Breaking Eggs for a Holodomor

Walter Duranty, the New York Times, and the Denigration of Gareth Jones

The purpose of this article is to delineate the circumstances and contexts within which the denigration of Welsh journalist Gareth Jones occurred by offering a detailed chronology of the events surrounding the publication of his first Russian famine article on March 31, 1933, also the date of Walter Duranty’s famine-denying article that denigrated Jones by name. The article also analyzes the sources that chronicle the reactions by Western news media, journalists who were involved, and official responses by political leaders. Lastly, the article unpacks the representations of stakeholders who historicize Jones and his coverage of the famine, illustrated in two complementary campaigns: to commemorate Jones as a Hero of the Ukraine and to strip Walter Duranty of his 1932 Pulitzer Prize.

On March 31, 1933, the London Evening Standard published an article titled “Famine Rules Russia” by Gareth Jones, a young Welsh journalist who had recently returned from an unescorted walking tour through several of the grain-growing districts in the Soviet Union. In his article, the first of twenty-one that he wrote over the next few weeks, Jones asserted that “the present state of Russian agriculture is already catastrophic but that in a year’s time its condition will have worsened tenfold.” On the very same day, the New York Times published an article titled “Russians Hungry, But Not Starving,” by Walter Duranty, an Englishman who had been the Moscow correspondent for the New York Times since 1921. In his lead paragraph, Duranty called Jones’ claims “a big scare story . . . with ‘thousands already dead and millions menaced by death and starvation.’ Its author is Gareth Jones.” By denigrating Jones by name, Duranty, the Pulitzer Prize winner in 1932, not only denied that a famine was raging across the USSR, but he also ignited a controversy about the legitimacy of that famine that has persisted for eighty years.

The contrasts between the two articles and authors are striking beyond the obvious difference in the headlines. A graduate of Cambridge fluent in Russian, German, and French, Jones was twenty-seven years old and a part-time journalist, known mainly as the foreign affairs adviser to the former prime minister, David Lloyd George. Jones’ article merits consideration for its forthright presentation of testimony from peasants gathered during a difficult and dangerous walking tour through fourteen villages across more than forty miles within the republics of Russia and Ukraine at a time when travel within these regions was banned. For his part, Duranty was a forty-seven-year-old seasoned journalist at the height of his fame, considered the most important Western journalist in Moscow. His article, written from the relative safety and comfort of Moscow, was pieced together by making inquiries “in Soviet commissariats and in foreign embassies . . . and from my personal connections, Russian and foreign.” Jones’ reporting represents journalism at its best, bold and assertive in chronicling a disaster of catastrophic proportions; Duranty’s article used biased sources and euphemisms to conceal the grim realities of a famine.

The Duranty-initiated controversy/famine denial, which was chronicled by a number of journalists who were stationed in...
Moscow at the time and aware of the famine and its cover-up, as well as by numerous scholars, represents what Sally J. Taylor, in Stalin's Apologist: Walter Duranty—The New York Times’s Man in Moscow, calls “one of the sorriest periods of reportage in the history of the free press.” Unfortunately, the controversy came to overshadow Jones’ reporting of the Five-Year Plan and the famine of 1932-33. However, on the day that both of their articles were published, Jones was jubilant about what he had already accomplished, doubtlessly unaware of Duranty’s criticism of his reporting. Jones wrote to his family:

I have never had two such days in my life. Yesterday the N.Y. Times, the Associated Press, the Allied Newspapers, the Press Association all wanted interviews! Then I went to tell L.G. [Lloyd George] about my visit. Then was called to the Daily Express to the Editor and offered £250 to write a series of articles.

The New York Times, it should be noted, never published a report based on an interview with Jones.

While scholarship has focused a harsh light on Duranty’s role in denying the famine, these studies have given scant attention to Jones’ reporting, which began in 1930 after the first of three trips to the USSR and continued until his death in August 1935. Jones’ reporting was further eclipsed after journals such as the Ukrainian-language Svoboda (Freedom) and its English-language subsidiary, the Ukrainian Weekly, took over the primary reporting of the famine in October 1933, when they launched a campaign asserting that Soviet policy had distinctly targeted Ukrainians, in the process murdering millions of innocent people in an act of genocide. Stunned by the Duranty-orchestrated denials and shunned by some of the people who had supported him, Jones fell from his brief stay in the international spotlight during his brief tenure as a reporter with the Western Mail in 1934-35.

The purpose of this article is to delineate the circumstances and contexts within which the denigration of Jones occurred by offering a detailed chronology of the events between March 27, when Jones wrote to Lloyd George detailing his interview with Soviet Foreign Minister Maxim Litvinov, and March 31, when the two important newspaper articles were published; by analyzing the primary sources that chronicle Jones’ reporting of the famine and the reaction by Western news media, journalists who were involved, and official responses by British and American political leaders in the immediate aftermath; and lastly by unpacking the representations of stakeholders who historicize Jones and his coverage of the famine, known in the Ukraine as the Holodomor, Ukrainian for “killing by starvation.” This project argues that the denigration of Gareth Jones serves as an example illustrating the importance and functionality of collective memory and journalism’s usability for the study of media history. How we come to know, understand and remember the reporting of the famine of 1931-1933 is important because of what scholar Barbie Zelizer refers to as journalism’s usability, “its invocation as a tool to defend different aims and agendas.” Journalists develop a repertoire of preferred practices through a recycling of informal associations around shared experiences. In this case, the famine is the “critical incident” through which journalists set up and negotiate preferred practices. Journalists come together as an “interpretive community” by creating stories about their past that they routinely and informally circulate to each other—stories that contain certain constructions of reality, certain kinds of narratives, and certain definitions of appropriate practice. In addition to journalists’ creating narratives about what famine reporting has been and should be, various constituencies or publics can attend to representing a key event by fitting it within their collective memory, validating themselves as well as the memories they invoke. However, it is also important to understand that all collective memories are partial, and at times “hide as much as they reveal.” Memories, in this way, act like mythologies; no one memory can bring forth all that is known about an event, nor can an event rely upon a single source.

Gareth Jones reports the famine in the Soviet Union for the Evening Standard on March 31, 1933.

Much of the scholarship about Gareth Jones and his reporting of the famine has focused on the role of Western journalists in reporting or failing to report the famine of 1932-33, comprised, in part, of works by the journalists themselves. Memoirs by Duranty, Eugene Lyons, Malcolm Muggeridge, and William H. Chamberlin document the working conditions faced by Western journalists forced to satisfy the censors. Of the memoirs, Assignment in Utopia, published by Lyons in 1937, offers the most complete, albeit flawed, explanation of how Western correspondents purportedly denigrated Jones’ reporting of the famine upon his arrival in Berlin after leaving the USSR. The following description by Lyons has served as the basis for almost every interpretation of how Jones was branded a liar.

