

“DUAL CRISES”: BRITISH PRESS REPRESENTATIONS OF HUNGARY AND EGYPT, 1956

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Abstract

In this thesis I compare and contrast two British newspapers: the *Daily Mail* and the *Manchester Guardian*, and their representations of the Hungarian Revolution and Suez War, both of which took place in October and November 1956. I examine the different styles of journalism in each paper, looking closely at the impact of media framing theory, governmental “influence” and the newspapers’ ownership. In addition, for the first time, the relationship of the Information Research Department, a branch of the British Foreign Office, with the British press will be evaluated in detail.

Drawing upon media frameworks, the position of the press in the 1950s and the choices of the British and Soviet governments to engage in military action in Egypt and Hungary respectively, the press’ role as an actor, rather than simply a source of information is discussed and argued for. Contextually, the 1950s represent the first full decade of the Cold War, as well as a decade where decolonisation became a real threat to British international interests. The rise of the Soviet Union to the status of superpower and the demise of the British global status as a world power mean that the press’ representations and portrayal of the events of 1956 are a fascinating and enlightening illustration of the global shifts in international politics.

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Introduction: Perspectives on the British Press

In 1956, the world once again faced “dual crises”. With the end of the Second World War had come occupation, with British, French, American and the Soviet military forces remaining in Germany, Austria, Hungary and other countries outside of Europe such as Japan. Hungary had fallen under Soviet influence and had in 1947, in the ‘blue-ballot’ elections, elected a Communist government. With the diminishing influence of Britain and France as their colonies began to declare independence, as well as the rise of the American and Soviet superpowers, the growing competition and disagreement in both Europe and globally resulted in the rising tensions of the Cold War. With a divided Europe, the result was the creation of hard borders, often referred to as the Iron Curtain.

The Hungarian Revolution erupted on the 23rd October 1956, a seemingly first ‘tear’ in the Iron Curtain. Internationally, newspapers and magazines reported daily on the Hungarian events and the British press was no exception. Support in Britain for the Revolution was reflected in the publication of seven days of front-page newspaper headlines which marks the importance of the event which did not directly involve Britain. However, six days after the outbreak of the Hungarian Revolution, Israel invaded Egypt. This invasion would soon be joined by both Britain and France. The Suez “crisis” signalled a change in world politics, and was a change that was duly noted in the British press, resulting in a re-prioritisation of headline news stories which displaced the six-day focus on the Hungarian Revolution, beginning on October 30th. My thesis investigates the way in which these two events, covering the fifteen-day period of October 23rd to November 7th, were presented on the front pages of two British newspapers: the *Daily Mail* and the *Manchester Guardian*. The rest of this introductory chapter will establish the approach which I will take in reference to scholarly

literature and the description of both events, as well as my methodological and theoretical approach to the analysis of the press.

I have used two British newspapers: the *Daily Mail* and the *Manchester Guardian* as sources for my argument. The *Daily Mail*, a newspaper famous for its ‘unashamedly conservative’¹ stance as well as for its strong opinion pieces, was one of the most read newspapers in the 1950s, with a readership of over two million in 1956.² The *Manchester Guardian*, established in 1821, and became a daily paper in 1855 following the abolition of the stamp duty, and in 1956 its readership was much lower than the *Daily Mail*’s, at around 160,000.³ The *Manchester Guardian*, unlike the *Daily Mail*, followed a much more left-leaning, liberal style of journalism. These two papers followed the traditional press line of being “Party papers”, whereby they affiliated themselves with a political party, and their articles supported their Party’s policy. The *Daily Mail*, an extremely pro-Tory newspaper, was the newspaper which, during 1956, was supportive of the ruling Party. The *Manchester Guardian* on the other hand supported the opposition: the Labour Party. The *Manchester Guardian* in the 1950s was printed in the style of a broadsheet, a common format for more ‘intellectual’ newspapers. Broadsheet newspapers were larger and therefore could fit more information onto a single page. The *Daily Mail* on the other hand was, and is, a tabloid newspaper in its style and content as a ‘popular press’ newspaper. Both formats, broadsheet and tabloid, will be explained in more detail in Chapter 3.

The British press in the 1950s, more so than in contemporary society, was used instrumentally by its elitist ownership. The elites were members of the ruling classes who thought of the

¹ Hugo De Burgh, *Investigative Journalism*, (London: Routledge, 2008), p.272.

² Tony Shaw, *Eden, Suez and the Mass Media*, p.197.

³ Ibid, p.197.

press as an instrument by which they could share their opinions and values. Many newspapers in the 1950s were owned and controlled by “press-barons” who exerted their power and views over the articles printed in their newspapers. The 2nd Viscount Rothermere (otherwise known as Esmond Harmsworth), for example, owned and controlled the *Daily Mail*, and his family had been in control of the paper since its establishment in 1896 (and whose descendants own the paper even today). Knowledge that the *Daily Mail* was owned and managed by not just a member of the ruling elite, but a powerful “press-baron”, could suggest that it was simply a ‘mouthpiece’ for its owner.⁴ However, the dominance of the elites over ownership of some of the most widely-read newspapers in Britain in the 1950s was not the only form of control. The *Manchester Guardian*, for example, worked differently to the ‘popular press’. Its much smaller readership reflected its choice to aim its publications at the ‘political and social elites’ rather than focus on being profitable and tailoring its journalism to the masses, as the ‘popular’ press did.⁵ The contrast in leadership from the “press-baron” for the *Daily Mail*, and the “self-styled” editors who ran the *Manchester Guardian* resulted in the attraction of two contrasting audiences. The ‘popular press’ which included the *Daily Mail* looked to gain more subscriptions from the masses, whereas the ‘quality press’ like the *Manchester Guardian* looked to reach ‘small but affluent’ audiences.⁶ These two types of leadership, one dedicated to profit and a wide audience, the other dedicated to quality news distribution for a select few, resulted in two very different types of journalism, both of with different priorities, and both which will be analysed in this thesis.

⁴ Adrian Bingham, ‘Reading Newspapers: Cultural Histories of the Popular Press in Modern Britain’, *History Compass*, 10, 2, (2012), pp.140-150, p.142.

⁵ Ibid, p.142.

⁶ James Curran, ‘The Era of the Press Barons’, in ed. James Curran and Jean Seaton, *Power Without Responsibility: Press, Broadcasting and the Internet in Britain*, (Abingdon, Routledge, 2010), pp.37-53, p.44.

The way in which both the Hungarian Revolution and the Suez War have been referred to in scholarly literature from the last 60 years has evolved over time. What is now called the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, was initially a student rebellion which the British press labelled as a nationwide revolt. Early headlines in the *Manchester Guardian* referred to the ‘Anti-Russian’⁷ nature of the Revolution while the *Daily Mail* referred to the possibility of labelling it as a ‘Civil War’.⁸ However, in my thesis I have chosen to refer to it as the Hungarian Revolution unless my sources use other labels. I have made this choice because in contemporary scholarship and journalism, it is referred to as Revolution, rather than ‘revolt’, ‘rebellion’ or ‘uprising’, each of which has a history behind its attribution. Similarly, I have chosen different terminology for the events in Egypt to the ones offered by the British press in the 1950s. Instead of referring to the British intervention in Egypt as a ‘police action’ or ‘crisis’, I have chosen to call it war. The confusion within the press as to the reasons behind the British action over the Suez Canal led to it accidentally being labelled as a war by the *Daily Mail* on the 1st November.⁹ I have commandeered this mistake by the *Daily Mail* in order to emphasise the perplexity of journalists and politicians alike in their responses to the Suez War.

Israel’s invasion of Egypt on the 29th October 1956 changed the press’ focus dramatically. Given that this event had such a strong impact on the reporting, it is worth reviewing the scholarship on the crisis. Unknown at the time, the Israelis, French and British governments had met secretly following Gamal Abdel Nasser’s nationalisation of the Suez Canal on the 26th July 1956.¹⁰ But, as shall be shown in my analysis of the press, the Cold War context was

⁷ ‘Police Open Fire in Budapest: Anti- Russian Crowds in Street Disorders’, *Manchester Guardian*, 24.10.1956, p.1.

⁸ ‘Hour By-Hour Flashes Tell How Hungary’s Civil War Rages’, *Daily Mail*, 25.10.1956, p.1.

⁹ Comment, ‘Britain at War’, *Daily Mail*, 01.11.1956, p.1.

¹⁰ Simon C. Smith, *Reassessing Suez 1956: New Perspectives on the Crisis and its Aftermath*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2008), p.5.

also relevant as the Soviet Union was perceived to desire more influence in the Middle East. The decision of the British government to work together with both Israel and France was problematic, not only on a legal stance, but also a moral one.¹¹ As will be shown by my analysis, the question commonly asked during this period in the more liberal *Manchester Guardian* was whether Britain was able to denounce the Soviet suppression of the Hungarian Revolution, when her own actions were of similar disrepute.¹² For the British government, the outcome of the Suez War was, in fact, a ‘crisis’, as it paved the way for the African colonies to declare their independence, thus ending British imperial influence.¹³ On the other hand, the term ‘tripartite aggression’, from the perspective of Egyptian or non-Western scholars is correctly used as the Israeli-French-British conspiracy was in fact an aggression, which had no legal basis for its execution.¹⁴ Therefore, in discussing the press coverage, I will pay close attention to how the two British newspapers label the ongoing events during this fifteen-day period.

Another key issue I have encountered during my research for this thesis is how should we define the relationship between the British press and politics? As aforementioned, the press in 1950s Britain, as well as in many other countries, was predominantly a Party press rather than a completely independent one, with different newspapers aligning themselves with different governmental Parties. James Curran writes that, ‘every single national daily newspaper slavishly supported the same political party at every general election between

¹¹ Some scholars have even argued that the pressure upon the British Prime Minister Anthony Eden caused him to be ‘disastrously influenced by Churchill’s shadow’, hence conspiring to take back control of the Suez Canal without consulting the United Nations. For further reading, see Simon C. Smith *Reassessing Suez*, introduction.

¹² Smith, *Reassessing Suez*, p.171, and Victor Zorza, ‘Tanks Mass in Hungary: Warsaw Pact Rejected’, *Manchester Guardian*, 02.11.1956, p.1.

¹³ Elizabeth Buettner, *Europe After Empire: Decolonisation, Society and Culture*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), p.56.

¹⁴ Thomas T. F. Huang, ‘Some International and Legal Aspects of the Suez Canal Question’, *The American Journal of International Law*, 51, (1957), pp.277-307, p.307.

1945 and 1970, with the sole exceptions of the... *Times* and the *Guardian*.¹⁵ What Curran shows is the British press' traditional approach to politics and allegiance. Even though newspapers had become more autonomous since the 1940s, Curran emphasises that politically, newspapers generally remained loyal to their affiliated Party.

As a result of this connection and affiliation of the press and Parties, I will argue that the press was not "objective" when reporting on the double crises of Hungary and Suez, and that connections in government, loyalties and editorial opinions affected the journalism the papers produced. It is for this reason that I have chosen to discuss and focus upon two contrasting newspapers- the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Mail*- which represent liberal and conservative positions respectively, to show how this public debate of words played out. This approach analyses for the first time the relationship between the British press and the Information Research Department (IRD), a branch of the Foreign Office. Using press coverage from this period, I will evaluate both crises within the Cold War and imperial contexts, as the press coverage alluded to both. The actions of the United Nations will also be considered as it was a new player in international politics and also featured heavily in the press coverage. It is my argument that in the British press the Suez War "minimised" the Hungarian Revolution on its front pages, whilst the Suez War was hotly debated, demonstrating how "dual crises" are handled and the role that was played by the press.

My methodological approach aims to reflect the complexities and opinions of the two newspapers during that period. I have chosen to look at the *Daily Mail*'s and the *Manchester Guardian*'s articles in a thematic way, rather than chronologically, because a thematic

¹⁵ James Curran, 'Fable of Market Democracy', in ed. James Curran and Jean Seaton, *Power Without Responsibility: Press, Broadcasting and the Internet in Britain*, (Abingdon, Routledge, 2010), pp.66-99, p.68. The exception of the *Guardian* refers to the newspaper's strong opposition to Clement Richard Attlee's post-war government, where the newspaper encouraged people to vote Conservative.

approach allows for the analysis of different article's connections, regardless of whether they were published at the same time or a week apart. The thematic approach also offers a better way of showing the shift of reporting from Hungary to Egypt, and the significance of the final headline regarding the Hungarian Revolution on the 5th of November. This thematic approach allowed me to analyse articles in relation to their content, rather than their publication date. It is an approach which I follow through the entirety of this thesis.

Taking this thematic methodological approach as well as demonstrating the linkage between the press and the government does not necessarily suggest that the press lacks independence. As Curran writes, 'accuracy, precision and veracity should not be confused with independence'.¹⁶ From this I argue that the press is an actor, not just a source, working to produce and publish information whether it supports the use of governmental sources or views or not. To make this argument I devote my first chapter to the IRD, which was operated by the British Foreign Office. As I will explain, the press' connection to the government through the Foreign Office is complicated, yet it can be shown that the information from the IRD was relayed via the press. The press is not a unitary voice, as the comparison between the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Mail* will show. Nonetheless, during international crises, journalists are dependent upon government sources and so demonstrating not only the linkage, but how each newspaper tends to incorporate and present the information helps to define what I mean by the press as an actor.

One theme of the press coverage of 1956 which is particularly striking in light of subsequent scholarship on the Suez War, is the acknowledgement of the initial widespread Arab support

¹⁶ James Curran, 'Introduction', in ed. James Curran and Jean Seaton, *Power Without Responsibility: Press, Broadcasting and the Internet in Britain*, (Abingdon, Routledge, 2010), pp.1-4, p.3.

for the nationalisation of the Suez Canal by Gamal Abdel Nasser in July 1956. One key scholar, James Jankowski, has written extensively on Arab nationalism, and the effect which the nationalisation of the Suez Canal had upon Middle Eastern relations and Nasser's consolidation of power as a result.¹⁷ Interestingly, Jankowski also writes about Suez from an Egyptian perspective, looking at it in a positive light rather than as a "crisis" which is more prominently a Western perspective on the nationalisation and the subsequent invasion. Although Jankowski does not refer to the Suez War as the 'Tripartite Aggression' as it is often referred to in Egypt, he acknowledges and records the responses to the nationalisation in July as celebratory, with messages of support being sent from neighbouring countries such as Iraq. In addition, Jankowski discusses the reiteration of supportive messages from Arab governments following the invasion and military conflict in October and November.

In addition to Jankowski's impressive work on Nasserism, Laura James also looks at Nasser's rise to power and the effect which the Suez War had upon his reign. James argues that from the Suez War, Nasser established himself as the 'ultimate symbol of Arab revolution'.¹⁸ This is a view held by other scholars looking into the Nasserist personality including Joel Gordon, a historian who spent a considerable amount of time with allies, collaborators and friends of Nasser in order to better understand the impact of Nasserism, who wrote of Nasser that he was, 'a national hero and regional sensation'.¹⁹ In addition to the heroic portrayal of Nasser, Howard Dooley writing in the 1970s looked at the contrasting perceptions of Nasser: 'worshiped by some, loathed by others'.²⁰

¹⁷ James Jankowski, *Nasser's Egypt, Arab Nationalism, and the United Arab Republic*, pp.83-88.

¹⁸ Laura James, *Nasser at War: Arab Images of the Enemy*, (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p.ix.

¹⁹ Joel Gordon, *Nasser: Hero of the Arab Nation*, (London: Oneworld, 2006), see introduction.

²⁰ Howard J. Dooley, 'Nasser and DeGaulle: Heroes in Search of a Role', *Society for History Education*, 4, 2, (1971), pp.48-53, p.48.

Therefore, I paid close attention to how Nasser was portrayed in the British press, specifically by looking at the *Daily Mail*'s and the *Manchester Guardian*'s representations of Nasser. By using these newspapers, I will show that the *Daily Mail* strongly adhered to the British governmental perspective on Nasser who was characterised primarily as a threat to British oil supplies, but also compared to individuals such as Hitler or Mussolini. The *Manchester Guardian*, on the other hand, obtained to take a less emotional representation of Nasser by reporting more factually rather than comparing him to other totalitarian leaders. Neither paper, however, portrayed Nasser as a hero, or recognised the Middle Eastern support for his actions as positive. Even the *Manchester Guardian*, a more liberal paper, did not recognise the nationalisation of the Canal in July 1956 as progressive.

