced into war. Surveys which attached qualifiers, such as if the war were drawn out one or more years or if France or England lost, generally increased the percentage believing America would become involved. Surveys offering a no opinion option tended to have a reduction in the percentage of those fearing America's involvement. See Cantril, pp. 966-71; Gallup, pp. 120, 137, 150, 175, 187, 200-01, 208, 224, 252, 276, 281-82.

Gallup, pp. 200-01, 281-82.

percentage of Americans, an average of about 48 percent, felt American involvement in the Great War had been a mistake.29

Doubts and fears about past American involvement amplified the concerns of the present. As a new war developed overseas, concerns of the present focused more sharply on the likelihood of future involvement and the shape such involvement might take. American opinion reflected and expressed those concerns.

The first crucial question regarding American foreign policy around which public opinion formed was whether or not the United States should go to war. As the 1930s ended and a new decade began, public surveys asked this question with increased regularity. Consistently and overwhelmingly, Americans responded no, America should not go to war. Between February 1937 and May 1940, an average of 93 percent of those surveyed said no. This average dropped during the following twelve months but remained a significant majority of about 83 percent. The lowest percentage was recorded less than one month before Germany attacked Russia (68 percent) but continued to reflect a large majority of American opinion which opposed America's entry into a second war.30

Most Americans found it hard to reconcile solid opposition to war with the fear that Germany posed a grave threat to the peace and

29 Cantril, p. 201. Seven surveys were taken by AIPO between January 1937 and April 1941. The lowest percentage which believed America's entry to be a mistake was 39 percent in November 1940, and March and May, 1941. The highest percentage was reached in the initial survey conducted in January 1937.

30 Cantril, pp. 966-73. These percentages reflect surveys in which no qualifying options were present. Other surveys asked whether America should enter the war under described circumstances or allowed for no opinion answers. In those surveys, the percentages of those surveyed who felt America should stay out declined but never fell below 50 percent however.
Roosevelt had attempted to accommodate the two fears by materially supporting those nations which fought the Axis. Believing that the security of the United States depended on successful resistance by those nations opposing the Axis, Roosevelt committed the nation to a course of action short of war but which pledged America's material resources and wealth against the Axis. This often set the country's foreign policy in a precarious no-man's land somewhere between neutrality and belligerency and provided fuel for the heated foreign policy debates that surfaced at this time. Isolationists condemned actions which veered from absolute neutrality while interventionists condemned the government's hesitancy to support American friends who were fighting Germany and Italy.

Nevertheless, as developments overseas revealed the increasingly destructive nature of the war and as the number of Axis victories increased, Americans saw the conflict approaching closer to home. As it neared, Americans reevaluated their opinions as to what risks they would accept if the nations fighting the Axis were in need of their support. Surveys taken between 1939 and 1941 revealed this change in opinion. In 1939, questions asked whether or not people were willing to help the Allies win if such help excluded the possibility of America going to war. The average response was that about 65 percent of the people would be

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31 Divine, p. 10.; Gallup, 220.
32 Divine, p. 11; Roosevelt, Public Papers and Addresses, pp. 2-5.
33 Dallek provides numerous examples of the occasions and extent to which isolationists and interventionists were important factors in Roosevelt's development of policy and plans of action. For a more detailed coverage of isolationists and internationalists, see Dawson.
willing to help without the risk of war.\textsuperscript{34} This was a sharp contrast with responses to surveys that questioned the willingness of the respondents to help if that help risked war. The average percentage of affirmative answers to this question was a very reluctant 22.5.\textsuperscript{35} Throughout 1940, however, Americans reassessed their values and attitudes and consistently demonstrated an increased willingness to support their overseas friends, even at the risk of war. In 1940, the average percentage of Americans willing to run the risk of war had increased to 56. As German victories appeared increasingly ominous, that average climbed during the first half of 1941 to 62 percent. The results of a survey taken on May 6 underlined this change in public attitudes by showing that 62 percent of those surveyed indicated that they would prefer going to war to allowing a British surrender.\textsuperscript{36}

This apparent increase in the public’s willingness to support those nations fighting the Axis should not be misinterpreted as an increased willingness to bring the United States into the war as a combatant. The willingness to incur risks only reflected a belief held by the public and administration that America’s security greatly depended on the successes of those countries fighting the Axis powers.\textsuperscript{37} However, based on the country’s record (Roosevelt’s history of action against the Axis and the public’s willingness to risk supporting the enemies of the Axis), aid to

\textsuperscript{34} Cantril, p. 967.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., p. 967.

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., pp. 937-75. For 1939 see, p. 967; for 1940 see, pp. 973-74; for 1941 see, pp. 974-75.

\textsuperscript{37} Herring, p. 5.
the Soviet Union, when it too became an enemy of the Reich, might now seem to have been fairly predictable. It was not.

Several factors contributed to this. Public enthusiasm for support failed to materialize, in part, because Americans did not like the Soviets. The Soviet Union had never been America's ally in the sense that an implicit friendship had existed between the two countries and this less than cordial relationship extended to the American public as well. As early as 1935, approximately as many people disliked Russia as Germany, Italy, and Japan.

Opinions deteriorated still further in 1939 with the Russo-German neutrality pact and subsequent invasion of Poland. To a large segment of the American public, the Soviet Union had joined Nazi Germany as an aggressive violator of treaties. Hostile opinion further intensified and reached new levels as the Red Army attacked Finland. Many Americans saw Moscow as the "modern anti-Christ" and as a "bloodstained gangster". The U.S.S.R. appeared to be solely motivated by communistic imperialism and interested only in expansion. Such factors influenced the American attitudes and opinions which prevailed in 1941 and which prevented any possible outpouring of sentiment when the Soviet Union was attacked.

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38 Levering, p. 50.

39 Cantril, p. 949. A survey conducted in October 1937 revealed certain percentages of respondents had "definite feelings of dislike" for: Italy, 33.1 percent; Germany, 33.1 percent; Japan, 30.8 percent; Russia, 30.4 percent.

Religious motivation also prevented many Americans from rallying to the Soviet cause. Religious influence had receded by the 1930s and 1940s but it remained one of the most deeply rooted sources of personal and collective value acquisition and development in America. Catholics became particularly vocal against the Soviets when in 1923 the vicar-general of the Roman Catholic Church in the Soviet Union was executed for counterrevolutionary activities. During Roosevelt's presidency, Catholic Church members constituted a very powerful force with the potential for influencing presidential decisions. The American Catholic population represented one-sixth of the nation's population in the 1930s. Catholics tended to become Democrats and they consistently voted for Roosevelt. They therefore made up an important part of the Democratic coalition and a factor worthy of consideration in the development of foreign policy. Many religious groups had been alienated by Moscow's line of revolutionary communism and official atheism as early as 1917.

