

ensor. Two days later, Paul Sheffer, greatly excited, came to see Duranty. Sheffer had learned from an unimpeachable source that it was not Leon Trotsky they had seen at the station but someone impersonating him. The real Trotsky and his wife were taken from their home the following day and driven by car to Lubertsi, some twenty miles from Moscow, and there put on the Tashkent train. Later Duranty learned that an actor who had played Trotsky in a Russian Civil War film had played a similar but briefer role at the Kazan station. For Duranty, the lesson of the story was clear. When someone later asked how he handled news in Russia, he replied, "My first rule is to believe nothing that I hear, little of what I read, and not all of what I see."

This was a sound admonition to any reporter covering the Soviet scene, but in subsequent years Walter Duranty failed to follow his own advice.

## 4

## Concealing Stalin's Famine

I had no intention of being an apologist for the Stalin administration; all that I was thinking of was that I had "doped out" the line that the administration must inevitably follow, and when it did follow that line I naturally felt that it was right.

Walter Duranty  
*The New York Times*  
1921-34

Against the background of desperation and enthusiasm and pitiless bigotry, against the life and death struggles amidst which we foreigners had our sheltered alien being, the breathless race of American newspapermen to file an emasculated, blue-penciled little dispatch ninety seconds before a rival was, in sober fact, grotesque.

Eugene Lyons  
United Press  
1928-34

In 1930, six American correspondents stationed in Moscow were trying with only moderate success to report on a country that covered one sixth of the earth and eleven time zones, with a population of 176 million comprising some 115 ethnic groups and a political system vastly different from any other in the world. They represented the two major wire services, the Associated Press and the United Press; *The New York Times*; the *Chicago Daily News*; and *The Christian Science Monitor*.

Although there were about the same number of correspondents in the capital as had arrived on the train from Riga in August 1921, in the course of the decade the institution of Moscow reportage had taken root. The Soviet government, accepting the presence of foreign journalists as a necessary evil, had established agencies and procedures for dealing with them. Under the aegis of the Press Department of the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, a censorship system screened

outgoing dispatches, eliminating “unfavorable” or “negative” reports. The secret police, under various acronyms over the decade—CHEKA, GPU, OGPU, NKVD—included surveillance of the correspondents as part of their regular responsibilities. Severity of censorship, however, varied during the decade according to the level of tension inside Soviet society. For example, during the bitter power struggle that ultimately resulted in Joseph Stalin’s triumph and Leon Trotsky’s exile, secrecy was so tight and censorship so rigorous that it was virtually impossible to report the conflict. But after total victory, when Stalin permitted his archrival and Mme. Trotsky to leave the country unscathed in 1929, GPU agents quietly urged several American correspondents to file the story, even to bypass censorship by phoning the news directly abroad. The reason for this departure from the rules was murky, but no correspondent was punished for this serious infraction.

By 1930, American newspapers and wire services had established a framework for operations in Moscow. Bureaus were opened and equipped; correspondents were provided with secretaries, translators, cars, and chauffeurs. Budgets were allocated to cover cable costs, salaries, office and apartment rental, travel, and other expenses. Newspapers touted the opening of a Moscow bureau as evidence of the broad coverage provided their readers.

Selection of correspondents, the key factor in the coverage, was, however, very much a haphazard procedure. The choice was often based on who was available for the assignment or located nearby, thus reducing the cost of travel. Special knowledge of Russia or ability to speak the language was not a factor. An exception was the *New York Herald Tribune’s* Joseph Barnes, an experienced reporter assigned to Moscow in the mid-1930s, who had studied Russian at Harvard. He may have been the first American newsmen academically trained in the language before going to Moscow. The theory in the newsrooms was that a resourceful, aggressive professional with solid reporting experience abroad or at home could handle the assignment. Given the prevailing censorship and the limited access to any information that was not official, this approach probably made

sense. The chosen few, however, did not stay long. Since Moscow was considered a hardship post, most of the correspondents served only two or three years, sometimes less, and were then reassigned. Except for Walter Duranty, they did not remain long enough to become experts, nor did they intend to become Soviet specialists. Moscow was simply another post, like Paris, Tokyo, or London.

Russia in the 1930s was a correspondent’s nightmare—or a dream assignment, depending on the individual’s frustration threshold. There was much to be reported, but much could not even be seen, and even if seen, would not pass through the heavy hand of the censor. Stalin announced completion of the first Five Year Plan one year ahead of schedule in 1932 but never revealed the staggering human and material costs. Factories were built, but there was no equipment to install; machinery was sent to unfinished plants to rust on railroad sidings; untrained peasants fresh from the countryside were ordered to produce tractors and trucks, to construct smelters and oil refineries. Those who remained on the land were forced to pool their plots into collective farms, producing only shortfalls in grain and meat. Housing for the workers was neglected, safety conditions in factories were ignored. People were overworked and underfed—all in the name of “fulfilling the plan.” At the same time, Stalin imposed new “labor discipline” on Soviet citizens, making it virtually impossible to change jobs and inflicting heavy punishment for a single day’s absence from work without sufficient reason. Despite the awesome costs, the accomplishments were impressive: Output of machinery quadrupled, oil production doubled, electric power output increased 250 percent. Two huge iron and steel centers were built, Magnitogorsk in the Urals and Kuznetsk in central Siberia, providing the Soviet Union with a base for a modern metallurgical industry. Joseph Stalin himself warned that time was short: “We are fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this distance in ten years. Either we do it, or we shall be crushed.” The date was February 1931, ten years before Hitler unleashed his armies against Russia.

\* \* \*

One of the biggest stories of the early 1930s was the famine—the worst since 1920–21—that took an estimated five million lives. Although bad weather and the Kremlin's policy of forcing peasants to deliver grain to the state at low prices contributed to the meager harvest, the overriding cause was Stalin's determination to smash peasant resistance to collectivization of their land, and the exile of millions of the more enterprising and productive peasants, the so-called *kulaks*, to work camps and prisons far from home—the beginnings of the Gulag Archipelago.

The government was determined to conceal the story, fearing that if the famine became known abroad it would have a devastating effect on Soviet prestige, particularly in the world Communist movement. Furthermore, the news could endanger fulfillment of the Five Year Plan in 1932. Since the export of grain was Russia's principal source of hard currency, foreign knowledge of the famine might force the government to reduce exports, resulting in a cutback of imported machinery needed for the plan. Rumors of hunger in the Ukraine, the North Caucasus, and Kazakhstan had reached Moscow via returning travelers, diplomats, and Russians who had friends and relatives in the afflicted regions. Several correspondents were aware of the rumors, but since there was no mention of famine in the newspapers, they knew that anything they wrote would be killed by the censor.

