

PROJECT HOPE AS PROPAGANDA:
A HUMANITARIAN NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION TAKES PART IN
AMERICA'S TOTAL COLD WAR

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The thesis titled
PROJECT HOPE AS PROPAGANDA:
A HUMANITARIAN NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION TAKES PART IN
AMERICA'S TOTAL COLD WAR

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ABSTRACT

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Project HOPE as Propaganda: A Humanitarian Nongovernmental Organization Takes Part in America's Total Cold War (155 pp.)

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This thesis chronicles the creation of Project HOPE, an American humanitarian nongovernmental organization, and the first voyage of its hospital ship, known as the *S.S. Hope*, to Indonesia. Through extensive archival research, including access to the largely unused Project HOPE archives, this study concludes that, at least from 1958 to 1961, this humanitarian venture was also a propaganda campaign during the total Cold War, the all-encompassing ideological struggle for national survival between the United States and the Soviet Union. As domestic propaganda, Project HOPE tried to get ordinary Americans to participate in the Cold War, build up their morale for the long struggle, expose them to world affairs, and gain their support for the global expansion of U.S. power. As foreign propaganda, Project HOPE aimed at containing communist expansion by securing friends for the United States through a positive demonstration of the material advantages of American-style freedom. This thesis also argues that Project HOPE was part of the "State-private network," a web of organizations that received support from the U.S. government while spreading propaganda on behalf of the United States.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	4
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	5
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	9
INTRODUCTION	10
The Ideology of Freedom and the Total Cold War	11
The State-private Network and Psychological Warfare	14
Integration: A More Positive Image of the Total Cold War	16
Propaganda as a Tool of Integration and Empire	18
Arguments and Themes	20
Conclusion.....	26
CHAPTER 1	
PROJECT HOPE AND THE STATE-PRIVATE NETWORK: PRIVATE CITIZENS, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, AND CORPORATE EXECUTIVES UNITE TO CREATE HOPE	28
The People-to-People Program, Project HOPE’s Precursor	30
The Impetus from Dr. William B. Walsh	32
Cooperation Between the State and Walsh	38
Conflict Between the State and Walsh	44
Dr. Walsh Turns to Corporate America.....	49
The Public-Private Elite, C.D. Jackson, and Project HOPE	54
Conclusion.....	65
CHAPTER 2	
MOBILIZING AMERICANS FOR THE COLD WAR: PROJECT HOPE AS PROPAGANDA WITHIN THE UNITED STATES.....	67
The Shared Assumptions of Project HOPE and People-to-People	68
Money and Methods: Project HOPE Mobilizes the American People.....	70
The Advantages of Civilian Participation in Cold War Propaganda.....	75
A Way to “Humanize” Americans	78
Project HOPE and Ex-Cell-O Corporation	84
Ex-Cell-O’s <i>Project HOPE</i> : Gaining Public Support for Free World Integration	90
Conclusion.....	100

CHAPTER 3	
WINNING FRIENDS FOR THE UNITED STATES?: PROJECT HOPE AS	
PROPAGANDA IN INDONESIA.....	101
New Battlegrounds: The Third World and Southeast Asia.....	103
Project HOPE Goes to Indonesia	107
HOPE Confronts Communism in Indonesia	114
HOPE Presents a Positive View of American Capitalism	116
The Irony of Confronting Materialism with Materialism	122
Targeting Indonesia’s Medical Elite.....	127
Project HOPE and Ibu Sukarno Hospital: Avenues for U.S. Influence.....	131
Conclusion.....	138
CONCLUSION.....	140
BIBLIOGRAPHY	152

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFL	American Federation of Labor
ARF	African Research Foundation
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIO	Congress of Industrial Organizations
EL	Eisenhower Library
HOPEA	HOPE Archives
ICA	International Cooperation Administration
NA	National Archives
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NSC	National Security Council
OCB	Operations Coordinating Board
PHD	Public Health Division
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party)
USIA	United States Information Agency
USOM	United States Operations Mission
VFW	Veterans of Foreign Wars
WRHS	Western Reserve Historical Society

INTRODUCTION

In December 1960, the *S.S. Hope*, a gleaming white hospital ship operated by a nongovernmental organization (NGO) called Project HOPE, approached the coast of the Indonesian island of Sumbawa. On the *Hope's* stern, a red, white, and blue American flag fluttered in the equatorial sea breeze as the crew dropped anchor and prepared the ship's launches for an extraordinary wartime invasion. Dedicated to alleviating physical suffering and fostering friendship for the United States during the tension-filled years of the Cold War, this invasion's prospects for success seemed promising as the *Hope's* landing boats neared a pier full of waving locals. Having spotted the crowd, Tim Lally, a radiologist from San Leandro, California, commented: "Well, it's the friendliest beachhead America's made in fifteen years." On this beachhead, Lally and his medical colleagues treated over 700 of "the blind, the crippled, the disfigured, [and] the congenitally abnormal" and, in the opinion of Washington, D.C. physician and Project HOPE founder Dr. William B. Walsh, made friends for the United States that ultimately numbered into the thousands.¹

Created in December 1958, Project HOPE refurbished, supplied, and staffed a retired U.S. Navy hospital ship loaned to it by the government and over the next fifteen years, sent this ship—rechristened the *Hope*—on eleven humanitarian voyages to regions and countries as diverse as Southeast Asia, Latin America, Sri Lanka, and Tunisia. This ship's primary mission was humanitarian—to train indigenous medical personnel and provide medical treatment to local peoples. At the same time, Project HOPE was also

¹ William B. Walsh, M.D., *A Ship Called Hope* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1964), 17-19, 23-24; Timothy F. Lally, M.D. quoted in Walsh, 18.

part of a propaganda campaign launched during the Cold War, the struggle for national survival and global supremacy between the United States and the Soviet Union. During the presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower, the United States waged what historian Kenneth Osgood has called a total Cold War. In this all-encompassing national effort, “perceptions, images, and symbols of power and prestige were as important as actual military force” and victory ultimately “depended upon the demonstration of technological, military, industrial, economic, and cultural strength.” Project HOPE and its hospital ship symbolized the medical, scientific, technological, industrial and economic strength of a generous nation and its caring people. HOPE tried to mobilize those people to participate in the struggle, demonstrate the superiority of the national ideology, discredit the enemy’s ideology, and assist the expansion of American power around the globe.²

The Ideology of Freedom and the Total Cold War

The Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union was, in the words of foreign policy scholar Frank Ninkovich, “an ideological conflict over the relative attractiveness of the belief systems and ways of life of the two main antagonists.” This ideological struggle, historian Scott Lucas argues, pitted the “Soviet ideology of

² “Project HOPE: Forty Years of American Medicine Abroad,” National Museum of American History, <http://americanhistory.si.edu/hope/index.htm> [accessed March 8, 2007]; Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower’s Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2006), 240-242, 348; For this thesis’s definition of propaganda, see the end of page 21. The euphemisms and synonyms for propaganda—psychological warfare, political warfare, ideological warfare, information, the battle for hearts and minds, public diplomacy, and even cultural diplomacy—are many and sometimes denote subtle but distinct differences in meanings. During the 1950s, however, U.S. officials and the public usually used many of these terms interchangeably. To reflect this historical usage and for practical stylistic reasons, this thesis will do likewise.

Marxism-Leninism” against “an American ideology, less systematic in its development but dedicated to the defense of ‘freedom’ and ‘democracy.’” Founded upon individual liberty, private property, and the preservation of order, the American ideology of freedom rejected all forms of collectivism, eschewed centralized political power, and adopted a universal reformist mission. Furthermore, Cold War historian Odd Arne Westad adds, as “the first country created on the ‘scientific principles’ of the Enlightenment,” the United States and its ideology epitomized “modernity.” Convinced of the superiority of freedom, many Americans believed “the only way of becoming modern would be to emulate the American example.” As a competing ideology, however, communism challenged U.S. exceptionalism and threatened to foment a worldwide revolution that would spread the collectivism and political centralization anathema to freedom. The result was the Cold War, an ideological conflict that for the United States became what Lucas calls a “global campaign to prove the superiority of . . . ‘the idea of freedom.’”³

The Cold War’s ideological nature convinced a majority of Americans that they were, in the words of Michael J. Hogan, “locked in a long-term struggle for survival with the Soviet Union.” It encouraged them to view that struggle, Osgood writes, “as they had the first two world wars that preceded it: as a total contest for national survival,” as a total war. Total war emerged during the mid- to late nineteenth century when industrialization, the growth of mass society, the development of mass media, and the

³ Frank A. Ninkovich, *U.S. Information Policy and Cultural Diplomacy* (New York: Foreign Policy Association, 1996), 17; Scott Lucas, *Freedom’s War: The American Crusade Against the Soviet Union* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 7; Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 4, 10-12, 25; Scott Lucas, “Negotiating Freedom,” Introduction in *The US Government, Citizen Groups and the Cold War: the State-Private Network*, eds. Helen Laville and Hugh Wilford (New York: Routledge, 2006), 3.

advent of indiscriminate long-range weaponry made it necessary to mobilize, Osgood explains, “all the nation’s resources—military, economic, and psychological”—during times of war. Mobilization for total war relied heavily on the participation of “ordinary citizens who served in the mass armies, worked in the industrial plants, experienced dramatic social changes induced by wartime conditions, and occasionally themselves became targets of military reprisals.” The necessity of civilian participation, Osgood explains, caused governments to conclude “that wars were no longer won merely by armies in the field, but by the morale of the entire nation.” Since victory now hinged on every citizen’s contribution to the war effort, public officials “turned to propaganda to mobilize civilians” at home and “to influence the attitudes of civilian populations in neutral and enemy nations.”⁴

As with other total wars, the Cold War, Helen Laville and Hugh Wilford suggest, “involved the mobilization of whole cultures and societies . . . to an unprecedented degree.” As Scott Lucas explains, “every aspect of American life from religion to sport to the wonders of consumerism had to become a beacon to the world while Soviet counterparts were exposed as the perversions of a system which impoverished and enslaved its citizens.” Osgood agrees, arguing that “virtually every aspect of the

⁴ Michael J. Hogan, *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State, 1945-1954* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 12-13, 26, 50, 61; Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 16, 22-23; Jeremy Black, *The Age of Total War, 1860-1945* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006), 1; As Osgood explains on pages 1-2 of *Total Cold War*, the fact that the people who lived through the Cold War viewed “the conflict *as a war* has faded into the background of historical understanding.” Asked by pollsters to explain the term Cold War in the early to mid-1950s, Americans responded by describing the conflict as a “war through talking,” “a subtle war,” “a diplomatic war,” “war without actual fighting,” “political war,” and “war propaganda.” Based on this polling data, Osgood argues that “most Americans . . . perceived the Cold War *as a war*, but as a different kind of war—one that was difficult to define, one that was fought not so much with guns and tanks and atom bombs, as with words and ideas and political maneuvers all over the world.” To the American public, he asserts, “the Cold War was . . . a war waged by other means” and fought through “nonmilitary modes of combat, particularly ideological and symbolic ones.”

American way of life—from political organizations and philosophical ideals, to cultural products and scientific achievements, to economic practices and social relationships—was exposed to scrutiny in this total contest for the hearts and minds of the world’s people.” Mobilizing every aspect of American life also required mobilizing every individual American. In the end, Lucas concludes, “every sector of U.S. society—business, labor, journalists, youth, women, African-Americans, athletes—was to play a part in a total Cold War.”⁵

The State-private Network and Psychological Warfare

Ironically, “a heavily centralized campaign” to mobilize the American people, according to intellectual historian Giles Scott-Smith, “would not sit well with an American ideology built on the freedom of the individual.” Freedom “exalted individual choice” while “it condemned state control,” explains Lucas, and its promotion had to occur through the appearance of individuals such as Project HOPE’s Dr. Walsh “freely making their own decisions and pursuing their own objectives” or “through the apparent autonomy of organizations in the private sector” like Project HOPE. The U.S. government needed HOPE and other “active groups, not linked to the government,” writes Helen Laville, “to represent private American life” and challenge communism’s expansion. Accordingly, U.S. propaganda strategy, Lucas concludes, “relied upon cooperation between the Government and private groups.” This cooperation between

⁵ Helen Laville and Hugh Wilford, Preface in *The US Government, Citizen Groups and the Cold War: the State-Private Network*, eds. Helen Laville and Hugh Wilford (New York: Routledge, 2006), xiii; Lucas, *Freedom’s War*, 7; Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 2; Scott Lucas, “Mobilizing Culture: The State-Private Network and the CIA in the Early Cold War,” Chap. 3 in *War and Cold War in American Foreign Policy, 1942-62*, eds. Dale Carter and Robin Clifton (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 84.

private citizens and public officials created a web of organizations called the “State-private network” that covertly or overtly received material or moral support (and sometimes both) from the U.S. government while waging psychological warfare on behalf of the United States.⁶

Psychological warfare formed “not a peripheral but a central aspect of the Cold War,” especially since the conflict represented, in Osgood’s words, “an ideological, psychological and cultural contest for hearts and minds . . . that . . . would be won or lost on the plane of public opinion, rather than by blood shed on the battlefield.” U.S. officials “defined . . . psychological warfare broadly to include any nonmilitary action taken to influence public opinion or to advance foreign policy interests.” These nonmilitary actions might include “covert operations, trade and economic aid, diplomacy, the threat of force, cultural and educational exchanges, and more traditional forms of propaganda.” In particular, President Dwight D. Eisenhower believed in psychological warfare that, Osgood writes, “extended beyond the official propaganda agencies of the American government to embrace any word or deed that affected the hearts and minds of the world’s peoples.”⁷

The psychological warfare operations undertaken by the State-private network during the total Cold War did not primarily target people under communist rule. In

⁶ Giles Scott-Smith, “Building a Community Around the Pax Americana: The U.S. Government and Exchange Programs during the 1950s,” Chap. 5 in *The U.S. Government, Citizen Groups and the Cold War: The State-Private Network*, eds. Helen Laville and Hugh Wilford (New York: Routledge, 2006), 85; Lucas, “Mobilizing Culture,” 84; Lucas, *Freedom’s War*, 3; Helen Laville, “The Importance of Being (In) Earnest: Voluntary Associations and the Irony of the State-Private Network During the Early Cold War,” Chap. 3 in *The U.S. Government, Citizen Groups and the Cold War: The State-Private Network*, eds. Helen Laville and Hugh Wilford (New York: Routledge, 2006), 48; Walter Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-1961* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997), 58.

⁷ Kenneth Osgood, “Hearts and Minds: The Unconventional Cold War,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 4 (Spring 2002), 85-86, 95; Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 47.

reality, as Lucas notes, the network avoided “political agitation” behind the Iron Curtain and instead focused on “cultural and social activity elsewhere.” Most network propaganda targeted what Osgood describes as “areas of the world that were noncommunist, neutral, or tied to the United States through formal alliances—the area that Americans liked to call the ‘free world.’” Propaganda in the free world “worked to foster conditions that would bind countries to the United States, thereby denying communist regimes access to critical resources, outposts for the projection of military power, and avenues for economic and political influence.” In other words, the goal was to contain the spread of communism by building a united free world dominated by U.S. power and founded upon the idea (though often not the reality) of freedom. As American studies scholar Christina Klein concludes, “the Cold War was as much about creating an economically, politically, and militarily integrated ‘free world,’ as it was about waging a war of attrition against the Soviets.”⁸

Integration: A More Positive Image of the Total Cold War

During the late 1940s and early 1950s, however, free world integration remained secondary to containing communism in Europe and East Asia. Although often depicted as “noble, restrained, and fundamentally defensive,” the containment policy—the centerpiece of U.S. foreign policy during the Cold War—justified “an aggressive

⁸ Lucas, *Freedom's War*, 2-3; Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 2-3, 106; Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 16; This thesis uses the term “free world” to describe the main targets of U.S. Cold War propaganda, the world’s noncommunist countries. It uses the term but acknowledges that many noncommunist U.S. allies and other nations supposedly part of the “free world” were, to use Osgood’s phrasing on page 9 of *Total Cold War*, “not particularly free.”

program of clandestine warfare against Communism, involving propaganda, sabotage, subversion.” Through the containment policy, the United States tried, in historian Walter Hixson’s view, to “apply external pressures, short of direct military conflict, that would promote instability behind the Iron Curtain with the ultimate goal of ‘rolling back’ communism in Eastern Europe and, to the extent possible, in the USSR itself.” In the end, containment depicted the world, Klein asserts, “in terms of Otherness and difference” organized “around the principle of conflict” and international struggle. “Fear . . . held this imagined world together,” writes Klein, and U.S. psychological warfare reflected this fear by disseminating what Hixson calls “harsh propaganda” that decried ““the monstrous all-devouring ambitions of Soviet imperialism”” and attacked ““the cruelty and unworkability of communist institutions.””⁹

As the Cold War ground on into the late 1950s, an influential American political elite began to view containment’s initial articulation as a “negative formulation of American identity” and “an ideological weakness.” This elite, Klein explains, wanted “a more positive” formulation that demonstrated what Americans stood for, not simply what they stood against. Fear, the elite felt, should no longer hold the anti-Soviet coalition together. Additionally, Osgood notes, containment “offered nothing for the maintenance of free world morale” and was ““inspirationally sterile.”” As a result, he continues, “a new psychological message was needed, a new moral mission, to cohere the free world into a united front.” The emergence of the largely neutralist Third World as the conflict’s primary battleground and the growing stalemate between the superpowers in Europe made the need for a new message particularly acute. The containment policy continued

⁹ Osgood, “Hearts and Minds,” 90; Hixson, xiv, 60-61; Klein, 34, 36.

but shifted its primary focus to achieving the “economic, political, and military integration of the noncommunist world” and to redefining America’s global role “through its alliances rather than its enmities.” This new emphasis on integration was based on what Cold War historian John Lewis Gaddis describes as “the concepts of political self-determination and economic integration” and the assumption that “a set of *common* interests . . . would cause other countries to *want* to be affiliated with [the United States] rather than to resist it.” It imagined a world, Klein writes, where “differences could be bridged and transcended” and where “intellectual and emotional bonds” between people would enable the United States to unite the noncommunist world into a “system of formal and informal alliances” that tied “core regions of the world to American leadership.”¹⁰

Propaganda as a Tool of Integration and Empire

To support this shift in emphasis, officials changed U.S. propaganda’s tone and content away from “harping on the vices of communism” and toward trumpeting “the positive virtues of the free world,” the United States, the American people, and the American way of life. U.S. propagandists, Hixson explains, adopted a more positive “evolutionary approach” that used “straight news and information programs, cultural exhibitions, and East-West exchange programs” to build, in the words of media scholar and sociologist Leo Bogart, “support for the U.S. in foreign public opinion.” Information officials hoped this new approach would promote “a sense of mutual interest with the United States,” create “a sense of solidarity for the noncommunist world in the face of

¹⁰ Klein, 23, 38, 41; Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 69, 72, 100; John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press, 1997), 38-39; Emphasis in the original.

common danger,” and construct a “united front against communism.” Integration and the propaganda supporting it recognized “that the Free World [could] survive only by solidarity” and that achieving solidarity required an “understanding of the U.S. by its allies and [an] identification of the U.S. with the aspirations of other peoples.”

Ultimately, information officials tried to convince “target audiences that Americans [were] basically like them in their aims, desires, and interests” in the hopes of “making people more friendly to the U.S., to American institutions, and to Americans as individuals, with the expectation that this [would] make them more likely to act in concert with the U.S. on political matters.”¹¹

Within this context, psychological warfare campaigns concentrated on making U.S. society more familiar to foreign peoples, confronting negative stereotypes of the United States and the American people, and trumpeting the virtues of the freedom ideology, which could improve people’s standard of living through capitalism, scientific advancements and technological improvements. According to Bogart, these campaigns also tried to “strengthen the internal political structures of America’s allies” while “increas[ing] the stability of the government[s] and reduc[ing] unrest” in free world countries “threatened by communism.” In threatened nations, especially in the Third World, propaganda aimed at achieving integration tried to limit “the appeal of communism” by promoting “economic growth,” demonstrating to local peoples “how to

¹¹ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 99; Hixson, xiv; Leo Bogart, *Cool Words, Cold War: A New Look at USIA’s Premises for Propaganda*, rev. ed. (Washington, DC: American University Press, 1995), 19-20

improve their standard of living,” and pointing to U.S. success as evidence that American-style freedom represented the best path of development.¹²

Integration propaganda “deeply involved” the United States “in the internal affairs of other nations” and, as Osgood concludes, essentially “added up to a form of secret empire building that used covert forms of coercion and manipulation to draw countries into the American orbit.”¹³ U.S. efforts to integrate the free world created a Cold War empire for the United States that was, Osgood argues,

built not just by ‘invitation,’ not just through persuasion, not just by economic expansion, and not just through mutual recognition of shared values, interests, or security needs. The American empire was also a covert empire built on subtle manipulation. It rested not on military conquest and absolute control, but on informal modes of dominance.¹⁴

Instead of relying entirely on gunboat diplomacy or engaging regularly in direct rule, the United States managed its empire through “the more sophisticated and secretive means of media and political manipulation.”¹⁵

Arguments and Themes

This thesis examines one potential means of manipulation known as Project HOPE and concludes that, at least during its earliest years from 1958 to 1961, HOPE was a domestic and a foreign propaganda program launched during a total Cold War. In doing so, this study asserts that by the late 1950s, U.S. officials believed the most effective Cold War propaganda strategy was one that used private American citizens and

¹² Bogart, 22-24.

¹³ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 107, 150.

¹⁴ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 150.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

nongovernmental organizations to convince foreign governments and their civilian populations of America's basic goodness in the hopes of gaining both those governments' and populations' support for U.S. foreign policy and for the crusade against communism. At the same time, such a strategy would boost domestic morale and present American citizens with a tangible way to participate in the Cold War.

As shown by this thesis, this propaganda strategy was first manifested in 1956 with the establishment of the People-to-People Program and then again in 1958 with the creation of the closely related yet independent people-to-people program called Project HOPE. At the highest levels, those involved in the creation, administration, and direction of Project HOPE—Dr. William B. Walsh, the group's founder; C.D. Jackson, an important member of HOPE's board of directors; Ralph Charbeneau, the maker of the film *Project HOPE*; Christian Herter, acting secretary of state; and President Eisenhower—intended for HOPE to serve as an extension of People-to-People, even though it was not under the latter program's control. Although this thesis clearly shows that Dr. Walsh was genuinely motivated by a deep humanitarianism, it also demonstrates that he shared important assumptions with those U.S. officials who created the People-to-People Program about the ability of ordinary people to improve perceptions of the United States overseas and change the policies of foreign governments.

By arguing that Project HOPE was both a humanitarian venture and a people-to-people propaganda program, this study builds upon the work of other scholars whose research has expanded propaganda's definition beyond the more traditional meaning that defines it as an "treacherous and deceitful practice" undertaken solely by the State and

usually through the mass media. This traditional definition proves too limiting when faced with the all-encompassing nature of the total Cold War. Accordingly, this project more broadly defines propaganda as a “*planned and deliberate act of opinion management*” that uses “any technique or action . . . to influence the emotions, attitudes, or behavior of a group, usually to serve the interests of the sponsor.” It is “not necessarily untruthful” though at times it can be “manipulative.” Furthermore, it is not limited in its dissemination to radio programs, motion pictures, posters, leaflets, and other mass media but also can be spread through a much wider range of activities including “cultural attractions, books, slogans, monuments, museums, and staged media events.”¹⁶

Chapter 1 begins to build the case that Project HOPE was propaganda by chronicling the creation of HOPE and examining how the NGO was part of the State-private network, an important apparatus for spreading America’s Cold War propaganda. The chapter begins by showing how Project HOPE developed out of the organizational structure of the People-to-People Program and by investigating Dr. Walsh’s reasons—both humanitarian and political—for creating HOPE. It focuses on Project HOPE’s relationship with the government and demonstrates that, like many State-private network organizations, the impetus for Project HOPE came not from the State but from a private citizen. In fact, this first chapter illustrates that building Project HOPE and the State-private network was not a story of government coercion upon the private sector but rather a story of cooperation, conflict, and negotiation between private citizens and public officials. It also investigates the role of corporate America in the creation of Project HOPE and pays particular attention to how support from high-powered executives—

¹⁶ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 7-8, 373 n. 10; Emphasis in the original.

many of whom moved easily between corporate America, the federal bureaucracy, and the nation's voluntary associations—reflected the interpenetrated corporatist structure of the State-private network. Finally, Project HOPE's focus on the free world—a characteristic discussed not just in chapter 1 but throughout the thesis—reflected how most groups in the network eschewed, in Lucas's words, “political agitation and paramilitary operations in Eastern Europe” and instead focused on “cultural and social activity elsewhere.” In Project HOPE's case, its activities concentrated on the Third World in particular and the free world more generally. Ultimately, this chapter calls for a new understanding of the State-private network that moves beyond the traditional conception of the network as sinister, covert, and largely directed by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). As with the term propaganda, this traditional definition is too limited when applied to the total Cold War. This chapter carefully broadens the definition of the State-private network to include private organizations that overtly received official support, willingly disseminated propaganda on behalf of the government, and engaged in a close cooperative relationship with the government at a level of intensity beyond the norm and befitting what public officials and private citizens alike saw as necessary to win a total war.

Chapter 2 investigates Project HOPE as a domestic propaganda program and finds that it was designed to give ordinary Americans a way to contribute to the Cold War and thereby sustain their morale for the long struggle against communism. It also exposed them to world affairs and tried to gain their support for a foreign policy centered on the global expansion of American power. Through public fund raising appeals, supply

collection drives, and other activities necessary to prepare the *S.S. Hope* for its first voyage overseas, the American people could contribute personally to both Project HOPE and the nation's effort to win the Cold War. This chapter shows how civilian participation in activities like Project HOPE carried with it several practical propaganda advantages. Most importantly, civilian involvement in Project HOPE and other propaganda activities 'humanized' America and Americans. The chapter also examines Project HOPE as one part of an elite effort to convince Americans to abandon any lingering isolationism, accept their nation's role as a global power, and support free world integration. Understanding Project HOPE as a domestic propaganda program and investigating the multitude of ways ordinary Americans could participate in HOPE adds to a growing field of scholarship focused on studying the role of ordinary people as actors, particularly as agents of cultural transfer, within the field of foreign relations. In *Transmission Impossible: American Journalism as Cultural Diplomacy in Postwar Germany, 1945-1955*, historian Jessica C.E. Geinow-Hecht argues that "the significance of transmitters in the process of cultural foreign policy is a field that still remains largely neglected." This thesis has tried to bring the role of ordinary people in U.S. Cold War propaganda to the forefront.¹⁷

Chapter 3 argues that Project HOPE, as a foreign propaganda program, was designed to help contain the expansion of communism by securing allies and friends for the United States through a positive demonstration of the medical and material advantages that came from American-style freedom. It examines the *S.S. Hope's* visit to

¹⁷ Jessica C.E. Geinow-Hecht, *Transmission Impossible: American Journalism as Cultural Diplomacy in Postwar Germany, 1945-1955* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1999), 186.

Indonesia from October 1960 to May 1961 as one more attempt to win over that nation's people in the hopes of changing the Indonesian government's neutralist foreign policy. This chapter chronicles Project HOPE's demonstrations of the medical, scientific, and technological improvements to people's lifestyles possible in a society based on capitalism. It shows that these demonstrations targeted Indonesia's medical professionals, an important elite American propagandists believed held at least some political influence in the medically disadvantaged developing nation. The ultimate goal was to pull Indonesia into America's anti-Soviet coalition. The chapter also shows that the *Hope's* visit revitalized plans for the U.S. government to financially assist an Indonesian hospital. By doing do so, Project HOPE provided American officials with one additional, though admittedly modest, avenue of influence to be used in Washington's efforts to bring Indonesia into the struggle against communism. Finally, this chapter places Project HOPE's Indonesian visit within the broader U.S. effort to construct a Cold War empire in Southeast Asia and illustrates how those efforts and the *Hope's* visit reflected the rising importance of the Third World as a Cold War battlefield. In doing so, it adds to the growing scholarship on the role of Third World nations in a conflict once seen solely as a superpower struggle for the control of Europe.