Anticommunism was an issue that most Catholics could accept; it was an issue to which most could also be faithful. In 1937, anticommunist sentiment received official sanction and encouragement in the encyclical Divini Redemptoris issued by Pope Pius XI. In it he wrote that communism was intrinsically wrong and warned that no one who would "save Christian civilization" would give any assistance to it. In response, Catholic

41 Levering, p. 50.
42 Ibid., pp. xvi, xix-xx.
leaders organized anti-Soviet rallies and openly denounced Soviet communism.  

The Soviet-German pact and the invasions of Poland and Finland confirmed Catholic suspicions about the Soviet brand of aggressive communism, and in 1940, Catholic factions lobbied for American support for Finland. The Catholic press declared that, "it would be better to fight Bolsheviks in Finland than in New York City." By June 1941, Pius XII reaffirmed the previous encyclical reinforcing Catholic opposition to communism as something with which those who sought to aid the Soviets would have to contend.

All of these factors meant that as Germans poured into the Ukraine, the United States was unable to act on the basis of any particular consensus. Though the public desperately hoped for peace, most Americans expressed a willingness to take steps which would help those nations fighting Germany even though such steps brought the United States closer to war. Contrary to this willingness to aid the opponents of the Axis, the Soviet Union was not perceived, either secularly or ecclasiastically, as an ally or a friend. Almost immediately after the German invasion of Russia, however, a massive campaign of persuasion developed to alter America's opinion profile. The remaining chapters of this thesis will identify and analyze the major attempts in that campaign.

44 Ibid., pp. 138-39.
45 Denver Catholic Register, December 7, 1939, p. 4, quoted by Flynn, p. 145.
46 Dallek, p. 296; Flynn, p. 138.
III. INITIAL RESPONSES TO RUSSO-GERMAN WAR

The campaign to change American public opinion began almost immediately after the news of the German invasion reached American shores. On the evening of the invasion, even before Americans had time to form opinions about this new development, Winston Churchill broadcasted his country's position to the world. Millions of Americans heard this NBC broadcast and, before Churchill had finished, had made significant strides in forming their opinions about Hitler's latest aggression.¹

As a vehicle of rhetorical appeal, Churchill's broadcast was a masterpiece.² First he aligned the Nazi regime with the worst aspects of communism. He then conceded all his former arguments against communism and disavowed any intention of retracting his previous anti-communist statements: "No one has been a more consistent opponent of Communism than I have for the last twenty-five years. I will unsay no words that I have spoken about it." What was important, suggested Churchill, was the present: "The past with its crimes, its follies and its tragedies flashes away . . . before the spectacle which is now unfolding." He spoke of soldiers who guarded the same fields which their

¹ Levering, p. 39.

fathers had tilled and the homes in which their mothers and wives prayed. He described the danger faced by ten thousand villages where maidens laughed and children played. And after attempting to wring every drop of emotional sympathy from his audience, he portrayed the enemy with chilling clarity as advancing in hideous onslaught with its "clanking, heel-clicking, dandified Prussian officers" and masses of hun soldiery. . . ." "Behind this glare, behind all this storm," the Prime Minister described a "small group of villainous men who plan, organize, and launch this cataract of horrors upon mankind. . . ."

Having vividly defined the enemy in terms which starkly contrasted them with their victims, Churchill resolved before the world that he and his country would "destroy Hitler." All else would be subordinate to that single purpose. All else would be set aside or forgotten. The war transcended class and political boundaries as Churchill reduced international affairs to a primitive struggle for survival. Finally, Churchill concluded his broadcast with the logical appeal that once Hitler's forces were successful in the east, they would turn again on the west. "The invasion of Russia," he warned, "is no more than a prelude to an attempted invasion of the British Isles." The war had become a common struggle which should be shared by all free peoples, for the danger to the Soviet Union was a danger to Britain and to the United States.

Although most Americans remained quite unwilling to step off into battle against Germany, Churchill's message attempted to move them to a closer position more sympathetic to the Soviet Union. Its rhetorical appeal was threefold. It poured a pathetic emotional imagery and appeal over the listeners and pleaded for their sympathy. Second, it reasoned that unorchestrated resistance in the past had enabled Hitler to succeed
and that, based on past experiences, Hitler could be expected to turn first on Britain and then the United States if he were successful in the east. Therefore, it logically followed that the free world’s survival should be paramount to all other considerations and that internationally orchestrated steps alone could turn the tide. A third reason Churchill's message was effective was the enormous amount of prestige the American public attributed to him. Churchill, who appealed to liberals with his resistance to Hitler, and to conservatives with his fundamental political philosophy, was at this time above criticism in the United States. 3

Thus, before most Americans had formed much of an opinion regarding increased American support of the U.S.S.R., they were assailed by very effective persuasion which combined the appeals of emotion, logic, and credibility.

Washington's reaction to Germany's invasion contrasted sharply with that of the prime minister. Though Roosevelt shared Churchill's hopes and concerns, he was more concerned about American public reaction to a possible war on the side of the Soviets than he had been about their reaction to entering the war on the side of the British. 4 Consequently, on June 23, Washington limited its official response to a statement issued by Acting Secretary of State Sumner Welles which indicated that the United States viewed Hitler as the enemy of democracy and that whatever actions any power took against Germany were actions that would

3 Levering, p. 41.

ultimately prove beneficial to American security.\textsuperscript{5} However, as of that date, the State Department wanted it understood that no actual aid had been provided to the Soviet Union nor had the Soviets requested any. Until they did, stated Welles, the question of American assistance was hypothetical.\textsuperscript{6}

On the following day, Roosevelt held a press conference in which the question of American aid to the Soviet Union naturally surfaced. The president had nothing substantial to say about aid and when pressed as to how important the United States considered the defense of the Soviet Union, Roosevelt skirted the subject by saying he never answered those type of questions and that instead he would generally say, "how old is Ann?" He ended the conference by suggesting that it would be best to wait and find out what help the Soviets wanted but added that he would not cross that bridge until he came to it.\textsuperscript{7}

Such noncommittal responses by the State Department and White House reflected the administration's cautious approach to the subject of aid to the Soviet Union. By remaining undeclared, Roosevelt did not become the center of controversy nor did his foreign policy become the target of anticomunist or isolationist groups. By not raising the issue of full support as Churchill had, Roosevelt limited the initial scope of the ensuing debate surrounding future American-Soviet relations to the question of whether or not the Soviet Union had now become more of an

\textsuperscript{5} Foreign Relations of the United States, 1941, vol. 1, General, The Soviet Union, pp. 767-68.

\textsuperscript{6} Ibid., p. 768.