The scene in which the American press corps combined to repudiate Jones is fresh in my mind. It was in the evening and Comrade [Konstantin] Umansky, the soul of graciousness, consented to meet us in the hotel room of a correspondent. He knew that he had a strategic advantage over us because of the Metro-Vickers story. . . . There was much bargaining in a spirit of gentlemanly give-and-take, under the effulgence of Umansky’s gilded smile, before a formula of denial was worked out.

We admitted enough to soothe our consciences, but in round-about phrases that damned Jones as a liar. The filthy
business having been disposed of, someone ordered vodka and zakuski, Umansky joined the celebration, and the party did not break up until the early morning hours.12

This passage constitutes the only first-hand account regarding Jones’ reporting of the famine and the immediate repudiation of that reporting. Until recently, many scholars accepted this version of events uncritically. Casting Jones in the role of the victim served a dual role: On the one hand, it purportedly absolved those journalists who, barred from traveling to the famine-stricken areas, were forced to conceal the famine in order to gain access to the trial of six British engineers accused of espionage for the Metropolitan-Vickers company, an event that strained relations between Great Britain and the USSR and resulted in a temporary embargo on Soviet goods. On the other hand, the victimization of Jones added a mythological dimension that sustains the professional practices of all journalists. As Lyons recounts, “Jones had a conscientious streak in his make-up which took him on a secret journey into the Ukraine. . . . That same streak was to take him a few years later into the interior of China during political disturbances, and was to cost him his life at the hands of Chinese military bands.”13 Perpetuating a mythology of courage under duress is part of journalism’s overall narrative. This particular narrative also has a duplicitous villain in the person of Walter Duranty, on whom so much of the scholarship has been focused.

Marco Carynnyk’s “Making the News Fit to Print: Walter Duranty, the New York Times and the Ukrainian Famine of 1933” offers a compelling account of the sordid affair, focusing primarily on Duranty’s role in orchestrating attempts to discredit Jones’ reports in March 1933. However, Carynnyk devotes a mere handful of paragraphs to Jones’ first-hand accounts.14 In “A Blanket of Silence: The Response of the Western Press Corps in Moscow to the Ukraine Famine of 1932-33,” Sally J. Taylor, one of Duranty’s biographers, distills the lengths to which Duranty went to appease Soviet authorities in order to maintain his standing as the doyen of Western journalists based in the Soviet Union. Taylor considers accounts of the famine by Muggeridge, Chamberlin, and Ralph W. Barnes, all of whom published articles before Jones returned from the area. She even quotes from the Duranty article of March 31, but curiously never mentions Jones by name.

In Angels in Stalin’s Paradise: Western Reporters in Soviet Russia, 1917 to 1937, a Case Study of Louis Fischer and Walter Duranty, James William Crowl devotes the better part of two chapters to the famine cover-up, detailing the inadequacies of many correspondents’ reporting but mentioning little about Jones’ work, other than to say that Jones, like Muggeridge and Barnes, learned that he could slip onto trains and spend days or weeks in stricken areas despite the travel ban on reporters. In fact, Jones had Umansky’s blessing to travel to Kharkov, ostensibly to report on a tractor factory. Crowl asserts that the stories Jones wrote caused such a stir in the West that “the Kremlin was eager for the foreign press in Moscow to deny its claims.”15 This last assertion refers to Lyons’ version of events. In “Modernization from the Other Shore: American Observers and the Costs of Soviet Economic Development,” David C. Engerman argues that even though Chamberlin, Lyons, Fischer, and Duranty held distinctly different views about the famine, they shared many common assumptions about the need for modernization in the USSR as well as notions of what constituted the Russian national character. Engerman describes Jones not as a journalist but as “a Russian-speaking assistant to former British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, [who] obtained his information during brief travels through Ukraine.”16 Engerman’s description fails to contextualize Jones’ work within a journalistic framework, never noting his previous publications related to agricultural conditions, forced collectivization, the Five-Year Plan, or Jones’ astute understanding of political situation in the USSR.

Finally, Whitman Bassow’s The Moscow Correspondents provides a history of the journalists who reported from Russia since the Revolution in 1917. Bassow explains that Western journalists only gained access to the USSR as a result of the famine of 1921 when the Bolsheviks were forced to plead for help. One of the provisos attached to humanitarian aid was that American correspondents be permitted to travel freely to report on food distribution by the American Relief Agency (ARA), which was headed by Herbert Hoover. In his chapter focused on coverage of the 1932-33 famine, Bassow identifies Jones as “an enterprising reporter for Britain’s Manchester Guardian . . . [whose] eyewitness reports in the Guardian created a furor.”17 Bassow also uses Lyons’ account of the Umansky-ordered famine denials to explain the concealment. He notes, “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.”18

The story of Jones’ reporting of the famine and the denials by pro-Soviet Western journalists is one of the more misunderstood episodes in journalism history. The episode of “throwing down Jones”19 by Western journalists stationed in Moscow purportedly occurred on the night after the first newspaper reports of Jones’ tour of the Ukrainian countryside were published on March 29 in the New York Evening Post and Chicago Daily News, as well as several British newspapers. Even more problematic than Lyons’ lack of details about the event’s timing, who was present, and the nature of this “gentlemen’s agreement” in exchange for access to the Metro-Vickers trial is Lyons’ framing of Jones as someone whose reports were based mainly on what Lyons, Duranty, and Muggeridge—all of whom Jones interviewed during his March trip—had told him.

In Assignment, Lyons readily admitted to feeling deeply ashamed about his and other journalists’ failure to report the famine, and his recounting was supposed to serve as atonement for that failure. However, his version of events is suspect on several counts. For one, he asserted that what Jones reported about the famine “was little more than a summary of what the correspondents and foreign diplomats had told him,”20 That Jones could write more than twenty newspaper articles based merely on a summary of what others told him rather than on the eyewitness testimony of peasants and workers recorded in his diaries illustrates Lyons’ penchant for diminishing the importance of Jones’ reporting while keeping the focus on himself. Secondly, his description of the vodka and zakuski party in exchange for their “phrases that damned Jones as a liar”21 is fraught with gaps that strain credulity. Lyons never named any other journalist who was present that evening, nor has anyone ever come forward to corroborate Lyons’ version of events. If anyone later had reason to

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210
attest to this version of events and deflect criticism from the famine denial and calling Jones a liar, it was Duranty, for he published the only article directly contesting Jones’ reporting of famine conditions in the USSR.