Eugene Lyons of the United Press was among those who had known about the famine for several months but as a wire service reporter required to cover all breaking news and respond to a stream of queries and requests from New York, he could not risk leaving Moscow. Unique among the Americans, Lyons had worked for four years as an editor in the New York office of TASS before being hired by UP for the Moscow assignment. Karl Bickel, the agency's president, personally recruited Lyons because he believed that sending a known Soviet sympathizer might induce the Russians to treat the UP more favorably than the Associated Press, providing it with more interviews and greater access to government officials—a

naïve assumption, as events were later to prove. Passionately pro-Soviet although not a member of the U.S. Communist Party, Eugene Lyons, twenty-nine, arrived in the "land of our dreams" with his wife, Billy, and five-year-old daughter Eugenie in 1928. In a few years his enthusiasm waned, replaced by revulsion and bitter disillusionment with the brutalities of Stalin, the toll of human life and dignity exacted by collectivization, and the growing regimentation of Soviet society. By the beginning of 1933, Lyons had no qualms about reporting the famine, which he regarded as another of Stalin's crimes, if he could only confirm the news and slip the story past censorship.

In March 1933, Lyons' secretary, Natalya Petrovna Shirokikh, spotted a reference to food shortages in *Hammer (Molot)*, a newspaper published in Rostov-on-Don. At last, thought Lyons, here was official confirmation in the press and a story that the censor could not kill. After filing a brief cable and well aware that the UP would not permit him to leave Moscow, he tipped off two colleagues whose newspapers encouraged them to travel: William R. Stoneman of the *Chicago Daily News* and Ralph W. Barnes of the *New York Herald Tribune*. The next day they went to the railroad station with Barnes' interpreter Oskar Emma, bought tickets, and departed for Rostov. For almost two weeks, the correspondents toured the area south of the city, talking to peasants about the grain shortage and local conditions. They watched as armed GPU security forces herded kulaks and their families onto freight cars taking them to distant exile. GPU agents finally arrested the newsmen and put them on a train for Moscow, but the Americans had their story.

Knowing that the censor would never pass their dispatches, Stoneman and Barnes sent them out of the country with two friendly German fur buyers returning to Berlin. The eyewitness accounts made the front page of the *News* and the *Herald Tribune*, but they so alarmed the Press Department that it immediately banned foreign correspondents from the famine areas. To add defiance to injury, Stoneman's story appeared under a Rostov dateline.

The phone call from the Press Department was not long in coming. Both Barnes and Stoneman were summoned to an audience with a furious press chief, Konstantin Oumansky, who charged them, as they were well aware, with violating censorship regulations. Stoneman, a tough, aggressive twenty-nine-year-old who had learned his craft covering crime and politics in Chicago, coolly replied, "If you want to criticize anybody, you can go right across the street to the GPU, to Lubyanka, and criticize the GPU, which is responsible for exiling the villagers and stealing grain from them."

Not many correspondents talked that way to Oumansky, but Stoneman, the son of a Congregational minister, was not timid in conversations with Soviet officials, especially the police. During an earlier visit of his to Stalingrad, the GPU phoned and ordered him to report to its headquarters. On arrival, he demanded an explanation from the officer on duty, who replied that he was not obliged to explain anything.

"Well," Stoneman shot back, "then I don't have to come to your goddamn office and tell you anything about myself."

Neither Ralph Barnes nor William Stoneman was punished for breaching regulations, although the violation caused great embarrassment for the Soviet government. In later years the pair most certainly would have been expelled, but such harsh action was rarely used until after World War II. Stoneman remained in Russia for two more years and then departed with his wife and daughter like an ordinary tourist.

The famine story, like the famine itself, was not dead. An enterprising reporter for Britain's *Manchester Guardian*, Gareth Jones, traveled to Moscow as a tourist in March 1933 and took a train to Kharkov, carrying a knapsack stuffed with canned food. Touring the region on foot, he was able to confirm what Barnes and Stoneman had reported. When Jones returned to England, his eyewitness reports in the *Guardian* created a furor. Moving quickly to head off any further reporting on the famine, the Press Department resorted to blackmail. An important international story was looming: The Soviets were preparing to put on trial six British engineers accused of sabotaging turbines and other machinery

sold to the USSR by their own firm, Metro-Vickers. Konstantin Oumansky made it clear that unless the correspondents repudiated the Jones report, they would not receive press credentials to cover the trial. After discussing the matter, the newsmen agreed that "compelling professional necessity" required that they work out a deal with the Press Department. Whether they received approval from editors back home for this arrangement is unknown, but they invited Oumansky to meet in a hotel room to negotiate what was, in effect, the terms of surrender. The correspondents bargained over language and details, but agreement was reached on a formula that would repudiate Gareth Jones.

"We admitted enough to soothe our consciences," Lyons wrote later, "but in roundabout phrases that damned Jones a liar. The filthy business having been disposed of, someone ordered vodka and *zakuski* (canapés). Oumanski joined the celebration, and the party did not break up until the morning hours."

Until then, Walter Duranty had been downplaying the story and had even denied that there was a famine. In March 1932, when reports of hunger were already reaching Moscow, he advised the *Times* "to the best of my knowledge there is no famine anywhere although partial crop failures [had occurred in] some regions." In November he wrote that despite the fact that living standards of a "large number of peasants" had fallen, there was "neither famine nor hunger," and a week later he predicted "nor is there likely to be."

Obliged to respond to the Jones story on the famine, Duranty refuted it. Whether his report was a result of the agreement with Oumansky or of his own convictions cannot be determined, but without leaving Moscow, since travel to the Ukraine was banned, he wrote that Jones produced a "big scare" based on inadequate information. He asserted that "there is no actual starvation or deaths from starvation," but in the same paragraph he conceded, "there is widespread mortality from diseases due to malnutrition"—a semantic distinction that in plain English meant many people were dying. Even after the trial ended with the conviction of several of the

engineers, Duranty continued to soft-pedal the famine. When his competitor Ralph Barnes returned to New York and wrote an uncensored story reporting that at least one million Russians had perished from hunger in 1932, Walter Duranty's response from Moscow in the *Times* three days later again showed his reluctance to report anything negative about the Soviets:

The excellent harvest about to be gathered shows that any report of a famine in Russia is today an exaggeration or malignant propaganda. The food shortage which has affected almost the whole population last year and particularly in the grain-producing provinces—the Ukraine, North Caucasus, the lower Volga region—has, however, caused heavy loss of life.