\textsuperscript{7} Roosevelt, Press Conferences, vol. 17, number 408-11.
enemy to Germany than it was to the United States. If this were found to be true and if the Nazi menace continued to be perceived as the greater threat, there could be little doubt as to the outcome of the public debate to determine which of the totalitarian nations American would favor. 8

Fully three-fourths of the nation's media circulation was owned or controlled by a constituency which had been inclined to support Roosevelt's cautious intervention. CBS, NBC, the whole gamut of Luce periodicals, the Christian Science Monitor, the New York Times, and the Washington Post were all interventionist. Because the president did not go directly to the people as Churchill had done, the media had the opportunity of selecting which authoritative persons were "newsworthy" and whose opinions would reach the people. Isolationists had neither the presidential platform from which they could gain direct and unhindered access to the public nor control of the media. Consequently, persuasion sympathetic to the Soviet Union saturated the public through the media, and the president sacrificed nothing by remaining silent. 9

One public figure whose opinions received coverage in the media was Canada's prime minister, William MacKenzie King. King stated that whether "consciously or unconsciously," every nation fighting Hitler was helping to preserve Christian civilization. Russia was not the threat to freedom and peace but Nazi Germany was, and to King, whoever "engages our enemy advances our cause." 10

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8 Levering, pp. 41-47.
9 Ibid., pp. 42-43.
A most unlikely public figure to receive media coverage on behalf of the Soviet cause was Alexander Kerensky. Having been premier of the Russian provisional government when the Bolsheviks overthrew it in 1917, Kerensky was a recognized antagonist of the Communist regime. To Kerensky, the disaster that was currently befalling his country was "no accident," but directly attributable to "Stalin's policy." Nevertheless, he urged that the Soviet Union be supported and warned that the present was not the time to "settle accounts."\textsuperscript{11}

In an editorial the \textit{New York Times} argued that the Soviet Union had provided the enemies of the Axis with unforeseen assistance. By resisting Hitler's might, the U.S.S.R. deprived Germany of vast Soviet resources and forced Germany to transfer its own resources that might otherwise be applied to Britain. Furthermore, while it continued to resist, a golden opportunity existed to create havoc on German forces which were forced to risk war simultaneously on two fronts. The editorial concluded that because of the Soviet Union, "action now would be doubly rewarded later on."\textsuperscript{12}

Even publications such as the \textit{Cleveland Plain Dealer}, which opposed using American aid to save the Communists from a "licking" and which instead recommended sending "a regiment of American communists [sic], fellow travelers, and defense strikers," quickly accepted Roosevelt's position that the U.S.S.R. was no longer America's main enemy.\textsuperscript{13}

By successfully restricting the field of contention to the

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{11}New York Times, June 23, 1941, p. 8.
\bibitem{12}Ibid., p. 16.
\bibitem{13}Cleveland Plain Dealer, June 22-24, 1941, cited by Maddux, p. 145.
\end{thebibliography}
acceptability and preferability of the Soviet Union as Germany's enemy, Roosevelt had almost completely disarmed the anti-interventionists. By remaining out of the fray himself, he allowed other forces of persuasion outside the administration to wage the pro-Soviet campaign. Though he appeared to be following public opinion, he had in fact only temporarily relinquished the task of influencing opinion to other influential forces, the media.  

Unfortunately for those Russian soldiers whom Churchill had described as standing guard by their praying mothers, America's intervention in the Russo-German war extended to little more than well wishing. Substantial aid from America did not materialize. Roosevelt released the Soviet assets which were in the United States, and he did not invoke the Neutrality Act which could have barred American shipping from traveling to Vladivostok.  

By the end of July, however, his administration had authorized the shipment of only $9 million in material to the U.S.S.R. By September, Josef Stalin pleaded for a vast increase in aid and warned that without it the Soviet Union would not be able to continue active military operations against Germany. Roosevelt had won the first persuasive battle in which the American

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14 Levering, pp. 41-42.

15 Foreign Relations of the United States, 1941, v. 1, pp. 768-70.


public was convinced that a Soviet victory was both preferable to a German victory and beneficial to its own security. This became evident in a poll conducted on June 24 which revealed that 72 percent of those surveyed wanted the Soviets to win. However, the prospect of actually supporting the U.S.S.R. was entirely too radical a departure from past policy to initiate without first addressing two considerations.

The first consideration posed the distinction between the Soviet Union's acceptability as a German enemy and its worthiness as an American partner. To many conservatives, supporting one totalitarian regime in its war with another seemed neither desirable nor justifiable.

As the Cleveland Plain Dealer suggested, it was certainly well that Hitler had still another enemy, but if in his "mad lust for power he should crush the Communist dictatorship and at the same time weaken himself so that he in turn could be destroyed, the world would be better off." Some others in the midwestern press reported that many Americans were "deeply disturbed at finding Stalin and the Soviet government thrown into the role of 'fellow traveler' with the democracies" and felt that any sympathy with the Soviet state would be wasted. The press added that although any Red Army contributions to Germany's destruction would be welcome, Stalin's government "richly deserved" the worst that might happen to it. The Wall Street Journal foresaw the European continent "bathed in blood" after a Soviet victory and pointed out that the only real

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18 Cantrill, p. 1187.
19 Cleveland Plain Dealer, June 24, 1941, cited by Levering, p. 46.
difference between Hitler and Stalin was the size of their mustaches. Senator Robert Taft, quoted in the New York Times, argued against any plan to provide the Soviets with aid and warned that a communist victory would be far more dangerous to the United States than a victory of fascism. Extreme among those who opposed providing aid to the Soviets but who were happy to see them at war with Germany was Senator Harry S Truman who suggested that America help whomever appeared to be losing at any given time so that as many Russians and Germans might be killed as possible. The Richmond Times-Dispatch opposed American aid to Moscow and warned that care was necessary in dealing with the Kremlin. Such statements of concern pointed to a fundamental inconsistency that would exist if the United States supported a regime whose image was repugnant and questionable.

The second consideration that had to be addressed was the Soviet Union's ability to win. Should the Red Army lose, the material support it had been given by the United States would fall into German hands and be wasted.

Even to the casual observer whose knowledge of the war in the Soviet Union came only from the maps on the front pages of local papers, Soviet victory appeared unlikely. The locations of the major battles moved ominously eastward, and the captions of war correspondence revealed

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21 Wall Street Journal, June 24, 1941.
23 Ibid., June 24, 1941, p. 1.
24 Richmond Times-Dispatch, June 23, 1941.
increased losses: "Russian Civilians Flee Border Area," "Withdraw in North," "Nazis Take Brest-Litovsk."  

