

Russia's 1946 Expulsion of Journalist Reuben Markham from Eastern Europe

Stuart Van Dyke Jr

To cite this article: Stuart Van Dyke Jr (2024) Russia's 1946 Expulsion of Journalist Reuben Markham from Eastern Europe, *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 35:4, 658-703, DOI: [10.1080/09592296.2024.2421722](https://doi.org/10.1080/09592296.2024.2421722)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592296.2024.2421722>



Published online: 29 Nov 2024.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

ARTICLE



Russia's 1946 Expulsion of Journalist Reuben Markham from Eastern Europe

Stuart Van Dyke Jr

Independent Researcher

ABSTRACT

Bulgaria and Romania's futures were still to be decided at war's end, but, until Potsdam allowed them in, Western journalists had been prevented from entering these countries, restricting first-hand accounts of Soviet activity. Reuben Markham had spent most of his adult life in Bulgaria, first as a missionary-educator and then as a correspondent for the *Christian Science Monitor*. Using letters, newspaper accounts, and archival resources, this article analyses his assignment in Eastern Europe from August 1945 to June 1946, when the Russians expelled him because of his reporting and influence on local democratic leaders. During this period, American public and official opinion changed from being favourable to the Soviet Union to becoming apprehensive about its actions. Markham knew the Balkans better than any other American journalist and his entry was pushed by the White House. At its request, he submitted a report about Bulgaria, which, along with diplomatic cables and the Ethridge Mission, informed the President's thinking. Markham had family ties to Ethridge's assistant, Cyril Black, criticised Bulgaria's November election and chronicled Romania's failure to guarantee political freedom, with his reporting putting him in personal danger. Acheson labelled his expulsion a violation of the Potsdam Declaration. In July, Markham urged the US to resist Soviet expansion, counselling Truman personally in an August meeting, which coincided with the Administration's firm stand to counter Russian encroachment on the Turkish straits. Markham's work placed him in the vanguard of Americans who identified and acted upon the Soviet Union's increasing control of Southeastern Europe.

After the war in Europe ended, 'American press correspondents . . . found it practically impossible to report news from, or even to enter, the countries of eastern Europe . . .'.¹ 'The Department has taken the position that American correspondents should be granted every reasonable facility for reporting to the American people events in this area'. 'A strong stand . . . is justified . . . because our effort to bring about the establishment of more representative governments in Eastern Europe is hampered by the American public's lack of knowledge of developments there'.

Making ‘an earnest and firm request . . . to Marshal Stalin to lift the “news blackout” in eastern Europe’ became an American goal at the July 1945 Potsdam conference, resulting in this agreement, ‘ . . . representatives of the Allied press will enjoy full freedom to report to the world upon developments in Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Finland’.²

The journalist the administration was ‘especially interested’ in getting into the Balkans was Reuben Henry Markham (RHM) of the *Christian Science Monitor*.³ Indeed, Secretary of State, James Byrnes, wired Sofia saying the White House was pushing his entry.⁴ Presidential Press Secretary Charles Ross asked Markham to send him a report on conditions there, which he did soon after his 1 September 1945 arrival.⁵

This article describes Markham’s ten months in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania from September 1945 to June 1946. His journalism, along with that of other reporters, provided in person accounts of Soviet and Communist control in the Balkans to the American public at a time when it generally still viewed Moscow favourably. Many of Markham’s pieces were broadcast back into Southeastern Europe by Voice of America, making him an important source of information for the local populations too.

In addition to his White House report, Reuben Markham had ties to the Mark Ethridge mission, sent by Byrnes to evaluate conditions. RHM reported hopefully on the freely elected Hungarian government and its social reforms. In Romania he catalogued the failure of the Communist dominated regime to implement the December 1945 Moscow Accords.

His coverage made him increasingly well-known in the Balkans and placed him in physical danger. It served as a bulwark of support for local democratic leaders and helped convince the American public that its wartime ally was tightening its single party grip.

These effects led the Russians, over US objections, to expel him in June 1946, an action cited by Byrnes and Undersecretary Dean Acheson as a violation of the Potsdam Declaration. Six weeks later, Markham met with President Truman at the White House at a critical juncture when Russia was demanding military bases on the Turkish Straits.

Reuben Markham deeply empathised with the peoples of the Balkans. Near the end of his life, he wrote that his ‘chief type of newspaper work has not been in the field of politics or formal international relations, but has rather been an attempt to interpret the men and women and children of eastern Europe, among whom he and his family lived and of whom he was very fond, to *Monitor* readers’.⁶

Born on a farm in Kansas, descended from three generations of ministers, he was himself ordained in the Congregational Church and dispatched as a 25-year-old in 1912 to Samokov, Bulgaria, by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to teach at the American Boys’ and Girls’ schools there. Residing in Bulgaria almost entirely until 1933, and

publishing a series of Bulgarian-language newspapers and journals, he became a political personage there in his own right. Reuben ‘spoke the language like a Bulgarian, and wrote it like a Bulgarian in a very amazing way; he knew and understood the ways of the Bulgarians, and he became a Bulgarian figure just as much as he was an American figure’.⁷ Office of War Information (OWI) Director, Elmer Davis, wrote that Markham probably knew more about the Balkan peoples than any other American.⁸

He led an engaged life. In 1917, he contrived a scheme, with the help of the American consul in Sofia, to carry secret Bulgarian government documents across war-ravaged Europe to the United States to try to convince it to refrain from declaring war on the Balkan country.⁹

Upon his return to Bulgaria in 1920, he assumed responsibility for the Mission’s newspaper, and began his own Bulgarian language publications. In 1923, the Prime Minister, Agrarian leader Alexander Stambolisky was overthrown in a rightist coup. ‘Bulgaria was shaken to its foundation’, Markham wrote. ‘Men were killed by hundreds and thousands’.¹⁰ ‘Many people who I knew personally were assassinated’. ‘I got stirred up at all the bloodshed, said so, wrote so . . .’.¹¹

‘He was the first to expose in print the so-called “white terror” . . . in the mid-twenties . . . This outspoken opposition of his to official mistreatment of peasants and workers had a devastating effect on the Tsankoff regime’.¹² Stambolisky’s son remembered Markham’s contribution twenty years later. ‘More than once his . . . voice was raised in defense of freedom. We remember it since the gloomy and bloody days of 9 June 1923, when peasants and workers were slaughtered . . . We remember him since the sinister days of the events of September and April, when he defended the freedom fighters with unparalleled valor and flogged their executioners’.¹³

Markham’s experiences with Bulgaria’s 1923 Communist uprising had made him knowledgeable about the movement. In his 1931 *Meet Bulgaria*, he found Communists ‘the best organized . . . political group in Bulgaria; . . . they meant business. They were out and out revolutionists. They expected to launch a general uprising, to seize the Bulgarian government, inaugurate a dictatorship, crush the bourgeoisie and divide the property of their wealthier neighbors’.¹⁴

Because of his journalism, Markham was forced by the Bulgarian government to resign from the Congregational Mission in 1925.¹⁵ He remained in the country, publishing his own Bulgarian-language weekly, *Svet* (World), continuing to identify extra-judicial killings by the government. In 1927, he was arrested and put on trial in Sofia, but was acquitted.¹⁶

RHM then became the Christian Science Monitor’s correspondent, first for Bulgaria, then for the Balkans and in 1933, moving to Vienna to cover Central Europe. Fortuitously, in the summer of 1939, he returned to the United States to write a series of articles entitled ‘Rediscovering America’. On 28 August 1939, he penned these words.

When I started on this tour of re-discovery . . . I hoped that no occasion would arise for writing an article like the present one I had long observed the workings of the Nazi machine and had felt convinced that its builders would not pause in the expansionist program in the light of present events, there is a question I must answer. It is:

What is my own duty and the duty of my nation in the present struggle? . . .

The answer comes as plain as day. It is a command to do my part that government of the people, by the people and for the people may not perish from the earth¹⁷

In October 1940, Anne Lindbergh, wife of Charles Lindbergh, the most prominent Isolationist spokesman, wrote *The Wave of the Future*, which called on the United States to stay out of the war, asserting that the totalitarian regimes in Europe had harnessed the energy of their peoples in a way that would improve mankind. Her book became a bestseller.

Reuben was deeply disturbed by her arguments and quickly published a rebuttal, *The Wave of the Past*, which, too, was a bestseller.¹⁸ Again, Markham made a full-throated plea for the United States to enter the war on the side of Great Britain. ‘The road to isolationism is absolutely closed. Every refuge has been swept away. America’s fate hangs on this issue Let us take sides consciously, solemnly, nobly and not by default’. ‘And having decided aright, let us act with all our might. What does that mean? It means to do everything that must be done. Nothing less’.¹⁹

This work was also a paean to democracy, in the face of the challenges of Nazism, Fascism, and Communism. ‘The genius of . . . democracy . . . enables us to keep on going forward When that is lost, everything is lost. . . . The only good foundation for a good society is democracy. If it is destroyed further building is impossible; if it is preserved, the building on it, even though defective, can be perfected’.²⁰

Markham was as critical of Communism as he was of Nazism and Fascism. He wrote that ‘In spite of all (his) regard for the heroic Communists he has known and his admiration for their self-sacrificing devotion to the masses, he believes Communism is a blight and a curse, destroying the masses and blasting every hope or dream that little men and women have cherished for the better life’.²¹

After the United States entered World War II, Markham joined the Office of War Information (OWI), eventually becoming Deputy Director for the Balkans. In February 1944, he was sent overseas, spending most of the year in Cairo and Bari, Italy. There, he came into close contact with Tito’s Communist-led Partisan movement. He observed that it resembled a dictatorship, writing, ‘I spent many months among Yugoslav partisans and saw Commissars exercise the absolute power of *gauleiters*’. He ‘heard many stories of men and women who had been taken away and never heard of again’.²² In another article he referred to them as ‘among the world’s most fanatical autocrats’.²³

Realizing that Britain and the US were abandoning Mihailovitch, who had been opposing Germany since April 1941, to throw all their support to Tito, consigning Yugoslavia to a Communist future, Markham argued vociferously against this decision. 'In August 1944, O.W.I. representative in Cairo, Reuben Markham, mounted a blistering attack on Anglo-American aid to the communist Tito, which reverberated all the way to the offices of the J.C.S. (Joint Chiefs of Staff) . . . within a fortnight Churchill was appealing to President Roosevelt to control the 'strong Mihajlovic lobby' . . . ' .²⁴

When Markham's arguments failed, he resigned in October 1944. Elmer Davis conceded that the decision to support Tito 'entailed long-term political consequences of which, Mr. Markham, familiar with the Balkans, was perhaps better aware than most American officials'.²⁵

Afterwards, Reuben voiced his fears to his brother. 'I see all of Europe & Asia falling under Stalin's dictatorial sway'.²⁶ 'I really have a year to be more or less independent & to give the rest of my life to a crusade for real American democracy'.²⁷

Throughout the spring of 1945, RHM hoped he would be permitted to enter Southeastern Europe. In Bulgaria, America was represented by men Markham knew well. Maynard Barnes, whom Reuben 'greatly admired', had served at the American Legation in Sofia from 1930 to 1934.²⁸ In turn, Barnes described Reuben as one of the 'well known friends of Bulgaria . . .'.²⁹ His assistant, Cyril Black, raised in Bulgaria, was the son of the Markhams' long-time associate, Floyd Black, President of the American College of Sofia. Through the Blacks, Reuben had access to first-hand information about Bulgaria that spring and summer.

On August 17, following the Potsdam Declaration, Byrnes wired Barnes, 'As you undoubtedly know, Markham has been pressing for some months to enter Bulgaria, where the *Monitor* plans to restation him. White House is also interested in facilitating entry of Markham into Bulgaria'.³⁰

RHM knew this assignment would not be an easy one, 'but it seemed to be something he could do to help in this matter, and he could not refuse to go'.³¹ He felt that it would 'be a hard year of pioneer service for our country'.³² The Markhams were 'glad the State Department . . . is trying to do something about the things that have been promised to all those lands'.³³ Reuben would also use this assignment as a way to try to help the peoples of Southeastern Europe as they faced the Russian-dominated regimes.

When Markham arrived in Sofia, the questions of whether there would be a Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, what the types of government would be, and whether Soviet expansion would extend further were complex ones for US policymakers. As far back as Woodrow Wilson's 14 Points, the US had called for an independent Poland and autonomy for the peoples of Austria-Hungary, and self-determination had become the European interwar order. The August 1941 Atlantic Charter proclaimed by the United States and

Great Britain confirmed that structure and rejected the idea of spheres of influence. ‘... they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them’.

The Soviet Union adhered to these principles as well in January 1942. After Potsdam, President Truman reaffirmed Yalta’s commitment that the Axis satellite nations would have governments ‘broadly representative of democratic elements’. ‘These nations are not to be the spheres of influence of any one Power’, he declared.³⁴ Nevertheless, the concept of spheres of influence was a live issue for the Big Three.

