SACRED SUSPICION: RELIGION AND THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR,

1880-1948

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the role of religion in the origins of the Cold War from 1880 to 1948. Building on David Foglesong’s research into the role of religion in shaping American missionaries, businesspeople, and public intellectuals’ perceptions of Russia, as well as Andrew Preston’s insights into the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration’s use of religious tropes to justify intervention against Nazi Germany from 1939 to 1945, this project focuses on the White House and US State Department’s efforts to manage diplomatic tensions and public controversies surrounding religious repression in Russia during the origins of the Cold War from 1880 to 1948. The central finding of this project is that during the period from 1933 to 1945, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his personal allies such as Joseph Davies sought to minimize popular and official criticisms of Soviet religious policies as a part of Roosevelt’s program of pragmatic cooperation with the USSR. Eventually, anti-communist officials in the State Department managed to undermine Roosevelt’s public relations program in order to justify a more confrontational approach to the Soviet regime. Roosevelt’s poor health, growing personal isolation, and neglect of personal relationships with American Catholic leaders after 1943, as well as his failure to create a bureaucracy committed to his vision of post-war cooperation, meant that after his death religion could be used by anti-communists in their campaign to denigrate the Soviet Union. To gain popular support for its containment and roll-back strategies, the Truman administration called for a worldwide Christian crusade to eradicate atheistic communism. By shedding light on how well the Roosevelt administration was able to overcome US-Russian religious tensions, this project supports the “missed opportunities” thesis that the Cold War was not inevitable. It also stands as an example of a growing body of scholarly research linking religion, diplomacy, and US foreign relations.

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Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Chapter 1 American Hopes for Russian Religious Reform, 1880-1932 29

Chapter 2 Religious Tensions Repressed: Roosevelt and Diplomatic 81

Recognition of the USSR, 1933-1940

Chapter 3 Religious Objections Defeated: The Establishment of the 131

Grand Alliance, 1941

Chapter 4 Suspicion Resurfaces: Roosevelt’s Attempt to Secure Religious 175

Support for Post-War Cooperation, 1942-1945

Chapter 5 From Cautious Cooperation to Anti-Communist Crusade, 1945-1948 238

Conclusion 269

Bibliography 274

List of Figures and Tables

List of Abbreviations and Symbols

AAA American Assumptionist Archives

LOC Library of Congress

FCC Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America

FDRL Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum

GUA Georgetown University Archives

HUAC House Un-American Activities Committee

NCWC National Catholic Welfare Council

NARA National Archives and Records Administration

NYPL New York Public Library

OF Official File

OWI Office of War Information

PHS Presbyterian Historical Society

PPF President’s Personal File

PSF President’s Secret File

USSR Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Declaration of Academic Achievement

The archival research, secondary research, and writing of this dissertation were completed by Yvonne Hunter. Dr. Stephen Streeter provided guidance during the planning stages and editorial feedback during the writing and revision process.

Introduction

The long-term tensions that contributed to the outbreak of the Cold War after 1945 originated in the 1880 to 1945 period. Although US-Russian relations were never based on sentiments of friendship or cultural affinity, the United States and Russia cooperated during most of the early- and mid-nineteenth century due to mutually-profitable bilateral trade, the absence of direct territorial disputes, and converging interests in limiting the power of Britain and France.[[1]](#footnote-1) Harmonious diplomacy and trade reduced the United States and Russia’s reliance on the European powers for international trade and diplomatic support, thereby strengthening their flexibility in international affairs.[[2]](#footnote-2) Russia’s lack of democratic rights and personal freedoms did not seriously impede US-Russian diplomatic relations prior to 1880. Although many Americans believed that the United States’ republican democracy was superior to Russia’s despotic monarchy, many US officials excused Russian autocracy on the grounds that the Russian masses were too ignorant, superstitious, and ethnically heterogeneous to be governed by popular representation. In turn, Russian leaders dreaded the spread of American-style revolutionary ideology among the Russian people but were reassured by the United States’ non-interventionist attitude toward European politics.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Economic and strategic conflicts began to trouble US-Russian relations after 1880 as Russia’s growing influence in the Far East and Manchuria threatened the United States’ “open door” trade policy in the region, and the United States reconciled with Russia’s traditional rivals, Britain and Japan. According to John Lewis Gaddis, the United States’ emergence as a major industrial and maritime power after 1880 also led many Americans to adopt a growing sense of moral responsibility for social and political conditions abroad. American political culture late in the late nineteenth century was deeply influenced by United States’ Protestant roots, and many Americans believed that the United States bore a providential duty as God’s “city upon a hill” to bring divinely-sanctioned religious and political freedoms to repressive foreign states.[[4]](#footnote-4) Yet, as Gaddis observed, many reformist Americans conflated the policies of foreign states which they “could only condemn” with those that they “could reasonably expect to change.”[[5]](#footnote-5) Thus, as American journalists began to report on imperial Russia’s brutal repression of suspected dissidents and discrimination against Jewish citizens in the 1880s, American politicians, journalists, and religious leaders began to condemn the Tsarist regime’s disregard for American ideals such as freedom of worship, separation of church and state, and individual political liberties. American observers intensified their criticisms of Russian religious policies after the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, decrying the Soviet regime’s atheistic ideology, anti-religious propaganda, and repression of Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant churches. To many reform-minded Americans, diplomatic reconciliation with Russia depended on Russian leaders’ adoption of American-style religious and political freedoms, making ideology one of the most persistent sources of US-Russian tensions prior to the Cold War.[[6]](#footnote-6)

This study will show that President Franklin Roosevelt largely succeeded in minimizing official and public criticisms of Soviet religious repression from 1933 to 1945 in order to secure pragmatic cooperation with USSR. After Roosevelt’s death in April 1945, however, President Harry Truman embraced anti-communist religious rhetoric as a means to rationalize US policies of containment and roll-back.[[7]](#footnote-7) Religious disputes did not primarily cause the outbreak of the Cold War between 1945 and 1948, which was shaped more directly by economic, territorial, and political disputes. Nonetheless, Truman’s calls for a democratic Christian crusade to rid the world of atheistic communism exacerbated the hostile atmosphere that characterized US-Soviet relations after 1945. Ultimately, Truman’s religious invective offered a powerful rhetorical tool that helped his administration persuade the US Congress, the American public, and Western religious believers to support confrontational US policies. The most corrosive of these policies for post-war US-Russian relations were US intervention in Greece and Turkey, the Unites States’ exclusion of the USSR from the European Recovery Plan, the build-up of nuclear and conventional military forces, and finally, the formation of an anti-Soviet military alliance, the North American Treaty Organization (NATO). Although this project explores the role of public religious controversies in US-Soviet relations, it is not meant to offer a post-modern analysis of American religious discourse, or an intellectual history tracking American religious thought over time. Rather, this project is a diplomatic history that explores the effect of religious controversies on state-to-state relations, and it evaluates the US government’s efforts to manage public religious issues through diplomacy and public relations.

**The Origins of the Cold War: Three Perspectives**

Historians have questioned precisely when and why the Cold War began, resulting in three overarching paradigms. Historians generally define the Cold War as a bipolar military, political, and ideological struggle between international blocs led by the Soviet Union and United States lasting from approximately 1945-1947 to 1989-1991. During the Cold War, both parties denied the other’s legitimacy, suppressed internal dissidents, and competed in a conventional and nuclear arms race.[[8]](#footnote-8) The traditional explanation popular in the 1950s and early 1960s ascribed the Cold War to an inevitable clash between Western capitalism and aggressive Soviet communism as they struggled for dominance within the bipolar power structure that developed after World War II. Orthodox historians such as Herbert Feis argued that the medium-term root of the post-war conflict was President Franklin Roosevelt’s failure in the 1930s to recognize Stalin’s irrational, paranoid, and expansionist nature. Thus, FDR did not attempt to topple Stalin’s regime or pre-empt Russia’s acquisition of resources and technology during its modernization programs in the 1930s, nor did he prevent Soviet territorial expansion in Eastern Europe between 1943 and 1945. Faced with an enlarged Russian regime whose communist ideology appealed to impoverished masses in regions of Europe that were devastated by the war, Truman had no choice but to contain the spread of Soviet-led communism through US investment in Western European reconstruction, anti-communist ideological propaganda, the build-up of military arms, and a protracted Cold War diplomatic struggle.[[9]](#footnote-9)

Orthodox historians such as Vojtech Mastny also denied that FDR could have succeeded in his hopes to preserve the Grand Alliance through spheres of influence controlled by the Four Policemen (The United States, Britain, China, and the USSR). According to the spheres of influence model, Soviet Russia would control the international policies of governments in Eastern Europe bordering the USSR, while the US, Britain, and China would heavily influence Western Europe and the Far East. Disputes would be managed through personal summit diplomacy and negotiation in the United Nations. According to Mastny, this plan was precluded by Stalin’s “insatiable craving” to expand Soviet influence beyond a limited zone of security in Eastern Europe after World War II. According to Mastny, FDR should have attempted to weaken or unseat Stalin before the Red Army swept into Eastern Europe after 1943.[[10]](#footnote-10) Similarly, John Lewis Gaddis pronounced in 1983, “The primary cause for the Cold War was Stalin’s own ill-defined ambition” and “determination to seek security” while permitting "little or none for other actors.” The secondary cause was the “West’s failure to act soon enough to stop him.”[[11]](#footnote-11) According to Gaddis, “As long as Stalin was running the Soviet Union a cold war was unavoidable.”[[12]](#footnote-12)

A second school of interpretation that came to be known as revisionism emerged during the 1960s amidst dissent over the US intervention in Vietnam. Revisionist historians blamed US aggression for the conflict while rejecting the orthodox view that Stalin was unreasonable, expansionist, and incapable of compromise. According to revisionist historians, US officials such as George Kennan, the State Department Soviet expert who articulated the Containment Doctrine in 1946, exaggerated the Soviet threat by claiming that Stalin was determined to dominate Western Europe and Asia and could only be deterred by the threat of United States’ nuclear and conventional military forces. In truth, the Soviet economy and government were impoverished by the war, communist parties abroad were weak and poorly organized, and the Soviet military lacked the technology, human resources, and infrastructure necessary to pose a serious threat outside of Eastern Europe.[[13]](#footnote-13) William Appleman Williams attributed US officials’ confrontational policies to the imperial nature of the United States’ capitalist economy and US officials’ strong belief in the moral imperative to expand capitalism globally.[[14]](#footnote-14) The revisionist historians Daniel Yergin and Frederick Propas attributed anti-communism to the bureaucratic culture of the State Department Eastern European Division, the tight-knit agency of professional foreign service officials who studied Russia and advised the White House on US-Russian policy from the mid-1920s to the 1940s. According to Yergin and Propas, the Eastern European Division was steeped in an institutionalized atmosphere of deep suspicion toward the communist regime because its members’ Ivy League educations, faith in capitalism, and training in anti-communist language institutes in Europe made them deeply averse to communist ideology.[[15]](#footnote-15)

Post-revisionism constitutes the third influential interpretation of the origins of the Cold War.[[16]](#footnote-16) This perspective developed in the 1970s as historians strove to overcome the bitter orthodox-revisionist division. Post-revisionists generally argued that the US and Russia shared responsibility for the conflict, which they attributed to officials’ national security perceptions, corporatism, world systems theory, and cultural misperceptions. However, some self-styled post-revisionists such as Robert Dallek have in practice assigned greater blame to the Soviet Union.[[17]](#footnote-17)

One issue of the Cold War debate pertinent to this dissertation is the “missed opportunities” controversy. Many orthodox, revisionist, and post-revisionist scholars argue that the Cold War was inevitable, although they differ about the reasons. The revisionist Gabriel Kolko considered the Cold War inevitable due to aggressive US policies and the Soviet Union’s defensive backlash against American economic imperialism, whereas Gaddis regarded the Cold War as inevitable due to the United States’ and Britain’s legitimate interest in protecting the West from Stalinist aggression.[[18]](#footnote-18)

Challengers of the argument that the Cold War was inevitable include Geoffrey Roberts, Mary Glantz, and Frank Costigliola. These historians maintain that the Cold War might have been avoided if Roosevelt had lived longer, or if the Truman administration had better understood and been capable of pursuing Roosevelt’s agenda of post-war cooperation after his death.[[19]](#footnote-19) Roberts claims that Stalin was a brutal dictator in domestic policy, but cautious and pragmatic in foreign policy. Rather than behaving as an ideologue thirsty for immediate communist domination of the globe, Stalin developed cordial relations with Franklin Roosevelt during the war in genuine hopes of securing a limited sphere of Russian influence in Eastern Europe, and managing conflicts through negotiation and compromise.[[20]](#footnote-20) Only when Washington tried to use Marshall Plan aid to strengthen Western Europe and lure Eastern European countries away from communism in 1947 did Stalin became convinced that ongoing cooperation with the United States would be impossible without jeopardizing Soviet national security. Roberts casts Stalin’s clampdown on Eastern Europe in late 1947 and 1948 as a defensive response designed to protect Soviet buffer states from Western subversion, rather than a prelude to a political or military invasion of Europe.[[21]](#footnote-21)

Similarly, Frank Costigliola joined the ranks of scholars who claimed that the Cold War was avoidable. According to Costigliola, President Franklin Roosevelt laid the foundations for post-war peace during World War II by personally charming the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin, and by assuaging Stalin’s insecurities and persuading him to pursue post-war cooperation with the West. Although Roosevelt never precisely articulated his plans for the post-war world, he likely hoped for open spheres of influence controlled by the Four Policemen, adjustment of conflicts via personal diplomacy and negotiation in the UN, granting Soviet Russia a post-war loan for reconstruction, and possibly sharing nuclear technology. Unfortunately, three contingent factors undermined FDR’s plans to preserve the Grand Alliance: Roosevelt’s poorly-managed health and sudden death in April 1945; his poor succession planning and the accession of Vice President Harry Truman to the presidency after his death; and Prime Minister Winston Churchill’s defeat to Clement Atlee in the British election of July 1945. With FDR and Churchill absent from the Grand Alliance, Stalin had little trust in the inexperienced new leaders. President Harry Truman was easily influenced by anti-communist State Department advisors who did not share the Big Three’s “cautious hopes” for post-war accord, and the Truman administration’s confrontational policies after 1945 played a vital role in the deterioration and breakdown of US-Soviet relations.[[22]](#footnote-22)

Leading diplomatic surveys on US-Soviet relations have touched briefly on religious controversies but have not systematically integrated them into an analysis of the long-term origins of the Cold War. [[23]](#footnote-23) This investigation will thus assess the role of religion in US diplomacy, official rhetoric, Congressional debate, and the national media’s interpretations of US-Soviet relations from 1880 to 1948, paying particular attention to FDR and Truman’s efforts to manipulate religious rhetoric as a means to promote either toleration or containment of the Soviet Union. Given historians’ valuable explorations of ideology in US foreign relations broadly and the role of religion in the Cold War after 1945, an analysis of religion in the origins of the Cold War from 1880 to 1948 is past due.

**Religion and the History of US Foreign Relations**

Since the cultural turn in the 1980s, historians have explored gender, class, race, secular nationalism, empire, and political philosophy as components of ideology that were vital to US foreign relations, yet until recently, historians have neglected the importance of religion.[[24]](#footnote-24) In 1997, Anders Stephanson challenged historians to include religion as a central ideological component of American expansion from the colonial period to the present. In Stephanson’s view, many Americans were guided by expansionist concepts of Manifest Destiny that were rooted in a popular belief that God had ordained the United States with a mission to spread American civil and political freedoms abroad. This “regenerative intervention” would fulfill God’s will to banish moral evils in foreign lands.[[25]](#footnote-25) Stephenson’s sweeping account of the role of religious ideology in US foreign relations devoted only one chapter to the interwar-to-Reagan period, and paid little attention to high-level diplomacy and bureaucratic policymaking.[[26]](#footnote-26) Similarly, Andrew Preston and Gary Scott Smith produced the first major surveys on the role of religion in US foreign relations, but their wide chronological scope and thematic breadth prevented focused attention to religion and the origins of the Cold War prior to 1945. For example, Preston highlighted FDR’s pubic invective deriding Nazi Germany’s immorality and lack of religious freedoms as justification for intervention in World War II. Yet, Preston neglected FDR’s extensive efforts to shelter Soviet Russia from similar criticisms citing Russia’s atheistic dogma and religious repression.[[27]](#footnote-27)

David Foglesong’s 2007 monograph, *The American Mission and the “Evil Empire”: The Crusade for a “Free Russia” Since 1881* focused specifically on the role of religion in US-Russian relations from the 1880s to the end of the Cold War. Foglesong argued that many American political leaders, intellectuals, and popular observers shared the belief that it was America’s providential duty as a Christian nation to spread religious and political freedoms across the globe. Thus, from the 1880s to the present, many Americans criticized Russia’s oppressive policies in the hopes of either inducing Russian leaders to adopt American-style freedoms or encouraging the Russian people to topple their dictatorial leaders through liberal revolution. According to Foglesong, Americans’ unrealistic hopes for rapid democratization in Russia led to recurring episodes of disillusionment and disappointment, particularly when Americans’ rising hopes for Russian reform failed. This occurred after the revolutions of 1917, diplomatic recognition of the Soviet regime in 1933, US-Soviet wartime cooperation from 1941-1945, and the collapse of the USSR in 1989-1991. In Foglesong’s view, even self-styled “realists” in the US State Department mistrusted Soviet officials primarily because of Christian missionary impulses, regardless of their claims that their anti-communism was rooted in geopolitical self-interest and hostility to Soviet leaders’ Marxist economic and political philosophy. Foglesong, who devoted a mere sixty pages to the origins of the Cold War from 1917 to 1945, focused primarily on American intellectuals, journalists, missionaries, academics, and businesspeople, rather than the US presidents, diplomats, and policy advisors who directly shaped state-to-state relations with Russia.[[28]](#footnote-28)

In the early 2000s, historians of religion and diplomacy such as William Inboden, T. Jeremy Gunn, Jonathan P. Herzog, Jason W. Stevens, Seth Jacobs, Stephen Kinzer, Raymond Haberski, Jr., and Diane Kirby began to explore the role of religion in the Cold War after 1945. Their studies illustrated how the Truman and Eisenhower administrations invoked anti-communist religious rhetoric and cultivated Protestant and Catholic leaders to generate popular support for the policies of containment and roll-back.[[29]](#footnote-29) These historians focused heavily on the early Cold War during the period from 1945 to 1965 but offered little insight into what role religion may have played in the origins of the Cold War.[[30]](#footnote-30)

Religion historians such as Gary Scott Smith have studied how Roosevelt’s personal religious beliefs shaped his foreign policy plans in the 1930s and early 1940s, but not how Roosevelt’s beliefs influenced his concrete policy decisions surrounding Soviet Russia. Smith has shown that FDR’s Episcopalian education, informal faith during adulthood, and Christian worldview reinforced his belief that the United States should pursue a liberal world order under the Four Freedoms axioms of 1941: freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.[[31]](#footnote-31) Yet, no one has yet fully explained how Roosevelt’s Christian ideology affected his decision to extend diplomatic recognition to Russia in 1933, and to minimize public criticisms of Russia’s religious policies throughout the 1930s and World War II. Nor have historians explained why FDR’s program for minimizing religious tensions was reversed so quickly after his death in April 1945.

This investigation will demonstrate that, although FDR harboured the long-term goal of spreading religious and political freedoms worldwide, he prioritized cooperative diplomatic relations with Russia because he believed that cooperation would benefit American security interests, promote international trade, and encourage Soviet leaders to gradually relax domestic religious and political restrictions as they grew less fearful of capitalist encirclement. Unfortunately, Roosevelt did not ensure that State Department Soviet experts genuinely embraced his program of minimizing religious tensions with the USSR, which made it possible for Harry Truman to resurrect official criticisms of Soviet religious policies after FDR died.

The small body of historians who have written about domestic religious conditions in Soviet Russia tend to focus narrowly on particular religious organizations and clerics. Their accounts have been shaped by the same religious and anti-communist bias as their subjects. [[32]](#footnote-32) For example, Dennis Dunn and Charles Gallagher’s analyses of the Catholic Church’s relations with Soviet Russia during the Roosevelt period support the anti-Soviet views of Catholic leaders by blaming Stalin’s immorality and aggression for the breakdown of US-Russian relations after World War II.[[33]](#footnote-33) The historian Steven Merritt Miner has criticized American and British political leaders and public figures for deceiving the Western public by obscuring the brutalities of Soviet religious repression after the German invasion of Russia in 1941.[[34]](#footnote-34) According to Miner, by supporting Stalin’s contention that religious freedom existed in the Soviet sphere, British and American leaders undermined popular support for anti-communist Catholic leaders who opposed Soviet incursions into Eastern Europe. The only positive outcome of Stalin’s religious propaganda was to alarm anti-Soviet officials in the US State Department and British Foreign Office to such an extent that they redoubled their efforts to promote containment-oriented policies and debunk Stalin’s claims of religious toleration.[[35]](#footnote-35) Unfortunately, Miner’s limited attention to US diplomatic sources prevented him from engaging seriously with revisionist interpretations of the origins of the Cold War.

In the early 2000s, historians of US foreign relations began to debate how to best define religion as a category of analysis.[[36]](#footnote-36) Andrew Preston argued in 2008 that religion is distinct from other elements of ideology in three ways: it involves belief in a supernatural God or Gods; belief in the power of religious creed and ritual; and belief that supernatural powers can and should influence politics in the secular world.[[37]](#footnote-37) Building on Preston’s approach, this investigation focuses on formal religion, defined here as an explicit belief in a God or Gods, membership in an organized faith group, and belief that divine beings can guide or intercede in secular affairs, particularly through the practice of religious ritual, prayer, or creed. Less attention has been given to non-formal religious belief, meaning the spiritual beliefs and practices of individuals outside of major organized faith groups. Since non-formal believers lacked institutional centres and representatives capable of exerting strong influence in Congress and the national media—and since most US policymakers belonged to Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish churches—non-formal belief appears less important than formal religion in shaping US diplomacy and public relations.

Another concept vital to this dissertation is civil religion, which refers to the evolving body of religion-oriented narratives about US national history and identity that circulated in the American media, educational institutions, civil organizations, and private sphere.[[38]](#footnote-38) This study adopts a selective approach to civil religion, focusing on narratives containing explicit references to God, scripture, God-given natural rights, providential national duty, and religious freedoms. Focusing exclusively on clear references to God and divinely-sanctioned national duties avoids misinterpreting secular nationalism as religious.[[39]](#footnote-39)

This study also adopts William Inboden’s premise that, depending on the context, religion may influence foreign relations primarily as a driver of policy or tool of rhetoric. As a driver of policy, policymakers’ genuine religious beliefs encourage them to pursue particular policy paths, such as withholding diplomatic recognition from Soviet Russia in the 1920s on the grounds that the Bolsheviks’ atheism and their hostility to organized churches made them unfit for participation in formal diplomacy. Religion acts as a tool of rhetoric when policymakers invoke religious arguments in a utilitarian manner to build official and popular support for their secular policy goals. Religious rhetoric does not necessarily imply genuine religious belief on the part of the speaker, so historians face challenges in distinguishing heartfelt religious oratory from disingenuous rhetoric. Typically, an effective means to infer whether policymakers genuinely believed their religious rhetoric is to compare their public statements to private ones not designed for public or bureaucratic release, such as private diaries or records of private conversations with trusted, like-minded advisors. When both categories of records are consistent, historians may infer that an officials’ religious rhetoric was rooted in genuine religious belief. Extensive diary records and public statements exist for President Harry Truman, and they reflect remarkable consistency in their anti-communist religious rhetoric. Unfortunately, Franklin D. Roosevelt kept no diary, behaved inconsistently with personal acquaintances, and avoided sharing private calculations with even his closest advisors. Thus, clear evidence of FDR’s personal religious beliefs and their impact on his diplomacy and rhetoric surrounding Russia remains sparse.[[40]](#footnote-40)

Historians have used a variety of approaches in their efforts to determine the influence of race, gender, emotion, and religious on US foreign policy.[[41]](#footnote-41) This study adopts Steven Casey’s methods for assessing the impact of domestic public opinion on FDR’s policymaking.[[42]](#footnote-42) Using FDR’s daily meeting agenda, reading materials, personal communications, and private conversations, Casey deduced that FDR was a politically-skilled, self-directed decision-maker, but sensitive to popular opinion which he gleaned from mass opinion polls and major liberal newspapers.[[43]](#footnote-43) When FDR believed that his private foreign policy goals did not enjoy popular support, he generally withheld his true aims from the public until evolving international events and his allies’ efforts to champion his preferred policy interpretations generated popular support. Only then did he publicly embrace his private goals, making it appear as if he followed popular will rather than guided it. Although mainstream views in Congress, the national media, and popular polls occasionally failed to come around to his position, Roosevelt usually succeeding in acquiring general consent for his wartime policies.[[44]](#footnote-44) This project adopts a similar approach to study’s Roosevelt’s management of religious issues, and it affirms Casey’s general conclusions.

Diplomatic correspondence constituted a central body of primary sources for this dissertation, including documents revealing Roosevelt’s relationships with prominent religious leaders.[[45]](#footnote-45) Attention to civil society focused on well-known American journalists, public intellectuals, legislators, and Catholic and Protestant leaders. Particular attention was paid to clerics with personal connections to officials in the White House and State Department. The *New York Times* and *Washington Post* provided important examples of mainstream press opinion that were likely to have influenced American leaders.[[46]](#footnote-46)

By exploring religion and US-Soviet relations from 1880s to 1948, this study demonstrates that religious issues made an important contribution to the breakdown of US-Soviet relations prior to the Cold War. The first chapter of this dissertation explores the period from 1880 to 1933 when US officials, journalists, and prominent religious leaders established a pattern of publicly criticizing the Russian government’s religious repression, and employing diplomatic pressure to try to compel Russian leaders to adopt American-style religious freedoms such as freedom of worship and separation of church and state. Prior to 1917, American reformers decried imperial Russia’s anti-Semitic discrimination and preferential sponsorship of the conservative Russian Orthodox Church. After the Bolshevik seizure of power in October 1917, Americans scored the Bolshevik regime’s atheistic dogma, expropriation of the wealth and property of Orthodox and non-Orthodox churches, and the arrest and imprisonment of clerics suspected of anti-Bolshevik sympathies. US officials during the 1920s sometimes publicly cited Soviet religious repression when defending the US policy of withholding diplomatic recognition from the Soviet regime. Anti-communist State Department officials and religious leaders also suspected the Soviet regime of subverting American Orthodox and Protestant congregations through communist fifth columns. American criticisms of Russia’s religious policies antagonized Russian officials, reinforcing their xenophobic fears of capitalist encirclement while failing to induce religious reform.

The second chapter of this project explores the 1933 to 1940 period when the Democratic president Franklin D. Roosevelt and his personal supporters—Ambassador Joseph Davies, Assistant Secretary of State R. Walton Moore, and Harry Hopkins—worked to lay the foundations for rapprochement with Russia by minimizing official and public criticism of Soviet religious repression. Hopeful that diplomatic relations would increase American exports to Russia, offset the economic contractions of the Great Depression, and deter expansion by fascist Germany and Japan, FDR employed his famous charm to persuade resistant American Catholic leaders that diplomatic recognition would hasten religious reforms in Russia. Following the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1933, FDR appointed friendly ambassadors to Russia to pursue his cooperative agenda and overrule dissenting embassy staff. Unfortunately, all but Joseph Davies, ambassador from 1936 to 1938, quickly became embittered. Anti-communist US embassy staff also undermined FDR’s cooperative program by informing visiting American priests of the regime’s ongoing religious repression. When Russia invaded Catholic-dominated Poland and the Baltic states in 1939, Roosevelt resisted pressure from State Department officials, legislators, and Catholic pundits to sever diplomatic relations, and he refrained from Catholic leaders’ bitterly anti-communist rhetoric. FDR’s pragmatic policymaking in the 1930s displeased many officials in his bureaucracy, but it preserved functional diplomacy with the United States’ future ally in the war against Germany.

The third chapter of this study focuses on the pivotal year of 1941 when FDR struggled to minimize Catholic opposition to the wartime Grand Alliance. In the weeks after German forces invaded the USSR in June 1941, the Roosevelt administration dispatched military materiel to Russia, and in October 1941, Congress sanctioned Lend-Lease aid. In a public relations campaign reminiscent of the effort to promote diplomatic recognition in 1933, FDR personally persuaded influential Catholic leaders such as Michael Ready of the National Catholic Welfare Council to endorse Lend-Lease aid to Russia. Roosevelt also publicly championed the view that Russia was liberalizing its religious policies due to wartime assistance from the United States. Most Catholic leaders, conservative legislators, and mainstream journalists embraced Roosevelt’s claim that cooperation with Soviet Russia served US interests, and they willingly ignored or rationalized Soviet religious repression in order to encourage popular support for the anti-German alliance.

The fourth chapter focuses on the dissolution of the American Catholic hierarchy’s support for long-term cooperation with Russia from 1942 to 1945. In 1942 and early 1943, most American legislators, Protestant and Catholic leaders, and mainstream journalists supported Roosevelt’s cooperative attitude toward America’s strongest military ally. The Roosevelt administration supplied Russia with military aid on an unconditional basis, while refraining from criticizing Russia’s domestic policies. Catholic criticism of Soviet religious repression emerged in the national press after the Red Army repelled German forces at Stalingrad in early 1943 and evidence surfaced that the Soviet secret police had massacred Polish officers in the Katyn Forest three years earlier. Roosevelt’s most trusted advisors, including Sumner Welles, also began to hold private meetings with Catholic leaders where those advisors criticized Roosevelt’s conciliatory approach to Stalin. Unfortunately, FDR neglected his public relations campaign and dissenting bureaucracy between 1943 and 1945. As the president became distracted, ill, and personally isolated, it became difficult to defend his program of cooperation with Soviet Russia.

The fifth chapter of this dissertation explores the breakdown of US-Soviet relations between 1945 and 1948. Following FDR’s death in April 1945, officials in the Truman administration grew frustrated by Soviet domination in Eastern Europe, communist propaganda, and Russia’s insistence on heavy German reparations. Soviet leaders resented the Truman administration’s unwillingness to supply Russia with continued lend-lease or a generous loan for reconstruction.[[47]](#footnote-47) At the same time, US officials saw an opportunity to promote sustainable recovery in Western Europe by extending American trade and economic practices to the Old World through a program of US investment that would exclude Soviet Russia. Thus, the Truman administration articulated containment doctrine in 1946, intervened in Greece and Turkey in 1947, and undertook the Marshall Plan with the deliberate aim of excluding the Soviet Union. To help sell these policies to the American public and Congress, Truman called on Christian democracies everywhere to unite in a global crusade to eradicate atheistic communism and spread Christian democracy worldwide.[[48]](#footnote-48) Between 1945 and 1948, Truman reversed FDR’s plans for the post-war peace and reinvigorated religious criticisms of Russia, wasting an opportunity to work with the Soviet Union to avert the development of a protracted bipolar struggle.

Although religious criticisms contributed to the origins of the Cold War from 1880 to 1948, religion did not drive policy to the same degree as economic, political, and security conflicts. Rather, religion operated primarily as a rhetorical device. US officials and public figures invoked religious tropes in order to justify and generate public support for their secular policy goals, and their religious tropes shifted to suit their changing policy agendas. As the Roosevelt administration demonstrated in 1933 and 1941, when US officials and American public figures believed that cooperation with Soviet Russia benefitted US security and economic interests, most officials, legislators, journalists, and religious leaders abandoned public criticisms of religious repression in Russia, and they willingly minimized or overlooked Soviet religious repression in the interests of pragmatic cooperation. However, when those Americans decided that US and Russian core interests no longer aligned, many embraced anti-communist religious themes to justify containment and confrontation. Indeed, the Marshall Plan appealed to Americans in 1947 and 1948 primarily because they believed in the economic, security, and humanitarian benefits of spreading American trade, industrial, and political practices to Western Europe. Many also feared the rise of repressive communist parties should post-war economic recovery lag, fears that were exacerbated by Stalin’s crackdown on Eastern Europe in late 1947. Ultimately, Truman’s religious invective calling for a Christian-democratic crusade complemented but did not overshadow traditional drivers of US-Soviet policy.[[49]](#footnote-49)

The US government’s adoption of anti-communist religious rhetoric during the early Cold War resulted from three contingent factors: Roosevelt’s sudden death and poor succession planning, his failure to create a bureaucracy committed to his vision of post-war toleration, and his failure to maintain personal relationships with anti-communist Catholics after 1943. If FDR had survived his fourth term—or if his successors had pursued his post-war vision of economic and territorial concessions, personal diplomacy, and a positive public relations campaign—the US might have avoided the confrontational Cold War policies that dominated US foreign relations after 1945. Even if FDR’s accommodating approach could not preserve the Grand Alliance, it still might have created an atmosphere of diplomatic cooperation and toleration that would have lessened tensions between the two emerging superpowers.

Chapter 1

American Hopes for Russian Religious Reform, 1880-1932

Throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth century, American politicians, public intellectuals, and religious pundits expressed hope that Russia would adopt religious freedoms similar to those enshrined in the US constitution. In particular, the First and Fourteenth amendments guaranteed the free exercise of religion within reasonable limits, equal protection under the law regardless of religion, and the non-involvement of government in religious affairs, particularly when government action might benefit one religion over another.[[50]](#footnote-50) Beginning in the 1880s, American observers criticized the Imperial Russian government’s anti-Semitism and the privilege that the state accorded to the repressive Russian Orthodox Church. After the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, American observers denounced the Soviet regime’s official atheism and anti-religious repression. As David Foglesong has demonstrated, since the late nineteenth century, Americans have promoted self-flattering national identity narratives asserting that it was America’s Christian duty to “free” Russia by reforming its barbarous ways and re-making it in America’s ideal image. This narrative of Christian uplift was well-established in American public discourse by the turn of the century as political leaders and national newspapers invoked similar themes to frame US intervention in the Philippines in 1899-1902 and Colombia in 1903.[[51]](#footnote-51)

Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft were particularly important in setting precedents in government policy and discourse surrounding religion in Russia. In 1903 and 1911, Roosevelt and Taft reacted to electoral pressures by shifting private diplomatic clashes over religious issues to the realm of official public discourse. By publicly censuring the Russian government for its illiberal religious policies and pressuring it to reform, the Roosevelt and Taft administrations encouraged popular expectations that the US government would continue to use official diplomacy to try to compel Russia to adopt American-style religious freedoms. In a pattern that would dominate the 20th century, criticism by US officials deeply antagonized Russian officials and produced no tangible benefits for Russian citizens or diplomatic relations.

After the Bolshevik Party seized power in 1917, the US State Department formed a professionalized division of anti-Soviet foreign service officers to monitor Soviet Russia and guide US policy surrounding the USSR. These “Russia Hands” in the Eastern European Division continued Roosevelt and Taft’s tradition of privately and publicly censuring Russia for religious repression. They also invoked Russia’s lack of Christian morality as a reason to withhold formal diplomatic recognition of the Bolshevik government. State Department officials harbored deep-rooted suspicions that the Bolshevik regime was planting subversive Orthodox priests in American Orthodox congregations as a means to spread communist ideology and destabilize the US government. To check this perceived threat, State Department officials coordinated efforts between private citizens and US officials to oppose the efforts of suspected Soviet-backed priests.

For a brief period after the revolution of 1917, some American observers—particularly reform-minded Protestants—applauded the Soviet government for disempowering the illiberal Russian Orthodox Church by revoking its state-sponsored privileges. With the Soviet government’s approval, a small cohort of leftist American Methodist evangelicals arranged with the Soviet government to work as missionaries in Russia in the mid-1920s in an effort to provide Russian believers with a substitute faith that the Bolshevik regime hoped would constitute less of a political threat to the regime. Yet, to help crush popular resistance to the industrialization and collectivization drives of the late 1920s and early 1930s, the Soviet government widened its repressive anti-religious campaign to target American missionaries in 1929, ending the temporary alliance between the Soviet government and American Protestant reformers. American Catholic and Protestant leaders united in defending Washington’s non-recognition policy against a growing lobby led by Senator William Borah (R-Idaho). Borah championed recognition as means to improve US-Soviet trade in the midst of the Great Depression. By 1933, supporters of recognition also claimed that it would discourage aggressive expansion by fascist Germany and Japan because it would create the impression of growing solidarity between the United States and the USSR, both of which opposed such expansion.[[52]](#footnote-52) With the national media and Congress bitterly divided after 1929 on diplomatic recognition, Robert Kelley of the US State Department’s Eastern European Division quietly funnelled reports of Russia’s anti-religious activities to publishers and congressmen who opposed diplomatic recognition. Thus, when FDR took was elected in 1932, criticism of Soviet religious policy was deeply entrenched in the anti-communist culture of the State Department.

**Roots of Reformism: The “Free Russia” Movement, 1880-1917**

In the 1880s, American businessmen and journalists who traveled to Imperial Russia expressed hope that its backward, illiberal government might one day adopt American-style religious and civil liberties. Among the best-known of these journalist-intellectuals was George Kennan, distant cousin to the State Department Russia specialist George Frost Kennan who articulated the containment doctrine in the 1940s. In 1884, *Century* magazine sent Kennan the journalist to Russia to write about the Russian prison system, which he had first observed while working as a telegraph surveyor in Eastern Russia in the 1860s.[[53]](#footnote-53)

Kennan’s trip coincided with Tsar Alexander III’s Russification campaign wherein the Tsar made Orthodox worship mandatory for all Russian subjects and declared the Church’s leaders to be infallible. The government prohibited conversion from the Orthodox Church and imposed hefty church tithes on all Russians. The government also restricted the rights and freedoms of Russian Jews, confining them to the Pale settlement in western Russia and barring them from certain schools and professions. Imperial officials alleged that the barbarity of Russian peasants and ethnic minorities made the population unfit for democracy. According to this logic, it was necessary to crush democratic impulses in order to inculcate the Russian masses with obedience to the Tsarist regime. Profiting from the Russification campaign, the Orthodox Church offered its support. [[54]](#footnote-54)

In his reports to *Century* magazine on the Russian prison system, George Kennan challenged Americans’ popular perception that Russian inmates were illiterate peasants and violent anarchists. Instead, he described work camps populated by non-superstitious, educated reformers poised to throw off Tsarist autocracy in favour of democratic government.[[55]](#footnote-55) Kennan eviscerated the state-sponsored Orthodox Church for indoctrinating the Russian peasantry to submit to the imperial government.[[56]](#footnote-56) Kennan’s criticisms resonated with American Protestants, Jews, secular liberals, and Russian émigrés who hoped America’s relatively tolerant religious and political norms would be introduced into Russia.[[57]](#footnote-57)

It remains unclear to what extent Kennan’s desire to reform Russia was driven by religious feeling. As historian David Foglesong observes, Kennan was raised in a strict Calvinist household, but as an adult, he grew disillusioned with traditional Protestantism, which seemed intellectually untenable compared to humanistic and scientific philosophies inspired by Darwin in the late 1800s. Like the “gentleman socialists” Ernest Poole, Arthur Bullard, and William English Walling, Kennan commented that humanist philosophies offered little emotional fulfillment because they lacked the inspiring missionary zeal of evangelical Protestantism.[[58]](#footnote-58) According to Foglesong, Kennan’s quest to rediscover the “Puritan fire” of his youth led him to sublimate his unfulfilled missionary impulses into a quasi-religious crusade to liberate Russia from Imperial repression.[[59]](#footnote-59)

There is evidence that religion helped to drive or at least shape the style of Kennan’s anti-Tsarist activism. Kennan and his peers invoked religious tropes in their writings about Russia. For example, Kennan claimed in 1917 that he gained a sense of “spiritual uplift” during his tour of the gulag in the late 1800s.[[60]](#footnote-60) Yet, Kennan and other reformers’ anti-clericalism, uncertainty about God's existence, and belief that God, if he existed, operated only as a “prime mover” suggests that secular humanism was at least as important as religion in fuelling many reformers’ enthusiasm for liberalizing Russia.[[61]](#footnote-61)

Encouraged by the public lobbying efforts of public intellectuals such as Kennan, the Free Russia movement achieved widespread currency in American political discourse by the early 1890s. Non-interventionist reformers argued that the US example of political and religious freedoms would inspire progress in Russia without the need for further action, while more enthusiastic observers, especially Jewish rights groups and humanitarian organizations, advocated diplomatic pressure and economic sanctions to compel Russia to adopt American-style civil freedoms. Kennan lobbied energetically for monetary and material support to Russian revolutionaries to help them overthrow the Tsar.[[62]](#footnote-62) Reformist discourse was so popular during the 1892 presidential election that both the Democratic and Republican Parties denounced Russia’s religious intolerance in their electoral platforms.[[63]](#footnote-63) Media pundits and politicians agreed: Imperial Russia’s support for the intolerant Orthodox Church and repression of religious minorities precluded Russia’s membership in the “civilized” family of nations.[[64]](#footnote-64)

As David Foglesong has observed, American politicians’ and pundits’ criticisms of the Tsarist regime distracted audiences from America’s embarrassing domestic inequalities. Rather than focusing on America’s post-bellum race conflict, anti-Semitism, Catholic-Protestant strife, gender inequality, and class conflict, American observers described the United States—or its progressive reformers, at least—as righteous global missionaries spreading religious and political freedoms throughout the world. The Free Russia movement briefly lost popularity when American attention was drawn to the economic depression of the late 1890s and the war of 1898, but Tsar Nicholas II’s short-lived liberal concessions during the Russian revolution of 1905 inspired renewed calls for religious and civil reform.[[65]](#footnote-65) Popular hopes in America to liberate Russia through reform or revolution remained robust in American Congressional and newspaper discourse in the early 1900s.

**Religion Enters the Realm of Diplomacy, 1880-1917**

During Alexander III’s Russification campaign from 1881 to 1894, American embassy officials in St. Petersburg privately complained to Russian officials of the Tsarist regime’s religious policies, especially its complacent attitude to Jewish pogroms and its restrictions on Jewish subjects. Ambassador John W. Foster lamented to his superiors in Washington that Russia’s Christian Orthodox mobs were “more worthy of the Dark Ages than of the Present Century.”[[66]](#footnote-66) Encouraged by powerful Jewish lobby groups such as B’Nai B’rith and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Foster wrote to the Russian Foreign Ministry in 1891 that religious bigotry not only endangered American Jews, but was repugnant to “civilized people” wherever it existed in the world.[[67]](#footnote-67) US Secretary of State William Evart echoed Foster’s high-handed language, invoking it in private meetings with irate Jewish lobbyists.[[68]](#footnote-68)

Russian officials were deeply offended by US criticisms of Russia’s religious policies in the 1880s and 1890s. Rather than complying with official US requests to improve civil rights for Russian Jews, Tsarist officials criticized social inequalities in the United States and continued to repress Russian Jews. In a private reply to a note from Ambassador Foster accusing the Tsarist regime of uncivilized religious bigotry, the Russian foreign minister indignantly rejected Foster’s implication that Russia required US instruction the handling of its religious affairs. He suggested Foster “edify” himself by reading the twelve hundred pages of Russian law that governed the treatment of Jewish minorities. The minister attached several Russian legal tomes to his rebuttal. After studying the texts, US embassy officials concluded that the laws pertaining to Jews were vague and Russian judges interpreted them “arbitrarily” to serve government aims.[[69]](#footnote-69) Foster’s private criticism did not help to improve conditions for Jews, and it compounded US-Russian diplomatic tensions.

Diplomatic clashes over religious repression in Russia remained largely unknown to the American public prior to 1903. President Benjamin Harrison briefly mentioned to Congress in his State of the Union Address of 1891 that his government had “found occasion to express” to Tsarist officials “serious concern” about the “harsh measures” being taken against Russian Jews. Yet, Harrison refrained from high-handed moral condemnations, emphasizing instead the US and Russia’s “historic friendship” and his “sincere” attitude as a “well-wisher.” Harrison’s only public objection to Russia’s religious policies was that they might cause a flood of Jewish immigration to United States, which would place unwanted demand on American employment and housing opportunities.[[70]](#footnote-70)

It was not until the first decade of the 1900s that private diplomatic clashes over religion between US and Tsarist officials became widely known to the American public. In 1903 and 1911, Presidents Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909) and William Howard Taft (1909-1913) publicly denounced Tsar Nicholas II’s government for its anti-Semitic policies. Initially, both the Taft and Roosevelt administrations tried to shift public attention away from religious conflict in Russia. Roosevelt and Taft were more concerned with US efforts to curb Russia’s territorial expansion into Manchuria, which US officials believed threatened the “open door” to American trade in the region. Diplomatic tensions mounted when Russia refused to withdraw from Manchuria in 1903-1904, leading Roosevelt to aid Japan in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905.[[71]](#footnote-71)

Upon a backdrop of escalating diplomatic tensions in 1903-1905, the American press and Congress seized upon a pogrom in Kishinev, Russia, in spring 1903 that killed 47, injured 400, and displaced 10,000 Jews. The *New York Times* reported that a “mob led by priests…slaughtered [Jews] like sheep.” The paper described “scenes of horror” where infants were “torn to pieces by the frenzied and bloodthirsty mob” while Russian police looked on. When the American media published rumours that Russian troops actively participated in a subsequent pogrom that summer, popular outrage at the Tsarist regime’s anti-Semitic policies peaked.[[72]](#footnote-72) The former US president Grover Clevelanddecried the "wholesale murder" of “defenseless men, women, and children” who had been "assured of safety” by Russia’s “professedly civilized government."[[73]](#footnote-73)The wealthy Rothschild family cut off private financing to the Russian government and pressed the US government to lodge an official note of diplomatic protest.[[74]](#footnote-74)

Initially, President Theodore Roosevelt and Secretary of State John Hay rejected these requests. Although personally repulsed by the Russian government’s “fiendish cruelties,” Hay reasoned that there would be no “possible advantage” to Russian Jews or the US government if Tsarist officials rebuffed US objections as they had in the past.[[75]](#footnote-75) The influential Jewish lobbyist rabbi Stephen S. Wise persisted in pressuring Roosevelt to publicly censure Russia, reminding him that US embassy officials had privately complained to Russian officials of anti-Semitic policies in 1872, 1880, and 1881.[[76]](#footnote-76) With the 1904 election looming, Roosevelt capitulated, soliciting from the Jewish advocacy organization B’nai B’rith a strongly-worded petition to present to the Russian Foreign Ministry. Released to national newspapers, the petition charged the Tsar with neglecting his duty to the “civilized” world, and it demanded that his regime immediately adopt religious toleration.[[77]](#footnote-77)

As Secretary of State Hays predicted, the note produced no tangible benefits for Russia citizens, but it may have helped Roosevelt’s re-election campaign by making him appear to be a liberal champion of American ideals surrounding civil and religious freedoms.[[78]](#footnote-78) The Russian Foreign Ministry regarded the petition as a condescending violation of its sovereignty, responding with a terse note accusing the US government of culpability in American domestic inequalities. In the months following the official US protest, violence against Jews in Russia increased as revolutionary disruptions in Moscow and St. Petersburg gained momentum. Anti-Semitic hostility was exacerbated by the publication in Russia of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion,* a racist tract alleging a Jewish plot for world domination.[[79]](#footnote-79) In 1904, President Theodore Roosevelt privately regretted his government’s public protest to the Russian Foreign Ministry: “out in the west, we…used to consider it a cardinal crime to draw a revolver…unless the man meant to shoot.”[[80]](#footnote-80) Roosevelt rejected public pressure for further official censure during the renewed pogroms of 1905. He had a “horror of saying anything” or taking “any action which we cannot make good,” he told Jewish financier Jacob Schiff.[[81]](#footnote-81) Like his cousin Franklin Roosevelt, TR understood the limits of US power and did not criticize Russia’s religious policies in public statements or private discussions with Russian leaders.

The historians David Mayers and John Lewis Gaddis have concluded that Roosevelt’s decision to publicly protest to the Kishinev pogrom in 1903 went against his better judgement.[[82]](#footnote-82) Roosevelt prioritized his own domestic popularity and electoral interests over fostering positive diplomatic relations with a major power, for he was aware of Russian officials’ disdain for US criticisms surrounding anti-Semitism in Russia. Rather than improving humanitarian conditions or building goodwill with Russian officials, Roosevelt’s public criticisms irritated Russian officials and affirmed popular expectations that the US government would continue to use diplomatic pressure to compel Russia to conform to American ideals surrounding religious freedoms.

In 1911, the Republican President William Howard Taft also set a public precedent by linking religious tensions to US-Soviet diplomatic discourse. In 1911, American newspapers reported that Russia had refused to honour travel passports for American Jews and restricted where they could reside while visiting Russia. The Jewish lobbyist Jacob Schiff met with President Taft to demand that he abrogate the Russian-American trade treaty of 1832 in order to pressure Russia to lift its anti-Semitic restrictions. Taft refused because he doubted the legal grounds for abrogating the treaty, feared disrupting the balance of power between Russia and Japan in Asia, and wished to protect trade relations. The United States was Russia’s third largest source of foreign imports and Russia absorbed one third of America’s agricultural tool and machinery exports.[[83]](#footnote-83) Undeterred, Schiff and the American Jewish Committee lobbied the House of Representatives to issue a resolution recommending that the government abrogate the trade treaty. In December 1911, the House voted 300 to 1 in favour of such a resolution.[[84]](#footnote-84) With the 1912 presidential election looming, members of the House hoped the resolution would curry favour with American voters who feared that Russia’s anti-Semitic policies would cause a flood of unwanted Jewish immigration to the United States, burdening American employment and housing resources.

Before the Senate could vote on the House resolution, however, President Taft—who planned to run for re-election in 1912—announced that the US government would withdraw from the treaty in one year. Taft’s supporters in the House and Senate applauded Taft’s announcement as evidence of his freedom-loving policies, while Taft’s critics charged he had to be forced by Congress to prioritize religious ideals over US monetary self-interest in protecting US-Russian trade. The Democratic New Jersey Governor Woodrow Wilson claimed that withdrawal from the US-Russian trade treaty proved that the Congress—if not the White House—was determined that United States should maintain principled diplomacy, rather than behaving like a cynical “body of traders.”[[85]](#footnote-85) Russian officials dismissed the US promise to negate the 1832 treaty as meaningless electoral grandstanding, and Washington continued to facilitate uninterrupted trade despite the withdrawal from the treaty. Although US officials appear to have been more interested in maintaining trade than reforming Russia’s religious policies, Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft set the important precedent of using diplomatic pressure as a means to prod Russia into honouring religious freedom.[[86]](#footnote-86)

**The March Revolution of 1917: The Peak of American Hopes**

American hopes for religious reform in Imperial Russia surged during the first months of World War I as Tsar Nicholas II loosened religious and civil constraints to generate domestic support for the war effort. The regime permitted American Methodist missionaries to make inroads into German-speaking areas of Finland and the northern Baltic region, and American Baptists expanded their activities into Russian-speaking areas of western Russia. The Tsar revoked the Orthodox Church’s control over education, conceded greater power to legislative government, and opened Russian markets to greater American trade and investment.[[87]](#footnote-87) American hopes for religious, political, and economic liberalization were dashed in 1916-1917, however, when the imperial government mismanaged the wartime economy, failed to renegotiate trade agreements with the United States, and intensified anti-Semitic repression in order to quell domestic political unrest. American religious leaders were particularly offended by Tsarist efforts to oust foreign missionaries who criticized the regime’s renewed anti-Semitism.[[88]](#footnote-88)

President Wilson initially sympathized with Tsar Nicholas’s support for the war against Germany and his territorial ambitions, but Russia’s lack of civil, political, and economic liberties clashed with Wilson’s idealistic belief in spreading American-style freedoms across the world. As the war dragged on, Wilson began to fear the expansion of Tsar Nicholas II’s conservative autocracy should Germany suffer a complete defeat. This anxiety led him to embrace the optimistic predictions of his advisors George Kennan and Samuel Harper: popular Russian dissatisfaction with wartime conditions would either force the Russian government to institute a constitutional democracy featuring essential political and civil liberties, or it would lead the Russian people to overthrow the Romanovs through democratic revolution.[[89]](#footnote-89)

The historians David Foglesong and John Lewis Gaddis argue that hopes for American-inspired reform in Russia led President Wilson and other American observers to overestimate the stability of the Provisional Government after the Revolution of March 1917. This overestimation contributed to a widespread sense of shock and betrayal when the Bolshevik Party supplanted the Provisional Government only eight months after it took power. President Woodrow Wilson revealed his optimism for the Provisional Government in an address to the US Congress in April 1917. Alluding to his personal philosophy favouring open global markets and democratic institutions, Wilson welcomed the events of March 1917 as “wonderful and heartening.” Unlike the “terrible” and “alien” Romanov autocracy, the Provisional Government reflected the desires of the Russian people who had always been “democratic at heart.” Liberated from imperial repression, the Russian masses could now add their “naïve majesty and might” to the forces fighting for “freedom,” “justice,” and “peace” in the world.[[90]](#footnote-90) Wilson’s views were echoed by influential public intellectuals such as George Kennan and national media organizations including the *New York Times* and *Life* magazine.[[91]](#footnote-91)

President Wilson and his closest advisors did not grasp the Russian people’s war weariness in 1917. The president inaccurately implied that the Russian people were eager to continue fighting because of their alleged anti-authoritarianism.[[92]](#footnote-92) In truth, Alexander Kerensky, who became Prime Minister of the Provisional Government in July 1917, and many other revolutionaries regarded the war as a corrupt imperial contest that should be ended immediately through a negotiated peace without indemnities. This view was unacceptable to British, French, and American leaders in summer 1917, partly because it implied that popular revolution should also occur in the West if diplomacy failed to end the war quickly.[[93]](#footnote-93) John Lewis Gaddis has speculated that Washington probably would have refused to aid the Provisional Government if it had met popular Russian demands for immediate peace and the redistribution of land.[[94]](#footnote-94) Ultimately, the Provisional Government pledged to continue the war without major internal reforms in order to establish the Provisional Government’s credibility in the eyes of the Western powers. Russian leaders also worried that opting out of the war would require a separate Russo-German peace on terms unfavorable to Russian interests. Russian citizens did not universally support Kerensky’s decision to remain at war, especially after Russia’s military fortunes worsened in summer 1917.

Wilson also downplayed the enormous challenges the Provisional Government faced in trying to improve Russia’s dysfunctional economy. The Russian people were deeply frustrated by ongoing economic disruption caused by the war, and they blamed the Provisional Government for failing to ameliorate deteriorating economic conditions in summer and autumn 1917. Finally, Wilson failed to recognize the Russian people’s unfamiliarity and ambivalence toward democratic political institutions. Many Russians expressed a preference for Russian workers councils over the liberal democratic form of government favored by Kerensky. Misperceptions perpetuated by the Wilson administration contributed to widespread surprise and disappointment in America when Bolshevik leaders seized power in November 1917.

The American press helped to foster unrealistic hopes in 1917 that the Provisional Government would transform Russia into an American-style liberal democracy that respected religious freedoms. Dr. Peter J. Popoff—an Orthodox priest, scholar, and frequent contributor to the *New York Times—*praised the Orthodox Church for welcoming the March Revolution as “brought about by God’s hand.” According to Popoff, the patriarch of the Orthodox Church endorsed the Provisional Government because the church genuinely agreed with its revolutionary ideals. The Orthodox Church, like the Russian people, was “ready” for democracy.[[95]](#footnote-95) Other journalists dismissed the Orthodox Church’s endorsement of the revolution as a disingenuous attempt to curry favour with the Provisional Government, which wanted to end the Orthodox Church’s state-sponsored privilege, intolerance of other faiths, and accumulation of private wealth at public expense. According to the *New York Times,* if the Russian patriarchs bore any true resentment toward the Tsar, it was because they were jealous of Nicholas’s permissiveness toward the mystic peasant, Rasputin.[[96]](#footnote-96) The national press also rushed to praise the Provisional Government’s “clear-headed” and “practical” religious policies after March 1917. According to the *New York Times*, leaders of the Provisional Government defied the stereotype of the “neurotic” and “emotional” Slav. Instead, they separated church and state in Russia, revoked the Orthodox Church’s control over education, and urged Orthodox patriarchs to share power with lower clergymen and laymen in a manner similar to the American Episcopal Church. “So toleration [and] democratization goes on in all… Russian life,” the *New York Times* glowed.[[97]](#footnote-97) The American evangelical Billy Sunday hailed the Provisional Government’s support for the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) and “other Christian movements.” Sunday welcomed the removal of the Tsar and “old Rasputin,” who were “opposed to Christianity.”[[98]](#footnote-98) The *Washington Post* suggested the Provisional Government should take its religious reforms further by expropriating the wealth of the Orthodox Church and redeploying it in the war against Germany. According these critics, the church’s ill-gotten wealth was the product of Tsarist privilege and mandatory tithes, and it should instead be used be to benefit the Russian people.[[99]](#footnote-99) Whether American journalists were sympathetic or unsympathetic to the Russian Orthodox Church, they exaggerated the Russian people’s desire for American-style religious reforms, and they inflated the importance of anti-Orthodox sentiment in generating popular support for the March Revolution.

Following the establishment of the Provisional Government in March 1917, Wilson dispatched envoys drawn from the US State Department, Committee of Public Information, YMCA, and Red Cross to report on conditions in Moscow. Wilson also asked his envoys to assist Russian officials in producing propaganda to check anti-war sentiment among the Russian masses. Unfortunately, many of Wilson’s envoys were ill-informed about Russia. The 72-year-old former Secretary of State Elihu Root returned a stream of overly optimistic reports to the White House, despite his unfamiliarity with Russian language, society, and culture. Root and his colleagues underestimated the Provisional Government’s weakening popularity due to wartime economic malaise, and they failed to note the growing power of Russia’s workers councils, which were increasingly dominated by Bolshevik Party leaders.[[100]](#footnote-100) Positive reports continued to flow to Wilson’s desk during the Provisional government’s disastrous July Offensive, and General Kornilov’s attempted coup in August wherein the Provisional Government was forced to call on Bolshevik-led soviets to help put down the insurgency. Even as Bolshevik demonstrations against the Provisional Government increased in autumn 1917, optimists such as Methodist missionary George Simons championed the view that Russia’s ongoing exposure to Protestant values would solve its political woes.[[101]](#footnote-101) Several experienced US consuls submitted more accurate warnings about Russia’s collapsing economy, political instability, and growing socialist opposition, but those reports traveled by diplomatic pouch instead of embassy cable so they reached the White House in weeks rather than hours. Wilson appears to have ignored them.[[102]](#footnote-102)

Unaware of the Provisional Government’s imminent collapse, President Wilson delayed urgently-needed economic aid to Russia until the state had “proved” its commitment to remain in the war. By the time the Bolsheviks seized power in November 1917, only $188 million of the $450 million of US aid reserved for Russia had arrived.[[103]](#footnote-103) If Wilson and other American observers had possessed a clearer understanding of the Provisional Government’s fragile hold on power, economic woes, the Russian people’s war weariness, and their inexperience with democratic government, US officials might have tempered American hopes for the Kerensky regime, lessening the polarized swing to disillusionment and resentment when it fell to the Bolsheviks in November 1917.

**The Bolshevik Seizure of Power: “Godless Communism” and the Betrayal of Free Russia**

The Bolshevik seizure of power in November 1917 shocked President Wilson and other American observers. To the anti-monarchical Free Russia movement, the Bolshevik Party betrayed America’s opportunity to transform Russia into a liberal democracy. Wilson delayed several months before taking a firm public stand against the Bolshevik government. In his Fourteen Points speech of January 1918, Wilson called for Russia’s “independent determination” of its “political development and national policy,” and he offered to “help the Russian people” in “any way” they were “willing to be helped,” including US mediation of conflicts between the Bolsheviks and their domestic rivals.[[104]](#footnote-104) Within days, however, the US Ambassador to Russia, David R. Francis, told the *London Times* that the Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin suffered from “insane…fanaticism” and ran a criminal regime.[[105]](#footnote-105) US leaders became infuriated when the Bolsheviks dissolved the Constituent Assembly in January 1918 and pursued peace talks with Germany. US leaders were appalled when the Bolshevik regime renounced Russia’s outstanding foreign debts which included $213 million in direct loans from the United States. Moreover, 70 percent of the US’s $1.48 billion in loans to Britain and France were in fact indirect loans to Russia.[[106]](#footnote-106) The Bolshevik Party nationalized private assets of foreign interests without providing compensation, and the regime disseminated communist propaganda at home and abroad encouraging global revolution.[[107]](#footnote-107) In late 1919, Wilson publicly denounced communist ideology as “poison” and the “negation of everything…American.”[[108]](#footnote-108)

During the Red Scare of 1919-1920, political and religious leaders in the United States encouraged popular fears that fifth columnists were spreading revolutionary communist ideology in America.[[109]](#footnote-109) Even before the Bolsheviks seized power in November 1917, the Orthodox scholar Reverend Peter J. Popoff warned that American government and civil institutions were giving a “free hand” to “mischief-making” and “unpatriotic” socialists within their organizations.[[110]](#footnote-110) Public alarm over communist subversion helped to justify Wilson’s policy of withholding diplomatic recognition from the Soviet government, a policy that drew vigorous opposition from Senator William Borah (R-Idaho).[[111]](#footnote-111) The Red Scare also validated Wilson’s decision in July 1918 to send 5,000 US army troops to assist anti-Bolshevik forces in Russia, which non-interventionists such as Senator Hiram Johnson (R-California) publicly assailed as a waste of American blood and treasure.[[112]](#footnote-112) The President warned in September 1919 that the “poison of disorder…revolt…[and] chaos” had spread to America via steamships, wireless radio, and telegraph, leading some American citizens to favour Marxist ideology.[[113]](#footnote-113)

Much of this fear of communist subversion focused on American churches. The National Civic Federation, a Republican-dominated business lobby devoted to reducing labour unrest, formed a task force after 1917 to root out socialism in American churches. In 1921, the committee reported to the *New York Times* that a group of “subversive” communists had infiltrated Presbyterian, Episcopal, Catholic, and Methodist churches, along with the YMCA, YWCA, and Red Cross.[[114]](#footnote-114) The committee chairman demanded that the president of a major New York Episcopal college be dismissed because he was once registered in a socialist political organization.[[115]](#footnote-115) In 1920-1921, a group of prominent ecumenical religious leaders pledged to “sweep clean” from American schools and churches the “invasion” of Bolshevik “propagandists” preaching the “gospel” of communism.[[116]](#footnote-116) The *Anarchist Soviet Bulletin* denounced American church leaders as capitalist oppressors in flyers distributed through the US mail, worsening American church leaders’ antipathy to the Soviet regime and leftist groups in America.[[117]](#footnote-117)

Several prominent US officials endorsed religious leaders’ anticommunism during the Red Scare of 1919-1920. Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover decried communist “outbreaks” in America, alleging that a “very large majority” of the perpetrators were pro-Bolshevik Jews.[[118]](#footnote-118) In 1920, Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer ranted in pamphlets distributed to the American press that the “sharp tongues” of communism were “licking the altars of the churches,” infiltrating schools, and “crawling into the sacred corners of American homes.” According to Palmer, the Justice Department possessed “confidential information” confirming that revolutionary communist ideology was placing the US government in real “jeopardy.”[[119]](#footnote-119)

Wilson’s policy of non-recognition and the fears associated with the Red Scare did not go unchallenged, especially before March 1918, when Russia concluded a separate peace with Germany. Prominent journalists such as Arthur Ransome of the *New York Times* and Riley Grannon of the *Washington Post* advocated US recognition of Russia. Advocates of recognition maintained that economic and diplomatic support to Bolshevik leaders might convince Russia to repudiate the treaty of Brest-Litovsk and re-join the war against Germany. Indeed, the Russo-German peace was despised by most Russians because it ceded to the Central Powers Finland, Poland, the Baltic states, Ukraine, and Transcaucasia, substantially reducing Russia’s population, agricultural land, and industry. According to Ransome and Grannon, at worst diplomatic recognition and economic support would encourage the Bolsheviks to resist any further German annexations, preventing the need for a costly US military intervention to protect Russian territory from falling into German hands.[[120]](#footnote-120) The Bolshevik-dominated press in Moscow also championed US diplomatic recognition because it would encourage American trade in Russia, help to resolve outstanding diplomatic conflicts, and strike a “blow” to German imperialism.[[121]](#footnote-121)

Understandably, most journalists who favoured recognition ignored the Bolsheviks’ repression of the Orthodox Church. The journalist John Reed extolled the Bolshevik experiment as the secular manifestation of Christian ideals. Reed praised the Russian proletariat for “building a kingdom more bright than any heaven had to offer” for which they would consider it a “glory to die.”[[122]](#footnote-122) Walter Duranty of the *New York Times* argued in 1921 that if the Bolshevik regime were toppled, weak Orthodox leaders would attempt to fill the power vacuum in Moscow, leading to anarchy and renewed European conflict as the major powers vied for control of Russian territory.[[123]](#footnote-123)

Bolshevik policies toward churches in Russia eventually eroded American public opinion of the Russian regime. In early 1918, the Soviet government expropriated Orthodox and Catholic Church property, stripped priests of civil authority, and revoked the Orthodox Church’s status as Russia’s official state religion. Russian clergymen lost voting privileges, were taxed at the highest rate, and those suspected of anti-communist resistance were arrested and, in some cases, executed. Churches of all denominations lost the right to own buildings, land, monasteries, or control bank accounts, and clerics were prohibited from teaching in public schools, private academies, and Sunday schools. The regime closed churches and evicted their clerics unless a minimum of eighteen local laypeople applied for a permit to keep the church for worship or residence purposes. Laypeople rarely submitted such applications because they feared disbarment from Party membership and exclusion from government employment.[[124]](#footnote-124)

In January 1918, the patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Tikhon Belavin of Moscow, denounced Bolshevik Party members as “outcasts of mankind” who were doing the “work of Satan.” He urged the faithful to combat Bolshevism to the death.[[125]](#footnote-125) Initially, Arthur Ransome of the *New York Times* implied that Tikhon’s criticisms were motivated by bitterness at the Church’s loss of its state-sponsored wealth and privilege.[[126]](#footnote-126) Yet, when news of the violence involved in the Bolshevik anti-religious drive reached America in early 1918, the newspapers lamented the “wholesale slaughter” of Russian priests and citizens.[[127]](#footnote-127) American Catholic leaders also decried Soviet violence and expropriations of both Russian and foreign-owned church property.[[128]](#footnote-128) Archbishop Platon Rozhdestvensky of New York, an anti-Bolshevik Orthodox priest who had visited Russia until early 1918, publicly urged President Wilson to send military support to help anti-Bolshevik armies restore Russia to the Western “family of nations.[[129]](#footnote-129) The American scholar Reverend Peter J. Popoff identified Patriarch Tikhon, titular head of the Orthodox Church in Moscow, as the sole Russian leader capable of reinstituting democracy.[[130]](#footnote-130) Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox leaders were nearly united in 1919-1920 in championing US military, economic, and cultural intervention in order to topple the Bolshevik regime and restore Russia to its alleged democratic destiny.