In the end, simply arguing that Project HOPE was a propaganda program during the total Cold War is not enough. There must also be an effort to judge the effectiveness of the venture. Yet, "even with today's highly developed methods of public opinion assessment," writes Osgood, "it is exceedingly difficult to ascertain with any certainty the effectiveness of advertising, public relations, and propaganda campaigns." Trying to do

so “when looking back in time,” he continues, “is even more difficult.” Nevertheless, in an attempt to gauge Project HOPE’s success, this study compares the assumptions made by those that believed in the potential of people-to-people contacts to influence international affairs with the outcomes of Project HOPE’s real world efforts in people-to-people diplomacy. Using this comparison, this thesis concludes that Project HOPE was a fairly successful domestic propaganda program but was less successful as foreign propaganda. Indeed, Project HOPE’s failure to gain any change in the Indonesian government’s neutralist foreign policy raises doubts about the fundamental assumptions of the propagandists who started People-to-People and questions the premise that persuading the people of a foreign nation simply to like America and Americans can actually change the policy of a foreign government.¹⁸

Conclusion

In December 1960, the *S.S. Hope* launched its unique invasion boats carrying Tim Lally and his medical colleagues toward the ‘friendly beachhead’ of Sumbawa. Nearly three years prior to this invasion, on January 9, 1958, President Eisenhower stepped before a joint session of Congress and a national television audience to deliver his State of the Union address. It was a “remarkable” speech that represented, in Osgood’s view, “a call to arms—not to traditional weapons of war, but to the new weapons of the Cold War.” The speech was ultimately a “declaration of total cold war.” Standing before a nation fearful of the military implications of the Soviet Union’s recent successful launch of the Sputnik satellite, Eisenhower began by reassuring Americans that their country still

¹⁸ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 10.

possessed “a broadly based and efficient defensive strength.” But then he warned against becoming “so preoccupied with our desire for military strength that we neglect” nonmilitary areas “where the foundations of real peace must be laid.” The threat of “communist imperialism” was “unique in history” because of its “all-inclusiveness.” The Soviet Union used “every human activity” whether in the fields of “trade, economic development, military power, arts, science, education, the whole world of ideas” to wage what he himself called a “total cold war.” In response, the United States, he declared, had to wage its own total Cold War by “bringing to bear every asset of our personal and national lives” in an effort to “win a different kind of war.” Victory in this total Cold War required enhanced military capabilities, of course, but also continued economic aid, increased trade, a national dedication to education and research, and, finally, what Eisenhower simply called “works of peace.” Although never clearly defined, “works of peace” included efforts by the world’s people to “learn to know each other better” through a “greater freedom of communication and exchange of people.” Another potential “work of peace,” he explained, would be international “cooperation on projects of human welfare” and “campaigns against the diseases that are the common enemy of all mortals.” By the close of 1958, Project HOPE embodied this call for increased exchange and communication between the world’s peoples, for more cooperation in improving human welfare around the globe, and for using nonmilitary weapons in a war fought with symbols and images—a war for national survival, a total Cold War.¹⁹

¹⁹ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 11, 347; Dwight D. Eisenhower, Annual Message to Congress on the State of the Union, January 9, 1958, *Public Papers of the President*, American Presidency Project, University of California-Santa Barbara, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=10599&st=people-to-people+conference&st1=> [accessed October 3, 2006].

CHAPTER 1

PROJECT HOPE AND THE STATE-PRIVATE NETWORK: PRIVATE CITIZENS, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, AND CORPORATE EXECUTIVES UNITE TO CREATE HOPE

Politicians, diplomats, military leaders, covert operatives, and government bureaucrats participated in the total Cold War, but ordinary Americans were also Cold Warriors. In fact, cooperation between private citizens and public officials during the Cold War created the State-private network—a web of largely private organizations that received moral and material support from the government while engaged in some kind of anti-Soviet activity. Eisenhower’s presidency brought an increase in this cooperation, most visibly with the launch of the People-to-People Program and that program’s pinnacle achievement, Project HOPE. During the Eisenhower administration, Kenneth Osgood argues, People-to-People served as the “most ambitious program for stimulating private cooperation in waging the Cold War” and Project HOPE served as “the most dramatic initiative undertaken by the People-to-People program.” Scott Lucas, who dismisses People-to-People as “more symbol than substance,” describes Project HOPE as one of its few successes while Christina Klein suggests that “Project HOPE was the most successful Asian endeavor” of People-to-People. Even government officials promoted Project HOPE as one of People-to-People’s most important programs and its “most striking development to date.” The People-to-People Program was the pinnacle of the State-private network and Project HOPE was the pinnacle of People-to-People.²⁰

²⁰ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 233, 240; Lucas, *Freedom’s War*, 245-246; Klein, 51; People-to-People Program, “Fact Sheet on People-to-People Program,” April 9, 1959, Box 7, Lot 66 D257, Records of the Department of State (RG 59), National Archives (hereafter NA).

However, Project HOPE's link with the People-to-People Program was only the beginning of the group's story as part of the Cold War's State-private network. Starting in late 1958, Dr. William B. Walsh began constructing Project HOPE into an organization that reflected many of the most important characteristics of the network. Like other State-private organizations, the impetus for Project HOPE came from an individual who held no *official* government position. Walsh did not create his organization in response to government coercion. Instead, as with the broader State-private network, Project HOPE's creation actually involved both cooperation and conflict between the private citizens backing HOPE and the government officials attracted to the project's propaganda value but skeptical about supporting an untested organization. Intrigued by the psychological potential of Project HOPE, government officials encouraged Walsh by conditionally promising him a hospital ship. At the same time, U.S. officials concerned about the project's cost and practicality adopted a wait-and-see attitude while Dr. Walsh turned to corporations and the corporate elite to gain the financial and material help needed to create HOPE.

Corporate America proved to be an invaluable source of funds, supplies, and expertise for State-private groups like Project HOPE. High-powered executives, who moved easily between the public and private sectors and maintained close ties with government officials, formed a public-private elite that reflected the interpenetrated corporatist nature of the State-private network. Members of this public-private elite such as C.D. Jackson—a leading member of HOPE's board of directors, executive vice president of the Time-Life Corporation, and a former psychological warfare adviser to

Eisenhower—acted as conduits for government influence within Project HOPE, as advocates for HOPE in official circles, and representatives of HOPE in the business world and before the general public. The participation of the public-private elite reassured the U.S. government about the prospects of Project HOPE’s success and did much to insure that the government gave indispensable material and moral support to Project HOPE, namely in the form of the retired Navy hospital ship and the money to refurbish that vessel.

Finally, this chapter only touches on the final characteristic of the State-private network apparent in Project HOPE. The remainder of the thesis focuses much more on how HOPE, like many State-private organizations, concentrated its activities in the free world. Dr. Walsh’s group eschewed “political agitation and paramilitary operations” in Europe, as Scott Lucas puts it, and instead focused on “cultural and social activities elsewhere.” In Project HOPE’s case, this meant the United States itself and Indonesia.²¹

The People-to-People Program, Project HOPE’s Precursor

President Eisenhower created the People-to-People Program in 1956 as a private program to allow, in his words, “people to get together and to leap governments—if necessary to evade governments—to work out not one method but thousands of methods by which people can gradually learn a little bit more of each other.” Eisenhower believed that person-to-person exchange, including “doctors helping in the conquering of disease,” could help the world achieve a lasting peace through greater understanding. As archival documents show, however, U.S. propaganda officials characterized People-to-People as

²¹ Lucas, *Freedom’s War*, 2-3.

an “instrument of foreign policy” and “the primary, but not [the] only, mechanism through which the Office of Private Cooperation enlists private support” for the activities of the United States Information Agency (USIA), the government’s main agency for disseminating official propaganda. Indeed, People-to-People was actually, in Osgood’s words, an “ambitious state-private cooperative venture . . . designed to encourage ordinary Americans, NGOs, and businesses to engage in public relations work on behalf of the United States.”²²

Project HOPE grew directly out of People-to-People’s organizational structure. This structure united certain population segments into what Osgood calls “independent citizen’s committees” based on specific interests, hobbies, or identities. Along with the People-to-People Program’s various committees for veterans, youth, fine arts and films, there was also the Committee on Medicine and the Health Profession. At a White House conference held in September 1956 to launch People-to-People, the private citizens who would ultimately run the program’s committees met with the USIA officials who had developed the program’s basic outline and vision. These officials encouraged the citizens on the health committee to share American technical knowledge and medical advancements with other countries through the exchange of medical personnel, journals,

²² Dwight D. Eisenhower, Remarks at the People-to-People Conference, September 11, 1956, *Public Papers of the President*, American Presidency Project, University of California-Santa Barbara, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=10599&st=people-to-people+conference&st1=> [accessed November 13, 2006]; “Statement on Activities of Office of Private Cooperation,” n.d., Box 200, Subject Files, 1953-2000, USIA Historical Collection, Records of the U.S. Information Agency (RG 306), NA; Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 216, 233; According to Osgood on pages 230-232 of *Total Cold War*, the Office of Private Cooperation was a division of the USIA charged, at first, with “mobilizing private industry to conduct foreign information activities.” The office “did not carry out operations itself” but instead “developed ideas for projects and found NGOs to implement them.” The office was first created in the late 1940s when propaganda was still controlled in the State Department. When the USIA came into being in 1954, however, the agency’s first director wanted the office “to shift its focus from generating ad hoc operations to creating permanent organizations that could devise and implement long-lasting programs on their own.”

books, and even the latest equipment. These information officials also suggested that the committee “develop a plan by which private resources can be put to work to improve public health and sanitation situations through information materials in many parts of the world.” Another proposed activity included “demonstrations of new techniques during visits to hospitals and clinics abroad, as a means of stressing the desire of the U.S. to share its scientific progress.”²³

The Impetus from Dr. William B. Walsh

In late 1958, People-to-People approached Dr. William B. Walsh and asked him to become co-chair of the health committee. Walsh’s subsequent efforts to secure a Navy hospital ship and create Project HOPE typified how the “impetus” behind the State-private network came, Lucas writes, “from individuals with no Government position, individuals with their own interests in ensuring the triumph of freedom.” Neither HOPE’s creation nor the State-private network’s “construction . . . was a case of the Government coercing or dominating the private sphere.”²⁴ Instead, Dr. Walsh’s determination to build his humanitarian organization shows that, in Helen Laville’s words,

the U.S. government did not invent the ideological zeal of voluntary associations; it did not create the interest of the voluntary associations in international relations from out of thin air; and arguably it did not even give their activities any significant direction.²⁵

²³ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 234; “A Program for People-to-People Partnership: White House Conference,” September 11-12, 1956, Box 201, Subject Files, 1956-1962, USIA Historical Collection, Records of the U.S. Information Agency (RG 306), NA.

²⁴ Lucas, *Freedom’s War*, 2; Lucas, “Mobilizing Culture,” 98.

²⁵ Laville, 62.

Of course, government officials did directly create some of the network's organizations and, as Lucas suggests, these groups "could be seen as 'fronts' for State operations" but Dr. Walsh and Project HOPE demonstrate that much network activity, in Lucas's words, "involved State cooperation with existing private structures." Though he admittedly served as a committee chair in the quasi-official People-to-People Program, Walsh alone—not the White House, the State Department, the International Cooperation Administration (ICA), the USIA, or the CIA—was the impetus behind Project HOPE.²⁶

But what motivated Dr. Walsh to create Project HOPE? Or as Lucas might put it, what interests did he have in "ensuring the triumph of freedom?" Private individuals like Walsh who acted as the driving force behind organizations involved in the State-private network usually came "from 'middle' or 'upper' class backgrounds." This class identification, however, did not mean they were "driven by a specific economic interest." Instead, they were often motivated "by a general ideological conception that our freedom should be their freedom [or] by non-economic interests." Was this the case with Dr. Walsh? A brief look at his available biography will help determine his motivations and perhaps illustrates that he possessed the class background typical of those who participated in the State-private network.²⁷

Walsh was born on April 26, 1920 in Brooklyn. He graduated from St. John's University in 1940 and from Georgetown University's medical school in 1943. The Second World War brought him to the South Pacific as chief medical officer on a Navy destroyer. During his tour of duty, the illness and death he witnessed among Pacific

²⁶ Lucas, "Mobilizing Culture," 98-99.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 100.

islanders greatly disturbed him. Children, Walsh felt, often died needlessly from afflictions that required only simple treatments. Moved by this suffering and the conviction that the people he saw “had never had any real medical care in their life,” the doctor pledged “that if [he] ever got the chance, [he] wanted to do something about that sort of thing.” Returning home in 1946, he received his medical license, began a two-year residency at Georgetown University Hospital, and started a private practice in Washington, D.C. During the postwar years, the doctor became relatively well known within the nation’s capital. At least two obituaries claim that Walsh assisted with the Eisenhower’s recovery from a heart attack in 1955. Indeed, at that time, Walsh was serving as a consultant on diseases of the chest to the National Institutes of Health. Then beginning in 1956, he started to receive a series of government appointments to different health-related advisory bodies. From 1956 through 1960, he was the vice-chair and then the chair of the Health Resources Advisory Committee for the Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization. In early 1958, the White House appointed him to the National Advisory Committee on the Selection of Physicians, Dentists and Allied Specialists for the Selective Service System. He was already serving on the President’s National Advisory Committee on Youth Fitness. Then, later in 1958, came the request to join People-to-People and the beginning of his efforts to create Project HOPE.²⁸

²⁸ “William B(ertalan) Walsh,” Contemporary Authors Online, Gale, 2006, in Biography Resource Center (Farmington Hills, Mich.: Thomson Gale, 2006), <http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/BioRC?vrsn=149&OP=contains&locID=athe17405&srchtpr=name&ca=1&c=1&AI=U15038960&NA=william+b.+walsh&ste=12&tbst=prp&tab=1&n=10&docNum=H1000103097&bCConts=41> [accessed November 30, 2005]; William Dicke, “William B. Walsh, Founder of Project HOPE, Dies at 76,” *New York Times*, December 28, 1996; “White House Names Dr. William Walsh,” *Washington Post*, January 16, 1958; For the obituaries claiming that Walsh helped with Eisenhower’s recovery from a heart attack, see the *New York Times* obituary cited above and also Robert K. Crone, “Obituary: Dr. William B. Walsh, Sr., MD,” *Journal of the American Medical Association*, March 26, 1997, 1012; Walsh died on December 27, 1996.

Growing out of his wartime promise to himself, Dr. Walsh added Cold War political and ideological motivations to his war-inspired humanitarianism and created Project HOPE. To begin with, he certainly saw a role for his organization in the Cold War and even colorfully depicted his group and its ship as “an American saga.”

We are known as money-grubbers, capitalists, Yankee barbarians. The power with which we emerged from World War II has been bitterly resented: “Yankee go home.” But we have to lead the free world whether we like it or not—or there won’t be any. Our government has poured fortunes into foreign aid. The *Hope*, I believe, is a dramatic and effective symbol of the national trait that makes our power bearable. As people, we reach out to other people with the wish to help them when we have little or nothing to gain from it.²⁹

This passage from *A Ship Called Hope*—Walsh’s memoir about Project HOPE’s creation and the ship’s maiden voyage—hints at several interconnected motivations tied together by Cold War considerations. Driven by a determined humanitarianism, Dr. Walsh looked to help contain communism, integrate the free world and present the United States as an example to the world while alleviating the suffering that had so greatly disturbed him during his naval service.

The doctor hoped to assist in containing communist expansion while also working to integrate the free world. America’s anti-Soviet containment policy, Christina Klein argues, held that “the expansion of communism anywhere in the world posed a direct threat” to U.S. power. The drive for free world integration stemmed from the long-held view that “the nation’s economy, in order to remain healthy, had continually to expand and integrate new markets and sources of raw materials.” As “two sides of the same coin,” containment and integration made the Cold War a “competition between the United States and the Soviets not just for strategic advantage, but also for exclusive

²⁹ Walsh, 15.

access to the world's markets, industrial infrastructure, and national resources." The expansion of Soviet communism had to be contained while the expansion of American freedom and capitalism had to flourish. Accordingly, Klein notes, "the military alliances designed to contain Soviet expansion also facilitated economic integration among member nations" while "foreign aid programs designed to stimulate struggling economies [also] served as channels for delivering military assistance."³⁰

Walsh wanted to assist containment and integration by creating "a floating medical center . . . [to] help train people in the developing nations" where the "God-given right of freedom had come suddenly." Newly freed, the nations "clung to freedom" in what Walsh saw as "a plea stronger than any cry for help." Sudden independence, he implied, threatened to force these new nations to turn to communist countries for assistance but Project HOPE would enable "people to help themselves" so they would not have to "depend upon aid from other nations." A visit by the *S.S. Hope* could improve "the ties of friendship between the United States and the countries visited" and end up helping integrate them into the America's anti-Soviet coalition. For example, Indonesia, Walsh said, "could . . . become the salvation of the Orient if the Communists did not win their fight for its control." Ultimately, he added, "if its new freedom lasts and the nation grows strong and democratic, it is a potentially powerful ally strung out over an area of thousands of miles."³¹

American ideology and exceptionalism was Walsh's final motivation to create Project HOPE. The total Cold War's ideological nature placed great emphasis on

³⁰ Klein, 24-26.

³¹ Walsh, 63, 71; Project HOPE brochure, n.d., http://www.eisenhower.archives.gov/dl/People_To_People/BinderII.pdf [accessed December 8, 2005].

depicting American-style freedom as the world's best hope to resist expanding communism. "Voluntary associations" like Project HOPE, Helen Laville suggests, "were a central ideological component of post-war American exceptionalism."

Americans hoped that the promotion of the voluntary association as a key building block of democracy, a practice that had proved so successful in their own historical experience, could be exported to other nations. This self-righteous confidence motivated many American organizations . . . to . . . active involvement in international affairs.³²

Various voluntary groups "sought to export their model of democratic participation" and their vision of freedom to the world.³³

As leader of Project HOPE, Dr. Walsh seemed to hold similar views. In a passage from *A Ship Called Hope*, he portrayed the United States as the protector of Western civilization, "revolutionary freedom," and "Christian precepts" in a modern world gone mad. He wrote, "I think, not since Pericles said it of the Athenians 400 years before the birth of Christ, has it been possible to say of another nation's citizens, 'We are alone among mankind in doing men benefits, not out of self-interest, but in the fearless confidence of freedom.'" Motivated by the American exceptionalism apparent in this passage, Walsh created a program "to bring the skills and techniques developed by the *American* medical profession to the people of other nations" and to improve local health conditions through *American* medicine.³⁴

³² Laville, 49.

³³ Ibid., 47.

³⁴ Walsh, 75; Project HOPE brochure, n.d; Emphasis added.

Cooperation Between the State and Walsh

The impetus for Project HOPE certainly came from Dr. Walsh, but to succeed as part of the State-private network, he would have to seek material and moral support from the government. The need for official help among State-private groups was not unusual. Most voluntary associations that tried to export American-style freedom, Laville notes, “were encouraged and aided by the government, which shared their understanding of the ideological importance of private voluntary activities as a defining characteristic of American ideology.” Project HOPE’s relationship with U.S. officials reflected how the government’s relationship with organizations in the State-private network was, according to Lucas, “sometimes one of cooperation, sometimes one of co-optation, often one of tension, and always one of negotiation.” Project HOPE, Walsh noted, “had direct or indirect relations with some twenty-six agencies or sub-agencies of the government, both Houses of Congress, and many members of the Executive Branch.” The doctor would have been unable to create Project HOPE without these official contacts and he readily admitted that “since we chartered a vessel owned by the government and attempted a brand-new type of technical assistance program, the government was very much involved.” This involvement did not come in the form of direct continuing monetary assistance but rather through the extension of one vital resource, the hospital ship. Initially, however, government involvement was quite hesitant as officials, faced with a very desirable but unprecedented propaganda possibility, worried over the venture’s cost, practicality, and propaganda value, adopted a wait-and-see attitude, and then tied their support to the achievement of certain benchmarks. A few officials—especially at the

International Cooperation Administration's (ICA) field post in Indonesia, the United States Operations Mission (USOM) located in Jakarta—reacted with immense skepticism and sharp criticism. Still, though “the relationship was not always harmonious,” Project HOPE’s creation shows that the public and private elements of the State-private network generally “were in accord on their objectives.” Indeed, the network’s two elements “shared an ideology of American exceptionalism and superiority,” writes Laville, and believed that “the participation of private groups served as a tangible demonstration of the spirit of cooperation and freedom that lay at the heart of American democracy.”³⁵

Taking over as People-to-People health committee co-chair in late 1958, Walsh started to expand on what he claimed was a common idea of the time: the government using old hospital ships to transport refugees. He wanted, however, to do more. In his memoir recounting HOPE’s creation, Walsh recalled how he and his fellow health committee chair, Dr. Elmer Hess, “talked for days about this new idea of mine for a floating medical center and how it could help train people in developing nations.” Eventually tired of talking, Walsh simply decided to ask the government for a ship and went to the White House to see Robert K. Gray, the secretary of the cabinet. Skeptical at first, Gray eventually set up an appointment for Walsh with Secretary of the Navy Thomas S. Gates. Gates responded enthusiastically and ordered a staff member to look into whether the Navy could legally charter a vessel to the doctor. Walsh recalled that Gates told him, “If this is possible . . . we will give you every cooperation. Just

³⁵ Laville, 47; 51-52; Lucas, “Negotiating Freedom,” 11; Walsh 63, 67; Lucas, “Mobilizing Culture,” 99; The International Cooperation Administration (ICA) developed, implemented, and administered nonmilitary U.S. foreign aid and technical assistance programs from May 1955 until September 1961 when its functions were transferred to the U.S. Agency for International Development. The ICA’s overseas posts were known as United States Operations Missions (USOM).

remember, the Navy can offer you no personnel or funds. Our only possible contribution will be the vessel itself.” Walsh also asked Dr. Howard Snyder, Eisenhower’s personal physician, to mention the idea to the president. Having taken these initial steps, the Committee on Medicine and the Health Profession formally broke with the People-to-People Program in December 1958 and incorporated separately as Project HOPE (HOPE was an acronym meaning Health Opportunities for People Everywhere), a private NGO dedicated solely to dispatching a hospital ship to the nations of the developing world.³⁶

Also during December 1958, Walsh met with Christian Herter, acting secretary of state, to outline his ambitious plan for the floating medical center and lobby for access to a ship. Walsh told Herter that

The medical staff of the ship, working with the local medical profession in various countries to be visited, would provide both medical care and training. The program . . . includes the sending of small medical teams of doctors in private practice to work with their counterparts in other countries for periods of four to

³⁶ Walsh, 63-66; Dayton Moore, “Project Hope,” *Today’s Health*, February 1960, 77; Actually, primary and secondary sources reveal several U.S. and international plans to use ships as floating trade fairs, cultural exhibits, and humanitarian platforms. Dizard, on page 71 of *Inventing Public Diplomacy*, briefly describes an unrealized plan put forth in 1955 to outfit a retired Navy aircraft carrier as “a floating trade exhibit . . . with a movie theater on the flight deck where an audience of two thousand could view films about the U.S. economy and its products.” Osgood describes either a similar plan or perhaps the same exact plan on page 223 of *Total Cold War*. Archival research shows that Japan sent a ship-based exhibit on machinery to Indonesia in early 1957 while the Indonesians themselves tried to send a floating trade fair to Hawaii in late 1960. This ship suffered engine difficulties, returned to port, and never made it to Honolulu though it did eventually sail to Tokyo. Archives also contain a U.S. foreign service dispatch from early 1959 describing the use of a Soviet merchant vessel in Indonesia as a propaganda exhibit that showed films right on the ship. For all these records see Box 03, Indonesia Djakarta General Records, 1950-1958 and Box 09, Indonesia Djakarta General Records, 1959-1961 in the Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State (RG 48), NA. Most interestingly, in May 1958, G.J. Antes, an Indonesian sailor, wrote to Emily Baum of Chicago asking if it would be possible to “get people interested in lending us a physician and an old boat.” Baum forwarded the suggestion to Sen. Paul Douglas (D-Illinois), who then asked the ICA to explore the feasibility and cost of supplying a boat “to provide medical service to remote areas.” The ICA consulted with the Indonesian Ministry of Health on the matter but rejected the proposal, noting that it and the ministry had higher priorities on which to focus, specifically malaria eradication. For these documents see Box 53, Indonesia Subject Files, 1953-1958, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948-1961 (RG 469), NA.

eight weeks; the establishment of [a] clearing house for requests for drugs, medical supplies and equipment; the exchange of literature.³⁷

Despite Project HOPE's recent official separation from People-to-People, many of these activities fulfilled the goals first given to the health committee back at the White House People-to-People conference in 1956.³⁸

The secretary and the doctor also discussed the costs of such a program. Walsh estimated that \$1.2 million would be needed for reconditioning the ship, while \$2 million annually would be required for operational costs such as maintenance, salaries, equipment, drugs and fuel. Walsh felt the operational costs could be privately "obtained . . . once the ship is put into condition." Since the vessel would remain the property of the Navy, however, many prospective donors felt that the "expenditure for reconditioning . . . should come from the Government." Although Herter said "the project appeared to be a worthy one and designed to serve the purpose of the People-to-People Program, as mentioned by the President," he also expressed some misgivings. His doubts partly reflected propaganda considerations for he thought "the people-to-people aspect would be emphasized if the funds for the program were obtained from private sources rather than from the Government." Additionally, his hesitancy reflected concerns over cost and practicality. He noted that official financial support would probably come from the ICA, which "was not in a position to provide the \$1,200,000 which Dr. Walsh had indicated was needed." Articulating a criticism that would doggedly stick to Project HOPE during

³⁷ "Memorandum of Conversation between Acting Secretary of State Christian Herter and William B. Walsh, M.D.," December 4, 1958, Document 511.006/12-458, Box 2096, Central Decimal Files, 1955-1961, General Records of the Department of State (RG 59), NA; Herter was acting as secretary of state in place of a cancer-stricken John Foster Dulles.

³⁸ Ibid.

its early years, Herter worried that “while sending out of the hospital ship might have symbolic value, other programs which could be carried out on shore would probably be more practical.” In response, Walsh stated that HOPE would “continue its efforts to obtain the necessary funds” and asserted that even he felt the ship should not be launched until the \$1.2 million for reconditioning had been secured along with at least three-fourths of the \$2 million annual operating cost.³⁹

Echoing Herter’s cautious reception but also demonstrating an appreciation for the symbolic value of Project HOPE, President Eisenhower himself expressed tentative support for the program at a press conference on February 10, 1959. Asked his opinion of the plan, Eisenhower said: “Well, I think the project—I have read about it in all its details in a number of reports—I think it’s a wonderful thing to do. I don’t know any better way in which you could bring to many thousands of people, many millions, the concern of the United States in humanitarian things.” Still, like Herter, the president sounded a note of caution, stating: “Now, the only thing that I know is still in question is whether or not this matter has yet been financed by these private interests in the way that they think it should be and the way they believe they can. Once that assurance is there, the Navy will have the ship ready for them, I assure you.”⁴⁰

These comments were echoed the next day in a letter from President Eisenhower to Dr. Walsh. “Impressed with the merit of the proposal developed by your Committee,” Eisenhower informed Walsh that he had ordered the State Department to “provide for a

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Dwight D. Eisenhower, Remarks at the President’s Press Conference, February 10, 1959, *Public Papers of the President*, American Presidency Project, University of California-Santa Barbara, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=11589&st=hospital+ship&st1=> [accessed February 11, 2006].

central point in the Government to lend advice and assistance in the successful launching of the project and later in its orderly coordination with Governmental activities which are related to it.” As in his press comments, the president qualified this support, noting “that a number of specific arrangements and understandings will be needed in order to insure that the project is successfully launched.” Still, once these were dealt with he would “provide . . . a hospital ship in operating condition.”⁴¹

The government’s attitude of cautious support continued in a classified meeting of the Operations Coordinating Board (OCB) on February 18, 1959. As part of the National Security Council (NSC), the OCB worked, in Osgood’s words, “to develop detailed plans of action to implement the grand strategy formulated by the NSC.” Made up of high-level security and foreign policy officials, the board “focused on coordinating and implementing [national security] policies” and thus “had wide jurisdiction over programs designed for international persuasion.” During the meeting, the OCB “noted that the government has undertaken to provide a hospital ship in operating condition” for Project HOPE and that the money for reconditioning would “come from the President’s Special Fund in the Mutual Security appropriation.” Echoing Eisenhower, however, the vessel would be provided only if Walsh’s organization achieved certain goals by July 1. The document did not specify the particular goals to be achieved.⁴²

⁴¹ Eisenhower to Walsh, February 11, 1959, framed display at Project HOPE headquarters in Millwood, VA.

⁴² Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 87; “Minutes: Meeting of February 18, 1959,” Box 3, State Department Participation in the OCB, 1947-1963, General Records of the Department of State (RG 59), NA; Participants at the February 18th OCB meeting included: Herter, Special Assistant to the President for Security Operations Coordination Karl Harr, Director of Central Intelligence Allen Dulles, Director of the U.S. Information Agency George V. Allen, Acting Director of the International Cooperation Administration Leonard J. Saccio, Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Gordon

More encouraging was a Navy memorandum to Eisenhower revealing that the government could legally “lease the ship under the authority of 10 USC 2667, which authorizes the Secretary of a military department to lease property . . . ‘upon such terms as he considers will promote the national defense or will be in the public interest.’” Such a lease would require no cash rental payments, just that Project HOPE pay for necessary maintenance, insurance, and repairs. Like Dr. Walsh, the Navy estimated that \$1.28 million was needed to put the ship, but not its hospital facilities, in operating condition. During the rest of February, March and April, the Navy worked with Project HOPE to determine the technical particulars of reconditioning and just exactly how much reconditioning would cost.⁴³

Conflict Between the State and Walsh

By May 1959, some progress had been made. Most notably, the government of Indonesia had already extended a formal invitation to Project HOPE. Dr. Walsh, in cooperation with Indonesian government officials and medical leaders, was planning for a nine-month stay starting in late November. On May 7, Secretary of State Christian Herter sent out official instructions regarding “Operation ‘HOPE’” to U.S. diplomatic posts in Indonesia. He began these instructions by explaining that the ship’s permanent medical staff and its rotating “units of specialists and generalists on three-month terms”

Gray, Under Secretary of the Treasury Fred C. Scribner, Jr., two representatives for Deputy Secretary of Defense Donald Quarles, and a representative for Atomic Energy Commission Chairman John McCone.