When the Russians signed their Non-Aggression Pact with Germany in August 1939, it had secret clauses that created spheres of influence for both Berlin and Moscow. ‘The importance of the Nazi-Soviet pact for the future course and evolution of Soviet spheres of influence policy cannot be over-emphasized’.³⁵ It established the content of a sphere of influence agreement, including exclusive freedom of manoeuvre, and provided the context for an ‘ambitious attempt ... to significantly expand the Soviet sphere of influence’ on its western borders. Russia annexed the Baltic States, seized its agreed upon portion of Poland, as well as Bessarabia and northern Bucovina from Romania, and launched a war against Finland, resulting in annexation of part of its territory. ‘In their zone of occupation, Red Army officers and NKVD officers ... used local collaborators, members of the international communist movement, mass violence and mass deportations ... to “Sovietize” the local population’.³⁶ The Soviet Union’s intentions did not stop there, as when it began quarrelling with Germany over Romania and Bulgaria, Molotov sent Berlin a memorandum on 17 January 1941 stating that ‘the appearance of German forces in Bulgaria would be a violation of USSR security interests’.³⁷

After Germany’s invasion on 22 June 1941, Russia wanted Great Britain and the United States to guarantee its new western borders. When they were unwilling, Josef Stalin wrote Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov that ‘the question of borders ... we will decide by force’.³⁸ In terms of types of governments, Stalin told Milovan Djilas, ‘Whoever occupies a territory also imposes in it his own social system’.³⁹

Russia’s 1944–45 plan in the Balkans was ‘A policy of securing ... the exclusion of Western influence from the region (and from the rest of Eastern Europe) and the establishment of friendly governments that would accept Moscow’s leadership and meet Soviet security requirements’.⁴⁰

Maxim Litvinov, long-time Foreign Minister, wrote Molotov in 1945 that ‘our maximum sphere of security should include Finland ... , Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, the Slavic countries of the Balkans and Turkey’. Norway, Yugoslavia, Denmark, Italy and Sweden should be ‘subject to bargaining and compromise’.⁴¹ Andrei Gromyko, ambassador to

Washington, added that there could be a problem in ‘the future of Eastern Europe’, as the American government might object to ‘the prospects of social change and of establishing Soviet-type regimes in some of those countries’. Ivan Maisky, long-time ambassador to Great Britain, believed that ‘to create real democracies’ in the former Nazi satellites, Poland and Yugoslavia, ‘some outside pressure would be necessaryWe should not hesitate to use this kind “of interference into the domestic affairs” of other nations . . . ’.⁴²

Stalin might have protected ‘the military security of the Soviet Union through arrangements for the demilitarization of Germany and her former satellites and with regional security pacts and bilateral defensive pacts . . . ’. However, ‘the value of a socialized Europe for Stalin was . . . absolute in two ways. It was, explicitly, the ultimate aim of his policies in Eastern Europe’. Secondly, socialist states were better security to him than alliances with states who were ‘potential enemies’.⁴³

As the war’s end approached, the future of Romania and Bulgaria were in question. In 1940, Romania had lost territory both to the Soviet Union and to Hungary and Bulgaria when northern Transylvania and southern Dobrudja were transferred by Germany and Italy. Nevertheless, Romania’s authoritarian government joined Hitler with 585,000 troops in his attack on Moscow.⁴⁴ Reuben Markham described its dilemma in these terms.

(Romania) could only decide between Hitler and Stalin; . . . between the Gestapo and the N.K.V.D.; between slave camps in Siberia and concentration camps as at Dachau. Rumania had to choose between a German boot and a Russian boot; and it chose the GermanTo the Rumanians, Germany . . . meant order; Russia, disorder. Germany meant Europe; Russia, Asia. Germany meant good roads, clean villages, splendid . . . cities, unexcelled mechanical skill. Russia meant dilapidation, backwardness, dirt of the Orient. Germany meant a modicum of security for persons and property; Russia meant utter insecurity for both.⁴⁵

As the war progressed, pro allied groups in Romania began plotting to pull it away from its alliance with Germany to join the Allies. They had been told by Winston Churchill that ‘satellite states, suborned or over-awed, may perhaps, if they can help shorten the war, be allowed to work their passage home’.⁴⁶ These groups succeeded in August 1944, with the arrest of dictator Ion Antonescu and the installation of a coalition government of the National Peasant, Liberal, Socialist and Communist parties. ‘It delivered a state, a nation and an army intact to the Allies’.⁴⁷

Armistice agreements signed with Romania and Bulgaria stated that the Allied Control Commissions (ACC) would be under the general direction of the Soviet Union until Germany’s surrender.⁴⁸ Byrnes confirmed that, ‘We are fully aware of (Russia’s) special security interests in those countries and we have recognised those interests in the arrangements made for the occupation and control of former enemy states’.⁴⁹ In his October 1944 meeting with Stalin, Churchill also offered Russia dominance there in return for Britain’s premier position in Greece.

At first, the Communist Party, which had fewer than 1000 members in 1939, did not control the coalition government in Bucharest.⁵⁰ 'Stalin had a highly developed political strategy for liberated countries throughout Europe', which was 'to be realized through the establishment of national fronts', and he personally advised Romanian Communist Party leaders to 'work toward establishing a national democratic front government'.⁵¹ Ana Pauker, member of the Central Committee, explained that the 'satellite organizations should enjoy independence', but 'not in the sense that each will do what occurs to it, but that each shall . . . do work according to the determined line given and received'.⁵²

Unhappiness with that effort, though, brought Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Vishinsky to Bucharest to force King Mihai to appoint Russia's choice, Petru Groza, Prime Minister on 6 March 1945, just weeks after the Yalta Declaration.⁵³ Pauker acknowledged that assistance from 'outside' had helped install the new government.⁵⁴

Although also a German ally, Bulgaria never declared war on the Soviet Union.

Its pro-German government was overthrown and replaced on 9 September 1944 by the Fatherland Front, a coalition of the Agrarian Party, the Socialists, the Communists, and a group of technocrats.

The local Bulgarian Communists were stronger than the Romanian ones and by October, with control of the Ministries of the Interior and Justice, as well as the support of the Red Army, the Bulgarian Communist Party reported that 'authority is in fact for the most part in our hands'.⁵⁵ Former Comintern leader, Georgi Dimitrov, advised including anti-German and anti-Fascist elements in the government, but said leaders of major political organisations should be replaced if insufficiently 'malleable', as happened with the Agrarian leader by 'the supposedly more tractable Nikola Petkov'.⁵⁶ Petkov, though, along with most of the Agrarian Union, resigned from the Fatherland Front in the summer of 1945.⁵⁷

For Cyril Black, 'It was . . . in the course of the spring of 1945 that the intentions of the Communists became unmistakable'. The most telling event was the sentence passed after a spectacular trial of the wartime regents, cabinet officers and members of parliament . . . Of these scarcely a dozen would have been regarded as war criminals worthy of capital punishment by the standards applied at Nuremberg, yet on 1 February 1945, no less than one hundred of them were sentenced to death and shot on the same day. The savagery of this action shocked the nation and set the stage for what was to follow.⁵⁸

This trial was an example of 'how the Soviet High Command, through the ACC, and in implementation of the armistice terms, could clear the way for the eventual elimination of all the rivals of the Communists'.⁵⁹

Maynard Barnes, worked hard to convey to Washington the conditions in Bulgaria at the end of 1944 and the beginning of 1945. For instance, one cable stated that 'the courts have subjected country to a blood bath', with 20,000

additional extrajudicial killings taking place, while another warned of the Russian threat to the Turkish Straits.⁶⁰

American military representative, Major General John Crane, sent similar reports, cabling that ‘The Bulgarian Militia ... has been completely Communized and is being used ... to terrorise ... the country ... Freedom of speech and freedom of the press are non-existent in Bulgaria’. Russia was ‘proceeding to impose a Communist-dominated government on Bulgaria ...’ ‘not desired by an overwhelming majority ...’.

The Yalta Conference tried to reconcile the concepts of self-determination with a Russian sphere of influence. ‘The Americans and the British generally agreed that the future governments of the Eastern European nations bordering the Soviet Union should be “friendly” to the Soviet regime while the Soviets pledged to allow free elections in all territories liberated from Nazi Germany’.⁶¹ The West and the Soviet Union, however, disagreed on the meaning of such ‘democratic political procedures’ as ‘free elections’ and ‘representative government’.⁶²

After his OWI resignation, RHM wasted little time in addressing the concept of spheres of influence in the Monitor. Asking can we create ‘a fair world order for all the nations?’ he wrote, ‘Many of the masters of the world have grown cynical’, and morally defeated. Arrangements were being planned of ‘which conscientious people cannot approve’. ‘Power politics in a crude and ruthless form seems to be reappearing’.⁶³ It was as if he knew of Churchill and Stalin’s meeting in Moscow dividing the Balkans.

In the run-up to Yalta, Markham was even more direct, addressing the fate of the small countries in Eastern Europe and Russia’s increasing hold on them. Peace, Reuben said, should be based on the principles of the Atlantic Charter, including no aggrandisement by the victors along with restoration of sovereign rights for victims of Nazi aggression.

The Atlantic Charter was ‘a sacred promise, before God, before mankind and before all history’. It was the pledge by which ‘America sent its boys by the millions to risk the supreme sacrifice’. ‘Now’, though, alluding to Russia’s strategic interests, ‘some Americans tend to belittle that sacred promise and talk of deals, of big power domination, of using scores of millions of common men and women to promote the security of mighty neighbors’. ‘But ... security can be based only on brotherhood and in law ...’, Reuben asserted. ‘Might does not make right now any more than when Hitler used it’.⁶⁴

RHM was critical of the Yalta Agreements, writing in the April 4th *Christian Century*, that the declaration that liberated countries would have ‘broadly representative democratic’ governments did not reflect reality. In Yugoslavia, ‘All that happened is that the American government officially recognised Tito’s Communist-led coercively imposed dictatorship’.

As for Bulgaria, ‘An autocratic regime, largely dominated by the Communists ... rules the country with an iron hand. It is carrying out

a nation-wide political purge by means of which it eliminates its political rivals *en masse* . . . ’.

‘Rumania is an even more distressing example of Yalta deception’. The government ‘was the creation of one ally. It emerged amid intimidation and terror . . . ’. ‘The Communist party in Rumania is . . . utterly unrepresentative, yet it now dominates the cabinet . . . The main task of this government is to destroy its political opponents, meaning all political leaders, in a nation-wide purge’.

The primary decision in regard to Poland was to recognise the pro-communist ‘Lublin’ regime. ‘No new government is to be created. The Lublin group is to be broadened by including persons of whom an Allied commission in Moscow will approve. We have seen how the Allied Control Committee works in Bulgaria and Rumania’.

Markham submits report to White House on Bulgarian conditions

In the summer of 1945, the most pressing issue in Bulgaria was the election scheduled for August 26. With the Communists in control of the Interior and Justice ministries, with the emergency law in place, and with the Fatherland Front preventing the Agrarian Union from running its own election lists, opposition politicians protested that it would not be fair. ‘Opposition political workers . . . were continually harassed by restrictions on newsprint and printing facilities, and by beatings and arrests’.⁶⁵ Barnes assiduously attempted to get the election postponed and the Russians considered him ‘the most anti-Soviet of the Americans they dealt with’.⁶⁶

On August 13, the US notified Bulgaria that it opposed its electoral procedure. Five days later, Byrnes went public, stating that the US. ‘wanted all important elements of democratic opinion’ represented in the government. Meanwhile, Barnes was pushing Bulgaria to postpone the election, which the government did on the 24th.

Ironically, the State Department had just cabled Barnes that it ‘did not contemplate our making specific request for postponement of elections’, and that it could ‘not support your action’ in asking for their postponement. The decision of how to form a ‘representative democratic government’ ‘is a matter for Bulgarians to undertake’. ‘. . . before taking further steps, Dept should have been consulted’.⁶⁷ ‘This was certainly a sharp reprimand’, concluded Cyril Black, and Barnes referred to it as a ‘censure’.⁶⁸

On the 25th, Markham flew out, as the ‘Only passenger with the crew of an (Air Transport Command) plane’.⁶⁹ Reuben told his wife, Mary, ‘Barnes expects me & knows am backed by White House’. ‘I am not worrying’, Reuben went on, ‘& you must not worry. In case of any difficulty write to Ross & refer to his letter’.⁷⁰

Despite the difficulties and very real dangers of this Balkan assignment, it turned out to be an exhilarating experience. After it was through, he wrote his spouse, 'The last ten months have been among the most exciting and satisfying in my life', adding a little ruefully, 'I like action as you know . . .'⁷¹

Once in Sofia, Reuben cabled ' . . . practically all friends well . . . '. 'Found very pleasant reception. All doors open'. The Protestant publication, *Zornitsa*' greeted him, writing that Markham, was known 'as an ardent democrat and fighter for the rights and liberties of the citizen'.⁷²

Reuben acted quickly in informing the White House of Bulgaria's status. He asked the American legation 'that his following comments based on intense study of events and contacts with all persons of importance . . . as well as with workers and peasants be urgently conveyed to Mr. Ross for attention of the President'. On September 10, they were forwarded, going to the White House on the 11th, with the endorsement that it was a good resume 'of the Bulgarian situation by a recognized, objective observer', whose 'long residence and intimate knowledge of conditions in Bulgaria give great weight to his observations'.⁷³

RHM's cable was a scathing indictment of the Bulgarian regime. 'The majority of Bulgaria considers itself in a totalitarian prisonThe present regime . . . is extremely dictatorial, brutal and utterly irresponsible'. The Fatherland Front was dominated by Communists who controlled the government and worked in intimate contact with the Russians. It imposed its 'will by violence . . . unprecedented since the time of the Turks'. Reuben also estimated 20,000 people had been killed with thousands more in concentration camps. Property was not safe from expropriation, and the regime lived by extortion.

Freedom of expression was non-existent. The peasants, as well as the bourgeoisie, were in grave danger, the regime was the '*exact antithesis*' of a people's government, and free elections were impossible. Markham urged the US to withhold recognition until the Fatherland Front had been deprived of its power, the militia disbanded, and the Ministry of Interior placed in non-Communist hands. Like Barnes, he drew attention to Russia's interests in the Bosphorus.

Presumably, RHM's report was brought to the attention of the president, who was 'a prodigious reader'.⁷⁴ It may have had a role in forming American foreign policy, as Truman wrote later that the equally damning Ethridge Report 'confirms our previous information on those two police states . . .'.⁷⁵ Reuben's telegram supported the cables that Barnes and General Crane had been sending to Washington.

Markham was not just trying to report on a failure to implement democratic procedures, because he covered positive social and economic changes, such as land reform, improved working conditions, increased education and greater women's rights, acknowledging these policies. Also, Russia was employing a National Front strategy in 1945, accepting in

some instances cooperation with other political parties and a minimal program. Thus, even if the goal of this policy was ‘the ultimate Sovietization of Eastern Europe’, these final intentions might not have been clear, as in the case of Hungary which conducted free elections in November 1945.⁷⁶

Even though Soviet control of the ACCs was set to end after Germany surrendered, Black attested that the principal change in the Balkans resulting from the Potsdam Declaration was the admission of Western journalists. The American public was not ready to confront Russia at the war’s end, but their presence helped the ‘slow ... process by which American opinion became convinced’ of this necessity.⁷⁷ ‘Having fought and won a war’, a historian explained, ‘almost no one in Washington wanted to think about another. The Russians ... had been allies, and official Washington still wanted to find a way to make common cause in the postwar world’.⁷⁸

Markham’s ‘was one of the few voices and the clearest ... to warn this country’, helping change American thinking in the fall of 1945 and the spring of 1946.⁷⁹ His articles were also crucial in keeping the Balkan peoples informed as they were broadcast back into Southeastern Europe by Voice of America.

