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MARSHALL PLAN FILMS AND AMERICANIZATION

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Marshall Plan Films and Americanization

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Abstract

George Marshall's speech to an audience at Harvard University in June of 1947 announced a plan that eventually made its way through the United States congress and took the form of the European Recovery Plan (ERP). The ERP distributed roughly thirteen billion dollars in aid to sixteen European countries. The ECA grew out of this program as the managerial arm of the ERP. The ECA's propaganda campaign included pamphlets, posters, radio broadcasts, traveling puppet shows, and finally 250 films created between 1949-1953. Marshall Plan Films discussed productivity, multilateral trade, and labor unions. For Marshall Planners these issues were the key to both revitalizing the European economy, and creating a self sustaining Europe.

In film, Europeans could see not only the modernizing techniques, building projects, and examples of Marshall Plan, but they were treated to visions of the American lifestyle as well. This study is an attempt to explicate the meanings and messages in the Marshall Plan Filmography. The Marshall Plan launched a massive propaganda campaign in an attempt to reformat the ideals of Europeans. The Plan was ostensibly an attempt to combat Communism as well as to re-vamp the economy of Europe. However, the films presented American ideals as something to aspire to: not only in business, but also in living everyday life. By stressing consumption over conservation and massive production over craftsmanship, the films told Europeans what America thought was best for them, and what would be beneficial for their future. Marshall Planners effectively sought to make Europe into a new, more American, place to live.

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Introduction

"We who have worked in the Marshall Plan have found a real and growing response to our information efforts. There is no telling what a sustained, full scale crusade to propagandize the free world doctrine will do. The evidence is that it will give new hope and determination to those who want freedom and bring new defeats to the enemies of freedom. The time to start this new and intensified program of free world propaganda is now, if the free world is to be made invincible in its credo as in its cause."[1]

Paul Hoffman, head of the European Cooperation Administration (ECA), believed in the Marshall Plan. Not only did he appreciate the need for implementing the financial aid of the Marshall Plan, he also saw clearly the need to promote the "cause" of the United States. His "free world doctrine" did not stop at economic change. It also contained religious, political, and social aspects and preached the coming of a new socially-conscious capitalism, "a system based on widespread ownership, diffusion of initiative, decision and enterprise and an ever-widening distribution of its benefits."[2]

Hoffman's concerns rested not only on the welfare of Europe's people after the devastation of World War II, but also on the future decisions and beliefs of his Atlantic neighbors. Americans worried about the growing escalation of the Cold War and the role they hoped that Europe would play in this struggle. For Europe to be the defensive ally American wanted, its economy needed to be strengthened as well. Hoffman and other state department

[1] Paul Hoffman, *Peace Can Be Won* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, 1951), 154.

[2] Hoffman, *Peace Can Be Won,*141.

officials believed that short-term changes were insufficient to rejuvenate Europe economically. Rather than simply reviving the European economy, American officials wanted to establish a European market that was compatible with their own system and eradicate many of Europe's existing trade policies. In short, they wanted to recast European business into a radical new role. Their goals were nothing short of a renascent Europe, one formed in the model of America's well-established economic and cultural practices. The Marshall Plan sought not only to remake economies: it sought to transform cultures.

Film was one of the most important mediums for sending out the message of the Marshall Plan. In film, Europeans could see not only the modernizing techniques, building projects, and examples of Marshall Plan, but they were treated to visions of the American lifestyle as well. An anonymous Italian observer proclaimed in 1953 that ninety-five percent of all Europeans judged American society by what they saw at the cinema. One report from the Marshall Plan office in Rome noted that film "was useful above all in reinforcing the European admiration for the American standard of living, for American technique… Undoubtedly film has given the US a propaganda triumph, to the extent that it has reminded Europeans of their traditionally optimistic vision of the 'American Paradise.'"[3] These two reports show how American officials viewed the power of film and the value of using it throughout Europe. Marshall Plan Films showed European audiences how Americans viewed their own capitalist utopia and suggested that Europeans could and should desire the same things that Americans did.

Diplomatic Progress

[3] David W. Ellwood, "The Propaganda of the Marshall Plan in Italy in a Cold War Context," in Giles Scott-Smith and Hans Krabbendam, eds., *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945-60* (Independence, KY: Frank Cass Publishing, 2004), 225.

George Marshall's speech to an audience at Harvard University in June of 1947 announced a plan that eventually made its way through the United States congress and took the form of the European Recovery Plan (ERP). On April 3, 1948, the plan was signed by President Harry Truman. The ERP distributed roughly thirteen billion dollars in aid to sixteen European countries over its four years of existence. The Economic Cooperation Agency (ECA) grew out of this program as the managerial arm of the ERP. Though the Plan was formed under the pretext of relief and defense against a Soviet and Communist threat, it manifested itself as a new program to alter the status quo of Europe. The Marshall Plan pulled together different individuals from all sectors of the American business world in order to foster speedy recovery and to remake Europe's economy as quickly as possible. This proved to be somewhat complicated in its implementation.

European nations had serious reservations about relinquishing political and economic independence. Marshall Planners endured a tumultuous series of negotiations with the French, British, and Germans in order to hammer out a plan that would incorporate the varying demands of these European nations while satisfying their own hopes for a stronger Europe able to stand as a bulwark against Communist aggression. An immense historiography details the diplomatic trials and economic struggles of the Marshall Plan in Europe, and it is useful to discuss some of these events.[4]

[4] On the diplomatic and economic aspects of the Marshall Plan see Michael Hogan's *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain, and the reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947-1952* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1987), which provides an excellent discussion of the trials the plan went through during its infancy and in its final implementation. Another excellent source for this history is Harry Bayard Price's *The Marshall Plan and its Meaning* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1955) which was written by representatives for the Governmental Affairs Institute, a private institution used to prepare an evaluation of the ECA and the Marshall Plan. Emanuel Wexler's *The Marshall Plan Revisited: The European Recovery Program in Economic Perspective* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1983) provides an excellent study regarding the long term effects of the Plan on European economies.

The American goal was always to refashion Western Europe on its own model, which consisted of a federated union imbued with an trade system. Marshall Planners argued that multilateral trade, supranational market control, and tariff reductions would foster increased competition. These elements in turn would create higher levels of productivity and a steady reduction of prices. They believed that such a system would herald a speedy recovery and satisfy both European and American goals. However, this plan called for a reduction in welfare programs and a gradual dismantling of the tariff system currently in place. European nations initially fought to maintain their own sovereignty and sought aid programs that would be specifically tailored to their individual interests. The conflicting views of Marshall Planners and Europeans were a constant issue during the negotiations for aid.[5]

Great Britain saw itself as a special partner to the Americans and felt it could demand and receive special treatment in Marshall Aid negotiations. Thus Britain perpetually held itself aloft from discussions regarding the establishment of the kind of supranational control that was constantly espoused by the American negotiators as a way to improve the economic situation for all of Europe. British officials were concerned that entering into any sort of multilateral trade union would devalue the pound, exhaust their gold and silver reserves, and possibly upset the well-established commonwealth trade market. Furthermore, they railed against the proposed cuts to their social welfare programs. The British consistently exploited the American's concern that British control and oversight was needed to form a strong Atlantic community. [6]

French concerns were two-fold: first, they were concerned about the reintegration and rearmament of West Germany for obvious national security reasons, and, second, by Britain's

[5] Michael Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain, and the reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947-1952* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1987),119-133.

[6] Hogan, *The Marshall Plan,* 285.

unwillingness to participate in the proposed formation of a Western European market. The French, along with the British, initially sought to limit and monitor any industrial growth in West Germany.[7] Though France was willing to acquiesce to many of the American proposals, the West German question perpetually remained a sticking point.

The German question was tied to the State Department's desire for a West German State that could present itself as a formidable ally against Soviet aggression as well as a leader in industry. These goals were obviously in contention with France's desire to maintain an industrial advantage as well as a healthy control over any military strength. West Germany's desire to join both the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Defense Community (EDC), as well as its desires to remove any constraints on its sovereignty and economic sector further alienated the French.[8]

These issues gradually receded due to pressure from the United States, but only after several failed attempts to achieve real consensus. The formation of the Organization of European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) created a forum in which members were able to discuss their respective policies on multilateral trade, but, as David Ellwood notes, reports and decisions often failed to meet either the expectations of the Americans or even fellow European nations. Ellwood does point out, however, that although the efforts sometimes collapsed into a lack of any consensus, this organization served as a precedent for future unitary agreement.[9]

This lack of any unity frustrated Marshall Planners. As Charles Mee Jr. put it, "The vision that sprang to some American minds was that of a bombed-out street: walls were

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[7] Hogan, *The Marshall Plan*, 196.

[8] Hogan, *The Marshall Plan*, 398-399.

[9] David Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe: Western Europe, America and Postwar Reconstruction* (Harlow, England: Longman House, 1992), 158.

destroyed, roofs caved in, basements flooded… and that the Europeans, rather than tightening their belts and doing without for a time, were gathering in the parlor for tea as usual, hoping the Americans would finance it all, and that the Europeans, meanwhile, would not have to cut down on their cakes and ale."[10] The American's growing disappointment in the efforts of Europeans to inculcate their goals resulted in an October 1949 address by Paul Hoffman. He called for "nothing less than the integration of the West European Economy."[11] In some ways this speech was as important as the Marshall address at Harvard. Hoffman made it clear that for aid to continue, multilateral trade, currency conversion, and a unified national policy must become a serious priority. For Europeans this address represented some of the strongest diplomatic language they had encountered from the Americans. In many ways, it was this speech that brought the European Payment Union (EPU) into existence.

The EPU created a system similar to an international bank. Different countries were able to maintain their gold and silver reserves and could operate on trade credits. This aspect of the plan encouraged the British to join and abandon their fears of losing their precious metal reserves. This plan set the precedent for future Western European economic coordination. For the first time, the "EPU created a pattern of institutionalized interdependence. It was a multilateral payments network, no matter how generous the terms of the settlement, and it did impose certain restrictions on national policy choices to make it work."[12]

Marshall Planners were pleased further with the 1950 Schuman Plan. The Schuman Plan put coal and steel production under a supranational authority, in which "France would participate

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[10] Charles Mee Jr., *The Marshall Plan: The Launching of the Pax America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), 190.

[11] Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe*, 159.

[12] Alan S. Milward, *The Reconstruction of Western Europe 1945-51* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 474.

and through which it would share in the development and direction of German industry."[13] Though the Schuman plan was not created by the Americans, and did not incorporate all of their desires, it did encapsulate many of the ideals they held for the future of the north Atlantic community. Though the Korean War changed the focus of American diplomacy in 1950, switching from economic recovery to a full blown war effort, the beginnings of a unified European trade system sympathetic to American aims was on its way to being formed.[14]

American diplomats fought hard with European nations to establish an economic system that was tailored to fit their own desires. They felt it was necessary to create an economic system similar to the American model by tearing down their pre-existing tariff systems and allying under a mechanism of supra-national control. Americans struggled to convince European leaders that their country's sovereignty must be sacrificed for a greater good. This greater good gradually came to include a security subtext with the beginnings of hostilities in Korea. The post-war nations of Europe eventually succumbed to pressure by the Americans, and were convinced, at least partially, that these free market capitalist ideas could provide them with what their nations needed. They ceded that relinquishing some authority over their economic systems would bring more goods and cheaper goods to their citizens, thereby easing some of the post-war problems they faced.

While the effect of the Marshall Plan on diplomatic relations and economic change in Europe presents important questions, this thesis focuses on the information campaign that was embedded the Marshall Plan. Robert Hall of the British Treasury wrote in early 1950: "The Americans want an integrated Europe looking like the United States of America – 'God's own

[13] Hogan, *The Marshall Plan*, 366.

[14] Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe*, 171-172.

country.'"[15] Though Europeans were exposed to American business practices throughout the early twentieth century, the Marshall Plan gave American diplomats a unique opportunity to overhaul the face of Europe.[16] They inculcated Europeans with new ideas, promoting values and beliefs that extended beyond a federated trading market. Marshall Plan Films promoted these new values, while simultaneously providing simple suggestions for new business practices through narration and imagery. The diplomatic reservations detailed above were widespread among the European populace. Marshall Plan propaganda was not made for the high level diplomats contemplating the issues of political or economic sovereignty, but for audiences unsure of the need for mass production and modern machinery. While the tools of statecraft could transform national policies, Marshall Planners needed an "on the ground" campaign to reach the European citizenry.

Informing the European Citizenry

The ECA's propaganda campaign included pamphlets, posters, radio broadcasts, traveling puppet shows, and over 300 films created between 1948-1954. It accounted for five percent of the budget allotted for the Marshall Plan. The Marshall Aid agreement required each participating country to sign the "European Cooperation Masterplan," which authorized "wide dissemination of information in the progress of the program… desirable in order to develop the sense of common effort and mutual aid which are essential to the accomplishment of the

[15] Lawrence S. Kaplan, *The United States and NATO : The Formative Years* (Lexington KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1984), 131.

[16] For background on these economic developments see Marie-Laure Djelic, *Exporting the American Model: The Postwar Transformation of European Business* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), Harm G. Schröter, *Americanization of the European Economy: A compact survey of American economic influence in Europe since the 1880s* (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer, 2005), and Victoria De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).

objectives of the program."[17] Marshall Plan propaganda was a condition for American Aid, and Marshall Plan Films served as an able conduit for the messages of this propaganda.

The Marshall Plan Films, in particular, promoted modernization in the areas of economics, industry, agriculture, and defense. Sometimes informative, sometimes humorous, these films primarily served as propaganda for the benefits of American Aid and the American way of life. Though Marshall Plan propaganda has been researched extensively,[18] Marshall Plan Films play a unique role for they show how Americans tried to change the minds of Europeans using visual representations. Historians have discussed the effects of Marshall Plan propaganda at length, acknowledging the heavy-handedness of this campaign in several Western European countries. Though they have documented first hand accounts, detailed meanings behind posters and pamphlets, and conducted national surveys, there are no extensive works that engage the Marshall Plan Film campaign. I argue that Marshall Plan Films occupied a unique space in the propaganda campaign. Marshall Planners wanted to convey a distinct vision of American culture. In order to do this they developed their own ideas of what constituted an "American" identity. Marshall Planners' views of American culture manifested themselves in the Marshall Films through portrayals of American daily life. Ultimately, Marshall Plan Films helped to

[17] Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe,* 162.

[18] The book *Selling Democracy: Films of the Marshall Plan 1948-1953* (New York, 2004) by Sandra Schulberg and Richard Pena was written to accompany the 2004 New York Film Festival and provides an overview of the films, the figures involved, and concludes with a filmography of the films they screened. Albert Hemsing's "The Marshall Plan's European Film Unit 1948-1955: a memoir and filmography," *Journal of Film, Radio, and Television,* Vol. 14, No. 3, (1994) provides a first hand account by one of the ECA filmmakers and also provides an extensive filmography. David Ellwood has also done considerable research on the films in the articles "The Propaganda of the Marshall Plan in Italy in a Cold War Context," *Intelligence and National Security,* Vol. 18, No. 2, (June, 2003), and "The USIS-Trieste collection at the Archivio centrale dello Strato, Rome," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television,* Vol. 19, No. 3, (1999). The primary source base I used was the George C. Marshall Foundation in Lexington, VA. It holds the bulk of these films and its website George C. Marshall Foundation Service, Scholarship, Education, http://www.marshallfoundation.org/ George C. Marshall Foundation [March 29, 2005] holds a descriptive filmography.

"sell" America by showing Europeans that an American style of capitalism, coupled with a rejection of Communism, could result in a more abundant life.

These ECA produced films sought to improve, and in some cases eradicate European "Old World" practices and implement newer, "more sophisticated" American methods. The American economy by 1948 had evolved into a unique system. The corporative style of capitalism introduced such processes as assembly lines and standardized products. Ultimately these new production techniques created a surplus of goods, which in turn drove down prices. Meanwhile, after WWII wages were on the rise making most of these goods available to a large cross-section of American consumers. Increased production rising wages in tandem with new marketing techniques, led to the rise of a consumer society.[19] Automobiles, dishwashers, and vacuum cleaners became increasingly available to everyone, as consumers began to define their lives by the items they owned. Charles McGovern argues that consumption came to embody the ideals of freedom that defined being American. For Americans, consumption was an equal opportunity activity, and having the "desire for labor saving devices, the desire for a better life as expressed in more and better things, the restless search for material improvements in daily life, all were the traits of a people that undergirded 'a new independence, a new democracy built on the permanent foundation of freedom.'"[20]

While American consumption was moving towards a classless, equal opportunity activity, European consumption habits remained firmly tied to class position. Though inroads to refashioning European economies into a more "American" style had achieved some success in

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[19] Lizabeth Cohen, *A Comsumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), 127.

[20] Charles McGovern, "Consumption and Citizenship in the United States, 1900-1940," in Susan Strasser, Charles McGovern, and Matthias Judt, eds., *Getting and Spending: European and American Consumer Society in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 50.

the first part of the twentieth century, the Marshall Plan provided a unique opportunity press these ideas further. Victoria De Grazia's states that "barriers of and levels" in consumption habits remained in place until WWII.[21] These barriers remained partly because of the relatively low wages of most Europeans. Even beyond the problem of wages, however, was an absence of the avid consumerism alive in America. European workers, partly due to their limited spending power, valued different things than their American counterparts. Small businesses dotted the European landscape, where one knew their grocer, butcher, and cobbler. Europeans often had relationships with individual retailers who specialized in their respective products. These methods of economic exchange amounted to different views of consumption: it reaffirmed a craftsman and the value of his or her ware, while reinforcing the social relationship of the seller and buyer. European governments believed that, "to defend the small retailer was also to safeguard the social order and national identity."[22] Therefore, the idealized life Americans presented of mass production, standardized goods, modern mechanization of factories, and the self-evident benefit of more goods often fell on deaf ears.

Marshall Plan filmmakers were well aware of these beliefs and the obstacles to changing them. Under the auspices of advancing economic practices and providing aid, they anticipated European fears and sought to assuage them. This was coupled with a rejection of these ""Old World"" practices they saw languishing in post-war Europe. These messages were often concealed and could approach the viewer on a subtle level. They worked to dismantle many of the class-based cultural values of Europeans in favor of practiced production techniques hard at work in America.

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[21] Victoria De Grazia, "Changing Consumption Regimes in Europe, 1930-1970: Comparative Perspectives on the Distribution Problem," *Getting and Spending*, 67.

[22] De Grazia, "Changing Consumption Regimes," *Getting and Spending*, 73.

Americanization and Propaganda

Ultimately these films served to facilitate a form of Americanization. Though one should note the historiographical problems with the idea of national exceptionalism, it is important to understand that Marshall Planners believed that America possessed a distinct culture. [23] They saw American culture as superior and looked for a way to convince post-war Europe of this. Outwardly the films suggested simple methods for helping workers and small businesspeople, but these changes were impossible without further changes in belief systems. This is precisely what the films accomplished by promoting American lifestyles. Marshall Films sent a clear message when they depicted an American leaving a factory job to go home to a steak dinner. After treating Europeans to this imagery, the films suggested that higher productivity could bring the same kind of affluence to Europe. The message became: Adopting American practices can bring American abundance. Through the medium of educational films, filmmakers presented the mechanics of "new" economic techniques, but then paired them with ideas on how one should buy, sell, and live.

Historians such as Victoria De Grazia, Reinhold Wagnlietner, and Richard Pells argue that Americanization was a significant element in the Marshall Plan Aid package. De Grazia argues that a cultural takeover began even before the Marshall Plan was implemented and traversed such avenues common in American economics such as brand name recognition, artistic advertising, and even marketing. When discussing the post WWII period, she stresses the Marshall Planners' desire to sell consumption "emphasize best practice, not politics, the

[23] For a discussion of this trend see Ian Tyrell, "American Exeptionalism in an Age of International History," in *The American Historical Review,* vol 96. no.4 (Oct. 1991): 1031-1055.

'American assembly line,' not 'the Communist party line,' and the 'full dinner pail,' not the 'free lunch'."[24] De Grazia's work to shows how the initial framework for Americanization was already in place before the Marshall Plan Films arrived in Europe, thus laying the groundwork for a continuation of the process. Wagnleitner's discussion of American film includes what he calls the "Marilyn Monroe Doctrine," and notes, "the ideological offensive of this war of words and images was almost always based upon a blend of political propaganda and cultural self-portrayal, of information *and* disinformation."[25] Pells also chronicles a process of information dissemination. His argument includes the idea that America, or Americanization, came to be associated with such terms as "streamlined," modernity, efficiency, advanced technology, and "an indicator of direction."[26] Pells' work spans the entire twentieth century, showing the long term effects of Americanization and its relevance to the Marshall Plan Films.

Using the word "propaganda" to describe the Marshall Films requires some clarification. The word "propaganda" acquired a very negative connotation throughout the early twentieth century, and American officials felt that it was controversial to use it during peacetime. However, these reservations gave way to growing fears in America concerning what role it would play in European countries. The Smith-Mundt Act of 1948 was ostensibly designed to promote a better understanding of the United States in other countries, as well as facilitate an understanding of foreign countries within its own borders.[27] This Act met fierce opposition, but

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[24] Victoria De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 348.

[25] Reinhold Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonizaion and the Cold War: The Cultural Mission of the United States in Austria after the Second World War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 54-55.

[26] Richard Pells, *Not Like Us: How Europeans Have Loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture Since World War II* (New York: BasicBooks, 1997), 11.

[27] Charles A. Thomson and Walter H.C. Laves, *Cultural Relations and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 1963), 67.

passed due to widespread concerns that the Soviet propaganda machine would discredit and deface the American image abroad. This fear inspired the effort to present the true face of America, and further: "if other people understood us, they would like us, and if they liked us, they would do what we wanted them to do."[28] These attitudes can be seen in the Marshall Plan propaganda. Images of an American life filled with abundance were not falsehoods, and Marshall Plan Aid provided food, building projects, and jobs to Europeans. However, there was always a concerted effort to promote change towards a more American way of life. Furthermore, Marshall Plan Films served as an important mouthpiece for American propaganda. David Ellwood cites an ECA office memo from Rome which states: "Carry it to them directly – it won't permeate down. And give it to them so they can understand it."[29] These statements illustrate the importance Marshall Planners placed in disseminating propaganda widely, as well as making sure Europeans got the message.

Alfred Hemsing, who worked with the ECA film unit, argues that today the films would simply be labeled "public diplomacy."[30] Hemsing explains that most of the films were made in his own office in Paris. Division managers and mission chiefs from the sixteen participating countries came up with suggestions for the subject of the films. Most of these ideas were then farmed out to indigenous directors, who worked with these theme suggestions.[31] Hemsing describes the films as "articulating its citizens' desire for a new united Europe."[32] Paul Hoffman also noted the importance of having the national citizens be the circulators of American

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[28] Oren Stephens quoted in Thomson and Laves, *Cultural Relations,* 68.

[29] Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe: Western Europe,* 162.

[30] Albert Hemsing, "The Marshall Plan's European Film Unit 1948-1955: a memoir and filmograpy," *Journal of Film, Radio, and Television,* vol. 14, no. 3, (1994): 269.

[31] Hemsing, "The Marshall Plan's European Film Unit," *Journal of Film,* 1994.