Lyons began this chapter in *Assignment* by quoting from Duranty’s March 31 article published in the *New York Times* without naming him, yet Lyons referred to the article as “our” denial and “what we did.”22 If this article represented an orchestrated collaboration, it is reasonable to assume that at some later point Duranty would have verified that effort as collaborative, in effect, spreading the blame; however, he never did, even after he admitted years later that a famine had indeed occurred.23 More telling is the fact that the article published in the *New York Times* on March 31 was based almost entirely on Jones’ interview with Duranty that occurred on March 19, which clearly points to Duranty’s being the sole author.

Duranty doubtlessly knew about the Jones Berlin press conference and perhaps even about H.R. Knickerbocker’s March 29 article about it, but if Duranty had a copy, he would have directly attacked assertions in the article. That Duranty may not have had a copy of the article is a distinct possibility given the timing of these publications. As Nigel Colley, Jones’ great-nephew, notes:

> From considering international time zone differences between New York and Moscow, if Knickerbocker’s article came out mid-afternoon in New York on the 29th, it would already be about midnight in Moscow, and this would have been before anyone in New York had chance to read it then and immediately disseminate its contents back to Moscow.24

Colley also explains that conceivably the Umansky-orchestrated party to throw down Jones occurred on the evening of March 30 and that Duranty was furnished with a complete copy of Knickerbocker’s article “so as to counter Gareth’s specific allegations”25 and then still have time to cable his article to the *New York Times* in order for publication on March 31. Duranty, however, did not counter specific allegations from the Knickerbocker article; rather, he countered specific points that Jones told him during the interview in Moscow. Had Duranty been furnished with a copy of Knickerbocker’s article, he would have used it. Lastly, Duranty’s famine denial story was almost certainly his own doing. He was en route to Berlin on March 30, having cabled another story from that city on March 31, meaning it is unlikely he attended the “vodka and zakuski party”26 described by Lyons, if such an event occurred.

Jones was not, as Lyons suggested, “the most surprised human being alive when the facts he so painstakingly garnered from our mouths were snowed under by our denials.”27 Other than Duranty’s story of March 31, the only other denial came from Fischer, who was on a book tour in the United States. When asked about the number of deaths in Kazakhstan, Fischer was quoted as saying, “Who counted them? How could anyone march through a country and count a million people? Of course people are hungry there—desperately hungry. Russia is turning over from agriculture to industrialism. It’s like a man going into business on small capital.”28 Duranty’s and Fischer’s denials of famine hardly constitute an avalanche burying Jones, raising further doubts about the Lyons version of that night’s events.

In creating this “Poor Gareth Jones”29 character who serves as the sacrificial lamb to their ineptitudes, Lyons undermines the importance of Jones’ work while deflecting criticism from their failure to cover the famine. Casting Jones as the victim of Duranty’s denigration mitigates the importance of his work and deflects attention from his accomplishments back to the Western correspondents in Moscow stymied by the travel ban that had been imposed in February. The record shows Jones was anything but a victim; he confronted Duranty’s famine denial directly and exposed Duranty and other Western correspondents as “masters of euphemism and understatement.”20 Additionally, he criticized liberals such as George Bernard Shaw and the liberal press, he wrote a letter to the editor in support of Muggeridge’s famine reporting, and he even questioned Lloyd George’s “admiration for Stalin.”31 Jones was quite capable of standing up for himself and for what he knew. He was neither stooge nor parrot. His reporting was his own. The only tragedy is that for far too long scholars have given more attention to the cowardice of those complicit in manufacturing consent32 for Stalin’s paradise instead of lauding the journalists who exposed the famine. Almost all of the Western journalists, including Duranty and Fischer, eventually recanted their denials of the famine. Unfortunately, by that point, Jones had largely become the forgotten man.

Upon his arrival in Berlin, Jones shared his findings in a press conference that included, among others, Knickerbocker (HK) for the *New York Evening Post* and Edgar Ansel Mowrer (EM) for the *Chicago Daily News*. Both of the American journalists’ March 29 stories about Jones’ foray into the countryside began by referencing the 1933 famine in light of the 1921 famine and attributing this news peg to Jones, while identifying him as the foreign affairs secretary (HK) or private secretary (EM) to David Lloyd George. Both explained that Jones was basing his estimation of famine conditions “after a long walking tour through the Ukraine and other districts in the Soviet Union”33 (HK) or “through the rural districts of the Ukraine”34 (EM). While Knickerbocker noted that Jones spoke Russian fluently and was the first foreigner to visit the countryside since authorities forbade foreign correspondents from leaving Moscow, Mowrer wrote that even though “foreign correspondents were forbidden to visit the famine regions of the Ukraine, Jones was allowed to do so.”35

Mowrer’s assertion was certainly correct in that Jones had secured permission to travel to Kharkov from Umansky, whom he visited in Moscow shortly after his arrival on March 5. Even before departing for the USSR, Jones intimated in a letter that he was hoping to journey there.36 Jones’ status as a private individual and not a recognized member of the correspondents’ corps may have played a role in securing Umansky’s permission. However, that any foreigner, even someone having Jones’ connections through Lloyd George, was allowed to travel unescorted illustrates the lengths to which the Soviet Foreign Office was willing to go to accommodate him. Jones’ status as a private individual also saved him after he was arrested in a railway station by the secret police. Jones recounted the event twice: the first time in his second article for the *Western Mail*, titled “Starving Russians Seething with Discontent,” published on April 4; and the second time on January 14, 1935, in an article syndicated in Hearst newspapers. In the first version, Jones framed the incident around the arrest of the six British engineers, four of whom were imprisoned in the headquarters of the OGPU, which was the predecessor of the KGB, and then related what happened to him.

I had narrowly escaped being arrested myself not long before at a small railway station in the Ukraine, where I had entered into conversation with some peasants. These were bewailing their hunger to me, and were gathering a crowd,
all murmuring, “There is no bread,” when a militiaman had appeared. “Stop that growling,” he had shouted to the peasants; while to me he said, “Come along; where are your documents?”