Representative Martin Dies, chairman of the House Committee which investigated un-American activities and an avowed anti-communist, predicted that Germany would be in control of Russia within thirty days. Walter Duranty, a popular columnist syndicated by the North American Newspaper Alliance, stated that the consensus of experts gave Germany at least a five to one advantage. The most positive statement that was made in the New York Times about the Red Army was that it would take a considerable time to destroy and that that time would benefit the West.

Revelations like these, although opinions, probably instilled doubt about the Red Army's ability to succeed. Before a consensus favorable to aiding the Soviets could form, Americans had to be convinced that their support would not be in vain.

Almost immediately after the news of Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union had spread to the United States, persuasive forces were at work to affect public opinion relative to Soviet-American relations. The first major persuasive force was provided by Britain's prime minister. Churchill made it clear that his country intended to set aside

25 Newsweek, June 30, 1941, p. 13. See also New York Times, June 22-30, July 1-10, 13-24, 25, 27, 29, 30; Norfolk Virginia-Pilot, June 22, 26, 27, July 1, 6; Richmond Times-Dispatch, June 23, 25-27, 30, July 1, 2, 6, 7, 16, 20; Time, June 30, July 7, 14, 21, 28.

26 New York Times, June 24, 1941, p. 3.


all past differences and to support the U.S.S.R. in its struggle with Germany. Churchill's purposeful action statement contrasted sharply with the official response from Washington. The president, who welcomed another nation to the growing list of Nazi enemies but who clearly intended to maintain a low profile regarding aid to the Soviet Union, relinquished his direct persuasive power to the forces of the media.

Thus, the first battle for public opinion over the antagonistic relationship between the United States and the U.S.S.R. took place with little presidential involvement. With no one else in the country capable of reaching the whole public directly and with three-fourths of the media circulation in agreement with the administration's foreign policies, isolationists were not likely to win this competition for public support.

However, moves to support the Soviets were an even further departure from past policies, and additional considerations had to be addressed before a public consensus could be reached in support of such aid. First, would American support of the U.S.S.R. serve to assist a truly worthy nation which was in need, or would support serve instead to spread the influence of another totalitarian state? Second, if the Soviets were supported, could they avoid defeat? Almost immediately a persuasive campaign surrounded these concerns in an effort to influence the shape of American opinion.
IV. OVERCOMING SOVIET IMAGES

The German invasion quickly transformed the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union. Since 1917 American-Soviet relations had been strained but Germany had put the two nations on the same side of an international crisis. Although most Americans soon recognized and accepted this change, the extent to which their country would actually pitch in and help Germany's newest enemy remained in doubt and the subject of initial public uncertainty.

Facing most Americans was the fundamental problem of reconciling their propensity to suspect Soviet motivations, institutions, and behavior with the apparent desirability of assisting the U.S.S.R. in its war with a mutual enemy. Anti-Soviet characteristics of initial public opinion had to be overcome and became the targets of persuasive efforts in the press that employed all the classical means of persuasion in order to reduce the public's reluctance to aid the Soviets. These efforts generally addressed one of two issues. The first issue involved the worthiness of the Soviets to receive assistance. The second issue involved the Soviet Union's potential to win.

To many Americans, Soviet worthiness was entirely dependent on the image the Soviet Union appeared to project. Often column headings set the tone for sympathetic portrayals. Such titles as, "Russian Civilians Flee Border Areas," and "1,500,000 Soviet Children Ordered Out of Big
Cities," projected a number of images. They portrayed the peril of Russian noncombatants, mostly women and children, fleeing Germans and forced to abandon the security of their homes in the face of grave and certain danger. Story headings that portrayed such pitious images appealed to the emotions of all who read them and generated sympathy for the Soviet cause. While headings and titles alone were not sufficient to change opinion to any great magnitude, they secured the reader's attention and they set in motion the process for image change.

The appeal of emotions was also a most effective persuasive appeal to generate sympathy for and improve the image of the Soviets. Photographs were effective vehicles to communicate that appeal. Shortly after the invasion, photographs began appearing in the press in increased numbers and provided readers with vivid visual imagery. Soon the public actually saw that of which Churchill had spoken. More important to those who advocated aid to the Soviet Union, photos clearly identified pathetic Soviet images and contrasted them to the images of aggressive Germans.

A photo study which appeared in Life demonstrated this tendency. The general destruction of battle immediately struck the reader. Black smoke drifted over the landscape suggesting recent destruction. Helmeted and armed German soldiers appeared in each photo sitting upon trucks or tanks. The implied association between the smoke, the destruction, and

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2Life, July 14, 1941, pp. 13-14. Similar photo studies are found in: Norfolk Virginia-Pilot, June 30, July 1, 2, 1941; Richmond Times-Dispatch, June 27-30, July 1, 4-6, 11, 16, 18, 1941; Time, July 7, 1941, pp. 18-19; July 14, 1941, pp. 18-19; July 21, 1941, p. 15. Stories of Soviet determination are found in: Colliers, July 26, 1941, pp. 16, 46; New Republic, August 18, 1941, pp. 210-213.
the German soldiers was unmistakable; Germans were presiding over the rape of Russia.

Several of the same photographs pictured civilians in sharp contrast with the German soldiers. Women wore plain babushkas and clutched satchels as they watched Germans passing by on their tanks. Some of the women appeared to smile, others only looked on as if dazed. Posted behind them was a sign which read, "Herzlich Willkommen - Heil Hitler." In another photograph on the opposite page, civilian men looked on as more Germans passed. The same sign hung above the men. Life stated that the two photos were staged and that the Germans themselves had constructed the signs. The signs were meant to convey the impression that the Germans were being accepted as liberators by the Russian population, but the captioned photos in Life carried a clearer message: the Germans were liars who forced civilians to comply with their propaganda campaign.

More importantly, Life's photos and photos like them presented Americans with visual and personal images of the Russian people as individuals and plain folk who were, perhaps for the first time, distinguishable from American perceptions of the Soviet regime. Life's photo study may have provided many Americans with their first view of the Soviet people that was not cast in a completely negative light. In a Time photograph, "grief-sickened" women were seen wandering among the wreckage of battle trying to identify victims.3 Those women had no threatening posture; indeed, they bore a resemblance to and could have been mistaken for American women. Such photographs revealed the human face of the Russo-

3Time, July 14, 1941, p. 18.
German conflict and attempted to separate perceptions about the Soviet people from perceptions about the Soviet regime.

Persuasion was also employed to enhance American perceptions of the Soviet regime. The same July 14 issue of Life provided readers with a glimpse of nine Soviet leaders who ruled under Stalin. According to Life, Soviet leaders were engaged in a "great war" in which they might not survive because they would be "the first the Nazis would shoot."

