Daria Mattingly and John Vsetecka (eds.)

# The Holodomor in Global Perspective

## How the Famine in Ukraine Shaped the World

With a foreword by Anne Applebaum

Ukrainian Voices, vol. 80

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Daria Mattingly and John Vsetecka (eds.)

# THE HOLODOMOR IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

How the Famine in Ukraine Shaped the World

With a foreword by Anne Applebaum

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# Foreword

*Anne Applebaum*

The Holodomor was a man-made famine, organized by the Soviet state, that killed nearly four million Ukrainians in 1932-1933. For half a century the world knew little about it. The Soviet leadership censored any mention of the famine inside the country. Outside the country, discussion of the famine was limited because Western diplomats and politicians did not want to undermine their relationships with the USSR. This volume, *The Holodomor in Global Perspective*, helps to fill the gap in knowledge and understanding created by this decades-long silence.

The authors in this anthology demonstrate that mass starvation in Ukraine was not a tragic byproduct of collectivization or economic mismanagement, as historians sympathetic to the Soviet project long claimed. Stalin and his inner circle were fully aware that hunger had begun to spread across the country after they had forced the collectivization of agriculture in 1929, but they nevertheless chose to target Ukraine in 1932 with even more lethal policies. Ukraine had resisted assimilation into the Soviet project, and they feared the republic would become a center of political resistance in the future.

The authors also place the Holodomor in a broader global and historical context. The Holodomor was part of a pattern of imperial domination that has remained remarkably constant in Tsarist, Soviet, and post-Soviet Russia. In the 1930s, for example, Stalin used food as a tool of repression, as well a source of influence in international relations. In the early stages of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Russian forces seized Ukrainian grain, blockaded Ukrainian ports, and disrupted planting cycles. The Kremlin once again turned food into a geopolitical weapon, not just against Ukrainians, but against the Global South, which depends on Ukraine's agricultural exports. Just as Stalin aimed to break Ukraine by starving its people, Putin sought to undermine

Ukraine's role as a producer of grain on the international market and, in doing so, deprive it of sovereignty in international affairs.

Other Soviet tools of repression used during the famine, from the manipulation of truth and the fabrication of "enemies" to the punishment of entire populations, did not disappear with the collapse of the USSR either. Modern Russia's denial of Ukrainian statehood, the dismissal of Ukrainian identity, and the violation of Ukrainian borders are deeply rooted in a tradition that spans over a long time. The past silence around the Holodomor has helped to perpetuate this imperial mentality. Because so few were held accountable, and because Soviet archives remained sealed for so long, the deaths of millions could be obscured behind euphemisms like "bad harvest" or "economic necessity." All of this sent a message: that it is possible to annihilate a nation and still be received as a legitimate actor on the world stage.

This collection breaks that silence. Through careful archival work, critical analysis and interdisciplinary insight, the contributors both trace the international dimensions of the Holodomor and convey some of the trauma. Grandchildren of survivors have told me the stories of fields stripped bare, grain requisitioned at gunpoint, desperate families reduced to eating bark or weeds, neighbors vanishing in the night. For Ukrainians, the Holodomor is a defining national trauma, one that informs their deep-seated mistrust of Russian power and their insistence on sovereignty. They are fighting a war not merely territory, but because they refuse to be erased.

*The Holodomor in Global Perspective* reminds us that history is not a dead subject: We are not so distant from the world of 1932, after all. The tools of oppression are more sophisticated now, but the logic is familiar. The denial of truth, the weaponization of need, the disdain for the lives of others—these are not relics but rather dangers we still face today.

# Introduction

*Daria Mattingly and John Vsetecka*

Taking inspiration from Lynn Hunt's *Writing History in the Global Era*,[1] this collection accepts her challenge: that writing global history does not mean flattening differences or embracing vague universals but rather recognizing the embeddedness of local tragedies within transnational structures, ideas, and consequences. Hunt defines globalization as "the process by which the world becomes more interconnected and more interdependent."[2] But in what way did the Holodomor contribute to historical globalization? How did it, in Hunt's terms, make the world more interconnected and more interdependent? This volume attempts to offer a starting point for answering these questions, demonstrating that a national tragedy can simultaneously exist on a global scale. The Holodomor, often described as an 'unknown genocide' or 'forgotten famine,' compels us to re-examine how violence against civilians is remembered, denied, instrumentalized, or, crucially, linked across contexts. Just as the memory of the Holocaust shaped international law and postwar consciousness, or the Great Irish Famine continues to echo through diasporic identity and colonial legacies,[3] the Holodomor must be studied not only as a catastrophe inflicted upon Ukrainians, but as part of a global history of state-engineered famines, imperial governance, and ideological warfare.

As the editors, we share the conviction that the Holodomor must be understood not only as a national tragedy or a Soviet phenomenon, but as a global event that resonated across international, political, economic, and cultural boundaries. The man-made fam-

1 Lynn Hunt, *Writing History in the Global Era* 2014.

2 Ibid., 52.

3 Vincent Comerford, "Grievance, Scourge or Shame? The Complexity of Attitudes to Ireland's Great Famine" in *Holodomor and Gorta Mór. Histories, Memories and Representations of Famine in Ukraine and Ireland*, edited by Christian Noack, Lindsay Janssen and Vincent Comeford London: Anthem Press, 2012), pp. 51-73.

ine in Soviet Ukraine in 1932–33, known as the Holodomor, has become a subject of international historical inquiry, political urgency, and moral reckoning. In recent years, a growing number of edited volumes and thematic issues on the subject have made vital contributions to our understanding of the causes, mechanisms, and legacies of the famine.[4] These works and many others have enriched our comprehension of the Holodomor within the Soviet and communist context, deepening the archival and testimonial record. This volume seeks to reframe the Holodomor through a global perspective, not to dissolve its Ukrainian specificity, but to better understand its resonances with other historical famines and genocides and its enduring relevance to the political, economic, and cultural dynamics of Russia's ongoing war in Ukraine.