⁴³ U.S. Department of the Navy, Memorandum regarding the chartering of a Navy hospital ship for Project HOPE, February 16, 1959, http://www.eisenhower.archives.gov/dl/People_To_People/BinderKK.pdf [accessed December 8, 2005]; For these conversations, see Box 06, Series I: Chronological files, 1961-1974, Operations & Logistics (HRG 05), Project HOPE Archives (hereafter HOPEA).

would “teach American medical skills” on a people-to-people basis in Southeast Asia. Most importantly, Herter ordered that “in conversations with Indonesians, it should be pointed out that this is not a U.S. Government [project], but a private project under the People-to-People program” Finally, he asked for comments about the plan.⁴⁴

At the United States Operations Mission (USOM) in Jakarta, Indonesia, the proposal met with skepticism and heavy criticism, especially within the Public Health Division (PHD). The PHD worried over Project HOPE’s lack of “permanency,” an essential element for medical success in the division’s view. It dismissed the plan for using rotating doctors as “a tax-free vacation” and charged that the proposed three-month rotation was “not long enough to become oriented to the problem, much less accomplish anything.” The division believed the vessel’s planned “six months in Indonesia” (Herter’s message had said nine months) were too short to provide a chance to “know these people, their problems, and their language.” The PHD worried that visits to more populated islands like Java, Bali, or Sumatra “would be at the risk of insult to the local medical profession” while ignoring remote areas with the greatest medical needs. Furthermore, using a hospital ship “implie[d] time on board . . . for treatment and recovery” but no type of surgery, the division argued, could be undertaken to complete recovery “while touching enough ports . . . in six months to make any kind of

⁴⁴ State Department, Washington to American Consulate, Surabaya and American Embassy, Djakarta, “Department of State Instruction regarding Operation HOPE,” May 7, 1959, Box 54, Indonesia Subject Files, 1953-1959, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948-1961 (RG 469), NA.

psychological impact.” It sharply concluded, “We cannot call at a port and discharge a cargo of medical care like oil or rice.”⁴⁵

Despite these concerns, the Public Health Division acknowledged that there was “a great deal of benefit to be derived from such a ship if it were planned differently.” It even concluded Project HOPE could “combat . . . Soviet efforts to penetrate [Indonesia] under the guise of health and medical care.” For success, however, the ship needed “a reasonably stable staff, not plagued by constant rotation, and doctors [who] would stay long enough to see some results of the work they had begun.” Furthermore, fewer ports-of-call, preferably away from more populated islands, would enable the ship to “make return calls . . . at reasonably spaced intervals.” The PHD concluded that if Project HOPE stayed a minimum of eighteen months and “if the basic crew knew the language before arrival,” then the venture “would meet with almost assured success.”⁴⁶

Based partly on this PHD report, James C. Baird, USOM Jakarta’s chief of mission, dispatched an airgram to ICA headquarters in Washington on May 13, 1959. Assuring superiors that he was “very interested in project ‘HOPE,’” Baird made several recommendations to “add to the insurance of success.” He suggested extending the vessel’s stay in Indonesia to two years, focusing only on ports in the outer islands, omitting the staff rotation plans, and including prominent Indonesian doctors as instructors on board the ship. Including these doctors “would demonstrate a fraternity of medicine,” show Project HOPE was “not a condescending gift,” and “do much to elevate

⁴⁵ USOM Djakarta to ICA Washington, “Hospital Ship ‘HOPE,’” May 13, 1959, Box 54, Indonesia Subject Files, 1953-1959, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948-1961 (RG 469), NA.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

the prestige of the medical leaders of this nation among their colleagues and further orient them toward the West.”⁴⁷

In part, USOM Jakarta’s critique reflected several criticisms about the People-to-People Program that can be applied to Project HOPE. Klein explains that professionals who dealt with international relations, particularly foreign service officers in the field dismissed People-to-People as “an ‘amateurish’ approach to a complicated world which failed to consider the needs and problems of peoples overseas.” One U.S. diplomat in Asia, she says, “condemned the program for its superficiality and its American focus.” In fact, People-to-People’s American focus was exactly the problem for these officials. Fitzhugh Green, a long-time USIA officer, criticized People-to-People as a “Yankee-style” activity “that had political sex appeal in the United States but overseas went unnoticed as a gentle rain in the night.” Klein concludes that “foreign affairs professionals disliked the program precisely because it was so clearly designed for American participation rather than overseas effectiveness.” Little reflection is necessary to see similar attitudes toward Project HOPE at USOM Jakarta. The ship’s stay was too short and impermanent to really deal with health problems, the ship’s staff had to learn the language to succeed and the rotation plan was simply a vacation. Of course, the post’s objections about HOPE’s lack of “permanency” also harkened back to Herter’s first meeting with Dr. Walsh when the acting secretary worried about the practicality of a hospital ship versus land-based medical programs. Finally, the USOM’s criticisms reflected the ICA’s bureaucratic focus on technical assistance and economic development rather than on propaganda. The Public Health Division envisioned Project HOPE only as

⁴⁷ Ibid.

a medical assistance program, not as a symbol of American humanitarianism or as an effort to improve the image of the United States abroad during the Cold War.⁴⁸

James Riddleberger, the ICA's director, however, did understand Project HOPE's propaganda value. On June 22, 1959, Riddleberger replied to Baird's message and informed him that the project had made "considerable progress" and enjoyed "wide support," including the president's. The ICA director ordered all "employees to approach the project with a constructive viewpoint and do all that is proper and feasible to ensure that it is a success." He then systematically rejected all of USOM Jakarta's recommendations and showed an appreciation for Project HOPE's propaganda role. HOPE could not operate in Indonesia for two years because "in its early stages it may be preferable from a public relations and fund raising viewpoint for it to move around to the maximum extent consistent with efficient operations." Riddleberger explained that the program's "first purpose . . . [was] one of training and demonstration rather than to provide facilities for free hospital care." Since the outer islands had fewer doctors, ironically, more "doctors who could benefit" from the training and demonstration mission would be found "in the principal cities." Essentially admitting that HOPE was in part about transforming ordinary Americans into Cold Warriors, Riddleberger noted that lengthening the rotating staff's tours was out of the question because "extended tours . . . might be less likely to attract medical personnel of the caliber desired." As a

⁴⁸ Klein, 55-56; Fitzhugh Green, *American Propaganda Abroad* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1988), 34.

psychological symbol, Project HOPE at some level had to sacrifice real medical concerns to ensure its propaganda value.⁴⁹

Dr. Walsh Turns to Corporate America

Facing this outright criticism as well as a wait-and-see attitude among more supportive government officials, Dr. Walsh now had to prove both himself and the viability of his vision by building an organization to operate and fund his hospital ship. In general, various sources funded the State-private network, ranging from well-known and independently wealthy citizens to, in Lucas's words, "established organizations" such as the Advertising Council or the Ford Foundation. Yet, the Ford Foundation, for instance, could only provide thousands of dollars, not millions. So, the CIA also set up dummy foundations to funnel its own money to the network's member groups. In many ways the network itself was, according to one writer, "an entrepreneurial coalition of philanthropic foundations, business corporations and other institutions and individuals, who worked hand in hand with the CIA." Project HOPE demonstrates, however, that funding and supplying State-private organizations did not always involve a covert CIA plot. Instead, Walsh turned to corporate America for material support and financial backing.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ ICA Washington to USOM Djakarta, "Project HOPE," June 22, 1959, Box 54, Indonesia Subject Files, 1953-1959, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies (RG 469), NA.

⁵⁰ Lucas, *Freedom's War*, 107-109; Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA in the World of Arts and Letters* (New York: New Press, 1999), 130; There is no available evidence to suggest that Project HOPE received covert government support from the CIA. In fact, the project's occasional financial problems are such a frequent topic in primary documents that one suspects the organization never received such covert support. Studies of the State-private network by Lucas, Saunders, and others demonstrate that organizations receiving CIA funding usually were quite flush with cash. Project HOPE

A Project HOPE fund raising report from September 1960, the month its hospital ship would sail for Southeast Asia, revealed that “commerce & industry” had given \$727,480 to the venture since its creation. The next closest amount, \$130,765, came from direct mail solicitations while the third highest amount, \$27,645, came from labor organizations. Throughout June 1960, HOPE sent fund raising letters to some of the nation’s largest corporations including North American Aviation, Green Giant, Proctor & Gamble, United Airlines, Goodyear Tire & Rubber, General Motors, Ford Motor Company, Westinghouse, General Electric and Sears, Roebuck. Letters to companies thanking them for donations revealed that Continental Motors gave \$250, RCA contributed \$1,500, and the *New Yorker* magazine gave \$100. Compared to the \$3.5 million needed to operate the ship for one year, however, these individual corporate contributions and industry’s total contribution really seem relatively small.⁵¹

In the end, corporate America’s greatest contribution to Project HOPE came in the form of contributions-in-kind—the donation of general provisions, medical supplies, and vital equipment. Corporate contributions-in-kind for the ship’s first voyage totaled nearly \$2.6 million. Drug companies like Johnson & Johnson, Merck, Rexall, and Pfizer donated tens of thousands and sometimes hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of

does not seem to share this characteristic. More research, especially in still classified documents, may one day prove this supposition incorrect. For documents discussing HOPE’s financial difficulties see Smith to Jackson, Memorandum regarding Project HOPE Board meeting, November 17, 1960, Box 57, Great White Fleet (Project HOPE), 1960-61, C.D. Jackson Papers, EL; numerous documents in Box 01, Series I: Maritime Operations-Administrative files, 1958-1974, S.S. Hope (HRG 20), HOPEA; John Cooper, “ICA Aide Says Hospital Ship ‘Hope’ Isn’t Worth Money Its Sponsors Ask,” *Washington Post*, September 8, 1961; and Maxine Cheshire, “Calm Waters Ahead for Good Ship HOPE,” *Washington Post*, March 25, 1962.

⁵¹ “People-to-People Health Foundation, Inc., Department of Development,” September 1960, Box 14, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA; For these letters, see Box 14, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA.

pharmaceuticals, ultimately totaling over \$1.5 million. Other companies in the medical industry gave the program about \$455,000 worth of surgical equipment and hospital supplies. A list of these donations revealed that “the total contribution of the dairy industry, including the design and installation costs for the milk machine [that transformed salt water into milk] . . . amounted to \$140,000.” General Foods, Nestle, General Mills, Pillsbury, Borden, Carnation, Kraft, Gerber, and others gave over \$112,000 worth of food.⁵²

What motivated this outpouring of corporate support for Project HOPE? The *Wall Street Journal* reported that some companies hoped for an expansion of their markets. Dr. Paul E. Spangler, Project HOPE’s senior medical officer, acknowledged that, in the newspaper’s words, “potential customers—doctors in other countries—will be exposed to American antibiotics and medical equipment” but promised that Project HOPE planned no special efforts to promote these goods. Nevertheless, President W.T. Brady of the Corn Products Company hoped his company’s donation of “a year’s supply of a new margarine line” would, according to the *Journal*, “serve to partly introduce the product and also to expand foreign markets.” Likewise, the Los Angeles-based U.S. Manufacturing Company, makers of prosthetic limbs, wanted to “expand its foreign business” by “seeking Asian customers.” Ralph Charbeneau, an executive at the Ex-Cell-O Corporation which provided milk cartons for Project HOPE, frankly admitted to the *Wall Street Journal* that, “It would be very wrong for us to pretend we are just philanthropists . . . because that isn’t our business.” Charbeneau succinctly stated that “if

⁵² Nicholas W. Crow, “SS HOPE – Voyage #1: Contributions-in-Kind,” November 1961, Box 14, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA.

you can't tickle the cash register, then you can't justify the expense in the eyes of the stockholders.”⁵³

At a deeper level, however, the market expansion these companies desired also supported U.S. efforts to integrate the free world. After the Second World War and as tension with the Soviet Union increased, American leaders understood that, in historian Laura Belmonte's words, “unless they helped other nations to rebuild their economic and political systems, American prosperity and security would be imperiled.” Communism, adds art historian Robert H. Haddow, seemed to offer a “compelling alternative” to American-style capitalism. To counter this alternative, Haddow suggests, corporate and government leaders concluded “that a global consumer economy on the U.S. model was the only effective way of preserving civilization from the clutches of Communist tyranny.” Accordingly, they cooperated to build this economy.⁵⁴

This partnership adopted three tactics to assist global economic integration: systemic reforms to the global economy, the extension of foreign aid and technical assistance programs, and the dissemination of propaganda that extolled the virtues of an economic model based on American-style freedom. HOPE—simultaneously a technical assistance and propaganda program—represented both of the latter tactics in this strategy. Systemic reforms like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and even the North Atlantic Treaty “shored up,” according to Haddow, war-torn economies “with military strength” and extolled superior

⁵³ David Grey, “Hospital Ship to Carry Medical Training, Business Promotions to Southeast Asia,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 21, 1960.

⁵⁴ Laura Belmonte, “Defending a Way of Life: American Propaganda and the Cold War,” PhD diss., University of Virginia, 1996, 24; Robert Haddow, *Pavilions of Plenty: Exhibiting American Cultural Abroad in the 1950s* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997), 2-5, 19-20.

American ideals like individual freedom, democracy, the free market, entrepreneurship, and private property. Reforms also opened foreign markets to a flood of U.S. currency and products. To further integration, foreign aid and technical assistance were added to the structural reforms in an effort to manage “the ‘rising expectations’ of the Third World” and forestall a “Soviet takeover of resource-rich” developing nations. By the middle of the 1950s, spearheading the aid effort was the ICA, which busied itself “designing and building dams, organizing agricultural extension systems, staffing public health services, and assisting foreign manufacturers to find their niche in the American marketplace.” These activities laid the foundation “for long-term corporate investment by improving infrastructure and reforming fiscal policy” and helped limit risk to U.S. companies investing overseas. Propaganda programs accompanied development projects to spread the U.S. leadership’s “ideal of progress and material abundance” and in turn “encourage people of other nations to adopt American business methods and open their economies to American companies.” One such propaganda program was People-to-People, which U.S. officials saw, Klein writes, “as an adjunct to its foreign economic policy.” Free world economic integration could be assisted through “voluntary activities and forging personal relationships.” So, the leaders of “People-to-People committees often represented the economic interests that had the most to gain from integration.” As evidence, Klein herself points to Project HOPE’s board of directors, which consisted of corporate executives from the pharmaceutical, international hotel, entertainment, tourism, and defense industries.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Haddow, 2, 9-11, 19-20; Klein, 52.

The Public-Private Elite, C.D. Jackson, and Project HOPE

When Dr. Walsh announced the names of the members of Project HOPE's inaugural board on March 20, 1959, corporate America was definitely represented. At the same time, many of these board members from the corporate sector maintained very close ties to the government and had served or would one day serve in some official government position. George Meany, the head of the AFL-CIO, served on the National War Labor Board during the Second World War. After the war, Eisenhower tapped him twice as a U.S. delegate to the United Nations General Assembly. Frank Pace, Jr., the president of defense contractor General Dynamics, served as head of the Bureau of Budget under President Harry S. Truman and as secretary of the army during the Korean War. John T. Connor, the president of pharmaceutical giant Merck & Company, at one time was a special assistant to Navy Secretary James Forrestal and helped draft the National Security Act of 1947. President Lyndon Johnson would ask him to serve as secretary of commerce. Eric Johnston, the president of the Motion Picture Association of America, joined HOPE's board in June 1959. Under both Truman and Eisenhower, Johnston served on the Commission on Inter-American Development and the advisory committee to the Economic Cooperation Administration. He also traveled to the Middle East as a diplomatic envoy in 1955.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ "Directors Chosen for Hospital Ship," *New York Times*, March 21, 1959; "George Meany," Encyclopedia of World Biography, 2nd ed., 17 Vols., Gale Research, 1998, reproduced in Biography Resource Center (Farmington Hills, Mich.: Thomson Gale, 2006), <http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/BioRC?vrsn=149&OP=contains&locID=athe17405&srchtp=name&ca=1&c=3&AI=U13705334&NA=george+meany&ste=12&tbst=prp&tab=1&n=10&docNum=K1631004445&bConts=59> [accessed January 30, 2007]; "Frank Pace Jr., Former Secretary of the Army and Executive Dies," *New York Times*, January 10, 1988; "John T. Connor, 85, Former Commerce Secretary, Dies," *New York Times*, October 10, 2000; "Johnston Joins Medical Plan," *New York Times*, June 4, 1959; "Eric Allen Johnston," Dictionary of American Biography, Supplement 7: 1961-1965, American Council of Learned Societies, 1981, reproduced

Walsh's reliance on board members with ties to both the public and private sectors reflected the State-private network's corporatist nature. Corporatism, in part, argues that government and business are, in the words of Inderjeet Parmar, "closely linked and share the same worldview: that the United States has a duty to lead the world, to police it and to ensure security and order." United in this view, Hogan explains, "elites in the private and public sectors collaborate to guarantee order, progress, and stability" at home and abroad. This collaboration, he notes, "creates a pattern of interpenetration and power sharing that makes it difficult to determine where one sector leaves off and the other begins." Elite participation in the State-private network replaced the wall of separation between the public and private sectors with a "revolving door" that, according to Parmar, "symbolize[d] the easy circulation of establishment men in the exercise of power" and "the symbiosis of private elites and public power." In other words, interpenetration within the network created a public-private elite that simultaneously protected the interests of government, the interests of business, and the interests of private citizens in the State-private network.⁵⁷

in Biography Resource Center (Farmington Hills, Mich.: Thomson Gale, 2006), <http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/BioRC?vrsn=149&OP=contains&locID=athe17405&srchtp=name&ca=1&c=1&AI=1177716&NA=eric+johnston&ste=12&tbst=prp&tab=1&n=10&docNum=BT2310010219&bConts=33> [accessed January 30, 2007]; Walsh, 216-217; Other members of the original board announced in the *New York Times* on March 21, 1959 were: Francis Boyer, board chairman of Smith, Kline & French; Eugene C. Carusi, Washington lawyer; Fred F. Florence, head of the Republican National Bank of Dallas; Dr. Elmer Hess, former president of the AMA; Edwin A. Locke, Jr., president of the Union Tank Car Company; Morehead Patterson, chairman of the American Machine and Foundry Corporation; John G. Searle, president of G.D. Searle & Co.; and Gen. L.J. Sverdrup, president of the Sverdrup & Parcel Engineering Company.

⁵⁷ Lucas, *Freedom's War*, 281-282; John Lewis Gaddis, "The Corporatist Synthesis: A Skeptical View," *Diplomatic History* 10 (Fall 1986), 358; Inderjeet Parmar, "Conceptualizing the State-Private Network in American Foreign Policy," Chap. 1 in *The US Government, Citizen Groups and the Cold War: the State-Private Network*, eds. Helen Laville and Hugh Wilford (New York: Routledge, 2006), 19, 24.; Michael J. Hogan, "Corporatism: A Positive Appraisal," *Diplomatic History* 10 (Fall 1986), 363; See also Michael J. Hogan, "Corporatism," Chap. 8 in *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, 2nd

Project HOPE board member C.D. Jackson—executive vice president at the Time-Life Corporation and a former psychological warfare advisor to President Eisenhower—typified the public-private elite that formed such a vital part of the State-private network. In many ways, he embodied the network himself. When Walsh asked Jackson to join HOPE’s board midway through 1959, the doctor gained a powerful ally with ties throughout corporate America and within the U.S. government. Furthermore, Jackson had immediate access to the widely-read publications of the Time-Life publishing empire. His inclusion brought the nation’s foremost psychological warfare expert into Project HOPE’s hierarchy and greatly encouraged skeptical government officials about the venture’s ultimate success as a propaganda symbol. With his connections and expertise, Jackson acted as conduit for government influence within Project HOPE, as an advocate for HOPE in official circles, and as a channel for publicity to the American people.

Born the son of a marble importer who frequently traveled to Europe, Charles Douglas Jackson attended a Swiss elementary school and the Hill School in Pottstown, Pennsylvania. In 1924, he received French and literature degrees from Princeton University and then convinced Time-Life founder Henry Luce to hire him as a personal assistant in the early 1930s. He remained employed as a high-level executive within Luce’s publishing empire for the next three decades though he frequently took leaves of absence to serve in various government and quasi-government positions. During the Second World War, Jackson helped organize General Eisenhower’s Psychological

Warfare Division, a service that brought him into Ike's confidence. Following the war, he returned to Time-Life Corporation as managing director of international editions and later as publisher of *Fortune*. While head of *Fortune*, Jackson vigorously promoted, in the words of one scholar, "his notion of 'Enterprise America': the need to achieve a partnership between business and government in the interests of economic expansion worldwide." His next absence saw him—as president of the National Committee for a Free Europe—set up Radio Free Europe (RFE), a founding organization in the State-private network.⁵⁸

Following Eisenhower's electoral victory in 1952, Jackson acted as special assistant to the president on psychological warfare operations. Osgood notes that Jackson's "faith in psychological warfare had few limits" even believing it could bloodlessly win a third world war. Besides bringing a great enthusiasm for information programs to his position, Jackson's ties to the Time-Life Corporation "provided the administration with another asset on the public relations front . . . to sell [its] Cold War policies." Furthermore, Osgood writes, Jackson "maintained a broader network of contacts with journalists, advertisers, business leaders, and nongovernmental organizations, and he called on them repeatedly to contribute to his psychological warfare initiatives." Though Jackson remained in his role as a presidential adviser for only a year before returning to Time-Life, he continued informally to advise Eisenhower until he left

⁵⁸ "Charles Douglas Jackson," *Dictionary of American Biography, Supplement 7: 1961-1965*, American Council of Learned Societies, 1981, reproduced in Biography Resource Center (Farmington Hills, Mich.: Thomson Gale, 2006) <http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/BioRC?vrsn=149&OP=starts&locID=athe17405&srchtp=name&ca=1&c=1&AI=1177912&NA=jackson%2C+charles+douglas&ste=12&tbst=prp&tab=1&docNum=BT2310010516&bConts=33> [accessed July 13, 2006]; "C.D. Jackson Dies; Time, Inc., Official," *New York Times*, September 20, 1964; Blanche Wiesen Cook, "First Comes the Lie: C.D. Jackson and Political Warfare," *Radical History Review* 31 (1984), 46; Lucas, *Freedom's War*, 76, 100.

office. Just as he offered the president expertise in propaganda and access to Luce's publications, C.D. Jackson offered Project HOPE these same things in addition to his network of official contacts in Washington.⁵⁹

Jackson's involvement with Project HOPE began when *Life* magazine presented its readers with a strikingly illustrated cover story titled "Bold Peace Plan for the U.S.: A New 'Great White Fleet.'" The original Great White Fleet was made up of state-of-the-art, highly-armored, white-painted American naval vessels sent on a round-the-world voyage, *Life* explained, "to impress the world with U.S. naval power and the nation's coming of age" during the administration of President Theodore Roosevelt. Now, the magazine's editors called "for a 'New White Fleet' . . . with a new mission." This new unarmed fleet, "painted white as a sign of peace . . . would sail around the world with food for the hungry, medical facilities for the sick and injured, and technicians to help underprivileged peoples improve their lot." This humanitarian task force would "harness America's productive goodwill and energies to help insure peace and combat the spread of Communism." Commander Frank Manson, an American naval officer and the visionary behind the New White Fleet, first thought of the idea in December 1957, about a year prior to Walsh's own first steps toward launching the *S.S. Hope*. The article's final two pages, however, featured a photograph of Dr. Walsh and a cutaway drawing of the *Hope*, which the magazine considered a "small-scale prototype of the White Fleet." Explaining later how HOPE came to be included in the article, C.D. Jackson told George

⁵⁹ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 82-83.

V. Allen, director of the USIA, that research into Manson's proposal led the editors at *Life* to "a similar but more modest effort known as Project HOPE."⁶⁰

On July 29, 1959, two days after *Life*'s article appeared, C.D. Jackson met with Dr. Walsh as part of Time-Life's efforts to investigate the feasibility of creating the New White Fleet. The day after this meeting, Jackson sent a short note to Walsh confirming his "willingness to serve as a member of the Board of Directors" for Project HOPE. In a subsequent and more formal acceptance letter, Jackson wrote of how quickly it "became apparent that [*Life*'s New White Fleet] aspirations and [Project HOPE's aspirations] were so similar that for Time, Inc. to set up a separate organization to promote the Great White Fleet would be superfluous and even harmful." The propaganda value of HOPE was not far from Jackson's thoughts. He expressed his belief that sailing "under private auspices" would demonstrate the power of "President Eisenhower's 'people-to-people' program" and illustrate America's peaceful intentions. Finally, Jackson dedicated Time-Life Corporation to launching HOPE's hospital ship as the "first ship of the Great White Fleet" and promised that donations collected because of the recent New White Fleet article would immediately "be channeled to Project HOPE."⁶¹

⁶⁰ "Bold Peace Plan for U.S.: A New 'Great White Fleet,'" *Life*, July 27, 1959, 17-25; Jackson to Allen, October 6, 1959, Box 57, Great White Fleet (Project HOPE), 1959, C.D. Jackson Papers, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library (hereafter EL); According to pages 11-12 of *American Propaganda Abroad* by former USIA officer Fitzhugh Green, Roosevelt's "Great White Fleet" did "good deeds along the way" and, in one instance, "stopped in the Mediterranean . . . to assist victims of an earthquake at Messina, Italy."

⁶¹ Jackson to Walsh, July 30, 1959; Walsh to Jackson, August 3, 1959; Jackson to Unnamed, August 11, 1959, Box 57, Great White Fleet (Project HOPE), 1959, C.D. Jackson Papers, EL. Documents in the Project HOPE archives indicate that about \$24,000 came to Project HOPE because this appeal. See Nelson to Alex, "Letter to 1959 Contributors," June 3, 1960, Box 14, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA.

Having already supplied Project HOPE with a moment of publicity before the American people, Jackson set about gauging the level of support in official circles for both HOPE and the New White Fleet. “To determine the attitude toward the Great White Fleet on the part of all interested agencies; and to assess the prospects for obtaining federal financial support . . . without sacrificing the underlying ‘people-to-people’ concept,” he sent Time-Life staffer Edgar P. Smith to Washington in late September 1959. Illustrating Jackson’s wide-ranging network of contacts within government, Smith met with such luminaries as Congressmen O.C. Fisher (D-Texas) and Ed Edmonson (D-Oklahoma), ICA Deputy Director James Grant, Assistant Secretary of Defense Graves Erskine, Special Assistant to the President Karl Harr, and CIA Director Allen Dulles.⁶²

Smith returned from Washington with “several rather pessimistic conclusions” about the New White Fleet’s prospects. He reported that real, as opposed to rhetorical, government support was generally lacking, especially since *Life* “joined with HOPE.” In meetings with administration officials, Smith encountered a “general feeling that we should ‘wait and see how HOPE turns out.’” He noted, however, that the USIA and the ICA seemed surprisingly sympathetic to both proposals though he did not elaborate.⁶³

Smith seemed generally suspicious of Walsh and expressed great concern about the lack of urgency at HOPE’s Washington headquarters and the complacency of the doctor and his staff. No one at HOPE had fundraising experience and “no finance committee or finance committee chairman has been appointed.” Smith felt that Walsh’s

⁶² Smith to Jackson, “Memorandum regarding Walsh; Running around Washington, etc.,” September 21, 1959, Box 57, Great White Fleet (Project HOPE), 1959, C.D. Jackson Papers, EL.

⁶³ Smith to Jackson and Heiskell, “Memorandum regarding Great White Fleet on the Potomac,” September 21, 1959, Box 57, Great White Fleet (Project HOPE), 1959, C.D. Jackson Papers, EL.

