WHEN AMERICA BECAME SUBURBAN

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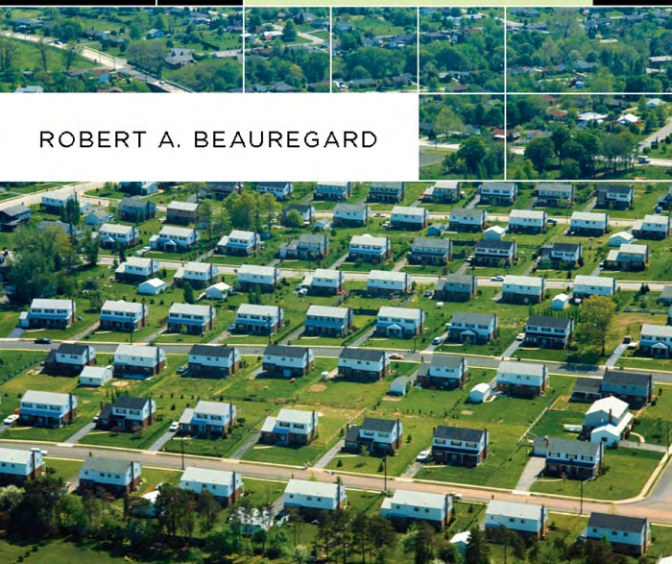

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America's Global Project

Not only was the suburban way of life essential to America's postwar prosperity, it also contributed to the crafting of America's global dominance. Suburbia's consumer-based lifestyle epitomized the freedom and prosperity that figured prominently in the ideological construction of the United States as an international power. The urban way of life held much less appeal. Cities were vulnerable to atomic-bomb attack, conjured up images of socialistic public housing, and harbored cells of communist subversion. The spreading slums and growing numbers of poor African American families combined with the seediness of industrial and commercial districts to lower cities' propaganda value even further. By contrast, the suburbs figured prominently in U.S. global projections that were designed to create a "better world abroad and a happier society at home."[1] One consequence was to further entrench the parasitic urbanization that was undermining the industrial cities.

The global dominance of the United States after World War II, a dominance that remained intact until the mid-1970s, was not about subjugation or territory. Neither colonialism nor expansion was the goal. Rather, the United States hoped to establish itself at the center of an international economy based on free trade. It would occupy the position of world political leader with distinction, and it would spread democracy and publicize the American way of life. "More than ever before—or since—Americans came to believe that they could shape the international scene in their own image."[2] The key was the casting of the country as a model to be emulated. Desire rather than fear would drive global dominance, with the United States portrayed as a

place of freedom, democracy, and economic opportunity. To achieve legitimate status in the eyes of the world, the nation needed to ground its values in a distinctively American way of life. The suburbs were the solution. They stood for achievement at home—the realization of the American Dream—and American exceptionalism in the world.

Manufacturing had elevated the United States to the commanding heights it enjoyed in the postwar era. Industrial prowess enabled the country to triumph in foreign wars while reaping the benefits of economic growth at home. Yet when the postwar era began, the industrial cities were in poor shape, rundown and increasingly abandoned by factory owners and well-to-do, mostly white households. Heavy manufacturing eventually collapsed, and light manufacturing moved to the suburbs along with even more white families, retail stores, and, later, office activities. With African Americans flowing to the inner cities and with slums more and more the dominant image of urban life, the industrial cities were unworthy of foreign envy. How could the country's industrial cities—polluted, shabby, and chaotic—ever compare with such capitals of Europe as Paris, Madrid, and Amsterdam or compete with the history and civilization they embodied?[3]

The industrial cities were additionally tainted by America's racial dilemma. African American ghettos and entrenched poverty anchored the stigma of urban decline and eliminated the older cities as candidates for international publicity. In addition, contemporary African Americans brought forth memories of slavery, the Civil War, and the decades of institutionalized discrimination that had followed emancipation. During the Cold War, Soviet propaganda "delighted in publicizing news of American racial discrimination and persecution."[4] Racial inequity was the country's shame, and it was not easily dissociated from the large, industrial cities.

In 1954, the editors of a national magazine commented on the spreading slums of Washington, D.C. Their ruminations led them to the intersection of urban decay, race, and Cold War ideology. After noting the lack of heat, lights, and toilets in the homes and the overabundance of rats, the editors noted that "a favorite Communist propaganda picture shows some dirty Negro kids playing in a yard of garbage against a backdrop of the sharply focused Capitol dome."[5] Such irony, visual or otherwise, made Americans uncomfortable. Their vision of the nation was one of prosperity, freedom, and tolerance, and it was this vision that they hoped to project to the rest of the world.

Another commentator, trading on the prevailing Cold War vocabulary of the 1950s, asked whether cities were not, in fact, un-American.[6]

His question was more rhetorical than substantive, and his article turned away from the implied ideological point to the flight of people from the cities and the cities' deepening extremes of wealth and poverty. The Jeffersonian concern with cities and democracy was left unaddressed. Still, the allusion should not be summarily dismissed. Here was the power of the Cold War rhetoric on display, along with a hint of its potential use against the cities.

Seen in this light, the designation of "All-American" cities by *Look* magazine during these years takes on new meaning.[7] These cities were selected for their efforts at civic improvement "in the public interest." The awards were not meant to be political; they were simply meant to recognize places where people (Americans) had created prosperous, pleasant, and stable communities. Nevertheless, inherent to the awards was an ideological message. Implicitly, they counteracted the ascendance of mass-produced suburbs and the decline associated with the industrial cities. These "All American" cities were often small towns such as Clarksburg, West Virginia, and Neosho, Missouri. The label itself linked cities with patriotism. In this period, to be American was to be fervently nationalistic and staunchly anticommunist.

With the racial disturbances of the 1960s, race, cities, and communism were once again joined in a symbolic triumvirate. South Carolina's U.S. senator Strom Thurmond, an archconservative and anticommunist, coupled the riots with "Communism, false compassion, civil disobedience, court decisions and criminal instinct."[8] With the exception of the communist accusation, this was the conservative critique of the city that was standard during these early postwar years.

Only a minority of observers of the city, though, blamed communists for Negro unrest. U.S. attorney general Nicholas Katzenback, for example, pointedly noted in 1966 that the riots "were indeed fomented by agitators, agitators named disease and despair, joblessness and hopelessness, rat-infested housing and long-impacted cynicism." The National Commission on Civil Disorders, set up to explain the causes of the riots, found no evidence of any organized or international influence. Still, the symbolic combination of urban decay and the oppression of African Americans was enough to eliminate city living as a candidate for the American Dream.[9]

The suburban way of life was ideologically and substantively "clean" and uniquely American. No other country engaged in mass suburbanization. Some—for example, Sweden and England—had "new towns" that were basically suburbs, but none had Levittowns. In turn, the suburbs represented freedom of choice in the market, including the

freedom to live wherever one wanted. Suburbs were all about consumption and prosperity. Consequently, other countries—having to rebuild after the war, facing shortages of goods (including housing), and having experienced, often firsthand, totalitarian or fascist regimes—were enticed by the affluence and democracy that the United States and its suburbs represented. "The transformation of American society [became] an integral part of the continuing transformation of the global economy."[10]

That Japan and the countries of western and eastern Europe rebuilt their cities after the war in ways the United States failed to do in no way implies that their citizens were immune to the allure of the American suburbs or to American-style consumerism. Many of these countries established significant welfare states—exceeding social provisions in the United States—to protect their citizens from the uncertainties and insecurities of markets. This did not preclude a desire for individual homes and automobiles, supermarkets, televisions, and the other accoutrements that were associated with American suburban living. Convincing them of the legitimacy of their desires and helping them to act accordingly was a central objective of American's postwar global dominance.

This linking of cities and suburbs with the short American Century was hardly an ideological imperative. Neither did it appear as an explicit and monolithic argument. Rather, the touting of the suburban way of life and the symbolic abandonment of the cities was woven into a variety of debates about how the United States should position itself in the world. From fear of the atomic bomb, which gave rise to a call for the decentralization of cities, to U.S. Cold War propaganda, cultural exchanges, foreign aid, and congressional debates concerning the provision of low-income housing, the project of global dominance embodied a need to hide, if not to abandon, the industrial cities.

The Cities and the Cold War

In August 1945, the United States destroyed two enemy cities. Hiroshima and Nagasaki were reduced to rubble not by saturation bombing, as had been the fate of German cities, but with atomic bombs. Suddenly, the destructive power of these weapons, and the ostensibly peaceful use of the atom for energy and health care, became part of the American psyche. Although the Soviet Union, the former World War II ally turned Cold War foe, did not develop the atomic bomb until 1949, from 1945 until the early 1960s, Americans fretted about

the possibility that an enemy, especially the Soviets, would launch an atomic attack on American cities. The purported consequence was daunting: near-total destruction. "The reality of the bomb, and the stark images of devastated American cities that it evoked, did for many Americans what two grinding wars had done for [the Europeans and the Japanese]." Consequently, at the top of the public policy agenda was the need to address the vulnerability of urban areas and the questionable likelihood of "urban survival in the nuclear age."[11]

If such an attack were to occur, cities, particularly industrial cities, would be prime targets. Military strategists noted the importance to an enemy of undermining the ability of the United States to produce war materiel, mobilize defensive forces, communicate, and keep the economy functioning. Such key industries as steel, motor vehicles, and airplane assembly were high-priority targets, and the cities in which they were concentrated—Pittsburgh, Detroit, Seattle, Los Angeles—were correspondingly at risk. San Francisco, Chicago, New York, and Boston, with their corporate headquarters and their banking and communication functions, were also high on the agenda of likely first targets. Military installations and ports (for example, the submarine base in Groton, Connecticut) could count on being struck during the first wave of bombs. Washington, D.C., was especially vulnerable. The federal government estimated that at least 140 cities could be potential targets. In a statement typical of the paranoia of the times, one popular magazine noted that "cities are pretty much defenseless and their populations are naked under the enemy."[12]

Dropping an atomic bomb on these cities would result in massive casualties and near-total destruction of vast areas, particularly at ground zero, the location one-half mile below the point at which a bomb would be detonated. Scientists and reporters described this destruction to the American public in graphic detail and frequently. For a distance of up to three-quarters of a mile from ground zero, buildings, bridges, and roadways would be reduced to rubble, and everyone there would either be instantly killed or would soon die from lethal radiation. For another two miles, heavy damage and high levels of casualties would be the norm. From there and for the next few miles, the destruction would be only serious, though people would still receive heavy doses of radiation and most of them would die within a short time. Fires would rage throughout the city. Water and power supplies would be heavily damaged and probably made inoperative. Mass transit systems would be disabled and most major highways destroyed.