*The Holodomor in Global Perspective: How the Famine in Ukraine Shaped the World* emerges from the conference by the same name that took place at the University of Cambridge in September 2022 and offered fresh perspectives and approaches. The conference and

4 For comprehensive scholarly volumes on the Holodomor and/or in comparison with other famine, see *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraiini*, edited by Valeriy Smoliy, Ivan Dziuba, Stanislav Kulchytsky et al. (Kyiv: Naukova Dumka, 2003); *Famine-Genocide in Ukraine, 1932-1933: Western Archives, Testimonies and New Research*, edited by Wsevolod W. Isajiw (Toronto: Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Centre, 2003); *Holodomor: Reflections on the Great Famine of 1932–1933 in Soviet Ukraine*, edited by Lubomyr Y. Luciuk (Kingston, ON: Kashtan Press, 2008); *Hunger by Design: The Great Ukrainian Famine and Its Soviet Context*, edited by Halyna Hryn (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2008); *Holodomor and Gorta Mór. Histories, Memories and Representations of Famine in Ukraine and Ireland*, edited by Christian Noack, Lindsay Janssen and Vincent Comeford London: Anthem Press, 2012); *After the Holodomor: The Enduring Impact of the Great Famine on Ukraine*, edited by Andrea Graziosi, Lubomyr A. Hajda, and Halyna Hryn (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2013); *Contextualizing the Holodomor: The Impact of Thirty Years of Ukrainian Famine Studies*, edited by Andrij Makuch and Frank E. Sysyn (Toronto: CIUS Press, 2015); *Communism and Hunger: The Ukrainian, Chinese, Kazakh, and Soviet Famines in Comparative Perspective*, edited by Andrea Graziosi and Frank E. Sysyn (Edmonton and Toronto: CIUS Press, 2016); the special issue "Soviet Famines," *Contemporary European History* 27, no. 3 (2018): 432–481, featuring Norman Naimark, Nicolo Pianciola, Tanja Penter, J. Arch Getty, Alexander Etkind, Sarah Cameron, Stephen G. Wheatcroft, Andrea Graziosi, and Ronald Grigor Suny; and *Documenting the Famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine: Archival Collections on the Holodomor Outside the Former Soviet Union*, edited by Myroslav Shkandrij (Edmonton and Toronto: CIUS Press, 2023).

thus this volume would not have been possible without the support of many people and organizations. While it is impossible to individually thank every person here, we do wish to express our immense gratitude to Marta Baziuk, Rory Finnin, Frank Sysyn, and everyone at the Holodomor Research and Education Consortium and volume contributors for supporting our initiative with funding and scholarship. We also wish to thank the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Alberta, the Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages at the University of Cambridge, and the Leverhulme Trust. Celebrated Ukrainian artist, Mykola Kovalenko, has kindly allowed us to use his artwork for the cover of the volume. Finally, we would like to thank Andreas Umland, editor of the "Ukrainian Voices" series at ibidem-Verlag, for including our volume in this collection. At such a crucial moment in time, ibidem-Verlag has proven to be one of the most steadfast presses dedicated to publishing quality texts on Ukrainian topics.

The volume is structured around three thematic parts: international awareness and responses to the famine; the Holodomor and the architecture of modern state violence; and the transmission and transformation of famine memory across generations and cultures. Each chapter contributes to a reimagining of the Holodomor as a global phenomenon and thus, implicitly, a prism through which to comprehend contemporary political violence, including Russia's current war in Ukraine.

Part I, "International Response to Famine: The Holodomor's Predicament in Geopolitics," assembles contributions that explore the geopolitical and communicative dimensions of the famine. Ray Gamache's chapter on the 1933 London Wheat Agreement exposes a brutal irony: while the world negotiated grain surpluses, millions of Ukrainians were being starved through enforced requisitions. This paradox of plenty echoes in contemporary debates around food security and weaponized hunger. Gamache's framing of the Holodomor within global grain politics and media discourse contextualizes the downplaying or outright denial of the famine by the American communists and progressive intellectuals like Reinhold Niebuhr, which Henry Prown discusses in detail in his chapter "The Truth About the Famine". In his pioneering research Prown

illuminates how "these erstwhile champions of the downtrodden" never questioned the assumption that the Soviet state had a right and even an obligation to punish recalcitrants in its march toward utopia. Roser Alvarez-Klee and Iryna Skubii, in turn, map Spanish awareness of the famine, tracing how leftist intellectuals and pro-Communist organizations shaped the reception (and occlusion) of the famine in Republican Spain. Their ground-breaking contribution illuminates the layered political and ideological lenses through which the Holodomor was perceived in Europe, offering parallels to how the current war is filtered through strategic silences, cognitive dissonance, and selective solidarities.

The second part, "Holodomor, Socialist Construction and the Architecture of Modern State Violence," turns inward to the Soviet system and its mechanisms of control by asking simple yet crucial questions. Bohdan Klid's chapter "Great Exodus For Bread" documents the peasant flight from Ukrainian villages in search of food, offering compelling evidence of a population resisting not merely hunger but the state violence that engineered it. His narrative captures the crucial intersection of human agency and state brutality, revealing the desperation that animated attempts to escape the regime's famine trap. Matt Pauly's contribution situates the Holodomor within the broader context of Soviet children's policy. He probes why Soviet authorities, despite the precedent of international famine relief in the 1920s, refused to appeal for help in 1932–33. The answer, he suggests, lies in the contradiction between Soviet triumphalism and the stark reality of mass child starvation—a contradiction that exposed the fragility of Soviet legitimacy. The inability to protect the most vulnerable undermined the state's paternalist rhetoric and revealed, chillingly, the prioritization of ideological control over humanitarian need. Pauly's inclusion of statistics and quotes from the young victims' appeals to the state that was supposed to protect them underscores the irony of the rhetoric of the western leftist intellectuals discussed in the first part of the volume.

So does the chapter by Andriy Kohut, which reveals the Holodomor through the lens of the Soviet security apparatus. Using statistical data and archival documentation, Kohut reconstructs the

GPU's role in repressing the Ukrainian countryside. His findings show a systematic campaign of "operational pressure" that both anticipated and rehearsed the techniques of the Great Terror. The meticulous planning and regional coordination of GPU actions underscore the extent to which the Holodomor was not a byproduct of failed policy but a deliberate tool of governance. In this sense, the famine emerges as a prototype of state violence that would later be exported and refined within the Soviet empire and other communist countries across the globe. As such, Kohut's research on the Holodomor offers a compelling framework of historical repression that helps us to understand wider implementation practices of starvation and genocide that can be applied globally.

Finally, Antanas Terleckas brings a Baltic perspective by examining postwar agricultural collapse in Lithuania. While not a case of famine on the scale of Ukraine, Terleckas's analysis reveals enduring patterns of Soviet agrarian failure and the persistent use of food and agricultural policy as instruments of state power. His chapter provides a valuable comparative angle, reminding readers that the Holodomor cannot be fully understood in isolation from the broader Soviet project of rural subjugation. The chapter also serves as an important reminder that the Soviet Union continued to struggle with food provisioning throughout its remaining existence.