The British press as an independent topic and as a research subject is encountered to a great extent by scholar Mark Hampton. He recognises the lack of scholarship which surrounds the British press, and instead of simply using the press as a source of information, he attempts to discuss the press' role in society and politics. Hampton also debates the 'influence' of the press upon society, but questions who the 'impressionable' classes of society constitute, and argues that between 1850-1950, this mostly reflected the 'popular classes'.²¹ What Hampton provides is a more detailed analysis of the 'public', and those people whom the media has the power to 'influence'. This discussion, especially in specific reference to the British press allows for a more thoughtful and thought-provoking discussion on the extent to which what the press prints has changed society.

²¹ Mark Hampton, *Visions of the Press in Britain: 1850-1950*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004), p.5.

One of the key concepts which is analysed in this thesis is that of the media framing theory. Media framing is a concept which describes how a newspaper story is portrayed in the context of the time. Scholars argue that media framing helps citizens to understand politics and formulate opinions by ‘stressing certain aspects of reality and pushing others into the background’.²² To summarise, the framing of a political event in the newspapers involves ‘selection and salience’, which results in some aspects being more emphasised due to their considered importance.²³ One framework which is discussed in this thesis is the Cold War frame, which, during the 1956 dual crises, dominated the newspapers’ portrayal of both Hungary and Suez.

Robert Entman discusses the Cold War framework in regards to American media, but his four ‘locations’ in the communication process are seemingly relevant to the Cold War framing in the *Daily Mail* and the *Manchester Guardian* during the 1950s. Entman’s four locations include ‘the communicator, the text, the receiver and the culture.’²⁴ All four of these locations allow for an understanding of how media framing works, and how it can function in the dissemination of carefully selected information and opinion. The ‘communicator’ refers to the newspaper itself, and the ‘text’ the newspaper articles which contain frames which are demonstrated by the ‘presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information and sentences that provide... judgement.’²⁵ The ‘receiver’s’ role is not, however, assumed to lack agency, and Entman recognises that the framing cannot always apply to the outcome of opinion.²⁶ This recognition is also confirmed by other media

²² Sophie Leheler and Claes H. de Vreese, ‘News Framing and Public Opinion: A Mediation Analysis of Framing Effects of Political Attitudes’, *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 89, (2012), pp.185-204, p.186, and Thomas E. Nelson, Zoe M. Oxley and Rosalee A. Clawson, ‘Toward a Psychology of Framing Effects’, *Political Behaviour*, 19, 3, (1997), pp.221-246, p.223.

²³ Robert M. Entman, ‘Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm’, *Journal of Communication*, 43, 4, (1993), pp.51-58, p.52.

²⁴ *Ibid*, p.52-53.

²⁵ *Ibid*, p.52-53.

²⁶ *Ibid*, p.53.

framing scholars who, although they acknowledge that much of the public's knowledge is a result of media dissemination of information, realise that the generalisation of media framing's "influence" is unsuitable.²⁷ For this reason I have been hesitant to oversimplify the connection between the British press and public in 1956. The final of Entman's locations is that of 'culture': the commonplace thinking of people in different social groups. Entman argues that culture ultimately affects whether an individual is affected by a specific type of media framing.²⁸

The media framing which is discussed in this thesis suggests that both the Cold War and imperial contexts of 1956 resulted in the articles which most emphatically appear in the *Daily Mail*. It is much clearer to envision the workings of the framing theory in the *Daily Mail* because of its passionate, emotional journalistic style. Stereotypes, calls to war, demonisation of communism and Nasserism all conform to the media framing theory about which Entman so eloquently writes. The Cold War frame is evident in both newspapers, with anti-Soviet flavour etched into the headlines during this period. The imperial frame on the other hand is much more divided between the newspapers, with the *Daily Mail* framing the colonial adventure in Suez as another 'Allied' action (similar to Second World War framing), and with the *Manchester Guardian* condemning the outdated colonial mentality. It is the use of framing which gives power to the press, but is also an 'inescapable' element of news reporting.²⁹

During the course of this thesis, I hope to show the dramatic shift in the press' focus from the Hungarian Revolution to the Suez War, all within the context of media frameworks as well as the Cold War and colonial contexts. The connection of press and government will be

²⁷ Nelson, Oxley and Clawson, 'Toward a Psychology of Framing Effects', p.223 and Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organisation of Experience*, (Boston: Harper & Row, 1974), p.24.

²⁸ Entman, 'Framing: Toward Clarification', p.53.

²⁹ Patterson, 'Time and News', p.62.

discussed, in special reference to the IRD and its relationship with the British press both in the United Kingdom and abroad. The importance of media framing, political context and the existence of Party press is shown through the changing representations of events in both Hungary and Egypt. With the British Empire signalling its own demise in Egypt, the press, the *Daily Mail* in particular, attempted to create a framework which allowed for a justification and comprehension of the new world status which Britain acquired following her “adventure” in Egypt. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, as a rising world superpower, had its representation in the British press re-emphasised as an ‘imperial’³⁰ aggressor, whose brutal actions in Europe resulted in Hungary’s ‘Murder.’³¹

The contexts of decolonisation, the Cold War and political turmoil added to the press’ framing of the dual crises generally. Yet in Britain during those October and November months, the press was not just a source of information, but an active actor. The frameworks, images, opinion pieces and Party affiliations meant that the British press lobbied for its own views, as well as those of the Party it supported. The media, and within it the press, has been debated as to whether or not it can be considered an instrument and capable of affecting public opinion. The arguments surrounding this debate often attach themselves to the politics and international aspects of a news story, with some scholars such as Thomas Patterson arguing that ‘abrupt developments are regarded as more newsworthy than chronic conditions’.³² This argument could explain why the British press in 1956 suddenly steered its focus away from the Hungarian Revolution and turned to the outbreak of war in Egypt. The ‘new’ news was more exciting, especially considering the necessity for newspapers to maintain their readership by being the first to reveal news in order to maintain and increase profits. The

³⁰ Comment, ‘Imperial Russia’, *Daily Mail*, 27.10.1956, p.1.

³¹ Jeffery Blyth, ‘The Murder of Hungary’, *Daily Mail*, 05.11.1956, p.1.

³² Thomas E. Patterson, ‘Time and News: The Media’s Limitations as an Instrument of Democracy’, *International Political Science Review*, 19, 1, (1998), pp.55-67, p.57.

Manchester Guardian's stance on the Suez War, for example, with its critique of government policy, resulted in a ten percent increase in its readership.³³ This thesis will contribute to the available scholarship on the British press by focussing on the specific time period of October 23rd until November 7th, and on two newspapers which are seldom contrasted due to their different journalistic styles: 'popular' versus 'quality'. Instead of looking at one type of press, I have chosen to compare them. This comparison allows me to argue that the ownership and readership of the papers help to shape the story which they portray.

³³ 'Key Moments in the Guardian's History', <https://www.theguardian.com/gnm-archive/2002/jun/11/1> [accessed on 01.06.2018].

Chapter 1: The Information Research Department's Press Relations

How the Information Research Department (IRD) fits into the discussion surrounding the British press and their reporting on the dual “crises” is evident when looking at the internal correspondence of the IRD referencing the British press. Although an explicit link is hard to prove, the IRD’s internal correspondence frequently referred to British newspapers as the press was considered to be a valuable distributor of information. In this chapter I hope to argue that the IRD and the British press were interlinked, especially considering the rise of power of the IRD by 1956. The outbreak of the Hungarian Revolution and the Suez War was an opportunity for the IRD to promote its assets, abilities and importance to both the Foreign Office and the government. As the IRD was on its way to becoming one of the Foreign Office’s largest departments, its role and connection to the public dissemination of information during the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and Suez War is paramount to analysing the governmental connection to the press. I hope this chapter will make clearer the functions of the IRD in general as well as proving the link between the government bodies and the press, as my argument hopes to show.

Explanation, Background and Purpose of the Information Research Department

The IRD had operated since 1948 under the leadership of the Foreign Office.³⁴ This department, initially established to deliver anti-communist information at home and abroad based on ‘the truth’, eventually evolved into a British propaganda machine whose mission divulged into more ‘anti anti-British’ than informative and anti-communist.³⁵ The IRD was

³⁴ James B. Smith, ‘The British Information Research Department and Cold War Propaganda Publishing’, in Greg Barnhisel and Catherine Turner, *Pressing the Fight: Print, Propaganda, and the Cold War*, (Massachusetts, University of Massachusetts Press, 2010), p.112-125, p.112.

³⁵ Andrew Defty, *Britain, America and Anti-Communist Propaganda, 1945-1953: The Information Research Department*, (Routledge: Abingdon, 2004), p.9.

built under an umbrella of secrecy, whose sole purpose aimed to be the collection of confidential and sensitive information about Communism in order to provide a more accurate education of its evils to the British public.³⁶ The importance of the IRD has been discussed in relation to the Cold War and the flow of information in British political circles in general, but in its own right, the IRD's impact during the Hungarian Revolution and the Suez War has not been analysed in detail. The growth of the IRD from its establishment in the late 1940s until 1956 was considerable, with secret relationships and contacts having already been developed and nurtured for nearly a decade.

The IRD was formed and secured over the backdrop of the rise of Communism in Eastern Europe after the end of the Second World War. Fear of communism and its spread culminated in the IRD's inauguration, allowing for a department whose main purpose of existence was to promote British values whilst attempting to convincingly frighten the public away from communist values and ideas. Interestingly, a large proportion of the contacts which were made via the IRD were in publishing houses where subsidised literature, promoted by the IRD, was made available to the public through the pretence of fiction.³⁷ The circulation of information via the IRD was planned to be invisible, with its traces difficult to monitor. By this I mean that Britain and her government maintained that they disassociated themselves from the propaganda techniques employed by their 'totalitarian' neighbours, as Britain was a power which 'did not engage in propaganda'.³⁸

³⁶ Hugh Wilford, 'The Information Research Department: Britain's Secret Cold War Weapon Revealed', *Review of International Studies*, 24, (1998), pp.353-369, p.353.

³⁷ The topic of IRD publications being promoted by publishing houses has somewhat excited the academic community to the subject. The most shocking discovery in the 1990s was of the IRD's relationship with George Orwell following his publication of anti-totalitarian material like *Animal Farm*. Orwell, it was revealed, had supplied the IRD with a list of names relating to people he believed could be trusted by the IRD, but also names which he advised against the IRD pursuing. For more discussion, surrounding the role of publishing houses and Orwell's donation of information, please see Smith, 'The British Information Research Department', p.125, and John Jenks, 'The IRD: Inside the Knowledge Factory', in John Jenks, *British Propaganda and News Media in the Cold War*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), p.70-71.

³⁸ Wilford, 'The Information Research Department', p.357.

Functions of the Department

The functions and relevance of the IRD has been called into question by scholars who argue that British anti-communist propaganda did not originate with the beginnings of the IRD, but had already begun, especially in the Middle East.³⁹ Nevertheless, the IRD represented a new movement towards the distribution of information in a way which was consistent with what could in other contexts be called ‘propaganda’. The information collected by the IRD was publicised by means of an extensive contact person list which consisted of large numbers of media employees such as journalists, newspaper editors, and broadcasters, as well as politicians and religious leaders who had the power and influence to funnel the information into the public.⁴⁰ The contact list did not only pertain to British persons, but in the Middle East and in other realms of the British Empire, influential contacts were made. In the Middle East, Cairo was the headquarters for translation of IRD materials for access to the ‘Arabic-speaking’ world, and by 1950, only two years after its inauguration, the IRD was producing materials on a global scale.⁴¹

The Suez War and the Hungarian Revolution were both closely monitored by the IRD whose functions of surveillance and propaganda arguably contest the depiction of the Cold War as a ‘war on the mind’.⁴² The IRD was an important tool in the anti-Soviet propaganda war, especially in the Middle East in the 1950s. Although the Suez War may suggest that the IRD’s mission was not successful, James Vaughan, an academic who has written substantially on the IRD’s role in the Cold War context, argues that it was not the IRD that was unsuccessful,

³⁹ James Vaughan, ‘Cloak Without Dagger: How the Information Research Department Fought Britain’s Cold War in the Middle East, 1948-56’, *Cold War History*, 4, (2004), pp.56-84, p.58.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p.59.

⁴¹ Wilford, ‘The Information Research Department’, p.359.

⁴² Vaughan, ‘Cloak Without Dagger’, p.56.

but rather the message which it relayed.⁴³ The IRD and its role during both the Suez War and the Hungarian Revolution was a priority to the British government during the events of 1956.

The information which was gathered by the IRD for distribution was not solely aimed at the British public for its circulation. The Middle East had its own information office located in Beirut, and the European office operated from Vienna. The IRD activities in these areas included using radios, journals, magazines and newspapers which helped to spread an anti-communist message. In the Middle East, however, especially in Egypt, the IRD evolved its practices into spreading not only anti-communist materials, but also “anti anti-British” materials, which became the new charter for the Department from May 1956, taking priority over the anti-communist campaign.⁴⁴ It was also acknowledged in the same month that anti-communist propaganda had been successfully dispersed to the Egyptian population via three important instruments of publicity: ‘Sharq (an Egyptian newspaper), distribution of pamphlets in Arabic, and publications of articles in the local press’ which discussed the ‘newly arrived rouble imperialism’.⁴⁵

In addition to the Vienna and Beirut offices, the IRD collected a considerable amount of information in one ‘Iron Curtain country’: Hungary.⁴⁶ In Hungary, according to one telegram, a staff of 19 locals operated on a daily basis, collecting information, running a library and a reading room and showed films there as well as producing a daily bulletin in Hungarian and also provided films for outside viewing. The annual budget for the Hungarian information

⁴³ Ibid, p.78, however this claim is disputed by Simon M. W. Collier in his unpublished thesis where he claims that by Suez’s failure, the IRD also failed, ‘Countering Communist and Nasserite Propaganda: The Foreign Office Information Research Department in the Middle East and Africa, 1954-1963’, (Doctor of Philosophy unpublished thesis, University of Hertfordshire, 2013), p.80.

⁴⁴ TNA, FO 1110/942, ‘Middle East: Soviet Propaganda’, Letter from P.F. Grey to Philip Adams, 03.05.1956.

⁴⁵ TNA, FO 1110/942, ‘Middle East: Soviet Propaganda’ 05.1956.

⁴⁶ TNA, FO 1110/939, ‘Eastern Europe: Possibilities for Information’, Telegram from C.C.B. Stewart, 17.07.1956.

work was £4,500, (today's equivalent of about £110,000) which aimed to analyse, translate and send back to London all valuable facts and figures pertaining to the communist rule in Hungary and other Eastern European countries. Interestingly however, the Hungarian information department felt that the BBC should be the main available disseminator of information, rather than the press, 'the BBC is the only major propaganda instrument which we can use on the Satellites', and work to provoke the use of the BBC broadcasts was encouraged by the Hungarian department to the IRD.⁴⁷

Press Relations to the Information Research Department

While a considerable amount has been written on the IRD's relationship with the BBC and other broadcasters, the specific role of the IRD and its press relations during 1956 has been relatively neglected. Some newspapers, namely the *Daily Telegraph*, and their relations with the IRD have been analysed academically, especially considering the personal involvement of the chief editors and press-barons. However, the difficulty remains to unambiguously link British newspapers and their journalists to the propagandistic mission of the IRD. Perhaps if one considers the growing power of the IRD from the early 1950s, the necessity of journalists' relations with the IRD becomes more transparent. John Jenks writes of the highly controlled 'defector interviews' which were guarded by the BBC and the IRD, for fear that the 'wrong kind' of information may be disseminated to disloyal press.⁴⁸ It became increasingly clear that absolutely no journalist would be able to obtain an interview with a Soviet Bloc defector 'without IRD sponsorship'.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ TNA, FO 1110/939, 'Eastern Europe: Possibilities for Information', citing Sir J. Ward's Paper on Britain's Policy towards the Satellites, 17.07.1956. Sir Ward in the paper encouraged the use of the BBC in showing that 'freedom is preferable to Communism', and emphasised that although Poland should be of 'priority interest', Hungary and Czechoslovakia should be 'in second place'. To see this paper in full, please see it cited in Csaba Békés, Malcolm Byrne and János M. Rainer, *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: A History in Documents*, (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2002), pp.148-151.