For whatever reason, Walter Duranty was still playing with words, refusing to admit that there was scarcely a difference between a famine and heavy loss of life, especially for the victims.

In September, when it appeared that good weather and a successful spring planting ensured a plentiful harvest, the travel ban was lifted. Duranty was the first to leave Moscow, thanks to the Press Department, which gave him a two-week head start on the other correspondents. His first story set the tone for the rest of his dispatches, reporting that he had seen only well-fed peasants and plump babies; large stocks of vegetables, milk, and eggs in village markets; and "mile after mile of reaped grain in the fields."

When Walter Duranty returned to Moscow, however, he told a different story. At a dinner party attended by Eugene Lyons; his wife, Billy; and *New York Times* correspondent Anne O'Hare McCormick and her husband, Duranty described what he had actually seen in "brutally frank terms and they added up to a picture of ghastly horror." His estimate of the number of Russians who had died of hunger was "the most startling" Lyons had yet heard.

"But Walter," exclaimed Anne McCormick, "you don't mean that literally?"

"Hell, I don't," replied Duranty. "I'm being conservative." The first comprehensive report on the famine, one that was dramatically dissimilar from Walter Duranty's, appeared in *The Christian Science Monitor* under the by-line of William Henry Chamberlin, the newspaper's correspondent in Russia since 1929. Published after he had left the Soviet Union in 1934 with no intention of ever returning, the articles described his extensive travels in the Ukraine and the North Caucasus with his Russian-speaking wife, Sonia. He saw barren fields, wasted and deserted villages, gaunt peasants, and whimpering babies. Everywhere he went, he heard the same account: Ten percent of the population had died from hunger and disease. This time there was no American Relief Administration to feed the starving. After the trip, Chamberlin returned to Moscow, packed his bags and notes, and left Russia to tell the story.

Like Eugene Lyons, William Henry Chamberlin had arrived in Moscow with strong pro-Soviet sympathies that quickly dissipated when they encountered the reality of Stalin's Russia. He spent much of his time traveling, a luxury that few of the other correspondents could afford, and gathering material for two books that have since become standard reference works: *The Russian Revolution* and *Russia's Iron Age*. When he returned to the United States he wrote a lengthy series on his experience, "a debt of honor to my readers for failing to report fully what happened in Russia after 1929 because of the censorship."

Walter Duranty's coverage of the famine was consistent with much of his reporting from the Soviet Union, slanting stories to fit his own vision of men and events. Unlike Eugene Lyons and William Henry Chamberlin, he arrived in Moscow with no basic sympathy for Socialism, and he was certainly not "redder than a rose," as George Selde had described another correspondent. Chamberlin has suggested that Duranty sold out to the Russians in exchange for special treatment, presumably Katya and a private apartment, but he has presented no hard evidence. On the other hand, Malcolm Muggeridge, Moscow correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian* in 1933-34, probed for psychological reasons, convinced that Duranty's

favorable coverage of the Soviet regime and his admiration for Stalin's brutal methods was "in some way getting back for being small . . . and not having the aristocratic lineage and classical education he claimed to have." William Stoneman saw Duranty differently: "He was amoral without any deep convictions about the rights and wrongs of communism."

Freudian analysis aside, Duranty's reporting created concern where it was most important: in the bosom of *The New York Times*. Managing editors, beginning with Carl Van Anda, who sent him to Moscow in 1921, and continuing with Frederick T. Birchall and Edwin L. James, who kept him there, were dissatisfied with his performance, especially when the newspaper, because of Duranty's dispatches, became known as the "Uptown Daily Worker." By August 1933, *Times* publisher Adolph S. Ochs was having second thoughts about his man in Moscow, concluding that although Duranty had been given "the widest latitude because of our confidence in his integrity and his alertness and ability to send authentic news, there have been indications for some time past that he is relaxing in his attitudes to his duties and not keeping us fully informed." Nonetheless, the *Times* retained him in the post, presumably because his retirement was imminent. Another reason may have been the Pulitzer Prize that Duranty won in May 1932 for his Moscow reporting that, according to the jury's citation, "show profoundly and intimate comprehension of conditions in Russia and of the causes of those conditions. They are marked by scholarship, profundity, impartiality, sound judgment, and exceptional clarity and are excellent examples of the best type of foreign correspondence."

All the newsmen in Moscow wanted to interview Stalin. They wrote letters but received no answers; they phoned his secretary but no one ever called back. They badgered the Press Department and were told that the request was being studied. Editors back home sent cables and urgent letters requesting the general secretary to receive their Moscow correspondents, citing "informed sources" in Riga and Warsaw who reported that Stalin had been assassinated, that Marshal Kliment

Voroshilov, commissar for war, was conspiring against his master, and that Red Square was covered with corpses.

Like the others, Eugene Lyons had also written letters, the latest on November 22, 1930, requesting "only two minutes" of Stalin's time to confirm that he was still among the living. The next day Lyons' phone rang and a man speaking good English asked:

"Mr. Lyons? This is Comrade Stalin's office."

A skeptical Lyons replied, "You don't say! How interesting! Give him my kindest regards, and Mrs. Stalin, too."

The voice insisted, "But this is Comrade Stalin's secretary. Comrade Stalin has received your letter and wished me to tell you that he will be glad to talk to you in one hour—at five o'clock, that is—in his offices at the Central Committee of the party."

Lyons could scarcely believe his good fortune with what could be the scoop of a lifetime. No foreign correspondent had interviewed Stalin since 1927.

Central Committee headquarters still stands today where it stood in 1930, on Staraya Ploshchad (Old Square) near the Kremlin. Lyons was there at the appointed time with his friend Charles Malamuth, a professor of Slavic studies at the University of California, who agreed to serve as an interpreter should Lyons' Russian fail, an unnecessary precaution since Stalin provided his own translator.

Lyons was ushered into a waiting room unlike any Soviet office he had ever seen, "quiet, orderly, unhurried, and efficient, devoid of the trappings of power, curiously austere and self-assured, without elegance, gold braid, or shrieking symbols: power naked, clean, and serene in its strength." He then entered an inner office where Stalin, attired in his customary tunic unadorned with decorations, offered his hand and a smile, "remarkably unlike the scowling, self-important dictator of popular imagination." They sat down at one end of a long conference table, and instead of pulling out a pipe, Stalin surprised Lyons by offering him a cigarette and lighting one for himself.

For over an hour, Lyons asked Stalin a range of questions

covering relations between the United States and Russia, the progress of the Five Year Plan, and expectations of a world Communist revolution, but it was his first query that provoked a laugh:

"Comrade Stalin, may I quote you to the effect that you have not been assassinated?"