Though nuanced, RHM’s journalism did not hesitate to describe the Communist-controlled Bulgarian government’s lack of democratic representation, its use of violence to stay in power and the threat to free elections. His ten months of reporting brought home to his readership the oppressive reality of Soviet-dominated Balkan countries.

As he had cabled the White House, Reuben reported right away that ‘a substantial part of the Bulgarian people is strongly opposed to the present Communist-dominated and Russian approved Bulgarian regime’. The Peasant League, ‘by far the largest political organization in the country’, issued a set of demands including the appointment of new Ministers of the Interior and Justice along with an end to the ‘special police laws for defense of the government’, which allowed citizens to be picked up without charges and trials. ‘The Peasant Party believes that fair elections ... will be impossible as long as police and courts are in the hands of Communists’.⁸⁰

On September 20th, RHM issued a thoughtful piece describing how Bulgaria had been in a political civil war, since the 1923 coup. At that time the rightist regime ‘was killing Bulgarians as the Turks never killed them’. In 1943–44, ‘Bulgarian pro-Axis regimes repressed anti-Axis activity with furious savagery, executing anti-Axis undergrounders en masse ... Thus Fascism in Bulgaria is associated with a hideous disregard for life, law and property’.

Unfortunately, though, now, ‘One of the most balanced men in Bulgaria and one of the founders of the Fatherland Front told me ... that “All the excesses of all former fascist regimes are less than those committed during the past year by the present regime”.’ ‘The Fatherland

Front, plays the role which the Nazi party played in Germany. All public life is obliged to emanate from this front. It endeavours to direct thoughts and actions’.

‘Throughout the whole country . . . (it) . . . had so completely suppressed the free expression of opinion, . . . and offered such dismal post-election prospects that a wave of joy swept the nation when the (August) elections were postponed’. ‘I also see’, he added, ‘that the nation has entered into a terrible labyrinth of violence and fear which . . . has brought Bulgaria to its greatest crisis in modern history’.⁸¹

In another story, though, Reuben posted that political freedom was improving. An opposition press had been allowed along with criticism of the administration. People who have sought him out have not been ‘molested’.

Nevertheless, many of these ‘ordinary’ people ‘who come to see me are afraid’. ‘I personally know of 83 cases in which during a single . . . week oppositional Agrarians complained of Government acts of violence, such as breaking up meetings, forcing peasants into labour battalions, beatings and even flogging. Most of these protests were in the form of telegrams sent to the Premier . . .’.

‘This noon a sad-faced woman meeting me on the street said: You don’t remember me, do you? I regretfully admitted that I didn’t and she continued, “Twenty years ago you helped me when my husband, an Agrarian leader, was beaten up by the Fascists. Now my son, also an Agrarian, has been arrested and brutally beaten by this regime”. Because of such happenings the Bulgarian people do not feel free’.⁸²

These months in Southeastern Europe were a dangerous, harrowing time. His experience during this period was seminal for Reuben. ‘He was able to verify at first-hand what a Communist take-over meant . . .’.⁸³ Romanian foreign minister, Constantine Visoianu, said that ‘On the soil of our countries under Soviet domination he underwent what was certainly the greatest disillusionment of his life’⁸⁴

He wrote that people ‘come to see me all day long. They often begin arriving before eight in the morning. This morn the first one came at seven. I never have a minute’s rest’.⁸⁵ He telegraphed the Monitor describing his emotions.

WORK HERE EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT BECAUSE ENORMOUS PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL STRAIN CAUSED BY INTERMINABLE STREAM BEREAVED VISITORS COMING TELL ME THEIR SORROWS NONE IS INVITED MOST ARE COMPLETE STRANGERS STOP THEIR HEARTS BRING THEM STOP ALL HAVE LOST DEAR ONES LIVE WRETCHEDLY AGONIZE FOR TRACELESSLY DISAPPEARED OR FOR RELATIVES IN CONCENTRATION CPSEYE CANT CLOSE HEART OR EARS OR DOOR ADSUCH (SIC) SAD PEOPLE SO LISTEN WITH . . . EXHAUSTING SYMPATHY STOP NEVER OUTSIDE NAZIDOM HAVE EYE SEEN SUCH CRUELTY . . . LIVING THUS AMID SOBS BRUTALITY CLOSED MINDS HARD HEARTS FIND GREAT NEED DIVINE FAITH TO RETAIN LOVE KINDNESS.⁸⁶

All that he witnessed made him reassess his feelings for Bulgaria. ‘This doesn’t mean I’ve lost my love for the Bulgars, but the fearful cruelty . . . repulsed and sickened me. They’re the cruellest people in Europe besides Russians and Germans’.⁸⁷ He told his brother that it also solidified his opinion of Communism. ‘You may recall having heard me say something about Russia & Bolshevism. Now after living 4 months under Russian imposed Communist dominated governments, I can assure you that Communist tyranny cruelty deception & destruction are worse even than I described them. Russian imposed regimes are unmitigated curses’.⁸⁸

These accounts focused RHM’s journalism and turned it even more condemnatory. On October 2, the Monitor printed a fierce and graphic report on the country’s concentration camps.

One of the most sinister facts . . . in Bulgaria is the existence of political concentration camps . . . There may be two sides . . . over the merits of the Fatherland Front . . . But there can be no doubt of the human degradation which is being practiced in the political concentration camps – sentences to which hang like a sword of Damocles over every phase of Bulgarian activity. . . mere disagreement with the economic, ideological or political concepts of the regime is enough to open their gates . . .

There were at least six such concentration camps in Bulgaria with ‘hundreds of . . . cases’. ‘. . . the confinement of Bulgarian citizens in concentration camps cannot be ignored’.⁸⁹

In an interview with Markham, Tsola Dragoicheva, chief secretary of the Fatherland Front, justified its actions. Saying that more than 2000 people had been executed upon orders of the People’s Courts, with more than twice that many imprisoned, she stated that the ‘armistice terms required punishment of those fascists most responsible for bringing Bulgaria into the war . . . and . . . that the cause of democracy demanded the elimination of dangerous Bulgarian fascists. As for concentration camps, they were necessary for confining those fascists who . . . had had to be restrained from conducting a harmful political activity . . .’⁹⁰ Reuben also reported that the ‘. . . law for defense of the government makes fascist activity . . . punishable by imprisonment or execution, and the term fascist is used to describe every word or act against the regime . . .’⁹¹

RHM wrote an equally forthright article on the question of whether free elections were possible in Bulgaria. Although he said ‘I shall not attempt to give a direct answer . . .’ by the end, there could be no doubt in the reader’s mind that he did not believe a free election could be held. The question was important to the United States, he explained, because it, along with Britain and Russia had guaranteed them.

In an election, Markham told his readers, the entire army would vote for the regime. All workers, officials and teachers ‘are under extreme pressure to vote for the Government’. Each of these groups was forced to attend mass rallies. Every apartment building was ‘under direct supervision of Communist

agitators'. 'Practically every citizen ... was visited by such agitators and enrolled on a list as for or against the Government'. The regime controls 'the whole propaganda apparatus', and does not permit the opposition to broadcast over the radio. The Communists are the only ones armed in Bulgaria, and the militia is completely in their hands. Food and housing can be tied to one's vote. 'As the climax to all this, Communists in every city and village from highest officials to the most common Party members, repeatedly declare that the Communists will not retire even if the Opposition votes them out, but will remain to destroy all who voted against them ...'.⁹²

This article was directed not only to American public opinion, but also to America's leaders who had to decide whether to sanction the Bulgarian elections scheduled for November. *The New Leader* reported that '(Markham's) dispatches from Sofia had been of inestimable service in conveying a true picture of conditions'.⁹³

A few days later, he stated in the *Monitor* that Bulgarian Communists 'had poured out scorn for American democracy and myself, who for a month had listened to the Bulgarian nation's anguished cries against Communist totalitarianism'.⁹⁴ To Mary, he added, 'I am sure I don't know what the future will bring to Bulgaria. I think eastern Europe is going to have a very hard time. I don't know how long I'll be allowed to stay'.⁹⁵ Nevertheless, 'The presence of American cors. (correspondent) in Bulgaria bucked up the whole population'.⁹⁶

His reporting did not go unnoticed by Russia, and it started to challenge Reuben's influence. 'Naturally such first-hand contacts and such access to indisputably authentic sources of information aroused the bitter resentment of Communist masters and when RHM's dispatches were radiocast back to Bulgaria and Romania by the Voice of America, he became the object of almost daily attacks on the part of the Communist radio and press throughout southeast Europe, with the Moscow radio chiming in'.⁹⁷

In mid-October, Reuben gave an interview to Petkov's opposition newspaper, which caused a stir. 'An American newspaper correspondent has become an undeniable factor in Bulgaria's tense political situation, where newspaper polemics and rough and ready name calling are the order of the day. The government and Communist press are carrying on a no-holds-barred campaign against Reuben Markham ... who is looked on as one of the strongest voices raised in behalf of civil liberties'.⁹⁸

Reuben had said that friendly relations could easily be established with the United States, 'if civil order, freedom and lawfulness were established in Bulgaria and if a possibility were given to the people to express their will without fear ... of prisons, arrests and concentration camps'. He added that nothing 'has filled me with such sadness as this compulsory expropriation of land of Bulgarian peasants ... Can a man who has loved Bulgaria be happy when he sees the noble independent Bulgarian peasant turned into a serf?'.⁹⁹

In response, the Communist paper, *Rabotnchesko Delo*, wrote, 'It is offensive that Mr. Markham has an attitude in our country as if he were in a colony'. 'It is obvious . . . they want to strengthen foreign pressure toward our country in order to cause a change in governmentThe Bulgarian people will not be affected by foreign interference and internal treason'. Having this interview referred to as 'treason' was extremely threatening since both judicial and extra-legal killings were frequent. Tragically, Nikola Petkov was executed two years later.

Asked to respond, Canham stated, 'Mr. Markham is, of course, at all times under instructions from us to limit his activities to those of a news correspondent. Neither he nor we can prevent the use of his dispatches in Bulgarian domestic politics'. Notably, this statement did not justify the interview, and it may be concluded that the Monitor was concerned about RHM's making his opinions public.

Markham's own statement was both defiant and conciliatory. ' . . . at a moment', he explained, 'when thousands of little fields are being forcibly taken from poor Bulgarian peasants to form co-operatives, could I have retained my self-respect if on being asked, I had refused to say such violence against peasants owning 10 acres of land or less make me sad?'

He went on, though, to add, 'I deeply regret that some of my dispatches and opinions have caused bitterness in certain circles'. 'I see a decided improvement in the general situation, warmly felicitate the Premier on it, and dare hope that improvements will continue . . . '. He later described Dragoicheva as having 'profoundly, categorically and even bitterly disapproved' of some of his dispatches.¹⁰⁰

Reuben was upset by this brouhaha and felt his courage wavering. He wrote Mary, 'One group now hates me furiously, the Communists, and the rest love me. Being thus in the midst of the controversy also distresses me. You have often seen me distressed and distraught and rather unworthily weak kneed. I regret to say I'm in such mood now'.¹⁰¹

Following this incident, former Monitor correspondent and friend, William Henry Chamberlin, wrote a laudatory column in *The New Leader* bolstering Reuben's work. He explained that 'the *Christian Science Monitor* . . . editorially walked on eggs to avoid giving offense to "our great Soviet ally" (and) gave (RHM) no encouragement to open up an anti-totalitarian barrage in its columns'.

Chamberlin believed, though, 'There is something refreshing and inspiring in the spectacle of this kindly, middle-aged Kansan . . . throwing a whole totalitarian regime . . . into a dither of angry indignation by simply speaking his mind'.

'If there were a Pulitzer award . . . for upholding the ideals of a free society and a free press with unflinching courage and honesty and devotion in an age of totalitarian violence and propaganda and fraud', there would be 'no worthier recipient than this simple, unassuming Kansas democrat, Reuben Markham'.¹⁰²

Markham's next piece demonstrated an effort to lower his rhetoric and show more deference to the Bulgarian government. 'This country has a free press; foreign correspondents are allowed freedom of action as well as free access to people and their dispatches are sent uncensored Also they are not subjected to pressure to write only favourable things'. It discussed the various opposition newspapers, how they outsold the pro-Communist ones three to one in the cities and two to one in the countryside and ended with the statement, 'Personally, I . . . rejoice that at present Bulgaria enjoys an almost ideal degree of press freedom'.

Five days later Markham returned to his more confrontational journalism in an article describing the Bulgarian Opposition's decision to boycott the November 18 elections. 'Much evidence indicates' the Opposition comprises 'a large antigovernment majority'. By boycotting, ' . . . it refuses to participate in legalising the present regime'.