[32] Hemsing, "The Marshall Plan's European Film Unit," *Journal of Film,* 1994.

propaganda.[33] This standpoint provides the films with the privileged position of being made in the interests of the specific country by one its own citizens. Curiously, Hemsing notes that the words "Marshall Plan" or "ERP" could be mentioned only once in a one-reeler and three times in films with two or more reels, thus attempting to keep the message of American Aid to a minimum. This shows that the ECA was conscious of the danger of "overdoing it" in their propaganda campaign. Yet, as Linda Christenson's filmography notes, though the majority of the films were filmed by indigenous directors, the films were generally sponsored, paid for, and initiated by the ECA.[34] First made with English dialogue, they were then translated when it was decided where to show the films.[35]

Though the Marshall Plan Films do vary, they follow some general trends. They are generally narrated, with a tone that oscillates between positive and ominous depending on the intention of the message and subject matter. Furthermore, the films repeatedly show the woeful sorrows of post-war Europe before discussing the great achievements and moments of triumph all thanks to the Marshall Plan. Some specific events are highlighted and shown over and over. For instance, in a number of films one can see the millionth ton of supplies delivered to a Greek harbor on Christmas, the passing of a pasteurization law in France, and the lottery to award plots of land to peasants in Southern Italy. A film about improving methods in a factory would be shown in a factory, while the "European Train," a seven car traveling exhibition that traveled throughout Norway, Sweden, Denmark, West Germany, West Berlin, Belgium, France, and Italy would necessarily have varied film exhibitions depending upon the audience. This traveling

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[33] Hoffman, *Peace Can Be Won,* 142.

[34] Linda Christenson, "Marshall Plan Filmography Preface," *George C. Marshall Foundation,* [database on-line], accessed April 6, 2006; available from http://www.marshallfilms.org/mpfdetail.asp#preface.

[35] Linda Christenson, "Marshall Plan Filmography Preface," *George C. Marshall Foundation,* [database on-line], accessed April 6, 2006; available from http://www.marshallfilms.org/mpfdetail.asp#preface.

exhibition, through film and other propaganda, focused on the broad topics of European cooperation and resources and stressed that with American aid Europeans could climb a mountain or construct a house. Surveys suggest that the train reached six million people.[36] Film subjects varied from the citrus trade in Italy to the rebuilding of Dutch dikes, but they all stressed the benefits of American Aid.[37]

In order to make sense out of the hundreds of Marshall Plan Films, I have chosen to organize the chapters thematically. Chapter one discusses the theme of increased productivity and the premise of "quality of life." In many ways this section deals with the most compelling aspect of the films. By exhibiting the ways in which Americans live day-to-day, Marshall Films helped to introduce the concept of quality of life. The idea of a factory worker driving their own car to work was one wholly foreign to the European worker, and it was powerful in its own right. Dozens of film lauded the benefits of increased production in order to achieve this abundance. The Marshall Planners, made up primarily of successful businessmen, believed that mass production could assuage the woes of the European citizen and make their life better. They touted the rationality of "Taylorism," as the best process for any industrial production. Coupled with the promotion of these assembly line techniques was the push for modernization. While the mass production films tended to be located in factories and industry settings, Marshall Filmmakers centered many films on farms. The filmmakers impress upon the viewers the notion that modernization and improvement come in the form of American tractors and American husbandry techniques. Part of this concerted effort to change European mindsets included the

[36] Harm G. Schröter, *Americanization of the European Economy: A compact survey of American economic influence in Europe since the 1880s*, (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer, 2005), 48.

[37] All of the films discussed in this thesis were accessed at the George C. Marshall Foundation Library and Archive. Henceforth the acronym (GMLA) will be used to indicate this. Primo Zeglio, Director, *Liquid Sunshine* Film for the European Cooperation Administration. Italy. 1950 (GMLA). And John Ferno, Director, *Island of Faith* Film for the European Cooperation Administration. Paris. 1950 (GMLA).

Productivity Missions. Filmmakers made movies that highlighted this "exchange" program that saw individuals from Europe and America trading business and farming techniques. Through this exchange Europeans are urged to strive for a little more in their daily work, because more has given Americans the products to make their lives better, and it can do the same in Europe.

Chapter two focuses on the American desire for a market based on the principles of their own capitalism. Time and again, Marshall Planners called for a restriction on tariffs in order to inspire the free market competition that they extolled in America. For American diplomats, this practice, which thrived in their own federated system, was the backbone of any strong neo-capitalist system. Marshall Planners pointed back to their 1787 Constitutional roots where they relinquished sovereignty and allocated a supranational authority for the greater good of less structured commerce. Some of the films deal with this issue in a playful way, stressing the comedic elements of a system that finds many businesses with a surplus of goods, but unable to unload them. However, other films take a darker tone and recall that stressing differences and trade barriers in the past brought about two world wars.

The Third chapter focuses specifically on European workers. Marshall Planners viewed this group as a contested prize that must be won over to democracy. Communism had significant strength in many European countries after WWII, and American officials moved to counter such movements. They made a number of films highlighting the benefits of "free" labor unions, while simultaneously warning viewers that Communist unions only fomented revolution. Implicit in this message was that "free" labor unions provided economic security and political rights while paving the way for a better quality of life. These films informed viewers that they were entitled to full shelves regardless of income, and that these shelves were the path to happiness. The films

suggest that the abundant life of American workers was something that European workers could aspire to, as long they rejected their local Communist organizer.

Ultimately this study is an attempt to explicate the meanings and messages in the Marshall Plan Filmography. The Marshall Plan launched a massive propaganda campaign in conjunction with its thirteen billion dollars in aid to Europe in an attempt to reformat the ideals of Europeans. Marshall Plan Films played a prominent role in this information campaign. The Plan was ostensibly an attempt to combat Communism as well as to re-vamp the economy of Europe. However, the films presented American ideals as something to aspire to: not only in business, but also in living everyday life. By stressing consumption over conservation and massive production over craftsmanship, the films told Europeans what America thought was best for them, and what would be beneficial for their future. Marshall Planners effectively sought to make Europe into a new, more American, place to live.

Chapter I

Modern Needs for a Modern People

"A substantial literature, the bulk of which appeared in the United States, as might be expected, in the brief ascendancy of American international power after the Second World War, has linked communications – the mass media in particular – closely with economic development. The central assumptions are based on the influential role mass communications can play, through exhortation and imitation, in instructing 'traditional' people to follow the ways of the more advanced societies. Thus, proponents of these views suggest the desirability of having the modern media promote 'empathy' for change, for becoming 'modern,' for discarding 'traditionalism,' for desiring the goods of Western consumer society, for leaving the countryside and migrating to the city and becoming 'urbanized.'"[1]

Marshall Planners wanted to use their propaganda campaign to reach out to everyday Europeans. American officials may have been convinced that they had converted diplomats to their religion of production, and though they may have gone to great lengths to publicize their business exchange programs, their information program was aimed at the everyday European. Marshall Plan Films were thus made to inform the common European of the goals of the ERP. As one ECA report phrased it, "In all ERP countries it is fair to say that the average man in the street, if stopped and questioned about the Marshall Plan, would know what it is… but much still remains to be done to stimulate the peoples of Europe to attain the goals set forth in the European

[1] Herbert I. Schiller, *Communication and Cultural Domination* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1976), 48.

Recovery Program."[2] Marshall Plan productivity films, more than other categories in the filmography, explained to the European viewer that more goods meant a better life.

For Marshall Plan officials, productivity was the key to revitalizing the European economy and creating a self-sustaining Europe. In the masses of literature focusing on post-war European recovery the word productivity is ubiquitous.[3] Higher production meant a greater output of goods; a greater output of goods meant more choices, and more choices meant an increase in competition. This increased competition was the tried and true method that many American businesses credited with the success of their own style of capitalism, and even the overall strength of the United States. To shore up the economies and defenses of their Atlantic allies these officials called for higher levels of production. With the start of the Korean War in 1950, their emphatic desire for increased productivity only grew.

However, their extended campaign to spread the virtues of productivity was incongruent with typical European styles of business and production. To "Old World" audiences "postwar America represented prosperity, especially in its elevated standard of living, and technological prowess."[4] But more than this, American practices implied the coming of the "consumer society": one with "new forms of economic organization including different kinds of industrial relations, business management, and markets."[5] These ideas clashed with typical concepts of business and daily lifestyles across Europe. Filmmakers promoted the processes of

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[2] Economic Cooperation Administration, *Fifth Report to Congress* (Washington DC, 1949), 68.

[3] The first thirteen reports of the Economic Coordination Administration all discuss the overall growth of production in sub-headings (sometimes more than once). In key secondary sources "productivity" is also a watchword. Imanuel Wexler's *The Marshall Plan Revisited* has numerous index listings for European production as well as Productivity. Alan S. Milward's work *The Reconstruction of Western Europe* has country by country index listings for the word productivity.

[4] Richard F. Kuisel, *Seducing the French: The Dilemma of Americanization* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), 3.

[5] Kuisel, *Seducing the French,* 3,

modernization, best process, standardization, and efficient time usage, while keeping in mind the "Old World" attitudes of their European neighbors. Productivity films encouraged the Europeans to reassess their beliefs and embrace the idea that higher productivity would lead to higher consumption. While it was apparent to Americans that higher consumption was a self evident good, Europeans had to be convinced of this. Consumptive and productive practices operated upon different belief systems in Europe. Marshall Films argued that high production and consumption were the path to a better way of life, an American way of life.

"You Too Can Be Like Us was the message of the Marshall Plan and it was the task of the propaganda effort to bring that idea home to Europeans everywhere."[6] Marshall Planners believed that small business owners and working class Europeans were the ones who needed to spread this gospel of higher productivity in Europe. These two groups could enact the serious changes needed in the European economy. More goods were essential to raising the "standard of living," and for the United States "raising the standard of living had become the official watchword for postwar reconstruction."[7] Examining American and European visions of consumerism, reveals why new production techniques may have seemed unappealing to European viewers. Films made for the factory floor and European farmers urged audiences to reach for higher production while shedding their long-held beliefs: all under the tutelage of American concepts. However, films made to bolster the Productivity Mission went even further, bringing viewers compelling visions of the American ways of life, and sending a powerful message about the possibilities of production. Marshall Plan Films focusing on productivity asked Europeans to push for a little more. Little changes in production could result in more goods, and if every European adopted this attitude, everyone would have access to a bit more

[6] David W. Ellwood, "You Too Can Be Like Us," in *History Today,* Vol. 48, October 1998, 34.

[7] De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, 340.

consumer goods.

How do you pronounce "Consumer?"

The concept of "standard of living" meant very different things to Europeans and Americans. As one American official in Paris noted, "The European workman listens listlessly while we tell him we are saving Europe, unconvinced it is his Europe that we are saving."[8] These Europeans also had very different ideas about what it meant to be a consumer. Despite the devastation wrought by WWII, Europe was still "stratified by social inequality" and working class Europeans viewed the idea of the good life in somewhat political terms. Furthermore, they expected their governments to take active roles in the regulation of commerce and management of their economies.[9] Even though the destruction of postwar Europe had "dislodged the old regime of consumption," it was not assured that Europeans would abandon their own notions of what comprised a "good life" and wholeheartedly embrace the American model of "overweening confidence in technology, raucous commercialism, and tolerance for social wreckage as the price paid for progress."[10]

These vast differences in consumerism were partly due to the highly stratified nature of the class system in Europe. The bourgeois family in Europe behaved somewhat like a typical American one: "spending as little as possible on food, stretching its budget to pay for respectable housing, the children's education, help for Madame, and the summer holiday."[11] However, the

[8] In a 1949 Paris report, quoted in Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe,* 165.

[9] De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire,* 341.

[10] De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire,* 341.

[11] De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire,* 115.

incredibly low wages of the European working class precluded this bourgeois patter. Workers looked to political action for raising wages, disregarding the notion that working hard would bring this change.[12] Without American consumerist desires, European workers defined life's pleasures as working as little as possible and eating good meals when they could, instead of saving for the future. The European working class focused their lives on daily needs and desires. Instead of saving for one's own home or seeking a wider selection of clothing, Europeans concerned themselves with "subsistence, not future substance, immediate survival, not future flourishing."[13]

Marshall Plan propagandists faced a group of individuals whose consumption habits were linked to their social estrangement. Essentially Americans and Europeans had very different views of what it meant to be a consumer. The European model of a consumer saw "higher standards as a social right, looked to the state to reduce inequalities among consumers, and was strongly influenced by the shared values of still intact political, religious, and community subcultures," while the American consumer "confided in the market to produce deliver goods, and embraced the profusion of new identities associated with U.S. consumer cultural goods and practices."[14] European aspirations were focused much more on the institutions that they had relied upon throughout their lives, largely indifferent to the benefits that less structured capitalism purported to bring. Extensive polling in 1949 forced Marshall Plan strategists to realize that, "The concept of higher standards of living was 'rapidly becoming anathematic to Europeans,'" and "the underlying concern of the majority of Europeans today is security… (Meaning) employment, health and old-age benefits… (or further), that a man's life, when

[12] De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire,* 114.

[13] De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire,* 114.

[14] De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire,* 342-343.

begun, contains the reasonable assurance and expectation of a rational progress toward a reasonable conclusion."[15] Thus Europeans balked when presented with American capitalism and the benefits of high production.

While humanist, socialist concerns about consumption may have been widespread in Europe, Americans upheld high consumption as one of their personal rights.[16] By the mid-twentieth century, American economic practices had developed a market that was far more egalitarian than the European one. A study contrasting the lives of an American factory worker in 1914 and 1948 showed significant gains in spending power. The typical American family in 1948 had more material goods and services and enjoyed more leisure time than a family in 1914.[17] Even beyond the literal rise in spending power, however, there emerged a new "American standard" for the quality of life. This new standard of living was not constrained by class distinction and allotted value to an item in terms of not only its cost, but its time-saving value.[18] Though it would be erroneous to suggest some class differences did not exist, studies at this time indicated that the wages of skilled factory workers (where more than one member of the spending unit works full-time) and the salaries of lower ranked professionals and managers were evening out.[19]

In the nineteenth century the term "standard of living" described bare minimums, but in later expressed the varying expectations of different socio-economic people and their

[15] David W. Ellwood, "The Marshall Plan and the Politics of Growth," in Peter M.R. Stirk and David Willis eds., *Shaping Postwar Europe: European Unity and Disunity 1945-1957* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 22.

[16] De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire,* 103.

[17] Laurence D. DeTrude and Wistaria Nishimura, *What an Hour's Work Would Buy 1914-194: A Conference Board Report* (New York: National Industries Conference Board, inc., 1948), 3.

[18] Margaret Reid, *Consumers and the Market* (New York: F.S. Crofts and Co., 1938), 24.

[19] David Reisman, "Careers and Consumer Behavior," in David Reisman, *Abundance for What? And Other Essays* (New York: Doubleday & company, inc., 1964), 121. This observation was based off of S. Kuznets, *Shares of the Upper Income Groups in Income and Saving* (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1953) and a series on The Great American Market in *Fortune.*

consumption capabilities.[20] With growing incomes and markets consumers realized a new sense of power in their consumptive habits. By the 1930s, the term "consumer sovereignty" properly encapsulated the new rights of American consumers. This term described the ability of most Americans, despite varying incomes, to buy a wide variety of consumer products. This equality of consumption in some ways reinforced a feeling of national belonging.[21] The majority of consumer products, though varied in quality, were standardized and available to the majority of American citizens. In this way consumption patterns guided an individual's interactions with fellow Americans and the world around them. The same consumer items were available to anyone who could afford them. Americans sought to define themselves through these purchasing habits and "were much more prepared than Europeans to accept the power of the economy over personal lives."[22] American markets offered most consumers (despite their varied incomes) the chance to buy a wide array of goods, thereby giving them a sense of equality when practicing consumption.

These consumptive desires fueled Europeans' criticisms of the American way of life. The exaltation for standardized goods caused many Europeans to conclude that Americans themselves had "standardized minds," and looked to their peers for cues on how to act and think.[23] Some French intellectuals categorized American life as "reducing human beings to the function of producer-consumers and saw in mass society, materialism, and standardization the end of civilization."[24] Georges Duhamel's *America the Menace* was a somewhat harsher

[20] De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, 101.

[21] De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire,* 103.

[22] Schröter, *Americanization of the European Economy*, 36.

[23] Pells, *Not Like Us*, 175.

[24] Kuisel, *Seducing the French,* 10-12.

indictment of American society than works by authors André Maurois and André Siegfried, but all of these writers worried about the implications of a society constantly in pursuit of the latest consumer product. These views, formed in the 1930s, formed the basis for the post-1945 stereotype of an American.[25] Reinhold Wagnleitner notes further that, "many Austrians – like many other Europeans – scorned the United States as a cultural wasteland inhabited by uncivilized nouveaux riches and foolish upstarts."[26]

While Europeans rejected the American desire for goods, Marshall Planners urged them to weigh the benefits of such practices. Productivity films asked Europeans to look at their devastated economies and realize that "a little more" can make life a little better. Productivity films had a vast assortment of subjects. Productivity in Marshall Plan Films focused on both the factory floors and the rural pastures of Europe. These Marshall Plan Films presented the benefits of higher productivity by using rationality, while seeking to dismantle well established economic practices. The films stressed that American techniques for increased productivity were the right ones, whether in hosiery making machines, or the usage of Texas mules.

So where are we on production?

In 1947, production in Western Europe, compared with pre-war levels, was significantly reduced. Agricultural production was only eighty-three percent of 1938 levels, industrial production was at eighty-eight percent, and exports were at a mere fifty-nine percent.[27] Production levels were an ongoing concern for Americans as well as Europeans. A 1949 report

[25] Kuisel, *Seducing the French,* 13.

[26] Wagnlietner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War,* 68.

[27] Hogan, *The Marshall Plan,* 30.

from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe pointed out that, "the more fundamental problem of the European economy is the increase in the productivity of European industry and agriculture which alone could satisfy the universal desire for better standards of living."[28] Americans were quick to point out growing production levels during the Marshall Plan years. Productivity records in the ECA's own *Thirteenth Report to Congress* (the last one published) revealed that by the second financial quarter of 1951 large scale European industrial production had risen forty-three percent above pre-war levels, and agricultural production had grown to ten percent above prewar levels.[29] ECA officials expressed a confidence in the growth of Europe's industrial sector, after a brief concern that raw materials would run out. They stressed the significance of their aid to this recovery. After noting that steel production in France had risen twenty-two percent since 1950, and that German steel output had gone up twenty-one percent since the previous year, the author attributed these increases in European steel production to ECA Funds that had helped to increase the capacity of these mills.[30]

This report highlighted specific achievements in industry, and European acknowledgements of these accomplishments. The report notes that Marshall Plan Funds, to the tune of £ 60 million, built the Abbey Works of the Steel Corporation of Wales: adding one million tons of new steel capacity in Great Britain. Chancellor of the Exchequer Hugh Gaitskell remarked, "Marshall Aid found us the dollars to pay for the plant that had to come across the Atlantic. We shall always remember with the deepest gratitude the help our American friends gave us."[31] ECA officials reported growing production levels in sulfur, copper, petroleum,

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[28] Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe*, 155.

[29] Economic Cooperation Administration, *Thirteenth Report to Congress*, (Washington DC, 1951), 15.

[30] ECA, *Thirteenth Report to Congress*, 18.

[31] ECA, *Thirteenth Report to Congress*, 18.

textiles, zinc, and motor vehicle output. The only area of industry they found disappointing was coal production, with Western Germany leading with an only thirteen percent increase from the previous year, France with only an eight percent increase, and the United Kingdom only producing five percent more.

Though overall production of food was up ten percent this increase was not enough to keep up with population increases; ECA officials searched for ways to convince Europeans to produce more. Officials targeted the issue of individual ownership on most European farms. The ECA report notes that there were sixteen million separate farms in Western Europe, which complicated the spread of new farming techniques.[32] ECA officials were spreading this "know-how" throughout the participating countries, but they needed wider information programs; to teach proven technical methods in raising grain yields, preventing seed disease, in better fertilizing, and even superior breeding methods to get greater output per animal rates. The report mentions the ECA Technical Assistance Program as one avenue to spread these ideas, as well as other governmental programs can focusing on improved methods for "storage, transportation, refrigeration, and other methods of food preservation."[33]

From January to June of 1951 the ECA made fifty new documentaries, making a combined total of 135 films in circulation throughout Western Europe. The report claims seventeen million people watched these films at non-commercial sites, and thirty-seven million at commercial theatres. ERP newsreel stories were distributed through regular commercial channels, reaching 30 million people a week. The ECA also conducted surveys to determine whether countries needed projectors, and what types of films they preferred.[34] Informing

[32] ECA, *Thirteenth Report to Congress*, 22-24.

[33] ECA, *Thirteenth Report to Congress*, 25.

Europeans was an ongoing mission, and though Marshall Planners acknowledged some production growth, they continually asked for more.

Economies of Difference

The American economic model in the early twentieth century was in many ways unique. While the American system had initially thrived on small firms competing among each other in their own relative locations, gradually this system changed in the years before and after 1900.[35] As individual businesses grew and aligned, the issue of "trusts" came to the forefront. Trusts described all "business cooperation and aggregates, loose agreements as well as tight arrangements."[36] Business arrangements such as these greatly altered the economic face of America, resulting in a somewhat chaotic market where competition often devastated small businesses. This process eventually culminated into the creation of the corporate business structure that defined the uniquely American style of business. The creation of corporations called into question many of the ideals that the American economy had espoused. This raised serious questions in a country where people believed their rights included the ability to form one's own business and compete in a fair market. As is well known, the corporate model survived legal persecution and went on to thrive, though under a nominal level of federal control.[37]

The American corporate model combined two major theories of production: Fordism and

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[34] ECA, *Thirteenth Report to Congress*, 66.

[35] Marie-Laure Djelic, *Exporting the American Model: The Postwar Transformation of European Business* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 23.

[36] Djelic, *Exporting the American Model*, 24.

[37] Djelic, *Exporting the American Model*, 25-31.

Taylorism. Corporate companies often formed by drawing together several peers into an arrangement in order to create a more efficient system and dominate their product-specific market. Frederick Winslow Taylor urged managers to study the organization of workers and to employ scientific techniques, all in order to maximize the output of the work-force.[38] Taylor's focus was on the individual worker and making the most of their time at work. He quantified these new techniques and helped to propagate them throughout American businesses. Taylor's use of rationalized methods and time management, coupled with Henry Ford's methods of production, helped to define the nature of American factories.

Ford's legendary success was due to the mass sales of the model "T." In 1914 Ford monopolized the use of conveyor belts to speed up the assembly time of this car. The "Tin Lizzy" came in only one color and model. Though it may have been boring, Ford was producing a car in the early twentieth century that was affordable to many Americans.[39] "Fordism stood for the total control of the flow of material and energy in a system of mass production."[40] Using the theories of Fordism and Taylorism American factories successfully optimized standardization and mass production, creating a unique climate in American factories. With such a model in place, the door opened for technological advancements that made standardized products affordable to many. Industrial centers adopted these techniques and successfully optimized worker output, increased productivity measures, and utilized machinery and assembly line techniques to distinguish American production dynamics.[41]

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[38] Stephen P. Waring, *Taylorism Transformed: Scientific Management Theory since 1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 12.

[39] Haruhito Shiomi and Kazuo Wada eds., *Fordism Transformed: The Development of Production Methods in the Automobile Industry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 3.

[40] Schröter, *Americanization of the European Economy*, 25.

[41] Djelic, *Exporting the American Model*, 37.

Marshall Plan Films that focus on factory production stress the rationality of American techniques, while addressing European fears of degrading craftsmanship, and automotizing labor. These films use terms such as "best process," and "suitably mechanized" to introduce ideas that Europeans may have found disturbing. Factory films primarily show specific procedures so that they are both technical and informative. They suggest to European audiences that American production techniques are more advanced.