**Religion and US Intervention in the Russian Civil War**

When President Wilson contemplated dispatching 1,300 American troops to Russia in the spring of 1917, his reasons centred primarily on alliance politics, military strategy, and US economic interests. Wilson believed that joint military intervention would foster wartime unity among the British and French allies, who agreed that coordinated anti-Bolshevik action was necessary to stop the spread of revolutionary ideology into war-weary Western Europe. By sending US troops to Russia’s northwest, Wilson also planned to seize military stockpiles in Murmansk and Archangel and deploy them against Germany. By sending additional troops to the Far East, Wilson intended to use US forces to assist Allied Czech soldiers trapped in central Russia to escape via Siberia in order to re-join the war effort. Wilson also projected that the presence of US forces in the Far East would deter Japanese incursions into Manchuria, a region that US officials still hoped to keep free of impediments to American trade and development.[[131]](#footnote-131)

Religious tensions also reinforced Wilson’s decision to intervene. Like many Western leaders, Wilson detested the Communist regime’s atheistic ideology, and he hoped that Christian tolerant elements would regain control of the government. According to David Foglesong, Wilson’s Presbyterian-inspired enthusiasm for liberating oppressed peoples drew him to reformist advisors such as George Kennan, who maintained that the presence of American troops in Russia would transmit democratic ideals to the Russian people, inspiring a groundswell of popular resistance aimed at toppling Bolshevik leaders.[[132]](#footnote-132)

In fact, US troops did little more than patrol railways and guard the shipping port of Vladivostok. They supported controversial White Army officers in the Far East known for their autocratic leadership style, which generated popular resentment among many Russians. Worse, British officers assigned to command American troops overrode Wilson’s orders prohibiting US troops from firing upon Bolshevik forces. US troops’ participation in military operations fostered perceptions in Russia that the United States was part of a Western conspiracy to invade Russia. When Wilson’s Western allies insisted that Czech troops must remain in Russia to combat the Red Army rather than flee to join the anti-German effort, Wilson’s allies undermined his public statements that US intervention was designed to aid the evacuation of Czech troops.[[133]](#footnote-133) US military intervention failed to trigger effective anti-Bolshevik uprisings, it undermined Wilson’s rhetoric in early 1918 claiming that the US respected Russia’s right to determine its own domestic political leadership, and it embarrassed the Wilson administration domestically and abroad. US intervention also sowed deep mistrust between US and Bolshevik officials.[[134]](#footnote-134)

During the US military intervention in Russia, the Wilson administration, with encouragement from American charities and religious organizations, decided to extend humanitarian relief to Russians in the hopes of strengthening anti-Bolshevik resistance. Alongside the War Trade Board and American Red Cross’s smaller relief operations, the American Relief Administration (ARA) delivered $50 million of government and private aid during the Russian Civil War and famine of 1920-1921. Approximately 300 Americans traveled to Russia to administer ARA relief, generating employment for 120,000 Russians.[[135]](#footnote-135) Both Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover and ARA Director William Haskell boosted the campaign as a Christian effort to ameliorate the suffering of Russia’s deeply religious people. Haskell urged Americans to do their “Christian duty” to assist Russia’s famine-stricken masses who would gratefully welcome American relief as a “miracle from God.”[[136]](#footnote-136) Raymond Robins, who led the American Red Cross expedition and publicly advocated diplomatic recognition, argued that aid to communist Russia would help it to realize egalitarian ideals that were unattainable in exploitative capitalist societies.[[137]](#footnote-137) US officials, charity boosters, and leftist critics promoted relief to Russia by insisting that it was America’s Christian duty to help Russia to resemble an idealized liberal America.[[138]](#footnote-138)

It remains unclear whether American relief efforts in Russia helped or hindered American-Russian diplomatic and cultural relations. Initially, ARA officials antagonized Bolshevik officials by attempting to disburse aid via a non-Bolshevik relief agency in Russia that US officials hoped might one day supplant Bolshevik rule. Russian officials, suspecting the ARA's subversive intentions, dissolved the non-Bolshevik disbursement agency by arresting and exiling its Russian leaders.[[139]](#footnote-139) The US government also offended Bolshevik officials by insisting that, as a condition of US relief, they must spend Russian gold reserves on famine relief rather than on revenue-generating industrial, commercial, and export-oriented infrastructure. Hoover also refused to divert US aid to Soviet infrastructure improvements to avoid strengthening the financial solvency of the Soviet regime, which could increase competition for American exporters.[[140]](#footnote-140) American and Russian officials bickered over control of relief operations and responsibility for operating costs.[[141]](#footnote-141) ARA workers also plundered Russian villages for artwork and antiques, buying cultural treasures for a pittance.[[142]](#footnote-142) Russian officials’ frustration mounted when the US government did not use famine relief as a prelude to formal diplomatic recognition. Bolshevik leaders hoped that the New Economic Policy of 1921 and its concessions to capitalist enterprise might persuade the US government to revise its policy of isolating the Bolshevik regime, but US officials refused. When American investors failed to subscribe *en masse* to Soviet mining and industrial concessions, Russian officials placed substantial blame on the US government’s failure to encourage private investment.[[143]](#footnote-143) To Russian officials, the US government seemed committed to ousting the Bolshevik regime.[[144]](#footnote-144) With bountiful agricultural harvests expected in 1922, Soviet officials began to attack the American Relief Administration in a domestic propaganda campaign. Hoover was forced to terminate the mission in 1923, as he realized that foreign aid had failed to dislodge the Bolsheviks from power.[[145]](#footnote-145)

Despite these mutual frustrations, American famine relief did make some positive contributions to US-Russian relations. By providing badly-needed food to starving Russian peasants, the United States had reduced economic pressure on the Bolshevik regime. Most Russian peasants were exhausted and had little appetite for challenging the Bolshevik government, despite US officials’ hopes that the famine would stir popular dissent. Russian officials generally allowed US relief workers to operate unmolested in Russia, and Russian leaders initially praised American generosity. In a domestic press campaign designed to help revitalize the Russian economy, Russian officials lauded the “businesslike efficiency” of American relief workers, hailing them as models for the “new” Russian worker.[[146]](#footnote-146) In this respect, US relief efforts reinforced manifest destiny narratives about America’s providential duty to reform or redeem Russia.

Some members of the American Protestant community initially cooperated with the Soviet government. Early in the decade, Bolshevik officials formed a tactical alliance with a small cadre of American Methodist, Pentecostal, Adventist, and Baptist missionaries, hoping they would supplant the anti-Bolshevik Orthodox Church. Sheltered from official harassment, American missionaries leased Orthodox and Catholic churches that had been nationalized by the Soviet government, coordinated state-sponsored education programs, and worked to convert both rural and urban Russians to the Protestant faith. Perhaps fewer than a dozen American missionaries operated in Russia in the 1920s, but by 1929, as many as 250,000 Russian citizens had converted to Protestantism.[[147]](#footnote-147)

Although American missionaries such as the Methodist priest Dr. Julius Hecker championed the possibility of “Christianizing communism,” there is little evidence that missionaries such as Hecker significantly influenced the national media, Congress, or officials in Washington.[[148]](#footnote-148) Most American Protestant leaders, including the powerful Methodist bishop John L. Nuelson, disavowed the Protestant missionary campaign after 1923 when the Bolshevik regime executed the Catholic Vicar General in Russia for anti-revolutionary agitation. When the Soviet government began to deport, harass, and exile American Protestant missionaries in 1929 as a means to break rural resistance to the government’s industrialization and collectivization programs, most of the regime’s few remaining American supporters turned to bitter opposition.[[149]](#footnote-149)

Despite efforts by Herbert Hoover’s Commerce Department to discourage American businesspeople from investing in Russia after 1919, approximately one thousand American engineers held technical consulting contracts in Russia in the mid-1920s.[[150]](#footnote-150) Wealthy investors, including the future US ambassador to Russia Averell Harriman, accepted resource extraction incentives offered by the Soviet government. General Electric had participated in building Russia’s largest hydroelectric dams, and Henry Ford exported tractors to the USSR. By 1931, the USSR was purchasing 25 percent of its imports from the United States, making the Soviet Union the largest overseas purchaser of US agricultural and industrial equipment. Although contracts for American consultants diminished after 1927 when the Russia began to shift toward industrial self-sufficiency, trade continued at a brisk pace until 1932.[[151]](#footnote-151) Most American entrepreneurs tolerated the US government’s non-recognition policy in the 1920s because it did not seriously impede their enterprises.[[152]](#footnote-152)

Although most American businesspeople who invested in Russia abstained from public debate about religious and political freedoms in Russia, some struggled to rationalize the morality of their economic cooperation with the atheistic, totalitarian Russian regime. Some American businessmen emphasized signs of progress under Soviet rule. They cited the growth of secular education, more egalitarian gender attitudes, and greater political autonomy for Russia’s ethnic minorities.[[153]](#footnote-153) Others American businesspeople sought to distance themselves from the regime’s illiberal practices. They praised signs of economic and industrial modernization while criticizing the Soviet government’s atheism, authoritarian politics, and inefficient bureaucracy. By scolding Soviet officials for their failure to more fully embrace American cultural and political norms, these American businesspeople may have sought to reduce the moral discomfort that accompanied their profit-driven cooperation with Soviet officials.[[154]](#footnote-154) When the Great Depression brought sharp reductions in American exports to Russia in 1932, a growing body of business and commercial interests began to call for diplomatic recognition as a means to foster trade and expand American export markets. Some invoked the argument that greater economic and political engagement with the West would help to hasten Russia’s progress toward religious, political, and economic freedoms.[[155]](#footnote-155) Although moral and religious issues were less central to American entrepreneurs than to American church leaders, politicians, journalists, and charity workers, Judeo-Christian discourse helped to shape how some businesspeople conceptualised and justified their transnational activities in Soviet Russia.

**Religion and the State Department’s Culture of Suspicion**

Religious beliefs significantly shaped the anti-Soviet culture of the State Department’s Division of Eastern European Affairs [EE], a small, specialized unit of the foreign service constituted in the mid-1920s to study Russia, monitor Soviet activity, and oversee US policy toward the USSR.[[156]](#footnote-156) The Division of Eastern European Affairs was headed by the Boston-raised Irish Catholic Robert F. Kelley, who oversaw a hand-picked staff of Ivy League graduates with fairly homogenous Protestant backgrounds.[[157]](#footnote-157) Long before taking charge of the division in 1926, Kelley had developed a deep hatred for Bolshevism. Owing to his Russian language training under anti-Bolshevik émigrés in Paris during World War I, Kelley believed that the Bolsheviks’ “world revolutionary purpose” menaced the United States and the world. A Bostonian Irish Catholic, Kelley found Soviet atheism and religious intolerance repugnant.[[158]](#footnote-158)

Soon after Kelly was appointed chief of the Eastern European Division, he recruited George Kennan, Charles Bohlen, and Loy W. Henderson, and helped them develop into the US State Department’s core team of Soviet experts in the 1930s and 1940s. Kelley put his recruits through rigorous Russian language training in European institutes where they adopted the anti-Bolshevik views of their mentors. Kelley then assigned them to diplomatic posts in anti-communist legations bordering Soviet Russia. This small, tightly-knit division came to monopolize the language proficiency and diplomatic skills required for US consular duties in Russia. Not surprisingly, members of the Eastern European Division grew deeply suspicious of the Bolshevik regime after years of reporting on Soviet sponsorship of the Comintern, forced industrialization and collectivization programs, domestic political repression, and anti-religious campaigns.[[159]](#footnote-159) Under the Republican administrations of Presidents Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover, the Eastern European Division dedicated itself to gathering evidence that could be used to defend the US policy of non-recognition.[[160]](#footnote-160)

The State Department began to mobilize religious issues to justify the US government’s isolation of Russia even before the formation of the Eastern European Division. In a series of high-profile clashes covered on the front pages of the *New York Times, Izvestia*, and *Pravda* in 1922 and 1923, President Harding’s Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes rejected demands by the Women’s International League of Peace and Freedom (WILPF) that the United States recognize the Soviet Union.[[161]](#footnote-161) In their plea for diplomatic recognition, WILPF activists accused the US government of neglecting America’s Christian duty to facilitate famine relief for the Russian people. Diplomatic recognition, they contended, would reassure American financiers that it was safe to invest in Russia and help stimulate mutually profitable investment and trade. To combat the State Department’s “worn-out excuses,” the WILPF drew attention to Methodist Bishop John L. Nuelson, who supported diplomatic recognition despite his well-known anti-Bolshevik convictions.[[162]](#footnote-162)

Secretary Hughes rejoined that US diplomatic recognition of the Bolshevik regime would undermine America’s commitment to Christian humanitarianism by encouraging unscrupulous American investors to “exploit” Russia’s unregulated economy. Recognition could also mislead well-meaning Americans to make foolhardy investments in Russia, which lacked “favourable conditions” in industry, agriculture, transportation, and law to protect their investments.[[163]](#footnote-163) The Soviet government’s atheistic immorality, Hughes declared, “strikes at the heart” of arguments for recognition based upon “principles of religion.” As long as Russia remained a “world of hatred” lacking the “sincerity of good faith,” there could be “no hope” for uplifting Russia through the “gospel…of brotherly kindness.” There was the added danger that recognition might appear to condone Russia’s repudiation of its debts and its illiberal confiscation of private property, thus encouraging the Bolsheviks to spread communism abroad and “visit upon other peoples the disasters that have overwhelmed the Russian people.”[[164]](#footnote-164)

Prominent east coast newspapers generally praised Hughes’s arguments on behalf of the non-recognition policy.[[165]](#footnote-165) The *New York Times*, for example, considered Hughes’s rebuttal “of great importance” for emphasizing that the Soviet regime bore full responsibility for Russia’s famine-related suffering and the mismanagement of its political and economic affairs. Accordingly, Hughes’s speech strengthened the *cordon sanitaire* that kept Russia isolated from European diplomacy by encouraging French and Belgian leaders to continue to withhold diplomatic recognition.[[166]](#footnote-166) When the Soviet government executed the Russian Catholic Vicar General in 1923 on the grounds that he had used his status as a priest to participate in counter-revolutionary plots, American newspapers and religious leaders joined in support of Hughes’s non-recognition policy[[167]](#footnote-167)

The State Department’s conviction that the Soviet government was trying to subvert Orthodox churches in America reinforced its belief that Russian communism threatened the United States. Soviet infiltration of American Orthodox congregations first came to the attention of the State Department in the early 1920s when the Supreme Court of New York ruled in favour of Reverend John Kedrovsky, a Russian-born Orthodox priest rumored to be affiliated with the pro-Soviet “Living Church” in Moscow. The Living Church was a group of reformist priests belonging to the Russian Orthodox Church that unsuccessfully attempted to usurp the ecclesiastical authority of the anti-Bolshevik patriarchate in Moscow in the early 1920s. In 1925, Kedrovsky won a favourable ruling from the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of New York to seize control of the St. Nicholas Orthodox Cathedral in Manhattan, the main Orthodox temple in the United States that had been consecrated by Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow in 1902. After a long and bitter legal battle with the anti-Bolshevik American cleric Platon Rozhdestvensky, Kedrovsky had persuaded the court to grant him sole ownership of St. Nicholas, enabling him to evict Platon Rozhdestvensky and assume leadership of the St. Nicholas congregation. The *New York Times* sided firmly with the anti-Soviet Rozhdestvensky and denounced Kedrovsky as a financially ruinous, Bolshevik-backed usurper. If the Supreme Court did not reverse its wrong-headed decision, the newspaper warned, the St. Nicholas congregation might be forced to pray for the “success of the Soviet Government.” [[168]](#footnote-168)

Soon after the ruling, senior officials in the State Department organized private efforts to combat Kedrovsky and his allies. In 1926, Assistant Secretary of State William Castle and Eastern European Division Chief Robert Kelley met with three Pennsylvania railway and mining executives to discuss strategies for preventing American Orthodox churches from being co-opted as “dangerous centers of communist propaganda.” Castle and Kelley promised to deny visas to “Russian-Bolshevik” priests and “tip off” the US Department of Justice and Department of Labor to warn them of Kedrovsky’s malevolent aims. Castle and Kelley also pledged to instruct the US Post Office to monitor Orthodox leaders’ mail for signs of communist activity. Kelley and Castle recommended that the businessmen buy up heavily-mortgaged Orthodox properties in order to protect them from expropriation by pro-Soviet priests, and they suggested a “strong anti-communist” propaganda campaign aimed at Orthodox congregations to ensure that they would not elect pro-Soviet priests to their congregations. Finally, Kelley promised to contact the Russian financial attaché in Washington and Senator George W. Pepper (R-Pennsylvania) to help coordinate these efforts to resist Kedrovsky and his allies. The three executives promised to furnish “money or personnel” to “assist in any possible way...whatever plan seemed best to succeed.” [[169]](#footnote-169) A year later, one of the railway executives defeated Kedrovsky’s legal claim to an Orthodox church in Pennsylvania, validating the State Department’s efforts to organize resistance.[[170]](#footnote-170) The Federal Bureau of Investigation also assisted domestic anti-Bolshevik activities in the early 1920s by collecting reports from the Republican-dominated National Civil Federation detailing the Soviet government’s anti-religious campaign and efforts to subvert churches abroad. The FBI then channelled that information to Senator Lee Slater Overman (D-North Carolina), who chaired a Senate committee that investigated Bolshevik propaganda in the United States.[[171]](#footnote-171)

Rather than rigorously investigating the Living Church, its ties to the Soviet government, and its impact on the Orthodox leadership in Russia, US officials ignored the complex realities of Soviet-Orthodox relations and exaggerated the threat that reformist clerics posed to American congregations. In truth, the Living Church’s attempt to seize control of the Russian Orthodox Church was effectively defeated in 1923. The Soviet government abandoned the schismatic sect entirely in 1927 when the Kremlin arranged a *modus vivendi* with the Russian Orthodox Church’s conservative leaders. US officials appear to have dismissed out of hand Kedrovsky’s repeated denials that he had connections to the Living Church and Soviet government.[[172]](#footnote-172) The State Department’s exaggerated alarm about the subversive efforts of allegedly Russian-controlled Orthodox clerics mirrored its poor understanding of the Comintern, which was disorganized and ineffective in the 1920s.[[173]](#footnote-173) To Robert Kelley, there were no meaningful distinctions between the Soviet government in Moscow and the broad array of domestic and international communist party organizations; attempts to study such distinctions constituted “academic hair-splitting.”[[174]](#footnote-174) Rather than acknowledging the murkiness of factional disputes within the Orthodox Church, officials in the Eastern European Division assumed that the Soviet government had used Kedrovsky and other clerics to foster anti-capitalist political movements abroad.[[175]](#footnote-175)

When the Soviet regime broadened its anti-religious campaign to encompass attacks on Protestant missionaries in 1929 with the aim of breaking peasant resistance to Stalin’s industrialization and collectivization programs, major east coast newspapers and Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish leaders denounced Russia’s renewed religious repression.[[176]](#footnote-176) Pope Pius XI called on Christians across the world to unite in protest, and the American radio personality Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen urged Catholics to root out “subversive” Americans who were friendly to Soviet Russia. [[177]](#footnote-177) The Soviet government retaliated with the public accusation that Catholics worldwide were scheming to foment war on Russia.[[178]](#footnote-178) In 1930, the American Committee on Religious Rights and Minorities, a prominent civil rights lobby that included influential congressmen, judges, businessmen, publishers, and religious leaders from a variety of Jewish and Christian faiths, publicly warned that the Soviet government’s attacks on Jewish, Protestant, and Catholic minorities in Russia threatened to “destroy” prospects for restoring diplomatic relations.[[179]](#footnote-179)

At the same time, the Republican Senator William Borah continued to lobby for recognition in the American press and Congress. Borah gained support as the Great Depression eroded American trade and exports leading business and union representatives to advocate recognition as a means to open new markets for American trade.[[180]](#footnote-180) In February 1930, Borah published a private message from the Acting Soviet Commissar of Foreign Affairs, Maxim Litvinov, assuring him that eleven of fourteen Russian rabbis reported to be under arrest by Soviet authorities had been released and were in no danger of execution.[[181]](#footnote-181)

With the religious community, media, and Congress bitterly divided after 1929 on the diplomatic recognition of the Soviet government, Robert Kelley of the Eastern European Division quietly funnelled reports of Russia’s anti-religious activities to publishers and congressmen who opposed diplomatic recognition. In late 1929, Kelley forwarded Representative Hamilton Fish Jr. (R-New York) a seventy-five page dossier detailing Russian anti-religious activities. Kelley’s dossier drew heavily on classified intelligence reports from US diplomatic posts in Riga and Berlin, which described Soviet anti-religious propaganda and émigré testimony alleging Soviet violence against Russian priests and foreign missionaries.[[182]](#footnote-182) Within months, Fish presented a resolution to the House of Representatives denouncing diplomatic recognition on the grounds that Soviet religious policies remained “repugnant to the ideals of civilized nations.”[[183]](#footnote-183)

In January 1930, Kelley also met with representatives of the National Lutheran Council to discuss resistance to Borah’s recognition lobby. The Lutheran priests were eager to discredit editorials in the *Christian Century* claiming recognition would help to reduce religious repression in Russia by alleviating Soviet leaders’ fears of domestic plots encouraged by hostile foreign powers.[[184]](#footnote-184) Although Kelley discouraged anti-Soviet Protestant leaders from attempting fact-finding missions to Russia or exporting bibles to Russian citizens because the US government could not assist the clerics if they encountered difficulties, he advised one private citizen to give monetary support to Reverend Kedrovsky’s opponents in order to assist anti-communist efforts at home.[[185]](#footnote-185)

Most of the Eastern European Division’s hostility to the Soviet regime focused on the Bolsheviks’ repudiation of $600 million of debt accrued by the Imperial Russian government and the Provisional Government to the US Treasury and American creditors.[[186]](#footnote-186) US officials also feared the spread of international communist propaganda.[[187]](#footnote-187) Religious disputes reinforced the perception in Washington that the United States was locked in a global ideological conflict with Russia. Most US officials believed that the United States had to fulfill its national vision of spreading liberal ideology throughout the world, which meant persuading or compelling the Soviet regime to adopt American-style market practices, civil political liberties, and religious freedoms.[[188]](#footnote-188) Yet, pessimists such as Robert Kelley expected Russian leaders to refuse to adopt liberal reforms surrounding religious freedom, even in the long-term. Thus, Soviet Russia’s vision for an atheistic alternative to capitalism appeared intolerable, and diplomatic recognition would merely endorse its existence.

The Eastern European Division’s anti-communism was particularly influential in shaping US foreign relations in the 1920s because presidents of that era and their chief advisors embraced it. On the eve of the presidential election in 1924, President Harding’s Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes praised Robert Kelley for defending Harding’s non-recognition policy by warning the US Senate of the threat posed to capitalist democracies by Soviet international propaganda.[[189]](#footnote-189) Presidents Calvin Coolidge (1923-1929) and Herbert Hoover (1929-1933) abhorred Soviet communism and continued to refuse recognition, despite persistent objections by Senator William Borah. Not until the Democratic president Franklin Roosevelt took power in 1933 did the White House consider diplomatic recognition of Soviet Russia.

**Conclusion:**

From the 1880s to 1917, US-Russian relations were troubled by simmering geopolitical tensions surrounding Russia’s growing potential to threaten US trade in Asia, as well as cultural and ideological tensions surrounding Russia’s centralized, despotic government and its incompatibility with the principles of American democracy. Adding to these tensions, US officials and American public intellectuals objected to the Tsarist regime and then the Soviet government’s lack of religious freedoms. By criticizing Tsarist Russia’s anti-Semitism and Orthodox privilege from the 1880s to 1917, and then denouncing Stalin’s anti-religious campaign in the 1920s, American politicians, religious leaders, and journalists sought to compel Tsarist and Soviet leaders to transform Russia into an idealized Christian democracy featuring American-style religious liberties. Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft were particularly important for linking religious impulses to diplomacy in 1903 and 1911, for they publicly chastised Russian leaders for their failure to conform to American ideals surrounding equal treatment of Jewish citizens. This public and private criticism antagonized imperial and Soviet officials and failed to produce liberal reform in Russia.

After the Bolshevik seizure of power in November 1917, President Woodrow Wilson and his Republican successors refused to extend diplomatic recognition to Russia primarily for economic and geopolitical reasons. The presidents and their top advisors in the State Department abhorred the Bolsheviks’ communist ideology, seizure of private property, state-controlled economy, and refusal to recognize unpaid debts. Yet, non-recognition of Russia came under fire from prominent lobbyists such as Senator William Borah who claimed that US-Soviet diplomacy would serve US economic and security interests by promoting trade and diplomatic cooperation; he also claimed it would improve conditions for Russian citizens who would prosper from American investments and cultural interactions.

Throughout the 1920s, US officials defended non-recognition by invoking religious issues. Officials such as Secretary of State Hughes and Eastern European Division Chief Robert Kelley, and their conservative supporters in Congress and the Catholic and Protestant community, publicly cited Soviet Russia’s atheistic ideology and religious repression as grounds for withholding recognition. They also claimed that Bolshevik Russia sought to overthrow American democracy by planting communist clerics as fifth columnists in American churches.

Although American anti-communism in the 1920s was predominantly driven by economic and political-ideological tensions, religious conflicts exacerbated US-Soviet diplomatic tensions and formed a locus for domestic debate about US policy toward Russia. Continuing in the tradition of TR and Taft, Wilson and other officials in the 1920s implied that it was America’s moral duty to employ diplomatic pressure—in this case, withholding recognition—to compel Russia to adopt American-style religious freedoms. Thus, when Franklin Roosevelt took office in 1933 with the intention to recognize the Soviet government, he faced significant opposition from anti-communists in the Eastern European Division, national media, Congress, and American Catholic and Protestant leadership. Unsurprisingly, much of that opposition focused on Soviet Russia’s lack of religious freedoms.

Chapter 2

Religious Tensions Repressed: Roosevelt and Diplomatic Recognition of the USSR, 1933-1940

# After entering office in 1933, Franklin D. Roosevelt faced significant opposition from Catholic leaders, conservative Protestants, State Department officials, and anti-communists in Congress who disagreed with his intention to extend diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Union. To overcome this resistance, Roosevelt persuaded Soviet officials to enshrine in the diplomatic recognition agreements guarantees of religious freedom for American visitors to Russia, although he avoided pressuring Soviet officials to tolerate religious worship among Russian citizens. FDR and his advisors also championed the view that diplomatic recognition would inspire the Soviet regime to allow broader religious freedoms among Russian citizens. Finally, Roosevelt used personal charm to persuade influential Catholic leaders such as the anti-communist priest Edmund Walsh of Georgetown University to publicly endorse recognition as a means to bring about religious reform in Russia. Ignoring anti-communist State Department officials’’ dark warnings about Soviet leaders’ atheistic immorality and aggressive policy goals, FDR appointed hand-picked allies such as William C. Bullitt to assist him in the recognition negotiations and public relations campaign. Together, these measures were successful for ensuring popular and religious support for recognition of Russia in 1933. Unfortunately, the administration’s optimistic rhetoric championing growing religious freedoms in Russia led to popular disillusionment after 1933 when religious repression in Russia continued.

# Tensions also mounted between the US embassy staff in Moscow and Soviet official. Following a brief period of optimism in 1934, the embassy and Kremlin failed to resolve outstanding disputes surrounding the Soviet disavowal of imperial and Provisional Government debts to American lenders; Soviet expropriation of private property in the 1920s; the Roosevelt Administration’s unwillingness to extend new loans to the USSR; the Soviet regime’s international communist propaganda; and Washington’s unwillingness to commit to a formal military defense pact against Germany and Japan. Exacerbating these tensions, US officials were frustrated by the Kremlin’s continued domestic political repression, slights and indignities toward the US embassy staff, atheistic propaganda, harassment of foreign and domestic priests, and intimidation of religious worshippers. The secret police’s harassment of American priests in Russia was particularly offensive to US embassy officials because it violated the religious freedom guarantees enshrined in the recognition agreements of 1933.

# Roosevelt hoped to minimize hostility between the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs and US embassy by appointing William Bullitt, Joseph Davies, and Laurence Steinhardt to oversee the mission. Unfortunately, all but Joseph Davies grew disillusioned with the Soviet regime and joined in the hostile views of George Kennan, Loy Henderson, and Charles Bohlen of the Eastern European Division. Despite Ambassador Joseph Davies’s modest efforts to minimize religious tensions during his ambassadorship from 1936 to 1938, US embassy officials continued to resent the Soviet regime’s religious repression. The new chief of the Easter European Division, Loy Henderson, actively undermined Roosevelt’s cooperative agenda by informing American priests who visited Moscow of the falseness of Soviet claims that religious toleration existed in Russia. Roosevelt sidelined these embassy officials in major diplomatic decision-making, but he could not remove them because he relied upon their Russian language skills and diplomatic training to carry out embassy tasks. Even when the Soviet regime outraged American Catholics by invading Catholic-dominated Poland and the Baltic region in 1939, he rejected the embassy’s advice to sever diplomatic relations, and he refused to adopt American Catholic leaders’ bitterly anti-Soviet rhetoric.

# Ultimately, FDR’s permissive bureaucratic management style allowed anti-communism to take firm root among State Department officials in his administration, but it is difficult to imagine a realistic alternative. Aware of his inability to change foreign service officials’ pessimistic views of the Kremlin, FDR strove to capitalize on their training and skills while minimizing their negative impact on state-to-state relations and American public discourse. FDR was also unable to completely minimize Catholic and Protestant leaders’ public criticisms of Soviet religious repression, but he limited the impact of those criticisms by refusing to adopt them in his own rhetoric and diplomacy. Thus FDR was able to establish and maintain functional relations with Soviet Russia from 1933 to 1940, despite bitter anti-communism within his own bureaucracy, the American religious community, and the US Congress.

# The Roots of Recognition: Roosevelt and American Religious Opposition

# As the historian Mary E. Glantz observed, FDR did not leave a detailed written record of his thoughts and attitudes toward the Soviet Union, but his actions reveal a stable, cogent Soviet policy during the interwar period and particularly during World War II.[[190]](#footnote-190) By the time that Roosevelt assumed the presidency in March 1933, popular and official support for non-recognition was already weakening. In 1927, Henry Stimson, Secretary of State under Calvin Coolidge, began to advocate recognizing the Soviet government, and Stimson cultivated close personal ties to the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, William Borah, Congress’s most vocal champion of Russian recognition.[[191]](#footnote-191) As Stimson explained to the financier W.W. Attenbury, the alleged “threat” posed to America by Russian propaganda was “less significant than some people imagined.” The prospect of a communist government seizing power in the United States seemed “fantastic,” and it was embarrassing that the United States remained the only major world power to isolate Russia. [[192]](#footnote-192)

# By 1932, a growing body of influential Americans, politicians and businesspeople began to favor US recognition of Russia as a means to expand American trade in the USSR, thereby offsetting the contraction of the world economy following the stock market collapse of 1929. Chief among these advocates were the former secretary of state Frank Kellogg, and leaders of the Russian-American Chamber of Commerce, a body of 150 elite American financiers.[[193]](#footnote-193)[[194]](#footnote-194) US officials such as Henry Stimson also hoped that formal US-Soviet ties would deter Japan from expanding its Far Eastern empire. Since access to Chinese and Far Eastern trading markets remained a cornerstone of Washington’s Open Door policy but direct military intervention was constrained by isolationists in the US Congress, Stimson hoped that Japanese militarists might mistake US-Soviet diplomacy as a prelude to a formal military pact.[[195]](#footnote-195)

# Despite this growing pressure, the Republican presidents Calvin Coolidge (1923-1929) and Herbert Hoover (1929-1933) regarded formal relations with communist Russia as politically dangerous and morally repugnant. Whenever dissent against this policy appeared, it was quickly undermined. For example, after Stimson publicly expressed his interest in revisiting the recognition issue, Assistant Secretary of State William Castle Jr. immediately contradicted his boss by telling journalists at a State Department press conference that the US government contemplated no change in policy.[[196]](#footnote-196) When humanitarian leaders argued that diplomatic recognition might open up trade that could mitigate the human suffering of the Russian famine of 1929-1932, the chief of the Eastern European Division Robert Kelley stepped up his private efforts to help Representative Hamilton Fish (R-New York) and leaders in the National Lutheran Council vilify the Soviet government for allegedly subverting Orthodox congregations abroad.[[197]](#footnote-197) With anti-Soviet officials dominating the White House and Eastern European Division, the recognition lobby faced insurmountable challenges prior to 1933.

# Soon after securing the Democratic nomination for the 1932 presidential election, Franklin Roosevelt and his backers in the Democratic Party decided to avoid taking a clear stance on the controversial issue of recognition of Russia. Wary of alienating strong supporters or detractors of recognition, FDR adopted a non-committal approach until after the election.[[198]](#footnote-198) After hinting in December 1932 via Senator Claude Swanson (D-Virginia) that his administration was seriously considering recognition, Roosevelt swiftly took action. [[199]](#footnote-199) He asked Secretary of State Cordell Hull and Special Assistant William C. Bullitt to explore public and official views on US-Soviet rapprochement, but they confronted strong opposition from Catholic leaders, conservatives in Congress, and anti-communist State Department officials.[[200]](#footnote-200) It was not until September 1933 that FDR felt sufficiently confident in the American public’s support to formally announce his intention to recognize Russia.[[201]](#footnote-201)

# Roosevelt’s Undersecretary of State William Phillips was among the most forceful opponents of recognition within the administration. Phillips privately advised Roosevelt and Hull that the United States should withhold recognition until US and Soviet officials had fully resolved major outstanding disputes. Such disputes included the US objections to the Russian Communist Party’s international communist movements, $600 million of unpaid Tsarist and Provisional government debt, Soviet property confiscation without adequate compensation to US nationals, state interference in private industry and trade, and the Kremlin’s lack of political and religious freedom guarantees for foreign nationals. According to Phillips, drastic Soviet reforms must precede recognition because American public opinion polls revealed that recognition was unpopular among many voters and newspaper editors in powerful northeastern states.[[202]](#footnote-202) In May 1933, US officials stationed in Riga, Latvia discouraged recognition by reporting that American and European Protestant missionaries in Russia were outraged by Soviet political and religious repression. These missionaries wanted the US government to demand liberal reforms as a pre- condition for formal diplomacy.[[203]](#footnote-203)

# Roosevelt and Hull generally ignored negative reports from State Department officials and US diplomats abroad. They also mistrusted the State Department’s public opinion studies and sought independent sources speaking to American public opinion.[[204]](#footnote-204) Cordell Hull submitted to FDR a newspaper survey by the America Foundation, a major civil liberties group, demonstrating that 63% of a sample of 1139 American newspapers favoured recognition.[[205]](#footnote-205) FDR and the White House press secretary Steven Early met with journalists in the White House press corps such as the United Press correspondent Fred Storm to explore their opinions on Russia.[[206]](#footnote-206) Hull also forwarded to FDR a letter from Princeton University professor Jerome Davis championing recognition on economic and security grounds.[[207]](#footnote-207)

# Prominent Catholic and Protestant leaders stood among the strongest public opponents of American rapprochement with the Soviet Union. The most vocal of these was the Jesuit priest Edmund Walsh, professor of political studies at the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service. After heading the Vatican’s famine relief mission to Russia in 1921, Walsh denounced Soviet religious repression in public talks and statements to the national media. Throughout the 1920s, Walsh fed the conservative *Time* magazine damning examples of Soviet anti-religious propaganda, along with copies of Western travellers’ reports exposing the regime’s harassment and intimidation of Soviet citizens suspected of disloyalty to the Party.[[208]](#footnote-208) Walsh attacked pro-recognition congressmen in vitriolic radio addresses and public lectures, particularly when the American press reported in spring 1933 that Roosevelt was leaning toward recognition. [[209]](#footnote-209) In April, Walsh delivered a speech to a 5,000-person rally in Washington, DC, protesting Roosevelt’s recognition policy. The protest was organized by a body of approximately 150 patriotic and religious organizations. In his speech, Walsh disparaged Soviet religious and civil repression, and he implored Roosevelt to reverse course. Congressional representative Hamilton Fish (R-New York) and President Wilson’s Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby joined Walsh at the podium to denounce recognition of Russia.[[210]](#footnote-210)

# In the fall of 1933 Roosevelt received many letters from prominent Catholic organizations protesting recognition, including a joint statement from the bishops of the National Catholic Welfare Council in Washington, DC.[[211]](#footnote-211) The council implored the White House, State Department, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and US congressmen to withhold recognition until Soviet Russia demonstrated full religious toleration, freed imprisoned priests, and lifted discriminatory restrictions on church finances, church property ownership, and religious education in Russia. Pope Pius XII’s official representative in Washington, Amleto Cicognani, sent similar messages, as did the conservative Baptist World Alliance.[[212]](#footnote-212) Although several Jewish organizations openly opposed recognition, most Jewish leaders applauded rapprochement because they appreciated the Soviet regime’s relatively tolerant attitude to Russian Jews which was an improvement upon the blatant discrimination of the Tsarist era.[[213]](#footnote-213)

**Roosevelt’s Religious Beliefs: Publicly Pious, Privately Enigmatic**

Roosevelt often invoked religious tropes and scripture in his public political addresses, yet he rarely revealed details about his personal religious beliefs, even among his closest companions. As a result, FDR’s religiosity remains somewhat mysterious. Raised in a traditional Episcopalian household, Roosevelt became immersed in religious doctrine from young age. He was particularly exposed to religious teachings at Groton College, an elite boarding school where he received an Episcopalian education. Roosevelt’s mentor was the school’s well-connected director, Reverend Endicott Peabody, whose sermons and lectures valorized patriotic Christian service through political service to the state. Roosevelt’s connection to Peabody continued into adulthood when Peabody conducted FDR’s marriage vows, educated his children, and led prayers at his presidential inaugurations. Always deferential to the influential patrician cleric, Roosevelt wrote to Peabody that he considered it “one of the blessings” of his life that, during his “formative years,” he had the “privilege” of Peabody’s “guiding hand” and “inspiring example.” As an adult, FDR followed the Roosevelt family tradition by becoming first a vestryman and later a warden of the St. James Episcopal Church in Hyde Park.[[214]](#footnote-214)

Roosevelt’s supporters frequently praised his personal religiosity, particularly after his pro-Soviet policies came under attack during the early Cold War. His personal secretary Grace Tully insisted that he bore “profound respect for religious piety in any form.” Roosevelt’s Secretary of Labor, Francis Perkins, claimed that FDR frequently consulted the Bible and Book of Common Prayer.[[215]](#footnote-215) In her memoirs, Eleanor Roosevelt recalled that her husband considered religious faith an “anchor” and “source of strength and guidance.” Roosevelt’s press secretary Stephen Early once commented that Roosevelt was “one of the finest Christian gentleman” that he knew.[[216]](#footnote-216)

Roosevelt often cited the importance of the Bible and Christian ethics in shaping American history and national culture, and he regularly invoked religious themes in his public addresses and private political rhetoric.[[217]](#footnote-217) For example, when questioned about his political philosophy, FDR responded, “Philosophy? I am a Christian and a Democrat—that’s all.”[[218]](#footnote-218) When thirty-seven US Senators refused to approve a resolution in 1935 endorsing US participation in a world court, FDR wrote to the Senate majority leader Joseph Robinson (D-Arkansas) that those who rejected the proposal would have to apologize to God for “a very long time” if they were ever allowed into Heaven, for God was against war.[[219]](#footnote-219) During the D-Day invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944, Roosevelt delivered a national radio broadcast wherein he asked Americans to join him in prayer. Roosevelt implored “Almighty God” to assist American soldiers in their heroic defense of “our Republic, our religion, and our civilization,” and he urged God to welcome fallen American soldiers into heaven. He urged American listeners to continue to “devote themselves” to prayer, for with God’s blessing, America would conquer the “unholy forces” of its “enemy.” In his D-Day prayer, Roosevelt was not above employing Christian rhetoric to encourage popular and congressional support for his post-war foreign policy aims, including US participation in a United Nations organization. FDR urged God to guide the United States and her “sister nations” toward a new order based on “freedom” and “world unity” that would be “invulnerable” to the “schemings of unworthy men.”[[220]](#footnote-220)

Accounts of Roosevelt’s piety can be misleading owing to his tendency to withhold his innermost thoughts.[[221]](#footnote-221) Grace Tully, who was intimate with the president’s daily activities, revealed that he typically preferred sleeping late on Sundays to attending church, and he usually spent the day socializing and working on his stamp collection. Tully attributed Roosevelt’s poor church attendance to his desire to avoid drawing public attention at his Hyde Park church, where he could not conceal his lower-body paralysis which he had suffered since contracting polio at age 39.[[222]](#footnote-222) Tully’s explanation does not account for Roosevelt’s spotty church attendance prior to his paralysis, however. FDR’s son James once claimed that his father “never preached much” to “anyone” about piety or virtue, but held “basic, simple…unquestioning” beliefs from which he drew “strength and comfort.”[[223]](#footnote-223) Eleanor, who devoted more thought to religious philosophy than her husband, compared FDR’s personal faith to that of a “child grown to manhood under certain simple influences.”[[224]](#footnote-224) When she once questioned FDR about whether they should educate their children in the strict Episcopalian tradition in which they were raised, Roosevelt responded that he preferred “not to think about things like that too much.”[[225]](#footnote-225) Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, a famed anti-Roosevelt critic and Methodist evangelist, charged Roosevelt with being indifferent to the church and “flippant toward religion.”[[226]](#footnote-226) Indeed, conservative priests often objected to Roosevelt’s notorious enjoyment of smoking, drinking, and large parties, which offended their pious sensibilities.[[227]](#footnote-227)

Roosevelt’s personal beliefs probably fell within the framework of liberal Christianity fashionable in the 1920s. He rejected Biblical fundamentalism and strict adherence to ritual, instead emphasizing personal connection to God, liberal social values, and the belief that all people are fundamentally good.[[228]](#footnote-228) Roosevelt almost certainly exaggerated his piety in certain contexts in order to curry favour with religious audiences and acquaintances. Frances Perkins, who regularly expounded on his principled religious faith, proved instrumental in winning Catholic and Protestant labor groups’ support for his controversial New Deal reforms.[[229]](#footnote-229)

There is some evidence to suggest that Roosevelt’s religious beliefs generally informed his foreign policy decisions, but it is unclear precisely to what extent FDR’s religious convictions influenced particular decisions at particular moments. The historian Robert Dallek attributed FDR’s liberal internationalism—his conviction that the United States bore a duty to serve other nations through international engagement—to his boyhood education under Peabody, who extolled the virtues of “manly, Christian service” to others through professional statesmanship. Yet, Dallek did not sustain this religious argument by discussing the relative impact of FDR’s religious beliefs on specific foreign policy decisions.[[230]](#footnote-230)

Roosevelt’s preference for private worship over clerically-mediated, organized religion, combined with his belief in convergence theory—his assumption that Russia would eventually adopt Western-style political and social norms as a product of engagement with the West—probably allowed him to reconcile his Christian beliefs with his pragmatic decision to avoid taking a strong diplomatic stance against Soviet religious repression. Roosevelt relegated his hopes for universal rights to life, liberty, and religious freedoms to a long-term goal, and did not aggressively press Soviet officials to respect freedom of worship among Russian citizens. Roosevelt declared in late 1939 that although he “heartily deprecated” Russia’s “banishment of religion” and “indiscriminate killing,” he believed that Russia would “some day…return to religion” because mankind had “always believed in God” despite occasional “abortive attempts” to “exile” him.[[231]](#footnote-231) Roosevelt did not specify which “abortive attempts” he alluded to, but he may have meant the anti-clerical policies of Revolutionary France (c. 1789-1801) and Revolutionary Mexico (c. 1917-1935).[[232]](#footnote-232) When Roosevelt’s religious idealism clashed with his political pragmatism, his pragmatism took priority.

**The Roosevelt-Litvinov Agreements: Modest US Requests, Vague Soviet Promises**

When Roosevelt first invited the Soviet foreign minister Maxim Litvinov to visit Washington to discuss official recognition in late September 1933, he did so against advice from Catholic leaders to demand Soviet guarantees of religious freedom as a prerequisite to the recognition talks. Roosevelt’s decision proved prudent because when Litvinov arrived in Washington on November 7, Stalin and Molotov cabled him directly to reiterate that he was not to grant any new religious concessions in his negotiations with US officials. In their talks with Litvinov, Roosevelt and Hull respected Soviet sovereignty over domestic religious matters by limiting their requests for guarantees of religious freedoms to American nationals in Russia, rather than Americans and Russian citizens. Their requests were also devoid of any binding enforcement mechanisms or consequences for non-compliance, making them little more than statements of intent. Both Roosevelt and Litvinov were pleased with the agreements because they provided the American public with the impression that Russia’s atheistic government had made significant concessions recognizing the principle of religious freedoms. In truth, the agreements involved no changes to the Soviet regime’s domestic religious guarantees for Russian citizens.

The recognition negotiations, which became known as the Roosevelt-Litvinov agreements, consisted of a set of letters between Litvinov and Roosevelt during private meetings on November 10. The notes on religious freedoms were the longest section of the recognition agreements which were released to the public after the meetings. No stenographers recorded the details of the negotiations, but several anecdotal accounts permit rough reconstruction.[[233]](#footnote-233)

In the preliminary meeting between Litvinov and Hull, Litvinov reputedly balked at Hull’s suggestion that they discuss religious issues. When Hull made it clear that the US desired only rights for American nationals, Litvinov was mollified, but progress soon stalled. According to Undersecretary Philips, Roosevelt then made his first calculated appearance, joking with Litvinov that they should meet alone that evening to “insult each other with impunity.” [[234]](#footnote-234) Roosevelt persuaded Litvinov during their private discussion that the US government bore a long tradition of protecting Americans’ “liberty of conscience and religious worship.” The two swiftly concluded the agreements.[[235]](#footnote-235)

Litvinov’s promises of religious freedoms for American nationals contained important loopholes and omissions. Litvinov insisted that existing Soviet constitutional guarantees were sufficient to protect American citizens’ freedom of worship, and he assured FDR that Russian courts would enforce those laws diligently.[[236]](#footnote-236) As Robert Kelley had indicated, however, Soviet officials were skilled at masking anti-religious persecution under a guise of legality by charging worshippers with other violations such as “interference with public order.”[[237]](#footnote-237) Although Litvinov guaranteed that Americans would be free to worship without disability, persecution, or “special attacks,” he rejected Roosevelt’s proposal that priests should receive equal treatment when renting living space and buying food. Litvinov also denied priests the right to rent or own space for conducting religious services, teach religion to children in groups, or collect funds for religious work. Litvinov promised that the Soviet government would not deny travel visas to American priests on “religious” grounds, but he insisted that the Soviet regime could deny entry on “personal” grounds.[[238]](#footnote-238)

After Moscow cabled Litvinov with news that Stalin was willing to honour debts incurred by the Kerensky government in 1917, Litvinov’s position on religious issues softened slightly. He conceded that America clerics would be allowed to conduct religious services in buildings leased to them by the Soviet government, and American priests would be allowed to teach children religion both singly and in groups. As Roosevelt’s trusted legal advisor Assistant Secretary of State R. Walton Moore privately noted, however, Soviet legal codes remained insufficient to ensure faithful enforcement of their “gentleman’s agreement.”[[239]](#footnote-239)

According to Eleanor Roosevelt, Francis Perkins, and Archbishop Francis Spellman, Roosevelt often repeated among his friends and acquaintances in Washington a dubious tale of how, during his first meeting with Litvinov, he had embarrassed him into granting religious freedoms to Americans living in Russia. Presumably, Roosevelt believed that if he could frame Litvinov’s religious concessions as an ideological and personal victory, this tale would play well among his Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish acquaintances. Drawing on biographical knowledge about Litvinov’s Jewish roots, FDR pointed out that Litvinov’s “good old mother and father” had been “pious” Jewish believers who taught him his prayers and hoped he would become a rabbi. “Every man in his deepest heart knows the existence of God,” Roosevelt lectured Litvinov. “You may think you’re an atheist,” he chided, “[but] before you die…you will believe in God.”[[240]](#footnote-240) When Litvinov turned “red as a beet” and “squirmed,” Roosevelt knew he “had him.”[[241]](#footnote-241) The future British Prime Minister Winston Churchill found FDR’s boasting unbelievable—he sarcastically promised to nominate Roosevelt for Archbishop of Canterbury if he lost the 1936 election—and the historian Robert Dallek considered Roosevelt’s account entirely “concocted.” [[242]](#footnote-242) Nonetheless, FDR repeated the apocryphal story among his influential Washington connections, probably because it seemed to reflect positively on US-Soviet relations, his faith in Judeo-Christian ideology, and his skill as a negotiator.

Following the Roosevelt-Litvinov meeting in November 1933, the Roosevelt administration championed the religious agreements. In a nationally-syndicated speech in mid-November, Roosevelt boasted that all Americans—particularly those from states which had “roots in religious teachings and religious liberty”—should feel “satisfaction” that “any American sojourning among the great Russian people” would be “free to worship God in his own way.”[[243]](#footnote-243) In a nation-wide radio address, Assistant Secretary Moore announced that Americans and their spiritual leaders would suffer no “disadvantage” or “discrimination” in Russia.[[244]](#footnote-244)

This spin succeeded. Despite the lack of legal bases for the religious agreements—not to mention their neglect of prisoner release and religious freedoms for Russian citizens—many Americans interpreted the published letters as proof that Roosevelt had compelled Litvinov to embrace American religious ideals. [[245]](#footnote-245) Bishop John Burke of the National Catholic Welfare Council observed that many Catholics agreed with Moore’s prediction that the Soviets would adhere to the agreements. Moreover, granting religious freedoms to American nationals would help to encourage Russian leaders to tolerate religious worship among Russian citizens.[[246]](#footnote-246)

In truth, Soviet officials continued to harass Russian worshippers, priests, and foreign missionaries, validating the pessimistic predictions of Catholic critics and officials in the Eastern European Division. Although Roosevelt’s effort to promote the impression of growing religious and political liberalization in Russia helped to popularize recognition in 1933, his optimism obscured the brutal nature of the Soviet regime. Many Americans were disappointed by the Soviet regime’s continued religious repression, particularly during the domestic party and army purges of the 1930s, and when Soviet influence spread into areas of Eastern Europe where Catholicism reigned during World War II and the early post-war period.

Given Roosevelt’s pragmatic desire to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and his powerlessness to compel the Bolsheviks to reform its domestic policies, his accommodating approach is understandable. If he had ignored or validated Catholic leaders’ objections to Soviet religious repression, he would have risked weakening American Catholic leaders’ and religious believers’ support for diplomatic recognition. Similarly, if he demanded firm guarantees of religious freedoms for Russian citizens, he would have offended Soviet officials and jeopardized the talks. Thus, Roosevelt faced two options in 1933: he could either pursue recognition while encouraging the American public to adopt reformist hopes—an approach that risked backlash if he could not maintain the public perceptions of improving religious freedoms following recognition—or he could abandon diplomatic recognition and continue to isolate Russia. Given Russia’s industrializing economy, massive population, large land mass, rapidly-developing military, and potential to absorb more American exports, continued isolation seemed contrary to American security and economic interests. Moreover, nearly sixteen years of non-recognition had demonstrated that isolating Russia in diplomatic affairs did nothing to improve civil liberties in the USSR.

As the historians Steven Casey and Betty Houchin Winfield have observed, President Roosevelt was attentive to American popular, media, and congressional opinion of his foreign and domestic policies. Although domestic opinion was diverse and poorly-documented in the 1930s, Roosevelt and his advisors believed that religious leaders and religious beliefs were powerful shapers of popular, media, and congressional opinion in the 1930s and early 1940s surrounding relations with Soviet Russia.[[247]](#footnote-247)

Roosevelt preferred a personal approach to managing mass opinion. He often spoke directly to American audiences through radio, film, and printed interviews, which allowed him to connect to Americans using his charismatic charm while circumventing journalists, editors, and public commentators who might critique or inflect his arguments. Roosevelt also cultivated personal relationships with influential members of the national media, Congress, and civil organizations.[[248]](#footnote-248) Using humour and flattery—as well as occasional manipulation and humiliation—Roosevelt often persuaded these figures to promote his policy goals before he publicly announced them. This allowed him to test the popularity of his ideas in Congress, the media, and general public discourse, and either abandon or delay officially announcing his plans until changing events or persistent lobbying produced popular support for his goals. This tactic of discreetly floating policy options and monitoring popular reactions to determine the timing of policy announcements made it seem that FDR followed popular will rather than guided it.[[249]](#footnote-249) Roosevelt and his allies did not always succeed at shaping popular media, or Congressional opinion, but FDR’s cautious approach meant that he rarely encountered overwhelming opposition to the foreign policy initiatives.[[250]](#footnote-250)

Roosevelt cultivated personal relationships with American Catholic leaders to minimize the Catholic community’s objections to recognition of Russia in 1933. On September 21, 1933, when Roosevelt publicly invited the Soviet foreign minister Maxim Litvinov to visit Washington to discuss establishing diplomatic relations, he also privately invited a leading anti-communist Catholic priest and political science professor, Edmund Walsh of Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service, to meet him in the Oval Office.[[251]](#footnote-251) No official record exists of their hour-long conversation, but Walsh told one of his colleagues that he had warned Roosevelt that Russian officials were “snakes in the grass.”[[252]](#footnote-252) To include Walsh in the upcoming negotiations, Roosevelt asked him to report on religious conditions in Russia and Litvinov’s attitude toward religion. Roosevelt assured Walsh that he need not worry about the Soviets, for he was a “good horse trader.”[[253]](#footnote-253)

Ten days later, Walsh urged Roosevelt to demand that Soviet leaders agree to three conditions as a prerequisite to the negotiations. First, Soviet officials must guarantee “complete liberty of conscience for all, whether citizens of Russia or nationals of a foreign jurisdiction.” Second, the Soviet government must give Russian citizens and foreigners complete freedom to worship in private and public according to their preferred customs, with no discrimination or restrictions of any kind. Finally, Walsh urged Roosevelt to demand that the Soviet government release all prisoners held in Russia due to religious beliefs. Walsh urged FDR to reject Soviet assurances that were based solely on existing laws, for Russia’s existing civil liberties guarantees were “sterile and useless.” The Soviets, he insisted, were “masters of all forms of evasion, concealment, and… [distraction] from damaging facts.” Unless the Russians made “concrete” and binding “concessions,” their promises of political and religious toleration would be meaningless.[[254]](#footnote-254)

Even though Roosevelt did not promise to follow his advice, Walsh sent the White House and the National Catholic Welfare Council a personal statement for public release announcing his full support for Roosevelt’s upcoming meeting with Litvinov.[[255]](#footnote-255) As Walsh explained to Roosevelt’s secretary Marvin McIntyre, he hoped to “contribute something” toward the public’s “tranquility of mind” in order to assist FDR’s negotiations with the Soviets.[[256]](#footnote-256) Walsh urged the American public to “remain calm” and “not storm” over the US-Soviet talks, for Walsh had “complete confidence” that the “pros and cons” of recognition would be “fully and justly considered” by the president. Walsh warned that“public controversy” was “superfluous” and “dangerous,” and the president should “not be hampered, annoyed, or embarrassed” in any way. Although “grave difficulties” existed between the United States and Russia, Walsh pledged to be the “first to support renewed diplomatic relations” if Roosevelt deemed the talks satisfactory.[[257]](#footnote-257) Given Walsh’s previous vitriolic opposition to diplomatic recognition, this endorsement constituted a major public relations victory for FDR.[[258]](#footnote-258)

Why Walsh cooperated so readily with Roosevelt in autumn 1933 remains controversial. The diplomatic historians Robert Dallek and Dennis Dunn attributed Walsh’s pliability to Roosevelt’s personal charisma. Walsh later explained that Roosevelt treated him with “that disarming reassurance so characteristic of his technique in dealing with visitors.”[[259]](#footnote-259) Roosevelt’s personal invitation to Walsh to visit him alone at the White House also flattered the Catholic priest, for it distinguished him as influential and contrasted with the anti-Catholic sentiment of many Protestant elites in Washington.[[260]](#footnote-260) Walsh was evidently prone to egotism, for he boasted in October 1933 that his endorsement could “deliver” the support of American Catholics, the American Legion, and the American Federation of Labour.[[261]](#footnote-261)

Roosevelt’s persuasiveness may also have played a role in preventing the National Catholic Welfare Council from publicly opposing US recognition of Russia in late 1933. The council’s general secretary, John Burke, held reservations about Soviet religious policies, yet he refused requests by other members of the National Catholic Welfare Council to publicly oppose Roosevelt’s pursuit of diplomatic recognition. Burke explained to bishop John McNicholas of Cincinnati that he had been assured by Roosevelt’s remarks at a private dinner function claiming that any government which attempted to “eliminate” the right to “believe in God” or to worship freely would find the task impossible, for religion was an “inherent, essential, undying quality…of the human race” that no “edict” could diminish.[[262]](#footnote-262) Roosevelt’s affirmation of the resilience of Christian beliefs gratified Burke, for it appealed to the bishop’s hope that popular religious sentiment in Russia would conquer Soviet atheism. Burke did not criticize FDR for failing to provide a timeline for Soviet Russia’s adoption of religious toleration. Nor did he criticize him for failing to demand religious guarantees for Russian citizens as a condition for recognition.[[263]](#footnote-263)

Although Roosevelt’s ploy initially encouraged Burke to withhold objections to the recognition negotiations, pragmatic self-interest explains the council’s continued silence after the White House released the final recognition documents in November. After surveying congressional and newspaper responses to the published recognition agreements in the weeks after their release, the council’s general secretary, John Burke, concluded that favourable public commentary outnumbered critical commentary by a ratio of 5:1. The bishops realized that most journalists, congress people, and public intellectuals favored recognition, and they feared that pubic opposition by the Council risked offending both Catholics and non-Catholics alike.[[264]](#footnote-264) Although the Republican congressman Hamilton Fish Jr. publicly denounced Roosevelt for “betraying” American churches and other civil organizations by recognizing Russia, most congressional representatives hailed diplomatic relations because they afforded opportunities for the United States to encourage Soviet officials to respect civil liberties.[[265]](#footnote-265) With anti-Catholic sentiment running high in America during the 1930s, the Catholic bishops did not want to appear unpatriotic.

**Roosevelt’s Struggles with the Eastern European Division, 1933-1940**

Unlike his Republican predecessors, Roosevelt largely ignored anti-communist careers officials in the State Department who took a hard line on controversial aspects of Soviet-American relations, including economic conflicts, geopolitical security arrangements, and international communist propaganda. FDR was forced to retain certain officials in the Eastern European Division such as Robert Kelley, Loy Henderson, George Kennan, and Charles Bohlen because they possessed Russian language skills necessary to operate the US embassy in Moscow. Yet, FDR assigned greater power to personally-appointed ambassadors who appeared to share his hopes for productive relations through conciliatory negotiation.

Roosevelt first had to confront anti-communist State Department officials during preparation for the recognition negotiations in the summer of 1933.[[266]](#footnote-266) The chief of the Eastern European Division Robert Kelley initially prepared a memo that held to the State Department’s long-standing position that the Soviet regime’s existing laws guaranteeing religious freedoms were meaningless. The Soviet government’s exorbitantly high tax rates for churches and prohibitions against ecclesiastical property ownership meant that Soviet “control” over religion could only be “weakened” through a “change in the entire existing political system.” According to Kelley, it was “doubtful” that any treaty provisions could make it “appreciably easier” for Americans to worship while in Russia.[[267]](#footnote-267) Unless such differences were “settled” prior to recognition, he warned, there would be no “satisfactory basis” for diplomatic relations with Russia.[[268]](#footnote-268) Before Kelley forwarded this memo to the White House, however, he eliminated his pessimistic prediction that the treaty agreements would be powerless to change Soviet religious repression. No record exists to explain why Kelley removed this negative commentary. Given that he continued to oppose recognition due to outstanding debts, Soviet interference in the politics of other states, and unreasonable government involvement in trade and industry, it seems likely that Kelley recognized Roosevelt’s determination to secure accord on religious differences and toned down his opposition to avoid offending his new boss.[[269]](#footnote-269)

Although Kelley maintained muted opposition to Roosevelt’s recognition policy in his internal correspondence to Cordell Hull and the White House after FDR announced his decision to pursue recognition in September 1933, he continued to complain about Soviet religious repression in private meetings with leaders of the National Catholic Welfare Council. On November 22, less than a week after FDR released the Roosevelt-Litvinov Agreements to the press, Kelley met with the National Catholic Welfare Council’s legal expert William Montavon. In their closed discussion,Montavon complained that Litvinov’s religious guarantees applied only to American citizens while neglecting Russian nationals. Moreover, the religious guarantees for American nationals would lead to “endless controversy” because the Soviet Constitution already promised religious freedoms; Russian authorities simply undermined them through questionable application of the law. Kelley openly agreed.[[270]](#footnote-270) As often occurred in discussions between America civil leaders and officials in the Eastern European Division, Roosevelt and Hull did not read the official memorandum of the conversation, and Kelley’s unhelpful remarks went undetected by the White House.[[271]](#footnote-271)

As relations between the US embassy and the Kremlin worsened in 1934 and 1935, Kelley vented his hostility. In an honorary lecture to several hundred naval officer trainees at the United States Naval Academy, Kelley proclaimed that the Communist Party was not a conventional “political organization” governed by a rational “political credo,” but a “fanatical…sect” impelled by “ruthless…hate” for the non-communist world. Like devotees of a crusading medieval order, Russian communists and their global allies worshipped the “infallible dogmas” of Marx and Lenin. Disciplined by the Communist Party’s “rigid hierarchy,” communists shared a radical orthodoxy and absolute loyalty to the Soviet regime. According to Kelley, like pre-modern Muslims, communists believed that they were “predestined” to “win over all foes,” and they operated without “ethical considerations” such as “compassion or pity.” Instead, they aimed to “destroy” all those who might impede them in their “ruthless pursuit of their cause.” [[272]](#footnote-272)

Occasionally, Roosevelt’s hand-picked appointees in the State Department met with religious and civil groups concerned about US-Soviet relations and religion in Russia. The contrast between Roosevelt’s appointed allies and anti-communist career bureaucrats such as Kelley is stark. For example, in early 1934, Assistant Secretary of State R. Walton Moore encouraged evangelical leaders of the American Bible Society to import Russian language Bibles to the USSR in coordination with Russian embassy officials in Washington. Moore refrained from telling the American evangelicals about his pessimistic projections for religious freedoms in Russia.[[273]](#footnote-273) Unfortunately for Roosevelt, his appointed ambassadors to Moscow found it more difficult to adhere to his agenda of cooperation.

When Roosevelt sent his personal friend and political supporter William C. Bullitt to serve as US ambassador to Moscow from 1934 to 1936, he did not anticipate Bullitt’s rapid shift toward bitter disillusionment with Moscow officials and the Soviet Union generally. Bullitt had acquired experience in Russian affairs as a journalist, novelist, and diplomatic envoy to Russia shortly after the Bolshevik revolution. Bullitt lobbied energetically on behalf of diplomatic recognition prior to 1933, although he grew concerned by reports in the late 1920s and early 1930s of the Russian regime’s brutal collectivization drive, harsh industrialisation program, and repressive anti-religious campaign. Bullitt expected that after the establishment of diplomatic relations, the United States and Russia would quickly resolve differences surrounding debts and loans, security, international propaganda, and Soviet Russia’s despotic political and religious policies. In short, he hoped that Russia would become a closer approximation of an American-style democracy.