A civilian (an OGPU man) appeared from nowhere, and they both submitted me to a thorough grueling of questions. They discussed among themselves what they should do with me, and finally the OGPU man decided to accompany me on the train to the big city of Kharkoff, where at last he left me in peace. There was to be no arrest. 37

In the 1935 version Jones was confronted by “a red-faced, well-fed OGPU policemen in uniform,” who then summoned a member of the secret police to escort Jones to “the nearest city, Kharkov.” Significantly, Jones developed this scene by highlighting his status as a journalist, not a private individual:

Throughout the journey I impressed him [secret police] with the fact that I had interviewed Lenin’s widow, and a number of commissars and great panjandrums of the Soviet regime, and by the time we reached Kharkoff I believed he was thoroughly convinced that any real arrest of myself would plunge Russia and Europe and the United States into a world war.

For he decided to accompany me to a foreign consulate in Kharkoff and he left me at the doorstep, while I, rejoicing at my freedom, bade him a polite farewell—an anti-climax but a welcome one. 38

The second version, written almost two years after the fact when Jones had reason to feel as though he’d been abandoned by people such as Lloyd George and Muggeridge, embellished the incident. For example, only the second version referred to the interview with Lenin’s widow (conducted during his 1931 visit) and that his arrest “would plunge Russia and Europe and the United States into a world war.” 39 This mention of the United States makes sense because this article appeared in American newspapers. Given what happened to William Stoneman and Ralph W. Barnes during their foray into the Kuban countryside in February 1933 and given the severity of the famine, it is clear that only his status as advisor to the former prime minister and his diplomatic passport saved him from more trouble. Jones secured a free visa from Ivan Maisky, the Soviet ambassador to Great Britain, in January 1933, which ultimately enabled Jones to avoid arrest; he was brought to Kharkoff, and left at the German foreign consulate since Great Britain did not have a consulate in Kharkoff at this time. It should also be noted that when Jones wrote the 1935 articles for the Hearst newspapers, he was en route to the Far East and was doubtlessly working from memory, which may account for the differences.

Another perplexing aspect related to this incident stems from the fact Jones did not record the arrest in his diary or discuss it in any personal correspondence. Not documenting his near arrest marks this episode as an extraordinary exception, but can be explained by the fact Jones knew his intention was to reveal the famine. The revelation was bound to cause problems with those who had trusted him—Maisky, Umansky, Litvinov, and Lloyd George. It is equally perplexing that his having been detained and escorted to the German consulate by the secret police was never communicated to Litvinov, who hosted a reception at his residence on March 19 that Jones attended. Despite the discrepancy about Jones’ being allowed to travel into the countryside, both Knickerbocker and Mowrer explain that Jones planned to use his address at the Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA) on March 30, to explain “the reasons for the [travel] prohibition” 40 (HK) and “the dislike of the Russian authorities to having conditions in the Soviet Union investigated” 41 (EM). In pointing to the famine as the reason why journalists had been banned from traveling and charging that Soviet authorities bristled at his exposures of internal problems, Jones certainly knew that he would be denounced by Soviet officials and never again granted entrance into the USSR.

In giving the Berlin press conference, Jones reconfirmed reports that had begun appearing in European and American newspapers about famine conditions afflicting regions of the USSR beginning in January and February. Jones further developed this point the following evening in his speech at the RIIA in London, titled “Soviet Russia in March 1933.” In addition to what he had conveyed in his press conference, Jones aimed part of his critique at the liberal press for hypocrisy and cowardice in raising events in Eastern Galacia while remaining silent “when a hundred million peasants are condemned to hunger and serfdom.” 42 Jones expressed particular disdain for a letter published in the Manchester Guardian on March 2 and signed by George Bernard Shaw and twenty others, a translation of which Jones had read in Izvestia while in Moscow. The letter reproached against attempts to discredit the Soviets’ experiment. Jones viewed the letter as farcical. In his speech, Jones decried the signatories’ gullibility. “Viewed from Moscow it was a mixture of hypocrisy, of gullibility and of such crass ignorance of the situation that the signatories should be ashamed of venturing to express an opinion about something which they know so little.” 43 In his Berlin press conference, Jones had made a point that Russians held Shaw in contempt. Mowrer quoted Jones, “After Dictator Josef V. Stalin, the hungry Russians most hate George Bernard Shaw for his accounts that they have plenty of food, whereas they are really starving.” 44 Jones’ willingness to confront cowardice on the part of liberals who turned a blind eye to the Stalinist regime’s tyranny against the peasantry was not altogether surprising; nonetheless, he demonstrated considerable courage in criticizing someone as famous as Shaw.

Little did Jones know that as he delivered his RIIA speech at Chatham House in London, Duranty was preparing his piece for the New York Times in which he denied the famine and accused Jones by name of distributing “a big scare story.” 45 Editors at the New York Times created the main and secondary headlines that clearly deny the famine, providing evidence that culpability for misrepresenting the famine went well beyond Duranty. In his opening paragraph, Duranty called Jones’ claims “a big scare story . . . with ‘thousands already dead and millions menaced by death and starvation.’” 46 Although no attribution was provided, this was the only direct quote Duranty used; however, Jones was not quoted in either Knickerbocker’s Evening Post article or Mowrer’s Daily News article as saying this. Knickerbocker quotes Jones as saying “Millions are dying of hunger.” 47 In a summary of what Jones was planning to say at the RIIA, Knickerbocker also wrote about the “impending death of millions.” 48 If Duranty were working from a copy of Knickerbocker’s article, he certainly allowed himself considerable laxity in presenting this information. Similarly, nothing in Mowrer’s article resembled Duranty’s direct quote. In terms of fatalities, Mowrer quoted Jones about deaths in Kazakhstan: “A foreign expert [Otto Schiller] who returned from Kazakhstan told me [Jones] that 1,000,000 out of 5,000,000 inhabitants there
have died of hunger.” The quote that Duranty used appeared in none of the other articles syndicated in Great Britain and the United States. Duranty must have been quoting Jones from the interview Jones conducted with him in Moscow. Duranty then quoted Jones as saying that the USSR was “on the verge of a terrific smash,” as he told the writer (emphasis added). In the next paragraph, Duranty again referred to their meeting:

Mr. Jones is a man of a keen and active mind . . . but the writer [Duranty] thought Mr. Jones’s judgment was somewhat hasty and asked him on what it was based. It appeared that he had made a forty-mile walk through villages in the neighborhood of Kharkov and had found conditions sad.

I suggested that that was a rather inadequate cross-section of a big country but nothing could shake his conviction of impending doom (emphasis added).

Clearly, Duranty was basing his article on their interview and not on what had been published in the Knickerbocker and Mowrer articles. After a section discussing other scare stories, Duranty returned to their March interview. “He [Jones] told me there was virtually no bread in the villages he had visited and that the adults were haggard, gaunt and discouraged, but that he had seen no dead or dying animals or human beings.” Duranty was reporting the gist of their conversation without being completely truthful. In point of fact, while Jones did not record witnessing any dead animals or humans himself, he did record eyewitness testimony from peasants who had lost animals, neighbors, and family members.