In 1952, the Mutual Security Agency produced the short film *Work Flow*. It focuses on industrial techniques in the factory setting and operates on an informational level. The narrator has a British accent and begins by stating that organizing work in mass production allows work flow to move things in the best way. He describes the German glass industry for an example. Glass products move along conveyor belts with machinery. Though productivity has increased, the standards of quality have not been lost. Even though machines have replaced men, employment has actually increased. The narrator then discusses improvements in efficiency that can be made without machinery. When workers have to go around collecting the parts to produce the product, this increases time spent. Workers need to be able to hand off parts to the next worker. The film then shows garment workers who pass cloth off to each other. A chart fills the screen with the statement, "the results achieved can be considerable."[42]

After outlining the advantages to be had in the textile industry, the narrator discusses a mill in Germany. There is logic in placing the mill by a river, using gravity to move the grain, cleansing the grain for impurities, and finally feeding the grain back into machines that make the semolina and flour. At the end of the process, "packing too, has been organized along flow

[42] GMLA, Interfilm and Dinkel Film, Producers, *Work Flow*, Dusseldorf, Film for the Mutual Security Agency, 1952.

production lines and has been suitably mechanized."[43]

The language of the film is simple and straightforward, with a rational tone that simply points out the ease in which these changes can be made and the obvious benefits that follow such changes. Much of what the camera focuses on is the imagery of the suggested changes: grain moving through its discussed stages, garments being handed off from worker to worker, and bottles moving along a mechanized conveyor belt. The film ties its message up in simplicity. *Work Flow* makes no over claims, just a straightforward recommendation to adopt economic methods that will increase productivity.

The film *Men and Machines* takes a much more direct approach in calling for higher productivity. The film is in color, a rare occurrence in the Marshall Plan filmography. It begins with an American voice describing how much industry has changed since the industrial revolution, and how it took a war to show Europeans how dependent they are on industry. "Are they modern enough or busy enough," the voice asks?[44] As the scene focuses on a factory, a narrator with a French accent chimes in, noting that the Renault plant outside of Paris has learned from Henry Ford's mass production techniques. If Europeans use standardized production, then there will be more products for more people. The American voice interjects that Europe needs to keep its craftsmanship, which is the character of Europe, and lists some of the many products they make. Losing this skill would make Europe not richer but poorer. The scene changes to a German beer bottling plant. The narrator states that there is a need for bottles made by hand as well as automatically. "Quality is demanded as well as variety."[45] The problem is combining

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[43] GMLA, Interfilm and Dinkel, *Work Flow*, 1952.

[44] GMLA, Diana Pine, Director. *Men and Machines*, Film for the European Cooperation Agency, London, 1951.

[45] GMLA, Pine, *Men and Machines*, 1951.

variety and high rate of output, keeping in mind the vital factor of low costs.

The film then moves on to a stove factory, and focuses on the various stages in the production process. "Was the time being used in the best way?"[46] The filmmakers stress the best process theme, putting emphasis on doing jobs faster, simpler, and better. When the film examines furniture making in Sweden, the narrator's conclusion is that this process combines the best of the old and the new, turning out quality-made furniture in higher numbers. Now the film examines textile production in Britain, focusing on the benefits of modernization. Though the factory does not make prints with hand blocking any longer, they still create fine products. "Using men like they were machines, if nothing else, is inefficient."[47] The narrator notes that by engraving the designs on high speed rollers you can maintain the European craftsmanship but now you have a higher output. Now Europeans can compete in the World Market, but maintain the quality of European goods. Next the filmmakers stress that countries must use the resources around them. Improvements can be made in a British polyurethane plant, or in another plant where they manufacture carbide; "this is all done with American aid," the narrator reminds.

The final focus is one of the oldest steel mills in Europe. "One of the plants that gave Europe its reputation."[48] But the narrator goes on to note that a plant this size could be producing much more steel. Europe is resting on its laurels, thinking that what was good for the first industrial revolution is good for Europeans. Europe must see modernization as a second industrial revolution. Viewers see a steel mill in operation, as the narrator states that the death of this old mill can give one last gift to the new mill. The old mill will serve as scrap metal when it is tossed into the furnace. For the future, Europe must manipulate steel and develop better

[46] GMLA, Pine, *Men and Machines*, 1951.

[47] GMLA, Pine, *Men and Machines*, 1951.

[48] GMLA, Pine, *Men and Machines*, 1951.

methods of organization, stresses the narrator. The screen then fills with scenes of cars driving, then tanks, airplanes, and finally tractors in fields. "Men, material, and machines. In the pulse and pattern of their increase, Europe sees an abundance which she has never known."[49]

This film's mood comes off as playful. With different narrators who affect their respective French, British, and American accents, the viewer can safely be assured that everyone is on the same side. It is not only the primary American narrator who urges these changes in industrial production, but his European counterparts as well. The film also stresses a merging of European craftsmanship with modern machinery, even going as far as to suggest that some individual movement denigrates the worker to the role of a machine. Essentially the filmmakers are attempting to reassure their European counterparts that their idealized views on craftsmanship are not foolish, but they must be married to modernity in order to bring about higher productivity. In turn this will create the abundance that Europe has never known. Focusing on stove and furniture factories, and ending with scenes of cars, tractors, planes, and tanks, makes the viewer aware of what Europe's goals should be; more goods for daily living as well as for defense. Both *Work Flow* and *Men and Machines* deal with improving production techniques in their own ways. Much of their subject matter was incompatible to the productivity practices enmeshed in European economies.

Work Flow and *Men and Machines* both deal with specifically American types of production techniques. Marshall Plan filmmakers were well aware of the economic climate in which they were releasing these films. *Work Flow* stresses the "Taylorist" rationality of handing off items to other workers, thereby reducing the amount of time wasted. *Men and Machines* urges European audiences to embrace the new assembly line activities, while stressing the need for modern machinery. Though Britain and Germany may have been somewhat more disposed

[49] GMLA, Pine, *Men and Machines*, 1951.

to these techniques, by and large the European style of small, family owned, business models found these ideas incongruent with their own methods. Not only intellectuals, but also French businessmen actually feared that these new styles would dismantle their French "civilization," and that American styles of Industrial Production could possibly have social, political, and cultural consequences.[50] Many Europeans regarded American capitalism "as ruthless, brutal, impersonal, and inhumane."[51]

By the early fifties, medium to small firms often family owned, dominated France's economy. The large industrial projects that the Marshall Films focused on were extremely rare in the French economy. In 1950, eighty-five percent of industrial firms in France employed no more than five workers.[52] Yet, some business relationships resembled corporations. Private limited liability firms presented French businessmen with a loose partnership that excluded liability, although these partnerships only made up 22 percent of business organizations by 1936, while in the United States seventy percent of businesses were corporate at this time.[53] Small French firms sometimes formed loose organizations, or cartels, in which prices were agreed upon. Marie-Laure Djelic argues that the Europeans kept this in place partly because of their social structure. For Europeans, it was ideal to own one's own business not only because it brought independence, but also because it conferred a higher social status. Europeans valued property ownership and economic independence more highly than the simple accumulation of wealth. Thus cartel price fixing operated partly so that small firms could stay in business with larger ones. Europeans frowned upon risky business practices because business ownership

[50] Djelic, *Exporting the American Model*, 49.

[51] Pells, *Not Like Us,* 193.

[52] Djelic, *Exporting the American Model*, 43.

[53] Djelic, *Exporting the American Model*, 45.

carried such a high level of social respect. Thus bankruptcy carried a high stigma in European society. The new business techniques advertised in Marshall Plan Films often required a significant investment on the part of the European owner. Introducing new machinery on a factory floor might have seemed risky to many of these individuals.

Other European economies functioned much as the French model did. Small to medium family owned firms dominated Italian business practices, with eighty percent of workers employed in firms employing no more than 500 people.[54] One way in which the Italian economy differed from the French model was its primarily state owned industrial structure. Although the start of the twentieth century showed heavy foreign investment in Italy, Benito Mussolini's rise to power saw an increasing fascist centralization. Mussolini gradually took over steel production, shipbuilding, and armaments. Even with these state run sectors, however, the Italian economy still thrived primarily on family run businesses. Germany's economy displayed some larger firms in the area of steel and coal production, but it too exhibited a predominance of family owned firms, primarily in the area of consumer product production. The development of cartels in order to fix prices and protect a large number of firms was at work in Germany as well, with some fifteen-hundred in place in 1923.[55] Thus Marshall Plan Films promoted business practices that were in many ways antithetical to the ones firmly in place.

Marshall Plan filmmakers addressed these ideas in *Machines at Work.* The film begins with a discussion of the history of machine inventions. Photographic images of old steam engines and printing presses show the gradual progress towards modern industry and current practices. The narrator notes that the audacity of man knew no limits, and that machines had changed the look of our planet. Men may fear machines, positing that "the effect on our society

[54] Djelic, *Exporting the American Model*, 59-60.

[55] Djelic, *Exporting the American Model*, 54.

has been to create what at times may appear a new type of human being conditioned by the machine."[56] However, what would happen if these fears cause humans to go back to old modes of travel? Some still think work done by hand is better than that of a machine, but this is only true of haircuts and magic shows, for industrial production requires high precision.

The narrator discusses the shortage of consumer products to prove his point. Bicycles are now available to many people through large scale production. If the current production techniques in Europe continue they will perpetuate useless labor hours, while prices rise and the purchasing power of the consumer falls. Now the narrator comes back to the usefulness of machines. The audience witnesses textile manufacturing while the narrator discusses the benefits of good organization and applying effective tools. When a machines cuts cloth sixty or eighty pieces at a time, bundles are delivered by chute to other areas, a machine is used to sew a button, and inspection is left to the worker to ensure quality. Machines and humans work together to create better techniques and products.

The film then criticizes those who think that production destroys any sense of artistry; "under the pretext that the best artists have always worked by hand, one could always go on wasting time by using out of date methods and ignoring the fact that there is, for instance, such thing as a paint gun."[57] The narrator notes that the use of small tools will always reduce the time for production. Sewing machines make work easier, and vacuum cleaners make cleaning more bearable. The narrator stresses again that every little machine helps; boring holes, labeling sacks, cutting wood, and even planning the size of the wood; "whether tossing a pancake or

[56] GMLA, William Novik, Director, *Machines at Work* Film for the Mutual Security Agency. London. 1952.

[57] GMLA, Novik, *Machines at Work*,1952.

shaving a customer."[58]

These techniques can be applied in even the smallest capacity. Filmmakers focus on a door-maker measuring the correct length and width of a door. Door-making requires many steps and is incredibly slow. But human ingenuity steps in. The worker invents a way to move the door around while it is still in the vise grips. One can always apply new techniques, and the development of machines should be the goal of man. In these examples, machines prove their superiority with their accuracy and precision but man takes the helm in order to guide such progress.

Machines at Work concludes by addressing an issue that humans and workers have always had with machines: with machines replacing men, won't there be a problem with the need for men? "This is no new problem," chides the narrator. He points out that automobiles gained ground and replaced the horse, and now car production requires far more skilled labor than the horse and carriage did. "It is logical that workers should directly participate in any benefits which result from the very use of productive resources," the film concludes. "It is the job of governments too to see that these requirements are understood while encouraging industry as a whole to reinvest its profits in new tools and in the improvement of its equipment. These are the essential conditions of the technical progress on which our standard of living depends."[59]

This film clearly addresses European fears of machines replacing man. The film's beginning suggests how foolish it is to hang on to old methods of production. By depicting the older models of trains and automobiles, using photos instead of actual footage, the viewer is left with the conclusion that progress is key. The film also engages the reverence for personal craftsmanship that was widespread in Europe. When the narrator calls attention to the invention

[58] GMLA, Novik, *Machines at Work*,1952.

[59] GMLA, Novik, *Machines at Work*,1952.

of the paint gun, noting that some choose to ignore this modern invention, the viewer recalls the initial imagery of the out-of-date modes of transportation. Now one questions whether some artistry is simply the employment out of date methods. Another key to this film is the specific reference to small firms, which were ubiquitous in the European economy. Even here, new methods of organization and the use of modern machinery are essential.

All of these factory films concentrate on employing American production techniques. *Work Flow* and *Men and Machines*, primarily uses rationality in its Fordist and Taylorist forms as an argument, showing the smooth and fast-paced methods of several factories, while acknowledging the need for European craftsmanship. *Machines at Work* has a more compelling argument. The craftsmanship of Europe must not be lost, but it must be amended so that productivity can increase the standard of living for everyone. The film urges management to share the benefits yielded from these new processes and compels governments to take an active interest in refueling the modernization movement. In addition to emphasizing these points, however, the films also urge the adoption of new techniques in every space of industry because Europe cannot move backward. The viewer must assume that these new techniques are part of inevitable progress.

An Agricultural Exchange

There were numerous Marshall Plan Films that focused on modern agricultural methods. These films stressed the use of tractors, better livestock and husbandry, and the overall theme of introducing scientific methods into the practice of farming. They were primarily one-nation films. They introduced the viewer to characters and developed a plot where an older individual

resists the introduction of a tractor, or new farming technique, but is eventually shown the light. Often an older character refuses the "modern" change, and then another positive character, who is typically younger, enacts this change, often without the permission of the older one. As the youth practices the new techniques, the film introduces a crisis in which the modern methods of the youth save the crop or otherwise completely change the mind of the older character.

While most agriculture films in the Marshall collection carried this generic drama, there was a clear difference in approach, depending on the region for which filmmakers created the film. Agricultural films made for Western European countries urged the use of modern equipment and higher yields per acre, but the tone was casual and appealed to the viewer with the rationality of science and technology. Often in these films one person refused to enact the progress that the other villagers have already adopted. Furthermore, these films often discussed several countries and related their problems to one another. In contrast, films that focused on countries like Greece and Turkey featured one youth overcoming the ignorance of an entire farm or village. Though they both employed the "lesson learned" theme, films in Turkey and Greece stress the simple nature of the farmers, giving Marshall Aid and techniques a far more miraculous tone. These films showed how individual Europeans could overcome ignorance and skepticism in backward nations.

200,000,000 Mouths, a color film made to be shown in Western Europe, uses many of the same arguments that factory productivity films used. It is clearly a multi-nation film, discussing several European nations. It begins with images of a baby being born. Not one million or two, but three million extra mouths a year are piling up in Europe. The narrator claims that there is not nearly enough food to feed everyone (Europeans), as the camera shows scenes of a bustling marketplace. Europe's drive and energy went into industry, and it preferred to buy food abroad,

but "the truth is that we Europeans must turn our eyes once more to the land we have tended to forget. The world can no longer feed us as it once did."[60] The narrator calls for a higher agricultural yield in Holland, and asks the Dutch to build dykes and pump out water to get to the good earth under the sea. He praises the "spotless dairies equipped with every machine technology can offer" in Denmark and the numerous tractors in Britain, but notes that people are still using methods that haven't changed in a hundred years. In every country there are new scientific methods available for the asking, but "across so much of the earth scientist and farmer do not know each other yet."[61]

The narrator cedes that geography is a factor, but claims the deeper reason is the European's closeness to land farmed for generations. Again he mentions that each minute there are six new mouths to feed, and stressing the factor of time and the dangers of loss of production. The Europeans must be in complete accord for success. A man in a jeep drives up "to meet the farmer on his own ground," for information must be brought to the farmer, and scientists must use common language to convince farmers of the benefits in higher production through the use of tractors. A Frenchman rides a tractor as we learn that the machine costs money, but that the government is making it easier to own one. "This French farmer has worked with horses all his life. The change comes hard at first but he's made up his mind to take the plunge."[62] Next the man from the jeep argues with the farmer about corn. The farmer eventually agrees with the man. It is then revealed that they are discussing new hybrid seed and fertilizer that the Marshall Plan has introduced in Europe. Though scientists in Holland and Britain have utilized the seed

[60] GMLA, Julian Spiro, Director, *200,000,000 Mouths* Film for the European Cooperation Administration. London. 1950-1951? (question mark indicates exact date of production unknown)

[61] GMLA, Spiro *200,000,000 Mouths*,1950-1951?

[62] GMLA, Spiro *200,000,000 Mouths*,1950-1951?

for better grass, they must remember to improve production for the whole year.

In southern Italy farmers agree to use the new seed. Here the film reenacts the Italian government's land auction to its Southern farmers. A narrator with an Italian accent takes over. The men stand around as an announcer calls off names and each man comes forward to accept their claim. "The old owners are being bought out… From now on the land is to belong to those who work it."[63] The men march off into the distance singing a song in unison, claim their land with stakes, and the scene ends with idyllic scenes of Southern Italy. The film closes with scenes of farmers, noting that, "the farmer's part is vital. Two hundred million mouths and more depend on him. In his hands he holds the fulfillment of our grand design."[64]

This film mainly provides an overview of the agricultural situation in Europe and stresses modern techniques in order to gain the full yield of the land already under use, as well as the exploration of new lands to farm. The film notes the benefits of scientific input as well. Although the narrator grants the modern techniques at work in Britain and Denmark, he follows this with the criticism that many still use outdated methods. Disapproval is also implicit in the statement "the world can no longer feed us." By discussing the generational passage of land plots, the filmmakers question the "Old World" habits of land usage. The narrator stresses that there are differences between the farmer and scientist, but that these can be overcome by a common language. Also present is the conflict and resolution with the Marshall Plan representative convincing the French farmer that his method is better. These themes can readily be seen in the factory films as well. *200,000,000 Mouths* appeals to the rational European mind while subtly criticizing their long-held market practices.

In *Bull's Eye For Farmer Pietersen* one can see the typical agriculture film narrative

[63] GMLA, Spiro *200,000,000 Mouths*,1950-1951?

[64] GMLA, Spiro *200,000,000 Mouths*,1950-1951?

more clearly. Originally only intended for the Dutch, the film was dubbed into seven languages and shown all over Western Europe.[65] The film begins with farmer Pietersen shooting a bulls-eye at the local fair, he and his friend Johansson are "at it again."[66] These Dutch farmers had been at war and many of their lands were underwater. "It took years to bring the land back."[67] As the men of the village sit around, Pietersen declares that they must do something about the land shortage. They hear about the Marshall Plan on the radio and decide to collectively purchase a tractor. Alone they can only buy parts, but together they can procure the whole tractor.

With the arrival of the tractor, complete with its Marshall Plan sticker, conflict begins. The tractor outpaces the horse-drawn tiller, but farmer Johansson refuses to use the new machine. Johansson refuses to acknowledge the prowess of the tractor, and "everyone saw it was a showdown."[68] The obstinate farmer's son even encourages his father to give in. Many of the farmers sell their horses because they have no need for them any longer. All of the farmers have a good summer with their new tractor. Scenes compare the ease of the machinery with Johansson's work, clumsily done by hand and with old fashioned horsepower.

The dispute is resolved in the final segment. Though all the other farmers complete their work, Johannson still labors in the field. Then a storm gathers in the distance. Johannson needs to finish or his crop will be lost. He finally goes to farmer Pietersen and asks for his help. With the tractor, the day is saved. The last scenes bring the viewer back to the fair. The farmers place a girl on the tractor, children play, and the narrator notes that production is way up.

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[65] GMLA, Ytsen Brusse, Director, *Bull's Eye For Farmer Pietersen* Amsterdam. 1950. Noted in the Linda Christensen filmography.

[66] GMLA, Brusse, *Bull's Eye For Farmer Pietersen,* 1950.

[67] GMLA, Brusse, *Bull's Eye For Farmer Pietersen,* 1950.

[68] GMLA, Brusse, *Bull's Eye For Farmer Pietersen,* 1950.

This film shows the conflict and resolution typical in agricultural films as well as the need for unity. It stresses the necessity of pooling together to get a modern machine that will help to produce more. Much like *200,000,000 Mouths* points out that Europe must feed itself, Pietersen notes that they must get all they can from their lands. This rationality appeals to everyone but Johannson, and this begins the conflict. The whole village urges Johansson to try the tractor, and the storm crisis causes him to change his mind. Rationality wins the day.

The following two films directly engage the problems Marshall Plan officials saw in Turkey. By the end of 1950, Turkey had received 150 million dollars in economic aid.[69] American officials saw Turkey as an untapped agricultural resource hindered by outdated methods and technology. Therefore ECA officials viewed Turkey's economic problems not in terms of reconstruction, but of creation and development. Much of Turkey was still using wooden plows and "other primitive equipment" when materials started arriving from America in 1949.[70] Therefore recovery in Turkey concentrated on its agricultural sector, which supported three-fourths of its population. In the ECA report on Turkey's economic progress, the first two items focus on the revamping its agricultural sector.[71] The study further elaborates on this crisis under in the Basic Problems chapter of the report stating, "Present equipment and methods are generally primitive and the rate of production is low in terms both of output per man and of output per acre."[72]

Yusef and His Plow and *The Village Tractor*, both made for Turkey, address productivity

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[69] Joyce and Gabriel Kolko, *The Limits of Power: The World and Untied States Foreign Policy, 1945-1954* (New York, Harper and Row Publishers, 1972), 413.

[70] A. C. Sedgwick, *New York Times* May 5, 1949.

[71] 1. The reorganization and development of agricultural production. 2. Increased exports of agricultural products and the reestablishment of a market for Turkish tobacco. cited in Economic Recovery Program, Turkey Country Study, February 1949, 3.

[72] Economic Recovery Program, *Turkey Country Study* February 1949, 27.

on a basic level. *Yusef and His Plow* begins with scenes from a small Eastern Turkish village. "The fruit of the soil is hard-won."[73] Men play backgammon and listen to a radio, which mentions the Marshall Plan. The narrator introduces Yusef, who is the youth in the story. Yusef asks his father if he can have a small plot of land to try out a metal plow. The other men from the village interject saying, "Let the boy have a go, you have nothing to lose."[74] After the boy is given permission, he rides to the farm school and asks the director, Hassanbe, for the metal plow. Yusef has to fill out a form proving he is a farmer in order to be given the plow. When Yusef receives the plow, there is an extended sequence showing him working the land. "The turning earth piled up behind the bright blade of the plow."[75] After this show of modernity, the village forgets about Yusef. A year passes before the next scene. Instead of seeding by hand, Yusef is now using a seed drill that he received from the farm director.

In the final sequence of the film Yusef gets a visit from Hassanbe, who admires his wheat and compliments his eight ears of corn per seed. After the harvest, the village gathers around Yusef praising his crops. Hassanbe then comes and urges other techniques like alternating fields and letting some lands go fallow. He also introduces the idea of getting a tractor for the village and stresses the importance of agricultural school to "ease farmer's toil."[76] The film closes with an homage to agricultural machines: "they are the tokens of prosperity; they are the foundations on which to build tomorrow's plans."[77]

The Village Tractor provides a more complex series of events, but still works to enlighten

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[73] GMLA, Clarke and Hornby Directors. *Yusef and his Plow,* Film for the European Cooperation Agency, London, 1951.

[74] GMLA, Clarke and Hornby, *Yusef and his Plow,* 1951.

[75] GMLA, Clarke and Hornby, *Yusef and his Plow,* 1951.

[76] GMLA, Clarke and Hornby, *Yusef and his Plow,* 1951.

[77] GMLA, Clarke and Hornby, *Yusef and his Plow,*1951.

a village skeptical of modernity. This film focuses on a village in Central Turkey that "supports many farmers who work their own land and live out their lives huddled between the fields."[78] The farmers only had animal power and their own strength to fetch water and till the land, but they have introduced some improvements such as the metal till. When the village hears that the government is introducing tractors, the village decides to order one together, "with Marshall Plan help."[79] An agricultural agent named Rushadbe comes to the village to discuss this possibility. After Hassan tells Rushadbe about the village's decision, the representative tells him that it is not that simple. There must be a contract and the government must know how much land they will plow with the tractor. They must also pay for some of the tractor to start with. Rushadbe also brings up the problem of driving the tractor, since no one has any training. A man named Neshdit volunteers, stating that he drove a lorry in the army. When Rushadbe suggests going to an agricultural school to learn, Neshdit repeats that he has driven a lorry and dismisses the idea. However, Hassan's son Amin volunteers to go study at the school and leaves the village.

Time passes in the village, and the plot focuses on Amin at the school with other boys. There they are taught about fuel levels, oil replacement, and the right type of equipment to use when working a pump or plowing a field. They even view an assembly line where the tractors are constructed. Each one learns to handle different types of equipment and try them on their own "under the instructor's watchful eye."[80] Eventually Neshdit arrives at the school to pick up the tractor but does not stop to talk to Amin. He drives the tractor into the village and impresses everyone. "He was a proud man. He began to talk of all the things he was going to do."[81]

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[78] GMLA, Clarke and Hornby. Directors. *The Village Tractor*. Film for the European Cooperation Administration. Turkey. 1948-1951.