“highly emotional involvement in Project HOPE” would prevent his ready acceptance of counsel from *Life* unless Jackson could get named to the board’s executive committee. Smith believed this unlikely since “Walsh wants a big-name, big-money, little-action board . . . that he can readily manage.” He opined that “all that Walsh wants from LIFE, (let’s face it) is free publicity—and no interference.” Smith recommended trying to use Jackson’s position as board member to “infuse some semblance of order into the fund-raising effort” and that Jackson dispatch a letter to Walsh expressing “reservations about the way HOPE is being run.”⁶⁴

Jackson sent a lengthy letter of advice to Walsh on September 22, 1959, a letter that illustrates his role as promoter of government propaganda goals within Project HOPE. He began by praising Walsh for his “blue-ribbon Board” and the early support gained from “powerful national organizations” such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), the Lions, and the AFL-CIO. Furthermore, Jackson noted that in all his time with Time-Life Corporation he could not “ever recall our editors whole-heartedly undertaking a continuing commitment” such as the one to Project HOPE. The nation’s foremost psychological warrior expressed great enthusiasm for a planned Advertising Council campaign for HOPE calling it “the best way for rapid, concentrated national dissemination of an idea through all media at nominal cost.”⁶⁵

Despite these advantages, Jackson remained concerned that Project HOPE’s success would not be realized “unless certain things are done rather quickly in order to permit all of these assets to be coordinated at the right time, in the right way, toward a

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Jackson to Walsh, September 22, 1959, Box 57, Great White Fleet (Project HOPE), 1959, C.D. Jackson Papers, EL.

central purpose.” It was imperative for HOPE’s vessel to arrive in Indonesia some time during the first six-months of 1960 or, in Jackson’s expert view, “so much momentum will have been lost that the emotion and the glamor [sic] will be gone . . . assets would melt away, and the whole project could founder.” To prevent this, he advised, Project HOPE needed \$750,000 on hand by late November and another \$750,000 by late January. Echoing Smith’s concerns, Jackson suggested that Walsh, then acting as chairman of the board, give up the chairmanship to John T. Conner and create “a really hard-hitting Executive Committee of the Board, empowered to make decisions and act on them.” Finally, he recommended a chief fundraiser or fundraising committee be found and that Walsh hire a “really top flight fund raising” professional who could effectively coordinate between HOPE’s fundraising and public relations staffs. Reflecting propaganda concerns, Jackson interjected his strong belief that “the hat and the tin cup must be visibly present at the moment of maximum fervor.”⁶⁶

There is no question about being able to whip up the necessary fervor over the next few months; but unless VFW, AFL-CIO, and others are right there in their communities at the right time to collect, their Resolutions [of support] will have been wasted, LIFE’s support will have been wasted, and the Advertising Council Campaign will have been wasted, and Project HOPE, which is today a source of dedicated enthusiasm on the part of your Board, will become a drudgery.⁶⁷

Intensely focusing the personal dedication of the board members, the vast membership of the supporting national organizations, the media power of Time-Life Corporation and the Advertising Council, and, most importantly, “the American people’s capacity for catching fire on an idea such as Project HOPE” would finally transform plans into reality.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

Walsh responded two days later, telling Jackson “I agree with you 100%” and promising to adopt many of his proposals including an “active and cohesive” board.⁶⁸

Jackson, however, not only acted as a conduit of official influence within HOPE but also as an enthusiastic advocate for the group within government circles. On October 6, 1959, Jackson wrote USIA chief George V. Allen because he “thought it might be well to update you on the current status of LIFE’s Great White Fleet proposal.” He reviewed the circumstances behind the magazine’s published proposal, mentioned that the idea came from Manson, and noted that “it seemed so attractive, not only from a humanitarian standpoint, but from a psychological warfare standpoint as well, that LIFE decided to back the Fleet idea to the hilt.” More than that, once Project HOPE, which he said was led by the “indefatigable” Walsh, had been discovered, “it seemed only logical to merge the HOPE and Fleet venture.” He then presented some considered opinions about the efforts. As far as launching the *Hope*, Jackson felt the “prospects for accomplishing this goal are very bright indeed” because of a “very active and dedicated Board of Directors.” He revealed the \$1 million of the estimated \$3.5 million annual operating cost had been collected and that January 1960 would bring an Advertising Council fundraising campaign. Additionally, many private organizations had expressed interest in providing financial support. Jackson believed that “the only big threat to Project HOPE now, as I see it, would be if the Administration were to refuse the use of . . . or to withhold the necessary funds . . . for demothballing and refitting the ship.” He expressed concern that “a few people within the Administration are raising the perfectly valid question whether a

⁶⁸ Ibid.; Walsh to Jackson, September 25, 1959, Box 57, Great White Fleet (Project HOPE), 1959, C.D. Jackson Papers, EL.

hospital ship is the most economic and efficient way to provide medical help and education in countries like Indonesia and Viet Nam.” In response, Jackson asserted—in a clear and striking statement of the Project HOPE’s propaganda value—that some of HOPE’s “excess cost” would “be more than amply justified by the goodwill that would accrue from having a privately endowed U.S. hospital ship riding at anchor in the steaming disease-ridden harbors of Southeast Asia.”⁶⁹

In the end, Time-Life Corporation’s involvement in Project HOPE and the advice and influence provided by the expert Jackson seemed to instill some confidence in government officials skeptical about the venture’s feasibility. Karl Harr, Eisenhower’s latest psychological warfare adviser, told Dennis A. Fitzgerald, an ICA official, that “with the introduction of the TIME people, there was introduced an element of policing of Walsh that is very pleasing.” Bernie Yudain, a Time-Life staffer in Washington, told Jackson that the State Department and the ICA were “delighted that it’s C.D. Jackson in particular who’s got a finger in the project.” Ultimately, the U.S. government officially chartered the Navy hospital ship *U.S.S. Consolation* to Project HOPE in a ceremony held on March 16, 1960. Once in the hands of Dr. Walsh, the *Consolation* was rechristened the *S.S. Hope*, but getting the ship refitted, supplied, and staffed would require much more work. The success of that work now rested largely in the hands of private American citizens, whose participation in Project HOPE represented not only its path to success but also its first and perhaps foremost propaganda goal.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Jackson to Allen, October 6, 1959, Box 57, Great White Fleet (Project HOPE), 1959, C.D. Jackson Papers, EL.

⁷⁰ Memorandum of telephone conversation between Dennis A. Fitzgerald and Karl Harr regarding Project HOPE, October 26, 1959, http://www.eisenhower.archives.gov/dl/People_To_People/

Conclusion

Like other groups in the State-private network, the impetus for Project HOPE came from an individual who held no *official* government position. Motivated by a strong humanitarianism, Cold War considerations, an ideological belief in American exceptionalism and enabled by his participation in the government-inspired but privately-run People-to-People Program—the pinnacle of State-private cooperation under Eisenhower—Dr. Walsh asked the government for a hospital ship. While the group’s impetus came from Walsh, as part of the State-private network, Project HOPE still relied on material and moral support from the U.S. government. Officials in Washington encouraged Dr. Walsh and promised him a ship because they were intrigued by Project HOPE’s propaganda potential. Simultaneously, they adopted a wait-and-see attitude, revealed their concerns about the project’s cost and practicality, and set up benchmarks that Walsh had to meet before receiving the ship. Faced with the government’s largely supportive but also cautious reaction, Dr. Walsh turned to members of a public-private elite drawn from the top echelon of corporate America to finance, supply, and build Project HOPE into a proper nongovernmental organization. The inclusion of this public-private elite reflected the interpenetrated corporatist nature of the State-private network and instilled confidence within officials about Project HOPE’s prospects for success. The elite protected government interests in HOPE, represented HOPE within official

BinderOO.pdf [accessed December 8, 2005]; Yudain to Jackson, November 13, 1959, Box 57, Great White Fleet (Project HOPE), 1959, C.D. Jackson Papers, EL; Walsh to Fisher, March 18, 1960, Box 30, Series VIII: Subject Files, 1959-1983, President's Office/Office of the Medical Director (HRG 01), HOPEA; See also “Charter Party Between United States of America and People-to-People Health Foundation, Inc.,” February 15, 1960, Box 35, Series VIII: Subject Files, 1959-1983, President's Office/Office of the Medical Director (HRG 01), HOPEA.

circles, and tapped the corporate community and the American people for funds and supplies. The remainder of this thesis also illustrates how Project HOPE was part of the State-private network in the fact that, like most network organizations, it concentrated its activities in the free world, avoiding “political agitation” in Europe and focusing instead on “cultural and social activities” in the United States itself and in the island nation of Indonesia.⁷¹

⁷¹ Lucas, *Freedom's War*, 2-3.

CHAPTER 2

MOBILIZING AMERICANS FOR THE COLD WAR: PROJECT HOPE AS PROPAGANDA WITHIN THE UNITED STATES

Although C.D. Jackson and others saw the clear propaganda benefits of “having a privately endowed U.S. hospital ship riding at anchor in the steaming disease-ridden harbors of Southeast Asia,” Project HOPE, as a psychological warfare campaign, did not solely target an overseas audience. It also targeted ordinary American citizens within the United States itself. During the Cold War, Osgood asserts, “many psychological warfare campaigns . . . expressly targeted the American people and . . . called on them to participate in the war of words being waged abroad” and in the more general battle against international communism.⁷²

One of the most important goals for propaganda during past total wars was “mobilizing the entire citizenry to support the war effort by giving everyone a role to play.” Through such a mobilization, propaganda also tried to maintain a high level of civilian morale in the belief that, in Osgood’s words, “the simple fact of doing something for the war effort contributed to wartime morale by giving ordinary Americans a sense of personal participation in the struggle—a feeling that they had sacrificed, an awareness that they had something material at stake in the national cause.” During the Cold War, American officials adopted a “total war mind-set that called for mobilizing the entire nation to support U.S. objectives.” The nation’s leaders consistently told Americans “that *they* were engaged in a war of ideas, and that *they* had better get involved.” Furthermore, as in past total wars, these leaders based their Cold War propaganda

⁷² Jackson to Allen, October 6, 1959, Box 57, Great White Fleet (Project HOPE), 1959, C.D. Jackson Papers, EL; Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 3.

campaigns on “the total war notion that public opinion at home needed to be agitated and organized to sustain national morale for the long struggle that lay ahead.”⁷³

Now that it had the hospital ship *Hope*, at a practical level, Project HOPE needed individuals to volunteer as part of the ship’s medical staff, to work as members of the ship’s crew, to serve as support and administrative staff back on land, and to act as sources of funding and publicity in different communities across the nation. Gaining this practical support, however, also gave individual Americans a constructive and meaningful way to participate in the Cold War. The involvement of ordinary citizens in Project HOPE provided practical advantages to U.S. propaganda efforts while also demonstrating the superiority of America-style freedom over Soviet-style communism. Involving ordinary citizens in psychological warfare campaigns like Project HOPE ‘humanized’ Americans and countered derogatory stereotypes disseminated in communist propaganda. Finally, Project HOPE and other psychological warfare campaigns targeted average Americans in an effort to gain public support for America’s postwar role as a global power and to forestall any return to the popular isolationism of the interwar years.

The Shared Assumptions of Project HOPE and People-to-People

In addition to growing out of the organizational structure of the People-to-People Program, Project HOPE also shared important assumptions with its ostensibly parent program about the impact ordinary individuals could have in the realm of foreign

⁷³ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 3, 22, 31, 215-216, 229. For additional information on the impact of the concept of total war on the thinking of U.S. officials during the early Cold War, see Hogan’s *A Cross of Iron*.

relations. Sustaining People-to-People was, Glenn Wesley Leppert explains, the “belief that the key to world peace was the simple act of increasing understanding among peoples.” In Leppert’s estimation, “the first and most important of the underlying assumptions” of People-to-People was that “personal contact in the long run would be more effectual than any official program for promoting America’s image.” Supporting this assumption was the idea that “personal contacts between peoples would lead to understanding and understanding to peace.” Likewise, he suggests, for this understanding to be achieved it was necessary to prevent “People-to-People from being perceived as an official government propaganda program” by securing wholly private financial support. In fact, it was assumed that “the more independent the program . . . the more effectual it would be.”⁷⁴

Project HOPE shared People-to-People’s assumption that interaction between individuals would lead to understanding, that understanding would lead to peace, and that success hinged on emphasizing the project’s private nature. According to one of its own informational brochures, Project HOPE aimed to “promote world peace through increased understanding between the people of the United States and the peoples of other nations.” The brochure declared that “when we Americans share with peoples of other lands our knowledge and experience and seek theirs on a truly personal level, we are portraying America as we believe it to be: a peace-loving nation trying to be partners with our friends.” Achieving world peace lay in enabling “people to help themselves” by improving their living standards and productivity and by fostering their self-reliance.

⁷⁴ Glenn Wesley Leppert, “Dwight D. Eisenhower and People to People as an Experiment in Personal Diplomacy: A Missing Element for Understanding Eisenhower’s Second Term as President,” PhD diss., Kansas State University, 2003, 2, 147-148.

Self-reliant nations remained independent and did not “depend upon aid from other nations.” Poor health jeopardized self-reliance, therefore Project HOPE called for “an active attack on disease and on nutrition and sanitation deficiencies.” The brochure cautioned, however, that “too frequently the actions of governments and international organizations in this area are viewed with suspicion and undermined by misleading propaganda.” To combat this perception, to “teach more effectively,” and to “understand more fully the customs and problems of others,” Project HOPE would rely on *individuals*, not the government, to accomplish its mission of mercy.⁷⁵

Money and Methods: Project HOPE Mobilizes the American People

Project HOPE mobilized the widest number of individuals for its own success and for the broader Cold War effort through its appeals for monetary donations and through related fund raising activities. In his account of the *Hope's* first voyage, Dr. Walsh recalled just some of the support and donations received from children and adults alike.

A bunch of boys in a small California town formed the first HOPE group, and it's still going strong, though the founder has left to be a page in the Senate. The boys gave picnics, car washes, and basketball games. \$400. Little girls baked cookies and sold them to neighbors. \$6.87. Ten juniors in Illinois put on a musical show. One city staged a toy fair with the goal of \$10,000 to put one staff doctor aboard the *Hope* for a year.⁷⁶

All across the nation, Walsh said, “there were golf tournaments, lunches, balls, fashion shows, bridge parties, moonlight cruises in the name of HOPE.”⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Project HOPE brochure, n.d.

⁷⁶ Walsh, 70.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

Concentrated efforts to collect money from the public for Project HOPE began with the publication of *Life* magazine's "Great White Fleet" proposal. That proposal appeared in the magazine on July 27, 1959 and depicted the *Hope* as the first ship in an American fleet of humanitarian vessels. Three weeks later, instead of appealing for money that would go to some organization solely dedicated to creating this fleet of ships, Andrew Heiskell, *Life*'s publisher, asked his readers to donate to Project HOPE, which he called "the prototype of the New White Fleet." In the bottom right corner of the full-page appeal, the magazine supplied readers with a "coupon" they could use to make a donation and directly mail to Project HOPE. Heiskell asked his readers to "please make your donation as large as you can—millions are needed." But he also assured his audience that "no contribution is too small." Primary documents indicate that during 1959 about \$24,000 came to Project HOPE because of Time-Life's appeals.⁷⁸

Beginning on January 1, 1960 the Advertising Council sponsored a two-month-long nationwide fund raising drive to, as the campaign's slogan put it, "Help Launch Hope." The drive was one more example of the many Advertising Council "campaigns associated with American foreign policy—C.A.R.E., civil defense, and Radio Free Europe"—during the Eisenhower years. In Project HOPE's case, to easily gather "donations from the man in the street," the *New York Times* reported, "collection boxes for the fund will be placed in drugstores." These collection boxes, Dr. Walsh recalled, came from the Pure Pak Division of the Ex-Cell-O Corporation, a "manufacturer of

⁷⁸ "Bold Peace Plan for U.S.: A New 'Great White Fleet,'" *Life*, July 27, 1959, 17-25; Andrew Heiskell, "Great White Fleet Gathers Steam: A special report from LIFE's publisher on what you can do to help," *Life*, August 17, 1959, 92; Nelson to Alex, "Letter to 1959 Contributors," June 3, 1960, Box 14, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA.

cartons and packaging machinery” that gave HOPE “80,000 half-gallon milk cartons” to place on the check-out counters of every drugstore in the nation. These cartons featured drawings of the red-cross-marked *Hope* and of a destitute Asian woman and child. Lettering on the cartons asked people to “Help Launch Hope” and exhorted them to “Make Friends for America!” Ex-Cell-O public relations executive Ralph Charbeneau asserted his belief to Congar Reynolds, head of the U.S. Information Agency’s Office of Private Cooperation, that “this national milk carton collection serves as excellent evidence of the ‘People-to-People’ nature of Project HOPE.”⁷⁹

As part of the Advertising Council’s campaign, both *Time* and *Life* magazines ran full-page public service advertisements on February 1 and February 15 respectively. The advertisements featured photographs of a teacher (an “ambassador with a blackboard”) in front of a classroom of medical personnel, a white American doctor treating an Asian boy while the boy’s father watched, and the gleaming white *Hope* itself. The ads explained that Project HOPE was needed in places where “too many health hazards exist” and where there were “too few hands to help.” HOPE could alleviate these problems through “training” that would “multiply hands” and improve the health of other nations. “With health comes self-respect,” the ads asserted, and a self-respecting “people at peace with

⁷⁹ “Drive for Medical Ship,” *New York Times*, December 17, 1959; Leon Schetler to Rear Admiral R.K. James, December 30, 1959, Box 6, Series I: Chronological Files, 1961-1974, Operations and Logistics (HRG 05), HOPEA; Robert Griffith, “The Selling of America: The Advertising Council and American Politics, 1942-1960,” *Business History Review* 57 (Autumn 1983): 404-405; Walsh, 70; “Dairy Industry to Support Project HOPE,” *Pure Pak News Pictorial*, First Quarter 1960, Box 16, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA; Photo of two cartons in the uncataloged photo collection at the Project HOPE archives in a box marked with the numbers 92-001, 19 of 35 and titled ‘Misc. 1960s inc. ship dedication;’ Charbeneau to Reynolds, January 21, 1960, Box 16, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising files, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA.

themselves are less likely to war with others.” Peace was “a priceless dividend” that Americans could “earn” if they gave to Project HOPE.⁸⁰

Another publicity effort involved a massive 14-foot model of the *Hope*. Leon Schertler, an assistant to Dr. Walsh, requested that Rear Admiral R.K. James, the head of the Navy’s Bureau of Ships, grant Project HOPE use of a model of a hospital ship that “the transportation industry” could display for two or three weeks in Washington, D.C. and New York City. Project HOPE first displayed the large model in Washington’s Union Station beginning on the afternoon of February 8, 1960. The next day’s *Washington Post* featured a picture of “Mrs. Darold Cain . . . and her [infant] daughter Lynn” viewing the display while the caption briefly explained Project HOPE’s purpose. The model was also part of “Launch Project HOPE Week” in New York City. On February 23, Mayor Robert F. Wagner, Jr. proclaimed the special week at a ceremony in Pennsylvania Station and unveiled the model, which was to be displayed during the week at the train station. According to the *New York Times*, the mayor, Dr. Walsh, and Ernest R. Beech, a Project HOPE board member and chairman of the board at Ford Motor Company, were joined by unnamed “officials of Indonesia” at the event. Apparently impressed with the model’s success at bringing attention to Project HOPE, Beech now wanted it, HOPE’s Schertler informed Admiral James, “utilized at public gatherings in conjunction with the Ford Motorama Show at St. Louis, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Buffalo.” Schertler apparently agreed with Beech’s impressions of the

⁸⁰ Advertising Council public service advertisements, *Time*, February 1, 1960, 83 and *Life*, February 15, 1960, 115.

model's success telling James that "the effect and response to use of the model has been most enthusiastic."⁸¹

Fraternal organizations, clubs, churches, and individuals responded to Project HOPE's pleas for donations. Congressman John Brademas (D-Indiana) sent Dr. Walsh a check for \$5.00 along with his "good wishes for the success of your program." Walsh thanked him for the donation and enthusiastically noted that "support from church groups, schools, Boy Scouts and the like all over the country is increasing all the time." An anonymous donor sent in four different gifts of \$750 each, the Business and Professional Women's Club of Chicago sent Halloween and Christmas decorations to be used on board the ship, and the American Merchant Marine Library Association provided books to stock a "seagoing library" for the *Hope's* staff and crew. The Advertising Club of Washington, D.C. organized a "champagne moonlight cruise" along the Potomac River. "Proceeds from the dance, fur fashion show, and other special features of the cruise," the *Washington Post* reported, went to Project HOPE. Robert K. Gray, the secretary of the cabinet, Mrs. E. Lee Ozbirn, the president of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, and Milton Q. Ford, president of the Advertising Club of Washington all sponsored the mid-August cruise. The Peninsula Community Church (in or near San Francisco) held a linen drive that, according to H.C. Varner, Project HOPE's West Coast representative, "snoballed [sic] like hell" collecting a "large amount of linen and blankets" for use on the *Hope*. Additionally, a troop of "Alameda County Explorer

⁸¹ Schertler to James, December 30, 1959, Box 6, Series I: Chronological Files, 1961-1974, Operations and Logistics (HRG 05), HOPEA; Photo, "Project HOPE Flagship Shown Here," *Washington Post*, February 9, 1960; "Project Hope Week Begins," *New York Times*, February 24, 1960; Schertler to James, March 8, 1960, Box 6, Series I: Chronological Files, 1961-1974, Operations and Logistics (HRG 05), HOPEA.

Scout[s] . . . [were] out knocking on doors asking for these items.” Nicholas Crow, HOPE’s director of logistics, was particularly pleased with this effort because bedding was “a vital area in which our needs are great.”⁸²

The Advantages of Civilian Participation in Cold War Propaganda

At first glance, linen drives, moonlight cruises, Advertising Council campaigns, or a few dollars donated to Project HOPE hardly seem capable of materially contributing to U.S. victory in the Cold War. Nevertheless, mobilizing private intermediaries to participate, however modestly, in U.S. psychological warfare campaigns provided important practical advantages: civilian participation made propaganda more financially cost-effective; it camouflaged, mitigated, or eliminated government involvement; it demonstrated the superiority of freedom over communism and provided extra legitimacy to the government’s propaganda messages; and it could ‘humanize’ the American people, their society, and the government’s Cold War policies in the face of communist propaganda that depicted the United States, its people and its government as materialistic, culturally-barren, and uncaring.

When civilians in private groups like Project HOPE cooperated with the government in a psychological warfare operation, it dispersed the program’s financial costs but increased the propaganda’s range and impact. Though he ardently waged Cold

⁸² Brademas to Walsh, April 12, 1960 and Walsh to Brademas, April 14, 1960, Box 30, Series VIII: Subject Files, 1959-1983, President’s Office/Office of the Medical Director (HRG 01), HOPEA; “She Keeps HOPE Afloat,” *Washington Post*, September 9, 1960; “Merchant Marine Library,” *New York Times*, October 9, 1960; “Cruise Aids Mercy Ship,” *Washington Post*, June 19, 1960; “Moonlight Cruise for Project HOPE,” *Washington Post*, July 24, 1960; H.C. Varner to Nicholas Crow, January 11, 1961, Crow to Varner, January 13, 1961, and Varner to Crow, February 2, 1961, Box 10, Series II: Administrative files, 1958-1971, Operations and Logistics (HRG 05), HOPEA.

War, President Eisenhower, writes historian Frank Ninkovich, “believed that an emphasis on military means alone threatened to bankrupt the United States” and potentially transform the country into a garrison state. More economical means had to be used and psychological warfare, in Ninkovich’s words, designed “to foment dissension became a potentially decisive way for each side to erode the enemy’s will and staying power.” As demonstrated by Project HOPE’s fund raising efforts, State-private propaganda could operate without constant government funding. According to a study of the U.S. Information Agency’s operating assumptions completed in 1954 by sociologist Leo Bogart, some personnel acknowledged that “the great value of private, cooperative projects is that, once they are started, many of them can continue independently.”⁸³

As a relatively cheap weapon of war, State-private propaganda also proved to be, in Osgood’s words, “a force multiplier . . . expanding the reach of U.S. messages.”⁸⁴ In fact, Wilson Dizard, a long-time USIA employee, argues that the government’s official propaganda activities “were eclipsed by the massive global activities of private groups, which emerge as the largest force influencing America’s ideological impact abroad.”

This private U.S. information sector, broadly defined, encompassed the mass media, the advertising industry, and cultural and educational institutions, along with multinational corporations and other organizations whose agendas included concerns about overseas public opinion.⁸⁵

U.S. propagandists took advantage of the global scope of these private groups and, in Kenneth Osgood’s words, “developed a ‘camouflaged’ approach to propaganda that used

⁸³ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 215, 231, 251-252; Ninkovich, 21; Bogart, vii, 115.

⁸⁴ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 231.

⁸⁵ Wilson Dizard, *Inventing Public Diplomacy: The Story of the U.S. Information Agency* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2004), 5.

the independent news media, nongovernmental organizations, and private individuals as surrogate communicators for conveying propaganda messages.”⁸⁶

A camouflaged approach to psychological warfare based on involving private intermediaries also gave extra legitimacy to the propaganda message. Bogart’s study showed that many USIA personnel believed attributing statements to official American agencies was counterproductive because the target audience would “suspect they are biased.” Several agency officers told Bogart that because people overseas were “impervious to official propaganda” it made sense to conduct psychological warfare “under nonofficial American auspices.” These experts reasoned that people targeted for propaganda would be more open and accepting of information that came from nonofficial sources. USIA officials concluded that because people could be, Bogart stated, “appealed to through a common bond other than nationality . . . information from a nonofficial American source that resembles the target is more acceptable than output coming directly from USIA.” In other words, targets would more readily accept information from peers, colleagues, and other people with whom the targets might see some shared interest or commonality.⁸⁷

Most importantly, civilian involvement in U.S. propaganda legitimated America’s number one Cold War message: the superiority of freedom over communism. Spontaneous and independent civilian participation supposedly proved freedom’s superiority. “We, as a nation, dedicated to the freedom of the individual,” an internal Project HOPE document stated, “need to show the rest of the world the type of individual

⁸⁶ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 5.

⁸⁷ Bogart, 114-115; Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 215, 231, 251-252.

a free society develops.” Freedom’s superiority was effectively demonstrated when, without government coercion, Project HOPE’s personnel in the field and their private supporters at home worked “personally . . . as individuals . . . to help other peoples less fortunate than ourselves” and “share the abundance of our nation for the betterment of mankind.”⁸⁸

A Way to “Humanize” Americans

All of this cooperation between the U.S. government and its citizens did not aim, Osgood writes, “to affect perceptions of U.S. policies per se, but rather to soften the image of the United States by ‘humanizing’ America in the eyes of the world.” Communist propaganda portrayed “America and Americans,” according to Bogart’s study, as “warlike, undemocratic, doomed economically, without culture, and immoral.” Soviet and Chinese propagandists denounced the United States, Bogart revealed, as “run by people who do not understand Europe, are hysterical about communism, and need war or heavy defense efforts to” prop up a disastrous economy. This propaganda depicted the United States as a culturally backward nation obsessed with monetary wealth and with a popular culture that revealed a terrible barbarism.⁸⁹

To officials at the USIA, it seemed the world believed communist notions of a barbaric American public obsessed with technological gadgets and material luxuries. Agency employees told Bogart that, in his words, “the unfavorable stereotype of

⁸⁸ D.L. Brubaker, “MacManus, John, & Adams, Inc. Conference Report on the Meeting of January 13, 1960,” January 22, 1960, Box 16, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising files, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA.

⁸⁹ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 215; Bogart, 83-84.

Americans as cultural barbarians must be counteracted” because “Americans are regarded throughout the world as uncultured boors and crude, materialistic people.”⁹⁰ Even President Eisenhower expressed concern about the perceived barrenness of American society around the world, giving voice to his worries in a letter to his brother Edgar.

It is possible that you do not understand how ignorant most of the world is about America and how important it is . . . that some of the misunderstandings be corrected. One of them involves our cultural standards and artistic tastes. Europeans have been taught that we a race of materialists, whose only diversions are golf, baseball, football, horse racing, and an especially brutalized brand of boxing. Our successes are described in terms of automobiles and not in terms of worthwhile cultural works of any kind. Spiritual and intellectual values are deemed to be almost nonexistent in our country.⁹¹

Furthermore, the president confided to his brother, “in some areas we are believed to be bombastic, jingoistic, and totally devoted to the theories of force and power as the only worthwhile elements in the world.”⁹²

Project HOPE “could and did change the image of America and Americans,” at least according to Dr. Walsh. Writing about one of the *Hope*’s earliest port calls on the Indonesian island of Sumbawa, Walsh claimed that

Until *Hope* came into her bay, Sumbawa knew America only through Hollywood. Townsfolk saw Elvis Presley and Elizabeth Taylor in the movies. They knew about cowboys and millionaires and gangsters. If they reached high school, the children were taught English (sketchily) and something of our politics, picking up a good deal of miscellaneous information, some of it accurate . . . But outside of such tidbits the islanders knew little of us and had never seen plain Americans in the flesh.⁹³

Through programs like Project HOPE and People-to-People, the U.S. government encouraged the people Walsh had called “plain Americans” to foster, in Osgood’s words,

⁹⁰ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 217; Bogart, 91.

⁹¹ Eisenhower to Edgar Eisenhower, November 22, 1955 quoted in Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 218.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ Walsh, 24.

“friendly contacts with like-minded foreigners to convince them of the basic goodness of the American people.” Collectively these programs proved to be “a friendly way of encouraging ordinary people to promote a positive view of the United States through informal contacts” and a way for average citizens to act as “goodwill ambassadors.” Personal individual diplomacy would spread the truth of America’s peaceful goals and illustrate the nation’s great respect for other people’s rights. Ultimately, Osgood argues, “Americans who joined the People-to-People effort,” which of course included Project HOPE, “often interpreted their activities as small but meaningful contributions to international understanding.”⁹⁴

Although statistically gauging their success at fostering such international understanding and improving the image of the United States proves largely impossible, members of Project HOPE expressed their belief that they were successfully contributing to world peace, international understanding, and depicting the United States in a more positive light. Ellen M. Miller, head of the Cleveland Committee for Project HOPE, wrote a fund raising appeal arguing that Americans who contributed to HOPE helped a program of “personal foreign aid that really reaches the people through medical diplomats.” The program resulted in “an awareness of the compassionate American” and served as a true example of “the American way of life in action.” Miller’s husband, Dr. Alexander Miller, served on the *Hope* during its maiden voyage and explained, in his own fund raising appeal, that “only through participation in such efforts and the intimate contact of the people of one country with those of another does one realize the value of such personal contact in establishing an atmosphere of understanding and goodwill

⁹⁴ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 233, 235, 239-240.

among nations of diverse cultures.” Project HOPE’s training and teaching mission provided, Dr. Miller wrote, “no better way to prove that Americans are a people of great compassion for those less fortunate.”⁹⁵ Marvin E. Revzin, an oral surgeon from Detroit, Michigan, told his colleagues in the American Society of Oral Surgeons that “the men who have volunteered to serve” on the *Hope* each

in his own way represents a segment of America—each different—but in this difference [is] typical of all parts of our country and our way of life. The people of Indonesia see this, and I believe they are beginning to understand that America’s strength is derived from this very difference because of the freedom it implies.⁹⁶

Finally, one Project HOPE document stated the organization’s belief that “there must be a great many of us in America today who would like to do something personally to prove that we are not the ‘Ugly American’ the Communists are so successfully picturing us to be.”⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Ellen M. Miller, fund raising letter, n.d. (c. 1962), Box 01, Alexander Miller Papers, 1938-1975, Western Reserve Historical Society (hereafter WRHS); Alexander Miller, M.D., fund raising letter, n.d. (c. 1962), Box 01, Alexander Miller Papers, 1938-1975, WRHS.