Duranty even agreed with Jones’s assessment about the mismanagement of collective farming. “I believed him because I knew it to be correct.” However, that assessment was as far as Duranty went in agreeing with Jones. After admitting that agricultural commissariats made a mess of Soviet food production, however, Duranty reverted to deploying stereotypes about Soviet indifference to the casualties involved in their drive toward the socialization of agriculture. Describing the Bolsheviks as being “animated by fanatical conviction,” Duranty used an expression that has become a staple of British journalism.

Duranty’s article made no direct reference to the March 29 articles by Knickerbocker and Mowrer; rather, every mention of Jones referenced their Moscow interview. In his diary from the meeting Jones recorded one particularly telling sentence: “I don’t trust Duranty. He still believes in collectivization. Said, Save face. Third international down & out. “Quiet”

In his letter to the New York Times editor, Jones attacked Duranty’s article but not the man, “whom I must thank for his continued kindness and helpfulness to hundreds of American and British visitors to Moscow.” Nonetheless, Jones countered Duranty’s assertion that he was forecasting the doom of the Soviet regime, calling it a “strange suggestion . . . a forecast I have never ventured.” He also took up Duranty’s claim about not having seen any dead people or animals. “That is true, but one does not need a particularly nimble brain to grasp that even in the Russian famine districts the dead are buried and that there the dead animals are devoured.” Despite this note of mild sarcasm, Jones was tactful in explaining that the Soviet Foreign Office successfully concealed the famine by censoring foreign journalists, turning them into “masters of euphemism and understatement.” He understood that they were forced to “give ‘famine’ the polite name of ‘food shortage’ and ‘starving to death’ is softened to read as ‘widespread mortality from diseases due to malnutrition.’” Rather than level accusations against these journalists working under duress, Jones instead delineated his five sources: foreign observers, conversations with peasants “who had migrated into the towns,” letters written by German colonists in Russia, evidence from journalists and technical experts “who had been in the countryside,” and finally talks with hundreds of peasants in Russia, who provided “an unanswerable indictment of Soviet agricultural policy.” He reminded Duranty that he was not basing his conclusion that a severe famine was ravaging the countryside based on his tramp through “a small part of vast Russia,” but on all three of his trips to the USSR, his four years of study of the Russian language and history, and his direct contact with the people in twenty villages across Ukraine, the Black Earth district, and in the Moscow region.

Jones was indeed convinced that the USSR was suffering from a severe famine, evidenced by the title of the first article published on that fateful day of March 31 in the Evening Standard, “Famine Rules Russia.” The Standard’s introduction was brief, describing Jones as “one of Mr. Lloyd George’s private secretaries. He has just returned from an extensive tour on foot in Soviet Russia. He speaks Russian fluently—and here is the terrible story the peasants told him.” In the previous day’s newspaper, the Standard had printed an advertisement titled “Russia as It Is,” which used the same introduction, though it included the fact that Jones was “the first foreigner to visit the Russian countryside since the Soviets confined foreign correspondents to the city of Moscow.” Significantly, the Standard’s editors referred to Jones in almost the same language as The Times editors had in 1930, highlighting his affiliation with Lloyd George, his fluency with the Russian language, and his walking tour. The Standard’s description of the walking tour as “extensive” stands in counterpoint to Duranty’s criticism, and points to the relativity of such an estimation due to the sheer size of the USSR. Jones used extensive eyewitness testimony from peasants and workers to convey the article’s thrust, articulated in the secondary headline, “The 5-Year Plan Has Killed the Bread Supply.” This awkward trope fails to mention the people who were
being starved to death.

Jones, however, organized his article around a series of encounters with ordinary citizens. The article serves as an excellent example of how Jones employed his source material. In the opening section, he created a sense of immediacy by dramatizing a confrontation between a father and son, the former a skilled worker in a Moscow factory and the latter a member of the Young Communist League. Jones distilled what is, in the diary, a lengthy exchange between the father and son. In the article, the man “shouted at his son”:

"It is terrible now. We workers are starving. Look at Chelyabinsk where I once worked. Disease there is carrying away members of us workers and the little food there is uneatable. That is what you have done to our Mother Russia."

This last statement was not recorded in the diary, and the son’s retort in the diary was limited to “But our gigants”; it was fleshed out much more fully in the article:

The father turned the idea of construction into a rhetorical question, which also ends the exchange in the diary. “What’s the use of construction when you have destroyed all that’s best in Russia?” In the diary, Jones described their exchange as “a violent argument.”

In the next paragraph, Jones posed a question about the gravity of the situation, speculating that “if millions are dying in the villages, as they are, for I did not visit a single village where many had not died, what will it be like in a month’s time?”

But we work for far greater slave drivers now. Now it’s absolute slavery. And they’ve ruined the peasant. . . . Gigants, indeed; when they’ve robbed the whole country of bread, when people are dying of hunger everywhere, when the next winter will be worse still. The workers will be too hungry to work in those Gigants. They’ve cleared the country of horses.

It is interesting to conjecture why Jones did not use this last indictment in the newspaper article, for it conveyed the essence of what Jones was attempting to communicate, namely, that as a result of the rapid buildup of industrial might “all that was best in Russia has disappeared.”

Jones then presented his own perspective on what the Five-Year Plan has left in its wake.

This ruin I saw in its grim reality. I tramped through a number of villages in the snow of March. I saw children with swollen bellies. I slept in peasants’ huts, sometimes nine of us in one room. I talked to every peasant I met, and the general conclusion I draw is that the present state of Russian agriculture is already catastrophic but that in a year’s time its condition will have worsened tenfold.

This paragraph captured the devastation in stark simplicity, and Jones effectively personalized his experience by counting himself among “the nine of us in one room.” Jones was not completely accurate in his prediction that things would worsen tenfold over the next year; in fact, the harvest of 1933 was considerably better than the previous two years, and there were several million fewer people to feed. Nonetheless, conditions remained bleak through the summer of 1933, a fact substantiated by people including William Henry Chamberlin, Otto Schiller, and Whiting Williams, all of whom wrote about the famine later in 1933 and 1934. Despite the fact that the harvest of 1933 was an improvement over the previous two, the suffering of the peasants in Ukraine, North Caucasus, and the Lower Volga might have been alleviated had procurements and exports been reduced in the previous autumn.