Those still alive, the scenarios went on, would flee in panic. With

roadways destroyed or clogged and mass transit shut down, people would be unable to escape in any organized way. Emergency medical, police, and fire services would be mobilized, but the loss of life among these personnel and the breakdown of communication systems would severely hamper any assistance that they might be able to provide. The injured, untreated for the most part, would die painful deaths. One scenario, with ground zero over Union Square in Manhattan, predicted 150,000 dead and dying just after the bomb exploded and offered the opinion that "in Central Park, ditches would be bulldozed for mass burial of the dead."[13]

The United States had never been so exposed to a foreign enemy. Geography alone had provided security. Oceans separated it from Asia and Europe while Canada to the north and Mexico to the south were friendly neighbors with insignificant militaries and small economies dependent on the United States. Now, however, long-range bombers, intercontinental ballistic missiles, and atomic bombs made the country's physical barriers much easier to breach.

The federal government responded with a variety of initiatives. Just after the war, the United States had managed to isolate the Soviet Union from Allied sharing of the knowledge needed to build an atomic bomb. The policy was to contain the proliferation of production capabilities, institute international controls over production and testing, and maintain aircraft and missile superiority. Missiles would intercept enemy bombers as they approached, and large bombers would be used to retaliate after an attack. Later, missiles became the delivery vehicle of choice for nuclear weapons. In fact, the U.S. government continued to make atomic bombs and went on to develop the hydrogen bomb. Stockpiling, moreover, was essential to a strategic posture of massive retaliation. It was meant to be a deterrent. Many believed that the presence of large numbers of bombs alone would discourage aggressors.

The defense against atomic attack also included the establishment of a complex early-warning radar system that would facilitate interception of incoming bombers. It would provide time for people to evacuate the cities or seek shelter there. To this end, the federal government set the Federal Civil Defense Administration the task of planning for an enemy assault. Its job was to identify emergency resources, develop plans for coordinating personnel, and provide for civil-defense shelters in public buildings and spaces. Individuals were encouraged to build personal fallout shelters to house their families. Protected from the initial blast and subsequent fallout of radiation, they would stay in the shelters until emergency personnel had brought the situation under

control. After that, however, they would probably "wander helplessly through a useless city."[14]

Fear and anxiety were widespread and were exacerbated by civil-defense preparations, which included having schoolchildren participate in air-raid drills that required them to hide under their desks for protection. At the height of the Cold War in the early 1960s, requests for the U.S. Department of Defense's thirty-two-page pamphlet *The Family Fallout Shelter* went from 260,000 copies per month to 600,000 copies, and the Bendix Corporation experienced a jump in sales of its "Family Radiation Kit" to be used to detect nuclear radiation. The home became a "bulwark against the dangers of the atomic age."[15]

Home fallout shelters posed an interesting moral issue.[16] Individual households were expected to build shelters where possible. This occurred, as might be expected, mainly outside the cities. The government would provide public shelters in the cities. One common ethical scenario involved the dilemma posed to the shelter-rich when confronted with the shelter-poor on their doorstep. Would space, purified air, and food supplies last if the shelter-poor were accommodated? More specifically, would suburban households with shelters be willing to admit to safety the hordes fleeing a bombed city?

One solution was obvious: encourage individuals to live outside the cities and businesses to invest away from the enemy's primary targets. Not everyone, however, could move far from where jobs were located or could purchase the fifteen-acre estate just outside Saratoga, New York, that was advertised in the *Wall Street Journal* as having "good bomb immunity." And businesses still needed to draw their workforces from relatively nearby.[17]

The more encompassing solution, one that would provide affordable housing and place workers near jobs, would be for the government to disperse the cities. This solution resonated with incipient suburbanization, the trend to lower densities, and the emergence of smaller cities embedded in multicentered metropolitan areas. Moreover, it built upon a policy of decentralization that had been managed during World War II by the federal government's War Production Board. "Space is our ally," claimed one observer, who further pointed out that cities like New York and Chicago were too vulnerable to be allowed to persist: "In an Atomic Age, no nation can afford to present such a perfect target to an enemy."[18]

A number of city planners proposed that "successful protection" could be achieved by gradually dispersing population and industry to new satellite communities in the periphery of the large central cities.

The satellites would be located twenty to twenty-five miles from the urban core and would be spaced equidistant from each other, thereby making a single bomb less effective in destroying industrial, corporate, and commercial functions and in killing a large percent of the population. In order to further diminish the damage, these peripheral cities would be located upwind from radioactive fallout. Back in the central city, neighborhoods would be ringed by parklike strips containing highways and railroad lines. These buffer zones would block the spread of fires, isolate transportation links from other potential targets, and serve as safe areas after the attack.[19]

In addition to lowering densities and creating buffer zones, planners also called for zoning by function (for example, secluding factories and separating industrial from residential areas) and for building housing in parklike settings on lots no smaller than two acres. No more skyscrapers would be built. Rather, office functions would be placed in low-rise, two-story buildings. Retail shops and stores would be encouraged to move to drive-in locations in commercial strips along highways.[20]

Many with an interest in urban development pointed out that the atomic bomb would provide another reason for doing what needed to be done, that is, improving the lives of people by releasing them from congested cities. One commentator wrote that "the decentralization of our cities on the spots on which they stand, plus the release of our whole communication system from the threat of a disastrous tie-up, are reforms which are long overdue, war or no war."[21] This attitude was pervasive; it was not just the atomic bomb that compelled dispersal of the large, industrial cities but also the failure of these cities to continue to prosper. For those who considered the atomic bomb a threat, the bomb was an excuse to decentralize the cities and lower densities.[22]

A report by the Population Research Bureau in 1953 noted that people were still migrating to the cities "at a time when atomic-hydrogen warfare could blow our cities to bits."[23] Urban growth was seen as increasingly unhealthy, and the threat of nuclear attack was viewed as an opportunity to place more people in "semi-rural life on the urban periphery." The result would be a much better balance between the city and the country and better living conditions for all.[24] With people living in semi-independent communities of 30,000 to 50,000 residents clustered around an urban center and with each of those satellite communities surrounded by open space, they would be less vulnerable to attack. And they would live in a healthier environment.

Easing this way of thinking was the discovery that the optimum

size of a city could be calculated from the destructive capacity and strategic intent of the enemy. It was estimated that an atomic bomb would cause instant death to 90 percent of the people within a half mile of ground zero, 50 percent of those between one-half and one mile away, 15 percent of the people from one to one and one-half miles away, and 3 percent of those from there to two miles distant. If the enemy's goal was to kill 5,000 people instantly, then a city with a density of 1,893 people per square mile would be safe. Within a two-mile radius, the requisite population would not exist and, therefore, an attack would not yield the deaths that were strategically required. The city would not become a target.[25] A city with this density and whose population was spread evenly up to two miles around the central business district thus could have a total population of 24,000 people and remain immune to attack. At three miles in radius, it could grow to 53,000 people. That these calculations depended on a rapidly changing and often-secret technology, on a deliberately obscured (but nonetheless assumed) strategic intent, and on the belief in the inherent rationality of one's enemy makes them highly suspect.[26]

Proposing to respond to the threat of atomic bomb attack by dispersing the industrial cities is nothing if not an endorsement of suburbanization and a foreshadowing of the rise of edge cities in the 1980s. The atomic bomb extended an antiurban ideology whose roots stretch back to well before nuclear physics embarked on the "taming" of the atom and the creation of fission. In short, "civil defense plans . . . suggested a particular atomic age rationale for the American retreat to the suburbs."[27] Providing reinforcement for this perspective were the debates around the establishment of a national highway system and public housing. They too drew on anxiety about foreign attacks and national defense.

The federal policy that created the interstate highway system was titled the National Interstate and Defense Highway Act of 1956. It had been preceded by the Defense Highway Act of 1941.[28] The latter had designated certain highways for the movement of troops, war materiel, and supplies and had emphasized constructing roads to military installations. The former had as one of its goals, albeit a minor one, the creation of a road system that would enable military personnel and equipment to be moved quickly to points of attack on the continent's coastal borders. Whereas the large size of the United States made it possible to disperse population to thwart nuclear attack and mute its consequences, that same size made it awkward for the military to provide protection against an enemy invasion.