The third and final part, "Defining, Transmitting, and Overcoming Transgenerational Trauma," interrogates the legacy of the Holodomor in cultural memory, diasporic transmission, and creative representation. Wiktoria Kudela-Świątek charts how early diaspora conceptualizations of the famine laid the groundwork for recognizing it as a genocide long before Raphael Lemkin introduced the term. Her exploration of Ukrainian intellectuals in interwar Europe illustrates the centrality of famine to modern Ukrainian identity and political mobilization, a theme that resonates today as Ukrainian society once again faces existential threats. Larysa Zasiekina's chapter adds psychological depth, examining the trauma carried by survivors and inherited by their descendants. Her research on transgenerational trauma offers insights into how historical violence persists within family systems, shaping mental

health, identity, and resilience. This contribution brings the Holodomor into dialogue with trauma studies, genocide psychology, and therapeutic practice, forging critical interdisciplinary connections. Sara Nesteruk closes the section with a multimedia analysis of Holodomor representation in contemporary visual and filmic forms. Her work on the animated documentary *Recipes for Baking Bread* bridges art, memory, and activism. Drawing on the linocuts of Mykola Bondarenko and interviews with historians and descendants, Nesteruk argues that creative practice can recover 'missing history' and reintegrate the emotional and sensory dimensions of famine memory. In doing so, her work exemplifies how cultural production can counter historical erasure and provide new forms of visual media that reinterpret and reimagine how we understand the past.

*The Holodomor in Global Perspective* thus offers both historical insight and contemporary relevance. It builds on the global turn in historiography to place Ukraine at the center of debates about sovereignty, memory, and the use of hunger as a weapon. Echoing Lynn Hunt's call to embrace history's interconnectedness, this volume challenges readers to move beyond parochial narratives and to consider how the past reverberates across borders and generations. We are publishing this volume at a time when Ukraine is once again under attack—militarily, politically, and culturally. Once again, its people are being denied their right to exist as a sovereign nation. Once again, Ukrainian grain has become a global issue amid climate change and armed conflict. In many ways, the echoes of the past are painfully loud. But so too is the need for deeper understanding. If we want to make sense of the Russo-Ukrainian war today, we need to understand the long history behind it. That history includes the Holodomor, and it matters not just to Ukrainians, but to all of us. We need to understand why some famines are remembered and others forgotten. Why some lives are grieved publicly and others left unacknowledged or are politically inconvenient. This volume does not offer a single answer, nor does it aim to settle every debate. Instead, it opens up space for new conversations across disciplines, across borders, and across generations. It invites readers to think globally and empathetically. And it reminds us, as Hunt writes, that global history is not just about scale. It is about connection and the responsibility that comes with knowledge.

# I

# International Response to Famine
## The Holodomor's Predicament in Geopolitics

# The Holodomor and the London Wheat Agreement of 1933

## Contextualizing the Problem of Mass Starvation in a World "Choked with a Surplus of Wheat"

*Ray Gamache*

### 'Yoked Together'

In his 2022 book, *Oceans of Grain: How American Wheat Changed the World*, historian Scott Reynolds Nelson argues that wheat, technology, and railroads played significant roles in shaping economic and social changes throughout history. Nelson focuses on the factors that helped to forge a relationship between an expansionist post-Civil War America fueled by an industrial boom and a Europe that faced political and economic upheavals as monarchies crumbled from within, culminating in World War I and the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. "I have tried to explain here the way that Russia and the United States were yoked together on an international market and the frequently catastrophic effects."[1] As this paper argues, those catastrophic effects included the mass starvation of four million Ukrainians.[2]

Citing the work of Alexander Israel Helphand (1867-1924), a German grain trader and revolutionary who wrote under the pseudonym of Parvus, Nelson cogently explores the ways in which the growing of wheat, its recipes for salvage and transportation, its distribution lines, and the intangibles that made trade possible bound producers and consumers together "in a common world ecology that viruses, empires, and states have only ridden upon, bits of

1 Scott Reynolds Nelson, *Oceans of Grain: How American Wheat Remade the World* (New York: Basic Books, 2022), 5.

2 Omelian Rudnytskyi, Nataliia Levchuk, Oleh Wolowyna, Pavlo Shevchuk, Alla Kovbasiuk, "Demography of a Man-made Famine in Ukraine 1932-1933," *Canadian Studies in Population* 42, nos. 1-2 (2015): 53-80.

foam on a vast, invisible deep."[3] Nelson concludes this expansive history of wheat's importance by explaining how Ukraine's absorption into the Soviet Union made the Bolshevik Revolution possible and how modern Russia's relative weakness "may still depend on its separation from Ukraine."[4] While acknowledging that Stalin's brutal attempt to collectivize peasant farms in Ukraine led to the *Holodomor*, Nelson ends his analysis in 1924, however, and does not contextualize specific political and economic events that are fundamental to understanding the *Holodomor*, more specifically, the signing of a Wheat Agreement at the 1933 World Economic Conference in London, at which the United States and the Soviet Union began the process of rapprochement eventually leading to formal political recognition after a fifteen-year hiatus.

Extending and applying Nelson's theory on the importance of wheat, I argue that the Wheat Agreement of 1933 is essential to delineating factors that contributed to the conjuncture of, on the one hand, the largest surplus of wheat in the history of humanity, and, on the other, the mass starvation of four million Ukrainians. This conjunctural approach confronts "questions of causal complexity and contextual specificity"[5] by teasing out complex, nonlinear relations between economic, political, and sociocultural processes. Analysis of the Wheat Agreement also offers insights into why reconciling this conjuncture of mass starvation and humanity's largest stockpile of wheat continues, almost ninety years later, to confound and challenge any reasonable understanding of the *Holodomor*. Media representations of the Wheat Agreement of 1933 offer important discursive threads that illustrate the meaning of conjuncture—the "combination of circumstances or affairs; especially, a critical time, proceeding from a union of circumstances; a crisis of affairs."[6]

3 Nelson, *Oceans*, 268

4 Ibid., 274.

5 Eric Sheppard, Jamie Peck, and Helga Leitner, "Conjunctural Analysis," in D. Richardson et al (eds), *The International Encyclopedia of Geography: People, the Earth, Environment, and Technology* (Oxford: Wiley, 2024), 2.