"Yes, you may," Stalin said with a smile, "except that I hate to take bread out of the mouths of the Riga correspondents."

After the political questions, Lyons asked Stalin about his family, and for the first time the Soviet leader revealed that he was married and had three children, one of them, Svetlana, still in school.

When the interview was over, Stalin asked whether he could read the cable, offering Lyons both an adjacent office and a Latin-script typewriter on which to work. Tea and sandwiches were served and Stalin occasionally stuck his head through the door to ask if anything was needed. When Lyons finished writing, the official interpreter read the story to Stalin and to Marshal Voroshilov, who had been present during the interview. They were both amused by references to Stalin's appearance and to his family. Other than a few nonpolitical changes suggested by Stalin, the story remained intact. Lyons, however, was taking no chances. He asked the Soviet leader to sign one copy to facilitate approval by the censor. Stalin picked up a pencil, scrawled across the top page, "More or less correct," and signed his name.

Eugene Lyons thanked Stalin and drove to the Foreign Affairs Commissariat to submit his cable to the censor, but everyone had left for the day. He then drove to Comrade Podolsky's apartment and handed him the dispatch. The Press Department official glanced at the signature, uttered the Russian equivalent of "I'll be damned," and collapsed in a chair. For once, a UP story was transmitted without changes.

Lyons' coup jolted the Moscow press corps, and congratulatory cables from the UP and its newspaper clients poured in. Envious colleagues phoned to find out how he had obtained the interview. Walter Duranty, however, was annoyed that *The New York Times* and he, the dean of correspondents who had

been reporting from Moscow since 1921, had not been granted the interview. Duranty hounded the Press Department until he obtained an audience a few weeks after the UP newsmen. Unlike Lyons or any other reporter, Duranty was favored with a second interview, in December 1933.

The choice of interviewer often depended on luck and timing. When it suited their purpose, Soviet officials chose any request for an interview, probably from the top of the pile. Lyons may just have been lucky, since there was no special reason for the UP to win the prize. If AP correspondent Stanley P. Richardson had sent Stalin a letter one hour after Lyons, he might have obtained the interview. Another lesson for reporters: The summons to the Central Committee came with one hour's notice, just enough time to change clothes, grab a notebook, and head across town. For Eugene Lyons, this only confirmed that, in a one-man news agency bureau, the correspondent must stay close to the office at all times.

In the lives of the American reporters, the most decisive factor was censorship. To get a story or a fact through the censor's net with minimal deletions was the daily challenge that correspondents dealt with in different ways.

When Linton Wells arrived in Moscow for INS in 1932, he told press chief Konstantin Oumansky that he would report nothing he believed to be untrue and would submit everything he wrote to censorship. However, if he knew that his facts were correct, no matter what the source, or if the information had already appeared in a Soviet publication and consequently was transmittable, then he would consider it "privileged and you cannot deny me the right to dispatch it. Whenever you do this, you ought to know that I shall feel justified in sending it out of the country by any means possible."

Oumansky replied, "I don't think we're going to get on well together."

"Well," countered the thirty-nine-year-old correspondent, "at least we know where we stand."

Another American who had few friends in the Press Department was Junius B. Wood, one of the finest reporters on

the *Chicago Daily News* and a veteran war correspondent. A crusty, pipe-smoking graduate of the Chicago school, he enjoyed writing stories that he knew would offend the censors. When, for example, the Soviet government, seeking to halt the black market in rubles, announced that only foreign currencies would be accepted in certain restaurants and hotels, Wood wrote a cable that did not pass the censor. The lead:

THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT TODAY REPUDIATED ITS OWN CURRENCY.

Wood's successor, William Stoneman, never hesitated to evade censorship, usually sending out his dispatches with departing travelers, as evidenced by his reportage of the famine.

"If the story was important and interesting," he told me, "I would send it out and take the consequences. Or let my paper take the consequences. If anything happened to me as a result of a story I sent, it was a matter between the *Chicago Daily News* and the Soviet government."

The authorities seemed to take a relaxed view of censorship violations by Stoneman and Wells, who were probably not the only ones to flout the rules. Before Linton Wells left in 1934, the Press Department even gave him farewell dinner, complete with expressions of hope that he would soon return.

A basic policy established by the Press Department was that any published information, having passed the internal censorship, would be approved for transmittal by foreign correspondents. An enterprising reporter, however, would include additional data from other sources or his own observations to flesh out the story. For example, if he wrote a piece about Soviet agricultural "achievements" based on an article in *Pravda*, he might also include a quote from a diplomat or Russian who had just returned from the Ukraine casting doubt on those claims, leaving it to the censor to strike out the

comments. Much of what a correspondent was actually permitted to transmit was what he and the censor agreed on. Bargaining took place face-to-face, a confrontation that was one of the crucial elements in reporting from Moscow. A correspondent without bargaining skills and tenacity soon found that his journalistic output declined in quality and quantity.

An example of this hagglng occurred in 1933 when Stalin's forced collectivization policy ran into serious opposition in the Kuban region of the North Caucasus, a stronghold of independent-minded cossacks. Through one of his contacts, Eugene Lyons obtained copies of a local newspaper that bannered eight-column headlines announcing that the population of three entire villages had been packed into cattle cars by Red Army troops and shipped out to lumber camps. That meant everybody: men, women, children, the old, and the sick. The purpose of the mass deportation was to crush cossack opposition to collectivization.

Eugene Lyons wrote his story and took it to Konstantin Oumansky for approval, expecting that it would be passed without difficulty, since the information came from an official Soviet source. Although he was annoyed that Lyons had discovered such an "unfavorable" story, Oumansky could not forbid its transmittal. Groping for a way out, he asked:

"But Mr. Lyons, you say that forty thousand are involved in this mass deportation. Where did you get the figure?"

"That's simple. I looked up your latest official census. The population of three settlements as given there totals about forty thousand."

"All the same, I'm sorry, I can't let you use that figure. That was the population two or three years ago. How do you know what it is today?"

"All right—you tell me how many were deported! Surely someone in the government knows."

"No, your cable can't go unless you eliminate the figure. Just say that the inhabitants were exiled, without specifying the figure."

Lyons walked out of Oumansky's office, refusing to emas-

culate the story by filing it without the crucial numbers. A few days later he left Moscow for a vacation, transmitting the cable from the UP bureau in Berlin. The report created a worldwide sensation, with its specific details on the human cost of the collectivization drive. Konstantin Oumansky's reaction could only be surmised, but on his return, Eugene Lyons was not reprimanded for his failure to file through censorship.