⁹⁶ Marvin E. Revzin, D.D.S., “Report on the Hope Ship, February 1961,” Box 5, Indonesia Files, 1960-1967, Office of Southwest Pacific Affairs, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, General Records of the Department of State (RG 59), NA.

⁹⁷ Unsigned to Charles R. Walgreen, Jr., June 21, 1960, Box 14, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA; The letter writer’s use of the term ‘Ugly American’ was, in part, a reference to the novel *The Ugly American* (1958) by William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick. This popular novel argued that the loss of U.S. prestige in Southeast Asia stemmed from the attitude Americans adopted when they lived or visited foreign lands. Americans isolated themselves from local peoples and engaged in behavior that was pretentious, loud, and ostentatious. They seemed woefully ignorant of local culture. According to Christina Klein on pages 88-89 of *Cold War Orientalism*, Lederer and Burdick defined their novel’s characters as either “ugly” or “non-ugly” Americans. Ugly Americans were typically local high-level U.S. officials which harbored, in Klein’s words, an “imperialistic” attitude and a “contempt for Asian people.” With their racially superior attitude, their refusal to immerse themselves into the local customs and language, and their segregated compounds, ugly Americans backed “huge aid projects that waste[d] millions of American tax dollars without improving the life of the common peasant.” The isolation of ugly Americans resulted in “bungle[d] missions” and the decline of U.S. influence in Asia. Non-ugly Americans “embrace[d] cultural differences” as well as their “common humanity” with Asians by learning local languages, accepting local foods and customs, and living in local-style housing in the midst of the indigenous population. Klein suggests that “their curiosity about other cultures and their willingness to commit themselves to others

Press coverage also expressed the view that Project HOPE improved the overseas image of America and Americans. In *Today's Health*, a magazine published by the American Medical Association, reporter Dayton Moore called Project HOPE “a striking example of individual American initiative” that presented “Americans as individuals, rather than an impersonal government, extending a hand of friendship.” Project HOPE came “from the heart of the American people” and was “truly inspiring evidence that people in this country are deeply concerned about the people in other countries as human beings.” In an especially enthusiastic editorial, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* declared that the *S.S. Hope* clearly demonstrated that unlike communist leaders, the American people “care about what happens to the health and welfare of individuals.” The *Oakland Tribune* editorialized that HOPE would “be a gift from the Americans who are cooperating to make it possible” and a gift “that can be easily accepted and easily understood.” In the Catholic magazine *America*, Dr. Walsh characterized his volunteers as the “best possible representatives of our way of life to that troubled part of the world” and enthused “they are our magnificent Americans.”⁹⁸

The propaganda effort to ‘humanize’ Americans, American life, and official U.S. policy faced one particularly daunting challenge during the 1950s and 1960s. In her doctoral study of U.S. information efforts during the Cold War, Laura Belmonte explains that the content of American propaganda often “rang hollow to foreign audiences

[made] them effective agents of U.S. interests.” Through their “willingness to integrate,” non-ugly Americans “are able to nudge the new nations of Asian into closer integration” with the United States. For a time, Burdick served on Project HOPE’s board of directors.

⁹⁸ Dayton Moore, “Project Hope,” *Today's Health*, February 1960, 77; Editorial “Medical Ship for Peace,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 15, 1959; Editorial, “A Good Investment,” *Oakland Tribune*, March 30, 1959; “Magnificent Americans,” *America*, February 18, 1961.

cognizant of lynchings, race riots, Ku Klux Klan rallies, and white supremacist politicians in the United States.” In the world’s colonial areas as well as in its newly independent nations, racism seemed inherent to U.S. society and as such appeared to be a much greater threat than communism to the overwhelmingly nonwhite populations living in these regions. In fact, as Thomas Borstelmann suggests, “the foreigners most interested in . . . the infection of racism among white Americans were the nonwhite peoples of the new nations of Asia and the Middle East and the remaining colonies of Africa.” To deal with the problem, U.S. propagandists acknowledged racial inequalities” but then tried to demonstrate “signs. . . of racial progress.” Stressing progress in race relations meant information officials profiled leading African Americans, pointed to “recent political, economic, and social advances by the African-American community,” and, on the whole, “attempted to balance journalistic and cultural portrayals of racial violence with more positive materials on minorities in the United States.”⁹⁹

Within this context, one of the *Hope’s* doctors, Richard M. Neal of Portland, Oregon—an African American who Walsh wrote was “chosen for his ability, not for his color”—encountered many Indonesian students who decided to train in Europe for fear of discrimination in the United States. Some “less sophisticated” Indonesians, Walsh claimed, even “thought black men were still slaves.” When these locals met Neal “some of them actually asked if he was a slave, brought along under duress.” The African American doctor responded with “the truth,” Walsh recalled approvingly. “Open,

⁹⁹ Belmonte, 295, 301; Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 70, 75; Kenneth A. Osgood, “Words and Deeds: Race, Colonialism, and Eisenhower’s Propaganda War in the Third World,” in *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War*, ed. Kathryn C. Slater and Andrew L. Johns (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 12-14.

relaxed, and honest,” he told them, again according to Walsh’s account, that “it was far from an ideal picture, but it was a lot better than the one painted by anti-U.S. propagandists and . . . that in time race barriers in his country would collapse.” Walsh does not record whether Neal’s answer convinced his Indonesian questioners but the African American doctor’s personal presence among the *Hope*’s medical staff likely challenged, in a modest way to be sure, stereotypes of all Americans as violent racists.¹⁰⁰

Project HOPE and Ex-Cell-O Corporation

U.S. officials tried to mobilize the American people to participate in Cold War propaganda for more than the practical advantages that participation brought with it. Both overseas and at home, U.S. information efforts supported America’s foundational Cold War foreign policies of containment and integration. Integration especially “needed a broad base of public support” from the American people to successfully bind noncommunist countries into a U.S.-led anti-Soviet coalition. “The expansion of U.S. power” throughout the free world, Christina Klein points out, “depended upon the support and services of millions of ordinary Americans” living, working, and traveling overseas as “soldiers, diplomats, foreign aid workers, missionaries, technicians, professors, students, businesspeople, and tourists.”¹⁰¹

The U.S. effort to integrate the free world would fail, however, “if Americans continued to think in narrowly national and ‘isolationist’ terms.” In a lengthy passage

¹⁰⁰ Walsh, 58.

¹⁰¹ Klein, 5, 22, 28.

worth quoting in full, Klein outlines the danger of a resurgent post-World War II isolationism.

Weary from wartime sacrifice and eager to return to the world of family formation and homemaking, Americans often preferred to focus their attention on domestic political concerns. The very newness of [the] containment and integration policies, which violated a long-standing tradition of avoiding permanent alliances outside the Western Hemisphere, provoked public opposition, while the abstract nature of their objectives, in sharp contrast to the concrete goals of World War II, generated little enthusiasm. Fearing foreign economic competition, many Americans expressed skepticism about the value of free trade—a cornerstone of international economic integration—and wished to keep tariffs and trade barriers high. Underneath it all ran a lingering isolationist sentiment, which worried political leaders throughout the 1950s.¹⁰²

To forestall a return to isolationism, some in the nation’s political elite believed the country’s “collective consciousness needed to be reshaped along internationalist lines.”

An attitude of internationalism had to be instilled within the American people, so that they would “accept the nation’s sustained engagement in world affairs, its participation in international organizations, and its long-range cooperation with other governments.”

This elite began mobilizing a “vast educational machinery designed to direct the attention of the American people to the world outside the nation’s borders.” The Cold War became, Klein suggests, “as much an educational endeavor as a political or military one.”¹⁰³

The internationalist message disseminated in this educational endeavor, Klein explains, “encouraged Americans to ‘look outward’” and presented “the Cold War as an opportunity to forge intellectual and emotional bonds” with peoples throughout the free world. These bonds usually had to be “forged across a divide of difference—of race,

¹⁰² Klein, 22, 28.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

class, sex, nation, religion, and so on.” While admitting these differences, U.S. officials also emphasized the commonalities that could bring people in the free world together and get “Americans to understand themselves . . . as participants in a world system” instead of isolated citizens in country cut off from the world by two oceans. The Eisenhower administration wanted Americans, Klein argues, “to conceptualize the world not only in terms of conflict [one might say differences], but also in terms of . . . interconnectedness” (one might say similarities). Through bonds built by bridging differences and recognizing commonalities, the United States would be able to maintain “the economic, political, and military integration of the ‘free world.’”¹⁰⁴

Domestically, Project HOPE formed part of the educational machinery dedicated to disseminating the government’s pro-integration message. It was a domestic propaganda campaign, like the People-to-People Program, designed to provoke interest in foreign affairs and create an awareness and understanding of international affairs within the United States. Also like People-to-People, Project HOPE, in Klein’s words, “encourage[d] Americans to abandon their lingering isolationism and learn to see themselves in relation to other peoples around the world.” Project HOPE gave “Cold War internationalism a social and cultural foundation” by “enlist[ing] the public in Washington’s world-ordering project of ‘free world’ integration.”¹⁰⁵

Project HOPE’s role as domestic propaganda was most clearly seen in its alliance with the Detroit-based Ex-Cell-O Corporation. The alliance began when Ex-Cell-O donated “a \$40,000 milk packaging machine” for use on board the *Hope*. The company

¹⁰⁴ Klein, 13-14, 23, 46-47.

¹⁰⁵ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 233, 242; Klein, 49-50.

also manufactured special milk-cartons used by *Hope*'s medical staff to distribute milk made by the ship's "'Iron Cow', a mechanical marvel that parlayed sea water and powder into fresh, rich milk." These cartons were decorated, according to Dr. Walsh, "with the crossed flags of Indonesia and the United States" and the Indonesian word "Harapan" with its English counterpart "Hope." In addition, Ralph Charbeneau, Ex-Cell-O's public relations director, personally worked on equipping the ship with amateur radio equipment to provide domestic news outlets with real-time coverage of the *Hope*'s first voyage. But the greatest help from Charbeneau and Ex-Cell-O in disseminating Project HOPE's internationalist message came in the form of an Academy Award-winning documentary film about Project HOPE's visit to Indonesia that was broadcast nationally by the CBS television network and widely distributed to civil society groups across the country.¹⁰⁶

"Friends" at the U.S. Information Agency and the State Department, according to Charbeneau, "recommended" a relationship between Project HOPE and Ex-Cell-O and "arranged" for the two entities to work together. The USIA's Congar Reynolds met with Charbeneau during the summer of 1959 and apparently familiarized Ex-Cell-O's PR chief with Project HOPE at that time. In early September of that same year, HOPE executive Leon Schertler—"after seeing examples of public service documentary films produced by the Ex-Cell-O Corporation"—suggested to Charbeneau that his company consider producing a film about Project HOPE. Charbeneau believed his company

¹⁰⁶ Charbeneau to Walsh, April 25, 1961, Box 5, Series III: Information Services Administration, Subject Files, 1960-1977, Development Office/Office of Information Services, (HRG 03), HOPEA; D.L. Brubaker, MacManus, John, & Adams, Inc. Conference Report from Meeting on March, 30, 1960, April 1, 1960, Box 16, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising files, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA; Walsh, 25; *Pure Pak News*, First Quarter 1960; Ralph C. Charbeneau, W8OLJ, "The Voyage of S.S. Hope," *QST*, April 1961. For additional documents chronicling the radio aspect of Project HOPE publicity see Box 16, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising files, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA.

“should sponsor a documentary motion picture story of ‘Project HOPE’ in action” because “unquestionably, this is a thrilling story which deserves to be told in professional manner to television and theater audiences throughout the free world.”¹⁰⁷

In part, the Cold War motivated Ex-Cell-O’s support for Project HOPE. In a letter to Walsh, Charbeneau explained that his company supported HOPE because it “wished to make clear to all, that American industry need not accept the communist assertion that capitalism is a dirty word, but rather, that American industry can defend the free enterprise system in a wholesome, constructive and *vigorous* manner . . . without fear of the cynic’s cry of ‘payola,’ ‘hidden persuasion,’ etc.”¹⁰⁸ In a “white paper” distributed

¹⁰⁷ Charbeneau to Walsh, December 11, 1959, Box 5, Series III: Information Services Administration, Subject Files, 1960-1977, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA; Charbeneau to Reynolds, January 21, 1960, Box 16, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising files, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA; Charbeneau to Schertler, September 17, 1959, Box 16, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising files, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA; Walsh to Charbeneau, October 28, 1959, Box 16, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising files, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA; The September 17, 1959 letter between Charbeneau and Schertler demonstrates Ex-Cell-O did have “unique success” at creating award-winning “public service” documentaries in the late 1950s. *The New Story of Milk* focused on the “latest techniques” in use on the dairy farm, at the milk processing plant, and in the distribution network and was screened at the Brussels World’s Fair in 1958. The next film, *Crisis*, was produced and distributed in cooperation with the Federal Civil Defense Administration and “documented an Ex-Cell-O conceived disaster plan for emergency drinking water in stricken areas.” The company also created *For God and Country*, a film for the Boy Scouts of America narrated by Tommy Rettig, star of TV’s *Lassie*. This documentary was “televised by more TV stations [200] in a one week period than any other public service film available” and screened in the Russian language at the United States Exhibit in Moscow in 1959. Ex-Cell-O’s third film, “Ambassadors with Wings,” featured the International Air Cadet Exchange program. While creating this film, Charbeneau met George V. Allen, then the U.S. ambassador to Greece but soon to become USIA chief. Narrated by actor Jimmy Stewart, “Ambassadors with Wings” premiered in Washington before “several hundred Pentagon, congressional, State Department and press people” while an international premiere was held at the Air Ministry in London. By September 1959, Ex-Cell-O was working on a documentary approved by both the Defense and State Departments about the Military Air Transport Service. All of these films were broadcast to millions of U.S. television viewers while hundreds of thousands of other Americans watched them at meetings of their churches, fraternal organizations, clubs, and other social organizations.

¹⁰⁸ Charbeneau to Walsh, April 25, 1961, Box 5, Series III: Information Services Administration, Subject Files, 1960-1977, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA; Emphasis in original.

to the press explaining Ex-Cell-O's relationship with Project HOPE, Charbeneau wrote a lengthy but striking summation of the Cold War importance of HOPE.

Practice of the art of warfare has become so effective that mankind now has it within its power to exterminate itself. The diligence employed in waging war dwarfs the attention given to the waging of peace. Project HOPE is a prophetic title for an urgent cause. It designates an historical peacemaking effort by private citizens of the United States and other countries in a people-to-people attempt to gain better understanding of one another's problems . . . and to share the fruits of one another's progress.¹⁰⁹

For these reasons, Ex-Cell-O supported Project HOPE and saw its documentary as an effort to "*wage the peace.*"¹¹⁰

In a *Wall Street Journal* article about business involvement in Project HOPE, however, Charbeneau frankly admitted the company's association was not completely altruistic. It saw "public health authorities" as "potential customers" for its "packaged products," he said, noting "it would be very wrong for us to pretend we are just philanthropists . . . because that isn't our business." He succinctly stated that "if you can't tickle the cash register, then you can't justify the expense in the eyes of the stockholders." Within this context, Charbeneau asked Walsh to allow "the inclusion in this film . . . of opening and closing titles" naming Ex-Cell-O as the documentary's producer as well as "brief appropriate scenes of Pure-Pak milk cartons being used in the normal routine of Project HOPE activities." Furthermore, Ex-Cell-O wanted HOPE to grant the company exclusive rights to make a documentary film about Project HOPE and "the right to publicity referring to the *fact* that Pure-Pak cartons were selected for use in

¹⁰⁹ Ralph C. Charbeneau, "A White Paper: Why Project HOPE and E-Cell-O Corporation?," n.d. (c. April 1961), Box 5, Series III: Information Services Administration, Subject Files, 1960-1977, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*; Emphasis in original.

the Project HOPE activity.” He promised that such publicity would be “dignified and in good taste.” Dr. Walsh agreed to these conditions with the stipulation that all publicity “be cleared with Project HOPE prior to release.” With the legalities settled, Ex-Cell-O officials agreed to completely finance, write, shoot, and distribute the documentary.¹¹¹

The Ex-Cell-O Corporation worked with the advertising agency MacManus, John, & Adams to produce the documentary. The ad agency tapped employees Frank Bibas to direct the film and Emmett Murphy to write the script. Murphy, an internal ad agency document stated, “has wide experience in the Far East and has previously worked with” the USIA “and other agencies or projects that were politically sensitive.” A production assistant, two camera operators, a sound technician, and an electrician rounded out the production crew. Bibas, Murphy, and the film crew sailed with the *Hope* when it left San Francisco for Southeast Asia on September 22, 1960.¹¹²

Ex-Cell-O’s *Project HOPE*: Gaining Public Support for Free World Integration

A year later, the work of Bibas and his crew was ready for presentation to the American people. At 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday evening, September 20, 1961, CBS aired the thirty-minute documentary. The network bent its own rules to air the program,

¹¹¹ Charbeneau to Walsh, December 11, 1959, Box 5, Series III: Information Services Administration, Subject Files, 1960-1977, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA; David Grey, “Hospital Ship to Carry Medical Training, Business Promotions to Southeast Asia,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 21, 1960; Schertler to Charbeneau, December 22, 1959, Box 16, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising files, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA; Emphasis in original.

¹¹² D.L. Brubaker, “MacManus, John, & Adams, Inc. Conference Report from the Meeting of January 12, 1960,” January 22, 1960, Box 16, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising files, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA; Walsh to Whom It May Concern, September 28, 1960, Box 16, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising files, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA; Walsh, 85.

temporarily setting aside a policy that prohibited the broadcast of news or public affairs programs made by outside parties. *New York Times*' television reporter Richard F. Shepard explained that a network spokesperson insisted the program "did not violate the restriction because it did not cover an area of news or controversy." The CBS official acknowledged that the program probably did fall into a "gray area" but was still "reconcilable" with network policy. Another unnamed member of the television industry not affiliated with CBS called the documentary "a fine, professional job." This industry insider characterized the show, in the words of Shepard, as "a fund-raising appeal to further the commendable work of the *Hope*" even though it did feature brief images of vessel's crew distributing Ex-Cell-O's milk containers. The show's fund-raising nature, according to Shepard's anonymous sources, made it no different from network appeals for other nonprofit organizations such as the American Red Cross though its thirty-minute length differed from these other broadcasts.¹¹³

The film opened with 'exotic Asian' music and an image of an Asian woman placing a flower in her hair. In the voiceover, journalist Bob Considine declared "this is one of the faces of Asia, half a world that knew culture and beauty a thousand years before Columbus." The exotic music gave way to softer and sadder 'Western' orchestral tones. A crying, emaciated child (perhaps no more than two or three years old) replaced the woman's image as Considine said, "And this is another face of Asia—reflecting the people's major problems: poverty and disease." His narration continued, "Outside the pitifully few hospitals and clinics, numberless patients [all women and children] wait."

¹¹³ "Television," *New York Times*, September 20, 1961; Richard F. Shepard, "TV 'Project Hope' Shirts C.B.S. Rule," August 12, 1961.

As the film showed a sad-eyed, melancholy boy (approximately eight years old) with a massive growth on the right side of his neck, Considine continued, “Patients like this orphan, who was to receive the priceless gift of a new life.” A gift from the two men conversing on screen—one an American and the other an Indonesian. “These are two of the doctors,” Considine said, “who played key roles in giving him that new life—thanks to . . .” Here the soft ‘Western’ orchestral music swelled into a hopeful and stirring melody as Bob Considine’s voice firmly declared “Project HOPE!” The music continued as two slides consecutively filled the screen, one simply reading *Project HOPE* and the next saying “A documentary report presented by Ex-Cell-O Corporation in the interest of international friendship and world peace.”¹¹⁴

These opening scenes as well as other images and narration throughout the film revealed two contrasting themes. First, the images reflected the facts that, in the words of historian Marc Frey, “most Americans perceived Southeast Asians as fundamentally different from Caucasians” and that although the “State Department recommended that officials not use terms such as ‘backward’ or ‘primitive peoples,’ they frequently employed these terms in private conversation or confidential dispatches.” In doing so, Frey asserts, these officials “allud[ed] to the exotic, to childishness, or to perceived feminine traits.” Such language, in Frey’s view, revealed a belief that “Southeast Asian

¹¹⁴ *Project HOPE*, film, directed by Frank Bibas (Detroit, MI: Ex-Cell-O Corporation, 1961), available in the Records of the United States Information Agency (RG 306), Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Special Media Archives Services Division, NA; *Project HOPE* script, Box 10, Series III: Information Services Administration, Subject Files, 1960-1977, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA.

societies were premodern,” that their peoples were “weak,” and they “needed a helping hand—the strong, reliable, and masculine hand of Uncle Sam.”¹¹⁵

Although U.S. officials avoided publicly using ‘backward’ or ‘primitive,’ Ex-Cell-O’s *Project HOPE* openly used the word ‘primitive’ and clearly depicted what the filmmakers might have termed the ‘backwardness’ of Indonesia. Attempting to show that country’s great material need through images of poverty, sickness, overcrowding, and poor sanitation, the accompanying narration—now ostensibly spoken by an ‘Indonesian doctor’—described the country as a new nation being built by poor people who had “to carry heavy burdens and work with primitive tools and machines.” Progress was slowed by “an ancient culture and many customs which are hard to change.” His people, the Indonesian narrator stated, “still grow rice as our ancestors did” and “still believe that disease is caused by evil spirits.” Furthermore, as a nation with very few doctors, Indonesians relied on a “medicine man” known as a “dukun . . . whose primitive knowledge has been passed down through the centuries.”¹¹⁶

But even though “their methods and tools are primitive,” Bob Considine said at the film’s end, “their determination to make a better life for themselves is strong.” Considine’s assertion pointed to another theme in the film, a theme that contradicted the premise that Indonesians were fundamentally different from Americans. This theme emphasized the commonalities between Americans and Indonesians. By emphasizing commonalities, the filmmakers, like U.S. officials more generally, Klein writes, “tried to educate Americans about the bonds that already tied them to the decolonizing world and

¹¹⁵ Marc Frey, “Tools of Empire: Persuasion and the United States’s Modernizing Mission in Southeast Asia,” *Diplomatic History* 27 (Sept. 2003), 556-558.

¹¹⁶ *Project HOPE* film, NA; *Project HOPE* script, HOPEA.

urged them to recognize that differences of language, religion, history, and race could be bridged.”¹¹⁷

In the film, Americans were told that even though Indonesia was a ‘primitive’ nation, it was also an independent nation where “freedom is very dear,” just as in the United States. Furthermore, Indonesia was a nation in the midst of “growing years . . . much like the early years in America after her revolution.” The Indonesian people were “like the pioneers of America . . . eager to work and build in freedom.” Showing images of Indonesians hard at work constructing new homes, the film’s voiceover noted, that they were “building a new nation . . . and building it with pride.” They were also “eager to cooperate with friendly people who wish to help us build a strong foundation for our new country.”¹¹⁸

The remainder of the *Project HOPE* film showed Americans actively bridging differences and embracing commonalities to help the Indonesians build a strong national foundation. Neatly dressed in their bright white medical garb, “dedicated Americans” paired off with their Indonesian “brothers in medicine” and began “teaching and healing.” The film showed Indonesian doctors lecturing their American counterparts about tropical diseases, the *dukun* tradition, and national public health programs while American doctors spoke on “pediatrics and infant diet, surgery and anesthetics, radiology and bacteriology and many more subjects.” The Americans performed countless surgeries allowing Indonesian medical personal to observe the operations because “when a surgeon has seen a special operation done once or twice, he learns how to do it

¹¹⁷ *Project HOPE* film, NA; *Project HOPE* script, HOPEA; Klein, 46.

¹¹⁸ *Project HOPE* film, NA; *Project HOPE* script, HOPEA.

himself.” A closed circuit television system enabled students and observers in the ship’s lecture hall to watch surgeries taking place in the operating rooms. In addition to being able to perform new procedures themselves, Indonesian surgeons would “be able to teach others, too.” Roving medical teams of both Indonesian and American medical personnel traveled “inland, far away from the ship” to pass out milk to children and teach “mid-wives and dukuns . . . the proper way to wash their hands in clean water before delivering a baby.”¹¹⁹

To continue this work and more, Dr. Walsh appeared on screen at the film’s end to ask for “the continuing financial assistance of the American people that believe as we do.” Project HOPE’s “whole effort,” he said, could “be best described in the words of President Kennedy in his recent Inaugural Address . . .” The president’s words accompanied images of Third World poverty and destitution. A bamboo shack with two naked and undernourished children standing in the doorway. An infant peacefully sleeping but also covered with flies. Another baby suffering from horrendous sores on its legs.¹²⁰ As the audience saw these images, they heard Kennedy’s voice

To those people in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves, for whatever period is required—not because the Communists may be doing it, not because we seek their votes, but because it is right.¹²¹

Then as glorious orchestral music swelled hopefully, images of HOPE appeared—images of an American teaching Indonesians, of a TV camera focused on a surgery, of happy patients leaving the hospital ship, and of Americans and Indonesians working together to

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

alleviate suffering and build a better world. Finally, a symbol of that potentially better world, the great white *S.S. Hope* appeared on screen as it sailed away from the camera and away from Indonesia. On its stern, an American flag flapped majestically.¹²²

As it told the story of lectures, surgeries, and field work, Ex-Cell-O's *Project HOPE* focused on, to use Klein's words, "politically engaged individuals communicating across racial and national boundaries, recognizing their shared interests, and working together to solve the root problems that provided a breeding ground for communism." With this focus, the film formed part of a category of "cultural forms" created throughout the 1950s that Klein calls "people-to-people narrative[s]." Within this genre of people-to-people narratives, "missionary stories formed a prominent subset" and "among these the 'medical missionary' was the most privileged." The real-life story of Dr. Thomas A. Dooley—an American doctor who lived and worked in Laos during the early to mid-1950s—represented the archetype of the medical missionary. At the same time, the three books he wrote describing his medical work in Southeast Asia reflected core aspects of the people-to-people narrative. Much like Ex-Cell-O's *Project HOPE*, Dooley's published recollections initially built a gap of difference between Americans and Asians. Dooley's Asians were, Klein writes, "dirty, sick, tradition-bound, and passive" while the Americans were "healthy, active, and physically upright bearers of modern science who dress[ed] in neat clothes despite the jungle heat and rain." Having established this gap, Dooley, again like the film *Project HOPE*, demonstrated how to bridge the gap by "reach[ing] across the boundaries of difference . . . by extending . . . sympathy, compassion, and feeling." With their message of differences bridged by

¹²² Ibid.

humanitarianism, Dooley's books, the *Project HOPE* film, and other people-to-people narratives "served as a cultural expression of the principle of international integration." In support of the American desire to create a united free world, the novels, travelogues, films, plays, and musicals of the people-to-people genre—part of the educational machinery of the total Cold War—tried to create an "international sense of 'we'" by recounting the lives and experiences of "ordinary people who found ways to participate in international affairs and who did so with tolerance and affection for others." Most importantly, these cultural creations, as Klein puts it, "helped to construct a national identity for the United States as a global power" and repudiate the "long-standing intellectual tradition (if not political reality) of isolationism."¹²³

Was the film successful at instilling an internationalist attitude and gaining the public's acceptance of America's new status as a global power? In addition to the CBS broadcast, *Project HOPE* was widely shown in schools, clubs, and churches. These showings, at least according to a report compiled for Dr. Walsh, always garnered favorable comments but only occasionally did these comments address Project HOPE's role in U.S. foreign policy. A church pastor in Illinois enthused that "it evoked a thunderous applause and a . . . prayer of God bless America." Otto Baumgartner of the California School Employees Association found it a "very good" film that "tells us how badly medical help is needed for these people" and that showed HOPE was "a worthy cause if there ever was one in Asia." A nun at St. Mary's General Hospital in Lewiston, Maine felt it was a "beautiful film showing our effort and good will" and expressed her belief that "we should have more of this propaganda." Mary Anne Pouring, the director

¹²³ Klein, 8-9, 85, 92-93, 97.

of Christian education at Elm Park Methodist Church in Scranton, Pennsylvania, said the “picture is in very good taste and presents the needs in the Far East in a through and convincing manner.” The mother superior at the Ursuline Convent in Alton, Illinois viewed the film as “a very fine demonstration in foreign relations, capable of destroying race prejudice.” An unnamed member of Pittsburgh’s White Oak Rod and Reel Club concluded, “Hope—a dream word to many people in any country. But, thanks to this wonderful picture, shows it can come true.” It remains unclear if such sentiments translated into increased political support for U.S. expansion. Moreover, measuring any such increase would prove exceedingly difficult.¹²⁴

The film’s greatest praise came from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. For the year 1961, *Project HOPE* won the Academy Award for Best Documentary Short Subject. Ex-Cell-O trumpeted its Oscar victory in a *Wall Street Journal* advertisement headlined “Industry wins first Oscar” and “Hollywood strikes a blow for freedom.” Photos of the *S.S. Hope* departing San Francisco harbor and American nurses distributing milk in Ex-Cell-O-made cartons accompanied a picture of a golden Oscar statue. The victory was “the first time” a film made by American industry had “been so honored.” HOPE’s mission, the ad stated, was “a unique enterprise in which the entire world sees our people—acting privately outside government as only a free people can—lending a helping hand to those who need it.” Moreover, it quoted now former President Eisenhower describing HOPE as “the single most effective step in presenting America as a warm and good friend.” The *Hope*, the former president said,

¹²⁴ Modern Talking Picture Service, “What do audiences say about your film?: Project HOPE,” n.d., Box 14, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising files, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA.