⁴⁸ John Jenks, 'IRD Distribution Patterns and Media Operations', in John Jenks, *British Propaganda and News Media in the Cold War*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), p.86.

⁴⁹ Ibid, p.86.

The BBC's relationship to the IRD is of considerable interest to academics who look into the functions of the Department. In a letter written to the IRD in 1957, BBC journalist Gregory Macdonald who was the BBC's Polish correspondent wrote, 'We are able to rely now to a greater degree on the Hungarian press, but we shall be very grateful to you for any press material that you think would not normally come our way... you have no idea how useful the daily telegram service was during all these months'.⁵⁰ Referring to the information which the IRD had given the BBC journalists during October and November 1956, Macdonald explicitly states the overt relationship of the broadcaster with the IRD. This explicit link is much harder to establish for different newspapers, but the existence of such informative allies in the broadcasting realm suggests that the press would also have been kept closely informed, if it was what they wished.⁵¹

The IRD through extensive reports and communications during the Suez War, kept British consulates and newspapers informed as to the happenings in Egypt.⁵² In addition to this consideration, the IRD wrote of its desire to improve upon its journalistic style in order that its information may be more readable and accessible to the British public, 'IRD articles should be written rather in the style of, say, the *Daily Express* than the *Manchester Guardian*'.⁵³ The disregard for the *Manchester Guardian's* style of writing may not be referring solely to the

⁵⁰ TNA, FO 1110/1009, 'Hungary: Correspondence with the BBC', Letter addressed to Miss Penny. C. Storey, IRD, Foreign Office from Gregory Macdonald, 13.04.1957.

⁵¹ Scholars including Peter Mansfield, Tony Shaw and James Vaughan are among many who have analysed the relationship of the IRD with the BBC. Mansfield writes, 'the IRD worked in close liaison with the military intelligence services and provided the BBC with negative and scurrilous material about Nasser' in 'Nasser and Nasserism', p.63. The link between the IRD and the BBC has been regarded as a sign that the BBC did not maintain objectivity through its broadcasts, and that there were more explicit connections between the BBC and the government than people are aware. Please see the extensive work by Tony Shaw regarding the relationship of the IRD and the BBC and other broadcasters in, *Eden, Suez and the Mass Media: Propaganda and Persuasion During the Suez Crisis*, (London: Tauris Publishers, 1996).

⁵² TNA, FO 1110/893, 'Egypt: Distribution of Material, Distribution of Foreign Magazines', "ready to help you with further material at any time, please let us know and we will do our best to supply what is needed".

⁵³ TNA, FO 1110/941, 'Middle East: Communist Propaganda and Other Developments', March 1956.

style of the *Manchester Guardian*, but also the content. The IRD wanted to make the content of its articles blend into newspapers and magazines in a way which would not raise suspicion that these articles were anything but the work of a specific journalist, rather than the anti-communist propaganda infiltrated into the papers. The *Daily Express* had a similar journalistic style and perspective to the *Daily Mail*: both newspapers were Tory supporters, populist, and both in the 1930s had been extremely supportive of the appeasement policies followed by the government under Neville Chamberlain. With double the readership of the *Daily Mail* at over four million copies sold in 1956,⁵⁴ the choice of the IRD to write in the *Daily Express*' style was logical, especially considering the *Daily Express*' readership figures: it was the second most read newspaper in Britain.⁵⁵

The IRD not only sourced information, but was regularly sent letters and informative telegrams which enabled them to remain aware to a large amount of the political events during 1956. For example, many internal governmental telegrams originating from the Middle East would also be distributed to the IRD, 'advance copies: Head of Information Research Department, Head of News Department'.⁵⁶ This particular example was regarding Mr. Fry's opinions on the UN and his suggestion to praise the bravery of the Hungarian people whilst condemning the brutal Soviet actions. In addition to this telegram, Fry also wrote that from 28th October he would cease to write as much regarding what was happening in Hungary as 'there are now so many British journalists in Budapest', whom he considered would be able to successfully cover the events in Hungary.⁵⁷ This was also sent to the IRD.

⁵⁴ Tony Shaw, *Eden, Suez and the Mass Media*, p.197.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p.197.

⁵⁶ TNA, FO 371/122377/10110/119, 'Casualties in Hungary', Telegram from Mr. Fry, British Ambassador to Hungary to Foreign Office, Telegram No. 462, 27.10.1956.

⁵⁷ TNA, FO 371/122377/10110/119, 'Casualties in Hungary', Telegram from Mr. Fry, British Ambassador to Hungary to Foreign Office, 28.10.1956.

Vienna was also one of the IRD strongholds in Europe, and the British embassy there was advised when and how to ‘leak’ news regarding Hungary.⁵⁸ Vienna had access to the first copy of the Hungarian Students’ Manifesto released on the 23rd October 1956. It was the decision of the British embassy there to send the Manifesto to the Foreign Office who decided against its immediate publication. This decision is reflected in the British press, when only the *Manchester Guardian* obtained a copy of the Manifesto, but even so only referred to it very briefly. Without the IRD and the Foreign Office allowing for the publication of the Manifesto, it is clear that either it was successfully hidden from the public, or that the newspapers complied with the Foreign Office’s wish not to share it with the public. The embassy in Vienna also kept a keen eye on the press’ movements and publications in Britain, as the British Ambassador to Vienna, Sir Geoffrey Wallinger wrote to the Foreign Office marvelling at the ‘fairly considerable coverage’ of Hungary in relation to the Suez War.⁵⁹

What correspondence sent to the IRD suggests is a strong following of information through articles which appeared in the press, both in British newspapers and abroad. One such letter addressed to the Foreign Office, and therefore to the IRD, explicitly connects their interest and source of information to the press, ‘as you can imagine we are following with interest the correspondence in the English newspapers about the need to step up political warfare in the Middle East and reports of last week’s parliamentary questions’.⁶⁰ Although this letter was sent before the outbreak of Suez, and before the nationalisation of the Canal in July, this letter arrived in a context whereby there was perhaps less reason to follow the English press, due to there not being anything substantial regarding the Middle East happening which would

⁵⁸ TNA, FO 371/122393/10110/630, ‘Hungarian Students’ Manifesto of 23.10.1956 Release to Press’, Telegram from Mr. Birch (MP) to Mr. Anthony Nutting referring to telegram 405 from Budapest.

⁵⁹ TNA, FO 371/122393/10110/630, ‘Hungarian Students’ Manifesto of 23.10.1956 Release to Press’, Letter from Sir G. Wallinger (British Ambassador to Austria) to Mr. W. H. Young (Foreign Office), 14.11.1956.

⁶⁰ TNA, FO 1110/942, ‘Middle East: Soviet Propaganda’, Letter from Philip Adams (Regional Information Office, Middle East, British Embassy Beirut) to P.F. Grey (Foreign Office), 18.04.1956.

have affected the embassy in Beirut or the British government generally. The IRD's sources of information however, as is interesting to note, came from various places in the Middle East, including Lebanon.

The Information Research Department as 'Anti-Communist' and 'Anti Anti-British'

The increasing 'political warfare' in the Middle East encouraged the IRD to disseminate more anti-communist propaganda for fear that the Soviets were strengthening their position. In reference to the Regional Information Office in Beirut, it was between this office and the headquarters in Whitehall where decisions regarding IRD propaganda in the Middle East were made. Increasing political warfare however, may have also been referring to the rising anti-British sentiment in Egypt. As Nasser had been identified by the IRD as 'the primary threat to British interests in the region', it fell upon the IRD and its regional office in Beirut to not only maintain the anti-communist propaganda, but also attempt to quell the rising Arab nationalist feeling which was a much more immediate threat to the British position in Egypt.

The IRD debated which English newspapers were appropriate for the dissemination of anti-communist, anti-Nasserite materials. The importance of speed was also considered, with the argument that the London Press Service (LPS) could do more to transmit information during the night, rather than waiting until the morning to spread politically important information.⁶¹ In addition to this debate, the IRD suggested that English newspapers could be 'exploited' more than they were at present, and the newspapers in particular which the IRD was considering included the *Times*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Yorkshire Post*, *Economist* and, most importantly for this thesis, the *Daily Mail*.⁶² The consideration of the *Daily Mail* does not

⁶¹ TNA, FO 1110/941, 'Middle East: Communist Propaganda and Other Developments', 24.03.1956, General Remarks by Information Officers on Press work.

⁶² TNA, FO 1110/941, 'Middle East: Communist Propaganda and Other Developments', 24.03.1956, General Remarks by Information Officers on Press work.

come as a surprise, and the lack of consideration for the *Manchester Guardian* also does not seem out of the ordinary. What is surprising from this content, however, is how explicitly, openly and unashamedly the IRD considered the use of newspapers to spread anti-communist propaganda. This was not simply relaying information about the potential problems of communism, but scaremongering, for which the *Daily Mail*, among others, was seen to be a useful tool. This frightening aspect of propaganda, especially considering the British government's official stance regarding its use of propaganda (that only totalitarian governments supported its use⁶³) was so widespread that it appeared in the mainstream 'independent' press. The shocking reality exposed by the archives of IRD operations allows one to question whether the existence of independent press can be presumed. The actions of the IRD, especially in regards to newspapers including the *Daily Mail*, show a strong connection between the government policy, promotion of anti-communism, and the newspapers themselves.

Concerning IRD operations which related to the Hungarian Revolution in October 1956, the main priority appeared to be the promotion and reassurance of a strict non-military response from Britain. A letter from the British ambassador to the Foreign Office stressed that the Hungarians must not be given false hope through the suggestion that the British military might come to their aid, 'we must do nothing to encourage the idea that military support might be forthcoming'.⁶⁴ All correspondence between the British embassy in Budapest and the Foreign Office which I encountered in the National Archives was sent either via the IRD, or was distributed to them through advance copies. In addition to this, a serious telegram from the 4th November recognised the importance of pushing information of the Soviet suppression

⁶³ Wilford, 'The Information Research Department', p.353.

⁶⁴ TNA, FO 371/122377/10110/119, 'Casualties in Hungary', Letter from Budapest to the Foreign Office, Telegram no.458, 27.10.1956.

in Hungary to the news agencies in Britain, and globally where the ‘hope that worldwide publicity may deter Russians from bombing Budapest’. It was also my finding that telegrams which recognised the IRD’s activities in producing information commonly recognised the importance of delivering such information anonymously.⁶⁵ Although it is difficult to assume that the press’ recognition and publicity of the Soviet suppression could have affected the Revolution’s outcome, the Foreign Office here made clear its reliance and faith in the power of the press. It is, perhaps, for this reason that the IRD used newspapers and magazines so dependably for the deliverance of anti-communist propaganda.

Conclusions

Looking further into the IRD and the press’ relationship, it has been stated that regardless of the benefits of broadcasting, the IRD chose to focus mostly on ‘the preparation of articles for insertion into newspapers, magazines and journals’.⁶⁶ The IRD by this argument considered the press to be a more important location for the relaying of IRD materials, rather than the radio. Apart from the occasional reference to a specific newspaper, however, the correspondence remains quite general in its reference to the press. However, looking at the output in the *Daily Mail*, especially its extreme views regarding Gamal Abdel Nasser (which will be discussed further in Chapter 3), one can begin to question whether these types of news articles were from a journalist or were an IRD sponsored article. The extent to which the IRD influenced the British press is very difficult to measure, and yet the mission of the IRD, the relaying of anti-communist propaganda, is in line with what the *Daily Mail* printed regarding both Hungary and the Suez War. This is an argument which is considered during both chapters looking at the British newspaper coverage of both events.

⁶⁵ TNA, FO 371/122380/10110/250, ‘Soviet Intentions in Hungary (1 of 3)’, Telegram from Foreign Office to Budapest, 04.11.1956.

⁶⁶ Vaughan, ‘Cloak Without Dagger’, p.61.

Chapter 2: The Complexities of Press and Government During the Hungarian Revolution

*“What a hollow, brutal sham the whole thing is! The Russian-Communist regime is Czarism all over again. The Cossacks have been riding roughshod over the Hungarians as they did in 1849, except that today they mow ‘em down with tanks instead of slashing with swords.”*⁶⁷

- Daily Mail, 29th October 1956

On October 23rd 1956 the Hungarian Revolution began. The Revolution represents a momentous episode in Cold War history which resulted in the death of thousands of Hungarian revolutionaries, and ended the hope that the West would come to the aid of countries under Soviet occupation.⁶⁸ The British media covered the Hungarian Revolution with excitement and fervour, sparking a strong public backing of the Revolution, as well as helping to raise a considerable amount of monetary aid to be sent to Hungary. The British press, with special focus on the *Daily Mail* and the *Manchester Guardian*, distributed their opinions, hopes and emotional responses to the events in Hungary, until the 30th October. This chapter which delves into British press coverage of the Revolution is necessary in order to contextualise the divergence of the newspapers which takes place following the outbreak of the Suez War.

I hope to show that the outbreak of the Suez Canal ‘Crisis’, with the invasion of Egypt by Israel on the 29th October 1956, caused both the *Daily Mail* and the *Manchester Guardian* to reprioritise their headlines and focus more on the events in Egypt, allowing for the brutal

⁶⁷ Comment, ‘The Candle of Liberty’, *Daily Mail*, 29.10.1956, p.1.

⁶⁸ A.R., ‘The Hungarian Revolution’, *The World Today*, 13, 1, (1957), pp.3-16, p.16.

suppression of the Hungarian Revolution by Soviet troops.⁶⁹ By this I am not suggesting that the newspapers themselves are the cause of the Hungarian failure, but that the lack of international media reporting of the Hungarian Revolution was one factor of many which led to the Soviet Union's response to Hungary, and also contributed to the mild repercussions from the UN. Media is a powerful tool, an instrument which can be used to disseminate both truth and propaganda, with the potential to 'shape attitudes and significantly influence opinions.'⁷⁰ Although I am not proposing to discuss and argue for the 'influence' of the press on public opinion and policy, some scholars, such as Yaeli Bloch-Elkon, have attempted to advocate for it. Instead, I will show that the Hungarian Revolution had long lasting effects on both the Cold War and the decolonisation processes which began in the 1940s and were accelerated during the 1950s.⁷¹ The impact and importance of the UN during this period shall also be considered. As an international peace keeping institution, it was seen as an organisation which could hinder conflict and suffering as people reeled from the brutality and horror of the Second World War. The Hungarian Revolution and the Suez War were the some of the first tests of UN action following colonial violence. The two events of October and November 1956 had a global impact, shattering the impression of the UN, tightening the Soviet grip on Hungary and bludgeoning the reputation of both Britain and France.⁷²

Media Framing in the Cold War, Colonial Context

As discussed in the introductory chapter, the Hungarian Revolution can be placed within both a Cold War and imperial context, with long lasting political ramifications for both the Soviet

⁶⁹ Michael J. Turner, *British Power and International Relations During the 1950s: A Tenable Position?* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2009), p.250.

⁷⁰ Yaeli Bloch-Elkon, 'Studying the Media, Public Opinion, and Foreign Policy in International Crises: The United States and the Bosnian Crisis, 1992-1995', *Press/Politics*, 12, (2007), pp.20-51, p.21.

⁷¹ Elizabeth Buettner, *Europe After Empire: Decolonization, Society and Culture*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), p.56.

⁷² Turner, *British Power and International Relations*, p.250.

Union and the West. Newspapers in Britain noted the importance of the Cold War context,⁷³ with the Revolution seen by many papers as the Hungarians rejecting communist ideology⁷⁴ whilst also being labelled by the Soviet press as 'counter-revolutionary'.⁷⁵ The context of the Cold War enabled and ensured a direct labelling of the events in Hungary as either pro-Western or counter-revolutionary, both labels emphasising the importance of the political tensions which had been rising since the conclusion of the Second World War.

