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Plans and Expectations: The American News Media and Postwar Japan
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The US-Japanese relationship became one of the most significant and enduring of the second half of the twentieth century. Yet, such a relationship would have been unimaginable to Americans before the end of World War Two. This article examines popular representations of Japan and China before and during the war, assesses the ideas of key figures from the press, and considers the ways in which media and policy interacted through the influence of opinion leaders. These prepared the way for the 'soft' peace relying on Japanese cooperation that would become the basis for a new alliance between America and Japan.

The US-Japanese relationship became one of the most significant and enduring of the second half of the twentieth century. Yet, such a relationship would have been unimaginable to Americans before the end of World War Two. At that time, Americans expected China, not Japan, to become America's Asian ally and the bulwark of the new international system in East Asia. In order to understand these expectations for postwar East Asia during the war, this article will examine popular representations of Japan and China, assess the ideas of key figures from the press, and consider the ways in which media and policy interacted through the influence of opinion leaders.[1]

As media analyst Jonathan Alter argues, 'logic can convince but only emotion can motivate'.[2] Popular sympathy with China and visceral hatred of the Japanese were driving forces of public morale in the Pacific theater.[3] What provided the driving force for America's emotional response to Japan as an enemy nation during World War Two? Lacking first-person experience of Asia or Asians on which to hang news reports, how did citizens understand 'the nature of the enemy' or know 'why we fight'? Popular media and entertainment created lasting images and broad pictures of Japan, China, and the people who lived in these countries. Public opinion polls in the period reveal a shocking ignorance of basic knowledge about the world, and especially Asia. In a survey carried out in 1940, for example, respondents expressed opinions on Japanese expansion into Southeast Asia and an oil embargo, but only 1.3 percent claimed to know where Singapore, a strategically important British holding, was located.[4] The geography, history, politics and cultures of East Asia in the American mind were like the blank interiors of unexplored continents in maps from previous centuries.

But popular publications and public opinion are only a part of the story of how the media influenced American policy on the treatment of postwar Japan. The figures who wrote on this question drew influence not just from their connection to the reading public, but also from their ties to policy-making circles. Through the personal correspondence of decision makers and thinkers, it is possible to reconstruct what sources these figures were reading, recommending,

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[1] Casey uses the term 'opinion leaders' to group 'journalists, editors, and commentators'; Casey, *Cautious Crusade,* 16.
[2] Alter, *The Promise*, 140.
[3] Wartime hatred of Japan has been explored in Dower, *War Without Mercy*, and Chappell, *Before the Bomb*.
[4] 'Questions on the Far East,' December 1940. Princeton Poll Folder, PJF (Subject). Roosevelt Library.

and discussing amongst themselves.[5] While other journalists will also be considered, this article focuses on two well-known opinion leaders; Henry Luce and Walter Lippmann. These figures were in a powerful position to disseminate their ideas on East Asia. As writers, influential journalists could reach large audiences with their books, articles and editorial pieces. Publishers and editors played a key role in relaying published information to target audiences, acting as gatekeepers through their power to select the opinions and ideas made available through their platforms. Published material was not the only, or even the most important, connection between opinion leaders and policy makers on the Japan question. Media elites, bureaucrats and politicians also shared ideas informally through telephone conversations, over dinners, and at social events. Especially powerful or respected figures were invited to become involved in planning committees and informal deliberation. More than simply outlining a range of available options to decision makers, these men became a part of the debate; a crucial component in the policy-making process. Political leaders, bureaucrats, area experts and engaged citizens all grappled with the ideas promoted by opinion leaders during the war. Taken together, popular and specialist publications formed the basis of American discourse on East Asia. They filled the sea of ideas in which policy-makers swam. The men behind those publications, tied to planners by personal and professional relationships, swam alongside them.

Popular Media

Asia Coverage before Pearl Harbor

Prior to 1941, most Americans with personal experience in China fell into one of two camps. They were either, like President Franklin Roosevelt's maternal grandfather, businessmen interested in China trade, or, like the parents of many mid-century Asia experts, missionaries. America was not unique in this respect. Missionaries and traders were at the forefront of early East-West interactions. Missionaries went to places other Westerners did not go, interacted with locals as they made converts and provided social services, and remained in the country for extended periods. As a result, they had a special position as the 'face' of their home country in China, and were also key sources of information about exotic locales back home.[6] Because of differences in the treaties China and Japan had signed with the Western countries in the mid-nineteenth century, the missionary link was far stronger with China. The connection resulted in a sense of a historical 'special relationship' for the United States, and created the impression of a China in need of American help.[7]

Events in the early 1930s also swayed popular sympathy toward China ahead of the coming crisis. Chiang Kai-shek's conversion to Christianity endeared his regime to existing sinophiles and helped to make the Chinese appear more 'like' the Christian-majority United States. Pearl S. Buck, an author raised in China by missionary parents, published a popular novel on China in 1931.[8] *The Good Earth* was then made into an Academy Award winning film in 1938. Buck parlayed her success into the publication of pro-Chinese articles in the American media.

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[5] Rudolf Janssens relied on reading lists in his analysis of government consumption of published material on Japan. Janssens, *What Future for Japan?*, 79. However, only a handful of government departments, none of which were central to the process of planning for Japan, created such lists. I have therefore relied on correspondence and other evidence in collections of personal papers.

[6] For an examination of this phenomenon in the context of British imperialism, see Porter, 'Religion, Missionary Enthusiasm, and Empire', 222–46.

[7] Park, 'Guiding Public Opinion on the Far Eastern Crisis,' 393.

[8] Jespersen, *American Images of China*, 25.