“erased from the minds of millions all propaganda that we are a war-mongering nation.” Ex-Cell-O Corporation commended “the Motion Picture Academy for its recognition of this picture story of American free enterprise in action” and expressed pleasure that the Academy “use[d] its international influence to press home to the world the complete falsity of communism’s case against capitalism.”¹²⁵

Project HOPE represented a small and perhaps effectual part of the educational machinery designed to win public support for the U.S. policy of integration during the Cold War. Did the U.S. government intervene to ensure this film carried an internationalist message to the American people? Beyond the USIA’s initial efforts to bring the Ex-Cell-O Corporation and Project HOPE together, the available evidence does not reveal any instances of official intervention in the making of *Project HOPE*. However, that same evidence suggests that such pressure would have been largely unnecessary. In a letter about the HOPE film to the propaganda agency, Charbeneau revealed that Ex-Cell-O had “earnestly striven to contribute to USIA’s goals” but he also thanked the USIA for its “counsel and encouragement.” Information officials must have been pleased with the final product. A letter from famed broadcaster Edward R. Murrow, the USIA director under President John F. Kennedy, “commend[ed]” the corporation’s “efforts to publicize the excellent work of Project HOPE” and the *Project HOPE* film was eventually distributed overseas in “23 languages” by the agency.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ Advertisement, “Industry Wins First Oscar,” *Wall Street Journal*, May 14, 1962, available in Box 01, Alexander Miller Papers, WRHS. This same ad and a separate but similar advertisement can also be found in Box 14, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising files, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA.

¹²⁶ Charbeneau to Reynolds, April 19, 1960, Box 16, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising files, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA; Murrow to Charbeneau, March 25, 1961, Box 05, Series III: Information Services Administration, Subject Files, 1960-

Conclusion

Project HOPE was a domestic propaganda program designed to mobilize the American people and sustain their morale for the long struggle that was the total Cold War. With fund raising efforts such as the Advertising Council campaign during January and February 1960 as well as other related activities—linen collection drives, moonlight cruises, and book donations, for example—the American people could personally support both Project HOPE and the Cold War effort. Civilian participation in Project HOPE had distinct practical propaganda advantages: the involvement of private citizens lowered financial costs, increased the propaganda's range and impact, camouflaged the government's role, boosted the message's legitimacy, and demonstrated freedom's superiority. It was also important to mobilize ordinary citizens so that their individual involvement in the nation's Cold War effort could 'humanize' America and Americans in the face of derogatory communist propaganda about the United States and its citizens. Beyond simply mobilizing civilians to participate in the Cold War, Project HOPE was part of a domestic education effort designed to build public support for the policy of integration. The story of the *S.S. Hope* as told in the Ex-Cell-O produced film *Project HOPE* tried to convince Americans to abandon any lingering isolationism, accept their nation's role as a global power, and contribute to the creation of an anti-Soviet free world.

1977, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA; *Project HOPE* film; Charbeneau to Carl T. Rowan, February 24, 1964, Box 05, Series III: Information Services Administration, Subject Files, 1960-1977, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA.

CHAPTER 3

WINNING FRIENDS FOR THE UNITED STATES?: PROJECT HOPE AS PROPAGANDA IN INDONESIA

During the “damp, gray Pacific morning” of September 13, 1960, a motorcade zoomed through the gate of Hunter’s Point Naval Shipyard in San Francisco and stopped near the looming white hull of the fully reconditioned and ready-to-sail *S.S. Hope*. Vice President Richard Nixon, his wife Pat Nixon, and Mayor George Christopher of San Francisco stepped from the motorcade to be greeted by Dr. William B. Walsh. Vice President Nixon, who was in the midst of his first race for the presidency, had taken time out of a campaign swing through the Pacific Northwest to speak at the *Hope*’s dedication ceremony. The vice president, according to the *New York Times*, “forsook political talk,” focusing instead on “the necessity of presenting ‘a true picture of what Americans feel in their hearts for other people.’” Nixon also addressed, Walsh recalled, “the needs of new nations.” As Nixon concluded his remarks, the *Hope*’s captain raised the ship’s colors, “the sun blazed through from the clouds” and a Navy warship “roared out a ten-gun salute over the ‘ruffles and flourishes’ of a Marine Corps band.” Similar pomp and circumstance accompanied the ship’s departure from San Francisco harbor about ten days later on September 22. The *Hope* went to sea, Walsh wrote, “between fountaining fireboats and beneath a flight of Navy jets.” It “moved past the battlements of Alcatraz and under the Golden Gate Bridge” and pointed its bow west across the great, rolling wastes of the Pacific Ocean toward the vast archipelago nation of Indonesia.¹²⁷

¹²⁷ Russell Baker, “Nixon Endorses Kennedy Pledge,” *New York Times*, September 14, 1960; Walsh, 82-83, 85.

Project HOPE's focus on Indonesia and Southeast Asia during the *Hope's* first voyage (the ship would also travel to South Vietnam as part of this initial trip) reflected the growing importance of this region and the Third World more generally as a battleground in the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. Within developing nations of the Third World like Indonesia, the United States confronted the growing appeal of communism with propaganda designed to disseminate positive messages about and images of the United States in an effort to win over and then bind those countries to the United States. We have seen how Project HOPE tried to 'humanize' the American people by involving ordinary Americans in its activities, but its positive images of the United States also included demonstrations of the material and social progress possible under a capitalism. Through Project HOPE's activities, Indonesians saw how the science and technology created by America's capitalist economy could improve their local water supplies, use x-ray to properly diagnose tuberculosis, and manufacture nutritious milk from sea water. The *Hope*—the ship itself with its closed circuit television system, air conditioning, shiny new medical equipment—also symbolized how capitalism, science, and technology could improve the lives of those living in the Third World. Target audiences for these propaganda efforts largely consisted of local elites, which, in Project HOPE's case, meant groups of Indonesian medical professionals such as doctors and nurses who might be able to push the relatively new country toward the free world. The *Hope's* trip also tried to pull Indonesia into the U.S. orbit by reviving an oft-repeated request from the Indonesians for official U.S. government financial assistance to a local hospital. The United States finally extended

that assistance after the Indonesians approached Dr. Walsh and Project HOPE with a request that his organization help staff the hospital. The involvement of Project HOPE in the Ibu Sukarno Hospital provided the U.S. government with one more avenue of influence, however modest, in Indonesia—a nation Washington desperately desired to keep out of communist hands while at the same time pulling it into America's Cold War empire in Southeast Asia.

New Battlegrounds: The Third World and Southeast Asia

Project HOPE, like the bulk of U.S. propaganda, targeted, in Osgood's words, "areas of the world that were noncommunist, neutral, or tied to the United States through formal alliances—the area that Americans liked to call the 'free world.'" Project HOPE specifically focused its activities where, as historian Andrew Johns puts it, postwar "turmoil and instability caused by the forces of decolonization and nationalism in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and the Americas" created what "became known collectively as the Third World." As colonies in the Third World gained independence from their imperial masters, Chester Pach writes, "issues of development took precedence over Cold War divisions" and, by the mid-1950s, "a self-conscious nonaligned movement" developed whose adherents refused to ally with either superpower or participate in the Soviet-American conflict. Yet, also by the mid-1950s, the fait accompli of a divided Europe pushed Moscow and Washington to look with longing towards the "vital resources, large populations, and growth potential" of the Third World, which they speculated "could have an important effect on Cold War competition" and even tip the

conflict's balance of power. Moreover, locked in a struggle to prove their respective ideologies superior, the United States and the Soviet Union, in historian Odd Arne Westad's words, "needed to change the world in order to prove the universal applicability of their ideologies." The Third World seemed "fertile ground for their competition." As stalemate grew on the Cold War's initial battlefields, Johns concludes, "the Third World became the primary battleground in the ideological, economic, and political struggle between Washington and Moscow."¹²⁸

Dr. Walsh appreciated the new Third World being created by postwar decolonization, the need to cultivate good relations with those new nations, and the struggle between communism and freedom for their loyalties. Explaining the motivations behind Project HOPE, Walsh spoke of his desire to create "a floating medical center . . . to help train people in the developing nations" where the "God-given right of freedom had come suddenly." Now independent, these nations "clung to freedom" in what Walsh saw as "a plea stronger than any cry for help." Walsh warned that communist nations were answering the plea for help through their offers of "friendship." A visit by the *Hope*, however, could also answer that plea, improve "the ties of friendship between the United States and the countries visited" and, by implication, preempt communist help and bring those countries visited into the U.S. orbit. Walsh and many others at the time understood that decolonization also presented, in Westad's words, "opportunities for

¹²⁸ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 2-3; Andrew L. Johns, "Preface," in *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War*, eds. Kathryn C. Statler and Andrew L. Johns (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), vii; Chester J. Pach, Jr. "Introduction: Thinking Globally and Acting Locally," in *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War*, eds. Kathryn C. Statler and Andrew L. Johns (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), xi-xii; H.W. Brand, *The Specter of Neutralism: The United States and the Emergence of the Third World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 1-3; Westad, 4.

extending U.S. ideas of political and economic liberties” and transforming former European colonies into areas of “American responsibility.” At the same time, decolonization “increased the threat of collectivist ideologies getting the upper hand in the Third World.”¹²⁹

Following Stalin’s death in March 1953, the Soviet Union did launch an active and sustained effort to win over the emerging Third World. Stalin’s successors combined, in Osgood’s words, “flexible diplomacy, trade and aid offers, and cultural, educational, and technical exchanges” into a new foreign policy of “peaceful coexistence” designed “to build closer ties to the developing world.” Soviet leaders tapped into the newly independent nations’ need to construct socially coherent, economically successful, and militarily strong states and offered vastly increased economic and military aid to the Third World. But, as Westad explains, the Cold War’s “ideological division” offered “two hegemonic models of development” for these state-building projects. The Soviet model promised “politically induced growth through a centralized plan and mass mobilization, with an emphasis on heavy industry, massive infrastructural projects, and the collectivization of agriculture, independent of international markets.” Meanwhile, a U.S.-influenced model promised “urban-based growth . . . advanced consumer products and the latest technology” if the new nations joined “a global capitalist market” and allied “with the world’s most powerful state.”¹³⁰

Early in the decolonization process, the Soviet-model seemed to gain the upper hand. The “track record of rapid industrialization and modernization” within the USSR

¹²⁹ Walsh, Foreword, 63; Project HOPE brochure, n.d.; Westad, 26-27.

¹³⁰ Pach, “Thinking Globally and Acting Locally,” xiii; Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 113; Westad, 92-93.

greatly appealed to the Third World's leaders and fostered an impression among the developing world's populace that the Soviets were "advancing more rapidly" than the Americans. At the same time, this populace also believed, Osgood writes, that "imperialism, not communism, represented the greatest threat to their peace and security" and viewed "the United States as a collaborator with European imperialism." Communist regimes, on the other hand, were, in Hixson's words, "armed with a body of Leninist theory on capitalist imperialism" that enabled them to support anti-colonialism and cast themselves as "liberators." For U.S. officials, these developments seemed to raise the possibility that nations in the Third World, Osgood argues, "would voluntarily gravitate into the Soviet orbit as a result of sympathy to communist ideology, lingering hostility toward European imperialists, material necessity, or admiration for Soviet industrial and technological feats."¹³¹

In the Third World, the newly independent nations of Southeast Asia seemed, according to Osgood, "especially vulnerable to communist subversion." In the face of China's 'loss', the inconclusive Korean War, France's collapse as an imperial power in Indochina, and ongoing revolutionary insurgencies throughout the region, the American leadership, writes historian Robert J. McMahon, "came to identify Southeast Asia as a region of vital significance to the peace, stability, and prosperity of the world—and a region, consequently, that held vital importance to the national security interests of the United States." As such, Washington tried to "keep a critical area within the boundaries of the so-called Free World" and, in the process, "gradually constructed a new empire across postcolonial Southeast Asia, a Cold War empire." President Eisenhower and his

¹³¹ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 70, 113; Osgood, "Words and Deeds," 4, 9; Hixson, 126.

advisors were especially “determined to ‘hold’ as much of the region as possible within the Western sphere” and “fought tenaciously” to prevent “potential aggression from the outside, to gain friends and allies among the area’s postcolonial states, and to defuse the ideological appeal of communism, neutralism, and radical nationalism.” As McMahon points out, they “used nearly every weapon in [the] superpower arsenal: military and economic aid, technical assistance, diplomatic backing, bilateral and multilateral security pacts, defense advisory teams, even, in the case of Indonesia . . . covert paramilitary intervention.” In particular, the persuasive efforts of U.S. propaganda served, Frey argues, as “tools of empire—means by which power and influence were projected, loyalties created, and political objectives achieved.” These psychological warfare operations tried “to prevent the spread of communism, to contribute to a positive image of the United States,” and “recast the face of Southeast Asia in an American image.” Propaganda proved “vital to America’s efforts at empire-building . . . in Southeast Asia”¹³²

Project HOPE Goes to Indonesia

Within Southeast Asia, Audrey Kahin and George Kahin suggest, “the political and economic importance of Indonesia far exceeded that of any other . . . country” in the region. According to historian Soo Chun Lu, the United States considered Indonesia important because of “its strategic location, and its raw materials.” The island republic

¹³² Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 115; Robert J. McMahon, *The Limits of Empire: The United States and Southeast Asia Since World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), ix, 69-70, 104; Frey, 544-545, 550.

sat astride the sea lanes between the Pacific and Indian Oceans while its “rubber, tin, and petroleum” were vital to the industrialized Free world.¹³³

Dr. Walsh understood the geopolitical importance of Indonesia and argued that the archipelago “could become the salvation of the Orient if the Communists did not win their fight for its control.” For Walsh, communism was a danger in Indonesia because, in his view, “any neutralist area has a strong Communist element.” He also believed that “in the outer islands, Mao Tse-tung was a hero.” At the same time, he felt that if Indonesia’s “new freedom lasts and the nation grows strong and democratic, it is a potentially powerful ally strung out over an area of thousands of miles.” In addition to communism, Walsh believed that decolonization presented its own challenges to Indonesia’s democratic growth for, as he put it, “the colonial Dutch had no policy for educating an eager and industrious people.” Indonesia’s new-found “freedom” resulted in a shortage of “trained men” and created a tremendous medical need in an “undeveloped paradise.” The island republic had only two medical schools serving its 3,000 islands and some 1,600 trained doctors serving its 82 million people. Most of these doctors practiced only on the main islands of Java and Sumatra. Project HOPE chose Indonesia to be the first destination of the *S.S. Hope* because, as Dayton Moore reported in *Today’s Health*, “its needs in the field of medical training are great, and its geography makes a ship a particularly effective means of helping to raise its level of medical care.”¹³⁴

¹³³ Audrey R. Kahin and George McT. Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy: The Secret Eisenhower and Dulles Debacle in Indonesia* (New York: New Press, 1995), 16; Soo Chun Lu, “U.S. Relations with Indonesia, 1953-1961” (PhD diss., Ohio University, 1997), 54-56.

¹³⁴ Walsh, 49, 71, 94; Moore, 33.

Although “considered . . . important to U.S. strategic interests,” writes Lu, Indonesia “did not choose to align with the United States in the Cold War.” From the moment of its independence, it “adopted a neutralist foreign policy” that “translated into efforts to ‘seek friendship’” with the Soviet Union, the People’s Republic of China, and the United States simultaneously. Significant electoral gains by the Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI), the Indonesian communist party, in both the general election of 1955 and the provincial elections of 1957 exacerbated U.S. concerns and raised fears the island nation might ultimately come under communist control. Another worrying development, in the eyes of U.S. officials, came in late 1956 when Indonesia’s President Sukarno called for the establishment of a “guided democracy” and the end of a multi-party political system. By the middle of 1957, the Eisenhower administration, explain Kahin and Kahin, “had become deeply worried that the Indonesian government, that major part of its armed forces stationed on Java, and especially its president, Sukarno, were under growing Communist influence and drifting dangerously to the left.”¹³⁵

Preventing communist domination of the archipelago became “the overriding objective of U.S. Indonesian policy.” At first, U.S. officials grasped onto “discontent” and an army rebellion in Indonesia’s outer islands as a way to, according to the Kahins, “change the character of the Indonesian government, and move the country into an anti-Communist alignment with the United States.” President Eisenhower ordered a covert intervention that gave “military aid and logistical support” to the rebellion in the hopes of “undermining, if not toppling outright, the Sukarno regime.” That regime speedily and effectively crushed the coup, however, and forced U.S. officials to accept that their

¹³⁵ Lu, 10, 16-17, 19; Kahin and Kahin, 16-17, 53.

“intervention had failed.” The Eisenhower administration now decided to “try to get along as best it could with the government it had just been trying to overthrow.”¹³⁶

For the remainder of the Eisenhower administration, into the Kennedy administration, and during the *Hope*'s visit, a new policy—officially outlined on February 3, 1959 in the National Security Council's secret policy statement NSC 5901—governed relations with Indonesia. Washington still believed “the chief danger confronting U.S. policy with respect to Indonesia is that a combination of domestic instability, Sino-Soviet Bloc economic and military aid, and growing local Communist strength may lead to a Communist takeover or to a policy increasingly friendly toward the Sino-Soviet Bloc.” These dangers and “the size and importance of Indonesia, together with its strategic position in relation to Australia and Free Asia . . . dictate a vigorous U.S. effort to prevent these contingencies.” The PKI's strength continued to worry American officials, but President Sukarno no longer seemed to be the extreme threat he had been prior to the rebellion and U.S. intervention. The effectiveness with which Sukarno had crushed the rebels had convinced the NSC that he possessed both power and will “to manipulate non-Communist elements” as a “counter-balance PKI strength.” Still, the enmity between Sukarno and U.S. officials that had resulted from the intervention was high. In the end, Lu explains, Washington “never really opted for bolstering Sukarno as a means of achieving their objectives.” Instead, American officials concluded, in the words of NSC 5901, that Indonesia's army and “the predominantly

¹³⁶ Lu, 54; Kahin and Kahin, 17-18.

non-Communist orientation of its officer corps represent the principal obstacles to the continued growth of Communist strength in Indonesia.”¹³⁷

Because of the military’s significance “as a stabilizing force” and because the Indonesian army, navy, and air force increasingly received huge shipments of arms, ships, and planes from the Soviet Union and Eastern European nations, military aid from the United States became crucial to its post-intervention relationship with Indonesia. However, other forms of aid, such as U.S. economic and technical assistance, remained important as well. Beginning as far back as 1955, American officials hoped, Lu claims, that modest “economic and technical assistance would help alleviate Indonesia’s economic and internal security problems but more importantly that it would win for the United States that country’s goodwill and favor.” Technical assistance, NSC 5901 revealed, “concentrated on the important problem of developing technical, professional, and managerial skills, with major emphasis on education” because a “shortage of trained professional men, administrators, and technicians” impeded “progress in the solution of Indonesia’s manifold political, economic, and social problems.” Jakarta was “making strenuous efforts to remedy this deficiency” and helping the effort was one way, NSC 5901 advised, “in which U.S. assistance can pay great long-range dividends.” Consistent with this analysis, the NSC suggested the United States “demonstrate interest in and concern for economic development in Indonesia while avoiding actions which might be

¹³⁷ Robert J. McMahon, “‘The Point of No Return,’: The Eisenhower Administration and Indonesia, 1953-1960,” in *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War*, eds. Kathryn C. Statler and Andrew L. Johns (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 94; Kahin and Kahin, 209-211; NSC 5901, “Statement of U.S. Policy on Indonesia,” February 3, 1959, *FRUS 1958-1960: Indonesia*, 334-344, available at <http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/FRUS/FRUS-idx?type=goto&id=FRUS.FRUS1958-60v17&isize=M&page=334> [accessed September 14, 2007]; Lu, 316.

interpreted as an attempt to control or take responsibility for Indonesian economic development.”¹³⁸ The United States could achieve this balance, the NSC advised, by

- a. Assisting Indonesians to travel and study in the U.S. and other Free World countries.
- b. Continuing programs for increased training of Indonesians.
- c. Making full use of U.S. private organizations to assist educational, cultural, medical, and scientific activities in Indonesia.
- d. Identifying the U.S. with willingness to assist peoples struggling with problems of independence, and emphasizing the U.S. tradition of anti-colonialism.¹³⁹

Doing these things would “broaden Indonesian understanding of the U.S. and the Free World” and persuade Indonesians “that closer cooperation with the Free World is desirable.” Project HOPE’s work in the island nation incorporated all four suggestions to some extent.¹⁴⁰

Nevertheless, as McMahon writes, “the new policy direction brought, at best, very modest returns.” In July 1959, Sukarno implemented his notion of “guided democracy” by dissolving the nation’s parliamentary democracy and reinstating the provisional constitution of 1945, which provided for, in the words of Donald Seekins, “a strong ‘middle way,’ presidential system.” In March 1960, Sukarno created a new appointive legislature with “as many as 25 percent of the seats . . . allocated for the PKI.”

¹³⁸ NSC 5901; Kahin and Kahin, 206-207; Lu 75; Up to this time, U.S. officials had remained unwilling to provide arms to Indonesia, or at least to the central government, but that attitude changed when in early 1958 Indonesian officials, the NSC reported, “purchased about \$25,000,000 worth of Army hardware in Poland, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia.” During the next twenty-four months the Indonesian navy was “scheduled to obtain a significant number of ships from the Soviet Bloc” while the air force had arranged “to purchase from the Soviets about 115 aircraft, including MIG fighters [and] jet bombers.” The National Security Council advised that Washington finally provide the military aid “Indonesia is now actively seeking” from the United States. The Kahins note that the United States began “in November 1958 and especially in January 1959 to augment enormously its flow of arms to Indonesia, in major effort to offset and outstrip” Soviet aid. This action, they claim, “induced Jakarta to place no further significant orders with the Soviet bloc” and “decisively tipped the scales away from the Communist bloc so far as Indonesia’s army was concerned.”

¹³⁹ NSC 5901.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

Furthermore, during the final months of the Eisenhower administration, Sukarno moved even closer to Indonesia's communist party. According to Lu, "this shift grew out of his need both to exploit the PKI's organizational apparatus, which provided him a pipeline to the masses, and . . . to 'maintain his bargaining position vis-à-vis the Army'" with which he was essentially sharing power. In Washington's eyes, it likely looked as if Sukarno was not only improving his relations with communists in Indonesia but with communists in Moscow as well. As far back as 1958, Lu notes, the Soviet Union had "significantly increased the size of its economic and military assistance to Indonesia." Then in February 1960, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev visited the island nation at the invitation of Sukarno. The visit, according to Lu, had "mixed results." Khrushchev's "brusqueness and high-handed attitude" turned off many Indonesians and "offended Sukarno" but the Soviet leader also offered the Indonesians "\$250 million in credit." At the end of 1960, in a secret dispatch to Washington, Howard P. Jones, the U.S. ambassador in Indonesia, concluded that "there is no doubt" that "we have been witnessing a closer rapprochement between Sukarno and [the] Soviet bloc in [the] last six months as well as [a] clear predilection on his part to protect [the] PKI."¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ McMahon, "Point of No Return," 95; Donald M. Seekins, "Historical Setting," Chap. 1 in *Indonesia: A Country Study*, 5th ed., eds. William H. Frederick and Robert L. Worden (Washington, D.C.: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1993), available at <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/idtoc.html> [accessed December 16, 2007]; Lu, 320, 330-332. American Embassy, Djakarta to State Department, December 3, 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960: Indonesia*, 567-568, available at <http://digioll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/FRUS/FRUS-idx?type=goto&id=FRUS.FRUS1958-60v17&isize=M&page=567> [accessed December 16, 2007].

HOPE Confronts Communism in Indonesia

Within this context, the *S.S. Hope* arrived in Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia, on October 19, 1960. The ship's staff and crew "received a warm welcome . . . from a committee of Indonesian physicians and medical students," the *New York Times* reported, while local officials hailed the ship "as a symbol of friendly relations between their country and the United States." The staff began accepting patients for treatment on the afternoon of October 21 and President Sukarno toured the ship the next day. Sukarno spent his visit, the *Washington Post* revealed, "calling on children in the pediatrics ward, talking with patients in the general ward and viewing an operation via closed circuit TV." Perhaps reflecting a belief in nonalignment and that movement's desire to maintain a balance in relations between the two superpowers, Sukarno also visited "a Soviet industrial exhibition on Djakarta's outskirts" on the same day. The Soviet ambassador to Indonesia also toured the *Hope*. The ambassador, Dr. Walsh recalled, "inspected us thoroughly and doubtless he would have been happy to report deficiencies back to the Kremlin, but officially he said to me that this was a fine type of field in which our countries should compete." Still, Walsh noted, "Communists were already trying to stigmatize us as an Imperialist hospital performing obscene experiments on helpless Indonesians." The *Hope* spent about ten days in Jakarta before beginning an eight-month voyage throughout the archipelago's outer islands. During this voyage, the ship slowly traveled east stopping at other ports on Java, then moving on to Bali and Sumbawa before

bearing north for Makassar on Sulawesi and then stopping at several different islands in the Maluku.¹⁴²

By early March 1961, the *Hope* arrived at Kupang on the island of Timor, a port of call that perfectly illustrates, at least through Dr. Walsh's eyes, Project HOPE's efforts to confront communism. On Timor, Walsh explained

Communism's pie-in-the-sky promises had attracted many converts and quasi-converts. In a frenzy of fear that HOPE might make allies for the U.S., the Timor Communist Party had put on a blanket anti-HOPE campaign. Widely distributed circulars, printed in red, described our mission as a medical calamity. According to the propaganda, half the people we treated had died. Furthermore, the Communists claimed that a *real* hospital ship was on its way from Red China and wise Indonesians, they said, would wait for it. "Everyone knew" that Americans hated all people of color and merely used them as medical guinea pigs.¹⁴³

Timor's population "was actively antagonistic" and local officials discovered a "serious plot" to blow up the *Hope*. Writing in *A Ship Called Hope*, Walsh told his audience that the plotters "were not agents of the Internationale, but Timorans who had believed the lies about us." They were given a tour of the ship to disprove what they had heard and, according to Walsh, "it took just one hour to convert the local revolutionaries." The plotters remorsefully apologized and offered Project HOPE "the use of the Kupang Communist meeting hall for our clinic!" The staff accepted the offer and held their clinic in the hall papered with "handmade posters condemning [both] the *Hope*" and the United States as well as portraits of Mao Tse-tung. Ignoring the propaganda on the walls, the

¹⁴² "Indonesians Greet Medical Ship Hope," *New York Times*, October 20, 1960; Walsh, 100-101, 106-109; Photo, "Hope in Indonesia," *Washington Post*, October 30, 1960; "Sukarno Visits Hope, Then Soviet Exhibit," *Washington Post*, October 29, 1960; "S.S. Hope Visits East Java," *New York Times*, November 4, 1960; A map and list of port calls is located in the front matter of Dr. Walsh's *A Ship Called Hope*. Box 01, Series I: Maritime Operations-Administrative files, 1958-1974, S.S. Hope (HRG 20) in the Project HOPE archives contains copies of telegrams between the ship and Project HOPE headquarters in Washington, D.C. detailing the departure and arrival dates for many the ship's stops in Indonesia.

¹⁴³ Walsh, 44.

staff went about treating patients and before too long “the photographs and posters were taken down—but not by us.” In fact, Walsh maintained that his group “made no overt propaganda” because Project HOPE “was a privately sponsored effort and we believed that medicine should know no politics.” Accordingly, the doctor explained, “Communists were treated when they asked to be, exactly the same as anyone else.”¹⁴⁴

HOPE Presents a Positive View of American Capitalism

Walsh’s story of the *Hope*’s Kupang visit alludes to the fact that while in Indonesia, Project HOPE focused more on presenting a positive image of both the United States and American-style freedom than on attacking and decrying the Soviet Union and communism. As we have seen, Project HOPE tried to ‘humanize’ the American people by exposing Indonesians and others to individual U.S. citizens. At the same time, Project HOPE exalted American-style capitalism, specifically the advancements in science and technology capitalism produced, and the medical, health, and social progress brought about by capitalism’s scientific and technological developments.

