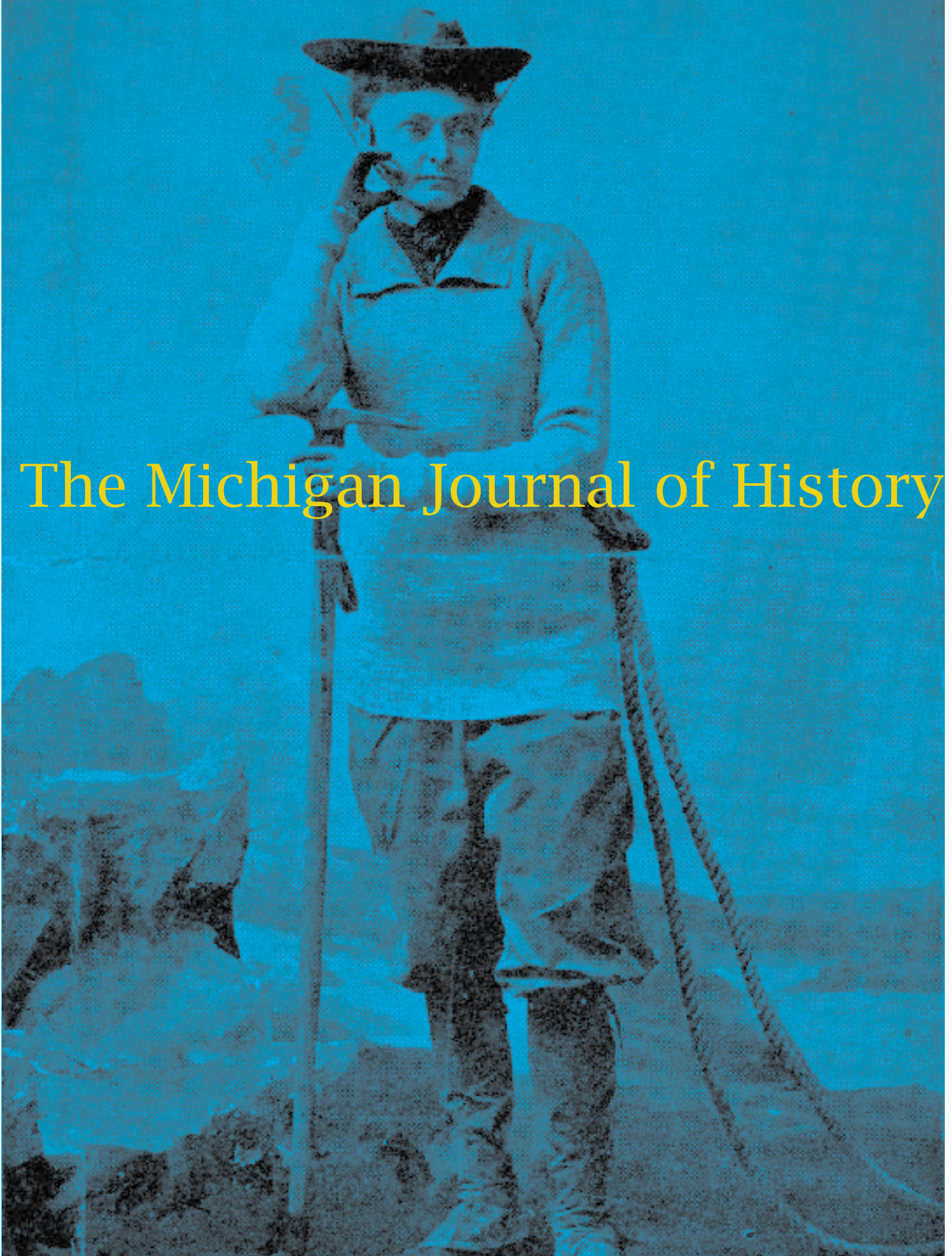


FALL 2014 VOLUME XI

The Michigan Journal of History



About the Cover

Annie Smith Peck (1850-1935) was a notorious mountaineer and lecturer of the early 20th century, known best for climbing Mount Huascarán—the highest peak in Peru. Peck graduated from the University of Michigan in 1878 with a degree in Greek, only a few years after the University first allowed female students to enroll. After making a living by teaching and giving public lectures, Peck discovered a love for mountaineering at the age of 45. Her first major accomplishment in this field was the climbing of the Matterhorn, which she achieved in 1895. The picture on the cover was from a publicity shoot just before she began this journey. In the picture, she wears a woolen tunic, knickerbockers and leather boots. This choice set her apart from previous female mountaineers, most of whom wore dresses or skirts when climbing in order to adhere to the decorum of the time. As part of a promotion, Singer, the sewing machine company, gave away postcards of this image with every purchase. The cards declared that Peck was “The Queen of the Climbers.” Later, Peck enjoyed a successful career climbing mountains in South America, where she made her largest contributions to the field. For more, see Elizabeth Faggs Olds’ *Women of the Four Winds*.

A Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

Dear Readers,

I know I speak for myself and the rest of the editing team at the Michigan Journal of History when I say that we are excited to release this new issue to you. We were once again fortunate to have received many submissions from talented students all over the country, and it was no easy task deciding which essays would be included in this journal. In the end, the pieces we chose reflect a wide array of time periods, events, and cultures. They look at history through unique lenses-- lending fresh perspectives to bygone times.

We are also happy to announce the addition of a new feature to our journal. While we are more than grateful to welcome submissions and readers nationally, we have started a tradition of including an essay which particularly focuses on the greater Ann Arbor-Detroit area that the University of Michigan calls home. In this way, we hope to acknowledge our strong Michigan roots in a way which we can share with our friends across the nation.

In closing, I'd like to thank everyone who was a part of the Fall 2014 issue. This publication would not have been possible without the dedication of the Michigan Journal of History's editorial team. Thank you to all of you who helped put this together, it has been a pleasure working with you all this past semester. I'd also like to extend our thanks to all of the writers who submitted their work for review. We are constantly impressed by not only the volume of submissions, but the talent behind them, and we encourage you all to continue submitting.