In the next section, Jones established two sentences that served as the leitmotiv for the remainder of his articles: “There is no bread” and “All are swollen.” He then uses the testimony of four peasants to document the conditions he found in the Ukrainian countryside as well as within miles of Moscow. Jones identified the people as “women who were trudging with empty sacks towards Moscow.”

The peasants told him about having no food, no cattle, and very few horses. Jones explained the significance:

The horse is now a question of life and death, for without a horse how can one plough? And if one cannot plough, how can one sow for the next harvest? And if one cannot sow for the next harvest, then death is the only prospect in the future.

In the next paragraph, Jones posed a question about the gravity of the situation, speculating that “if millions are dying in the villages, as they are, for I did not visit a single village where many had not died, what will it be like in a month’s time?”

This directly countered Duranty’s contention; Jones may not have directly witnessed anyone dying, but that hardly discounts Jones’ assertion that people were dying in every village he visited. Without potatoes, without beets, previously used as cattle fodder but now needed for human consumption, the situation was quickly approaching catastrophic proportions, far worse than the more localized 1921 famine. But today the famine is everywhere, in the formerly rich Ukraine, in Russia, in Central Asia, in North Caucasia—everywhere.

Lack of food was not the only thing to dread, even for the people in the towns and cities, who for the most part were “warmly clad and . . . well fed.” Moscow, Jones related, “does not look so stricken.” However, for the vast majority of unskilled workers a new dread loomed: unemployment. Thousands were being dismissed from factories in many parts of the USSR. Jones used the testimony from two workers to illustrate the new reality for many:

It is terrible now. I get two pounds of bread a day and it is rotten bread. I get no meat, no eggs, no butter. Before the war I used to get a lot of meat and it was cheap. But I haven’t had meat for a year. Eggs were only a kopeck each before the war, but now they are a great luxury. I get a little soup, but it is not enough to live on.

Those who were dismissed, often for minor offenses such as arriving minutes late, faced severe repercussions, losing one’s bread card and being expelled from the city. The internal passport system had been introduced on December 27, 1932. The Central Committee and Sovnarkom [Council of People’s Commissars] issued the decree, titled “About Establishment of the Unified Passport System within the USSR and the Obligatory Propiska of Passports.” The declared purposes were the improvement of population bookkeeping in
various urban settlements and "the removal of persons not engaged in industrial or other socially-useful work from towns and cleansing of towns from hiding kulaks, criminals and other antisocial elements." Jones provided testimony related to the fate of these newly unemployed:

We are treated like cattle. We are told to get away, and we get no bread card. How can I live? I used to get a pound of bread a day for all my family, but now there is no bread card. I have to leave the city and make my way out into the countryside where there is also no bread.\(^65\)

Those banished to the countryside faced almost certain death if they could not join a \textit{kolkhoz} [collective farm]. Even when a worker was able to join a \textit{kolkhoz}, life was difficult, as Jones notes in one diary entry, "I joined the kolkhozy three week ago. They made me pay so many taxes that life became a burden."\(^66\) Jones ended the article by explaining that the Five-Year Plan's accomplishment of building factories came only with the destruction of agricultural acreage, and "it is bread that makes factory wheels go round."\(^67\)

Within a month of the first famine article's publication, Jones double-doubled realized the gravity of his situation. In his March 27 letter to Lloyd George, he noted, "M. Litvinoff asked me to treat this [arrest of the Metro-Vickers engineers] as particularly confidential."\(^68\) Having breached that confidentiality by leaving the train bound for Kharkov and exposing the famine, Jones crossed a threshold and became "a marked man," as he explained more than a year later in a letter to Margaret Stewart, a Cambridge student who was about to journey to the USSR:

Alas! You will be very amused to hear that the inoffensive little "Joneski" has achieved the dignity of being a marked man on the black list of the OGPU and is barred from entering the Soviet Union. . . . As a matter of fact Litvinoff sent a special cable from Moscow to the Soviet Embassy in London to tell them to make the strongest of complaints to Mr. Lloyd George about me.\(^69\)

It is not clear how Jones knew about the "special cable" sent from Moscow. Maisky conveyed Litvinov's displeasure to Lloyd George in a letter that was subsequently copied by the British Embassy on April 8, 1933.\(^88\) Subsequently, Lloyd George distanced himself from Jones, who was fully expecting to be summoned by his former employer to discuss the trip. That summons never came. The three men—Litvinov, Lloyd George, and Jones—all attended the World Economic Conference in London's Geological Museum in June 1933. Dr. Margaret Siroil Colley, Jones' niece and biographer, speculates that "a meeting occurred between Gareth and the two senior statesmen . . . and if they did meet, it would be certain that Gareth's Moscow interview [with Litvinov] was discussed."\(^89\) Margaret Colley believes that even if a meeting did not occur during the conference the former prime minister may have shunned Jones in Litvinov's presence, signaling that Jones was ostracized by the British establishment.

Despite numerous articles in several newspapers during March and April, the British government avoided making public comments on the famine, fearing it would jeopardize its relations with the USSR after the last two of the six Metro-Vickers engineers were released on July 1, and the trade embargo, imposed since March, was lifted.\(^90\) Advocating better relations with the Soviet Union became a matter of policy for Great Britain as National Socialism in Germany under Adolf Hitler took on more ominous, militaristic overtones. If the British government then "suppressed further reporting by Gareth fearing to give offence to the Soviet Union," as Margaret Colley suggests, then it was implemented indirectly by eliciting the support of publishers and editors. For example, before his trip to the USSR, Jones had agreements to write articles on conditions in the USSR for \textit{The Economist} and \textit{The Times}, neither of which came to fruition.

Even more dubious was the official position taken by the British Foreign Office, which had first-hand knowledge of the famine but advised against making the information public. In July, William Strang sent several dispatches to Sir John Simon regarding evidence of the famine, even in Moscow. "The suffering and death inflicted upon the population are regarded as the normal casualties of a nation-wide operation in class warfare (a class war to end classes) in which the authorities are confident that victory will be theirs."\(^92\) Despite such information, the Foreign Office adopted a policy of restraint. For example, Sir Laurence Collier, head of the Foreign Office Northern Department, furnished a reply to Sir Waldron Smithers, who had enquired the situation in the USSR:

The truth of the matter is, of course, that we have a certain amount of information about famine conditions in the south of Russia similar to what has appeared in the press . . . . We do not want to make it public, however, because the Soviet Government would resent it and our relations with them would be prejudiced.\(^93\)

Despite recriminations from the British establishment, Jones covered the World Economic Conference, reporting on the speeches by Lloyd George and Litvinov. Jones describes Litvinov as being "mild and guarded . . . The bright picture he painted of the Soviet Union was based on Soviet statistics, which are unreliable, and was intended to serve as propaganda rather than a real contribution to the Conference."\(^94\) Jones' reporting on the conference was measured and balanced, betraying neither a sense of vindictiveness nor desperation.