[79] GMLA, Clarke and Hornby, *The Village Tractor*, 1948-1951.

[80] GMLA, Clarke and Hornby, *The Village Tractor*, 1948-1951.

The next scene shows Neshdit operating the tractor. He frightens some horses with the machine, but in one day ploughs more than the horses could do in a month. The village was cultivating more land than it ever had before. Neshdit polishes the outside of the tractor but does nothing with the interior. The tractor breaks down. Neshdit comically gets on and off the tractor trying to figure out what is going on. "Neshdit stopped and had a look at the engine… but the more he looked the less he knew what to do."[82] Smoke pours from the tractor, while the other farmers use their horses and plows making slow progress. After Neshdit ineffectually picks at the tractor, he returns to the village in defeat.

The final sequence in the film shows Amin returning from the agricultural school. Amin goes with his father Hassan and Neshdit out into the field to look at the tractor. "Amin guessed what was wrong."[83] The tractors plugs were dirty. Amin fixes the tractor, thus impressing his father and showing Neshdit the error of his ways. Now the tractor runs smoothly, the village finishes its plowing. They even decide to invest in a combine making the harvest go faster. The film closes by stressing that a bigger yield can produce a better profit from the farmer's lands.

In the first film, Yusef is met with skepticism regarding the use of a metal plow. He proves the village wrong and gains affirmation for embracing modernity. After this positive revelation by the village, the agricultural school director suggests that they try to get a tractor. In the second film the village agrees to try a tractor, picking up where the other film left off. Again we see youth as the guiding light to modernity. Although the village accepts the virtues of a modern tractor, the character Neshdit still presents a backward attitude. He proudly takes on the duty of driving the tractor, but rejects the idea that one might need training to drive the tractor

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[81] GMLA, Clarke and Hornby, *The Village Tractor*, 1948-1951.

[82] GMLA, Clarke and Hornby, *The Village Tractor*, 1948-1951.

[83] GMLA, Clarke and Hornby, *The Village Tractor*, 1948-1951.

and keep it running. He polishes the outside of the machine, wholly ignoring the inside of the tractor. One sees the "modern-ness" of the tractor first as he rides it through town, then as he frightens horses, and finally when the narrator remarks on the amount of work it can accomplish. Of course the tractor breaks down, and Neshdit is incapable of repairing the machine because he has disregarded the knowledge that comes with tractor care. Here Amin enters as the savior youth. He quickly identifies the problem and has the tractor running again. Again youth gains the acclaim of the village. This film closes with the implementation of a newer piece of machinery: the combine. In the first film skepticism is overcome, and in the second film ignorance is overcome, both with materials and knowledge from the Marshall Plan.

In the film *The Story of Koula* the ingenuity of youth also plays a prominent role. The film begins with a boy riding a donkey at sunrise in a small Greek village. The audience learns that the boy's name is Kyriakos and that he is such a lover of animals that his neighbors think he can talk to them in his own language. The boy's village is made up of hills with hovels on them, each with their own rocky plots of land. The narrator tells us that Kyriakos wants a mule more than anything. His animals were lost in the war, but when the boy hears about the Marshall Plan bringing livestock, he urges his grandfather to sign up for a free mule. It is clear at this point that the boy does not have a father. Nothing happens for a while, underlining the skepticism of the grandfather, but Kyriakos is so optimistic that he names the mule Koula in advance.

In the next scene a Marshall Plan representative posts the recipients of new mules shipped from America. Kyriakos is excited and runs to tell his grandfather. At this point, the focus switches to the mules being unloaded at the docks. These mules from "Texas, Arkansas, and Mississippi" are "are not at all like the docile little donkeys most people in Greece are used

to."[84] The mules fight their Greek handlers as the narrator explains that they are unruly from their long journey. Kyriakos and four other men journey to the city to receive their muless. The men are intimidated by the size and energy of the American animals. The boy picks out a mule that he thinks must be Koula, but the livestock is given away by lots and another man gets Koula. Koula is soon traded to Kyriakos, as all the farmers are friends.

Here the film presents its complication. The American mules continue to buck and fight, and none of the farmers can control them despite their best efforts. Again the youth of Kyriakos shows the way as he sings to his mule, calming it. He proves that he can handle even these unruly animals because he knows when to give them water and food, explains the narrator. One last problem presents itself for Kyriakos in the film: he cannot get Koula to concentrate on plowing. In his solution lies the moral of the film. He harnesses the old European donkey to the new American mule so that Koula is not lonely and can be shown the way. And "Greece itself became just a little happier land to live in."[85]

The Story of Koula, though made as a "one-country film," was eventually dubbed into nine languages and shown throughout Western Europe.[86] This film follows the aforementioned process of youth versus old-age, at the same time interjecting the benefits of American technique. Here it is in the donkeys of the Southwest, who might as well be tractors for the lack of control the Greek farmers can exert. Again it is Kyriakos who is able to tame the beast by teaming him up with his old donkey. As Victoria De Grazia notes, the film shows the destitution in the "hovels, olive trees, and dry-as-dust fields of Filavia," and also highlights the absence of

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[84] GMLA, Vittorio Gallo, Director, *The Story of Koula* Film for the European Cooperation Agency, Rome, 1951.

[85] GMLA, Vittorio Gallo, *The Story of Koula*,1951.

[86] Filmography section of Albert Hemsing's, 'The Marshall Plan's European Film Unit, 1948-1955', *Journal of Film, Radio, and Television,* vol. 14, no. 3, 1994.

adult males implying that many have died in the Communist led civil war.[87] The film reflects the dire situation that Greek citizens faced. Even before WWII, Greeks only averaged eighty dollars in income per capita.[88] After eight years of devastation by the German occupation from 1941-1944, and the ensuing civil war from 1946-1949 American Aid was much needed.[89] The civil war forced some to abandon farmlands and put further strains on the government budget.[90] Ultimately reconstruction had to begin in the rural villages with, "roads, communications, housing, and public health measures, as well as technical measure to improve agriculture."[91] American technology (in the form of a mule) helped farmers to forge ahead with the optimism of youth, and the ability to yield a little more from the earth.

In farming films, new mules, hybrid seeds, and tractors all represent modernization. Although Western European agricultural films have a somewhat less dramatic tone, they urge viewers to renounce their arcane beliefs about "Old World" methods. They suggest that farmers cannot wallow in the past and must embrace science in order to produce the highest possible yield. In Greece and Turkey, the message extends only to making small changes. These changes may be more dramatic than in Western Europe, but old beliefs must be overcome, and youth is the impetus for this change. In both of these areas, Marshall Films suggest that a lot more, or even a little more, will create new levels of prosperity. These new methods prove to be American: a new hybrid seed, or mules and tractors from Marshall Funds. Whether it saves farmer Johansson's crops, or brings Kyriakos' family a little more, one must embrace modernity

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[87] Victoria De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, 349.

[88] European Recovery Program, *Greece Country Study*, (Washington DC, 1949), 1.

[89] George A. Jouganatos, *The Development of the Greek Economy, 1950-1991: An Historical, Empirical, and Econometric Analysis*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1992), 11.

[90] ERP, *Greece Country Study*, 2.

[91] ERP, *Greece Country Study*, 3.

to make these changes.

The Evidence of Exchange

While the information arm of the ECA created numerous films on farm and factory production, they also felt that the exchange of ideas should take a more direct form. Consequently, they initiated numerous exchange programs in order to increase productivity in the industrial sector as well as in agriculture. The ECA Technical Assistance program, which started at the close of 1948 and later became the Production Assistance program on June 30, 1951 (USTA&P), sent American experts to work on the European continent to introduce American production techniques, labor-management relationships, mechanization changes, and even husbandry improvements. In order to safeguard the success of this program, the Marshall Planners took surveys of the participant's industrial output in order to plan visits by labor unionists, farm laborers, and trade associations. This betrayed an effort to change economic as well as cultural practices: "The reconstruction of production facilities had to go hand in hand with gains in output per man-hour, and to achieve these gains European managers and workers had to discard archaic habits of work, abandon old traditions of class conflict, and 'emulate' the American example."[92] From the Technical Assistance program to the Assistance Productivity drive, the message did not change. It simply reiterated the need for higher productivity, claiming that Europe's industrial output was still less than one-third of the United States'.[93] The program further noted a desire to bring the means for European industry to the responsibility of individual people and businesses. The ECA had decided early on to establish an information department to

[92] Hogan, *The Marshall Plan*, 143.

[93] ECA, *Thirteenth Report to Congress*, 3.

spread the gospel of the Marshall Plan; this program took on a new dimension with the start of the Korean War in 1950. With the Production Assistance Drive, Marshall Planners essentially redoubled their efforts highlighting the need for an increase in per-person output, individual efforts to enact newer, modern methods, and maximizing production.

Though ECA officials constantly espoused the virtues of such techniques in dialogue, they also employed a far more "hands on" approach in the Productivity Mission, starting in Britain with the Anglo-American Council on Productivity (AACP). The AACP formed to exchange American and British teams of business representatives in order to share techniques. These teams took trips to each other's nations in order to exchange managerial, organizational, and general business techniques. These exchanges became fairly sophisticated with a permanent field office in New York, project managers, escort personnel, press and media liaisons, and eventually orientation centers.[94] By December 31, 1951, these USTA&P programs had sent over a hundred industrial teams to the United States, some sixty of which were British.

Not all the participating countries had the same conciliatory attitude that the British did. A similar suggestion was proposed in 1950 to France, in hopes of a joint Franco-American productivity center modeled on the Anglo-American model. Initially this idea failed due to a perception that this was foreign interference and that it was foolish to think that; "the French problem could be solved by simply applying methods used in the United States."[95] However, after a brief scramble to locate funds for the exchange program, the missions began in late 1950, as 40 missions of over 500 French citizens were sent to study in the United States. The make-up of these groups varied from highly specialized engineers, to industrial workers or officials. Two-

[94] Imanuel Wexler, *The Marshall Plan Revisited: The European Recovery Program in Economic Perspective* (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1983), 91.

[95] Quoted in Kuisel, *Seducing the French*, 74.

thirds of the focus was on industrial methods with one-third examining agricultural methods. By the end of 1953, 2,700 French had traveled to the United States.[96] The Italians and the Dutch also declined the initial suggestion to set up agencies for exchange, but by the end of 1952 all sixteen countries had these organizations in place. At the close of the program 1,600 Italians and 5,000 Germans had also engaged in these productivity missions. In 1953, American efforts to transfer their ideas of productivity culminated in the creation of the European Production Agency (EPA), as part of the OEEC. The agency was opposed by the Swiss, and Hugh Ellis-Rees, the British representative to the OEEC, stated that its creation was not entirely a matter of free will.[97]

Marshall Plan filmmakers felt that it was important to highlight these exchanges. Though the number of people who engaged in the Productivity Mission was impressive, this could hardly be enough to satisfy Marshall Planners that these practices would become widespread. It was undoubtedly true that these trips, putting strangers from similar industries together, caused the formation of networks in which new techniques were shared.[98] However, these groups were necessarily made up of managers and businessmen of large factories and plants. The films offered these officials a vehicle in which to spread the messages that Productivity Mission travelers learned to other Europeans. In some ways the films depicting these programs are the most compelling in the category of productivity. These films move beyond the suggestion of improving production methods, demonstrating that others have adopted these methods with immense success. They also show an exchange of ideas, convincing the viewer that the intellectual playing field was level, and that American advice was helpful and voluntary. Further, the films gave the European an idea of what the American way of life was. These films

[96] Kuisel, *Seducing the French*, 80.

[97] Schröter, *Americanization of the European Economy*, 50.

[98] Schröter, *Americanization of the European Economy*, 51.

not only present Europeans with the benefits of the Marshall Plan, but they show them the comparatively extravagant life that Americans lead, and urge them to ask for the same.

A More Productive Life for Everyone gives a broad overview of the benefits of the USTA&P programs. It is narrated and uses brightly colored storyboards with some animation unlike the typical documentary style of other films. The narrator begins by noting that America is a productive land and that its people are production minded. As the audience hears that America is also a prosperous land, they see workers over a hot furnace, a diamond cutter hunched over his desk with a microscope, a farmer plowing his fields, and an industrialist reviewing his charts. "Mass production methods mean lower prices to the consumer, more profit to the owner and more pay to the worker. It is this American attitude of performance that can mean so much to other nations."[99] Filmmakers switch to depict congressional proceedings where they pass the Technical Assistance program. The program sends productive teams from Europe to the United States to apply techniques they learn in America to solve productive problems back home. These representatives are made up of management, workers, technicians, and labor representatives. Interests vary from Swedish plastics to building techniques for Great Britain. Filmmakers focus on a French team at a shoe factory where they witness a stitching technique that they can use to improve productivity in their own businesses. The team goes to an ECA office, where the representative tells them that the help can always be had in overseas trade, transportation, and tourism; all of these areas can adopt aspects of American production practices. A German veterinarian who was sent to the United States to learn about X disease (an unspecified animal disease) states, "What I learned I sent home."[100]

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[99] GMLA, Production Information unknown, *A More Productive Life for Everyone* Probably a film made for the Mutual Security Agency. Location unknown. Date unknown.

[100] GMLA, Credits unknown, *A More Productive Life for Everyone*, Date unknown

At this point the film stresses the "two-way" nature of the productivity missions. U.S. experts also examine French industrial methods. Not only were some of these ideas adopted, some were put in place within a matter of hours. Nation-wide surveys help teams to incorporate better methods. One such survey showed that there were better ways of handling fish for French fishermen. In another instance a French auto worker has a problem with some car parts. He is able to ship them to an American counterpart who helps him solve the problem. The narrator lists the many ways in which European and American businesses trade ideas; mail services send information to experts, manufacturers receive, U.S. officials direct brochures and monographs to European libraries, mission teams exchange trade magazines, both parties interchange post charts and working models, and finally films and motion pictures allow for the two-way transfer of information.

The final segment returns to the French shoe factory owner from earlier in the film. This French businessman Maurice Duvareau, though skeptical, tried the new techniques. He removed useless actions, introduced new machinery, "eliminated wasted movements," and "altered disagreeable positions."[101] The factory owner also improved the working conditions in the factory with a better ventilation system, and now he makes 50 percent more shoes. The camera pans over non-descript European towns, as the narrator likens Europe to a giant, "goods are his life's blood and that blood is circulating." The giant is revived first in villages and then the nation, he explains. "The vital services of the Technical Assistance program are for all men in free nations for all men who realize that by sharing techniques and ideas and know-how with each other they all profit. This way, and only in this way, lies strength for all of us and a more productive life for everyone."[102]

[101] GMLA, Credits unknown, *A More Productive Life for Everyone*, Date unknown.

Over to You takes a more personal tone than *A More Productive Life for Everyone.* It begins by noting that the primary purpose of Marshall Aid is to distribute raw material and food to repair a war-scarred economy. However, there is another angle to Marshall Aid that is less spectacular: trading production techniques. The narrator notes that the exchange ideas should have no frontiers and should be freely given and taken. He mentions specific names of engineers in the exchange program as the camera shows each one; Tom Bannow superintendent, Arthur Russell skilled mechanic, Ernest Holmes a knitter, Doris Palmer a welter, and Clifford Grugock of the trade union. "The real purpose of this team is two-way traffic," states the narrator.[103] In the next scene, they are in New York as the narrator marvels at the fantastic Manhattan skyline. The group examines a garment factory examining the fast pace of American workers. Seven buttonholes in fifteen seconds, finishing fifty dozen shirts a day, "The average American worker goes all out for the highest possible pay packet."[104] The narrator notes that with high output comes high wages. In the evening the team records their findings on a typewriter, sometimes slipping away to listen to the radio. Another man types feverishly with his shirt undone at the neck and a cigarette in his mouth. The Europeans are learning all they can from the Americans.

The next day the team is back in a hosiery factory. As the camera focuses on the hosiery moving through the different hands of the workers, the narrator comments that the routine was turned upside down for their benefit, and they heard how the women were asked not to wear jewelry so as to not harm the nylons, while snags are fixed with a machine that is given to the team to take back to England. After the demonstration, the team feels farthest from home when

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[102] GMLA, Credits unknown, *A More Productive Life for Everyone*, Date unknown.

[103] GMLA, Crown Film Unit, Producer. *Over To You*. Film for the European Cooperation Administration. London. 1951.

[104] GMLA, Crown Film Unit, *Over to You*, 1951.

the workers clock out. "It is to America's credit that all of the lowest paid workers have their own cars. Their cost of living is high but so are their wages, and they are able to buy more things than the European worker can."[105] The viewer sees workers getting into cars after this statement. The narrator continues by noting that the cost of living is high but so are the wages, so that American workers can buy more things than the European worker. There is no limit to their ambition or ingenuity.

In the final section of the film, the British industrial team travels to Niagara Falls, the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Monument, a fashion show, and some of them are even able to witness the stock car craze. The next scene dramatically highlights the special status of these exchange students as they meet ECA head Paul Hoffman. As the group shakes hands with him, they thank him for his help with the opening of private business records and all of the cooperation they received. "We are carefully observing the attitudes of mind of the American man and woman in this great industrial machine."[106] Hoffman returns these comments with the hope that they will be missionaries in Europe, as they have in America.

When the team returns, they are assailed with questions about their vacation. The narrator jokingly states that everyone expected them to be chewing gum and wearing those zigzag ties like Americans. Unfortunately, they were all reserved mainlanders and disappointed them. They took weeks to compile the report, and finally met again to discuss their trip. In closing, the narrator comments that their serious business is to remember that management and labor have a lot to learn. "So it is over to you."[107]

Over to You operates quite successfully as an overview of the benefits of the Technical

[105] GMLA, Crown Film Unit, *Over to You,* 1951.

[106] GMLA, Crown Film Unit, *Over to You,* 1951.

[107] GMLA, Crown Film Unit, *Over to You,* 1951.

Assistance program. American business practices resoundingly win over the missionaries in the film. Both the simple request that women workers not wear jewelry, and the modern machine that repairs tears in hosiery, are noted as American ingenuity. To the viewer, there are two resounding messages: American methods will bring higher productivity, and the onscreen Europeans have already been convinced of this. The most powerful scene in the film is when the narrator expresses astonishment over the higher standard of living of American factory worker. By stressing that even factory workers own cars, it is clear that higher productivity creates prosperity for everyone.

Conclusion: What did we learn?

When Paul Hoffman discussed the benefits of the USTA&P programs, he remarked that, "even more important than what Europeans learn about lathes and plows is what they learn about America. They learned that this is the land of full shelves and bulging shops, made possible by high productivity and good wages, and that its prosperity may be emulated elsewhere by those who will work toward it."[108] This quote sums up the vision of America that ECA officials were presenting to Europeans. Higher productivity was an American doctrine that business credited with the success of their country. They acknowledged that this was anathema to many European economic practices, "it will require a profound shift in social attitudes, attuning them to the mid-twentieth century."[109] This understanding of European views shined through in the films on productivity.

The factory films addressed European fears that higher production meant the eradication

[108] Hoffman, *Peace Can Be Won,* 103.

[109] Richard Bissel quoted in Kuisel, *Seducing the French,* 73.

of craftsmanship. The filmmakers went out of their way to stress that higher output and quality are not antithetical to each other. This was carried further in the films on the exchange programs, where we saw that new methods of production and modern mechanization were for the benefit of Europe. Personal accounts stressed the ingenuity of American processes. They do not relegate the skilled worker to the unemployment line, but do jobs that are beneath a human being. Beyond that, they save time, providing the key argument: these methods will produce more, and more goods reduce prices so that everyone can afford them.

Agricultural films worked in much the same way. These films questioned the generational conflict over traditional methods of farming. Europe needs more food so it must produce more food. Youth realized the ways of the modern world and must overcome the outdated methods of their ancestors. The theme of overcoming stubborn beliefs was seen again and again. These tales of triumph were coupled with the authority of science and research as well as education. The protagonist youths often attended a local agricultural school in order to learn the best ways to employ new techniques.

The Productivity Missions were the most powerful advertisements for the raising production. These films depicted the American worker as a dynamic figure. Americans work hard because they know that their capitalist system will reward them. They work hard so that they can go home in their own cars and eat steak in the evening. These workers enjoy unfettered capitalism's rewards of cheap abundant goods. Hard work and better production methods result in a better life.

Essentially these films showed how modern techniques for higher production were a way to improve their lives. Higher productivity is shown as the way out, to make life a little better. The films also drew the viewer's attention to the economic prowess of America. Europeans

watching the films were reminded of the aid that the Marshall Plan brought, and the reasons why such aid was available. America employed these same techniques, and provided its people with surplus enough to share.

Chapter II

What Do You Mean When You Say Unity?

"The ECA's overseas information program includes: (1) dissemination of information on the nature and progress of the recovery program, and American cooperation and assistance in Europe's recovery effort; (2) countering, directly or indirectly, propaganda attacks designed to obstruct the Marshall Plan; and (3) clarifying the specific steps that are necessary to accomplish the recovery goals and the actions required on the part of individuals and governments."[1]

WWII shattered the former systems of power and structure on the European continent. The Marshall Plan was instituted out of a desire to see these systems re-established under the guiding hands of the United States. Its passage through congress was possible due to widely held fears of leftist and Communist advancement. Stemming these forces was necessary, "Given the need to reconstruct and save these areas for the West and capitalism as a necessary precondition for maximizing broader American economic goals in the world."[2] These policy makers did not distinguish between "the Left in the Greek mountains or northern French mine fields and the dictates of the Kremlin, and it was hardly prone to attribute the dynamism of local radicals to the decay of capitalism."[3] Marshall Planners therefore focused on raising the standard of living in Europe to popularize centrist politicians because they believed that Communism fed off of

[1] Economic Cooperation Administration, *Fifth Report to Congress* (Washington D.C., 1949), 65.

[2] Kolko and Kolko, *The Limits of Power,* 34.

[3] Kolko and Kolko, *The Limits of Power,* 31.

poverty, political instability, and social dislocation.[4] Economic security was imperative to combat the advancement of Communism. These planners envisioned a new Europe: a continent more closely connected for military and economic purposes.

From the start of the Marshall Plan in 1948 to the Mutual Security Agency takeover in 1952, officials unceasingly assailed Europeans with "integration" rhetoric, calling for an eradication of trade barriers and the introduction of a multilateral trading system. This urgency manifested itself quite frequently in their films. American officials purveyed the messages of economic unity and anti-Communism on their own and also intertwined them together. Marshall Plan films covered both of these issues in depth, relying on facts from the past and commonly held fears of the future. Ultimately the quest for higher productivity levels in Europe called for "a mass market to be established as the basis for intra-European trade cooperation, which, as propaganda insisted, would in turn promote peace and higher standard of living."[5]

Economic rhetoric in the films came out of American business experiences, as well as the lessons learned from the ongoing European Aid programs. Initial American stabilization programs in the form of limited reconstruction loans and relief assistance had come to naught by 1947.[6] Faced with a post-war Europe with "rigid controls of capital and trade, multiple exchange rates, and a good deal of bilateral barter," American diplomats felt that individualized aid distribution would simply reinforce this system.[7] Americans hoped that the formation of an integrated Europe would bring about their ultimate goals of higher production levels, lower

[4] Pells, *Not Like Us*, 53.

[5] De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, 347.

[6] Michael J. Hogan, "European Integration and the Marshall Plan," in Stanley Hoffman and Charles Maier eds., *The Marshall Plan: A Retrospective* (Boulder CO: Westview Pres, 1984), 1-2.