During the Cold War, Soviet propagandists attacked the U.S. economy “as immoral, imperialist, and materialistic” and held up socialism as the best pattern for industrializing and spreading the benefits of economic growth to all of society. But under capitalism, according to this propaganda, Americans suffered exploitation at the hands of small ruling elite, faced widespread unemployment, suffered from “pervasive malnutrition,” and lacked other “social protections.” Just as they tried to ‘humanize’ the American people, U.S. propagandists countered by portraying “capitalism in human,

¹⁴⁴ Walsh, 44-46.

individualistic terms.” The USIA’s “People’s Capitalism” campaign that began in 1955 marked the high point of propaganda efforts to define and defend the U.S. economic system. Driven by the increased income, economic mobility, consumerism, stock investments, and growing size of the U.S. middle class, “People’s Capitalism” represented “a story of progress.” It was a progress characterized by “the highest standard of living in the world,” by “automation and new businesses, social security, hospitalization benefits, labor unions, public education, and the finest university system in the world,” by “automobiles, televisions, and radios” and by “four-lane superhighways, plenty of free time for leisure activities, and *wide access to medical care*.” Every American enjoyed the progress, prosperity, and benefits of “People’s Capitalism” and as such every American was a capitalist.¹⁴⁵

U.S. information officials closely intertwined their depictions of the nation’s economic and industrial progress with the advancement of American science and technology. “The United States’ reputation as the scientific and industrial leader of the world,” a National Security Council report argued, “has been of immeasurable value in competing against Soviet aims in both neutral and allied states.” Accordingly, U.S. propaganda experts tried to include “demonstrations of genuine technological advances” in their psychological strategy. Proposed demonstrations included “spectacular development projects like a rice airlift to Indonesia, the establishment of an emergency food bank for international disasters, and programs for education in less developed areas.” The CIA suggested “the U.S. organize an ‘international medical year’ or an

¹⁴⁵ Belmonte, 329, 339; Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 255-256, 270-271; Hixson, 134. Emphasis added.

‘international biomedical year’ to attack worldwide diseases and reward scientists whose research benefited humankind.” Building food-processing plants overseas, constructing hospitals in developing regions, highlighting research into creating synthetic foods, and launching an international university were also proposed.¹⁴⁶

Similar to some of the proposed programs listed above, Project HOPE had a role to play in demonstrating the medical and social progress possible in a capitalist society based on science and technology. Not only did the *Hope* staff expose physicians and nurses to the latest advancements in American medical science, they did the same with other health professionals such as “midwives, sanitary engineers, and [medical] technicians.” The *Hope* carried personnel for “an epidemiological research unit, a nutritional research unit, [and] a sanitation and public health unit,” all of whom applied their scientific knowledge to better the lives of Indonesians. For example, the ship’s sanitation expert, Richard S. Mark of Bethesda, Maryland, studied the water supply in Kupang, found it was “contaminated from both its sources” and “suggested that chlorination be started and filtration undertaken after heavy rains.” Mark conducted a similar survey at Ambon in the Malukus. Although the town’s water source was “very good,” the local authorities treated the supply with a very weak chlorination mixture that resulted in ten times more bacteria than was acceptable.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ NSC 5522, June 8, 1955 quoted in Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 330; Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 344.

¹⁴⁷ “S.S. Hope: Kupang Report – March 8-March 26, 1961,” n.d., Box 01, Series I: Maritime Operations-Administrative files, 1958-1974, S.S. Hope (HRG 20), HOPEA; Project HOPE brochure, n.d.; “S.S. Hope: Ambon Report – February 11-March 6, 1961,” n.d., Box 01, Series I: Maritime Operations-Administrative files, 1958-1974, S.S. Hope (HRG 20), HOPEA.

Also while at Ambon, Project HOPE “completed a mass chest x-ray survey of 2,500 government employees, teachers, laborers, and office workers.” Dr. Timothy Lally of San Leandro, California, a radiologist, and Dr. James Youker of Richmond, Virginia, who interpreted and analyzed the x-ray film, presented their findings to local health officials and “found only 5 to 10% [of those x-rayed] with active TB,” which was lower than their expectations. The concern, however, was not so much about the number of infections but about the lack of technology to properly diagnose the disease. The Indonesians, Dr. Youker explained, “have to treat TB here without x-ray because although there is an x-ray machine in Ambon, there is no film.” Because, he added, “there are other diseases that closely resemble TB and can be differentiated only by x-ray, their TB wards contain many people who do not have this disease.”¹⁴⁸

At most ports, the *Hope* left behind some of the material benefits of America’s capitalist economy and U.S. science and technology. At Ambon, the ship’s crew off loaded “36,000 units of a new leprosy drug to be sent to the leper colony at Sapaura.” They also sent ashore “11,400 pounds of powdered milk, large quantities of drugs, medicines, equipment, and supplies, including 30 dozen pair of hospital pajamas, quantities of quinine, vaseline, DDT, disinfectant, pentothal, vitamins, bandages, and gauze.” At Kupang, another “11,400 pounds of milk powder . . . as well as quantities of medicines, drugs, and other medical supplies” were sent to the town’s hospital. It should

¹⁴⁸ “S.S. Hope: Ambon Report – February 11-March 6, 1961,” n.d., Box 01, Series I: Maritime Operations-Administrative files, 1958-1974, S.S. Hope (HRG 20), HOPEA.

be recalled that nearly all the *Hope's* drugs and medical supplies were donated by America's pharmaceutical industry.¹⁴⁹

The ship's so-called "iron cow" represented one of the most striking examples of the *Hope's* efforts to demonstrate the material advantages of a capitalism based on science and technology. The "iron cow," briefly discussed in chapter 2, and the artificial milk it created were widely distributed during the *Hope's* stay in Indonesia. They also featured prominently in the film *Project HOPE*, which was screened overseas in several languages by the USIA. In the film, the narrator described the "system for making milk and drinking water" as "one of the most amazing processes I've ever seen."

Imagine making milk from sea water. Every day thousands of gallons of salt water from the Pacific Ocean are pumped into the ship. Then the big tanks boil the water and the salt is taken out. After filtering the water over and over, pure milk solids are added. Then butterfat is blended. The result: milk that tastes just like something straight from a dairy at home. The "Iron Cow" (and that's what we all call this operation) can produce thousands of gallons of milk a day.¹⁵⁰

Images of technicians dressed in white coveralls accompanied this narration. They mixed the powdered milk and liquid butter and poured the mixture into a machine with many moving parts connected by a seemingly endless maze of pipes. Just a few moments later, the film showed Dr. Walsh and several Indonesian dignitaries happily sharing glasses of the artificial milk. The film also showed three American nurses passing out cartons of milk to a fairly large crowd of smiling children swarming around them. As the children drank their milk on screen, the narrator explained that most of the milk was "distributed

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.; "S.S. Hope: Kupang Report – March 8-March 26, 1961," n.d., Box 01, Series I: Maritime Operations-Administrative files, 1958-1974, S.S. Hope (HRG 20), HOPEA.

¹⁵⁰ *Project HOPE*, film, directed by Frank Bibas (Detroit, MI: Ex-Cell-O Corporation, 1961), available in the Records of the United States Information Agency (RG 306), Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Records, Special Media Archives Services Division, NA; *Project HOPE* script, Box 10, Series III: Information Services Administration, Subject Files, 1960-1977, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA.

to people in the villages on shore” and that the “free milk turned out to be the high-point of every maternal child care program we scheduled.”¹⁵¹

Finally, the *Hope*—the hospital ship itself—symbolized the material and social advantages of a scientifically- and technologically-driven capitalism. The ship’s staff and crew opened the vessel for public tours at many of its port calls in Indonesia, so as many locals as possible could witness the wonders of American modernity. During the *Hope*’s visit to Makassar on Sulawesi, Dr. Walsh recalled, “we held more fascination than any American movie, even in Cinemascope or Technicolor.” Besides the patients actually treated on board, nearly 8,000 people toured the vessel during its three-and-a-half week stay at Makassar in February 1961. Seeing where the *Hope*’s staff and crew worked and lived “fascinated” these visitors, many of whom constantly marveled, according to Walsh, at “how American and efficient it was.” On such a tour, Indonesians likely saw “the large auditorium with ranks of classroom chairs, with writing arms, . . . [and] three large TV screens high on the walls.” Perhaps they were allowed into “No. 1 operating room” where they found a “closed-circuit TV [camera], and an intercom system” that broadcast to the auditorium and “made it possible for the audience to ask questions while procedures were under way.” Many Indonesians were awed by this television system since, in the words of one of the ship’s clergy members, “they have read about television but have never seen it.” As the reverend concluded, “Whatever they see on the ship, their one remark is, ‘We saw television.’”¹⁵² Perhaps tours continued through the ship’s “laboratories, a medical library, physiotherapy room, dental clinic with three chairs and

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² “Asians Warmed by Hospital Ship,” *Washington Post*, December 17, 1960.

shining equipment . . . x-ray department, anesthesia room, [and an] eye-ear-nose-and-throat clinic.” The ship featured all of the necessities available in “a small, shore hospital.” All of it was cooled by air conditioning that “saved lives and impressed our visitors.” As these visitors left the ship, they might have looked back to see “the blaze of her purposeful lights.”¹⁵³

The Irony of Confronting Materialism with Materialism

Project HOPE promoted the material advantages of a capitalist economy but by doing so it contradicted its efforts to challenge the stereotype of the materialistic American. One critic spotted the inconsistency in Project HOPE’s simultaneous efforts to down play American materialism while emphasizing the advantages of that same materialism. This same critic also attacked an instance of rank commercialism that resulted from Project HOPE’s close relationship with corporate America—a relationship that not only enabled Dr. Walsh’s group to promote capitalism but, as we have seen, also funded and supplied HOPE while providing companies with a way to expand their markets.

In the spring of 1960, several months before the *Hope* departed for Indonesia, Dr. Thomas D. Rees, president of the African Research Foundation (ARF), criticized Project HOPE with intensity and passion in a letter to James Shepley, *Life*’s assistant publisher. As the president of another medical NGO, Dr. Rees—who was “deeply interested in the cause of international medicine” and its ability to gain “the good will of other peoples

¹⁵³ Walsh, 22, 36-37; “S.S. Hope: Makassar Report,” n.d., Box 01, Series I: Maritime Operations-Administrative files, 1958-1974, S.S. Hope (HRG 20), HOPEA.

toward the United States”—felt “compelled” to share his concerns about Project HOPE’s potential “deleterious future effects on the whole cause of international medicine.” While acknowledging that the idea behind the ship was “good,” he and other “responsible people in the field of international medicine” worried about “its proper execution” and believed that HOPE had “every chance of resulting in a giant fiasco.”¹⁵⁴

First, Dr. Rees believed the *Hope*’s operating cost to be “exorbitant, considerably more than \$1,000.00 per day.” Such a huge amount could be better spent sending “hundreds of physicians, nurses, and technicians . . . to . . . areas inaccessible to the ‘ship.’” Because it was a ship, the *Hope* was “geographically . . . limited” to conducting its medical work in “larger ports where reasonable medical facilities already exist.” Health care personnel in these ports, Rees worried, “may consider the ship unwelcome,” so he suggested sending “medical teams to cooperate with and teach the local medical profession in their local facilities.” Furthermore, using a ship would not allow Project HOPE to reach “the largest number of doctors and people in each country visited” because they lived in “areas quite remote from a floating U.S. hospital palace.” These criticisms and suggestions echoed those made by USOM Jakarta in May 1959 and the initial worries of Acting Secretary of State Herter when he first met with Dr. Walsh in December 1958. Finally, and most importantly, Dr. Rees argued that “a disease-ridden native population would be more grateful for a person-to-person contact and assistance than it would be in the arrival of a material object such as a ship, the news of which may well never reach them.” He noted that “many people have a negative attitude regarding

¹⁵⁴ Rees to James, April 7, 1960, African Research Foundation, 1960 (2), Box 110, General File Series, Jacqueline Cochran Papers, EL.

American materialism” and asked “why emphasize it?” It is indeed ironic that as Project HOPE tried to depict positively America’s scientific- and technological-based capitalism with a showcase of mechanical wonders like the Iron Cow and the *S.S. Hope* itself, Dr. Walsh’s group was also attempting to dissuade the belief that Americans were a materialistic people.¹⁵⁵

Not only did its effort to promote capitalism result in contradicting messages, the effort as well as Project HOPE’s need for funds and supplies fostered a close relationship with corporate America that resulted in at least one incident where the group appeared to advertise a company’s newest product. Nine months after his first letter, Rees again wrote Shepley to register his extreme displeasure with what he called “a most serious, embarrassing, and irresponsible by-product” of the *Hope*’s trip to Indonesia. Three official Project HOPE press releases made it appear, he charged, “that this international project is being used to ‘push’ or ‘advertize’ [sic] an American commercial product.”¹⁵⁶ He quoted one of these releases which began

¹⁵⁵ Ibid. Rees took issue with the fact that Project HOPE’s “motivating force” came, in his view, “directly from the White House.” He argued that while high-level support may “override objectors,” it “did not necessarily underline the validity of the project.” He also asserted that “many responsible government officials, . . . primarily from the ICA, “strongly opposed this operation as being impractical” and noted that, according to “rumor . . . some of these men even had job transfers because of their resistance.” Rees seemed annoyed that even though ARF, the Medical, Eye, and Dental International Care Organization (MEDICO), and “other interested groups” had offered to meet with the head of HOPE, Dr. Walsh had “steadfastly refused to meet with other interested persons in this field.” In closing, Rees said that he “would resent seeing an expensive blunder committed which would not dispel the myth of the ‘Ugly American’” and instead could potentially “provide strength to the accusations of our enemies.” In Box 110, African Research Foundation, 1960 (2), General File Series, Jacqueline Cochran Papers, EL is a separate letter dated May 24, 1960 from Rees to ARF board member Jacqueline Cochran. In this letter, Rees revealed his anger and jealousy at the high-level backing given to Project HOPE and the relative ease with which the venture was launched. He wrote: “When I think that we have struggled for three years to get a little money and responsible Board of Directors, it makes me a little angry that all of the people on the Hope Ship project joined—some because the pressure was put on them from above—and very few of them have bothered to become informed on the subject.”

¹⁵⁶ Rees to Shepley, December 21, 1960, African Research Foundation, 1960 (1), Box 110, General File Series, Jacqueline Cochran Papers, EL. The rest of Rees’s letter took on a prosecutorial air

A radically new American food product, a margarine produced by a newly patented process to help reduce the increasing incidence of heart disease is currently being used in seminars for Indonesian doctors, medical aides, and nutritionists aboard the S.S. HOPE.¹⁵⁷

According to Rees, the release stated that Project HOPE “made special arrangements with the Corn Products Company, an American food processor and manufacturer, to put Mazola Margarine” on board the *Hope* prior to its September departure “even though the product was not introduced in the United States until last month.”¹⁵⁸ Rees quoted the release as claiming that

In addition to being extremely low in saturated fat, an ingredient believed to have adverse effects on blood cholesterol levels which is a factor in heart disease, the new margarine contains three times the amount linoleate as ordinary margarine and as much as eight times as much as in butter.¹⁵⁹

Dr. Rees expressed exasperation that the two-page, double-spaced press release contained four references to Mazola Margarine and three references to Corn Products Company. He indignantly demanded “quotes of authoritative, scientific facts to support the sweeping statement that this, or any other margarine, will reduce the increasing incidence of heart disease.” He also demanded, “as an individual physician and as President of the African Research Foundation, a reputable and ethical voluntary organization,” an

and vociferous tone. He demanded answers to several questions: while in Jakarta, did *Hope* “suffer from an acute lack of patients?” Were patients from Jakarta hospitals moved to the *Hope* to simply fill its beds? How could Project HOPE justify to “interested, intelligent persons of the efficacy” of visiting a city with “a first-rate medical school, largely staffed and administered by an excellent faculty appointed by the University of California under direct contact with our own federal ICA”? Again about Project HOPE, Rees pointedly asked, “Does this enormously expensive project . . . substantially accomplish anything in actual relief from disease or the ethical understanding of the high standards of medicine in the United States? Is it a fact that the back-country native, deprived of medical assistance, can truly benefit directly by this type of medical service?” Rees forwarded copies of his letter to President-elect John F. Kennedy and Kennedy’s campaign foreign policy adviser, Chester Bowles. He also sent the letter to senators J. William Fulbright, Lister Hill, Hubert Humphrey, Jacob Javits, and Stuart Symington as well as North Carolina governor Luther Hodges and Michigan governor G. Mennen Williams.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

explanation of “this shocking example of American commercialism being exploited abroad, and at home, by the administration of a voluntary organization.” Dr. Rees said that he and ARF’s board of directors promised to “catalyze an investigation” if Project HOPE allowed “any further commercialism.” He cautioned against confusing “advertising and publicity with badly needed improved public relations between ours and foreign countries” and, in closing, bitingly suggested “renaming this ship ‘the Good Ship Mazola Margarine’ or perhaps the ‘S.S. Corn Products.’” He begged for “no more gimmicks.”¹⁶⁰

Although Dr. Rees’s question about the *Hope* emphasizing American materialism went unanswered by anyone at Project HOPE or Time-Life Corporation, C.D. Jackson did respond to Rees’s complaint about what Jackson called the “regrettable” Mazola Margarine incident. Jackson shared the doctor’s concern “completely” and related Walsh’s own explanation that the press release “was done by the margarine people in violation of a previous agreement with us that we were to be given the privilege of screening the release before it went out.” Project HOPE’s public relations chief, Robert Conlin—who Jackson implied was no longer with the group—agreed to allow Corn Products’s ad agency to prepare a statement about their donation on official Project HOPE letterhead. A first and second draft were rejected by HOPE, but “somehow the second . . . version was released on the assumption that it had been approved.” Jackson noted that this version “obviously went far beyond the limits of propriety for a situation of this kind.” While it was normal and indeed advantageous to both HOPE and contributing corporations to make announcements about donations, Jackson

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

acknowledged that this particular release “went further and certainly implied a product endorsement.” He magnanimously told Rees that his “criticism [was] absolutely justified” and assured Rees that he had written Walsh “urging that steps be taken to assure that no repetition of such a misfortune can occur.”¹⁶¹

Targeting Indonesia’s Medical Elite

Trumpeting the scientific and technological progress possible in a capitalist economy not only created conditions for the Mazola Margarine incident or contradicted efforts to down play stereotypes, it also created expectations among some Indonesians that could not be satisfied. In Jakarta, some of Indonesia’s medical professionals sent what Walsh called “an undue proportion of wholly incurables” to the *Hope* expecting the staff to work miracles or the ship to be “a floating Mayo Clinic” outfitted to treat every conceivable ailment. There were disappointments as the medical staff refused those for whom they could do nothing. A similar occurrence provided a rocky beginning to the ship’s visit to Makassar. Some fifty doctors, Walsh recalled, “wanted either to use us for their own purposes or to make monkeys of us.” They presented the ship’s staff with

¹⁶¹ Jackson to Rees, January 5, 1961, Box 57, Great White Fleet (Project HOPE), 1960-61, C.D. Jackson Papers, EL; See also Jackson to Walsh, January 5, 1961 and Walsh to Jackson, January 9, 1961, Box 57, Great White Fleet (Project HOPE), 1960-61, C.D. Jackson Papers, EL. These letters reveal that Walsh “was equally annoyed with the way in which the margarine release was handled.” However, the head of HOPE told Jackson that he was surprised Rees’s letter “would require your personal attention.” Officials at HOPE apparently considered Rees, to use Jackson’s words, “something of a ‘troublemaker.’” Project HOPE had contacted several ARF board members to see if they really supported Rees as he claimed they did in his letter. These members, Walsh said, “had no knowledge of the letter and were considerably resentful that it had been sent.” The board members contacted “not only rejected its content but without exception had great praise for Project HOPE.” Walsh told Jackson that “a young man who is as brash and careless as this hardly merits the reaction he seems to have received from your staff.”

“impossible cases” including a request for a live arm transplant or at least an immediate prosthetic.¹⁶²

But health-based propaganda like Project HOPE had to try and win over at least some of these doctors because doctors, nurses, and other health professionals represented the *Hope*'s primary psychological target and reflected U.S. propaganda's focus on the Third World's local elites or what the USIA called “leadership groups.” In the hopes of “connecting influential segments of foreign societies to the United States through common intellectual, cultural, and social ties,” Osgood writes, American propagandists targeted leadership groups to “foster long-term intellectual and attitudinal developments that would enhance U.S. influence and create a positive climate for the implementation of U.S. foreign policies.” Furthermore, the United States targeted different elites because these groups “wielded most of the power in the predominantly undemocratic countries of the third world.” The leadership groups targeted, USIA official Wilson Dizard wrote at the time, included “top government officials, newspaper publishers and editors, broadcasters, religious leaders, professional men and the like.” Dizard pointed to doctors as “another highly influential group, particularly in countries where health conditions are serious and medical men are few.”¹⁶³

Within this context, Project HOPE brought thirty Indonesian nurses on board the ship to travel with the *Hope* during its eight-month voyage throughout Indonesia.

“Placed in an entirely foreign environment with much more exacting standards and methods, the language of the ship a foreign language, and surrounded by a medical

¹⁶² Walsh, 35-37, 103.

¹⁶³ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 114-115; Wilson P. Dizard, *The Strategy of Truth: The Story of the U.S. Information Service* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1961), 54.

philosophy different from their own,” a Project HOPE archival document stated, “the group found the first months difficult ones, indeed.” In *A Ship Called Hope*, Dr. Walsh claimed these Indonesian nurses initially “had been inclined to shrug their shoulders and say, ‘Well, of course, you can do wonders with all the equipment you have.’” The American nurses on board the *Hope* worked to convince their Indonesian counterparts “that if you know what you want to accomplish you can usually improvise with what you have.” In addition to the thirty nurses permanently assigned to the *Hope*, at port calls like Makassar local nurses temporarily came aboard for classes and training. Lottie Reich of Glendale, Arizona “taught 15 Makassar nurses a course in ward procedures, public health, and control of communicable disease, instructing three hours a day for 14 days.” At the same time, Teresa Campbell of San Francisco, California “taught a surgery class for 13 of the local nurses for one hour a day, and conducted seminars in nursing organization.” By the time the *Hope* reached Kupang on Timor the thirty nurses traveling with the ship were themselves teaching their fellow Indonesians the procedures and techniques they had learned from the Americans.¹⁶⁴

In addition to nurses, Project HOPE targeted Indonesian surgeons and other local doctors. The surgeons, Dr. Walsh told the readers of *A Ship Called Hope*, were “exceedingly deft, have a tender touch, and learn rapidly.” Though many had only received “limited training in surgery,” they tackled “complicated procedures after taking part in only three or four demonstrations.” To train and teach physicians while at Jakarta,

¹⁶⁴ Walsh, 49, 96; “S.S. Hope: Kupang Report – March 8-March 26, 1961,” n.d., Box 01, Series I: Maritime Operations-Administrative files, 1958-1974, S.S. Hope (HRG 20), HOPEA; “S.S. Hope: Makassar Report,” n.d., Box 01, Series I: Maritime Operations-Administrative files, 1958-1974, S.S. Hope (HRG 20), HOPEA.

the *Hope* staff held “four conferences daily on the ship and additional ones in the evenings ashore” where “average attendance was over 200 and discussion was spirited.” Through these conferences and simply working together, many of Project HOPE’s “men formed close personal friendships with their Indonesian counterparts and the exchange of information grew intimate.” Dr. R. Theodore Bergman, a urologist from Los Angeles, California, “taught his new friend, Dr. Oetama, techniques the latter had only read about” and transformed him into “an expert” who could teach “these techniques at the University of Indonesia.” In Ambon, Dr. Arnold Smoller of Mattapan, Massachusetts trained Dr. Tan Swie Lang, a “young Chinese doctor how to perform simple eye operations which can correct a common eye disease caused by vitamin A deficiency.” Tan Swie Lang’s training gave Ambon’s one other surgeon “another hand to assist him.”¹⁶⁵

Through Project HOPE, Indonesian nurses and doctors “were given the opportunity to observe first hand Western medicine.” One local nurse enthused, “All my life I’ve read about European and American hospitals and now I can’t believe I have the chance to see all this first hand.”¹⁶⁶ By teaching nurses and doctors the latest in American medicine, the *Hope* left behind “medical personnel . . . with brand-new HOPE standards;”

dukuns on outer islands who would no longer murder newborn infants with rusty scissors; students reading thousands of medical books and journals we had given to their libraries; nurses who were inspired to fight for every single life and doctors who would no longer leave the nurses to cope when they could not cope.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ Walsh, 104; “S.S. Hope: Ambon Report – February 11-March 6, 1961,” n.d., Box 01, Series I: Maritime Operations-Administrative files, 1958-1974, S.S. Hope (HRG 20), HOPEA.

¹⁶⁶ “S.S. Hope: Ambon Report – February 11-March 6, 1961,” n.d., Box 01, Series I: Maritime Operations-Administrative files, 1958-1974, S.S. Hope (HRG 20), HOPEA.

¹⁶⁷ Walsh, 210.

Instilling Indonesia's medical elite with new HOPE standards or what one might call American standards—standards made possible by the science and technology available in a capitalist system—reflected a belief among some U.S. propagandists that enabling a “medical student” to secure “information that is useful to him professionally . . . reflects favorably upon the United States.”¹⁶⁸

Project HOPE and Ibu Sukarno Hospital: Avenues for U.S. Influence

As American propaganda in Indonesia, Project HOPE tried to bind that nation to the United States through demonstrations of the material advantages of U.S. capitalism and by winning friends for the United States among Indonesia's medical elite. By simply visiting Jakarta, however, the *Hope* rejuvenated, in the words of a State Department memo, a “longstanding proposal for the United States Government to give financial assistance to the Ibu Sukarno Hospital.” The *Hope's* visit allowed the Indonesians to ask Project HOPE for help staffing the facility. In turn, the Indonesian request allowed U.S. leaders—desperate to bring the island nation into the American orbit and keep it out of the Soviet orbit—to award outright official aid to the hospital and build one more tie between Indonesia and the United States. At the very least, officials hoped, the government's public aid and Project HOPE's private aid might improve the odds of keeping Indonesia within the free world as a neutral nation.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁸ Bogart, 154.

¹⁶⁹ Steeves to Sheppard, January 23, 1961, Box 5, Indonesia Files 1960-1967, Office of Southwest Pacific Affairs, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, General Records of the Department of State, (RG 59), NA.

Indonesian President Sukarno first suggested building the hospital in 1953 as a way to confront high rates of TB among his country's young people. Cabinet members and other distinguished leaders of the nation's elite took up the president's challenge, formed a foundation, raised construction funds, and started building in January 1955. Although intended to serve as a children's tuberculosis hospital, a complete lack of funds kept the doors shut. Eventually, the foundation offered the unused building to the Indonesian Ministry of Health to use as the ministry wished, but not before they looked to the United States and ultimately to Project HOPE for help.¹⁷⁰

The United States Operations Mission (USOM) in Jakarta first proposed assisting this hospital in December 1957. The Indonesians had "approached USOM for assistance in supplying minimum essential equipment to the hospital and to the necessary support services such as power generation, steam boiler laundry, elevators, etc." Sukarno himself "expressed his hope that U.S. assistance in supplying equipment can be achieved." With the blessing of Howard P. Jones, the American ambassador in Indonesia, USOM Jakarta argued that the project's "humanitarian aspects" and its potential "enhancement of our relations with the Republic of Indonesia" required approval of U.S. aid totaling around \$1.6 million.¹⁷¹

The International Cooperation Administration (ICA) in Washington rejected the USOM's proposal, sparking a plea for reconsideration by Ambassador Jones. He asked

¹⁷⁰ USOM Djakarta to ICA Washington, "U.S. Support for 'Ibu Soekarno' Children's Tuberculosis Hospital" December 19, 1957, Box 54, Indonesia Subject Files, 1953-1959, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948-1961 (RG 469), NA; "First Ibu Sukarno story," n.d., Box 7, Series II: Maritime Operations-Subject Files, 1960-1974, S.S. Hope (HRG 20), HOPEA.