Influential figures like Buck, media mogul Henry Luce and academic Owen Lattimore championed China in the national press.[9] In addition, many American reporters preferred working in China to Japan, partially because it had a larger established expatriate community. The majority of reporting on the Sino-Japanese conflict was done in China, which meant that American reporters saw the war alongside the Chinese. Foreign journalists experienced Japanese aerial bombings on Chongqing, even sharing shelters with Chinese officials, and their reports were subject to Chinese censorship before transmission.[10] Official censorship was matched by self-censorship by journalists. American war correspondent Martha Gellhorn stated that self-censorship, created by a sense of obligation to powerful Chinese hosts, was the greater hindrance to accurate reporting.[11] Nationalistic support of an American ally, the belief that criticism of China would strengthen the position of an aggressive Japan, and a professional desire to be allowed to return to China all served to soften reporting on China by American reporters in and out of China.[12]

In contrast to China coverage, the 1930s media portrayed Japan as a dangerous actor, even as business links between the countries continued. At the zenith of trade in the mid-1930s, Japan was America's third-largest trade partner.[13] Japan remained economically important for the US as it pursued an aggressive foreign policy at odds with American interests. Between 1935 and 1939, fully a quarter of Japan's imports came from the US.[14] Unlike China, Japan had not been home to large numbers of American missionaries or businessmen. America had initiated and championed the idea of an "open door" policy from the last year of the nineteenth century, nominally freeing China from colonization by allowing colonial powers equal access to its market. In part because of the strength of Meiji Japan, there had been no equivalent sponsorship on which Americans could hang a narrative of patronage.[15] Japan also lacked popular champions in the American media. China was praised for its affinity with the United States as a 'democratic-type' society by Luce, Buck and Lattimore, creating a false impression of Chinese politics in American minds. Japan, which had a Western-style constitution and parliament, and from 1925 had universal male suffrage, was not referred to as a democracy or a 'democratic-type' society in public discourse.[16] For informed citizens, Japan menaced America's colony in the Far East, the Philippines. In the 1930s the perceived danger of Japan swallowing whole a newly-independent Philippines was a major factor in slowing American disengagement there.[17] In the run-up to Pearl Harbor, the press was vocal in supporting China by pushing for an embargo against Japan. The resulting pressure to take a tough line with Japan caused President Roosevelt to complain to his Secretary of the

[9] Luce and Lattimore are discussed as part of a group of 'opinion leaders' below.
[10] Park, 'Guiding Public Opinion on the Far Eastern Crisis,' 395.
[11] Moreira, 'Hemingway on the China Front,' 146.
[12] Tuchman, 'Stilwell and the American Experience in China,' 251.
[13] Wilkins, 'The Role of U.S. Business.'
[14] Imports from the US to Japan were mostly cotton, iron and oil. Import trade figures remained stable in the 1930s. Japan's exports to the US, however, declined from a high in 1925–1929 of 37% to 14.3% by 1939 as Korea and Manchuria became more important to Japan's economy. Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism*, 211.
[15] This is not to say there was no business or missionary link with Japan. State Department member Eugene Dooman, for example, was born in Japan as the child of missionary parents. Haruo Iguchi writes about business links in *Unfinished Business*. There were also a small number of expatriates resident in Japan before the war. Wilfrid Fleisher, former editor of the *Japan Advisor* in Tokyo, is an example. His book on postwar plans was published and reviewed by American news outlets.
[16] Japan took a distinct turn away from democracy in the 1930s when the country formed 'national unity cabinets' in response to political violence and instability. These cabinets shifted power from political parties in favor of the military. Nevertheless, the political system in Japan from the late nineteenth century was intentionally based on 'modern' Western models.
[17] Kotlowski, 'Independence or Not?', 502.

Interior, 'I think the whole business of exports to Japan was made difficult by the press and the press only.'[18] Government reports noted that the 'extraordinarily bellicose tone toward Japan' in the press was not reflected in Gallup polls surveying public opinion.[19] The aggressive stance may have been intended to attract an audience to a topic of limited general interest.

The crisis in the Far East was far from the top of the national agenda. Media support for action in East Asia was predicated on the assumption that involvement would not be costly for the US. Concern for China did not translate into public support for serious American intervention in the conflict. Gallup polls in 1937 and 1938 demonstrated that the vast majority of Americans wanted to limit US interests in the area by having its nationals leave the country and were opposed to loans or arms shipments to China.[20] Although in 1938 polls indicated that 76 percent of Americans supported US retention of the Philippines, isolationists argued that abandoning that interest was necessary to avoid becoming drawn into conflict with expansionist Japan.[21] While certainly covered by the press, the Sino-Japanese War was treated as a 'distant sideshow,' far less important than domestic issues or events in Europe.[22]

Wartime Coverage

During the war, the press depicted the Japanese using images of monkeys, and described the nation's population as a mere collection of 'reproductions from the same negative'.[23] However, negative racial stereotyping was made complicated by the fact that America's chief ally and enemy in the Pacific were both Asian nations. In 1942, liberal columnist Anne O'Hare McCormick declared optimistically that ideology alone, not race, would be an issue in the war. The 'color line,' she wrote, had been 'broken down' by Axis aggression, so that 'light peoples and dark peoples [could] see that the peril is not yellow or white. China is on our side and Japan is on Germany's because common ideas override superficial differences.'[24] This was further reinforced by stories of loyalty and shared suffering endured by Filipinos after Japan's occupation of the American colony. As one article noted, the Filipinos, 'representing many different racial strains, have proved themselves to be as fine a people as is to be found anywhere on this earth.'[25] The Office of War Information actively discouraged the movie industry from employing racist characterizations in film depictions of the Japanese, and was concerned that the Japanese people be separated from their leadership in the public mind.[26] It monitored film depictions of China and Japan through a Bureau of Motion Pictures which created a manual for reference on American policy, reviewed screenplays, wrote dialogue, and encouraged changes to scripts.[27] 'China,' the OWI manual asked movie-makers to remember, 'is a great nation, cultured and liberal, with whom, inevitably, [the US] will be closely bound in the world that is to come.'[28] Hollywood was encouraged not to stoke race hatred in the case of Japan. Rather than showing

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[18] FDR to Harold Ickes, 1 July 1941, PSF (Dept) Interior, Ickes. Roosevelt Library.
[19] Alan Barth to Ferdinand Kuhn, 8 August 1941. PSF (Dept) Treasury, Editorial Opinion. Roosevelt Library.
[20] Gallup, *The Gallup Poll*.
[21] Kotlowski, 'Independence or Not?', 512.
[22] Casey, *Cautious Crusade*, 29.
[23] Dower, *War Without Mercy*, 38.
[24] McCormick, 'Abroad'.
[25] 'Post-war Amity with Japan Urged'.
[26] Koppes and Black, *Hollywood Goes to War*, 250.
[27] Ibid., vii.
[28] Jespersen, *American Images of China*, 77.

caricatures of the 'little buck toothed treacherous Jap,' the OWI manual advised writers that fascism, not race, was the issue.[29]

From the outbreak of the war, media coverage reinforced existing support for China, highlighting its long resistance against what had now become a common enemy. *Time* responded to the Asian issue by attempting to differentiate the Chinese from the Japanese in racial and cultural terms. In late December 1941 it published a feature piece to help readers distinguish 'your friends' the Chinese from 'Japs' using a checklist of physical and behavioral characteristics. Chinese facial expressions, for example, were 'more placid, kindly, [and] open' while Japanese were 'dogmatic, [and] arrogant.'[30] Chinese were taller and had toe placement similar to Europeans. By reporting that the Chinese were physically closer to Europeans, *Time* created a comforting narrative of a people 'like us.'