The foreign correspondent was not the only victim of censorship. In an equally difficult and vulnerable position was the censor himself, since he was responsible for the political purity of the outgoing dispatches. One could easily imagine the scoldings they were subjected to by their superiors if by chance a story slipped through the net, or even a line or a paragraph that reflected unfavorably on the Soviet Union. Both censor and correspondent understood their symbiotic relationship, often collaborating to find acceptable language that would protect each partner to the transaction. In these cases, perhaps a more honest and accurate by-line would have been: Eugene Lyons and Konstantin Oumansky, United Press Staff Correspondents.

Unlike the agency correspondents who filed breaking news around the clock, the pace in Moscow for newspaper reporters or "specials" was leisurely in the 1920s. They filed one or two dispatches a day and then could relax. If a story broke late at night, despite the eight-hour time difference between New York and Moscow, the sixteen to twenty hours required for transmittal made it impossible to meet the deadline for the next day's paper. Since, under the circumstances, speed was not essential, the story was held over until the next day. Walter Duranty, for example, knew that a cable he delivered to the telegraph at 5:00 P.M. on Thursday would not reach the *Times* foreign desk before Friday between 5:00 A.M. and 9:00 A.M., much too late for the final edition's 3:00 A.M. deadline. Duranty's social life was enhanced by this schedule, permitting him to attend a party or enjoy a quiet dinner and file in the morning. By 1930, however, cable service had so vastly improved that he could file as late as 7:00 A.M. Moscow time

(11:00 P.M. in New York) and still get his story into the final edition of the *Times*.

What irked Duranty most, as it did the other correspondents, was the frequent late-night phone calls from the Press Department announcing that "an important communiqué"—no details—was available at the Foreign Affairs Commissariat and could be picked up immediately. This meant getting out of bed, driving across town, going through the Russian text with a translator, and writing a story, if warranted, at midnight or 1:00 A.M. for approval by the censor. Often the communiqués were only of marginal interest to American readers and not even transmitted: another wasted trip and sleepless night.

To ease the strain, Duranty hired Robin Kinkead, twenty-three, a year out of Stanford University, who showed up in Moscow a few days after Christmas in 1929 with little money, no job, and a great ambition to be a foreign correspondent. For an ungenerous fifteen dollars a week, Duranty, now forty-five, found himself an eager young assistant and legman who proved to be the best journalistic bargain in Moscow. Kinkead quickly learned his job, making it possible for Duranty to take longer vacations and go on lucrative lecture tours in the United States. But he also made mistakes.

In June 1931, two American pilots, Wiley Post and Harold Gatty, landed their monoplane *The Winnie Mae* in Moscow to refuel on a round-the-world flight. With Walter Duranty out of the country, Robin Kinkead was covering the arrival. Since the *Times* had obtained exclusive rights to Post and Gatty's personal story, Kinkead followed them around Moscow, nagging them for their report, but all he heard from them was "Get the hell out of here and don't bother us. We've got to rest!"

Instead of the personal signed story, Kinkead cabled a routine account of the landing. The next day he received a blistering wire from managing editor Frederick Birchall, demanding to know why. In desperation, Robin Kinkead asked Eugene Lyons for advice.

"Oh, for Chrissakes, someone should have told you. No

culate the story by filing it without the crucial numbers. A few days later he left Moscow for a vacation, transmitting the cable from the UP bureau in Berlin. The report created a worldwide sensation, with its specific details on the human cost of the collectivization drive. Konstantin Oumansky's reaction could only be surmised, but on his return, Eugene Lyons was not reprimanded for his failure to file through censorship.

The foreign correspondent was not the only victim of censorship. In an equally difficult and vulnerable position was the censor himself, since he was responsible for the political purity of the outgoing dispatches. One could easily imagine the scoldings they were subjected to by their superiors if by chance a story slipped through the net, or even a line or a paragraph that reflected unfavorably on the Soviet Union. Both censor and correspondent understood their symbiotic relationship, often collaborating to find acceptable language that would protect each partner to the transaction. In these cases, perhaps a more honest and accurate by-line would have been: Eugene Lyons and Konstantin Oumansky, United Press Staff Correspondents.

Unlike the agency correspondents who filed breaking news around the clock, the pace in Moscow for newspaper reporters or "specials" was leisurely in the 1920s. They filed one or two dispatches a day and then could relax. If a story broke late at night, despite the eight-hour time difference between New York and Moscow, the sixteen to twenty hours required for transmittal made it impossible to meet the deadline for the next day's paper. Since, under the circumstances, speed was not essential, the story was held over until the next day. Walter Duranty, for example, knew that a cable he delivered to the telegraph at 5:00 P.M. on Thursday would not reach the *Times* foreign desk before Friday between 5:00 A.M. and 9:00 A.M., much too late for the final edition's 3:00 A.M. deadline. Duranty's social life was enhanced by this schedule, permitting him to attend a party or enjoy a quiet dinner and file in the morning. By 1930, however, cable service had so vastly improved that he could file as late as 7:00 A.M. Moscow time

(11:00 P.M. in New York) and still get his story into the final edition of the *Times*.

What irked Duranty most, as it did the other correspondents, was the frequent late-night phone calls from the Press Department announcing that "an important communiqué"—no details—was available at the Foreign Affairs Commissariat and could be picked up immediately. This meant getting out of bed, driving across town, going through the Russian text with a translator, and writing a story, if warranted, at midnight or 1:00 A.M. for approval by the censor. Often the communiqués were only of marginal interest to American readers and not even transmitted: another wasted trip and sleepless night.

To ease the strain, Duranty hired Robin Kinkead, twenty-three, a year out of Stanford University, who showed up in Moscow a few days after Christmas in 1929 with little money, no job, and a great ambition to be a foreign correspondent. For an ungenerous fifteen dollars a week, Duranty, now forty-five, found himself an eager young assistant and legman who proved to be the best journalistic bargain in Moscow. Kinkead quickly learned his job, making it possible for Duranty to take longer vacations and go on lucrative lecture tours in the United States. But he also made mistakes.

In June 1931, two American pilots, Wiley Post and Harold Gatty, landed their monoplane *The Winnie Mae* in Moscow to refuel on a round-the-world flight. With Walter Duranty out of the country, Robin Kinkead was covering the arrival. Since the *Times* had obtained exclusive rights to Post and Gatty's personal story, Kinkead followed them around Moscow, nagging them for their report, but all he heard from them was "Get the hell out of here and don't bother us. We've got to rest!"