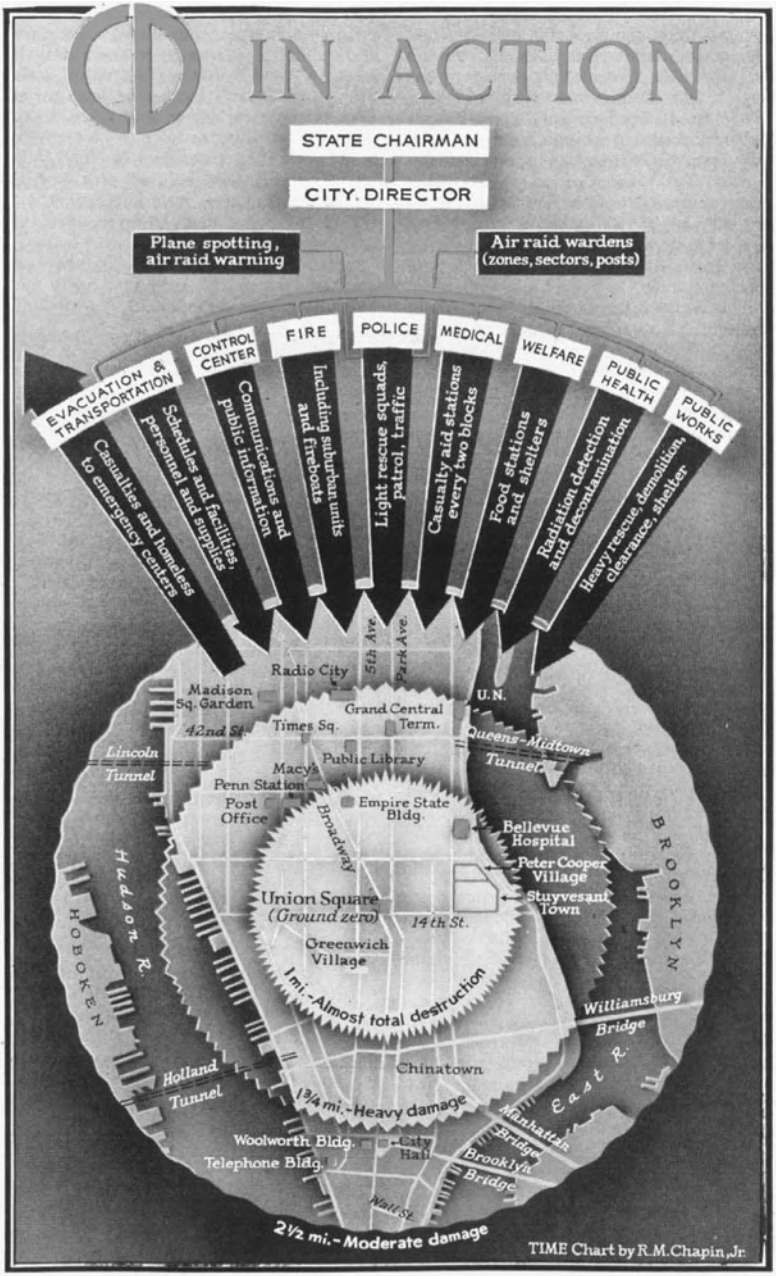

Figure 14. Preparing for an atomic-bomb attack, New York City, 1950. From "The City under the Bomb," Time, *October 2, 1950, 13.*

In an era of long-range aircraft and, later, intercontinental ballistic missiles, moving troops and equipment along highways was not the most efficient way to counter the initial attack, even though it was important for repelling a subsequent invasion. Military leadership and in particular President Dwight D. Eisenhower, a former army commander, were concerned about the difficulties the current road system posed to troop movements. In fact, President Eisenhower named General Lucius D. Clay, former American military governor of occupying forces in Berlin during the onset of the Cold War, to head his Advisory Committee on a National Highway Program.

The dearth of limited-access highways linking cities to each other, the quality of the interurban and interstate roads that did exist, and the ability of these highways to accommodate large military equipment—in terms of both the width of the roads and the height of bridges and tunnels—were all at issue. Consequently, the 1956 interstate highway act contained guidelines that standardized the quality of road construction and designated the width of lanes and the clearances underneath crossover bridges. Although the military did not always adhere to these standards by controlling the size of its equipment, the intent was there. More importantly, the national defense goal was crucial for changing the funding formula from 50:50, with the federal government and state governments sharing the costs equally, to a 75:25 federal-to-state ratio.[29] This made the program even more enticing to the states and helped to assure construction of interstate highways across the land.

Congress liked the idea that high-speed, limited-access, divided highways could be used to evacuate the cities in case of an atomic-bomb attack. The highways would enhance civil-defense preparedness. With prior warning, people would be able, quickly and safely, to drive their automobiles or take buses away from the central cities. After the attack, emergency fire and medical personnel would be moved efficiently into the cities from the surrounding suburbs.

In effect, the highway system that contributed to mass suburbanization after World War II was made possible, in no small part, by a rationale that linked highways to the possibility of foreign invasion and the need for national defense. Further strengthening the rationale was the specific threat of an atomic-bomb attack and the commonsensical notion that dispersing people, business, and industry would not just make a concerted attack harder but also diminish the destruction that an attack might cause. Of course, the decline of the industrial cities and the spread of low-density development hardly needed these arguments to come to fruition. As one commentator wrote, a "new world

order" might well save the country's cities from atomic bombing, but it would not save them from decay.[30]

Simultaneously, the federal government was working with local governments to address the problems of the cities, even as it was funding civil-defense activities, highway construction, and mortgage-insurance programs that shrank them. One of the programs aimed at reversing urban decline was public housing.

Unlike urban renewal, which subsidized private-sector real estate investment, public housing was enveloped in both Republican distaste for the New Deal programs of the Democrats and the real estate industry's interest in protecting its prerogatives. Consequently, both Republicans and real estate people opposed public housing. To press their case, public housing's critics took up the banner of anticommunism. For some, public housing was the first step along the path to socialism and would bring about the demise of free enterprise. For others, public housing projects were a threat because subversives supposedly thrived in them. "Suspiciousness about Communist evil had been internalized and [it] generated widespread" anxiety, not the least of which was fear about the erosion of property rights.[31]

At the end of World War II, the United States faced "the worst housing crisis in [its] history."[32] Demand was projected at 1.5 million new units each year from the late 1940s to 1960, but the private sector had produced only half that in 1947. Moreover, private developers and investors invariably targeted the top of the market, whereas the need was for housing for low-income households. While middle-income households could purchase new homes in the suburbs, low-income households (including many African American migrants from the South) were confined to the city—and were desperate.

The real estate and home-building industry was embarrassed. Frequent mention of the housing shortage and the possibility of government intervention lessened its prestige and posed the threat of interference by the public sector. Developers and their bankers responded with tract housing in the suburbs and apartment buildings in the cities; however, neither was sufficient to meet demand. Overcrowding persisted in the metropolitan cores. Despite this, the real estate industry attempted to defeat the bill proposed in 1947 to expand the Housing Act of 1937.[33]

The main line of attack was a defense of the free-enterprise system that emphasized freedom of choice. One official of the National Association of Real Estate Boards claimed that one could "trace back the history of every country that's gone Communistic or Socialistic, and

it all started with public housing."[34] The enemy of capitalism was socialism. Socialism involved public ownership rather than private property, and it meant not just government control over business but also government takeover of the housing industry. Private businesses were eager to accept government subsidies (for example, the assistance provided by FHA mortgage insurance); they were opposed to the government as a producer of housing. Public housing was seen to be insidious and the "cutting edge of the Communist front."[35]

Home ownership was considered a bulwark against socialism. As the suburban developer Levitt put it: "No man who owns his own house and lot can be a communist. He has too much to do."[36] Being committed to a home and to private property rights would make people responsible and less likely to work against the system that provided these opportunities. Ostensibly, home ownership brought people into the political mainstream.

The real estate industry found a champion in U.S. senator from Wisconsin Joseph McCarthy, a relatively new senator whose name would later become an "ism"—McCarthyism—and synonymous with anticommunism, intimidation, and demagoguery. McCarthy saw an opportunity to use public housing as a tool to attack the Democrats, weaken the legacy of the New Deal, and establish a reputation as a foe of communism. In 1947, he engineered the creation of a joint congressional committee designed to hold hearings on the proposed public housing legislation; he maneuvered to place himself in charge. Hearings were held in thirty-three cities, and nearly 1,300 carefully chosen witnesses testified, most of them unsurprisingly opposed to public housing.

McCarthy's attack was two-pronged: first, to convince people that public housing did not really help the poor but instead was allocated to friends of the Democrats who governed the cities, and second, to link it with communism. (Private housing, on the other hand, was essential to democracy.) McCarthy believed that public housing projects "menaced the republic" and were deliberately created slums that became "breeding ground(s) for communists." Throughout the hearings, McCarthy labeled public housing a "socialist danger."[37] Nevertheless, he was unable to derail the legislation, and the bill eventually became the famed Housing Act of 1949 that promised a decent home and living environment to all Americans.[38]

Ironically, the supporters of public housing also drew on the fears associated with communism. President Harry Truman argued that "there is nothing more un-American than a slum. How can we expect to sell democracy to Europe until we prove that within the democratic

system we can provide decent homes for our people?" The housing expert Nathan Strauss agreed. When the government provides healthful, livable, low-rent homes and eliminates slums, he wrote, it "cuts the ground from under the Communists."[39] For both opponents and proponents, the threat of communism, whether external or internal, was pertinent to the debate. At the same time, proponents of public housing and urban renewal were also motivated by the desire to project a positive global image, one that presented the United States as accomplished and compassionate.

In the end, accusations of communist conspiracy and claims that public housing would open the door to socialism delayed but did not defeat the legislation. The real estate industry subsequently turned its attention to convincing state and local governments to reject public housing. Earlier legislation had limited the number of new public housing units in any city to the number of dwellings demolished as part of slum clearance. This one-to-one rule meant that the supply of homes would not increase and the government would not compete with the private sector. Providing public housing only to those with the lowest of incomes further protected the prerogatives of the home-building industry, since it was generally not interested in building homes in a price range that low-income households could afford. Needless to say, anxiety about a nascent socialism and fears of a communist menace were unfounded. Except for small minorities, the citizens of the United States found neither socialism nor communism to their liking. As for the national government, it was equally, perhaps more, obsessed with disseminating the American way of life across the globe.

Exporting the Suburban Dream

The suburbs were not immune to anxieties about nuclear attack and communist infiltration. "Civil defense plans . . . suggested a particular atomic age rationale for the American retreat to the suburbs, and such plans helped to taint the otherwise innocent and safe quality of life" there.[40] Planners and others framed the dispersal of the cities as a way to minimize the risk of and damages from an atomic-bomb attack and as inherently desirable because of the low-density living it offered. These rhetorical moves still left intact the possibility of widespread and unpredictable death and destruction. Given the tendency of radioactive fallout to drift with the winds across city boundaries and given the hordes of city dwellers fleeing the city after an attack, the suburbs were still vulnerable.