An optimistic view of China as an ally was also reflected in the media and public expectations for the country's future. Vice President Henry Wallace announced in a national radio broadcast that trade with China and Russia would revitalize the American Pacific Northwest region and create factory jobs that would smooth the transition back to a peacetime economy. Japan, which had been America's largest trade partner and the most developed economy in the region, was notably absent from Wallace's 'Era of the Pacific.'[31] But trade and investment were not the only benefits postwar China had to offer. Pearl S. Buck anticipated that China would make moral and political contributions to the coming new world order. 'What has China to offer a post-war world?' Buck asked in a speech at New York's Carnegie Hall. 'China will be the wisest of all. She will have more than any other country to contribute to that [postwar] world out of her 4,000 years of human history, out of her wisdom in human relationships... and out of her conviction of the worth of the individual.'[32] Such statements built up unrealistic expectations about the future role of a war-torn and politically unstable nation.

While in-country reporting certainly helped foster sympathy for China, it also resulted in negative accounts once perceptions began to change. As American congressman Walter Judd pointed out, reporters rarely had the benefit of long experience in the country. As a result, Americans were 'being deluged nowadays with a flood of reports from people who do not have an adequate background of experience in Asia.'[33] Lacking context, such reports were based on brief impressions and previously held ideas. New correspondents were influenced by early over-enthusiastic accounts of 'a country endowed with more than human qualities... a democracy pure and Jeffersonian,' led by selfless and noble leadership.[34] A report from Britain's Washington Embassy noted in July 1944 that 'those sections of the public who think about it at all are now rather bewildered. They are beginning to doubt whether China will be a friendly democracy protecting American interests in the Pacific and whether the China market will be so lucrative after all.'[35] Once skepticism set in, they unfavorably compared the China they encountered to a previously-held idealized version or to the United States itself.[36]

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[29] Koppes and Black, *Hollywood Goes to War*, 250.
[30] 'Home Affairs'.
[31] Wallace, 'The Era of the Pacific'.
[32] 'Chinese Envoy Sees Offensive in Asia'; Pearl S Buck at United China Relief 'Tribute to China' Rally at Carnegie Hall.
[33] Walter Judd had himself been a missionary in China for ten years. Judd, 'What Is the Truth About China?'.
[34] Peffer, 'Our Distorted View of China'. Quoted in Jespersen, *American Images of China*, 402.
[35] Quoted in Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 422.
[36] McCormick, 'Abroad'.

Media coverage of the war also helped to harden views against Japan, an enemy nation. The Japanese were portrayed as fanatical, deeply conformist and even subhuman. Such characterizations, combined with accounts of war crimes, 'eroded nearly all compassion for the Japanese, soldiers or civilians,' in the United States.[37] Revelations in 1944 boosted anti-Japanese sentiment and led to calls for retribution in place of a soft peace.[38] Reports on the Bataan Death March and the abuse of prisoners of war were released in January of that year. [39] These were followed by desperate and bloody battles as America's island-hopping campaign moved forward. A *Time* piece published in August described to readers the 'gruesome deeds, incomprehensible to the occidental mind' of Japanese civilians.[40] Accounts of fighting to the death and civilian suicide reinforced the existing characterization of the Japanese as racially distinct fanatics.

Postwar Plans

No clear plan for postwar Japan was made available to the public during the war. At the time, plans were being formulated by a small group of State Department area specialists working in a subcommittee of a State War Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC) tasked with broader postwar planning. However, it was not clear that the work of this group would become policy until Harry Truman signed off on an overview of their recommendations in June of 1945.[41] SWNCC plans often diverged from Roosevelt's mercurial thoughts on Asia, and there were other potential sources of future planning throughout the war. Because of policy confusion under President Roosevelt, there were no officially adopted plans to publicize. In addition, it was felt that public discussion about postwar plans could put the Administration in a difficult position. Committing to a set position during the war would make it more difficult to make concessions to allies or change course. While using the media as a mechanism for informing the public about major decisions and non-secret international agreements, the Administration aimed to limit discussion of the postwar world in the press. 'I have not the slightest objection towards your trying your hands at an outline of the postwar picture,' Roosevelt told planners, but cautioned, 'for heaven's sake don't even let the columnists hear of it.'[42] As a result, government plans for defeated Japan were largely a mystery to ordinary Americans.

Despite these limitations, major newspapers were able to provide readers with a remarkable range of voices on the subject of postwar Asia. The press covered major international conferences and agreements.[43] Letters to the editor, book reviews, reprinted speeches by leading figures and conference summaries provided nuanced perspectives on the Japan question. Many of these views, especially from officials or experts close to official planning circles, were quite close to recommendations being developed in the State Department. Former Ambassador Joseph Grew's 1943 speaking tour in particular brought the debates from closed planning circles into the public sphere. The speeches and subsequent news reports included key elements of plans for Japan. As did official planners, Grew argued before the public that it would be 'folly' to make

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[37] Chappell*, Before the Bomb*, 98.

[38] Thorne, *Allies of a Kind,* 492.

[39] 'Japanese Atrocities to Prisoners of War,' 31 January, 1944. Doc-No: H.doc.393m Serial-Volume: 10878 Congress-Session: 78-2 (1944) Sessional-Volume: 14, LexisNexis Congressional Hearings Digital Collection.

[40] 'World Battlefronts: The Nature of the Enemy'.