The Opposition considered the Fatherland Front 'a totalitarian government protected by a Special Law for the Defense of the Government'. Able to exclude any candidate, it had no system to guarantee an accurate vote count. Current restrictions prevented organisational activity and campaigning. 'The whole sad struggle is caused by the determination of one party to impose a coercive regime on the majority of the nation'.¹⁰³

The Ethridge mission

As RHM was reporting from Bulgaria, the Big Three foreign ministers met in London from September 11 to October 3. Markham's White House cable may have influenced the American position, with negotiations about Bulgaria and Romania deadlocked. 'The issues as to the representative character of the . . . provisional governments and the degree of freedom which was likely . . . in forthcoming elections had been . . . sharply drawn during the . . . debates . . .'.¹⁰⁴ With conflict over other subjects as well, such as a trusteeship over Libya and control of Japan, the Russians thought the Allies were 'hostile, duplicitous and anti-Soviet at heart . . .'. 'To get anything', Stalin said, 'from this kind of partner, we must arm ourselves with the policy of tenacity and steadfastness'. ' . . . Stalin had no inclination to compromise on . . . a vital issue – the . . . Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe'.¹⁰⁵

Reacting to Byrnes' complaints, Molotov told him that he was not well informed about the Balkans. Worried that American public opinion was ill-prepared for a confrontation with Russia, and 'distrustful of professional diplomats', Byrnes decided to send Mark Ethridge, 'a gifted editor and publisher' to investigate conditions.¹⁰⁶

Named as Ethridge's assistant was Barnes' former colleague, and Markham family friend, Cyril Black. 'I just saw in the Monitor', Mary noted, 'that Cyril

Black is to accompany the editor from Kentucky, I am so glad Cyril is to go along, and feel greatly relieved, that it is he – for he has been over there thru all the bad happenings’¹⁰⁷

Black was also well informed about America’s impotence on the Allied Control Commission (ACC).¹⁰⁸ The Russian General, S.S. Biryusov, stated ‘we had no doubt that (the Americans and the British) would try to interfere with the establishment of a democratic order in Bulgaria. We had to strike from the hand of our “partners” the spoke which they were constantly trying to put in the wheel of history’.¹⁰⁹

One of the ‘bad happenings’ was the May escape from house arrest of Agrarian leader Georgi Dimitrov, who took refuge in Barnes’ house, where he spent more than three months. His wife was arrested and ‘severely beaten’. Several days later, Dimitrov’s 25-year-old secretary, after being arrested and tortured, was found dead beneath a 4th story window, which Black described as contributing ‘a further element to the prevailing atmosphere of terror’.¹¹⁰ Barnes was told by the Prime Minister that she died of suicide jumping out a window, to which the diplomat replied that ‘nobody abroad would believe such a version’. The Prime Minister agreed.¹¹¹

In July, Reuben saw Floyd Black, who had been waiting five months for permission to return to Sofia. In October, his request was denied, because ‘he was not sufficiently friendly to Russian objectives’ in Bulgaria.¹¹² After this meeting, Mary reported that ‘. . . the things (Reuben) wrote are mild beside what Mr. Black said is happening in Bulgaria’.¹¹³ Floyd Black considered Reuben to be ‘the leading authority . . . on Bulgarian and Balkan affairs, that everyone . . . looked to . . . for information and opinion’.¹¹⁴

Cyril, whose mother was Bulgarian, became close to Ethridge during the mission, giving Reuben, who stayed in Sofia ‘because of the coming of Mr. Etheridge (sic)’, a connection to the Louisville editor.¹¹⁵ Later, Ethridge wrote, ‘I know Mr. Markham very well and think extremely highly of him’.¹¹⁶

Reuben wrote that ‘the charge is often made . . . that Byrnes told Ethridge to give a loaded report, . . . to find what Byrnes wanted found’, that conditions were not as bad as reported.¹¹⁷ Ethridge may have been selected because he had ‘been sympathetic to Russia’, and had believed that ‘we would get along now that the war was won’.¹¹⁸

RHM reported, though, the dispatched team did not meet Byrnes’ hopes. The investigation was ‘a model effort at objectivity’, interviewing 45 . . . leaders in Bulgaria, including every ‘major political actor’.¹¹⁹ Rather than staying with one of the American diplomats, Ethridge billeted in a ‘rather cold hotel room’, (as did Markham) and conducted his interviews alone with Black as his interpreter.¹²⁰

‘I suppose’, Markham speculated, ‘that he went to Bulgaria . . . with the feeling that he would achieve something . . . , that he’d get the ball rolling. I had the impression that Ethridge thought the Balkan Communists might

prove to be diamonds in the rough, like 'old Andy Jackson'. If so, 'he'd kid 'em along a bit' and get them, at least partially, onto our team. For one who knew the Bulgarian Communists, such an attitude ... seemed extremely dangerous'.¹²¹

Ethridge was told, 'that more than 10,000 have been massacred without trial by Government supporters, that police torture was and is practiced on a large scale, that extortion by Government supporters is common, that they have stolen property worth billions and that thousands of people are kept in more than a dozen concentration camps at the will of the police'. He was also informed that '... jurisprudence has become a party tool, that a party-controlled militia is above ... ministers ...'.¹²²

Ethridge heard from Pauker that 'acceptance of Communist policy forms the only basis on which representatives of the other parties could be brought into the National Democratic Front'.¹²³

After a few days, Ethridge felt 'nothing further could be done in Bulgaria to save Bulgarian democracy and independence'.¹²⁴ The Agrarians were refusing to participate in the elections as long as the Communists controlled the Interior and Justice ministries, and Communist leader Georgi Dimitrov was intransigent on this issue.¹²⁵

Persuaded by Barnes and Petkov, Ethridge decided, with Department approval, to go to Moscow to try to postpone the Bulgarian election.¹²⁶ Having been reprimanded by Byrnes, Barnes may have believed that the Secretary would never represent his position adequately to the Russians.

Markham, though, thought Ethridge's going to Moscow was taking a big chance. 'I think he should have gone to Rumania first. Plainly, if he failed at Moscow his subsequent trip to Rumania would be a futile anti-climax ... Well, Ethridge utterly failed ... He saw no top men ... reached no positive results. But his efforts did show that the Kremlin was adamant ... on the Balkans ...'.¹²⁷

'Mr. Ethridge's ... investigations confirmed the conclusions of America's political and military missions ... , as well as reports of most American journalists on the spot'.¹²⁸ His December paper 'accused the Soviet government of planning expansion into Greece and Turkey', and concluded that the Bulgarian and Romanian governments interfered with free elections and took 'systematic efforts to thwart representative government ...'.¹²⁹ 'Such a confirmation of the truth', Markham wrote, 'was beneficial'.¹³⁰

Ethridge's mission 'shaped the origins of the Cold War ... and decisively pushed ... Truman towards confrontation with Soviet expansionism'. 'Although Ethridge failed to change the course of events in the Balkans, he had one very important reader ... President Truman', who ... 'became convinced of the failure of Byrnes' soft-line and the need to stand up to the Soviet Union'.¹³¹

Truman wrote Byrnes, ‘... I read the Ethridge letter this morning ... There isn’t a doubt in my mind that Russia intends ... the seizure of the Black Sea Straits to the Mediterranean ... I am not going to agree to the recognition of those governments unless they are radically changed’.¹³²

A group favouring firmness, including Truman, Acheson, ‘career foreign service officers with Soviet experience, ... leaders in the Congress, and most of the press’ was forming. ... George Kennan’s Long Telegram was sent 22 February 1946. ‘The liberal branch of the establishment’, however, ‘found it difficult to believe that Russia was interfering in Balkan affairs to the detriment of free elections’. Invited to meet with Walter Lippmann, Lyndon Johnson and Estes Kefauver, by Washington Post owner, Eugene Meyer, Ethridge discovered that ‘They found his account ... quite contrary to their expectations and seemed to wonder if the liberal editor had not turned into a red-baiter’.¹³³

Markham, with his September cable to the White House, his Balkan journalism, and his direct relationship with Barnes, Black and Ethridge, was part of the group pushing the country to take a stronger stance ‘about the things that have been promised to all those lands’.

He provided his verdict on the November 18 Bulgarian elections. ‘The new Bulgarian parliament appears to be a ... rubber stamp ...’, which ‘is expected to legalise the execution of nearly 3000 former Bulgarian leaders condemned by people’s courts and ... vote amnesty for the slaying of tens of thousands of other prominent Bulgarians’. ‘The people’s courts were political instruments established by the Communists and many of their verdicts were dictated ...’. In addition, ‘this Parliament will give the stamp of legality to a very extensive confiscation of property ...’.

‘The Communists claim these steps were necessary to wipe out Fascism, to right wrongs and to give a new social complexion to the nation ...’. The question arises, ‘whether the regime ... will tend to become milder, more representative and more just to all the people ...’. ‘... one sensational event of major importance seems to indicate more brutality and terror. It is the sudden and complete suppression of the Opposition press. For three months, three opposition ... papers were allowed to appear and write with complete freedom ...’.

‘However, most Bulgarians felt that it ... was nothing but a show-piece designed to impress Anglo-American newsmen and especially Mark ... Ethridge’. ‘The majority of Bulgarians feared that after the elections, this freedom would be rescinded, and terror increased ...’. ‘This elimination of press freedoms seems to confirm that fear and reveal the basic dictatorial intentions by the regime’.¹³⁴ (Figure 1)



Figure 1. Mark Ethridge (front centre), Reuben Markham (far right), Cyril Black (tall man), Mrs. Mary Thayer (*Washington Post* correspondent, front right), Bucharest

Reuben reports from Romania

After spending two months in Bulgaria, Markham moved to Bucharest. Life in Romania was easier. ‘My room is warm; I have hot water and bathtub, . . . The people in Sofia’s hotel Bulgaria were very nice to me but the cold room and the strain got my goat’.¹³⁵

Reuben was well regarded in Romania. An article in the ‘moderate’ Bucharest paper, *Jurnalul*, quoted Cleveland newspaperman, Theodore Andrica, ‘In America, Mr. Markham has an extraordinary prestige’, writing for a ‘newspaper of great moral authority’. *Jurnalul* then zeroed in on what it considered Reuben’s most important characteristic. ‘He is the man who always tells the truth and only the truth’.¹³⁶

RHM penned a comparison of political and economic conditions in Bulgaria and Romania. ‘. . . the representative character of both countries is questioned by the United States . . .’, as ‘an extraneous party coalition responsible to no constitutional authority . . . dominated by Communists’ is in control. ‘In each country, Communists head the Ministries of Justice, Interior, and Propaganda and direct the police, radio, and the official press’, with ‘concentration camps and much political coercion’.

The day after Vishinsky had installed the Groza government, the leaders of the Romanian Communist Party met to discuss their plans. Pauker called for ‘cleansing the land, . . . which is to say, purging, not letting people on the street

who will become active enemies, but possibly sending them into camps, where they will be sorted and put to work – arresting of war criminals. And this must be done not only on the top, but from top to bottom'.¹³⁷ '... no fewer than 50,000-70,000 had been sacked from the government by the end of 1945'.¹³⁸ The Party, Vasile Luca added, needed to get more credit for its social reforms, but 'That does not mean that we shall begin to talk about our final purpose'.¹³⁹

Between Bulgaria and Romania, though, RHM's article continued, '... there are striking differences'. The Communists in Bulgaria were stronger, indigenous, and consisted in part of former Underground members who imposed 'themselves brutally on the remaining 99% of the population'. 'The situation in Romania', he noted, 'is considerably milder'. The schools, the army, and the courts 'still resist complete Communist control'. 'Moreover, Romania has indulged in no "purge" such as that in Bulgaria'. '... the prospects of reaching general political harmony seem greater'.¹⁴⁰

When Markham arrived, Romania was in the midst of a constitutional crisis. After Potsdam, the Americans and British informed King Mihai that they would not recognise the Groza government. The King, then, stopped signing any of its decrees. In turn, Petru Groza, with Soviet backing, refused to resign.¹⁴¹ At a large demonstration on the King's birthday, November 8, a peaceful crowd of 40,000–50,000 gathered. Fights and scuffles broke out between Communist supporters and demonstrators. 'Finally, the troops opened fire on the crowds', with dozens killed or wounded.¹⁴²

The demonstration served as a pretext to bring Juliu Maniu, National Peasant Party head, in for interrogation. 'The questions made it plain that the Romanian Communist-dominated regime is seeking grounds for stopping Dr. Maniu's political activity and suppressing the National Peasant Party'. 'In the Russian paper appearing in Bucharest as well as the Romanian Government press, ... Maniu is the subject of furious daily attacks ...'. He was asked why he accused Russia of imposing the Groza regime on Romania and why he had called its ministers 'Quislings'. To the first question, he answered, 'Because it is true', and to the second, 'Because ... they are serving the interests of a foreign power to the detriment of their own nation'.¹⁴³

Maniu told RHM that 'not only the whole peasantry, but a majority of workers are opposed to (the Communists)'. 'Only the Government itself openly employs violence as an instrument of policy'. 'A large number of our party members are under arrest and not a few have been beaten'.¹⁴⁴

The same public criticism Markham experienced in Bulgaria had begun in Bucharest. 'The Roumanian press is ... attacking me as Bulgarian papers used to, tho not so savagely – not quite. I don't enjoy it'.¹⁴⁵ He worried that these attacks might also influence left-leaning Americans to discount his journalism. 'Some of this has been reported in America. I sometimes wonder if the press there has been bad to me'.¹⁴⁶ As

Chamberlin put it, 'Even many liberals positively resented being told unpleasant truths'.¹⁴⁷

At the end of December Markham left to spend a month in Hungary. Before departing, he critiqued Russia, the Romanian Communists, and the government. '... it is plain ... that a very small part of the Rumanian nation supports the Communists, while the overwhelming majority opposes them bitterly'.

The Communist Party had very few members, and was 'looked upon as a foreign instrument ...'. 'The great majority of Romanian functionaries ... oppose the Communist regime and express their opinions to foreigners and natives with remarkable frankness'. 'The Romanian passion for independence is all directed against Communism', and 'has penetrated into all schools'.

The Communists won less than 2% of the vote in recently held municipal elections. Even 'in committee elections among factory workers, the Communists have been badly outvoted'.

'No doubt, the economic situation plays a vital role in nurturing this sentiment'. 'Most houses in the city are cold and waterless'. 'For the privations, insecurity and abject humiliation which they have to endure, practically the whole Romanian nation holds the Communists guilty'.

'It is plain ... that any regime under the present circumstances would be unpopular. But when all dissatisfaction is directed against a ... coercive, poorly manned, inadequately led, ... authoritarian party that has brought no appreciable benefits, one can see what terrible ... opprobrium must be heaped upon such party'.¹⁴⁸

Hungarian interlude

Unlike Bulgaria, Hungary held a free election on 4 November 1945, with the Communists winning only 17% of the vote, while the Agrarian Small Holders' Party won 57%.¹⁴⁹ This election was seen as a potential model for Romania, although it was too late to affect Bulgaria whose elections were scheduled for November 18. In Romania, Peasant Party leaders estimated that the 'opposition comprises 80% of the nation'.¹⁵⁰

Markham found a vast difference politically between Hungary and Bulgaria. The People's Courts in Hungary, for instance, 'function in a civilized way'. 'Everything is half civilized - in Bulgaria the gov't is savage'. 'I have much sympathy for (the Hungarians)'.¹⁵¹

Reuben knew Hungary well, living there in 1938-39. He was clear-eyed about the issues it faced. Having lost much of its territory after World War I, it was irredentist between the wars. 'Magyar nationalism in its aggressive period before World War I, as well as in its postwar effort to liberate 3,000,000 Hungarians under foreign rule was a disturbing international force'.¹⁵²

‘The most rigidly stratified society in Europe’, before World War II, Reuben wrote, ‘as well as . . . Hungarian feeling of racial superiority . . . seemed to rest on a system . . . of unjust land ownership’, with ‘its landless peasants not very far from serfdom . . .’¹⁵³ ‘Besides this, Hungary in recent years was disgraced by that group of terribly cruel Nazis and Arrow-Cross men whose anti-Jewish atrocities were among the worst committed anywhere’.¹⁵⁴

RHM believed that reforms were being enacted by the new political regime, after the ‘Red Army arrived from Stalingrad and summarily swept away the millennial system of land distribution’. ‘Nobody can now hold more than 143 acres’. The Catholic Church lost one million acres, the Protestant, 150,000, the Esterhazy family 500,000 and Count Festitch about 100,000. ‘The whole social structure was suddenly demolished as though struck by an atomic bomb’. ‘Hungary’s land reforms are one of the justest acts in recent European history’. ‘If the future should develop according to expectations Russia will deserve much credit’.¹⁵⁵

Markham was relatively complimentary about civil liberties. The state-controlled radio showed ‘objectivity, balance and much freedom’. ‘The press regime . . . appears equally fair’. ‘. . . the humorous magazines get away with an astonishing amount of criticism presented in the form of persiflage’.¹⁵⁶ Plus, ‘. . . the powerful Roman Catholic Church is largely unhampered in its teaching and activity’.