[7] Lincoln Gordon, "Lessons From the Marshall Plan: Successes and Limits," in *The Marshall Plan: A Retrospective*, 56.

prices, and ultimately bring about a higher standard of living. By 1949 Paul Hoffman and U.S. officials felt that a "United States of Europe" was ultimately what was needed.[8] ECA policymakers believed that a deregulated economic system coupled with some semblance of coordination and control could produce an economy of growth and stability.[9] American economic theories went further suggesting "Unhampered trade dovetailed with peace, high tariffs, trade barriers and unfair economic competition with war."[10] ECA officials stated that European trade barriers had been "the curse of Europe during the last fifty years," and that a continuation of these methods would "menace the continent's safety and well being in the years to come."[11]

Marshall Plan Films also addressed specific security concerns for both Americans and Europeans. For instance, though much of the debate over the Schuman Plan and the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) centered on the problem of relinquishing political autarchy and economic sovereignty, Americans saw these organizations as a means for collective security. The constant focus on Western Germany revealed concerns of both Americans other Europeans. France even viewed the decimated West Germany as a possible threat, and its economic potential was undeniable. Although initially adamant opponents of the revival of German industry, French diplomats eventually acceded to German revitalization "within the framework of controls and limitations, either already in force or to be concluded…"[12] America's fear of Western

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[8] Gordon, in *The Marshall Plan,* 56.

[9] Hogan, *The Marshall Plan*, 27. A further discussion on the unique nature of the American economic structure will follow in the second chapter.

[10] Cordell Hull quoted in Richard M. Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism: Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics, and Internal Security 1946-1948* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1972), 16.

[11] Paul Hoffman quoted in *New York Times,* Nov. 13, 1949.

German capabilities ran even deeper than this, fearing "any resurgence of German nationalism and autarky," and ultimately hoping that a reintegration would form a safeguard against Communist expansion.[13] Furthermore, both the Atlantic community and America viewed this region's surplus in coal and steel capabilities as a prize susceptible to Soviet aspirations, and ultimately either a source of strength or a threat to the Atlantic community. Americans viewed the Marshall Plan as "the way to buttress Western Europe against Communist subversion, reconcile Germany's revival with the security and economic concerns of the liberated areas, and bolster America's flagging campaign for multilateralism."[14]

The ECA film unit addressed these themes directly in some films, and summarily throughout the collection. European security was directly connected to strengthening the economy through the higher production of goods and a freer movement of these goods. By raising the standard of living, while eliminating housing shortages and hunger, they hoped to counter any appeal that Communism may have held. For Americans to achieve their own economic and political goals, they needed to successfully contain leftist and Communist forces.[15] The filmmakers used levity in some films, while others focused on the past mistakes and the possibility of future threats. In both, the theme of Atlantic unity is a key component of the message. The filmmakers sometimes merged the themes of economic integration and collective security so that unity could embody both messages. Communism and the Soviet threat took a direct role in these discussions. Multilateralism and anti-Communism were indirectly addressed within films discussing the

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[12] Raymond Poidevin, "Ambiguous Partnership: France, The Marshall Plan and the Problem of Germany," in Charles S. Maier and Günter Bischof eds., *The Marshall Plan and Germany: West German Development within the Framework of the European Recovery Program* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 359.

[13] Thomas Schwartz, "European Integration and the 'Special Relationship': Implementing the Marshall Plan in the Federal Republic," in *The Marshall Plan and Germany*, 172.

[14] Hogan, in *The Marshall Plan: A Retrospective*, 3-4.

[15] Kolko and Kolko, *The Limits of Power*, 29.

ongoing projects and accomplishments due to the Marshall Plan, but they also took center stage in a significant number of the films. One category of films approached the theme of multilateral trade with a light, even comedic, flavor. The other category hinted at a possible threat upon the horizon, using ominous language while extolling the virtues of economic unity.

An Extraordinary Overview

Made in 1950, the films in the *ERP in Action 1-12* series were each eleven minutes long, in black and white.[16] Like many of the other series in the film catalogue, this group of films expressed many of the messages in the Marshall Plan.[17] It covered topics such as the increase in multilateral trade, improved production techniques, exchange programs, and general aid. It also reminded the viewer of the goodwill contained in the Marshall Plan. The *ERP in Action* series looked at all of the countries involved in the Plan and highlighted the country-specific projects that Marshall Aid was funding in Europe. These films illustrate these two themes and how they relate to the overall message of the Marshall Plan.

ERP in Action 1-12 discuss the threat of Communism and the benefits of multilateralism both directly and indirectly. To begin with, the viewer sees the recovery situation in numerous countries. In the first film in the series the filmmakers look at achievements in Wales, Britain, Denmark, Norway, France, Turkey, and Greece. In these brief overviews and country studies,

[16] This series was made entirely in English, though according to the filmography compiled by Linda Christenson *ERP in Action 3,4,5,6, and 7* were translated into Dutch and *ERP in Action 8 and 9* were translated into Turkish, Linda Christenson, "Filmography," *George C. Marshall Foundation*, [database on-line], accessed February 22, 2006; available from http://www.marshallfilms.org/mpfdetail.asp#preface.

[17] Other film series were *The Changing Face of Europe, The Marshall Plan at Work, One-Two-Three, Strength for the Free World,* and *Turkey and the Land* cited in Linda Christenson, "Filmography," *George C. Marshall Foundation*, [database on-line], accessed February 22, 2006; available from http://www.marshallfilms.org/mpfdetail.asp#preface.

the narrator highlights the message of the ECA president. The film begins with the arrival of Paul Hoffman to a conference in France where he makes the goals of the Marshall Plan clear stating, "Since 1947 we have proved that together we can start economic recovery and alliance against attack. …anxiety gives way to hope and turns hope into confidence."[18] It is already clear from the first *ERP* film that European unity (with the implication of economic growth) and anti-Communism are united to encapsulate Marshall Plan aims.

Other films in the series highlight the numerous public exhibitions that spread the message of both the Marshall Plan and multilateral trade. For instance in *ERP in Action 2* the narrator draws attention to West Germany's re-admittance into European relations. This new role includes a membership to the Marshall Plan and access to ERP Funds. Scenes of a Marshall Plan exhibit in Berlin while the narrator states, "for two million West Germans this show represents freedom from the Soviets."[19] As the Berliners mill around the massive exhibit, the message is clear: one must reduce isolationist political tendencies in order to repel the Soviet threat, as well as embrace higher production methods to create prosperity. Filmmakers repeat this formula in *ERP in Action 4*. Another Marshall Plan exhibit is on display at a Viennese spring fair. Sellers have come to see the wares of other countries and market their own products, which provides the perfect opportunity for a Marshall Plan exhibit. One display encourages the lifting of European trade barriers, with a miniature model that shows the lifting of several guard gates one sees at border crossings.

Some *ERP in Action* films specifically address the possibilities in the American marketplace. *ERP in Action 4* focuses on an eleven man team that is teaching United Kingdom

[18] GMLA, European Cooperation Administration. Producer. *ERP In Action No. 1*. Film for the European Cooperation Administration. Paris. 1950.

[19] GMLA, European Cooperation Administration. Producer. *ERP In Action No. 2*. Film for the European Cooperation Administration. Paris. 1950.

businessmen how to penetrate American markets. The speaker of the group admits that the market is rugged and competitive, but goes on to claim that the fine products of the British can stand up to American standards. It is a new market that is ready to be tapped, and the United Kingdom's reputation precedes it. *ERP in Action 5* discusses the expansion of the world market at a fair in Brussels, where Marshall Planners intend to bring facts and figures from America to show how to expand into the world market.

Perhaps the most interesting way this series expresses the need for multilateralism and unity was in its focus on the Western European poster contest in *ERP in Action 5*. The viewer sees several artists hard at work on canvases. The entrants range from accomplished artists to hopeful students and ECA officials award many prizes. Officials take 100,000 entries and whittle them down to 300, then 4, and finally choose a winner at a concluding ceremony. "Cooperation among nations is necessary for success," the narrator intones.[20]

In many ways, this poster contest served as an example of how Marshall Planners attempted to promote an integrated Europe. The winner of the poster contest was Reijn Dirksen from the Netherlands with a poster entitled *All out Colours to the Mast,* which depicted a sailboat with a sail made up of the flags from all the countries participating in the Marshall Plan.[21] Other flags highlighted the same idea; one featured the word "Europe" in the shape of a factory with the flags forming a support under the building while another displayed a man constructed with the different flags stirring a pot labeled "ERP."[22]

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[20] GMLA, European Cooperation Administration. Producer. *ERP In Action No. 5*. Film for the European Cooperation Administration. Paris. 1950.

[21] Smithsonian, February 16, 2006. http://www.npg.si.edu/exh/marshall/mast.htm

[22] Seen in Shulberg, Sandra and Richard Pena, *Selling Democracy: Films of the Marshall Plan 1948-1953* (New York, 2004), 3.

The filmmakers successfully promote the idea of a European identity through these broad notions of unity. In the *ERP in Action 12*, when discussing Britain's entrance into NATO, the narrator remarks on the right to "live in a world which recognizes the right of man to live think clearly, speak freely, and live decently, without fear and without shame."[23] The *ERP in Action* series, as well as other films that do cursory overviews,[24] create an idea of unity by focusing on a European-wide effort. By including several nations and several projects per eleven minute film, the films emphasize both the ubiquitous and the individualistic nature of ERP Aid. Cycling through the different nations and their shared needs enables filmmakers to create the idea of a unified Atlantic community. They show that each country is involved with individual projects, but essentially linked in a grander effort: The rebuilding of Europe. The films show that improving farming methods is both a Turkish and French goal. Ship building takes place in both Trieste and Norway. In order to further this point, they stress the likenesses between nations while warning viewers that differences can be Europe's downfall. The films create an other, or "non-Europe-ness." Sometimes the unity is explicitly expressed, but the viewer also infers this when they see how alike the different countries are. The viewer is left not only with the pride of achievement in his or her own nation, but is also left with the idea that there is a specific European identity that must be contrasted with a Soviet-Communist one.

Cartoons, European Laborers, and Snowball Fights

[23] GMLA, European Cooperation Administration. Producer. *ERP In Action No. 12*. Film for the European Cooperation Administration. Paris. 1950..

[24] The *One, Two, Three* Series, *The ERP in Action* Series, and *The Changing Face of Europe* Series all operate in this way.

Although the *ERP in Action* series creates a general idea of identity and unity, other films approach this issue directly using the common movie devices of satire and misfortune to win over audiences. These films specifically address "new" ideas of unity, and create a far more powerful message than the overview films discussed above. In these films the viewer is far more likely to engage the ideas onscreen, partly because they are given specific characters and crisis situations. Furthermore, these specific problems take place in various countries, bringing out the concept of unity for each viewer.

The following three films all stress the need for European unity, but in different ways. In the first two films, the filmmakers use first humor, and then hardship, to convince Europeans that their individual economic problems are more alike than they think. Though they both stress the need for unity, the second film expands this theme further to include an emphasis on the ramifications of its failure. *Let's Be Childish,* the third film, though light in tone questions the rationality of fervent nationalism. The most striking aspect of these films is the way they portray individual problems as "European" problems, forcing the viewer to rethink national exceptionalism.

The Technicolor cartoon *The Shoemaker and the Hatter* primarily uses jocosity to convey its messages about the future of Europe's economy. This film, which featured the same cartoonists who would go on to make the animated version of Orwell's *Animal Farm,* approached multilateral trade with the adventures of two European businessmen. It begins by introducing the viewer to a hatter and shoemaker trying to restart their respective businesses after the war. The hatter decides that he will make one hat a week and charge a substantial sum, while the shoemaker takes the opposite approach and creates as many shoes as he can. However, the shoemaker barely makes enough money on his shoe business to feed his family. In contrast, the

hatter's business strategy is to make sure hats cannot be imported without a high tariff. He amasses all the hatters in the town, forming a large procession to present a petition to the mayor, convincing him to pass a large tax on imported hats. Our shoemaker, the protagonist, considers this same move, but instead decides to get a machine to increase his productivity. He too, goes for help to the mayor but gets an import license instead. He tries to sell his leather in the same country where he is getting the machine, but finds that they have a high tax on imported leather. Finally he gets his machine, but he has to pay a high tariff on it. However, the next scene has him making shoes at a furious pace. He can even employ more people because of the machine. His family is finally able to wear the shoes that their father makes.

The cartoon then mocks the notion of tariffs. With his surplus of shoes, the shoemaker travels by train, trying to sell his product in different countries. It seems clear that this trip is covering Western Europe countries. In each country he finds that others have the same problem; one man has a farcical number of cheese wheels he cannot sell, and another man has a ridiculously huge pile of lumber for his country's furniture-makers he cannot unload. The shoemaker even finds a country with an absurd surplus of hats, "Pity they couldn't export them because of our hatter."[25] Meanwhile, in his home country, people walk by the hatter's store and stare at the one hat that none of them can afford. These examples lead to the inevitable conclusion of the cartoon. When the shoemaker returns, he marches up to the mayor and calls for an end to all tariffs. The mayor gets on the phone with the leaders from the other countries, and they all agree to eliminate the tariffs. Once tariffs are eliminated, all of the products flow where they are needed. The hatter is forced to become a carriage driver, while the shoemaker absorbs his old shop, and everyone has the consumer goods they need. "Efficient producers

[25] GMLA, John Hallis, Director, *The Shoemaker and the Hatter* Film for the European Cooperation Administration. London. 1950.

everywhere enlarged and increased production, which meant more work and more goods all around."[26]

Translated into eleven languages and shown in movie houses all over Western Europe, this cartoon was immensely popular.[27] By depicting local merchants and craftsman all in the same economic situation, the film succeeds in appealing to a wide audience. The artists depict the shoemaker as a hardworking man, who is unsure at first what to do about his post-war situation but is convinced that making as many shoes as possible is far better than making one pair and charging a high price for it. In contrast, the hatter has only a wife to support, acts with devious intentions, is drawn in fine clothing, and has a perpetual sneer upon his face. He shows no sign of sympathy when locals get pelted by rain outside of his shop and stare longingly at his one hat for sale. Aside from these obvious caricatures of rough and respectable, the shoemaker's free market odyssey powerfully brings home the point of the film. The viewer is sure to wonder, "Why shouldn't all the barriers be opened up if we are all sitting on surpluses?" The European businessmen's farcical surpluses provoke a comedic response. Piles of goods surround them and they shake their heads at the absurdity of their situation: the common man suffering the whims of misguided politicians. This message is carried further in the actions of the mayor. When the hatter brings his petition for a tariff with a mob, the mayor fearfully hides and then quickly accedes to the will of the hatters. He is shown first to be a weak and fearful character: a caricature in opposition to a wise politician considering the needs of businessmen in his country. Though the mayor redeems himself at the end of the film by removing tariffs, the cartoonists

[26] GMLA, Hallis, *The Shoemaker and the Hatter*, 1950.

[27] Linda Christenson's filmography has only Italian, German, and Dutch language versions of the film listed but in the film's description she mentions that it was translated into eleven languages. Linda Christenson, "Marshall Plan Filmography Preface," *George C. Marshall Foundation*, [database on-line], accessed April 6, 2006; available from http://www.marshallfilms.org/mpfdetail.asp#preface.

clearly lambaste the role of government in their film. The lesson is to take charge of economic change yourself, and eradicate the foolish trade barriers that far-removed politicians have set in place.

The documentary style film, *The Years of Decision,* takes the same theme but stresses the sameness of Europeans further. The film begins with the end of the war and the first attempts to restart European economies. "After years of starvation and suffering life is at last worth living again."[28] Farm and factory products are being exchanged again, with food in the markets that had not been seen since pre-war days. To stress this point the narrator introduces the viewer to an international cast. Goula, a Dutch textile worker, produces cloth for international trade; John Clayton, a British coal worker, provides for his country and the rest of Europe; Pietro Leone makes steel from abroad in Turin, and in France farmer Msgr. Olivier grows food with machines he never used before. The narrator then intones; "Beneath the rubble of the war-torn cities and towns, lies the wreckage of Europe's productive capacity," but there is hope because, "the people of Europe did not lack courage."[29] They rebuilt with whatever was at hand because they did not have time to replace old or outmoded machinery. Men went back to their jobs and life improved, but they were all occupied with rebuilding their own countries and trade was slow. It is slow going when you are trying to produce food with antiquated methods, or trying to use rotted nets to revive the fishing industry.

The narrator dashes this optimistic description of Europe's recovery by describing a drought in 1947. Coal production ceases and things become grim for the people of Europe.

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[28] GMLA, March of Time all credits, *The Years of Decision,* Film for the European Cooperation Administration, Paris, 1950. Dutch and French versions of this film are listed in the Christenson filmography. Linda Christenson, "Marshall Plan Filmography," *George C. Marshall Foundation,* [database on-line], accessed April 6, 2006; available from http://www.marshallfilms.org/mpf.asp.

[29] GMLA, March of Time, *The Years of Decision,* 1950.

"Though John Clayton and the other miners of Europe worked hard and long, they could not dig enough coal to keep their homes warm and their factories running full time."[30] "Coal had to be doled out to people."[31] As the coal industry falters so does factory output, and power plants are put on a restricted schedule. Goods that Europeans need disappear from the shelves and farmers are reluctant to sell produce and livestock. People are forced to live by the black market, "illegally."[32] Trade within nations is bad, but international trade is even worse, as people refuse to exchange with each other. "Belgium was building freight cars and would willingly sell them. But France could not buy them because Belgium would not accept French francs in payment."[33]

Here the narrator sums up the dire situation in Europe, setting up the entry of the Marshall Plan. They have gone as far as they can in two years, but now in 1947 they are producing below what they need: only two-thirds in textiles, coal less than two-quarters, half enough steel and only two-thirds in food production. As Europe is facing collapse, General Marshall makes an appeal to their people, "if they would work together, the United States would supply the money for food and raw materials essential to recovery."[34] Here the film summarizes the well known stages of the plan: the leaders meeting in Paris, Molotov's rejection of the plan, the sixteen nations that accept the plan, the appointment of Paul Hoffman, and the appropriation of five billion dollars from the U.S. Congress for the Plan.

The film then takes a positive tone again as Marshall Funds provide the impetus for recovery. Europeans note that this is an outright gift. People crowd around their radios listening

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[30] GMLA, March of Time, *The Years of Decision,* 1950.

[31] GMLA, March of Time, *The Years of Decision,* 1950.

[32] GMLA, March of Time, *The Years of Decision,* 1950.

[33] GMLA, March of Time, *The Years of Decision,* 1950.

[34] GMLA, March of Time, *The Years of Decision,* 1950.

to news of the Plan. They then receive much needed food. Marshall Plan aims are not only to provide food for Europeans, but to help them supply these needs on their own. The film then returns to the individual European stories. Goula's cotton factory re-opens, and he is back to work. Marshall Aid delivers coal to John Clayton's mine, helping this mine increase its tonnage by thirteen million over the next year. Food and raw goods move across borders, bringing the economy back to life again. "Whatever Europe needed for recovery could now be obtained with Marshall Plan Funds."[35] Norwegians are fishing again with new nets; they even have a thriving international canning industry thanks to Marshall Plan Funds. British markets are buying these fish, while in Turin Pietro's steel exports give him the money to buy spaghetti again. Our French farmer is selling his products and wants a tractor to increase his yield. The money he spends on the American tractor goes to public works, power plants, and gives jobs to French workers in the countryside.

European officials use Marshall Funds to build houses, and the film stresses that there is an overall trend of more jobs in factories and more production with skilled labor. "As production rose all over Europe shop windows were filled again."[36] Though the narrator notes that it is a long way until 1952, overall production was up ten percent, coal production was up eleven percent, textiles eighteen percent, and steel eighty percent. At the close of the film the narrator explains that some friends are still out of work and cannot afford the things they want, but "at the turn of the half-century millions of people throughout Western Europe knew that the Marshall Plan worked, and they were working with it..."[37]

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[35] GMLA, March of Time, *The Years of Decision,* 1950.

[36] GMLA, March of Time, *The Years of Decision,* 1950.

[37] GMLA, March of Time, *The Years of Decision,* 1950.

This film discusses the need for intra-Europe trade by highlighting the personal tragedies of several members of the European community. It brings to flesh the type of situations described in *The Shoemaker and the Hatter*. John Clayton, Pietro, and Goula all have the same problems. They simply want to feed their families, but the failure of the European community to work together has crippled them all. Just as the shoemaker and his European counterparts had surpluses that they could do nothing with, Belgium finds itself with a surplus of freight cars that it cannot sell France, due to currency incompatibilities. The Marshall Plan provides the impetus to convince them, and their elected officials, that this is the way to economic success. In this film the benefits appear to be purely based on consumption.

Though Marshall Plan Funds succeeded in alleviating the tragic situation described in the months before it came to Europe, the real goal appears to be more free trade coupled with higher production. For Marshall Planners, intra-European trade creates the impetus for increased production. Towards the end of the film, when Europe's economy has been restarted, the positive result is full shop windows. Full windows and goods for everyone is the result of this new trade system. When the film closes, the narrator acknowledges the uphill drive to 1952, but the problem is not only the unemployment of some but their inability to buy the things they want. "Want" is stressed here, instead of "need."

Both the *The Shoemaker and the Hatter* and *The Years of Decision* emphasize the idea that an intra-European trade system providing "full shelves" will be the solution to European problems. This concept was often at loggerheads with European economic opinion. American views manifested themselves explicitly in the latter half of 1949, when Paul Hoffman and other ECA officials attempted to strengthen the OEEC and overcome the widespread resistance to this concept. They believed that a "centralized authority in a corporative body with a European

identity," with "congruent monetary and fiscal policies" was needed to form an economic integration that they would be pleased with.[38] They believed European economic success would come with "the removal of quotas" and "the use of tariffs as a cushion and not as a quantitative restriction."[39] When United States officials saw Britain dragging their feet on the decision to appoint a leader to the OEEC, they stated; "Congress might curtail its support for the third year of the Marshall Plan unless further 'progress toward economic integration' was forthcoming."[40]

This economic message could be seen as well in the American media coverage of the Marshall Plan. Journalists and ECA officials continually pointed to the altruistic nature of American Aid and the steadfast refusal of Europeans to accede to their simple requests. "Meanwhile it is well to note that ECA, in its undramatic fashion, is doing some dramatic things… it authorized $123,532,633 for foreign aid, which is close to a rate of $ 6.5 million a year."[41] Another author plaintively points to an agreement that every ERP participating country has signed. Article 2 states that the recipient of aid must take steps to "promote types of production essential to the recovery program: to take measures to achieve financial stability, and to cooperate in stimulating trade, reducing trade barriers and eliminating restrictive trade practices."[42] The author goes on to note Paul Hoffman's "mental anguish" at the European failure to adopt these practices and even posits that Hoffman must wonder if "eliminating restrictive trade restrictions," may only be figures of speech in Western Europe. For Marshall Plan officials this economic unity was needed, but beyond this they desired unity in the bigger,

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[38] Hogan, *The Marshall Plan*, 282-283.

[39] Hogan, *The Marshall Plan*, 291.

[40] Quoted in Hogan, *The Marshall Plan*, 284.

[41] *New York Times,* Sep. 28, 1948.

[42] *New York Times,* Dec. 26, 1949.

more ideological sense. American officials hoped to encourage a more distinct idea of Europe among Europeans. They helped to form these various military and economic organizations in order to help establish a more definite idea of European identity.

This drive for a European sense of "unity" is the primary message in *Let's be Childish*. The film takes place at an unspecified Alpine resort, though the word "Europe" is clearly written on the outside of the building. The dialogue is in various European languages; however, the final lesson is delivered in English.[43] It opens with children of all different nationalities playing out in the snow. The camera moves among the children so that the viewer can hear them speaking in their own languages. An English child, Toni, arrives at the resort and is told she can play outside. Toni tries to join in with the different groups, but they turn her away, each in their own language. Their play is interrupted by drumming and an announcement that the hotel is awarding a four pound box of sweets for the "best snow model."[44] After the announcement the children excitedly go back to work building their forts. However, things go awry when the Swedish children finish. Someone steals part of Toni's fort, one child steals a shovel from another, and a giant snowball fight erupts. In the ensuing fray Toni is struck with a snowball, cuts her face, and begins to cry. All of the children stop and gather around her, and then place her on a sled, transporting her to her parents.