[41] 5-C-8, SC-138, 23 June 1945. Iokibe, ed., *Occupation of Japan: US Planning Documents, 1942-1945*.

[42] FDR to Adolf Berle, 26 June 1941. Box 22. PSF (Dept) State, Roosevelt Library.

[43] For example, reporting on the Cairo declaration, a *New York Times* journalist explained plans for Japan's disarmament and loss of territory, and the rise of China as a world power. 'Tokyo's co-prosperity sphere,' he wrote, 'will be entirely scrapped.' And 'from the ashes' of Japan's empire a 'new and greater China' would rise. Sulzberger, 'Conferences Fixed Shape of World to Come'.

Japan a permanent outcast from the family of nations. While retribution would leave Japan 'a festering sore' on the international body politic, stability depended on convincing that Japanese people that they stood to 'gain by playing the game with the rest of the world,' especially in terms of economic growth and trade.[44] This sentiment was echoed throughout the war as the press covered liberal and intellectual groups like the Universities Committee on Post-war International Problems and the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. The Universities Committee argued that 'we must teach Japan not only that aggression does not pay, but that peaceful international collaboration does pay,' while the Federal Council of Churches recommended that postwar Japan be demilitarized and 're-educated' by fostering pre-war 'liberal elements,' made a member of the international community and given access to markets.[45] Such thinking was at the heart of bureaucratic plans for a soft peace and reported on in the press.

Media coverage also offered views that were not in line with specialist planning, including calls for a tough peace or for vengeance against the enemy. Book reviews provided neat summaries of alternative plans. *Pacific Charter*, written by a New York Times correspondent, declared that the Pacific theater of World War Two was not a war against the militarists currently in power but against 'Japan, the nation, the race.' The book called for Japan's towns and villages to be crushed after the war so that the 'Japanese people will know from their own experience what they have been inflicting on other peoples.'[46] A 1945 *New York Times* book review began with a disturbing anecdote about well-heeled Americans at a dinner party cheerfully discussing exterminating the population of Japan after the war. The writer made a blithe segue to reviewing a work by longtime Japan resident Wilfrid Fleisher, asking, 'assuming… that we can't and won't kill 73,000,000 people – what can we do with them?' Major George Fielding Eliot's *Hour of Triumph* took quite a different approach. He warned that plans focusing on preventing future violence by containing current enemies were nearsighted. While agreeing that postwar Japan would need to be monitored but also allowed industry and trade ('60,000,000 Japanese can't live by raising rice'), Eliot anticipated future causes of unrest. Focusing on Japan and Germany at the expense of anti-colonialism in Asia and Anglo-American rivalry with Russia in Europe, he argued, would be dangerous. Postwar plans for Japan, Eliot wisely noted, were 'in danger of preparing to avert the last war, not the next.'[47] Wartime coverage of postwar plans thus exposed readers to a range of nuanced and informed opinion in addition to racist and extreme views.

Opinion Leaders

Walter Lippmann

Walter Lippmann, perhaps the best-known commentator on world affairs of the time, had columns reprinted in 160 newspapers with a combined circulation of eight million.[48] A native New Yorker, Lippmann attended Harvard six years behind FDR.[49] As author of several well-received books and a widely syndicated columnist, Lippmann was already an established public intellectual in the years before the war. His first book, published in 1912 when Lippmann was

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[44] 'Opposes Making Japan an Outcast'.
[45] 'Would Readmit Japan', 'Grouping of Nations For Peace Proposed', and Porter, 'Church Program for Peace Voted'.
[46] Chamberlin, 'When the Orient is Set Free,' and Chamberlain, 'Books of the Times' (1943).
[47] Chamberlain, 'Books of the Times' (1944).
[48] Casey, *Cautious Crusade*, 21.
[49] The future president enjoyed a taste of journalism as president of Harvard's student publication, *Crimson*. Lippmann, though already interested in writing and current affairs, was not invited to join, perhaps because his Jewish background kept him outside some elite social circles. Steele, *Walter Lippmann*, 28.

just 23 years old, was admired by Teddy Roosevelt, who began a correspondence with the young writer.[50] Lippmann then served during the Great War as the youngest member of 'the Inquiry,' Woodrow Wilson's postwar planning project.[51] Lippmann considered himself to be a political realist, and, like Henry Luce, advocated a more active American engagement in world affairs.[52] For Lippmann, protecting American interests, military and strategic, ought to be the primary driver of American policy. His column on current affairs and American foreign policy, 'Today and Tomorrow,' was read by millions of ordinary Americans as well as leading lights of the establishment, and was brought into debates on foreign policy and the postwar world.

Senior statesmen professed themselves to be deeply influenced by Lippmann's publications. Congressmen with quite different views wrote him throughout the war to praise or challenge his articles, and his work was also read into the congressional record.[53] In 1940 Edward Stettinius, then administrator of the Lend Lease program and later to become Secretary of State, wrote to praise a recent article and declared that he had 'followed [Lippmann's] writings for years.' James F. Byrnes, who would succeed Stettinius as Secretary of State, also felt 'compelled' to write Lippmann in June 1945 to share his thoughts on an article about postwar power structures. Outside the State Department, Secretary of War Henry Stimson remarked that he agreed with Lippmann's approach to postwar planning and informed the journalist, 'I have been recommending a reading of your book to everybody that I can.'[54] Although not a policy maker himself, Lippmann became an important figure in postwar planning as a result of the currency of his ideas through newspaper articles and book publications. The approval of the figures he influenced was needed to move the policy drafts up for presidential consideration before they could become policy, and congressional support was needed to fund any planned occupation or reorientation efforts, as well as to ratify a peace treaty with defeated Japan.

What kind of ideas did Lippmann spread with regard to Japan in particular? Like many generalists, his attention was focused mainly on the Atlantic and relations with European powers. However, as the Far Eastern Crisis began to threaten American security Lippmann's views on US-East Asian relations underwent a significant shift. In 1931, he had argued that the United States ought not become involved in the Manchurian crisis, because it had 'no particular political interest' in the 'whole great region.' Rather, he believed that any response to the crisis should be taken by nations which, unlike America, had a 'definite stake in the area.'[55] Already by 1937, this viewpoint was coming under scrutiny. In a review of an article submitted to *Foreign Affairs*, the editor and then close friend Hamilton Fish Armstrong remarked that Lippmann ought to make it clear in his piece that the US did in fact have important interests in what he called the 'Eastern Pacific.'[56]

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[50] Reminiscences of Walter Lippmann, Columbia University Oral History Project, 5.