Elaine Tyler May, a cultural historian, positioned suburban growth within this postwar anxiety.[41] During the first half of the short American Century, marriage rates and birthrates were higher and divorce rates were lower than they had been in the previous generation and would be in the subsequent one. Moreover, the women of this era embraced traditional gender roles, with many of them staying home to raise children. The parents of the baby boomers were unlike their parents and unlike their children. The children married later, had fewer offspring, divorced more frequently, and joined the ranks of postwar feminist and gay social movements. They also fueled the first round of gentrification in the cities in the late 1970s and 1980s.

What explains the anomaly—the commitment to family and domestic tranquility—of this postwar generation of suburbanites? These households were more prosperous than their predecessors, but prosperity has always been associated with marrying later and having fewer children and commonly makes the breakup of families easier. None of this occurred. The answer, May offered, lies with the larger political culture—the domestic ideology—in which the postwar suburban family was situated. Forming a buffer between the family and the anxieties of the atomic bomb, McCarthyism, and communist subversion was a family-centered culture that was relatively isolated in the suburbs. This domestic ideology was a haven from these disturbing eventualities. With the parents protecting the children, defending the hearth, and providing for all needs, suburbanites were safe in the nuclear family.

Adding to their sense of security was the suburban home. It was surrounded by its moat of grass and set in a residential area in which all other families were racially and economically alike; foreign influences were absent. Suburban families were also far from the cities on which postwar anxieties were focused. In addition, their homes were self-contained. The mother could do the washing, prepare meals, and entertain without having to leave the nest. Her children could amuse themselves watching television or, when the outside beckoned, play on the backyard swing set or swim in the family pool. Near at hand, ever ready, was the family automobile, in case a flight from danger became necessary.

When the father returned from a day at work, he would be greeted by his wife and children and reassured that even if he had to go into the world and be exposed to its threats, a place existed where being safe and cared for was assured. His family was even protected from the world of corporate growth and organizational loyalties where promotions often meant relocations. With a suburb on the fringe of Atlanta

hardly different from one outside Boston, and with his family and home life stable, the rootlessness of social mobility was diminished. There were costs, but in the suburbs the postwar family's "deepest wish to build a warm hearth against the cold war" was realized.[42]

One group denied this option was homosexuals.[43] In the 1950s, gays and lesbians were just beginning to develop collective identities and view themselves as oppressed minorities. As they crafted communities in the cities, they came under attack by anticommunists for the corrosive impact their sexual practices had on others and for the security risk they posed. (Homosexuals were deemed more susceptible to blackmail than heterosexuals, an implicit comment on their double-victimization.) Homosexuality was also perceived as a threat to marriage and motherhood, and the "feminization" of gay men was seen as eroding the masculine vigor that might be used to resist communism. Gays and lesbians, though, were not present in the suburbs, at least in any numbers—or visibly. Rather, they resided mainly in the cities. Homosexuals amplified the city's subversive reputation, and this further extended the symbolic distance between suburbs and the declining urban cores. Here was another issue to add to the woes of the industrial cities.

It was not just homosexuals who threatened peace and security. Many family professionals were concerned that the anxieties of the age would lead to promiscuity by heterosexuals. Premarital sex was particularly feared. Sexual chaos would hinder reproduction and deprive the country of the children needed to keep the country strong. Those holding this view encouraged early marriage and traditional gender roles. They also offered courtship advice that warned against sexual intercourse prior to marriage. At a time of national insecurity, sexual freedom was unacceptable.[44]

The family and suburbs, though, were not simply retreats from an ominous world; they were also points of pride and celebration. They were at the center of the postwar American Dream. By contrast, the postwar discussion of America's global aspirations excluded the industrial cities from this rosy view of American life. They were liabilities: They were vulnerable to attack, they hid communist sympathizers, and they were the origin of arguments meant to transform the country from a capitalist democracy to a democratic (possibly, even, undemocratic) socialism. To put it bluntly: "Cosmopolitan urban culture represented a threat to national security."[45] By contrast, the suburbs were essential to the postwar American Dream, and that dream was a significant element in the country's global aspirations. The suburban way of life

crystallized Americans' sense of themselves as capable, prosperous, and free. The "perfectionist impulse . . . [that] swept through postwar American society" had to be shared with the world.[46]

Since the rumors of the New World first spread amongst the courts of the European powers in the fifteenth century, the Americas have been a coveted place. Early explorers came for fame and fortunes, early colonists for religious and political freedom. With its vast geography and ever-expanding economy, the United States came to be perceived as a land of possibilities, elevating hopes and attracting waves of immigrants. The roots of the American Dream extend to other lands, its imagery fueled as much by alien aspirations as by homebred accomplishments.

These hopes represent a host of revered values: independence, freedom of choice and mobility, tolerance, democratic institutions, and free enterprise.[47] Consumption and social mobility, moreover, vie for equal status with political and cultural freedom. People once migrated to America because they thought that the streets were paved with gold; they came because economic opportunities were greater here than there. Once here, they wanted to experience that dream: start families, earn a fair wage, and live well. Through the years, the dream took on different colorations. In the early postwar period, it involved a college education, home ownership, a secure job with a large corporation, and a comfortable life that combined work and leisure with the nuclear family. With productivity on the rise, the economy growing, and incomes increasing, realizing that dream, at least for white Americans, was relatively easy. And it was realized in the suburbs.[48]

Postwar planners believed that "expansion, domestic prosperity, and the world's well-being were complementary goods."[49] World War II brought the United States out of the isolationism it had embraced as far back as the early decades of the century. More and more, elected officials, federal bureaucrats, military advisers, and corporate leaders began to believe in the importance of free trade and overseas investment as keys to domestic prosperity. In a world of nuclear weapons, jet aircraft, and missiles that could carry payloads across national borders, isolationism simply was less and less an option. This internationalism included trade and cultural exchange as well as a flow of ideas that carried the American way of life to the world. "Science, technology, and even the arts became strategic resources to be mobilized in the nation's quest for world dominance."[50]

At the end of World War II, "America stood in a position of material and moral supremacy."[51] Unlike those of the world's other in-

dustrial powers—England, Japan, Germany, the Soviet Union—its factories had not been destroyed, its railroads and highways were intact, its financial markets were functioning, and its population had escaped decimation. U.S. cities did not have to be rebuilt because of enemy bombing, nor did the country have to rely on international agencies for financial assistance to restart its economy. The United States could retool its factories with relative ease and begin the shift to an economy focused on consumer goods and services. Moreover, the mass production and organizational techniques that had enabled it to be victorious could also be used to meet the demands of a growing and mobile population and to restructure its urban areas.

That the United States had successfully turned back fascism and saved the world from the imperial designs of Japan and Germany conferred a moral superiority on the nation. Coupled with its vaunted and international reputation as the land of freedom and democracy, this moral position compelled the country to meet its international obligations and take on the leadership of the Western world, as Henry Luce and others encouraged it to do. The United States was primed for this task, believing that a world free of dictators and of barriers to trade and investment would bring peace and prosperity to all peoples. A nation so capable and accomplished could easily, and would gladly, bear the weight of world leadership.[52]

Most Americans agreed with the assertion that the United States—its economy, government, and social customs—was a model for the rest of the world. Despite an avowed commitment to a marketplace of "alternative visions of human possibilities," as one historian noted, Americans still "believed that America's own formula for advancement would inevitably triumph in the global marketplace."[53] The components of this formula included democratic institutions, civil rights, economic opportunity, and religious and ethnic tolerance. The freedom of choice and the social mobility they enabled were central to the economic prosperity enjoyed by its citizens. In the postwar era, that prosperity was inseparable from the massive growth of middle-income suburbs and the suburban way of life associated with them.

Consequently, in projecting its image across the globe, the United States also projected its commitment to suburban living as the quintessential American way of life and a way of life that might be copied by others. Through Cold War propaganda, cultural exhibitions, and trade relations, the country exported its values and social practices. None could be easily distanced or imagined independently from the suburbs.[54]

Trade was a primary conduit for transferring American values to

other countries, particularly to those of the United Kingdom and western Europe. The story begins with the Marshall Plan, known officially as the European Recovery Program (ERP), the country's post–World War II effort to help European nations reconstruct their economies and, by doing so, resist the postwar blandishments of communism. Passed by the U.S. Congress in 1948, the Marshall Plan was based on the belief that domestic prosperity would be achieved only in a world of free trade among prosperous nations. It was preceded by the Lend Lease Agreement of 1942 and the Truman Doctrine in 1947. The first provided assistance to the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union prior to America's entry into the war against Germany. The second served as Truman's commitment that the United States would support all free people in their resistance to internal subjugation or external pressure. The former established a policy of trade assistance, and the latter a rationale for standing in the way of the communist advance.

Against this earlier background, Secretary of State George C. Marshall in June 1947 proposed that the United States help Europe cope with postwar recovery. In a famous speech at Harvard University, he called on western European governments to propose a plan to work together to rejuvenate their economies. The U.S. government was dissatisfied with the pace of recovery in Europe and the limitations of international aid agencies. He noted in reference to the U.S. embrace of world leadership that "[we are] deeply conscious of our responsibilities." The Marshall Plan gave substance to America's new internationalism.[55]

The European nations subsequently engaged in a complex set of multilateral negotiations in order to produce a reconstruction scheme. In the end, sixteen countries proposed a multibillion-dollar approach to bolstering their economies, an approach that relied heavily on trade with the United States and improvements in production capacity. Using loans and grants, the United States would make financial assistance available to these countries, and they would apply the funds to the purchase of American goods. The Marshall Plan would raise European living standards, make European economies more congenial to U.S. investment, provide the means for the Europeans to pay their share of the costs of rearmament, and remove the destitution in Europe that might make people susceptible to communism. Coincidentally, it would boost the U.S. domestic economy. The act itself stated that "Congress finds that the existing situation in Europe endangers the establishment of a lasting peace, the general welfare and national interest of the United States, and the attainment of the objectives of the United Nations." Despite its complex humanitarian, economic, and political motives, and most im-

portantly for our concerns, it "allowed the United States to remake the European economy in the image of the American economy."[56]

Under the auspices of the Marshall Plan, the United States exported two types of commodities—goods and American business know-how—and the government engaged in a great deal of propaganda. High on the list of commodities were raw materials such as wheat, tobacco, cotton, oil, sulfur, and borax; intermediate producer goods such as aircraft parts and drilling equipment; and capital equipment such as tractors. American business experts, in turn, consulted with European firms about technology, human relations policy, and manufacturing techniques. The transfer of technology and knowledge also occurred through direct foreign investment by American firms and the sending of American managers, with their families, to live in Europe for extended periods of time.