This chapter seeks to analyse the language and political climate in which the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Mail* wrote articles about what was happening in Hungary. Both newspapers chose to refer to the Revolution in Hungary as an 'uprising', 'rebellion' or 'revolt', never as a 'revolution'. To this day, in Britain, the Hungarian Revolution is referred to as the Hungarian 'uprising', and from this statement I have inferred that the context of the Cold War meant that the British newspapers chose not to refer to Hungary's events as a 'Revolution' because of the communist connotation. This framing theory, whereby the context of the Cold War affected the reporting on Hungary, still has lasting effects for today's society, where 'uprising' remains the chosen terminology. The terminology of the Revolution still has a vital role in contemporary society. Interestingly, the debate over the terminology which should be used to reference the Revolution began in its immediate aftermath, on December 5th 1956, when the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZMP) decreed that the actions taken by the Hungarians amounted to counter-revolution.⁷⁶ Following this, until 1989, Hungarian school

⁷³ Nelson, Oxley and Clawson, 'Toward a Psychology of Framing Effects', p.222.

⁷⁴ 'Europe on the Move', *Daily Mail*, 25.10.1956, p.1 and Joseph F. Thorning, 'Communism: National and International', *World Affairs*, 119, 4, (1956), pp.99-101, 'what has been proved at Budapest and throughout Hungary, however, is that men, women and children who love God and country are not apt to be satisfied with independence from the Kremlin; they are determined to rid themselves of Soviet domination and, perhaps more importantly, of National Communism', p.100.

⁷⁵ 'Raid on Barracks Repulsed: State of Emergency Declared', *Manchester Guardian*, 25.10.1956, p.1.

⁷⁶ 'The Change in the Evaluation of the 1956 Revolution', <http://tudasbazis.sulinet.hu/hu/tarsadalomtudomanyok/tortenelem/az-i-vilaghaborutol-a-ketpolusu-vilag-felbomlasaig/a-szocialista-rendszer-osszeomlasi/az-1956-os-forradalom-ertekelesenek-valtozasa-az-elmult-evtizedekben> [accessed on 02.06.18].

textbooks referred to it as ‘counter-revolution’. At the reburial of Imre Nagy, it was announced that reference to 1956 as a Revolution was decriminalised, and any other term forbidden.

It is clear in the articles of the *Daily Mail* that the context of the Cold War helped shape the narrative surrounding the events in Hungary. The ‘Comments’ section on the front page of the *Daily Mail* are telling, as this section is more of an opinion piece than objective journalism. One such section writes,

‘Russia, who for years has been accusing Western nations of “exploitation” and “oppression” now faces a fearful dilemma. She is nakedly guilty of these crimes in Hungary... The *Daily Worker*... said that the Soviet troops in Hungary “are defending Socialism and assisting the Hungarian people to retain their independence form imperialism”. Presumably that means “Western imperialism”. But the whole impetus of the Hungarian uprising has been the urge to shake of the yoke of Russian imperialism: to be free of the abhorrent concomitants of the police State- the purges, the secret “trials”, the tortures, the fear, the poverty and the moral degradation’.⁷⁷

This explicit reference to both the colonial and Cold War contexts helps build the framework of the *Daily Mail*’s argument. Without a framework, newspapers struggle to build their stories.⁷⁸ Both the pro-colonial argument put forward here by the *Daily Mail*, as well as the clear portrayal of the Soviet “enemy”, allowed for the readers of the newspaper to easily identify the importance of the Hungarian Revolution, and the necessity to support its mission. By pro-colonial, I am referring to the *Daily Mail*’s use of “Western imperialism” in inverted commas, whereby it reads as though the journalist was attempting to mock the *Daily Worker*’s use of anti-imperial language. In addition, without encouraging the use of Western military

⁷⁷ ‘Imperial Russia’, *Daily Mail*, 27.10.1956, p.1.

⁷⁸ Tamir Sheaffer and Shira Dvir-Gvirsma, ‘The Spoiler Effect: Framing Attitudes and Expectations Toward Peace’, *Journal of Peace Research*, 47, (2010), pp.205-215, “Media framing is defined as selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution”, p.206.

force, the *Daily Mail* successfully implemented a war of words against the Soviet Union, its stance in Hungary, and the *Daily Worker*: the British communist newspaper.

The *Manchester Guardian*, on the other hand, maintained a much less emotional, more “objective” style of delivering the news surrounding the events in Hungary. Without a front page ‘comments’ section, the paper maintained a more factual and textual deliverance of the Revolution taking place. Yet even though the newspaper is less biased in its reporting, the media framing theory still applies. The Cold War helped to create a background for the stories from Hungary. Like the *Daily Mail*, the *Manchester Guardian* used the context of the Cold War to create a Soviet ‘enemy’ and a Hungarian ‘underdog’. It was also not uncommon for the *Manchester Guardian* to base its information regarding Hungary on stories told by tourists and locals who crossed from Hungary into Austria. The strong reliance on these testimonies suggests that limited information was available from the Hungarian news outlets, and suggests it was difficult to place journalists into the scene of the fighting. However, although many newspapers relied on the testimonies of tourists, locals and refugees in Austria, the *Manchester Guardian* printed stories of people, ‘seeing twenty rebels hanged on flagpoles and street lamps in the capital’, as well as exaggerated numbers of victims, resulting in a gory and unsubstantiated journalistic style.⁷⁹

The Hungarian Revolution had a global effect on the perception of communism and the Soviet Union itself. In Britain, the news of the Revolution and the reporting of it caused a considerable rift within the British Communist Party. The newspaper of the British Communist Party: the *Daily Worker* found that reporting on the events in Hungary caused considerable conflict within its workforce. The framing of the stories regarding Hungary

⁷⁹ ‘Massacre in Village: Rebels Ask Help from Austrians’, *Manchester Guardian*, 27.10.1956, p.1.

centred around the argument that the Hungarian revolutionaries were in fact 'counter-revolutionaries' and 'imperialists' who hoped to draw Hungary closer to the West by trampling on the mission of the Russian Revolution of 1917.⁸⁰ This argument was not supported by all of the newspaper's staff, with some employees shocked at the imperial use of force which the Soviet Union had employed to quell the protests. Rather than believe the *Daily Worker's* framing of the Revolution, some of its employees rejected the newspaper's interpretation of the Revolution.

The *Daily Worker* found itself justifying the action taken by the Soviet Union in the name of the one true Revolution, whilst papers such as the *Daily Mail* and the *Manchester Guardian* showed the brutality of the Soviet intervention, and claimed the Hungarian people's right to self-determination. Following the Revolution in Hungary, the Communist Party in Britain held a congress in order to discuss and understand what had occurred in Hungary, especially in light of Khrushchev's "Secret Speech" which had taken place in February that same year.⁸¹ Peter Fryer, the *Daily Worker's* chief correspondent in Budapest in 1956 who was in attendance said, 'none of the problems the Communist Congress was called to solve- subservience to Russia, stifling of discussion, deep anxiety about Hungary- has in fact been solved. The crisis is deeper than ever.'⁸² The Hungarian Revolution split the British

⁸⁰ Ian Black, 'How Soviet Tanks Crushed Dreams of British Communists', *Guardian*, 21.10.2006, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/oct/21/politics.past> [accessed on 07.05.2018].

⁸¹ For further reading on Khrushchev's Secret Speech, please see Kathleen E. Smith, *Moscow 1956: The Silenced Spring*, (London: Harvard University Press, 2017). This particular publication is an excellent example of how the Secret Speech affected lives and events throughout the year 1956. Out of context, the Hungarian Revolution can be considered highly unpredictable. However, Smith lays out the ramifications of the rejection of the Stalinist past, and upon the release of thousands of political prisoners, it is more understandable that such attempts were made to overthrow an oppressive regime in Hungary and elsewhere like Poland. Khrushchev, the deliverer of the Secret Speech in February 1956 was not simply a politician who tried to break with the Stalinist past of the Soviet Union, but was also an individual who was dealing with the complexities and realisation of the importance of the past, and how a break with history is impossible.

⁸² AWL, 'The 1957 Crisis in the Communist Party', *Workers' Liberty*, 19.12.2013, <https://www.workersliberty.org/story/2013/12/19/1957-crisis-communist-party> [accessed on 07.05.2018].

Communist Party, but is a split which is visible through the medium of the press: the *Daily Worker*. With the resignation of Peter Fryer from the newspaper, and his subsequent expulsion from the Communist Party as well as a twenty percent drop in Communist Party membership (from 33,095 in February 1956 to 26,742 in 1957), it is evident that due to the events of 1956 the British Communist Party suffered immensely.⁸³

The *Daily Mail* and the *Manchester Guardian*: Representations of Revolution

The first publication referencing the Revolution in Hungary appeared on the 24th October, the day after the outbreak of the rebellion. Both the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Mail* used the happenings in Hungary as headline news, and it dominated the headlines of other newspapers at the time. Previously, both newspapers had considered the implications of the political upheaval in Poland, and during the reporting on Hungary, Poland is frequently referenced. Headlines from the 24th October include the *Daily Mail*'s 'Budapest Troops Fire', and the *Manchester Guardian*'s, 'Police Open Fire in Budapest: Anti-Russian Crowds in Street Disorder'. Both newspapers concentrated on Hungary, even though both struggled to obtain accurate information of the events, especially considering the 'telephone communications between Budapest and the West was cut off'.⁸⁴

With changing figures of death and unclear reports on the extent of destruction published in both the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Mail*, as well as in other newspapers, the knowledge of the British public during the Revolution was imbalanced.⁸⁵ Looking at the

⁸³ '1956-68: Crisis and Recovery', *Communist Party of Britain*, 25.09.2008, <https://www.communist-party.org.uk/history/267-1956-and-all-that.html> [accessed on 07.05.2018], A.J. Davies, *To Build A New Jerusalem*, (London: Abacus, 1996), p. 179.

⁸⁴ 'Police Open Fire in Budapest: Anti-Russian Crowds in Street Disorders', *Manchester Guardian*, 24.10.1956, p.1.

⁸⁵ Victor Zorza, 'Troops Joining the Rebels? A Conflict of Loyalties', *Manchester Guardian*, 26.10.1956, p.1.

figures published by both the *Daily Mail* and the *Manchester Guardian* it is clear that due to the sources of information, differing reports of numbers of those who had been killed had led to confusion. The *Manchester Guardian*, for example, published that according to tourists from Budapest who had fled to Austria, between two thousand and three thousand people had been killed by October 26th,⁸⁶ with this number increasing to ten thousand in the Saturday publication on the 27th October.⁸⁷ Interestingly the article, written by journalist Victor Zorza, based its information on intelligence coming from Austria, as by the 4th November, Zorza was noted as being one of the British journalists who had been captured during his quest to Budapest in order to report more accurately.⁸⁸ Zorza had been identified by the Foreign Office as one of the twenty-four British journalists in Hungary during the Revolution.⁸⁹ Arguably the placement of journalist Zorza into Hungary days after the publication of the number of atrocities taking place in Budapest shows the *Manchester Guardian*'s desire for accurate reporting and reliable information. This is the case for many British newspapers during the Revolution, as prior to their placement in Budapest, a majority of the information about the Revolution was coming from either the Budapest Radio, other organisations such as the United Press or directly from the British embassy in Budapest via the IRD.⁹⁰

Both the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Mail* continue to headline the Revolution in Hungary until the 30th October 1956, with the outbreak of the Suez "crisis". In the case of the

⁸⁶ 'City "Seemed in Hands of Rebels": Traveler's Stories of Troop Desertions', *Manchester Guardian*, 26.10.1956, p.1.

⁸⁷ 'Revolt Spreading in Hungary', *Manchester Guardian*, 27.10.1956, p.1.

⁸⁸ TNA, H10110/267, 'From Budapest to Foreign Office Telegram 569', 04.11.1956.

²² TNA, H10110/267, 'From Budapest to Foreign Office Telegram 569', 04.11.1956.

⁹⁰ There were three major American news agencies which operated in Budapest during the Revolution and proved invaluable to newspapers across the world: the Associated Press, the United Press and the International News Service, as well as British Reuters. Newspaper reports also relied heavily on the broadcasts from the Hungarian Budapest Radio. For further reading see Zsolt Varga, 'Contemporary American Press Coverage on the Outbreak of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution', *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies*, 8, 2, (2002), pp.123-132.

Daily Mail, the shift in attention is incredibly clear, for the layout of the paper as a tabloid allows for only one headline story, as opposed to the *Manchester Guardian's* broadsheet layout, allowing for two. For the *Manchester Guardian*, however, it can be determined that the Hungarian Revolution was de-prioritised due to its being moved from the left hand of the paper to the right side.⁹¹ However, it can be argued that the *Manchester Guardian* did more than the *Daily Mail* to maintain the relaying of information about the Hungarian Revolution because it continued to publish information on the front page even after the outbreak of the Suez War.

On the 30th October, the day after the outbreak of the Suez War, but the first day of the British press' reporting on the matter, both headlines read, 'Israel Invades Egypt', and yet the Comment section for the *Daily Mail* on the front page read, 'Hoping and Praying'.⁹² The hoping and praying referred to Hungary, and to the statement by British Foreign Secretary Mr. Selwyn Lloyd that 'more Russian troops were moving in'.⁹³ In this instance the Suez War took priority placement on the front page, as it stayed for the duration of the Suez War, apart from a single day, the 5th November 1956, following the brutal suppression of the Hungarian Revolution by the Soviets, namely, 'The Murder of Hungary'.⁹⁴ The justification for this re-reporting of Hungary by the *Daily Mail* was that, 'the fast-moving events in the Middle East were overshadowed by something even more dangerous to world peace. We refer to Hungary'.⁹⁵ Arguably, by looking at this statement which referred to world peace, it can be concluded that the events of Suez were considered by the *Daily Mail* to be more 'dangerous to world peace' than what had happened in Hungary. This shift in 'importance' shows that the

⁹¹ Please see Figure 4, the *Manchester Guardian* edition of 30.10.1956, p.1.

⁹² 'Israel Invades Egypt', *Daily Mail*, 30.10.1956, p.1.

⁹³ 'Hoping and Praying', *Daily Mail*, 30.10.1956, p.1.

⁹⁴ Jeffrey Blyth, 'The Murder of Hungary', *Daily Mail*, 05.11.1956, p.1.

⁹⁵ Comment, 'Hungarian Tragedy', *Daily Mail*, 05.11.1956, p.1.

two competing frameworks for the stories: the Cold War versus the imperial, and how this affected the publication of news stories. The Suez War was more damaging to Britain and her global interests, and therefore it took priority.

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ISRAEL INVADES EGYPT

Armour and Mechanised Units 18 Miles from Suez

RAIDERS' BASES ATTACKED

U.S. to Honour Pledge "Against Aggression"

Israeli forces yesterday crossed the Egyptian frontier, advanced rapidly, and were last night reported by Israeli Radio to be 18 miles east of the port of Suez.

The Israeli forces, which include armoured and mechanised troops, were reported to have advanced from the Gaza Strip, a 25-mile strip of land between Israel and Egypt, and to have taken 18 miles from Suez towards the city of Suez.

An Egyptian Army spokesman said that Israeli troops had entered into Egypt, "to fight a battle with Egyptian forces up to the limit of their capacity."

The Israeli Foreign Ministry announced yesterday that its army had taken 18 miles from Suez towards the city of Suez.

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U.S. ACTION SURPRISES EGYPT

Grounds for Fearing Israeli Attack

From our Cairo Correspondent

CAIRO, October 29. — Egyptian officials here today expressed surprise and concern at the news that the United States had announced its intention to send a large military force to Egypt to assist in the fight against the Israeli invasion.

The Egyptian Foreign Ministry spokesman said that the United States' action was a surprise, and that it was not known whether the United States was acting in accordance with its pledge to support the United Nations' efforts to bring about a ceasefire in the Middle East.

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EGYPTIAN AIRCRAFT MISSING

18 Officers on Board

From our Cairo Correspondent

CAIRO, October 29. — Egyptian officials here today announced that 18 officers and crew members of a Egyptian military aircraft were missing after the plane was shot down by Israeli forces in the Sinai Peninsula.

The Egyptian Air Force spokesman said that the aircraft was shot down on October 28, and that the 18 officers and crew members were still missing.