[51] Steele, *Walter Lippmann*, 128–40.

[52] In fact, his 1944 book, *U.S. War Aims*, is reminiscent of Luce in its call for an 'American destiny' to become the global leader as the inheritor of Western civilization. See Lippmann, *U.S. War Aims*, 209.

[53] See, for example, Walter Lippmann to Senator Borah, 24 February 1939. Box 57, Folder 258, Reel 48, Walter Lippmann Papers, Yale University, and Senator Vandenberg to Walter Lippmann, 14 December 1944. Box 132, Folder 2589, Reel 93. Walter Lippmann Papers, Yale University.

[54] Stettinius to Lippmann, 30 May 1940. Box 103, Folder 2001, Reel 92. Walter Lippmann Papers, Yale University. James Byrnes to Walter Lippmann, 30 April 1945. Box 59 Folder 355, Reel 50. Walter Lippmann Papers, Yale University. Henry L Stimson to Lippmann, 1 June 1943. Box 104, Folder 2007, Reel 93. Walter Lippmann Papers, Yale University.

[55] Walter Lippmann, as cited in McPherson, 'Review of *Walter Lippmann and the American Century*.'

[56] Hamilton Fish Armstrong to Walter Lippmann, 31 March 1937. Box 52 Folder 105 Reel 42. Walter Lippmann papers, Yale University.

During the war, Lippmann's best-selling book *US Foreign Policy: Shield of the Republic* revealed the dramatic turn his thinking had taken. Moving on from his prior view that East Asia was a region in which the US had no significant interests, Lippmann argued that from the nineteenth century the US had 'placed itself at the geographical center of the empires of Eastern Asia' with the acquisition of Alaska, Hawaii, Guam and the Philippines.[57] This change was crucial to Lippmann's views on American relations with the nations of the northern Pacific, because, in his conception of foreign policy, 'interest' was the prerequisite for heavy involvement abroad. It was also an influential view. Secretary of State Cordell Hull and Stimson debated Lippmann's ideas as expressed in the book shortly after its publication. Stimson specifically urged Hull to read again the chapter on 'historical analysis of American policy,' which outlined America's deep and entrenched interests in the Pacific.[58]

Lippmann and postwar plans

From 1943 until the end of the war, Lippmann's recommendations for the treatment of postwar Japan remained unsettled and even contradictory. He neatly described his stark view of an empire-less Japan's future as a sidelined nation, 'She is to be an island nation near a continent where she has no foothold, and in an ocean which others command.'[59] The problems Lippmann foresaw in dealing with defeated Japan were twofold. First, the Allies needed to create a peace treaty and postwar order that the Japanese themselves would accept. Like official area specialists, Lippmann argued that a harsh or punitive peace could not last. Japan had to be assured access to markets and raw materials, and must 'be able to earn a decent living peaceably.' His reasoning for this position, however, was based on a conservative assessment of America's ability to impose terms or radical changes on a foreign country. In stark contrast to the far-reaching plans being developed within the government, Lippmann rejected the proposition that America should 'run' postwar Japan during a transformative occupation, writing 'we cannot manage a Japanese revolution.'[60]

Lippmann drew his second idea on the danger of postwar Japan from balance of power arguments in circulation at the time. He argued that the potential existed for Japan's power to be reconstituted as a counterweight in case of any postwar rivalry between the Allies. Discord between China, Russia and the United States might lead to any one of those countries supporting a Japanese revival and courting the former enemy for support. In *US War Aims,* Lippmann argued that there was the possibility of strife between any of the three Allied Powers in East Asia, but thought it most likely that China or Russia would support Japan in order to strengthen their positions in any territorial conflict along their long shared land border.[61] It was therefore competition between the Allies which might make Japan a danger in the future.

Despite confirmed American interests in Asia and the potential of future rivalry for influence over postwar Japan, Lippmann held that the United States should not take leadership in handling Japan after the war. Rather, he argued that China ought to take the initiative in reconstruction and

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[57] Lippmann, *US Foreign Policy: Shield of the Republic*, 24.
[58] 11 May 1943, 31. Reel 8. Henry Lewis Stimson Diaries, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.
[59] Lippmann, *US War Aims*, 101.
[60] Lippmann, *US War Aims*, 105–106.
[61] Surprisingly, Great Britain did not play a major role in postwar East Asia in Lippmann's analysis. However, he does note its value to America as an ally, especially because of its available bases around the world. Walter Lippmann, *US War Aims*, 104.

rehabilitation, and possess the final say in the length and character of the occupation, as well as any issues of reform might arise. This position was radically different from the mainstream belief that, of the Allies, the United States ought to set the agenda for Japan and international security in the Pacific. No expert on Asia, Walter Lippmann was himself deeply influenced by the ideas of Owen Lattimore on China.[62] In common with many leading figures, including President Roosevelt, Lippmann believed that 'the peace of the Pacific has turned and will turn upon China,' which would emerge from the war as a 'new great power in the modern world.'[63] While such an optimistic appraisal of Chinese power was common, the idea that China would not only participate but would lead the occupation of Japan was not. Readings of Lippmann, a well-known and respected analyst, thus reinforced the hopeful thinking and expectations about China's role in the postwar world which would ultimately be disappointed.

Henry Luce

Henry Luce, head of Time Inc and a commentator in his own right, played a double role as author and editor. In common with many Westerners interested in Far Eastern affairs in the 1930s and 1940s, he had been the child of missionaries stationed in Asia. Born in Shandong, China, at the end of the nineteenth century, his upbringing deeply influenced his world view. As an adult Luce felt sympathy with Nationalist China and a missionary zeal for spreading American values around the globe through a robust and active foreign policy.[64] Encouraging the support and development of China using the patronage of the United States, which he saw as a mutually beneficial relationship, was a driving passion in his life.