Many European firms embraced American business practices. They introduced automated production and new marketing schemes and adopted U.S.-style advertising and management philosophies. The Marshall Plan "aimed to get as close as possible to the people it was benefiting in order to channel attitudes, mentalities and expectations in the direction America understood, the direction of mass-production for mass-consumption." An expert on the Marshall Plan characterized it as one of the "greatest international propaganda operations ever seen in peacetime."[57]

The Marshall Plan provided just over $13 billion to European recovery between 1948 and 1952, when the effort ended. More than $5 billion was used to purchase industrial goods, and an almost equivalent amount went to buy food and other agricultural products, mostly from the United States. About $800 million was spent just on freight charges to the U.S. shipping industry. To state the obvious, these expenditures boosted foreign trade. As a portion of the country's overall economic activity, trade increased by two-thirds between 1945 and 1955.[58]

In fact, throughout the short American Century, from the business cycle peak in 1948 to the valley in 1973, exports expanded as a portion of GNP, though since foreign trade was less than 10 percent of the domestic economy, the country was never dependent on it. During that time, total exports in 1958 dollars more than tripled, to just over $70 billion. Even more striking was the growth in direct foreign investment. U.S. investors were aggressive in purchasing businesses in Europe and in establishing overseas plants and offices there. Across this period, U.S. direct foreign investment increased more than fourfold, to $66 billion.[59] Exports and direct foreign investment carried the American way of life to Europe.

One commentator noted that the most important impact of the Marshall Plan was psychological. The plan "seriously damaged the Communist parties of Europe," provided support—because prosperity returned—to liberal and conservative political forces that resisted communist intrusions, and drew together the European countries in a common market. The dominant belief was that the American way of life, as represented by these goods and activities, was irresistible. The communists were losing in the struggle to capture the imaginations of western Europeans. Even in European countries, such as France and Italy, where the communist vote was high, "the very people who vote Communist are showing a preference for the American mode of living."[60] The Marshall Plan put the United States "firmly at the center of Europe," economically, politically, and culturally.[61]

As part of the plan, European participants had to agree to the dissemination within their borders of "information and news" on the workings of the ERP. This made it possible for the United States to engage in extensive selling of the American way of life. The ERP funded documentary films, radio programs, mobile cinemas, pamphlets, traveling exhibitions, concerts, contests, variety shows, calendars, postage stamps, cartoons, atlases, and traveling puppet shows all aimed at explaining the plan, encouraging European integration and greater productivity, and conveying U.S. accomplishments. Its overall efforts contributed to a "revolution of rising expectations" and enabled the United States to project "its power into Europe."[62]

The American way of life was spread most forcefully through U.S. consumer goods.[63] Europeans increasingly were replacing their family-run stores with supermarkets, their country lanes with superhighways, and their small hotels with motels. They were buying automobiles. Consumption was being made easier by the adoption of consumer credit and personal bank loans, of fixed-price selling rather than haggling, and of advertising. People were buying more labor-saving devices (such as blenders, vacuum cleaners, and washing machines), ready-to-wear clothing, home television sets, and packaged foods. American music (jazz and rock and roll), movies, and television spread the lifestyle that accompanied these products. A Swiss department store advertised a display of U.S. goods by admonishing its customers to "Live Like an American." American influence was, one journalist wrote, "creating a real revolution in the daily life of people."[64]

This influence also involved city planning and architecture. The Marshall Plan funded exhibits on U.S. construction techniques and planning paradigms. Architecture was exported to Europe in the form

of American embassies and military bases, in shopping-mall design and (stretching the category) infrastructure such as oil refineries. One of the most significant, even if not the most common, of these endeavors was Hilton International, a wholly owned subsidiary of Hilton Hotels, whose purpose was to build modern hotels for international business travelers and tourists in the major cities of Europe and the Middle East. Hilton International often arranged its portion of the financing with the European Cooperative Administration, one component of the Marshall Plan. Moreover, Conrad Hilton, president of Hilton International, viewed the hotels as propaganda. He is quoted as having said that "an integral part of my dream was to show the countries most exposed to Communism the other side of the coin—the fruits of the free world." All of this was part of a longer-term flow from America to foreign countries of ideas and practices in architecture, city planning, and construction.[65]

The export of American ideas, goods, and customs was inseparable from the suburban dream. Supermarkets, motels, automobiles, and superhighways were all implicated in the parasitic urbanization that enabled postwar mass suburbanization and abetted the decline of the older, industrial cities. Televisions, washing machines, packaged foods, and consumer credit were primarily attributes of suburban living. Europeans adopted not simply isolated practices and products but an American way of life that was a suburban way of life. Correspondingly, Europeans had no need for American cities; their cities were older, more revered, and less dominated (with exceptions) by industrialization. When they embraced American ways, they also received, as part of that package, suburban images and the values of a suburban mentality. Put most bluntly, Americans made a "cultural assault on 'decadent' European values."[66]

Reinforcing the spread of U.S. popular culture into foreign lands was the constant stream of Cold War doctrine and cultural exchanges. As early as 1938, the Department of State had established a Division of Cultural Relations designed to counteract propaganda against the United States. The division was absorbed into the Office of War Information during World War II and later became the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) and the radio station Voice of America. To this conduit was added the Fulbright Act of 1946, which was designed to foster the exchange of artists and scholars in order to breed cultural understanding. In 1948, moreover, the Smith-Mundt Act authorized a peacetime overseas information program, thereby making information and cultural exchanges acknowledged instruments of foreign policy.[67]

The common objectives of these initiatives were to create a broad awareness of U.S. policy, negate the thrust of communist propaganda (especially that directed at casting the United States as imperialist and domestically oppressive), show a mutuality of interest among peoples and nations, and explain American values. The USIA hoped to make people from around the world friendlier toward the United States. Ideally, these efforts would "inculcate respect for, and if possible allegiance to, the democratic way of life."[68]

The divide between information and propaganda is undeniably thin, however. Consequently, the USIA and Voice of America often found themselves under attack from Cold War warriors—anticommunists to the core—who wanted more strident rhetoric directed against the Soviet Union and an approach that mimicked American advertising, that is, that was wholly positive and celebratory. Carl T. Rowan, the director of USIA, responded in a speech in 1964: "The easiest way to destroy USIA, to render it totally ineffective, would be to have it feed the world nothing but superlatives about America and the American way of life."[69]

In the early 1950s, Voice of America was broadcasting twenty-eight program hours a day in thirty-four different languages. The USIA daily press service delivered news items to 10,000 newspapers and regularly published twenty-five periodicals. In production were 466 reels of film footage. Additionally, the USIA set up 160 libraries and information centers around the world that were open to the public, and it was involved in numerous exhibitions and trade fairs.

For the most part, these different activities were meant to convey an evenhanded view of the United States. An American way of life was on display. Americans were portrayed as nice people, generous, altruistic, and cultured. The U.S. government was democratic and peace loving. The economy was characterized as a mixed economy generating a high standard of living for the great majority of people. The images were of skyscrapers, churches, factories, and suburbs. Although no one set of images or way of life dominated, the overall thrust was to convey the attainability of the American Dream.[70] The goal was a balanced portrayal. Yet the strong emphasis on the American standard of living, an emphasis supported by the Marshall Plan and amplified by the global reach of the U.S. economy, propelled U.S. proselytizing into the contentious realm of suburbanization and industrial-city decline.

No one event epitomizes the suburban quality of this postwar propaganda more than the famous, and now iconic, "kitchen debate" between Vice President Richard M. Nixon and Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev in July 1959.[71] The debate took place at the American

National Exhibition in Sokolniki Park in Moscow. It followed a similar visit of dignitaries and an exhibition that the Soviets had held in New York City and came at a time when the Soviet premier was vociferous in his criticism of capitalist America. Cold War tensions were high, and Nixon looked forward with trepidation to his visit and first meeting with Khrushchev.

The exhibit covered 400,000 square feet and cost $5 million. It consisted of an exhibition hall containing 500 photographs of the United States, twenty-two American automobiles, sports and camping equipment, a supermarket display, and cosmetics and other commodities normally purchased by the American consumer. It also included a heart-lung machine and a computer (Ramac 305) preprogrammed to provide written answers to 3,500 questions about the people, land, institutions, history, and culture of the United States. Approximately 800 U.S. corporations were represented. In addition to the exhibition hall, a geodesic dome provided space for 5,000 people. In that space, American films were shown on Circlorama, a 360-degree movie screen, and events such as fashion shows were held.

Outside the hall was a detached, single-family, six-room, ranch-style house. This prefabricated model home would have cost $14,000 to build in the United States, and it contained $5,000 worth of furnishings including a color television, a built-in washing machine, an all-electric kitchen, and a home workshop. The house was billed as "within the price range of the average U.S. worker."[72]

Nixon opened the exhibit with a speech that stressed three themes: the importance of cultural understanding, the high U.S. living standard, and the commitment of the United States to domestic freedoms and international peace.[73] He gave statistics on home ownership and the purchase of cars, televisions, and radios and noted that all of these luxuries were affordable for the average American worker. U.S. workers, he said, "enjoy the highest standard of living of any people in the world's history." Nixon asserted that the United States "from the standpoint of distribution of wealth comes closest to the ideal of prosperity for all in a classless society." To balance his presentation, he called attention to such persistent problems as unemployment, support for the aged, labor strikes, and racial discrimination, but he quickly noted that they were being addressed.

Material progress, Nixon went on, was hardly worth praise if people were not free and their government not open. He pointed specifically to the freedoms of religion and travel, freedoms ostensibly absent in the Soviet Union, and followed that by saying that the United States

would not impose its system of government on others. We want peace, Nixon proclaimed: War with the atomic bomb would destroy not only the victims but also the aggressor as radioactive fall-out drifted across the planet.