The spokesman said that the aircraft was shot down on October 28, and that the 18 officers and crew members were still missing.

N.I.S. CHARGES PROTEST

Sumner-Townsend of Many Years

From our London Correspondent

LONDON, October 29. — The National Industrial Society (N.I.S.) has today charged the Government with failing to protect the interests of workers in the textile industry.

The N.I.S. spokesman said that the Government had failed to protect the interests of workers in the textile industry, and that it was necessary to take action to protect their interests.

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MORE "TAKES"—MORE PAY

Bonus for Busmen

From our London Correspondent

LONDON, October 29. — The Transport and General Workers' Union (T.G.W.U.) has today announced that it has agreed to a new bonus scheme for its members, which will provide for a 10 per cent increase in pay for those who work more than 150 hours in a year.

The T.G.W.U. spokesman said that the new bonus scheme was a result of negotiations with the employers, and that it was designed to provide for a 10 per cent increase in pay for those who work more than 150 hours in a year.

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THOUSANDS GREET THE QUEEN

Royal Film Performance

From our London Correspondent

LONDON, October 29. — Thousands of people gathered today in London to greet the Queen and Prince Philip as they arrived in the city for a visit.

The Queen and Prince Philip arrived in London on October 28, and were greeted by a large crowd of people.

The Queen and Prince Philip arrived in London on October 28, and were greeted by a large crowd of people.

CEASE-FIRE CALL IN ALGERIA

M. Moullet's Appeal

From our Algiers Correspondent

ALGERIA, October 29. — M. Moullet, the Algerian Minister of the Interior, has today called for a ceasefire in the Algerian civil war.

M. Moullet said that the Algerian civil war was a tragedy, and that it was necessary to bring about a ceasefire in order to bring peace to the country.

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SHOW ORDERS END SHORT-TIME WORK

Many Shops Closing

From our London Correspondent

LONDON, October 29. — Many shops and businesses have today closed their doors in protest against the Government's policy of short-time working.

The shops and businesses said that the Government's policy of short-time working was a hardship, and that it was necessary to close their doors in protest.

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HUNGARIAN REBELS ASKED TO DISARM

Danger of New Outbreak Over Government's Terms

From our Budapest Correspondent

BUDAPEST, October 29. — The Hungarian Government has today asked the Hungarian rebels to disarm, and has warned that it will take action against them if they do not do so.

The Hungarian Government spokesman said that the Hungarian rebels were a threat to the country's security, and that it was necessary to take action against them.

The spokesman said that the Hungarian rebels were a threat to the country's security, and that it was necessary to take action against them.

FIGHTING STILL IN RUDEPST

Defence of Barracks

From our Budapest Correspondent

BUDAPEST, October 29. — Fighting between the Hungarian rebels and the Government forces is still going on in Budapest, and the rebels are now fighting for the defence of the city's barracks.

The Hungarian Government spokesman said that the rebels were fighting for the defence of the city's barracks, and that it was necessary to take action against them.

The spokesman said that the rebels were fighting for the defence of the city's barracks, and that it was necessary to take action against them.

NEWSPAPER PRINT STRIKE

Editors' Protest

From our London Correspondent

LONDON, October 29. — The editors of several newspapers have today announced that they are striking in protest against the Government's policy of censorship.

The editors said that the Government's policy of censorship was a violation of the press's freedom, and that it was necessary to strike in protest.

The editors said that the Government's policy of censorship was a violation of the press's freedom, and that it was necessary to strike in protest.

AD FROM MANY LANDS

Many Advertisements

From our London Correspondent

LONDON, October 29. — A large number of advertisements from many different countries have today appeared in the Manchester Guardian.

The advertisements were from a wide range of countries, including the United States, Canada, and several European countries.

The advertisements were from a wide range of countries, including the United States, Canada, and several European countries.

CARGO LINER TAKEN IN TOW

Engine Breakdown

From our London Correspondent

LONDON, October 29. — A cargo liner has today been taken in tow by a tugboat after its engine broke down in the English Channel.

The cargo liner was taken in tow by a tugboat, and is now being towed to a port.

The cargo liner was taken in tow by a tugboat, and is now being towed to a port.

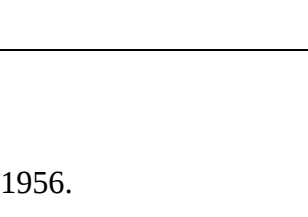


Fig 4: front page of the Manchester Guardian from 30th October 1956.

The British Government

The “influence” of the British government on the information relayed in both newspapers is hard to measure but can be analysed due to the frequent communication which the British Foreign Office in London maintained with the British Embassy in Budapest. Communications between the Foreign Office and the British Ambassador to Budapest (Mr. Leslie Fry) sometimes referenced what the British newspapers were printing, and the content was occasionally discussed. The British Embassy in Budapest, for example, expressed its surprise when it was made clear that the Hungarian Students’ Manifesto had not been released to the British press for publications, ‘I have traced only one clean reference in the British Press to the manifesto (*Manchester Guardian*, October 25) and that gave only a brief summary of it.’⁹⁶ To this the Conservative Politician Sir Anthony Nutting replied, ‘the manifesto seems to me of very considerable political interest. I should have thought that it might as well be released to the Press’.⁹⁷ It is this correspondence which suggests that the British government had considerable influence over what exactly was, and what could be, published in the British press. In its refusal to transfer the information about the Hungarian Students’ Manifesto to the mainstream press, the newspapers were hindered in their abilities to publicise the information, especially during a tempestuous period when only limited information was available to the West from Hungary. Using this example when the students’ Manifesto was not released to the British press suggests that the government was highly influential, or at least had the ability to be, when considering the content of the publications in the British press regarding Hungary.

⁹⁶ TNA, FO 371/122393/10110/630, telegram from Mr. Birch, Air Ministry to Mr. Anthony Nutting, 25.10.1956.

⁹⁷ TNA, FO 371/122393/10110/630, Mr. Anthony Nutting response, 25.10.1956.

Explicitly, the *Observer*, the sister newspaper to the *Manchester Guardian*, wrote on the 28th October 1956 that due to the Russians' desire for a communist government in Hungary, 'Western action should, if possible, avoid provoking the Russians further or suggesting to them that the West is attempting to bolster a hostile State within the political boundaries that Russia has hitherto considered essential for her security'.⁹⁸ In line with the government policy line at the time, the *Observer* conformed to the idea that Western military action should and would not be encouraged in the press. However, although military intervention was not suggested, the paper shows a clear allegiance to the wishes and demands of the Hungarian people, with one such journalist claiming, 'their motto is "Life or Death"- life meaning freedom'.⁹⁹

The relationship of the British government to the Press is not necessarily explicit, but the frequent transfer of information to the Head of the News Department suggests that a considerable number of telegrams regarding events in Hungary were 'leaked' to the press. How this can be implied is by viewing the bottom right hand corner of each telegram and looking into the recipients of 'Advance Copies' of a telegram. It is in a large number of cases that the 'advance copy' is forwarded to the Head of the News Department, as well as the Information Research Department. This connection implies a government and press link whereby the information gathered by the government was distributed in moderation, and with the full knowledge of the government, to the British press. Articles appearing in the *Daily Mail* and the *Manchester Guardian* would have been of considerable interest to the government due to their content and the context in which they were being printed. Newspapers in Britain had reached their peak in the early 1950s, with over eighty-five percent

⁹⁸ Patrick O'Donovan, 'American Takes the Initiative', *Observer*, 28.10.1956, p.1.

⁹⁹ Lajos Lederer, 'Pretence of Control', *Observer*, 28.10.1956, p.1.

of the British adult population reading a paper regularly.¹⁰⁰ The substantial amount of the population with access to the newspapers and therefore the information disseminated, it is understandable that the British government would be interested in the information being distributed to such a large audience.

Rising Pressure: Letters and Petitions from the British Public

Although public opinion regarding the Hungarian Revolution is not the main subject of this thesis, recognising that public opinion was highly supportive of the mission of the revolutionaries is an noteworthy observation. The discussion surrounding the connection between news, government and the public is one of the most complicated and problematic issues in relation to the mass media.¹⁰¹ Many scholars recognise the media as a channel which can link the public to the policy makers, and it is for this reason that public opinion should be addressed.¹⁰² In addition, with the British population reading more newspapers in 1956 per head than in any other country in the world, Hungary became an issue not only from the 'top down', but was also a widely discussed and fascinating topic for the British public.¹⁰³

The press, both the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Mail*, did not encourage, incite, or debate the possibility of British military action in Hungary, in accordance with government policy, however, the public did consider this option. In an abundance of letters sent to the prime minister Anthony Eden, British people wrote of their horror of the events in Hungary,

¹⁰⁰ Adrian Bingham, "The Monster"? The British Popular Press and Nuclear Culture, 1945- Early 1960s', *The British Journal for the History of Science*, 45, 4, (2012), pp.609-624, p.610.

¹⁰¹ Bloch-Elkon, 'Studying the Media', p.20, and Mark Hampton, *Visions of the Press in Britain*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004), p.4-5.

¹⁰² Bloch-Elkon, 'Studying the Media', p.22.

¹⁰³ Bingham, "The Monster"? The British Popular Press', p.610.

and argued that it was the duty of the British government to assist and if necessary intervene.

In one such letter, British citizen William Smith wrote,

'I am a qualified radio operator with flying experience and the ability to use and handle automatic weapons, and I am both fit and willing to parachute, if necessary, into Hungary. I would gladly learn the methods of using explosives to the best advantage, of co-ordinating guerrilla activities designed to bring about and hasten the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Hungary. When this does eventually happen, I am sure relations between the two countries would benefit from Britain having supported, even to this small extent, the cause of the Hungarian people.'¹⁰⁴

Although what Smith offers is extreme, there are other letters of similar nature, as well as an abundance of petitions from university students including those from Exeter and Oxford who requested the consideration of the British government in bringing the matter of the Hungarian Revolution to the forum of the United Nations. Without the information delivered by news agencies such as the *Daily Mail* and the *Manchester Guardian*, the public would not have been as aware of the chaos and the extent to which international support of the revolutionaries was necessary.

When looking into the possibility that public opinion can influence foreign policy, the question is difficult to substantiate. By debating the extent to which public opinion is taken into consideration when governments make their decisions regarding relations with the international community, few scholars have taken the time to look at the explicit connection between these influences.¹⁰⁵ Public opinion is usually considered to be just one influence among many, with other factors affecting government foreign policy to a larger extent.¹⁰⁶ However, public opinion during the period of the Hungarian Revolution is important, not

¹⁰⁴ TNA, letter addressed to Prime Minister Anthony Eden from William Smith, 09.11.1956.

¹⁰⁵ Christopher Hill, 'Public Opinion and British Foreign Policy Since 1945: Progress in Research?', *Opinion Publique et Politique Extérieure en Europe, I. 1870-1915*, (Actes du Colloque de Rome, 1980), pp.63-74, p.63.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, p.63.

simply due to its consideration within the mechanisms of government, but because it shows the British public's solidarity with Hungary in 1956. With the disappointing lack of involvement on the part of the British government in the eyes of the Hungarian people in 1956, and in the memory of the Revolution today, looking into British public opinion suggests, contrary to the opinions of many, that the British people were much more supportive of military action in Hungary than is first assumed, considering the lack of military intervention.

Certainly, it was not in the foreign policy of the British government at the time to involve themselves in a conflict which seemed to have little gain other than supporting a people who were rejecting Soviet rule. In one report, journalist Victor Zorza of the *Manchester Guardian* wrote of the story of a seventeen-year-old girl who had 'put up a ladder against the Russian memorial, threw a noose round the Red Star on top of it, and pulled it down', along with a question she had asked the group of British journalist with whom he was travelling. Her question, "[The Hungarian people] believe that by thus drawing the attention of the world to what is happening they will compel the Russians to get out" ... and without pausing asked: "and what is the feeling of the British people?" We all hesitated. No one was anxious to reply.¹⁰⁷ However, what the petitions and letters suggest is that the British public were sympathetic to the cause of the Hungarian Revolutionaries, even if the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Mail* failed to report it. This type of reporting seems to incite a guilt in the readership of the newspaper as if implying that there was more which could be done on the part of the individual. The *Daily Mail* in this regard utilised their readership and the 'guilt of

¹⁰⁷ Victor Zorza, 'The Pride of the Rebels, and a Question for Britain', *Manchester Guardian*, 29.10.1956, p.1.

doing nothing' by encouraging people to donate to the cause of the Hungarian people through a front-page advertisement entitled, 'Aid From Britain'.¹⁰⁸

The newspapers' reports on the Hungarian Revolution show a different story to the one which was told by the British government. Instead of ignoring a people's Revolution in Hungary, regardless of whether the British government supported it militarily or not, both the *Daily Mail* and the *Manchester Guardian* worked to enlighten and disseminate the information of the Revolution to the British public. It is interesting that the amount of information accessible to the newspapers was controlled in part by the operations of the IRD, and by the Foreign Office's decision on whether to share information from the British Embassy in Budapest with the press or not. However, the choice of both newspapers to cover the Revolution on their front pages suggests that the newspapers during the Hungarian Revolution were their own actors, not simply sources of information.

The United Nations and the "Problem of Hungary"

In a considerable number of the petitions and letters, the necessity of the UN in solving the conflict was requested. In addition to this line of argument, both newspapers also advocated for the involvement of the UN. However, it is not Britain's movement towards the UN which is applauded, but rather that of America: '*America Takes the Initiative*'¹⁰⁹ (italics my own). It is not only the representation of the UN in the press which is of interest, but also the press' reporting on the Hungarian hopes for the UN, "we will fight on until our beloved country is freed from the yoke of the Soviets... until really free and secret elections under United

¹⁰⁸ 'Aid From Britain', *Daily Mail*, 29.10.1956, p.1.

¹⁰⁹ Patrick O'Donovan, 'American Takes the Initiative', *Observer*, 28.10.1956, p.1.

Nations supervision install a government chosen by the people and for the people”. A vast roar of approval followed this statement.’¹¹⁰

The UN as an international instrument became increasingly popular following its inauguration on the 24th October 1945, following the end of the Second World War. During the Hungarian Revolution, it was the United States who called upon the UN to mediate peace between the Hungarians and the Soviets. It was desired by the British public, the British government and the British press as well, however, that the UN be involved, ‘I was most relieved to hear from a BBC broadcast that reference to the UN was being considered... perhaps a resolution could also be introduced praising the fortitude and bravery of the Hungarian people in the cause of their freedom and condemning Russian aggression and ruthlessness’.¹¹¹ The telegram received by the Foreign Office from the British Ambassador to Hungary was also distributed to the News Department within the British government, allowing for further distribution to the press. This is evident in the publications of the *Observer* as it writes of the beginnings of the UN mechanism, which was hoped would put an end to the brutalities happening in Hungary.

The hope directed towards the UN, however, did not result in the outcome which was desired. It was not until 10th January 1957 that the UN began its analysis of what had taken place in Hungary during the period of the Revolution by establishing a Special Committee of five UN member states to create a report on the Hungarian Revolution, looking into witness

¹¹⁰ Reuter Correspondent, ‘A Drive Across Hungary: The Divided Revolutionaries’, *Manchester Guardian*, 29.10.1956, p.1.

¹¹¹ TNA, FO 371/122377/10110/119, Telegram 462 from Budapest to Foreign Office, 27.10.1956, for distribution to News Department and United Nations Department.

statements, press releases and political statements.¹¹² It was only after the conclusion of the Suez “crisis”, that the United Nations ‘had more time to spare for Hungary’.¹¹³ The Special Committee ceased its activities in December 1958 after it condemned the Soviet actions in Hungary, but little was done to reprimand them.