Bullitt’s optimistic rhetoric in 1933 alarmed Joseph Stalin, who hoped FDR would choose a more dispassionate ambassador that would be less prone to disappointment.[[274]](#footnote-274) Indeed, Bullitt’s hopes rapidly faded in 1935 when Soviet officials proved unreceptive to American cultural influence. For example, Moscow military officers rejected Bullitt’s efforts introduce baseball and polo in the capital. Russia also failed to acquiesce to US desires surrounding debts, loans, security, international propaganda, and the construction of a US embassy building in Moscow. Soviet officials began to subject members of the US embassy to slights, insults, and indignities, and during the party purges of 1934 to 1938, Stalin and his allies exiled and arrested many of the Moscow intelligentsia with whom officials at the US embassy socialized.[[275]](#footnote-275) By 1935, Bullitt became just as bitter as the officials in the Eastern European Division, including Loy Henderson, Charles Bohlen, and George Kennan.[[276]](#footnote-276)

As Frank Costigliola and other historians have argued, Bullitt’s vitriol against Soviet officials was rash, intemperate, and corrosive to Soviet-American relations.[[277]](#footnote-277) Bullitt’s devout Episcopalian religious ideology and Christian worldview reinforced his anti-communist beliefs. When Roosevelt first asked Bullitt to analyze the question of religion in preparation for recognition autumn 1933, Bullitt agreed with Catholic leaders by insisting that firm guarantees of religious rights must be extracted from Soviet officials before inviting Soviet representatives to Washington for negotiations. Otherwise, Roosevelt would be accused of “making friends with a government avowedly an enemy of God and persecutor of religion.”[[278]](#footnote-278) More concerned about securing Soviet participation in the recognition talks, Roosevelt overrode Bullitt’s recommendation and invited Litvinov to Washington. FDR then assigned the religious negotiations to the more temperate Cordell Hull.[[279]](#footnote-279)

In Moscow, Bullitt’s anti-Semitism exacerbated his disillusionment with Soviet officials. Bullitt complained to Hull and Roosevelt that the Moscow Ministry of Foreign Affairs was infested with obstructionist Jews such as the press commissar Constantin Oumansky, a “wretched little kike.” Bullitt still hoped that Stalin, an Orthodox Christian, would discover this Jewish subversion within his bureaucracy and restore Christianity to the ranks. Bullitt’s anti-Semitism eroded his faith in prospects for cooperating with Jewish Kremlin officials.[[280]](#footnote-280)

Between 1934 and 1936, Bullitt tried to alert Roosevelt and Hull to the Soviet menace, and religious tropes were central to his analysis. Bullitt complained that the Russia was “ruled by fanatics” prepared to “sacrifice themselves and everyone else” to their “religion of communism.” Because Russian youth had been drilled in the “catechism” of Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist doctrine, they could not be expected to seek the individual freedoms celebrated as the “birthright” of every American.[[281]](#footnote-281) Stalin served as a “ruling prophet” who demanded “adoration and absolute obedience” and wielded absolute power until “utopia” was achieved. Bullitt predicted that Soviet leaders, the Russian masses, and the Communist Party’s international agents would lie, betray international covenants, and resort to “mass murder” and “atrocious crimes” with a “happy sense of virtue” in pursuit of their communist “gospel.”[[282]](#footnote-282) Bullitt urged Roosevelt and Hull to beware the Soviet regime’s “godless theocracy” which already controlled one sixth of the globe, enjoyed self-sufficiency in key resources, and was rapidly becoming militarized and industrialized. Soon the USSR would be immune to attack, and the Soviets would overrun China, Western Europe, and eventually the United States.[[283]](#footnote-283)

Bullitt’s religion-inflected anti-communist manifestos were prompted by his understandable dismay at the brutality of Soviet domestic policies, and his capitalist aversion to the revolutionary goals of orthodox Marxist-Leninist theory. Yet, Bullitt exaggerated Stalin’ unbridled expansionism and desire to destabilize Western Europe through monolithic control of international leftist groups. In truth, communist groups outside of Russia tended to be weak, disorganized, and relatively ineffective in the 1930s. Most importantly, Bullitt minimized the Kremlin’s desire for a long-term *modus vivendi* with the West to consolidate Soviet control over traditional Russian territory. Particularly after the defeat of Hitler, Stalin was preoccupied with Russian reconstruction, securing a zone of Russian security in Eastern Europe, and preventing German resurgence. Long-term cooperation with the US and Britain seemed the best means to secure those aims.[[284]](#footnote-284)

Unfortunately, there is little evidence of Roosevelt’s opinions of Bullitt’s religion-oriented tirades. It appears that he generally ignored or dismissed Bullitt’s anti-Sovietism. FDR wrote to Bullitt in early 1936 that he found his personal correspondence “very amusing,” and he assured Bullitt that US officials were treated poorly in all European capitals, not just in Moscow.[[285]](#footnote-285) Frank Costigliola claims that Roosevelt’s ambivalence was partly rooted in his resentment of Bullitt’s romantic relationship with his secretary and former mistress, Marguerite “Missy” Le Hand. According to this interpretation, Roosevelt toyed with Bullitt, remaining outwardly affable and dangling promotions before him while ignoring his policy advice.[[286]](#footnote-286) Bullitt’s caustic religious warnings appear to have made little impression on FDR, who decided to reassign Bullitt to the Paris embassy in 1936 in order to avoid further antagonizing Russian leaders.

Bullitt’s Christian anti-communism also led him to support the virulently anti-Soviet Catholic priest Father Leopold Braun in his perpetual disputes with Moscow officials. Braun arrived in Moscow in 1934 with Bullitt’s assistance, and he served as the sole resident American Catholic priest until 1945. As the principal religious minister to Moscow’s English-speaking diplomats and Russian-speaking Catholics, he openly expressed his anti-Soviet views among his parishioners. Soviet officials monitored Braun and obstructed his attempts to purchase food, lodging, fuel, and transportation. Although Bullitt initially warned Father Braun against provoking Soviet officials—Bullitt could do little to defend him if he were tried before Soviet courts—he affirmed Braun’s outrage at Soviet mistreatment and supplied him with money, food, and offered him permanent lodging at the US embassy.[[287]](#footnote-287) Although Bullitt’s warnings may have prevented a serious confrontation with Soviet officials, his encouragement of Braun’s unconcealed hostility to the Soviet regime did nothing to ease diplomatic tensions in Moscow.

**Roosevelt Cultivates American Catholic Leaders, 1933-1940**

Although Roosevelt was relatively powerless to dampen religious tensions between the US embassy and Moscow, he continued in the 1930s to personally charm powerful Catholic leaders in Washington and New York, helping to secure their public support for his domestic and foreign policies. In 1934, Roosevelt invited Bishop John Burke of the National Catholic Welfare Council to the White House to discuss the public criticisms of the isolationist radio personality, Father Charles Coughlin. In 1934, Coughlin had blasted Roosevelt’s New Deal policies and accused him of being disinherited by his father because the latter had judged FDR too irresponsible to inherit the family estate. Roosevelt told Burke that he found Coughlin’s allegations “hurtful” and “brutally untrue,” and Burke apologized and promised to look into the matter, although he found it impossible to silence Coughlin. Burke believed that Roosevelt’s “soul” was “wounded” and “suffering,” and he had called on Burke to give him “healing.”[[288]](#footnote-288) Evidently, Burke imagined that he served as Roosevelt’s private spiritual counsellor, despite the fact that Roosevelt was an Episcopalian and not a Catholic. In 1942, Archbishop of Detroit Edward Mooney finally muted Coughlin at the administration’s request by ordering the priest to cease his isolationist attacks on FDR’s wartime policies or be defrocked.[[289]](#footnote-289)

The National Catholic Welfare Council’s decision to withhold criticism of Roosevelt’s Russia policy in 1933 and 1934 was an achievement in light of several Catholic politicians’ strong objections. In 1934, the Irish Catholic senator David Walsh (R-Massachusetts) accosted Burke at the Senate offices in Washington, DC. The senator complained in a “loud” and “angry” voice that Burke and the council had betrayed American Catholics by abandoning their public opposition to diplomatic recognition of Russia in 1933. Walsh was unimpressed by Burke’s excuse that the National Catholic Welfare Council had thought it advantageous to protest recognition privately, so the two parted on poor terms.[[290]](#footnote-290)

Although Roosevelt and his advisors acted deferentially toward religious leaders, White House officials often grew irritated by their efforts to interfere with the policymaking process. The White House received many requests from religious groups asking FDR to reinstate prohibition, prohibit commerce on Sundays, make personal appearances at minor church events, and intervene in factional sectarian disputes. Many clerical leaders believed they were equal or superior to elected political representatives and deserved special attention. One American Protestant leader, B.O. Lovejoy, insisted in 1933 that FDR host a 20-minute meeting at the White House with three prominent Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish delegates to discuss domestic and foreign policy. When Roosevelt’s secretaries politely declined his request, Lovejoy persisted and FDR reluctantly agreed.[[291]](#footnote-291) FDR made great use of his White House press secretaries, who worked to deflect priests’ unwelcome requests while giving the impression that Roosevelt was a devout Christian. For example, when one Catholic bishop demanded that American churches be exempt from wartime taxes and rationing laws, FDR asked one of his secretaries to draft a polite rejection couched in the “best ecclesiastical style.”[[292]](#footnote-292) Although Father James Coughlin and Father Edmund Walsh criticized Roosevelt’s policy of diplomatic accord with Russia, many Catholic leaders, including the bishops of the National Catholic Welfare Council, generally refrained from public objection prior to 1939.

**Joseph Davies Attempts to Repair US-Soviet Relations, 1936-1938**

Between 1936 and 1938, the Soviet regime undertook a series of internal reforms that angered and puzzled many American observers. The regime publicly promised greater civil, religious and political freedoms to its people, while at the same time undertaking unprecedented violence in the party and army purges. Although FDR redoubled his efforts to calm diplomatic, public, and religious tensions between the United States and Russia, career officials in the Eastern European Division continued to undermine his efforts.

American journalists, religious leaders, and politicians’ hopes for religious and political liberalization in Russia were briefly raised in 1936 when the Soviet regime adopted a new constitution, popularly known as the “Stalin Constitution,” which explicitly protected freedom of speech, the press, assembly, and religious worship, while also restoring the franchise to Russian priests. As reported in the American press, Communist Party members responded by openly attending church services, and Russian Baptist leaders began to hail Stalin’s government and socialist doctrine as compatible with the pro-social values championed in the Christian gospels.[[293]](#footnote-293)

Yet, American journalists, politicians, and religious leaders’ hopes for greater freedoms in Russia were dashed by reports in mid-1936 that Soviet officials were intimidating, imprisoning, exiling, and executing Russian military, civilian, political, and religious figures suspected of disloyalty to the regime. Senator John W. McCormack (D-Massachusetts) implored the US government to demand that Soviet leaders demonstrate their “good intentions” by releasing all priests imprisoned in Russia. Jewish and Mennonite organizations urged the Roosevelt administration to protest Soviet violations of Russian clerics’ constitutional rights.[[294]](#footnote-294) Disgruntled embassy officials sent a steady stream of cables affirming media reports of religious repression.[[295]](#footnote-295) Nonetheless, Roosevelt, who was determined to improve US-Soviet relations, refused to condemn Soviet religious policies.

Several dozen American clergymen and intellectuals travelled to Russia in summer 1936 in order to investigate the impact of the Stalin Constitution on religious freedoms in Russia. The largest mission was the “Eddy Group,” a delegation of approximately 70 American religious and civil leaders interested in studying Soviet religion and education. US embassy officials disregarded Roosevelt’s agenda of minimizing religious controversies surrounding Russia, and instead tried to impress upon the American visitors the extent of Soviet religious repression. The interim ambassador Loy Henderson complained to his superiors in Washington that the leftist journalist Anna Louise Strong and the Methodist priest Julius Hecker were leading the group to adopt a benign view of Soviet religious policies. Members of the mission found it impossible to interview local Russian citizens whom Soviet security officials had intimidated into silence.

In order to expose Soviet religious repression, Loy Henderson arranged private meetings between Reverend Donald G. Barnhouse, an American evangelical radio personality and representative of the Federal Council of Churches, and three anti-Bolshevik priests who had resided in Moscow for several years. One was Father Leopold Braun, the Massachusetts Assumptionist priest whom William Bullitt had brought to Moscow in 1934, and another was the Russian-born, German-speaking Lutheran pastor Alexander Streck, a Soviet citizen who occasionally ministered to members of the US embassy.. Braun informed Barnhouse that the Soviets continued to arrest, imprison, exile, harass, and execute Russian priests and worshippers with the intention of closing all Christian churches in Russia by 1937.[[296]](#footnote-296)

According to US embassy records, when Barnhouse and a junior US embassy official attempted to interview Pastor Streck at his parish office, an “obviously Semitic” Soviet security official posing as a “parish chairman” insisted on monitoring the discussion. Streck appeared “nervous and ill at ease,” prompting Barnhouse and the US embassy official to cut the interview short.[[297]](#footnote-297) Two months later, on the day that Streck was scheduled to officiate the wedding of the vice consul of the US embassy, the Soviet secret police arrested Streck for suspected espionage.[[298]](#footnote-298) Bullitt, who had been redeployed as Ambassador to France, assured Henderson over the telephone that Streck’s arrest would produce “disgust” on the part of the American public and government. In truth, American national newspapers barely mentioned the arrest, and the White House ignored it.[[299]](#footnote-299) Anti-communist embassy officials’ efforts to expose Soviet religious repression by informing American missionaries in Moscow in summer 1936 worsened Soviet leaders’ xenophobia, encouraged them to crack down on Russian clerics, and exacerbated tensions between the US embassy and Kremlin.

In hopes of improving relations between the Kremlin and US embassy, Roosevelt appointed his friend Joseph Davies to replace William Bullitt as ambassador in November 1936.[[300]](#footnote-300) As a trial lawyer with no diplomatic experience and the husband of a socialite heiress to the General Foods fortune, Davies’s primary qualification as ambassador to Russia was his determination to pursue Roosevelt’s agenda of non-criticism toward the Soviet government.[[301]](#footnote-301) Despite his inexperience and naïve credulity toward Soviet propaganda surrounding the purges and show trials, Davies strove to improve US-Soviet relations in an effort to secure a powerful ally against German and Japanese aggression. Although Davies was a devout Methodist, he was particularly careful not to antagonize Russian leaders about sensitive topics such as religious repression and political ideology, and he attempted to promote positive perceptions of Russia in the American media by obfuscating Soviet religious intolerance and the unjust nature of the party and army purges. Finally, Davies worked with Roosevelt to remove antagonistic officials such as George Kennan from the US embassy in Moscow and retain pro-Soviet officials such as Lieutenant Colonel Richard Faymonville.[[302]](#footnote-302)

Davies’s upbeat reports on religious matters in Russia contrasted sharply with the pessimistic reports that the State Department was accustomed to receiving from Bullitt. In 1937 Davies reported that membership in the Society of Militant Atheists had declined sharply, and the Soviet press was calling for an end to aggressive tactics for combatting religion. Davies predicted that anti-religious activity would involve only education in the future, rather than intimidation, imprisonment, or exile. Davies also interpreted the Soviet government’s restoration of voting rights to Russian clerics as part of a broader trend toward greater civil liberties.[[303]](#footnote-303) When religious repression worsened during the escalating purges of the following year, Davies appeared to ignore reports that might damage American perceptions of the Russian regime.

Davies also strove to minimize religious tensions in diplomatic talks with Russian leaders. In June 1938, he told Stalin, Premier Molotov, and President Kalinin that their two countries shared “one very great and noble aim;” whether impelled by “God” or secular “forces” such as “ideals” or “human nature,” both nations shared a “genuine desire” for “peace in the world.” Davies evaded ideological disputes in order to foster goodwill that might be used to facilitate coordinated efforts to restrain German and Japanese aggression. Davies warned Washington that if the United States, France, and Britain failed to achieve meaningful security agreements with Russia, Soviet officials might seek to protect Russia’s territorial integrity by treating with Germany.[[304]](#footnote-304)

Davies’s efforts to smooth diplomatic relations in Moscow and polish Russia’s public image proved limited in the face of irresolvable disputes concerning security. The Roosevelt administration was unwilling to assist Stalin in his efforts to contract private American firms to build warships for Russia, largely because US military officials objected that building capacity was needed for US ships.[[305]](#footnote-305) Moreover, isolationism in the US Congress hamstrung Roosevelt’s freedom to commit to a mutual defense pact wherein the US and USSR pledged to come to one another’s aid in the event that either country was attacked. Conversely, German officials were eager to appease the USSR by pledging non-aggression and granting Russia a zone of security in Eastern Europe. Such a pact would ease Germany’s seizure of resource-rich Western Poland. More importantly, by securing Germany’s Eastern flank against war with Russia, the pact would prevent Germany facing a two-front war should its seizure of Western Poland provoke a declaration of war by France and Britain in the West.

Thus, Stalin concluded the Molotov-Ribbentrop non-aggression pact of August 1939, which included secret protocols that allowed Germany and Russia to divide Poland, and Russia to seize the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. With the Red Army weakened by the army and party purges, and British and French officials unwilling to commit to security pledges guaranteeing Russia protection against German aggression, the Nazi-Soviet pact won Stalin time to rebuild his military leadership, and it secured a territorial buffer in Eastern Europe to strengthen Russia’s defenses against a future war with Germany.[[306]](#footnote-306)

After Davies departed for his new ambassador post at Brussels, Belgium, in April 1938, relations between the US embassy staff and Kremlin officials deteriorated. Under the interim ambassador, Alexander Kirk, embassy officials sent to Washington a stream of dark reports detailing religious repression in Moscow.[[307]](#footnote-307) Shortly after Davies’s departure, Soviet officials arrested and shot the American Methodist priest Julius F. Hecker on suspicion of espionage. In truth, Hecker had simply begun to criticize the regime.[[308]](#footnote-308) The Soviet secret police also resumed their harassment of the openly anti-Soviet priest Leopold Braun, whom Joseph Davies had briefly protected during his posting in Moscow.[[309]](#footnote-309)

When Russia invaded Poland and Finland in autumn 1939, US-Soviet relations reached their worst point under the FDR administration. American journalists and members of the US Congress condemned Soviet behaviour, particularly after the Russian air force bombed Finnish civilians. Catholics grew especially alarmed because Russia had annexed Eastern Poland, where many Catholics lived, and threatened the Baltic states, which could potentially bring millions of European Catholics under Soviet control. Father Edmund Walsh led the anti-Soviet charge by directing a voluntary relief fund for Finnish citizens.[[310]](#footnote-310)

Roosevelt deplored Soviet behaviour and publicly condemned Russia’s expansion into Poland and the Baltic region, but he still prioritized Germany and Japan as the greatest dangers to Western security interests and modulated his diplomacy and rhetoric accordingly. In February 1940, Roosevelt described Stalin’s regime to the America Youth Congress as an “absolute dictatorship” whose “regimentation,” “indiscriminate killing,” and “banishment of religion” had earned his disapproval. Yet, he expressed certainty that Russia would one day “return to religion.”[[311]](#footnote-311) Roosevelt resisted demands by Senator Arthur Vandenberg (R-Michigan), Senator John McCormick (D-Massachusetts), and other anti-Soviet members of congress to sever diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. Instead, Roosevelt declared a “moral embargo” that prohibited private American exports of airplane construction materials to Russia. FDR likely intended the prohibitions to be a slap on the wrist to appease anti-Soviet public sentiment. As Roosevelt’s White House advisors predicted, Soviet officials circumvented the embargo and their armaments program continued unhindered.[[312]](#footnote-312) FDR strengthened US ties to Rome by appointing Myron Taylor as his personal envoy to the Pope, even though the pontiff publicly denounced Soviet behaviour in heated terms. Nonetheless, FDR refused to embrace the Vatican’s anti-Soviet stance.[[313]](#footnote-313) Ever the juggler, FDR confided to Cordell Hull in December 1939 that the Kremlin’s “downright rudeness” to US embassy officials had made him question whether it was “worthwhile to continue diplomatic relations,” but he still concluded that the US could not “afford to repay such rudeness” in kind.[[314]](#footnote-314) Thus, Roosevelt treated the Soviet ambassador Constantin Oumansky cordially during the winter of 1939-1940, and he ignored advice from anti-communist State Department officials to censure Soviet Russia by recalling US diplomats from Moscow.[[315]](#footnote-315) Roosevelt’s prescient preservation of US-Soviet relations in the 1930s helped facilitate the rapid shift to Lend-Lease aid to Russia after the German invasion of 1941.

**Conclusion**

Scholars who dislike Roosevelt often include in their complaints against him the decision to recognize the Soviet Union instead of continuing his Republican predecessors’ policy of isolating Russia. According to this school of interpretation, Roosevelt unwisely extended recognition to the Soviet Union without first resolving conflicts connected to outstanding debts, international communist propaganda, Soviet hopes for a US commitment to protecting Soviet security, and the Soviet regime’s domestic religious and political repression. This interpretation disregards Roosevelt’s efforts to benefit US national interests by securing greater access to export markets in Russia to offset the market contractions of the Great Depression, and to establish greater solidarity with the USSR as a means to deter German and Japanese militarists interested in aggressive expansion in Europe and Asia.

In order to garner popular support for recognition, Roosevelt and his allies deliberately promoted the perception that Soviet Russia would adopt greater religious and civil liberties as a result of recognition. This tactic worked in the short run, but eventually resulted in heightened disillusionment and bitterness among US officials such as Bullitt and anti-communist Catholics such as the Georgetown University professor Father Edmund Walsh. Officials in the Eastern European Division subverted Roosevelt’s agenda and exacerbated American religious leaders’ disillusionment by affirming their negative perceptions of religious freedoms in Russia. When relations between Bullitt’s embassy and the Kremlin deteriorated to new lows in 1936, Roosevelt appointed the friendlier ambassador Joseph Davies. Part of Davies’s mission was to obscure Soviet officials’ continued efforts to combat religious groups in Russia. At no time did the White House or Roosevelt’s personal allies seek to expose the truths about Soviet religious repression or persuade the Kremlin to adopt greater domestic political and civil liberties.

Roosevelt’s approach to Russia was deceptive, but it is difficult to imagine an alternative that would have been more beneficial for US national interests. Greater transparency and firmness toward Soviet religious repression in 1933 would have risked offending Soviet leaders and jeopardizing the recognition negotiations altogether. Later, greater public criticism of the Soviet show trials, purges, and invasion of Eastern Europe risked impeding the US government’s ability to rapidly form a US-Soviet alliance against Germany, which FDR did when he asked Congress to extend Lend Lease aid to Russia in 1941. A hard line on Russia after 1933 could have even conceivably jeopardized the formation of the Grand Alliance that proved vital to ensuring Russia’s survival in 1941 and defeating the Axis powers in 1945. FDR’s approach to diplomacy and rhetoric surrounding Russia appears to have balanced his need to satisfy general American opinion while preserving his strategic flexibility.

Chapter 3

Religious Objections Defeated: The Establishment of the Grand Alliance, 1941

In 1941, most opinion leaders in the US Congress, media, and American Catholic clergy supported Roosevelt’s goals for strategic cooperation with Russia. Although they recognized the tensions between stated American ideals and the realities of religious repression in Russia, they were willing to subsume religious issues to the pragmatic need to halt German and Japanese aggression. Many conservative religious leaders and laypeople attacked Roosevelt’s policy of rapprochement with Russia, especially the policies of renewed trade, aid, and lend-lease, but Roosevelt and his supporters overwhelmed religious objections through well-placed public rhetoric, crafty press coverage, and behind the scenes pressure on opponents. Roosevelt’s success in minimizing religious tensions in 1941 lends weight to the argument that the “religious Cold War” was not inevitable prior to 1945. For the majority of America observers, if cooperation with Soviet Russia seemed to serve America’s self-interest, then it was acceptable to marginalize or ignore the religion-oriented objections of anti-Soviet opponents. Unfortunately for Roosevelt’s long-term goals, after the fortunes of war changed in Russia’s favour in 1943, members of his administration began to question whether non-critical cooperation with Russia was still an expedient course. Taking the lead of influential advisors like Sumner Welles, domestic support for cooperation—particularly among religious leaders—began to erode.

**Religion and the First Lend-Lease Bill, January-March 1941**

In January 1941, Roosevelt, Welles and Hull hoped to woo Russia away from closer cooperation with the Nazi regime or at least prevent trade and political ties from strengthening between the two countries. Beginning in August 1940, the State Department received reliable intelligence reports that the German high command was developing immediate plans to invade Russia, making a future Soviet-American military alliance appear more likely. The State Department also hoped that gestures of Soviet-American solidarity would discourage Japanese expansion in the Far East, a serious fear among American officials. Although Roosevelt overrode the pessimism of anti-Soviet advisers such as Ambassador Laurence Steinhardt, domestic opposition—particularly from religious groups—proved more problematic. Religious leaders and their Congressional allies vigorously denounced Soviet expansion into Poland and Finland, and they were bound to oppose any US efforts toward improved relations.[[316]](#footnote-316)

Roosevelt’s first major move toward rapprochement was his decision in early January to remove the US Moral Embargo of December 1939, which prohibited American companies from selling defense articles to the Soviets. Designed to censure Russia for invading the largely Catholic countries of the Baltic region, the embargo received strong support from anti-Soviet congressmen, religious leaders, and conservative public figures. President Roosevelt initially validated religious criticisms of Russia during his 1940 public campaign to mobilize support for military aid. Roosevelt insisted that “permanent security” required a “moral” and “righteous” peace based on universal freedom of worship, and he called on Americans to combat “anti-Christian aggression, which may attack us from without.” [[317]](#footnote-317) Roosevelt’s religious critiques of Soviet Russia in 1940 proved embarrassing for his policy of rapprochement in 1941, and such criticisms disappeared from his official utterances by late May 1941. As Roosevelt’s speechwriter Samuel Rosenman later explained, “though we detested Soviet dictatorship and her anti-religious policy, our own self-interest lay in helping the enemy of Hitler.”[[318]](#footnote-318)

Compounding the controversy over the Moral Embargo was Roosevelt’s refusal to include clauses prohibiting aid to Russia in the Lend-Lease Bill presented to Congress on January 10, 1941. If the bill passed unamended, the president could unilaterally extend lend-lease to “any country whose defense the president deems vital to the defense of the United States.” [[319]](#footnote-319) Roosevelt’s speechwriter wrote in 1948 that Roosevelt had rejected advice from State Department officials to preclude aid to Russia in the Lend-Lease Bill because he believed it was “possible if not probable” that Russia would be attacked by the Axis powers and would “desperately need American help.”[[320]](#footnote-320)

Noninterventionist congressmen proposed several amendments to the Lend-Lease Bill prohibiting aid to Russia, and they drew heavily on religious discourse and support from religious organizations. Representatives George Tinkham (R-Massachusetts), Karl Mundt (R-South Dakota), and Senator Robert Reynolds (D-North Carolina) led the anti-Soviet campaign by encouraging congressional appearances by isolationist groups such as the Anti-War Crusade of the International Catholic Truth Society, Youth Committee Against War, and Women’s National Committee to Keep the United States Out of War. In Senate committee hearings, Herbert Wright, professor of international law at Catholic University, framed lend-lease as a backroom alliance with the “utterly untrustworthy” USSR.[[321]](#footnote-321) The Protestant minister Gerald K. Smith of the Committee of One Million testified that Roman Catholics sent his organization a torrent of mail decrying FDR’s “semi-friendly” relationship to the “archenemy of the Christian religion.” Wright claimed that “religious people” could have no confidence in the Act if it permitted “any thought” that America might “contribute...to the power of the Soviet Union.” [[322]](#footnote-322) On the Senate floor, Senator Burton Wheeler (D-Montana) presented a letter from the Church League of America condemning Roosevelt’s policy of trading with the Soviets as inconsistent with his anti-Axis rhetoric, and he charged the Soviets with committing atrocities in Eastern Poland as publicized by prominent religious groups.[[323]](#footnote-323) Senator Reynolds accused the Soviet government of “one of the most vicious assaults ever recorded” upon Christianity, including “mass massacres,” prohibitions on religious worship, and the destruction and expropriation of churches. Finally, Reynolds berated Roosevelt for “making violent, ardent love” to Stalin, whose record of religious persecution demanded Russia’s isolation in foreign affairs.[[324]](#footnote-324) Drawing on these themes, the minority report in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee accused Roosevelt of condoning Stalin’s immoral “crimes” and behaving as if Russia’s record was “white as snow.”[[325]](#footnote-325)

Despite spirited religious protests against the lack of restrictions barring future aid to Russia in the Lend-Lease Bill, the Tinkham and Reynolds amendments were defeated by a ratio of approximately 2:1 in both the House and Senate. This defeat can be partially explained by the administration’s effective public relations strategy of evading its opponents’ religious and ideological objections, focusing instead on the geopolitical and strategic advantages of broad presidential powers over lend-lease. Secretary of State Cordell Hull and Secretary of War Henry Stimson refused to be drawn into moralistic discussions of Russia’s domestic and foreign policy, despite repeated attempts by isolationist Congressmen. Stimson, who mentioned Russia just once in his congressional testimony, tersely suggested to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that amendments barring aid to Russia might “offend” the Soviet government in a “highly injudicious” manner likely to cause “trouble” for the State Department.[[326]](#footnote-326) Roosevelt’s supporters in Congress, such as Luther Johnson (D-Texas), echoed Hull and Stimson’s approach, dismissing aid to Russia as purely theoretical while emphasizing the benefits of improved relations in light of the German threat.[[327]](#footnote-327) Even the notoriously anti-Soviet William Bullitt conceded that all-out aid to democracies would protect Christian America from the expansion of Bolshevism. In his testimony to the House Committee on Foreign Relations, Bullitt insisted that Soviet ideology was too weak to pose a real threat to American interests.[[328]](#footnote-328)

The liberal press also helped to defeat the anti-Soviet amendments to the Lend-Lease Bill in early 1941. Major newspapers such as the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* defended Roosevelt’s removal of the Moral Embargo and broad presidential powers over lend-lease, and minimized coverage of religious leaders’ and isolationists’ critiques.[[329]](#footnote-329) Arthur Krock of the *New York Times* applauded the embargo decision as a triumph of pragmatic policymaking over the “myopic” idealism of American isolationists.[[330]](#footnote-330)The *Washington Post* delayed publishing Father Edmund Walsh’s charge of appeasement until a week after the administration publicized the embargo decision, and buried Walsh’s comments on the back pages.[[331]](#footnote-331) The major newspapers also largely ignored the Tinkham and Reynolds amendments while they were before Congress. The *New York Times* reported only that Representative Tinkham’s overzealous attacks on Russia had elicited laughter in Congress.[[332]](#footnote-332) The scarcity of records detailing journalists’ conversations with government officials makes it difficult to determine whether they actively conspired to promote lend-lease, but Arthur Sulzberger, Walter Lippmann, and Anne McCormick met fairly regularly with Roosevelt and Welles during the early 1940s.[[333]](#footnote-333)

The precise influence of the media on the policymaking process cannot be measured empirically, but the historian Robert Levering argues that controllers of the national radio and liberal press were crucial for shaping both mass and attentive opinion surrounding Russia during World War II. With the exception of President Roosevelt, whose savvy personal use of the mass media was “probably unprecedented in history,” would-be opinion-shapers had to rely on the “judgment and goodwill” of journalists, editors, and commentators who decided which views would receive wide public circulation.[[334]](#footnote-334) Most congressional and popular observers in the 1940s looked to radio and newspapers for both straight news and expert interpretation because they had little or no personal access to the world of foreign policymaking and television was not yet widely available.[[335]](#footnote-335)

Prominent newspapers such as the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* were particularly authoritative sources of foreign policy news and opinion for the attentive public. Major newspapers had permanent news bureaus at most major world capitals, and these foreign desks were staffed by expert commentators with “insider” connections to powerful policymakers. The journalist David Carr claims that under-resourced American papers often draw their content from the *New York Times*, a phenomenon he calls “*New York Times* effect.”[[336]](#footnote-336) The liberal “press of record” was also probably more influential in Washington circles than the conservative press. Many thoughtful observers—the President included—dismissed stridently “anti-Roosevelt” papers such as the *New York Daily News* and *Chicago Daily Tribune* as non-reflective of mainstream opinion, even among Conservatives.[[337]](#footnote-337) Levering contends that daily liberal newspapers were also more influential than weekly or monthly magazines such as *Time* and *Life* because readers usually formed opinions during the breaking news cycle and their views typically remained unaltered by further debate.[[338]](#footnote-338) The sociologist Carol Weiss reported in 1974 that the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* were the most widely-read publications among east coast financial, political, and media elites.[[339]](#footnote-339) Finally, although religious periodicals such as *Christian Century, Catholic World,* and *America* were popular among clergymen, their circulation figures were dwarfed by major secular papers. For example, *Christian Century* counted more than 25% of American clerics in its readership, but the magazine never exceeded 30,000 copies per issue. This compared poorly to the *New York Times’* 400,000 to 800,000 copies daily.[[340]](#footnote-340)

The US Congress’s rejection of the Tinkham and Reynolds amendments may also be explained by a general lack of interest in the Russia controversy in early 1941, especially in prominent isolationist circles. The chairman of the America First Committee, Robert E. Wood, warned only of the dangers of lend-lease to Britain, not Russia. On the front page of the *New York Times* the group’s aviator spokesman, Charles Lindbergh, praised Roosevelt’s “*modus vivendi”* with the Soviet government.[[341]](#footnote-341) Many isolationists continued to argue that Russia’s activities did not pose an urgent threat to the United States. Even the anti-Soviet non-interventionist Ambassador Joseph Kennedy neglected the Soviet issue in early 1941.[[342]](#footnote-342)

Finally, Congress’s rejection of the Tinkham and Reynolds amendments can be explained by the desire of Roosevelt’s supporters to block any non-interventionist amendments which might undermine the Lend-Lease Bill. To Roosevelt’s supporters, validating attacks on Roosevelt’s judgement in managing Soviet-American relations would have lent tacit support to other congressional proposals designed to cripple lend-lease through congressional limitations. Anti-isolationism among Roosevelt’s supporters primarily caused the failure of the anti-Russian amendments in Congress, not support for extending aid to Russia in the event of a German invasion.[[343]](#footnote-343)

Although the Lend-Lease Act passed on March 11, Roosevelt’s power to assist Russia in the event of a German invasion was far from secure. Religious groups’ vocal support for the Tinkham and Reynolds amendments served as a bracing reminder that future accommodation with Russia would generate opposition—especially among Catholics—which noninterventionist congressmen would use to maximum effect. Compounding the problem was the administration’s pledge to dispense all of the lend-lease funds granted in March to Britain, China, and other combatants. If Russia were suddenly attacked, Roosevelt would have to ask Congress for additional funds, which could renew attempts to block or severely limit aid to Russia. Finally, the Dirksen Amendment enabled Congress to revoke the Lend-Lease Bill at any time through a concurrent resolution by the House and Senate, meaning sudden, strong opposition to Russia could derail a future attempt to provide lend-lease aid.[[344]](#footnote-344)

The administration’s efforts to minimize religious opposition to Russia extended to the embassy in Moscow. In early 1941, US officials worked to bury a controversy involving Father Leopold Braun, an American priest who ministered to the only Catholic Church in Moscow. Although successful, the embassy’s efforts reveal the ambivalence of some members of the Roosevelt administration toward the president’s program of minimizing religious tensions with the Soviet Union. This ambivalence would grow deeper in mid-1943, when advisers’ support for unconditional cooperation cooled in the wake of Soviet military successes and signs of Soviet domination over the post-war government of Poland.

Braun’s church was robbed five times between 1939 and early 1941, the final robbery occurring just as Congressional debate surrounding the first Lend-Lease Bill peaked in February 1941.[[345]](#footnote-345) Braun accused Soviet officials of deliberately engineering the thefts to oust him from the country, and he repeatedly pressed the American and French embassies to file a formal note of protest charging the Soviet government with violating the religious freedom clauses contained in the Roosevelt-Litvinov agreements of 1933. Braun castigated Soviet investigators for failing to apprehend the perpetrators, recover stolen property, or prevent further burglaries, even though the church stood one block from police headquarters.[[346]](#footnote-346)

When Ambassador Laurence Steinhardt—an assimilated Jewish lawyer—took up his post in Moscow in August 1939, he initially avoided comment on religious issues. Yet, Steinhardt quickly came to resent Moscow officials’ personal slights, harassment, and surveillance of the US embassy staff, and he became an advocate for Braun in his conflicts with Soviet officials.[[347]](#footnote-347) When Braun informed Steinhardt of the first robberies, Steinhardt inquired privately with the Soviet Foreign Ministry, which had no effect.[[348]](#footnote-348) Braun became particularly irritated when Soviet officials tried to charge him several thousand rubles in December 1940 for failing to safeguard the church. Braun refused an offer from an “official in the diplomatic corps”—probably the French ambassador—to pay the Soviet bill and avoid negative publicity. Several weeks later, the church was robbed again, and Braun leaked news of the robbery to the international press, causing a “terrific sensation” that finally prodded the State Department into action.[[349]](#footnote-349)

Although Ambassador Steinhardt submitted an official note of protest to the Kremlin on March 4, 1941 and privately expressed to Braun his outrage at the robbery, Steinhardt and his superiors in Washington promptly tried to bury the controversy. Two weeks after issuing the protest, Steinhardt and his counterparts in Washington told the national press that the Soviet response was “completely satisfactory,” because Russian authorities had arrested four “professional thieves” and recovered some of the stolen property.[[350]](#footnote-350) The US officials neglected important details, however, such as the bogus nature of the Soviet investigations which Steinhardt privately found “utterly ridiculous,” and the Soviets’ failure to return most of the missing items. Moreover, the Soviet Foreign Ministry had privately told Steinhardt that Braun was “derelict” in his duties to safeguard the church property, which had been “generously” furnished by the Soviet government free of charge and returned to Braun even after his failures. The official Soviet investigation also implied that Braun colluded with robbers who “could only” have succeeded with the help of a “confederate” inside the church.[[351]](#footnote-351) Braun concluded that Ambassador Steinhardt acted “regrettably” in working with “questionable zeal” to “subdue the repercussions” of the thefts and “farcical” investigations, “diminishing the importance of the scandal.”[[352]](#footnote-352) William Bullitt, Father Braun’s ally in Washington, also failed to expose the truth.[[353]](#footnote-353)

Braun complained that Western diplomats were unwilling to defend religious freedoms because they remained “shut up” in the “official world of luxurious receptions,” reading news “almost exclusively from official sources.” These diplomats refused to admit that “totalitarian and police states” engaged in “mass deportations, imprisonments, closing of churches, [and] hard labor.” The international press was “no better informed.”[[354]](#footnote-354) In truth, Ambassador Steinhardt, Secretary of State Cordell Hull, and Under Secretary Sumner Welles were deeply offended by Soviet repression, but professional duty bound them to pursue Roosevelt’s goal of rapprochement with the Soviet Union, forcing them to keep religious tensions from the public eye.[[355]](#footnote-355)

Fortunately for the administration, the remainder of spring 1941 was relatively free of disputes surrounding Russia and religious issues, aside from pleas by American religious leaders urging Roosevelt to declare that a future alliance with Russia was impossible.[[356]](#footnote-356) Cordell Hull spoke about the need for a “spiritual resurgence” in America, but he carefully avoided references to Russia and Communism.[[357]](#footnote-357) When the Catholic pundit Edmund Walsh testified in early June against three American book publishers on trial for disseminating anti-religious Soviet literature in the United States, the major east coast newspapers drew no connections to foreign policy.[[358]](#footnote-358) Ambassador Steinhardt continued to urge Washington to take a firmer approach toward Russia but Roosevelt ignored him, even after Welles, Hull, and prominent American intellectuals such as Walter Lippmann also began to advocate a harder line.[[359]](#footnote-359) When German troops crossed into Soviet territory on June 22, however, religion shot to the forefront of American public discourse surrounding Russia.

**Roosevelt’s Strategy for Minimizing Religious Opposition After Barbarossa: Concession, Compartmentalization, and Rehabilitation**

Roosevelt had good reason to worry about religious opinion after Germany invaded Russia. Gallup’s American Institute of Public Opinion and Cantrill’s Office of Public Opinion Research predicted that some government financing for limited sales of military materials to Russia would enjoy popular support, but not all-out aid bankrolled by the United States. Gallup found that nearly 75% of Americans preferred a Russian victory to a German one, but a breakdown by religion demonstrated that support for a Russian victory among Catholics was 10% lower.[[360]](#footnote-360) When Gallup asked on June 24 whether the United States should supply war materials to Russia on the “same basis” as to Britain, 54% responded that Russia should not receive the same amount of aid as Britain, with Catholics again disproportionately opposed.[[361]](#footnote-361) The administration worried that Catholics were sympathetic to Nazi propaganda because Germany was allegedly saving the “civilized world” from the “deadly dangers” of atheistic Bolshevism.[[362]](#footnote-362) Indeed, in 1937, Pope Pius XI declared Communism to be “intrinsically wrong” and “no one who would save Christian civilization may collaborate with it in any undertaking whatsoever.”[[363]](#footnote-363) Anti-Soviet congressmen were poised to enjoy substantial popular support in future congressional battles over lend-lease to Russia, especially among conservative Catholics.

Roosevelt, Sumner Welles, and Myron Taylor adopted three strategies for minimizing popular hostility surrounding religion and Russia in summer 1941. First, they conceded to their opponents the immorality of Russia’s atheistic, communist ideology. Second, they emphasized the strategic advantages of helping Russia repel the German invasion, attempting to separate the question of aid from tensions linked to ideological differences. Third, beginning in early fall US officials tried to rehabilitate Russia’s public image. American officials pressured Catholic and Soviet leaders to promote the perception that Soviet religious policy was in the process of liberalization, and that aid to Russia was morally compatible with Christian beliefs. Despite attempts by isolationists and some religious figures to block Roosevelt’s accommodationist policy, the US Congress approved $1 billion of lend-lease aid for the Soviet Union on November 7, 1941, and Russia formally joined America and Britain to form the Grand Alliance in January 1942.[[364]](#footnote-364)

Even before German troops crossed into Soviet territory on June 22, Under Secretary Sumner Welles began pressing Catholic leaders to support Roosevelt’s policy of economic and military aid to Russia. During a private meeting with Bishop Michael J. Ready, chairman of the National Catholic Welfare Council, on the day before the invasion, Welles shared startling intelligence that Germany “would march on Russia soon, perhaps tomorrow.” He explained that Germany “needed the resources of Russia,” but would seek to clothe the invasion as a noble Christian crusade to destroy atheistic Communism. Welles handed Ready documents on harsh German occupation policies in Poland, which he also sent to Bishop Hurley, and promised to arrange a private meeting between Ready and the president.[[365]](#footnote-365) In response to these flattering attentions, Ready and his allies campaigned among the American clergy to discourage public criticism of Roosevelt’s policy of unconditional aid to Russia.[[366]](#footnote-366) Roosevelt also encouraged Soviet officials to consider the problem of Soviet-Catholic tensions. After meeting Roosevelt on June 22, Soviet Ambassador Oumansky cabled Moscow, “Roosevelt fears influential Catholics.”[[367]](#footnote-367)

On June 23, Welles delivered to the Washington press the administration’s first official response to Barbarossa. In a speech approved by Roosevelt, Welles admitted that both Germany and Russia denied the “freedom to worship God,” the “great and fundamental right of all peoples.” Yet, Welles advocated a “realistic” American policy of helping “any” force that resisted Hitler, whose bid for “universal conquest” threatened to bring the “cruel and brutal enslavement of all peoples” and “ultimate destruction” of “free democracies.”[[368]](#footnote-368) The day after Welles’ speech, Roosevelt told the Washington press he intended “to give all the aid we possibly can to Russia.”[[369]](#footnote-369) The historian Andrew Preston cites Welles’ speech as an example of the Roosevelt administration’s persistent effort to “promote and protect” religious liberty, a theme that “permeated” US foreign policy during World War II.[[370]](#footnote-370) Ralph Levering, however, describes Welles’s speech as a “sop to Catholic and conservative Protestant opinion” because it reassured them of America’s “moral superiority.”[[371]](#footnote-371) Welles’s tactical admission of Russia’s history of religious repression was designed to pre-empt opponents’ accusations that Roosevelt evaded the issue, but it was not designed to encourage religious freedoms. Never again during the war would any of Roosevelt’s top officials publicly acknowledge Soviet religious repression.

The national liberal press defended Welles and Roosevelt’s separation of religious objections from the question of aid. Arthur Krock of the *New York Times* declared that there were “no signs” of debate in Washington about whether Russia’s “character” or the “nature of its system” posed a moral dilemma to Congress. The only questions about aid to Russia, he insisted, concerned timing and tactics. Krock argued that the American public did not take literally official propaganda promoting lend-lease as tool for aiding “democracies,” for China and Greece were non-democratic nations already receiving American aid.[[372]](#footnote-372) Krock even attacked Senator Harry Truman for his “disturbing” but “not too serious” assertion that the United States should help Germany defeat Russia if the Soviets appeared to be winning and vice versa. Given Krock’s frosty relationship with Roosevelt, Krock’s endorsement of lend-lease indicated that even hostile journalists were willing to support his policy of aid to Russia in summer 1941.[[373]](#footnote-373) One of New England’s most authoritative periodicals, the *Christian Science Monitor,* also came out in support for aid to Russia. Regardless of American antipathy to “Marxism,” Stalin's “despotism,” and the “dangerous philosophy" of Communism, the *Monitor* declared, "the immediate attack comes from Nazism."[[374]](#footnote-374)

Despite Roosevelt’s success in minimizing religious objections among American liberal editorialists, conservative congressmen and isolationists used religious arguments to attack the administration’s response to Barbarossa. The America First Committee publicly argued that the United States should be a model of Christianity by remaining aloof in the conflict between corrupt Old World powers. With the “ruthless forces of dictatorship and aggression” now “clearly lined up on both sides,” Americans should not “take up arms behind the red flag of Stalin.” [[375]](#footnote-375) Charles Lindbergh announced that he preferred an alliance with Germany to one with Russia because of the “cruelty, the Godlessness, and the barbarism that exist in the Soviet Union.”[[376]](#footnote-376) Congressman Hamilton Fish Armstrong (R-New York), Frederick C. Smith (R-Ohio), and Senator Gerald Nye (R-North Dakota) declared aid to Russia incompatible with the Four Freedoms and Catholic interests. Representative Tinkham formally urged the House of Representatives to impose a congressional injunction against lend-lease to Russia. Tinkham blasted Roosevelt and Hull for taking “into their arms” a “bloody aggressor,” a “homicidal destroyer of democracies,” and a “dictatorship of unparalleled cruelty.”[[377]](#footnote-377) The legislator also proposed a congressional investigation of Roosevelt’s Soviet policy since 1933 with special attention to the role of communists in the Roosevelt administration. Representative Harold Knutson (R-Missouri) proposed that Congress apply the Neutrality Acts to Russia, which would block American shipping through Vladivostok.

Despite these flamboyant isolationist charges in late June and July, Tinkham and Knutson’s proposals died quietly in committee, as the *Washington Post* predicted.[[378]](#footnote-378) Leading American newspapers poked fun at their hyperbole, buried their criticisms in inner pages, and lent them no editorial support. [[379]](#footnote-379) The State Department promptly issued licences for the immediate shipment of $1.8 billion of defense materials, which the Soviet government paid for using non-lend-lease financing arranged by the US government. As Roosevelt knew, Russian foreign currency reserves and collateral were exhausted by the initial orders, meaning the US Treasury could provide no further financing without breaking constitutional laws. By mid-September, Roosevelt would have to ask Congress for a second appropriation of lend-lease funds to assist Russia, subjecting the question of US-Soviet cooperation to renewed congressional debate.[[380]](#footnote-380)

**Organized Religious Groups: The Defeat of Anti-Soviet Catholics**

The Roosevelt administration worried less about Protestant than Catholic opinion after Barbarossa. Since Protestant denominations tended to be more loosely-organized and without hierarchical discipline, Protestant discourse was less susceptible to censorship and influence by upper members of the clergy. Protestant opinion was diverse, but generally, Protestant editorialists supported trade in certain defense items based on stringent financing terms. Protestant journals expressed concerns about Russia’s inability to repay loans, and they opposed an excessive drain on US rearmament. The theologian Reinhold Niebuhr was among the proponents of this moderate view. Unlike Catholics, few Protestant leaders supported complete non-cooperation with Russia.[[381]](#footnote-381)

The debate over lend-lease to Russia was more intense among American Catholics. Interventionist Catholics moved quickly after June 22 to endorse Roosevelt’s policy of aid to the Allies. Within a week, fifteen Catholic clergymen and laypeople from the Fight For Freedom Committee declared that, although Communism was the foe of Christian America, Germany posed a more dangerous threat. Catholic Americans, they warned, must not allow German propaganda to “confuse” them into overlooking the truth: Germany had to be stopped even if it necessitated a temporary alliance with Russia.[[382]](#footnote-382) The Pope took no stance on the Russia issue in his highly-anticipated speech on June 29 as the public debate between isolationist and interventionist Catholics escalated.[[383]](#footnote-383)

A week after the Pope’s address, the Florida Bishop Joseph P. Hurley issued the first endorsement by a major Catholic leader in support of lend-lease to Germany’s foes.[[384]](#footnote-384) Hurley’s national radio broadcast of July 6 was intensely controversial, for the well-connected Florida Bishop was reputed to be a personal protégé of the Pope, having served as a diplomat at the Holy See for twelve years. Editorialist Ernest Lindley of The *Washington Post* argued that Hurley broke the Pope’s silence on the question of aid to Russia for he spoke with the consent of the Holy See—an untrue assertion, but this was not known to the public.[[385]](#footnote-385)

In his address, Hurley attacked isolationists as “dyspeptic moralists” and “Nazi sympathizers.” These “dupes” had fallen prey to German propagandists, who were trying to instigate a “holy crusade against Communism” in order to “divide and discourage” Americans. Hurley cited the German “rape of Poland” and repression of the Church as proof that the Nazi Party was the “enemy of God,” and “Enemy No. 1 of America and of the world.” He would later endorse lend-lease to Russia in more explicit terms.[[386]](#footnote-386) Sumner Welles, Roosevelt’s envoy to the Vatican, Myron Taylor, and Vice President Henry Wallace praised Hurley for his interventionist speech.[[387]](#footnote-387)

Catholic reaction to Hurley’s broadcast was mixed. Several prominent Catholic noninterventionists delivered vitriolic rebuttals, including Archbishop Francis J. Beckman of Iowa, Thomas Walsh of the Catholic War Veterans Committee, Reverend John Ellis of Catholic University, and celebrity radio personality Father James Coughlin. [[388]](#footnote-388) Other anti-Soviet Catholics, however, were more restrained. The editors of *America* and *Commonweal* took no clear stand on the question of an alliance with Russia, and the *Catholic World* printed no editorials commenting on Russia until 1944, after which it readopted bitterly anti-Soviet positions.[[389]](#footnote-389) Archbishop Francis Spellman of New York also refrained from public comment, although he privately complained to the Pope that Hurley’s speech was “useless and senseless.” Bishop Edward Mooney of Detroit took a similar position.[[390]](#footnote-390)

According to the historian and Jesuit priest Charles R. Gallagher, Sumner Welles used Bishop Hurley in 1941 as a “black propagandist” for the government. Welles furnished Hurley with state secrets and official rhetoric that Hurley included in his speeches as if that material had originated from the Catholic community.[[391]](#footnote-391) Welles also encouraged the national liberal press to publicize Hurley’s speeches, and editors and journalists at national newspapers tended to cast Hurley’s anti-isolationist attacks in a positive light while framing negatively the rebuttals of anti-communist Catholics like Archbishop Beckman.[[392]](#footnote-392) Gallagher’s assessment of Welles’ manipulation of Hurley requires some qualification. Hurley publicly adopted interventionist views long before his meetings with Welles in late spring 1941. Moreover, Welles did not give Hurley secret information that lent him a decisive edge against his opponents, for his anti-Nazi speeches hardly differed from interventionist arguments circulating at the time. Finally, the liberal press would likely have covered Hurley’s sensational radio address in a positive manner, even without Welles’s encouragement.[[393]](#footnote-393) Welles did not cause Catholic leaders or the liberal media to support the government in summer 1941; interventionist clergymen and liberal editorialists were willing allies.

For two months after Welles’s June speech, the Roosevelt administration avoided broaching religious freedoms in Russia, both in public speeches and in private meetings with Soviet diplomats. Meeting with Stalin in late July, Roosevelt’s personal envoy, Harry Hopkins, secured Stalin’s agreement that Russia and the United States formed natural allies in restoring order to the international community. Eager to appear cooperative, Hopkins avoided mentioning Russia’s poor image in the American Catholic community. July and August were inopportune months to pressure the Soviets directly, for Roosevelt still hoped to persuade Catholic leaders in the United States and Rome to take a more favourable position on aid to Russia, which might make Stalin more amenable to concessions to religious groups. Moreover, there was little goodwill to be expended on religious issues, for tensions ran high between American and Soviet diplomats tasked with sorting out the delicate negotiations for the first deliveries of American material. Eastern European Division Chief Loy Henderson, Assistant Secretary of State Adolf A. Berle, FBI Chief J. Edgar Hoover, and Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles remained deeply suspicions of Soviet military and geopolitical intentions. These fears were exacerbated by Soviet Ambassador Oumansky’s demand that Washington recognize Russia’s annexation of largely Catholic Baltic countries. [[394]](#footnote-394) Ever the “juggler,” Roosevelt avoided broaching the religious problem with Soviet diplomats until mid-September, when Congress was about to consider lend-lease and religious issues could no longer be avoided.[[395]](#footnote-395)

Roosevelt’s meeting with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill off the coast of Newfoundland on August 9 helped to clarify to Roosevelt that he required a more aggressive approach to combat Russia’s poor religious image. The joint declaration of war aims later known as the Atlantic Charter failed to include specific protections for religious freedoms, causing conservative publications such as *Christian Century* and *Time* to criticize Roosevelt for deliberately evading the issue in order to pave the way for an immoral alliance with Russia.[[396]](#footnote-396) Roosevelt’s speechwriters would later explain the omission as a product of Roosevelt and Churchill’s assumption that religious freedoms were implicit in the Charter. The major liberal newspapers minimized the criticisms through delayed and inconspicuous coverage, but the critiques highlighted the fact that the religious problem could not be ignored.[[397]](#footnote-397) On August 25, Bishops Mooney and Ready complained to Welles that they had supported Roosevelt’s policy of aid but now faced “difficulties” within their ranks. The two bishops pleaded for the president to declare that aid to Russia did not mean that America supported Communism.[[398]](#footnote-398) Following Ready’s suggestion would risk offending Soviet officials and undermine efforts to rehabilitate Russia’s public image, so Roosevelt wisely ignored it. Bishop Ready also wanted the administration to persuade Stalin to endorse the Four Freedoms articulated in Roosevelt’s State of the Union address in January 1941. Such an endorsement, Ready imagined, would demonstrate to Americans that a policy of aid to Russia did not mean sacrificing the defence of religious freedoms in the interests of “expediency.”[[399]](#footnote-399) The following month, Roosevelt would take cautious steps toward securing such declarations from the Soviet government.

Before addressing the Soviets directly, Roosevelt approached the Vatican leadership in Rome. He dispatched Myron Taylor on a mission in late August to enlist the Pope’s endorsement of the Atlantic Charter, and to persuade the pontiff to state that the 1937 papal encyclical prohibiting assistance to communism did not apply to lend-lease in the present crisis.[[400]](#footnote-400) Roosevelt instructed Taylor to pacify the Pope’s anti-Soviet attitudes by rationalizing the Bolshevik attack on the Catholic Church in 1918 as provoked by the latter’s anti-Bolshevik activities in the Russian Civil War.[[401]](#footnote-401) Roosevelt claimed that Russian Orthodox churches were now open and attended by “a very large percentage of the population,” eliding that worshippers were predominantly older women and children unlikely to suffer Soviet repression. Roosevelt wrote directly to the Pope that he believed Stalin might be persuaded to tolerate religion as a result of wartime cooperation with the Western democracies. He added that Soviet Russia was not an “aggressor nation” but was “defending its own soil,” posing a lesser threat to religion, the Catholic Church, and humanity as a whole than Germany because it relied on propaganda rather than military force. Isolationist Catholics, by ignoring those “realities,” would “directly assist” Germany’s attempt at global conquest. The Pope’s evasive reply made no mention of Roosevelt’s arguments and the Papal Secretary, Domenico Tardini, rejected them outright. Nonetheless, Taylor’s assistant, Harold Tittmann, reported that Roosevelt’s views produced a “sympathetic reaction” and had a “heartening effect” on the Pope.[[402]](#footnote-402)

The administration also mobilized American bishops to pressure the Vatican. In meetings with the Catholic priest and professor Maurice Sheehy of Catholic University, Bishop Hurley, Bishop Ready, and Archbishop Edward Mooney of Detroit, Welles validated their growing impatience with Pope Pius and his Washington representative. The clerics were eager for the Holy See to clarify the meaning of the 1937 encyclical, and to intervene to stop the embarrassing media war between Hurley and Archbishop Beckman over the question of aid to Russia.[[403]](#footnote-403) Mooney urged Rome to declare that the encyclical did not prohibit American aid, and he reminded the Holy See that it would be embarrassing if the meaning were still unclear at National Catholic Welfare Council’s annual bishops’ meeting in November.[[404]](#footnote-404)

The combined pressure from Roosevelt, Taylor, and Mooney probably persuaded the Vatican to endorse Roosevelt’s desired reinterpretation of the 1937 encyclical. On September 20, Papal Secretary Tardini sent the Apostolic Delegate in Washington a letter stating the Pope would privately recognize a distinction between aid to the Russian people and aid to Communism.[[405]](#footnote-405) After conferring with Sumner Welles, Ready and Mooney disseminated the reinterpretation in a pastoral letter signed by the prominent American isolationist, Bishop John T. McNicholas, while privately confirming to the Bishops that the letter had the approval of the Pope.[[406]](#footnote-406)

Some Catholic clergymen and laypeople rejected Bishop McNicholas’s pastoral letter, but dissenting views were few. Censorship efforts by leading Catholics helped to minimize public criticism. The isolationist Bishop Gerald Shaughnessy obeyed the Apostolic Delegate’s order to refuse to participate in Archbishop Francis J. Beckman’s radio broadcast on the Russia question. Beckman spurned McNicholas’s pastoral letter by suggesting that aiding the Russian army was equivalent to aiding Russia’s Godless communist government. Senator Robert Taft (R-Ohio) pressed McNicholas to return publicly to his non-interventionist politics, but McNicholas refused.[[407]](#footnote-407) At the annual bishops meeting of the National Catholic Welfare Council in November, Mooney and Ready persuaded the bishops to declare unanimously that the Russian people were to be admired and respected, even if this did not apply to their Communist leaders. The Council encouraged Catholic Americans to be deferential to the US government, maintaining “respect and reverence” for the “authority of our civil officials,” which had “its source in God.” [[408]](#footnote-408) Although lend-lease to Russia was already secured in Congress, the declaration indicated to the public that the upper echelon of American Catholics unanimously embraced aid to Russia.

The Roosevelt administration’s public relations victory among leaders in the American clergy in 1941 was far from complete. After meeting with Myron Taylor during his mission to Rome in late August, Papal Secretary Tardini told him that the Holy See did not accept Roosevelt’s assertion that religious freedom existed in the Soviet Union or that war would bring liberalization. Russia would attempt to expand across a weakened Europe after Germany’s defeat, sparking a conflict with Britain and the United States that would pose a greater global threat than German expansion.[[409]](#footnote-409) Many Catholic clergymen and laypeople in the United States continued to denounce Soviet Communism, even if they tolerated temporary aid in the war against Germany.[[410]](#footnote-410) After 1945, Harry Truman and his advisors would begin to exploit this weakness in the Soviet-American alliance by reviving at the highest levels of government arguments that America must actively combat the spread of godless Russian Communism.

**Meanwhile in Moscow: Minimizing Religious Tensions Abroad**

The Roosevelt administration’s efforts to manage the religious problem continued at the Moscow embassy as well. When Roosevelt met with the Soviet ambassador in Washington on September 11, he predicted the “extreme difficulty” of persuading Congress to grant lend-lease to Russia because of the USSR’s “unpopularity...among large groups...who exercise great political power in Congress.” Roosevelt claimed that he personally believed religious freedom existed in Russia—probably a dissimulation given his knowledge of reports to the contrary—and he never asserted that Russia required genuine religious reforms. He told Oumansky that if the Soviet government could generate “some publicity” in America suggesting the existence of religious freedoms, it would have a “very fine educational effect” before the Lend-Lease Bill went before Congress.[[411]](#footnote-411) Unfortunately, Oumansky relayed only the request to “publicize the patriotic position of the [Orthodox] church in the USSR.”[[412]](#footnote-412)

Roosevelt broached the issue again through his personal envoy, Averell Harriman, who made a week-long trip to Moscow in late September to discuss lend-lease. Harriman wrote in his post-trip memorandum that he took “every occasion” to speak to Stalin, Molotov, Oumansky, and other Soviet leaders about the importance of the “religious subject” in American public opinion. He urged them to cultivate the impression through “statements and action” that the Soviet government was “willing to allow freedom of worship not only in letter but in fact.” Soviet officials nodded in response, which Harriman interpreted to mean a “willingness to see that something was done.”[[413]](#footnote-413) When Harriman informed Soviet officials that the Washington press was censuring Roosevelt for his remarks at a press conference on September 29 asserting that religious liberty existed in Russia, Oumansky promised Harriman that a “high Soviet official” would respond publicly in a helpful manner. Oumansky reiterated Roosevelt’s claim that Russia “did allow religious worship,” but he promised to “reduce restrictions” further and disseminate the changes with the “necessary publicity.”[[414]](#footnote-414)

Harriman’s private view was that Soviet leaders would “give lip service” and “make a few gestures” in order to placate Roosevelt, but they would not respect religious freedoms in the way that most Americans understood them. Religion would be kept “under careful control like a fire which can be stamped out at any moment.”[[415]](#footnote-415) Self-styled “realists” such as Harriman took a dim view of the possibility of managing religious differences successfully in the long-term, but they had little choice but to play along with Roosevelt’s public relations program in 1941. They made non-antagonistic requests for propaganda gestures rather than substantial changes to Soviet religious policy, and they did not speak publicly about Russia’s ongoing religious intolerance.