6 The New Webster Encyclopedic Dictionary of the English Language (New York: Random House, 1982).

Put another way, this paper unpacks the discursive tropes used to historicize events in which political leaders felt compelled to negotiate terms to cut agricultural production while people died in the streets of Ukraine from a lack of food. That political leaders and the general public were aware of the humanitarian disaster is beyond dispute, evidenced by numerous calls for international relief. The gruesome facts were widely known thanks to Western journalists like Rhea Clyman, Malcolm Muggeridge, Ralph Barnes, William Stoneman, Harry Lang, and Gareth Jones, each of whom published accounts of mass starvation based on eyewitness observations in Ukraine, the North Caucasus, and the Lower Volga, so the questions as to why nothing was done to mitigate the suffering and why the international community turned a blind eye to the suffering in favor of a flawed, nonbinding, unenforceable agreement remains one of many unexplained phenomena that encumbers wide international awareness and understanding of the *Holodomor*.[7]

Utilizing the theoretical and methodological dimensions of discourse and conjunctural analysis, this paper delineates the political, economic, and cultural meanings and significances of particular texts within constituted relations of power. An investigative

7 Rhea Clyman published a series of articles in the *Toronto Telegram* during the summer of 1932 when she and two American women drove deep into the Soviet countryside where they saw food riots. Clyman's journey is chronicled in "Hunger for Truth," a documentary by Andrew Tkach. Clyman's companions, Mary L. DeGive and Alva Christensen, published an account in the *New York Times* on August 20, 1932. Malcolm Muggeridge published an article in the *Manchester Guardian* in January 1933 after having ventured to Rostov-on-Don where he witnessed entire villages empty; he also published a series of three articles in later March 1933. William Stoneman of the *Chicago Daily News* and Ralph W. Barnes of the *New York Herald Tribune* published articles based on their unescorted trek into Ukraine and the North Caucasus. Harry Lang, a reporter for the *Daily Worker*, published a series of articles about his visit to Ukraine in Yiddish, which eventually were translated into English and published in William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal*. Lang was vilified by Louis Fischer of the *Nation*, as a traitor to the socialist cause and as a propaganda tool of Germany's Nazi regime. Lastly, Gareth Jones created a firestorm of controversy when, upon returning from his unescorted trek through the Ukrainian countryside, announced on March 29, 1933, at a Berlin press conference that millions of people were starving to death. He published almost two dozen articles in the *Western Mail*, *London Evening Standard*, *London Daily Express*, and the *Financial News*.

study of journalism history is actualized in the process of creating coherence from archival fragments. How researchers assemble a coherent image of an event from primary sources arguably runs counter to what Lawrence Grossberg has characterized as the ontological turn.[8] In a post-truth, post-survivor world in which all competing narratives about historic events are contentiously relative, contemporaneous texts offer limited, but compelling narratives, constituted in newspaper accounts, personal correspondence, and official documents. The ontological turn untethers narrative from biography and context, so that information only exists for and of itself. The legacy of the last decades in literary studies has suggested any form of critique is symptomatic and a part of the very thing it is critiquing. Grossberg argues the way forward is avoiding relativism and certitude, not assuming that scholars know how people experienced the world they knew.

> I believe it is the task of critical work to make visible the relations that remain invisible or even refuse to appear, not because they are necessarily hidden secrets nor because we are blind or stupid, but because we have not looked with other tools (concepts). It is the task of critical work first to separate and then to fuse a multiplicity of demands and powers, of failures and limits, into the possibility of finding the unity and commonality in the difference and multiplicity.[9]

The application of discourse analysis to media texts[10] calls for textual analysis that focuses attention on the practices and professional standards and constructs of a newspaper, its actors, objects, discursive strategies, and ideological standpoints. Understanding journalism as a practice involves a theoretical and historical (re)-construction of its context. Additionally, the critical discourse analysis framework provides the opportunity for synchronic and diachronic analyses, meaning both comparative and longitudinal analyses are utilized. In this way, events and specific issues are associated to the

8 Lawrence Grossberg, "Reality Is Bad Enough, Draft Chapter One." Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321805684_REALITY_IS_BAD_ENOUGH_DRAFT_CHAPTER_ONE?channel=doi&linkId=5a32a57b0f7e9b2a287c1c41&showFulltext=true.

9 Ibid.

10 Anabela Carvalho, "Media(ted) Discourse and Society," *Journalism Studies* 9(2), 2016, 161-177.

broader issues under consideration. Media discourse interacts with other dimensions (e.g., economic, political) to constitute a perception of the world. Media discourse is constitutive in the sense that it sustains and reproduces the status quo, and in another sense, it contributes to transforming it. Because of its constitutive aspect, newspaper stories are shaped by sources, eyewitness accounts, and factual data in the attempt to give meaning to issues of public concern. They are also shaped by the institutional practices of journalists interacting with sources, relationships that necessarily designate positions as subjects and agents.[11]

## '…a Calamity of Good Crops'

To contextualize the *Holodomor* from a global perspective requires analysis of the prevailing conditions that led to what was contemporaneously called "the world wheat crisis,"[12] the period from 1926-1934 when the world actually produced more wheat than it consumed, resulting in significant surpluses that drove the price down precipitously. So alarmed were the wheat-exporting countries that international conferences were organized in a futile attempt to stabilize prices and draw down the surplus. Stocks of wheat had increased in the decade following World War I not because of abnormally high average yields, for the average annual world wheat yield per acreage actually declined slightly; rather, increased stocks of wheat resulted from greater cultivation in less productive conditions that were subsidized by governments.[13] Additionally, drought-resistant types of wheat, improved machinery, and technological progress contributed to the extension of cultivation into regions with poorer soils and less favorable climate. Stockpiles of wheat were not the result of declined consumption: Even though the per capita consumption declined slightly during the post-World War I decade, total consumption actually increased.

11 Carvalho, "Media(ted) Discourse and Society," 163.
12 Paul de Hevesy, *World Wheat Planning and Economic Planning in General* (London: Oxford University Press, 1940), 1.
13 Ibid., 2-3.

The surplus stocks and precipitous fall in the price of wheat resulted from the expansion of wheat cultivation in Argentina, Australia, Canada, and the United States, as well as the restoration and resumption of wheat production in Europe, the Danubian countries, and the Soviet Union. More importantly, political events stemming from measures ratified in the Treaty of Versailles, war reparations, and newly drawn maps created new territorial and economic arrangements that pushed countries toward national self-sufficiency.[14] As one agricultural expert noted, these post-World War I treaties were drawn up "without due respect for history, geography, and justice, and without regard for the potentialities inherent in some nations. Their provisions could not fail to breed a series of evil consequences, one arising inevitably from the other. "… This has necessarily led to general re-armament. Armaments constitute a danger of war; the danger of war provokes self-defence; self-defence implies self-sufficiency; and self-sufficiency means buying at home and not from abroad."[15] This vicious cycle was manifested in increased agricultural production with an accompanying decrease in the volume of international trade.