Reuben was impressed by Hungarian Communist leader Matyas Rakosi. Rakosi told him that he did ‘not want to divide the nation over controversial questions at this critical moment. “Hungary is already bleeding from a thousand wounds. We must bind them up rather than open new ones”.’ ‘It seems quite possible’, Reuben concluded, ‘. . . Hungary’s political goulash would profit from a large sprinkling of Rakosi’s political red paprika’,¹⁵⁷ noting that these favourable articles kept him from being attacked in the Hungarian press.¹⁵⁸

In economic affairs, though, such as reparations ‘and the seizure of much war booty’, RHM concluded that Russia controlled Hungary tightly.¹⁵⁹ He characterised Russia’s economic presence with an analogy. ‘Parenthetically, this writer believes that the Hungarian Government is about as free as a householder would be if a foreign guest had occupied his dwelling coercively and helped himself to everything he wanted, including the grandfather clock’.¹⁶⁰ In addition, ‘The very important Interior Ministry and the vital Directorship of Political Police were given to the Communists . . .’¹⁶¹

He found the economic situation to be deplorable. ‘. . . on the whole, this is incomparably the saddest place I’ve been in’. ‘more than sad – utterly hopeless. the city’s smashed. living conditions must be terrible. fearful food shortage. prices simply knock your eye out . . .’¹⁶² Reuben’s own living conditions were difficult as well. His hotel room was ‘cold as ice’.¹⁶³ ‘It is no exaggeration to say that Hungary’s supreme problem is merely to keep alive’. ‘Popular opinion . . . holds the Communists responsible for the economic disaster’.¹⁶⁴

In Budapest, he found a Hungarian friend he had known before the war. It was distressing to see her. 'Practically the whole family has been wiped out. Almost everything she had was destroyed'. Not surprisingly, 'on one subject she has grown bitter . . . she hates Hungary'. 'I might feel the same way about Boston if all the neighbors took you and most of the family off and killed you all. Jews were hunted here just like wild animals and anti-Semitism runs higher than ever'. 'These here have suffered terribly. They are just remnants; that's all'.¹⁶⁵

He was sorry to leave Budapest, though, recording, 'I rather like the atmosphere', hoping that Hungary could go the route of Austria or Finland, rather than Bulgaria.¹⁶⁶

Romania following the Moscow conference

In December 1945, the Big Three foreign ministers conference in Moscow considered the remaining items to be resolved, including the governments in Bulgaria and Romania, before concluding the post-war peace treaties. Differences with the Soviet Union had begun to make the concept of spheres of influence more attractive to the United States than tripartite administration. Leaving Bulgaria and Romania in Russian control in return for American dominance in Japan was a *de facto* application of that policy.¹⁶⁷

The Ethridge Report helped formulate America's position, though, so Byrnes felt pressured to at least attempt to promote democracy in Romania. When the Russians offered to bring into the government one member each of the National Peasant and Liberal parties, 'Byrnes seized on this device'.¹⁶⁸ Since publication of the Ethridge report, 'would have been . . . a shock to . . . American opinion which was still optimistic regarding . . . cooperation with the Soviet Union', and make this agreement more difficult, he blocked it.¹⁶⁹

The Moscow Accords also included this well-intentioned statement. ' . . . the Rumanian Government . . . should declare that free and unfettered elections will be held as soon as possible on the basis of universal and secret ballot. All democratic and anti-Fascist parties should have the right to take part in these elections and to put forward candidates. The reorganized government should give assurances concerning the grant of freedom of the press, speech, religion and association'.¹⁷⁰

Although the Moscow formula sounded good, it was not much different than Yalta. Reuben reported feeling 'pretty despondent', as it would leave Romania 'in the unhappy position of becoming the security sphere of another nation'.¹⁷¹ 'I try to kid myself into pretending that it was the best possible, but its cold comfort and I'm tired of the cold'.¹⁷²

Back in Bucharest, however, the example of Hungary's election and the 'atmosphere' he had found there enabled him to hope that the Accords might allow free political expression in Romania. He may have believed too that his

return could boost the prospects of Romania's democratic elements. '... in Danubia ... the mere presence of a representative (of) America encourages men and women working for democracy'.¹⁷³

In an early January article, RHM wrote optimistically that 'the Romanian nation may receive an opportunity to choose freely its own Government', with 'an opportunity to hold elections similar to those recently conducted (in Hungary) and in Austria'. He was not unaware of the pitfalls, however, as '... a deceptive application of the formula might cause confirmation of the present autocracy'.¹⁷⁴

A week later, Reuben remained positive. 'Consequences in Romania of the recent ... Moscow agreements are promising'. Representatives genuinely belonging to the National Peasant and the Liberal Parties were appointed to the Government. '... in fair elections ... the political aspects of Romania's situation ... would be on the way to solution'.¹⁷⁵

In early February the United States and Great Britain recognised the Groza government after the Premier declared that there would be a 'free and unfettered election on the basis of universal and secret ballot'. 'In other words', Markham wrote, '... Groza took a step, even though a faltering one, towards fulfilment of this condition'.

Undoubtedly ... the American representatives here ... know ... that the United States may be fooled. The present minority Government is determined to hold its power and might curtail liberties in order to gain that end. Also, Russia ... bitterly opposes Britain and the United States in this part of the world.

Juliu Maniu lodged a complaint with the A.C.C. concerning '... the allegedly defective way in which the Moscow agreements are being applied'. 'Practically all Opposition leaders agree', according to RHM, '... that civil liberties are still greatly curtailed'. Nevertheless, 'Much freedom for oppositional political activity also has been granted. Every observant correspondent knows it beyond doubt'.¹⁷⁶

Later that month, Reuben described how Petru Groza 'invited me to accompany him ... on a visit to the oil-distribution centre ... The Premier introduced me to the Minister of Mines with the remark that he had brought an adversary along'. 'As Premier Groza left, the workers sent him off with ... "We'll vote for Groza".'

'... no observer ... could help but feel warm sympathy with every ... government working to help such people gain a better and fuller life ...'. '... I was inspired to see ... workers declare their allegiance to the Government which they hoped would help them gain a fairer share of Romania's good things, but ... I am not sure of the results'.

Eighteen years earlier, Markham recalled seeing the workers and peasants pledge their support to Juliu Maniu '... until Romania truly became

a loving mother to all its children. I ... have been compelled regretfully to watch the futility of that peasant struggle for two decades’.

‘Premier Groza’s chief backing is a very small Communist group ...’. ‘... into the ranks of the Government have penetrated exceedingly dubious elements. Important places of power are ... held by notorious former pro-Nazis, and the principal Government group tends to use both the Romanian nation and the working class as objects of power politics in the interest of a foreign state’.¹⁷⁷

Romania had had a home-grown Fascist movement and RHM also recorded that the government charged the opposition of harbouring adherents. Minister of Justice Lucretiu Patrascanu said, ‘As to the necessity of outlawing Liberals and National Peasants, I make no prophesy, but must say that recent events revealed the presence of Fascist elements ... working in the old parties ... that cannot be ignored’.¹⁷⁸ Markham reported on the legacy of Fascism in the Romanian press as well. ‘The principal accusation brought by one side against the other is that (the) opponent was a collaborator with the Nazis’. ‘Unfortunately, the charges against journalists on both sides seem true’.¹⁷⁹

The following day, Markham discussed the 22 Bucharest dailies. Four or five were ‘worthy papers ably written by incorruptible men ...’. ‘... the freedom of the press established by the Groza government, in spite of all the deficiencies, certainly serves the cause of Romanian ... democracy’.¹⁸⁰ Soon afterwards, however, Reuben had to note that the Government was not providing newsprint to the Opposition papers. ‘... with one hand the Government suppresses press liberty which it gives with the other ...’.¹⁸¹

RHM covered a well-attended Liberal (Conservative) party meeting led by Party chief, Dinu Bratianu. The Government ‘gave it almost complete freedom’, but it was troubling that as Mr. Bratianu ‘was approaching ... , his splendid Buick was severely sideswiped by a truck driven by a worker’. ‘The Liberals firmly believe it was an attempt to kill their chief, and I, who saw the car, believe it might possibly have been’.¹⁸²

Two articles followed describing the break-up of the Socialist Party. It had to approve running on a ticket with the Communists. ‘Reportedly, many leading Socialists were subjected to terror and bribery; some were fired from their jobs, while others were given good posts, even houses’, and the measure passed. Socialist leader Titel Petrescu, claiming he had support of 80% of the members, ‘... refused to accept the decision ...’. ‘As a result (of) the present rupture ... the Socialist Party is expected to lose much influence’.¹⁸³

On the one-year anniversary of Groza’s government, RHM cited its positive accomplishments – better relations with Russia, among Romania’s ethnic groups, with other Balkan countries, improvements in women’s rights and labour conditions, along with distribution of land to the peasants and religious liberty. On the other hand, Markham continued to inform his readers that it was ‘generally recognized as a Communist regime’, which was not democratic.

There was no parliament and freedom of expression was suppressed amid widespread graft and favouritism. The ‘extensive and growing opposition’ complained that Groza employed coercion and subverted justice.¹⁸⁴

Reuben attended a meeting with Ana Pauker. She also pointed out that ‘since the advent of the present government women had made much progress in the realm of equal rights, equal pay, equal labor conditions . . . Mrs. Pauker is . . . self-reliant, capable . . . and in her relations with journalists, rather jovial. Her attitude was rather gay and superficially amused, as though she considered us harmless nuisances’. ‘Of course under this amusing appearance of sparring with American journalists . . . Mrs. Pauker is one of the most serious women in the world, with a record of long prison terms and great sacrifices for the cause which she serves with . . . devotion . . .’¹⁸⁵

On March 12, Reuben informed Mary, ‘In a few hours I shall leave for a pretty hard weeks trip into Bucovina and back thru Moldavia. Am going with a leading oppositionist politician, Ion Mihalache . . . This is a good chance which I don’t want to turn down . . . The . . . political situation here . . . is getting very very tense’.¹⁸⁶

Living in the midst of deadly conflicts, Reuben himself was now in physical danger. Returning from this ‘long hard trip’, he confided to Mary ‘I had a number of adventures not entirely free from peril . . .’¹⁸⁷

‘. . . we reached . . . Suceava about 10 o’clock in the evening . . .’¹⁸⁸ Mihalache, Co-President, with Maniu, of the National Peasant Party, and ‘Now in his sixties . . . lives in a village, . . . wears peasant clothes, and . . . devotes his energies to helping villagers help themselves; and although he has been a Minister many times . . . , he is still a poor man’.

‘The purpose of the tour’, ‘was reestablishment of the Peasant Party organization’. ‘This was very difficult, because for a decade almost all political parties have been outlawed in Romania, no elections have been held, and no oppositional political activities have been permitted’.

At Suceava, 500 had gathered, but ‘local organisers showed considerable nervousness’, because of the ‘presence in the hall of a number of Communist Youth members’. ‘Being uneasy lest his presence . . . cause trouble, . . . Mihalache decided not to appear at the meeting’. Two hours into it, the ‘Communists . . . whistled and shrieked against . . . Maniu and for the Groza Government, Generalissimo Joseph Stalin, and Russia’. ‘After an hour of bedlam, peasants and supporters filed out . . .’. A gendarme who had sat with the protesters ‘frankly said there would be no freedom for the old parties, meaning for anyone except the Communists and their satellites. He admitted that he and his colleagues would not permit them to vote freely’.

Mihalache’s group then travelled to the town of Radauti. There Markham saw the same ‘Communist shock troops’, who had been at Suceava. Nevertheless, due to the ‘excellent local national Peasant Organization and

a non-Communist district governor', Mihalache held a successful meeting. Driving next to Bacau, the travellers arrived at 7:00 P.M.

Outside his hotel, Markham could see 'groups of Communist youth and plain-clothes policemen'. The Party Chief informed Mihalache that local Communists had broken into headquarters recently and attacked a number of party members. Given this recent event, the Party chief strongly advised Mihalache against going to a restaurant a few yards distant. Markham, however, decided to go out for supper. 'This move proved unwise'. Knocking at Mihalache's door 'to tell him where I was going; he said he was going too'.¹⁸⁹

Ten of them were at the table, with 'a number of stalwart National Peasant Youth' at the doorway. Reuben sat next to an elderly reserve colonel 'who seemed cheerful and confident'. Towards the end of the meal '... a group of Communists from the street tried to invade the restaurant'.¹⁹⁰ 'Window panes crashed, doors went smashing down, bottles flew through the air, ... and confusion mounted. ... Mihalache, closely surrounded by his loyal henchmen moved towards the backdoor and I decided to follow'.¹⁹¹ '... journalistic prudence persuaded me to go along with the man who was the ... object of the attack ... to see what happened to him. Of course, I cannot swear that this journalistic prudence was not accompanied by a rather vivid personal desire not to have my head busted'. ... 'when ... Mihalache and his bodyguards ... reached the back door of the yard, I was not far behind. And I fully shared his discomfort upon discovering that the backdoor was already blocked by Communist ruffians.'

But we had good local strategists well acquainted with the terrain. They led us over a very high fence, up a narrow creaking stairway along an outside corridor, over a high and rather formidable masonry partition between two houses, onto another corridor into a stranger's apartment. As we entered, without asking anybody, the noise increased without, the fight raged below ... and a shot was heard. We quickly extinguished all lights, kept deep silence and awaited events. We had to wait a long time but were greatly relieved – at least I was – that the attackers did not find their way to our hiding place.