"Look at these men," wrote Life, "they would not be noticed unfavorably at an executive meeting of an American insurance corporation," and "would be an easy and agreeable group to meet." Even though Life was obliged to mention the harsh and ruthless conditions at the top of the Soviet power structure, the positive comparisons it made between Soviet leadership and American businessmen illustrated a remarkable departure from previous views.

Life accompanied the portraits of the Soviet leaders with brief histories. In the photographs, each man appeared stern and determined but the histories made each more personable. For instance, Life informed its readers that Muscovites had nicknamed Viacheslav Molotov, "Iron Pants." Andrei Andreyev was described as a self-made man who had elevated himself from being the son of a peasant farmer to the President of the Communist Party Control Commission. Those Americans frustrated

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4Life, July 14, 1941, pp. 18-19; similar captioned photos are found in: Look, August 12, 1941, pp. 26-27; Newsweek, June 30, 1941, p. 14; Norfolk Virginia-Pilot, June 29, 1941, p. 1; Richmond Times-Dispatch, June 24, 1941, p. 10; July 12, 1941, p. 1; Time, June 30, 1941, p. 23; July 14, 1941, pp. 22-23; July 21, 1941, p. 19; Current History, September, 1941, pp. 6-11, suggested Americans had misjudged Stalin's motives in aligning with Hitler in 1939 and that Stalin's efforts provided the democracies of the world time to prepare for Hitler's eventual world-wide onslaught.
with bureaucratic red tape may have delighted in *Life*’s description of
the duties performed by Georgi Malenkov whose job it was to "lambast
Communists for 'buckpassing' and 'bottlenecks'." The chief of the Soviet
Secret police, Laurenti Beria, although cited as being a "particularly
dangerous man," was flattering described as "probably the best-
educated," and "a qualified architect, intellectual, and intense." The
article depicted the Vice Premier for Defense, Kliment Voroshilov, as an
officer and a gentleman. Nevertheless, he was said to be the butt of a
Moscow joke for when he reviewed troops in Red Square, the crowd would
murmur, "What a horse! What a horse!" Anastas Mikoyan, Commissar of
Foreign Trade, received the most personable of the nine histories. In
it, the reader learned that the Soviet leader came from a "large brawling
family of boys" and had acquired a theological education. During the
Russian civil wars, continued *Life*, Mikoyan had been captured by British
interventionist forces but had escaped. He alone of the nine leaders had
visited the United States.

*Life*’s brief histories combined with portraits could not erase all
the negative Soviet images that had developed since 1917. Nevertheless
they revealed a clear persuasive attempt to establish a more personal
point of reference around which a new awareness of the Soviet government
could develop. Through the use of photographs, the Soviet leadership was
removed from the nebulous "them" category. The accompanying text targeted
blind suspicion and antagonism and replaced them with increased awareness
of actual identities which possessed many admirable characteristics. Once
the American public could identify Soviet leaders on a more personal
basis, it would be more susceptible to additional persuasive attempts
made to develop a favorable Soviet image.
Pictoral and verbal depictions of Soviet heroism provided another avenue by which persuasive appeal worked to improve the Soviet image. *Time* reported that the Nazis were "amazed" by Soviet fanaticism. One *Time* report described the "dinosaur-like charge" of a Russian tank into the fire of numerous German anti-tank guns. Although the Germans perforated the tank's turret with fire, it continued to attack until it caught fire and burned with all its crew still aboard. A Russian pilot reportedly crashed his plane into a cluster of German fuel tanks. Survivors reported the body of a seventeen year old girl was reported to have been found in a truck still clutching her rifle. *Time* quoted a Nazi report stating that although the Soviet soldier was not very intelligent, together with other soldiers he was able to forge a fortress of destruction. The Soviets had, continued the German source, an "animal-like zeal for attaining their goal."\(^5\) The *New York Times* declaring that there were none braver than the Russian soldier, reminded its readers of the last war when "Russians died by thousands, fighting only with clubbed muskets."\(^6\)

*Life* combined Soviet communiques which described heroic deeds of the battlefield with their own artists' conceptions of Soviet action. One picture portrayed obsolete Russian biplanes attacking a German armored column while they were being simultaneously attacked by a vastly superior force of modern Messerschmitt fighters. Though the Soviets were clearly outclassed and outnumbered, they reportedly "flung" themselves at the enemy and destroyed "scores" of German tanks. Another picture revealed

\(^5\) *Time*, July 14, 1941, p. 19.

Russian cavalry attacking and defeating heavily equipped German infantry which had attempted to cross a river. Russian civilian bravery dominated a picture of stablemen who had set fire to stores of fodder, thereby causing the destruction of German fuel trucks. The final picture in the series depicted the bravery of a junior lieutenant tank commander who had destroyed four of five surrounding German tanks and who had then charged and crushed the remaining fifth tank with his own. 7

The above examples of stories about Soviet heroism are significant for several reasons. First, articles sympathetic to the Soviet cause, which appeared in Life, Time and the New York Times, represented the articles found in the three-fourths of the nation's press that supported Roosevelt's foreign policy 8. Second, the stories of Soviet valor revealed three persuasive approaches to improve the Soviet image. The stories consistently portrayed the Soviets as the David-like underdog pitted against the ever-threatening Goliath of the Wehrmacht. Such depictions attempted to enlist reader sympathy for the Soviets who appeared to be fighting against the odds. The second persuasive approach featured the citations of individual and group heroism and targeted the readers' likely tendency to admire bravery in whomever it was found. Finally, to the extent that the stories of solider and civilian heroism favorably reflected on all the Soviet people, American perceptions of the Soviet people would become less formless and more positive.

The persuasive attempts thus far described were directed at the

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8Levering, pp. 42-43. Similar stories of Soviet heroism are found in: New York Times, June 23-July 31, 1941; Norfolk Virginia-Pilot, June 23-July 31, 1941; Richmond Times-Dispatch, June 23-July 31, 1941; Time, August 11, 1941, p. 17.
American public's image of the Soviet leaders and people. Persuasive efforts were applied to reduce the public's negative images of the Soviets and to replace them with favorable images that were more inclined to be worthy of public support. Persuasive attempts were made to enlist sympathy and admiration for and to build empathetic bridges to the Soviet people.