That Jones was stung by the Duranty denial, by Lloyd George's shunning, and by the broken promises by the two newspapers is clear, evidenced by his request for support sent in a letter to Malcolm Muggeridge. In his response dated April 17 Muggeridge thanked Jones for his letter, which included praise for Muggeridge's series on the famine that had been published in late March. "Duranty is, of course, a plain crook, though an amusing little man in his way,"\(^95\) Muggeridge wrote. "If you send me a cutting of Duranty's piece, I'll gladly write to the \textit{NEW YORK TIMES} a letter of protest."\(^96\) Muggeridge ended the letter by apologizing that he wouldn't be back in England for some time because of the need to finish a book project and to earn some money.

Muggeridge did at least compose a letter to the editor of the \textit{New York Times}, dated April 26 from Rossinières, Canton de Vaud, Switzerland. In this letter, which was never published, Muggeridge wrote that it "has been brought to my notice that, in your March 30th issue (sic), a message from your Moscow correspondent whose tendency was to discredit certain reports made by Mr. Gareth Jones on the conditions prevailing in agricultural districts in the Soviet Union."\(^97\) Muggeridge then explained that his eight months as a correspondent in Soviet Russia and what he learned from agricultural experts in the impacted areas "led me to come to precisely the same conclusions as Mr. Gareth Jones."\(^98\) Muggeridge outlined the causes for the famine, which he argued was worse than the famine of 1921,
pointing to forced collectivization, the exporting of food products, and the establishment of politodes in the machine-tractor stations, “which are under the control of, and to a large extent manned by, the Ogpu, and whose function is, to return to your correspondent’s vivid, if cynical, metaphor, to go on cracking eggs in the hope that omelette may still be available in the Kremlin. . . . Though I have no doubts whatever about the Soviet Government’s ability and preparedness to go on cracking eggs, every kind of egg, I am convinced that before very long there will be no omelette left for anything.”

A carbon copy of this letter resides in the Jones archives, presumably furnished by Muggeridge. The length and rambling nature of the letter in part explains why the New York Times chose not to publish it, if it was ever sent. Perhaps having returned the favor by writing this letter was as much as Muggeridge felt he needed to do.

Even though Jones forwarded Muggeridge clippings of Duranty’s reporting in early autumn, Muggeridge reneged on his promise, using the timing as his excuse. Duranty was the first Western journalist allowed to travel beyond Moscow when the travel restriction was lifted. In a letter dated September 29 Muggeridge was blunt in his assessment, but he shied away from a confrontation. “He [Duranty] just writes what they tell him to. At the same time, since his message refers to the new harvest I can’t challenge him on first hand knowledge. That is to say, I know and you know that his description of things in the Caucasus is untrue; he can always retort, ‘You haven’t seen and I have.’” Muggeridge then proposed a project in which he would take specimens of Duranty’s writings and write ‘You haven’t seen and I have.’”

Muggeridge then proposed a project in which he would take specimens of Duranty’s writings and write a satirical piece “that a paper like TRUTH might publish, and that might do some good.”

By putting his own concerns before those of Jones, Muggeridge failed to support Jones, the one person who had gone out of his way to corroborate Muggeridge’s three articles published in the Manchester Guardian on March 23-25, 1933. Muggeridge published a number of books and articles in which he chronicled his journey from enthusiastic communist to disillusioned realist about the Soviet regime.

Additionally, Muggeridge misrepresented Jones in his 1934 novel Winter in Moscow through the character Pye, who is depicted as almost the exact opposite of Jones. Martin Sieff notes:

He [Pye] is old where Jones was young, cynical where Jones was idealistic and a hard drinker and chain smoker where Jones was a teetotaler. It is as if Muggeridge, a cynic, smoker and chronic drinker himself, was driven to expurgate the very image of Jones, even though he had written him a letter of support during the controversy.

And forty years later, Muggeridge almost totally eviscerated Jones’ record of reporting on the famine by misrepresenting Duranty’s March 31 article to suggest that Duranty was attempting to rebut Muggeridge’s Manchester Guardian articles.

What has happened to the legacy of Gareth Jones’ reporting? Further illustrates Zelizer’s concept of usability. In 2003, several articles were published, all of which link Jones to the Holodomor as a hero. Roman Revkiv wrote an article for the Ukrainian Archive & News titled “Welsh Journalist Gareth Jones—Hero of Ukraine.” The Ukrainian Weekly published “Gareth Jones: Correspondent Who Reported the Great Famine.” And Martin Sieff, senior news analyst for UPI, wrote a commentary titled “Gareth Jones, Hero of Ukraine.” That Jones has been elevated to the status of hero is not altogether surprising. At the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, where Jones earned a “First Class Honours Degree” before moving on to Trinity College at Cambridge, a bronzed bas relief of Jones’ head adorns a memorial plaque erected in 2006. The plaque reads (in English, Welsh and Ukrainian): “In Memory of Gareth Richard Vaughan Jones . . . One of the first journalists to report on the Holodomor, the Great Famine of 1932-33 in the Soviet Ukraine.” Attending the ceremony commemorating the plaque’s unveiling were members of Jones’ family and the Ukrainian ambassador to Great Britain, Ihor Kharchanko, who lauded Jones as an “outstanding figure who should be noted. He should be seen as a hero for what he did and for the way he put his life on the line.”

In addition to the plaque commemoration, Jones was honored by the government of Ukraine in November 2008 with the Order of Merit, which was presented to Margaret Colley at the British 75th Holodomor Commemorations at Westminster Central Hall, London. Fedir Kurlak, chief executive of the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain, said, “As far as the Ukrainian community is concerned, anyone who has heard of Gareth’s exploits will quite simply take his hat off to him, and regard him as an exemplary journalist.”

Commemoration of Jones’ reporting of the Holodomor has not been the only symbolic campaign. An effort to have Duranty stripped of his 1932 Pulitzer Prize has also accompanied how the famine is remembered. Publication of the book Not Worthy in 2004 illustrates how inimical a figure Duranty remains for Ukrainians and anyone impacted by the tragedy. As Lubomyr Luciuk argues, “That Walter Duranty was not worthy of his Pulitzer Prize is certain. Why the Holodomor’s murdered millions are not worthy of justice remains unexplained.” While both of these statements are perfectly logical, it is not completely clear how stripping Duranty of his Pulitzer Prize affords the Holodomor’s victims meaningful justice, impugns the famine deniers as Soviet stooges, or gives voice to “those journalists who dared expose the Stalinist regime for what it was.”