Back in Bucharest, Markham learned that 'the ... jovial colonel who partook of our unfinished supper ... was so badly beaten ... that he was then in a hospital. The reader will probably not be surprised when I say the thought occurred to me that I might have been there beside him – if not in a morgue'.

As for Mihalache, 'I realised ... they had wanted to beat him up in order to remove him from the fight'.

This realisation was not the end of this experience with terror.

... after my return ... I learned that hooligans, armed with rifles, revolvers and light machine guns had broken into the home of my host at Suceava and murdered him in his bedroom in the presence of his family. I suppose the blood spattered over the bed on which I had slept ... It is difficult not to believe the murderers were the government-paid, police-directed ruffians whom I had seen at Suceava and Radautz ...

My host's name was Trajan Tsaranu.¹⁹²

These events made a deep impression on him. 'Each day, I see more clearly that something fully as bad as Hitlerism is reaching out to dominate and curse humanity'.¹⁹³

Two weeks later, under continuing stress, he sent Mary an emotional letter.

It has all been . . . a bit dangerous. Today I saw a lot of people get beaten up and last Sunday saw one who had just been shot. As I've said before Communism and Russian imperialism are among the most terrible things in history. I'm going to devote the rest of my life to fighting them. And it's a dangerous job. I'm again the subject of ferocious attacks in the press and when some of the clubs and bottles and bullets will hit me I don't know. How long I'll be here I don't know. In any case my duty now is here . . .¹⁹⁴

The March 19 headline about Romania's commitment to the Moscow Accords stated baldly 'Pledge Broken'. 'A five-day trip . . . has strengthened my impression that . . . the Romanian Government is violating its pledge . . . to guarantee freedom of oppositional political activity'.

Markham also experienced official repercussions from his writing. RHM had requested 'clearance' to return to Bulgaria. He felt he had 'a newspaper mission there'. On March 22, three days after his 'Pledge Broken' story, Reuben learned that he was cleared to return to Sofia. Barnes had flown into Bucharest and would be able to take Reuben back with him the next day.

'As Barnes and I sat with a group of American friends in the hotel lobby last night Barnes said "Markham's the most hated man in Bulgaria".'¹⁹⁵ The next day, 'not very long before I was ready to leave, I was suddenly told that the clearance was either a mistake or cancelled . . .'¹⁹⁶

The Monitor journalist also recorded positive feelings about his Balkan assignment. 'It's been a very special period in my life. Never have I been so noted; so attacked and so sought. Wherever I go in Roumania the people I meet know me. I'm treated like a lone doctor in a land of sick people . . . In Bulgaria, of course, I was still more detested and loved'.

He described one event he attended. 'I went to a little oppositional worker meeting two nights ago . . . and such cheering you never heard. Crowd kept yelling mark-ham, mark-ham'.¹⁹⁷

Reuben came to be seen as a lifeline to the West in Romania. 'I have become a sort of permanent factor. I am looked upon as American press and many groups want me to be present at dangerous meetings. They think if I'm there huligan (sic) communists may not break up meeting or if they do at least I can tell the world if I survive'.¹⁹⁸

He believed that he was under constant police surveillance. Romanian Intelligence thought that he 'served as link between the National Peasant Party and the British and American Missions'.¹⁹⁹ 'I have been writing some pretty plain telegrams lately . . . and at least one . . . was broadcast back. For . . .

those reasons the police will probably watch me closer than ever. . . . people who come to see me are often pretty scared but no one's been hurt yet . . . ' .²⁰⁰ Just a month later, though, he wrote, 'I wouldn't advise Roumanians to associate with me, because the government detests me and the government is ruthless'.²⁰¹

Most of the 'hot news' was about 'political atrocities', and Markham felt 'the Monitors getting tired of them'.²⁰² A 'political atrocity' he did report on described Russian soldiers discharging 'salvo after salvo' over the heads of an April political meeting in Rosioru de Vede. Fifteen hundred people had gathered for a National Peasant Party rally. A group of Communists with at least four soldiers entered the theatre and began heckling the speaker. 'Passions mounted', and 'according to some eyewitnesses', one of the Communists took out a revolver and shot towards the stage. Then the soldiers began firing 'over the heads of the audience' continuing 'for some time'. A second group of soldiers also opened fire. 'It naturally followed that the audience fled at headlong speed'.²⁰³ Voice of America broadcast this article back into Romania.

Reuben travelled twice to Transylvania to investigate political conditions there. 'Partisan tension has reached a point . . . where public expression of political opinions has become difficult and dangerousThe possibility of holding fair elections would appear to be diminishing'.

The two Cabinet Ministers who had entered the administration after the Moscow Accords were M. Roniceanu, the Liberal, and Emil Hatieganu, National Peasant. On his way to a political meeting featuring the two ministers, RHM had to cross a river on a 'crude ferry'. Before arriving at the same crossing, Hatieganu had been stopped at a roadblock, where the police phoned 'the Communist Party about the Minister's approach'.

Upon reaching the stream, he found a truck already on the ferry and was compelled to wait as it was slowly pulled to the opposite bank. The arriving truckster drove the front wheels of the vehicle on the quay where it stalled, . . . halfway on and halfway off the ferrytraffic was stopped and . . . Hatieganu impatiently waited more than an hour as the . . . driver tinkered with the engine. Finally, the Minister's chauffeur crossed the stream in a small boat to help repair the stalled motor, which was at last started.

The truck, instead of proceeding, backed onto the ferry and returned to the side of the river where Hatieganu was waiting. There, 20 young people, 'who called themselves Communists', climbed onto the back of the truck, after which the Minister's car was able to drive on. Halfway across, though 'the truck moved back into . . . Hatieganu's car, damaging the fender and breaking a light before stopping'.

Reaching the other side, the truck 'squared off across the narrow road . . . completely blocking it'. The youth dismounted, surrounded Hatieganu's car,

yelled insults at the Minister, and punctured two tires. They did not disperse until 4:00 p.m. and the tyres were not repaired until 5:00. Learning that another group of shock troops was ahead, Hatieganu decided to turn around and return to Cluj, thereby missing the political rally. A similar experience prevented Roniceanu from attending as well. ‘Election freedom is vitiated’, Reuben closed, and ‘brutal clashes’ with the opposition are already occurring, ‘some resulting in murder’.²⁰⁴

Markham made it to the rally, where there were ‘many thousands of peasants’.²⁰⁵

As I entered the arena and took my place at the edge of the crowd one of the villagers said ‘the American correspondent!’ The word spread like a prairie fire that an American was present and the meeting was interrupted by the multitude’s shouting ‘Traiasca America!’ (Long Live America.) After that had continued for quite a while, the peasants began to say in unison, ‘We want to see the American! We want to see the American!’ My efforts to remain inconspicuous had failed and since I was causing more disturbance by remaining in the crowd than by going to the rostrum I made my way through the multitude . . . to the . . . press table amid cheers . . . Among my newspaper colleagues on the platform were two Russian correspondents.²⁰⁶

Reuben also reported on an official protest by Maniu and Bratianu, which stated that ‘Promises made . . . by the Romanian Government after the Moscow accord have been repeatedly rendered null and void in the Government’s acts’. Prevented from printing it in their newspapers, they submitted it to the American, British, and Russian missions. Their complaints included

- Censorship
- Opposition political activity prevented ‘usually by violent means’
- The Ministry of Information and state radio ‘are instruments of propaganda against the opposition’.
- ‘the restrictive laws . . . of Romania’s . . . dictatorial governments are preserved’.
- capital punishment sentence ‘for efforts to change the regime’.

A memorandum by Hatieganu and Roniceanu complained that ‘matters of state are not discussed by the ministerial council and that . . . decisions . . . are taken by individual ministers without participation of the Cabinet as a whole’. RHM pointed out that their two parties represent the same ‘proportion of the Romanian nation as Republicans and Democrats in America . . .’.²⁰⁷

The regime continued its open hostility towards him. Groza made a speech and ‘invited the anglo-american press . . . —but not me . . . I wonder how this will all end with the opposition begging me to go to all their meetings and the government trying to keep me away from its’.²⁰⁸

On May 15, RHM published his most critical article on Romania's government.

... a very small minority of hard men rule Romania ...

They want to destroy the only genuine peasant party ...

this rule is due to force, meaning guns as well as absolute control over food and jobs.

... this force is maintained largely by a foreign power.

... the common people here are not freed but enthralled. They ... are largely silenced. They do not receive objective truth but propaganda.²⁰⁹

This damning description, combined with his first-hand accounts of Communist suppression of political activity, the support his presence provided to the Opposition and the standing he had developed in the country had made him a serious problem for the Soviets.

Expulsion

The Red Army newspaper, *Graul Nou*, took action, accusing Markham of declaring at an opposition meeting 'that war between the United States and Russia was inevitable', that he had been expelled from Bulgaria 'for embittering United States-Bulgarian relations', and that he should be prevented from 'traveling through Romania'. In response, 'Mr. Markham said that all the allegations of the Russian Army organ were "untrue", but other Romanian papers took up the attack'.

On May 21, '... Markham attempted to file a cable ... It was returned with the note that the cable office had received orders ... that his cables must pass through Soviet censorship', even though this requirement had been lifted on 15 October 1945. 'This was the first case of reimposition'. 'Freedom from censorship has been withdrawn from Reuben Markham'.²¹⁰

The Russians then ordered Markham expelled from all of Eastern Europe under their command for his anti-Soviet attitude. American Legation Head, Burton Berry, believed the Russian general, 'had made up his mind that Markham's presence was an obstacle to Soviet aims in Romania, and therefore must be removed at all costs'.²¹¹

The Russian statement claimed that 'Markham has systematically abused his rights and privileges as a journalist, repeatedly taking an active part in numerous meetings of opposition groups where he has made speeches directed against the Soviet Union and the Rumanian government'.

Secondly it accused him of 'misleading information'. '... on 17 April 1946 ... the radio station "Voice of America" broadcast ... a slanderous telegram by Markham containing reference to the dispersal, which supposedly took place in the city of Roshiori De Vede, of a meeting of

Rumanian citizens by “Russian Soldiers” who allegedly also shot up portraits of King Michael. These reports were a sheer invention on the part of Markham’.²¹²

In reply to the Russian accusations, Markham said:

I never made any speech of any kind at any political meeting anywhere in Romania My report on the action of Russian soldiers was made after the most careful investigation on the spot and was based . . . on reports by local government authorities and conformed to reports from other American sources. When asked if the United States will intervene militarily in Eastern Europe, I always have answered by emphatically pointing out that the United States was already almost fully demobilized and that military action plainly was out of the question. I have always stressed that the United States mood is against, not for, military action and is pro-Russian. I have told Romanian acquaintances, when asked, that the attitude of the United States government and people appeared to be stiffening, that the United States would without doubt defend its place in the world if threatened, but that the United States . . . wants to promote world peace through the fullest cooperation with the U.S.S.R.²¹³

Berry commented on the Russian statement. ‘I do not believe Markham’s presence as observer at recognized meetings of all political elements in Government, some of which are called “opposition groups” by note, can be considered as interfering in Romanian internal affairs’. Berry went on to write,

Barlad meeting . . . is considered reference to Barlad National Peasant Congress of April 7 when many were injured Military Mission Representative on spot confirm Markham did not attend this meeting as he was unable to supply him with transport. Rosiorii de Vede incident was accurately reported by Markham as given previously, and confirmed by American ACC officer and trusted Romanian employee who intensively questioned local Government officials and all political elements in town.²¹⁴

He cabled Washington that Markham ‘has gotten around the country as no other reporter and has written courageously of what he saw. Of course the Russians and Rumanian Government resent this. His expulsion is part of program of preparation for elections which the government desires to hold while Red Army is still in Rumania and without the assistance of any . . . observers from the US or Great Britain’.

He wrote Mary about his expulsion. ‘I’ve been fired by the RussiansIt’s been a strain but my place was here and my experiences here will help me for the days of struggle aheadYou can hardly imagine what my presence meant to these people . . . and earlier to the BulgariansThey simply look upon me as a kind of hero standing shoulder to shoulder with them in a struggle for elemental decency’.²¹⁵

On the afternoon of his expulsion, (Markham) went to a reception . . . for (General Courtlandt Schuyler) . . . head of the American military mission. News . . . had just been made known, so the party turned into a spontaneous reception in his honour. A former

prime minister, former cabinet members, writers, professors pressed around him to express their regrets and devotion. When he left, the former prime minister, in Balkan fashion, publicly kissed him goodbye. That evening, another former prime minister, the most beloved leader of modern Rumania, sent the newspaperman a grateful farewell message.²¹⁶

Journalist, Theodore Andrica, wrote, 'I happened to be in Bucharest . . . when he was asked to leave and his going from that scene was considered by all Romanians as a sort of national tragedy'.²¹⁷

The State Department 'instructed its representatives in Bucharest and Moscow to "do everything they can" to get the expulsion decree reversed'.²¹⁸ Byrnes wired U.S. Ambassador to Russia, Walter Bedell Smith on May 24.

Please make strong representations urgently requesting Soviet Govt immediately to rescind order . . . expelling Reuben Markham Order is clear violation Potsdam Communique which envisaged enjoyment by Allied press of full freedom to report developments in Rumania. This Govt cannot accept the position that the activities of a correspondent in an effort to obtain accurate information from all sources in the normal pursuit of his calling constitutes 'meddling in Rumanian party politics'. . . .

Ambassador Smith 'reported that a strong protest relative to Markham's expulsion had been made in a letter . . . to . . . Molotov . . .'.²¹⁹

The US government protests had an effect, and Reuben was allowed to remain temporarily in Romania 'pending a decision on a high level', but could do no newspaper work.²²⁰ 'The reversal of the Russian decision to expell (sic) me came as a sensation to Roumania'. 'The government intervened . . . in a marvelous way . . .'.²²¹ 'Finally, on June 22, though, the Russians announced their decision 'refusing to rescind expulsion order against Markham . . .'.²²²

At a press conference, Dean Acheson stated that 'the American government considered suppression of news freedom in Romania a violation of the Potsdam agreement made a year ago by Premier Stalin, President Truman, and Prime Minister Attlee'.²²³

Berry summed up the effect. ' . . . Soviet and Romanian governments have achieved their objective(;) (the) principle, and application of uncensored American news reports from Russian controlled areas has received great setback and entire affair has been another heavy blow against American prestige in Romania by reducing our effectiveness in bringing about free and unfettered elections'.