Other types of persuasive approaches were necessary to reduce the fears that characterized American perceptions of the Soviet regime. Such approaches relied on logical appeal, as initiated in Churchill's June 22 speech. In it he stated that no one had ever been more consistently opposed to communism than he but that communism was no longer the most immediate danger threatening the free world. "Germany was the real enemy," and speaking for his country he stated that "Britain was not going to take her eyes off the main target." Churchill made a vivid distinction between the Russians who guarded their homeland, their mothers, their wives, and their children and the Germanys who were blood thirsty, wicked plunderers. The prime minister devoted phrase after phrase to the verbal annihilation of the German image, thereby improving the comparative image of the Soviet Union. That communism might be a threat was not the issue; that Germany was the threat was the issue. To Churchill, it was the only issue and it fully justified his offer to provide the Soviet government with all available assistance possible.\(^9\)

On the day following Churchill's broadcast, many American newspapers provided their readers with the complete text of his speech. Most editors responded in a positive view, while those newsmen closely linked

\(^9\)Churchill, pp. 371-73.
with the isolationist press remained silent. The New York Post anticipated the criticism of those who would accuse Soviet supporters of being "allied with communism," and stated that its response would be that they should read the prime minister's speech.\(^\text{10}\)

The logic was both simple and undeniable. Although Soviet Communists might well be detested, German Nazis constituted an immediate danger. To the extent that Communists were combating Nazis, they should be supported in their effort. This argument hinged on the premise that Nazis posed the greater threat. In summarizing the rationale of American attitudes, polster Dr. George Gallup said that Russia was not imperialistic but that Germany was. Even if Russia won, it would not invade the United States, whereas Germany probably would.\(^\text{11}\)

Like Churchill, newspapers cast Russians and Germans in contrasting lights that tended to enhance the Soviet image at the expense of the Germans. Such contrast began with story headings. For instance, a New York Times article which speculated about the cause of the new war outlined its general drift in the title, "Germany Orders Russia to Give What She Needs."\(^\text{12}\) Adjacent to that article appeared a cartoon which pictured Stalin standing in a field, pipe in mouth, facing rows of German armored vehicles. Anyone browsing through the pages, without going further into the article, would receive the distinct message that Germany was an international bully and that the Soviet Union had stood up to it.


\(^\text{11}\)George Gallup, AIPO Release, July 13, 1941, Gallup Organizational Files, cited by Levering, p. 42.

The title of a story appearing the following day, "Hitler Reveals Aim to Rule World", expanded this bulky image and made it appear still more menacing. On the same page the paper declared that the German attack on Russia was proof that Hitler planned to dominate the entire world by force. In the article, Senator Walter F. George expressed his fear that the German invasion might cause a false security or sense of relief to establish itself in the country if Americans believed that Germany would surely be defeated by the Soviets. To Senator George, Germany was still an enemy worthy of all the nation's attention.

Lewis W. Douglas, the chairman of the national policy board of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, also received column space in which he enumerated the reasons why Germany was America's number one enemy:

First, that Hitler [had] planned on world domination and that he would commit any crime to achieve it. Second, that a successful venture into Russia means unlimited oil, and hence a stronger Germany to subdue Britain and to force its will on us. Third, that the peril to the United States is increasingly grave, making unmistakably clear the necessity of immediate and decisive action. . . .

The Daily Worker, which also received press coverage in nationally circulated publications, stated that Germany's attack on the U.S.S.R. was likewise an attack on the people of America and the free world.

The Nation expressed its hope that the American people would come to understand the "one actual issue in the war," which was the need to defeat and destroy Hitler because he presented "the one overwhelming menace to

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14 Ibid., p. 9.
15 Ibid., p. 11.
the Western democracies and to freedom throughout the world." In a later issue, The Nation expanded upon its fears. It warned that Hitler's real hope did not lie in the Soviet Union or in Britain, but in "softening, dividing, confusing, [and] prying wider [the] social fissures" which were already established in the world's democratic societies. Hitler's efforts, the article continued, would be directed mainly at Vichy, Rome, Madrid, and the New World. The article predicted that pro-Nazi, religious, and reactionary groups would flock to the anticommuunist cause. Hitler's primary tactic would be the division of American opinion and subsequent diluting of the nation's war effort. It was not necessary to win friends for the Soviet Union, it was necessary only to direct attention to another potential enemy. The article concluded by reminding its readers that with seventeen countries already under the German heel and Russia invaded, the one serious issue of the day was Hitler's defeat.

Arguments of this nature provided the rationale that Americans needed to condemn Germany as the nation's primary threat. If the public could be convinced that Germany's defeat was the most critical concern, the need to support all nations that were actively fighting Germany would become clearer. Logical persuasive appeal targeted the negative perceptions Americans held about the Soviet regime and attempted to improve those images. Images of the Soviets were also contrasted with perceptions about the more menacing Germans. The object was to reduce the Soviet threat.

16 The Nation, June 28, 1941, p. 740.
17 Ibid., July 5, 1941, p. 3.
One other hurdle had to be reduced before full public support could be gained in support of increased aid. That hurdle was the fear that the U.S.S.R. would lose. If the Soviet Union lost, what purpose would be served in supporting it? The fear stemmed from two concerns. The first was the suspicion that Soviet leaders would make a separate settlement with Germany as they had at Brest-Litovsk in 1917 and in the Ribbentrop-Molotov Mutual Non-Aggression Pact in 1939. The second concern centered on the doubt that the Soviet armed forces could win, regardless of their commitment. Stalin's purge of the Soviet officer corps and the Red Army's demonstrated ineffectiveness in the Soviet-Finnish war contributed to this view. Martín Dies, Democrat chairman of a house investigative committee warned that Hitler would be in control of the U.S.S.R. in thirty days. Walter Duranty, a syndicated columnist for the North American Newspaper Alliance, wrote that the consensus of experts was that the odds were five to one in Germany's favor.

The press addressed these concerns. The first concern, that of the Soviet Union's willingness to pursue the war through to victory, was the target of emotional and logical appeal. After June 22 and until Pearl Harbor, the front pages of American newspapers lead with news about the Russo-German war. During the last week of June, the war in the Ukraine and American-Soviet relations occupied approximately 72.3 percent of the

19. Maddux, p. 149.
front page of the average American daily newspaper. The news often reported loss of materiel, personnel, and territory; however, it also portrayed courage, determination, and great fighting spirit. Stories such as those found in Life, Time, and the New York Times, already discussed, described the personnel heroism of the Russian people and attempted to arouse the combative spirit in many Americans. Stories of incredible self-sacrifice appealed directly to American compassion and were intended for skeptics who doubted that the Soviet people would do whatever was necessary to prevail.