By the end of 1930, the price of wheat had dropped to a new low, causing panic within Western economies already saddled with unemployment, shuttered factories, and bread lines. To illustrate the severity of the wheat problem, coverage of the wheat conferences convened in early 1931—first in Paris, then Rome, and finally London—provides insight into the dysfunction that prevailed. In the days leading up to the Paris Conference, to which the United States did not send a delegate, a *New York Times* (*NYT*) editorial argued that attendees needed to find a way to withstand Soviet dumping of grain on the market.

> The discussion may turn to protecting other European markets from Russian shipments; especially when they are offered, as they were last year, below the ruling market price….
> It was not alone that Russia had produced an exceptionally large crop of wheat in 1930, but that it was mostly withheld from normal home consumption and that the "export surplus" was forced on the international market

14 Ibid.
15 Ibid, 2.

> practically regardless of price…. Their program manifestly was to sell it all, no matter what sacrifice in price or profit might be involved, in order to provide the maximum possible of credits to purchase foreign machinery…. The present phenomenon, the government of one of the greatest potential producers seemingly taking the deliberate attitude of a "bear" on agricultural prices, has created a new and perplexing situation.[16]

Discussions at the Paris and Rome conferences focused on possible solutions like creating an international wheat pool to which every wheat grower would turn over production to a central organization and share the results of the marketing operations. Conference committees were also charged with finding a way to dispose of existing wheat stocks without drastically cutting back on production. The suggestion of reducing sown acreage was ultimately tempered, "a bow to Soviet Russia's insistence that it would not restrict output."[17] After having largely disappeared from the wheat market following the Bolshevik Revolution and civil war, Soviet wheat exports in 1930 brought chaos to an already overstocked market, driving prices even further down. The Soviet delegation disputed such accusations by pointing out the "mockery" of asking the unemployed to consume more bread; they also protested a recommendation that the League of Nations collaborate with the International Institute of Agriculture, contending that the Soviets did not adhere to the League.[18]

The London Wheat Conference, convened in May 1931, had no agenda other than to dispose of the huge stocks already accumulated and to stabilize the price of wheat. And yet finding agreement proved elusive at best. Suggestions about how to lower surplus stocks ranged from selling off stocks under a quota selling arrangement to decreasing production to varying the uses of crops. That the delegations struggled to find tangible solutions is evidenced in a *NYT* account.

> Here and there some idealistic but inexpert layman bobs up with the approval of Senator [William] Borah's notion that if there is too much wheat in

16 "Europe's Conference on Grain," *New York Times*, February 25, 1931, 23.
17 Arnaldo Cortesi, "Wheat Exporters to Meet in London," *New York Times*, April 2, 1931, 7.
18 Ibid.

> one part of the world and starving people in another, part of the grain should be taken to those who are hungry. … Russia says in advance that she will not commit herself to any such scheme [lower production acreage], and if Russia refuses the plan is doomed to failure as a matter of course. But the delegates will argue with Russia along some lines as this: They will tell her that her own people should eat more of their wheat for the sake of health and that if she exported less but at a better price than she is now getting, she would still derive as much revenue from grain exports to finance the five-year-plan.[19]

This *NYT* reporter, Charles A. Selden, succinctly summarized the issues in terms of what to do with the surplus wheat as well as the likely Soviet response, suggesting that the conference parameters were well known and unlikely to change. Definite proposals for ending the crisis by establishing an international export wheat pool were laid before the conference by the Polish and Australian delegations. In response to the U.S. refusal to consider creation of an international wheat pool, the Soviets accused the Americans of attempting to sabotage the conference, illustrated in this statement published in *Izvestia*, the Soviet Union's national daily newspaper:

> Indeed, the United States, after long delay, came to the conference not to reach an agreement but with the aim of smashing it because what is really meant by its participation in the conference and its refusal to adopt the only sensible form of agreement is an attempt to keep its own hands free for dumping on a scale unparalleled in the history of capitalism. We are confronted with the refined type of hypocrisy. On the one side an empty declamation about imaginary Soviet dumping; on the other a refusal to accept the quota with a clear intention of throwing on European markets not only the surplus from the current harvest, but the celebrated Legge stocks, which equal in quantity the average annual wheat export of the United States.[20]

With each side accusing the other of dumping surplus wheat, the Soviets and Americans staked out opposite positions. The wheat-exporting countries—Argentina, Australia, Canada, and the United States—had indeed increased production by more than twenty percent over pre-World War I averages. Because the price of foodstuffs and raw materials declined nearly twice as much as manufactured

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19 Charles A. Selden, "Wheat Conference Opens Tomorrow," *New York Times*, May 17, 1931, E55.

20 Walter Duranty, "Soviet Accuses US of Spoiling Parley," *New York Times*, May 23, 1931, 8.

products, the resulting imbalance between exports and imports became unmanageable with individual nations protecting their industries against dumping from another country by enacting tariffs or boycotting exports. Having evinced no actual solutions, the conference only revealed how far apart the Hoover administration and Soviets remained, leading the *NYT* to ask a basic question.

> Would they gain, or would they not, if the diplomatic situation permitted Mr. [Henry L.] Stimson and Mr. [Maxim] Litvinoff to write each other notes about it? Or will the rest of the world profit or not by the continuance of the political estrangement between Moscow and Washington?[21]

The dilemma of attempting to solve international problems when two of the major nations had no diplomatic relations surfaced long before the wheat crisis. However, it was the wheat crisis that brought to light an urgency among American liberals for the United States to recognize the Soviet Union.

Louis Fischer, a correspondent for the *Nation*, showed considerable prescience with the publication of his 1931 book *Why Recognize Russia?* released a month before the London wheat conference. In his autobiography written a decade later, Fischer recounted how he came to write the book. After attending a luncheon at the National Republican Club where Anna Louise Strong spoke for U. S. recognition of the Soviet Union and Paul Scheffer argued against it, Fischer explained, "Both sides argued so poorly that I thought there was room for a book on the subject."[22]

In this book, Fischer proposed that the wheat crisis necessitated U. S. recognition of the Soviet Union. After providing an historical overview of US-Soviet relations between 1917-1930—largely

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21 Edwin L. James, "This Week in Europe; Russia's Blue Chips," *New York Times*, May 24, 1931, E3.