Sincerely,

Melissa Durante
Editor-in-Chief, Michigan Journal of History

MICHIGAN JOURNAL OF HISTORY EDITORIAL BOARD, Fall 2014

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Compromised Defense - The Conquests of Basil II

Michael Goodyear

University of Chicago

The reign of Basil II has been considered a time of strength and expansion for the Byzantine Empire. During Basil's nearly fifty-year reign the frontiers of Byzantium grew on various fronts, and the Empire was at a peak of military strength and foreign influence. Just fifty years after Basil's death, however, the Byzantine Empire diminished greatly in size, and its army was in a decrepit state. Basil's successors were certainly not as competent in military or political affairs as Basil himself. That being said, Basil left them a heavy legacy.

At the beginning of Basil's reign there was a bulwark of defense comprised of the buffer states - a series of smaller, independent nations that surrounded the borders of the Byzantine Empire in the Balkans and in the Middle East. The location of these states prevented a direct territorial connection between Byzantium and the greater military powers to the North, South, and East of the Byzantine state.¹ During Basil's campaigns, the Byzantine state directly absorbed the buffer states in Bulgaria and the Caucasus. The political and military repercussions of these conquests have often been overlooked by past scholarship on Basil II. Although Basil is considered one of the greatest of Byzantine emperors, considering the financial and territorial ramifications that stemmed from the integration of these buffer states brings into question the effectiveness and benefit of the very conquests for which he is remembered and exalted.

Many historians hold Basil in esteem for both his internal and external policies. His military victories in Bulgaria are given a semi-mythical quality, especially the Battle of Kleidion

¹ The term "buffer state" is used in this paper to describe any independent nation that bordered the Byzantine Empire and was a hindrance to invaders rather than their ally, thus providing Byzantium with a valuable first defense against invaders.

and its aftermath. Complete histories of the Byzantine Empire in general do not go into much detail on any effects of Basil's conquests.² Even works on issues and enemies that Byzantium faced after Basil II's death do not go into detail about the buffer states.³ John Haldon's specialized work on Byzantine warfare does mention this issue of the buffer states, but only in passing.⁴ The ramifications of Basil's conquests have often been overlooked and have thus far not received a thorough examination.⁵

Basil was a soldier emperor who undertook many wars along Byzantium's borders. According to a near contemporary, Basil "spent the greater part of his reign serving as a soldier on guard at our frontiers," continuously campaigning and expanding the borders of Byzantium.⁶ He campaigned across the Empire and "did not follow the customary procedure of other emperors...for him the time to return was when the task at hand was accomplished."⁷ This single-mindedness resulted in significant gains for Byzantium. Under Basil, the Byzantine Empire achieved a territorial height it had not seen since the advent of Islam. This territorial expansion was achieved through the conquest of the buffer states. These states were the Bulgarian Empire in the Balkans and various Armenian principalities in the Caucasus and they

² Romilly Jenkins, *Byzantium: The Imperial Centuries AD 610-1071* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 301-332; George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University, 1969), 298-315; A.A. Vasiliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1952), 300-374.

³J. Laurent, *Byzance et les Turcs Seldjoudides dans l'Asie occidentale jusqu'en 1081*, Annales de l'Est publiées par la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université de Nancy (Paris, 1913-1914), 16-18; G. Schlumberger, *L'Épopée byzantine à la fin du dixième siècle*, II (Paris: 1896-1905), 498-536. Laurent focuses on the Seljuks while Schlumberger provides details on Basil's relations with the various Caucasian states. Neither directly discusses, however, how Basil's conquests affected or did not affect Seljuk incursions.

⁴ John Haldon, *Warfare, State and Society in the Byzantine World, 565-1204* (London: University College, 1999), 85-90.

⁵ My examination of the ramifications here is strictly limited to the strategic military ramifications. There were certainly others such as seditious conquered populations and tax problems. Due to Basil's great reputation among Byzantine historians that followed him, it is difficult to find explicit source details on consequences of Basil's conquests. Tactical observations and interpreting the observations of historians that followed Basil and witnessed the crumbling of the empire, however, can be achieved to better understand the military consequences of Basil's conquests.

⁶ Michael Psellus, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers*, trans. E. R. A. Sewter (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Classics, 1966), 46.

⁷ Psellus, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers*, 46.

filled a significant role in Byzantine territorial integrity. These smaller states provided a buffer between Byzantium and other states of comparable territorial size or military strength.

The buffer states provided a defense system against foreign powers, which would have to march through other foreign territories before attacking Byzantine lands. Opposing troops were in foreign territory for a longer time before reaching their target, causing greater and more numerous logistical complications, such as provisioning and supporting troops in foreign lands and having to further stretch their own lines of communication. Attack by these foreign bordering nations was also a serious threat, as an armed body moving through a non-allied nation could be seen as a military challenge or an attack. After already having fought their way through one nation, the opposing force would be weakened before it came into conflict with Byzantine troops in their home territory.

In either case, maintaining the existing system of buffer states was a wise defensive plan, especially when those states were not hostile. Even if one of those nations was somewhat hostile to the Byzantine Empire⁸, these buffer states were familiar neighbors, as compared to an unknown or novel threat. No Life or death struggle occurred in these regions. Armenia had always been relatively peaceful, Aleppo and other minor Syrian states were relatively friendly following the expansion of Fatimid power in the South, and Bulgaria had not really been a serious threat since the time of Tsar Simeon at the start of the tenth century. Even if any of these nations did aggressively attack Byzantium, they were known quantities. The Byzantines had observed their lands, people, and tactics for centuries. The same cannot be said for other enemies beyond the borders states. Nomadic steppe tribes pouring into the Caucasus and Eastern European regions were new and untested enemies with which the Byzantines were brought into direct contact due to Basil's annexation of the buffer states.

⁸ The only state that falls into this category during basil II's reign was Bulgaria under Tsar Samuel.

Basil's conquests were not the first time that the buffer state system was undermined. Nikephoros II Phokas had launched an attack on Bulgaria in 967 in which he incited Sviatoslav I of Kiev to attack Bulgaria from the north. Sviatoslav was so successful that after quickly annexing Bulgarian land, he continued on to attack Byzantine territory and threatened Constantinople. Only with great difficulty did Nikephoros' successor, John I Tzimiskes, defeat Sviatoslav and restore Byzantine power in the region. Following Sviatoslav's defeat, Bulgaria was annexed by Tzimiskes; the nation became independent again early in the reign of Basil II, reestablishing itself as a state between the Byzantines and peoples further north.