Logical appeal augmented the public's emotions. Soon after the war began, the media gave wide coverage to reports that the U.S.S.R. was going to receive at least some assistance from the United States and Britain. The New York Times reported that Roosevelt was willing to release the Soviet $40,000,000 that had been frozen in American banks and would also provide whatever material assistance he could that had not already been destined for Britain. The same issue reported that British and Soviet negotiators would meet to conclude plans for additional aid from Britain. Soviet requests for enormous quantities of aircraft, guns, gasoline, and lubricants implied that they were not anticipating a secret deal with Germany or capitulation. Fears of Soviet withdrawal from the war were further targeted in reports about American and British willingness to redirect some of the aid to the U.S.S.R. that had been

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22 Levering, p. 54.

previously designated for Britain. Such willingness suggested a vote of confidence in Soviet intentions.²⁴

The press addressed not only Soviet intentions but the Soviet ability to win as well. A Gallup Poll revealed that almost 63 percent of those who had an opinion expected the Soviets to lose.²⁵ It logically followed that if the Soviets could not win, much of the material aid they had been given would then fall into German hands. Therefore, persuasive efforts had to address the Soviet potential for victory.

As already indicated, news appeared almost daily in the press about the war in the Ukraine. Although much of the news revealed Soviet retreats and losses, it was countered by optimistic reports concerning other aspects of the war. Beginning with the first day's coverage of the war, optimism competed with other less encouraging news. For instance, although much of the news reported Soviet losses, other encouraging reports stressed the enormous size of the armed forces. The 7,150,000 Soviets under arms were hailed by the New York Times as the largest army in the world. Time estimated Soviet strength to be an even larger 10,000,000.²⁶ Proclamations that cast the Soviets in a more favorable light proclaimed German victories: "Nazis Take Brest-Litovsk; Soviet Claims 5,000 Prisoners," "Russians Counter Tank Attack; Finns Take War Steps," "Minsk Push Gains; Red Forces Inflict Huge Losses on Nazis."²⁷

²⁴Dawson, p. 128; Maddux, p. 151.
²⁵Gallup, p. 289.
²⁷New York Times, June 24, 1941, p. 1; June 26, 1941, p. 1; June 28, 1941, p. 1; Similar headings that contrasted unfavorable events with more favorable headings are found in: New York Times, June 23-July 31, 1941; Norfolk Virginia-Pilot, June 23-July 31, 1941; Richmond Times-Dispatch,
The tendency by the media to soften bad news by providing the good along with it also occurred in the text of articles. For example, a large map appeared on the front page of one paper showing the areas that had been and were currently being seized by the Nazis. According to that map, the Red Army was losing on the grandest of scales. Yet, the accompanying text indicated otherwise. It stated the German onslaught had met with "stiff resistance," an entire Nazi mechanized regiment had been "annihilated," and the Soviet air force had set ablaze the German-controlled Black Sea port of Constanta.28

Stories that described the continuous retreat of Soviet forces, and these appeared regularly, often added that the Reds had inflicted heavy casualties on the Germans and suggested hope in predictions that the situation would improve when the Red Army reached new defensive positions somewhere in the rear.29 Time announced that the situation was not at all as bad as it appeared. Quantitatively, it reported, the Soviets had more and heavier divisions (heavier meaning that they contained more armored vehicles) than the Germans, as well as more men, and more planes. The Soviet forces also possessed the experience they had gained in Finland. The Red Army was resilient, courageous, hard fighting, and commanded by the very competent Marshall Semion Timoshenko.30 In a later issue, Time indicated that although the Soviets had definitely "taken a whipping," it was not certain "that the whipping would stick."

June 23-July 31, 1941; Time, July 14, 1941, p. 17; July 28, 1941, p. 15.


29 Ibid., June 28, 1941, p. 1.

30 Time, June 30, 1941, pp. 22-24, 27.
According to *Time*, the Germans found themselves in the midst of a horror story:

Stores of fodder blazed up in unsponstaneous combustion. German supply trains met strange accidents. German columns fell into ambush. Temporary German bridges collapsed. Serious fighting broke out in many places hundreds of miles to the German rear.

Continuing, *Time* cited the pro-German Swedish newspaper *Aftonbladet* which had reported that numerous partisan actions had crippled the German war effort. *Time's* conclusion suggested that the senior Nazi general was undoubtedly very nervous about the change of events. 31 More encouraging still were German reports of news such as that of a Berlin radio broadcaster who, perhaps ill-advisedly, reported that in a certain action, "Every one of our tanks had been shot to pieces ... we had to crawl away on our stomachs." 32

These examples of from-the-front reports which accompanied accounts of Soviet retreats permeated most of the press in the early days of the war and portrayed the Red Army in as favorable a light as possible. There were no great victories to report, but there were great deeds. Those deeds and any other encouraging information which might offset the discouraging accounts of the war's overall progress were persuasively applied in the press and stood as indicators that the Soviet war effort could succeed.

Germany's military actions transformed the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union and aligned them on the same side of an international crisis. Nevertheless, before the United States could

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31 Ibid., July 14, 1941, pp. 17, 19, 20.
32 Ibid., July 21, 1941, p. 19.
actively support the Soviet Union, the American public's long-standing suspicions of Soviet behavior had to be reduced and overcome. Those suspicions became the targets of persuasive efforts that were employed in the nation's press. The persuasive efforts addressed two main concerns: the Soviet Union's worthiness to receive assistance and its potential to defeat Germany.

The press initiated several persuasive approaches to generate favorable images and to portray the Soviets as worthy of American assistance. First, war coverage appeared that portrayed the Soviet people as distinguishable from the Soviet government. Second, the Soviet government was cast in a complimentary light in stories that had a "human touch" and that provided new points of reference from which improved perceptions of the Soviet government could develop. Third, accounts of Soviet heroism pitted against heavy odds persuasively attempted to enlist sympathy and admiration for Soviet fighters and to extend similar positive perceptions to all Soviet people. Fourth, the Soviet Union was contrasted with Germany and revealed as the lesser of two evils. Finally, persuasion was applied to alleviate concerns regarding the Soviet willingness and ability to defeat Germany by encouraging accounts of various aspects of the war such as heroism, the Red Army's colorful (albeit limited) successes, and the hope of improved developments in the future. Such approaches were designed to shift American opinion away from opposition to increased aid for the Soviet Union.
V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Before June 22, 1941, the United States followed a policy which avoided direct involvement in a war with Germany but which violated a purely neutral position. Roosevelt took a number of hostile steps against Germany and Italy that bordered on belligerency. Of primary value to those nations fighting Germany were Roosevelt's policies underwriting their war effort. The American public, however, resisted steps that might lead the United States into war. Until Lend-Lease, the American public tolerated only cash transactions to those countries that were friendly to the United States and at war with Germany. After Lend-Lease, Roosevelt ably provided war materials to any nation whose defense he deemed vital to the security of the United States. Lend-Lease worked well and America's friends were provided war materials with which they carried on their war.