In 1941, he wrote his most influential piece, an editorial in *Life* entitled 'The American Century.' The article was circulated widely. First published in a magazine with a readership of three million, it was reprinted across other titles, with abstracts appearing in the *New York Times* and other newspapers.[65] Luce's piece was a call for robust American internationalism and assumption of global leadership. Public comments poured in from around the country in response to the piece, and politicians took the ideas to the floors of Congress.[66] The 'American century' was specifically invoked in support of internationalist resolutions put before the House of Representatives.[67] However, not all official response to Luce's article was positive. In 1942 Vice President Wallace criticized the 'American century' thesis in an article of his own, arguing that the future ought not to be dominated by one nation, but by the common mass of people globally.[68] Regardless of whether one agreed, Luce's arguments became deeply influential in the discourse on America's Asia policy, and could not simply be ignored.

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[62] Lippmann cites Lattimore in his discussions of China in both books. Lattimore, a Sinophile blinded to the weakness of Chiang's government, was a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and a government adviser during the war.

[63] Lippmann, *US Foreign Policy*, 154–56.

[64] An indicator of this conviction, and its connection to traditional missionary activity, is Luce's role in founding United China Relief in 1939.

[65] Hunt, 'East Asia in Henry Luce's "American Century",' 321.

[66] Luce kept these response letters, both negative and positive. They make up several folders within his personal papers. Box 180. Henry Luce papers, Library of Congress. His article was read into the Congressional record. U.S. Congress, House, 77th Cong., 1st session, 5 March 1941, Congressional Record 87:1828–31.

[67] Congressional Record, Proceedings and Debates of the 77th Congress, First Session. Speech of Martin J Kennedy of New York House of Representatives, 6 March 1941. Box 31 Henry Luce Folder. America First Committee Papers, Hoover Institution Archive, Stanford University.

[68] Henry A. Wallace, as cited in White, 'The "American Century" in World History', 115.

Luce's beliefs had implications for postwar planning on Japan.[69] He thought that America had a special destiny as the inheritor of Western civilization, and that Asia would desire, take up, and benefit from American technology, culture, and patronage. The article reinforced the circulating ideas that China would become the new Asian great power and America's most important ally in the Pacific, supplanting Japan as the most modern and powerful Asian nation. This vision of postwar East Asia imagined a diminished world status for Japan, making its future less important. But Luce's call for the country to commit itself to the spread of American values worldwide also fit neatly with the idea of a long, potentially expensive, American intervention in postwar Japan. The boldness of the 'American century' was reflected in the most radical proposals for how Americans might deal with defeated Japan.

Time Inc.

It is difficult to overestimate the place of Luce's Time Inc. publications in American life during the 1930s and 40s. Its major output comprised three magazine titles, *Time*, *Life* and *Fortune*. *Time* and *Life* were popular, accessible publications. *Life* in particular used an image heavy format to appeal to the middle classes. *Fortune*, better researched and more reflective, targeted a narrower audience of educated businessmen. In addition to these publications, Time Inc increased its media presence with widely consumed newsreels and radio programs. It has been estimated that by the end of the war 30 million Americans read or at least skimmed a Time Inc. publication every week.[70]

Henry Luce, as the man behind the company, took a deep editorial interest in the content of his publications. Two issues, both tied to the treatment of Japan, were of particular interest to him; these dealt with representations of China and with postwar planning. His sympathies toward China in general and the Nationalist regime in particular were reflected in the editorial policy of Time publications, especially following the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War. In a demonstration of the popular publication's support, the Chiangs were named 'Man & Wife of the Year' by *Time* in 1937. The corresponding article offered a characteristically positive view of the American-educated Madame Chiang, noting that 'Her rise and that of her husband, the Generalissimo, in less than a generation to moral and material leadership of the ancient Chinese people cover a great page of history.'[71] Luce used such promotion, in addition to positive accounts and simplifications to help American readers relate to China, in order to generate support for his view of the country.[72]

Luce's dogged support for Chiang and his Kuomintang (KMT) government and editorial intervention along these lines drew both support and criticism amongst contemporaries and is remembered by historians as the hallmark of his editorial influence. In 1946 China expert John Fairbank remarked that Luce, in his support for Chiang, had 'prostituted the truth and his own staff for policy purposes.'[73] Criticisms of the regime and reports of political instability in China did find their way into Time Inc publications from time to time, but editors and journalists were

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[69] For an overview of Luce's ideas on East–West relations, see White, 'The "American Century" in World History,' 114.

[70] Herzstein, *Henry R. Luce*, 50.

[71] 'Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-Shek'.

[72] *Life* editorial policy made China more familiar to Americans by drawing comparisons with the United States in its articles, referring to key cities with American equivalents, for example, 'China's Chicago'. Jespersen, *American Images of China*, 39–43.

[73] As cited in Herzstein, *Henry R. Luce*, 60. For an orthodox description of Luce's pro-China editorial policy, see Hunt, 'East Asia in Henry Luce's "American Century",' 326.

aware of Luce's slant and altered their work to accommodate it. In 1942 Pearl S. Buck wrote to Luce with a general overview of their shared position on China's value to the United States, and ended the letter with the comment that she would like to write a piece on the subject for *Life* 'with pleasure and wrath.'[74] Despite this common ground and the article being written with Luce in mind, the submitted piece was critical of the corruption which permeated the KMT. After some personal struggle over printing a perspective he disagreed with and which he believed would be harmful to the cause so near his heart, Luce decided to run the article, rationalizing that he did 'not want to be found guilty of misleading the American people' by failing to report on negative developments in China.[75] Still, such decisions were rare, and remained firmly in the hands of one powerful figure.

Henry Luce became interested in postwar planning quite early. Days after Pearl Harbor, *Time* inaugurated what it called its 'Q' or 'Postwar' Department. The group was meant to provide all Time Inc. publications with articles and opinion pieces on the coming world. The group was quiet until 1943, when Luce became more actively engaged with its work. In February of that year, Luce visited Washington to meet with the nation's top officials in order to better understand the state and content of government planning.[76] After his return from Washington Luce became more involved in the group, rechristened the 'Policy Formulation Committee,' attending brainstorming sessions and providing his own opinions for circulated memos.[77] Although he delegated day to day work to editors, Luce maintained final authority over decisions across Time Inc. titles, and expected publications to reflect his views. As he reminded his editors, 'if there is any gospel around here it is the Post-War Memos' which he approved and circulated.[78] Luce's need to delegate and willingness to accept some opposing views undermined the totality of his influence as editor. However, his championship of Nationalist China and his ideas, well known and deeply entrenched on issues close to the Japan question, certainly indicate the importance of Henry Luce as a gatekeeper to the news and views presented in American media.