The next sequence begins with sad music playing as the children look at the devastated snow forts around them. "We couldn't start all over again," says one.[45] The next scene is at the candy shop. Some of the children attempt to pool their money for some candy, but only two

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[43] Linda Christenson's filmography lists translated versions of *Let's Be Childish* in Italian, Dutch, French, and German. Linda Christenson, "Marshall Plan Filmography," *George C. Marshall Foundation*, [database on-line], accessed April 6, 2006; available from http://www.marshallfilms.org/mpf.asp.

[44] GMLA, George Freedland, Director, *Let's Be Childish*, Film for the European Cooperation Agency, Paris, 1951.

[45] GMLA, Freedland, *Let's Be Childish*, 1951.

currencies are accepted. Their next idea is to all pitch in to build a new fort, while one child goes to check on Toni. Drums sound again, and Toni comes out wearing an eye-patch to see that the new fort is labeled "Toni Ville." Soldiers march up to the new snow fort and award the children first prize, as Toni takes the chocolates from the announcer's hands. "These children, from all the corners of Europe, have overcome the barrier of language that separates their countries. They have understood each other and united their efforts to make this contest their common cause. May it be a lesson to our adult world."[46] At the close of the film, the parents arrive to congratulate their children but end up arguing with each other, each claiming that their children could have done it on their own, as their kids ski down the hill in unity.

Although the film is decidedly light-hearted in nature, it conveys some very interesting messages about unity. The desire of each group of children to work on their own plays as an obvious reference to ardent, residual nationalism. Toni's injury is the only thing to stop the fighting children. Her dramatic accident becomes the rallying point for the kids. The destruction of the forts functions as an allegory to the devastation of the two World Wars. The children's nationalistic pride creates the differences and fortifications, which then cause the injury of Toni and the destruction of their projects. These children subsequently seek Toni's approval, fighting to award her the prize. This leads them to the scene in the chocolate shop, which also sends a clear message. Currency complications prevent the children from simply buying Toni candy to express their regrets. Here it is clear too that economic differences create the disparate environment they must avoid. So in the end they must unite for their better good and overcome their language barriers to please their new English friend. When they pitch in together they receive a prize, so that they learn to quell their individual nationalistic aims for the greater good.

[46] GMLA, Freedland, *Let's Be Childish*, 1951.

The title, "Let's be childish," obviously refers to the lessons learned by the children, but it has deeper meanings. It refers to the foolishness of nationalism, and its negative effects on the economy and security of Europe.

This film makes references to the need for an economic unity, but it is clear that the film is reaching for a more encompassing notion of the word. A more dramatic message is encoded in *Let's Be Childish's* notion of unity. This sense of unity is tied to the growing fear by American and ECA officials of the Soviet Communist threat. Dramatic events in 1950 forced a re-assessment of American goals in Europe. With the North Korean invasion on their minds, ECA policymakers rushed to "push Western European unity under a great economic and military umbrella."[47] Constant rhetoric over the implications of this invasion altered the focus of the Marshall Plan. Now the focus would be on Europe's self-defense rather than strictly economic goals. An ECA Paris paper in 1950 suggested reformatting policy guidelines to "increase European 'stability, self-confidence and, therefore, self-respect.'"[48] Another report outlined the reformatted manifesto of the Marshall Plan. "(1) Marshall Aid and military assistance are good for you because they give you as Europeans – a fighting chance to make Europe strong enough to discourage any aggression. (2) *But* – this strength can only be achieved through unity. As separate, rival powers, the nations of Free Europe *are* weak; *are* dangerously exposed. (3) Productivity must increase because more food, more machines, more of nearly everything is needed to make Europe so strong it will be unassailable."[49] This type of rhetoric developed due to an American conception that European ruling groups were stricken with "neutralism, pacifism,

[47] Kolko and Kolko, *The Limits of Power*, 473.

[48] Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe*, 179.

[49] From a *Mission Memorandum* sub-file in Aug. 1950. Quoted in Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe*, 179.

and we-don't-want-to-be-occupiedism."[50] This report highlights the same security messages that are evident in the film. When divided, the children only create chaos, but when they work together they right their wrongs and create a winning situation. Unity and security are connected even more dramatically in the next two films.

Border Troubles and the Ruhr

Marshall Plan Films often took a more serious tone when discussing the need for European unity and economic collaboration. To make this point, some films used widespread, post-war fears, to persuade viewers of the direness of their situation. These films not only made references to the fears of the future, but also to the destructive decisions of the past. Marshall Plan filmmakers present European viewers with two versions of possible catastrophe: repeating the mistakes of the past and not preparing themselves for the threat of the future. In general films referring directly to the Soviet threat as an impetus for unification are far more prevalent, but these films also point to the surrounding destruction of WWII to argue for economic cooperation. *Me and Mr. Marshall* and *The Hour of Choice* deal with both of these issues. As we will see, music and graphics helped to make the films even more terrifying and plausible. Both films use fear effectively to underline their messages.

Me and Mr. Marshall begins with a written statement on the screen, "This is a translated version of a film produced under the auspices of Information Control Division, Office of Military Government for Germany (US), as part of the reorientation program for the German people. It is now being shown, both commercially and non-commercially, throughout the US

[50] Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe,* 180.

Zone of Germany."[51] The film introduces us to the narrator and main character, Hans Fischer, who states that he is twenty-six and that his profession is an "optimist." He then recollects the history that led him to the mines. After he hears a speech on doing one's part for Germany, he travels to the Ruhr to become a miner. Although the work is hard: eight hours a day, six days a week, he remarks that meals are great (he further notes that they total fifteen-hundred calories a day). He compares joining the coal industry to enlisting for the army, "except this time the shoes fit, and the beds were softer too."[52] The introductory segment of the film closes with Hans describing how he learned to work in the mine with a multitude of people, who only had the color black in common.

Here the film shifts, as Hans realizes the further implications in increased coal mining. He knows it is complicated but he thinks he has it figured out. This is where George C. Marshall enters the film. Marshall points out the tough time Europe is having, with its bombed out cites and disrupted trade and industry, "from Stalingrad to Paris."[53] "War threw a monkey wrench into the whole machinery of European trade."[54] "Unless something was done about it Europe could go kaput. Because when people get hungry enough, or cold enough, or hopeless enough they start to look for the easy answers: uniforms, slogans, violence, and barbwire. And the world couldn't take that again."[55] Hans proceeds to read a good part of the original Harvard address.[56]

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[51] GMLA, HICOG producer, *Me and Mr. Marshall,* Film for the European Cooperation Agency, Germany, 1949? Though the Christenson filmography has two English language versions and one German version listed, the German version seems to also be in English. Linda Christenson, "Marshall Plan Filmography," *George C. Marshall Foundation*, [database on-line], accessed April 6, 2006; available from http://www.marshallfilms.org/mpf.asp.

[52] GMLA, HICOG, *Me and Mr. Marshall,* 1949?

[53] GMLA, HICOG, *Me and Mr. Marshall,* 1949?

[54] GMLA, HICOG, *Me and Mr. Marshall,* 1949?

[55] GMLA, HICOG, *Me and Mr. Marshall,* 1949?

As in the beginning of the film, subtitles display the lines that Hans reads. The specific section of the speech stresses America's commitment to assist any country that asks for assistance, their resolution to deter any country or political party from perpetuating misery for profit, and their belief that Europeans have the right to determine the usage of American Aid.

As the speech ends, Hans proudly exclaims, "Everybody called it the Marshall Plan."[57] He goes on to note that though Moscow thought it would lead to interference, sixteen countries joined. Here the filmmakers use an animated graphic to show the countries that accepted and those that declined. A black wave gradually envelopes the Eastern European countries and the Soviet Union. Hans proceeds to discuss Germany's dismal situation. Before the war they imported and exported frequently, but after it ended, all they had was scrap metal to sell. They tried to restart industry, but Hans describes the problem with mechanical production and food production: "there's not enough coal because there's not enough machinery; there's not enough machinery because there's not enough steel there's not enough steel; because there's not enough coal," and "No farm equipment, no food; no food, no production; no production, no export; no export, no import; no import, no farm equipment, no food."[58] Hans then discusses the amount of aid that the Marshall Plan provided, allowing them to start up trade with the whole world by increasing their coal output. Hans concludes the film with a personal touch: "I like being part of all this. It's something big and good, and I think its going to pay off. For Europe, for Germany, yes, and for me too. That's why I'm down here eight hours a day, six days a week. Name? Hans

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[56] Noted in the Christenson filmography. Linda Christenson, "Marshall Plan Filmography," *George C. Marshall Foundation*, [database on-line], accessed April 6, 2006; available from http://www.marshallfilms.org/mpf.asp.

[57] GMLA, HICOG, *Me and Mr. Marshall*, 1949?

[58] GMLA, HICOG, *Me and Mr. Marshall*, 1949?

Fischer. Profession? Just call me a Marshall Planner."[59] The film ends with scenes of people window shopping and men working in a factory.

Me and Mr. Marshall sends very deliberate messages concerning the need for more coal, the role that Germany must play in this goal, the likely dangers surrounding a failure of post war reconstruction, and finally the goodwill of the Marshall Plan. By using Hans as the inside character who confides in the viewer, the film can claim to be projecting common, "German" views. Hans is a simple man who realizes Germany needs to revamp the coal industry and take part in multilateral trade. He begins the film describing himself only as a twenty-six year-old miner and optimist, but ends the film a "Marshall Planner." His experience as a Ruhr coal miner is described as hard but rewarding: he even mentions the high amount of calories he is given. Yet it is when Hans begins discussing George Marshall that the viewer understands the importance of coal. The film transmits the message that a higher output of coal and industry is necessary to prevent yet another war. As the viewer digests this, the filmmakers commence to show images of Marshall and highlight parts of his speech. The filmmakers display the Marshall Plan as the answer to all of Germany's problems. Excerpts taken from the speech head off the expected remonstrations: Europe will be left to decide how it will use American Aid.

The use of fear in the film helps to create the idea of a united Europe. This is evident first in the prophetic references to barbwire and slogans made by Hans. By implying that the horrible things of the not-so-distant past may recur, the filmmakers seize upon the worst fears of Europeans. Without a unified economic front, the situation in post-war Europe could denigrate into yet another world war. Increased coal production and trade must prevent this from happening. Viewers are drawn into the post-war misery of Germany after coal is shown as the primary product in a complex commodity chain; therefore, Hans' work becomes essential to

[59] GMLA, HICOG, *Me and Mr. Marshall*, 1949?

European recovery and stability. Indeed, the growth of the West German economy is directly tied to the maintenance of peace in Europe.

In *The Hour of Choice* the narrator begins by discussing the accomplishments of the European continent, "The land of the setting sun."[60] Much has been accomplished in Europe's history, "despite diversity and difference."[61] The music takes on an ominous tone as the narrator mentions the equally long history of borders. Though man should have strived to defeat these divisions, they were perpetuated instead. Here the filmmakers use scenes from a Catholic ceremony to show some attempt at unifying Europeans. Despite these differences European successfully, "launched an era of productive science."[62] However, the narrator stresses the notions "partners yet rivals," and "unity and difference," as antithetical in nature. This is followed by scenes of people celebrating in festivals and relaxing watching fireworks. The fireworks turn into bombs exploding, and the screen is filled with visions of chaos. "In every tongue the testimony is the same. In difference, there can be no unity."[63] When these images cease, the narrator notes that there is a new threat. A scene of a parade shows people holding pictures of Lenin and Stalin. Western Europe is no longer the center of the world, and a totalitarian regime is rising in the East.

The film then shifts to the Marshall Plan. Filmmakers contrast American state nation-building: "a mighty nation, born of our own diversity made one from many by the voluntary will

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[60] GMLA, Gaumont British Picture Corporation Ltd, Producers, *The Hour of Choice*, London, 1951. The Christenson filmography has versions of this film in German and Portuguese. Linda Christenson, "Marshall Plan Filmography," *George C. Marshall Foundation*, [database on-line], accessed April 6, 2006; available from http://www.marshallfilms.org/mpf.asp.

[61] GMLA, Gaumont, *The Hour of Choice*, 1951.

[62] GMLA, Gaumont, *The Hour of Choice*, 1951.

[63] GMLA, Gaumont, *The Hour of Choice*, 1951.

of forty-eight United States and now forging beyond us in wealth and strength."[64] The film shows scenes of rebuilding and asks if Europe is really going to continue stressing differences. George C. Marshall, "a level soldier's voice, speaking now in terms of selfless statesmanship," states that America must do what it can, and within a few months American officials decide how much aid each European nation will get. With European work and ideas coupled with American materials and machines, the Plan will rebuild Europe.

In the next segment the narrator asks rhetorical questions with an incredulous tone. "Is it reasonable to revive our differences? To set up our frontiers and our barriers again? Is it sane when confronted with a show of strength?"[65] The freedom loving countries must form a European union with heartfelt intentions. He goes on to stress that such a union must be something "close and real and vital."[66] Next, he discusses current programs in Europe that foment unity, describing them all as acts of faith. Programs like the Schuman Plan, a simple act of faith, "but it may mean much to those who still lack a hearth, a home, a simple job."[67] "For everyone who shops around for something a little different, a little new," The European Payments Plan is another act of faith, solving the problems of exchange and currency. The final act of faith is shown to be the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. "Allies cannot afford to be antagonists," for this could lead to, "helpless impotence in the moment of assault."[68]

Here the film makes its final plea for the dissolution of barriers for the greater good. Strength is needed now more than ever, stresses the narrator. He mentions the possibilities of a

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[64] GMLA, Gaumont, *The Hour of Choice*, 1951.

[65] GMLA, Gaumont, *The Hour of Choice*, 1951.

[66] GMLA, Gaumont, *The Hour of Choice*, 1951.

[67] GMLA, Gaumont, *The Hour of Choice*, 1951.

[68] GMLA, Gaumont, *The Hour of Choice*, 1951.

common market; "if our trade knew no barriers, if our goods knew no restriction, living would be better for us all. Brighter, cheaper, fuller."[69] There is also a final mention of the danger of maintaining barriers should war be thrust upon them. At the film's close the viewer sees an arrival at a border crossing as the narrator states, "let the barriers vanish. For all that we possess of energy and skill can only yield its full reward if we're united in name in mind in heart in action."[70]

The Hour of Choice takes a much stronger tone than *Me and Mr. Marshall*. Not only does it claim that division caused the Second World War, but its second, more central message, is that these divisions could result in the failure to defend against a new threat. It first incorporates Europe's long history as divided and united, in order to show the resulting tragedy of WWII. The description of Europe is both scathing and admiring. Though the narrator recognizes the great achievements of the "land of the setting sun," he concludes that their divisions have crippled them. Filmmakers claim that Europe is no longer the center of the world as they introduce images of Communist rallies. The film describes America as "forged in unity," the antithesis of a Europe riddled with divisions and barriers. Marshall's characterization is as a "level soldier's voice," contrasting with the irrationality of Europe's warmongering. America is portrayed as a rational helping hand, willing to fix the mistakes of their Atlantic neighbors.

Particularly striking are the emphatically worded questions the narrator poses about maintaining the former barriers of Europe. He uses "we," showing that it is a fellow European asking his countrymen these questions. He then describes the progress Europe has made to create unity. The film then points out the different programs in Europe that are working to create a more united Europe (The Schuman Plan, the EPU, and NATO), labeling them "acts of faith."

[69] GMLA, Gaumont, *The Hour of Choice*, 1951.

[70] GMLA, Gaumont, *The Hour of Choice*, 1951.

Here the film makes its main points on the need for an intra-European economic system. He lists the benefits of these programs and their future possibilities, making the overall claim that "living could be better for us all." At the close of the film, a car approaches a border crossing with its gates down, giving the viewer a literal example of the film's main point.

These ideas reflect the confidence that ECA officials expressed in the progress towards a more unified Europe. They maintained confidence in their information program, stating that there was "greater public interest in and acceptance of realistic measures for the strengthening of Europe's economic position."[71] These officials continued, stating that there was "public acceptance, if not enthusiasm," for balancing budgets, increasing dollar exports, liberalizing trade, stabilizing currencies, and increasing investment. All to improve the standard of living.[72] Just as the film claims that Europe has turned away from Communism and towards NATO, so did the report. It also noted the weakening of the "Third Force," the name for European isolationism.[73] While extolling the gains made in forging a unified Europe, ECA officials acknowledged that there had been some resistance to their ideas due to misconceptions. These "misconceptions," could reflect efforts by the Left to show that NATO and the ERP were mechanisms to drag Europe into American wars, or even that the ECA's primary goal was to "shore up economic and social systems which are not popular and to restore to power reactionary and conservative vested interests."[74] Furthermore, the Marshall Plan had come to represent American foreign policy as a whole, so that Soviet Cominform attacks were necessarily centered

[71] Economic Cooperation Administration, *Ninth Report to Congress* (Washington D.C., 1950), 36.

[72] ECA, *Ninth Report*, 36.

[73] ECA, *Ninth Report*, 37.

[74] Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe*, 180.

not only on the Plan, but on the American nation.[75] Thus the report suggested focusing their future information program on conveying "the nature and tactics of the Communist threat throughout the world," and "The development of understanding of the Marshall Plan's contribution to Europe's military and economic strength, its independence, standard of life, and free institutions."[76]

This summary of the ECA's unification information campaign serves to highlight the main messages in *Me and Mr. Marshall* and *The Hour of Choice.* Both films remind the viewer that Marshall Aid came after European practices led to a devastating war. Integration, cooperation, and unity are the lofty messages of the films. The films use negative imagery of destroyed landscapes, actual warfare, animated threats, and children in slums to convey the need for economic and military unification.

Conclusion: Onward Toward Unity!

The subject of European intra-national trade was one of the first listed priorities of American policymakers. Many advancements of the Marshall Plan were measured by the formation of the OEEC, the EPU, and NATO; all programs that brought Europeans under cooperative systems. Marshall Plan policymakers considered these programs vital to the recovery of Europe. As we have seen, the ECA's film unit addressed these issues in detail. Lighter films, such as *The Shoemaker and the Hatter*, poked fun at a carnivalesque world where trade barriers prevented the cheap flow of goods that people needed (like shoes) but also items that people wanted (like hats). Americans wanted to put forth a new way to look at trade and

[75] ECA, *Ninth Report,* 38.

[76] ECA, *Ninth Report,* 39.

consumer desires under the auspices of the Marshall Plan. As we took the animated train with the shoemaker, we could see the surpluses that were blocking up the ability of everyone to afford cheese, furniture, and shoes. The tenet of free trade became the key to a new consumer heaven.

Fear is the second theme that is prevalent in films on intra-European trade. This fear takes center role in *Me and Mr. Marshall.* The viewer is urged to think of the folly of WWII. We get to know Hans Fisher whose tale is quite convincing. The film illustrates the complexity of economic recovery and its central role in European security. In conjunction, *The Hour of Choice* called upon viewers to consider the possible threat from the Soviet Union.

These Marshall Plan Films urged viewers to consider new ways of looking at their respective nation and its role in an international market. Thus we see films that use different devices to win over the viewer's opinion. Fear and humor were the impetus to make Europeans see that a future of political stability rested upon economic and military unity. And this unity would be built upon fulfilling the consumer desires of the populace. Unity provides both a way to prevent a resurgence of fascism and another world war and, conversely, an insurance against the rising Soviet threat.

Chapter III

Joining the "Right" Labor Union

"Italians have never shown much interest in fitting products or prices to the mass market, with the result that their scale of operations remains limited and costs high. The idea of persuading the poor consumer to want something he has never had by advertising and then give it to him at a price he can afford may turn out to be the biggest contribution of the Marshall Plan to Italy – if it can be put across."[1]

Though this observation by New York Times correspondent Michael Hoffman was specific to the economic climate of Italy, its message can be applied to every country that signed the European Cooperation Masterplan.[2] Marshall Plan Films necessarily focused their message on European workers, for they were the ones with the ability to change Europe and the ones liable to be persuaded that Communism might offer a superior social model. These films took fairly complex economic practices and worked them into relatively short narratives and documentaries. Multilateral trade and higher productivity films pressed viewers to re-examine the way they did business. These films urged everyday Europeans to adapt new methods for production and trade and demonstrated an effort to make Europe into a more American looking place. Some films addressed another serious concern of American officials: namely the potential appeal of Communism in Western Europe.

Though the poverty and destruction wrought by WWII brought out humanitarianism

[1] *New York Times,* Jun. 3, 1949.

[2] In the "publicity" section of the agreement each nation agreed to facilitate "wide dissemination of information on the progress of the program," noted in Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe*, 162.

among American diplomats, they also worried about the spread of Communism. Indeed the perceived threat of Soviet Communism provided a major incentive to pass the Marshall Plan through congress. ECA head Paul Hoffman believed that Communist propaganda was successful because it promised relief from destitution. He wrote, "I came face to face with the fact that millions of people in Italy, France, and West Germany were convinced that Communism offered them a better way of life than democracy."[3] ECA reports to Congress stressed the need to focus specifically on labor organizations, where the Communist influence was the strongest. One 1950 report noted that of thirty-five million trade union members, six million were under Communist control primarily in France and Italy.[4]

Though distributing material Marshall Plan Aid helped to fight the propaganda war against the Soviet Union, these officials also used their informational campaign in order spread messages concerning the importance of democracy. A report from the Rome mission in 1950 urged Marshall Planners to, "Carry the message of the Marshall Plan to the people. Carry it to them directly- it won't permeate down. And give it to them so that they can understand it."[5]

In particular, Marshall Planners produced films urging Europeans to embrace "free" trade unions. European labor unions were often Communist dominated, or at least Communist infiltrated. After examining the somewhat intangible threat of Communism, we will then move on to discuss six different films. It is important to note that Marshall Films centered on trade unions in America as well as Europe. Films depicting American labor struggles stress that rights can be won through collective bargaining, and open relations with labor and management. American labor movements are successful because they reject Communism and trust in the lofty

[3] Hoffman, *Peace Can Be Won*, 133.

[4] Economic Cooperation Administration, *Seventh Report to Congress* (Washington D.C. 1950), 76.

[5] Ellwood, "You Too Can Be Like Us," *History Today*, 35.

goals of higher production. Films focusing on European labor point out the irrationality of the Kremlin's message and ask viewers to reject Communist influence. Ultimately labor films urge audiences to join "free" trade unions to gain a higher standard of living. They ask Europeans to renounce radical politics and trust in democratic (American) labor unions, because they promise a better quality of life.

The Communist Threat

Americans gradually identified Communism as a threat to the American way of life. They used these beliefs to substantiate the Cold War, which lasted some forty-odd years. American officials took an active role in global affairs in the years following WWII. U.S. officials were increasingly convinced that Joseph Stalin and his associates were "ideological zealots who viewed conflict with the West as necessary to obtain their objectives."[6] These officials categorized the Soviet regime as totalitarian, and Stalin's Communism gradually became the main villain in America's "global struggle for peace." The 1947 Truman Doctrine stated that the U.S. would be willing to help any free peoples under the threat of aggressive totalitarian regimes. The Doctrine recognized that totalitarian regimes gain favor in poverty stricken areas, and that "they reach their full growth when the hope of a people for a better life has died."[7] American officials believed that poverty fueled sympathy for Communism as they confronted a devastated post-war Europe. Prosperity, for the Marshall Planners, provided the key to anti-Communism. An Italian booklet issued by Marshall Planners in 1949 put it this way: "A higher standard of living for the entire nation; maximum employment for workers and

[6] Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe*, 67.

[7] Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe*, 69.

farmers; greater production."[8] For American officials, the European worker must be the focal point in the struggle against poverty and Communist infiltration.