Embassy officials in Moscow also assisted Roosevelt’s program of Soviet-American cooperation by working to neutralize the antagonistic Leopold Braun. Following Barbarossa, Braun refused to allow Western and Soviet officials to record his religious services for propaganda purposes because it would obfuscate decades of religious persecution by Russian authorities. Braun infuriated Ambassador Steinhardt in July 1941 by demanding that he be housed at the American embassy after losing his accommodations with Vichy officials when they broke off relations with the Soviet government.[[416]](#footnote-416) Steinhardt, facing shortages, chaotic preparations to move the embassy to Kuibyshev, and regulations prohibiting private parties from residing at the embassy, brushed off the request. Braun complained to former Ambassador Joseph Davies in Washington, worsening Steinhardt’s frustration with the priest.[[417]](#footnote-417)

In early July, State Department officials asked Bishop Michael Ready and Monsignor Michael O’Shea to persuade Father Braun to leave Moscow because the priest appeared to be “showing signs of a nervous breakdown.”[[418]](#footnote-418) When the clerics did nothing, Sumner Welles intervened. Welles showed Ready Steinhardt’s cable reporting that Braun was undertaking a “defeatist” anti-Soviet “campaign” among diplomats and parishioners in Moscow. The British Ambassador Stafford Cripps, “fearful” of retaliation from Soviet authorities, argued that Braun had “seriously prejudiced” the "position of the Catholic Church" in Moscow, especially because Soviet officials might “otherwise be inclined to relax their restrictions.”[[419]](#footnote-419) Apologetic, Ready and his superiors ordered Braun’s recall, but Braun refused to leave. Writing letters to William Bullitt and Myron Taylor, Braun accused Steinhardt of a “plot” founded on “base falsehoods” and “utterly despicable double-crossing.”[[420]](#footnote-420)

Despite the failure to remove Braun in 1941, the troublesome priest soon abandoned his campaign to publicize Soviet religious persecution, and even proved helpful to official efforts to secure Catholic-Soviet accord in 1942. During a brief meeting with Averell Harriman in Moscow in September, and in a subsequent letter to Myron Taylor, Braun reported that anti-religious rhetoric in the Soviet press had eased, and authorities were prohibiting anti-religious meetings. Based on these new revelations, he recommended that the State Department press Russia for a formal *modus vivendi* with the Church.[[421]](#footnote-421) Aware that he had fallen into disfavour with the US government, Braun apparently wished to appear amenable to Soviet-American cooperation. Armed with Braun’s optimistic reports, Taylor lobbied powerful Catholic leaders such as Edward Mooney to cooperate in pursuing cordial relations between the Catholic Church and Russia, enjoying some success in 1942.[[422]](#footnote-422)

**The “White House Baptism” Controversy: Revising the Historiography**

In late September and early October, Roosevelt held a series of press conferences that infuriated American religious leaders by claiming that religious freedom actually existed in the Soviet Union. The controversy began when the administration released a letter procured by Bill Donovan of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) from the Polish Ambassador stating that the Soviet government was allowing Catholic priests to minister to Polish New Army troops mustering in Russia. The news seemed initially to bolster Roosevelt’s rehabilitation efforts. Then, during a press conference on lend-lease, Roosevelt boldly asserted that freedom of religion actually existed in Russia. [[423]](#footnote-423) After confessing that he did not know the precise wording of the Soviet Constitution, the president insisted that Article 124 protected freedom of conscience, religion, and the right to propagandize against religion. Just as an American citizen could preach for or against religion from atop a soapbox in Washington, he reasoned, the same was true for Soviet citizens in Russia.[[424]](#footnote-424)

Within a few days of Roosevelt’s press conference, conservatives such as the Catholic Congressman Martin Dies and the cleric-pundits Edmund Walsh and Fulton Sheen castigated Roosevelt for falsely asserting that freedom of religion existed in Russia. Conservative newspapers such as the *Chicago Herald Tribune* treated these Catholics’ criticisms sympathetically.[[425]](#footnote-425) The historian Andrew Preston concluded that the public response to FDR’s comment was “universally, indeed ecumenically, hostile,” and Ralph Levering contended that, “If any American except the editor of the *Daily Worker* applauded Roosevelt's comments, no one has been able to discover it.”[[426]](#footnote-426) In fact, the liberal press came to Roosevelt’s defense. Journalist Edward Folliard of the *Washington Post* argued on the front page that even Father Edmund Walsh admitted that FDR may have been subtly pressing Stalin to enforce constitutional guarantees for religious freedom, a tactic that, if successful, would constitute a “historic contribution” backed by “certain [religious] quarters.”[[427]](#footnote-427) Similarly, although the *Washington Post* printed Congressman Hamilton Fish Armstrong’s sarcastic comment that FDR should invite his “palsy walsy” “comrade” Joe Stalin to be baptized in the White House swimming pool, the paper buried the quote at the end of a long article otherwise uncritical of the administration.[[428]](#footnote-428) The only overtly anti-administration piece in the *New York Times* was a paid advertisement by the America First Committee. America First accused Roosevelt of giving Stalin’s religious policy a “clean bill of health” in order to push lend-lease through Congress, and cited an article on Soviet religious repression written by Monsignor Fulton Sheen in 1937. The next day, the Catholic Fight For Freedom Committee ran a rebuttal advertisement denigrating Sheen’s 1937 article as “history,” and the committee cited more recent reports by Bishop Hurley, Bishop James Griffin, and Associate Supreme Court Justice Frank Murphy claiming that religious freedoms were expanding in Russia. The Fight for Freedom Committee accused America First of trying to intimidate Catholics into opposing US aid to Russia that would help the Red Army to resist Hitler.[[429]](#footnote-429)

Prominent liberal editorialists also defended Roosevelt’s Russian policy. For example, Arthur Krock and Walter Lippmann applauded Roosevelt’s optimism that US-Soviet wartime cooperation would induce religious liberalization in Russia, and they reminded readers of reports of greater religious freedoms for soldiers in the Polish army.[[430]](#footnote-430) Following a clandestine meeting with Roosevelt at White House, Bishop Ready withheld a prepared press statement denouncing Roosevelt’s remarks. Instead, Ready publicly praised the president’s “active efforts” to “bring about the termination of religious persecution in Russia,” a mission described as worthy of “wholehearted” support from “all who love freedom.” Edmund Walsh then followed suit by endorsing Roosevelt’s remarks as designed to “win” religious freedoms in Russia, a goal that all “right-thinking Americans” should support.[[431]](#footnote-431) By framing Roosevelt’s rhetoric as motivated by a patriotic belief in America’s providential mission to spread religious freedoms around the globe, the liberal press assisted in the project of damage control, thereby bolstering Roosevelt’s prestige in the process.

Unfortunately for Roosevelt and his supporters, Solomon Lozovsky, assistant director of the Soviet Information Bureau, reignited the controversy. By declaring on October 6 that freedom of religion was protected both in letter and practice in Russia, he implied that there was therefore no need to reform Soviet religious policies. Father Edmund Walsh denounced Lozovsky for “scotching” FDR’s olive branch. Walsh proposed that the United States demand from Russia guarantees of religious freedom as a condition of lend-lease aid.[[432]](#footnote-432) Reverend Fulton Sheen added a long list of other requirements for lend-lease: the Soviet government must “reject atheism,” “restore religious freedom,” release all political prisoners, and close concentration camps to prove it was no longer an “anti-democratic...gangster dictatorship.” Sheen urged Roosevelt to deport American leftists to Russia, and to threaten Soviet officials with exclusion from any postwar settlement if Russia remained “Communistic.”[[433]](#footnote-433)

Despite Walsh and Sheen’s campaign, the liberal press continued to print editorials championing a pragmatic alliance and rejecting impractical conditions for aid.[[434]](#footnote-434) When religious objections did arise, they appeared on the back pages, often without the context that would help a reader to make sense of the objections. For example, in mid-October, the *New York Times* reported a postcard poll by America First and the isolationist Catholic Layman’s Committee for Peace claiming that more than 90% of Catholic priests opposed lend-lease to the Soviet Union. The headline, however, avoided any mention of Russia, stating only that the clergymen opposed sending troops to a “shooting war” in Europe. Interventionists promptly pointed out in *Commonweal* that less than 40% of those polled bothered to return the questionnaire, and on October 21, the editor of *Protestant Digest* publicized a petition signed by 1,000 Protestant leaders endorsing the president's aid policies*.*[[435]](#footnote-435)Religious figures such as the Protestant theologian Reinhold Niebuhr and Catholic Bishop Edward Mooney of Detroit remained quietly pessimistic about Russia’s commitment to religious freedoms. Only relatively low-circulation religious periodicals such as *America* continued to publicly demand that the US withhold assistance to Russia.[[436]](#footnote-436)

After the flurry of controversy in early October, the Roosevelt administration refrained from further public comments on the incendiary topic of religion in Russia. To keep the Catholic Church on his side, Roosevelt dispensed to the Catholic clergy intelligence reports of German plans to de-Christianize Europe. On October 10, the US House of Representatives passed the Second Lend-Lease Bill by a vote of 217 to 162, defeating isolationists’ renewed attempts to block or restrict lend-lease on the basis of religious objections. The US Senate followed suit, and on November 7 Russia became eligible for $1 billion of lend-lease aid with no interest, no collateral in hand, and no payments until five years after the war. In the Declaration by United Nations of January 1, 1942, the document that formalized the Grand Alliance, Roosevelt successfully persuaded Stalin to include religious protection clauses.[[437]](#footnote-437) When Roosevelt declared in his State of the Union speech on January 6 that Allied support for the Four Freedoms had been established in the Atlantic Charter, the mainstream press accepted FDR’s assertion without criticism, despite the controversy in August over the neglect of religious freedoms. The press had either forgotten the criticisms or deemed them unworthy of repetition.[[438]](#footnote-438) Roosevelt had succeeded in securing trade, aid, and formal military alliance with Soviet Russia.

Despite these successes, the Roosevelt administration and the liberal press lost several propaganda opportunities surrounding Russia and religion in 1941. A week before Roosevelt’s controversial press conference, Soviet Ambassador Maisky told the London Chamber of Commerce that the Soviet Constitution “allows freedom of worship,” and the USSR had 8,000 churches and 60,000 priests, some of whom ministered to Polish troops. Churches received free rent and tax exemptions, and priests enjoyed equal rights provided they remained within their “natural sphere” of “human conscience and faith.” The American press paid no attention to Maisky’s speech, however, contributing to the impression that Roosevelt’s similar assertions about religion in Russia were without basis. Roosevelt stored a report of Maisky’s speech in his personal files, suggesting it might have directly inspired his controversial comments at the Washington press conference of September 29.[[439]](#footnote-439)

Roosevelt’s allies in the liberal press and Congress also neglected patriotic statements by the head of the Russian Orthodox Church in Moscow, Metropolitan Sergei Bulgakov. In autumn 1941, Metropolitan Sergei and his Council of Bishops condemned priests who collaborated with German forces in the Baltic region, and they urged Christians to be loyal to the Soviet government.[[440]](#footnote-440) According to a leading propagandist in the Politburo, Sergei’s declaration would “strengthen in the eyes of international opinion” the “influence” of the Orthodox Church in Russia, which would be “politically useful” for the Soviet government. The politburo distributed Sergei’s statements to the foreign press.[[441]](#footnote-441) By the time American newspapers picked up the story in February 1942, however, American debate over lend-lease had passed. US media bureaus in London and Moscow neglected to report the potentially useful news about religion. Poor communication between local government officials and embassy staff also contributed to the lack of coordination in propaganda efforts. This was certainly the case with Lozovsky’s harmful response to Roosevelt’s press statement that religious freedom existed in Russia. Oumansky promised Averell Harriman during his visit in late September that a high Soviet official would respond in a “helpful manner,” but there was no planning about the content or timing. Conversely, American and British bureaucrats cooperated closely to promote the activities of Western clergymen whom they deemed helpful for popularizing administration policies.[[442]](#footnote-442)

**Conclusion**

Some historians argue that religious opposition jeopardized cooperation, trade, and aid to Russia in 1941. William Langer and S. Everett Gleason wrote in their pioneering study on American entry into World War II, “Considering the storm over the religious issue is it is astounding that the administration should have succeeded in picking its way between the shoals of public opinion and the rocks of congressional opposition.”[[443]](#footnote-443) Andrew Preston argues that religious leaders’ private pessimism about Soviet religious policy “did not bode well for the continuation of the Grand Alliance after the war.” To Preston, anti-Sovietism like that of Bishop Edward Mooney “doomed prospects for postwar cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union.”[[444]](#footnote-444) More important than this ongoing private dissent among Catholic leaders, however, was the administration’s success in gaining public support for US-Soviet cooperation from American Catholic leaders and the liberal press, especially before mid-1943. When administration bureaucrats, opinion-shapers in the liberal media, and pro-administration congressmen believed that cooperation with Russia was in America’s self-interest, they set aside religious ideals and worked to marginalize religious opposition. Unfortunately, when Soviet-American tensions increased in 1943—exacerbated by Russia’s likely victory in Europe, the revelation of Katyn massacre, and the disputes over the fate of post-war Poland—Roosevelt’s advisers began to press openly for a tougher line against Russia. The American clergy, the press, and Congress then took their cue by bringing up previous religious arguments to justify a more confrontational line toward Russia. By 1948, toleration among American liberals for religious differences had waned, and hostile religious rhetoric helped to popularize and propel America’s Cold War policies.

Chapter 4

Suspicion Resurfaces: Roosevelt’s Attempt to Secure Religious Support for Post-War Cooperation, 1942-1945

From 1942 to 1943, Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish leaders, the national press, and popular observers generally supported Roosevelt’s cooperative alliance with Russia. In the election of November 1940, Catholics voted for Roosevelt at rates of 57% to 82% depending on income bracket, and those figures dropped only slightly in 1944.[[445]](#footnote-445) Protestant support for the Democrats was even higher.[[446]](#footnote-446) Protestants were also optimistic about long-term cooperation with Russia. Public opinion polls from 1943 showed that 44% to 59% of Protestants believed Russia would willingly cooperate with America after the war, although Catholics were more mistrustful with numbers approximately 10% lower.[[447]](#footnote-447)

Particularly during the first two years of the Grand Alliance, patriotic religious leaders and laypeople were loath to publicly criticize America’s strongest military ally. The American economy was mobilized for war, US forces were embattled against the Japanese in the Pacific, and the Red Army struggled to repel German advances in the East. American self-interest in winning the war initially made the US-Soviet alliance overwhelmingly popular. In February 1942, only 4% of Americans opposed Roosevelt’s policy of extending wartime aid to Russia, down from 14% in October 1941. Although religion was not critical in American support for the US-Russian alliance, Roosevelt and his allies used personal relations with religious leaders, and media propaganda suggesting Soviet religious toleration, to help to consolidate popular support for military and diplomatic cooperation.

Tensions surrounding public support for Soviet Russia mounted after April 1943 when German officials alleged that the Soviets had killed 3,000 Polish officers in the Katyn Forest in 1940.[[448]](#footnote-448) Roosevelt’s closest advisors such as Sumner Welles began to criticize his accommodationist approach to Russia in private meetings with Catholic leaders, and Catholic pundits publicly denounced Russia’s human rights violations in Eastern Europe. Distracted, unhealthy, and increasingly isolated during the last two years of the war, Roosevelt proved unable to staunch the loss of Catholic support or restrain liberal idealists such as the journalist Anne O’Hare McCormick from publicly pressing for the immediate realization of the Four Freedoms in Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe.

Roosevelt’s poor succession planning proved fatal for the permanence of his policies. Neither Protestant nor Catholic leaders supported granting economic and territorial concessions to Russia, permitting a Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, or adopting a non-critical approach to the Russian government’s lack of domestic civil and political liberties. With leaders of the Catholic hierarchy, Protestant pundits, and US officials opposed to Roosevelt’s conciliatory vision, the Truman administration encountered little difficulty implementing more a confrontational approach to Russia after Roosevelt’s death.

**Protestants and the Grand Alliance**

Protestant leaders in America were generally more disorganized and pluralistic in their attitudes to Russia than their Catholic counterparts. As a result, the Protestant movement continued to take a secondary place in Roosevelt’s opinion-shaping agenda. For example, when twelve leading members of the premier American Protestant organization, the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, met in November 1941 to discuss religious freedoms in Russia, some radical evangelical members wanted the Soviet government to print Russian-language bibles and allow Protestant missionaries to conduct mass religious services among soldiers and POWs. Non-evangelical members countered that Protestant missionaries should focus on providing food relief, conducting religious services only when formally requested by POWs and when Soviet authorities granted permission. Proselytizing, these pragmatists argued, might alienate Soviet officials and “endanger” relief work, for Soviet officials had a history spurning foreign missionaries and it was unrealistic to expect their attitudes to change immediately.[[449]](#footnote-449) In early 1942, some Protestant leaders were so anxious to avoid offending Soviet officials that they favoured a request to withdraw from State Department files a letter previously submitted by the Federal Council urging the US government to press Stalin into respecting religious freedoms.[[450]](#footnote-450) There was no consensus among American Protestant leaders.

Popular opinion was also divided within the American Protestant population. Opinion polls in 1944 suggested that Protestants tended to be more optimistic than Catholics that Russia would continue to cooperate with the United States after the war. According to one poll, 30% of Catholics believed Russia would “take over a large part of Europe and try to spread Communism” after the war. Only 17% of Protestants polled held that view.[[451]](#footnote-451) When the Gallup organization asked in summer 1943 if the US should make a defensive military alliance with Russia after the war, Protestant responses were split at 39% for and 37% against.[[452]](#footnote-452) Given the pluralism and ambivalence among American Protestant believers, officials in the FDR administration devoted limited energy to cultivating Protestant leaders, and focused instead on the more anti-Soviet Catholic hierarchy.

The Protestant leaders of the Federal Council of Churches grew more unified and politically active during the last two years of the war. Nonetheless, because the council’s statements remained vague and generally non-antagonistic toward Russia, FDR made little effort to personally contact the council leaders. One such leader was John Foster Dulles, an established East Coast lawyer and devout Presbyterian. Dulles seized control of the ecumenical Protestant umbrella group in 1942 by shifting the group’s role toward political activism, and by chairing the council’s Commission on a Just and Durable Peace. In 1943 Dulles published two tracts that demanded universal religious freedoms and political self-determination across the globe.[[453]](#footnote-453) Because Dulles’s manifestos called for US support of a post-war international organization and did not explicitly criticize the Soviet government, Roosevelt’s advisers publicly embraced Dulles’s reformist manifestos calling for universal freedoms. Yet, Roosevelt’s advisors urged him to pay greater personal attention to the increasingly outspoken Federal Council of Churches, which might become dissatisfied if its ideals for post-war religious and political liberties were not realized in Eastern Europe and Russia after the war. Roosevelt showed little interest.[[454]](#footnote-454) Although anti-communist Protestants such as Dulles supported Roosevelt’s tolerant approach to Russia prior to 1945, their support for the Grand Alliance was fragile and did not long outlast Germany’s defeat.[[455]](#footnote-455)

**Envoys and Evasions: Roosevelt Rehabilitates Russia’s Religious Image, January 1942 to April 1943**

After America’s entry into the war, Roosevelt and his closest advisors largely succeeded in rehabilitating Russia’s religious image in the American national press. In early 1942, US officials avoided public appearances at religious events where speakers adopted an anti-Soviet stance, and Vice President Henry Wallace worked assiduously to frame Russia as a model liberal member of the Grand Alliance.[[456]](#footnote-456) In a campaign to generate popular support for the Grand Alliance, Henry Wallace delivered public speeches championing Russia’s political and religious policies, and he appeared at a string of Protestant and Jewish events. Several of his speeches were crafted with the assistance of Welles.[[457]](#footnote-457)

Wallace’s speeches received uncritical attention in the national media in 1942 and 1943, despite his wild exaggerations and inaccuracies.[[458]](#footnote-458) For example, in May 1942 Wallace publicly praised the Allies as providential victors fighting on the side of the “Lord” to defeat Hitler, whom he likened to “Satan.” Wallace applauded post-1917 Russia as a burgeoning bastion of God-given individual freedoms akin to the United States after 1776. Having “groped its way to the light,” Russia had joined other liberal nations to combat the Nazi menace and realize the Four Freedoms across the globe.[[459]](#footnote-459) “God helping us, we’ll be...fighting beside [Russia] for the freedom of the world,” Wallace predicted.[[460]](#footnote-460) Wallace’s rhetoric effaced the Soviet government’s previous and continued violations of political and religious freedoms, and he made no specific demands for post-war reforms. In a well-publicized address to the Conference of Christian Bases of World Order in March 1943, Wallace warned that the US must not provoke a Third World War by “abandoning” or “double-crossing” Russia. Instead, Americans had to be “tolerant and even helpful” as Russia resolved domestic problems in its “own way.”[[461]](#footnote-461)

Wallace’s efforts to rehabilitate Russia’s public image arrived at a key moment in US-Soviet relations. Popular support for aid to Russia climbed in the months after Pearl Harbor, but opinion polls from 1942 showed that popular confidence that Russia would cooperate with the US after the war slipped from a high of over 50% in January to under 40% in early fall.[[462]](#footnote-462) Beginning in July, morale suffered as American forces experienced military setbacks in the Pacific, Anglo-American convoys were sunk en route to the Russian port of Murmansk, and Stalin criticized Churchill for inadequate Anglo-American aid and the failure of Britain and the United States to open a second military front in Europe. Wallace’s religion-inflected propaganda helped to reinvigorate popular sympathy for Russia and confidence in the long-term viability of the US-Soviet Alliance.[[463]](#footnote-463)

Perhaps the savviest advocate of the Soviet Union was the defeated 1940 Republican presidential candidate, Wendell Willkie, who travelled to Moscow in September 1942 at FDR’s behest to confer with Stalin and his advisors.[[464]](#footnote-464) Willkie deliberately avoided the US embassy staff in order to demonstrate to Soviet officials that he did not share the career officials’ hostility to the regime.[[465]](#footnote-465) During a dinner in Willkie’s honour, he explained to Stalin’s Assistant Foreign Minister Andrey Vyshinsky that the goal of his trip was to encourage a more “favourable” impression of Russia in America. Particularly, Willkie wished to contradict “stories” spread by “enemies” in the American press which alleged that freedom of religion did not exist in the USSR. Willkie assured Vyshinsky that he shared the Soviet government’s hostility to “priest craft,” and if introduced to “churchmen” and everyday people, he would “remain silent” about unflattering observations while reporting only the “good things.” When Vyshinsky doubted that Willkie would be believed in America, Willkie boasted that 23 million Americans voted for him in the 1940 election because they believed he told the “whole truth” and “could be trusted.”[[466]](#footnote-466)

Willkie’s media campaign helped to improve popular American perceptions of Russia in autumn 1942. As the Red Army saved Stalingrad and the British drove back Rommel in northern Africa, Willkie told Americans of Russia’s excellent education system, industrial production, Stalin’s humility and good-naturedness, and Russia’s “magnificent” contribution to the war. Americans’ belief in the possibility of postwar cooperation rapidly jumped by nearly 10%, reaching levels similar to those of January 1942. Willkie’s best-selling 1943 memoir, *One World,* chronicled his favourable personal impressions of Russia, and Willkie’s writings continued to inspire advocates of Soviet-American cooperation until as late as 1950.[[467]](#footnote-467) Willkie’s pro-Soviet stance alienated many of his supporters in the Republican Party leadership, forcing him to drop out of the 1944 presidential race. Willkie died of a heart attack a year later. President Roosevelt unfortunately never found a Republican ally equally capable of popularizing pragmatic cooperation with Russia.[[468]](#footnote-468)

Another of Roosevelt’s allies in promoting the post-war alliance was the former US Ambassador to Russia Joseph Davies. In speeches and press interviews, Davies insisted that Russia was “definitely not” anti-religious. Davies claimed that Soviet officials had refrained from intimidating worshippers while he was ambassador to Moscow, and he praised the regime for granting requests for privileges for the American priest Father Leopold Braun. Davies excused the Bolsheviks’ persecution of the Orthodox Church during the Revolution by pointing out that the Church had collaborated with the oppressive Tsarist regime. Davies, a devout Methodist who disagreed with communism, praised Russian officials for pursuing positive relations with the United States despite the incompatibility of communism and capitalism. Such toleration of ideological differences was the “essence” of peaceful relations, he argued. Davies also vigorously rejected the argument that atheistic Russian officials were untrustworthy. According to Davies, Russia’s war effort against the Nazi menace contributed to the defense of Christianity and warranted Stalin’s presence at the peace table.[[469]](#footnote-469)

The American press reported Davies’s opinions about Russia favourably in 1942 and early 1943.[[470]](#footnote-470) In a special issue of Henry Luce’s *Life* magazine thatshowcased the Soviet Union, Davies contributed an article wherein he attributed the 1936 Russian constitution’s nominal religious freedoms to Stalin’s personal intervention, and *Life* confirmed that the 1936 constitution had “choked” the Russian anti-religious campaign.[[471]](#footnote-471) Finally, Davies reiterated Wallace’s assertion that Stalin did not intend to foment communist revolution worldwide or seek territorial expansion. According to Davies, the primary threat to post-war peace was America’s potential betrayal of Russia by withholding reconstruction aid.[[472]](#footnote-472)

**April 1943-August 1944: Averell Harriman and Roosevelt’s Failed Attempt to “Clean House” in Moscow**

Spring 1943 marked a turning point in US-Soviet relations and the origins of the Cold War because US embassy officials in Moscow began to insist with increasing urgency that further economic aid to Russia, whether for wartime military operations or post-war reconstruction, must be based on Soviet concessions and conformity to American wishes, rather than FDR’s policy of lend-lease aid with “no questions asked.” In the view of officials such as Ambassador William Standley, the Red Army’s victory at Stalingrad made Russia less dependent on US assistance for its military survival. Thus, a swift introduction of a firmer policy involving tough bargaining and exchange would help to ensure that the Soviet Union would not begin to demand unilateral concessions in the post-war world.[[473]](#footnote-473)

Although Roosevelt intended to use promises of post-war reconstruction aid as a tool to persuade Stalin to cooperate with the US after the war, he rejected the State Department’s advice to make wartime lend-lease aid contingent on Soviet reciprocity. Roosevelt feared alienating Stalin when Russia was still needed in the war against Japan, and he had already broken his promise to Molotov to open a second front in Europe in 1942. FDR also hoped to persuade Stalin to commit to a post-war United Nations organization. Losing Stalin’s trust and goodwill through tough wartime bargaining risked derailing those policies.

Precise post-war planning remained impossible in 1943 while it was still unclear how occupation zones would be distributed. Nonetheless, Roosevelt planned to secure Stalin’s cooperation through future support for post-war territorial and political concessions granting Russia a zone of security in Eastern Europe, continued unconditional lend-lease aid during the war, and a future loan for post-war reconstruction in Russia.[[474]](#footnote-474) Thus, FDR sent his personal friend Averill Harriman to replace Standley as ambassador to Russia in fall 1943 with the goal of assuring Stalin that the Roosevelt administration prioritized Germany’s defeat above all else, regarded Russian officials as “equals,” and was interested in supporting post-war reconstruction in the USSR.[[475]](#footnote-475) FDR accepted the inevitable fact that the Red Army would march toward Germany and Stalin would dominate liberated states in Eastern Europe in order to ensure “friendly governments.” Roosevelt hoped only that the USSR would provide the international media with the impression that political elections in Eastern Europe were free and democratic. As Roosevelt explained to Stalin in March 1945, the “genuine popular support” of the American public was necessary for the US government to carry out “any… policy, foreign or domestic.”[[476]](#footnote-476) No matter how frustrated Roosevelt became with Stalin’s thinly-disguised domination of the Polish government, his uncooperativeness in arranging Germany’s surrender, and disagreements about voting powers in the United Nations, FDR prioritized the defeat of Germany and Japan and the continuation of the Grand Alliance, and he refused to risk a serious break with Stalin.[[477]](#footnote-477)

Unfortunately for FDR, the US congress and the press had become particularly difficult to influence by early 1943. In mid-April, German officials announced the discovery of the remains of 3,000 Polish officers allegedly shot by the NKVD in the Katyn Forest in 1940, which provoked outrage among Catholic and Polish leaders. Stalin denied the charges, broke off relations with the Polish government in exile, and continued his policy of deporting citizens in occupied Poland to the Russian interior. The US Congress divided between pragmatic Democrats who defended the US’s strongest military ally, and anti-communists who were deeply suspicious of Soviet Russia and its post-war intentions. Prominent proponents of anti-Soviet “new isolationism” included anti-New Deal Senators Burton K. Wheeler (D-Montana), Gerald Nye (R-South Dakota,) and Albert Chandler (D-Kentucky).[[478]](#footnote-478) Henry Luce, the owner of *Life* and *Time* magazines, expressed this new consensus of dissatisfaction with FDR’s policies: friendly overtures by US officials would merely “offend” Americans’ “self-respect” while making the Russians “doubt the value of an alliance with nincompoops.”[[479]](#footnote-479)

Hostility to Roosevelt’s pragmatic Russia policy also manifested in growing public criticism of Henry Wallace and Joseph Davies’s religious propaganda. The celebrity radio preacher Norman Vincent Peale berated Wallace in 1943 for comparing the Russian revolution to the work of Christ.[[480]](#footnote-480) Joseph Davies’s April 1943 film, “Mission to Moscow,” also generated backlash from religious commentators. Based on Davies’s best-selling 1942 memoir, the film evaded Russia’s history of religious repression, validated the show trials as justified prosecutions of German and Japanese agents, and rationalized the Soviet invasion of Eastern Europe in 1939 as the reacquisition of historic Russian territory for defensive purposes. In a cameo monologue during the film’s opening sequence, Davies declared that he was a “basic” Christian like his “sainted mother” and believed the American system to be the “best” in the world. Nonetheless, he believed that few leaders had been “so misrepresented and misunderstood” as those of the USSR. Their “integrity and honesty” and desire for lasting peace had earned his “great respect.”[[481]](#footnote-481) President Roosevelt personally ordered the film’s production in 1942, and he met regularly with Davies to discuss its progress.[[482]](#footnote-482) The Office of War Information also approved the screenplay because it would project the “United Nations theme,” encourage “understanding” of Soviet foreign policy, and help “dispel the fears” of many Americans.[[483]](#footnote-483)

Public reception of *Mission to Moscow* varied greatly. The *New York Times* criticBosley Crowther praised the producers for making a film that “sharply and frankly” pressed for a greater “understanding of Russia's point of view.” The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences nominated the film for an Oscar for best art direction.[[484]](#footnote-484) Conversely, religious critics, conservative periodicals, and some anti-Stalinist leftists expressed fury. Philip Hartung of the Catholic periodical *Commonweal* condemned the film as "obviously one-sided...propaganda” that omitted religious persecution in the Soviet Union.[[485]](#footnote-485) *Life* magazine lambasted *Mission to Moscow* as a blatant attempt by the Roosevelt administration to “sell” American-Soviet cooperation to American citizens by whitewashing Soviet Russia. According to the editors, the film misrepresented the “complicated history of international diplomacy” by reducing it to a clash between the “lily white virtue” of Roosevelt and his Soviet allies, and the “blackest villainy” of Russian saboteurs, US Congressmen, and unfriendly Western diplomats.[[486]](#footnote-486) In the House of Representatives, Marion T. Bennett (R-Missouri) fretted that Hollywood had "lost its head” and “gone completely overboard” in its desperate desire to paint a favourable picture of Russia. Senator Robert Taft (R-Ohio) demanded a Senate investigation into Hollywood propaganda and the Roosevelt administration's role in it.[[487]](#footnote-487) Although *Mission to Moscow’s* precise impact on popular views is impossible to measure, the editorial and political backlash against the film among conservatives indicated growing opposition to Roosevelt’s conciliatory approach to Russia in mid-1943.[[488]](#footnote-488)

**The US State Department: A Hotbed of Religious Suspicion, 1943-1945**

In the summer of 1943, several of Roosevelt’s most senior officials, including Cordell Hull, Sumner Welles, and Ambassador William Standley, began to privately and sometimes publicly oppose FDR’s program to appease the Soviet Union. These officials continued to support wartime aid to Russia, but with the Soviet army no longer in urgent peril, they urged FDR to adopt a *quid pro quo* approach to teach Soviet officials that long-term assistance would be contingent upon reciprocity and greater conformity to American wishes.[[489]](#footnote-489) Standley led the attack in March 1943 when he publicly accused Stalin of hiding the extent of American aid from the Russian people. Rumours surfaced in the American press that Standley’s remarks might cause the House of Representative to restrict Lend-Lease aid to Russia.[[490]](#footnote-490)

To check growing criticism of his Soviet policy, President Roosevelt turned to personal diplomacy. He replaced Standley with his trusted advisor and long-time supporter of US-Soviet cooperation, Averell Harriman. Roosevelt personally met and corresponded with Stalin and Churchill, and he dispatched like-minded emissaries from outside the State Department such as Wendell Willkie and Joseph Davies to visit Allied capitals. As Roosevelt wrote to Churchill in March 1942, “I can personally handle Stalin better than either your Foreign Office or my State Department….Stalin hates the guts of all your top people...he likes me better, and I hope he will continue to do so.”[[491]](#footnote-491)

Roosevelt’s cousin and confidante Margaret Suckley recalled that Roosevelt held guarded but realistic hopes for post-war accord with Stalin through compromise and conciliation. Suckley stated that Roosevelt told her shortly before his death, “If I did something Stalin did not approve of, he’d stab me in the back.”[[492]](#footnote-492) Roosevelt hoped to use financial and political incentives to persuade Stalin to join the war against Japan, limit the western reach of his sphere of influence, and hold plebiscites in Eastern Europe that would create an impression of self-determination in order to American public opinion. There is some evidence that Stalin reciprocated Roosevelt’s hopes for post-war accord through personal diplomacy. He reportedly stated after the Yalta Conference in February 1945, “Let’s hope nothing happens to [Roosevelt]. We shall never again do business with anyone like him.”[[493]](#footnote-493)

In the weeks after Standley’s embarrassing public attack on Stalin in March 1943, Roosevelt sent Joseph Davies to Moscow in order to signal to Stalin his personal commitment to long-term cooperation. Davies carried to Stalin a letter from Roosevelt requesting a face-to-face meeting, resulting in the Tehran conference of November 1943. Davies also brought a copy of his film “Mission to Moscow” in order to demonstrate to Stalin that American opinion was friendly to Russia.[[494]](#footnote-494) Davies avoided antagonizing officials about religious freedoms in Russian-controlled territory, for religious tensions were a particularly sensitive topic in spring 1943 due to Catholic leaders’ outrage at the discovery of the Katyn massacre, Russia’s break with the Polish government in exile, and Russia’s territorial claims to Catholic-dominated Poland.[[495]](#footnote-495)

Washington officials held divergent expectations for Davies’s trip, highlighting the growing gulf between Roosevelt’s accommodating attitude to Russia and many State Department officials’ growing desire for a firmer policy line. Secretary of State Cordell Hull expected Davies to deliver a brow-beating to Stalin rather than an olive branch, for he told Churchill that “selected persons” would “talk Mr. Stalin out of his shell,” inducing Stalin to cease his “aloofness, secretiveness, and suspiciousness” and adopt “practical” policies in Europe.[[496]](#footnote-496) Welles hoped that Davies’s mission would empower frustrated US officials in Moscow to “deal firmly” with the dictator.[[497]](#footnote-497)

Officials at the US embassy in Moscow were openly hostile to Davies’s friendly overtures toward Stalin. Standley, who was jealous that Davies had usurped his diplomatic role, reported to Hull and FDR that Davies’s trip to Moscow was a dismal failure. Standley claimed that Davies had peppered Stalin with obsequious toasts during a private dinner. During a private screening of “Mission to Moscow,” Molotov, Litvinov, and other Soviet officials showed “rather glum curiosity,” and Stalin was heard to “grunt once or twice.” Standley predicted that Stalin would refuse to distribute the film in Russia, for Davies’s “flattery of everything Russian” and the film’s “ill-advised” attention to “unpleasant events” such as the purge trials would fail to “contribute to better understanding.”[[498]](#footnote-498) By contrast, Davies reported to leading executives at Warner Brothers that Stalin and Molotov had been “generous in their praise” of the film, and Soviet officials portrayed in the film were “enthusiastic” in their approval. Davies informed Welles and Roosevelt that his trip “could not have been more satisfactory” because it demonstrated that Soviet officials felt “kindly” toward Washington.[[499]](#footnote-499)

Contrary to Standley’s dark predictions, Stalin approved “Mission to Moscow”for theatrical release in Russia, making it the first American film to be widely released in Russia in over a decade. Soviet censors did not delete material from the film, preserving Davies’s monologue wherein he declared his opposition to communism and extolled the American government as superior for the “common man.”[[500]](#footnote-500) Davies’s disagreement with the State Department and US embassy about the goals and outcome of the trip reflected a bifurcation within the Roosevelt administration over aims and strategies for dealing with Soviet Russia.

Although Roosevelt and Hopkins worried about the corrosive impact of hostile attitudes among US officials at the Moscow embassy in 1943, they refused advice from their chief military attaché to remove dissenting officials. Those officials’ language skills, professional diplomatic training, and experience made them indispensable for carrying out routine embassy tasks.[[501]](#footnote-501) Instead, FDR continued to subordinate junior embassy officials to hand-picked ambassadors whom FDR believed would support cooperation with Russia. For example, when Roosevelt replaced Standley with W. Averell Harriman in October 1943, he permitted George Kennan to serve as Harriman’s advisor on civilian affairs. Harriman assured Roosevelt that he could override any “unsound” advice and “bring out the facts.”[[502]](#footnote-502) Unfortunately, Roosevelt overestimated Harriman’s ability to sideline Kennan. As John Lewis Gaddis has observed, Kennan “used the opportunity to mount a sustained assault on Roosevelt’s approach to the Soviet Union.”[[503]](#footnote-503) Rather than assembling reports and propaganda materials that suggested that religious toleration was increasing in Russia, Kennan barraged Washington with cables arguing that Soviet religious reforms were duplicitous and designed to facilitate Soviet domination in Eastern Europe. Few of Kennan’s reports offered balanced accounts explaining that the Russian Orthodox Church willingly cooperated with Stalin’s regime and promoted the war effort because Stalin rewarded the church with greater freedoms and privileges. Kennan also failed to explain that incidents of anti-Catholic repression in communist-dominated states such as Yugoslavia and the Ukraine were often the result of local residents’ anger at Catholic leaders’ wartime support for fascist forces. Nowhere did Kennan suggest that US officials could improve Russia’s religious image in the Western press in order to encourage popular support for the Grand Alliance and post-war cooperation.[[504]](#footnote-504)

Earlier, Kennan penned a memorandum in late 1942 illustrating the State Department’s hostile attitude toward Stalin’s religious policies. Myron Taylor requested the memo from Kennan because he hoped to use the experienced diplomat’s insights as the basis for a declaration of religious freedoms for Stalin’s signature. Taylor hoped that such a declaration would reduce tensions between the Soviet regime and Catholic Church.[[505]](#footnote-505)

Kennan reiterated the criticisms that he first expressed in the 1920s and 1930s as a member of Robert Kelley’s anti-Soviet Eastern European Division to assert that Soviet religious repression undermined the possibility of post-war peace with Russia.[[506]](#footnote-506) According to Kennan, constitutional protections for religious freedoms were “ineffective” because the Soviet regime had “smashed” the independent power of the Orthodox Church in the 1920s. Moreover, the regime barred worshippers from membership in communist organizations, limited the careers of religious worshippers, and restricted religious education. In Kennan’s view, wartime Nazi propagandists had exploited Eastern Europeans’ “hunger” for religious freedoms by re-opening churches and importing priests to territory seized from Russia, thereby reducing popular resistance to German occupation and strengthening the Axis war effort.

Kennan also identified religious differences as “one of the greatest barriers to a sound future peace.” Unless Soviet leaders could be “induced” to “tolerate religion” and accept the “cooperation” of foreign religious groups, a “psychological gulf” would divide Russia and the West after the war. Kennan expected Soviet leaders to remain “suspicious” and “fearful” of foreign religious influence, for their innate, racially-rooted xenophobia had been compounded by two decades of “communist education” and “intellectual isolation.” In Kennan’s dark assessment, gradual convergence was impossible because Soviet Russia would not liberalize its religious policies as a product of normalized relations with the West.[[507]](#footnote-507)

Kennan was not the only State Department official to disregard Roosevelt’s program of rehabilitating Russia’s religious image. In 1941, Loy Henderson of the Eastern European Division began to privately assist the lawyer Ralph M. Arkush in his decades-long legal battle against Reverend John Kedrovsky, a Russian-born Orthodox priest who had persuaded the Supreme Court of New York to grant him legal custody of the St. Nicholas Orthodox Cathedral in New York City in 1925. Arkush represented leaders of the schismatic American Orthodox Church, which had controlled the cathedral prior to Kedrovsky’s seizure. After winning the Supreme Court case, Kedrovsky had evicted Arkush’s clients and assumed leadership of the congregation. Arkush and his clients alleged that Kedrovsky was a communist agent of the pro-Soviet “Living Church,” a group of Moscow Orthodox priests who had attempted to topple the anti-Soviet Orthodox patriarchate in the early 1920s.

Henderson initially rejected Arkush’s plea to warn Soviet envoys that the presence of subversive Russian clerics in the United States was “prejudicial” to wartime cooperation because it jeopardized congressional support for lend-lease.[[508]](#footnote-508) Yet, Henderson’s interest in the case quickly grew.[[509]](#footnote-509) Henderson dispatched J. Edgar Hoover of the FBI to investigate Kedrovsky, and he began to meet regularly with Arkush.[[510]](#footnote-510) Henderson brought the case to the attention of Charles Bohlen, the newly-appointed Chief of the Eastern European Division, and although the Department could not be openly involved in the sectarian dispute, Henderson and Bohlen privately encouraged Arkush and his clients’ efforts to weaken Kedrovsky’s influence over Orthodox worshippers in New York.[[511]](#footnote-511) To Henderson, Kedrovsky was a dangerous communist subversive who preyed upon Orthodox religious believers in order to spread anti-capitalist ideology.

Bohlen also considered Stalin’s religious policy ominous for the future of Soviet-American relations. In 1944 Bohlen warned Cordell Hull that the Russian government would “unquestionably” continue to use the Russian Orthodox Church as a “political instrument” for aggrandizing Soviet power. He predicted that Stalin and his puppet governments in Eastern Europe would repress non-Orthodox groups in order to strengthen the influence of the Moscow Orthodox patriarchate, which was subservient to Stalin’s will. Bohlen scoffed at Stalin’s creation of an official Soviet liaison to manage relations with non-Orthodox religious groups as a sham designed to reassure Catholics in Eastern Europe that the regime would tolerate Catholic churches in Soviet-controlled territory.[[512]](#footnote-512)

Top officials in the Eastern European Division also worried about Soviet subversion of American Baptist and Jewish groups. In the summer of 1943, Loy Henderson and Barlett Gordon of the Eastern European Division investigated charges by conservative Baptist leaders that the pro-Soviet evangelical priest K.J. Jaroshevich was defrauding American citizens by soliciting donations for phony philanthropic missions in Poland and Eastern Europe. The Office of Censorship monitored Jaroshevich’s mail, confirming that he had “propagandized” American Baptists by falsely claiming that freedom of religion existed in Russia.[[513]](#footnote-513)

The FBI Chief J. Edgar Hoover also launched an investigation of a New York-based Jewish fundraising group that supported Soviet Russia’s Birobidjan settlement in Siberia. Stalin had established the far-flung autonomous Jewish settlement in the 1930s to deflect charges of anti-Semitism.[[514]](#footnote-514) He also used it to isolate and monitor Jewish citizens whom he regarded as untrustworthy.[[515]](#footnote-515) Despite a brief flurry of criticism in 1937-1938 when the settlement’s inhabitants became targets of the Soviet purges, the American liberal press hailed the Jewish colony as evidence of Soviet religious toleration. Public endorsements were expressed by Nobel Prize-winning physicist Albert Einstein, Senate majority leader Alben Barkley (D-Kentucky), Senator Claude Pepper (D-Florida), Senator Elbert D. Thomas (D-Utah), and Senator Warren G. Magnuson (D-Washington).[[516]](#footnote-516) Despite Birobidjan’s positive implications for popularizing Roosevelt’s policy of cooperation with Russia, the FBI and State Department continued to consider American supporters of the Birobidjan settlement potential threats to US security.[[517]](#footnote-517)

Whether State Department officials were justified in their suspicion of the expansionist aims of Soviet religious policies remains unclear. Some of the research conducted in Russian archives after the collapse of the USSR in 1991 indicates that the Soviet government sought to consolidate territorial gains in Eastern Europe after the war by co-opting the Orthodox Church and promoting the perception that the Soviet government engaged in religious toleration. Despite such propaganda efforts, restrictions on religious worship continued into the post-war period, although the Soviet government relaxed anti-religious propaganda and restrictions on freedom of worship for Orthodox believers during the war.[[518]](#footnote-518) Yet, questions persist about the degree to which Soviet leaders orchestrated popular anti-Catholic repression and compelled Orthodox leaders to support the regime. The historian Daniel Peris recently demonstrated that Russian citizens’ wartime efforts to disempower rural religious leaders were often motivated by narrow political and power disputes at a local level, rather than Soviet dictates.[[519]](#footnote-519) Despite the complex nature of religious freedom in Russia during the 1930s and 1940s, US officials regularly submitted unbalanced, damning reports based on unverified rumours, Soviet press coverage, and decontextualized first-person reports from anti-Soviet émigrés and refugees.[[520]](#footnote-520) Most US officials in Moscow remained convinced that the regime was using false propaganda to further an aggressive campaign of world conquest, and they refused to assist Roosevelt’s program of polishing Russia’s religious image to build Western support for US-Soviet cooperation.

Roosevelt’s small circle of bureaucratic supporters also declined sharply in 1943, undermining his efforts to promote wartime religious accord. Harry Hopkins and the former Ambassador to Russia Joseph Davies remained staunch supporters, but Ambassador Averell Harriman lost faith in Roosevelt’s conciliatory approach in 1944 and failed to improve embassy-Kremlin relations. Roosevelt removed Assistant Secretary of State Sumner Welles in autumn 1943 when Cordell Hull threatened to expose Welles’s homosexual tendencies, and so FDR had to dispatch Hull to the Moscow Conference in October 1943 despite Hull’s poorer rapport with Soviet officials.[[521]](#footnote-521) When Hull met with the Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov for the first time at the Moscow Conference, Hull noted that “difficulties” persisted in the US press and Congress surrounding religious freedoms in the Soviet Union. Hull claimed that “agitators” and “trouble-making” journalists in the United States had put the “wrong interpretation” on religious issues, but a better “exchange of information” would improve religious opinion.[[522]](#footnote-522) In response, Molotov dismissed the anti-Soviet American press as “not very important” because Roosevelt could correct popular views through direct “guidance.” Molotov’s disinterest in managing the American press and his overestimation of FDR’s power over popular opinion marked a step backward from Soviet officials’ warm assurances to Averill Harriman in 1941 that “something would be done” to improve Russia’s religious image.[[523]](#footnote-523) Roosevelt had originally chosen Welles to represent him at the Moscow Conference.[[524]](#footnote-524)

More effective at managing the religious problem—at least for a time—was Ambassador Standley’s replacement in Moscow, Averell Harriman. Roosevelt selected Harriman in 1943 in the hopes that he would bring even-handed, self-directed leadership to the Moscow embassy. As a personal friend of Roosevelt, corporate executive, competent Lend-Lease administrator, and owner one of the first American mining corporations to operate in Russia during the 1920s, the hope was that Harriman would be able to negotiate effectively with Soviet officials while disciplining embassy staff who opposed Roosevelt’s agenda of unconditional lend-lease aid and gaining Soviet cooperation through compromise and conciliation.

In his reports from Moscow in October 1943, Harriman praised the Soviet government’s latest religious policies, which included restoration of the Moscow Patriarchate and Holy Synod, promotion of a new theological seminary in Moscow, resurrection of official Church publications, provision of candles and supplies to churches, and plans to reconstruct churches in liberated areas. Representatives of the Russian League of Militant Atheists assured US officials that their future anti-religious activity would remain “scholarly” and “restrained.”[[525]](#footnote-525) Roosevelt was apparently unaware that Harriman did not share his hope that Russia would gradually adopt American political and cultural norms as a product of long-term cooperation with the West. Once immersed in the anti-Soviet atmosphere of the US embassy in Moscow, Harriman soon diverged from Roosevelt’s accommodationist approach and came to favour Kennan’s more pessimistic and confrontational policy line.[[526]](#footnote-526) By early 1945, positive embassy reports on growing religious toleration in Russia had ceased and were replaced by Kennan’s ominous reports of renewed religious repression in Soviet-controlled territory.

Roosevelt’s long-time friend Myron Taylor was initially another useful diplomatic ally for managing religious tensions. While stationed in Rome as Roosevelt’s representative to the Vatican in October 1942, Taylor used his well-honed skills as an American labor dispute mediator to reassure the anti-communist Catholic Prime Minister of Portugal Antonio Salazar that popular fears in Western Europe surrounding the spread of Soviet-led communism were greatly “exaggerated.” Taylor argued that an “orderly system of control” and post-war relief measures would prevent the rise of Soviet-inspired communist movements in the region. Taylor reminded Salazar that Averell Harriman had persuaded Stalin to respect religious freedoms during the lend-lease negotiations of 1941, which had led Stalin to formally pledge in the Joint Declaration of Allied Unity of January 1942 his commitment to universal religious freedoms.[[527]](#footnote-527) Taylor assured Salazar that Soviet Russia would be a “useful and beneficial” partner in the reconstruction of Europe, even if Russia had been a “wayward child” in the past.[[528]](#footnote-528)

Like Harriman, however, Taylor was inwardly pessimistic about Russia’s ideological compatibility with the West, and he grew openly disillusioned in 1943 when his efforts to secure Soviet-Vatican rapprochement failed due to revelations of the Katyn Massacre and Soviet domination of Poland. Taylor adopted such bitterly confrontational attitudes towards the Russians in late 1945 that President Harry Truman, who was still undecided about prospects for post-war accord, contemplated recalling Taylor from the Vatican in order to preserve what remained of US-Soviet goodwill.[[529]](#footnote-529)

Despite the US government’s bifurcated and inconsistent approach to minimizing religious tensions during the war, the Soviet government independently generated propaganda suggesting that religious toleration was improving in the USSR, and it played well in the American liberal press. For example, the *New York Times* heralded the lifting of evening curfews in order to allow candlelit Easter services in 1942.[[530]](#footnote-530) It also applauded Stalin when he met with Metropolitans Sergei, Alexei, and Nikolai of the Orthodox Church in September 1943, after which Stalin permitted the Orthodox leaders to formally elect a new patriarch, revive the defunct Synod of Bishops, and reopen several parishes and seminaries in Russia.[[531]](#footnote-531) Patriarch Sergei returned these favors in September 1943 by imploring Christians everywhere to support Stalin’s fight against Hitler, and beseeching Allied leaders to provide “real” military support to the Red Army by opening a second front in Europe immediately.[[532]](#footnote-532) Stalin bestowed a medal upon Metropolitan Alexei Simansky for his fundraising efforts during the siege of Leningrad and for the Orthodox Church’s sponsorship of plane and tank forces for the Red Army, and the newly-elected Patriarch Alexei captured headlines in 1944 when he declared Stalin a “wise leader” who was “loved” by the Orthodox clergy and chosen “by the Lord” to lead Russia. Major newspapers such as the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* celebrated this news without criticism during the war, omitting the important context surrounding Russia’s history of religious repression and cooptation of the Orthodox Church.[[533]](#footnote-533)

**Catholics: From Pragmatic Alliance-Boosters to Confrontational Critics, 1942-1945**

Catholics generally reacted positively to Stalin’s endorsement of religious freedoms in the Declaration of Allied Unity in early 1942, the Soviet defense of Stalingrad in late 1942 and early 1943. Prior to the revelation of the Katyn Forest massacre in April 1943, most prominent Catholic leaders refrained from public criticism of the USSR, and some actively supported Roosevelt’s efforts to promote post-war cooperation. Bishop Michael J. Ready and his subordinates in the National Catholic Welfare Council refrained from criticizing the largest American relief agency to Russia, despite its failure to condemn Soviet civil rights violations, and its unwillingness to undertake relief efforts in Soviet-occupied Poland.[[534]](#footnote-534) When Sumner Welles informed Ready and Archbishop Francis Spellman in 1942 that he held out “faint hope” that the Soviets would allow American priests to undertake missions to Eastern Europe, the Catholic leaders did not protest.[[535]](#footnote-535)

Even Father Leopold Braun cooperated with Roosevelt’s pro-Soviet agenda in 1942. When Braun obtained an intelligence report from a German acquaintance claiming that Nazi leaders were exploiting Eastern European populations’ dissatisfaction with Soviet religious restrictions in order to minimize resistance to German occupation, he forwarded it to Bishop Michael Ready, who sent it to the US State Department. Ready hoped to maximize the report’s “useful effect” while preventing Braun from offending Soviet officials.[[536]](#footnote-536) The Vatican also showed restraint in early 1942 by denying the Polish ambassador’s plea to denounce communists in Poland who openly opposed the Catholic Church.[[537]](#footnote-537) For the moment, the Catholic hierarchy in the United States and abroad generally cooperated with Roosevelt’s program of Allied unity, and concealed its reservations from the public eye.[[538]](#footnote-538)

Soviet propaganda claiming that religious freedom prevailed in Russia displeased Catholic leaders, but they generally remained silent prior to 1943. In late 1942, the Russian government published *The Truth About Religion in Russia,* a 175-page treatise written by Metropolitan Nikolai and Metropolitan Sergei of the Orthodox Patriarchate in Moscow. Soviet-controlled presses produced tens of thousands of copies, which were sent to Western diplomats and sympathizers, including Joseph Davies.[[539]](#footnote-539) The treatise claimed that religion had been freely practiced in Russia since the revolutionary period, yet it denounced anti-Bolshevik Orthodox clerics in Russia as traitors and hoarders of public wealth.[[540]](#footnote-540) Alexander Werth of the *New York Times* hailed the treatise as a “highly important landmark” in the history of Orthodox-Soviet relations. The Soviet regime, Werth predicted, would continue to revive languishing Orthodox congregations and encourage religious nationalism after the war.[[541]](#footnote-541) Bishop Ready ignored the pleadings of the Apostolic Delegate to Washington Amleto Cicognani to denounce *The Truth About Religion in Russia*, and the *Catholic Herald* withheld its biting critique of the treatise until July 1944.[[542]](#footnote-542) Although Catholic leaders’ private alarm about Soviet expansion and religious propaganda mounted in 1942 and early 1943, they did not yet openly break ranks with Roosevelt’s Russian policy by openly criticizing Russia or the Grand Alliance.[[543]](#footnote-543)

American Catholic leaders’ first open break with Roosevelt’s Russia policy occurred in early 1943, when the Red Army began to advance on Eastern Europe which contained large Catholic populations. Russian leaders, angry about German charges that the Soviet secret police had murdered 3,000 Polish officers in the Katyn Forest of Poland in 1940, broke off relations with the Polish government exiled in London.[[544]](#footnote-544) In the face of implausible Soviet denials about its role in the massacre, and the forced deportation of Polish citizens into Eastern Russia, Roosevelt found it increasingly difficult to persuade Catholic leaders such as Bishop Michael J. Ready and Archbishop Edward Mooney to remain silent. Growing Catholic dissent in 1943 and 1944 troubled the Roosevelt administration because it was eager to avoid offending Polish-American voters during the presidential election campaign of 1944.[[545]](#footnote-545)

On April 15, two days after German Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels revealed the Katyn massacre, Bishop Ready met privately with Assistant Secretary of State Sumner Welles to discuss the future of Poland. Ready expressed his “great and growing concern” that the US government was “acquiescing” to Russia’s demand to permanently move the Polish border west of its August 1939 position. Ready scored Vice President Wallace, Assistant Secretary Adolph Berle, former Ambassador Joseph Davies, officials in the Office of War Information, and top American news commentators for urging Americans to accept Russia’s claims to a security zone in Poland as a “realistic” concession. Ready complained that US officials seemed prepared to “forsake or to forget” the principles of the Atlantic Charter, for it was already tolerating the Kremlin’s deportation of Poles, which led to a “brutal separation of families” and signalled an “inhuman disregard for children.”[[546]](#footnote-546)

Although Welles assured Ready of Washington’s commitment to the Atlantic Charter and promised that Polish territorial losses would be compensated by expansion into Germany, the assistant secretary nearly let slip his frustration with the Soviet regime. He explained to Ready that the US government faced “tremendous difficulties...in all its dealings with Russia,” for Stalin was “almost impossible to deal with.” Nonetheless, Welles hoped that Catholic leaders would do “everything feasible” to boost public support for a United Nations organization to oversee relations with the USSR.[[547]](#footnote-547) Ready was not mollified. Catholics would be more supportive of the Roosevelt administration, he retorted, if it stopped suggesting that the post-war world would be “fashioned” by the Big Four to the exclusion of the Poles, French, Dutch, and Belgians.[[548]](#footnote-548) Not surprisingly, Ready made little effort to rein in the Catholic media's criticism of Russia in order to protect the government’s “delicate negotiations.”[[549]](#footnote-549)

James Clement Dunn, Welles’s replacement in late 1943, also failed to stifle growing Catholic criticisms of the Soviet Union. Meeting with Bishop Ready for the first time in January 1944, Dunn warned that if Catholic leaders continued their “agitation and propaganda” surrounding Soviet behaviour in Poland, their criticisms would jeopardize the precarious relations between the Kremlin and Polish government in Britain. Dunn urged the American Catholic hierarchy to “counsel the Polish people to be calm,” at least until Roosevelt and Churchill could mediate talks between Stalin and the exiled Polish leaders. In Dunn’s view, the controversy over Poland’s post-war borders and government had stirred the “force of opposition” in America, which threatened to “ruin” the Roosevelt administration’s “desired post-war policy of international cooperation.” Bishop Ready rejected Dunn’s plea and demanded that the Roosevelt administration defend the principles of the Atlantic Charter and Four Freedoms in Eastern Europe.[[550]](#footnote-550)

Despite growing Catholic dissent in summer 1943, a number of Roosevelt’s official and popular supporters worked to limit the negative impact of Catholic criticisms of Russia. Assistant Secretary Adolf Berle publicly reassured the Soviets that there was no American plan to create an anti-Soviet *cordon sanitaire* in Europe. The liberal media also generally championed Roosevelt’s efforts to secure long-term post-war accord with Russia. When American Catholic leaders spoke out against Soviet domination of the Polish government, Soviet annexation of western Poland, and the Red Army’s deportation of Polish citizens, Walter Lippmann of the *New York Herald-Tribune* suggested that Archbishop Spellman and Stalin should personally negotiate a concordat to help reduce open tensions between the Soviet regime and Catholic Church.[[551]](#footnote-551) In May 1944 Stalin unsuccessfully attempted to produce just this sort of concordat by meeting with the American Catholic priest Stanislaus Orlemanski in Moscow.[[552]](#footnote-552) As an American-born citizen of Polish descent who presided over a parish ministry in Massachusetts, Orlemanski’s credentials appeared impeccable. In truth, he was a prominent supporter of the Soviet-backed government in Poland, and he enjoyed a firm base among American labour groups. Many anti-Soviet Polish-Americans, Catholics, and conservatives considered Orlemanksi a Soviet apologist who might betray Polish and American interests. Fearful that Orlemanski’s trip to Moscow might raise hackles, Roosevelt did not publicly acknowledge the mission, which was privately funded.[[553]](#footnote-553)

Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov greeted Orlemanski with a lavish reception. After meeting privately with Orlemanski for two hours, Stalin signed a statement indicating his desire for better Catholic-Kremlin relations. The statement drafted by Orlemanski advocated “freedom of conscience and of worship,” and declared “persecution and coercion” of the Catholic Church “inadmissible." The statement also mentioned that Russia hoped to “cooperate” with the Vatican in the ongoing “struggle” against religious persecution and coercion.[[554]](#footnote-554)

Orlemanski’s ploy to cast Soviet religious policies in a positive light did not go down well with Catholics or select members of the US Congress and the mass media. American Catholic leaders pointed out that Orlemanski’s trip had not been sanctioned by his clerical superiors. Bishop Michael Ready blasted Stalin’s declaration as the “phoniest propaganda” ever “pawned off” on Americans by “capable Soviet agents.” Orlemanski’s trip was, in his view, a “political burlesque” designed to distract Americans from Russia’s “stabbing in the back” of Poland through its domination of the Polish government. The Catholic senator John A. Danaher (R- Connecticut) claimed that Orlemanski and Stalin sought a government of “expediency” in Poland rather than one of “justice” that adhered to the principles of the Atlantic Charter.[[555]](#footnote-555) The Catholic senator John D. Dingell (D-Michigan) claimed that Orlemanski had “soiled his sacerdotal robes” in order to “kowtow” to enemies of Poland and the Catholic Church.[[556]](#footnote-556) Similar criticisms were voiced by the Catholic journalist Anne O’Hare McCormick, who criticized Soviet duplicity surrounding Orlemanski’s trip in four of her *New York Times* columns.[[557]](#footnote-557) Even Florida Bishop Joseph Hurley, Roosevelt’s stalwart ally in the Lend-Lease controversy of 1941, supported Ready’s denunciation of Orlemanski’s mission.[[558]](#footnote-558) Vatican officials were so appalled by Orlemanski’s unauthorized conference that they declared the priest unwelcome in Rome, even if he travelled with State Department assistance.[[559]](#footnote-559)

Fortunately for Roosevelt, most journalists were less critical of Orlemanski’s efforts to secure a Catholic-Soviet accord. Ralph Parker of the *New York Times* welcomed Stalin’s declaration of religious freedoms as evidence of the dictator’s benevolent attitude on religious matters and growing deference to popular wishes in Russia and abroad.[[560]](#footnote-560) Several American newspapers praised the Soviet regime for publishing the Orlemanski-Stalin declaration in the government-controlled Russian press. National newspapers also ran interviews with Orlemanski which yielded positive impressions of Moscow.[[561]](#footnote-561) Roosevelt considered the Stalin-Orlemanski declaration “interesting” and wanted to meet Orlemanski in person, but Cordell Hull, wary of the incendiary nature of religious issues, successfully discouraged a meeting.[[562]](#footnote-562) When Orlemanski’s Catholic superiors suspended him from his Massachusetts parish, the *Washington Post* and *New York Times* criticized the Catholic hierarchy for its heavy-handed censorship.[[563]](#footnote-563) Bishop Michael Ready quickly arranged for Orlemanski to be restored to his Massachusetts parish, but weeks of public newspaper controversy had opened a breach between American Catholics and the Roosevelt administration.[[564]](#footnote-564)

The Orlemanski controversy continued to simmer throughout the summer of 1944. During an official visit to Washington by the anti-Soviet Polish Prime Minister Stanisław Mikołajczyk, Roosevelt attempted to persuade the exiled Polish leader to meet with Father Orlemanski. Mikołajczyk allegedly retorted that, as a Catholic, he “would have nothing to do” with a priest who had “violated the canons of the Church,” and as a Pole, he would not “deal with a…Soviet agent.” Mikołajczyk complained that if Stalin wished to “demonstrate his good faith,” he should release the “one thousand priests” languishing in Russian prisons.[[565]](#footnote-565)

The historian John Lewis Gaddis has described the Orlemanski affair as “one of the more curious episodes in Soviet-American wartime relations.”[[566]](#footnote-566) The Orlemanski controversy, however, marked an important rupture in Roosevelt’s relations with American Catholic leaders. As Roosevelt became more distracted by finishing the war, post-war planning, and his growing personal isolation and ill-health, he also grew more personally aloof from Catholic leaders. Thus, the defense of his Soviet policy was left to James Clement Dunn, who proved incapable of establishing rapport with powerful bishops.

The growing rift between Catholic leaders and the Roosevelt administration over FDR’s cooperative Russia policy was reflected in popular opinion. In November 1944 the Office of Public Opinion Research found that fewer than half of the Catholics polled trusted Russia to cooperate after the war, and lower-income Catholics, the largest of the groups sampled, were the most mistrustful.[[567]](#footnote-567) Catholics were also more likely than Protestants or the aggregate population to believe that Russia planned to spread communist revolution after the war, and outlaw private property and differential wages.[[568]](#footnote-568) Exit polls in the 1944 presidential election revealed that only 49% of wealthy Catholics voted Democrat, a drop of 18% from 1940.[[569]](#footnote-569) By 1945, Catholic support for Roosevelt’s presidency, and his Russia policy in particular, was eroding.

The Yalta Conference in the Crimea in February 1945 exacerbated the breakdown of Catholic leaders’ support for Roosevelt’s foreign policy surrounding Russia. The president grew increasingly concerned in late 1944 about the Vatican’s potential opposition to any agreements on Poland that might emerge from the upcoming Big Three meeting.[[570]](#footnote-570) In a last-minute decision, Roosevelt sent Hopkins to Rome prior to Yalta in January 1945 with instructions to hear the Pope’s concerns, and persuade him stop criticizing the United States for its failure to support the exiled Polish government in London.[[571]](#footnote-571) The mission failed. The Pope continued to urge Archbishop Francis Spellman and other American clerics to support the London Poles against the Soviet-backed Lublin government.[[572]](#footnote-572) During the Yalta Conference, the Vatican battled the Kremlin in a rhetorical war that was covered prominently in the American press. Soviet-controlled newspapers accused Papal officials and Francis Spellman of pro-fascist policies and support for Germany and Italy, while the Vatican-controlled newspaper *Osservatore Romano* accused the Soviets of aggressive expansion in Eastern Europe, religious and political repression, and “explicit anti-religious hatred” that threatened the foundations of the peace.[[573]](#footnote-573)

In an ill-fated attempt to encourage American Catholic leaders to look positively upon the Yalta Conference, Roosevelt brought to the Crimea his elderly friend Edward Flynn, a well-connected Irish-Catholic layman and chairman of the Democratic Party in the Bronx, New York. With no official position at the Big Three meeting, Flynn was to attend official dinners, confer with Roosevelt’s aides, and gather public relations material to help win Catholic support for long-term Soviet-American cooperation.[[574]](#footnote-574) Apparently, Flynn did not take his mission seriously. Alger Hiss recalled that Flynn was “very bored” throughout the conference and “drank more tea...than even an Irish American could wish for.”[[575]](#footnote-575) The Big Three did not address religious tensions directly except for one occasion when Stalin joked derisively, “The Pope! How many divisions has he got?”[[576]](#footnote-576)

Roosevelt, perhaps as a result of his growing personal isolation and poor health, decided at the conclusion of the talks to send Flynn to accompany Ambassador Averell Harriman to Moscow for three weeks.[[577]](#footnote-577) Flynn proved to be a poor successor to the Republican presidential candidate Wendell Willkie, who had once served as Roosevelt's savvy public relations agent in Moscow. Whereas Willkie was willing to turn a blind eye to religious repression in Russia, the naïve Flynn expected few problems in convincing Soviet officials to permit Catholic priests full freedom in Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe. Predictably, Flynn was disappointed. In letters to his family, Flynn complained that Soviet officials claimed to know “little or nothing” about religion in Soviet-controlled territory. In any case, their “Asiatic” nature prevented them from making rational decisions when it came to religious issues.[[578]](#footnote-578) Flynn, who stopped by the Vatican on his way home, did not encourage the Pope to pursue Soviet-Catholic accord. Flynn also said little to the American press.[[579]](#footnote-579) The Pope and his top officials continued to denounce Soviet Russia, support the Polish émigré movement, oppose Soviet-dominated Poland’s westward expansion, and suppress communist parties in Italy and Eastern Europe. From Stalin’s perspective in early 1945, the Roman church was an obstructionist force in international policy.[[580]](#footnote-580)

Despite the Catholic Church’s public opposition to the Yalta accords, Americans were not decidedly opposed to post-war cooperation with Russia in the winter and spring of 1945. Although 6 to 8 million American citizens of Polish descent were overwhelmingly Catholic, most of them valued Russia’s contribution to the anti-Nazi war effort, and many questioned the legitimacy of the Polish government in London. Jewish Polish-Americans tended to be more positive toward Soviet Russia, which countered to some degree hostile Catholic opinion in the Polish community.[[581]](#footnote-581) Although some American journalists had begun in late 1944 to support Catholic leaders’ criticisms of Roosevelt for abandoning the Polish government in exile, once they learned of the upcoming Big Three conference at Yalta, dissent largely ceased. After the conference, the national media welcomed the Yalta accords with optimistic enthusiasm, to Roosevelt’s satisfaction.[[582]](#footnote-582)

Even if FDR had been more attentive to managing his public relations campaign after 1943, it is unlikely that he could have prevented some degree of public Catholic criticism of post-war cooperation with Soviet Russia. Without the urgent need for wartime cooperation to defeat Germany, and with the revelations of the Katyn massacre and Soviet domination of Eastern European governments, Catholic leaders’ criticisms of Soviet political and religious repression were bound to resurface in national discourse.