Spreading Influence and Ideas

In *The Wise Men of Foreign Affairs*, Robert Schulzinger argued that elites outside the government often reflected official policy because bureaucrats, politicians, businessmen and academics came from the same sorts of elite social circles.[79] Thus, shared ideas were the result of the similarities across types of elites. In the case of leading media figures, the connection is even deeper than Schulzinger suggested. These people were part of the same social circles, with human relationships built on informal social connections. Through personal networks, media elites joined the policy-making process as active elements in the evolution of ideas out of which formal policy grew and was accepted. Ideas were discussed and defended, assumptions and visions were shared in unrecorded, informal environments. These individuals were already part of official and unofficial planning groups and were invited to share ideas and join associations, committees and government departments, further enmeshing them in the process.

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[74] Pearl S. Buck to Henry Luce, 2 November 1942. Box 1. Henry Luce Papers, Library of Congress.

[75] Brinkley, *The Publisher*, 294.

[76] During the three-day trip, Luce met with Hull, Welles and Wallace, in addition to Britain's Ambassador to the United States, Lord Halifax. Jessup, ed., *The Ideas of Henry Luce*, 348–351.

[77] Herzstein, *Henry R. Luce*, 268.

[78] Brinkley, *The Publisher*, 309.

[79] Schulzinger, *The Wise Men of Foreign Affairs*, 251.

Authors and policy-makers shared comments on early drafts of essays and articles. In this way, they became engaged in the ideas circulated in the media in a more complex fashion, both shaping and being shaped by media discourse. Examples of this kind of collaboration abound. Stanley Hornbeck, the former head of the State Department's Far Eastern department and influential Sinophile, sent Lippmann a memorandum of his 'observations' on the collapse of the Hull negotiations which led to the attack on Pearl Harbor. Although Lippmann did not cite the memorandum, it is possible that Hornbeck's views on Japan and China, which were similar to Owen Lattimore's, contributed to Lippmann's perspective on the Far East presented in his wartime publications.[80] Lippmann in turn both offered comments on a draft manuscript for Secretary of State Ed Stettinius and asked Grew to read and give opinions on Japan-related sections of his own book manuscript.[81] This practice was also common within respected but unofficial policy circles. In 1941, John Foster Dulles, who was then working on postwar planning within the Christian community and would later become Secretary of State, wrote to the Secretary of the American Council, Edward C. Carter, to comment on a draft monograph 'postwar worlds' before its publication.[82]

One particularly good example of the way in which these draft reviews helped circulate ideas is Joseph Grew's pre-publication reading of 'What Future for Japan?' by Asia specialist Lawrence K. Rosinger.[83] Grew offered suggestions for Rosinger to incorporate and expressed disagreement with some of the author's assumptions about postwar Japan. A month later, Grew sent both Rosinger's draft article and his own comments to Navy Secretary James Forrestal, suggesting that they meet over lunch and discuss the ideas presented. 'I am sure,' Grew wrote, 'that a talk [about the treatment of postwar Japan] would be mutually helpful.'[84] Although no record exists for these and other informal meetings, they form an important part of consensus building among officials. Such discussions, sparked by media articles, brought government departments closer together and had a direct impact on American policy toward postwar Japan.

Personal Connections

Soft connections knitted a few important media figures into influential circles. For example, their shared interest in China generated correspondence between Henry Luce and Cordell Hull through the United China Relief organization.[85] Walter Lippmann, charming and worldly, was an active member of the social networks of New York and Washington. The Lippmanns' wartime social calendar included meals with the Dean Achesons and the Henry Stimsons.[86] In 1939 the Lippmanns rented the house of future Office of Strategic Services (OSS) Director and Roosevelt

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[80] Stanley Hornbeck to Walter Lippmann, 21 February 1942. Box 78, Folder 1078, Reel 68. Walter Lippmann Papers, Yale University.

[81] Walter Lippmann to Joseph Grew, 2 May 1944. Box 74, Folder 928, Reel 64; Walter Lippmann to Edward Stettinius, 2 November 1943. Box 103, Folder 2001, Reel 92. Walter Lippmann Papers, Yale University.

[82] John Foster Dulles to Edward C. Carter, 14 January 1941. Box 48. Institute of Pacific Relations Papers, Columbia University.

[83] Planner response to the Rosinger article is also discussed in Janssen, *What Future Japan*, 143. Rosinger, like many wartime China experts, was later questioned by the Senate Internal Security subcommittee about possible communist sympathies. 'Obituary, L. K. Rosinger, 78, An Expert on China'.

[84] Joseph Grew to James V. Forrestal, 20 September 1943. Box 58. James V Forrestal Papers, Princeton University.

[85] Cordell Hull to Henry Luce, 5 September 1941. Box 2. Henry Luce Papers, Library of Congress.

[86] Dean Acheson to Lippmann, 31 May 1939. Box 50, Folder 4. Walter Lippmann Papers, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library. 6 February 1943, 29. Reel 8. Henry Lewis Stimson Diaries, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

confidant William Donovan.[87] Gift giving too was a source of warmth in relationships. Senator Vandenburg, having received from Luce a box of cigars, included in his thank-you note an invitation to meet at Luce's convenience.[88] Birthday, Christmas, and get-well cards were sent and saved; they reinforced the human bonds between policy makers.

Regular correspondence made for easy sharing of information between journalists and officials. Throughout the war, powerful figures like Forrestal and Stimson wrote to Lippmann to set up lunches and meetings and discuss the ideas presented in his columns.[89] In May 1944 Walter Lippmann telephoned Joseph Grew to tell him about a conversation with Soviet diplomat Vladimir Sergeyvich Pravdin. The two discussed Russian interests in the Pacific. Russia, Lippmann told Grew, had renewed territorial ambitions in Port Arthur, a warm-water port in the Far East which had been a source of imperial rivalry since the nineteenth century. The Soviets were also concerned about how cooperation with the Chinese communists in fighting the Japanese would be perceived in Washington and Chongqing. Grew had this information typed into a memorandum, which he then passed to the Secretary of State.[90] Later that year, Lippmann visited Henry Stimson after returning from a trip to France. He took the opportunity to express his views on the planned occupation of Germany, arguing that the country would remain a threat even under occupation and suggesting that the country be permanently divided.[91] Information and ideas moved between formal and informal channels at such meetings.