Relations between Nixon and Khrushchev were tense from the beginning. In a taped debate earlier that day, Khrushchev had accused Nixon of knowing "absolutely nothing about communism"—only fearing it—and had predicted that in seven years, the Soviet Union would surpass the United States economically.[74] The climax of their frank discussions came "when they went into a model American home—the home that Pravda (the Soviet news organ) had criticized as not representative and too expensive for the average American worker."[75] Walking through the house, and in front of reporters, Nixon encouraged Khrushchev to admire the kitchen, one like, he said, "those in our houses in California."[76] He pointed specifically to a built-in washing machine. Khrushchev responded: "We have such things." Nixon commented that such appliances made life easier for the American woman; Khrushchev retorted that the Russians did not share "the capitalist attitude toward women."

Nixon persisted. He explained that the model home was affordable, noting that veterans of World War II normally purchased homes in the range of $10,000 to $15,000. They debated how long the house would last, with the Soviet premier saying, "We build for our children and grandchildren," and Nixon replying that this house would last for more than twenty years, at which time Americans would then want a new kitchen and a new home. "The fact is," Khrushchev replied, "newly built Russian houses have all this equipment right now" and that moreover, in the Soviet Union one had a right to a home, unlike in America.

The debate then turned back to an earlier discussion they had had regarding missiles and who could destroy whom. Pointing to the washing machine, Nixon asked whether it was not better that the two world powers compete on the basis of consumer goods rather than with "machines of war such as rockets." Khrushchev responded as if threatened. "But your generals say: 'Let's compete in rockets.' In this respect we can also show you something." "We are both strong," Nixon replied and argued that neither side should engage in ultimatums. Khrushchev responded: "Who is giving an ultimatum?" After Nixon spoke, Khrushchev went on to say that he sensed he was being threatened: "We will answer threats with threats," and "We have the means to threaten too." As they moved away from the model home, the tension abated, and they agreed that peace was in both nations' interests.[77]

For standing up to the Soviet premier and doing so in front of an international audience of reporters, Nixon returned home as a "national hero." "He refuted Soviet propaganda, without making threats," noted *Life* magazine.[78] One month later, in a speech before the American Dental Association, the vice president commented on the "great battle of ideas going on in the world today" and declared that the United States "cannot stand silently by while the disciples of communism beat their drums in the world forum." In his book *Six Crises,* published in 1962, Nixon described his meeting with Khrushchev as one of the personal turning points of his career.[79]

The kitchen debate was a significant episode in the exchange of Cold War propaganda between the United States and the Soviet Union. It asserted in a very public and global way the values of American-style democracy and capitalism against Soviet-style communism and economic planning. The debate was also crucial in crystallizing the importance of a suburban way of life—and domesticity—to the selling of the American standard of living.

In an appliance-laden, suburban ranch house, as the historian Elaine May has observed, Nixon and Khrushchev argued over the relative merits of home appliances, the role of women as housewives, and the benefits of home ownership. The home—and the prosperity that enabled its purchase—anchored the core values of freedom and democracy. "Nixon insisted that American superiority in the cold war rested not on weapons but on the secure, abundant family life available in modern suburban homes."[80] Here was the American Dream in its quotidian form. This was what Nixon and myriad internationalists wanted people from other countries to admire. This was the image attached to the prepared foods, television sets, and automobiles and to the use of credit cards, supermarkets, and motels. And it was the image that people around the world absorbed when they bought and acted American.

All of these postwar goods and images and the lifestyle that went with them—the American way of life—were rooted firmly in the suburbs. "Suburbia would serve as a bulwark against communism and class conflict," blocking subversion and dissolving any lingering class divisions.[81]

Conclusion

At the center of the postwar global discourse—whether it was the Cold War rhetoric directed at the Soviet Union, the "information and news" aimed at the industrialized and industrializing democracies of western

Europe, or domestic policy debates laden with concern about international subversion—sat the suburban way of life. The suburbs symbolized the world's highest standard of living and focused the American Dream for both citizens and immigrants. While not every foreign citizen wanted to migrate to the United States and not every resident of the country wished to move to the suburbs, almost all wanted a piece of the suburban lifestyle: the freedom of the automobile, the convenience of home appliances, the benefits of consumer credit, and the choices offered by supermarkets.

The power of America's message was derived from a conflation of freedom and democracy with consumption and lifestyles.[82] When postwar apologists declared America the land of the free, they made reference to two quite different types of freedom: political freedom and freedom of consumer choice. The first was central to the allure that the United States projected to the rest of the world, especially communist countries and those increasingly under Soviet influence. But in the United States, people—more accurately, Caucasians—enjoyed civil rights. They could vote, speak freely, and congregate in public. What people did not enjoy were social rights: the right to a well-paying job, decent housing, health care, and adequate food. With welfare states emerging and becoming stronger in western Europe, these deficiencies were glaring.

Taking the place of social rights in the United States were prosperity and consumer choice. Prosperity made such rights seem redundant, while consumer choice made the uncertainties of capitalism seemingly manageable and more tolerable. People were free to work wherever and for whomever would hire them. Once paid, they were free to live where they wanted and consume what they desired. Riches were possible, and spending was virtually unconstrained. A wealth of consumer goods and services were available. People in the United States could even start their own businesses. Most importantly, they could live as they pleased. This was freedom.

The suburbs were the place where this freedom was most pronounced. In the city were the persistent problems of unemployment, poverty, and racial discrimination that Nixon had commented on in his speech opening the Moscow exhibit. Holding up the industrial cities as models to emulate would have served to publicize these embarrassments. With the cities becoming increasingly African American in the 1950s and with the country still unwilling to legislate against racial intolerance and spreading poverty, exposing the urban way of life was simply an invitation to the world's derision.

Cities were vulnerable to nuclear attack and were also seen as

sites of potential subversion to which communists gravitated and where they fomented revolt and poisoned the minds of otherwise patriotic citizens. Considered the haunt of homosexuals, liberals, and intellectuals, cities were not to be trusted. Further disqualifying them from representing the preferred American way of life was their status as ground zero for atomic bombs—better to disperse the cities than praise them. Suburbanization was the antidote to the communist menace in the cities and the threat of nuclear attack; prosperity and rampant consumption were the antidote to communist propaganda.[83]

The suburban way of life thus enabled the United States to fight communism at home and to project its image across the globe. It marked the nation as unique. And suburbanization, "in its broadest sense, . . . promoted the expansion of American interests, activities, and power in other parts of the world."[84] The innovative nature of this new spatial form, and of the lifestyle associated with it, spoke to the technological and intellectual prowess of the country and the ability of its citizens to cast off the past in search of a better future. The physical and visual openness of the suburbs, with lawns surrounding each freestanding house, also contrasted with the density of the cities. The suburbs signaled a mixture of individualism and conformity, a democracy where people were equal and yet free to pursue their dreams. "Observing American happiness and prosperity, other nations would seek the same by adopting American methods."[85]

Suburbanization carried much of the burden of American claims to freedom and democracy and of its exceptionalism. The message embedded in these themes was convincing and powerful. The United States not only occupied the high moral ground against godless communism, but it also offered an alternative. Importantly, that alternative was within the grasp of peoples who adopted capitalist economies, opened themselves to world trade and foreign investment, and embraced democratic institutions that allowed civil rights and consumer choice.

Behind the short American Century and its peculiar pattern of urbanization was the force of the country's global project. By implicating the suburban way of life in postwar advances across the globe, the desirability of the cities was diminished. Dangerous in numerous ways, obsolete, and representing a time when labor toiled simply to survive, the industrial cities lacked the cultural weight to be considered seriously for extensive and fundamental redevelopment. It might have been cosmopolitan to be urban, but to be urban was no longer sensible. The suburbs were where people should want to be. It was there that the American Dream had relocated.

7. America's Global Project

1. James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945–1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), vii.

2. Patterson, *Grand Expectations,* vii. The historian Henry Steele Commanger agreed: "Americans emerged from the war less self-centered and more conscious of the economic interdependence of all nations and of their responsibilities for the maintenance of sound international economy." See his *The American Mind: An Interpretation of American Thought and Character since the 1880s* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1950), 432. David Harvey made a similar point in relation to American cultural imperialism in his *The New Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 56–57. Neil Smith, in *The Endgame of Globalization* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 44, commented on an empire detached from geography.

3. Sir Hugh Casson, "Fairest Cities of Them All," *New York Times Magazine,* January 24, 1960, 10ff., and Homer Hoyt, "The Structure and Growth of American Cities Contrasted with the Structure of European and Asiatic Cities," *Urban Land* 18, no. 8 (1959): 245–250.

4. Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 75.

5. "New 'Hearts' for Our Cities," *Newsweek,* March 29, 1954, 74.

6. William H. Whyte Jr., "Are Cities Un-American?" *Fortune,* September 1957, 123ff. Thirty-five years later, Thomas Bender answered Whyte's question by noting the historical tenacity of the claim that cities are un-American and yet the necessity of cities for sustaining democracy. See his "Are Cities American?" *CultureFront* 1, no. 2 (1992): 4–11.

7. Ben Kocivar, "All-American Cities," *Look,* February 4, 1958, 35–37, and Robert A. Beauregard, *Voices of Decline: The Postwar Fate of U.S. Cities,* 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2003), 226–228.

8. The Thurmond quotation is from "The Cities: What Next," *Time,* August 11, 1967, 11. That same article reports that the House Un-American Activities Committee had received a staff study that blamed the riots on extremists and communists.

9. The Katzenback quotation is from "Cities: The Bonfire of Discontent," *Time,* August 26, 1966, 10, and the conclusion of the National Commission is on page 9 of its report, U.S. Riot Commission, *Report of the National Commission on Civil Disorders* (New York: Bantam Books, 1968).

10. Thomas J. McCormick, *America's Half Century: United States Foreign Policy in the Cold War* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 192.