This defensive system disappeared after the conquests of Basil II along the Danube and in the Caucasus. Although Bulgaria had been subjugated by John I Tzimiskes, Tsar Samuel led a rebellion against Byzantine authority, reestablishing a Bulgarian Empire centered at Ohrid. This empire included Macedonia, most of the original Bulgarian state, western portions of the Balkans, and even part of Epiros, Thessaly, and Albania.⁹ Basil's first expedition against the Bulgarians ended in failure, but Basil opened a new series of campaigns against the Bulgarian Tsar in 1001. First, Basil created a wedge of Byzantine territory up to Pliska, effectively cutting off Macedonia, the core of Samuel's empire, from the old Bulgarian heartland.¹⁰ Continuing this strategy, Basil utilized pincer movements to further isolate Samuel's forces until he was confident enough to bring the Bulgarian army to battle. The Byzantine strategy of attrition lasted until 1014, effectively wearing down Bulgarian resistance. With this weakening of Bulgarian forces, Basil confidently engaged the Bulgarian army in 1014 where Byzantine troops annihilated the Bulgarians at the Battle of Kleidion. Basil then blinded the 15,000 survivors, leaving one in each hundred with a single eye to guide his comrades back to Samuel. Samuel

⁹ John Haldon, *The Byzantine Wars* (Charleston, SC: Tempus Publishing Inc., 2000), 106.

¹⁰ Haldon, *Byzantine Wars*, 106.

died shortly after the battle, supposedly because he saw his once proud army return decimated and mutilated.¹¹ After their leader was gone, Bulgarian resistance effectively collapsed, with their entire empire being absorbed by 1018, restoring a direct border with fierce warrior peoples beyond the Danube as the Byzantine frontier.

Basil was also active in the fractured Caucasus region in annexing buffer states.¹² The death of Gagik I in 1020 caused the Bagratid states of Armenia to descend into chaos.¹³ Gagik had been an important and influential ruler in the Caucasus, and his death destabilized the region. The Georgian state of Tao in Iberia, which had been partially absorbed already, was soon to be completely subjected by Basil, who also marched against Vaspurikan, an Armenian state formerly ruled by Gagik, which was severely weakened.¹⁴ Basil used this opportunity to conquer the region of Vaspurikan and add it to his conquest of the Tao region of Iberia. The remaining Armenian Kingdom of Ani was left intact under Gagik's successor, John Smbat, but was to fall under Byzantine rule after its ruler's death in accordance with an agreement signed between Basil and John Smbat.¹⁵ These acquisitions by Basil resulted in a significant portion of land in the Caucasus coming under Byzantine rule, and Byzantium's Eastern borders now reached all the way to Eastern Iran.

In Syria, Basil undertook a different strategy than in the Caucasus and in the Balkans. He realized that the danger of occupying regions far from Constantinople and creating an extended strip of territory in Syria would directly expose Byzantium to the military and naval power of the Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt¹⁶. Instead, Basil maintained vassal and neutral buffer states such as

¹¹ Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 310.

¹² See Map 1 for the locations of Tao, Vaspurikan, and Ani.

¹³ Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 314.

¹⁴ John Harper Forsyth, *The Byzantine-Arab Chronicle (938-1034) of Yahya b. Sa'id Al-Antaki* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 1977), 558, 564.

¹⁵ Forsyth, *Byzantine-Arab Chronicle*, 565.

¹⁶ Haldon, *Warfare, State and Society in the Byzantine World*, 41.

the Emirate of Aleppo as a screen to defend Byzantine territory from direct attacks by the powerful Fatimid Caliphate. Realizing the costs and dangers that an extended Syrian border would create, Basil opted for a strong defensive system of buffer states in this region, unlike in Bulgaria and in the Caucasus.

One prime factor for Basil's decision to maintain the buffer states in Syria was that this front had a more concentrated and powerful enemy than did the Caucasus or the Balkans. At this time the Fatimid Caliphate was the preeminent Muslim power and was a concentrated state which held sway over vast territories. Meanwhile in the Caucasus, there were no major imposing powers that could challenge Byzantium. The Persian Empire was long gone, and the impotent Abbasid Caliphate no longer had authority that extended much further than Baghdad. A similar situation had been established in the Balkans, where no concentrated powers existed that could seriously threaten Byzantine territory. The Kievan Rus were now allies of Byzantium following the marriage of Basil's sister to Vladimir of Kiev and had come under the spiritual guidance of Constantinople, effectively removing any immediate threat from this once dangerous power.¹⁷ No other established states in the region had the military capacity to seriously harm Byzantium. Basil had made his conquests while keeping in mind the potential dangers they could cause in the future by analyzing the present dangers in all three regions.

During Basil's reign the steppes seemed secured, and the Seljuk Turks were a distant people, making the policy of annexing Bulgaria and Armenia seem like an effective policy which would further the territories and strength of Byzantium.¹⁸ Basil's great conquests in Bulgaria and the Middle East, however, paradoxically weakened the Byzantine Empire by leaving its borders

¹⁷ Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 304.

¹⁸ Michael Angold, *The Byzantine Empire, 1025-1204: A Political History*, 2nd ed. (London; Longman, 1997), 32.

less protected due to the absorption of former buffer states¹⁹. In addition, Byzantine troops were diverted and paid to defend this newly conquered land instead of having the Bulgarian or Armenian states pay to defend their own land. The lack of a local kingdom in the Balkans and the Caucasus also made rule in this region less centralized and defense less concentrated. Defense, supplies, and support now had to come from Constantinople, stretching Byzantine resources and manpower over great distances. The conquest and absorption of these buffer states also led to direct contact between Byzantium and new and more dangerous enemies, such as the Pechenegs and the Seljuk Turks, which were not impeded by the now annexed buffer states. Basil's successors faced this problem of an exposed frontier, which was exploited by the steppe peoples and the Seljuks and contributed to the decline of Byzantium.

Significant threats to Byzantium may not have existed during Basil's reign, but the introduction of new enemies into these areas significantly threatened Byzantine's newly-expanded borders. In the years following Basil's death, a host of new enemies appeared that took advantage of Basil's expansion of the Byzantine state. Liudprand of Cremona cites the dangerous position of Byzantium in the Balkans, where it was surrounded by the fiercest savage nations – Magyars, Pechenegs, Khazars, and Rus.²⁰ In the Balkans, barbarian tribes such as the Pechenegs attacked the Byzantine Empire and ravaged imperial land. The Bulgarians may have created problems for the Byzantine Empire throughout their history, but their state also provided a barrier that protected Byzantium from the turmoil of the European steppes, which began to directly affect Byzantium in 1027.²¹

¹⁹ Haldon, *Warfare, State and Society*, 85.