In a book published in 1946, several authors compiled the pros and cons of American Capitalism and Russian Communism, providing an interesting piece of American Cold War propaganda. One essay, by William Chamberlain, asks whether Stalin's Russia could "go democratic."[9] Chamberlain concludes that it is impossible, and his reasons sum up the American view of the inherent evils in Communism. His argument centers on the conditions of the Soviet worker. "Freedom of Speech," does not exist in the Soviet Union, whether in the press, in elections, or trade union organization.[10] He dismisses any possibility for freedom of religion and freedom from fear. His section on freedom from want addresses a worker's quality of life. Chamberlain cites a Russian economics student who claimed that, "in 1938 the Soviet workman was not only more poorly fed than the French or German workman, but more poorly than the Bulgarian. Compared with the Swedish workman, the Soviet worker, although he ate much more bread, had one-third of the meat, two-fifths of the fats, one-third of the milk, one-tenth of the sugar…"[11] These disparaging descriptions of Soviet life encapsulate everything that American life is not. American officials tried to present Europeans with much the same argument. In Marshall Plan Films discussing unions, filmmakers urged viewers to believe that Communism would destroy their freedoms, while democracy (in the form of "free" trade unions) could provide them with freedom as well as a higher quality of life.

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[8] Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe,* 62.

[9] William Henry Chamberlain, "Can Stalin's Russia Go Democratic," in Clarence A. Peters ed, *American Capitalism vs. Russian Communism* (New York: The H.W. Wilson Company, 1946), 237.

[10] Chamberlain, in *American Capitalism,* 238.

[11] Chamberlain, in *American Capitalism,* 239.

Bill Smith and Alexander Brody: Regular Joes

Films on American labor unions presented the prosperity of American workers' lives in a literal way. Viewers see individuals fighting for their rights with factory owners, with positive conclusions in every film. When an American union member wins concessions, they often result in higher wages and shorter working hours. Their standard of living increases with more money for consumption and more hours for leisure. Implicit in this message is a full rejection of anything Communist. These films create a sense of the rights that European deserved in a union. The "free" trade unions of America protect a worker's rights, precluding any need for political upheaval. Yet, these rights were contingent upon a rejection of Communist influence. The Marshall Films argue that Communist intervention would only sabotage efforts to gain the rights that Europeans deserved in their working lives.

Pursuit of Happiness, a color film, begins by describing how many work hours go to putting food on the table: 8 out of 24. "One-third of our lives affects the other two-thirds directly and positively."[12] The narrator claims that workers need these hours for the pursuit of happiness. This goes for bakers, butchers, druggists, farmers, or even poultry workers. He continues with this overview of American labor, but then points out, "some get it and some don't."[13] Two men can live in the same community and be good citizens; both work at the same trade and are equally skilled. However Ed Jones' life might be plagued with work problems. And while Ed

[12] GMLA, Credits unknown, sponsored by the AFL Amalgamated Meat Cutters Union, *Pursuit of Happiness,* 1949-1951. This film is only listed in English in the Christenson filmography. It could be similar to the "Strength for the Free World" series made for the Mutual Security Agency, where the films were made to be shown in America but were sometimes re-edited and distributed in Europe. This is described in Alfred Hemsing's "The Marshall Plan's European Film Unit, 1948-1955: A Memoir and Filmography," in *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television,* Vol. 14 Issue 3, 1994.

[13] GMLA, New World Productions, Producers, *Pursuit of Happiness* Probably a film made for the Mutual Security Agency. Hollywood, CA. 1949-1951

faces uncertainty, Bill Smith finds security in his work. The narrator suggest that this is because Bill Smith is not just one man or one job. "He is a butcher in San Diego, California or an apprentice in New York. He is a sheep shearer, a poultry worker, a Chicago cowboy; he is white, yellow, or black."[14] Bill Smith lives in many cities and his children go to many schools. "He eats bacon and eggs, egg foo yo ng, fried noodles, gefilte fish, Irish stew, fried chicken, and black-eyed peas."[15] These are the members of the 200,000 Amalgamated Meat Workers Union. They are inducted with specific rights: guaranteed minimum wage, equal division of labor, insurance, vacations with pay, welfare benefits, and can only be discharged with good and sufficient reason. Bill Smith is also part of local headquarters, and is backed by a president, secretary, and negotiating committee. Each headquarters records the history and rule of the labor union. "Silent evidence of the progress made to improve your working condition, wages, and general well being."[16]

The film addresses a specific labor struggle, where women were not given equal wages for the same job that men did in a factory. A woman's voice does the narrating for this section. They file a grievance, and a business representative goes to work arguing their case while they continue to work. Eventually the y call in a trusted representative to arbitrate, but for the women the case is crystal clear. "We got a salary raise to the same scale the men had received. We know what it means to have the Amalgamated behind us."[17]

Now the male narrator comes in to describe his past labor struggle. The workers and the company did not agree on fair wages and benefits, so the workers hit the streets for nine weeks.

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[14] GMLA, New World Productions, *Pursuit of Happiness,* 1949-1951.

[15] GMLA, New World Productions, *Pursuit of Happiness,* 1949-1951.

[16] GMLA, New World Productions, *Pursuit of Happiness,* 1949-1951.

[17] GMLA, New World Productions, *Pursuit of Happiness,* 1949-1951.

When the contract was up, management suggested "a decrease in wages. A decrease at a time when cost of living was skyrocketing. Lowered working conditions after years of struggling to improve them and there was to be no allowance for tools, no allowance for clothes."[18] Seven packing houses tried to break the union. The union called on ancillary services and struck for five weeks. "Let the seven of them turn out the work. Let them butcher the meat and trim the bones. Let them run the plants and turn out the products."[19] The narrator continues the strike description, showing viewers that eventually the plant managers realized they were losing money. Union negotiations took place, with the full backing of the organization.

A new male narrator interjects a description of how the union functions, and why a worker needs a union. The labor union is set up like America. The American Federation of labor operates in one central organization which looks out for locals. And the individual is below this level. "The purpose of such careful organization is just one thing: security."[20] The narrator states that workers need unions. Bill Smith needs insurance, welfare plan, and free schools because there is more to a day than working hours. Bill Smith can take classes in college and learn about labor relations and government. Young Bill Smith can take apprentice classes to learn about the high standards that butchers practice. But beyond these daily needs there must be leisure hours. "He can enjoy himself with a free untroubled mind because he isn't merely snatching at a moment's happiness."[21] Because if Mr. and Mrs. Smith want to lie on the beach there should be time to enjoy it. The film closes stressing the contributions that Bill Smith makes not only to union funds, but even to European relief.

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[18] GMLA, New World Productions, *Pursuit of Happiness*, 1949-1951.

[19] GMLA, New World Productions, *Pursuit of Happiness*, 1949-1951.

[20] GMLA, New World Productions, *Pursuit of Happiness*, 1949-1951.

[21] GMLA, New World Productions, *Pursuit of Happiness*, 1949-1951.

This film's main thrust focuses on the rights one deserves in the workplace. We see this first in the disparaging description of Ed Jones. He is denied the basic rights that are guaranteed through the union even though he is neither less talented nor hardworking. In contrast, Bill Smith's rights to pursue happiness are reinforced, and he becomes a ubiquitous force through his union membership. The film stresses the egalitarian nature of the union, allowing all races and religions into their ranks. When there is a union dispute the film reveals its message. Though the women have to work hard and eventually strike in order to secure the fair wages they deserve, the point is made: they were able to achieve it. Though the plant owners initially denied these rights, the workers first try arbitration, then strike, and then rely again on diplomacy to gain the rights they deserve. The closing section brings out the real message of the film. Labor unions help to guarantee the rights that American citizens expect: schooling, health care, and retirement. Unions provide for the worker so that he or she does not have to look for rights in fanatic political movements. "Free" trade unions trade a fundamental restructuring of economic relations for security and gradual economic improvement.

Another film, *With These Hands* centers on the character Alexander Brody and his experience with the International Ladies Garment Worker's Union. This Marshall Plan Film played all over Europe and was dubbed into nine languages. It opens with Brody sitting at a desk telling a woman that he joined the union in 1910. Brody's character is idiosyncratic and filled with humor. He starts by telling the woman at the desk about his first experience with the union. After the factory manager tries to charge a fellow worker, Galileo, a dollar for two broken needles, Brody quits his job. Against his wife Jenny's wishes, he goes to a union meeting. This union decides to strike, and the workers walk a picket line for fifty-eight days. The strike causes hardships, and Brody's wife remarks "when the landlord comes for the rent,

I'll tell him you're a human being."[22] Later the landlord arrives and states, "when you make the payment, I'll bring back the table."[23] Brody remains a humorous character throughout the film. In one scene, during a strike, a man looks down through a hole in his shoe and Brody remarks, "what did you expect? Mustard?"[24]

After all of the picketing, the strikers win union recognition. This union ensured a contract, wage clauses, and better working conditions with reduced hours. In a scene in his apartment Brody puts shoes on his daughter's feet and they both eat licorice. Though the factory owners keep fighting the unions, Brody and his friend don't give up, but continue to face hardships. The film reveals that Brody's friend Galileo has a respiratory disease. During this segment, Brody relates a story of another factory where workers tried to form a union. The factory owner kept organizers out, even going to the extreme of locking the windows and doors. A fire broke out, killing 146 people. Meanwhile, Galileo's illness forces him to go to a sanatorium for a period, but the union pays for it.

While Galileo is gone, times change, and the union faces more problems. "Paris sent over its latest creations, and so did Moscow."[25] In 1926, Communist organizers take over the union and demand a fifty percent increase in wages. Managers refuse the increase, and the union goes on strike. Brody claims that this was just to turn the employers against the workers and spark revolution. "We wanted to build a union; they wanted to use the union to build the Communist

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[22] GMLA, Jack Arnold, Director, *With These Hands* Film used by Mutual Security Agency. New York. 1950. The Christenson filmography notes that it was dubbed into nine languages and shown throughout Europe. Linda Christenson, "Marshall Plan Filmography," *George C. Marshall Foundation*, [database on-line], accessed April 6, 2006; available from http://www.marshallfilms.org/mpf.asp.

[23] GMLA, Arnold, *With These Hands*, 1950.

[24] GMLA, Arnold, *With These Hands*, 1950.

[25] GMLA, Arnold, *With These Hands*, 1950.

Party."[26] "They wanted to take power. The only one who took power was the electric company."[27] They are forced to crawl back to their jobs. Brody relates the hard times of the depression, when their union funds would have helped them out.

Here the film takes a positive turn again. Galileo returns and becomes a union organizer, going to Milwaukee and Minneapolis. The union is back on its feet and is back in negotiations with the owners. Brody is older now, and he comes home to relax on the couch. His wife yells at him for having his feet on the couch. In this scene, Brody makes the point of the film clear. Jenny complains that his paycheck is short, so he explains that he donated part of it to start another union. "Settling a peaceful trade with the boss is easier than settling with Jenny. How many suits or dresses does a family of a textile worker buy on fifteen dollars a week? Through the union you raise wages, you improve conditions, people live like people. This stuff about an American standard of living. You know how you get it? Build a trade union movement."[28] This segment ends with the union and management agreeing on a contract.

The final sequence of the film takes a dramatic tone as it discusses the advantages of a union. "The union protects the bread you eat. But there are many kinds of bread. The book is bread, and the singing is bread, and this too is bread" (referring to the union manual).[29] The film shows Brody at the vacation spot for union members. People play tennis, bocce ball, and cards. They swim, and men wrestle on canoes. There is a beauty contest, children play in the sand, and Brody and Jenny sit out in a canoe, where Brody praises the high quality health care available for union members. Then we see Brody at the doctor, who tells him he should think of retiring.

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[26] GMLA, Arnold, *With These Hands,* 1950.

[27] GMLA, Arnold, *With These Hands,* 1950.

[28] GMLA, Arnold, *With These Hands,* 1950.

[29] GMLA, Arnold, *With These Hands,* 1950.

Brody returns home and tells his wife this. Finally we are back to the beginning where Brody started the story. He signs the form to get a pension and walks out to the busy streets of New York. As he walks out, a girl is walking up to a window to sign up for the union. Brody stops to tell her it's a good idea.

This film operates much like *The Pursuit of Happiness* did, but brings out the notions of standards of living and the threat of Communism dramatically. For both American and European audiences, this film is about the rationality of "free" trade unions. Alexander Brody tells the tumultuous tale of the ILGWU. His faith in the union shatters when Kremlin organizers destroy the organization and bankrupt it on purpose. These organizers are not interested in giving the worker rights; they simply want to create the conditions for a revolution. When the Communist instigators ruin the union treasury the workers must "crawl back to their jobs."[30] This is followed by a short discussion of what the Great Depression did to the union. The implication is that this is what the union treasury should have been used for. The second striking moment in the film is Brody's forceful argument on the power of unions. Unions give Americans their high standard of living. This organization protects the worker while giving him or her the capability to purchase more goods for less money. Brody's witticisms and his first hand account of union tribulations gives the film a further emotional power. *With These Hands*' narrative form and well-written dialogue set it slightly apart from other Marshall Plan Films. Brody is a sympathetic character that audiences may have identified with. Though both of these films outline the benefits of belonging to a "free" trade union, Brody's zealous denouncements of Communism and his ardent claim that unions give Americans their high quality of life give this film a compelling message.

Labor films were clearly aimed at the union struggles of the European. However,

[30] GMLA, Arnold, *With These Hands,* 1950.

American union ideals and European union ideals presented conflicting points of view. These differences can be seen in how each respective group viewed its relationship with management. As noted earlier, Europeans viewed their roles in labor in political terms. European unions were formed outside of factories and often with the political support of Social Democrats or Communists. They generally expressed interest in the decision making of the companies, while American workers avoided involvement in management. American labor unions viewed such participation as a "tool of management."[31] European worker participation constituted a more active role in company decisions, while Americans concerned themselves with higher wages and reduced working hours. These differences can be summarized as:

"1) focus on the individual and personal betterment (US) versus focus on the collectivity and social equity (Europe).
2) concentration on material goals or money (US) versus concentration on immaterial goals or power (Europe).
3) use by management to improve the firm's performance (US) versus use by society to instill specific social and political values and practices in the management of companies (Europe)."[32]

While in Europe unions harbored a general distrust of management, Americans viewed their relationship differently, maintaining "a mutual trust that existed among all employees."[33] American unions, as opposed to European unions, stood apart from employers, the government,

[31] Schröter, *Americanization of the European Economy*, 202-203.

[32] Schröter, *Americanization of the European Economy*, 193.

[33] Kuisel, *Seducing the French*, 93.

or political parties.[34] *With These Hands* and *Pursuit of Happiness* present viewers with unions that give workers the security they desire out of life. Both films cycle through union struggles, but in *The Pursuit of Happiness* one can see that the women on strike have confidence that their injustices will be set right. And Alexander Brody's many struggles result in a strong union at the close of the film. Their confidence lies not in a political party, or governmental involvement, but their unions. These happy endings imply that a union may have to struggle and negotiate with management if disputes arise, but that ultimately union leaders operate on a level playing field with management: "They believe in their sincerity. In extreme circumstances they tell each other that they are maladroit, never that they are corrupt or worse."[35] Both films close with scenes of vacation, indicating that their union will provide not only job security, but the pleasures of life as well. The Filmmakers use these visions of equitable negotiation to make their larger point: Communism will not give you these securities, only a "free" labor union will.

This portrayal of American labor unions, coupled with the earlier depiction of an average worker in the Productivity Mission films, give us a complete picture of what Marshall Planners believed about American workers. American workers were confident enough in their economic system to see higher productivity as a way to higher standards of living. More production meant more goods and profits because "they knew the American employer would share the benefits with them."[36] Labor and productivity Marshall Films create an image of an American who has the utmost faith in the ability of his union to produce material gains in everyday life, as well as the security to provide for social needs. It is a trust in American capitalism: something still antithetical to the European left.

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[34] Kuisel, *Seducing the French,* 93-94.

[35] Kuisel, *Seducing the French,* 94.

[36] Kuisel, *Seducing the French,* 93.

This vilification of Communist involvement in labor films reflects the fears that Americans had about the Communist unions throughout Europe, especially in France and Italy. In fact, Marshall Planners made films specifically to discredit the Communist parties in these two countries. Marshall Plan officials actively tried to counter the propaganda efforts of the Cominform, which they categorized as attempts to "arouse suspicion, fear, uncertainty, and dissension among the Western European states," and to "prevent development of any form of economic cooperation" in order to "create the conditions of chaos and misery in which Communism thrives."[37] In these films, it is clear that the Marshall Plan propaganda effort was aimed at the everyday European. This propaganda was intended "to reach Giuseppe in the factory and Giovanni in the fields."[38]

The French laborer was a primary subject of debate and concern for American officials. Americans wanted to negate Communist polemics and present the benefits of the "American way of life."[39] In 1950, though productivity and production had increased significantly since 1938, wages had not.[40] In France, Americans used both open and covert means to attack the French Communist party (PFC); threatening French officials with the removal of aid, using the Central Intelligence Agency to distribute money to contending parties, and installing editorials and

[37] Economic Cooperation Administration, *A Report on Recovery Progress and United States Aid* (Washington D.C.,February, 1949, 142.

[38] Ellwood, "You Too Can Be Like Us," *History Today*, 35.

[39] Kuisel, *Seducing the French*, 25.

[40] Chiarella Esposito, *America's Feeble Weapon: Funding the Marshall Plan in France and Italy, 1948-1950* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1994), 94.

newspaper articles criticizing Communism.[41] ECA officials endorsed a forceful propaganda campaign suggesting that French workers receive a slip in their paychecks that informed them that their wages came from ERP Funds. They even suggested introducing a board game called *Tour de France*. As players advanced along the board they might be stymied by a destroyed road, or they might advance along a modern bridge built by Marshall Plan Funds.[42] A concerted diplomatic struggle in 1950 urged French diplomats to provide low-income housing, unemployment benefits, new jobs, investments in agriculture and tourism, and French exports to the dollar area.[43] Though French officials rejected these strong suggestions, American officials clearly wanted the average French worker to better know what the ERP was doing for them and their country.

Both the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) mobilized to fight Communist unions.[44] They secretly funded non-Communist unions with CIA money and provided organizers. These efforts culminated into such victories as hamstringing a Communist-led dock worker strike in 1949, but ultimately these American incursions only ever focused on broader Cold War issues, ignoring the domestic needs of these European unions, and causing the French worker to become skeptical of American labor leaders.[45] The struggle to reach French workers can be seen in the following film.

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[41] Frank Castigliola, *France and the United States: The Cold Alliance Since World War II* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1992), 65-66.

[42] Esposito, *America's Feeble Weapon*, 98-100.

[43] Esposito, *America's Feeble Weapon*, 101.

[44] Castigliola, *France and the United States*, 66.

[45] Castigliola, *France and the United States*, 67.

The Other Paris begins with a Communist parade. The film is starts by decrying the demonstrators' Red slogans, "stop the Indochina war, down with germ warfare, and unite with the Soviet Union."[46] Demonstrators perform a mock fight between a Communist youth and a U.S. soldier, showing the violent nature of the Americans. A women's union marches by, and viewers learn that this union was a phony cover for a Communist organization. Even more Communist trade unions fill the screen and the narrator intones, "this is the minority that want to push France into the hands of the Soviet Union."[47] This ominous imagery is countered with scenes of the French army who stand guard, not only for France, but for all of Europe. The narrator asks what is needed to stem these Communist forces. A union is the answer: "a worker must have a voice."[48] Though Communists gained a quarter of the vote in 1948, they made the mistake of trying to sabotage the Marshall Plan.

Here the film addresses the reason why Communist unions have found a place in France. It shows the outskirts of Paris where "thousands live in slums," and basic supplies are in need. Children playing in back alleys and streets put up anti-American posters. However, anti-Communists also put up posters (one of these posters is of an iron dove with a gun for a beak).[49] But the real struggle is not fought on walls. Here American union member Joe Heath extols the advantages of democratic unions. Democracy will win out; it is just a matter of battling destitution, which is what leads the workers to Communism. This can be achieved by establishing a "free" trade union and raising the standard of living for the French worker.

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[46] GMLA, Mutual Security Agency. Producer. *The Other Paris.* 1953.

[47] GMLA, MSA, *The Other Paris,* 1953.

[48] GMLA, MSA, *The Other Paris,* 1953.

[49] This poster is discussed also in Kuisel, *Seducing the French*, 27.

Now the viewer meets Jacques Dupont and sees his working situation at a French rail yard. Though he is dissatisfied with his economic situation, he is "not looking to Stalin for answers."[50] He is a member of a non-Communist trade union. These men working on the train engines are "not different from Americans except that they are constantly barraged by the party line. They just want a better standard of living."[51]

Next the narrator discusses Marie, Jacque's wife, and the state of their living situation. Their home is small, but preferable to the rooming houses that many workers are forced to live in. Though she is lucky to have running water she keeps her food in a wooden cupboard and "to buy a fridge it would take Jacque's wages for a month."[52] Marie has to walk five flights up to her apartment, and works at a goggle factory where she makes sixteen dollars a week. The grocer's market is where the family feels the pinch, states the narrator, as Marie walks through the cheapest market in town. A scene of a blind accordion player sets the mood, as the learns that sixty percent of the family's income is spent on food. Pork is up forty percent and hamburger qualifies as a luxury item. Shoes cost half a week's pay, and sweaters an entire week's pay. Marie can only "look longingly at skirts on display."[53]

Joseph Heath, the U.S. labor representative, returns to the frame stating that this is a problem for the French worker. Prices are up 30 percent, and the French government keeps spending more on its military. "The guy on the street doesn't understand it and doesn't like it."[54]

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[50] GMLA, MSA, *The Other Paris,* 1953.

[51] GMLA, MSA, *The Other Paris,* 1953.

[52] GMLA, MSA, *The Other Paris,* 1953.

[53] GMLA, MSA, *The Other Paris,* 1953.

[54] GMLA, MSA, *The Other Paris,* 1953.

Jacque only makes 20 dollars a week and cannot afford things like a night at the movies or a new bicycle, and does not think the tax system is fair. He is shocked that he can even pay bills.

Now the film intercedes with information from factory owner Harry Martin. He encourages the growth of free enterprise and "free" unions. Machines can be introduced that reduce the work done by hand but without reducing employment. Union membership encourages workers to take pride in their work. The film elaborates on this idea, depicting union programs that teach representatives how to negotiate with management and bargain for better conditions.

The closing segment shows Jacque at the local bistro. He attempts to get Pierre to join his union. Jacque has all the arguments at his fingertips and convinces his friend to give the union a try. It is, of course, a non-Communist trade union, and they attend a meeting together. The issue on the floor is whether or not to join in a demonstration with another, Communist-led, union. One man calls for the unions to stick together, while another will have no truck with the Reds. The scene ends with the narrator explaining, "well, we can't give you all the speeches."[55] The film concludes with the statement: "If we ever get around to convincing the French worker that they are not just the subject of intellectual debate we won't have a problem. Frenchmen love their liberty as much as Americans."[56]

This film directly addresses the notion of "quality of life" and how it must be raised to combat Communism. Filmmakers depict Communist demonstrators showing an ongoing threat to liberty. And why would Communism ever succeed? The viewer sees that the destitution in the outskirts of Paris is the answer. However, the film goes beyond the suggestion that providing enough food to prevent starvation will be enough to stop Communist conversions.

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[55] GMLA, MSA, *The Other Paris*, 1953.

[56] GMLA, MSA, *The Other Paris*, 1953.

The film addresses fear of starvation, while asking when the Parisian will become a consumer. First noting that food prices are skyrocketing, the narrator continues by lamenting Jacque's inability to buy household items such as a refrigerator. In another scene, Marie stares longingly in a display window filled with new skirts. Viewers are urged to look beyond the everyday needs in which they may be accustomed in a way that directly reflects what an American consumer would demand from his own market. The interjections of various American labor officials is able to reinforce this point. They bring up that Jacque might want the money for a new bicycle, or even a night at the movies. They sympathize with Jacque's family, and suggest that American-style "free" trade unions will provide the solution. The closing statement about the French worker being the subject of debate further enunciates to the viewer the sincere concern Americans felt for the lives of French workers. The belief that the French worker could be made to espouse the same desires as the American consumer, and adopt the same union techniques extended to the propaganda campaign in Italy as well.