Instead of the personal signed story, Kinkead cabled a routine account of the landing. The next day he received a blistering wire from managing editor Frederick Birchall, demanding to know why. In desperation, Robin Kinkead asked Eugene Lyons for advice.

"Oh, for Chrissakes, someone should have told you. No

aviator writes his personal story. You write it! If they don't say anything, you make it up."

"But that's cheating," protested Kinkhead.

"Well," replied the old wire service hand, "you can figure out what they *might* have said."

Robin Kinkhead returned to the office, wrote a first-person account of the flight into Moscow, full of chitchat and colorful details, and dispatched it to New York. This time there was no angry cable from Birchall. The *Times* published the article about their heroic exploit, signed by Wiley Post and Harold Gatty—on the front page.

Life for the agency correspondents was very different from that of the "specials." Not only were they on duty twenty-four hours a day covering news in the Soviet Union, but they were also at the mercy of editors in New York who did not seem to realize that when it was 5:00 P.M. in Washington it was 1:00 A.M. in Moscow and urgent queries could not be answered at that time, if ever. Stanley Richardson of the Associated Press and his United Press competition, Eugene Lyons, left many Bolshoi Theater performances, dinner parties, and poker games in response to phone calls from the Press Department, which, as agency reporters, they could not ignore. If, on occasion, they were obliged to travel outside Moscow, they worked out a pool arrangement under which one reporter would cover the news for everyone else. In 1930, for example, the Press Department invited foreign correspondents to witness the opening of the Turksib railroad that connected the central Asia city of Tashkent to the Trans-siberian line, a mammoth engineering project. With Walter Duranty in the United States on one of his lecture tours, Robin Kinkhead was again in charge of the *Times* bureau. Both the AP and UP correspondents decided to go on the trip, confiding their operations to the inexperienced cub reporter, a risky business for the agencies and for the newspaper. Fortunately, no big stories broke while everybody was out of town, in part because the news managers of the Press Department were also in Tashkent.

While correspondents agreed that travel, either arranged by the Press Department or privately, was the best way to find out

what was going on in the country, only a few reporters like William Stoneman, Ralph Barnes, and William Henry Chamberlin could do so extensively. Stoneman and Barnes journeyed down the Volga to the Caspian Sea, to the Crimea, and to the Ukraine, almost anywhere they wanted except to Karelia and eastern Siberia, where the labor camps were located. Leaving Moscow was simple; since no permission from the Press Department was required, all one had to do was go to the railroad station and buy tickets. The wide latitude and freedom from deadline pressures that *The Christian Science Monitor* allowed Chamberlin provided him, of all the "specials," with greater freedom to travel. He found that the farther he traveled from Moscow, the more relaxed and communicative people became.

"The villages were never so cowed as the capital," he concluded. "There were fewer Communists, fewer police agents in and out of uniform, and the peasants, old and young, welcomed what was usually the unique occasion of meeting Americans."

Unlike the Russians around them, by 1930 the American correspondents were living well. Those who did not stay in hotels found comfortable apartments and acquired maids and cooks and chauffeurs. Walter Duranty left his storefront apartment for more spacious quarters on the sixth floor of a modern building; Katya and Michael moved with him. Joseph Barnes, who replaced Ralph Barnes (no relation) as correspondent for the *New York Herald Tribune* in the mid-1930s, rented a cozy log cabin, an *izba*, on the other side of the Moscow River. The house was later bought from its Russian owner by Edmund Stevens, who subsequently served as the wartime Moscow correspondent of *The Christian Science Monitor*. Stevens retained ownership of the *izba* for almost forty years, until it was demolished to make way for construction of an apartment building. Eugene Lyons, after living two years with Billy in a renovated stable that also served as the United Press bureau, moved into a mansion occupied by Dr. Armand Hammer, an American physician, entrepreneur, and acquaint-

tance of Lenin; Hammer had obtained a concession from the government to manufacture pencils in the USSR. The new quarters, which were guarded by Dobermanns, must have seemed like a palace, with a marble spiral staircase, rococo statuary, a vast kitchen, and a wood-paneled dining room that Lyons shared with his new landlord. Dr. Hammer's motives in opening his house to a correspondent were not entirely charitable, however. Since he was transferring ownership of his pencil enterprise to the Soviet government, he calculated that the Russians would be less likely to evict him with the UP correspondent on the premises. His assumption was correct, and Lyons and his family happily resided in the largest American home in Moscow for almost four years even after Hammer had departed.

Planning for the future, Eugene Lyons invested in an apartment in a cooperative building under construction financed by a group of Moscow literary figures. Since the writers desperately needed trucks to haul construction materials obtainable only with the hard currency, they offered Lyons an apartment if he would buy the vehicles. Lyons advanced the needed twenty-five hundred dollars and acquired what was to become the famous United Press apartment on Ulisa Furmanova (Furmanov Street), which remained in the agency's possession for almost forty years, the only one owned by an American news-media organization in the Soviet Union. During that time it sheltered at least half a dozen UP correspondents, their wives, children, friends, girlfriends, cats and large numbers of mice. The celebrities who passed through its portals included Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, author Truman Capote, journalist John Gunther, U.S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, countless ambassadors, U.S. senators, members of the cast of a touring company of *Porgy and Bess*, and, of course, many Russians. What made the apartment even more valuable was that after Stalin's death in 1953, when almost all Western correspondents were obliged to live in ghettos for foreigners under twenty-four-hour surveillance by MVD or KGB guards who harassed Soviet citizens brave enough to enter the enclave, no

security guards were posted outside the UP apartment. Russians could walk in and out unmolested, a prime source of information for the correspondents who lived and worked there.

Famine in the Ukraine and hunger in the North Caucasus did not affect the life-style of the correspondents. They were able to import supplies and, like other foreigners in Moscow, were permitted to buy food and liquor for dollars at special hard-currency stores operated by the Soviet government. As always the social scene was lively, with parties, dinners, and receptions offered by the diplomats, who invited the correspondents in the belief that they were the best-informed people in Moscow. Occasionally the correspondents would meet at the Hotel National for a friendly game of billiards. The big weekly event, however, was the dance at the Metro-pole, where Alexander Svartsman's band played traditional folk songs and popular Western tunes. Virtually the entire foreign colony turned out for the event, as well as a large contingent of Russian girls who were there for more than foxtrotting. Two popular dance partners for the correspondents were the Gillis girls, Faye and Beth, daughters of J. H. Gillis, an American mining engineer who had supervised construction of two electrolytic zinc plants in the Soviet Union. Faye Gillis, an expert pilot, was the first and probably the last American woman to fly Red Air Force planes. She later married INS correspondent Linton Wells. Walter Duranty also attended the dances, but because of his wooden leg, he did not get onto the floor frequently. According to Robin Kinkaid, he spent most of the evening engaged in his favorite pastime, "romancing some dame."