The State Department followed up Reuben's expulsion in a June 26 meeting with the Monitor. If pressed strongly, 'the State Department might be willing to consider another note to the Russians regarding Mr. Markham'. 'With Markham, the belief is that he was simply persona non grata due to his popularity with opposition groupsAll officials were laudatory . . . , remarking that his news copy had been of vast assistance . . . in providing information on events within Romania . . .'.²²⁴

Syndicated columnist Dorothy Thompson described the significance of Reuben's expulsion.

The case of Mr. Markham is especially interesting, and his expulsion particularly damaging to Russian prestige ... It is the basic policy of the Christian Science Monitor ... always to emphasise the favourable and constructive elements in any situation. ... particularly in the reports of Mr. Markham, which I have read carefully as they came out, this has been obvious and notable. Mr. Markham has done the fairest and most objective reporting from any Russian-occupied area ... If, therefore, Mr. Markham and the ... Monitor cannot operate in Russian and Russian-occupied territory, the burden is on the Russians to prove that any honest newspaper or reporter can.²²⁵

On July 2, the *Washington Post* published an editorial on Markham's reporting, which explained its importance in America's view of the Soviet Union.

The expulsion of Reuben H. Markham from Romania, and his account of the Russian-inspired tyranny in the Balkans shows that all the efforts to assure some degree of freedom in the Balkans have gone aglimmering ... Terrorism, judging from the cases given by Mr. Markham, is practiced on non-Communist parties with the view of wiping out opposition ... That the (Moscow) agreement has made no difference to conditions is the testimony of Mr. Markham ...

Mr. Markham is ... an unimpeachable witness. He ... has had a unique experience in the Balkans, and no foreigner is more respected, even loved, in Bulgaria. That is one reason why, no doubt, the Russians wished to get rid of him ... The incident will add to the disquiet that liberals everywhere are feeling over the excesses perpetrated in Russian-supervised territory'.²²⁶

Also addressing Markham's reporting, Ethridge and Black concluded that the entry of the American reporters had had 'significant results for western public opinion'.²²⁷ Markham's expulsion was another indication of the difficulty of implementing the Yalta formula of 'friendly governments' 'broadly representative of democratic elements'.

In the middle of July, RHM penned a commentary, in which he transitioned from describing conditions in Southeastern Europe to calling for the US to do something about them.

In Bulgaria and Romania, 'It was ... as though I passed a jail and the prisoners shouted through the window to ask if I knew anyone who had a key that could open doors'. 'Humanity has placed its baby on our doorstep and we are inextricably involved. We may leave it to starve, ... or we may help take care of it. But never can we pretend that it isn't there ... That baby's future is now our affair'. America's decision would decide whether '... we ... all move toward freedom together or toward slavery together'. 'The world can't endure half slave and half free, any more than Lincoln's America. We Americans can't be free alone, nor Eastern Europe enslaved alone'.²²⁸

Markham was evoking Lincoln's prediction that 'a *crisis* shall be 'reached and passed'. The country 'will become *all* one thing or *all* the other'.

RHM was arguing for American action from both the moralist and realist points of view. There was a needy world to be taken care of – the moralist argument. But there was also a realist one. Molotov said of the Americans, 'They woke up only when half of Europe had passed from them'.²²⁹ Europe too, Markham stated, would become all one thing or all the other. If it became all communist, American liberties would be directly threatened. To prevent that, the US must be prepared to act when the 'crisis' was reached.

Privately, too, he was recommending a confrontation. 'When I see what terrible beings Russia-inspired Communists are, I personally urge a showdown with Stalin'.²³⁰

Meeting with Truman

On July 20, Markham wrote President Truman describing conditions in Eastern Europe.²³¹ Reuben approved his taking a firmer stand against the Russians. 'I like Truman. He makes some mistakes but does lots of good things'.²³²

The letter conveyed his main message. '... Russia has established ... dictatorial, despotic regimes in practically the whole of Eastern Europe ...'. RHM then used emotional language to try to engage him by declaring that 'You as the President of the United States are the principal hero of all Eastern Europe', and ended with a frank final sentence, also designed to make it personal, 'I was kicked out of the Balkans by a Russian General'.

The President returned a friendly note, saying he would like to see him.²³³ They met at the White House on August 7. At this crucial time in American-Soviet relations, Truman heard up-to-the-minute information about Russian actions in the Balkans. Reuben referred to the encounter as having had a 'conference at the White House with President Truman'.²³⁴

President Truman invited me to sit beside his desk and we talked for 20 minutes or more ... He invited me to tell him what I had seen, which I was glad to do. That is on my heart. I should be ashamed if I were not moved by the cruel military occupation, subjugation, subversion of justice and oppression which I have seen in Eastern Europe. The President did me the honour of asking what I thought America should do and I told him, as a citizen to his Chief Executive.²³⁵

Given his public and private views, it seems clear what Markham advised the President.

A week later, Truman held a vital conclave with Acheson, Navy Secretary James Forrestal, General Eisenhower, and the Chiefs of Staff to discuss Russia's August 7th demand to share the defence of the Straits with Turkey.

In March, RHM had addressed Russia's threat to the Bosphorus, describing its large armies in the Balkans, troop movements towards the south, and the '... unanimity of Communistic press ... campaigns against Turkey and Greece ...'. It is not surprising that Balkan peoples 'ask if Russia is again on the march toward Istanbul'.²³⁶

In front of the generals, 'Truman ... pulled out a large map of the region ...', and 'launched into a lecture about the strategic importance of the eastern Mediterranean ...'.²³⁷ Truman later wrote that 'To allow Russia to set up bases in the Dardanelles ... would ... result in Greece and the whole Near and Middle East falling under Soviet control'.²³⁸

'The only thing that will deter the Russians', Acheson counselled, 'will be the conviction that the U.S. is prepared ... to meet aggression with force of arms'. 'We might as well find out', Truman replied, 'whether the Russians were bent on world conquest', saying he was prepared to go 'to the end'. 'Firmness worked', as the Russians shelved the issue.²³⁹

It is not difficult to imagine the President and Markham poring over the same map a week earlier. His advice coincided with one of the turning points in the development of American policy towards the Soviet Union at the onset of the Cold War.

Truman biographer, David McCullough, credits policies such as the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan to 'a handful of men', such as Truman, Marshall, Acheson, Kennan, and Harriman, 'almost entirely on their own'.²⁴⁰ Without detracting from their achievements, one person who helped prepare the way for them was Reuben Markham.

Notes

1. '1945, The Conference of Berlin, Volume I, Document 257', Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, United States Department of State, (FRUS) Office of the Historian, Briefing Book Paper, 'Admission of American Press Correspondents into Eastern Europe', Office of the Historian, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945Berlin01/d257>, accessed May 7, 2023
2. FRUS, '1945, Europe, Vol. IV, Document 281'
3. Ibid., Document 325'
4. FRUS, '1945, Europe, Vol. I, Document 288'
5. FRUS, 1945, 'Europe, Vol. IV, Document, 325'
6. Reuben Markham, "R.H. Markham's Work for the Christian Science Monitor," Mary Baker Eddy Library, Erwin D. Canham Collection, Box 20226, Folder 127734
7. Floyd Black, "Markham's Years in Bulgaria as Missionary and Teacher," *American Bulgarian Review* 12, no. 1 (1962): 23
8. Elmer Davis, Letter to the Editor, "Mr. Markham's War Service," *Christian Science Monitor* January 5, 1950, 20
9. Alexander Velichkov, "Reuben Henry Markham and Bulgaria," *Bulgarian Historical Review*, no. 1–2 (2001): 129–62
10. Reuben Markham, self-written bio for *The Wave of the Past*, February 4, 1941, 4

11. Reuben Markham, "If the Light be Darkness," *New Leader*, November 16, 1946
12. Boyan Choukanoff, "Markham of Bulgaria," *Bulgarian Review* XXVI–XXVII, Dec. 1986–Jan. 1987 64–65, 67.
13. Asen. Al. Stamboliyski, "The Noble Defender of Bulgaria," *People*, April 7, 1946, In Bulgarian, translated by Litcho Datzov; *People* was the newspaper of the Workers' Social Democratic Party in Bulgaria; the events of September refer to the 1923 Communist uprising; of April to the aftermath of the 1925 bombing of the Sveta Nedelya Church by the Communists.
14. Reuben Markham, *Meet Bulgaria*, (Sofia: published by the author, 1931) 305–6
15. Markham, "Light," *New Leader*, November 16, 1946
16. Velichkov, "Markham," *Bulgarian Historical Review*
17. Reuben Markham, "Lincoln's Union Issue Returns in World Form," *Christian Science Monitor*, August 28, 1939
18. Royalty Records, 1927–1965, University of North Carolina Press, Special Collections, Box 3:3; The University of North Carolina Library; It sold 140,000 copies.
19. Reuben Markham, *The Wave of the Past* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1941) 54.
20. Markham, *Wave*, 33, 35
21. Reuben Markham, self-written bio for *The Wave of the Past*, February 4, 1941,
22. Reuben Markham, "The Night Swallowed Them Up," *New Leader*, July 21, 1945.
23. Reuben Markham, "Our Political Immorality," *Christian Century*, January 31, 1945.
24. Bradley F. Smith, *The Shadow Warriors* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1983) 282 ; and Walter Roberts, *Tito, Mihailovic, and the Allies, 1941–1945* (New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1973), 257.
25. Elmer Davis, "Mr. Markham's War Service," Letters to *Christian Science Monitor*, January 5, 1950
26. Letter, Reuben Markham to Lon Markham, February 13, 1945.
27. Ibid., March 26, 1945
28. Ibid., March 22, 1946
29. FRUS, 1945, Europe, Volume IV, Document 297
30. Ibid., Document 258
31. Letter, Mary Markham to Sister Mary (Ostrander), August 30, 1945
32. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, August 30, 1945
33. Letter, Mary Markham to Markham family, August 29, 1945.
34. Reuben Markham, *Rumania Under the Soviet Yoke*, (Boston: Meador, 1949) 255
35. Geoffrey Roberts, "Ideology, Calculation and Improvisation: Spheres of Influence and Soviet Foreign Policy 1939–1945," *Review of International Studies* 25, (1999) 659.
36. Anne Applebaum, *Iron Curtain*, (New York: Doubleday, 2012) xxvii
37. Markham, 'Rumania', 136
38. Eduard Mark, "Revolution by Degrees, Stalin's National-Front Strategy for Europe, 1941–1947," *Wilson Center, Cold War International History Project*, February, 2001, 11
39. Vladimir O. Pechatnov, "The Big Three After World War II: New Documents on Soviet Thinking about Post War Relations with the United States and Great Britain," *Wilson Center, Cold War International History Project*, May, 1995, 23
40. Roberts, "Spheres of Influence," 670
41. Pechatnov, "New Documents," 12
42. Vladimir O. Pechatnov, "New Documents," 4; By 'real' democracies, he meant 'people's' democracies.
43. Mark, "Revolution by Degrees," 44, 45

44. Robert Kaplan, "The Antonescu Paradox," *Foreign Policy*, February 5, 2016, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/02/05/the-antonescu-paradox-romania-world-war-ii-hitler/>, (accessed October 8, 2023).
45. Markham, *Rumania*, 148; George Kennan agreed that 'It is . . . no exaggeration to say that in every border country concerned . . . , Russia is generally more feared than Germany'. John Gaddis, George F. Kennan (The Penguin Press: New York, 2011) 142.
46. Markham, *Rumania*, 175
47. *Ibid.*, 165, 166
48. Wikipedia, 'Allied Commission', https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allied_Commission, (accessed October 14, 2023)
49. Markham, *Rumania*, 260
50. *Ibid.*, 229
51. Mark, "Revolution by Degrees," 6; Ivo Banac, *The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 1933–1949* (New Haven: Yale University Press) 351
52. Mark, "Revolution by Degrees," 28
53. Reuben Markham, "Soviet Hand Backs Groza in Romania," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 6, 1945
54. Mark, 'Revolution by Degrees', 26
55. *Ibid.*, 31
56. *Ibid.*, 32, see Fn. 65
57. "Fatherland Front (Bulgaria), *Wikipedia*, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fatherland_Front_\(Bulgaria\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fatherland_Front_(Bulgaria)), (accessed October 4, 2023)
58. Mark Ethridge and C.E. Black, "Negotiating on the Balkans, 1945–1947," in *Negotiating with the Russians*, edited by Raymond Dennett and Joseph E. Johnson, (World Peace Foundation, 1951) 188
59. Cyril Black, "The Start of the Cold War," *Review of Politics*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (April 1979) 175
60. 1945, Europe, Volume IV, Documents 167, 271
61. U.S. Department of State, Archive, "The Yalta Conference, 1945," <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/wwii/93273.htm#:~:text=The%20Yalta%20Conference%20took%20place%20in%20a%20Russian,progress%20of%20the%20war%20and%20the%20postwar%20world.> (accessed September 23, 2023)
62. Ethridge and Black, "Negotiating," *Negotiating*, 205
63. Reuben Markham, "America's Power and Responsibility," *Christian Science Monitor*, November 3, 1944
64. Reuben Markham, "Brotherhood Through Law," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 17, 1945
65. Black, "Cold War," *Politics*, 183
66. David Stone, "The 1945 Ethridge Mission to Bulgaria and Romania and the Origins of the Cold War in the Balkans," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 17:1, (2006): 93–112
67. FRUS, 1945, Europe, IV, 307
68. Black, "Cold War," *Politics*, 185
69. Letter, Mary Markham to Markham Family, August 29, 1945
70. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, September 1, 1945
71. *Ibid.*, June 24, 1946
72. B. Zypkov, "Welcome Mr. Markham," *Zornitsa*, September 15, 1945, Bulgarian
73. FRUS, 1945, Europe, Vol. IV, Document 325
74. David McCullough, *Truman* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992) 561
75. Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs*, Vol. 1 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co.) 551
76. Mark, *Revolution by Degrees*, 7