The film *The Struggle For Men's Minds* was part of a series called "Strength For The Free World." This series was made primarily for American audiences, but was sometimes re-edited and shown to European audiences.[57] Ominous music introduces scenes of Rome and the camera focuses on a man smoking a cigarette. He creeps up behind a couple, firing a gun into the back of the man, staging the 1948 assassination attempt of Communist leader Palmiro Togliatti. In outrage, the Communists call a strike. Industry ceases, while railroads stop. The strike almost becomes a revolution as "action squads distributed weapons to men who would use them."[58] However, some workers refuse to strike, listening to Alcide De Gasperi of the new Free

[57] This is noted in the preface to Linda Christenson's filmography. Linda Christenson, "Marshall Plan Filmography Preface," *George C. Marshall Foundation*, [database on-line], accessed April 6, 2006; available from http://www.marshallfilms.org/mpfdetail.asp#preface.

Confederation of Italian Trade Unions, who explains the real reasons for the strike. The Communist threat subsides, and the workers return to their jobs.

Why did this happen, asks the narrator? After the war the weakened economy created the prerequisites for Lenin's revolution. Only a few resisted the Communists and they were able to keep Italy in constant turmoil, "softening it, for revolution."[59] Rioting fills the screen and we learn that the 1947 elections put Communists in power all over Italy. An animated segment shows the hammer and sickle placed all over the Italian map. "Then something began happening," the narrator tells us. An American flag and bags of food fill the screen: "democracy, they began to see, actually achieved the good things that Communism could only promise."[60] Italy joined the new unions, and Communist union membership dropped from five to three million. The new unions backed the European Recovery Plan. America's Aid helps to rebuild a pharmaceutical company and a few destroyed factories.

For Italy, America's Aid provides proof that one can wash away post-war despair. Now Italy is disposed to listen to democracies. A new way of life was good, and one could pursue happiness in peace and freedom. People play cards and bocce ball, and read American literature. The Information Agency gives reading material to Italians in the form of comics and regular books. They also tell Italians the truth about the East-West struggle, and about the need to work together to save peace. Italians get a visit from a mobile Marshall Plan unit, which among other purposes, screens films. "Movies were an effective weapon in the struggle for Italian's minds."[61] These exhibitions show films about the home life in Iowa, or a Detroit auto worker's life, and

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[58] GMLA, Mutual Security Agency, Producer, *The Struggle for Men's Minds* Italy. 1952. A Strength for the Free World film.

[59] GMLA, MSA, *The Struggle For Men's Minds*, 1952.

[60] GMLA, MSA, *The Struggle For Men's Minds*, 1952.

[61] GMLA, MSA, *The Struggle For Men's Minds*, 1952.

also displays Marshall Plan projects such as new housing and farm modernization. The mobile exhibition performs a Judy and Punch show to reach the children. American books and puppet shows are able to "persuade the rank and file."[62]

Marshall Planners make posters urging Italians to join NATO and learn about the MSA and State Department because "walls of cities and towns are this country's television screens."[63] The Pache Libertad Company is also turning out anti-Communist posters. Union leader Alcide De Gasperi's message is peace and liberty. Anti-Communist propagandists send literature to Communist addresses. Even the church gets on board to fight Communists by ex-communicating them. Giving the vote to women is another way to combat this ever-present threat. The film lists all of these anti-Communist activities and ends with Italy's induction into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Now the Communist "action squads" step up their campaign, smearing the West daily. The Communists couple these public denouncements couple beatings and violence. Agitators start arguments in cafes and even go into small villages and try to gain supporters by holding dances, "though they sneer at Western dancing as bourgeoisie."[64] Though the U.S. weakened their influence on the land issue, the Reds successfully shut down the docks with their Communist dominated trade union. The narrator lists two Italians among others who opposed Communists and were killed as a result.

Despite the strength of the Communists, American Aid has helped to keep the democratic elements in power. National elections saw a majority of democratic leaders elected. The Communists can no longer halt the weapons, food, and goods from Marshall Aid, as well as

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[62] GMLA, MSA, *The Struggle For Men's Minds*, 1952.

[63] GMLA, MSA, *The Struggle For Men's Minds*, 1952.

[64] GMLA, MSA, *The Struggle For Men's Minds*, 1952.

1,350 million dollars. "Yes, a big sum, but it has helped Italians keep a democratic government in power."[65] Here the narrator directly addresses the American viewer, noting that their tax dollars created jobs in Italy and strengthened free trade. American help also built tractors and trucks to create a strong force in NATO. "Your help made that possible, without it Italy might have fallen to Communism."[66]

This film dramatically depicts an ongoing struggle against Communist organizers, creating a powerful argument for the need of ongoing American Aid to Italy. Even the title of the film, *The Struggle for Men's Minds*, implies a dramatic, even desperate situation. The film begins with the re-enacted assassination attempt of the prominent Italian Communist leader Palmiro Togliatti. Through this violence, filmmakers inform the American or European viewer of the volatile situation in Italy. As scenes of chaos and rioting by Communist-dominated unions follow this assassination attempt, observers must contend that Italy was close to revolution. When the narrator rhetorically asks, "How did this happen?" the answer is similar to the conclusions reached in *The Other Paris*. It is not educated political activity, but the destitution left by the war that creates the chaotic environment. The slums of Rome and Paris are the breeding grounds for Communist activity, and a few agitators take the opportunity to "soften" the area for revolution.

The filmmakers then tell the viewer the answer to Italy's problems. First, American Aid reduces the emergency situation with material aid, and secondly, American influence strengthens the "free" trade unions. These new unions are able to overcome the Communist-dominated ones, partly because they can point to the benefits of Marshall Aid. The film then goes into an extended discussion of all the information that Americans are sharing with the Italians. This

[65] GMLA, MSA, *The Struggle For Men's Minds*, 1952.

[66] GMLA, MSA, *The Struggle For Men's Minds*, 1952.

information contains the "truth" of democracy's benefits. America's truth includes the reality of the "East-West" struggle, but more importantly it incorporates the truth about living standards. Showing films on how American factory workers live presents a European worker with the benefits of American corporate capitalism. Filmmakers depict American consumption habits to persuade the "rank and file," that democracy brings these high standards of living.

Towards the end of the film, filmmakers remind viewers of the ongoing agitation by the Communists, who even have the gall to host bourgeois village dances when taking time out from their poster campaign. The narrator lists two dead anti-Communists to show the violence Communists commit alongside their perpetual propaganda efforts. Even the church steps in on the side of the anti-Communists, and viewers learn that democracy brings the ability to vote for women. However, one is left with the idea that the struggle is unending. Finally, the film reminds American viewers that their tax dollars have saved a country from Communism.

David Ellwood notes that Italy was the site of the ECA's largest propaganda campaign partly due to its relatively high Communist activity compared to other ERP countries.[67] American officials sought to strengthen the Christian Democrats (CD) in order to nullify Communist influence. Joyce and Gabriel Kolko point out that U.S. officials played an active role in the April 1948 election in order to secure a victory for the Christian Democrats and a failure for the People's Bloc, a coalition of Socialist and Communist parties.[68] Even further, the State Department announced that it would deny visas to Communists, urged Italo-Americans to write letters to their relatives urging them to vote for the CD party, gave financial support to the

[67] Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe,* 162.

[68] Kolko and Kolko, *The Limits of Power,* 438.

party, and even played recordings of Hollywood stars to convince Italians to for the CDs: resulting in a majority of forty-eight percent victory over the Communist thirty-one percent.[69]

However, Ellwood demarcates the political climate in Italy further, showing that in reality, the Christian Democrats and the Communists gradually developed a "live-and-let-live" attitude, though this relationship was far from defined in the early years of the Marshall Plan.[70] After the Italian Communist Party (PCI) were thrown out of the government in 1947, and lost the majority vote in 1948, they were further hamstrung by the creation of the Soviet Cominform. Soviet orders forbade an involvement in parliamentary affairs, while ordering the out of hand rejection of the Marshall Plan.[71] Moscow categorized it as an "instrument for American domination in Western Europe."[72] Thus, "opposition to the Plan would be largely extra-parliamentary, in the streets, in the factories, in the front organizations and media the Party controlled."[73]

These beliefs explain the protracted efforts of American propagandists and the messages in *The Struggle for Men's Minds*, which portrays an informational battle, where the mind of the Italian citizen was the prize. As Ellwood argues, Americans attached a large importance to "changing the balance of power, structures and attitudes of in the world of organized labor," and employed American labor organizations to help them in their efforts.[74] They broke up the Communist dominated Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (CGIL) by 1948, and

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[69] Kolko and Kolko, *The Limits of Power,* 438-439.

[70] Ellwood, "The Propaganda of the Marshall Plan," in *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe,* 230.

[71] Ellwood, "The Propaganda of the Marshall Plan," in *The Cultural Cold War,* 231.

[72] Esposito, *America's Feeble Weapon,* 14.

[73] Ellwood, "The Propaganda of the Marshall Plan," in *The Cultural Cold War,* 231.

[74] Ellwood, "The Propaganda of the Marshall Plan," in *The Cultural Cold War,* 232.

created the "free" trade union Libera Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (LCGIL), further encouraging the absorption of non-Communist group previously involved with the CGIL.[75]

However, the American backed Italian government formed a symbiosis with the Communist Party and Communist Labor. And small business owners agreed to collaborate on similar economic and social policies.[76] Despite American presence, pressure, and assistance, "the corporate system of industrial production had not found institutional champions there."[77] Though Marshall Planners placed paramount significance in reaching the Italian worker to inspire enthusiasm for their productivity and production ideas, they faced a government unwilling to cooperate, as well as a populace suspicious of these methods. "Americans hoped that, above anything else, 'free' trade unions could bring about a redefinition of industrial relations in Italy."[78]

The Italian worker served as an entrance point for learning American economic practices, and the film, *A Job for Giovanni* elaborates on these capabilities. The film takes place in Naples and starts with a visual tour of the city through the eyes of a civilian reporter who was a war correspondent. This reporter does the narration throughout the film. Though Naples is still beautiful, the reporter soon finds himself in the "laundry district" where things are bleak. As sad music sets in, the reporter talks to the local pharmacist who gives advice to residents and treats their sicknesses so that, "The friendly druggist knows more about what is going on his

[75] Djelic, *Exporting The American Model,* 261.

[76] Djelic, *Exporting The American Model,* 265.

[77] Djelic, *Exporting The American Model,* 265.

[78] Djelic, *Exporting The American Model,* 261.

community than most small town mayors."[79] The reporter learns that Naples still faces sickness and unemployment. In the old days jobless Italians could emigrate for employment, but there are no jobs anywhere.

Then the reporter meets the street vendor Luigi, who does a good business selling pizza. For a dime one can get a little pizza, and some sustain themselves for the day on this little snack. Luigi confesses that he would like to move to Brooklyn; "everyone wants to go to America."[80] In this depressed economy a peddler leaning on a tourist is a common occurrence in daily street life. "Gaiety, good food, and music at Zia Teresa's. Next door there is dire poverty."[81] The reporter talks to a bricklayer who cannot find work. The Italian government always promises a building project, but they never deliver. When he goes to the local café for cards and a glass of wine, he is barraged by Communist agitators who "make easy converts."[82]

"Who is to blame?" asks the reporter. He laments that the government "is as backward as it is beautiful and poor."[83] In this oxcart economy, Southern Italians make a third of what their northern neighbors make. However, there are plans to modernize the Southern economy. With ECA assistance the Italian government is starting massive hydroelectric dam projects. There are also efforts to modernize a steel plant. The reporter does another interview with a workman, Pasqualli, who tells him that he only makes fourteen dollars a week and supports three kids, a wife, and his mother-in-law. This begins an extended explanation of why American production techniques are needed. American methods of production will improve the Italian worker's

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[79] GMLA, Mutual Security Agency. Producer. *A Job For Giovanni*. Paris. 1952. A Strength for the Free World film.

[80] GMLA, MSA, *A Job For Giovanni,* 1952.

[81] GMLA, MSA, *A Job For Giovanni,* 1952.

[82] GMLA, MSA, *A Job For Giovanni,* 1952.

[83] GMLA, MSA, *A Job For Giovanni,* 1952.

situation by finding better methods of distribution and increased production. The reporter goes on to state that we cannot expect a strong defense structure without a strong economic base. Focusing on a steel plant the narrator states, "That's a new American crucible in action."

That is why Americans need to teach factory owners and workers that higher output means lower costs, states the narrator. They must also raise the wages of skilled labor in Italy, and share the benefits with the workers. ECA officials have the support of the non-Communist unions who explain these ideas to the factory workers. We must help Italy cut distribution costs and raise productivity. Italian trade unionists learn the same methods that Americans use to create prosperity. These methods have made American prosperous, and "productivity does not mean exploitation."[84] A democratic approach means modern sales methods, expanded markets, and greater social and economic benefits.

The film concludes with an overview of the modern techniques employed in Southern Italy. Viewers see new potato diggers and oil crushing machines at work in the rocky soil of the South. The reporter tells us that these steps were made with American Aid, and that Italy will soon be self-sufficient. "I left Naples with new confidence in Italy's chances of remaining a free nation," "a nation strong enough to play its full role in the defense of the West."[85]

This film ties together several of the themes we have discussed above. *A Job For Giovanni* tells the viewer that though life is better in America, the worker must resist Communist agitators and try to bring a little America to Italy instead. The film subtly criticizes the Italian government as it notes that it is "as backward as it is poor and beautiful," but not before it paints a stark view of the Naples citizenry. *A Job For Giovanni*'s overall message of hope interrupts the disconcerting assessment of Naples street life. New land projects and modernizing ideas

[84] GMLA, MSA, *A Job For Giovanni,* 1952.

[85] GMLA, MSA, *A Job For Giovanni,* 1952.

bring the worker a paycheck. It is still a small paycheck but higher productivity will soon eradicate these woes. One must hold on, and listen to the "free" trade unions who are full of the wisdom of American economic practices.

Conclusion: All Together Now

European Labor Day brings all of the labor movements in Europe together. The film begins with a lively tune, as the narrator points out that May Day is celebrated all over Europe. In 1889 workers fought for "a fair days' wages for a fair days' work."[86] But this doctrine has come under attack. Germany's union was the first to be smashed by the hand of Adolf Hitler. In Germany May Day became "a display of regimented Nazi might."[87] Today there is a new menace to May Day. Stalin's work code reads: "no worker may leave his job in state cooperative or public enterprises. Nor change jobs without provision. Penalty? Two to four months forced labor."[88] Soviet workers are ignorant of the rights they deserve. On their May Day, Norwegians honor labor leader Redd Anna Kethley who has been jailed in Budapest. They march in front of the Hungarian embassy, demanding her release. These Norwegians are mindful of the Russian workers' plight and long for a day when they will have "free" labor unions. The Danish use May Day to launch a freedom campaign in defiance of Stalin.

Here the narrator notes that "free" labor unions have fought Communism in their ranks for years. In the Netherlands labor unions march not as a show of force, but for "labor's strength

[86] GMLA, European Cooperation Administration. Producer. *European Labor Day*. Film for the European Cooperation Administration. Paris. 1951.

[87] GMLA, ECA, *European Labor Day*, 1951.

[88] GMLA, ECA, *European Labor Day*, 1951.

and well being."[89] In Western Germany, May Day has a special significance. Though their unions were smashed, they rose up again and are stronger than ever. German union organization is the best in Europe; few have such an equal voice with management and industry. In West Berlin they turn out in force for May Day 1951. Filmmakers show a rally where American labor leader Victor Reuther speaks. "Determined never to be isolated from the West, they listen intently to American trade union leaders."[90] In Vienna, at the Ringstrasse, seventy-seven thousand Austrians listen to socialist president Theodor Kerner. And in Italy two million workers of the CSIL come out on May Day to see President Pastori to hear that their union is challenging the Communist dominated union. The goals of the European union are still a fair days' wage for a fair days' work, and "as more and more workers achieve this goal, the frontline defense against Communism grows stronger. For free workers protected from exploitation and political interference remains the true strength of Western democracy."[91]

This short film (9 min.) brings together many of the themes discussed in this chapter. Every European country is united against Communism and Communist unions. By quickly cycling through different May Day celebrations, the viewer sees that every country is on board for the fight against repressive Soviet forces. German labor is determined to never be isolated from the West, and Italians are happy to hear that their union is countering the Communist Party. Communism is completely vilified in the film. First the narrator relates it to Nazism and Hitler, and then he reads part of the labor code in Russia. Viewers find out that the Soviet worker has no capability to determine where he or she will work. This totalitarian regime will even sentence the worker to hard labor for infractions of these rules. The film begins with the dark state of the

[89] GMLA, ECA, *European Labor Day,* 1951.

[90] GMLA, ECA, *European Labor Day*, 1951.

[91] GMLA, ECA, *European Labor Day*, 1951.

Russian worker, but ends with a hopeful message. In Western democracy the worker is protected from "exploitation" and "political interference."[92]

Labor union films used the shadow of Communism and the light of democracy to show that "free" trade unions could provide everything that the European worker needed. In American labor union films, viewers entered the lives of American workers. These workers did not rely upon their government to gain the rights they deserve; they counted on their union membership. The films showed successful union-management negotiations to prove their point. One did not need the radical tools of Communism to gain rights in the workplace. "Free" labor union involvement provided these rights, but more importantly it gave the worker high wages and cheap goods to make a better life.

European labor films operated in a similar manner. They presented the threat of Communism in a more dramatic fashion because such political movements were prevalent throughout the continent. These films urged the common European to resist Communist rhetoric until American capitalism could provide equal rights and a better life. The final film vividly portrays the widespread "free" labor movements in Western Europe, showing that all must stand against the threat of Soviet Communism in order to gain the promise of a better life.

[92] GMLA, ECA, *European Labor Day*, 1951.

Conclusion

"In fact, nowhere on earth have the economic system and the essence of capitalism reached as full a development as in North America. Nowhere else is acquisitiveness as clearly seen as it is there, nor are the desire for gain and the making of money for its own sake so exclusively the be-all and end-all of every economic activity. Every minute of life is filled with this striving, and only death ends the insatiable yearning for profit. Making a living from anything other than capitalism is as good as unknown in the United States, and an economic rationalism of a purity unknown in any European country serves this desire for gain."[1]

The film *Marketing* begins with lively scenes from Paris showing "the rush and bustle."[2] Operators, secretaries, and foremen all feel like they accomplish something in a day's work. They are all using up-to-date methods and are part of the future of Paris. However, when they return home, they return to the past. In many homes in Paris there is little glamour. Prices are high and they must often make do without the goods they desire. But "wherever they live and whatever they do, they are potential customers."[3] This is why market research is important. The best way to find out what people want is to ask them. Sales, brand names, advertising, and delivery services can all be helpful. With careful planning one can gather exact specifications in order to market products correctly.

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[1] Werner Sombart, *Why is there no Socialism in the United States?* (Tübingen, Germany: Verlag Von J.C.B. Mohr, 1906; reprint trans. Patricia M. Hocking and C.T. Husbands London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1976), 4-5 (page citations are to the reprint edition).

[2] GMLA, Pierre Long, Director, *Marketing* Film for the Mutual Security Agency. Paris. 1953.

[3] GMLA, Long, *Marketing*, 1953.

Here the film describes different marketing scenarios. Wool makers conduct a survey to find out customer preferences. Now they have the specifications to gear their production processes towards specific consumers. X-ray machines are needed at most hospitals. By making more machines they become cheaper, and now that they are cost-efficient more doctors buy them. These ideas also can be applied to everyday life. In some printing machines, paper is made in rolls and then cut to size. Now these machines are made with industry standards, demonstrating proper "standardization." The same can be seen in clothing manufacture. Compare the rationality of tailor-made vs. ready made. One no longer has to wait while a tailor sizes clothing; they can buy clothing off the rack already made to their specifications.

Improved packaging increases sales as well. Putting milk in cartons and stamping it with an expiration date makes it easier and safer for the consumer. Using egg cartons to package eggs cuts down on lost product. Even making sure that every package of sugar cubes contains the same number makes things simpler for the producer and consumer. Self-service grocery stores make it easier for the consumer as well. Now there are more products to choose from, which stimulates sales. It makes the whole process simpler.

Marketing successfully encapsulates many of the themes that Marshall Plan films propagated. This film highlights the logic and rationality of American business practices such as standardization, mass production for reducing prices, modern machinery for more efficient production, and of course the benefits of marketing. The film suggests that Europeans should find markets for their goods, no matter what they are. By employing smart packaging the consumer learns about the product from the label, and trusts that they are buying a product consistent in quality. The closing scene depicts a self-service grocery store, bringing the point

home further. Eventually marketing can help a product build the same level of consumer trust that one finds with the local grocer.

In fact, marketing somewhat describes the process of Marshall Plan Films. Though a large number of these films focused on specific production and husbandry techniques, the underlying message of the entire catalogue was: look at what your methods have given you. Now look at the wealth and prosperity that our methods have given us. American advertising arrived in Europe in late January 1927.[4] This marked the date when J. Walter Thompson opened advertising agencies throughout Europe. Victoria De Grazia shows that from the start, American companies discovered differences between their advertising techniques as compared to European ones. This made them more aggressive in their campaign to prove American superiority and show European methods as "backward" and "undeveloped," essentially stressing "our way" not "theirs."[5] The American advertising presence urged Europeans to be more self-conscious about their own peculiarities, reinforcing the idea that American products represented the "standard" or norm.

American politicians also recognized the power of advertising. Advertising became the medium "for getting across strong messages."[6] Newspaperman George Creel convinced President Woodrow Wilson to employ the JWT advertising agency to convince Germans during WWI that defeat was inevitable. People recognized American advertising as a way to "sway the ideas of whole populations, change their habits of life," and "create beliefs."[7] American officials turned to JWT after WWII as well. Marshall Planner's used the advertising company's expertise

[4] De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, 231.

[5] De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, 234.

[6] De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, 238.

[7] De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, 238-239.

in order to explain "the enduring peace of a 'socially-conscious capitalism,'" and "Trade not aid."[8] Marshall Planner's used advertising to shore up their massive propaganda campaign. These ad-people undoubtedly helped to strengthen the various economic messages of the plan. However, Marshall Plan Films achieved a further goal beyond the outward spread of messages.

Marshall Plan Films gave Europeans a visual explanation of how Americans created a "superior culture." Scenes of modernity and affluence sought to imbue viewers with a lasting impression of the only way forward in a postwar environment. Michael Postan wrote in 1955: "Transatlantic inspiration to European policies of growth… came not only from what the USA gave or preached but also form what the USA was… Both openly and discretely the wish to catch up with the USA became the ambition of governments and the public… American affluence and American levels of consumption – motor cars, domestic gadgets, and all- were held up as rewards to come. In short, America's very presence provided an impulse to European growth and a measure of its achievements."[9] This quote underlines the real power of the Marshall Plan Films. Many Europeans saw the affluence of the American officials firsthand. They saw American GIs gallivanting around the cities of Paris, Rome, and West Berlin, while they struggled to heat their homes and feed their families.[10] But those who did not see Americans in person may have seen them in Marshall Plan Films. They may have seen the relatively astounding affluence of American workers, who owned their own cars, worked less hours for more money, drove their own cars to their own homes, and sat down at tables covered in meat and potatoes.

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[8] De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, 239.

[9] Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe*, 227.

[10] Pells, *Not Like Us*, 136.

These "affluent American workers" in Marshall Plan Films showed what Marshall Planners thought about America and its consumption fueled pursuit of life. The Marshall Plan propaganda campaign sought to diffuse the appeal of Soviet Communism and establish a trading system compatible with the American model. But these films also showed what American officials thought about their own country. American officials created these images in the hope that Europeans would embrace the American model of capitalism and leave behind values that they felt were outdated and unrealistic. Marshall Plan Films asked Europeans to see the wisdom of American capitalism: a world filled with cheap goods, new gadgets, and the latest of everything.

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