²⁰ Liudprand of Cremona, *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, trans. Paolo Squatriti (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 50.

²¹ Angold, *The Byzantine Empire, 1025-1204*, 32.

The situation in the Caucasus would also be similar to that in the Balkans in that the absorption of Tao and Armenia by Basil allowed direct Turkish raids on the Byzantine Empire beginning in the 1040s. In the East, Seljuk Turks invaded and ravaged Byzantine Armenia, formerly the Armenian buffer states of Vaspurikan and Ani. Michael Psellos, a scholar of medieval Byzantium, recognizes the extension of Byzantine borders in the East and also cites Empress Eudocia's laments in regards to barbarian Turks invading Byzantine Armenia and ravaging imperial lands.²² Without the Armenian buffer states, the Turks could directly invade Byzantine lands. Significantly, this allowed Turkish warriors to reach Lake Van relatively unhindered, and resulted in the Byzantine army facing a better-prepared Turkish army at the Battle of Manzikert, instead of one weakened by a long march through other foreign states. The political aftermath of Manzikert invited the conquest of almost all of Anatolia by the Turks.

In addition to the problems associated with any direct attack, it was very difficult for Byzantium to achieve victory while being attacked on various fronts by different enemies. Basil only led victorious campaigns of conquest while being actively engaged on one front. According to Yahya ibn Sa'id al-Antaki, a historian who was alive during Basil's reign, Basil established peace with the Fatimid Caliph, allowing him to transfer Byzantine troops to the Balkans in order to apply more pressure on Bulgaria.²³ Under his successors the Empire was attacked simultaneously on many fronts. As nomadic hordes invaded the Balkans, Normans invaded Italy and Seljuk Turks rode into Anatolia. These serious crises diverted attention from the other fronts.

²² Psellus, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers*, 253, 348. Michael Attaleiates, *The History*, trans. Anthony Kaldellis and Dimitris Krallis (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012). Psellos' contemporaneous fellow historian, Michael Attaleiates, does explicitly mention an extended border, only mentions Basil II twice (as Basileios in Kaldellis and Krallis' translation), mentions Bulgaria only in passing, and never mentions Armenia. It is still useful to note that he implicitly gives proof of a long Eastern border through his various mentions of troops moving to borders from Syria into the Caucasus, fighting a variety of foreign armies from the Sultan of Aleppo to the Seljuk Sultan.

²³ Forsyth, *Byzantine-Arab Chronicle*, 503; Cedrenus, George and John Scylitzes, *Historiarum compendium* (Bonn: Bekker, 1839), 447.

This problem was augmented by the lack of buffer states to stave off attack on at least some of Byzantium's many frontiers. With the conquest of Bulgaria and several Caucasian states, however, the Byzantine Empire was opened up to direct onslaught by powerful peoples who, even if they were not threats in Basil's day, wreaked havoc on Byzantium during the eleventh century. The influx of these new enemies coupled with extended Byzantine borders and a lack of buffer states hampered Byzantium's system of defense.

Basil's extensive territorial conquests destroyed the buffer zones surrounding the Byzantine Empire, creating the financial burden of garrisoning those new lands with Byzantine troops which strained Byzantine resources.²⁴ Basil's foreign wars of conquest were expensive by themselves and even those that succeeded created even more dire costs. His annexation of Bulgaria and the Caucasian states of Vaspurikan, Tao, and later Ani, not only removed long-time buffer zones between the Byzantine Empire and its most powerful neighbors, but also added expenses to Byzantine defense. Alliances with rulers and peoples along the frontier assuaged Byzantine military costs in these regions since the Byzantines had to maintain less of their own troops in these regions.²⁵ As the imperial income decreased under Basil's successors, the Byzantine state began to experience budgetary difficulties.²⁶ These difficulties in turn hampered Byzantium's economic capacity to engage in defense and warfare successfully.

Basil had led campaigns throughout his reign, but the implications of his conquests were unseen even by Basil. As Psellos remarks, where sufficient troops and finances were lacking, 'expansion became merely a diminution of strength'.²⁷ Only fifty years after Basil's death, the Byzantine Empire certainly did not have sufficient troops or money to maintain Basil's gains.

²⁴ Holmes, *Basil II*, 525-526.

²⁵ Holmes, *Basil II*, 530-531.

²⁶ Holmes, *Basil II*, 28.

²⁷ Psellus, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers*, 306.

Basil had purposely not conquered regions in Syria because the conquest of these smaller states would bring the Byzantine Empire into more direct territorial contact with the Fatimid Caliphate. Meanwhile, since there were no clear and present dangers for Byzantium in either the Balkans or the Caucasus, it was deemed safe and tactically wise to annex the frontier regions.

Soon after Basil's death, trouble was imminent in the conquered regions of Bulgaria and Armenia, as new dangers arose in the form of nomadic raids in the Balkans and the onslaught of the Seljuk Turks in the East. The extended, exposed frontier provided these peoples a chance to directly attack Byzantium without having to traverse through bordering lands, which would weaken opposing armies, or lose troops through military action in those frontier nations. Basil's extensive campaigns may have provided short-term success for the Byzantine Empire, but they also compromised Byzantium's long-term defensive strategy.

Basil can hardly be faulted for not predicting future movements of new enemies but he can be faulted for not seeing the usefulness of the buffer states in the Balkans and the Caucasus for the future. Buffer states had served as defensive zones for the Byzantine Empire for centuries and were time tested in effectiveness of military policy and foreign policy. During the late Roman period the Byzantines had used the Ghassanids to defend from Arab incursions from the South and defend the southern border from other hostile attacks while the Sassanid Persians employed the Lakhmids in a similar manner. The Byzantines had used Armenian and pre-Georgian peoples as buffer zones in the Caucasus for centuries and had previously settled various tribes in the Balkans to serve as buffer zones. Enemies had invaded these two regions many times before and it was likely that they would do so again. Neither region was built up with advanced defensive structures and the opposition of local peoples only hindered their defenses. The conquests of both regions were of potentially questionable economic benefit,

neither of which was exceedingly prosperous and both had suffered damage due to war. In addition, the Armenian states had been friendly with the Byzantine Empire for generations. The exact benefit of Basil's conquests, except an increase in prestige, territory, and glory, is somewhat questionable as his conquests only increased the financial and military burden of the Byzantines while diverting resources and men from other regions and development projects.