77. Ethridge and Black, "Negotiating," 204–5
78. Evan Thomas, *The Very Best Men*, (Simon and Schuster: New York, 1995) 23; see also John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997) 32, 25
79. Hal Lehrman, "Markham Honored as Educator, Journalist and Public Figure," *American Bulgarian Review* 12, No. 1 (1962): 22; Editorial, "Balkan Night," *Washington Post*, July 2, 1946
80. Reuben Markham, "Peasants Call for Overhaul in Sofia Rule," *Christian Science Monitor*, September 10, 1945
81. Reuben Markham, "Goal of Bulgarian Liberty Found in Visit to Sofia," *Christian Science Monitor*, September 20, 1945; The 'balanced man' RHM was referring to was probably Nikola Petkov.
82. Reuben Markham, "Democracy Peers Through Balkan Rifts," *Christian Science Monitor*, September 28, 1945
83. William Henry Chamberlin, "Reuben Markham: Foe of Tyrants," *New Leader*, January 3, 1955
84. Constantine Visoianu, "Markham Early Saw East Europe as the New Battleground in the Struggle Between Freedom and Tyranny," *American Bulgarian Review* XII, no. 2 (1962): 24
85. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, September 23, 1945
86. Telegram, Reuben Markham to *Christian Science Monitor*, October 11, 1945
87. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, December 16, 1945
88. Letter, Reuben Markham to Lon Markham, December 21, 1945
89. Reuben Markham, "Concentration Camp Waits Enemies of Bulgar Regime," *Christian Science Monitor*, October 2, 1945
90. Reuben Markham, "Mrs. Dragoicheva Defends Bulgarian Regime," *Christian Science Monitor*, November 9, 1945
91. Reuben Markham, "Communists Hold Key in Bulgarian 'Free Voting'," *Christian Science Monitor*, October 6, 1945
92. Reuben Markham, "Communists Hold Key," October 6, 1945
93. William Henry Chamberlin, "A Story of Journalistic Courage," *New Leader*, November 17, 1945
94. Reuben Markham, "Bulgaria Free? – Peasants and Communists Speak for Themselves," *Christian Science Monitor*, October 12, 1945
95. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, October 30, 1945
96. Ibid., October 31, 1945
97. Reuben Markham, "R. H. Markham's Work for the Christian Science Monitor," January 26, 1949, unpublished
98. AP, "Yankee Correspondent Has Bulgars Aroused," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, October 18, 1945
99. *Berkshire County Eagle*, October 17, 1945, 3
100. Markham, 'Dragoicheva', November 9, 1945
101. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, October 15, 1945
102. Chamberlin, "Courage"
103. Reuben Markham, "Sofia: Voting Boycott?" *Christian Science Monitor*, October 22, 1945
104. Ethridge and Black, "Negotiating," 185
105. Vladimir O. Pechatnov, "Foreign Policy Correspondence Between Stalin and Molotov and Other Politburo Members, September 1945-December 1946," Translated by Vladislav Zubok, *Wilson Center, Cold War International History Project*, September 1999, 8, 13, 2
106. Black, "Cold War," 186, 197; Markham, *Rumania*, 262

107. Letter, Mary Markham to Helen Mitchell and Jordan Markham, October 18, 1945
108. Black, 'Cold War', *Politics*, 172
109. *Ibid.*, 173
110. *Ibid.*, 181
111. FRUS, 1945, Europe, Volume IV, 221
112. *Ibid.*, 354
113. Letter, Mary Markham to Sister Mary Ostrander, July 29, 1945
114. Condolence letter, Floyd Black to Mary Markham
115. "Oral History with Mark Ethridge," Harry Truman Library, June 4, 1974, <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/oral-histories/ethridge>, (accessed May 9, 2023); Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, October 30, 1945
116. Letter, Mark Ethridge to Porter Cowles, August 18, 1947, University of North Carolina Press, Special Collections, Box 4:35, University of North Carolina Library.
117. Markham, *Rumania*, 262; Stone, "Ethridge Mission," summary
118. Ethridge, Oral Interview, Truman Library; Stone, "Ethridge Mission".
119. Reuben Markham, "Romania Awaits Arrival of Truman Personal Envoy," *Christian Science Monitor*, November 10, 1945; Stone, "Ethridge Mission," 95; and Black, "Cold War," 186
120. Markham, "Personal Envoy"
121. Markham, *Rumania*, 262–3
122. Markham, "Personal Envoy"
123. Ethridge and Black, "Negotiating," 198
124. Stone, "Ethridge," 99
125. Black, "Cold War," 186–8
126. Stone, "Ethridge," 99–100; FRUS, 1945, Europe, IV, 358
127. Markham, *Rumania*, 263–4; Ethridge met with Andrei Vishinsky, Vice Commissar of Foreign Affairs. Black, 'Cold War', 189
128. Markham, "Balkan Survey," *Christian Science Monitor*, 1945
129. Stone, "Ethridge," 107; Ethridge and Black, "Negotiating," 201
130. Reuben Markham, 'Rumania', 262–3
131. Stone, 'Ethridge', 93, 107
132. Truman, 'Memoirs', Volume One, 551
133. Black, 'Cold War', 193, 192
134. Reuben Markham, "New Parliament of Bulgaria Set to Legalize Mass Purge," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 18, 1945
135. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, October 31, 1945
136. Reuben Markham, "Outlook for Democratic Rule in Romania Grows Brighter," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 1, 1946; Tudor Teodoresch-Braniste, "In No Case, Check Without Cover," *Jurnalul*, February 28, 1946, Google translate, September 23, 2022
137. Mark, "Revolution by Degrees," 29
138. Robert Levy, *Ana Pauker, The Rise and Fall of a Jewish Communist* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001) 75
139. Mark, "Revolution by Degrees," 29
140. Reuben Markham, "Romania and Bulgaria: Major Contrasts Bared," *Christian Science Monitor*, November 5, 1945
141. Markham, *Romania*, 257–9
142. Reuben Markham, "Big Three Open Trails to Co-operation," *Christian Science Monitor*, November 12, 1945; Stone, "Ethridge," 103

143. Reuben Markham, "Maniu's Activities Attacked in Romanian Court Inquiry," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 22, 1945
144. Reuben Markham, "Maniu Urges Coalition Regime in Romania," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 1, 1945
145. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, December 7, 1945
146. Ibid., December 16, 1945
147. Chamberlin, "Courage"
148. Reuben Markham, "Romanian Liberalism Saps Communist Front," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 20, 1945
149. Wikipedia, "1945 Hungarian Parliamentary Election," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1945_Hungarian_parliamentary_election (accessed January 30, 2023)
150. Reuben Markham, "Elections in Hungary Seen Pointing Way for Romania," *Christian Science Monitor*, November 8, 1945
151. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, January 12, 1946
152. Reuben Markham, "Hungary's New Schoolbooks Teach Peace and Democracy," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 27, 1946
153. Reuben Markham, "Division of Land in Hungary Transforms Social Structure," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 7, 1946
154. Reuben Markham, 'Resurgence of Fascism' Jolts Hungary', *Christian Science Monitor*, January 16, 1946
155. Markham, "Division of Land"
156. Reuben Markham, "Budapest and Press Spotlight Democratic Gains," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 9, 1946
157. Reuben Markham, "Budapest Communist Leader Spurs Rehabilitation Unity," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 22, 1946
158. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, January 12, 1946
159. Reuben Markham, "Budapest Liberal Weekly Suspended for Fortnight," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 24, 1946
160. Reuben Markham, "Tildy Seeks to Lead Hungary Out of Chaos," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 8, 1946
161. Reuben Markham, "Budapest Liberal Weekly"
162. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, December 26, 1945.
163. Ibid., January 20, 1946.
164. Reuben Markham, "Chaos Worsens for Shivering Hungarians," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 23, 1946
165. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, January 20, 1946
166. Ibid.
167. Black, "Cold War," 191; "America wanted to confirm its position in Japan and in return gave the U.S.S.R. almost a free hand in the Balkans." Markham, *Romania*, 264.
168. Black, "Cold War," 191
169. Ethridge and Black, "Negotiating," 201; Ibid.
170. FRUS, 1945, General: Political and Economic Matters, Volume II, Document 268.
171. Reuben Markham, "Romanian Town Prefers Its Own Way," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 29, 1946
172. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, January 1, 1946
173. Reuben Markham, "Sofia Regime Hit By Factional Rift," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 25, 1946
174. Reuben Markham, "Moscow Accord on Romania Termed Step for Democracy," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 11, 1946

175. Reuben Markham, "Political Groups Act Toward Greater Harmony," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 17, 1946
176. Reuben Markham, "Mixed Romanian Views Greet Anglo-U.S. Recognition News," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 6, 1946
177. Reuben Markham, "Romania Meeting Symbolizes Struggle of Balkan Workers," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 20, 1946
178. Reuben Markham, "Communist Aims in Romania Outlined," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 12, 1945
179. Reuben Markham, , "Romania: Opposition Press 'Speaks,'" *Christian Science Monitor*, February 21, 1946
180. Reuben Markham, "Opposition Press"
181. Reuben Markham, "Opposition Dailies Throttled in Romania and Bulgaria," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 9, 1946
182. Reuben Markham, "Romanian Liberals Shade Goal in Sharp Blast on Communists," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 7, 1946
183. Reuben Markham, "Socialist Rift Seen in Romanian Election," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 1, 1946; "Romanian Socialist Party Split on Communist Ties," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 13, 1946
184. Reuben Markham, "Hurdles Mount Against Groza Despite Fanfare," *Christian Science Monitor* March 14, 1946
185. Reuben Markham, "Romanian Women Urge Equality," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 9, 1946
186. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, March 12, 1946.
187. Ibid., March 18, 1946.
188. Reuben Markham, "Romanian Acts Indicated Pledge Broken; Yugoslavia: Can Slogans Hide Issues?" *Christian Science Monitor*, March 19, 1946
189. Markham, *Rumania*, 293
190. Markham, "Pledge Broken"
191. Markham, *Rumania*, 294
192. Markham, "Rumania" 297; another publication reported Tsaranu's murder as taking place in June, Reuben Markham, "Bullies in the Balkans", *Collier's Magazine*, September 7, 1946.
193. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, March 18, 1946
194. Ibid., March 31, 1946
195. Ibid., March 22, 1946; hated by the Communists
196. Ibid., March 31, 1946
197. Ibid, April 6, 1946
198. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, May 13, 1946
199. Mihaela Sitariu, "British-Romanian Relations During the Cold War," (doctoral dissertation, The University of Western Ontario) 48, fn 57
200. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, April 19, 1946
201. Ibid., May 31, 1946
202. Ibid., May 2, 1946
203. Reuben Markham, "Romanians Charge Coercion by Soviet," *Christian Science Monitor*, April 15, 1946
204. Reuben Markham, "Tension Mounts in Romania, Controls Result in Violence," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 2, 1946
205. Reuben Markham, "Good Order Rules Transylvania Politics," *Christian Science Monitor* May 11, (1946)
206. Markham, "*Rumania*", 555-6

207. Reuben Markham, "Opposition Charges Romania With Suppressing Liberties," *Christian Science Monitor*, April 27, 1946
208. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, May 13, 1946
209. Reuben Markham, "Menacing Forces Held Active as Romanians Taste 'Freedom'," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 15, 1946
210. Associated Press, "Soviet Censors Monitor Writer," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 22, 1946
211. Burton Berry, *Romanian Diaries 1944-1947*, (Iasi: Center for Romanian Studies, 2000) 411
212. Russian Statement provided by State Department to the Christian Science Monitor.
213. "Reds Oust U.S. Newsmen," *Kansas City Star*, 3, May 24, 1946
214. Berry, *Diaries*, 441-2
215. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, May 23, 1946
216. Erwin Canham, *Commitment to Freedom*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Press, 1958) 348; "the most beloved leader" must refer to Juliu Maniu.
217. Theodore Andrica, "Reuben Markham", Letters, *Christian Science Monitor*, January 12, 1950
218. *Bangor Daily News*, 10, May 28, 1946
219. FRUS, 1946, Vol. VI, Rumania, 406
220. Associated Press, "U.S. Appeal Aids Markham in His Soviet Ban," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 27, 1946
221. Letter, "Reuben Markham to Mary Markham," May 27, 1946
222. Berry, *Diaries*, 441; Telegram, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, June 23, 1946
223. Bertram D. Hulen, "Russian Censorship is Troubling U.S., Expulsion of Correspondent from Rumania Cited as a Violation of Accord," *New York Times*, June 25, 1946
224. Christian Science Monitor memo describing meeting with Walworth Barbour and staff, June 26, 1946
225. Dorothy Thompson, "On the Record," *Evening Star*, A-12, July 1, 1946
226. Editorial, "Balkan Night" *Washington Post*, July 2, 1946
227. Ethridge and Black, "Negotiating", 182
228. Reuben Markham, "A Baby on America's Doorstep," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 17, 1946
229. Gaddis, "We Now Know," 22
230. Letter, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, June 24, 1946
231. Letter, Reuben Markham to President Truman, July 20, 1946; photocopied from Truman Library, April 15, 2021
232. Letters, Reuben Markham to Mary Markham, March 22, 1946, April 19, 1946
233. Letter, Harry Truman to Reuben Markham, July 25, 1946; The President's August 7 calendar reads for 11:30 A.M., "Mr. Reuben Markham, Correspondent for Christian Science Monitor". Truman Presidential Museum and Library, <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/truman-papers/daily-presidential-appointments-file-original-set-1945-52/daily-15?documentid=7&pagenumber=1>, (accessed August 10, 2022)
234. Foreword to June 19-24, 1948 Lecture Series at the University of Washington
235. Reuben Markham, "An American Visits With His President", *Christian Science Monitor*, August 17, 1946, 16
236. Reuben Markham, "Russia Tightens Grip on Balkans," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 30, 1946
237. Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas, *The Wise Men* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986) 371; Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1969) 196

238. Truman, *Memoirs*, Vol. 2, 97
239. Isaacson and Thomas, *Wise Men*, 371–2
240. McCullough, *Truman*, 561

Disclosure statement

The author is Reuben Markham's grandson.

Notes on contributor

Stuart Van Dyke Jr, a graduate of Yale University, earned an M.A. in history from Boston University and a D.E.A., *Histoire de XXe Siecle*, from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris. He received his Ph.D. in European history from the University of Chicago, where his dissertation "French Settler Politics During the Algerian War, 1954–58," was awarded honors. Retired now, he served as the Director of Government Affairs at the Public Housing Authorities Directors' Association from 1999 to 2014 in Washington, D.C., where he currently lives.