Nonetheless, FDR had demonstrated in the 1930s and early 1940s his ability to minimize Catholic opposition to his Russia policies through attentive personal effort. Had it not been for his distraction with the war, worsening health, and diminishing circle of intimate support figures after 1943, he might have managed his bureaucracy more closely, cultivated Catholic leaders more carefully, and chosen envoys more wisely, thereby reducing Catholic leaders’ open opposition to his conciliatory approach to Russia in Eastern Europe.[[583]](#footnote-583) Roosevelt was clearly anxious to improve Catholic opinion of the USSR, and he was aware of the dangers of dissent within his administration. Indeed, Major General James F. Burns of the US Soviet Protocol Committee warned Roosevelt and Hopkins in July 1943 that hostile US officials in the diplomatic corps and War Department were jeopardizing future US-Soviet relations by failing to develop “mutual trust and friendliness.”[[584]](#footnote-584) Roosevelt’s failure to respond more effectively to Catholic and bureaucratic opposition after 1943 undermined the likelihood that his policies would persist after his death in April 1945.

**Archbishop Francis Spellman and Anne O’Hare McCormick: Cooperative Catholic Supporters Revert to Bitter Anti-Soviet Criticism, 1941-1945**

Archbishop Francis Spellman and the *New York Times* journalist Anne O’Hare McCormick’s declining support for Roosevelt’s Soviet policy after 1943 stand out as prime examples of how Roosevelt’s success at cultivating Catholic leaders rapidly vanished during the last two years of the war. Initially, FDR was extremely attentive to Francis Spellman, New York City’s highest-ranking Catholic cleric. In 1939, the influential Archbishop gushed that Roosevelt’s hand-written letter inviting him to a personal meeting at the White House counted among his “most treasured possessions.”[[585]](#footnote-585) Their relationship flourished in 1940 when Spellman met regularly with FDR and championed Roosevelt’s policies in public.[[586]](#footnote-586) Roosevelt received personal gifts from the Archbishop, and despite Roosevelt’s preoccupation with US military mobilization, he personally contacted the chairman of the War Production Board in winter 1942 to ensure that Spellman’s broken home furnace was repaired.[[587]](#footnote-587)

Roosevelt’s attentiveness to Spellman paid off when FDR appointed him military vicar of the American armed forces in 1942. This afforded Spellman the opportunity to inspect American troops in Europe, and issue media statements on the Allied war effort. During a tour of Western Europe in early 1943, Spellman vigorously lobbied European political and clerical leaders to support rapprochement with Russia. After meeting with the Spanish dictator Francisco Franco, Spellman reported to Roosevelt that the “only reason” for lingering pro-German sentiment in Spain was anti-communism, which was shared “all over Europe.” Spellman assured Roosevelt that he exerted himself “on every occasion” to remind European leaders of Stalin’s “adherence to the Atlantic Charter” since Russia joined the Grand Alliance. Spellman also reiterated Stalin’s public pledges that Russia would not “possess any European territory” or “impose” communist governments on “any nation” after the war.[[588]](#footnote-588)

Unfortunately for FDR, Spellman’s willingness to boost Russia’s partnership in the Grand Alliance proved ephemeral. It is not clear why Roosevelt grew cool toward Spellman, but FDR met with the Archbishop with declining frequency in 1944, and their personal correspondence largely ceased when FDR began to delegate matters concerning Spellman to his White House secretaries. Once Spellman became alienated by Roosevelt’s handling of the disputes over Poland and the Baltic region in 1944, he stopped championing the administration’s Russia policies.[[589]](#footnote-589) On the eve of the presidential election in November 1944, Spellman submitted a long memorandum to Roosevelt’s secretary warning of the dire consequences of Roosevelt’s failure to provide Italy with reconstruction aid necessary for its post-war “fight for survival” against communism. Unless the US intervened, “hunger...unemployment and communism” would lead to a “Godless government” in Rome. Indeed, Spellman warned, the Yugoslavian socialist Marshal Tito, with the “approval” of Stalin, planned to “grab” the Istrian peninsula, “carve up Italy,” and turn the Atlantic Charter into a “scrap of paper.”[[590]](#footnote-590)

Roosevelt’s White House secretaries and his speechwriter Sam Rosenman implored the president to lunch with Archbishop Spellman prior to the 1944 election with the hope that Spellman might endorse Roosevelt’s candidacy, praise his foreign policies, and perhaps even pose for a photo with the president. FDR finally concurred, but a two-hour meeting failed to produce a substantive statement by either Roosevelt or Spellman.[[591]](#footnote-591) Displeased by the Yalta accords of February 1945, Spellman later backed the Vatican and National Catholic Welfare Council’s demands that the United States liberate Poland from Soviet interference.[[592]](#footnote-592) Roosevelt had neglected one of America’s leading Catholics and left him unconvinced of the soundness of his policies, losing the support of a Catholic figure who might have helped promote post-war Soviet-American cooperation.

Roosevelt’s relationship to Anne O’Hare McCormick offers another example of FDR’s declining effort to enlist influential Catholic figures in support of his foreign policy. As a roaming correspondent for the *New York Times* since the early 1920s, McCormick had traveled regularly to Europe and Russia, where she obtained interviews with Stalin, Hitler, and Mussolini. In 1927, she published a 300-page book analyzing Russian political, religious, and social life ten years after the Bolshevik Revolution. McCormick lamented withering religious worship among all but elderly women and children, and she criticized the dilapidated state of Russia’s historic Orthodox Cathedrals.[[593]](#footnote-593) In the 1930s, McCormick won a Pulitzer Prize for reporting on international affairs, and became the first woman appointed to the *New York Times* editorial board. As a devout Catholic of Irish descent and wife of a conservative industrial financier, she harboured deep suspicions toward leftist governments and the Stalinist regime in particular. The American and European diplomats with whom she socialized affirmed her antipathy to communism, although she refrained from identifying those diplomats by name in her writings.[[594]](#footnote-594) McCormick also enjoyed close ties to Archbishop Francis Spellman, and she had several private audiences with Pope Pius XI (1922-1939) and Pope Pius XII (1939-1958).[[595]](#footnote-595)

Roosevelt worked to cultivate McCormick’s journalistic support for his foreign and domestic policies by meeting with her at least once per year from 1936 to 1942.[[596]](#footnote-596) Roosevelt and McCormick reputedly shared a warm relationship based on a mutual sense of humour, sharp wit, and sophisticated understanding of domestic and foreign policy.[[597]](#footnote-597) During their off-the-record meetings, the president revealed his political goals to McCormick, which she then reproduced in her columns without crediting the president. She remained a stalwart defender of the New Deal, FDR’s attempt to pack the Supreme Court, and the extension of Lend-Lease to Britain in 1941.[[598]](#footnote-598)

McCormick parted with Roosevelt, however, when it came to Russia. After the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939, McCormick dismissed the possibility of long-term Soviet cooperation with the West. McCormick argued that the European war was fundamentally “religious” because Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia had usurped “every human and divine right.” Like a “tumor pressing on the whole social body,” these dictatorships stopped the international system from “functioning naturally.” Stalinism in particular represented the advanced and “deadly” stage of a “worldwide disease.”[[599]](#footnote-599)

From 1941 to 1943, however, Roosevelt persuaded McCormick to help improve American opinion of Russia. After one of her off-the-record meetings with the president in January 1941, McCormick defended Roosevelt for lifting the Moral Embargo, refusing to prohibit future lend-lease to Russia, and assuming the “fearful responsibility” of dispensing lend-lease aid. In her view, Roosevelt sought to expand his presidential powers and involve America in the war in order to “defend freedom everywhere” and ensure lasting peace by creating a post-war organization capable of implementing a “New Deal for the world.”[[600]](#footnote-600)

Her first major complaint occurred in October 1941 when Roosevelt attempted to boost congressional and popular support for lend-lease to Russia by asserting that freedom of religion already existed in the USSR. McCormick demanded that the US government justify aid to Russia solely in terms of mutual interest in defeating a common foe, rather than support for the Soviet regime.[[601]](#footnote-601) Yet, after the December 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor brought the United States into the Second World War, McCormick refrained from criticizing the Soviet Union publicly because she recognized the importance of Roosevelt’s efforts to maximize public support for the Grand Alliance.[[602]](#footnote-602)

In early 1942, Roosevelt appointed McCormick to the political subcommittee of the Post-War Planning Committee, which gave McCormick direct access to top officials in the State Department, including Sumner Welles and Cordell Hull, as well as members of the House and Senate Foreign Relations Committees. It also made her privy to classified studies about conditions in Eastern Europe.[[603]](#footnote-603) The group undertook long, complex discussions about political and social conditions in Europe, submitting recommendations to the president about ideal post-war territorial boundaries and governmental structures. McCormick proposed using US political and economic influence to impose Western-friendly governments in European countries liberated by British and US forces, and she urged creating stable political blocs capable of resisting communist and Soviet influence.[[604]](#footnote-604) The committee was particularly alarmed by the possibility of “sovietisation” of the post-war Hungarian government, a country with a majority Catholic population.[[605]](#footnote-605) Despite McCormick’s private opposition to Soviet expansion, she expressed cautious optimism in her *New York Times* columns about long-term Soviet-American cooperation.[[606]](#footnote-606) Rather than criticizing Soviet religious policy, she focused on denouncing Nazi violations of religious freedoms.[[607]](#footnote-607)

Roosevelt paid less and less attention to McCormick in 1943. The president disbanded the postwar planning sub-committee in July, probably on the advice of Cordell Hull, who sought to weaken the influence of its chairman, Sumner Welles.[[608]](#footnote-608) Roosevelt also reduced the frequency of his private meetings with McCormick. By spring 1944, she began to disregard FDR’s agenda of promoting post-war cooperation with Russia and complain openly in her public newspaper columns about Stalin’s political interference in Eastern European governments, as well as his bogus claims to respect religious freedom.[[609]](#footnote-609) FDR was probably powerless to stop McCormick from airing at least some of her bitterness toward Stalinist Russia in 1944. Yet, her past sympathy to Roosevelt’s political rationales, and her past receptiveness to his charm, suggests that if he had continued cultivate his relationship to McCormick, FDR might have persuaded her to censor some of her bitterness and pessimism toward Soviet Russia and prospects for long-term US-Soviet accord.

FDR tried to prepare Americans for the challenges of implementing the Atlantic Charter after the war ended. Roosevelt believed that it was necessary to affirm the Four Freedoms in order to secure public support for the wartime Alliance and post-war United Nations. Yet, recognizing the reality of expanded Soviet power in Eastern Europe after Germany’s defeat, Roosevelt concealed from the American public many of the illiberal aspects of Soviet domestic policy, including religious and political repression, and he worked to temper public expectations for immediate religious freedoms in Russia. In a press conference in late December 1944, Roosevelt described the Atlantic Charter as an “objective,” like the Ten Commandments. Although those centuries-old ideals had not yet been fully realized throughout the world and could not be expected to materialize in the immediate future, they remained “something pretty good to shoot for.” Similarly, he argued, progress toward the Four Freedoms and principles of the Atlantic Charter would occur over the long term in “peaks and valleys,” but “on the whole,” the “curve” would be “upward.”[[610]](#footnote-610) In his State of the Union Speech on January 6, 1945, Roosevelt warned Americans not to expect the principles of the Atlantic Charter to be immediately achieved in complicated areas like Poland and Greece. Without naming Russia explicitly, Roosevelt urged Americans to forego the temptation to blame those they disliked for unwanted outcomes in post-war Europe.[[611]](#footnote-611)

But Anne McCormick, like many Catholic public figures, was not persuaded. Although McCormick initially cooperated with FDR’s efforts to improve Russia’s image in 1941 and 1942, she continued to demand that the Four Freedoms be respected immediately in Eastern Europe. She did nothing to habituate the public to more realistic expectations for Russia’s slow, uneven progress toward religious and political freedoms, and to encourage toleration in the name of post-war accord.[[612]](#footnote-612) Incidentally, McCormick failed to see the hypocrisy in criticizing the Soviet regime for controlling governments in Eastern Europe while at the same time advising Roosevelt to compel weak European states to join in anti-communist political blocs.[[613]](#footnote-613)

As tensions mounted over Soviet domination of Eastern Europe in early 1945, McCormick began to aggressively question Roosevelt’s conciliatory approach to Russia. Following the Yalta Conference, McCormick assailed Stalin for political interference in Rumania, Poland, and Turkey, his blackout of the international press, and his initial refusal to appoint Foreign Minister Molotov to the San Francisco Conference in April. In her view, Russia’s actions “cast doubt” upon whether the Big Three agreements could ensure peace, for Stain was “lukewarm” to international organization, joint action, and consultation.[[614]](#footnote-614) In her final interview with Roosevelt before his death on April 12, McCormick described a tired and dejected president who made “concessions” and “compromises” to Stalin surrounding Soviet influence in Eastern Europe, with no reciprocity from the dictator. Roosevelt disliked Stalin’s intransigence, but seeing no alternative, he grasped at even the thinnest reed for maintaining the peace.[[615]](#footnote-615) In truth, it appears that Roosevelt held out genuine hope for a post-war alliance with the Soviets until the very end of his life. As Roosevelt wrote to Churchill on the day before his death, it was best to “minimize the Soviet problem as much as possible” because conflicts arose “every day” but would usually “straighten out.”[[616]](#footnote-616) Similarly, in his final letter to Stalin conveying the Western public’s dissatisfaction with the Polish government’s lack of non-communist representatives, FDR assured him, “Having understood each other so well at Yalta, I am convinced that the three of us can and will clear away any obstacles which have developed since then.”[[617]](#footnote-617)

**Conclusion**

Roosevelt initially enjoyed great success in obtaining Catholic, media, and popular support for the wartime partnership Russia, but he struggled after 1943 to secure long-term support for a tolerant, conciliatory Russia policy involving a Soviet sphere of security in Eastern Europe and Western support for Russian economic reconstruction. In 1941 and 1942, Roosevelt’s personal allies such as Joseph Davies, Henry Wallace, Wendell Willkie, and Francis Spellman promoted the impression in America and the West that the Soviet government respected religious freedoms, and most Americans believed that Russia could be trusted and would not pose a threat to the US or Western Europe after the war. Soviet behaviour during the last two years of the war sowed a great deal of mistrust among Americans, however, especially Catholics. Stalin’s violations of political autonomy in Poland and the Baltic states, his restriction of civil liberties, and his rejection of responsibility for the Katyn massacre in 1943 made it difficult to continue to promote the idea that the Soviet Union respected human rights and religious freedom. As Roosevelt grew more personally isolated, unhealthy, and distracted with the Pacific war, Normandy invasion, and post-war planning and diplomatic negotiations, he became less attentive to key allies such as Bishop Michael J. Ready, Archbishop Francis Spellman, and Anne McCormick, who began to publicly attack his conciliatory Russia policy.

Leading diplomats in the Roosevelt administration such as Cordell Hull, Averell Harriman, George Kennan, Charles Bohlen, and Myron Taylor also began to subvert Roosevelt’s agenda of promoting public support for post-war accord with Russia after 1943. Following the Red Army’s victory at Stalingrad and the revelation of the Katyn Forest massacre, these disillusioned officials actively challenged the idea that Russia engaged in religious toleration, and that Russia would not seek to expand beyond a limited sphere of influence in Eastern Europe. Whereas Roosevelt’s appointed allies lost faith over time, career officials such as Kennan and Bohlen never shared Roosevelt’s hopes for continuing the Grand Alliance through toleration of Soviet domestic repression and concessions to Soviet security interests. Although Roosevelt had attempted to purge Kennan and Bohlen from the Moscow embassy in order to remove their corrosive influence in US-Soviet relations, Roosevelt found himself dependent upon Bohlen’s linguistic skills at the Tehran Conference, and he acceded to Harriman’s request to restore Kennan on the grounds that Harriman could filter Kennan’s anti-Soviet bias.

With both civil society and the diplomatic corps divided on Roosevelt’s Russia policy, the Truman administration had little difficulty popularizing more hard-line policies between 1945 and 1948.[[618]](#footnote-618) Opinion polls in 1947 showed that the proportion of Americans who still trusted Russia to cooperate with the United States was less than 25%, a far cry from the wartime high of nearly 60%.[[619]](#footnote-619) Due to mounting economic, security, and political disputes, Roosevelt’s unexpected death in April 1945, his failure to consolidate public and bureaucratic support for his policy of accommodating Russia, and the Soviet regime’s poorly-managed diplomacy and public relations, the goodwill that Roosevelt had worked to foster with Stalin was lost. As US-Soviet relations deteriorated under the Truman administration, religious ideology helped the US government justify its confrontational policy and rhetoric surrounding the USSR.

Chapter 5: From Cautious Cooperation to Anti-Communist Crusade, 1945-1948

Cautious and pragmatic in foreign policy, Stalin attempted to cooperate with the United States until at least 1947 as he focused on domestic economic reconstruction and consolidating Russia’s influence over Soviet-dominated states in Eastern Europe. When President Harry Truman offered Marshall Plan aid to the USSR in June 1947 on terms that were unlikely to be accepted by Soviet leaders, the plan convinced Stalin that cooperation with the United States would be impossible without jeopardizing the Soviet sphere of security in Eastern Europe. Stalin responded by resurrecting the Comintern, ordering international communist groups to boycott Marshall Plan talks, and endorsing A.A. Zhdanov’s “two camps” speech which described a global struggle between American imperialism and Soviet-led anti-imperialism.[[620]](#footnote-620) According to some historians, the Big Three’s guarded hopes to achieve lasting accord through personal diplomacy and support for Soviet reconstruction and security could have preserved the Grand Alliance.[[621]](#footnote-621) Stalin was not blameless, but the Truman administration’s exclusion of Russia from European Recovery Plan in 1947 moved the two nations closer to Cold War. Recent works by the religion historians William Inboden, Jeremy Gunn, Seth Jacobs, and Raymond Haberski, Jr. have explored in detail how the Truman and Eisenhower administrations promoted the Cold War policies of containment and roll-back through religious anti-communist rhetoric.[[622]](#footnote-622) Beginning in 1946 and continuing throughout his term in office, Truman implored Christian believers everywhere to unite to free oppressed people from atheistic communism.[[623]](#footnote-623) State Department officials complemented Truman’s religious rhetoric by cultivating prominent Catholic and Protestant leaders such as Francis Spellman, debunking Soviet claims of religious toleration, and investigating alleged Soviet efforts to subvert American Orthodox, Baptist, and Jewish organizations.

US leaders’ adoption of anti-communist religious themes in discussions of US foreign policy after 1946 was not inevitable.[[624]](#footnote-624) Franklin Roosevelt demonstrated during the 1930s that it was possible for a politically savvy president to refrain from criticizing Russia’s religious policies while persuading many influential members of the American Catholic hierarchy to minimize their religious hostility. Roosevelt’s death left Harry Truman free to persecute the Soviets using anti-communist religious rhetoric after 1946.

**The Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, and Breakdown of US-Soviet Relations**

Using Soviet archives that became accessible to Western scholars after collapse of the USSR, the historian Geoffrey Roberts argued that the “point of no return” in the development of the Cold War occurred in autumn 1947 when the Soviet Union adopted anti-Western policies and rhetoric in reaction to the failure of the Marshall Plan talks in July 1947. Prior to the Soviet exit from the Marshall Plan negotiations in Paris, Stalin desired ongoing alliance with Britain and the United States for both economic and ideological reasons.US-Anglo-Soviet cooperation would benefit Soviet economic recovery and international commerce, preserve peace and preclude the need for arms build-up, and help to prevent the resurgence of a militarized Germany. Stalin was satisfied with the geographical boundaries of Soviet influence in Eastern Europe and sought consolidation rather than expansion. Indeed, Stalin predicted that conflict was more likely to erupt between the United States and Britain due to imperial rivalries than between the US and USSR. Stalin also hoped that the growth of the American working class, unionized labour, and the progressive movement in the United States would dampen ideological tensions that threatened to inhibit long-term cooperation.[[625]](#footnote-625)

Unfortunately, Stalin’s suspicions that the US sought to form an anti-Soviet Western political bloc deepened when Harry Truman unveiled the containment doctrine to the US Congress in March 1947. Truman called for funding to the governments of Greece and Turkey in order to help pro-Western leaders protect the impoverished Greek masses from a “militant…terrorist” minority led by “Communists.” According to Truman, this minority was “exploiting” the Greek people’s “want and misery,” preventing economic recovery, and creating “political chaos” in southern Europe.

Truman’s calls for intervention extended beyond aid to Greece and Turkey. According to Truman, the US was duty-bound to help “free peoples” everywhere who were “resisting…subjugation” by “armed minorities” and “outside pressures” that threatened their “free institutions” and “national integrity.” People worldwide were being forced to “choose” between two “ways of life.” One was based upon free elections, representative government, political and personal freedoms, and “freedom of speech and religion,” whereas the other was based upon “forcibly imposed” minority rule, “terror and oppression,” state-controlled media, rigged elections, and “suppression of personal freedoms.” Truman cited “coercion and intimidation” in Poland, Rumania, and Bulgaria as proof of the Yalta agreements’ failure to ensure free elections. Truman warned that if totalitarian regimes were allowed to continue to spread their “influence,” the “security of the United States” and democracies everywhere would be in jeopardy. Although Truman did not explicitly name Russia as the locus of the totalitarian, communist “way of life,” his allusion to the USSR was unmistakable.[[626]](#footnote-626)

Initially, Stalin did not give much attention to Truman’s March 1947 speech. Molotov was instructed to continue to negotiate in good faith at the Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in Moscow. Even though the council failed to agree upon German reparations and the structure of the German government, Stalin still believed that compromise with the United States could be achieved on key economic and political questions. Stalin greeted the Marshall Plan proposal in June 1947 with genuine interest, and he sent a delegation to the international talks in Paris.[[627]](#footnote-627) The breakdown came a month later, when Secretary of State George C. Marshall proposed offering a large stimulus package to European states on the condition that they reorganize their economic practices to include cooperative union management, American-inspired industrial production methods, open trade, and easily convertible currency. US officials believed in the correctness of spreading New Deal economic practices to the Old World.[[628]](#footnote-628) Although US officials offered Marshall Plan funding to Soviet delegates, they privately expected Soviet officials to reject the offer because conditions for economic transparency and reorganization would impinge upon Soviet autonomy. Although historians have debated the issue, it appears that US officials deliberately intended for Soviet officials to reject the offer because they feared Russian participation would cause lengthy negotiations, concessions, and Congressional opposition in the United States, which risked delaying or preventing the program.[[629]](#footnote-629)

The Marshall Plan offer convinced Stalin that cooperation with the US would be impossible without jeopardizing the Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe. In order to strengthen Soviet control over Eastern Europe in anticipation of Western political attacks, the Kremlin ordered communist regimes in Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe to crack down on domestic individuals suspected of capitalist sympathies, and boycott the remainder of the Marshal Plan discussions. In September, Stalin resurrected the Comintern in the form of the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform), and called on communist parties in Western Europe to abandon support for cooperative reconstruction efforts. Stalin also approved Zhdanov's public speech declaring that two “camps” existed in international affairs. Just as Truman had identified a worldwide struggle between “free” and “totalitarian” forces, Zhdanov described two hostile camps: Western-led imperialism and Soviet-led anti-imperialism, which were locked in a battle for global supremacy. In February and March 1948, pro-Soviet communists seized control of Czechoslovakia. Congressional debate surrounding the European Recovery Bill continued, but growing fears of Soviet expansion—alarm bolstered by the Czech coup and Truman’s anti-communist rhetoric—led Congress to pass the bill in April 1948. As Truman once remarked, without Stalin’s "crazy" moves in 1947 and 1948, he “never could have got a thing from Congress" surrounding the European Recovery Act.[[630]](#footnote-630)

Historians have examined the Truman Doctrine speech of March 1948 and Marshall Plan debate of June 1947 to March 1948 from a variety of angles. Diplomatic historians have explored the interplay of economic and political factors, and how themes of modernization, gender, and pathology inflected Truman’s public rhetoric and public responses to US policy.[[631]](#footnote-631) Most historians agree that proponents of the Marshall Plan focused the bulk of their energy on economic and anti-communist themes. Boosters of the Marshall Plan claimed that European governments would be required to introduce American-style financial, industrial, and trading practices, which would benefit Americans and Europeans by ensuring swift and stable economic growth and international trade. Proponents also claimed that investment in Europe would combat the spread of communism by improving material conditions and political stability, thereby reducing the appeal of communist ideology to European populations. Whereas Secretary of State George C. Marshall primarily championed the economic benefits of the plan in his speeches to Congress and the media, Truman focused on anti-communism, particularly after Stalin introduced anti-Western policies and rhetoric.

Until recently, historians have neglected religion in their analyses of containment doctrine and official efforts to sell the Marshall Plan. Truman was neither formally trained in theology nor well-versed in varied Christian traditions, but he maintained a firm faith in God based on his strict Baptist upbringing. Truman boasted of having read the Bible several times in its entirety.[[632]](#footnote-632) Truman believed that individual “character” required immersion in a “fundamental system” of moral rules, best provided by Christianity. He also believed that God would punish wrongdoers and reward the righteous.[[633]](#footnote-633) Truman ruminated in his private diary in May 1945 that he had “no faith in any totalitarian state, be it Russian, German, Spanish, Argentinian, Dago, or Japanese,” which prioritized protecting the “power of government.” In particular, “Russian Godless Pervert Systems” would block the coming of the “hoped-for millennium.” Indeed, Truman appears to have harbored post-millennialist beliefs, which became popular among evangelical Baptists during the Second Great Awakening in the early 1800s. Truman seems to have believed that it was humanity’s duty to create the peaceful Kingdom of God on Earth, as prophesied in the Book of Revelation. The West could achieve this, Truman believed, by replacing oppressive political regimes with freedom-loving democracies [[634]](#footnote-634) Truman proclaimed in October 1945 that his administration would use military force if necessary to secure American ideals of “righteousness,” “justice,” and “freedom” in the world and would not tolerate “compromise with evil.” [[635]](#footnote-635)

Upon taking office in April 1945, Truman was convinced that America must use its power in the world to construct an international political system based on Christian ideals. He wanted the United States to participate in an international organization devoted to ensuring individual and collective rights and freedoms, and he was determined to not make the same mistakes that President Woodrow Wilson did in his flawed effort to persuade Congress to join the League of Nations. Truman was also inspired by Roosevelt’s success in using US military and economic resources to defeat Nazi Germany.[[636]](#footnote-636) Although Truman remained deeply hostile to atheistic communism and suggested publicly as late as June 1941 that Stalin’s regime was as repugnant as Hitler’s Germany, Truman’s complaints ceased after Arthur Krock of the *New York Times* criticized him for undermining Roosevelt’s efforts to aid Russia in the war against Germany.[[637]](#footnote-637) When US-Soviet tensions mounted in 1946, however, Truman again began to describe the Soviet Union as a source of moral evil. His anti-communist religious rhetoric came into full force during his campaign to popularize the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan in 1947.

After Winston Churchill’s “Iron Curtain” speech at Fulton, Missouri in early March 1946, Truman praised the leaders of the ecumenical Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America for affirming their belief in the “worship of God” and the need for “individual freedom in a democracy." According to Truman, the war against Germany had pitted forces of “religion and democracy” against “forces of evil” where the “individual amounts to nothing.” He warned that the “civilized world” faced unprecedented threats in the new atomic age, and its “survival” depended on fulfilling Judeo-Christian principles espoused by the “ancient prophets” and the “Sermon on the Mount.” Truman implored American Catholic, Jewish, and Protest leaders to be “shock forces” in the “moral and spiritual awakening” that the United States needed to resist its post-war enemies.[[638]](#footnote-638)

The historian William Inboden has demonstrated in detail how the Truman administration increasingly invoked religious invective after 1947 in an effort to generate domestic and international support for containment policies.[[639]](#footnote-639) In August 1947, Truman publicized his letter to the pope declaring America’s mission to spread “sacred rights” and individual “freedoms” across the globe because those rights were “inherent” to man’s “relationship to God and his fellows.” Alluding to his belief in America’s post-millennial mission to create a divine order on earth, Truman claimed that humanity must free itself from the “chains of untruth” under “collectivist organization.” By doing their duty to “almighty God,” defenders of freedom would “arise reborn and revitalized” from their “daily struggle” to defeat the “evil” that sought to “destroy” them. Truman promised to use the United States’ “spiritual and material” resources to build an “enduring peace” founded on “Christian principles.”[[640]](#footnote-640)

In his 1948 state of the union address, Truman argued that the “basic source” of America’s strength was “spiritual,” for Americans were a “people of faith.” They believed that men possessed individual dignity as “children of God” created in his “image,” and they rejected the communist premise that humanity’s purpose was to “strengthen the state” as “cogs in an economic machine.”[[641]](#footnote-641) To Truman, communist regimes’ atheistic dogma strengthened their collectivist, repressive political organizations in a dynamic antithetical to the free Christian West.[[642]](#footnote-642) In a speech to Irish Catholics in New York on St. Patrick’s Day in 1948, Truman urged Americans to reject “Henry Wallace and his Communists’…insidious propaganda” that the Marshall Plan risked war with the USSR whereas peace could be maintained “solely by wanting peace.” In truth, he argued, communists “persecuted” religion because Judeo-Christian doctrine invalidated totalitarian rule by demanding “freedom under God.” Americans had to “face” the urgent “threat” that communism posed to American “liberty” and “faith.”[[643]](#footnote-643)

Truman displayed little patience for anyone who questioned his approach to combatting communism. When liberal clerics in the Federal Council of Churches recommended that the US reduce military spending, increase funding to social welfare programs, and renew dialogue with the USSR to preserve post-war peace, Truman scoffed, “This is a perfectly asinine document” riddled with “sophistry.” To Truman, the correct path for the Christian democratic world was a firm policy of containment based on economic, political, and psychological warfare, not one based on US-Soviet dialogue and accommodation.[[644]](#footnote-644)

Top officials in the Truman administration cultivated influential Catholic leaders to support anti-communist US policies. In 1951, the State Department’s Psychological Strategy Board created an advisory panel, which included Francis Spellman and Truman’s Baptist pastor, Reverend Edward Prudent. The board recommended that the State Department engage more extensively with American and foreign churches by heralding “common values” shared by faith groups worldwide, such as belief in God and freedom of worship.[[645]](#footnote-645) In 1953, the agency which oversaw the Voice of America doubled its religious programming, shipped bibles and other religious books to US libraries overseas, and hired Cecil B. DeMille, director of the Hollywood film, *The Ten Commandments,* to advise the US government on its foreign propaganda documentaries showcasing American prosperity and technology.[[646]](#footnote-646)

By 1950, religious rhetoric pervaded Truman’s speeches, diary, and public relations materials, as well as his administration’s secret policy documents.[[647]](#footnote-647) In 1950, the National Security Council issued NSC-68, an important planning paper that recommended increased defense spending, military mobilization, and diplomatic pressure to defeat communism. The authors rationalized these policies using religion-inflected language, claiming they were necessary to counter Soviet Russia’s “new fanatical faith” that was “antithetical” to American values. Whereas communism constituted a “perverted faith” in which existence was devoted entirely to “serving the ends” of a totalitarian system that itself “becomes God,” the United States was committed to “freedom.” Indeed, communist regimes devoured their own citizens due to suspicions of citizens’ secret loyalty to a “higher authority”—almost certainly an allusion to God. Until the West confronted Russia with a “clearly superior counter-force” that was “spiritual as well as material,” the Kremlin would continue to gain momentum in domestic and foreign policy.[[648]](#footnote-648) To the authors of NSC-68, a psychological campaign aimed at spreading religious belief worldwide constituted a non-nuclear, non-military, and relatively inexpensive ideological weapon that would appeal to religious citizens worldwide and weaken Soviet Russia’s popularity on both sides of the Iron Curtain.[[649]](#footnote-649)

Although most major American religious groups agreed with Truman’s anti-communist principles, a substantial minority of American Protestant, Jewish and Catholic organizations did not unanimously support US Cold War initiatives. Protestant progressives in the Federal Council of Churches feared that Washington’s anti-communist rhetoric and military build-up might provoke a war with Russia, and they worried that US efforts to spread liberal capitalism abroad might drain popular enthusiasm for combatting social injustice at home. Truman responded by sidelining those religious leaders and issuing ecumenical statements calling on believers of all Christian faiths to unite behind US efforts to eradicate communism at home and abroad.[[650]](#footnote-650) In 1951, Truman warned a New York Presbyterian congregation that the world was threatened by an international communist movement that was “utterly and totally opposed” to “spiritual values,” for Soviet-led communism reflected a “fierce and terrible fanaticism” that “denies the existence of God” and “stamps out” religious worship. To Truman, God had “created” America and gave it “power and strength” for one “great purpose:” to defend freedom and eradicate oppressive regimes directed by the Soviet government.[[651]](#footnote-651)

**The State Department, Religion, and Deepening Suspicions, 1945-1948**

Religious ideology helped to harden anti-Soviet attitudes in the State Department and FBI after Roosevelt’s death. The State Department’s Eastern European Division increased its efforts to monitor Russian religious conditions, the Russian media’s propaganda surrounding religious matters, and American religious leaders suspected of communist sympathies. According to the State Department’s secret reports, the Soviet government had succeeded in presenting itself as tolerant of the Russian Orthodox Church, Catholics, Baptist missionaries, Jewish groups, Muslim congregations, and other religious denominations. In truth, the reports claimed, the Kremlin was cracking down on religious followers of all faiths in Eastern Europe, especially Catholics. Even worse, the pro-Soviet Moscow Orthodox hierarchy was cultivating the political loyalty of American Orthodox leaders and believers in the United States.

George Kennan, the minister counselor to the US embassy in Moscow from 1944 to 1946, served as the US government’s primary interpreter of religious affairs in Russia in the early post-war period. Roosevelt had removed Kennan from the Moscow embassy in 1937 as part of general purge of anti-communists in the State Department that had also included the transfer to Turkey of the Eastern European Division Chief Robert Kelley. Roosevelt, Joseph Davies, and Harry Hopkins hoped that by removing “anti-Stalin” officials from important diplomatic posts, they could improve relations with the Kremlin. In late 1944, the newly-appointed ambassador to Moscow Averell Harriman insisted that Kennan be restored to the embassy due to his experience and expertise in Russia. Under Kennan’s influence, Harriman quickly began to favour tougher policies toward the Soviet government.[[652]](#footnote-652)

In early 1945, Kennan warned Washington that the Soviet regime was using religious propaganda to improve its reputation in the Middle East and Eastern Europe in an attempt to gain a foothold for future political expansion. Kennan was especially concerned about the Russian Orthodox Church’s plan to hold an international sobor in early February 1945 to elect a new supreme leader of the Eastern Orthodox Church. The event was significant because international leaders of Orthodox churches outside of Russia had not gathered to enthrone a supreme patriarch since 1667.[[653]](#footnote-653) Moreover, after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, many Orthodox organizations in Western Europe, the Middle East, and the United States had declared themselves autonomous from the Moscow patriarchate. Thus, the plan to hold a sobor could be interpreted as a bid by the Russian Orthodox leadership in Moscow to reincorporate scattered international churches under the ecclesiastical supremacy of their leading cleric, Metropolitan Alexei Simansky, a supporter of Stalin’s regime.[[654]](#footnote-654)

In his reports to Washington, Kennan presented the Orthodox sobor as evidence of the Soviet government’s “deliberate policy” to “make use of every possible channel of influence in foreign affairs.” Soviet dignitaries attended the ceremony, the Kremlin provided opulent lodgings to the visiting Orthodox hierarchs, and Stalin used the Soviet press to disseminate news to the foreign media of the Soviet regime’s benevolent attitude to the sobor. In Kennan’s view, the ceremony was designed to “disarm criticism” of the Soviet regime and “gain sympathy” in “western religious circles” by camouflaging the Kremlin’s continued restrictions on religious worship.[[655]](#footnote-655) Kennan reported that a “horde” of Soviet photographers had taken “exhaustive” newsreel footage of the sobor and distributed it to foreign media organizations, including a clip of a Soviet official embracing an Orthodox cleric. Meanwhile, the Soviet secret police had “surrounded” the Moscow Cathedral in order to restrict public access. When an elderly Russian woman attempted to sell a religious icon outside the church, she was “unceremoniously hustled off” by the secret police. According to Kennan, there was “no question” that the Kremlin would continue to coopt Orthodox leaders while repressing religious worship in practice, for it denied Russians access to a “respectable career” unless they belonged to communist organizations that expressly forbade religious worship.

To Kennan, the Orthodox Church remained a “withering” organization of “priests and old women” that was the Kremlin’s tool for domestic domination and foreign expansion.[[656]](#footnote-656) By coopting the weak and pliable Orthodox clergy in Moscow, Stalin used the church as a “direct channel” to “influence…all believers of the Eastern Church wherever they may reside,” especially those outside of the Soviet Union that shared a common Slavic identity. According to Kennan, if the Soviet regime succeeded in gaining influence over the property and “traditional privileges” of Orthodox churches in the Near East, the Kremlin would have an “iron in the fire” of regional politics. Kennan worried that the sobor would reorient the loyalties of Orthodox believers away from the pro-western Greek and Egyptian Orthodox patriarchates toward the pro-Soviet church in Moscow.[[657]](#footnote-657)

Kennan’s fears of Soviet dominance soared when the sobor unanimously elected Alexei patriarch in February 1945. Addressing “Christians of the whole world,” Alexei and his supporters declared that the “Lord Jesus Christ” had “blessed” the “glorious Red Army” which was liberating Europeans from Nazi Germany. The council called on Orthodox clerics worldwide to unite their “scattered believers” under Alexei and support the “common holy deed of defending the motherland.” [[658]](#footnote-658) To Kennan, the Moscow patriarchate confirmed its role as Stalin’s mouthpiece when it publicly branded everyone who advocated mercy toward the German people as perpetrators of “monstrous distortions of the divine teachings of the saviour.”[[659]](#footnote-659) Kennan also charged the Orthodox leadership in Moscow with willingly helping Stalin to wage “open battle” against the Vatican, which resisted Soviet political expansion into Eastern Europe. According to Kennan, the Moscow patriarchate resented the Vatican’s alleged attempts to dominate all of Eastern Christendom after the Bolshevik Revolution.[[660]](#footnote-660) In short, the Russian Orthodox Church had been reduced to an “instrument” of Soviet policy.[[661]](#footnote-661)

Unlike Kennan, Roosevelt’s hand-picked director of the Office of War Information, Archibald MacLeish, regarded the Orthodox sobor as an opportunity for the American media and US government’s wartime propaganda agency to showcase the Soviet regime’s increasing religious toleration.[[662]](#footnote-662) Although MacLeish came from a devout Baptist background and remained deeply concerned with religious freedoms, he understood Roosevelt’s mandate to promote Soviet-American cooperation.[[663]](#footnote-663) In January 1945, MacLeish assured the head of the Motion Picture Association of America’s War Activities Committee, Dr. Francis S. Harmon, that he would obtain Soviet newsreel footage of the Orthodox sobor and distribute it to American cinemas. By publicizing the election in a manner similar to the election of the Catholic pope, the American film industry could help to “establish in the minds” of “millions of church people” the Soviet regime’s willingness to let the Russian Orthodox Church occupy a prominent place in Russian life.[[664]](#footnote-664) MacLeish also tried to counter the influence of anti-communist conservatives in the State Department after Roosevelt’s death in April. In a national radio address in late May, he declared that Russia and the United States should not give in to “fear and suspicion” but must “live and work together.”[[665]](#footnote-665)

These clashing interpretations of the sobor were typical of the kind of dissent that existed in FDR’s permissively-managed bureaucracy. Whereas MacLeish sought to promote FDR’s policy of cooperation with Russia by broadcasting media materials that cast Russia’s religious policies in a positive light, George Kennan denounced Soviet religious policies as part of an overall campaign to promote a hard anti-communist line against the Soviet Union. As relations with Russia deteriorated and officials such as Kennan enjoyed more influence over the inexperienced president Harry Truman, their negative views of Soviet religious policy reinforced the Truman administration’s shift toward containment-oriented initiatives.

The State Department and FBI also began to fear after 1945 that Soviet agents were successfully infiltrating American and European branches of the Russian Orthodox Church. The only American cleric present at the 1945 sobor was Metropolitan Benjamin Fedchenkov, the pro-Soviet leader of the pro-Soviet branch of the American Orthodox Church. Representatives of the anti-Soviet branch missed the election because bad weather had grounded their plane. [[666]](#footnote-666) Kennan repeatedly denounced Fedchenkov as a dangerous propaganda agent for the Soviet regime. The Moscow clergy honored Fedchenkov as the sobor’s fourth-highest ranking cleric and its sole representative in North America, despite the truth that his anti-Soviet rival Metropolitan Theophilus Pashkovsky bore the support of the majority of North American Orthodox congregations. When Fedchenkov announced to the sobor that his vote for Alexei bore the “unanimous consent” of all Orthodox believers in the United States, Kennan reported that Fedchenkov’s declaration received more attention from the Russian cameramen than any other event at the sobor. To Kennan, the Moscow patriarchate had succeeded in duping the Western public into believing that it bore the unified support of the international Orthodox community, the falseness of which was known only to informed Orthodox clerics and government officials.[[667]](#footnote-667)

The FBI shared Kennan’s concerns about the pro-Soviet Orthodox clergy and began monitoring Moscow’s high-ranking clerics when they arrived in Washington and New York in the autumn of 1945 and 1947 to persuade American Orthodox priests to align with the Moscow Orthodox leadership. According to FBI investigators, the religious and ethnic ties of American Orthodox leaders to Russia rendered them vulnerable to communist influence, even though many had disavowed communism. The FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover suspected that many American Orthodox priests claimed hostility to the Moscow hierarchy to deceive the House Un-American Activities Committee during its investigations of American communists.[[668]](#footnote-668)

The American envoy to the Vatican, Myron Taylor, joined Kennan in offering negative assessments of Soviet religious policy. In early 1945, Taylor sent Washington scathing reports of the Yugoslavian communist leader Marshal Tito’s vicious attacks on local Catholic clergy and laypeople. According to Taylor, “terroristic" assaults by Soviet-backed communists in Yugoslavia had led to “massacres” of Franciscan priests. Taylor did not suggest that the attacks might be spontaneous reprisals in response to Catholics’ support for Yugoslavia’s axis-appointed Catholic Ustasha regime, which between 1941 and early 1945 murdered hundreds of thousands of Yugoslavian Serbs, Jews, Roma, and other dissidents in an effort to create a racially “pure” Croatia.[[669]](#footnote-669) In similarly decontextualized reports, the US ambassador in Belgrade reported Pope Pius’s personal complaints of communist brutalities against Catholics in Yugoslavia, and US legations in Greece, Turkey, and Cairo reported Catholic allegations of repression by communist groups.[[670]](#footnote-670)

Some of these reports reached the US Congress. In June 1945, Claire Boothe Luce (R-Connecticut) warned the House of Representatives that a “reliable” US official in Moscow believed that Catholics in Eastern Europe might soon be forced to renounce the ecclesiastical superiority of Rome in favour of the Kremlin-dominated Orthodox Church in Moscow. [[671]](#footnote-671)

US officials also suspected American Baptist and Jewish organizations of serving as “fellow travelers” of the Soviet regime. The most worrisome group was the American Birobidjan Committee, a New York-based Jewish philanthropic organization that raised funds for the Soviet-sponsored Jewish Birobidjan settlement in Siberia. When in summer 1947 approximately 150 wealthy Jewish businessmen and humanitarians gathered in New York City to discuss the Birobidjan project, covert FBI investigators reported that the group’s leaders accused the American government of abandoning Jewish refugees and orphans while the Soviet regime rescued two million European Jews and resettled them in an autonomous homeland on Russian soil. Relief workers praised Birobidjan as a “model” community wherein Jews enjoyed complete religious freedom and full “equality” with other Russian citizens. Conversely, the British Zionist project in Palestine was a “destructive business” where British “imperialist policies” harmed both Jews and Arabs. The New York City Councilman Stanley Isaacs championed the settlement as worthy of US monetary support while denouncing Truman’s request for aid to “fascist regimes” in Greece and Turkey as a scheme aimed “against” Soviet Russia and the “peace of the world.[[672]](#footnote-672) With its wealthy and influential body of supporters, the Birobidjan Committee seemed to US officials to constitute a powerful locus of pro-Soviet subversion and propaganda.[[673]](#footnote-673)

Finally, evangelical American Baptists were a domestic segment that US officials also monitored as potential dupes of the Soviet government. In March 1945, the head of the Baptist World Alliance W.O. Lewis informed officials in the Eastern European Division that his organization was delighted with the Russian government’s recent concessions to Baptists in the Soviet sphere. The Kremlin allowed Russian priests to send mail abroad and convene an international leadership meeting in Moscow, and Baptists in Romania were permitted unprecedented freedoms under communist rule. When Lewis asked how to express his gratitude to Soviet diplomats in Washington, officials in the Eastern European Division discouraged him and referred him to State Department experts familiar with reports of the Soviet religious repression in Yugoslavia and the Ukraine.[[674]](#footnote-674) The US embassy in Moscow confirmed in 1946 that Russian-born Baptist clerics were joining the “throngs” of “Soviet clergy” who travelled abroad each year to “propagate the Stalinist faith.”[[675]](#footnote-675)

Baptists began to pose even greater problems for the Truman administration in summer 1947 when Truman attempted to bolster the popularity of the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan by developing closer public ties to the Vatican. In August, Truman publicized a personal letter to Pope Pius XII wherein he expressed his desire to cooperate with Rome to liberate the world from the “chains of untruth” and “collectivist organization” by ensuring that worship of God was “respected in all lands.”[[676]](#footnote-676) Forty-four leading American Baptist leaders immediately denounced Truman’s letter in the national media, charging Truman with making a calculated move to make America the “ally of clerical totalitarianism” by committing it to the Vatican’s “crusade…against communism.” The Baptist leaders excoriated Truman for pandering to Catholic voters in the upcoming presidential election, and they demanded that he stop entangling US policy with Rome and instead pursue the American people’s desire for “peace.”[[677]](#footnote-677)

Fortunately for the Truman administration, conservative Baptist leaders defended Truman’s anti-communist cooperation with the Vatican and disavowed “soft-liner” Baptists who criticized Truman’s Cold War policies. Chief among the administration’s supporters was the flamboyant Reverend Frank J. Norris, a well-known radio pastor and bitter anti-Catholic. In summer 1947, Norris wrote the White House and State Department to praise Truman’s efforts to craft a “united front” of Catholics and Baptists against “the most brutal atheistic tyrannical despotism in all...time.” Norris captured national newspaper headlines in August 1947 when he publicly denounced non-interventionist Baptists such as Louis Newton for “doing the bidding of Stalin” and “lining up” with communists to destroy God and the American government.[[678]](#footnote-678) Norris undertook a well-publicized trip to Europe to visit the Catholic pope, and he declared in a major Protestant journal that the Vatican constituted a vital ally in the global battle between Christianity and communism. According to Norris, Rome was "the last Gibraltar in Europe” capable of stemming the tide of Soviet domination of Western Europe.[[679]](#footnote-679) Although the Truman administration’s calls for an anti-communist Christian front failed to garner the unqualified support of all American Christian leaders, this was due primarily to internecine disputes within and between their organizations. Most Christian leaders supported Truman’s anti-communist worldview and the policies of containment and roll-back.

**Conclusion**

When the Truman administration offered Marshall Plan funding to Russia in 1947 on terms designed to be unacceptable to Soviet leaders, it convinced Stalin that the United States sought to undermine Russia’s territorial buffer zone in Eastern Europe, thereby jeopardizing Russia’s long-term security. Stalin cracked down on communist-dominated states in Eastern Europe, directed communist parties abroad to oppose Western reconstruction efforts, and adopted anti-capitalist Cold War rhetoric. According to the historian Geoffrey Roberts, this marked the final turning point on the road to the Cold War.

An important component of Truman’s public campaign to popularize containment doctrine and the Marshall Plan in Congress and popular opinion centred on anti-communist religious rhetoric. After 1946, Truman implored Christian believers to support America’s manifest destiny to spread democracy and Christian religious freedoms worldwide by eradicating the communist-atheist menace emanating from Soviet Russia.[[680]](#footnote-680) State Department officials cultivated cooperative anti-communist Catholic and Protestant spokespeople, decried Soviet propaganda claiming that religious toleration existed in Soviet-controlled states, and monitored American Orthodox, Baptist and Jewish groups suspected of communist sympathies. Thus, the Truman administration reversed Roosevelt’s approach of refraining from criticism of Soviet domestic policies and marginalizing anti-communist officials who invoked religious tensions to justify more confrontational policies.

Truman and his advisors embraced containment doctrine primarily for economic, security, and geopolitical reasons rooted their belief in the benefits of expanding capitalist industrial and trading practices abroad, and their genuine yet exaggerated fears of Soviet expansion into Western Europe. Although religious ideology did not cause the Cold War, Truman’s religious anti-communism helped to frame the Cold War struggle in terms that were familiar and appealing to many Americans, encouraging popular and congressional support for the policies of containment and roll-back. US criticisms of Soviet religious repression exacerbated the atmosphere of anti-Soviet hostility that characterized State Department and American public discourse after 1945, encouraging the breakdown of relations between 1946 and 1948. Truman’s reversal of FDR’s cooperative approach to Russia, including his tolerant attitude to religious differences, was not inevitable. Instead, it was the result of contingent factors such as FDR’s sudden death, poor succession planning, and failure to secure the support of anti-communist Catholics for long-term cooperation with Soviet Russia.

Conclusion

Religion played an important role in American Cold War rhetoric and official operations after Harry Truman left office in 1953. The Republican president Dwight D. Eisenhower broadened Truman’s religious rhetoric by explicitly inviting Muslim, Jewish, and other non-Christian faiths to join Protestants and Catholics in an ecumenical crusade against atheistic Russia.[[681]](#footnote-681) The National Security Council reported in 1953 that the Soviet government was persecuting pro-Western priests while financially sponsoring pro-Soviet ones who offered “another powerful weapon” of “thought control” among large Orthodox populations in the Middle East and Mediterranean region. The CIA, Pentagon, and State Department began to secretly channel financial aid to anti-communist Orthodox leaders in the United States and Turkey in the hopes of using them as “weapons” to “combat communists” and “recapture the Church.”[[682]](#footnote-682)

US leaders continued to publicly invoke religion to rationalize US containment policies in the 1960s and 1970s, despite secularizing trends in American society, civil rights leaders’ challenges to religious narratives about American exceptionalism, and growing religious opposition to US nuclear arms and military invention in Vietnam. In 1962 and 1963, the US Supreme Court removed official prayers and Bible study from public schools, and Martin Luther King argued that America’s discriminatory race policies prevented America from realizing its ideal identity as God’s bastion of liberal freedoms. During the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961, the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, and the Vietnam War from 1964 to 1975, many Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish leaders invoked religious rhetoric to denounce US nuclear and military policies as contradictory to the pacifist, anti-interventionist, and anti-imperialist teachings of the gospel. The Watergate scandal of 1972-1974 led many religious believers to doubt the moral integrity of Christian politicians.[[683]](#footnote-683) Despite religion’s ebbing power to bolster the US government’s Cold War policies, American religious believers remained deeply anti-communist and generally supported the US government’s rhetoric calling for Western nations to free oppressed people from communist tyranny. Thus, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, and Carter continued to highlight Western democracies’ shared belief in God and duty to protect religious and political freedoms abroad.

Religion historians have begun to analyze the role of religion in end of the Cold War, but this scholarship remains underdeveloped and divided. Diane Kirby, William Inboden, and Peter Kent have maintained that religion was vital to the end of the conflict because Pope John Paul II’s popularity in Poland and Eastern Europe after 1978 and communist regimes’ hostility to the Catholic Church encouraged political dissent during the collapse of the USSR from 1989-1991. These historians have also claimed that and President Ronald Reagan’s religious rhetoric casting Russia as a Godless “evil empire” encouraged ongoing Western support for Cold War policies while adding to the political malaise in the Soviet sphere.[[684]](#footnote-684) Yet, detailed scholarship suggests that Catholic leaders in Europe were generally cautious and cooperative in relations with communist governments, which collapsed primarily due to internal political and economic woes.[[685]](#footnote-685) Historians such as Inboden are on firmer ground by emphasizing the importance of Soviet religious intolerance in the Afghan War from 1979-1989. By supporting radical Marxist leaders in Afghanistan who disregarded the nation’s Muslim political traditions, underdeveloped economy, illiteracy, and tribal political structures, the Soviet regime entangled itself in a demoralizing ten-year war against US-equipped Islamic *jihadists* that ended with a humiliating Soviet withdrawal in 1989. The resource-draining war may have contributed to Gorbachev’s refusal to send military units to quell anti-communist demonstrations in Eastern Europe, contributing to the fall of the Berlin Wall in late 1989.[[686]](#footnote-686)

The United States never experienced the anti-communist religious front desired by Truman and Eisenhower during the early Cold War, and the role of religion as a US Cold War weapon ebbed and flowed throughout the conflict. Nonetheless, US leaders’ calls after 1945 for a Christian, Jewish, and Muslim crusade against the atheistic Soviet Union almost certainly helped to sustain Western popular support for the protracted Cold War struggle. Popular hostility to Soviet religious policy in the Eastern bloc may also have played an important role in the collapse of the USSR after 1989. Religious ideology probably never eclipsed economic, military, or national security factors as a primary driver of government policy or major Cold War events, but it served as a powerful rhetorical tool in American Cold War leaders’ efforts to win “hearts and minds” of domestic and foreign audiences. Indeed, popular support or at least consent was often vital to Cold War policies on both sides of the Iron Curtain. That was demonstrated during the US congressional debate over the Marshall Plan in 1947-1948, popular and Congressional debate about US military intervention in Vietnam, Islamic resistance to Soviet-backed rule after 1979, and national rebellions against communist rule in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the USSR in the 1980s.

This project has demonstrated that the US government’s Cold War religious rhetoric evolved from a long tradition of official and public criticism of religious repression in Russia. Beginning in the 1880s, American journalists began to travel to Tsarist Russia and denounce the Tsarist regime’s anti-Semitic repression and favoritism toward the pro-imperial Russian Orthodox Church. As the United States gained more industrial, commercial and political influence in the late 1890s, journalists, religious reformers, and politicians began to argue that it was America’s duty as God’s bastion of liberal freedoms to spread democratic and religious rights abroad. American demands for American-style religious freedoms antagonized Russian leaders and failed to induce liberal reform, and this dynamic persisted after the abdication of the Tsar and the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. US officials decried the Bolshevik regime’s nationalization of church property, discrimination against worshippers, and imprisonment, execution, and exile of Orthodox and Catholic priests. American officials cited Soviet religious repression to justify the United States’ non-recognition policy, and during the American Red Scare of 1919-1921, Catholic and Protestant leaders accused communist agents of infiltrating American churches, schools, and civil institutions. State Department officials were particularly suspicious that American Orthodox clerics were grooming their American congregations to spread communism.

When FDR took power in 1933, he was convinced that improved US-Soviet relations would benefit American economic, military, and geopolitical interests. Thus, he introduced a more tolerant approach to Soviet religious repression that was largely successful until 1943. He persuaded anti-communist Catholic leaders to support diplomatic recognition in 1933 on the grounds that recognition would encourage religious reform in Russia. Roosevelt also championed the view that religious freedoms in Russia were improving. Unfortunately, anti-communist officials in the State Department resisted FDR’s accommodating attitude to religious, economic, and security conflicts. Although Roosevelt sidelined hostile foreign service officials by controlling decision-making and appointing friendly ambassadors to Russia, all of his envoys with the exception of Joseph Davies quickly became embittered with the USSR. Determined to maintain positive relations, FDR overlooked Soviet religious repression and the party and military purges of the late 1930s, and he refused to break off diplomatic relations even after Russia invaded Poland in 1939. Ultimately, his tolerant approach maintained functional relations, enabling Lend Lease and the Grand Alliance against Germany after the Barbarossa invasion in 1941.

The Roosevelt administration was particularly successful at minimizing religious tensions during the first two years of the Grand Alliance. Convinced that pragmatic military cooperation served US interests in defeating Germany, most Americans willingly overlooked or rationalized Soviet religious repression in order to bolster the Alliance. Unfortunately, Roosevelt began to neglect his personal relationships to Catholics leaders after news broke in early 1943 of the Soviet massacre in the Katyn Forest in Poland. Isolated, unhealthy, and preoccupied with military and diplomatic decision-making, FDR was unable to stem the loss of Catholic leaders’ support for his tolerant Russia policy. Roosevelt also lost the support of key officials in his administration who began criticize Roosevelt’s accommodating attitude to Russia in meetings with American Catholic leaders.

When Harry Truman took power after FDR’s death in April 1945, he harbored a deep anti-communism that was rooted in part in his Baptist upbringing and belief in America’s providential duty to create an international system governed by Christian morals and political and religious freedoms. Under the sway of State Department hardliners such as George Kennan and Charles Bohlen, Truman abandoned FDR’s plans for continuing the Alliance through economic aid and territorial concessions. Instead, Truman dispatched military and financial aid to defeat communism in Greece and Turkey, and he offered Marshall Plan funding on terms that were designed to be unacceptable to Soviet officials. Although Truman had muted his religious anti-communism during the war, in 1946, Truman called for a Christian crusade to contain atheistic communism. Although Truman’s religious invective did not cause the turn to the Cold War from 1945 to 1948, it exacerbated post-war tensions and helped to generate American and Western support for containment and roll-back.

By analyzing the causal influence of religion on the origins of the Cold War from 1880 to 1948, this project has sought to fill a gap in the existing scholarship on US foreign relations. Whereas David Foglesong focused on briefly on journalists’ and public intellectuals’ views of Russia during the interwar period, and whereas Gary Scott Smith and Andrew Preston focused on FDR's overall religious beliefs and anti-Nazi rhetoric, this project has analyzed the causal influence of religion on White House policy toward Russia prior to the Cold War. [[687]](#footnote-687) Ultimately, religion operated as more as a tool of rhetoric rather than a primary driver of policy. When US officials sought to isolate Russia for economic or geopolitical reasons, they invoked religious rhetoric to justify their goals, and the national media and Congress generally accepted their interpretations. This occurred when diplomatic tensions mounted in Asia after 1900, and when the Bolshevik regime seized power, signed a separate peace with Germany, and expropriated foreign-owned property after 1917. Yet, when pragmatic cooperation with Russia seemed to benefit US economic and security interests—as it did during the Great Depression and the war against Germany from 1941 to 1943—most Americans cooperated with President Roosevelt’s efforts to reinterpret Russian religious policy in a more positive light. As Andrew Preston has observed, charismatic presidents such as Franklin Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln had the power to heavily influence how the American media, Congress, and mass public understood their nation’s religious identity and its application to foreign policy. Thus, when FDR set aside the traditional goal of realizing religious freedoms worldwide in order to benefit core American interests, even anti-communist Catholic leaders would generally follow suit. [[688]](#footnote-688)

This project also contributes to the “missed opportunities” debate by integrating religion into an analysis of whether the Cold War was avoidable. If FDR had lived, maintained better health and personal support after 1943, and devoted more energy to ensuring that his successors understood and shared his post-war vision for managing religious tensions, the United States might have adopted a more cooperative, less hostile approach to religious issues after April 1945. Indeed, FDR tried to warn the American public in late 1944 to be patient with Russia’s slow progress toward the Four Freedoms, and he tried in 1945—albeit with little success—to fashion at least the appearance of Catholic-Kremlin accord through his envoy, Edward Flynn. Although some degree of economic, ideological, and geopolitical conflict was inevitable after Germany’s defeat, a greater US commitment to accommodation in the realm of religious ideology might have improved post-war relations and permitted greater negotiation and cooperation between the two superpowers.