11. The first quotation is from Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* (New York: Pantheon, 1985), 279. The second quoted phrase is from Mark Gelfand, *A Nation of Cities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), 166–167. A na-

tionwide Gallup poll in 1950 asked respondents, "What do you think is the most important problem facing the country today?" War was mentioned by 40 percent, the economy by 15 percent, unemployment by 10 percent, and communism by 8 percent. In 1975, as the short American Century came to an end, the same question elicited a different list: high cost of living (60 percent), unemployment (20 percent), dissatisfaction with government (7 percent), and the energy crisis (7 percent). See "What's the Problem?" This Week in Review, *New York Times,* August 1, 1999. On the geopolitical aspects of city-suburban distinctions in this period, see Matthew Farish, "Disaster and Decentralization: American Cities and the Cold War," *Cultural Geographer* 10 (2003): 125–148.

12. See "The City under the Bomb," *Time,* October 2, 1950, 12.

13. "The City under the Bomb," 13. See also "A-Bombs on a U.S. City," *Life,* February 27, 1950, 81ff.; "How U.S. Cities Can Prepare for Atomic War," *Life,* December 18, 1950, 77–82; "Naked City," *Time,* November 28, 1949, 66; and "What an Atomic Bomb Might Do to Your City," *American City,* March 1948, 83–84. In "Mist of Death over New York," *Reader's Digest,* April 1947, 7–10, a fictional atomic bomb was detonated at night deep in the city's harbor, creating a radioactive mist that spread over the city and killed 389,104 people within six weeks.

14. "The City under the Bomb," 12.

15. The quotation is from Elaine Tyler May, "Explosive Issues: Sex, Women, and the Bomb," in *Recasting America: Culture and Politics in the Age of the Cold War,* ed. L. May, 154–170 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 161. On the "Family Radiation Kit," see "The People: Ready to Act," *Time,* September 29, 1961, 13–15.

16. Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Security and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), 204–205.

17. "A-Bombs on a U.S. City," 89. The advertisement is reproduced in Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light,* 311.

18. R. E. Lapp, *Must We Hide?* (Cambridge, Mass.: Adison-Wesley, 1949), 8 and 85. See also Lisle A. Rose, *The Cold War Comes to Main Street* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999), 106. For useful discussions of decentralization and the atomic bomb, see Michael Quinn Dudley, "Sprawl as Strategy: City Planners Face the Bomb," *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 21, no. 1 (2001): 52–63; Farish, "Disaster and Decentralization"; and Margaret Pugh O'Mara, *Cities of Knowledge: Cold War Science and the Search for the Next Silicon Valley* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005), 28–45. During and just after World War II, federal policy concerning defense industries and related worker housing was one of decentralization. See Greg Hise, *Magnetic Los Angeles: Planning the Twentieth-Century Metropolis* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 49–55, and Arnold L. Silverman, "Defense and Deconcentration: Defense Industrialization after

World War II and the Development of Contemporary American Suburbs," in *Suburbia Re-examined,* ed. Barbara M. Kelly, 157–163 (New York: Greenwood, 1989).

19. "Asserts Dispersal Best Bomb Protection," *American City,* February 1955, 24. For a review of the role of city planning in proselytizing "defensive dispersal," see Dudley, "Sprawl as Strategy."

20. Slyvian G. Kindall, *Total Atomic Defense* (New York: Richard Smith, 1952), 83–119.

21. "How U.S. Cities Can Prepare for Atomic War," 85.

22. See Tracy B. Augur, "Planning Cities for the Atomic Age," *American City,* August 1946, 75–76, 123. Richard Gerstell, in his *How to Survive an Atomic Bomb* (New York: Bantam Books, 1950), argued that dispersal was a "silly idea" and that while cities were more vulnerable to attack, they also had more protective shelters. See Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light,* 323–325.

23. "Moves Are to Cities," *Science News Letter* 64, no. 24 (December 12, 1953): 373. Of course, "to the cities" meant to metropolitan areas and not necessarily to the central cities.

24. Quotation is from "How U.S. Cities Can Prepare for Atomic War," 85. See also Augur, "Planning Cities for the Atomic Age," 75, and Lapp, *Must We Hide?* 9.

25. Kindall, *Total Atomic Defense,* 87–88.

26. As Michael Quinn Dudley wrote, "The efforts of the dispersal advocates were sincerely—if naively—directed toward maintaining economic functionality after a nuclear attack and to save lives; yet, they consistently failed to identify dispersal's inherent futility" ("Sprawl as Strategy," 62).

27. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America,* 96.

28. See Dudley, "Sprawl as Strategy"; Gelfand, *A Nation of Cities,* 222–234; and Helen Leavitt, *Superhighway-Superhoax* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1970).

29. The funding formula was later changed to 90:10, federal to state.

30. Augur, "Planning Cities for the Atomic Age," 75.

31. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America,* 75. For general background on public housing, see Rachel Bratt, "Public Housing: The Controversy and Contribution," in *Critical Perspectives on Housing,* ed. R. Bratt, C. Hartman, and A. Meyerson, 335–361 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986).

32. Catherine Bauer, "Freedom of Choice," *Nation,* May 15, 1948, 533–537.

33. On this effort, see Rosalyn Baxandall and Elizabeth Ewen, *Picture Windows: How the Suburbs Happened* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 87–105; Richard O. Davies, *Housing Reform during the Truman Administration* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1966), 67–72; and Nathan Strauss, *Two-Thirds of a Nation* (New York: Knopf, 1952), 256–257.

34. Quoted in Strauss, *Two-Thirds of a Nation,* 263.

35. Davies, *Housing Reform during the Truman Administration,* 18.

A similar ideological attack was mounted against national health insurance during these years. See Jacob S. Hacker, *Divided Welfare State: The Battle over Public and Private Social Benefits in the United States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 224–225.

36. Cited in Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 231.

37. The first quotation is from Davies, *Housing Reform during the Truman Administration,* 68, and the other two quotations are from Baxandall and Ewen, *Picture Windows,* 91 and 93, respectively. In 1952, Congress passed the Gavin Amendment. It stipulated that "no housing built under the [Housing Administration] Act was to be occupied by any current member of any organization listed by the Attorney General as subversive." A number of local public housing authorities attempted to enforce the amendment, but by 1956, after failing a number of court challenges, the federal government withdrew its commitment to enforcement. See David Caute, *The Great Fear: The Anti-Communist Purge under Truman and Eisenhower* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978), 181–182.

38. The subsequent Housing Act of 1954 contained a section (910) that encouraged the provision of housing "in a manner that will facilitate progress in the reduction of vulnerability of congested urban areas to enemy attack" (see Dudley, "Sprawl as Strategy," 59).

39. The Truman quotation is from Davies, *Housing Reform during the Truman Administration,* 96, and the Strauss quotation is from Strauss, *Two-Thirds of a Nation,* 265.

40. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America,* 96.

41. See Elaine May, "Cold War—Warm Hearth: Politics and the Family in Postwar America," in *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order,* ed. S. Fraser and G. Gerstle, 153–181 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989); May, "Explosive Issues"; and Anne M. Boylan, "Containment on the Home Front: American Families during the Cold War," *Reviews in American History* 17, no. 2 (1989): 301–305.

42. May, "Cold War—Warm Hearth," 175.

43. John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 40–53.

44. May, "Explosive Issues." Sexual fears were also, as they had been for decades, connected to race, specifically to miscegenation involving black men and white women.

45. May, "Cold War—Warm Hearth," 153–181.

46. Quotation is from Clifford E. Clark Jr., "Ranch-House Suburbia: Ideals and Realities," in May, *Recasting America,* 171. See also Vera Michaels Dean, "U.S. Foreign Policy in the Atomic Age," *American Scholar* 17, no. 1 (1947): 81–85. William W. Goldsmith argued that the racial divides in postwar cities had a significant influence on U.S. foreign policy. His argument is

rudimentary but very suggestive. See his "The Metropolis and Globalization," *American Behavioral Scientist* 41, no. 3 (1997): 299–310.

47. On the political side of the American Dream—citizenship, civil rights, and civic virtues—see Michael Walzer, *What It Means to Be an American* (New York: Marsilio, 1992).

48. By contrast, Hollywood was portraying the cities of the time as a nightmare, particularly in the film noir genre that explored crime, sexuality, and even communism. See Nicholas Christopher, *Somewhere in the Night: Film Noir and the American City* (New York: Holt, 1977), 33–65.

49. Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890–1945* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 201.

50. Andrew Jamison and Ron Eyerman, *Seeds of the Sixties* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), 5. The "world dominance" seems a bit extreme. See also Rose, *The Cold War Comes to Main Street,* 297.

51. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America,* 13. See also Robert Dalleck, "The Postwar World: Made in the USA," in *Estrangement: America and the World,* ed. S. J. Ungar, 27–49 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), and David S. Landes, *The Poverty and Wealth of Nations* (New York: Norton, 1998), 459–460.

52. On the turn from isolationism to global engagement, see McCormick, *America's Half Century,* 17–124; Patterson, *Grand Expectations,* 82–104; and Donald W. White, *The American Century: The Rise and Decline of the United States as a World Power* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1996), 159–271.

53. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream,* 234. See also Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914–1992* (New York: Vintage, 1996), 234, where he wrote of this period that "the U.S.A. was a power representing an ideology, which most Americans sincerely believed to be the model for the world."

54. White, *The American Century,* 211–242. On "America's market empire" and its impact on Europe, see Victoria de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through 20th Century Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2005).

55. Quoted in Patterson, *Grand Expectations,* 129. On the Marshall Plan, see Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes,* 240–241; Scott Jackson, "Prologue to the Marshall Plan: The Origins of an American Commitment for a European Recovery Program," *Journal of American History* 65, no. 4 (1979): 1043–1068; McCormick, *America's Half Century,* 78–86; Charles L. Mee Jr., *The Marshall Plan: The Launching of Pax Americana* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984); White, *The American Century,* 201–205; Robin W. Winks, *The Marshall Plan and the American Economy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1960); and Herman Van der Wee, *Prosperity and Upheaval: The World*

Economy, 1945–1980 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987), 42–47.

56. The first quotation is from Winks, *The Marshall Plan and the American Economy,* 25, and the second is from Edmond Wright, *The America Dream: From Reconstruction to Reagan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1996), 339.