The correspondents were not always filing serious political and economic stories; they also wrote features that illuminated other aspects of Soviet life. In 1934, for example, there was much skepticism outside Russia about the cadaver in Lenin's tomb: Was it genuine, or just a stuffed dummy? To dispel such aspersions on the revolutionary leader and the Soviet Union's most revered relic, the Press Department invited the correspondents to Red Square for a personal inspection of the

remains. On hand for the guided tour were the two scientists who had embalmed Lenin in 1924, Professors V. Vorobev and B. Sbarsky. As the fascinated correspondents watched inside the gloomy crypt, the Russians raised the glass case under which Lenin's body lay, the upper torso garbed in a khaki tunic with a single decoration over the heart, hands folded over heavy red embroidery that covered the lower half of the body. Then they briskly tweaked the ears and pinched the cheeks to demonstrate that the corpse was real, explaining how the organs had been removed after Lenin's death ten years earlier and replaced with chemicals. The Russians treated the corpse in a businesslike fashion, as if they were teaching an anatomy lesson to a class of medical students, displaying no awe toward the remains of the man who had led the Bolsheviks to power and was venerated by millions.

When the United States and the Soviet Union established diplomatic relations in November 1933, the American correspondents hoped that the Russians, seeking to improve their image in the stronghold of capitalism, would become more open and more forthcoming with interviews and special trips and might even ease censorship. Initially a new atmosphere of friendliness toward Americans did prevail, with a round of government receptions and interviews, including a meeting between the correspondents and President Mikhail Kalinin. In an unusual gesture, Stalin departed from the fiction that he was only a party official without government responsibilities and entertained U.S. Ambassador William C. Bullitt. Within a few months, however, it became clear that little would change. Bullitt, who had known Russia during the heady days of the Revolution, was depressed by the repressive atmosphere he saw around him. Furthermore, he believed that Foreign Affairs Commissar Maxim Litvinov, who had succeeded Georgi Chicherin and negotiated the recognition agreement in Washington, had deceived President Roosevelt with respect to the subversive activities of the Comintern in the United States, the settlement of Russia's prerevolutionary debts, and religious freedom for American nationals residing in the Soviet Union. The U.S. protest over the Moscow meeting of

the Comintern in 1935 as a violation of the Roosevelt-Litvinov agreement was rejected by the Soviet government with the customary explanation that the organization, whose senior officials included many leading Russian Communists, was an independent body.

Contrary to expectations, the opening of a U.S. embassy in Moscow had only a modest impact on the American newsmen working there. They could now buy some American products previously not available in the hard-currency stores, such as pipe tobacco, and there were additional compatriots to invite to parties and dinners. Among the new arrivals were several choice social companions who were to play important roles in future Soviet-American relations: the brilliant, intellectual George F. Kennan and the shrewd and charming Charles E. (Chip) Bohlen. Only low-ranking officials then, both were destined to become ambassadors to the Soviet Union. Within a few years, however, the embassy became increasingly important for the correspondents as a place that could provide assistance when needed. The new ambassador, Joseph E. Davies, a political appointee who succeeded William Bullitt in November 1936, was particularly friendly toward American reporters and even interceded with Premier Vyacheslav Molotov on their behalf when they had problems. In 1934, however, the only indication that the Americans had arrived was the Stars and Stripes flapping from a balcony of the new embassy chancery on Mokhovaya Street, a modern building that faced vast Manege Square and the Kremlin.

During almost six years in Moscow, Eugene Lyons increasingly lost his enthusiasm for the Soviet regime as his dream collided with reality. He was transformed from a Communist sympathizer, first into a skeptical observer, then into a foe. Reflected in his stories, this change was beginning to be noticed both at the United Press and at the Foreign Affairs Commissariat. In the eyes of the Press Department, Lyons' report on the deportation of forty thousand peasants decisively pushed him over the line that separated "friendly" from "unfriendly" bourgeois correspondents. The dénouement came suddenly

in November 1933 while Maxim Litvinov was headed for Washington to negotiate U.S. recognition of the Soviet Union, a particularly delicate and important mission. At that very moment, Russian and Japanese armed forces were involved in bloody fighting over violations of their common border in Manchuria, creating a potentially dangerous situation in the Far East. Although these incidents were common knowledge in Moscow among journalists and diplomats, there was no confirmation solid enough to file a story.

One evening, two Russian acquaintances whom Lyons suspected were GPU agents came to see him at his home, and after much drinking they revealed that Soviet forces had inflicted severe losses on the Japanese, including the sinking of naval vessels. Lyons considered the information worth a brief cable, taking the precaution, however, of describing it as an "unconfirmed report." Just as he finished writing his dispatch, the UP's London bureau phoned about another story, and before signing off, the editor at the other end asked the usual question: "Anything new in Moscow, Gene?"

Succumbing to temptation, Lyons read him the cable, uncleared by the censor, but as soon as he hung up, he knew he had made a dangerous blunder. Lyons immediately called London to kill the story, only to discover that the dispatch had already moved on all wires. Within hours it was on front pages around the world.

In unison, the Russians and the Japanese vehemently denied the story and denounced Eugene Lyons, but for different reasons. From Washington, Maxim Litvinov accused the Japanese of using Lyons to wreck negotiations with the United States, while Tokyo charged the Soviets were using Lyons to further negotiations. Webb Miller, UP bureau chief in London, phoned Lyons pleading with him to reveal his sources, but he refused, explaining as best he could that because the lines were tapped, disclosing the names would only subject his Russian contacts to reprisals. In retrospect, Lyons realized that he had indeed been manipulated, but if he had submitted the copy to the censor, he might have been spared. Since he was unwilling to name names, his credibility

at the United Press was undermined and his value to the agency in Moscow was clearly at an end. Ed L. Keen, UP vice president for Europe, finally traveled to Moscow to inform Lyons that he was being recalled.

Eugene Lyons left Moscow in January 1934, but not before the Press Department honored him with a farewell lunch in an atmosphere of "polite, if strained cordiality." For the American reporter, it was a sad departure. Although he had come to detest the regime, he had also come to love and respect the Russian people. Now he was bidding *proshchay*, farewell, to them and to Moscow, "city of desperations and enthusiasm, beauty and squalor. The thought that I might never see it again was a vise, every turn of the train's wheels closing its arms more painfully on my heart."