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1. Tsarist officials initially refused to recognize the US government after 1776 in order to maintain good relations with Great Britain, but the United States and Washington established diplomatic relations in 1808 to defend their neutral maritime trading rights against Britain and France during the Napoleonic wars. See John Lewis Gaddis, *Russia, The Soviet Union, and the United States: An Interpretive History,* 2nd Ed. (New York, 1990), 6-22. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The northern United States benefitted from relations with Russia during the American Civil War, and the United States purchased Alaska on favorable terms in 1867 despite Russia’s weak defenses in the region. The United States sold sugar, rice, indigo, cotton, and technology to Russia, which reciprocated with sales of hemp, iron, and sailcloth and other necessary staples for the US maritime industry. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Russian leaders also preferred the less-radical nature of the American Revolution compared to that of France. Ibid., 6-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Andrew Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, and Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy* (Toronto, 2012), 7-8, 11, 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Gaddis, *Russia, The Soviet Union*,26. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Ibid., 28; David S. Foglesong, *The American Mission and the “Evil Empire”: The Crusade for a “Free Russia” since 1881* (New York, 2007), 28, 43-47, 62, 72, 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. On defining the Cold War, see Anders Stephanson, “Fourteen Notes on the Very Concept of the Cold War,” *H-Diplo Essays,* 1997/2007, http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/essays/PDF/

   stephanson-14notes.pdf. On the catastrophic impact of the Cold War on the Third World, see Odd ArneWestad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge, 2007). For interpretations minimizing the negative outcomes of the Cold War, see John Lewis Gaddis, “The Long Peace: Elements of Stability in the Post-war International System,” *International Security* 10.4 (1986): 99-142; Robert Robert Dallek, *The Lost Peace*: *Leadership in a Time of Horror and Hope*, *1945-1953* (New York, 2010), 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Feis claimed that US leaders made a genuine effort to cooperate after the war, but Stalin refused to honour diplomatic agreements concluded with President Franklin Roosevelt at Yalta in January 1945 and President Harry Truman at Potsdam in July 1945. Instead, Stalin imposed communist regimes on unwilling populations in Eastern Europe and reinvigorated propaganda calling for international communist revolution, forcing Truman to contain Soviet expansion. Herbert Feis, *Churchill- Roosevelt-Stalin: The War They Waged and the Peace they Sought* (New Jersey, 1957); and Herbert Feis, *From Trust to Terror: The Onset of the Cold War, 1945-1950* (New York, 1970). Also see Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., “Origins of the Cold War,” *Foreign Affairs* 46 (1967): 22-52. For similar orthodox interpretations, see Paul Nitze, *United States Foreign Policy, 1945–1955* (New York, 1956); Louis Halle, *The Cold War as History* (New York, 1967); Adam Ulam, *The Rivals: America and Russia Since World War II* (New York, 1971); John Lukacs, *A New History of the Cold War* (Garden City, New York, 1966); Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* (New York, 1969); Robert Ferrell, "Truman Foreign Policy: A Traditionalist View," in *The Truman Period as a Research Field,* ed. Richard Kirkendall (Columbia, 1974), 11-45. For a new survey of Cold War historiography, see Curt Cardwell, “The Cold War,” in *America in the World: The Historiography of US Foreign Relations Since 1941*, 2nd Edition, ed. Michael J. Hogan and Frank Costigliola (New York, 2013), 104-130. On subjective judgements in Cold War historiography, see John Lewis Gaddis, "On Moral Equivalency and Cold War History,” *Ethics & International Affairs* 10 (1996): 131-148; Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question*" *and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge, UK, 1988); and Bruce Cumings, “Revising Post-Revisionism, Or the Poverty of Theory in Diplomatic History,” *Diplomatic History* 17. 4 (1993): 539–69. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Vojtech Mastny, *The Cold War and Soviet Insecurity: The Stalin Years* (New York, 1996), 23; and Vojtech Mastny, *Russia's Road* to the *Cold War*: *Diplomacy*, *Warfare* and the *Politics* of *Communism*, *1941*-*1945* (New York, 1979). These orthodox views enjoyed a resurgence of support in the post-Cold War atmosphere of triumphalism that swept over the West after the Soviet Union collapsed in 1989. Orthodox historians travelled to former Soviet states where they mined previously-inaccessible Soviet archives to support their anti-Soviet interpretation of the origins of the Cold War. See Wilson D. Miscamble, *From Roosevelt to Truman: Potsdam, Hiroshima, and the Cold War* (Cambridge, UK, 2007), 323; John Lewis Gaddis, *We Know Now: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York, 1997), 292; John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (New York, 2005); Robert Gates, *From the Shadows: The Ultimate Insider's Story of Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War* (New York, 1996); Richard Pipes, “Misinterpreting the Cold War,” *Foreign Affairs* 74 (1995): 154-161*;* and Tony Smith, *America’s Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century* (New Jersey, 1994). For a broader discussion of orthodox scholarship, see Cardwell, “The Cold War,” 105, 114. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Gaddis, “The Emerging Post-Revisionist Synthesis on the Origins of the Cold War,” *Diplomatic History* 7.3 (1983), 176. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. John Lewis Gaddis asserted in 1972 that neither the USSR nor the US was solely responsible for the Cold War, but in the 1990s he placed blame primarily on Stalin’s aggression. John Lewis Gaddis, *We Know Now: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York, 1997), 292; John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History (*New York, 2005). For orthodox-leaning scholarship after 1989, see Miscamble, *From Roosevelt to Truman*; Robert Gates, *From the Shadows: The Ultimate Insider's Story of Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War* (New York, 1996); Pipes, “Misinterpreting the Cold War,” 154-161*;* and Smith, *America’s Mission*. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. For a balanced discussion of the strengths and limitations of revisionism, see Thomas G. Paterson, “The Origins of the Cold War,” Organization of American Historians Magazine of History 2.1 (1986), 5-9, 18 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. William Appleman Williams*,* *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York, 1988 originally published 1958). Also see Joyce Kolko and Gabriel Kolko, *The Limits of Power: The World and US Foreign Policy, 1945-1954* (New York, 1972). Gar Alperovitz advanced the atomic diplomacy thesis, which holds that US policymakers provoked the breakdown of relations by flaunting the United States’ atomic capabilities in a misguided bid to intimidate Soviet Russia and dominate the post-war order. See Gar Alperovitz, *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam* (New York, 1965). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace: the Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State* (Boston, 1977); Frederic L. Propas, “Creating a hard line toward Russia: the training of State Department experts, 1927-1937,” *Diplomatic History* 8 (1984): 209-226. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. For contrasting views on the merits of post-revisionism, see John Lewis Gaddis, “The Emerging Post- Revisionist Synthesis and the Origins of the Cold War,” *Diplomatic History* 7 (July 1983): 171–90, and responses by Lloyd Gardner, Larry Kaplan, Warren Kimball, and Bruce Kuniholm in the same issue. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Robert Dallek wrote in 2010 that despite Western leaders’ “blunders…it was Stalin, above all, who assured that the postwar world would continue its traditional rivalry…in what came to be called the Cold War.” Dallek placed the largest proportion of blame on Stalin’s aggression. See Dallek, *The Lost Peace,* 75. For critiques of Wilson Miscamble’s traditionalism despite his self-identification as a post-revisionist, see Frank Costigliola, H-Diplo roundtable review of *From Roosevelt to Truman: Potsdam, Hiroshima, and the Cold War,* by Wilson D. Miscamble, *H-Net, H-Diplo*, September 2007, http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/ roundtables/PDF/FromTrumantoRoosevelt-Roundtable.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Gabriel Kolko*, The Politics of War: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1943-1945* (New York, 1968); Joyce Kolko and Gabriel Kolko, *The Limits of Power* (New York, 1972); Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947* (New York, 1972). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Costigliola claims that Truman lacked an “understanding or appreciation” of FDR’s plans for a “Big-Three-led post-war transition,” as well as the “patient and confident temperament” needed to deal with insecure, prideful Soviet leaders. Self-righteously convinced that the United States was a “uniquely moral force,” Truman expected Soviet officials to readily accede to American demands, and he refused to embrace the conciliation and ambiguity that FDR knew was required for functional relations. Frank Costigliola, *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances: How Personal Politics Helped Start the Cold War*, (Princeton, New Jersey, 2012), 360, 388. Also see Mary E. Glantz*. FDR and the Soviet Union: The President's Battles over Foreign Policy* (Lawrence, 2005); Geoffrey Roberts, *Stalin's Wars: From World War to Cold War, 1939-1953* (New Haven, 2008). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. According to Geoffrey Roberts, Stalin’s desire for security, combined with some degree of communist ideological fervour, led him to seek expansion into Iran, Turkey, and Korea, but he sought cooperation with the West until at least 1947. Stalin thought a war between the capitalist Western nations was more likely than with the Soviet Union. Roberts, *Stalin's Wars*, xi-iii, 317. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Costigliola, *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances,* especially 3-4. Robert Dallek recently adopted a darker view of the Big Three’s post-war plans, contending they bore little genuine hope for negotiation; instead, they expected military, political, and ideological conflict, and Roosevelt and Churchill retained control of nuclear technology in anticipation of using it to deter Soviet expansion. Dallek, *The Lost Peace*, 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. For examples of leading works that focused on economics and diplomacy with only episodic attention to religious controversies, see DonaldBishop, *The Roosevelt-Litvinov Agreements: The American View* (Syracuse, New York, 1965); Raymond H. Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia, 1941: Foreign Policy and Domestic Politics* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1959); Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945* (New York, 1995). Peter Filene’s 1967 US-Soviet survey explored religious discourse in civil society but did not assess its impact on state-to-state relations. John Lewis Gaddis’s 1990 diplomatic survey ignored religious issues, and Norman Saul’s 2006 survey made passing reference to religion. See Peter G. Filene, *Americans and the Soviet Experiment, 1917-1933* (Massachusetts, 1967); Gaddis, *Russia, The Soviet Union;* Norman E*.* Saul*, Friends or Foes: The United States and Russia, 1921-1941* (Lawrence, Kansas, 2006). For other diplomatic surveys focusing on the pre-Cold War period that devote cursory attention to religion, see Edward Bennett*, Recognition of Russia: An American Foreign Policy Dilemma* (Waltham, Massachusetts, 1970); John Richman, *The United States & the Soviet Union: The Decision to Recognize* (Raleigh, North Carolina, 1980)*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Dianne Kirby, introduction to *Religion and the Cold War,* ed. Dianne Kirby (New York, 2003), 1. Michael Hunt defined ideology as an individual or group’s “pluralistic body of assumptions and cognitive frameworks,” some of which may be “partially or poorly articulated.” These beliefs “reduce the complexities of a particular slice of reality” and suggest appropriate ways of responding. In Hunt’s view, American ideology primarily involves notions of national greatness, racial hierarchy, and hostility to revolution. Michael Hunt, “Ideology,” in *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, eds. Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson (New Haven, Connecticut, 2004), 222. Also see Michael Hunt, *Ideology and US Foreign Policy* (New Haven, Connecticut, 1987). For works exploring ideology primarily in terms of gender, empire, revolution, and race, see Mary A. Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of US Imperialism, 1915-1940* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 2001); Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood* (New Haven, Connecticut, 1998); Robert D. Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood: Gender and the Making of Cold War Foreign Policy* (Amherst, 2003); and Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 2006). For explanations of why religion has remained a neglected aspect of diplomatic history, see Patricia R. Hill, "Religion as a Category of Diplomatic Analysis," *Diplomatic History* 24 (2000): 633, and Andrew Preston, "Bridging the Gap between the Sacred and the Secular in the History of American Foreign Relations," *Diplomatic History*, 30.5 (2006): 783-812. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. According to Stephanson, concepts of “Universal Right,” “Human Reason,” and “Just War” that undergirded American expansion bore roots in Christian narratives dating back to the Medieval Crusades. Some isolationists claimed that God had chosen the United States to remain a morally pristine “exemplary state” separate from the “corrupt and fallen world,” but interventionists considered it America’s providential duty to use US military, economic, and political power to project American values into the politics of foreign states in order to banish moral evils abroad. Anders Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny: American Expansionism and the Empire of Right* (New York, 1995), xii. Stephanson, “Fourteen Notes,” 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny,* xii. Stephanson’s essay *Fourteen Notes* totals only twenty pages with a brief section on religious ideology and the Cold War. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Preston, *Sword of the Spirit*; Gary Scott Smith, *Faith and the Presidency: From George Washington to George W. Bush* (Oxford, UK, 2006). For a discussion of the limitations of older religious and diplomatic history, see Preston, "Bridging the Gap,” 794-795. On the dearth of religion scholarship on US-Soviet relations, see Thomas Maddux, ed., H-Diplo roundtable review of David S. Foglesong, *The American Mission and the ‘Evil Empire’: The Crusade for a ‘Free Russia’ since 1881,* H-Diplo Roundtable Reviews 9.5 (21 March 2008), http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/American

    Mission-roundtable.pdf. Detailed institutional histories exist on specific religious organizations and their activities in Russia, but those monographs do not focus on the causal role of religious tensions in shaping US-Soviet diplomacy prior to the Cold War. See Peter C. Kent, *The Lonely Cold War of Pope Pius XII: The Roman Catholic Church and the Division of Europe, 1943-1950* (Montreal, Quebec, 2002); Gerald P. Fogarty, S.J., *The Vatican and the Americanist Crisis: Denis J. O'Connell, American Agent in Rome, 1885-1903* (Rome, 1974); Gerald Fogarty, ''Roosevelt and the America Catholic Hierarchy,'' in *FDR, the Vatican, and the Roman Catholic Church in America, 1933-1945,* ed. David B. Woolner and Richard G. Kurial (New York, 2003), 11-43; George Q. Flynn, *American Catholics and the Roosevelt Presidency, 1932-1936* (Lexington, Kentucky, 1968); Christopher Lawrence Zugger, *The Forgotten: Catholics of the Soviet Empire from Lenin through Stalin* (Syracuse, New York, 2001). [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Foglesong, *The American Mission,* 60-106. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. For works that focus on the post-1945 period, see William Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy, 1945-1960: The Soul of Containment* (New York, 2008); Gunn, *Spiritual Weapons***; Jonathan P. Herzog,** *The Spiritual-Industrial Complex: America's Religious Battle against Communism in the Early Cold War* (Oxford, UK, 2011); Jason W. Stevens, *God-Fearing and Free: A Spiritual History of America’s Cold War* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2010);Seth Jacobs, *America's Miracle Man in Vietnam: Ngo Dinh Diem, Religion, Race, and US Intervention in Southeast Asia, 1950-1957* (Durham, North Carolina, 2004); Raymond Haberski Jr., *God and War: American Civil Religion Since 1945* (Princeton, New Jersey, 2012)*.* On the centrality of religion to the Dulles brothers, see Stephen Kinzer*, The Brothers: John Foster Dulles, Allen Dulles, and Their Secret World War* (New York, 2013); Kirby, ed., *Religion and the Cold War*. Andrew Preston briefly discussed religion and US foreign relations during the 1930s and World War II, noting that the Truman administration redirected Roosevelt’s anti-Nazi religious discourse toward the Soviet Union after 1945. Preston did not analyze Roosevelt and his allies’ attempts to shelter Russia from religion-oriented criticisms, however, nor did he address the role of religion in the origins of the Cold War. See Preston, *Sword of the Spirit,* 291-365. For a similar cursory discussion of the origins of the Cold War, see Gary Scott Smith, *Faith and the Presidency,* 191-220*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Inboden concluded only that FDR did not predict that Truman’s expropriation of rhetoric imploring Americans to do their Christian duty to protect Europeans’ religious freedoms from totalitarianism. Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy,* 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. On Roosevelt’s personal faith, see Gary Scott Smith, “Religion and the Presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt,” in *Religion and the American Presidency: George Washington to George W. Bush with Commentary and Primary Sources,* ed. Gastón Espinosa(New York, 2009). Also see Merlin Gustafsen and Jerry Rosenberg, “The Faith of Franklin Roosevelt,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 19(1989), 559-566; Ronald Isetti, “The Moneychangers of the Temple: FDR, American Civil Religion, and the New Deal,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 26 (1996): 678-693; Merlin Gustafsen, “Franklin Roosevelt and his Protestant Constituency,” *Journal of Church and State* 35 (1993): 285-295; Richard V. Pierard and Robert D. Linder, *Civil Religion and the Presidency* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1988), 161-183; William J. Federer, *The Faith of FDR: From President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s Public Papers, 1933-1945* (St. Louis, Missouri, 2006). Andrew Preston has highlighted the absence of scholarship on religion and US foreign relations from 1914 to 1945. Preston, “Bridging the Gap,” 784, 805. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Preston, “Bridging the Gap,” 784, 805. For works on religion in Russia that focus narrowly on particular clerics, religious organizations, or controversial episodes in Russian religious history, see Dimitry Pospielovsky, *The Orthodox Church in the History of Russia* (Crestwood, New York, 1998); Nathaniel Davis, *A Long Walk to Church: A Contemporary History of Russian Orthodoxy* (Oxford, 2003); Walter Kolarz, *Religion in the Soviet Union* (London, UK, 1961); **Bohdan R. Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State (1939-1950)* (Toronto, 1996);** Daniel Peris, *Storming the Heavens: The Soviet League of the Militant Godless* (Ithaca, New York 1998); Daniel Peris, “'God is Now on Our Side': The Religious Revival on Unoccupied Soviet Territory during World War II,” *Kritika* 1.1 (2000): 97-118; Edward E. Roslof, *Red Priests: Renovationism, Russian Orthodoxy, and Revolution 1905-1946* (Bloomington, Indiana, 2003); Zugger, *The Forgotten*. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Charles Gallagher is an ordained Jesuit priest and professor of history at Boston College, and Dennis J. Dunn was a practicing Catholic. Reviewers have criticized Dunn for his “unabashed lack of objectivity” and pro-Catholic bias. Charles R. Gallagher, S.J., *Vatican Secret Diplomacy*: Joseph P. Hurley and Pope Pius XII (New Haven, 2008); Dennis J. Dunn, *The Catholic Church and Russia*: *Popes*, *Patriarchs*, *Tsars and Commissars* (Burlington, Vermont, 2004); Stella Rock, review of *The Catholic Church and Russia: Popes, Patriarchs, Tsars and Commissars* by Dennis J. Dunn, *The English Historical Review* 120.489 (2005): 1362-1365. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Using newly-available Russian records on the World War II and the immediate post-war period, Miner showed that Stalin’s government—with the assistance of British and US officials, Protestant leaders, and public intellectuals—successfully disseminated the impression in the Western media that religious toleration existed in wartime Russia. StevenMerritt Miner, *Stalin's Holy War: Religion, Nationalism, and Alliance Politics, 1941-1945* (Chapel Hill, 2003). [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Ibid., 333. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. See Preston, "Bridging the Gap,” 783-812; and Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy*, 4-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Preston, "Bridging the Gap," 783-812. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. On civil religion during the Cold War, see Haberski, *God and War: American Civil Religion Since 1945*. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. David Zietsma recently explored the importance of religion in US decision-making, including the Roosevelt administration’s extension of lend lease aid to Russia in 1941. In a response article, David Foglesong questioned whether Zietsma had overemphasized the importance of radical religious perspectives. In an article surveying Catholic influence on foreign policy, Wilson Miscamble demanded indisputable proof that the leaders in the Catholic Church directly influenced US foreign policy while paying little attention to possibility that Christian religious ideology indirectly shaped diplomacy, Congressional decision-making, media discourse, or public opinion in important ways. See David Zietsma, “'Sin Has No History': Religion, National Identity, and US Intervention, 1937-1941,” *Diplomatic History* 31 (2007): 531-565; David Foglesong, review of "'Sin Has No History': Religion, National Identity, and US Intervention, 1937-1941" by David Zietsma, *H-Net, H-Diplo*, June 2010, http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/reviews/dh/dh2007.html#zietsma; Wilson Miscamble, “Catholics and American Foreign Policy from McKinley to McCarthy: A Historiographical Survey," *Diplomatic History* (1980): 223-240. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. # On FDR’s skill at charming personal acquaintances by appearing to agree with them without committing to their positions, see Warren Kimball, *The Juggler: Franklin Roosevelt as Wartime Statesman* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1991). For an excellent survey of theoretical works on the decision-making process, see Jerel A. Rosati and James M. Scott, *The Politics of United States Foreign Policy* (Belmont, California, 2011), especially 274-289.

    [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. For historians of religion, separating the role of religious and secular influences on a policymaker’s thinking poses methodological and interpretive challenges. For example, Arnold Offner’s uncertainty about religion’s role in shaping Harry Truman’s ethics and policymaking contrasts sharply with Diane Kirby’s insistence on its importance. The complexity of the policymaking process also complicates assessments about causation. Historians grapple with the pluralistic nature of public and elite discourse, uncertainties about what information policymakers were exposed to, and the scarcity of documentation speaking to policymakers’ perceptions of any given message. Dean and Costigliola have explored language, emotion, biography, and institutional and professional culture to glean clues into hidden motivation and private perception, but they have not focused on religion. The historian David Zeitsma has explored broader religious discourse in the 1930s and World War II, but he did not focus on US-Soviet religous issues. See Arnold Offner, *Another Such Victory: President Truman and the Cold War, 1945-1953* (Stanford, California, 2002),3, 6, 9, 127; Kirby, *Religion and the Cold War*, 8; Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood*; Frank Costigliola, “Unceasing Pressure for Penetration': Gender, Pathology, and Emotion in George Kennan's Formation of the Cold War," *The Journal of American History* (March 1997): 1309-39; Frank Costigliola, "'I Had Come as a Friend': Emotion, Culture, and Ambiguity in the Formation of the Cold War," *Cold War History* (August 2000): 103-28. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Casey compared the importance of public opinion to that of pressure form diplomatic allies and advice from military and political advisors. Steven Casey, *Cautious Crusade: Franklin D. Roosevelt, American Public Opinion, and the War Against Nazi Germany* (New York, 2002), xxiv-xxvi. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Roosevelt strove to gauge public opinion by studying mass opinion polls, six national newspapers, and the opinions of prominent liberal journalists, and he avoided openly challenging mainstream views. FDR retained Secretary of State Cordell Hull, whom he disliked, primarily for his influence on Capitol Hill. Casey, *Cautious Crusade,* xxiv-xxvi. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. FDR favored polls produced by Henry Cantrill and Joseph Gallup, and he read six major American newspapers each day: the *New York Times*, *New York Herald Tribune*, *Washington Post,* *Washington Times Herald*, *Baltimore Sun,* and *Chicago Tribune.* When novel controversies arose for which poll data was unavailable, FDR used prominent journalists who usually supported his policies as “weathervanes” for mass opinion; these journalists included Walter Lippmann, Anne O’Hare McCormick, and Dorothy Thompson. FDR worked to influence their printed interpretations as a conduit for guiding public discourse. Ibid., xviii, xix, xxii, xxiii, 17, 38, 121, 125. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. For a discussion of the opacity of Roosevelt’s thinking, see Kimball, *The Juggler.* For further strategies on analyzing diplomatic documents and contextual sources to reveal policymakers’ hidden assumptions, see Frank Costigliola and Thomas G. Paterson, “Doing and Defining US Foreign Relations: A Primer," in *Explaining American Foreign Relations History*, 2nd ed., eds. Michael Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson (New York, 2003), 10-34; Frank Costigliola, “Reading for Meaning: Theory, Language, and Metaphor," in *Explaining American Foreign Relations History*, 2nd ed., eds. Michael Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson (New York, 2003), 279-303. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. This project paid less attention to relatively obscure public intellectuals, minor religious leaders, and narrowly-circulated press organs that were largely overlooked by both US officials and the mass media. Those individuals’ and press organs’ lack of high-level or widespread exposure implies that they exerted little influence on official or public perceptions. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Gaddis, *Russia and the Soviet Union*, 177-179. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Andrew Preston argued that there was no uniform Cold War consensus among American religious believers during the late 1940s and early 1950s. Conservatives—particularly Catholics—advocated aggressive tactics to defeat communism at home and abroad, whereas progressives often felt Truman’s aggressive containment neglected ideals of social justice. Nonetheless, most religious believers wanted to contain or eradicate Soviet communism, and anti-communist religious rhetoric largely dominated foreign policy, congressional discourse, and American religious leaders’ public and private statements. See Preston, *Sword of the Spirit*, 465-467, 484-485. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. See Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace: the Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State* (Boston, 1977); Frederic L. Propas, “Creating a hard line toward Russia: the training of State Department experts, 1927-1937,” *Diplomatic History* 8 (1984): 209-226; Offner, *Another Such Victory*; Glantz*. FDR and the Soviet Union*; Roberts, *Stalin's Wars,* especially 25; Frank Costigliola, “Broken Circle: The Isolation of Franklin D. Roosevelt in World War II,” *Diplomatic History* 32 (November 2008): 677–718; and Costigliola, *Roosevelt’s Lost* *Alliances*. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. US Const. amend. I, XIV. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. For President William McKinley’s religious rationale for annexing the Philippines, see General James Rusling, “Interview with President William McKinley,” *The Christian Advocate* 22 January 1903. On Americans’ use of civilizing narratives to justify political pressure or intervention in Russia, Colombia, and Cuba, see Foglesong, *The American Mission*, 6, 23, 29-30. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Bishop, *The Roosevelt Litvinov Agreements,* 4. Roosevelt quickly came to favour this view. John Lewis Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union, and the United States*: *An Interpretive History, 2nd ed*. (New York, 1990), 121. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Foglesong, *The American Mission*, 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. On Alexander III’s repressive religious policies, see David Mayers, *The Ambassadors and America's Soviet Policy* (New York, 1995), 50. On anti-Semitic legislation under Alexander III, see Secretary of State James Blaine to Minister Plenipotentiary Charles E. Smith, February 18, 1891, US

    Department of States, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* [FRUS] (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1891-1892), 737-738. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Foglesong, *American Mission*, 24; George Kennan to Alice Stone Blackwell, December 28, 1917, box 7, George Kennan Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC [LOC]. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Kennan, “A Voice for the People of Russia,” *Century* (July 1893); “Which is the Civilized Power?” *Outlook,* October 29, 1904, 516-520; “A Sacrilegious Fox Hunt,” in *A Russian Comedy of Errors* (New York, 1915). All quoted in Foglesong, *American Mission*, 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Foglesong, *American Mission,* 16, 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Ibid., 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Ibid., 15-16. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. George Kennan to Alice Stone Blackwell, December 28, 1917, box 7, George Kennan Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC [LOC]. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Foglesong, *The American Mission*, 24, 42. On English Walling’s anti-clericalism, see James Boylan, *Revolutionary Lives*: *Anna Strunsky & William English Walling* (Amherst, 1998). For discussions of Kennan and other reformers’ humanism and adult religiosity, see Martin E. Marty, *Righteous Empire: The Protestant Experience in America* (New York, 1970), 188-198; William G. McLaughlin, *Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform: An Essay on Religion and Social Change in America, 1607-1977* (Chicago, 1978), 141-178; William R. Hutchison, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago, 1987), 43, 86, 103-11*.* Although the reformer Arthur Bullard might be considered properly “religious,” Foglesong acknowledges that Bullard repudiated traditional Protestantism to some degree. Foglesong, *The American Mission*, 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Ibid., 15-21, 23-24 [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Kirk H. Porter, compiler, *National Party Platforms* (New York, 1924), 163, 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Foglesong, *The American Mission*, 1, 21, 38-39. For examples of religion-inspired reformist writings and articles, see James William Buel, *Russian Nihilism and Exile Life in Siberia:* *A Graphic and Chronological History of Russia’s Bloody Nemesis, and a Description of Exile Life in All it True But Horrifying Phases* (St. Louis, 1883); “Not a Beauty Spot,” *Life,* May 8, 1890; Arthur Bullard, “The Real Russian People at Church,” *The Independent,* July 4, 1907, 26-32; “The Peasant and the War,” *The Outlook,* May 27, 1905, 22. Quoted in Foglesong, *The American Mission,* 1, 21, 36-39. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. For optimistic press coverage of Nicholas’ modest religious reforms in 1905, see “Czar’s Latest Edict means a Real Reform,” *New York Times,* May 1, 1905, 4; “Not Ripe for Change: Russian People Incapable of Self-government,” July 23, 1905, 6; “Jews to Make Stand: Price of Loan to Be Russian Hebrew Reforms,” *Washington Post,* August 16, 1905, 3; Foglesong, *American Mission*, 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Ambassador John Foster to Secretary of State James Blaine, May 24, 1881, *FRUS* (1881) 2: 1020. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Cyrus Adler and Aaron M. Margalith*, With Firmness in the Right*: *American Diplomatic Action Affecting Jews, 1840-1945 (*New York, 1946), 178. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Ibid., 212. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Benjamin Harrison, State of the Union Address to Senate and House of Representatives, December 9, 1891, in *American Presidency Project,* ed. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29532. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. John Lewis Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union, and the United States*: *An Interpretive History, 2nd ed*. (New York, 1990), 40-41. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Mayers, *The Ambassadors,* 58. For anti-Tsarist press coverage of the pogroms, see Julius T. Loeb, “Guilt is With Russia: Government Accused of Inciting Murder of Jews, *Washington Post,* May 24, 1903, E3; “Troops Aided Mob: Jewish Outrages in the Russian City of Gomel,” *Washington Post,* Sep 24, 1903, 1; “1,600 Soldiers in the Town, Officials Encourage the Mob, A Thousand Families Flee,” *New York Times,* September 24, 1903, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Grover Cleveland address at Carnegie Hall, May 27, 1903, quoted in Philip Ernest Schoenberg, "The American Reaction to the Kishinev Pogrom of 1903," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 63.3 (1974), 270. On the Russian pogroms, see Stuart E. Knees, “The Diplomacy of Neutrality: Theodore Roosevelt and the Russian Pogroms of 1903-1906, *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 19.1:71-78, Monty Noam Penkower, “The Kishinev Pogrom of 1903: A Turning Point in Jewish History,” *Modern Judaism* 24.3 (2004): 187-225; Taylor Stults, “Roosevelt, Russian Persecution of Jews, and American Public Opinion,” *Jewish Social Studies* 33.1 (1971):13-22; Ann E. Healy, “Tsarist Anti-Semitism and Russian-American Relations,” *Slavic Review* 42.3 (1983): 408-425. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. *New York World,* May 28, 1903, quoted in Foglesong, *The American Mission,* 28. Also see Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union*, 42-44. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Secretary of State John Hay to Jacob Schiff, May 10, 1903, John Hay Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC [LOC], quoted in Stults, “Roosevelt, Russian Persecution of Jews, and American Public Opinion,” 17. Also see Hay to Henry White, May 22, 1903, quoted in Stults, “Roosevelt, Russian Persecution of Jews,” 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Rabi Stephen S. Wise to President Theodore Roosevelt, May 22, 1903, quoted in Stults, “Roosevelt, Russian Persecution of Jews,” 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union,* 42-43; Mayers, *The Ambassadors,* 58. For newspaper coverage of the petition, see “Note Goes to Russia: Jewish Protest to Be Submitted to the Czar, President Decides to Act," *Washington Post,* June 26, 1903, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union,* 43; Philip C**.** Jessup**,** *Elihu Root*, vol. 1: *1845-1909* (New York, 1938), 58, 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Mayers, *The Ambassadors,* 58; Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union,* 42-45. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Roosevelt to Elihu Root, June 2, 1904, in vol. 2 of *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt,* ed. Elting E. Morison (Cambridge, M.A., 1951), 810; Roosevelt to George Otto Trevelyan, May 13, 1905, ibid., 1174-1175. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Roosevelt to Schiff, December 14, 1905, in *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt,* vol. 2, ed. Elting E. Morison (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1951), 113. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union,* 43; Mayers, *The Ambassadors,* 58. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union,* 45. For further reading, see Naomi W. Cohen, “The Abrogation of the Russo-American Treaty of 1832,” *Jewish Social Studies* 25.1 (1963): 7-8; Healy, "*Tsarist Anti-Semitism*," 417-419. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Wilson Address at Carnegie Hall, December 7, 1911, *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson,* vol. 18, 583-587, quoted in Foglesong, *The American Mission*, 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union,* 46-47. For further reading on the trade treaty controversy, see Cohen, “Abrogation of the Russo-American Treaty,” 38-41; Clifford L. Egan, “Pressure Groups, the Department of State, and the Abrogation of the Russian-American Treaty of 1832,” Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society 115.4 (1971): 328-334; Max M. Laserson, *The American Impact on Russia, Diplomatic and Ideological, 1784-1917* (New York, 1950), 359-361. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. For detailed figures on expanding Russian-American trade during the war, see Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union*, 51-52. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Foglesong, *The American Mission,* 45-47; Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union,* 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union*, 54; [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Wilson’s Address to Congress, April 2, 1917, in *Selected Addresses and Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, ed. Albert Bushnell Hart (2002, Hawaii), 194. Although Wilson did not directly invoke religion in his address, the historian David Foglesong argued that his calls for universal liberty were intertwined with his Presbyterian faith in human perfectibility and Divine Providence. Without direct references to God or religion, Foglesong’s assertion remains speculative. Foglesong, *The American Mission*, 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Kennan, “The Victory of the Russian People,” *Outlook,* March 28, 1917; “Welcome Russia,” *LIFE*, May 10, 1917; “Is a People’s Revolution,” *New York Times,* March 16, 1917, 3; Stephen Bonsal, “Lvoff Foretold Russia’s Freedom,” *New York Times,* March 17, 1917, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union,* 57-59. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Ibid., 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Ibid.,61, 63-65. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Peter J. Popoff, “The Church in Russia,” *New York Times,* April 3, 1917, 12; Popoff, “Russia Ripe for a Republic,” *New York Times,* July 3, 1917, 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. “Russia Proclaims religious Freedom: Discriminatory Measures Largely Responsible for Rasputin's Rise and Czar's Downfall,” *New York Times,* April 5, 1917, 13; “Holy Man Stirs Russia,” [***Washington Post***](http://search.proquest.com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/news/pubidlinkhandler/sng/pubtitle/The+Washington+Post+$281877-1922$29/$N/60400/PagePdf/145535627/fulltextPDF/13CF8775CE913B3969B/19?accountid=12347), August 19, 1917, F1. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. “Religious Liberty for Russia,” *New York Times,* April 6, 1917, 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. “Billy Sunday Prays for all New York,” *New York Times,* April 18, 1917, 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. “Root Goes to Tell Russians Radicals Must be Curbed if Country is to be Aided,” *Washington Post,* May 13, 1917, E1. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union,* 60-64; On the marginal role of Jewish interests in the Root mission to Russia, see Zosa Szajkowski, “Jews and the Elihu Root Mission to Russia, 1917,” *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 37 (1969): 57-116. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. “From Petrograd,” *The Christian Advocate,* November 8, 1917*,* 1166. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union*, 61-65. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Harry H. Savage, “Official Policies and Relations of the United States with the Provisional Government of Russia, March-November, 1917” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1971), 27, in Gaddis, *Russia the Soviet Union,* 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. “Allies Adopt Wilson Plan to Aid Russians,” *Washington Post,* January 23, 1919, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. “Francis Approves Russian Parley,” *New York Times,* February 3, 1919, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union*, 52, 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. Ibid., 67, 70-71. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Wilson Address at Des Moines, Sept 6, 1919, in *The Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson: War and Peace,* vol. 2, ed. Ray S. Baker and William E. Dodd (New York, 1927), 15; Also see Walter L. Hixson, *The Myth of American Diplomacy*: *National Identity and US Foreign Policy* (New Haven, Connecticut, 2008)*,* 136. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. On the Red Scare of 1919-1920, see William E. Leuchtenburg, *The Perils of Prosperity*, *1914–1932*, 2nd ed. (Chicago, Illinois, 1993), 66-83, and Robert K. Murray, *Red Scare: A Study in National Hysteria, 1919-1920* (Minneapolis, Indiana, 1955). [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Peter J. Popoff, “Unpatriotic Efforts,” *New York Times,* August 6, 1917, 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. “Borah Sees War if We Don’t Recognize Russia,” *New York Times,* December 30, 1923, XX1; “Recognition of Russia Essential, Says Borah, *“Washington Post,* November 12, 1924, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. David S. Foglesong, *America's Secret War* *Against Bolshevism: US Intervention in the Russian Civil War, 1917-1920* (Chapel Hill*,* 1995),226-228*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. Woodrow Wilson, “Des Moines Speech,” September 6, 1919, in *The Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson,* ed. Baker and Dodd, 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. “Bolsheviki Bore into the Churches,” *New York Times,* February 16, 1921, 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. “Dr. Bell Denies Being a Socialist,” *New York Times,* December 14, 1920, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. “Putting the Bible on the Stage to Combat Unrest,” *New York Times,* November 30, 1919, SM3; “Warns of Church ‘Reds’,” *Washington Post,* October 21, 1920, 3; “Admits Attack on Interchurch Drive,” ***New York Times*,** July 15, 1920, 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. “Vicious Attacks on President Mingled With Choice Profanity,” *Washington Post,* October 6, 1919, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Quoted in Foglesong, *America’s Secret War,* 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. A. Mitchell Palmer, “The Case Against the Reds,” *Forum,* February 1920, 173-176, in *The Fear of Conspiracy: Images of Un-American Subversion from the Revolution to the Present* ed. David Brion Davis (Ithaca, NY, 1971), 226-227. Also see Regin Schmidt, *Red Scare*: *FBI and the Origins of Anticommunism in the United States*, *1919–1943* (Copenhagen, Denmark, 2000), 296-297. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. Arthur Ransome, “Anti-Red Russians Allies of Germans,” *New York Times,* April 3, 1918, 4; Ryley Grannon, “Plea Here for Soviet,” *Washington Post,* May 6, 1918, 1. For newspaper discourse reflecting hopes for US recognition in early 1918, see “Washington Watches Events in Russia,” *New York Times,* January 5, 1918, 2; “Allies Now May Recognize Lenine,” *New York Times,* January 4, 1918, 1. For left-leaning Russian-American groups’ calls for recognition, see “Unfurl Soviet Flag Here,” *Washington Post,* June 10, 1918, 4; “Local Bolsheviki Stand by Lenine,” *New York Times,* June 12, 1918, 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. “Push into Don Region,” *Washington Post,* May 4, 1918, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. John Reed, *Ten Days that Shook the World* (New York, 1982),244. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Walter Duranty, “Russian Peasants Fear Divine Wrath: Terror in Famine Districts,” *New York Times*, July 20, 1921, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Dunn, *The Catholic Church and Russia*, 74. On the persecution of the Russian Orthodox Church after the revolution, see J.W. Daly, “Storming the Last Citadel: The Bolshevik Assault on the Church, 1922,” in *The Bolsheviks in Russian Society: Revolution and Civil Wars*, ed. Vladimir N. Brovkin (New Haven, Connecticut, 1997), 235-68; Peris, *Storming the Heavens*; William B. Husband, *“Godless Communists”: Atheism and Society in Soviet Russia, 1917-1932* (DeKalb, Illinois, 2000). [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. “Lenine Heads New Cabinet,” *New York Times,* November 11, 1917, 1; Arthur Ransome, “Bolsheviki Cursed by Head of Church,” *New York Times,* February 6, 1918, 2. “Bolsheviki Disestablish Church and Seize Its Property, and Patriarch Issues Threat of Excommunication,” *Washington Post,* February 6, 1918, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. For example, see “$1,000,000 Bible Stolen in Loot of Sacristy: Patriarch Going to Petrograd to Head Great Church Revolt Against Bolsheviki,” ***New York Times*,** February 19, 1918, 2; “Soviet Fatal to Church: Permits Religious Work, but Destroys it by Teachings,” *Washington Post,* April 11, 1920, 3; Reverend R. Courtier-Foster, “Christianity Is Sure to Vanish If Bolshevism Is Not Conquered,” *Washington Post,* January 11, 1920, 56; “Sees Bolshevism as Hideous Religion,” *New York Times,* August 2, 1920, 2; “Soviet Slaughters Hostages, Former Ministers Are Shot,” *Washington Post,* September 29, 1918, 6; “Bolsheviki Is Killing Numbers of Priests,” *Washington Post,* December 13, 1918, 5; “Ruin in Lawlessness,” *Washington Post,* January 27, 1918, 2; “Asks Church’s Aid Against Bolshevik: Baker's Aid Appeals to Newly-Merged Lutherans,” *Washington Post,* November 16, 1918, 5; “Differ on Japan’s Duty to Russia,” *New York Times,* March 17, 1918, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. For Catholic criticism in the media, see “Soviet Fatal to Church: Permits Religious Work, but Destroys it by Teachings,” *Washington Post,* April 11, 1920, 3. On the broader history of Catholic repression in Russia, see Dunn, *The Catholic Church and Russia*: *Popes*, *Patriarchs*, *Tsars and Commissars*. For Protestant criticism of the Bolsheviks, see “Fears World War Between Races,” *Washington Post,* February 25, 1918, 8; “Cables Protest to Wilson,” ***New York Times*,** January 25, 1919, 2; “Dr. Simons Stands by Senate Words,” ***New York Times*,** February 17, 1919, 4; “Bolsheviki Mock Religion,” *New York Times,* May 14, 1919, 3; “Butler Sees War on Christianity,” *New York Times*, March 22, 1920, 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. “Russian Prelate Here After Flight,” ***New York Times*,** June 19, 1919, 10; “Russian Reds Vent Hatred on Church,” *New York Times,* July 20, 1919, 23; “Union of America and Russia Advised,” *New York Times,* September 30, 1919, 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. Peter J. Popoff, “Looks to Patriarch: Hope That Head of the Church May Save Russia,” *New York Times,* November 27, 1917, 12; Peter J. Popoff, Felix Orman, Edwin C. Boykin, Mary Graham Rice, “Where is Russia?” *New York Times,* April 28, 1918, 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union*, 75-77. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. Foglesong, *The American Mission,* 54-55. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union*, 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. Foglesong, *The American Mission*, 54-55. On American military intervention and support to White and Czech forces, see Foglesong, *America’s Secret War.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union,* 99-100; Foglesong, *The American Mission,* 64. Also see Benjamin M. Weissman, *Herbert Hoover and Famine Relief to Soviet Russia*, 1921-1923, (Stanford, California, 1974), and Bertrand Patenaude, *The Big Show in Bololand* (Stanford*,* California, 2002), especially preface, 398. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. Patenaude, *The Big Show in Bololand,* 504-06, 139, quoted inFoglesong, *The American Mission,* 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. Foglesong, *The American Mission,* 58-59. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. Ibid., 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. Ibid, 64-65. Also see Patenaude, *The Big Show in Bololand,* 42, 46, 72, 84, 103-104. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. # Weissman, *Herbert Hoover*, 142.

     [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. Lawrence Emerson Gelfand, ed., *Herbert Hoover: The Great War and Its Aftermath, 1914-23* (Iowa City, Iowa, 1979), 199. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. Frank Costigliola, *Awkward Dominion: American Political, Economic, and. Cultural Relations with Europe, 1919-1933* (Ithaca, New York,1984),88-91. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union*, 100-102. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. Ibid; Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union*, 100-102. [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. Costigliola, *Awkward Dominion,* 91-92. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. Foglesong, *The American Mission,* 65. Also see Patenaude, *The Big Show in Bololand,* 522, 532, 629, 600-604; Alan M. Ball, *Imagining America: Influence and Images in Twentieth-Century Russia* (Lanham, Maryland, 2003). [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. Foglesong, *The American Mission,* 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. Methodist missionary Dr. Julius Hecker’s work appeared in Robert Kelley’s personal bibliography under “Soviet Russia: Religious Policies,” but Kelley does not appear to have incorporated Hecker’s ideas into his policymaking perceptions. Hecker was not widely discussed in the national press; The *New York Times, Washington Post,* and *Wall Streeter Journal* made little mention of him after his reports on the Russian famine in 1922. Leaders in the American Methodist community distanced themselves from Hecker in 1923 when the Soviet government executed the Catholic Vicar General, scandalizing American audiences. Finally, although Hecker published under a left-leaning publisher and was reviewed in academic journals in the mid-1930s, there is little evidence Hecker’s writings significantly influenced broader discourse. For Kelley’s sole reference to Hecker, see Black-covered notebook, folder 16, box 1, Robert F. Kelley Papers, Georgetown University Archives, Washington, DC [GUA]. For a rare example of coverage in the *New York Times*, see “Tells of Deaths on Famine Trains,” *New York Times,* March 26, 1922, 33. For academic responses to Hecker’s work in 1935, see [Corliss Lamont](http://www.jstor.org.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/action/doBasicSearch?Query=au%3A%22Corliss+Lamont%22&wc=on&fc=on), Review of *Moscow Dialogues: Discussions on Red Philosophy* by Julius F. Hecker; *Religion and Communism: A Study of Religion and Atheism in Soviet Russia* by Julius F. Hecker; *Russian Sociology: A Contribution to the History of Sociological Thought and Theory* by Julius F. Hecker, Pacific Affairs 8. 1 (1935): 118-121, and Bruce Hopper, “Review of Moscow Dialogues: Discussions on Red Philosophy by Julius F. Hecker; Religion and Communism; A Study of Religion and Atheism in Soviet Russia by Julius F. Hecker; Russian Sociology: A Contribution to the History of Sociological Thought and Theory by Julius F. Hecker,” The American Political Science Review 29.2 (1935): 308-310. Also see Foglesong, *The American Mission,* 68-70, and Matthew L. Miller, “A Hunger For Books: The American YMCA Press and Russian Readers,” *Religion, State, & Society* 38.1 (2010): 53-74. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. Some public intellectuals such as the leftist philosopher Corliss Lamont argued that the Soviet anti-religious drive in the 1930s was rooted in Russian popular will, but this attitude was rare in American public and political discourse. See Corliss Lamont, *Soviet Russia and Religion* (New York, 1936). For a dated but comprehensive study on national discourse surrounding Russia during the non-recognition period, see Filene, *Americans and the Soviet Experiment*. [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. The US government outlawed imports of gold bullion from Russia, banned long-term credit to Russian buyers of American goods, and limited visas for business travel. Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union,* 96, 102-103. [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. Foglesong, *The American Mission,* 63-64. [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. See Theodore R. Weeks, “Nationality, Empire, and Politics in the Russian Empire and USSR: An Overview of Recent Publications,” *H-Soz-u-Kult,* October 29, 2012, http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/forum/2012-10-001. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. For a theoretical discussion of cognitive dissonance and its role in guiding policy decisions, see Tami Davis Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality in Air Warfare: The Evolution of British and American Ideas about Strategic Bombing, 1914-1945* (Princeton, New Jersey, 2002), 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union*, 112-115. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. On the State Department’s culture of suspicion, see Yergin, *Shattered Peace*;Propas, “Creating a hard line,” 209-226; Glantz*. FDR and the Soviet Union*, especially 1-7; Roberts, *Stalin's Wars,* especially 25; Costigliola, “Broken Circle,” 677–718; Donald E. Davis and Eugene P. Trani, *Distorted Mirrors*: *Americans and Their Relations with Russia and China* in the Twentieth Century (Columbia, Missouri, 2009), especially 41-57; Costigliola, *Roosevelt's Lost* *Alliances*; and Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union,* 107-109. [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. On the early history of the Division of Eastern European Affairs, see Davis and Trani, *Distorted Mirrors*, 41-57, and Propas, “Creating a hard line,” 209-226. [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. On Kelley’s anti-Bolshevism and opposition to diplomatic recognition, see Propas, “Creating a hard line,” 210-211; and Cathal J. Nolan, ed., *Notable US Ambassadors Since 1775: A Biographical Dictionary* (Westport, Connecticut, 1997), 205-210. [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. Propas, “Creating a hard line,” 210-211. [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. Glantz, *FDR and the Soviet Union,* 9, 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. “Hughes Bars Recognizing Soviet As Not Fulfilling Obligations,” *New York Times*, May 2, 1922, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. “Ask Recognition of Russia,” *New York Times,* March 16, 1923, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
163. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. “Soviet Recognition is Again Refused; Our Terms Not Met,” *New York Times*, March 22, 1923, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
165. For favourable coverage in 1923, see ibid., and “Washington Weighs Hughes Statement,” *New York Times,* May 7, 1922, 39. For Walter Duranty’s rebuttal, see Walter Duranty, “Moscow Disputes Hughes’s Argument,” *New York Times,* March 28, 1923, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
166. “Washington Weighs Hughes Statement,” *New York Times,* May 7, 1922, 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
167. Francis M’Cullough, “Catholic Vicar Dies at Hands of Soviet,” *Washington Post,* April 4, 1923, 1; “Russians Execute Mgr. Butkavitch; Russia Defiant, *“New York Times*, April 4, 1923, 1; “Kill 340 in Ukraine for Vicar Protests,” *New York Times* April 6, 1923, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
168. Internal disputes within the Orthodox Church complicated the question of legal control over the St. Nicholas Church. Prior the Bolshevik Revolution, the conservative Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in Russia designated Platon Rozhdestvensky the head priest of the New York parish. In 1923, the soon-to-be-deposed Patriarch Tikhon reaffirmed Rozhdestvensky’s appointment. When the Orthodox Church split between conservative and reformist elements, however, Rozhdestvensky declared the North American diocese autonomous and attempted to create an autocephalous Orthodox Church based in New York. When the reformist Russian-born priest John Kedrovsky claimed legal ownership of the New York cathedral controlled by Rozhdestvensky, the dispute resulted in a lengthy legal battle. In 1925, Appellate Division of the Supreme Court passed a controversial ruling in favour of Kedrovsky, who then evicted Rozhdestvensky. Rozhdestvensky’s subsequent appeal remained unresolved into the 1940s. For examples of the extensive newspaper coverage of the dispute, see “Archbishop Platon is Ousted By Court,” *New York Times,* November 28, 1925, 16; “Platon’s Farewell Stirs St. Nicholas,” *New York Times,* November 30, 1925, 8; “Russians Divide on Platon Case,” *New York Times,* Jan 3, 1926, XX9; “Russian Prelate Sees Cathedral Regained,” *New York Times,* May 27, 1927, 24. On the broader history of the Orthodox Church in America, see. C. J. Tarasar, ed., *Orthodox America*, *1794-1976*: *Development of the Orthodox Church in America* (New York, 1975). [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
169. Memo of conversation between Acting Chief of the Division of Eastern European Affairs Robert Kelley, Assistant Secretary of State William R. Castle, H.E. Stevenson of the Pennsylvania Railroad, Irwin Gordon of Reading Railroad, and Farrell of Reading Coalfields, August 17, 1926, 811.404/84 ½, Record Group 59, National Archives and Records Administration [NARA], College Park, Maryland. [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
170. Gordon letter to Castle, June 23, 1927, 811.404/92 ½, RG 59, NARA. Robert Kelley, Loy Henderson, and Earl Packer of the Eastern European Division also used diplomatic channels to send Danish officials detailed records of the Kedrovsky case, hoping to assist Danish officials in similar situation where suspected Soviet-backed clerics attempted claim control of an Orthodox church in Copenhagen. For these exchanges, see H. Percival Dodge, American Minister, letter to Secretary of State, March 18, 1927, 811.404/96, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
171. The Overman Committee was succeeded by the House Un-American Activities Committee [HUAC] in 1945. Schmidt, *Red Scare*: *FBI and the Origins of Anticommunism*, 53, 138. [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
172. On the Living Church, see Roslof, *Red Priests*. For Kedrovsky’s public denials of Soviet connections and the American press’ rejection of his claims, see “Court Acts in Row in Russian Church,” *New York Times,* November 9, 1923, 19; “Platon’s Farewell Stirs St. Nicholas,” *New York Times,* November 30, 1925, 8; “Kedrovsky Wins Post as Russian Prelate,” *New York Times,* April 1, 1926, 28; “Miliukov Criticizes Orthodox Rule Here,” *New York Times,* May 22, 1928, 7. The *New York Times’* favourable pieces on Kedrovsky were rare, consisting of a letter to the editor from Kedrovsky’s lawyer and statement by Kedrovsky. These were printed inconspicuously on pages 14 and 18, respectively. See Ralph M. Frink, “Russian Church Dispute,” *New York Times,* 14; “Kedrovsky Answers Manning’s Criticisms,” *New York Times,* November 23, 1926, 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
173. Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union*, 107-109. [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
174. Lecture delivered at the Naval War College, September 30, 1927, folder 7, box 2, Robert F. Kelley Papers, GUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
175. For a more complex contemporary account of Orthodox-Soviet relations, see Julius Hecker, *Religion Under the Soviets* (New York, 1927). Although Hecker’s book appeared in Robert Kelley’s personal bibliography, Kelley seems to have disregarded it in favour of more negative interpretations of Russian religious policy. Black-covered notebook, folder 16, box 1, Robert F. Kelley Papers, Georgetown University. For similar views in the press, see “Russians Divide on Platon Case,” *New York Times*, Jan 3, 1926, XX9. On US officials’ alarmist misperceptions surrounding the Comintern, see Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union*, 107-108. [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
176. For examples of newspaper coverage critical of the Soviet anti-religious drive, see “Soviet Still Wars on Anti-Semitism,” *New York Times,* May 19, 1929, N22; “Pope Scored Soviet War on Religion,” *New York Times,* February 9, 1930, 1; “Soviet War on Religion,” *New York Times,* March 2, 1930, 137; “Churches Here Denounce Soviet War on Religion,” *New York Times,* March 17, 1930, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
177. Walter Duranty, “Soviet Hits Church as Communist Foe,” *New York Times,* February 14, 1930, 5; “Great Evil is Laid to Bad Catholics,”*New York Times,* February 27, 1939, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
178. “Red Papers Jeer Pontiff’s Prayers,” *New York Times,* March 21, 1930, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
179. “Warn Soviet it Kills Hope of Recognition,” *New York Times,* 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
180. Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee William Borah, “Should the U. S. Recognize Soviet Russia? PRO,”*Congressional Digest,* 12.10 (October 1933), 238. [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
181. “Soviet Sends Reply to Borah Message; 11 of 14 Rabbis Free,” *New York Times,* February 24, 1930, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
182. Kelley to Rep. Hamilton Fish, December 2, 1929, 861.404/278a, RG 59, NARA. For examples of the Berlin embassy’s hostile reports on religious repression and hopes for greater American public interest, see US Ambassador to Berlin Jacob G. Schurman to Washington, November 23, 1929, 861.404/279, RG 59, NARA. For an example of similar reports from Riga, Latvia, see US Ambassador to Riga F.W.B. Coleman to Washington, March 18, 1929, 861.404/262, RG 59, NARA, and Coleman to Washington, December 3, 1929, 861.404/281, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
183. “Recognition Tied to Religious Situation, Resolution, 28 February 1930,” in *Documents of Soviet-American Relations,* vol. 2: *Propaganda, Economic Affairs, Recognition, 1917-1933,* ed. Harold J. Goldberg(Florida, 1995), 405. [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
184. Executive Director of the National Lutheran Council John Morehead to Kelley, December 14, 1929, 861.404/280 RG 59, NARA; Kelley to Morehead, January 24, 1930, 861.404/280, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
185. For example, Kelley advised one interested citizen to help counter Kedrovsky by contributing to a private fund dedicated to assisting the Russian Orthodox Church in America. See Netty F. Cunningham to Kelley, April 4 1929, and memorandum by Kelley, April 17, 1929, 811.003/981, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
186. Katherine A. S. Siegel and Katherine A. S. Sibley*, Loans and Legitimacy: The Evolution of Soviet-American Relations, 1919-1933* (Lexington, Kentucky, 1996), 137. [↑](#footnote-ref-186)
187. See Arne Odd Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge, 2007), especially 11-12, 38-39. [↑](#footnote-ref-187)
188. On US efforts to spread it cultural, economic, and political norms to Russia, see Emily Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion 1890-1945* (New York, 1982), especially 33, 78. [↑](#footnote-ref-188)
189. The founder of the Eastern European Division, Evan E. Young, also praised the anti-Soviet Kelley as a man of “rare and exceptional ability. Propas, “Creating a hard line,” 211. [↑](#footnote-ref-189)
190. Mary E. Glantz*, FDR and the Soviet Union*, 189 [↑](#footnote-ref-190)
191. Bennett, *Recognition of Russia,* 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-191)
192. Attenbury to Stimson, March 13, 1931, and Stimson to Attenbury March 30, 1931, 861.01/1653½, RG 59, NARA, quoted in Bennett, *Recognition of Russia*, 77; Bennett, *Recognition of Russia*, 75-76. [↑](#footnote-ref-192)
193. Kellogg to Stimson, November 18 1932, 861.01/1841, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-193)
194. Bennett, *Recognition of Russia*, 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-194)
195. Bennett, *Recognition of Russia*, 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
196. Ibid., 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-196)
197. Kelley to Hamilton Fish, December 2, 1929, 861.404/278a, RG 59, NARA; Executive Director of the National Lutheran Council John Morehead to Kelley, December 14, 1929, 861.404/280 RG 59, NARA; Kelley to Morehead, January 24, 1930, 861.404/280, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-197)
198. Bennett, *Recognition of Russia,* 87-88. On Roosevelt’s attentiveness to public opinion and its general role in his foreign policies, see Casey, *Cautious Crusad*e, xxii-xxvi. [↑](#footnote-ref-198)
199. Bennett, *Recognition of Russia,* 87-88; Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign*

     *Policy,* 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-199)
200. Bullitt undertook a trip to Europe to explore Russian officials’ sentiments on recognition. See Robert Paul Browder, *The Origins of Soviet-American Diplomacy* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1953); and Beatrice Farnsworth*, Bullitt and the Soviet Union* (Bloomington, Indiana, 1967), 105-110. [↑](#footnote-ref-200)
201. Bennett, *Recognition of Russia,* 87-88, 93-94; Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt,* 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-201)
202. Undersecretary of State William Phillips, memorandum, July 27 1933, box 15, President’s Secret File [PSF], Franklin D. Roosevelt Library [FDRL], quoted in Bennett, *Recognition of Russia*, 90-91; Undersecretary of State William Phillips, memorandum, October 19, 1933, OF 220, FDRL, quoted Bennett, *Recognition of Russia*, 90-91. [↑](#footnote-ref-202)
203. For example, see Felix Cole cable to Hull, May 10, 1933, 861.404/357, RG 59, NARA; Cole cable to Hull, Dec 2 1933, 861.404/370, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-203)
204. Bennett, *Recognition of Russia,* 92. For a general discussion of FDR’s mistrust of State Department career officials, see Casey, *Cautious Crusade,* xxii-xxvi. [↑](#footnote-ref-204)
205. Report by Committee on Russian-American Relations of the American Foundation, October 30, 1933, box 220, Official File [OF], FDRL, in Bennett*, Recognition of Russia*, 91. [↑](#footnote-ref-205)
206. White House Press Secretary Steven T. Early to Le Hand, March 20, 1933, 861.00/1152½, RG 59, NARA, quoted in Bennett, *Recognition of Russia*, 92. Fred Storm was the United Press White House correspondent the 1930s, the president of the White House Correspondents Association in 1936-1937, and according to *Life,* one of Roosevelt’s favourite journalists in the Washington press corps. *Life*, August 7, 1939, 16. Also see *Life*, November 30, 1936, 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-206)
207. Jerome Davis, memorandum, folder “Russia-Miscellaneous, box 4, OF 220-A, FDRL. Eleanor Roosevelt also forwarded FDR an article from *Protestant Digest* wherein Davis reiterated his support publicly. Eleanor Roosevelt to FDR, memo enclosing “Why Not be Fair to the Soviet Union?” by Jerome Davis, April 1939, box 49, folder 1937-1940, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-207)
208. See Edmund Walsh letter to Time Assistant Religion Editor Lillian Kerner, March 23, 1930, folder 46, box 1, Edmund Walsh papers, GUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-208)
209. For examples of Walsh’s prominent media presence, see copy of Walsh’s Church of the Air radio address titled, “Christianity and Communism: Christ or Lenin?,” April 23, 1933, folder 335, box 5, Edmund Walsh papers, Georgetown University Archives [GUA]; “Russian Talks Set at Georgetown,” Washington Post , February 5, 1933. 4; “Dr. Walsh Traces Early Radicalism,” *Washington Post*, February 11, 1933, 4; “Urges Capitalism to Face Red Issue, *New York Times*, February 21, 1933, 22;

     “Recognition called Big Goal of Soviets,” *Washington Post*, March 10, 1933, 5; “Dr. Walsh Assails Shaw’s Red Eulogy,” *Washington Post*, April 13, 1933, 3, “Colby Letter Read at Meeting Against Soviet Recognition, *Washington Post*, April 19, 1933, 18; “Soviet is Assailed at D.A.R. Meeting: Reverend Dr. Walsh Deplores Borah's Efforts for Recognition of 'Most Brutal Government,’” *New York Times*, April 21, 1933, 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-209)
210. “Colby Letter Read at Meeting Against Soviet Recognition, *Washington Post*, April 19, 1933, 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-210)
211. National Catholic Welfare Council General Secretary John Burke to Undersecretary Philips, September 30, 1933, folder Communism, Russia, 1933, box 25, OGS, NCWC, CUA. Burke attended Edmund Walsh’s public lectures on Russia, and the NCWC press service forwarded Walsh’s reports of religious repression in Russia to three daily newspapers and eighty-four weekly newspapers. Burke letter to Walsh, January 26, 1929, folder Communism, Russia, 1920-1932, box 25, Office of the General Secretary [OGS], National Catholic Welfare Council [NCWC], Catholic University of America, Washington, DC [CUA]. [↑](#footnote-ref-211)
212. On Catholic and Protestant petitions in 1933, see Bennett, *Recognition of Russia,* 93, and Peter G. Filene*, Americans and the Soviet Experiment* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1967), 88. Also see copy of letter from the Baptist World Alliance to FDR, November 14, 1933, folder 415, box 6, Walsh papers, GUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-212)
213. Filene, *Americans and the Soviet Experiment*, 88. [↑](#footnote-ref-213)
214. Roosevelt to Peabody, reprinted in Frank Davis Ashburn, *Peabody of Groton*: *A Portrait* (New York, 1944), 349. For a detailed analysis of FDR’s religiosity, see Gary Scott Smith, “Religion and the Presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt,” in *Religion and the American Presidency,* ed. Espinosa, 185-210. [↑](#footnote-ref-214)
215. Grace Tully, F.D.R., *My Boss*, (Chicago, Illinois, 1949), 6; Perkins quoted in Gary Scott Smith, “Religion and the Presidency,” 187. [↑](#footnote-ref-215)
216. Eleanor Roosevelt, *This I Remember* (New York, 1949), 347, quoted in Gary Scott Smith, “Religion and the Presidency,” 187. Stephen Early made this comment to the Catholic author Fulton Oursler, who later penned the Christian novel *The Greatest Story Ever Told.* See Early to Oursler, January 17, 1945, folder Readers Digest, box 3024, President’s Personal File [PPF], FDRL, quoted in ibid., 187. [↑](#footnote-ref-216)
217. Gary Scott Smith, “Religion and the Presidency,” 192. [↑](#footnote-ref-217)
218. Roosevelt, quoted in Smith, *Faith and the Presidency,* 191. [↑](#footnote-ref-218)
219. Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt,* 96. [↑](#footnote-ref-219)
220. Franklin D. Roosevelt, “Prayer on D-Day," June 6, 1944, in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1944,* *American Presidency Project,* ed. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=16515. [↑](#footnote-ref-220)
221. Frederick W. Marks III, *Wind Over Sand: The Diplomacy of Franklin Roosevelt* (Athens, Georgia, 1988), ix. [↑](#footnote-ref-221)
222. Tully, *F.D.R.,* 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-222)
223. James Roosevelt and Sydney Shallett, *Affectionately, F.D.R.: A Son’s Story of a Lonely Man* (New York, 1959), 99; Gary Scott Smith, *Faith and the Presidency*, 193. [↑](#footnote-ref-223)
224. Eleanor Roosevelt, *The Autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt* (New York, 1961), 278. [↑](#footnote-ref-224)
225. Eleanor Roosevelt, *This Is My Story* (New York, 1937), 149-150. [↑](#footnote-ref-225)
226. For media coverage of Peale’s anti-Roosevelt campaign, see “Roosevelt Policy held Reactionary: Dr. Peale Declares a Planned Economy Menaces Freedom of Mass of the People,” *New York Times*, February 12, 1934, 13; “Roosevelt is Criticized: Dr. Peale, at Syracuse, Charges Indifference to Religion,” *New York Times*, August 19, 1935, 2; “President’s Stand Debated By Clergy,” *New York Times*, January 13, 1936, 13; “Weighs Roosevelt Issue: Reverend N.V. Peale Holds We Must Change President or Constitution,” *New York Times*, June 1, 1936, 13; “Roosevelt Defeat Urged By Dr. Peale,” *New York Times*, July 22, 1940, 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-226)
227. Historians’ recent attention to Roosevelt’s sexual infidelity and enjoyment of ribald humour further complicates the notion that Roosevelt prioritized Christian piety. Costigliola, *Roosevelt’s Lost Alliances*, 40, 81, 62, 72-74; Gary Scott Smith, “Religion and the Presidency,” 189-190. [↑](#footnote-ref-227)
228. Gary Scott Smith, “Religion and the Presidency,” 188. [↑](#footnote-ref-228)
229. “Roosevelt Backed by Clergy in Crisis,” *New York Times*, March 13, 1933, 16; Elisabeth Poe, “D.A.R. Gets Perkins Views on Jobless,” ***Washington Post,*** April 21, 1933, 1. On Perkin’s contribution to popularizing New Deal reforms among Catholic labor groups, see Kenneth J. Heineman, *A Catholic New Deal: Religion and Reform in Depression Pittsburgh* (University Park, Pennsylvania, 1999), 48-50, 68, 97. On her influence among labor groups generally, see G. William Domhoff and Michael J. Webber, *Class and Power in the New Deal: Corporate Moderates, Southern Democrats, and the Liberal-Labor Coalition* (Stanford, California, 2011), and Jason Scott Smith, *Building New Deal Liberalism: The Political Economy of Public Works, 1933-1956* (New York, 2005), 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-229)
230. Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt,* 4. Eleanor Roosevelt recalled that FDR “felt he could ask God for guidance and receive it” during “great crises,” and he seemed calmer after prayer. Grace Tully claimed that Roosevelt believed in the “efficacy of prayer” for guiding “momentous decisions.” Neither cited FDR’s religiosity as important to specific decisions, however. Eleanor Roosevelt, *The Autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt*, 277-278; Tully, *F.D.R*., 6. Also see Thomas H. Greer, *What Roosevelt Thought* (East Lansing, Michigan, 1958), 7-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-230)
231. Roosevelt speech, February 1940, quoted in Robert Sherwood*, Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History* (New York, 1948), 138. [↑](#footnote-ref-231)
232. On state-led atheism and anti-clericalism in France and Mexico, see Nigel Aston, *Religion and Revolution in France, 1780-1804* (Catholic University of America Press, 2000), and Donald J. Mabry, “Mexican Anticlerics, Bishops, Cristeros, the Devout during the 1920s: A Scholarly Debate,” *Journal of Church and State* 20.1 (1978): 81-92. [↑](#footnote-ref-232)
233. Confusion persists surrounding the precise chronology of the negotiations, and Secretary Hull’s achievements versus those of Roosevelt, Bullitt, Kelley, and Treasure Secretary Judge R. Walton Moore. Bennett, *Recognition of Russia*, 93-96, 115-118. Also see Bishop, *The Roosevelt-Litvinov Agreements*, 61-67. [↑](#footnote-ref-233)
234. Robert Paul Browder, *The Origins of Soviet- American Diplomacy*, 133. [↑](#footnote-ref-234)
235. The historian Edward M. Bennett argues that Litvinov may have deliberately stalled the preliminary talks in order to gain a private audience with FDR, which signalled to outside observers—particularly the Japanese--that the US and Russia were connected at the highest levels. Bennett, *Recognition of Russia*, 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-235)
236. Bishop, *The Roosevelt-Litvinov Agreements*, 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-236)
237. Ibid.,*,* 66 [↑](#footnote-ref-237)
238. Ibid., 63-65. [↑](#footnote-ref-238)
239. Moore letter to Roosevelt, November 11, 1933, box 18, R. Walton Moore Papers, FDRL, quoted in ibid., 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-239)
240. These quotes are drawn from Frances Perkins, *The Roosevelt I Knew* (New York, 1946), 142-143; James Farley, *Jim Farley’s Story* (New York, 1948), 43-44; and Robert Gannon, *Cardinal Spellman Story* (New York, 1962), 156-157*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-240)
241. Blanche Wiesen Cook, *Eleanor Roosevelt*, vol. 2, *The Defining Years, 1933-1938,* 307. [↑](#footnote-ref-241)
242. Gary Scott Smith, “Religion and the Presidency,” 190; Dallek, *The Lost Peace*, 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-242)
243. “Text of President Roosevelt's Speech at the Savannah Stadium,” *New York Times,* November 19, 1933, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-243)
244. Moore quoted in Bishop, *The* *Roosevelt-Litvinov Agreements*, 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-244)
245. Bennett, *Recognition of Russia*, 121. [↑](#footnote-ref-245)
246. Ibid., 127. For other religious leaders’ approval of the recognition agreements, see “Soviet Recognition Praised in Pulpits,” *New York Times,* November 20, 1933, 2. When the prolific scholar Maurice Hindus published a monograph in November 1933 contending that the “New Russian” was deeply atheistic and materialistic, one reviewer at the *New York Times* dismissed his claim as “unsound.” See “Casting the Russian Balance Sheet,” *New York Times*, November 12, 1933, BR6. [↑](#footnote-ref-246)
247. Bennett, *Recognition of Russia*, 98. On the primacy of religious issues and Catholics to Roosevelt’s foreign policy in 1933, see Bennett, *Recognition of Russia*, 126. [↑](#footnote-ref-247)
248. Costigliola, *Roosevelt’s Lost alliances,* 98-99. Also see Kimball, *The Juggler*, 240, 248, 249. [↑](#footnote-ref-248)
249. For excellent discussions of Roosevelt’s strategies for managing the media, see Betty Houchin Winfield, *FDR and the News Media* (Urbana, Illinois, 1990); Casey, *Cautious Crusade* (2002); and Michael S. Sweeney, *Secrets of Victory. The Office of Censorship and the American Press and Radio in World War II* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 2001). [↑](#footnote-ref-249)
250. Some of Roosevelt’s most controversial policies were domestic ones, particularly his New Deal reforms and Supreme Court Bill in 1937. See Winfield, *FDR and the News Media*. [↑](#footnote-ref-250)
251. Jean Edward Smith claims FDR issued his invitation to Walsh as early as September 1st, but Patrick H. McNamara and Richard Gid Powers argue it was October 10, the day FDR announced the upcoming meetings. Jean Edward Smith, *FDR* (New York, 2007), 342; Richard Gid Powers, *Not Without Honor: The History of American Anticommunism* (New York, 1995), 113; Patrick McNamara, *A Catholic Cold War*, 81. [↑](#footnote-ref-251)
252. Untitled, unsigned insert, May 31, 1961, Edmund A. Walsh Papers, Georgetown University Archives, Washington, DC [GUA]. [↑](#footnote-ref-252)
253. Patrick McNamara, *A Catholic Cold War: Edmund A. Walsh, S.J., and the Politics of American*