¹⁷¹ USOM Djakarta to ICA Washington, "U.S. Support for 'Ibu Soekarno' Children's Tuberculosis Hospital" December 19, 1957, Box 54, Indonesia Subject Files, 1953-1959, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948-1961 (RG 469), NA.

for a review because at lunch with Sukarno on May 22, 1958, the president broached “the subject of U.S. assistance” to the hospital. The ambassador “strongly recommend[ed], in view of [the] President’s deep interest [in] this project and his evident desire for [the] U.S. to assist this hospital, which has widespread public support, that serious consideration be given to immediate approval.” Jones also argued for approval because of the “political and emotional appeal to [the] Indonesian people” that U.S. help to a hospital represented. Even with the ambassador’s appeal, Washington took no action to extend the aid. None of the archival documents collected for this study explain the refusal.¹⁷²

Then in March 1959, with Project HOPE planning to visit Indonesia, some U.S. officials began to wonder “would this be a good time to resuscitate the Ibu Sukarno Hospital?” Yet, the U.S. government still did not act. Finally, at the end of 1960, the Indonesians themselves, Ambassador Jones told Washington, “moved aggressively to open Ibu Suknaro hospital with minimal equipment purchased locally and borrowed from other hospitals and supplied from [the] HOPE ship.” In accordance with an agreement between Dr. Walsh and Indonesian Minister of Health Satrio, Project HOPE would “help staff [the] hospital for training doctors and nurses and furnish some equipment.” In particular, Satrio asked Walsh to help set up the orthopedic wing. “I answered with a glib yes,” Dr. Walsh recalled, “thinking that the Oriental pace of things would leave me six months.” Instead, the health minister told the doctor that he had three weeks. Walsh immediately set about organizing a team of orthopedists separate from the hospital ship

¹⁷² American Embassy, Djakarta to State Department, Washington, May 28, 1958, Box 54, Indonesia Subject Files, 1953-1959, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948-1961 (RG 469), NA.

and headed by Dr. John LeCouq, the founder of the Seattle Orthopedic Clinic. Walsh and his organization also sent “three trucks of medical supplies . . . to the new hospital from the *S.S. Hope*.” One shipment of supplies in December 1960 included cast cutting shears, bone files, chisels, numerous types of retractors, bone holding forceps, plaster saws, and more. Those involved desired that the facility become a “model hospital and nursing academy managed jointly by Project HOPE and the Indonesian Ministry of Health.”¹⁷³

Asking Project HOPE for help also sparked one more Indonesian request for official U.S. government assistance to the hospital. The Indonesians asked for a \$200,000 grant to procure radiographic equipment, autoclaves, and other basic equipment. In a confidential message dated December 21, 1960, the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta told the State Department that providing such assistance “will yield permanent benefits and serve U.S. interests in Indo[nesia] significantly, particularly in counteracting [the] impact of [a] Russian gift hospital soon to be erected.” Three days later, Ambassador Jones sent his “strong endorsement” of the partnership between Project HOPE and Ibu Sukarno hospital. He also wanted to see Washington finally extend aid to the hospital because the “combination of ICA equipment assistance” with Dr. Walsh’s pledge to help “can mean much to our objectives here.” Failing to provide official

¹⁷³ Walter C. Furst to Helene Granby, March 24, 1959, Box 54, Indonesia Subject Files, 1953-1959, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948-1961 (RG 469), NA; American Embassy, Djakarta to State Department, Washington, “Ibu Sukarno Hospital,” December 21, 1960, Box 76, Indonesian Subject Files, 1953-1961, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948-1961 (RG 469), NA; Walsh, 135-136; “First Ibu Sukarno story,” n.d., Box 7, Series II: Maritime Operations-Subject Files, 1960-1974, *S.S. Hope* (HRG 20), HOPEA; Unnamed to Captain Soekarlin, Ibu Sukarno Hospital, December 26, 1960, Box 13, Series IV: Voyage-Program files, 1960-1972, Operations & Logistics (HRG 05), HOPEA; American Embassy-USOM Djakarta to ICA Washington, “Ibu Sukarno Project No. 55-150, Also Sukarno Visit,” April 19, 1961, Box 76, Indonesian Subject Files, 1953-1961, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948-1961 (RG 469), NA.

assistance or support Project HOPE's role "would have [a] most unfortunate impact on [the] attitude [of an] influential Indonesian medical group toward [the] U.S." Finally, in Jones's view, allowing Project HOPE to assist the Sukarno hospital would serve as an appropriate climax to the *Hope's* visit and "ensure general acceptance by [the] medical fraternity here as well as [the] public of [the] outstanding nature" of Project HOPE.¹⁷⁴

Back in Washington, John Steeves, the deputy assistant secretary of state for Far Eastern affairs, echoed the views of the ambassador in Jakarta when he wrote to William Sheppard, the ICA's Far East regional director, to advocate for the extension of official assistance. He revealed that Dr. Walsh agreed to help the Ibu Sukarno hospital at the prodding of Ambassador Jones, "who interpreted the Indonesian request as a unique opportunity for [the] introduction of American assistance." Steeves asserted that Indonesians viewed the *Hope's* visit "as a selfless gesture by private American citizens" and urged Sheppard's agency to grant the long-awaited financial aid as a way to enhance "the psychological climate already achieved by Dr. Walsh's undertaking." Furthermore, Steeves emphasized President Sukarno's great personal interest in the hospital, reemphasized the "psychological benefits from a modest investment," and pointed to concerns about a Soviet effort to support "a similar but much more comprehensive hospital project in Djakarta." The United States might not be able to completely "compete with lavish Soviet gestures," he wrote, but that did not mean it should "ignore

¹⁷⁴ American Embassy, Djakarta to State Department, Washington, "Ibu Sukarno Hospital," December 21, 1960, Box 76, Indonesian Subject Files, 1953-1961, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948-1961 (RG 469), NA; American Embassy, Djakarta to State Department, Washington, December 23, 1960, Box 76, Indonesian Subject Files, 1953-1961, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948-1961 (RG 469), NA.

opportunities for constructive contributions to Indonesian progress.” Additionally, Steeves connected health and psychological factors with military affairs as well. He explained that assistance for the hospital might help to offset the impact of “a high level Indonesian arms negotiating mission recently . . . returned from the Soviet Union where . . . discussions were held relative to the provision by the Soviet Union of substantial quantities of heavy armaments to Indonesia.” Steeves recommended that the \$200,000 be allocated as swiftly as possible.¹⁷⁵

Sheppard replied that “in view of the political exigencies involved” the ICA would extend financial assistance but believed helping to “establish a pediatrics hospital or a women’s hospital” would prove a better route than supporting a general hospital like Ibu Sukarno. A children’s hospital in particular carried the potential of “high prestige.” In addition, Sheppard and the ICA felt “assistance to an Ibu Sukarno general hospital would put the U.S. in perhaps unfavorable direct competition with a general hospital being developed in Djakarta by the Russians.” Perhaps hinting at a desire to control the Sukarno hospital project as much as possible, Sheppard also stated that if ICA assistance was to be given then the United States should try “reorienting the project in order to make it more acceptable from an overall as well as a technical point of view.” Finally, pointing to past difficulties at getting the Indonesian Health Ministry to provide its part of the funding for other ICA medical programs, Sheppard told Steeves “the Government of

¹⁷⁵ Steeves to Sheppard, January 23, 1961, Box 5, Indonesia Files 1960-1967, Office of Southwest Pacific Affairs, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, General Records of the Department of State (RG 59), NA.

Indonesia will need to assign this project sufficient priority to assure its financial support.”¹⁷⁶

ICA official Jim Fowler expressed concerns similar to Sheppard’s. He suggested assistance need not be immediately awarded although there was a serious political need “for a statement of U.S. agreement in principle to undertake a hospital program.” Fowler told Sheppard that the actual extension of funds could occur “once all the technical and other problems are ironed out.” In fact, he saw “no use (and some dangers) in prematurely allotting funds for this project” and worried that “no one knows how or whether the Indonesians will put up their share to finish construction” and that “no real commitment to provide staff is at hand, only [an] oral understanding that Walsh will help.” Fowler concluded “that we ought to tell State we have all these problems, but that if for overriding political reasons they feel we need to indicate willingness—in principle—to help with a hospital project we are prepared to go along, but funding must await clarification of some of these problems.”¹⁷⁷

By April 1961, Project HOPE was, USOM Jakarta reported to Washington, “using subject hospital and expect[ed to] continue indefinitely.” Dr. LeCouq and his team of orthopedists were treating at least thirty patients and hoped to transform the hospital into “a model teaching establishment for Indonesia.” The ICA did award the \$200,000 to Ibu Sukarno hospital because of “overriding political considerations.” Taking note of President Sukarno’s “personal interest in [the] project,” officials at the

¹⁷⁶ Sheppard to Steeves, n.d., Box 76, Indonesian Subject Files, 1953-1961, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948-1961 (RG 469), NA.

¹⁷⁷ Fowler to Sheppard, February 16, 1961, Box 76, Indonesian Subject Files, 1953-1961, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948-1961 (RG 469), NA.

Department of State felt it “would be extremely useful” if President Kennedy or Secretary of State Dean Rusk “inform him personally.”¹⁷⁸

Conclusion

At nine o'clock in the morning on May 31, 1961, the *S.S. Hope* left Jakarta after nearly eight months among the islands of Indonesia. The ship sailed north to South Vietnam, where it and the Project HOPE medical staff would stay until August. The *Hope* would not arrive back in the United States until September. While in Indonesia, Project HOPE, as a propaganda, confronted communism, challenged Third World neutralism, and tried to further integrate the free world by attempting to bind Indonesia to the United States. In its effort to tie the island nation to the United States, Project HOPE presented U.S. society and the American people in a positive light and tried to demonstrate the material and social advantages of an economic system based on capitalism, science, and technology. It targeted this message mainly at Indonesian doctors and nurses, all of whom represented an important elite or leadership group that seemed to hold a modicum of political power in a medically-disadvantaged Indonesia. Furthermore, Project HOPE enabled the government of the United States to build one more tie with Indonesia in the form of the Ibu Sukarno Hospital as part of U.S. efforts to construct a Cold War empire in Southeast Asia and integrate the free world into an anti-Soviet alliance. Finally, Project HOPE's focus on disseminating propaganda in Indonesia—a relatively new nation whose lack of political, economic, social, and military

¹⁷⁸ State-ICA Washington to American Embassy-USOM Djakarta, “Ibu Sukarno Hospital,” February 23, 1961, Box 76, Indonesian Subject Files, 1953-1961, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948-1961 (RG 469), NA.

development seemed to make it particularly vulnerable to communist control—reflected U.S. officials' belief in the importance of the Third World as a Cold War battlefield.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁹ Telegram, Chiles to Project HOPE via Brinson, May 17, 1961, Box 01, Series I: Maritime Operations-Administrative files, 1958-1974, S.S. Hope (HRG 20), HOPEA.

CONCLUSION

Project HOPE's success as a humanitarian venture can be measured statistically. As the *Hope* departed Indonesian waters, Dr. Walsh calculated that the medical staff had "treated more than 17,000 people, performed more than 700 major operations, held more than 800 teaching sessions, X-rayed 10,000, distributed 86,000 pounds of medical equipment, 80,000 pounds of powdered milk, 4,000 medical journals and the same number of books, and 2,000 artificial limbs."¹⁸⁰ Through the efforts of Project HOPE, a new hospital was available to Indonesians as well. While these activities may not have substantially improved the overall health conditions in a country with "only two medical schools and about 1,600 fully-trained Indonesian physicians" for 82 million people, Project HOPE did change the lives of those 17,000 patients treated by the *Hope's* staff, especially those who underwent surgery. One surgery for example enabled a young Indonesian orphan suffering from a huge growth on his neck to, in the words of the *Project HOPE* film, "for the first time in his young life . . . hold his head erect."¹⁸¹

Measuring the effectiveness of Project HOPE and its ship as propaganda, however, proves much more difficult. Statistics cannot necessarily account for a person's ideological loyalties or explain why a shift in those loyalties may or may not occur. Judging success also depends upon the identity and interests of the judge. As HOPE's founder, for example, Dr. Walsh might have been more likely to see success where U.S. officials or Indonesian doctors might have seen only failure. Ultimately, this thesis has largely avoided the question of results and instead has focused on simply demonstrating

¹⁸⁰ Walsh, 159-160; Project HOPE brochure, n.d.

¹⁸¹ *Project HOPE* script, Box 10, Series III: Information Services Administration, Subject Files, 1960-1977, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA.

that Project HOPE, as an organization in the State-private network, was both a domestic and foreign propaganda program. This study maintains that the organization was propaganda—a “*planned and deliberate* act of opinion management” that used “any technique or action,” in this case, medical training and treatment, “to influence the emotions, attitudes, or behavior of a group” to serve the interests of the United States. By doing so, it supports the findings of other scholarly works that have expanded propaganda’s definition beyond the traditional conception that describes it as a “treacherous and deceitful” activity practiced only by the State and disseminated only through mass media.¹⁸²

Nevertheless, an accounting of the effectiveness of Project HOPE must, at the very least, be attempted. Such an accounting begins with a reminder that by the late 1950s, U.S. officials believed the most effective Cold War propaganda strategy was to use private entities and citizens to convince foreign populations and their governments of the basic goodness of the American people and of U.S. society. These officials hoped that by doing so they could gain the support of those populations and their governments in the American crusade against communism. At the same time, using private citizens and NGOs would boost domestic morale and present ordinary Americans with a concrete way to participate in the total Cold War. During the late 1950s, this strategy was most clearly manifested in the People-to-People Program and then in Project HOPE, the most visible effort at people-to-people propaganda.

When one compares the assumptions of those who like Dr. Walsh believed in the potential of people-to-people contacts to influence international affairs with the outcomes

¹⁸² Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 7-8, 373 n. 10; Emphasis in the original.

of Project HOPE's real world efforts in people-to-people diplomacy, the conclusion must be that HOPE was quite successful at mobilizing the American people to participate in the total Cold War, was somewhat successful at improving the image of America and Americans among ordinary Indonesians, but utterly failed to gain any change in the Indonesian government's neutralist foreign policy. This failure undermines the fundamental assumptions of the official propagandists who started People-to-People and of Dr. Walsh, who started Project HOPE. They all believed that persuading the people of a foreign nation to like America and Americans would change the policy of a foreign government. Yet, the Indonesian government continued its refusal to align with the United States in the Cold War.

As chapter 3 argues, Project HOPE was designed to contain communist expansion by securing friends for the United States with positive demonstrations of freedom's material advantages. The activities undertaken by Project HOPE during the *Hope's* visit to Indonesia and described in this chapter did arguably improve Indonesians' opinions of the United States, the American people, and the American way of life. When the *Hope* first arrived in Jakarta, the *Indonesian Observer*, an English language newspaper in that city, praised Project HOPE as a private venture that "represents the hearts of a mighty nation, of the man on the street and the hope that he wants to share with others." The *Times of Indonesia*, another of that country's English language papers, published a similar editorial that called Project HOPE "a timely and practical expression of the concern the citizens of the United States (better off in many ways than those in other parts of the world) have for those less fortunate than themselves." These editorials point

to a modicum of success in HOPE's efforts to challenge the widespread stereotype of the greedy and uncaring American.¹⁸³

At the same time, some evidence also shows the Indonesian reaction to Project HOPE was one of "both enthusiasm and disappointment." According to the *New York Times*, Dr. Sjarif Thajeb, HOPE's local liaison, felt the ship would "be of great help to the outer islands of Indonesia—places like Sumbawa where there are two doctors for a population of half a million . . . but here in Djakarta—well, perhaps we expected too much." Thajeb said his colleagues expected a "floating university" but instead saw *Hope* as "more like a good-sized county hospital." Meanwhile, many average Indonesians apparently expected a ship of miracles. They begged to be treated by the ship's staff only to be disappointed because the staff planned to "take on only fifty-six patients" during the port visit to the capital. Ominously for Project HOPE's goal to confront communism, the Soviet Union had just agreed to build a 200-bed medical facility in the Indonesian capital, the *New York Times* reported, and "Indonesians felt that it would have been more useful to have a much needed 'permanent' hospital—'like the Russians are building'—rather than a 'floating' one."¹⁸⁴

The USIA post in Jakarta, however, found "local reaction highly favorable, with interest building fast." In a roundup of media coverage dispatched to Washington, Thomas A. Flanagan, the agency's representative in the Indonesian capital and the U.S. Embassy's public affairs officer, briefly summarized the editorials appearing in

¹⁸³ Editorial, "Hope," *Indonesian Observer*, n.d. and Editorial, "Errand of Mercy," *Times of Indonesia*, October 19, 1960, both available in Box 14, Series IV: Public Relations-Fundraising files, 1959-1990, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA.

¹⁸⁴ "Indonesia Views U.S. Mercy Ship," *New York Times*, November 20, 1960.

Indonesia's English language newspapers. He also reported that that the "Indonesian-language *Merdeka* termed [the] ship's visit a privilege, bid the ship welcome, and wished the project success."¹⁸⁵ Several months after this initial assessment, Project HOPE received a brief but highly favorable mention in the USIA post's annual Country Assessment Report for Indonesia. Flanagan's secret report painted a somewhat bleak picture regarding the success of information efforts in the country during 1960 and summed up the year by stating that the USIA in Jakarta "scored a number of notable impacts in the area of culture but despite this it is unable to produce evidence that . . . operation[s] retarded the movement of the Indonesian Government closer to the Soviet bloc." According to the assessment, "the greatest successes . . . were in support of . . . maintain[ing], and where possible increas[ing] the reservoir of goodwill the United States enjoys in Indonesia by presenting a fair and accurate picture of the United States, its people and its institutions." Flanagan concluded that "Indonesian goodwill toward the United States was substantially increased by the visit of the People-to-People Project HOPE."¹⁸⁶ While there are indications from different sources that Project HOPE improved Indonesian views of the United States, more research in Indonesian archives and perhaps oral histories with Indonesians who remember the *S.S. Hope* are needed to provide a clearer and more complete picture of HOPE's success or failure at winning their hearts and minds. Nevertheless, more research still will not change the fact that

¹⁸⁵ USIS Djakarta to USIA Washington, October 21, 1969, Box 76, Indonesia Subj. Files, 1953-1961, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948-1961 (RG 469), NA.

¹⁸⁶ Thomas E. Flanagan, "Country Assessment Report, February 27, 1961," Box 2, Asia Program Evaluations, Foreign Service Dispatches, 1954-1965, USIA Office of Research, Records of the United States Information Agency (RG 306), NA.

improved goodwill did not translate into policy changes. Project HOPE perhaps made some headway regarding improved opinions of America and Americans and created opportunities to bind Indonesia more closely to the United States but the Indonesian government in Jakarta remained committed to its neutralist course in the Cold War.

At the same time, those who had developed propaganda centered on people-to-people contacts not only wanted to win over the hearts and minds of foreign audiences but also to give ordinary Americans a meaningful way to contribute to the Cold War. These propagandists believed that increasing personal participation would improve the American people's morale for the long struggle against communism, expose them to world affairs, forestall their return to isolationism, and increase their support for a U.S. foreign policy centered on the global expansion of American power. As chapter 2 illustrates, Project HOPE was fairly successful at gaining the participation of American doctors, nurses, and other health professionals in the total Cold War while also educating a broader segment of ordinary Americans about Third World underdevelopment in particular and international affairs more generally. Several of the medical professionals that served on the *Hope* expressed to Dr. Walsh an understanding of the project's as well as their individual Cold War missions. Malcolm McCannel, an ophthalmologist from Minneapolis, Minnesota, told Walsh, "I think if you take the cataract out of grandma's eye . . . it's a lot better than giving her country a Sherman tank. Her eight children and eight grandchildren and all the people they know will be grateful because some Americans made the old lady see. Anyway, who really needs a Sherman tank?" Dr. Max Hirschfelder of Centralia, Illinois reflected U.S. concerns about the appeal of communism

to developing nations when he told Dr. Walsh that “for the man who has nothing, like these people on Bali, the little Communism offers—a broad general mediocrity—seems like paradise. Only by personal contacts like [Project HOPE] can we show him that there is something beyond mediocrity and that it is possible for him to attain it.” Moreover, just prior to leaving Indonesia, some of the *Hope* staff took an off-duty excursion to a volcano near the Indonesian city of Bandung, birthplace of the Third World’s nonaligned movement. Discovering some rocks that earlier visitors had arranged to spell out USSR, these American civilians promptly rearranged them to read SS HOPE USA instead and perhaps gained one more small victory in the total Cold War.¹⁸⁷

Furthermore, many of the reactions to the film *Project Hope* recounted in chapter 2 reveal that Project HOPE did raise ordinary Americans’ awareness of the world’s problems and of the need for the Americans to act as a way to address those problems. Similar reactions can also be found in letters written to Project HOPE after a condensed version of Walsh’s *A Ship Called Hope* was published by *Readers’ Digest* in early 1965. “My eyes are now open to the suffering around the globe” wrote Madaline R. Moscovitz of Great Neck, New York, who then requested information about Project HOPE so that she could “learn more about what is being done and what has been done.” Sherry Denger of Ingalls, Indiana expressed similar sentiments when she explained that HOPE’s story sparked within her a “feeling of being ashamed of my own ‘unintentional self-centeredness’ in relation to the needs and suffering of the people of the world.” She promised to pray for “the continued strength and courage required for the continued and

¹⁸⁷ McCannel quoted in Walsh, 50; Pulliam quoted in Walsh, 56; Hirschfelder quoted in Walsh, 137; Walsh, 158-159.

much needed work of this group.” Whether these sentiments of support for Project HOPE translated into increased domestic political support for American globalism remains an open question and requires further research. Still, this chapter brought the role of ordinary people in foreign relations to the forefront as part of the growing historical scholarship that examines the impact of average citizens within the realm of international affairs.¹⁸⁸

Finally, in chapter 1, this thesis argued that Project HOPE was part of the State-private network. Project HOPE was part of the network because—as this chapter’s examination of HOPE’s origins illustrated—the impetus for its creation came from an individual who held no *official* government position, namely Dr. William B. Walsh. This was a characteristic shared by many of the State-private network’s organizations. Furthermore, this chapter illustrated that building Project HOPE and the State-private network was not a story of government coercion upon the private sector but rather a story of cooperation, conflict, and negotiation between private citizens and public officials. In its investigation of the role of corporate America in the creation of Project HOPE, this chapter showed that HOPE fit within the State-private network because its early support came from prominent figures in a political and business elite who moved easily between the public and private sectors. The support from this public-private elite was another common characteristic of the State-private network and reflected its interpenetrated corporatist nature. Lastly, Project HOPE’s focus on the free world—a characteristic discussed not just in chapter 1 but throughout the thesis—reflected how most groups in

¹⁸⁸ Moscowitz to Project HOPE, January 14, 1965 and Denger to Project HOPE, January 14, 1965, Box 10, Series III: Information Services Administration, Subject Files, 1960-1977, Development Office/Office of Information Services (HRG 03), HOPEA.

the network eschewed “political agitation” in Europe and instead focused on “cultural and social activity elsewhere.” By arguing that Project HOPE was part of the State-private network, this chapter abandoned the conventional understanding of the network as sinister, covert, and largely directed by the CIA. It broadened the State-private network’s definition to include private organizations like Project HOPE that overtly received official support, willingly disseminated propaganda on behalf of the government, and engaged in a close cooperative relationship with the government at a level of intensity beyond the norm and befitting what public officials and private citizens alike saw as necessary to win a total war.¹⁸⁹

After leaving Indonesia, the *S.S. Hope* spent one month in Hong Kong for repairs and shore leave and then three months in South Vietnam treating patients and training medical personnel. The ship returned to the United States on September 14, 1961.¹⁹⁰ Between 1962 and 1974, the *Hope* made voyages to Peru, Ecuador, Guinea, Nicaragua, Columbia, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Tunisia, the West Indies, and, finally, two trips to Brazil. In 1974, however, Project HOPE retired its hospital ship and began operating solely on land. HOPE continued, however, to confront communism. The year it retired the *Hope*, according to a National Museum of American History online exhibit about Dr. Walsh’s group, the project “became the first U.S. private voluntary organization to work behind the Iron Curtain . . . with a program to improve the Polish-American Children’s Hospital (PACH) in Krakow and provide medical training for the hospital’s staff.” Nine years later in the People’s Republic of China, Project HOPE “conducted training programs for

¹⁸⁹ Lucas, *Freedom’s War*, 2-3, 281-282.

¹⁹⁰ “S.S. Hope Back from Year’s Goodwill Mission to Asia,” *New York Times*, September 15, 1961.

medical professionals in pediatric care, established China's first master's degree program in nursing and began a preventive dentistry program for children.” Then, in 1989, the Soviet Union invited Project HOPE to assist with earthquake relief and long-term health care improvements in Armenia. Following the Soviet Union’s collapse, the White House charged Project HOPE with coordinating U.S. medical assistance to America’s former enemy.¹⁹¹

Fifty years after the *S.S. Hope*’s first voyage, Project HOPE is returning to its roots and the organization’s volunteers are once again taking part in seaborne humanitarian missions. A renewed partnership between HOPE and the U.S. Navy began in the wake of December 2004’s deadly earthquake and tsunami in the Indian Ocean basin. In addition to several groups of volunteers dispatched to the Navy owned-and-operated hospital ship *USNS Mercy* during the earthquake and tsunami recovery, Project HOPE also sent medical staff to the *Mercy* for a humanitarian voyage to the Philippines, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and East Timor. From April 24 to September 29, 2006, “Navy medical personnel, Project HOPE volunteers and other volunteers from health-related nongovernmental organizations provided care to nearly 61,000 patients,” performed “more than 1,000 surgeries,” and provided training to local medical personnel. Much like the *Hope*’s maiden voyage to Southeast Asia, this new HOPE venture “did more than improve the health of thousands of people in Indonesia and Bangladesh.” Terror Free Tomorrow, a public opinion research organization, found that “attitudes toward America in both countries—the world’s largest and third largest Muslim nations respectively—

¹⁹¹ “Project HOPE: Forty Years of American Medicine Abroad,” National Museum of American History, <http://americanhistory.si.edu/hope/index.htm> [accessed March 8, 2007].

also improved.” Terror Free Tomorrow’s polling showed, for example, that 87 percent of Bangladeshis surveyed said the *Mercy’s* visit “made their opinion of the U.S. more favorable.” Admiral Mike Mullen, the U.S. chief of naval operations, believed the *Mercy’s* mission showed how the American people, American power, and American principles “are now, and will always be, a tremendous force for good.”¹⁹²

The *Mercy’s* mission and subsequent HOPE-Navy voyages to Latin America, Vietnam, and several island chains dotting the Pacific Ocean reflect how spreading the ideology of freedom and depicting the United States in a positive light remain central aspects of U.S. foreign policy. In fact, in the words of former USIA official Wilson P. Dizard, “public diplomacy’s role in U.S. foreign policy has taken on new significance” since the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001. In the subsequent War on Terror—another ‘different kind of war’ that arguably depends even more on fostering favorable public opinions of America and Americans than did the Cold War—the United States, in the words of Peter G. Peterson, chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations, needs to “make clear why [it] is fighting this war and why supporting

¹⁹² “Project HOPE Prepares to Direct Relief Team on Navy’s Hospital Medical Ship,” January 12, 2005, <http://www.projecthope.org/newsupdate/currentnews/view.asp?id=100105> [accessed November 5, 2007]; “Project HOPE Sends 93 Medical Volunteers on a Humanitarian Aid Effort on the USNS *Mercy*,” February 4, 2005, <http://www.projecthope.org/newsupdate/currentnews/view.asp?id=100102> [accessed November 5, 2007]; “Project HOPE Sends Second Rotation of Medical Volunteers on a Humanitarian Aid Effort on the USNS *Mercy*,” February 25, 2005, <http://www.projecthope.org/newsupdate/currentnews/view.asp?id=100096> [accessed November 5, 2007]; “Project HOPE Dispatches Medical Volunteers for Earthquake Aid Effort on the USNS *Mercy*” April 4, 2005, <http://www.projecthope.org/newsupdate/currentnews/view.asp?id=100090> [accessed November 5, 2007]; “First Project HOPE Volunteers Board USNS *Mercy* for Summer-Long Humanitarian Mission,” May 22, 2006, <http://www.projecthope.org/newsupdate/currentnews/view.asp?id=100021> [accessed November 5, 2007]; “U.S. Navy Hospital Ship Improved More than Health of People in Southeast Asia,” November 16, 2006, <http://www.projecthope.org/newsupdate/currentnews/view.asp?id=100150> [accessed December 12, 2006]; “Changing Opinions of American through HOPE,” n.d., <http://www.projecthope.org/newsupdate/news/opinions.asp> [accessed December 12, 2006].

it is in the interests of others.” Doing so, he claims, will gain the “indispensable cooperation of foreign nations.”¹⁹³

The United States, however, “has a serious image problem” because of particular foreign policy actions: the indefinite incarceration and perceived lack of legal or even human rights for prisoners held at the U.S. Naval Base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; the ‘false’ intelligence and other ‘lies’ that justified a seemingly headlong rush to war in Iraq; the abuse of prisoners held by the U.S. military at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq; anger over America’s ‘blind’ support for Israel; a general resentment of the arrogance of U.S. ‘cowboy diplomacy’ and unilateralism; and fears of the unchecked power wielded by the United States in today’s unipolar world. Objections to U.S. policy are exacerbated, Petersen says, by “stereotypes of Americans as arrogant, self-indulgent, hypocritical, inattentive” people, who “lack empathy toward the pain, hardship, and tragic plights of peoples throughout the developing world.” As during the Cold War, Project HOPE today may represent the type of “public diplomacy . . . needed to offset such hostility,” and “articulate a positive future for peoples throughout the developing world” while demonstrating that many Americans understand other people’s longing for “increased prosperity, improved quality of life, and peace.”¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ Lucas, *Freedom’s War*, 283; Lucas, “Negotiating Freedom,” 11; Dizard, *Inventing Public Diplomacy*, xv; Peter G. Petersen, “Public Diplomacy and the War on Terrorism,” *Foreign Affairs* 81 (Sep/Oct 2002): 74-94, available at <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=3&hid=8&sid=6c7d63fa-664a-4568-99f0-b71041aebec3%40SRCSM2> [accessed June 7, 2007].

¹⁹⁴ Petersen, “Public Diplomacy.”

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