During his six years in Moscow, Eugene Lyons must have filed from five thousand to six thousand cables and mail features covering an enormous variety of subjects, but whether they made any profound impression on the American public is doubtful. When he distilled the essence of his experience into a book, however, without the editorial assistance of Konstantin Oumansky, and infused it with a scathing appraisal of the Soviet regime, the result was explosive.

*Assignment in Utopia*, published in 1937, was the first major book by an American correspondent to tear aside the propaganda curtain that hid the harsh reality of the Stalinist regime: a bitter, angry work that could only have been written by a true believer whose vision of communism was destroyed by the Communists themselves. The evidence was eloquently—indeed, brilliantly—reported in its pages. Favorably reviewed by many critics, *Assignment in Utopia* was denounced by Soviet sympathizers and by American Communists, but Dorothy Thompson wrote in the *New York Herald Tribune*: "Of all the books on Russia written by Americans thus far, this seems to me the most important and the most moving."

Walter Duranty's departure from Moscow was far less dramatic than that of Lyons. In September 1931 Duranty had asked the *Times* to let him retire so he could work on his book and exploit the U.S. lecture circuit, where he was the most

popular and best-paid authority on Russia. Apparently the newspaper was not ready to let him go even though covering Moscow was becoming too arduous for the forty-seven-year-old correspondent.

Before he finally relinquished his post in April 1934, Duranty sailed to New York on the *Berengaria* with Maxim Litvinov to cover U.S.-USSR recognition negotiations. The voyage with the commissar for foreign affairs must have been especially satisfying for Duranty since, without a doubt, his reporting from Moscow had helped create a climate in the United States that facilitated the establishment of ties between the two countries. On an earlier trip, he had been invited to lunch by Franklin D. Roosevelt, governor of New York and Democratic candidate for the presidency, who sought his views on Russia. Roosevelt had already made it clear that he would seek to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet regime should he win the election. Duranty strongly believed that U.S. recognition of Russia was essential to counter the growing military strength of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. Indeed, despite his flaws as a reporter, during the years he covered Moscow, Walter Duranty informed the world that from the ashes of the tsar's empire a new power had risen that would have to be reckoned with and would henceforth play a paramount role in international affairs.

Walter Duranty's assignment in Russia was the longest of any correspondent in the history of the *Times* bureau, and although it created controversy inside and outside the newspaper, his own explanation for his fourteen-year stint is unassailable:

"Moscow is the most interesting place in the world and that as a newspaperman I would not change for any other assignment. It is interesting politically because there before your eyes is being created something wholly new in human history. Still greater in my opinion is what might be called the natural interest of Russia—its utter difference from anything one has known before and its Alice-in-Wonderland topsy-turvy-ness as compared with the Western World."

Most reporters who have covered Moscow since would probably share that assessment.

The controversy over Walter Duranty haunted him long after he left Moscow. Seen by many, including some of his fellow correspondents, as the preeminent expert on the Soviet Union, knowledgeable, balanced, and objective, he was viewed by others as an admirer of Stalin and an apologist for the Communist regime. Konstantin Oumansky, according to Malcolm Muggeridge, was always pointing to Duranty as an example for other journalists.

Even Joseph Stalin pronounced judgment on Walter Duranty during his last interview with him in 1933, a year of widespread famine, the exile of millions of peasants to Siberia and the Far North, forced collectivization, and enormous and widespread suffering. Few of these developments were reported by Duranty, or, if he did write about them, it was in a guise that justified the human costs, rationalized with his favorite expression, "You can't make an omelet without breaking eggs."

Stalin could not have been unaware of Duranty's professional performance when he told him:

"You have done a good job in your reporting of the USSR. Although you are not a Marxist, you tried to tell the truth about our country and to understand it and explain it to your readers. I might say that you bet on our horse to win when others thought it had no chance, and I am sure you have not lost by it."

After his retirement, Walter Duranty continued to work for the *Times* on a retainer with the understanding that he would serve in Moscow for several months a year. He did return to Russia on several occasions, but he spent most of his time in the United States on the lecture circuit promoting his best seller *I Write as I Please*, and writing other books. In 1940, he returned for the last time to the Soviet capital, where he seemed quite lost and out of touch. He even bet a fellow reporter a hundred dollars that the Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact, signed in August 1939, would last because "Hitler and Stalin aren't that crazy." Walter Duranty finally settled down with a wealthy widow among the palm trees in Orlando, Florida, where he died on October 4, 1957, at age seventy-two.

\* \* \*

Eugene Lyons left the United Press after he returned to New York and spent the rest of his working life as a prominent and articulate anti-Communist. He published eleven books; edited the *American Mercury*, a monthly magazine that opposed America's wartime alliance with Russia; and was a senior editor of *Reader's Digest* for many years. Lyons died in New York on January 7, 1985, at eighty-six, surviving all the Soviet bureaucrats who caused him so much grief. Konstantin Oumansky was killed in an airplane crash in 1945 en route to Mexico City, where he was the Soviet ambassador. The other censors disappeared during one of Stalin's many purges. But Dr. Armand Hammer, eighty-nine, Lyons' former Moscow landlord, in mid-1987 was still thriving as chairman of Occidental Petroleum Corporation and making lucrative deals with the Russians.

William Henry Chamberlin reported for the *Monitor* from Paris and Tokyo before retiring from journalism in 1940 to write books and lecture at various universities. He died in Switzerland in 1969 at seventy-two. William Stoneman abandoned journalism in 1945 to join the United Nations as the official spokesman for Trygve Lie, its first secretary-general. Stoneman died in 1987 at eighty-three in Saint Germain-en-Laye, a Paris suburb. Ralph Barnes, who went on to become a distinguished foreign correspondent for the *New York Herald Tribune*, was shot down covering a bombing raid over Yugoslavia in 1944.

By 1985, Robin Kinkead had long retired to Bolinas, California, a picturesque beach town north of San Francisco where he was writing his memoirs. Following his stint with Durany and then heading the Reuters Moscow bureau, he decided to quit journalism and after six years in the U.S.S.R. returned to the United States in 1935. He undertook various writing assignments, including a WPA guide to California, a tour of duty with the Office of War Information, and a public relations post with Pan American World Airways. At eighty, he looked back at his years in Moscow without nostalgia.

"I'd had my fun as a glamorous and dashing correspon-

dent—even with a trench coat for a while. . . . But as the years went by, I got more and more fed up and wasn't meeting any interesting women. Besides, I could see that I was in danger of becoming a drunk.

"I was fed up with being in Europe and away from my homeland—not a flag-waving thing. I just wanted to be on my own soil, with my own people."