22 Louis Fischer, *Men and Politics: An Autobiography* (London: Jonathan Cape), 1941, 203. Fischer explains, "On Monday, I went to see my publisher, and sketched the outline of the book. On Tuesday, we signed the contract, and a month later the book was ready for the press with the title, *Why Recognize Russia?*" Written ten years after the fact, this assertion strains credulity in suggesting he had the manuscript ready to go to press in less than a month. More likely, Fischer had already begun the process and was far enough along to make a reasonable pitch.

compiled after having recently completed a long trek through several Soviet republics—Fischer averred: "At the present juncture, wheat could afford the occasion for diplomatic contacts between the Soviet and American governments."[23] And he correctly predicted that if nothing were done at the upcoming London conference, disaster in the form of armed conflict or "wholesale slaughter and universal distress"[24] was an inevitability. As James Crowl points out, Fischer was unapologetic when it came to supporting Stalinism, defending the viciousness of Red Terror as a means to achieve a true workers' paradise. "Like many young people from an impoverished background, he [Fischer] was determined to excel, and, in part, Russia was his means for gaining respect and a reputation, just as it was for Duranty. Thus, he thrived in his role as an interpreter of the Soviets to the West, and he wanted to be recognized as an unquestionable authority. If he was dogmatic in his articles, he was perhaps even more so in his dealings with people."[25]

Throughout the book, Fischer claimed that Soviet wheat exports were, as they had been prior to World War I and the Revolution, a permanent factor in the world market, providing the Soviets the means to buy Western industrial goods, especially machinery needed to improve agricultural production. Success of the Soviet Five-Year Plans was a given for Fischer, after the entire world was taken by surprise in 1930-31 by the reappearance of Soviet grain exports. "It was a rude awakening after a long period of sleepy skepticism, and now outside observers have rushed from the extreme doubt to the extreme of exaggeration."[26]

Fischer deflected attention from the Soviet Politburo's merciless campaign to socialize agriculture by deluding readers into believing that real diplomacy "is the anticipation and elimination of big dangers."[27] He accused anyone opposed to recognition of the

23 Louis Fischer, Why Recognize Russia? The Arguments For and Against the Recognition of the Soviet Government by the United States (New York: Cape & Smith, 1931), 289.

24 Ibid., 26.

25 James W. Crowl, *Angel's in Stalin's Paradise* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1982), 195.

26 Fischer, Why Recognize Russia? 19.

27 Ibid., 27.

Soviet Union of using "sinister propaganda" to keep the Soviets from assuming their rightful position as one of the six major world powers, the larger implications of which "may be preparing a horrible fate for an entire generation."[28] Fischer pontificated with blind zeal, though the horrible fate that he predicted "sinister [Western] propaganda" would produce was turned completely around and used to justify Stalin's agenda. "Instead of calling one another names, they should consult with one another and endeavor to find a way out through mutual agreement. The Bolsheviks would be only too happy to participate in a conference which would again raise the price of wheat…"[29] In reality, the Soviets had no intention of stabilizing the price of wheat; rather, they were intent on crushing dissent by exiling hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian kulak families, most of whom were from the grain-surplus regions. Of the almost two million people exiled, a full quarter of them went missing, and available evidence indicates that death rates were very high.[30]

By autumn of 1931, nothing substantive had emanated from the wheat conferences, and other economic factors such as war reparations and increased tariffs were impacting trade relations. A new trade treaty between Germany and Hungary was signed at Geneva in late September, a tariff agreement between the two nations that involved the granting by Germany of preference for Hungarian wheat. However, the proposed preference of Hungarian wheat never took effect, because consent of other nations with most-favored-nation status with Germany was withheld.[31] Problems such as these plagued European agrarian states as they were unable to compete with overseas grain, yet in attempting to forge relations with European wheat producers, Germany showed readiness to grant preferential treatment to non-Western grain growers.

By January, Great Britain signaled readiness to abandon more than ninety years as a free trade country and impose tariffs. Soon

28 Ibid., 26.
29 Ibid., 290.
30 R. W. Davies & Stephen G. Wheatcroft, *The Years of Hunger: Soviet Agriculture, 1931-1933* (London: Palgrave), 46-47.
31 "Germany to Favor Hungarian Wheat," *New York Times*, July 20, 1931, 11.

thereafter, a resolution providing for changes in fiscal policy was introduced in the House of Commons by Neville Chamberlain, Chancellor of the Exchequer, imposing a customs duty on all imported goods of ten per cent of their value. As the *New York Times* reported, "The new law is distinctly and frankly stated to be for bargaining purposes with other tariff countries and for the purpose of retaliation against nations which in the opinion of the new commission discriminate against Britain. One hundred per cent duties are possible against such countries."[32] Not surprisingly, Great Britain was one of seventy nations to increase tariff rates dating from July 1, 1931.

Unable to find stability in balancing trade, many nations resorted to drastic tariff increases, devalorization of currency, and the introduction of import restrictions.[33] For example, the U. S. Congress attempted to enact a tariff bill as a means of combating the prevailing quotas, embargoes, and licenses in foreign countries, especially by foreign governments that controlled their own trade through restrictive trade practices.[34] The bill was vetoed by President Hoover, who railed against self-sufficiency. "The veto of the program reveals complete subserviency to the selfish, blind and dumb forces of extreme economic isolation, or each country vainly striving to live as completely unto itself as is humanly possible, regardless of costs or sound economic laws. This mad policy of extremism was the greatest single impediment to sound business recovery…."[35] Despite Hoover's rhetoric, the United States harbored no expectation that embargoes, quotas, and licenses would be eliminated, and consequently the real problem for the United States was to find means whereby the restrictions were applied fairly.

Representatives from the United Kingdom met in Ottawa at the Imperial Economic Conference throughout the summer, attempting to find an agreement for an imperial quota scheme for

32 Charles A. Selden, "British 10% Tariff Goes to Commons; Has Trading Clause," *New York Times*, February 5, 1932, 1.

33 See "New Barriers Seen for Wheat Exports," *New York Times*, February 23, 1932, 29.

34 See "Confer on Halting Our Losses Abroad," *New York Times*, April 16, 1932, 2.

35 "Tariff Bill Vetoed by the President; House Upholds Him," *New York Times*, May 12, 1932.

wheat whereby Canada would supply a large part of the British market.[36] Such quotas had critics concerned about the consequences of foreign wheat, which formerly flowed into the British market, would find its way into European grain markets where selling pressures intensified and depressed the price of the wheat. Australia submitted a threefold plan for increased preferences for certain of its agricultural products, as well as a demand for action against the Soviet Union's dumping of wheat at below-market prices. As the Australian delegate noted, "The marketing methods adapted by Russia completely disorganized the market in 1930. There is no form of overseas competition which has aroused such strong feelings among Australian wheat growers as the dumping of Russian wheat into Great Britain."[37]

As preliminary estimates of the 1932 wheat crop were being assessed in late summer, Poland revived the idea of creating an international wheat pool. Renewed concerns about how to dispose of Danubian wheat led one agricultural expert to send President Hoover an open letter "proposing a more informal sort of cooperation by means of an export pool to be created by all the Danubian states and the Farm Board…"[38] while French economist Paul de Hevesy suggested that convocation of another world grain conference should be undertaken as part of a larger World Economic Conference in June 1933. The United States had refused to join in a World Wheat Pool in 1931, and would resist, on constitutional grounds, any restriction upon its freedom of trade. And that position would not change at the subsequent conference in London.