Conclusions

The impact of the Hungarian Revolution was global and memorable. It represented a movement against the dominance of the Soviet Union, and was one of the first challenges to the mechanisms of the UN. It also represented a test of allegiances within the British press. The loyalty of the newspapers to the government line, rather than the appeals of the public comes as a surprise with regard to the *Manchester Guardian*. The *Daily Mail*’s pro-government stance as well as its emotional appeals to the British public is perhaps less of a surprise to contemporary readers. Yet at the same time, the choice of both newspapers was to report on Hungary by placing it on their front pages. Headline news resulted in ‘fairly considerable coverage’ despite the outbreak of the Suez War according to the British Ambassador to Vienna.¹¹⁴ What this chapter has shown is a progression from the beginnings of Revolution to the demise of its front page coverage, which will be explored in the next chapter looking at the British press and the coverage of the Suez Canal “crisis”, the remarkably different response of the UN and the British public protests to the colonial aggression.

¹¹² Description found on the Open Society Archives website of the collection, <http://www.osaarchivum.org/digital-repository/osa:693f36ae-56a5-4564-89ee-0bc7b20eb414> [accessed on 08.05.2018].

¹¹³ A.R., ‘The Aftermath of the Hungarian Revolution’, *The World Today*, 13, 11, (1957), pp.458-472, p.60.

¹¹⁴ TNA, FO 371/122393/10110/630, ‘Hungarian Students’ Manifesto of 23 October 1956’, Letter from Sir G. Wallinger (British Embassy in Vienna) to Mr. W.H. Young (Foreign Office), 14.11.1956.

Chapter 3: Dual Crises: The Suez Canal “Crisis” and the Battle of Power in the Press and Public

“It has long been declared policy of the United Kingdom to do everything in her power to lower tension in the Middle East in order to bring about conditions favourable for the conclusion of a final peace settlement between Israel and her Arab neighbours.”¹¹⁵

-British Delegation to the United Nations, 2nd November 1956

The Suez Canal “Crisis” began on the 29th October 1956, with the first reports of Israel’s invasion of Egypt published in the press on the 30th October. Scholars writing during the Cold War period have argued that the outbreak of the Suez War and the subsequent ‘intervention’ by both Britain and France created a ‘favourable moment’ for the suppression of the Hungarian Revolution by the Soviet Union.¹¹⁶ More recent scholarship has built on this arguments, suggesting that the British and French action in Suez lessened the chance of a sharp UN response to Soviet action in Hungary as it would have been considered a double standard if the UN had only condemned the Soviet action, whilst refusing to denounce military action against Egypt.¹¹⁷ The Suez War also became problematic during discussion about whether it was possible for Britain to condemn the Soviet acts of aggression in Hungary when she herself was ‘guilty of exactly similar acts of aggression’ in Egypt.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ TNA, FO 371/121747, The Delegation of the United Kingdom at the United Nations convention in New York telegram (no.1005) to the Foreign Office, 02.11.1956.

¹¹⁶ Jiri Valenta, ‘Revolutionary Change, Soviet Intervention and “Normalisation” in East Central Europe’, *Comparative Politics*, 16, 2, (1984), pp.127-151, p.134.

¹¹⁷ Edward Johnson, ‘The Suez Crisis at the United Nations: The Effects for the Foreign Office and British Foreign Policy’, in *Reassessing Suez 1956: New Perspectives on the Crisis and its Aftermath*, ed. By Simon C. Smith (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2008), pp.165-177, p.171.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*, p.276.

The extent to which Suez has been debated academically as a turning point in British imperial politics is considerable. In Simon C. Smith's *Reassessing Suez: New Perspectives on the Crisis and its Aftermath*, arguments regarding the placement of Suez within British political and international history are deliberated. The finality of the British Empire and its attachment to the Suez War 'fails to take into account the variety of British reactions as well as differences over the nation's rightful position in the world'.¹¹⁹ The public, the press and the government were not all of one opinion. The division within the Conservative government over British action in Egypt was strikingly public, with heated parliamentary debates, disorder and disrespect shown in the House of Commons throughout the Suez period in the press.¹²⁰ The *Manchester Guardian* called for the end of the government as 'far from restoring peace and stability in the area... the government has poured petrol on the flames' of the decolonisation movement and the rise of Nasser.¹²¹ Nationwide protests which disputed British aggression included petitions from university students and professors, as well as from the Church.¹²² The publication of disapproval resounded throughout the front pages of the *Manchester Guardian* for the entire period of the Suez War. There, publicising disarray was a form of criticism to the government policy in Egypt.¹²³ The press was 'at the heart of the debate' regarding the benefits and disadvantages of the Suez intervention.¹²⁴ It is the press' representations of the Suez War which are of interest, especially in comparison to the press publications on Hungary.

¹¹⁹ A.J. Stockwell, 'Suez 1956 and the Moral Disarmament of the British Empire', in *Reassessing Suez 1956: New Perspectives on the Crisis and its Aftermath*, ed. Simon C. Smith (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2008), pp.227-238, p.237.

¹²⁰ For one example of discord see, Parliamentary Correspondent, 'Censure Defeated By Majority of 69: Sitting Suspended During a Stormy Debate', *Manchester Guardian*, 02.11.1956, p.1.

¹²¹ 'To Quell the Flames', *Manchester Guardian*, 05.11.1956, p.6.

¹²² 'Churches Appeal', *The Observer*, 04.11.1956, p.1.

¹²³ Even today, the *Guardian* prides itself on the fact that it was one of the only newspapers who in 1956 criticised the government's policy in Egypt. See their 'key moments' as described by themselves on their website, <https://www.theguardian.com/gnm-archive/2002/jun/11/1> [accessed on 30.05.2018].

¹²⁴ Stockwell, 'Suez 1956 and the Moral Disarmament of the British Empire', p.230.

The legal complications which arose during Britain's attempt to find reason to forcibly take control of the Suez Canal were numerous. From the 26th July, 1956, the day Nasser announced the nationalisation of the Canal, the British government sought legal advice on how to proceed, with the first Cabinet meeting taking place on the 27th July.¹²⁵ The nationalisation of the Canal, however, was a legal manoeuvre, leaving Britain without the ability to credibly retake control of the Canal with international support. The result of this was the secret "collusion" of Britain, France and Israel in the Protocol of Sèvres, which has been dubbed 'a council of war' because of its stated intentions in Egypt.¹²⁶ Following the broadcast of the news of the nationalisation of the Canal, Eden was warned of the consequences of colluding with Israel and France to bring down Nasser, with emphasis placed on the effect such an arrangement may have upon Anglo-Arab relations.¹²⁷ The secrecy of this agreement was paramount, with some records burned and destroyed by order of Eden himself, for fear that the existence of such an agreement might be discovered.¹²⁸ The invasion of Egypt by Israel on the 29th October 1956 was the result of months of planning in secret by the "ménage à trois" compilation of Britain, France and Israel, and led to one of the most infamous scandals in modern British history.

The *Daily Mail* and the *Manchester Guardian*: Representations of the Suez Canal "Crisis"

In the British press, the reporting on the Suez War differed considerably from the perspective taken on Hungary. The press had been sympathetic to Hungary, but had maintained a non-military stance when considering what action to take. However, the Suez War divided the press, with the *Daily Mail* in high favour of military action taken by the government and with

¹²⁵ Geoffrey Marston, 'Armed Intervention in the 1956 Suez Canal Crisis: The Legal Advice Tendered to the British Government', *International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, 37, (1988), pp.773-817, p.776.

¹²⁶ S. Ilan Troen, 'The Protocol of Sèvres: British/French/Israeli Collusion Against Egypt, 1956', *Israel Studies*, 1, 2, (1996), pp.122-139, p.123.

¹²⁷ Roy Fullick and Geoffrey Powell, *Suez: The Double War*, (Barnsley, Pen & Sword, 1979) p.13.

¹²⁸ *Ibid*, p.124.

the *Manchester Guardian* in strong opposition. With declarations of war as well as an explicit promotion of the government line, the *Daily Mail* rallied its readers to support the decisions of the ruling Tories, ‘we can be sure that so grave a decision was reached in the deep, sincere conviction that if we had remained quiescent Britain and the world would have suffered irreparable damage’¹²⁹. The *Manchester Guardian*, quite unlike the *Daily Mail*, questioned the authority of Eden to make the decision to invade Egypt and discussed his mannerisms and attitude frequently in their articles: ‘Sir Anthony, in his most elaborately languid manner, kept his feet up on the dispatch box and refused to answer’¹³⁰. While referring to the Prime Minister, the *Manchester Guardian* recognised the increasing domestic and international opposition to the intervention in Egypt, and criticised Eden’s decision not to immediately implement the UN recommended cease-fire.¹³¹

The first reports of the Israeli invasion of Egypt were printed as headline news on the 30th October 1956. ‘Israel Invades Egypt’ was the headline for both the *Daily Mail* and the *Manchester Guardian*.¹³² Although the reporting of the Suez War in both papers began under the same headline, the gradual changes in the responses of the papers resulted in two very different journalistic perspectives on the actions of Israel, France and Britain. The *Daily Mail*’s front page on the 30th October also included terms and conditions of the Anglo-Egyptian agreement of 1954, quoting that,

‘in the event of an armed attack by an outside Power on any country which at the date of signature of the present agreement is a part to the Arab League States Treaty of Defence of 1950 or as Turkey, Egypt shall afford to Britain such facilities as may be necessary in order to place the base on a war footing and to operate it effectively.’¹³³

¹²⁹ Comment, ‘Britain at War’, *Daily Mail*, 01.11.1956, p.1.

¹³⁰ Parliamentary Staff, ‘U.N. “Police” a Way-Out’, *Manchester Guardian*, 03.11.1956, p.1.

¹³¹ ‘Eden’s Conditions for Halting Attack’, *Manchester Guardian*, 04.11.1956, p.1.

¹³² Walter Farr, ‘Israel Invades Egypt’, *Daily Mail*, 30.10.1956, p.1 and ‘Israel Invades Egypt’, *Manchester Guardian*, 30.10.1956, p.1.

¹³³ ‘Facilities’, *Daily Mail*, 30.10.1956, p.1.

By quoting the 1950 Treaty, the *Daily Mail* was already, prematurely, attempting to consolidate and justify any British military action which could take place. The legal grounds for the intervention of Britain in Egypt during the Suez War is contestable, and maintains to be so even today. It was for the reason of legality, and the fear of UN reprisals, that the British and French governments held off from acting over the nationalisation of the Suez Canal for months after Nasser's declaration. It was the *Daily Mail*'s explicit support of the military action¹³⁴ which differentiates it considerably during the Suez "crisis" from the *Manchester Guardian*'s explicit condemnation.¹³⁵

The Press' Portrayal of the British Political Crisis

The outbreak of the Suez War caused considerable controversy, not only in the press or public, but within the political realm. The Tory press, it has been argued, even downplayed the political problems faced by the Conservatives in the aftermath of British aggression in Suez, and suggested that public support was much greater than in reality.¹³⁶ The *Manchester Guardian* revealed its concern regarding the question of whether a declaration of war had been issued against Egypt, which showed a lack of coherence, clarity and strong opposition to the actions taken by the Prime Minister. The newspaper reported on the discussion of war in the House of Commons, and allegedly shouts of, 'filthy cowards', hurled at the Tories by the Opposition took place following the Prime Minister's refusal to answer whether a declaration of war had been issued.¹³⁷ The report on the same day in the *Daily Mail* produced an entirely different perspective on the story, 'Sir Anthony Eden came triumphant last night

¹³⁴ Michael J. Turner, *British Power and International Relations During the 1950s: A Tenable Position?* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2009), p.249.

¹³⁵ Ibid, p.230.

¹³⁶ Tony Shaw, 'Government Manipulation of the Press During the 1956 Suez Crisis', *Contemporary Record*, 8, 2, pp.274-288, p.284.

¹³⁷ Parliamentary Correspondent, 'Censure Defeated by Majority of 69- Sitting Suspended During a Stormy Debate', *Manchester Guardian*, 02.11.1956, p.1.

after the grimmest battle of his political career. He defeated a Socialist censure by 324 votes to 255¹³⁸. The conflicting representations of the House of Commons discussion, with the *Manchester Guardian*'s reflection of it as a catastrophe and chaotic event, and with the *Daily Mail* as a triumph and success for the Prime Minister, it is clear that the Suez War had considerable political ramifications, made apparent to the public by the press.

Although the Hungarian Revolution had also resulted in a political crisis in Britain, it affected to the greatest extent the British Communist Party as was discussed in Chapter 2. During Suez however, it was the ruling Conservative party which was the most affected and which suffered from the outcome the most profoundly. One of the Conservative Party's loyal newspapers¹³⁹, the *Daily Mail* made a significant contribution to attempts to justify the British military action in Egypt. With reports angled to support military intervention, the *Daily Mail* also reported on the lowering morale of the Egyptian army, poisoning the readership for a victory for Britain.¹⁴⁰ The framing of the Suez reports in the *Daily Mail* focussed around the 'vicious' personality of Nasser in an attempt to boost readership support for the Suez War.¹⁴¹ It was not the likes of the *Daily Mail* to criticise the British Government for action in Suez, but rather the *Manchester Guardian*. However, as some academics have emphasised, Prime Minister Eden was not the first or last government minister 'to lie for his country abroad and to his country.'¹⁴²

¹³⁸ Ronald Camp, 'Eden Triumphs with a Record 69 Majority', *Daily Mail*, 02.11.1956, p.1.

¹³⁹ Other newspapers were also loyal to the political line enforced by the ruling Conservative party during the Suez War. Newspapers which held similar allegiances to the *Daily Mail* included the *Times*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Express* and *Sunday Times*. All of these papers conformed to the wishes of Eden and his government during the Suez War by reporting minimally on the scale of the military operations, vilifying Nasser in publications, portraying British public support for the military action as national and rallying support for the intervention in Egypt. For further reading on the loyalties and politics of the British Tory press, please see Tony Shaw's 'Government Manipulation of the Press During the 1956 Suez Crisis'.

¹⁴⁰ Richard Greenough, 'I See Israelis Take Gaza', *Daily Mail*, 03.11.1956, p.1.

¹⁴¹ Walter Farr, 'Egyptians Told: Keep Clear 'We'll Try to Spare Your Lives'', *Daily Mail*, 03.11.1956, p.1.

¹⁴² Stockwell, 'Suez 1956 and the Moral Disarmament of the British Empire', p.232.

The Suez War also led to the resignation of Anthony Nutting, a member of the Conservative Party who was one of the Prime Minister's 'favoured sons.'¹⁴³ The relationship between Eden and Nutting had, prior to the Suez War, been strong. But in Nutting's memoirs, he asks questions such as, 'how and why did the man, whose whole political career had been founded on his genius for negotiation, act so wildly out of character?'¹⁴⁴ The resignation of Nutting came as a shock to the British public of the time,

'I remember vividly November 3, the day Nutting resigned. At the British Mission in New York we felt for a few hours paralysed... his resignation told us that there was no subtle masterplan in London which would make worthwhile the humiliation and abuse being heaped on us day after day at the UN.'¹⁴⁵

As the shock of the resignation sunk in, the newspapers maintained their reporting of the events in Egypt, and also of the destruction in Hungary on the 5th November 1956, after the return of Soviet troops to Budapest on the 4th. Nutting also published reports regarding the Prime Minister's strange remarks and exclamations following the nationalisation of the Suez Canal in his book: *No End of a Lesson*, published just ten years after the "crisis" in 1967. Nutting remembers some of the unusual behaviours of Eden, and one particular phone conversation where he expressed his determination to be rid of Nasser: 'but what's all this nonsense about isolating Nasser or "neutralising" him, as you call it? I want him destroyed, can't you understand?'¹⁴⁶ However, some scholars have argued that the resignation of Nutting was not reflective of a political crisis but simply a junior minister resigning from his post.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ Political Correspondent, 'Nutting Resigns on Suez Policy', *The Observer*, 04.11.1956, p.1.

¹⁴⁴ Anthony Nutting, *No End of a Lesson: The Story of Suez*, (London: Constable, 1967), as cited in Lord Owen, 'The Effect of Prime Minister Anthony Eden's Illness on his Decision-Making During the Suez Crisis', *An International Journal of Medicine*, 98, 6, (2005), pp.387-402.

¹⁴⁵ 'When Eden fell from Grace: The Deception when we took on Nasser Cost us Dear', *The Telegraph*, 04.03.2000, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/4720067/When-Eden-fell-from-grace.html> [accessed on 11.05.2018].

¹⁴⁶ Anthony Nutting, *No End of a Lesson*, (London: Constable, 1967), p.34.