57. The quotations are from David Ellwood, "'You Too Can Be Like Us': Selling the Marshall Plan," *History Today* 48, no. 10 (1998): 34 and 33, respectively. See also Wright, *The American Dream,* 339.

58. White, *The American Century,* 204. The trade data can be found in Wright, *The American Dream,* 339.

59. The data in this paragraph were taken from U.S. Department of Commerce, *Historical Statistics of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1975), and U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, various years). All data are in 1958 dollars.

60. "Is the World Going American?" *U.S. News & World Report,* March 23, 1959, 74. At the same time, European intellectuals held American culture in contempt, much like the contempt that American intellectuals had for the suburbs.

61. Mee Jr., *The Marshall Plan,* 263. Later, the Marshall Plan became an ideal in the debate over the redevelopment of U.S. cities. In 1960, an advisory committee to the Democratic Party, in a report on cities and suburbs, wrote that "just as the Marshall Plan restored the cities of western Europe from the devastation of war, so our program will restore urban America from the ravages of spreading slums and disorderly growth" (quoted in Gelfand, *A Nation of Cities,* 290).

62. Ellwood, "'You Too Can Be Like Us,'" 33.

63. Olivier Zunz commented in *Why the American Century?* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998) that mass consumption was "the basis for American democracy" and was "emblematic of the 'American Century' as liberals saw it" (90). To this extent, noted Nicholas Dagen Bloom, "the government and the mass media exported the image of the commodious suburban house" as well as that of the shopping mall. Bloom, *Merchant of Illusion: James Rouse, America's Salesman of the Businessman's Utopia* (Columbus: Ohio University Press, 2004), 12 and 125. The invasion of Europe by American consumer goods actually began just after World War I. See Daniel Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Policies in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 370–372, and Peter J. Taylor, "Locating the American Century: A World-Systems Analysis," in *The American Century: Consensus and Coercion in the Projection of American Power,* ed. D. Slater and P. J. Taylor, 3–16 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999).

64. "Is the World Going American?" 82. See also William E. Leuchtenburg, *A Troubled Feast: American Society since 1945* (Boston: Little, Brown,

1973), 55–57, where, on page 55, he mentioned the Swiss department store advertisement.

65. The Hilton quotation is from Annabel Jane Wharton, *Building the Cold War: Hilton International Hotels and Modern Architecture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 8. More generally on this topic, see Jeffrey W. Cody, *Exporting American Architecture, 1870–2000* (London: Routledge, 2003), 128–135, and Stephen Ward, "Learning from the U.S.: The Americanization of Western Urban Planning," in *Urbanism: Imported or Exported?* ed. J. Nasr and M. Volait, 83–106 (Chichester, U.K.: Wiley-Academy, 2003). On the domestic impact of Cold War ideas in architecture and city planning, see Timothy Mennel, "Victor Gruen and the Construction of Cold War Utopias," *Journal of Planning History* 3, no. 2 (2004): 116–150.

66. Harvey, *The New Imperialism,* 55.

67. Richard M. Barsam, *Nonfiction Film: A Critical History,* rev. and expanded ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 276–280; Leo Bogart, *Premises for Propaganda: The United States Information Agency's Operating Assumptions* (New York: Free Press, 1976); Ronald T. Rubin, *The Objectives of the U.S. Information Agency* (New York: Praeger, 1966); George N. Shuster, "The Nature and Development of United States Cultural Relations," in *Cultural Affairs and Foreign Relations,* ed. R. Blum, 8–40 (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963); White, *The American Century,* 236–242; and Reinhold Wagnleiter, "Propagating the American Dream: Cultural Politics as Means of Integration," *American Studies International* 24, no. 1 (1986): 60–84.

68. Shuster, "The Nature and Development of United States Cultural Relations," 13. The Voice of America was "the nation's ideological arm of anti-communism." See David F. Krugler, *The Voice of America and the Domestic Propaganda Battles, 1945–1953* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000), 1.

69. Quoted in Rubin, *The Objectives of the U.S. Information Agency,* 79. See Krugler, *The Voice of America and the Domestic Propaganda Battles, 1945–1953* on frictions around Voice of America between liberal internationalists and conservative isolationists. The difficulties of promoting a single vision of the United States are discussed in Paul Swann, "The Little State Department: Washington and Hollywood's Rhetoric of the Postwar Audience," in *Hollywood to Europe: Experience of a Cultural Hegemony,* ed. D. W. Ellwood and R. Kroes, 176–195 (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1994).

70. Bogart, *Premises for Propaganda,* xii and 89–90; White, *The American Century,* 238. In its involvement with the motion-picture industry and the exporting of movies, the State Department usually objected to three types of films: those depicting race relations (which it believed foreign audiences had too little knowledge to contextualize), gangster films, and horror movies. The first two can be associated with cities. See Swann, "The Little State Department." For a case study of efforts to export American culture to Austria, see

Reinhold Wagnleitner, "The Irony of American Culture Abroad," 285–301, in May, *Recasting America*.

71. For brief overviews of the debate, see de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire,* 454–456, and White, *The American Century,* 231–233. The cultural clash between the United States and the Soviet Union was part of international trade fairs during these years and was a major aspect of the Brussels World's Fair of 1958. See Johne Findling, ed., *Historical Dictionary of World's Fairs and Exhibitions, 1851–1988* (New York: Greenwood, 1990), 311–318. The Brussels World's Fair had a model of the city of Philadelphia that flipped over to replace a slum with a modern city center, thereby recognizing the country's problems but demonstrating its ability to solve them. See Robert H. Haddow, *Pavilions of Plenty: Exhibiting American Culture Abroad in the 1950s* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997), 108.

72. This description of the exhibition is based on "At the Fair, Fascinated Russians Flock to U.S. Exhibits," *Life,* August 10, 1959, 28ff.; "When Nixon Took on Khruschchev," *U.S. News & World Report,* August 3, 1959, 36–39; and White, *The American Century.* The quotation is from "When Nixon Took on Khruschchev," 39.

73. The full text of the speech can be found in "Setting Russia Straight on Facts about the U.S.," *U.S. News & World Report,* August 3, 1959, 70–72.

74. "Nixon-Khrushchev Moscow Debate," August 24, 1959. Video recording 306.2520, records of the U.S. Information Agency, Research Group 306. National Archives at College Park, College Park, Md.

75. Harrison E. Salisbury, "Nixon and Khrushchev Argue in Public as U.S. Exhibit Opens," *New York Times,* July 25, 1959.

76. California was both Nixon's birthplace and the state that epitomized postwar suburban development.

77. The quotations are taken from "Encounter," *Newsweek,* August 3, 1959, 17–18; Salisbury, "Nixon and Khrushchev Argue in Public as U.S. Exhibit Opens," 1–2; and "When Nixon Took on Khrushchev," 36–39.

78. "A Barnstorming Masterpiece," *Life,* August 10, 1959, 22–25. The quotation is on page 22.

79. The quotation is cited in "Nixon, Once Soviet Guest, Becomes Top Soviet Target," *U.S. News & World Report,* September 28, 1959, 60. Richard M. Nixon, *Six Crises* (New York: Doubleday, 1962), 235–291. Nixon would later have another major crisis when in August 1974 he resigned from the presidency, the only president to do so, in the face of probable impeachment for obstruction of justice.

80. May, "Cold War—Warm Hearth," 158.

81. Ibid. See also Daniel Lazare, *America's Undeclared War: What's Killing Our Cities and How to Stop It* (New York: Harcourt, 2001), 243–249.

82. On the politics of mass consumption, see Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Knopf, 2003), esp. 124–129, and Ruth Rosen, *The World Split*

Apart: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America (New York: Viking, 2000), 14.

83. Despite this, "cold war tensions induced a terrible self-doubt and ambiguity" about the American Dream. See Thomas Schaub, "Without Fanfare or Foucault: The Cold War and the Loss of a Defining Narrative," *Clio* 26, no. 1 (1996): 104.

84. Wayne S. Cole, *An Interpretive History of American Foreign Relations* (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey Press, 1968), 482. I have replaced Cole's "urbanization" with "suburbanization." Better than either would be "parasitic urbanization."

85. William L. O'Neill, *American High: The Years of Confidence, 1945–1960* (New York: Free Press, 1986), 4. On the openness of suburbs and their democratic qualities, see Amy Maria Kenyon, *Dreaming Suburbia: Detroit and the Production of Postwar Space and Culture* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004), 55–59. Promoting American interests abroad also siphoned energy and political will from solving domestic problems. One commentator noted in 1969 that "perhaps our generation is so taken up with America's global supremacy that local concerns seem provincial and picayune." See Kenneth E. Fry, "Central Cities Fight Back," *Nation's Business,* September 1969, 60.

8. Identity and Urbanity

1. See John A. Hall and Charles Lindholm, *Is America Breaking Apart?* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999), 61–78; Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914–1991* (New York: Vintage, 1996), 403–432; and James Petras and Morris Morley, *Empire or Republic? American Global Power and Domestic Decay* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

2. Writing in 1967, Guy Debord, a central figure in the revolutionary movements of the 1960s, noted that "we already live in an era of the self-destruction of the urban environment." See his *The Society of the Spectacle* (New York: Zone Books, 1995; orig. pub. 1967), 123.

3. Mike Davis, *Ecology of Fear* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1998), 354. See also Tom Engelhardt, *The End of Victory Culture: Cold War America and the Disillusioning of a Generation* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), and Thomas Schaub, "Without Fanfare or Foucault: The Cold War and the Loss of a Defining Narrative," *Clio* 26, no. 1 (1996): esp. 98.

4. "The United States was involved in a global 'war,' yet Americans were militarily un-menaced. The economy was churning out the most peaceable and the most warlike of big ticket items, and both were being sold to audiences migratory to the suburbs, intent on creating a carefree world of basement playrooms and backyard barbecues. The country was re-imaging itself as a magic kingdom, a cornucopic mechanism for turning out the world's play toys and pleasure environments" (Engelhardt, *The End of Victory Culture,*