How to overcome U. S. resistance to an international wheat pool of grain-exporting countries remained the vexing stumbling points for central and Eastern European countries. When news reports surfaced that Poland's 1932 wheat crop was one-sixth larger than the previous year, most experts feared that prices could not sustain production costs. "The calamity of good crops looms over

36 See "Canada Asks Britain to Buy More Wheat," *New York Times*, July 31, 1931, 5.
37 "Australia Outlines Demands at Parley," *New York Times*, July 23, 1932, 4.
38 "Danubian Wheat a World Problem," *New York Times*, June 26, 1932, 8.

Polish agriculture."[39] Unable to dispose of the new crop at a profitable price, growers and producers faced the continuing crisis with few solutions in sight other than tariffs and quotas. Poland was certainly not alone in this regard, as Canada negotiated with Great Britain at the Imperial Economic Conference to buy more of its 80,000,000 bushels of surplus, further impacting imports from the United States.

Another ominous note was struck when the *NYT* reported that the Soviets would need to import rather than export wheat.[40] Although no source was identified in the story, numerous reports predicting dire conditions for Soviet agriculture production were beginning to surface from Western observers like Andrew Cairns of the Empire Marketing Board and Bruce Hopper of Harvard University. After an extended tour of three grain-producing areas, Cairns had several recommendations for the Soviets to alleviate the suffering of those lacking adequate rations, one of which included trading concessions for wheat. Cairns directed another recommendation to convince the United States "that while politically it would be nice to be recognised, what was really needed was the reorganization of the American Relief Adminnistration and other bodies who would distribute food and old clothes to the very many millions hungry Russians."[41] Cairns, despite betraying antisemitism in blaming the stereotypical Jew Bolshevik[42] for problems in Soviet agriculture, linked U. S. recognition of the Soviet Union with the need for international relief by referencing the Volga Famine of 1921, and he correctly predicted how the catastrophe about to unfold would be acted out by the United States and Soviet Union, yoked together in their dance macabre, as illustrated by David Low

39 "Poland Revives Grain-Ring Plan," *New York Times*, July 24, 1932, E4.

40 "Danubian Wheat a World Problem," *New York Times*, June 26, 1932, 8.

41 Andrew Cairns, "Description of a Tour in the Volga Region," FO 371/16329, 193. Published as Research Report No. 35, *The Soviet Famine 1932-33: An Eyewitness Account of Conditions in the Spring and Summer of 1932 by Andrew Cairns*, ed., by Tony Kuz, (Edmonton, Alberta: Canadian Institute of *Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, 1989).*

42 See Paul Hanebrink, *A Specter Haunting Europe: The Myth of Judeo-Bolshevism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2020.

in his caricature of FDR and Litvinov, titled "Russian Ballet" and published in the *Evening Standard*.[43] [Illustration 1]

## '… to the Edge of Famine'

The 1932 worldwide harvest only proved that the grain-exporting countries had not solved the wheat crisis, despite having convened several international conferences that generated lots of discussion but few solutions, resulting in a network of trade restrictions of unprecedented scope. Unable to export products of adequate value, wheat-exporting countries were forced to reduce their imports of foreign goods, and the resulting disturbances within the currents of international trade hindered the normal processes. As de Hevesy noted, "In these circumstances, and behind newly-raised tariff walls, agricultural countries built up national industries, and industrial countries further extended their high-cost agricultural production, thus reducing still further the already shrunken exchange of goods and services between nations."[44] What de Hevesy described was a cycle of self-sufficiency and self-defense, which contributed to strained territorial and economic arrangements. Worldwide material distress was reflected in political unrest, evidenced in the recognition of Manchukuo by Japan, the appointment of Adolf Hitler as Chancellor of Germany, and the election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt as president of the United States.

Japan's recognition of Manchukuo as an independent state further strained already frayed Japanese relations with China and the Soviet Union. It also strained relations between Japan and the United States, which had an interest based on the Nine-Power treaty guaranteeing China the opportunity to work out administrative issues. Not surprisingly, the U. S. Farm Board almost immediately pressured the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to arrange

43 See Andrew J. Williams, *Trading with the Bolsheviks: The Politics of East-West Trade, 1920-1939* (Manchester University Press, 1992), front cover. Low, it should be noted, was the brother-in-law of Litvinov, which perhaps explains why he chose Litvinov as FDR's dance partner and not Stalin or Kalinin, to whom FDR had extended the first official correspondence.

44 De Hevesy, 7.

the sale of 15,000,000 bushels of wheat to China, in a deal that President Hoover and conferees believed would nudge the price of wheat up by ten cents a bushel. Unfortunately, it marked one final failure for the Hoover administration's handling of the wheat crisis.[45]

By the summer of 1932, FDR launched his bid for the White House by proposing a six-point plan that included permanent remedies and immediate relief for farmers. Denouncing stabilization measures attempted by Hoover's Farm Board as useless and costly to taxpayers, FDR ridiculed crop control as a hardship on the farmers and urged cooperative marketing and tariff adjustments that would provide producers of agricultural surplus commodities with a tariff benefit over world prices equivalent to the benefit given by tariffs to industrial products.[46] FDR stressed that any reorganization of the U. S. Department of Agriculture must not use any mechanism which would cause European countries to retaliate on the ground of "dumping" cheap wheat onto the market.

Additionally, war reparations and debts stymied efforts to forge an agreement to stabilize the price of wheat. In June 1932, prior to the Lausanne conference on disarmament, France's Premier Édouard Herriot notified the British prime minister that the British proposal for a complete wiping out of reparations was not acceptable, and the Americans soon followed in opposing cancellation of war debts.[47] The Treaty of Versailles had created economic disparities that made it increasingly difficult for countries to pay their debt. As asserted in the Dawes Plan of 1924, payments of reparations by Germany could be made by bringing about a restoration of German prosperity, particularly in terms of foreign trade. As Ivy Lee, American public relations magnate who represented German interests, argued, "The funds transferred to the Allies on repara-

45 "Hoover and RFC Confer on Financing Sale of 15,000,000 Bushels of Wheat to China," *New York Times*, September 26, 1932, 1.