¹⁴⁷ Lord Beloff, 'The Crisis and its Consequences for the British Conservative Party', in Roger Louis and Roger Owen, *Suez 1956: The Crisis and its Consequences*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp.319-334, p.322.

‘Some Tories were shaking their heads gloomily last night because they believed that the Arab States would argue that Israel had beaten Egypt and that Egypt had beaten Britain,’¹⁴⁸ was the reporting in the *Manchester Guardian* on the 7th November relating to the political crisis which befell the government following the “crisis” of Suez. The reports on the same day in the *Daily Mail* were of a quite different nature, however, with headlines such as, ‘A Pat for Eden as MPs Cheer,’¹⁴⁹ and comments such as ‘sensible people will thank goodness that the British forces (and the French) are there to keep the ring, secure fair play and look after our vital interests.’¹⁵⁰ The political allegiances of each paper were emphasised during the period of the Suez War, with pro-government papers like the *Daily Mail* spinning the political crisis in government as a complication rather than a political rebellion. The *Manchester Guardian* did not attempt to gloss over the happenings within government, and due to its consistent anti-Suez policy, the government troubles were reported rather gleefully.

The United Nations and the “Final Peace Settlement”

‘For the first time in history, a world force is entering a battle zone to keep the peace in the World’s name.’¹⁵¹

With the ongoing Hungarian Revolution, the Suez Canal “crisis” added to the list of issues which the UN was attempting to quell. The reputation of Britain at the UN during the Suez War was severely damaged, with the *Observer* arguing that the ‘Eden government had dishonoured Britain by flouting the UN’¹⁵², due to Britain’s decision to involve themselves in Egypt without consulting the mechanisms of the UN. The UN’s response to the disruption in Egypt was substantially different to its response in Hungary. With the preoccupation of the

¹⁴⁸ ‘Premier’s Position Hazarded’, *Manchester Guardian*, 07.11.1956, p.1.

¹⁴⁹ Ronald Camp, ‘A Pat for Eden as MPs Cheer’, *Daily Mail*, 07.11.1956, p.1.

¹⁵⁰ Comment, ‘Objective Achieved’, *Daily Mail*, 07.11.1956, p.1.

¹⁵¹ British Pathé, ‘United Nations’ Biggest Test’ (1956), 2.50.

¹⁵² Turner, *British Power and International Relations*, p.250.

UN with Suez, there was not much to be considered about Hungary, a ‘telling indictment of what Britain had done’¹⁵³.

The Security Council discussion on Hungary which began on the 28th October was interrupted by emergency discussions on Suez which began on the 29th October, leaving a five-day lapse in the consideration of Hungary by the UN.¹⁵⁴ The *Daily Mail* reported on the disillusion in Budapest when the UN discussion on Hungary was delayed: ‘on the radios they heard the United Nations had postponed its debate on the Hungarian problem. The Hungarians began throwing away their guns in disgust. They felt they had been betrayed.’¹⁵⁵ In the same report, journalist Jeffrey Blyth writes about the Hungarians’ hope, and how they ‘scanned the skies for United Nations planes’ while they continued to fight the Soviets. It can be argued that the press’ re-evaluation of the situation, and the displacement of Hungary from front-cover news stories helped to divert world attention towards Suez, increasing Soviet manoeuvrability in Hungary.¹⁵⁶ In a ‘Review of the British Weekly Press’, the conclusion cited Suez as partly responsible in the tragic outcome of the Hungarian revolution.¹⁵⁷ From the Blyth report, it is clear that his opinion, which appeared on the *Daily Mail’s* front page, concurred.

In the British public during the 1950s, the UN ‘with its apparent legal aspect and its apparent concern for peace, was certainly popular at the time,’¹⁵⁸ and the rift caused within the UN by British intervention in Egypt was not received favourably by the public. It is suggested by Guillaume Parmentier, writing in the 1980s, that the British public and the British press would

¹⁵³ Ibid, p.250.

¹⁵⁴ Brian McCauley, ‘Hungary and Suez, 1956: The Limits of Soviet and American Power’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 16, 4, (1981), pp.777-800, p.792.

¹⁵⁵ Jeffrey Blyth, ‘Hungary Dies Fighting’, *Daily Mail*, 12.11.1956, p.1.

¹⁵⁶ McCauley, ‘Hungary and Suez, 1956’, p.787.

¹⁵⁷ Gary Rawnsley, ‘Cold War Radio in Crisis: the BBC Overseas Services, the Suez Crisis and the 1956 Hungarian Uprising’, *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 16, 2, (1996), pp.197-219, p.211.

¹⁵⁸ Guillaume Parmentier, ‘The British Press in the Suez Crisis’, *The Historical Journal*, 23, 2, (1980), pp.435-448, p.441.

have been much more supportive of British military action over Suez had it been taken in July or August of 1956, rather than waiting until late October.¹⁵⁹ By then, the *Daily Mail*, a supporter of the government policy in Egypt, no longer understood the purpose of the mission of the British government in Egypt, other than to remove Nasser as premier. The *Daily Mail* and other members of the Tory press and had to ‘find motives for themselves if they wanted to defend the intervention’, especially as the UN was unsupportive.¹⁶⁰ It was also argued that the press was ‘very attached’ to the UN and its mission and that a majority of periodicals expressed their regret that the intervention in Suez had not been managed through its mechanisms.¹⁶¹

With a cease-fire in Egypt declared from the 7th November, the UN played an instrumental role in the deliverance of peace. With Britain’s reputation in tatters internationally, the Prime Minister consoled himself by arguing that that UN was, as a result of the Suez War, given a chance to ‘prove itself a really effective international organisation.’¹⁶² Indeed, the entry of UN peace-keeping forces into Egypt was the first ever deployment of UN multi-national troops in history, and the disruption caused by the British, French and Israelis to the Egyptians did give the UN its first chance to use the peace-keeping forces. However, as a “justification” of the intervention in Suez, it is poor. The argument was one of many attempts by the British government to save face in light of the embarrassment of Suez.

The ‘flouting’ of the UN by the British and French in their attempts to regain control of the Suez Canal was considered to be a mistake by politicians at the time as well as contemporary

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, p.435.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, p.439.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, p.441.

¹⁶² ‘Fighting Ends in Egypt’, *Manchester Guardian*, 07.11.1956, p.1.

scholars writing about the Suez War.¹⁶³ However, it is clear from the secrecy of the Protocol of Sèvres, and Eden's own stated personal agenda that they believed that the workings of the UN were not related to the desired outcome of the Suez intervention. If the British and French had only desired to 'protect' the Canal by 'restoring international status', then the UN would have been a consideration.¹⁶⁴ However the desire of the British government, with the strongest support ebbing from Prime Minister Eden, was the removal of Nasser from power, and this was not an objective which could be succeeded with the assistance of the UN. The fear of Nasser was publically stirred in the press, in line with the perspective of Eden who had developed a strong personal animosity towards Nasser.¹⁶⁵

The Opposition of the British People

Looking into the discussion surrounding the public's response to the outbreak of Suez, the animosity of parts of the population can be analysed through the mediums of photographs which depict protests, polls, letters, petitions as well as academic analysis of the public

¹⁶³ The Lord Chancellor said in 1956 that, 'it would be wrong to disregard the United Nations', especially considering that improper use of force would be 'inconsistent' with the United Nations' Charter which maintained an emphasis on the preservation of peace. In addition, the Deputy Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, Sir Harold Caccia, warned of the repercussions of the Suez action, and queried the effect which it could 'affect our position in the United Nations'. Both quotes were cited in Geoffrey Marston, 'Armed Intervention in the 1956 Suez Canal Crisis: The Legal Advice Tendered to the British Government', *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, 37, 4, (1988), pp.773-817.

¹⁶⁴ Edward Johnson, 'The Suez Crisis at the United Nations: The Effects for the Foreign Office and British Foreign Policy', in *Reassessing Suez 1956: New Perspectives on the Crisis and its Aftermath*, ed. By Simon C. Smith (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2008), pp.165-177, p.169.

¹⁶⁵ Owen, 'The Effect of Prime Minister Anthony Eden's Illness,' p.387.

response. It is often argued when discussing Suez that the opinion of the general public was ‘clearly divided and volatile’, much in line with the depictions of the “crisis” in the press.¹⁶⁶



Fig. 5: ‘Wild Scenes in Whitehall’, the *Manchester Guardian*, 05.11.1956, p.1.¹⁶⁷

Following the outbreak of the controversial Suez War, nationwide protests took place. The Suez “Crisis” had affected the British position in the UN, and the British delegation’s standing there was ‘at an all-time low.’¹⁶⁸ The majority of the British public were supportive of the UN, due to its establishment after the recent conclusion of the Second World War, and some began to protest the government’s decision to intervene in Egypt. It was not only noted in

¹⁶⁶ Christopher Hill, ‘Public Opinion and British Foreign Policy Since 1945: Progress in Research?’ *Opinion Publique et Politique Extérieure en Europe*, 1, (1981), pp.63-74, p.64.

¹⁶⁷ The photograph available from the *Manchester Guardian*’s archive was not of good quality, this photograph is of higher quality but was obtained from another newspaper archive online, accessed through The National Archives’ website, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/fo371-1189221.jpg> [accessed on 18.05.2018].

¹⁶⁸ Johnson, ‘The Suez Crisis at the United Nations’, p.171.

scholarship which has analysed a range of press reports that the public was discontent with the outbreak of Suez, but also within scholarship on radio broadcasts, as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)¹⁶⁹ maintained a non-critical, non-supportive policy line, reflective of the ‘division of opinion within Britain’ at the time.¹⁷⁰ The discussion surrounding the impact which the outbreak of the Suez War had upon the outcome of the Hungarian Revolution was also an element in the press within British society at the time.¹⁷¹

Figure 5 which depicts a protest against the government intervention in Egypt which took place on the 4th November was published in the *Manchester Guardian* on the 5th November, the same day on which Hungary received more press attention due to the violent Soviet suppression of the Revolution on the 4th. The use of this image on the front cover of the *Manchester Guardian* shows the importance of the opinion of the public to the argument put forward by the *Manchester Guardian* during the Suez “crisis”. The argument that the government had involved itself in an illegal war, or “police action” to preserve the dignity of Britain internationally at the expense of helping the Hungarians with their fight for independence from the Soviet Union, was maintained as the Revolution made its way to the right hand side of the newspaper on this date. The image shows public animosity to the Suez

¹⁶⁹ The role of the BBC during the Suez War, although not the topic of this dissertation, has inspired an interesting debate in academia. The BBC was considered to be a tool which would aid the dissemination of British propaganda to the Middle East, broadcasting the mission of the British Empire in a positive light, whilst also aspiring to be the most popular broadcaster in the area. Some scholars have argued that the BBC maintained its impartiality during the Suez War, whilst others recognise that it was exploited as an invaluable propaganda machine, both in Egypt and at home. The incredible power of the radio was recognised as being a more intimate transmitter of information, with ‘possibilities both for good and evil’. For further reading on the role of the BBC during the Suez War please see James Vaughan, ‘Cloak Without Dagger: How the Information Research Department Fought Britain’s Cold War in the Middle East, 1948-56’, *Cold War History*, 4, (2004), pp.56-84, and Gary Rawnsley, ‘Cold War Radio in Crisis: the BBC Overseas Services, the Suez Crisis and the 1956 Hungarian Uprising’, *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 16, 2 (1996), pp.197-219.

¹⁷⁰ Rawnsley, ‘Cold War Radio in Crisis’, p.201.

¹⁷¹ For further reading on this debate see Brian McCauley, ‘Hungary and Suez, 1956: The Limits of Soviet and American Power’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 16 4 (1981), pp.777-800, Guillaume Parmentier, ‘The British Press in the Suez Crisis’, *The Historical Journal*, 23 2 (1980), pp.435-448 and Michael J. Turner, *British Power and International Relations During the 1950s: A Tenable Position?* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2009), p.250 among others.

intervention, and its use suggests that the magnitude of the protests would not have been imagined otherwise. The *Daily Mail*, on the other hand, did not use any image of the protests on its front cover. Instead, its articles about the Whitehall protests reflected a one-sided perception of those people who had decided to disagree with the government policy. Without focus on the people in the protest, the sub-headline read, ‘8 Police Hurt in Whitehall Riot’.¹⁷² The protest was depicted as a ‘mob’ who were ‘shouting, screaming’ as they made their way to Downing Street in protest of the government action in Suez.¹⁷³ When describing the crowd itself, the *Daily Mail* made a conscious effort to suggest that those protesting did not represent the ‘masses’ of British society:

‘The crowd- thousands strong- included large numbers of coloured men, some accompanied by white women. There were also many Greeks, Cypriots, Indians, Pakistanis- many of them waving Communist publications... Men standing at the back of the crowd shouted: “stick a knife in the horses!”, -“down with the Fascist police!”’¹⁷⁴.

The detailed description and emphasis on the nationality of the members of the protest is shockingly in line with the *Daily Mail’s* policy line during the Suez crisis: by emphasising that the protesters were not “British”, the suggestion here is that the protest is a minority one. This account leaves no doubt as to the *Daily Mail’s* characterisation of the protesters.

The story told by the *Manchester Guardian* was very different to the short, emotionally charged and biased publication in the *Daily Mail*. By contrast, the *Manchester Guardian* attempted to provide context to the cries of ‘Fascist’, and also reported on the police’s acts of violence as well as the crowd’s. The writing on the banners was also summarised as signifying deep discontent with the War and for the Prime Minister, ‘into the Canal with Eden’ and ‘no war with Suez’ were reported as fairly commonplace banners, with some also signifying

¹⁷² Daily Mail Reporters, ‘8 Police Hurt in Whitehall Riot’, *Daily Mail*, 05.11.1956, p.1.

¹⁷³ Ibid, p.1.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, p.1.

solidarity with the UN, ‘respect the United Nations’.¹⁷⁵ The use of the photograph also implies that magnitude reported by the *Manchester Guardian* was not overly exaggerated, although the problem with photographs is not simply what they depict, but rather what they do not.¹⁷⁶

Although not to the same extent as for Hungary, some letters and telegrams were addressed to the Prime Minister regarding the events in Egypt. For the Hungarian intervention, many of the letters were supportive of potential British military action in Hungary, however this was not as much the case in regards to Egypt. With letters coming from across Europe, the Prime Minister was reprimanded for his action over Suez, especially as the consequences, so it was perceived, had affected the outcome in Hungary. One letter from Munich, Germany was extremely anti-Eden:

‘The letter is addressed to “Anthony Eden, to the detriment and shame of his country Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.” Hungary’s misery has been caused by the Prime Minister’s aggression in Egypt. This last action clearly proves the Prime Minister’s shocking decadence, and it is immaterial whether that action is due to stupidity or evil intent. The Prime Minister has now opened the door to Communism, and it would be a very small consolation if the Prime Minister were to resign. If this should happen [the] writer hopes the Prime Minister will be taken to Siberia, and stays there until the end of his days. Writer curses the Prime Minister.’¹⁷⁷

Although this letter does not originate from a British citizen, and can therefore not be representative of public feeling in Britain, the opinion is so intense and emotional that it must be considered interesting and relevant that such passion should originate from a German doctor who took the time and energy to compose a letter which was sent from Germany. The

¹⁷⁵ London Staff, ‘Wild Scenes in Whitehall: 27 Arrests: 8 Policemen Hurt’, *Manchester Guardian*, 05.11.1956, p.1.

¹⁷⁶ Jennifer Tucker and Tina Campt, ‘Entwined Practices: Engagements with Photography in Historical Inquiry’, *History and Theory*, Theme Issue, 48, (2009), pp.1-8, p.5.

¹⁷⁷ TNA, FO 371/122391/10110/579, Letter from Dr. Kurt Weschta of Munich to the Prime Minister Anthony Eden, ‘Précis’, on 04.11.1956.

sentiment reflects the United Kingdom's isolation at the United Nations, and the damage that colonial aggression in the 1950s could inflict upon nations.