Basil may be remembered as one of the greatest Byzantine emperors, but the negative effects of his policies belie the laudatory image provided by contemporary and modern historians. Coupled with the problems of new enemies and exposed frontiers, the increased expenses, which were a result of defending Basil's new conquests, made it more difficult for his successors to defend the Empire. Even under commendable emperors, these problems would have proved a serious threat to Byzantine security, let alone under Basil's often-ineffective successors. In addition to poor governance, rivalry between the military and civil aristocracies, and a host of other issues, the problems Basil's conquests created helped to explain the rapid decline of the Byzantine state during the eleventh century. Although it may have seemed like a tactical move at the time, Basil's conquest of the buffer states of Bulgaria, Vaspurikan, Tao, and Ani stretched Byzantine finances, causing the Byzantine borders to be exposed to attack, ultimately compromising the defense and integrity of the Byzantine Empire.

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Buffalo Extermination: 1865 to 1883

Heather Kirkpatrick

University of Michigan

The near extermination of the American bison, often referred to as the buffalo, is a story that spans centuries. The lives of the buffalo were intrinsically connected to both the ecological world around it, the Great Plains, as well as their most cunning predator, the human. Estimates of the real population of buffalo at the beginning of the 19th century are uncertain, but most experts believe it consisted of around 20 million buffalo in 1800. By 1850 that number had decreased to 10 million; by 1900, the number of buffalo on the Great Plains had dwindled to less than 1000.²⁸ There are many reasons for this sizable depletion of the American bison. Ecological changes had a major impact; however these changes were not extreme enough to account for the fast-paced destruction of the buffalo population. Instead, the downfall of this once marvelous creature was mainly the result of human influence.²⁹ The two main reasons for the destruction of the buffalo between 1865 and 1883 were economic gain attributed to the sale of buffalo hides, as well as the “civilizing” mission of Americans towards the Plains Indians.

Several Native American tribes hunted buffalo. Nomadic tribes included the Blackfoot (northern Montana), the Crow (Yellowstone River country in Montana and Wyoming), the Sioux (Dakotas), the Arapaho and Cheyenne (eastern Colorado, Wyoming, and Nebraska), the Kiowa (Kansas and Oklahoma), and the Comanche (western Texas). In addition, the Mandan, the

²⁸ Lueck, D. “The Extermination and Conservation of the American Bison.” *The Journal of Legal Studies*, 2006, 31.S2, pg. 610

²⁹ Isenberg, A. C. *The Destruction of the Buffalo: An Environmental History, 1750- 1920*. New York: NY: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Pg. 129

Hidatsa, and the Arikara lived in villages.³⁰ Nomads are defined as “groups with no fixed abodes who moved from place to place in search of food and grazing land.” All of these tribes, both nomadic and settled, depended on the buffalo to varying degrees, and they were central the Plains Indians’ livelihoods and culture. Bison provided food, weapons, shelter, clothing and tools, as well as a large role in Plains religion and mythology.³¹

The Western Indian Wars

The Western Indian Wars, which lasted from 1866 to 1890, led many people to believe the American bison should be eradicated. The Western Indian Wars occurred when a large number of eastern Americans, mainly miners, ranchers, and homesteaders, moved west after the Civil War. Due to altercations which developed between the settlers and the Plains Indians, the federal government felt it was necessary to control plains tribes by placing them on reservations.³² However, many Plains Indians did not want to move to reservations, so the federal government and the military needed a way to force them to give up their ancestral lands. Military officials stationed on the plains decided that since Plains Indians depended so heavily on buffalo for sustenance, the eradication of the buffalo would mean the end of Plains Indian tribes and the “brutality” they practiced.³³

However, for the military fighting the Comanche Indians, killing buffalo had the opposite effect. As the buffalo began to disappear, the Comanche began taking steps to ensure the perpetuation of their main food supply.³⁴ When discussing the Comanche, Kicking Bird, chief of the Kiowa, explained,

“The buffalo was their money[,] their only resource with which to buy what they needed

³⁰ Lueck, “American Bison”, pg. 618

³¹ Newton. *The Slaughter of the Bison*. 1968. Retrieved from Forest Preservation of Cook County (IL)

³² *Western Indian Wars*. Smithsonian National Museum of American History.

³³ “The Descent of Civilization: The Extermination of the American Buffalo.” *PBS Online*.

³⁴ Klos, G. “Indians.” *Texas State Historical Association*. June 2010.

and did not receive from the government... They loved them just as the white man does his money, and just as it made a white man's heart feel to have his money carried away, so it made them feel to see others killing and stealing their buffalo.”³⁵

The loss of the Comanche’s main source of materials led many to consider retaliatory action, and they began to perform raids in both Texas and Mexico. In turn, the authorities on the northern side of the Rio Grande led their own attacks on the Comanche. In June 1874, a Comanche war party attacked a buffalo hunting party at Adobe Walls. Sixteen men, including thirteen Comanche warriors and three hunters, died. This battle, as well as the subsequent Second Battle of Adobe Walls, prompted American officials to attempt to force even more Comanche onto reservations. Later that year, the military burned five hundred Comanche lodges and destroyed many supplies, propelling many Comanche to move to reservations.³⁶ Pushing “hostile” Plains Indians onto reservations was supposed to have two benefits: opening the plains to more buffalo hunters, stimulating the economy and furthering America’s “civilizing” mission by forcing Plains Indians to farm on reservations.

The Comanche were not the only group that chose to fight these relocation orders, and when it came to military attacks, Plains Indians had an advantage.³⁷ Many Plains Indian tribes used guerilla warfare, which was far more effective on the plains to traditional forms of fighting.³⁸ When General Sheridan and General Sherman, famed for their ruthless destruction of the South during the Civil War, gained their commissions as generals on the Great Plains, they used previous experience to attempt to defeat the Plains tribes. David Smits, a historian studying Plains Indians, wrote, “In order to combat the guerrilla style, the generals decided to cut of the

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Smits D.D. “The Frontier Army and the Destruction of the Buffalo: 1865-1883.” *The Western Historical Quarterly*. 1994. 25.3. Pg. 318

³⁸ Ibid, 317

enemy's resources: namely, the buffalo."³⁹ A commentator from the time stated that an enemy using guerilla tactics could only be beaten by, "making it impossible for him to exist in a country he operates in."⁴⁰ In the case of the Plains Indians, this meant the destruction of the buffalo.