46 James A. Hagerty, "10,000 Cheer the Nominee," *New York Times*, September 15, 1932, 1.

47 Charles A. Selden, "Herriot Rejects Britain's Proposal to End Reparations," *New York Times*, June 8, 1932, 1.

tions account cannot in the long run exceed the sums which the balance of payments makes it possible to transfer."[48] More ominously, young Germans were beginning to rebel against reparations, as well as the "War Guilt" accusation, a term coined by former British Prime Minister David Lloyd George. After years of deprivation, many believed "that the scheme of reparations deprives the German of opportunity to enjoy life or to attain progress. That feeling is the basis of Hitlerism."[49]

Adolf Hitler used the plight of starving masses to bolster his 1932 election campaign against the social democrats and communists by lumping the two groups together as Marxists. Mass starvation became a discursive weapon Hitler used to rage against Marxist propaganda that workers in every nation would unite to destroy capitalist oppression. As journalist Louis Lochner noted, Hitler promised labor groups employment yet managed to assuage conservatives and monarchists by promoting Germany's rearmament.[50] During the 1932 campaign, Hitler addressed a rally at the Berlin *Sportpalast* in which he claimed that "millions of people are starving in a country that could be a breadbasket for a whole world."[51] This statement suggested that Hitler's expansionist agenda might ultimately include Ukraine as a source of wheat under the Nazi foreign policy of *Lebensraum*, the unity of Blood and Soil.

In late November, the *NYT* published a story about the plan for a new conference of the leading wheat-exporting countries "with a view to curtailing acreage" was suggested at the annual

48 Quoted in Ivy L. Lee, "Publication on War Debts & Gold Crisis," Speech, DePauw University, Greencastle, Indiana, February 21, 1932. Much of the material for this speech was prepared by Gareth Jones, who had been hired by Ivy Lee in April 1931, shortly after Jones stopped working for David Lloyd George. The material eventually made it into Lloyd George's *Memoirs*, thanks again to Jones, who rejoined Lloyd George's staff in 1932.

49 Ibid.

50 Louis P. Lochner, *What About Germany?* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1942).

51 Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands – Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), 61.

meeting of the Alberta Wheat Pool.[52] Reducing acreage became the lynchpin for the four Western wheat-exporting countries, being offered in direct response to the Eastern European countries' preference for establishing quotas. On the same day, the newspaper published a front-page story—the first of a six-part series by Walter Duranty—on food shortages in the Soviet Union in which he claimed that two-thirds of the Soviet Union would be lucky to have rations of bread, cabbage, and potatoes as a regular diet through the winter, though "there is no famine or actual starvation, nor is there likely to be."[53] Written in response to news articles about starvation in Soviet Ukraine, Duranty parroted Soviet propaganda, blaming food shortages on peasant resistance to rural collectivization as well as Soviet excesses used to overcome that resistance.[54] Duranty blamed local officials for failing to follow Politburo guidelines for grain requisitioning, as well as extraneous factors such as the worldwide depression, "which forced the Soviet Union to increase the exportation of foodstuffs at a time when the shoe was beginning to pinch and when the distribution of that food at home would have corrected many difficulties. Second, the Japanese war threat, which put new pressure on the same tender."[55] Duranty soft-pedaled what he knew were starvation rations. Stalin's desire to secure a surplus of grain for the Red Army proved to be disastrous. Additionally, following the Japanese incursion into Manchukuo, Soviet agricultural authorities had failed to build up grain stocks in the Far East; total stocks of food and fodder grains amounted to 190,000 tons on July 1. By January 1, 1933, more than three-million

52 "Wheat Conference Urged," *New York Times*, November 25, 1932, 27. See also, "Asks Curb on Acreage," *New York Times*, October 27, 1932, 8. It is highly likely that Cairns' report was disseminated at this meeting.

53 Walter Duranty, "All Russia Suffers Shortage of Food; Supplies Dwindling," *New York Times*, November 25, 1932, 1.

54 Walter Duranty, "Food Shortage Laid to Soviet Peasants," *New York Times*, November 26, 1932, 9. See also, Gareth Jones, "Will There Be Soup? Russia Dreads the Coming Winter," *Western Mail*, October 15-16, 1932, 6. Jones's reporting was largely based on his journey to the Soviet Union the previous summer with Jack Heinz II, as well as reports he had read in Soviet newspapers and what he had heard from people like Hopper, Jules Menken, London School of Economics; and Kingsley Martin, editor of the *New Statesman*.

55 Ibid.

tons had been allocated to various funds, mainly *Gosfond* and *Nepfond*, but that amount reflected a net decline in grain available for internal use by a million tons. "The grain utilization plan for 1932-33 was built on illusion."[56]

A *NYT* editorial brazenly claimed that Duranty's reporting about the Soviet agricultural crisis spoke with "unprecedented detail and vigor" despite disputing his contention that collectivization had been a success. "Collectivization of the peasants was carried out by a campaign of terror. … The 'successful' collectivization campaign is of course a ghastly failure. It has brought Russia to the edge of famine."[57] That the *NYT* parried with Duranty over the characterization of what constituted "success" renders its decision to promote his reporting as "detailed and vigorous" even more inconsistent and incredible, especially after pointing out that Soviet troubles had been duly noted in "government statements on harvesting troubles, by reports brought out of Russia by visitors, and with increasing frequency by dispatches dealing openly with food shortages."[58] Significantly, Duranty's series of articles marks the beginning of his campaign to deny mass starvation in Ukraine. That campaign necessarily intensified over the next few months as the aforementioned Western reporters provided eyewitness reporting on the emerging catastrophe.[59]

Both the British and American governments had gathered considerable testimony about the deteriorating conditions in Ukraine from travelers to the Soviet Union. Of the many reports on conditions gleaned by the U. S. Department of State's Eastern European division was one by Professor Samuel N. Harper of the University of Chicago, whose detailed account included dire warnings about the agricultural situation. "Worst of all is the situation in the

56 R. W. Davies, M. B. Tauger & S. G. Wheatcroft, "Stalin, Grain Stocks and the Famine of 1932-1933," *Slavic Review* 54(3), 1995, 652.

57 "Soviet Food Scarcity," *New York Times*, November 26, 1932, 14.

58 Ibid.

59 For example, Jones published a two-part story, titled "Will There Be Soup?" about the looming famine in October 1932. Clyman's reporting so infuriated Soviet authorities that she was deported in September 1932. Barnes's and Stoneman's accounts, based on a trip to Rostov-on-Don, were published in January and February 1933 respectively.