Although public opinion and 'the public' itself is difficult to define, the publication of articles on the protests in both the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Mail* on the front page suggest that the protests themselves were serious enough to be taken into consideration by the press. The violence showed by individuals at the protests as well as banners calling for the resignation of Anthony Eden also reflect a growing discontent for the colonial policies which were put forward and pursued by individuals within the government. The end of empire, strongly associated with the Suez "Crisis" for both the British and French empires has influenced the academic writings reference to this chapter in British history, but the suggestion that the Suez War was a "Crisis" is a Eurocentric claim, failing to take into consideration the success and celebration of the outcome of the intervention in Egyptian politics both nationally and internationally. The public opinion to which I have referred is predominately British, with the exception of letters of European origin such as that from Dr. Weschta in Munich. The public response in Egypt is altogether a different discussion, and one whose outcome is exceedingly different from that experienced in Britain.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁸ Very few academic articles relating to the nationalisation of the Suez Canal in 1956 take into consideration the Egyptian perspective. Writing about the Suez Canal, its nationalisation and the "Crisis" which ensued, it is often the choice of the academic to pursue a discussion relating to the European perspective of Suez, especially that of the United States, the United Kingdom or France. When attempting to discuss the impact of the Suez "Crisis", it is often portrayed as a crisis or a signal for the end of empire, but for Egypt it was an overwhelming victory, allowing for Nasser to succeed as a politician until his death in 1970. Today, Nasser is still heralded as an iconic individual, a successful politician and as a key figure in obtaining and maintaining Egypt's independence from Britain.

The Many Versions of Gamal Abdel Nasser

The depictions of Nasser in the British press were almost exclusively negative, casting him as a character without respect or dignity.¹⁷⁹ This depiction of him was consistent with the image which had frequently been expressed by Prime Minister Eden who had likened him to Hitler and Mussolini,¹⁸⁰ and which was part of the argument against ‘appeasement’ and in favour of British military action in Egypt.¹⁸¹ In an interview in 1967, Eden even maintained his argument regarding Nasser, ‘I am still unrepentant about Suez. People never look at what would have happened if we had done nothing. There is a parallel with the 30s.’¹⁸² Eden’s obsession with the removal of Nasser is usually discussed in relation to his illness and his subsequent drug addiction to the prescription drug Drinamyl¹⁸³ which it has been suggested impeded his judgement during the Suez War.¹⁸⁴ However, the portrayal of Nasser has been discussed academically in relation to the Information Research Department, the News Department and the Foreign Office,¹⁸⁵ as well as looking closer into the relationship of

¹⁷⁹ Comment, ‘Britain At War’, *Daily Mail*, 01.11.1956, p.1.

¹⁸⁰ Beloff, ‘The Crisis and its Consequences for the British Conservative Party’, p.329.

¹⁸¹ Owen, ‘The Effect of Prime Minister Anthony Eden’s Illness’, p.399.

¹⁸² ‘Anthony Eden is Dead at 79’, *The New York Times*, 15.01.1977, <https://www.nytimes.com/1977/01/15/archives/anthony-eden-is-dead-at-79-anthony-eden-although-typecast-for.html> [accessed on 16.05.2018].

¹⁸³ Prior to the introduction of Drinamyl in the 1950s, the use of anti-depressants in the general public frequently resulted in reports of agitation and discomfort. Drinamyl was evolutionary in the way it worked as it combined the use of amphetamines (mood up-lifters) with barbiturates (sedative and central nervous system depressants). Both amphetamines and barbiturates are highly addictive and, disconcertingly, amphetamines often result in patients having alarming reactions to its use (side effects include psychosis, delusions and paranoia when used in high doses). Due to the poor understanding of these effects in the 1950s, barbiturates were prescribed frequently. For example, in 1960 one billion tablets were prescribed in the UK. In an impressive article by Lord Owen, the effect that Drinamyl had upon Anthony Eden during the Suez “Crisis” is evaluated. Eden had undergone a cholecystectomy in 1953 which resulted in an external bile fistula, resulting in a re-exploration of his abdomen later that year. However, it was necessary to undergo a third operation a few months later, which was successful. Owen argues convincingly that there is ‘no doubt’ that Eden relied upon Drinamyl during the course of the Suez War. He also argues that alongside Drinamyl, Eden regularly took sleeping pills. Owen’s argument concludes with the statement that ‘if Eden had been fit and well, he would have realised that such a course [of action relating to collusion with Israel] contained the seeds of its own destruction’. For more reading relating to the use of ‘stimulants’ by Eden, the full article is as follows: Lord Owen, ‘The Effect of Prime Minister Anthony Eden’s Illness on his Decision Making During the Suez Crisis’, *Q J Med Journal*, 98, (2005), pp.387-402.

¹⁸⁴ Owen, ‘The Effect of Prime Minister Anthony Eden’s Illness’, p.393.

¹⁸⁵ Vaughan, ‘Cloak Without Dagger’, p.74.

government and press which was, and is, enhanced by the existence of Lobbies.¹⁸⁶ The many versions of Gamal Abdel Nasser is a chapter dedicated to the discussion and debate within the British press regarding his premiership, as well as looking into the reasons behind this portrayal.

The press during the Suez War reflected a growing negative attitude toward Nasser and Egypt in general.¹⁸⁷ The *Daily Mail* was not shy in its overtly anti-Nasser publications, with comments such as ‘there is no doubt that Colonel Nasser is a Dictator of a most dangerous kind.’¹⁸⁸ The newspaper also explicitly linked Nasser with Russia, bringing the Cold War framework into play, ‘Nasser’s *Russian* jet bombers,’¹⁸⁹ (italics my own) and ‘[Russia] seemed to lose interest in the Mediterranean until last year when she obtained her foothold through Nasser.’¹⁹⁰ The link between Nasser and Communism complemented the *Daily Mail*’s Cold War framework which had been strongly ideologically anti-Communist since 1947, adding to the unease which had been building within the United Kingdom since the end of the Second World War.¹⁹¹ The media framework over Nasser in the *Daily Mail* was especially successful in finding a topic whereby he would appear as the enemy, not only

¹⁸⁶ Lobbies are an important, effectual instrument of British journalism. The Lobbies, and lobby journalism refers to a select group of journalists who are allowed access to information which is not privy to other journalists. The terms and conditions of access to this political information are paramount to the functioning of the Lobbies: some information obtained can be attributed to Press Secretary and the Prime Minister, however not all information may be linked back to the Prime Minister. In cases when the source of information must stay anonymous, journalists are permitted to use it in stories and articles, but it must not attribute it to its source. This form of journalism has been highly contested, as it seemingly allows for dissemination of information without responsibility. However, in 1956 lobby journalism was incredibly popular. With the first list of lobby journalists appearing on record in 1884, with academic Norman Robson writing in the 1930s that admission to the Lobby ‘is a highly prized privilege, one which cannot be enjoyed by a great many who would find it of great benefit’ (p.160). In 1956, the building tensions over the government’s Suez policy resulted in the discrediting of the government’s Press Secretary William Clark, whose loss of credit in the Lobby led to his resignation. For further reading see John Wilson, *Understanding Journalism: A Guide to Issues*, (London: Routledge, 2006), pp.164-169 and Norman Robson, ‘The Lobby Journalist- A Definition’, *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 15, 2, (1938), pp.159-166.

¹⁸⁷ Mansfield, ‘Nasser and Nasserism’, p.63.

¹⁸⁸ Comments, ‘Power’, *Daily Mail*, 01.11.1956, p.1.

¹⁸⁹ ‘Nasser’s Army Routed’, *Daily Mail*, 02.11.1956, p.1.

¹⁹⁰ Comment, ‘Blackmail’, *Daily Mail*, 06.11.1956, p.1.

¹⁹¹ Tony Shaw, ‘The British Popular Press and the Early Cold War’, *The Historical Association*, 83, 269, (1998), pp.66-85, p.78.

through the text, but also through imagery. It is also known that during the Suez War, the Soviet Union was supportive of Nasser's mission for independence 'to the hilt', and its explicit support through the United Nations in particular allowed for an exaggeration of the Egyptian-Soviet relationship in the British press.¹⁹²

Tony Shaw's article, 'Government Manipulation of the Press During the 1956 Suez Crisis', discusses the press' representation of Nasser in relation to the wishes of Eden. How Nasser and Nasserism were portrayed, especially in the Tory press, argues Shaw, was highly influenced by the government's use of the Lobbies, a unique feature of British press and politics which allows for full disclosure of information without identification of the source.¹⁹³ The Lobbies' use was paramount to the successful portrayal of Nasser as a villain and as a result of its use, it allowed for the successful conduction of 'a war of nerves against a foreign leader on a scale rarely seen and across the whole press spectrum'.¹⁹⁴ The use of the press by the British government during the Suez War was substantial, and without its mobilisation perhaps the image of Nasser would not have been disseminated to the public with the ubiquity with which it was during those months. The effectiveness of the press' campaign against Nasser was to have long-lasting effects which are still visible today.

Nasser was portrayed in newspapers such as the *Times* as uncivilised, 'for the civilised nations Nasser is no longer a possible partner'¹⁹⁵, according to the letter sent in by a French diplomat, attempting to speak on behalf of the 'French view' of Nasser. The *Times* went on to refer to Nasser as a dictator, similarly to the *Daily Mail's* portrayal, arguing that in accordance with

¹⁹² Moshe Gat, 'Anatomy of Decline: Anglo-Soviet Competition in the Middle East, 1956-67', *Israel Affairs*, 19, 4, (2013), pp.603-622, p.605.

¹⁹³ Shaw, 'Government Manipulation of the Press', p.285.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, p.285.

¹⁹⁵ Jean Owen, 'The Polls and Newspaper Appraisal of the Suez Crisis', *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 21, 3, (1957), pp.350-354, p.350.

this view, it was necessary to stop him. In addition to this consideration of Nasser as a dictator, his comparison by the newspapers and Eden himself to Hitler and Mussolini seemed to justify the intervention of the British in Egypt as appeasement to Hitler had not worked in the 1930s.¹⁹⁶ Perhaps in this sense the intervention is more clear, as Eden was a strong advocate against the appeasement of Hitler during the 1930s, and had resigned temporarily in protest of the policy. His conviction that Nasser was to follow a similar path to Hitler and risk world peace was in part to blame for his actions over Egypt.

Through the use of cartoons in some newspapers and magazines, Nasser was made to look demonic and uncivilised. The image, 'Nasser Tries the Churchill Touch', published in the *Daily Mail* on the 2nd November 1956, Nasser, holding up his hand in the symbol of peace, is an image which mocked the actions of the Egyptian premier by comparing his speeches and hand gestures to that of the "great British" Winston Churchill, considered to be the hero of Britain, and a strong leader who guided Britain through the Second World War. The speech delivered by Nasser was not published in its entirety on the front page of the *Daily Mail*, and was summarised through the use of this cartoon. The *Manchester Guardian* on the other hand did publish in brief the speech, without the aid of pictures or cartoon drawings. Referencing the same speech delivered by Nasser via the radio *Voice of Arabia*, the



Fig. 6: Nasser Tries the Churchill Touch, *Daily Mail*, 02.11.1956, p.1.

¹⁹⁶ Beloff, 'The Crisis and its Consequences for the British Conservative Party', p.329.

Manchester Guardian quoted Nasser as well as relaying the context in which the speech was given, ‘President Nasser today proclaimed martial law throughout Egypt and declared in a nation-wide broadcast: “We shall fight and we shall not surrender.”’¹⁹⁷ The extremely different presentations of Nasser’s speech to his country as demonstrated through the mediums of the *Daily Mail* and the *Manchester Guardian* reflect the divisive nature of the press’ affiliation. By this, the allegiances of the different newspapers to the different parties within government allowed for the reporting on events in Egypt to be widely contrasted. By this argument, expressed explicitly through reference to the individual papers, the affiliation of the newspaper was highly influential to the content produced and printed within the paper itself.

Conclusions

The Suez War deflected the British Tory press’ attention away from the Hungarian Revolution, and focussed it more on the demonisation of Nasser, the necessity of a successful war outcome and encouragement of public to support the government’s decision to invade Egypt. The *Daily Mail* is a perfect example of the relationship of government and press affecting the publication of certain news stories, as in line with government policy. The *Manchester Guardian*, on the other hand, as it was not a member of the Tory press, had a different approach to the Suez War. By criticising the government’s ‘illegal’ action in Suez, the paper opened itself to immense political criticism as well as nearly being subjected to wartime censorship. The stark contrast in the two newspapers’ representations of the war, and of Nasser, shows how political allegiances during the crucial weeks of the Suez War affected the representations of the “crisis”, allowing for uneven and contrasting flows of information to the British public.

¹⁹⁷ ‘Egypt Fighting a Total War’, *Manchester Guardian*, 02.11.1956, p.1.

Final Conclusions

Both the Hungarian Revolution and the Suez War contributed to a change in global status for Britain and the Soviet Union. I refer to these two powers in particular as they represent the two powers who were the aggressors in the dual crises in October and November 1956. The choices which these two countries made and the representations of them in the British press during the fifteen-day period, which has been analysed during the course of this thesis, impacted the Cold War as well as the decolonisation processes which took place during the late 1950s and the early 1960s. The British press during this critical period showed itself to be an actor, not simply a source of information. Although it can be argued that the *Daily Mail* still aligned itself with the wishes of its press-baron and the Conservative government during both the Hungarian Revolution and Suez War, the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Observer* took a different approach, paving the way for more critical journalism which could make a difference to the readers as well as, perhaps, public opinion in general.

This thesis has shown that the context in which the Hungarian Revolution and the Suez War took place was paramount to the outcomes of both of these events. The Cold War concerns contributed to the greater outlay of British propaganda which was promoted by the IRD through the medium of the press, and the British colonial adventure in Egypt showed the rising support for the independence of the colonies, when intervention could no longer be justified by either the government, or the press. The *Manchester Guardian's* decision to criticise the government's policy in Egypt by demanding the Prime Minister's resignation, and by emphasising the lack of clarity and support within the House of Commons, mostly on the part of the Labour Party, but also as a conflict which the Conservatives faced within their own ranks is significant. The *Manchester Guardian* coverage represents a break with the journalism which took place during the Second World War, and the beginning of a new

journalistic era. Even the overt support of the Hungarian revolutionaries in both the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Mail* reflects a changing role of the press in 1956 whereby expression of opinion and emotion, even if it conflicted with the position of the government, became the norm.

The legality of the Suez intervention was questioned by the British press and the United Nations. However, the Soviet suppression of the Hungarian Revolution, although challenged, was less of a legal question due to the existence of the Warsaw Pact. The British press' representation of the UN highlighted its new role in the international field whereby it was considered to be the instrument which would solve inappropriate military actions taken by both the Soviet Union and Britain. The arrival of UN peacekeepers into Egypt was the first time an international peacekeeping force had ever been called into action, a news story that portrayed British embarrassment. The *Manchester Guardian's* recognition of the UN's role in international affairs contributed to its stance against the British action over the Suez Canal nationalisation because of its 'flouting' of the UN. On the other hand, the UN's lack of interference over Soviet actions in Hungary was reflected in British newspapers, as they reported on the disappointment in Hungary, after having heard reports that the UN had postponed discussions about their plight, in favour of Suez.

This thesis has analysed the *Daily Mail* and the *Manchester Guardian*, as well as other newspapers, for their representations of the Hungarian and Suez "dual crises". It has also connected the British press to the government through the analysis of the Foreign Office's IRD. The shift in attention from Hungary to Egypt reflects the political interests held by the British government and, presumably, the newspapers' readership. It is impossible to know how much of the content available on the front pages of the *Daily Mail*, and most probably

to a lesser extent the *Manchester Guardian*, were the work of journalists, or influenced by state information sources.

With my methodology concentrating heavily on the thematic issues addressed within both newspapers, it has allowed me to gradually work through the views and comments and articles to conclude that the relationship between press and government during October and November 1956 was a significant factor in the dissemination of information to the public, and that the press is indeed an actor, able to criticise and evaluate the actions of the government. The use of the *Daily Mail* and the *Manchester Guardian* allowed for a further analysis as to which newspapers had the independence and ability to use their power as actors to reveal their own voice. Media framing during the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and Suez War either justified or condemned the military action taken by both Britain and the Soviet Union, however it is the British press as its own actor which allowed it to argue, or comply, with government policy.

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