While the American officers fighting the Plains Indians reduced the number of bison on the plains, they failed to anticipate the desperation this would instill in the tribes, which would cause them to fight even harder. In 1880, William Blackmore, an English scholar, wrote about the effects that the destruction of the buffalo had on Plains Indians. He wrote, "Many of the wild Indians of the plains, deprived of their ordinary sustenance, government rations not being forthcoming, and driven to desperation by starvation, have taken to the war path."⁴¹ This caused further violence among the Plains Indians, and it did not help the "civilizing" or economic goals held by military officers or politicians.

Military Policy on the destruction of the buffalo

Since buffalo were such an important part of Plains Indian life, it was logical that certain members of the military targeted buffalo for destruction. In 1868, a letter from General Sheridan to General Sherman stated that, "the best way for the government is to now make them poor by the destruction of their stock."⁴² The destruction of the stock meant the destruction of the buffalo population to Sheridan (Smits, 1994, p.323). Their theory was that this destruction would lead to the subjugation of Plains Indians, causing them to willingly go onto reservations and become yeoman farmers. By doing this, the Plains Indians would take another step forward on the path to "civilization."

In another quote, Sheridan writes, "If I could learn that every Buffalo in the northern herd

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Maypenny, G.J. "Chapter VIII." *Our Indian Wars*. 1880. University of Virginia Library.

⁴² Ibid., 323

were killed I would be glad. The destruction of this herd would do more to keep Indians quiet than anything else that could happen, except the death of all the Indians. Since the destruction of the southern herd ... the Indians in that section have given us no trouble”⁴³ This not only shows that Plains Indians caused problems for the military stationed in the West, but that the American officers had trouble controlling them. In addition, it confirms Sheridan’s theory that the destruction of the Plains Indians most vital resource could subdue them, and it shows the connection between the economic and “civilizing” benefits of killing buffalo.

According to William T. Hornaday, Superintendent of the National Zoological Park, professional hunters killed approximately 3,158,730 buffalo from the southern herd before the eventual destruction of the southern herd in 1874.⁴⁴ This large number of buffalo hides brought economic benefits to those who sold them. In addition, the destruction of the southern herd presumably made it very difficult for the Southern tribes, among them the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Kiowa, and Comanche, to survive. This, among other factors, forced these tribes onto reservations.

One way that the military helped destroy buffalo herds, and therefore force Plains Indians onto reservations, was through the distribution of free ammunition to buffalo hunters. Frank H. Mayer, a buffalo hunter during the 1870s, wrote, “Part of this encouragement was of a practical nature that we runners [hunters] appreciated. It consisted of ammunition, free ammunition, all you could use, all you wanted, more than you needed.”⁴⁵ The army did not have enough men on the plains to exterminate the buffalo or severely hinder Plains Indians’ lives, but there were plenty of men who hunted in order to sell the hides to eastern companies. Free ammunition allowed hunters to shoot into herds of buffalo indiscriminately without the fear they would not

⁴³ Smits, “Frontier Army,” 327.

⁴⁴ Hornaday, W.T.. *The Extermination of the American Bison. The Project Gutenberg.* 1889. Pg. 510

⁴⁵ Mayer F.H., & Roth C.B. “The Buffalo Harvest.” 1910. Accessed *PBS Online.*

be able to get more ammunition, and it caused more buffalo to die. This brought individual economic benefits for the hunters, in addition to fewer buffalo on which Native Americans could survive.

Even though the military clearly supported buffalo extermination, it was not an official policy. Rather, there existed an informal, popular idea that the destruction of the buffalo would cause the destruction of Native Americans. This led some military officers to make individual choices that would lead to the buffalo extermination. Andrew C. Isenberg, a history professor at Princeton, put it best when he said, “Sherman commended the hunters but he did not command them. Although the hunters served Sherman’s purposes, they did not come to the plains at his behest but rather to satisfy an industrial economy’s appetite for natural resources.”⁴⁶ Here, a link is established between the two ideas of civilizing the Plains Indians and the economic benefits of hunting buffalo. Without the incentives provided by the military, there would have been fewer buffalo killed. Thus, America’s “civilizing” mission would have been more difficult.

Commercial Reasons and the Railroad

Although the destruction of the buffalo was beneficial for America’s “civilizing” mission, it also helped businesses on the east coast. In 1871, a tannery in Pennsylvania discovered a technique to use buffalo skins as commercial leather. This increased the price of buffalo hides which incentivized more people to travel to the West in order to kill buffalo. Frank Mayer, a buffalo hunter during the 1870s, wrote, “The whole Western country went buffalo-wild. It was like a gold rush...Men left jobs, businesses, wives and children, and future prospects to get into buffalo running.”⁴⁷ Subsequently, there were approximately three million buffalo killed annually

⁴⁶ Isenberg, A. C. (2006). *The Destruction of the Buffalo: An Environmental History, 1750- 1920*. New York: NY: Cambridge University Press. Pg. 127

⁴⁷ Mayer, “The Buffalo Harvest.”

to meet the increased demand for hides.⁴⁸ The new technology led to a larger diversity of parts for machines, which helped the economy of the east.

The development of the railroads, built around the same time as the discovery of new uses for buffalo hides, also allowed for a cheaper way of getting hunters to the west.⁴⁹ The expansion of railroads severely impacted the population of buffalo for several reasons. In 1867, the Union-Pacific Railroad extended to Cheyenne, Wyoming. This essentially split the American bison into the northern and southern herds, reducing their reproductive capacity as well as the population. By 1870, the Kansas Pacific Railroad and Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad made the southern herd accessible to hunters. The Northern Pacific Railroad reached Glendive, Montana in 1880, thus making the northern herd open to exploitation. Before the railroads, it was very expensive to ship hides east. The development of the railroads around the 1870s facilitated the cheap transportation of these resources. The southern herd was the first killed off due to the fact that the railroad cut through the southern plains first. The northern herd was decimated years later with the development of the Northern Pacific Railroad (Lueck, 2002, p.S620).

Progression of “Civilization”

In addition to the economic benefits from the destruction of the buffalo population, many Americans felt that buffalo perpetuated “savagery.” During the 1860s, ideals about the plains being a wasteland changed to thoughts of it being productive for cattle grazing (Webb, 1872, p.114). The only problem was that buffalo and Native Americans lived on the land. Settlers felt that once buffalo left the land, the Plains Indians would follow. This would leave large tracts of land open for white settlement.