Opinion leaders developed reputations as active members of policy circles, and as a result were invited to join planning groups and committees. Shortly before America went to war, Bill Donovan began preparing for his new job as coordinator of defense information, a position which would evolve into head of the OSS.[92] To begin the project, Donovan wanted a group of eight or nine well informed individuals to meet informally and create a set of future scenarios for his staff to use as the basis of their first reports. Archibald MacLeish, working for Donovan, wrote to Luce that as 'the world's greatest' editor, 'we have to have you as one of the group.'[93] Henry Luce joined what they called the 'glass ball shooting committee,' which met at Donovan's home to set the agenda for OSS research. In 1943, MacLeish, then assistant director of the OWI, wrote to Luce again, asking for opinions and comments on a draft background sheet on China because of his authority on the subject.[94] Walter Lippmann, who enjoyed both public regard and personal associations with men in the highest level of government, was asked to become undersecretary of state in 1945, a position which he politely refused.[95]

Conclusion

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[87] Lippmann to William Donovan, 7 April 1939. Box 67, Folder 629. Walter Lippmann Papers, Yale University Library.

[88] Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg to Henry Luce, 20 December 1943. Box 3. Henry Luce Papers, Library of Congress.

[89] Henry L. Stimson to Lippmann, 25 Nov 1940. Box 104, Folder 2007; James Forrestal to Lippmann, 19 Feb 1942. Box 71, Folder 794. Walter Lippmann Papers, Yale University.

[90] Memorandum of Conversation, Walter Lippmann and Joseph Grew, 17 May 1944. MS Am 1687.3, Mem cons Vol. 6 (1944). Joseph Grew Papers, Harvard University.

[91] 11 May 1943, 31. Reel 8. Henry Lewis Stimson Diaries, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

[92] The OSS would in turn become the Central Intelligence Agency after the war.

[93] Archibald MacLeish to Henry Luce, 27 August and 9 September 1941, Box 2. Henry Luce Papers, Library of Congress.

[94] Archibald MacLeish to Henry Luce, 11 January 1943. Box 2. Henry Luce Papers, Library of Congress.

[95] Walter Lippmann to James Byrnes, 23 August 1945. Box 59, Folder 355, Reel 50. Walter Lippmann Papers, Yale University.

As the major source of information available to the public on current and foreign affairs, popular media played an important role in both reflecting and shaping public opinion. However, linking media coverage and policy-making is not simple. The relationship between media, public opinion, politicians' perception of opinion and decision-making is complex.[96] Despite these serious limitations, popular media is useful for capturing a sense of the 'public mood' in this period. Certainly, contemporary politicians were greatly concerned with the media as both an indicator of public opinion on specific issues and as a powerful factor in forming that opinion. President Roosevelt, for example, requested and read weekly reports on these op-ed pieces and surveys of newspaper clippings.[97] Foreign leaders also had access to American media output. As domestic politicians used summaries of the press in order to understand their constituents, America's allies used them to draw conclusions about US interests and intentions.[98] This window, dim and distorting as it may have been, was especially important in subjects like postwar planning where US diplomats were secretive or unclear about national aims. Thus, despite the flaws of using popular media to evaluate public opinion, it was indeed regarded as measure of that phenomenon by American and Allied policy makers. Media was therefore the major connection between the American public and American policy-making. And, to the extent that it did convey a sense of the 'public mood' in a broad sense, media indicators are important in understanding how Americans thought about the role of their country in Asia and the future of Japan.

Opinion leaders – editors, journalists and expert contributors – comprised a clear group of actors interested in Japan's future and active in shaping policy. Distinct from media, though tied to it through publications, the cases examined in this chapter were part of an internationalist in-group involved in planning. Luce and Lippmann were both elite East Coast internationalists who called for expanding American influence and protecting American interests abroad. These two were particularly influential because of their large readerships and deep interlinkage with officials, but were part of a more diverse group including Pearl S. Buck, Owen Lattimore, Anne O'Hare McCormick and many others. Opinion leaders both shaped and reflected the ideas of planners because of their shared personal backgrounds and social interaction, control over available material, correspondence and collaboration. The divide between officials and outside elites during the war was porous. Through personal connections and established reputations, journalists, authors and editors shared ideas and knowledge, engaged in formal and informal planning, tried to influence policy based on personal beliefs, and were invited to join the government themselves. Individuals and ideas moved in both directions. Just as it is difficult to chart the spread of ideas, it is difficult to distinguish between shaping and being shaped in such a two-way flow of information. The patterns of interaction examined here expanded what might be called the 'policy making community' to include area specialists, opinion columnists, editors, and publishers.

Rosy coverage helped create unrealistic expectations for a postwar China which would be a close ally and the dominant power in postwar Asia. This conception made it possible to sideline Japan as a major power in future plans. Before and during the war, popular media reinforced anti-Asian racial stereotypes and the dehumanization of the Japanese, stirring wartime race-hate. However, print media also made the work done by the opinion leaders and other groups involved in wartime planning available to the public. Newspapers published analysis on postwar Japan from books, conference summaries and speeches. These short distillations of careful and nuanced

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[96] Jespersen, *American Images of China*, xix.
[97] Memorandum to Lowell Mellett, 21 July 1941. PSF (Subject) Mellett, Roosevelt Library.
[98] White, 'The "American Century" in World History,' 116.

approaches to complex issues ensured that ordinary Americans were not strangers to the broad outlines of postwar Japan policy. The lines of future policy were uncertain within and outside government, particularly during the Roosevelt Administration. However, during the war the news media provided a crucial service in exposing the reading public to ideas that would prepare them for what was to come. Newspapers covered the 'soft' peace based on Japanese cooperation that, as the situation on the ground changed dramatically with the start of the Chinese civil war and the rise of a Cold War, would become the basis for a new alliance between America and Japan.

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