Stripping him of the Pulitzer Prize would be a symbolic gesture at best, one that would add little to our understanding of why we continue to look away when confronted with this and other historic nightmares.

Calls in the early 1990s to rescind Duranty’s Pulitzer Prize were not accepted by the Pulitzer Prize Board, who revisited the issue again in 2003. In July of that year the board notified the New York Times that it was reconsidering the request, but ultimately decided that no action was warranted. In its statement the board argued that there was no evidence of “deliberate deception” by Duranty:

Revoking a prize 71 years after it was awarded under different circumstances, when all principals are dead and unable to respond, would be a momentous step and therefore would have to rise to that threshold. . . . A Pulitzer Prize for reporting is awarded not for the author’s body of work or for the author’s character, but for the specific pieces entered in the competition.
Arthur Sulzberger Jr., publisher of the *New York Times*, commended the board’s decision, noting the “many defects” in Duranty’s journalism without acknowledging the newspaper’s culpability in publishing Duranty’s work, as well as in its editorial decisions in terms of assigning headlines and giving prominence to his famine-denying stories. Additionally, *New York Times* editorials clearly followed the same pattern of denials found in Duranty’s articles. Even though the newspaper may “regret his [Duranty’s] lapses,” until it fully acknowledges its own part in disseminating famine denial stories, that newspaper remains every bit as culpable for misrepresenting the tragic episode as Duranty.

Rather than commending the Pulitzer Prize board’s decision not to rescind Duranty’s prize, the *New York Times* should voluntarily return it, for the newspaper clearly knew that Duranty’s reporting reflected Soviet policy. Evidence clearly shows that the newspaper was complicit in duping the public. In a memorandum dated June 4, 1931, A. W. Kliefoth, a member of the U.S. Berlin Embassy, summarized a meeting he had with Duranty. The final sentence of the memorandum read: “In conclusion, Duranty pointed out that ‘in agreement with NEW YORK TIMES and the Soviet authorities,’ his dispatches always reflect the official position of the Soviet regime and not his own.” The series that Duranty wrote about the Five-Year Plan for which he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize ran from June 14-27, 1931, only ten days after this meeting. Significantly, Kliefoth was careful to quote Duranty directly regarding the crucial point about this agreement between the *New York Times* and Soviet authorities. Given this agreement and having abrogated the trust placed in it by the public, the only ethical course for the *New York Times* to take is to return the Pulitzer Prize. The company ended a statement at its website explaining the 1932 Pulitzer Prize awarded to Duranty by noting that the *New York Times* “does not have the award in its possession.” Presumably, that absolves the newspaper of meeting its obligation and returning the 1932 Pulitzer Prize. Until the newspaper owns up to its part in fostering misinformation, the denigration of Gareth Jones continues.

NOTES

3. Ibid.


81 Ibid.

82 Ibid.

83 Ibid.

84 Ibid.

85 Jones travelled to the USSR in August 1930 and again in August-September 1931. On the second trip, he escorted Jack Heinz II as a courtesy to Ivy Ledbetter Lee, with whom Jones was employed between April 1931 and March 1932. Using Jones’ diaries, Heinz published a book about the journey, titled Experiences in Russia 1931—A Diary. The book provides compelling evidence that the forced collectivization of agriculture and the drive to eliminate the kulak were having a deleterious impact on the peasants.


87 “Russia as It Is,” Evening Standard, March 30, 1933, 1.


89 Ibid. See also, Gareth Jones, Diary of Tour of Russia, March 1933, file B1/13, diary 3, part 1, 15. Gareth Vaughan Jones Papers, National Library of Wales.


91 Ibid.

92 Ibid.

93 Ibid.

94 Ibid.

95 Jones, “Famine Rules Russia.”


97 Jones, “Famine Rules Russia.”

98 Ibid.

99 Ibid.

100 Ibid.

101 Ibid.

102 Ibid.

103 Jones, “Famine Rules Russia.”

104 Ibid. See also Jones, Diary of Tour of Russia, March 4-11, 1933, file B1/15, diary 1, part 1, 10. Gareth Vaughan Jones Papers, National Library of Wales.

105 Ibid. See also Jones, Diary of Tour of Russia, March 4-11, 1933, file B1/15, diary 1, part 2, 1. Gareth Vaughan Jones Papers, National Library of Wales.


109 Jones, “Famine Rules Russia.”


112 George Carey, “Hitler, Stalin & Mr. Jones,” BBC Four Storyville Series, July 5, 2012. In Mr. Carey’s documentary, a letter from S.J. Sylvester (sic) is shown in which Lloyd George conveys his displeasure to Jones and forbids him from travelling to the USSR. Whoever copied the letter at the embassy got A.J. Sylvester’s name incorrect.

113 Colley, More Than a Grain, 300.

114 The six Metro-Vickers engineers went on trial on April 12, 1933; four of them—Gregory, Monkhouse, Cusshy and Nordwall—were expelled from the USSR at the trial’s conclusion April 19, 1933. The two men who had made confessions, Leslie Thornton and H. W. MacDonald, were sentenced to three- and two-year sentences respectively. Those sentences were commuted, and the two men were released in July. See Colley, More Than a Grain, 256-57.

115 Ibid., 305.


117 Ibid., 397.

118 Gareth Jones, “Britain’s Policy before the World Economic Conference,” Western Mail, June 15, 1933. Jones’ mention of the unreliability of Soviet statistics is apt. See Andrew Cairns, The Soviet Famine, 1932-33: An Eye-witness Account of Conditions in the Spring and Summer of 1932, Tony J. Kuz, ed. (Edmonton, Alberta: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta Press, 1989), 38. Cairns, who toured the USSR extensively in 1932 with Otto Schiller, notes, “all Russian statistics are compiled in three sets—one for publication, one confidential set for the directors, and one very confidential set for the very high officials. The Government would not, he argued, weaken its prestige by publishing figures showing that the plan as a whole had not been carried out by less than about 90 percent no matter what the truth might be.” The three sets of statistics point to the difficulties independent observers and journalists experienced in making use of data to understand the scope of the disaster.


120 Ibid.


122 Ibid.

123 Ibid.


129 Ibid., vi.


131 Ibid.

132 Ibid. On several occasions in late 2003, Margaret Colley and Nigel Colley sent letters to the public editor of the New York Times seeking a public apology. Those queries were ignored.