     *Anticommunism* (New York, 2005), 82. Also see Louis J. Gallagher, *Edmund A. Walsh, S.J.: A Biography* (New York, 1962), 69-70. [↑](#footnote-ref-253)
254. Edmund Walsh memo to FDR, “Religion in Russia,” October 21, 1933, folder 273, box 4, Walsh papers, GUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-254)
255. Walsh to Marvin McIntyre, October 21, 1933, folder Russia, box 220a, OF, FDRL; McNamara, *A Catholic Cold War,* 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-255)
256. Walsh to McIntyre, October 21, 1933, folder “Russia,” box 220a, OF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-256)
257. Press Release, October 21, 1933, appended to ibid. Walsh informed McIntyre that he had cancelled his planned pubic lecture opposing recognition. McIntyre distributed Walsh’ positive press release to major American newspapers for syndication, and he thanked Walsh on behalf of the president. Walsh to McIntyre, October 21, 1933, folder “Russia,” box 220a, OF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-257)
258. On the eve of the Roosevelt-Litvinov talks, Walsh reiterated his private plea to Roosevelt to press Litvinov to release imprisoned priests. Demonstrating his loyalty to Roosevelt, Walsh continued to endorse recognition in *America* and *Commonweal,* and he continued to refrain from publicly criticizing Russia until the recognition negotiations were over. Walsh’s supportive press statement drew some criticism. One reader of the Catholic periodical *America* complained to the editor that Walsh had “bended [sic] over backward” for the president Walsh to McIntyre, October 21, 1933, folder “Russia,” box 220a, OF, FDRL; Walsh to Roosevelt, November 7, 1933, folder Russia, box 220, OF, FDRL; Director of NCWC Press Department to Burke’s secretary Miss McNulty, October 23, 1933, folder Communism, Russia, 1933, box 25, OGS, NCWC, CUA; McNamara, *A Catholic Cold War*, 81. [↑](#footnote-ref-258)
259. Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945: With a new Afterword* (New York, 1995), 79; Dennis J. Dunn, *Caught Between Roosevelt and Stalin* (Lexington, Kentucky, 1998), 22; Walsh, quoted in Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt*, 80. Also see Bennett, *Recognition of Russia*, 94-96. [↑](#footnote-ref-259)
260. For general discussions of anti-Catholicism in mid-20th century America, see Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People, Second Edition* (New Haven, Connecticut, 2004); Martin E. Marty, *Modern American Religion,* vol. 2: *The Noise of Conflict, 1919-1941* (Chicago, Illinois, 1991). On anti-Catholicism and anti-Semitism in the Foreign Service, see Mayers, *The Ambassadors*, 98. [↑](#footnote-ref-260)
261. Walter G. Hooke letter to Marvin McIntyre, October 15, 1933, box 220a, OF, FDRL; Bishop, *The Roosevelt-Litvinov Agreements*, 94-96. Walsh’s biographer Patrick McNamara claimed that Walsh publicly endorsed Roosevelt’s recognition policy because he feared that continued opposition would lead Roosevelt to limit foreign service careers of graduates from Walsh’s program at the Georgetown School of Foreign Service. This seems unlikely given Walsh’s swift return to anti-Soviet rhetoric following the establishment of relations with Russia. See McNamara, *A Catholic Cold War,* 84. For evidence of Walsh’s swift return to anti-Soviet critiques including calls to sever diplomatic relations, see “Soviet Must End Propaganda Bureau, Dr. Walsh Contends,” *Washington Post*, November 19, 1933, 3; “Success of Recognition Rests On Soviet, Says Father Walsh,” *Washington Post*, December 10, 1933, 10; “Litvinoff Greeted on Arrival Home, *New York Times*, December 10, 1933, 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-261)
262. Burke letter to McNicholas, October 5, 1933, folder Communism, Russia, 1933, box 25, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-262)
263. Burke letter to Archbishop Amleto Cicognani, November 23, 1933, October 5, 1933, folder Communism, Russia, 1933, box 25, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-263)
264. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-264)
265. Director of NCWC Press Department to Secretary to John Burke Miss McNulty, Oct 23 1933, folder Communism, Russia, 1933, box 25, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-265)
266. This unsigned, undated memo featured standard identifying marks for the author, typist, and recipient, which in this case were “EE K:djw:SS.” The lower-case typists’ initials (djw) almost certainly belong to Dorothy J. Wells, a typist in the Division of Eastern European Affairs (EE). The upper-case recipient’s initials (SS) indicate Secretary of State Cordell Hull. The memo was therefore authored by “K,” Chief of the Eastern European Division Robert Kelley. The pencilled-in revisions match Kelley’s distinctive handwriting. The Register of the Department of State for 1933 and 1934 does not list any officials in the Division with the initials D.J.W. Thanks to David Langbart of NARA for furnishing this information. “Religious Rights,” undated report, box 3, Eastern European Division General Records, 1911-1940, E373, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-266)
267. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-267)
268. Kelley, “Problems Pertaining to Russian-American Relations Which, in the Interests of Friendly Relations with the United States and Russia, Should be Settled Prior to Recognition of the Soviet Government,” *FRUS:* The Soviet Union, 1933-1939, 1: 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-268)
269. R. Walton Moore radio address, November 22, 1933, quoted in Bishop, *The Roosevelt-Litvinov Agreements,* 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-269)
270. William Montavon, memorandum, December 15, 1933, folder Recognition of Russia, box 25, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-270)
271. The Assistant Chief of the Eastern European Division, Earl Packer, also undermined FDR’s recognition policy by telling priests from the American Lutheran Church that “any attempt” by US officials in Moscow to “make an investigation” into the matter would be “detrimental” to Russian citizens, who would be targeted by Soviet officials if they were observed in conversation with US diplomats. Packer revealed to the Lutheran leaders the content of confidential cables from Riga and Moscow that had reported Soviet intimidation of Russian citizens suspected of fraternizing with US officials. Memo of conversation between Earl Packer with John Morehead and Ralph M. Long of the Lutheran International and National Church Agencies, April 6, 1934, 861.404/380, RG 59, NARA. For examples of embassy reports of worsening religious persecution in Russia, see Riga Charge D’Affairs Felix Cole to Hull, May 4, 1934, 861.404/385, and Moscow Charge D’Affaires John C. Wiley, February 8, 1935, 861.404/389, RG 59, NARA. For a broader discussion of US officials’ resentment of police methods after 1934, see Mayers, *The Ambassadors,* 116-117. [↑](#footnote-ref-271)
272. “Lecture Delivered at Naval Academy, April 3, 1935,” folder 4, box 2, Kelley Papers, GUA; also see Kelley to Captain Lewis McBride, March 26, 1935, folder 4, box 2, Kelley papers, GUA. For earlier iterations of Kelley’s speech delivered to the Naval Academy in 1926, 1927, 1929, and 1932, see folders 6-9, box 2, Kelley papers, GUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-272)
273. In April 1934, Moore fielded an inquiry from the American Bible Society about importing bibles to Russia. Moore suggested the group contact the Russian embassy in Turkey since the bibles would enter from that country, and he asked the missionaries to inform him of the Soviet response. Moore to Robert F. Skinner, February 8, 1934, 861.404/369, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-273)
274. Farnsworth, *William C. Bullitt and the Soviet* *Union,* 109, 153. [↑](#footnote-ref-274)
275. On the purges of the mid-1930s, see Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror: A Reassessment* (New York, 1990). [↑](#footnote-ref-275)
276. Mayers, *The Ambassadors*, 110; Farnsworth, *William C.* *Bullitt* 107-108. [↑](#footnote-ref-276)
277. Dennis Dunn and David Mayers praised Bullitt as a competent “realist” whose pleas for firmness against Soviet aggression were ignored by the “careless” Roosevelt, but this interpretation has been challenged by a variety of historians. For a positive interpretation of Bullitt’s anti-communism, see Mayers, *The Ambassadors,* 106, 135; and Dunn, *Caught Between Roosevelt and Stalin*, 4. For criticism of Dunn’s perspective, see Marc J. Selverstone, review of *Caught Between Roosevelt and Stalin: America's Ambassadors to Moscow* by Dennis J. Dunn, *H-Diplo, H-Net Book Reviews* (November, 2001), http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=5688. Also see Laura A. Belmonte, review of *Caught Between Roosevelt & Stalin: America's Ambassadors to Moscow* by Dennis J. Dunn*, H-Pol, H-Net Reviews* (March, 1999), http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=2924. For more critical biographies of Bullitt, see Farnsworth, *William C. Bullitt and the Soviet* Union, and Michael Cassella-Blackburn, *The Donkey, the Carrot, and the Club: William C. Bullitt and Soviet-American Relations, 1917–1948* (Westport, Connecticut, 2004), especially 128. Blackburn particularly emphasizes Bullitt’s hostile ideology and tendency to “needlessly antagonized the Soviet diplomatic corps through threats and intimidation.” For further criticism of Bullitt, see Costigliola, *Roosevelt’s Lost Alliances*, 185. For historiographical debate about the soundness of Roosevelt’s Russia policy, see Frank Costigliola, Alonzo Hamby, Robert Jervis, Eduard Mark, David S. Painter, and Chester Pach, review of *From Roosevelt to Truman: Potsdam, Hiroshima, and the Cold War* by Wilson Miscamble, *H-Diplo Roundtables, H-Net*, http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/FromTrumantoRoosevelt-Roundtable.pdf. For Bullitt’s correspondence with FDR, see Orville H. Bullitt, ed., *For the President*: *Personal* and *Secret*: *Correspondence Between Franklin D*. *Roosevelt and William C*. *Bullitt* (Boston, 1972). [↑](#footnote-ref-277)
278. Memo to FDR, undated, folder William C. Bullitt, 1933-1937, box 799, OF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-278)
279. Bennett, *Recognition of Russia*, 117-118. [↑](#footnote-ref-279)
280. Mayers, *The Ambassadors,* 113. [↑](#footnote-ref-280)
281. Bullitt to Hull, October 6, 1934, folder Russia, 1934, box 49, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-281)
282. Bullitt to Hull, April 20, 1936, folder Russia, 1935-1936, box 49, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-282)
283. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-283)
284. On Stalin’s revolutionary ideology but realistic and pragmatic foreign policies, see Roberts, *Stalin’s Wars,* 25. On Stalin’s his ineffective use of leftist groups, see Eduard Mark’s comments in Frank Costigliola, Alonzo Hamby, Robert Jervis, Eduard Mark, David S. Painter, and Chester Pach, review of *From Roosevelt to Truman: Potsdam, Hiroshima, and the Cold War* by Wilson Miscamble, *H-Diplo Roundtable Reviews, H-Net*, http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/FromTrumanto

     Roosevelt-Roundtable.pdf, especially 28-29; Eduard Mark, “October or Thermidor: Interpretations of Stalinism and the Perception of Soviet Foreign Policy in the United States, 1927-1947,” *American Historical Review*, 94 (October 1989): 937-962; and John W. Strong, review of *The Communist International, 1919-1943* by John Lewis Evans, *Outline History of the Communist International* by The Institute of Marxism-Leninism, Central Committee of the C. P. S. U.; and *Soviet Russia Masters the Comintern: International Communism in the Era of Stalin's Ascendancy* by Helmut Gruber, *The American Political Science Review* 70.4 (1976): 1377-1380. [↑](#footnote-ref-284)
285. Roosevelt’s “very amusing” comment probably referred to Bullitt’s letters wherein he called future Soviet Ambassador Constantine Oumansky a “filthy little squirt” whose face resembled a “spanked baby’s butt.” Roosevelt’s assertion that US officials were poorly treated everywhere probably alluded to European diplomats’ resentment of the US’s non-interventionist attitude toward German and Japanese aggression in the 1930s, and the US’s autarkical economic response to the Great Depression. March 4, 1936, and Roosevelt to Bullitt, April 21, 1936, folder Bullitt Correspondence, 1933-1936, box 50, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-285)
286. Costigliola, *Roosevelt’s Lost Alliances*, 74-75. [↑](#footnote-ref-286)
287. Fr. Leopold Braun, “Pro Memoria (I): Certain Unpublished Details Concerning the Present Mission of the Assumptionists in Russia, Especially 1934-1945,” Leopold Braun papers, drawer 1, American Assumptionist Archives [AAA], Dunwoodie, Massachusetts. [↑](#footnote-ref-287)
288. Burke memo, August 1936, folder Roosevelt, Franklin D. 1933-1941, box 153, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-288)
289. Susan Jacoby, *Freethinkers: A History of American Secularism* (New York, 2004), 279. [↑](#footnote-ref-289)
290. Burke memo, May 22, 1934, black interview book, box 153, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-290)
291. See Assistant Secretary Marvin McIntyre to Reverend B.O. Lovejoy, August 17, 1934, folder Church Matters 1933-1941, OF 76, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-291)
292. Roosevelt memo to William Hassett, March 11, 1943, folder Church Matters 1942-1945, box 76, OF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-292)
293. Sarah Rosemary Davies, *Popular Opinion in Stalin's Russia: Terror, Propaganda and Dissent, 1934-1941* (Cambridge, 1997), 78-79. [↑](#footnote-ref-293)
294. Hull forwarded his speech to Ambassador Bullitt in Moscow, despite his full awareness that the US government was powerless to influence Russia’s domestic religious policies. McCormack to Hull, June 25, 1936, 861.404/400, RG 59, NARA; Rabbi Moses Weingewirtz to the State Department, November 28, 1936, and Kelley to Weingewirtz, December 2, 1936, 861.404/410, RG 59, NARA; Memo of conversation between Earl Packer and Dr. H.S. Bender of the Mennonite Central Committee, September 1, 1936, 861.404/412, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-294)
295. For example, see Charge d’Affaires Loy Henderson to Hull, September 28, 1936, 861.404/403, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-295)
296. Henderson used codenames in his cables to Washington to protect the identities of his local religious contacts, but he noted that one was a Lutheran priest and the other a Roman Catholic priest, suggesting that he referred to Streck and Braun. Henderson also reported that Soviet agents repeatedly tried to recruit Barnhouse as a Soviet spy. Henderson to Hull, September 18, 1936, 861.404/404, RG 59, NARA, including enclosures. When Barnhouse returned to the US to share his experiences with his coreligionists, Robert Kelley of the Eastern European Division furnished Barnhouse with a copy of Henderson’s secret cable containing Barnhouse’s dictated account of his meetings with the Moscow priests. Kelley to Donald G. Barnhouse, November 10, 1936, 861.404/407, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-296)
297. Henderson to Hull, September 18, 1936, 861.404/404, RG 59, NARA, including enclosures. [↑](#footnote-ref-297)
298. Primary and secondary sources on Streck’s fate remain sparse. One contemporary Lutheran periodical suggests that the Soviet regime executed him soon after his arrest. See “New Life is Springing Up From the Stump,” *Religion in Eastern Europe* 27.1 (February 2007), 54, http://www.georgefox.edu/ree/Recent%20News%20on%20Religion\_Feb%202007.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-298)
299. William Bullitt cabled Secretary of State R. Walton Moore from Paris to relay the urgent report from Loy Henderson. Bullitt claimed in his report to Washington that his comment about negative reaction in the US was intended to be heard by the Soviet secret police, who would be monitoring their phone conversation. Bullitt to Hull, November 14, 1936, 861/404/408, RG 59, NARA. *FRUS* contains no mention of Streck’s arrest, but the *New York Times* briefly mentioned it in its back pages. See Harold Denny, “Arrest in Moscow Hits Wedding Plan,” *New York Times,* November 13, 1936, 9; “US Consul Married in Moscow Ceremony: Substitute Pastor Is Obtained After First Choice Is Seized in Widespread Raids,” *New York Times*, November 15, 1936, 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-299)
300. Mayers, *The Ambassadors*, 109-110. [↑](#footnote-ref-300)
301. Dennis Dunn and David Mayers depicted Davies as an incompetent dilettante who ignored Soviet aggression and domestic repression in slavish pursuit of Roosevelt’s policies. According to this view, Davies helped to mislead the American government and people about the aggressive nature of the Soviet regime, thereby delaying efforts to contain Soviet expansion after World War II. See Mayers, *The Ambassadors*, especially 120-121, and Dennis J. Dunn, *Caught between Roosevelt and Stalin: America's Ambassadors to Moscow* (Lexington, Kentucky, 1998). For criticism of Dunn’s negative interpretation, see Laura A. Belmonte, review of *Caught Between Roosevelt & Stalin: America's Ambassadors to Moscow* by Dennis J. Dunn, *H-Pol, H-Net Reviews* (March 1999), http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=2924i. For further criticisms of Davies’s naïveté toward Soviet officials, see Keith Eagles, *Ambassador Joseph E. Davies and American-Soviet Relations, 1937-1941* (New York, 1985), and Edward M. Bennett, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Search for Security: American-Soviet Relations, 1933-1939* (Wilmington, Delaware, 1985). [↑](#footnote-ref-301)
302. The historians Elizabeth Kimball Maclean and Todd Bennett have presented Davies as a relatively reasonable, pragmatic diplomat. For sympathetic accounts of Davies’ role in Russia, see Elizabeth Kimball MacLean, *Joseph E. Davies, Envoy to the Soviets* (Westport, 1992), and Todd Bennett, “Culture, Power, and Mission to Moscow: Film and Soviet-American Relations During World War II,” *Journal of American History,* 88 (2001): 489–518. [↑](#footnote-ref-302)
303. Davies to Hull, March 17, 1937, 861.404/412, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-303)
304. Davies to Hull, June 9, 1938, folder Diplomatic correspondence, Russia, 1937-1940, box 49, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-304)
305. Gaddis*, Russia, the Soviet Union,* 134-135. [↑](#footnote-ref-305)
306. Mayers, *The Ambassadors*, 122-123. On Stalin’s decision to conclude the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and his subsequent failure to prepare more fully for the German invasion, see Teddy J. Uldricks, "The Icebreaker Controversy: Did Stalin Plan to Attack Hitler?," *Slavic Review* 58.3 (1999): 626-643; David M. Glantz, *Stumbling Colossus: The Red Army on the Eve of World War* (Lawrence, Kansas, 1998); Gabriel Gorodetsky, *Grand Delusion: Stalin and the German Invasion of Russia* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999); Geoffrey Roberts, *Stalin's Wars: From World War to Cold War, 1939-1953* (New Haven, CT, 2006) 5, 30-34. [↑](#footnote-ref-306)
307. For example, see Arthur Bliss Lane to Hull, May 13, 1937, 861.404/414, RG 59, NARA; Henderson to Hull, January 20, 1939, 861.404/429, RG 59, NARA; *Mayers, The Ambassadors*, 125. [↑](#footnote-ref-307)
308. Foglesong, *The American Mission*, 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-308)
309. Braun noted that Davies used his influence with Kremlin officials to gain better treatment for the priest. Leopold L. S. Braun, *In Lubianka’s Shadow: The Memoirs of an American Priest in Stalin's Moscow, 1934-1945*, ed. G. M. Hamburg (Notre Dame, Indiana, 2006), xxxix. [↑](#footnote-ref-309)
310. “Spiritual Geopolitics: Fr. Edmund Walsh and Jesuit Anti-Communism,” in *Geopolitical Traditions: Critical Histories of a Century of Geopolitical Thought*, ed. David Atkinson and Klaus Dodds (New York, 2000), 189. [↑](#footnote-ref-310)
311. Roosevelt speech, February 1940, quoted in Sherwood*, Roosevelt and Hopkins*, 138. [↑](#footnote-ref-311)
312. Robert D. Lewallen, *The Winter War: The United States and the Impotence of Power* (USA, 2010), 32-33. [↑](#footnote-ref-312)
313. Michael P. Riccards, *Faith and Leadership: The Papacy and the Roman Catholic Church* (Lanham, Maryland), 406-407. For an overview of US-Vatican relations prior to and during the Cold War, see J. F. Pollard, “The Vatican, Italy and the Cold War,” in *Religion and the Cold War*, ed. Dianne Kirby (Basingstoke, UK, 2003), 103-118. [↑](#footnote-ref-313)
314. Roosevelt to Hull, Dec 22, 1939, box 49, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-314)
315. Roosevelt considered forcing Soviet delegates to use central phone lines in retaliation to Soviet slights in Moscow, but he did not do so. Roosevelt to Hull, January 10, 1940, box 49, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-315)
316. Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia*, 14-22, 47-48. On Hull and Welles’s hopes that removing the moral embargo would put Soviet-American relations on a more “friendly” footing, see Welles to FDR, January 9, 1941, folder 1, box 151, Welles papers, FDRL. On US diplomats’ general pessimism toward maintaining relations with Moscow in early 1941, see Mary Glantz, *FDR and the Soviet Union* (Kansas, 2005), 54-55. [↑](#footnote-ref-316)
317. Franklin D. Roosevelt, “Annual Message to the Congress, January 3, 1940,” in *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 9, ed. Samuel I. Rosenman (New York, 1941), 8; Roosevelt, “Radio Address in Connection With the Christian Foreign Service Convocation, March 16, 1940,” in *Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 9, 103; Roosevelt, “Radio Address on the Occasion of the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America, February 8, 1940,” in *Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 9, 76; Roosevelt, “‘Our Democratic Army Has Existed for One Purpose Only: the Defense of Our Freedom,’ Radio Address on the Occasion of the Drawing of Numbers Under the Selective Service Act of 1940, October 29, 1940,” in *Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 9, 509-510. [↑](#footnote-ref-317)
318. Samuel Rosenman, “Introduction,” *Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt,* vol. 10, ed. Samuel I. Rosenman(New York, 1950), xx. A keyword search for “religion” and “religious” in the digitized volume of Roosevelt’s published addresses in 1941 shows just one reference, in May 1941, to communists as “enemies of democracy” and ruthless in their “denial of God.” By late September, however, Roosevelt actively defended Russia’s religious policy. His religious attacks directed at Germany steadily increased after late 1939. See Roosevelt, “We Choose Human Freedom—A Radio Address Announcing the Proclamation of an Unlimited National Emergency,” May 27, 1941, *Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt,* vol. 10, 184, 191; Roosevelt, “The Seven Hundred and Seventy-first Press Conference (Excerpts), September 30, 1941,” *Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt,* vol. 10, 402. A keyword searchable text of the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States* is available at the University of Michigan Digital Library, http://name.umdl.umich.edu/4926590.1941.001. [↑](#footnote-ref-318)
319. Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia,* 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-319)
320. There is some ambiguity surrounding the intent behind the clause giving the president lend-lease powers. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau wrote in his diary that the Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter engineered the clause primarily to enable swift assistance to Balkan countries, especially Turkey. Ibid., 9-10; Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, 226, 264; William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, *The Challenge to Isolation, 1937-40* (New York, 1952), 256. [↑](#footnote-ref-320)
321. US Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, *Hearings on S. 275, A Bill Further to Promote the Defense of the United States, and for Other Purposes,* 77 *Congressional Record* 87.2, 445-46 (hereafter Senate, *Lend-Lease Hearings*), quoted in Dawson,  *Decision to Aid Russia,* 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-321)
322. Senate, *Lend-Lease Hearings*, 77 Cong. Rec. 87.2, 469-70, quoted in Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia,* 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-322)
323. 77 Cong. Rec. 87.2, 1297-98, 1492. [↑](#footnote-ref-323)
324. 77 Cong. Rec. 87.2, 1211. [↑](#footnote-ref-324)
325. Committee on Foreign Relations, *Promoting the Defense of the United States, Minority Views*, S. Rep. No. 45, at 2-3, 77 Cong. Rec. 87.2, quoted in Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia,* 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-325)
326. Senate, *Lend-Lease Hearings*, 77 Cong. Rec. 87.1, 119, quoted in Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia*, 27-28. [↑](#footnote-ref-326)
327. 77 Cong. Rec. 87.1, [499, 596](javascript:readerData.gotoPageId('94830979')); Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia*, 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-327)
328. “Text of Bullitt Speech Urging All-Out Aid for Democracies,” *Washington Post,* January 8, 1941, 10; House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Hearings on H.R. 1776, A Bill Further to Promote the Defense of the United States, and for Other Purposes,* 77 Cong. Rec. 87.1, 499, 596,quoted in Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia*, 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-328)
329. “US 'Moral Embargo' on Russia Lifted,” *Washington Post,* January 22, 1941, 1; Arthur Krock, “The Government’s Gesture Toward the Soviet,” *New York Times,* January 23, 1941, 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-329)
330. Harold Callender, “End of ‘Moral Embargo’ Aids Russian Relations,”January 26, 1941, E6;