⁴⁸ McDaniel, C., & Gowdy, J.M. “Markets and biodiversity loss: some case studies and policy considerations.” *International Journal of Social Economics*, 25.10, 1998. Pg. 1458.

⁴⁹ Lueck, “Buffalo,” 620

Since the first settlements on the east coast of America, Europeans and later Euro-Americans have held the belief that productive use of land is civilized, and unproductive use of land is uncivilized. This argument stems from philosopher John Locke's theory that unless land is used to its fullest potential, it is being wasted.⁵⁰ This argument was used again in the relocation of Plains Indians onto reservations in the 1860s and 1870s. General Sherman wrote, "in so short a time replaced the wild buffaloes by more numerous herds of tame cattle, and by substituting for the useless Indians the intelligent owners of productive farms and cattle-ranches." He implies that "civilized" culture would take over the lands previously inhabited by "savage" people. In addition, we can see a comparison of cattle to buffalo. Cattle are seen as the "civilized" version of the buffalo. He also compares the intelligence of Plains Indians to white owners, stating that white settlers are more intelligent than Native Americans. Therefore, he feels that Native Americans should give up the land in order for people who will better use the land to take advantage of it.⁵¹

The Secretary of the Interior, Columbus Delano, also stated his desire that Native Americans give up their "savage" habits. He stated, "While I would not seriously regret the total disappearance of the buffalo from our western prairies, in its effect on the Indians, regarding it rather as a means of hastening their sense of dependence upon the products of the soil and their own labors."⁵² To achieve this, Americans had to force Native Americans to give up their reliance on buffalo. In Delano's mind, once Plains Indians did this, they would see how beneficial it was to farm, and they would happily keep their "civilized" way of life.

Sherman also discussed the progression of civilization. He states, "It seems idle to expect that the enterprising and industrious white race will cease till every acre of this continent

⁵⁰ Locke, John. "Second Treatise on Government." 1689. S. 33

⁵¹ Smits, "Buffalo," 337

⁵² Delano, C. Report of the Secretary of the Interior.

susceptible of cultivation is reduced to possession, and till the vast unfenced prairie which has been for ages the pasture-field for its millions of buffalo is covered by herds of horses, beef cattle, and sheep, each having an owner entitled to protection in his property by the government, local or national.”⁵³ This shows the dream of American civilization including the production of cattle.

Since the founding of America, people have used John Locke’s theories of property to rationalize taking land from Native Americans. Many people who took it from Native Americans felt that taking full advantage of the land was enough to justify their actions.⁵⁴ Sherman’s quote also shows the transformation of “natural” land into agricultural land, as well as the transition from Native American occupiers of that land to white owners. In addition, we see the formation of “civilized” government compared to “savage” Plains Indian governments. These all follow President Jefferson’s dream of small yeoman farmers participating in representative governments.

America’s desire for more land extended as far as breaking treaties. The Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1868 granted Sioux Indians “the right to hunt on any lands north of North Platte, and on the Republican Fork of the Smoky Hill river, so long as the buffalo may range thereon in such numbers as to justify the chase.”⁵⁵ The treaty banned American hunters, but it allowed for scientific exploration, land grants, and mining claims. These three practices are central to the American idea of settlement. The treaty was set up as if they planned on settling, or at least exploiting, the land in upcoming years.⁵⁶ In 1874, Columbus Delano wrote in his report to

⁵³ Sherman, W. “Introduction.” *Report of the Secretary of War...To the Two Houses of Congress*. University of Virginia Library.

⁵⁴ Locke, “Second Treatise,” s. 36

⁵⁵ Delano, C. (1874). “Treaty with Sioux Indians.” *Report of the Secretary of Interior...To the Two Houses of Congress*. *University of Virginia Library*.

⁵⁶ Isenberg, “Buffalo,” 125 and 128

Congress that there were no longer enough buffalo to warrant Sioux hunting them. Therefore, he concluded that “time has arrived when it should be open to settlement and cultivation by the white man.”⁵⁷ This came after news that the Black Hills held gold, which makes the “civilization” goals of the Federal government seem based more in economics than on helping the Sioux achieve what policy makers felt was good for them.

Around the same time the federal government took away the Sioux right to hunt buffalo on North Platte and the Republican Fork of the Smoky Hill River, Americans began hunting on the Great Sioux Reservation. After the Sioux moved onto reservations, a change in ideas about extermination by American hunters occurred. Up until this point, many military officials supported the destruction of buffalo in order to achieve the end goal of getting Plains Indians onto reservations. After the Sioux moved onto reservations, they felt that buffalo should not be killed anymore. In 1879, Sheridan wrote that “wholesale slaughtering of the buffalo should be stopped”⁵⁸ The slaughtering he is referring to is the hunting which occurred on the Great Sioux Reservation. Sheridan felt that white people should not be hunting on these lands because the federal government did not adequately supply the Sioux with food. Therefore, if there were enough buffalo on the reservation, they could hunt there, and they would not cause trouble for the United States.⁵⁹

In the federal government’s mind, it would be a waste to spend so much time and effort to force Plains Indians onto reservations, only to have them leave due to lack of food. Buffalo was still a staple of the Sioux diet due to the American government not providing them with enough food. This shows us that the main goal of moving Native Americans onto reservations was to get them out of the way of “productive” land usage. It somewhat seems that in this case,

⁵⁷ Delano, “Treaty.”

⁵⁸ Smits, “Frontier,” 337

⁵⁹ Ibid, 337

they did not care about the civilization of the Plains Indians, but rather about the economic benefits they could accrue from the production of buffalo hides. Up until this point, it was a main goal of the government to persuade Plains Indians to stop eating buffalo, but once they opened the land to “civilized” people, the desire to eradicate the buffalo population ended.