When Germany invaded the U.S.S.R., Soviet-American relations were less than friendly and news of German spearheads into the Ukraine raised little sympathy in most Americans. American suspicion of Soviet motives and behavior translated into an unwillingness to provide the Soviet Union the same degree of aid that America provided Great Britain. Therefore, opinion had to change before Roosevelt could expect public support for increased aid to the Soviets. The media subjected the American public to massive doses of information about the new war immediately after Germany's invasion. Much of that information was persuasive in nature
and designed to shift, alter, or in some other way reorient public opinion.

The first persuasive responses to the Russo-German war occurred almost immediately after Germany's invasion. Winston Churchill portrayed pitious images worthy of sympathy and contrasted them with a cold and menacing enemy. He also reasoned that disunity among the nations of the world had enabled Hitler to succeed and that the time was overdue for an internationally orchestrated front against him. Washington responded in a low-key fashion with a State Department communique that little more than recognized the existence of another German enemy. Roosevelt's cautious approach enabled him to avoid becoming the subject of national controversy and it gave the American media, predominantly favorable to his cautious interventionist policies, the opportunity to select the "newsworthy" opinions that would reach the public. Consequently, initial debate surrounding American-Soviet relations was reduced to an argument about the preferability of either a German or Soviet victory. The fact that the public perceived Germany as the greater threat to American security quickly ended the debate.

However, the prospect of providing aid to the Communist nation presented a new set of concerns. First, there would be an inconsistency if America supported one totalitarian regime that was engaged in a war with another equally repugnant regime. Second, if the U.S.S.R. were provided aid, would that aid enable it to avoid defeat. Several persuasive approaches addressed the public's perceptions of Soviet worthiness. Such approaches distinguished the Soviet people from the Soviet regime and drew similarities between Soviet and American characteristics. Soviet leaders were presented more personably and the Soviet people were
portrayed in heroic terms as fighting against great odds. Finally, the Soviets were contrasted with Germans. These persuasive attempts sought perceptual changes in the public and attempted to enlist sympathy, admiration, and understanding. Perceptions of the Soviet Union's potential to win were approached by the accounts of the great military deeds and bravery that accompanied the news of the front. Good news accounts offset the bad in order to appeal to the hope of victory.

Although no correlation can be drawn between the persuasive appeals found in the nation's press and the changing of public opinion, certain indicators did suggest that opinion changed. Gradually, many of the conservative publications which had expressed isolationist or anti-Soviet views changed their opinion. Their editorials increasingly cast aid to the Soviets in more favorable light. For example, the September San Francisco Chronicle attacked senators who still opposed increased aid and wrote, "We should stop snapping the tail of the Red Bear and instead help grab the Nazi monster by the throat."¹ Barron's, a bastion of conservatism, reluctantly supported aid to the Soviets and suggested that because the Soviet Union would be sufficiently weakened by its war effort, it would be unable to exert any influence over Europe after the war. Furthermore, according to Barron's, the war could provide the catalyst needed for a transformation of the Soviet system.² Continuing along

¹San Francisco Chronicle, September 25, 1941, cited by Maddux, p. 154.
this line, the New York Herald-Tribune predicted that the result of the 
Russo-German war would inevitably be the democratization of communism.\(^3\)

Organizations that had opposed Roosevelt's policy toward the U.S.S.R. 
also revised their views. On August 8, 1941, the president of the Ameri-
can Federation of Labor advocated increased aid to Moscow.\(^4\) The Committee 
to Defend America First praised Soviet efforts in August and suggested 
that Hitler might have found his "Gettysburg" in the Ukraine and that 
"blessings" would flow as a result.\(^5\) A captioned photograph in Life 
provides a vivid illustration of the extent to which the isolationist 
movement had fallen from public favor. The photo showed a small monument 
that had been built to commemorate the first night flight landing site of 
Charles Lindbergh, who was a leader and spokesman of the peace movement. 
Amidst the encroaching weeds, portions of the monument were knocked down 
and yellow paint had been poured over it.\(^6\)

Finally, on October 10, 1941, by a vote of 328 to 67, the second 
Lend-Lease appropriation bill passed the House. Thirteen days later, the 
Senate passed the same legislation by a fifty-nine to thirteen vote. The 

president signed the legislation on October 28.\(^7\) On November 7, Roosevelt 

\(^3\)New York Herald-Tribune, September 25, 1941, p. 24, cited by 
Dawson, pp. 222-23.

\(^4\)Maddux, p. 154; Dawson, pp. 224-26.

\(^5\)Dawson, p. 185.

\(^6\)Life, July 14, 1941, p. 88.

\(^7\)U.S., Congress, House, "Supplemental Appropriation for National 
Defense, 1942, Lend Lease," H. Res. 5788, 77th Cong., 1st sess. 10 October 
1941, Congressional Record 87:7839. U.S., Congress, Senate, "Supplemental
issued a directive to the head of the newly established Office of Lend-Lease which stated that the defense of the U.S.S.R. was vital to the defense of the United States and which authorized the transfer of up to $1 billion in credit to the Soviet Union.\footnote{Department of State Bulletin, 1941, vol. 5, p. 365-66.}

Thus, less than four and one-half months after the outbreak of war between Germany and the Soviet Union, the United States had committed extensive support to the Soviet Union and pledged $1 billion in aid. Despite the former animosity, when the votes were cast, opposition dwindled and isolationists fell into tacit agreement with interventionists. Representative John Taber perhaps most accurately summarized the sentiments held by both camps in a question he asked in October during the appropriation hearing, "Is not the meat of this situation that unless such needed assistance is given as promptly as possible to Great Britain and the rest of the crowd that is fighting Hitler we will have to do the job alone?"\footnote{United States, Congress, House, Representative John Taber speaking for the Supplemental Appropriation for National Defense, 1942, Lend Lease, H. Res. 5788, 77th Cong., 1st sess., 9 October 1941, Congressional Record, 87:7765.}

Surveys taken that month suggested that a large majority of the public supported the policy of increasing American aid for the U.S.S.R. A \textit{Fortune} poll revealed that a remarkable 84 percent of those polled accepted and supported the prospect of increased aid.\footnote{Cantrill, p. 961.}
Enthusiasm could be attributed to a number of factors. Increased German naval activity in the Atlantic probably made Americans more aware that the war was coming ever closer.\(^{11}\) Another factor was probably the fear that when war did come, America would have lost a very valuable ally if the Soviet Union had been defeated.\(^{12}\) Although no causal relationship can be firmly established, the public's support of increased aid to the U.S.S.R. relied in part on the public's improved opinion of the Soviets. Such improvement materialized only after the public perceptions of the Soviet image and ability to win had improved. Persuasive appeal in the American media after June 22 was applied to the same perceptual ends.

\(^{11}\) Bailey and Ryan, pp. 169-204.

\(^{12}\) Dawson, p. 286.
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