     “Gesture To The Bear,” *Washington Post,* January 24, 1941, 8; Krock, “The Government’s Gesture,” *New York Times,* January 23, 1941, 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-330)
331. *The New York Times* buried Bishop John Gannon’s objections in a similar manner. See “Father Walsh Assails Soviet 'Appeasement',” *Washington Post*, January 30, 1941, 14, and “[Soviet Chief Peril, Reality Men Hear](http://search.proquest.com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/106127999/135B18BEB682A3DC488/10?accountid=12347),” *New York Times,* February 2, 1941, 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-331)
332. “$1,300,000,000 Top Put on Arms to Be Sent,” *New York Times,* February 8, 1941, 1; Turner Catledge, “Peril in Quibbling: Self-Defense Put Ahead of Fine Law Points by Secretary of State,” *New York Times,* January 16, 1941, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-332)
333. The personal papers of publisher Arthur H. Sulzberger and columnist Anne McCormick did not yield details about their interactions with statesmen and religious leaders in early 1941, nor did official government sources. Anecdotes in memoirs are generally incomplete. On Anne McCormick’s relationship to power, see Yvonne Hunter, "Cold Columns: Anne O'Hare McCormick and the Origins of the Cold War in *The New York Times* (1920-1954)," unpublished Masters thesis, Nipissing University, 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-333)
334. On the role of “respected opinion-makers” and controllers of the mass media in shaping the policymaking process, see Ralph B. Levering, *American Opinion and the Russian Alliance, 1939-1945* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1976), 8-12, 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-334)
335. On the primacy of radio and newspapers versus other media sources, see ibid., 50 [↑](#footnote-ref-335)
336. For a recent discussion of David Carr’s use of the term “New York Times effect,” see “‘Page One: Inside the New York Times’ Reviewed; Plus The ‘New York Times Effect’ on New York’s Biggest Real Estate Development Swindle,” *Noticing New York* (blog), June 26, 2011, http://noticingnewyork.blogspot.ca/2011/06/page-one-inside-new-york-times-reviewed.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-336)
337. Steven Casey, *Cautious Crusade* (New York, 2001), 16. On the preeminence of the *New York Times* during World War II, see Levering, *American Opinion and the Russian Alliance,* 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-337)
338. Levering, *American Opinion and the Russian Alliance,* 9-12, 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-338)
339. Carol H. Weiss, “What America's Leaders Read,” Public Opinion Quarterly, 38.1 (1974): 1-22. [↑](#footnote-ref-339)
340. On *Christian Century’s* readership and circulation, see Michael H. Carter, “Diplomacy's Detractors: American Protestant Reaction to FDR's 'Personal Representative at the Vatican,” in *FDR, the Vatican, and the Roman Catholic Church in America,1933-1945,* eds. Richard Kurial and David Woolner (New York, 2003),186. For representative circulation statistics, see *Editor and Publisher* *International Yearbook 1941* (New York, 1942), and *N. W. Ayer &* *Son Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals*, (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1942). On the print media’s influence at mid-century, see Michael Emery, Edwin Emery, and Nancy L. Roberts, *The Press and America: An Interpretive History of the Mass Media*, *9th ed*. (Boston, Massachusetts, 2000), and George H. Douglas, *The Golden Age of the Newspaper* (Westport, Connecticut, 1999). [↑](#footnote-ref-340)
341. Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia,* 30, 31; Harold Hinton, “Urges Neutrality: Aviator Testifies He Wants Neither Side to Win Conflict,” *New York Times*, January 24, 1941, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-341)
342. Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia,* 41; Turner Catledge, “Kennedy Opposes Full Power Given in Lease-Lend Bill,” *New York Times*, January 22, 1941. [↑](#footnote-ref-342)
343. Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia,* 41. For a general discussion of religion and the lend-lease controversy in America, see Preston, *Sword of the Spirit,* 298-314. [↑](#footnote-ref-343)
344. Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia,* 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-344)
345. Braun’s accounts are inconsistent, but they tend to agree on major points. For the fullest accounts of the church robberies, see Leopold L. S. Braun, *In Lubianka's Shadow,*175-199, and unpublished manuscript by Braun, “Pro Memoria (I): Certain Unpublished details concerning the present mission of the Assumptionist in Russia, especially 1934-1945,” 1947, Braun drawer 1, folder “Correspondence/Notes Braun, March 13, 1934,” Braun Papers, AAA. [↑](#footnote-ref-345)
346. Braun, *In Lubianka’s Shadow,* 182. [↑](#footnote-ref-346)
347. On the poor state of Soviet-American relations after August 1939, see Mayers, *The Ambassadors*, 127-130. [↑](#footnote-ref-347)
348. Steinhardt telegram to Hull, February 17, 1941, *FRUS*, 1941, 1: 995-996. [↑](#footnote-ref-348)
349. Braun, *In Lubianka’s Shadow*, 180; Braun, “Pro Memoria,” 1947, Braun drawer 1, folder “Correspondence/Notes Braun, March 13, 1934”, Braun Papers, AAA. [↑](#footnote-ref-349)
350. U.S. Department of State, *Department of State Bulletin* 4.91 (March 22, 1941): 334; “Moscow Church Recovers Relics,” *New York Times,* March 18, 1941, 5; “Moscow’s Catholic Church Robberies,” *The Catholic Herald,* March 28, 1941. [↑](#footnote-ref-350)
351. Steinhardt to Hull, February 28, 1941, 861.404/438, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-351)
352. Braun, *In Lubianka’s Shadow,* 183. [↑](#footnote-ref-352)
353. “Bullitt Asks Funds To Replace Thefts From Soviet Church, *Washington Post*, March 7, 1941, 11; “Bullitt Urges Help for Moscow Church,” *New York Times*, March 7, 1941, 23. For evidence of Bullitt’s extensive financial and political lobbying on behalf of Braun, see memorandum by Burk Walsh, NCWC news correspondent, to Frank Hall, March 13, 1934, OGS, NCWC, CUA. The contents of this undated memo suggest it was written in 1940-1941. [↑](#footnote-ref-353)
354. Braun, “Pro Memoria,” 1947, Braun drawer 1, folder “Correspondence/Notes Braun, March 13, 1934”, AAA. [↑](#footnote-ref-354)
355. On official displeasure at Soviet religious repression, see memorandum of conversation between Welles, Oumansky, Ray Atherton, and Loy Henderson, December 16, 1940, 711.61/7801, *FRUS*, 1940, 3:431; Bullitt to Steinhardt, January 17, 1940, April 2, 1940, and Dec 28, 1940, box 29, General Correspondence, 1940, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; and Standley telegram to Hull, June 3, 1942, *FRUS*, 1942, 3:152. On the Catholic Church’s dissatisfaction with government failure to defend religious freedoms during the late WWII and early Cold War period, see Kent, *The Lonely Cold War* *of Pope Pius XII.* [↑](#footnote-ref-355)
356. The Jesuit periodical *America* and Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen continued to publicly oppose the State Department’s decision to lift the moral embargo. *The Catholic World* editorialized in May that “moral instinct” rebelled at the prospect of the USSR joining the anti-German alliance, imploring President Roosevelt to announce that he would “not accept Russia as an ally of the US.” Quoted in Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia,* 85-87. [↑](#footnote-ref-356)
357. “The Need for General Spiritual Rebirth,” *Department of State Bulletin* 4.91 (March 22, 1941): 335. [↑](#footnote-ref-357)
358. “Cites Soviet Ban On All Religion, *New York Times,* June 19, 1941, 4; “Soviet's War On Religion Told at Trial,” *Washington Post*, June 19, 1941, 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-358)
359. On bureaucratic pressure to deal more firmly with Russia in 1941, see Mary E. Glantz, *FDR and the Soviet Union,* 45, and Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia,* 48, 56. For evidence of the media’s wavering support for rapprochement in spring 1941, see Walter Lippmann, “Today And Tomorrow: Russian Policy,” *Washington Post*, March 6, 1941, 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-359)
360. Hadley Cantrill, ed., *Public Opinion, 1935-1946,* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1951), 1187; Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia,* 99; Preston, *Sword of the Spirit,* 355. [↑](#footnote-ref-360)
361. Cantrill, *Public Opinion,* 1102*.*The State Department’s Office of War Information [OWI] also studied religious groups’ opinions, but OWI reports generally failed to reach decision-makers in the White House. Casey, *Cautious Crusade*, 268. [↑](#footnote-ref-361)
362. “[Text of the Statement on the War by Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop of Germany](http://search.proquest.com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/105545458/135724FF16E1B7792FE/1?accountid=12347),” *New York Times,* June 23, 1941, 4. For a discussion of Catholic isolationism prior to Barbarossa, see Gerald P. Fogarty, S.J., "Roosevelt and the American Catholic Hierarchy," 26-27. For a broader discussion of Catholic and Protestant reaction to Barbarossa, see Foglesong, *The American Mission,* 85-95. [↑](#footnote-ref-362)
363. Papal Encyclical, *Divine Redemptories,* March 19, 1937, quoted in Miner, *Stalin's Holy War*, 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-363)
364. On the Declaration by United Nations signed January 1, 1942, see Townsend Hopes and Douglas Brinkley, *FDR and the Creation of the U.N.* (New Haven, Connecticut, 1997). [↑](#footnote-ref-364)
365. “[Text of the Statement on the War by Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop of Germany](http://search.proquest.com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/105545458/135724FF16E1B7792FE/1?accountid=12347),” *New York Times*, June 23, 1941, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-365)
366. For general discussions of Roosevelt and Welles’ cultivation of American Catholics, see George Q. Flynn, *Roosevelt and Romanism*: *Catholics and American Diplomacy, 1937-1945* (Westport, Connecticut, 1976), and D. Woolner and R. Kurial, eds., *FDR, the Vatican, and the Roman Catholic Church in America*, *1933–1945* (New York, 2003). For the NCWC chairman Michael Ready’s cooperative efforts with Welles to suppress public statements by clergyman hostile to aid to Russia, see memorandum of conversation between Ready and Welles, July 17, 1941, folder 23, box 119, OGS, NCWC, CUA, and Ready to Welles, July 2, 1941, box 119, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-366)
367. Oumansky quoted in Miner, *Stalin's Holy War*, 115. [↑](#footnote-ref-367)
368. Turner Catledge, “Our Policy Stated,” *New York Times,* June 24, 1941, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-368)
369. Text of Roosevelt press conference, June 24, 1941, Press Conferences, M.S., vol. 17 (January-June, 1941), I-P, President’s Personal File, FDRL, quoted in Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia,* 1941. [↑](#footnote-ref-369)
370. Preston, *Sword of the Spirit,* 325 [↑](#footnote-ref-370)
371. Levering, *American Opinion and the Russian Alliance,* 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-371)
372. Arthur Krock, “The Government Is for Any One Who Fights Hitler,” *New York Times,* June 24, 1941, 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-372)
373. On Krock’s hostile relationship to Roosevelt, see Casey, *Cautious Crusade*, 31-33; text of speech by Krock to the National Republican Club, January 26, 1935, Arthur Krock Collection, Princeton University, quoted in Betty Houchin Winfield, *FDR and the News* *Media* (Illinois, 1990), 35; and Winfield, *FDR and the News* *Media,* 66-67. [↑](#footnote-ref-373)
374. *Christian Science Monitor,* June 24, 1941, 22. For more on the press’ response to Welles’s speech, see Levering, *American Opinion and the Russian Alliance,* 48-49. [↑](#footnote-ref-374)
375. Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia,* 68, 80. [↑](#footnote-ref-375)
376. “Lindberg Assails Tie With Russia,” *New York Times*, July 2, 1941, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-376)
377. Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia,* 101-103. [↑](#footnote-ref-377)
378. “Tinkham Assails Roosevelt For Pledging Aid to Soviet,” *The Washington Post,* June 30, 1941, 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-378)
379. “The Day in Washington,” *New York Times*, June 29, 1941, 28; “Tinkham Assails Roosevelt For Pledging Aid to Soviet,” *Washington Post*, June 30, 1941, 8; James B. Reston, “War Step Trend Eyed By Congress,” *New York Times,* June 30, 1941, 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-379)
380. Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia,* 129-131, 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-380)
381. Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia,* 94-95. For a discussion of theologian Reinhold Niebuhr’s interventionism, see Gary B. Bullert, "Reinhold Niebuhr and the Christian Century: World War II and the Eclipse of the Social Gospel," *Journal of Church and State* 44.2 (2002): 271-290. [↑](#footnote-ref-381)
382. Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia.* 88. [↑](#footnote-ref-382)
383. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-383)
384. “Wants War Action Left to President,” [*New York Times,*](http://search.proquest.com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/pagepdf.lateralsearchlink_1:lateralsearch/sng/pubtitle/New+York+Times+$281923-Current+file$29/$N?site=hnpnewyorktimes&t:ac=106043416/fulltextPDF/135DE4F10ED6080121C/12&t:cp=maintain/resultcitationblocks)July 07, 1941, 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-384)
385. Ernest K. Lindley, “Significant Utterance: Bishop Hurley,” *Washington Post,* July 11, 1941, 9; Charles R. Gallagher, *Vatican Secret Diplomacy*, 129; Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia*, 89. [↑](#footnote-ref-385)
386. Hurley’s address was published in the *Washington Post*, entered into the Congressional Record, and approved by Sumner Welles for public distribution by the State Department. Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia,* 89; Gallagher, *Vatican Secret Diplomacy,* 131-132. [↑](#footnote-ref-386)
387. Gallagher, *Vatican Secret Diplomacy,* 128. [↑](#footnote-ref-387)
388. On clerical and public debate about Hurley’s speech, see Gallagher, *Vatican Secret Diplomacy,* 123-125. [↑](#footnote-ref-388)
389. Gillis, "Getting Wise to Russia," *Catholic World* 160 (1944): 1, and Gillis, "Stalin Refuses to Play Ball," *Catholic World* 161 (1945): 198, quoted in Colin Reynolds, “Catholic and Protestant: Two Religious Periodicals and US-Soviet Relations, 1930-1950,” *Vestnik: The Journal of Russian and Asian Studies* 7 (2007): 6-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-389)
390. Gallagher, *Vatican Secret Diplomacy,* 125, 127-128. [↑](#footnote-ref-390)
391. Ibid., 131. [↑](#footnote-ref-391)
392. Ibid., 115-116. [↑](#footnote-ref-392)
393. Ibid., 116. [↑](#footnote-ref-393)
394. Assistant Secretary Adolf A. Berle called Russia’s attempt to secure a sphere of influence in the Baltic region “damned dangerous.” In July, Berle wrote to FBI chief Herbert Hoover warning the FBI to be wary of Soviet treachery with Germany, and to be vigilant against Communist activity in the western hemisphere. Loy Henderson and Berle sent a memo to Welles claiming that Soviet requests for military technology were “very efficient espionage,” and they advised denying the Russians information. Sumner Welles wrote in the margin of the memo, “I agree.” Quoted in Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia,* 135-137. [↑](#footnote-ref-394)
395. In late July, Welles cabled the American mission in Rome that it was inadvisable to make any public statement pressuring Russia to liberalize its religious policies, despite knowledge that Russia had not improved in this regard and an American protest might soften conservative religious interests toward post-war peace with Russia. Phillips to Hull, July 21, 1941*, FRUS,* 1941, 1:999. On Roosevelt’s deftness in managing political conflicts, see Kimball, *The Juggler*. [↑](#footnote-ref-395)
396. On Roosevelt and Churchill’s neglect of religious freedoms when crafting the Charter, see Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, 361, and Samuel Rosenman, *Working With Roosevelt* (New York, 1952), 316. [↑](#footnote-ref-396)
397. Rosenman, *Working With Roosevelt,* 316; Turner Catledge, “Another Aid Bill is Seen in Capital,” *New York Times*, August 15, 1941, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-397)
398. Welles to Roosevelt, August 25, 1941, box 171, folder 7, Sumner Welles Papers, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-398)
399. Ready to Welles, Aug 23, 1941, folder 23, box 119, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-399)
400. Langer and Gleason, *The Challenge to Isolation,* 796. [↑](#footnote-ref-400)
401. Published works available in 1941 lent some support to Roosevelt’s assertion. See Julius F. Hecker, *Religion Under the Soviets* (New York, 1927). [↑](#footnote-ref-401)
402. Roosevelt to Pope Pius XII, in *Wartime Correspondence Between President Roosevelt and Pope Pius XII,* ed. Myron Taylor, (New York, 1947), 61; memorandum by Domenico Tardini, “Réflexions de Mgr Tardini touchant la réponse à faire it Roosevelt,” September 12, 1941, in *Actes et Documents du Saint Siège Relatifs à la Seconde Guerre Mondiale: Vol. 5: Le Saint Siège et la guerre mondiale; Juillet 1941- Octobre 1942*, eds. Pierre Blet, Robert A. Graham, Angelo Martini, Burkhart Schneider (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1969), 202-206 (English translations included). Tittmann, quoted in Langer and Gleason, *The Undeclared War,* 796. [↑](#footnote-ref-402)
403. Gallagher, *Vatican Secret Diplomacy,* 126. [↑](#footnote-ref-403)
404. Cicognani to Maglione, September 1, 1941, *Actes et Documents*, eds. Blet, Graham, Martini, and Schneider, 163-174. [↑](#footnote-ref-404)
405. Tardini to Cicognani, September 20, 1941, *Actes et Documents*, eds. Blet, Graham, Martini, and Schneider, 240-241. [↑](#footnote-ref-405)
406. Gerald Fogarty, *The Vatican and the American Hierarchy From 1870 to 1945* (Wilmington, Delaware, 1985), 273-274. [↑](#footnote-ref-406)
407. Ibid.; Richard Polenberg, “World War II and the Bill of Rights, *The Home-Front War: World War II and American Society*, eds. Kenneth Paul O'Brien and Lynn H. Parsons (Westport, Connecticut, 1995), 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-407)
408. Fogarty, *The Vatican and the American Hierarchy,* 275-276. [↑](#footnote-ref-408)
409. Memorandum by Domenico Tardini, “Réflexions de Mgr Tardini touchant la réponse à faire it Roosevelt,” September 12, 1945, *Actes et Documents,* eds. Blet, Graham, Martini, and Schneider, 202-206. [↑](#footnote-ref-409)
410. For evidence of ongoing opposition to aid to Russia among the lower clergy in Autumn 1941, see “Catholic Clergy Oppose War Move: 91.5% of Those Voting in Poll Against a Shooting War in Europe,” *New York Times,* October 16, 1941, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-410)
411. Memorandum of conversation between Roosevelt, Hull, Hopkins and Oumansky, September 11, 1941, *FRUS, 1941*, vol. 1: 832-33; Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull,* vol. 2 (New York, 1948), 976-977. [↑](#footnote-ref-411)
412. Dunn, *The Catholic Church and Russia,* 115. [↑](#footnote-ref-412)
413. Harriman’s 1976 memoir and Robert Sherwood’s 1948 memoir contradict this account, claiming the Soviets offered no response to Harriman’s religious inquiries. Harriman’s contemporary first-hand account seems most reliable, given its proximity to the events. See Memorandum by Averell Harriman, “Religion in the USSR,” October 4, 1941, box 160, W. Averell Harriman papers, Library of Congress, Washington DC; Averell Harriman and Elie Abel*, Special Envoy to Churchill and Stalin* (New York, 1975), 103; Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, 388. [↑](#footnote-ref-413)
414. Hull to Steinhardt, October 2, 1941, *FRUS, 1941,* 1:1000-1001; Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, 391-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-414)
415. Memorandum by Averell Harriman, “Religion in the USSR,” October 4, 1941, box 160, Harriman papers, LOC. [↑](#footnote-ref-415)
416. Braun, “Pro Memoria,” 1947, Braun drawer 1, folder “Correspondence/Notes Braun, March 13, 1934,” AAA. [↑](#footnote-ref-416)
417. Ibid., emphasis in original. [↑](#footnote-ref-417)
418. Bruce Mohler, Director of NCWC Immigration, to Ready, July 9, 1941, folder 4 Communism: Russia: Braun (1934 thru 1953), box 26, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-418)
419. Memorandum, “Paraphrase of telegram received from American embassy, Moscow,” October 13, 1941, folder 4 Communism: Russia: Braun (1934 thru 1953), box 26, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-419)
420. Copy of Braun to Bullitt, October 3, 1941, folder 4: Communism: Russia: Braun (1934 thru 1953), box 26, OGS, NCWC. Braun’s superiors forbade him from publishing his memoir in order to protect the ongoing Catholic mission in Moscow, but he continued to make unauthorized statements to the press maligning the Soviet government after 1945. Cicognani to Ready, October 24, 1941, folder 4 Communism: Russia: Braun (1934 thru 1953), box 26, OGS, NCWC; Cicognani to Reverend Wilfrid Default, October 4, 1947, drawer 2: Braun, folder “Braun Leopold (printed papers after Moscow), AAA; Newspaper clipping, “Chaplain Says Soviet Police Got Supplies,” *Washington Post,* November 7, 1946, folder 1, box 26, OGS, NCWC. [↑](#footnote-ref-420)
421. Dunn, *The Catholic Church and Russia,* 111; Braun to Taylor, October 3, 1941, folder 4 Communism: Russia: Braun (1934 thru 1953), box 26, OGS, NCWC. [↑](#footnote-ref-421)
422. In fall 1942, Taylor persuaded Bishop Edward Mooney to draft a declaration of religious freedom designed to be acceptable to the Soviet government. Mooney explained that he avoided any “reference to the past” or “confession” to allow “face-saving” by the Soviet government. Papal Secretary Tardini in Rome remained more pessimistic toward Braun’s reports and less amenable to rapprochement, however. Mooney to Taylor, Nov 30 1942, Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C.: 1942, box 52, PSF, FDRL; memorandum of conversation between Taylor and Tardini, Sept 26, 1942, Diplomatic Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C.: 1942, box 51, PSF, FDRL; Dunn, *The Catholic Church and Russia,* ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-422)
423. “New Polish Army Training in Urals” [*New York Times,*](http://search.proquest.com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/pagepdf.lateralsearchlink_1:lateralsearch/sng/pubtitle/New+York+Times+$281923-Current+file$29/$N?t:ac=105745880/fulltextPDF/135D0DBBCA42DAB61AB/16&t:cp=maintain/resultcitationblocks) October 1, 1941, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-423)
424. Frank L. Kluckhohn, “Roosevelt Cites Red Church Law,” *New York Times,* October 1, 1941, 9; “President Bids for Support of Program to Aid Soviet,” *Washington Post*, October 1, 1941, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-424)
425. “Roosevelt’s View on Soviet Scored,” *New York Times,* October 2, 1941, 3; “Worship in Soviet President’s Hope,” *New York Times,* October 3, 1941, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-425)
426. Preston, *Sword of the Spirit,* 360; Levering, *American Opinion and the Russian Alliance,* 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-426)
427. Edward T. Folliard, “Church Leaders Interpret: Roosevelt Believed Seeking Religious Freedom in Soviet,” *Washington Post,* October 2, 1941, 1; Edward T. Folliard, “White House Acts to Clarify Remark on Religion in Russia,” *Washington Post,* October 03, 1941, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-427)
428. Folliard, “White House Acts to Clarify Remark on Religion in Russia,” *Washington Post,* October 03, 1941, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-428)
429. Advertisement, “Can the Reds Worship God?” *New York Times,* October 3, 1941, 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-429)
430. Arthur Krock, “What the President Said About Religious Liberty,” *New York Times,* October 3, 3, 1941, C22; Walter Lippmann, “Today And Tomorrow: Russia, America And Mr. Roosevelt,” *Washington Post,* October 4, 1941, 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-430)
431. Draft statement by Ready, “unused,” no date, folder 23, box 25, OGS, NCWC, CUA; NCWC press release, October 3, 1941, folder 23, box 25, OGS, NCWC, CUA. On the secretiveness surrounding Ready’s meeting with Roosevelt, see “The President’s Day,” *Washington Post*, October 3, 1941, 2; “Mgr. Walsh Backs Moves,” *New York Times*, October 4, 1941, 3. For examples of favourable coverage, see N.S. Timasheff, “Aid to Russia Held Essential: But Injection of Religious Question Is Viewed as Beside the Point” *New York Times,* October 3, 1941, C22, and Mark Sullivan, “Russian Constitution: Mr. Roosevelt's Press Statement, *Washington Post,* October 3, 1941, 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-431)
432. Soviet Affirms Religion is Free,” *New York Times,* October 5, 1941, 1; “‘Catholic Leader Assails ‘Mockery,’” *New York Times,* October 6, 1941, 4; “Father Walsh Urges US To Press Reds,” *Washington Post,* October 6, 1941, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-432)
433. “Moscow Statement on Religion Disappoints White House Circles,” *New York Times,* October 6, 1941, 1; “Religious Freedom Guarantee Urged as Basis for Assistance,” *Washington Post,* October 8, 1941, 1; “Catholic View Given on Aid to Russians,” *New York Times,* October 14, 1941, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-433)
434. For examples of neutral newspaper coverage of Russian claims of religious freedoms, see “Soviet Affirms Religion is Free,” *New York Times,* October 5, 1941, 1, “Editors Ask Dr. Walsh To Clarify His Views,” *Washington Post,* October 7, 1941, 3, and Lawrence E. Davies, “Full Aid to Soviet Favored by A.F.L.,” *New York Times,* October 17, 1941, 12. For voyeuristic coverage of Catholic leaders’ heated language and demands for religious guarantees, see “’Catholic Leader Assails ‘Mockery,’” *New York Times,* October 6, 1941, 4, “Religious Freedom Guarantee Urged as Basis for Assistance,” *Washington Post,* October 8, 1941, 1, and “Catholic View Given,” *New York Times*, October 14, 1941, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-434)
435. “Catholic Clergy Oppose War Move: 91.5% of Those Voting in Poll Against a Shooting War in Europe,” *New York Times,* October 16, 1941, 4; “Clergy Poll,” *Commonweal*, October 31, 1941, 37-38, quoted in Dawson, *The Decision to Aid Russia,* 265-268. [↑](#footnote-ref-435)
436. For an example of ongoing demands for religious reform, see Fulton J. Sheen, “Soviet Russia May Be Helped But Russia Must be Reformed,” *America,* October 18, 1941, 35. On private suspicion among Catholic clergymen and laypeople in 1942 and 1943, see Preston, *Sword of the Spirit,* 363. [↑](#footnote-ref-436)
437. George N. Crocker, *Roosevelt's Road to Russia* (Chicago, Illinois, 1959), 147; Douglas Brinkley and David R. Face-Crowther, eds., *The Atlantic Charter* (New York, 1994), 89. [↑](#footnote-ref-437)
438. Crocker, *Roosevelt's Road to Russia*, 147. [↑](#footnote-ref-438)
439. Excerpt of Maisky speech, Sept 23, 1941, Diplomatic Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C. 1939-40, box 51, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-439)
440. Miner, *Stalin's Holy War,* 68-74. On religious conditions inside Russia during WWII, see Peris, “‘God is Now on Our Side’,” 97-118. [↑](#footnote-ref-440)
441. Miner, *Stalin's Holy War,* 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-441)
442. For Anglo-American coordination in managing the Catholic clergy, see Welles to Ambassador Joseph Kennedy, June 30, 1939 and Aug 1, 1939, folder 11, box 53, Sumner Welles Papers, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-442)
443. Langer and Gleason, *The Challenge to Isolation,* 818. [↑](#footnote-ref-443)
444. Preston, *Sword of the Spirit,* 364. Also see Preston, “Death of a Peculiar Special Relationship: Myron Taylor and the Religious Roots of America’s Cold War,” in *America’s Special Relationships: Foreign and Domestic Aspects of the Politics of Alliance,* ed. John Dumbrell and Axel R. Schafer (New York, 2009), 210-213. [↑](#footnote-ref-444)
445. November 1940, Roosevelt commanded 57%, 70%, and 82% support among upper-, middle-, and lower-income Catholics, respectively. Catholic support for FDR dropped slightly in the election of 1944, but the declines were only 18%, 11%, and 4%, respectively. Sam Rosenman memorandum to Grace Tully, September 13, 1944, “What Trend the Catholics of the US are Taking in this Election,” Public Opinion Polls: 1942-1944, Subject files, box 157, PSF, FDRL; Warren B.Walsh, “What the American People Think of Russia, *Public Opinion Quarterly* 8.4 (Winter 1944-1945), 516-517. Also see Surveys by the Gallup Organization, January 1943-August 1945, and the National Opinion Research Centre (NORC), October 1945-March 1947, quoted in “A Half Century’s Polling on the USSR and Communism: A Roper Centre Review of Public Attitudes,” *Public Perspective* 3.1 (1991), 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-445)
446. Protestants also generally favoured Roosevelt in the elections of 1940 and 1944, with relative declines of only 2% to 6%. Sam Rosenman memorandum to Grace Tully, September 13, 1944, “What Trend the Catholics of the US are Taking in this Election,” Public Opinion Polls: 1942-1944, Subject files, box 157, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-446)
447. The wealthiest Protestant demographic returned the highest percentage of positive responses. Similarly, Catholics actively distrusted Russia in greater percentages, with a difference of 2% to 14%, depending in income level. When the Gallup organization asked in summer 1943 if the US should make a defensive military alliance with Russia after the war, Protestant responses were split at 39% for and 37% against. Gallup Survey no. 287-K, February 3, 1943, *The Gallup Poll,* 36; Samuel Rosenman memo for Grace Tully, folder Subject Files: Public Opinion Polls: 1942-1944, box 157, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-447)
448. *Fortune* polls, October 1941 and February 1942 and Jerome Bruner, *Mandate from the People* (New York, 1944), 248, quoted in Walsh “What the American People Think of Russia,” *Public Opinion Quarterly,* 516-517. [↑](#footnote-ref-448)
449. “Informal Meeting held November 21, 1941 on the Religious Situation in Russia” folder 8, box 40, RG 18, Records of the Federal Council of Churches in Christ in America [FCC], Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania [PHS]. [↑](#footnote-ref-449)
450. Eric M. North of the American Bible Society letter to Loy Henderson, April 4, 1942, 840.404/8, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-450)
451. Whereas only 39% of Catholics predicted Russia would seek a limited security sphere by insisting that neighbouring states like Poland were governed by friendly regimes, a larger minority of Protestants—over 47%—held that view. Samuel Rosenman memo for Grace Tully, folder Subject Files: Public Opinion Polls: 1942-1944, box 157, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-451)
452. Gallup Survey no. 287-K, February 3, 1943, George Horace Gallup, *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1935-1971* (New York, 1972)*,* 36; Samuel Rosenman memo for Grace Tully, folder Subject Files: Public Opinion Polls: 1942-1944, box 157, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-452)
453. *Life* magazine promoted Dulles as the probable future secretary of state prior to the 1944 election and highlighted his religious background. Sumner Welles, Senator Joseph Ball, the presidential candidate Thomas Dewey, and Arthur H. Sulzberger of the *New York Times* also publicly praised Dulles’s “Six Pillars of Peace.” John Foster Dulles, “Six Pillars of Peace*,*” April 15, 1943, *Vital Speeches of the Day* 9.13 (1943): 405; John Chamberlain, “Close up: John Foster Dulles,” *Life*, August 21, 1944, 85; Dulles letter to Sulzberger, June 6, 1943, folder 16, box 187, Arthur Hays Sulzberger Papers, NYPL. [↑](#footnote-ref-453)
454. In January 1941, Roosevelt reluctantly agreed to meet with Samuel McCrea Cavert of the Federal Council of Churches, but he insisted that the meeting be limited to 15 minutes. Cavert letter to Secretary to the President Gen. E.M. Watson, January 13, 1941, folder Church Matters 1933-1941, box 1, OF 76, FDRL. For examples of attempts to deflect religious requests, see Administrative Assistant to the President Lowell Mellett letter to Nat Schumlowitz, November 8, 1940, and Roosevelt memo to Mellett, November 9, 1940, folder Church Matters 1933-1941, box 1, OF 76, FDRL; Edwin Watson to James Heller, President of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, July 5, 1941, Watson letter to Rabbi Stephen Wise, July 5, 1941, and Early to Heller, July 31, 1941, folder Church Matters 1933-1941, box 1, OF 76, FDRL; Early letter to Reverend Karst Bergman, May 22 1940, folder Church Matters 1933-1941, box 1, OF 76, FDRL. On clerical dissatisfaction with FDR’s evasions, see Watson memo to William Hassett, September 18, 1941, folder Church Matters 1933-1941, box 1, OF 76, FDRL; A.L. Warnshuis of the Federal Council of Churches Committee of Overseas Relief and Reconstruction letter to Secretary to the President William D. Hassett, January 4, 1945, 840.404/1-445, RG 59, NARA. Roosevelt’s sparse attention to Protestants is confirmed by his daily appointment log, which can be searched at the FDR Presidential Library, http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/daybyday/daylog. [↑](#footnote-ref-454)
455. Historians have studied closely Dulles’s Cold War bellicosity and its roots in his Calvinist belief system. Historian Mark Toulouse argues that in 1943-1944, Dulles ascribed to the Neibuhrian view that a mixture of goodness and evil characterized every nation-state, including the US and the USSR. During 1945 and 1946, however, Dulles shifted toward “self-righteous nationalism,” arguing that individual states could be either absolutely good or absolutely evil, with the US constituting a heroic nation state versus the morally deplorable Soviet Union. Mark Toulouse, *The Transformation of John Foster Dulles: From Prophet of Realism to Priest of Nationalism* (Macon, Ga., 1985), 153-162. Also see Ronald W. Preussen, *John Foster Dulles: The Road to Power* (New York, 1982), Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith,* 384-410. [↑](#footnote-ref-455)
456. For example, Assistant Secretary of State Adolf A. Berle ignored requests to speak at a religious studies institute offering lectures by anti-Soviet clerics. These clerics included Leopold Braun’s successor John Lafarge, and Jacques Maritain, a virulently anti-communist professor and future post-war French Ambassador to the Vatican. Louis Finkelstein to Assistant Secretary of State Adolf Berle, May 8, 1942, 811.404/280-1/2, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-456)
457. For Wallace and Welles’ collaboration, see Wallace letter to Welles, February 21, 1942, folder 15, box 85, Welles Papers, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-457)
458. For uncritical or positive coverage of Davies’s addresses, see “Four Freedoms After War Backed by Forum Speakers,” *Washington Post,* June 8, 1942, 19; “Roosevelt Wins Churchman Award,” *New York Times,* June 09, 1942, 18; “Mr. and Mrs. Joseph E. Davies Hold Reception in Honor Of Lieut. Luidmila Pavlichenko and for American-Soviet Friendship,” *Washington Post,* September 25, 1942, B9; “Marks Muhlenberg Date: Lutherans' Convention Hears Vice President Wallace,” *New York Times,* October 19, 1942, 21; “Full Unity Urged With the Russians: Congress of American-Soviet Friendship Stresses Need of Spiritual Understanding,” *New York Times,* November 8, 1942, 36; “Wallace Assures Russia Priority,” *New York Times,* November 9, 1942, 19; “Public Should Weigh Problems Of Peace Now, Wallace Says,” *Washington Post,* December 19, 1942, B11; “Wallace, Other Dignitaries to Attend Mass,” *Washington Post,* January 17, 1943, 14; Robert Tate Allan, “Base for Peace Found in Bible, Wallace Says,” January 27, 1943, 8; “Mme. Chiang Worships: Attends Methodist Church With Mr. and Mrs. Wallace,” *New York Times,* March 1, 1943, 7; “Soviet Peace Tie Urged by Wallace” *New York Times,* March 9, 1943, 1; “Plan for Security Lauded in Sermons,” March 14, 1943, 13; “Wallace Idealism is Praised by Ayer,” March 15, 1943, 9; “Peace Initiative Urged by Wallace on America Now,” *New York Times,* July 26, 1943, 1. Some conservative editors and columnists attacked Wallace’s excessive idealism and spiritual “mysticism,” but these arguments were rare, appeared predominantly after spring 1943. See “Wallace's Republic,” *Washington Post,* January 28, 1943, 6; Harold Callender, “Russian-American Issues Brought Into Open,” March 14, 1943, *New York Times,* E3; Raymond Moley, “The Dual Identity of Mr. Wallace: The Vice President Should Not Hold an Executive Office,” *Wall Street Journal,* July 9, 1943, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-458)
459. Henry A Wallace, Speech delivered to the Free World Association, New York City, May 8, 1942, in Henry A. Wallace, *Democracy Reborn,* ed. Russell Lord (New York, 1944), 190. [↑](#footnote-ref-459)
460. “'We Are Over Hump,' Wallace Declares: Nazis Soon Will See Cause Is Lost, He Says, Praising Soviets,” ***New York Times,* September 25, 1942,** 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-460)
461. The *Washington Post* featured the speech on the front page and the *New York Times* quoted it in full. Edwin D. Gritz, “Wallace Sees World War III If US Double-Crosses Russia,” ***Washington Post*,** March 9, 1943, 1; “Vice President Wallace's Address Warning of Danger of Third World War,” ***New York Times***, March 9, 1943, 4. The only negative reaction to Wallace’s rhetoric was indignation among some conservatives at Wallace’s implication that the US planned to betray Russia in the post-war world. For a discussion of press reaction to Wallace’s speech, see Levering, *American Opinion and the Russia Alliance,* 107-108. [↑](#footnote-ref-461)
462. The OWI found that those who believed Russia could be depended to cooperate with the US after the war increased from 38% in February 1942 to 51% in August, but trust then wavered early fall. Moreover, those who believed Russia would try to spread communism after the war rose slightly to 33% and popular trust that Russia would cooperate after the war dropped slightly to 38%. The OWI passed these results to the Warner Brothers studio, producer of Joseph Davies’s propaganda film “Mission to Moscow,” noting the need for the media to emphasize that Russia would meet treaty obligations. Walsh, "What the American People Think of Russia," *Public Opinion Quarterly,* 516-518; OWI Bureau of Intelligence poll, December 1942, *Mission to Moscow* files, Warner bros. Production Files, USC, and OWI Bureau of Intelligence, “The American Views of Our Public Ally,” June 10, 1943, box 6, in Clayton R. Koppes and Gregory D. Black, *Hollywood Goes to War: How Politics, Profits, and Propaganda Shaped World War II* (Berkeley, California, 1990)*,* 183. [↑](#footnote-ref-462)
463. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-463)
464. Roosevelt helped to personally organize Willkie’s trip. “Excerpts from the Press Conference,” August 21, 1942, *Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin Roosevelt*, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=16295, accessed August 4, 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-464)
465. Mary Earhart Dillon, *Wendell Willkie, 1982-1944* (Philadelphia**,** 1952), 271. [↑](#footnote-ref-465)
466. Standley, untitled memorandum, October 24, 1942, *FRUS,* 1942, 3:644-646. In truth, Willkie ignored the Polish embassy’s reports charging Soviet leaders with religious restrictions, and he rejected Polish requests that he ask the Russian government to provide better housing, transportation, and privileges to Polish priests. Copy of memo to Willkie by the Polish embassy in Iran, Sept 16, 1942, folder 1939-1942, box 25, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-466)
467. For an example of Willkie’s positive publicly efforts, see Wendell L. Willkie, “One World,” *Life,* April 26, 1943, 73-80; Walsh, “What the American People Think of Russia,” *Public Opinion Quarterly,* 516-518. [↑](#footnote-ref-467)
468. On resistance to anti-communism and Willkie’s legacy in the late 1940s, see Christopher Endy et al., H-Diplo roundtable review of *Upstaging the Cold War: American Dissent and Cultural Diplomacy, 1940-1960*, by Andrew J. Falk, H-Diplo Roundtable Reviews, 14.14(2013), January 2, 2013. Accessed January 2, 2013. http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/Roundtable-XIV-14.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-468)
469. Joseph Davies, “Address before South American Consular Officers and Newspaper Correspondents,” January 8, 1943, folder 3, box II:62, Joseph E. Davies Papers, Library of Congress, Washington DC [LOC]. See also untitled speech, February 8, 1943, folder 3, box II:62, Davies Papers, LOC, and “Address to the Metropolitan Opera Guild and Victory Committee, February 13, 1942, folder 3, box II:62, Davies Papers, LOC. [↑](#footnote-ref-469)
470. For examples of positive coverage, see “Full Unity Urged with the Russians: Congress of American-Soviet Friendship Stresses Need of Spiritual Understanding,” *New York Times,* November 8, 1942, 36; “For Russian Friendship,” *Washington Post,* September 25, 1942, B9. For Vice President Henry Wallace’s similar messages, see “Text of Wallace Speech on Post-War World, *New York Times*, December 29, 1942, 19. A special issue of Henry Luce’s conservative periodical *Life* in May 1943 pictured Stalin on the cover, and the entire issue devoted itself to celebrating Russian art, ballet, and Russia’s contribution to the war. Davies contributed two full-length articles, one valorizing Russian art and one championing Soviet-American post-war relations. Joseph Davies, “The Soviets and the Post-War,” *Life,* May 29, 1943, 49-50. [↑](#footnote-ref-470)
471. “The Father of Russia,” *Life,* May 29, 1943, 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-471)
472. Davies, “The Soviets and the Post-War,” *Life,* May 29, 1943, 49-50. [↑](#footnote-ref-472)
473. See Glantz, *FDR and the Soviet Union*, especially 142-143. [↑](#footnote-ref-473)
474. Ibid., 148. [↑](#footnote-ref-474)
475. Mary Glantz, *FDR and the Soviet Union*, 148. Todd Bennett, “Culture, Power, and *Mission to Moscow:* Film and Soviet-American Relations during World War II,” *The Journal of American History* 88.2 (2001):494. [↑](#footnote-ref-475)
476. Glantz, *FDR and the Soviet Union,* 156, 161-162. [↑](#footnote-ref-476)
477. Roosevelt to Stalin, March 31, 1945, in *My Dear Mr. Stalin,* ed. Susan Butler (New Haven, Connecticut, 2005), 309-310; Glantz, *FDR and the Soviet Union,* 162. [↑](#footnote-ref-477)
478. Levering, *American Opinion* *and the* *Russian Alliance*, 134. [↑](#footnote-ref-478)
479. Luce moved away from his previous vacillation between Russia in *Life* while criticizing Roosevelt’s accommodations policy in *Fortune*, adopting a more uniformly dark view in his publications. Ibid; “An 'Isolationist' Reaction?," *Fortune,* April 1943, 118. Also see “Government by Horse Sense: Selling the People on Russia," *Fortune,* June 1943, 128. [↑](#footnote-ref-479)
480. “Vice President Wallace Criticized by Peale For Linking Christianity to Russian Revolt,” *New York Times,* April 5, 1943, 24. For other examples of critical coverage, see Harold Callender, “Russian-American Issues Brought Into Open: Plain Speaking on Both Sides May Clear Up Some Past Differences,” March 14, 1943, E3; Raymond Moley, “The Dual Identity of Mr. Wallace: The Vice President Should Not Hold an Executive Office,” *Wall Street Journal,* July 9, 1943. [↑](#footnote-ref-480)
481. *Mission to Moscow,* Warner Bros., 1943, quoted in Koppes and Black, *Hollywood Goes to War,* 200; “Mission to Moscow,*"*  quoted inPhillip L. Gianos, *Politics and Politicians in American Film* (Westport, 1998), 125. For the full screenplay, see David Culbert, ed., *Mission to Moscow* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1980). For the screenwriter Howard Koch’s denigration of Davies’s introductory monologue, see Howard Koch, *As Time Goes By* (New York, 1979), 125-126. For the producer’s subsequent denunciation of Davies as “brainwashed” by FDR, see Robert Bucker to Culbert, January 1 and January 14, 1978, in Culbert, *Mission to Moscow,* 253. [↑](#footnote-ref-481)
482. Koppes and Black, *Hollywood Goes to War,* 193. [↑](#footnote-ref-482)
483. Feature review, April 28, 1943, Mission to Moscow File, box 3521, Motion Picture Reviews and Analyses, Motion Picture Division, Los Angeles Office, Overseas Operations Branch, Office of War Information Records, quoted in Bennett, “Culture, Power, and Mission to Moscow,” 499; see also report, Hollywood Office, Bureau of Motion Pictures, Office of War Information, April 29, 1943, box 1434, record group 208, Office of War Information Records, Archives Branch, Washington National Records Centre, Suitland, Maryland, printed in Culbert, *Mission to Moscow,* 257. [↑](#footnote-ref-483)
484. Bosley Crowther, “Mission to Moscow, Based on Ex-Ambassador Davies' Book, Stars Walter Huston, Ann Harding*,”* *New York Times*, April 30, 1943. [↑](#footnote-ref-484)
485. Philip T. Hartung, "Hollywood's Mission," *Commonweal*, May 21, 1943, 125, quoted in Todd Bennett, “Culture, Power, and Mission to Moscow,” 502. [↑](#footnote-ref-485)
486. "*Mission to Moscow*: Davies Movie Whitewashes Russia," *Life*, May 10, 1943, 39-42; Bennett, “Culture, Power, and Mission to Moscow,” 502. [↑](#footnote-ref-486)
487. 78 Cong. Rec. 78.1, May 24, 1943, A2570; *New York Herald Tribune*, October 10, 1943, Propaganda File (microfilm: reel 8), Motion Picture Association of America General Correspondence, Margaret Herrick Library, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Beverly Hills, Calif., quoted in Bennett, “Culture, Power, and Mission to Moscow,” 502. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was divided on the film. See Form Letter, Dwight Macdonald at al. to “Dear Friend,” May 12, 1943, NAACP MSS, LOC, and Herman Shumlin et al. to Walter White, June 1, 1943, NAACP MSS, LOC, in Culbert, *Mission to Moscow,* 257-260*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-487)
488. Walsh, "What the American People Think of Russia," 516-518, and Bennett, “Culture, Power, and Mission to Moscow,” 489-518. [↑](#footnote-ref-488)
489. On hard-line views among Soviet experts in 1943, see Mary Glantz, *FDR and the Soviet Union*, chapters 5 and 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-489)
490. “Standley’s Talk Stirs Washington,”*New York Times,* March 9, 1943, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-490)
491. Roosevelt letter to Churchill, March 18, 1942, in Warren Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence, Vol. 1* (New Jersey, 1984), 421. Harry Hopkins affirmed Roosevelt’s optimism toward Russia in November 1943, stating that Roosevelt “knows now that Stalin is get-atable” and they would “get along fine in the future. Lord Moran (Sir Charles Watson), *Churchill at War 1940*-45 (New York, 2002), 215. [↑](#footnote-ref-491)
492. Given Suckley’s intimacy with the president in the last year of his life, her account seems reliable. Joseph Lash interview with Margaret Suckley, May 1969, box 44, Joseph Lash Papers, FDRL, quoted in ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-492)
493. Sergio Beria, *Beria: My Father* (London, 2001), 106. [↑](#footnote-ref-493)
494. Ibid., 505; David Culbert, "Our Awkward Ally: Mission to Moscow (1943)," in *American History/American Film: Interpreting the Hollywood Image*, ed. John E. O'Connor and Martin A. Jackson (New York, 1979), 136-37. [↑](#footnote-ref-494)
495. Bennett, “Culture, Power, and Mission to Moscow,” 489-494. [↑](#footnote-ref-495)
496. Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull,* vol. 2, 1248. [↑](#footnote-ref-496)
497. Ready, memorandum of conversation with Welles, April 19, 1943, box 119, folder 25, OGS, NCWC, CUA. Averell Harriman later said Davies’s views of Stalin and Russia were “utter nonsense” and Davies “never knew what was going on.” George Urban, "Was Stalin (the Terrible) Really a 'Great Man'?: A Conversation with W. Averell Harriman," *Encounter* 57.5 (November 1981), 24. For a discussion of Hull, Welles, and their relationship to FDR, see Irwin F. Gellman, *Secret Affairs*: *Franklin Roosevelt*, *Cordell Hull, and Sumner Welles* (Baltimore, MD, 1995). [↑](#footnote-ref-497)
498. Standley cable to Secretary of State, May 25, 1943, folder Russia: July 1942-1943, box 49, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-498)
499. Davies letter to Warner, May 24, 1943, in Mission to Moscow, ed. David Culbert (Madison, 1980), 261; Davies telegram to Welles, May 27, 1943, *FRUS,* 1943, 3:657. [↑](#footnote-ref-499)
500. Bennett, “Culture, Power and Mission to Moscow,” 490-491. [↑](#footnote-ref-500)
501. For evidence of ongoing concern in Washington over anti-Soviet attitudes among the Moscow embassy staff, see “Memo for Mr. Hopkins,” Major General James F. Burns of the Soviet Protocol Committee letter to Hopkins, August 10, 1943, *FRUS, The Conferences at Washington and Quebec, 1943*, 624-627. [↑](#footnote-ref-501)
502. Roosevelt denied Harriman’s request to transfer Bohlen to Moscow because he was needed as a translator at the Tehran Conference in 1943. FDR promised to transfer Kennan following his diplomatic negotiations in the Azores but, perhaps deliberately, FDR instead reassigned Kennan to the European Advisory Commission in London. By the time the “mistake” was sorted out in January 1944, Kennan was suffering from stomach ulcers that forced him to return to the United States. Bohlen encouraged Harriman to persist in demanding the appointment, and Roosevelt and Hopkins finally allowed Kennan to return to Moscow as Harriman’s advisor on civilian affairs. John Lewis Gaddis, *George F. Kennan: An American Life* (New York, 2011), 173. [↑](#footnote-ref-502)
503. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-503)
504. For an example of a relatively balanced document that predicted non-violent Soviet limitation of religious freedom in the post-war world, see OSS Chief William Donovan to Grace Tully, report on religion in Russia, April 9, 1945 microfilm roll 25, M1642 , Records of the OSS Washington Director’s Office, RG226, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-504)
505. Kennan penned the memo while stationed in Portugal. Myron Taylor memorandum to Hull and Roosevelt, October 20, 1942, box 84, Welles Papers, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-505)
506. On Kennan’s attitude to US-Soviet cooperation, see Frank Costigliola, "'Unceasing Pressure for Penetration',” 1309-39; Frank Costigliola, “Kennan and Nitze 2.1,” review of *The Hawk and the Dove: Paul Nitze, George Kennan, and the History of the Cold War* by Nicholas Thompson, *Diplomatic History* 36.5(2012): 935-937; David Mayers, *George Kennan and the Dilemmas of US Foreign Policy* (New York, 1988); Anders Stephanson, *Kennan and the Art of Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1989). [↑](#footnote-ref-506)
507. Kennan memo to Taylor, October 2, 1941, folder 18, box 84, Welles papers, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-507)
508. Ralph M. Arkush, legal representative for the Russian Greek Orthodox Church in America, letter to Henry A. Wallace, Vice President, August 18, 1941, 811.404/220 ½, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-508)
509. Henderson letter to Arkush, September 24, 1941, 811.404/220 ½, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-509)
510. Official correspondence surrounding Arkush case was extensive. See Arkush letter to Henderson, December 12, 1941, 811.404/264, RG 59, NARA; Arkush letter to Henderson, December 12, 1941 811.404/264, RG 59, NARA; FBI Chief J. Edgar Hoover to Henderson and Adolf Berle, December 23, 1941, 811.404/265, RG 59, NARA; Berle to Hoover, January 9, 1942, 811.404/265, RG 59, NARA; Arkush letter to Henderson, January 30, 1941, 800.404/268 RG 59, NARA; Henderson letter to Arkush, February 11, 1942, 811.404/268, RG 59, NARA; Arkush to Henderson, March 1942, 811.404/271, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-510)
511. 67 Ibid; Arkush, letter to Henderson, Aug 10 1943, 811.404/333, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-511)
512. Chief of the Division of Eastern European Affairs Charles Bohlen to Secretary of State Hull and Director of the Office of European Affairs James Clement Dunn, FRUS (1944) 4: 1216-1217. [↑](#footnote-ref-512)
513. Eric North of the American Bible Society to Henderson, May 12, 1942, 840.404/7, RG 59, NARA; memorandum of conversation between General Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance W.O. Lewis and Barlett Gordon of the EU, August 10, 1943, 811.404/333, RG 59, NARA; “Censorship Report: President of US Church Group seeks to Propagandize Asserted Religious Tolerance in Russia,” Office of Censorship, July 22, 1943, 811.404/334, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-513)
514. The FBI began to investigate the Birobidjan committee in 1945 and its efforts accelerated in 1947. See Hoover memorandum to Chief of the Division of Foreign Activity Correlation Jack D. Neal, “The American Birobidjan Committee,” April 26, 1947, 711.61/4-2647, RG 59, NARA; Neal to Robert J. Hooker, Ambijan Committee memo, September 9, 1947, 711.61/9-2447, RG 59, NARA. Prior to 1948, liberal newspapers such as the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* applauded the Birobidjan settlement as evidence of Stalin’s liberal patronage of Jewish welfare. Positive coverage spiked during diplomatic recognition in 1933, Hitler’s anti-Semitic campaign in the mid-1930s, and during efforts to resettle displaced European Jews and orphans after the war. See “Soviet Offers German Jews Republic of Own,” *Washington Post*, December 7, 1933, 17; Walter Duranty, “Odessa Made Over on Soviet Model,” *New York Times,* April 30, 1933, E3; Harold Denny, “Soviet to Settle 12, 000 in Far East: Dispossessed Jews in Ukraine to Get Land in National Province of Biro-Bidjan,” *New York Times*, May 10, 1934, 16; “Soviet to Aid Jews,” *New York Times*, October 4, 1935, 18, “Help for Children in Reich Put First,” *New York Times,* April 27, 1936, 14; “Jews to be Settled in Soviet Territory: American Committee Thanks Envoy for Offer of a Refuge in Birobidjan,” *New York Times,* October 29, 1935, 14; “Jews Hail Compact for Colony in Soviet,” *New York Times,* March 1, 1936, 5; “Birobidjan Project Gets New Impetus: Russia Authorized Admittance of 2,000 Families From Poland, Jewish Group Hears,” *New York Times,* December 23, 1936, 12; J.M. Budish, “Birobidjan Called Place of Promise,” *New York Times,* March 28, 1937, 35; “Russian Freedom: Soviet Stands Alone As Protector Of Racial Groups, Ambassador Troyanovsky Tells Jewish Colonizing Society,” *Washington Post,* April 25, 1938, X9; “Aids 3,500 Child Refugees: Birobidjan to Provide for Group From Liberated Russia,” *New York Times,* May 9, 1944, 15; “Supplies Go to Birobidjan Waifs,” *New York Times,* September 7, 1945, 5; “Americans Help Orphans in Russia,” *New York Times,* January 27, 1946, 25; “Birobidjan Groups Merge to Aid Jews,” March 11, 1946, 12; “Benefit to Aid Children” *New York Times,* May 14, 1947, 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-514)
515. Charles Bohlen observed the machine gun-guarded Birobidjan camp en route to Japan in 1940, noting that “pro-communists” cited the colony as proof of Soviet “tolerance and humanity.” Charles Bohlen, *Witness to History, 1929-1969* (New York, 1973), 107. [↑](#footnote-ref-515)
516. The *New York Times* ran less than a dozen critical pieces on Birobidjan between 1929 and 1950. For negative coverage, see “Cold to Russian Offer,” *New York Times*, December 9, 1933, 8; Elias Tobenkin, “Birobidjan Heads Held as Plotters,” *New York Times,* March 7, 1937, 47; Harold Denny, “Moscow Strikes at Émigrés: Executions in the Far East Are a Warning Against Plotting That Goes on There,” *New York Times,* July 11, 1937, 52; “Jewish Soviet State Suffers First Purge: Reported Shot in Birobidjan as Spies and Wreckers, *New York Times,* June 15, 1938, 4; “Soviet Disenfranchises 321: Action is Linked to a Reported Plot in Birobidjan,” ***New York Times,*** October 3, 1938, 7; “Birobidjan Held Failure for Jews,” *New York Times,* January 15, 1939, 19. For endorsements, see Einstein to Lead Drive: Fund Sought for Settlement of War Orphans in Birobidjan,” *New York Times,* June 23, 1945, 9; “Barkley Deplores Attitude on Russia,” *New York Times,* January 28, 1946, 4; “Senator Thomas Praises Russians,” May 17, 1944, 7; “Says Russia Needs Peace: Pepper Assists Fund Drive for Jewish Region in Siberia,” *New York Times,* November 12, 1946, 3; “Magnutson Opposes Any Anti-Soviet Pact,” *New York Times,* March 10, 1946, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-516)
517. Only when hostile Cold War attitudes prevailed following the passage of the Marshall Plan in 1948 did liberal correspondents such as Drew Middleton and C.L. Sulzberger of the *New York Times* resurrect the image of Birobidjan as a deceptive, squalid, and oppressive communist scheme. See Drew Middleton, “Anti-Semitism Seen Mounting in Russia,” *New York Times,* February 13, 1948, 13; C.L. Sulzberger, “Soviet Jews’ Area Reported in Decay,” *New York Times,* February 15, 1948, 5; “Pravda is Annoyed Over Times Report,” *New York Times,* March 1, 1948, 6; “Enesco Boycotts Benefit Concert,” *New York Times,* April 17, 1948, 13; Joseph Newman, “Australian Couple Flees Soviet's State for Jews,*” Washington Post,* November 10, 1949, 4. Some defenders still championed the settlement but they gained little support in the liberal press. See “Anti-Semitism’s Rise in Russia is Disputed,” *New York Times,* February 26, 1948, 10; “Birobidjan Group Here Denies Area Lags,” *New York Times,* March 28, 1948, 12; “Concert Audience Hails Soviet Envoy,” *New York Times,* April 18, 1948, 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-517)
518. For scholarship on the realities of Soviet religious policies during World War II, see Steven Merritt Miner, *Stalin's Holy War*: *Religion*, *Nationalism, and Alliance Politics*, *1941–1945* (Chapel Hill, 2003), especially 68-74, and Daniel Peris, “‘God is Now on Our Side’: The Religious Revival on Unoccupied Soviet Territory during World War II,” *Kritika* 1:1 (Winter 2000), 97–118. [↑](#footnote-ref-518)
519. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-519)
520. For a rare example of balanced intelligence reporting, see OSS Chief William Donovan to Grace Tully, report on religion in Russia, April 9, 1945 microfilm roll 25, M1642, Records of the OSS Washington Director’s Office, RG226, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-520)
521. Glantz, *FDR and the Soviet Union,* 143-144. On Roosevelt’s promotion of Davies’s memoir and film, see Todd Bennett, “Culture, Power, and Mission to Moscow,” 489-518. [↑](#footnote-ref-521)
522. Special Assistant to the Secretary of State Charles E. Bohlen, Memorandum of Conversation between Hull and Molotov, October 23, 1943, *FRUS,* 1943, I: 615-616. [↑](#footnote-ref-522)
523. Averell Harriman, memorandum “Religion in the USSR,” October 4, 1941, box 160, W. Averell Harriman papers, LOC. [↑](#footnote-ref-523)
524. Hull resented FDR’s choice to send Welles to Moscow in autumn 1943, and after managing to oust Welles from the State Department by threatening to expose his homosexual proclivities, he demanded that he replace Welles at the conference. Roosevelt maintained Hull as Secretary of State after 1941 due to his influence in Congress, but FDR mistrusted him and often kept him at arm’s length. See Susan Butler, *My Dear Mr. Stalin,* 125-126. Derek Watson, "Molotov et la Conférence de Moscou, Octobre 1943," *Communisme*, 74/75, 72-99, original English text available online at http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/staff/academic/harrison/archive/persa/018english.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-524)
525. Embassy aide Maxwell M. Hamilton cable to Hull, October 13, 1943, *FRUS*, 1943, 3: 860-861; Harriman cable to Hull, October 29, 1943, *FRUS*, 1943, 3*:*861-863. The less-cooperative Ambassador Standley was also forced to report in autumn 1943 that Metropolitan Alexius declared the Church “greatly indebted” to Stalin for his reinvigorating measures. Standley cable to Hull, September 11, 1943, *FRUS,* 1943, 3:858. [↑](#footnote-ref-525)
526. Costigliola, *Roosevelt’s Lost Alliances,* 110; Glantz, *FDR and the Soviet Union,* 167-168. [↑](#footnote-ref-526)
527. Declaration by the United Nations, Jan. 1, 1942, FRUS, 1942, 1: 25-26. [↑](#footnote-ref-527)
528. Taylor, memorandum of conversation with Portuguese Prime Minster António de Oliveira Salazar, c. October 1942, folder Diplomatic Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C., box 51, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-528)
529. On Taylor’s shift toward anti-Soviet perspectives, see Preston, *Sword of the Spirit,* 364, and Preston, “Death of a Peculiar Special Relationship,” 210-213. [↑](#footnote-ref-529)
530. “Moscow Lifts Curfew For Easter Services,” *New York Times,* April 6, 1942, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-530)
531. Stalin also appointed the former NKVD official Georgi Karpov as his official liaison to the church. Edward E. Roslof, *Red Priests,* 193. [↑](#footnote-ref-531)
532. “Red Army’s Plea Backed by Sergius,” *New York Times,* September 6, 1943, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-532)
533. Ibid; “War Honor to Leningrad Clergy,” *New York Times,* October 16, 1943, 4; “Clergy Gets Medals for Aiding Leningrad,” *New York Times,* October 17, 1943, 39; “Alexei Avows Loyalty to Stalin On Becoming Patriarch of Russia, *New York Times,* May 22, 1944, 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-533)
534. Ready privately instructed Bishops of the National Catholic Welfare Council to quietly distance themselves from the Russian War Relief. Memo by Ready, December 18, 1941, folder 13, box 26, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-534)
535. Untitled memorandum, June 21, 1942, folder 1939-1942, box 25, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-535)
536. Braun letter to Monsignor Robert F. Keegan, May 1, 1942, 840.404/5-142, RG 59, NARA; Norman Armour of the Department of European Republics memo to Assistant Secretary of State G.Howland Shaw, August 22, 1942, 840.404/5-142, RG 59, NARA. When the State Department subsequently refused Ready’s request to use diplomatic channels to contact Braun to solicit reports about “social progress” in Russia, the Bishops accepted the refusal without dissent. Director of the NCWC World Service Press Agency Frank Hall memo to Ready, Feb 10 1943, folder 4, box 26, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-536)
537. Assistant to Myron Taylor Harold Tittman cable to Hull, January 23, 1942, 866A.001/98, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-537)
538. For Mooney and Ready’s continued private resistance to suggestions that Russia was liberalizing its religious policies, see Mooney letter to Ready, August 26, 1942, Taylor letter to Ready, August 29, 1942, and Ready to Taylor, November 24, 1942, folder 1939-1942, box 25, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-538)
539. Metropolitan Nikolai sent 700 copies of the tract to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and he personally visited the American, British, and Japanese embassies in Moscow to promote the work. On Soviet-Orthodox relations during World War II, see Tatiana A. Chumachenko, *Church and State in Soviet Russia*: *Russian Orthodoxy from World War II* to the Khrushchev Years, trans. Edward E. Roslof (Armonk, NY, and London, 2002), especially 5-6; Christopher Marsh, *Religion and the State in Russia and China*: *Suppression*, *Survival, and Revival* (New York, 2011), 70-71; Christopher March, “Eastern Orthodoxy and the fusion of national and spiritual security,” in *The Routledge Handbook of Religion and Security,* ed. Chris Seiple et. al. (New York, 2013), 22-31. [↑](#footnote-ref-539)
540. Historian Steven Merritt Miner has suggested Sergei and Nikolai’s reframing of Soviet history might have been a subtle attempt at subversion through Aesopian language, but that interpretation was not current in the media or diplomatic circles at the time. Miner, *Stalin’s Holy War*, 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-540)
541. Alexander Werth, “Soviet Makes Peace With Church: Accord Is Recognition of Loyal Support and Popular Demand,” *New York Times,* September 19, 1943, E5. [↑](#footnote-ref-541)
542. Welles letter to Ready, January 29, 1943, and Cicognani to Ready, February 18, 1943, folder Communism: Russia, 1943, box 25, OGS, NCWC, CUA; Donald Atiwater, *“*Anti-religion--not merely practical policy but integral to Communism,” review of *Church and State in Modern Russia* and *The Truth About Religion in Russia,* in *Catholic Herald*, July 7, 1944. The radio lecturer Father Wilhelm de Fries also attacked the piece in April 1945. “Church and State in Russia,” *Catholic Herald,* April 6, 1945, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-542)
543. At Myron Taylor’s request, Archbishop Edward Mooney of Detroit also drafted a declaration of religious freedoms in 1942 that was designed to be acceptable to Stalin and the Catholic Church. Privately, Mooney rejected the Russian government’s claims of religious toleration, but his draft declaration deliberately avoided mentioning Russia’s history of religious repression in order to give Stalin the “face-saving” measures he desired. Unfortunately, Cordell Hull convinced Roosevelt to table the proposed declaration indefinitely because religious freedoms were too sensitive to broach directly. Memorandum of conversation between Taylor and Tardini, September 26, 1942, Diplomatic Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C.: 1942, box 51, PSF, FDRL; Mooney to Taylor, November 30, 1942, folder Diplomatic Correspondence: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C., 1942, box 51, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-543)
544. “A Half Century’s Polling on the USSR,” 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-544)
545. For example, see “Polish Chaplain Asks Aid: Says 400,000 Polish Children Have Perished in Russia,” *New York Times,* April 2, 1943, 12; “List 2,000,000 Hostages Held,” *New York Times,* April 17, 1943, 4; “Safeguard Poland, Cleric Asks,” *Washington Post,* September 3, 1943, 3; “Nazi and Soviet Ideologies Identical, Msgr. Sheen Assert*s,” Washington Post,* October 29, 1943, B14. [↑](#footnote-ref-545)
546. Ready, memorandum of conversation with Welles, April 19, 1943, box 119, folder 25, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-546)
547. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-547)
548. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-548)
549. Director of the **National Catholic News Service Frank** Hall to Ready, April 19, 1943, folder 25, box 119, OGS, NCWC, CUA; Ready to Montavon, April 20, 1943, folder 25, box 119, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-549)
550. Ready letter to Archbishop Stritch, “Strictly Confidential Memorandum,” January 11, 1944, folder 43, box 126, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-550)
551. Walter Lippmann, “Today And Tomorrow: Straws In The Wind,” *Washington Post,* April 6, 1943, 11. For further media support for Russia’s activities in Poland, see Mark Sullivan, “Poland's Boundaries Affect US Elections,” *Washington* Post, April 23, 1943, 10; William L. Shirer, “Poles Play Into Nazi Hands in Treatment Of 'Massacre' Story,” April 25, 1943, B2; Harold Callender, “Washington Voices ‘Regret’ at Break,” *New York Times*, April 27, 1943, 5; Bertram D. Hulen, “Washington Hails Reds' Step As Great Gain for the Allies,” *New York Times*, May 23, 1943, 1; “Rome And Moscow,” *Washington Post*, May 29, 1943, 6; “Poland’s Partisans Hold Moscow Rally,” *New York Times*, June 12, 1943, 4; Ralph Parker, “Valor of Poles Praised,” *New York Times*, October 24, 1943, 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-551)
552. Clare Booth Luce (R-Connecticut) scored Roosevelt in the House of Representatives for failing to convince the Russians that they need not “rob their neighbours” to gain security. John Lewinski (D-Michigan) questioned why the State Department provided a visa to Orelmanski, a “traitor to Christianity.” See “Priest and Savant in Russia Merely as Citizens, Hull Says,” *Washington Post,* May 14, 1944, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-552)
553. FDR cable to Stalin, March 8, 1944, folder 1944-1945, box 2, Official File 220-220a, FDRL. The government denied involvement in the trip when criticism emerged in early May. See, “Russia Financed Trip, Hull Reports,” *Washington Post,* May 7, 1944, M2; “President Clarifies Priest’s Passport,” *New York Times,* May 10, 1944, 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-553)
554. “Religion: Home Again, Home Again,” *Time,* May 22, 1944. [↑](#footnote-ref-554)
555. “National Catholic News Service Press Release,” May 1, 1944, folder 12, box 26, OGS, NCWC, CUA. Also see “US Priest’s Visit to Stalin Assailed: Mgr. Ready, Catholic Welfare Conference, Condemns Trip as 'Political Burlesque',” *New York Times,* May 1, 1944, 5; “Record of Priest’s Remarks,” ***New York Times*,** May 13, 1944, 4; “Foreign News: Local Boy Makes Good,” *Time,* Monday, May 08, 1944; “Religion: Home Again, Home Again,” *Time,* May 22, 1944; “Poland Being Sacrificed, Prelate Fears,” *Washington Post,* May 8, 1944, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-555)
556. May 3, 1944, 78 Cong. Rec. 90.2, 3931, quoted in Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War,* 146. [↑](#footnote-ref-556)
557. Anne O’Hare McCormick, “Abroad: The Issue of Poland,” *New York Times,* April 30, 1944, E1; McCormick, “Abroad: Problems of Empire,” *New York Times,* May 7, 1944, E2; McCormick, “Abroad: If the Russians and Poles Get Together,” *New York Times,* May 17, 1944, 18; “Abroad: If the Russians and Poles Get Together,” *New York Times,* May 21, 1944, E1. [↑](#footnote-ref-557)
558. Hurley letter to Ready, May 5, 1944, folder 12, box 26, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-558)
559. Ready, untitled memorandum, July 18, 1944, folder 12, box 26, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-559)
560. For example, see Ralph Parker, “Significance of Priest's Visit,” *New York Times,* May 1, 1944: 5; W.H. Lawrence, “Stalin Friendly Toward Church, Priest Says on Leaving for US,” *New York Times,* May 7, 1944, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-560)
561. For example, see Henry C. Cassidy, “Stalin Is 'Friendly' to Church, Visiting US Priest Declares,” *Washington Post,* May 7, 1944, M1; “US Priest Flying Home From Russia,” *New York Times,* May 8, 1944, 10; Raymond Daniell, “New Polish Stand is More Flexible,” *New York Times,* May 12, 1944, 4; “Stalin for Cooperation With Pope, Free Worship, Orlemanski Says*,” New York Times*,May 13, 1944, 1; “Record of Priest’s Remarks,” *New York Times,* May 13, 1944, 4; “Stalin Urges Free Church, Priest Says,” *Washington Post*, May 13 1944, 1; “'Crucified,' Cries Orlemanski, Suspended for Moscow Trip,” *Washington Post,* May 14, 1944, M1; Lawrence Resner, “Orlemanski Put Under Suspension for Moscow Trip,” *New York Times,* May 14, 1944, 1; Lawrence Resner, “Orlemanski Bows to Bishop’s Order,” *New York Times,* May 15, 1944, 1; “Story in Soviet Press: Moscow Papers Use Dispatch Quoting Orlemanski's Views,” *New York Times,* May 15, 1944, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-561)
562. Roosevelt to Hull, May 31, 1944, and Hull to Roosevelt, June 2, 1944,760C.61/2334, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-562)
563. “Orlemanski Affair,” *Washington Post,* May 15, 1944, 8; “Orlemanski Ill, Stays at Rectory: Going to Monastery Delayed Until Priest Recovers From 'a Nervous Upset'” *New York Times,* May 16, 1944, 10; “Orlemanski Placed Under Doctor's Care,” *Washington Post*, May 16, 1944, 1. Even Anne McCormick tempered her tone, noting Orlemanski’s sincere motives and desire for Catholic-Soviet reconciliation. She also noted Stalin’s genuine concern for post-war Polish American opinion and that of satellite peoples concerned about maintaining freedom of religion. Bishop Ready evidently paid close attention, for he kept an annotated copy of McCormick’s column in his files. McCormick, “Abroad: If the Russians and Poles Get Together,” *New York Times,* May 17, 1944, 18, and McCormick, “Abroad: If the Russians and Poles Get Together,” *New York Times,* May 21, 1944, E1. Ready kept McCormick’s May 17 column in his files, with the section on Orlemanski highlighted. See May 17, 1944, folder 12, box 26, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-563)
564. Untitled draft, May 15, 1944, folder 12, box 26, NCWC, CUA; “Orlemanski's Apology Ends Suspension, Promises Bishop to Obey Church Rules,” *New York Times,* May 17, 1944, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-564)
565. Carroll letter to Ready, August 3, 1943, folder 12, box 25, OGS, NCWC, CUA. [↑](#footnote-ref-565)
566. Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War,* 146. [↑](#footnote-ref-566)
567. Walsh, “What the American People Think of Russia,[”](http://www.jstor.org.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/action/showSearchInfo?doi=10.2307%2F2745305&searchText=b.&searchText=walsh&searchText=Russia&searchText=warren&wc=on&fc=on&acc=off&Query=%28%28warren+b.+walsh%29+AND+%28Russia%29%29+AND+%28doi%3A10.2307%2F2745305%29) *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 520. [↑](#footnote-ref-567)
568. Ibid., 520-521; Warren B. Walsh, "What the American People Think of Russia," *American Quarterly on the Soviet Union*, 6.3 (1945), 22-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-568)
569. The Democrats saw a drop from 70% support in 1940 to 59% support in 1944 among middle-income Catholics, and a drop of 82% to 78% support among lower-income Catholics, losses of 18%, 11% and 4% among upper, middle, and lower-income groups, respectively. Samuel Rosenman memo for Grace Tully, folder Subject Files: Public Opinion Polls: 1942-1944, box 157, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-569)
570. Hopkins to US Ambassador to Great Britain John G. Winant, September 4, 1944, box 337, book 10: Growing Crisis in Poland, Hopkins Papers, cited in S.M. Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace* (New York, 2010), 373. [↑](#footnote-ref-570)
571. Report by Polish Ambassador to the Vatican Kazimierz Papee, December 4, 1944, box 5, file 2, Hoover Institution Archives, cited in Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace*, 374. [↑](#footnote-ref-571)
572. Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace,* ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-572)
573. “Russians Rebuked by Vatican Paper,” *New York Times,* February 11, 1945, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-573)
574. Peter C. Kent, The Lonely Cold War of Pope Pius XII: The Roman Catholic Church and the Division of Europe, 1943-1950 (Ithaca, N.Y.: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 82. John Melby, a US official in Moscow, claimed that it was widely understood in Moscow that Roosevelt sent Flynn to Moscow to help achieve rapprochement between the Kremlin and Vatican. John P. Newman, *The Cold War Romance of Lillian Hellman and John Melby* (Chapel Hill, 1989), 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-574)
575. Alger Hiss, *Recollections of a Life* (New York, 1988),121-122. [↑](#footnote-ref-575)
576. Roosevelt first made this jest to French Prime Minister Pierre Laval in 1935. Winston Churchill, *The Second World War: The Gathering Storm,* vol. 1: *The Gathering Storm* (Boston, 1948), 105. [↑](#footnote-ref-576)
577. The elderly, inexperienced Flynn was inept at dealing with Soviet leaders, according to Harriman’s daughter. Kathleen Harriman letter to Mary Harriman, February 10, 1945, no, 179/9, February 1-5, 1945, Averell Harriman Papers, quoted Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace,* 372. [↑](#footnote-ref-577)
578. Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace*, 372-73. [↑](#footnote-ref-578)
579. For examples of Flynn’s inconclusive statements to the press, see Virginia Lee Warren, “Russia-Vatican Negotiations Afoot And Progressing, Flynn Implies,” March 23, 1945, *New York Times,* 1; “Flynn Mission Amplified,” *New York Times,* April 6, 1945, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-579)
580. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-580)
581. Ralph Levering, *American Opinion* *and the Russia Alliance*, 131. [↑](#footnote-ref-581)
582. On press coverage and domestic discourse surrounding Yalta, see Levering, *American Opinion and the Russia Alliance,* 175-199*.* For Roosevelt’s satisfaction with the media response to Yalta, see “Excerpts from the Press Conference Aboard the USS Quincy En Route From Yalta,” February 23, 1945, in *Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin Roosevelt*, *American Presidency Project,* ed. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=16589, accessed January 1, 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-582)
583. On the enigmatic nature of FDR’s private thinking, see Kenneth S. Davis, *FDR:* *The War President*, *1940-1943* (New York, 197), 8. On the role of Roosevelt’s emotional isolation and health problems in the origins of the Cold War, see Frank Costigliola, “*Broken Circle: The Isolation of Franklin D. Roosevelt in World War II,”* 677–718, and Costigliola, *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances.* On Roosevelt’s worsening health, see Robert H. Ferrell*, The Dying President* (Columbia, Missouri, 1998);Hugh Gregory Gallagher*, FDR's Splendid Deception* (New York, 1985); Steven Lomazow, “*The untold neurological disease of Franklin Delano Roosevelt* (*1882*-*1945*),” Journal of Medical Biography 17 (2009): 235-40. [↑](#footnote-ref-583)
584. Burns urged Roosevelt and Hopkins to remove diplomats who refused to “pledge loyal support” to Roosevelt’s cooperative agenda. He also highlighted the dangers of permitting officials to make statements emphasizing the need to “eliminate dictatorships.” Hopkins took Burns’s report so seriously that he brought it to the secret planning conference between Roosevelt and Churchill in Quebec in August 1943. James F. Burns memorandum to Hopkins, August 10, 1943, *FRUS The Conferences at Washington and Quebec, 1943*, 624-627.On Roosevelt’s intentions when forming the Soviet Protocol Committee, see Butler, *My Dear Mr. Stalin,* 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-584)
585. Spellman to Roosevelt, May 27, 1939, and Spellman to Roosevelt, April 17, 1940, folder Subject Files: Francis Spellman, box 165, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-585)
586. Spellman’s advocacy of Roosevelt’s policies in early 1940 garnered letters from prominent figures expressing support. See Luce to Spellman, March 15, 1940; Merz to Spellman, March 12, 1940 folder Subject Files: Francis Spellman, box 165, PSF, FDRL; Welles to Roosevelt, March 14, 1942, folder Subject Files: Francis Spellman, box 165, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-586)
587. See Spellman to Roosevelt, June 26, 1943, and Roosevelt to Donald M. Nelson, October 15, 1942, folder Subject Files: Francis Spellman, box 165, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-587)
588. Spellman letter to Roosevelt, March 4, 1943, folder Subject Files: Francis Spellman, box 165, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-588)
589. For example, see Roosevelt memo to Admiral Leahy, July 11, 1944, folder Subject Files: Francis Spellman, box 165, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-589)
590. Untitled memo, filed October 24, 1944, folder Subject Files: Francis Spellman, box 165, PSF, FDRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-590)
591. Rosenman to Roosevelt, September 27, 1944, folder Subject Files: Francis Spellman, box 165, PSF, FDRL; Barnes to Roosevelt, October 10, 1944, folder Subject Files: Francis Spellman, box 165, PSF, FDRL. For the minimal press coverage on their meeting, see “Spellman and Roosevelt Talk,” *New York Times,* October 19, 1944, 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-591)
592. “After Praying for Poland and its People, *New York Times,* April 18, 1945, 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-592)
593. Anne O’Hare McCormick, *The Hammer and the Scythe: Communist Russia Enters the Second Decade* (New York, 1927), 33, 203. [↑](#footnote-ref-593)
594. See Anne O’Hare McCormick, “A World Turned Upside Down,” *New York Times,* October 30, 1927, SM1. [↑](#footnote-ref-594)
595. On Anne McCormick’s evolving views toward Russia and her connections to government and religious leaders, see Yvonne Hunter, “Cold Columns: Anne O'Hare McCormick and the Origins of the Cold War in *The New York Times* (1920-1954)," Master’s thesis, Nipissing University, 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-595)
596. Karen Dearlove, “Gender, Journalists and Access to the Administration: Anne O'Hare McCormick, Arthur Krock and Franklin D. Roosevelt,” April 25, 2007, Hall Institute of Public Policy, accessed February 1, 2013, http://hallnj.org/topics/40-the-world-beyond-new-jersey/319-karen-dearlove. [↑](#footnote-ref-596)
597. Roosevelt once remarked that McCormick was a “wonderful human being" who “thinks deeply.” Barbara Belford, *Brilliant Bylines: A Biographical Anthology of Notable Newspaperwomen in America* (New York, 1986), 166; Georgie Geyer, "Dorothy Thompson & Anne O'Hare McCormick," *Editor & Publisher* 132.44 (1999): 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-597)
598. Dearlove, “Gender, Journalists and Access to the Administration;” Hunter, “Cold Columns.” [↑](#footnote-ref-598)
599. McCormick, “Europe: Function of the State Is Real Issue, as Pope Has Seen,” *New York Times,* October 30, 1939, 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-599)
600. McCormick, “Europe: The President's Powers and the New World Order,” *New York Times,* January 13, 1941, 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-600)
601. McCormick, “Religious Freedom in the Soviet Union,” *New York Times,* October 6, 1941, 16; McCormick, “Where Will Hitler Spend the Winter?,” *New York Times,* October 13, 1941, 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-601)
602. For a discussion of the American media’s cooperation with Roosevelt’s wartime censorship and propaganda efforts, see Sweeney, *Secrets of Victory.* [↑](#footnote-ref-602)
603. Chaired by Assistant Secretary Sumner Welles, McCormick’s political sub-committee included the Johns Hopkins scholar Isaiah Bowman, Roosevelt’s envoy to the Vatican Myron Taylor, Assistant Secretary of State Adolf A. Berle, Lend-Lease advisor Benjamin Cohen, and anti-communist figures such as historian James T. Shottwell, economist Herbert Feis, andCongressman Hamilton Fish Armstrong, the editor of *Foreign Affairs.* On the composition of the committee, see Ignác Romsics, “The Composition of the Committee,” in *Wartime American Plans for a New Hungary: Documents from the US Department of State, 1942-*1944, ed. Ignác Romsics (Boulder, Colorado, 1992), www.hungarianhistory.com/lib/romsics. [↑](#footnote-ref-603)
604. “Minutes of the Sub-Committee on Territorial Problems,” T Minutes 16, August 14, 1942, in *Wartime American Plans for a New Hungary*, http://www.hungarianhistory.com/lib/romsics/ w12.htm. [↑](#footnote-ref-604)
605. “Hungary, Transition to Permanent Government: Establishment of a Provisional Government,” February 26, 1944, in *Wartime American Plans for a New Hungary*, www.hungarianhistory.com/lib/romsics/w37.htm. [↑](#footnote-ref-605)
606. P minutes 4, March 28, 1942, box 55, Notter files, RG 59, NARA. For an example of McCormick’s benign Soviet-related public commentary during this period, see, McCormick, “Abroad: The Nostalgia for Buffers and Boundaries,” ***New York Times*,** Apr 7, 1943, 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-606)
607. McCormick, “Germany's Internal War Centers in the Churches,” *New York Times,* June 10, 1942, C20. [↑](#footnote-ref-607)
608. Christopher D. O'Sullivan, *Sumner Welles, Postwar Planning, and the Quest for a New World Order, 1937–1943* (New York, 2008)*,* 263. [↑](#footnote-ref-608)
609. For examples of McCormick’s criticism of Soviet behaviour in the Orlemanski affair, see McCormick, “Abroad: The Issue of Poland,” *New York Times,* Apr 30, 1944, E1; McCormick, “Abroad: Problems of Empire,” *New York Times,* May 7, 1944, E2. [↑](#footnote-ref-609)
610. Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Excerpts from the Press Conference," December 22, 1944, *Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin Roosevelt*, in *American Presidency Project,* ed. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=16484. [↑](#footnote-ref-610)
611. Roosevelt, State of the Union Address, January 6, 1945, *Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin Roosevelt,* in *American Presidency Project,* ed. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=16595. [↑](#footnote-ref-611)
612. Harley Notter, "Official Statements of Postwar Policy," January 2, 1942, Welles papers, box 190, FDRL; P minutes 2, March 14, 1942, Notter files, box 54, RG 59, National Archives, in O’Sullivan, *Sumner Welles,* 200, 250-252; Sumner Welles, *The World of the Four Freedoms* (New York, 1943), v-vii; McCormick, “First Specifications for the Post-War Order,” ***New York Times*,** June 1, 1942, 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-612)
613. “Minutes of the Sub-Committee on Territorial Problems,” T Minutes 16, August 14, 1942, in *Wartime American Plans for a New Hungary*, www.hungarianhistory.com/lib/romsics/ w12.htm. [↑](#footnote-ref-613)
614. McCormick, “Abroad: The Stone Will Not Be Rolled Away by a Miracle,” *New York Times,* March 31, 1945, 18. McCormick, “Abroad: Beginning of the Question Period for the Big Three Not the Peace Conference Free to Speak,” *New York Times,* March 7, 1945, 20; McCormick, “Abroad: Russian Demands on Turkey Upset US,” *New York Times,* March 24, 1945, 16; McCormick, “Abroad: The Political Home Front in the Soviet Union,” *New York Times,* April 4, 1945, 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-614)
615. McCormick, “His 'Unfinished Business'--And Ours,” *New York Times,* April 22, 1945, SM3. [↑](#footnote-ref-615)
616. Roosevelt to Churchill, April 11, 1945, in *My Dear Mr. Stalin*, ed. Susan Butler, 321. After Roosevelt’s death, McCormick collaborated extensively with the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, promoting Secretary John Foster Dulles’s religion-inflected ideological crusade to protect the world from communist expansion See Hunter, “Cold Columns," iv. [↑](#footnote-ref-616)
617. Roosevelt to Stalin, March 31, 1945, in *My Dear Mr. Stalin,* ed. Susan Butler, 309-310. [↑](#footnote-ref-617)
618. Geoffrey Roberts, *Stalin’s Wars,* 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-618)
619. Gallup and NORC polls, 1943-1947, in “A Half Century’s Polling on the USSR and Communism: A Roper Centre Review of Public Attitudes,” *Public Perspective* 3.1 (1991), 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-619)
620. Roberts, *Stalin’s Wars,* 318. [↑](#footnote-ref-620)
621. Frank Costigliola, H-Diplo Roundtable Review of *From Roosevelt to Truman: Potsdam,*

     *Hiroshima, and the Cold War* by Wilson Miscamble, *H-Diplo Roundtables,*  http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/fromTrumantoRoosevelt-Roundtable.pdf, 6-11; Roberts considers the “two camps” speech of September 1947 the “final breakdown” of the Grand Alliance and the “onset of the Cold War.” Roberts, *Stalin's Wars*, 25-27, 319. [↑](#footnote-ref-621)
622. Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy*; Jeremy Gunn, *Spiritual Weapons*; and Raymond Haberski Jr., *God and War: American Civil Religion Since 1945.* [↑](#footnote-ref-622)
623. Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy*, i. [↑](#footnote-ref-623)
624. The “sacralization” of foreign policy is a phrase favored by Herzog to refer to Truman and Eisenhower’s religious rhetoric, whereas William Inboden coined the phrase “public theology.” See Jonathan P. Herzog, *The Spiritual-Industrial Complex: America's Religious Battle against Communism in the Early Cold War* (Oxford, UK), 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-624)
625. Geoffrey Roberts, "Moscow and the Marshall Plan: Politics, Ideology and the Onset of the Cold War, 1947," *Europe-Asia Studies* 46. 8 (1994): 1373; Roberts, *Stalin’s Wars,* 318. [↑](#footnote-ref-625)
626. Truman, Address before a Joint Session of Congress, March 12, 1947, in 20th Century Documents: 1900 – 1999, *The Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy*, Yale University Lillian Goldman Law Library, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\_century/trudoc.asp. [↑](#footnote-ref-626)
627. Scott D. Parrish, “The Turn Toward Confrontation: The Soviet Reaction to the Marshall Plan, 1947,” in Scott D. Parrish and Mikhail M. Narinsky, "New Evidence on the Soviet Rejection of the Marshall Plan, 1947: Two Reports," Working Paper no. 9, *Cold War International History Project* (Washington, DC, 1994), 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-627)
628. Michael J. Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain and the Reconstruction of Western Europe* (New York, 1987), 89. [↑](#footnote-ref-628)
629. Scott D. Parrish concluded that “most of the available evidence” indicates that the US deliberately designed the Marshall Aid offer so that Moscow would reject it. US officials feared that the Kremlin would impose unwanted conditions on aid, delay negotiations, and forestall implementation of the program. Parrish, “The Turn Toward Confrontation,” 13. Also see Geoffrey Roberts, *Stalin’s Wars*, 25; and Geoffrey Roberts, "Moscow and the Marshall Plan: Politics, Ideology and the Onset of the Cold War, 1947," *Europe-Asia Studies* 46. 8 (1994): 1371-86. [↑](#footnote-ref-629)
630. Harry Truman, December 1955, quoted in Richard E*.* Neustadt*,* *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan* (New York, 1990), 43. By November 1947, opinion polls suggested that nearly half of those who had heard about the ERP supported it, and that figure rose to 56 per cent by February 1948. Harold L. Hitchens, "Influences on the Congressional Decision to Pass the Marshall Plan," The Western Political Quarterly 21.1 (1968), 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-630)
631. On the corporatist model attributing Congress’ approval of the Marshall Plan to a desire to stabilize international trade and promote economic growth, see Michael J. Hogan*, The Marshall Plan: America, Britain and the Reconstruction of Western Europe* (Cambridge, 1987). On Truman’s emphasis of anti-communism to overcome bipartisan objections and Secretary Marshall’s emphasis of economic benefits, see John Bledsoe Bonds*, Bipartisan Strategy: Selling the Marshall Plan* (Westport, Connecticut, 2002). For an account of how Marshall Plan proponents’ arguments stressing anti-communism, containment, economic prosperity, and American Christian traditions of charity and generosity proved more popular than objections to the ERP’s high cost, ineffectiveness against communism, the potential to make the American economy overly export-dependent, and the ERP’s tendency toward imperialism, see Hitchens, "Influences on the Congressional Decision to Pass the Marshall Plan," 51-68. Hitchens attributed passage of the ERP to bipartisan collaboration, interest group lobbying on behalf of the plan (including religious leaders’ lobbying), support from liberal newspapers and radio, State Department presentations in Congress, and Truman’s propaganda campaign. On Soviet political interference in Iran as another impetus for adoption of the Marshall Plan, see Wilson D. Miscamble, "The Foreign Policy of the Truman Administration: A Post-Cold War Appraisal,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 24.3 (1994): 479-494, especially 482. On modernization themes, see Dennis Merrill, “The Truman Doctrine: Containing Communism and Modernity, *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36.1 (2006): 27-37. On pathology and the language of emergency, see Robert L. Ivie, “Fire, Flood, and Red Fever: Motivating Metaphors of Global Emergency in the Truman Doctrine Speech,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 29 (1999): 570-591. On gender and containment under the Truman administration generally, see Robert Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood,* 64-66. [↑](#footnote-ref-631)
632. Offner, *Another Such Victory,* 3, 8, 9, 10, 92. [↑](#footnote-ref-632)
633. Harry S. Truman, *Mr. Citizen* (New York, 1960), 131. Also see Ferrell, 134, and Aida Donald, *Citizen Soldier: A Life of Harry S. Truman* (New York, 2012), 88-89. [↑](#footnote-ref-633)
634. Truman, memo, May 23, 1945, in *Harry S. Truman, Letters Home*, ed. Monte M. Poen (Columbia, Missouri, 1894), 189. On millennialist beliefs, see Richard Connors and Andrew Colin Gow, eds., *Anglo-American Millennialism, From Milton to the Millerites* (Boston, Massachusetts, 2004). On post-millennialism in early American history and the post-WWI period, see Preston, *Sword of the Spirit,* 124,280, 392. [↑](#footnote-ref-634)
635. Harry S. Truman, Address on Foreign Policy at the Navy Day Celebration in New York City, October 27, 1945, in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Harry S. Truman*, 1945, *American Presidency Project,* ed. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=12304. [↑](#footnote-ref-635)
636. Elizabeth Edwards Spalding, *The First Cold Warrior: Harry Truman, Containment, and the Remaking of Liberal Internationalism* (Lexington, Kentucky, 2006), 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-636)
637. Text of speech by Krock to the National Republican Club, January 26, 1935, Arthur Krock Collection, Princeton University, quoted in Betty Houchin Winfield, *FDR and the News* *Media*, 35; and Winfield, *FDR and the News* *Media,* 66-67. [↑](#footnote-ref-637)
638. Truman, Address in Columbus at a Conference of the Federal Council of Churches, March 6, 1946, in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Harry S. Truman*, 1946, *American Presidency Project,* ed. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=12599. [↑](#footnote-ref-638)
639. Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy,* 105-156. [↑](#footnote-ref-639)
640. Exchange of Messages with Pope Pius XII, August 6, 1947, released August 28, 1947, in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Harry S. Truman, 1947,* *The American Presidency Project*, ed. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=12746. For more on Truman’s religious invective in 1947 and 1948, see Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy*, 116-117. [↑](#footnote-ref-640)
641. Truman, Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, January 7, 1948, in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Harry S. Truman*, 1946, *American Presidency Project,* ed. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=13005. [↑](#footnote-ref-641)
642. Truman to Reverend William P Lampe, April 29, 1946, quoted in Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy,* 110. [↑](#footnote-ref-642)
643. Harry S. Truman, St. Patrick's Day Address in New York City, March 17, 1948, in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Harry S. Truman*, 1948, *American Presidency Project,* ed. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=13131. Also see Nicole L. Anslover, *Harry S. Truman: The Coming of the Cold War* (Routledge, 2013), 101. [↑](#footnote-ref-643)
644. Truman to William Hassett, quoted in Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy,* 113. [↑](#footnote-ref-644)
645. Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy,* 18. For more on the US Information Agency and its use of religious materials, see Nicholas J. Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency* (New York), 74, 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-645)
646. Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency*, 74, 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-646)
647. For further examples of Truman’s religious rhetoric, see Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy,* 110-156. [↑](#footnote-ref-647)
648. National Security Council, “NSC 68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security,” April 14, 1950,” *FRUS*, 1950 1: 239–240. [↑](#footnote-ref-648)
649. Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy*, 2, 107. [↑](#footnote-ref-649)
650. Ibid.,107, 113. Also see Preston, *Sword of the Spirit*, 465-467, 484-485. [↑](#footnote-ref-650)
651. Harry S. Truman, Address at the Cornerstone Laying of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, April 3, 1951, in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Harry S. Truman, 1951*, *The American Presidency Project*, ed. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=14048. [↑](#footnote-ref-651)
652. Hopkins ignored Harriman’s initial request in late 1944 to move Kennan to Moscow, but Harriman and Charles Bohlen’s persistence soon resulted in his transfer. See Dunn, *Caught Between Roosevelt and Stalin,* 71; and Isaacson and Thomas, *The Wise Men*, 226-227. [↑](#footnote-ref-652)
653. The position of Supreme Patriarch had been revived in 1917, but the First and Second World Wars had made it impossible for Eastern Orthodox leaders outside of Russia to travel to Moscow for the elections in 1917 and 1943. Miner, *Stalin’s Wars,* 192. [↑](#footnote-ref-653)
654. The Moscow hierarchy elected Alexei to replace Patriarch Sergei following Sergei’s death in 1943, but international Orthodox representatives had not been present at the election. On the history of the Orthodox Church during this period, see Wassilij Alexeev, “The Russian Orthodox Church 1927-1945: Repression and Revival,” *Religion in Communist Lands* 7.1 (1979): 29-34; Bohdan R. Bociurkiw, “Church-State Relations in the USSR,” in *Religion and the Soviet State*, ed. M. Hayward and WC. Fletcher (London, 1969), 218-224; Philip Walters, “The Russian Orthodox Church 1945-1959,” in *Religion in Communist Lands* 8.3 (1980): 218-224. [↑](#footnote-ref-654)
655. Kennan to Secretary of Secretary of State Edward Stettinius, February 3, 1945, 861.404/2-345, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-655)
656. Ibid.

     Kennan to Stettinius, February 7, 1945, 861.404/2-745, RG 59, NARA. Also see Kennan to Stettinius, May 16, 1945, 861.404/5-1645, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-656)
657. Kennan to Secretary of Secretary of State Edward Stettinius, February 3, 1945, 861.404/2-345, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-657)
658. Kennan to Stettinius, February 7, 1945, 861.404/2-745, RG 59, NARA [↑](#footnote-ref-658)
659. Kennan to Stettinius, February 8, 1945, 861.404/2-845, RG 59, NARA; Kennan to Stettinius, February 10, 1945, 861.404/2-1045, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-659)
660. In Kennan’s view, Stalin became openly hostile to the church after he failed to craft a strategic *modus vivendi* with Rome via Father Orlemanski. Ibid; Kennan to Stettinius, February 10, 1945, 861.404/2-1045, RG 59, NARA. Similarly, the US envoy to Egypt S. Pinkney Tuck warned Washington in May 1945 that the Soviet government’s support for the Moscow patriarchate was “astute” because it filled a “long felt want” for international leadership among influential Egyptian Orthodox clerics who had been left “rudderless and neglected” following Bolshevik repression of the Moscow church in the 1920s. Rather than continuing to seek out British officials for patronage and support, Egyptian Orthodox leaders would now turn to the Soviet-sponsored Orthodox patriarchate in Moscow, making the Egyptian church susceptible to the Kremlin’s influence. US Envoy Extraordinary to Cairo S. Pinkney Tuck to Stettinius, May 4, 1945, 861.404/05-0445, RG 59, NARA; Tuck to Stettinius, June 8, 1945, 861.404/6-845, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-660)
661. Kennan to Stettinius, May 16, 1945, 861.404/5-1645, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-661)
662. FDR chose MacLeish in 1941 to oversee the War Department’s [Office of Facts and Figures](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Office_of_Facts_and_Figures&action=edit&redlink=1) and later moved him to the [Office of War Information](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Office_of_War_Information), FDR’s agency for monitoring public opinion and coordinating war-related news and propaganda such as [posters](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poster), radio, and other media. When MacLeish requested permission to return to public life in 1944, Roosevelt persuaded him to return as the Assistant Secretary of State for Cultural and Public Affairs. See Casey, *Cautious Crusade*, 48, 52-54. [↑](#footnote-ref-662)
663. Archibald MacLeish, *Archibald MacLeish: Reflections*, ed. Bernard A. Drabeck, Helen E. Ellis, and Richard Wilbur (Amherst, 1986), 15-16, 200. [↑](#footnote-ref-663)
664. Dr. Francis S. Harmon to Archibald MacLeish, January 11, 1945, and MacLeish to Harmon January 16, 1945, 861.404/1-1145, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-664)
665. For the text of MacLeish’s broadcast, see MacLeish to Wilfred Lumer, May 39, 1945, 711.61/5-2945, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-665)
666. The anti-Soviet Metropolitan Benjamin Pashkovsky did not attend the sobor on grounds of “ill health,” but he appointed a delegation to attend in his stead. Soviet officials denied the delegate Ralph M. Arkush’s travel visa en route, and the remaining delegates were delayed by bad weather. It is unclear whether the delegates’ Russian pilots deliberately grounded their plane on a pretense. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-666)
667. Kennan to Stettinius, February 3, 1945, 861.404/2-345, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-667)
668. FBI Director John Edgar Hoover to Chief of the State Department Foreign Activities Correlation Frederick B. Lyon, February 5, 1946, 861.4040/2-546, RG 59, NARA. Also see Marshall to Smith, November 10, 1947, 861.404/11-1047, RG 59, NARA; President of the Russian-American Union Serge Bolosselky to Chairman of the House Committee on Un-American Activities Edward J. Hart, copied to Byrnes and Truman, December 17, 1945, 861.404/12-1745, RG 59, NARA; US Ambassador to the USSR Walter Bedell Smith, February 2, 1948, 861.404/2-248, RG 59, NARA; Attorney General Philip B. Perlman to Secretary of State George C. Marshall, November 10, 1047, 861.404/11-1047, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-668)
669. Taylor to Stettinius, February 28, 1945, 860H.404/2-2845, RG 59, NARA. Also see 861.404/1-2947, Taylor to Secretary of State James Byrnes, September 23, 1946, 860H.404/9-2845. [↑](#footnote-ref-669)
670. US ambassador to Belgrade, Richard C. Patterson, April 11, 1945, 860H.404/4-1145, RG 59, NARA. 860H.404/7-1045. The US ambassador in Greece reported that communists in Athens planned to install a pro-Soviet Orthodox hierarch in Greece and make the church an “extension of Russian influence” by interfering with regional Orthodox ecclesiastical elections. US Ambassador to Greece Lincoln MacVeigh to Stettinius, December 5, 1945, 861.404/12-545, RG 59, NARA. For other reports of communist repression of religious freedoms, see Tittman to Byrnes, July 10, 1945, 860H.404/7-1045, RG 59, NARA; Ambassador to Cairo Alexander C. Kirk to Byrnes, July 25, 1945, 860H.404/7-2545, RG 59, NARA; Patterson to Byrnes, October 16, 1945, 860H.404/10-1645, RG 59, NARA; US Ambassador to Turkey Ross Wilson to Secretary of State George C. Marshall, May 26, 1947, 861.404/5-2647, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-670)
671. Claire Boothe Luce to Acting Secretary of State Joseph Grew, June 13, 1945, and Grew to Luce Booth, June 20, 1945, 861.404/6-1345, RG 59, NARA. Also see Senator Thomas C. Hart to Grew, June 14, 1945, 861.404/6-1445, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-671)
672. Hoover memorandum to Chief of the Division of Foreign Activity Correlation Jack D. Neal, “The American Birobidjan Committee,” April 26, 1947, 711.61/4-2647, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-672)
673. The FBI also circulated pamphlets distributed by an associated branch of the Birobidjan Committee in located Chicago. Neal to Robert J. Hooker, Ambijan Committee memo, September 9, 1947, 711.61/9-2447, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-673)
674. Memo of conversation between Merritt Cootes of the Division of Eastern European Affairs and W.O. Lewis of the Baptist World Alliance, March 20, 1945, 861.404/3-2045, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-674)
675. Smith to Byrnes, July 29, 1947, 861.404/7-2646, RG 59, NARA. [↑](#footnote-ref-675)
676. Truman letter to Pope Pius XII, August 6, 1947, in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Harry S. Truman*, 1947, *American Presidency Project,* ed. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=12746#ixzz2hWgeLRUU. [↑](#footnote-ref-676)
677. “Baptist Group Hits US-Vatican Notes,” [**New York Times,** August 31, 1947,](http://search.proquest.com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/hnpnewyorktimes/pubidlinkhandler/sng/pubtitle/New+York+Times+$281923-Current+file$29/$N/45545/PagePdf/107996013/fulltextPDF/14112F8A9DD6B4841B3/1?accountid=12347)19. [↑](#footnote-ref-677)
678. Reverend Frank J. Norris to Truman, May 8, 1947, 711.61/5-847, RG 59, NARA; “Baptists See Pope, Back Truman View, *New York Times*, September 6 1947, 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-678)
679. “The Pitiful and Discredited Leaders of the Once Powerful Southern Baptist Machine Have Failed to Divert Attention of the People by Dragging Red Herring of Roman Catholicism Across Trail,” *Fundamentalist*, July 4, 1947, 1, and “Pope Meets Baptist Ministers,” *New York Sun*, September 5, 1947, quoted in Barry Hankins, *God's Rascal: J. Frank Norris and the Beginnings of Southern Fundamentalism* (Lexington, Kentucky, 1996), 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-679)
680. Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy*, i. [↑](#footnote-ref-680)
681. Eisenhower’s NSC staff called for “greater emphasis upon the religious factor in the American program against Communism,” particularly in domestic and foreign propaganda. Inboden, *Religion and the Origins of the Cold War,* 300. [↑](#footnote-ref-681)
682. Ibid, 300-301. [↑](#footnote-ref-682)
683. Ibid., 312. [↑](#footnote-ref-683)
684. See *Religion and the Cold War,* ed. Dianne Kirby (New York, 2003), 1, 67; Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy,* 321-322. On the lack of scholarship supporting Kirby and Kent’s assertion that religion helped to end the Cold War, see Merrilyn Thomas, review of *Religion and the Cold War* edited by Diane Kirby, *Reviews in History* 362 (October 2003), http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/362. [↑](#footnote-ref-684)
685. Recent scholarship suggests that Catholic leaders did little to hasten the collapse of the USSR, for rather than calling on Eastern European Catholics to rebel against communist regimes, the Pope and national Catholic leaders pursued accommodation and co-existence with communist regimes. Similarly, Reagan’s religious rhetoric likely paled in significance next to the internal economic woes and political reforms that sparked the collapse of the USSR. See Bernd Shafer, “The Catholic Church and the Cold War’s end in Europe: Vatican *Ostpolik* and Pope John Paul II, 1985-1989,” in *Europe and the End of the Cold War: A Reappraisal,* ed. F. Bozo et. al(Oxford, UK, 2008), 5, 75-76; John Anderson, *Religion, State and Politics in the Soviet Union and Successor States* (New York, 1994), 168-169, and Gregory F. Domber, *Bottom of FormSupporting the Revolution: America, Democracy, and the End of the Cold War*, Ph.D. Dissertation, George Washington University, 2008, 241, 243. [↑](#footnote-ref-685)
686. Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy,* 321-322. [↑](#footnote-ref-686)
687. On Foglesong’s scant attention to powerful policymakers and the "gap between

     public attitudes and governmental policy," see Deborah Lawson’s comments in Thomas Maddux, ed., H-Diplo roundtable review of David S. Foglesong, *The American Mission and the ‘Evil Empire’: The Crusade for a ‘Free Russia’ since 1881,* H-Diplo Roundtable Reviews 9.5 (21 March 2008), http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/AmericanMission-roundtable.pdf. On Andrew Preston’s failure to demonstrate the causal influence of religion on diplomacy, see Ira Chernus and Bruce Kucklick, H-Diplo roundtable review of *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith,* by Andrew Preston, *H-Net, H-Diplo Roundtables* 14.11 (December 2012), http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/Roundtable-XIV-11.pdf, and Allen C. Guelzo, review of *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith* by Andrew Preston, *National Review* 64.8 (April 30, 2012): 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-687)
688. Preston, *Sword of the Spirit*, 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-688)