Opposition to Buffalo Extermination

Many people felt that “civilizing” Native Americans was the right thing to do, but many felt that the destruction of the buffalo was not a good way of achieving this end. One explorer, W.E. Webb, published a book about his journey in which he discussed the need for a policy to protect the buffalo. He questioned people’s reactions on whether they would support the same kind of latent destruction of “useful” animals. He wrote, “By law...no man should be suffered to pull trigger on a buffalo, unless he will make practical use of the robe and the meat. What would be thought of a hunter, in any of the Western States, who shot quails and chickens and left them where they fell?”⁶⁰ Webb’s interpretation shows that some people saw the misuse of the buffalo as wrong. His idea also stems from Locke’s philosophy that being wasteful is against God’s will.⁶¹ Unfortunately, it would take until 1884 for Congress to begin protecting wild American bison.⁶²

In addition to the idea that the haphazard killing of buffalo was wrong, some people felt that trespassing on reservation land was unjust as well. In addition, some members of the federal government had differing opinions on Native Americans’ place in future American society. Columbus Delano stated in 1873, “These encroachments by the whites upon the reservations set apart for the exclusive occupancy of the Indian is one prolific source of trouble in the

⁶⁰ Webb, W.E. *Buffalo Land: An Authentic Account of the Discoveries, Adventures, and Mishaps of a Scientific and Sporting Party in the Wild West*. The Project Gutenberg. Pg. 312-313.

⁶¹ Locke, “Second Treatise,” s. 46

⁶² “Time Line of the American Bison.” *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*.

management of the reservation Indians, and measures should be adopted to prevent such trespasses in the future.”⁶³ Delano felt that Native Americans and the rest of American society should remain separate. This tells us that Delano did not really care about what happened to Plains Indians as long as they were not getting in the way of other Americans. For example, Delano supported buffalo extermination, but only for those buffalo that were not on reservations. This tells us that he had two main goals for moving Native Americans onto reservation land. First, once Plains Indians were on reservations, they would become civilized, which was a goal of buffalo extermination. After Plains Indians moved onto reservations, buffalo hunting was no longer looked at in the same positive light because many officials knew that buffalo were still important in keeping reservation Indians from starving. Second, once Plains Indians moved onto reservations, the land could then be used by settlers in a “civilized” fashion.

Others thought that with the extermination of the buffalo, Plains Indians would be absorbed into “civilized” American society. H.M. Stanley, a Welsh journalist and explorer, states, “As the buffalo and antelope vanish, so will they, and that before many years have elapsed. Annihilation of the many and absorption of the remainder is clearly their doom.”⁶⁴ This shows us yet another proposed plan for the future of Plains Indians, but it continues with the idea that without the buffalo, Plains Indians would become civilized.

Although many military officers felt that by killing buffalo, Native Americans would somehow become subdued, other officers, like Colonel W.B. Hazen, saw the error of that type of thinking. In a letter to another man concerned with the destruction of the buffalo, Henry Bergh, wrote, “Uncle Sam will presently be called upon to furnish funds from the government purse to supply beef to Indians who are now well fed with buffalo beef, which they are careful never to

⁶³ Delano, *Report*.

⁶⁴ Stanley, H.M. *My Early Travels and Adventures in Asia and America*. 1895. Open Library.

waste.”⁶⁵ Hazen, among others, noticed that without the aid of the buffalo, the United States would have to pay for the care of Plains Indians, and he did not feel that was a good policy on the part of the federal government. This was years after the end of the Civil War, and many Americans were concerned with the economy due to an economic decline at the beginning of the 1870s.⁶⁶

Others also felt that the economic cost of destruction of such a large population’s main food source was illogical. George Maypenny (1880), former U.S. Commissioner of Indians wrote, “So far as the destruction of the buffalo deprived the wild Indian of his most desirable and natural food, the deficiency had to be supplied by the issue of rations, thus putting an additional burden of millions on the treasury of the nation” (para.8). This was years after the Depression of 1873, though many Americans were still feeling its effects. Thus, this was a very logical argument that many people probably accepted.⁶⁷ Spending money on a group that many Americans viewed as inferior would have angered some Americans, especially when they did not see Plains Indians as part of the nation.

Effects on Plains Indians

In addition to the effects previously described in this paper, there were other ramifications on Plains Indians. Jim Stone, a Yankton Sioux and current executive director of the Intertribal Bison Cooperative explained the cultural implications of the loss of the buffalo. He wrote, “To force that sedentary lifestyle on somebody who was out living on the adrenaline rush of hunting buffalo—either on horse or foot—I don’t know if we can fully comprehend what that would feel like. They had been the caretaker of the buffalo, and suddenly there were no more. From the cultural side, they had failed in their role as humans. I don’t know how I would

⁶⁵ Hazen, W.B. “Slaughter of Buffaloes.” *Harper’s Weekly Magazine*. University of Virginia Library

⁶⁶ “A History of the U.S. Economy.” *Random History and Word Origins for the Curious Mind*. Sept. 2010.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*.

deal with that.”⁶⁸ Beyond the simple fact that the loss of the buffalo changed the way that Plains Indians lived, it changed the very root of their culture. It is something that can never be regained for many Sioux Indians.

In addition to the cultural destruction caused by the extermination of the buffalo population still felt today, the American government spends a large amount of money on programs for Native Americans. According to John Koppisch, a reporter for Forbes, the federal government spends \$2.5 billion on programs to help Native Americans. In addition, according to Koppisch, many people who are economically in the bottom 1% in the United States live on Native Americans reservations.⁶⁹ Part of this money can be linked to destruction of the buffalo because most of the economic value the Plains Indians held in the buffalo was lost when they moved to reservations. It is astonishing that a process which was implemented over 150 years ago still has a large effect on Plains Indians.

Loss of the buffalo between 1865 and 1883 permanently changed Plains Indians’ lives because the buffalo made up such a large part of their livelihoods and cultures. Not every policy centered on both the economic benefits of hunting buffalo and the “civilizing” effects of the destruction of the buffalo, but most policies furthered at least one of these end goals. Later, laws were put in place to prohibit the destruction of the buffalo, but none of these laws helped Plains Indians stay off reservations. It was only after the benefits associated with the destruction of the buffalo expired that the federal government prohibited their destruction. This was just one policy among many designed to get Native Americans onto reservations, and soon after the formation of reservations, the allotment process would begin.

⁶⁸ Jowort, A. “Genocide by Other Means: U.S. Army Slaughtered Buffalo in Plains Indian Wars.” *Indian Country: Today Media Network.com*. 2010.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

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Bourgeois Espionage: The Bureau of Secret Intelligence During World War I and the State Department's Battle with Modernity

Sam Kleinman

Georgetown University

Introduction

It was a hot day in Maine on August 31st, 1917. In the back room of an exclusive country club, President Wilson's key foreign policy advisor, Colonel Edward House, met with the State Department's chief man in foreign intelligence, Gordon Auchincloss. Auchincloss presented newfound evidence that Germany was routing directives for sabotage operations through the Swedish embassy in Washington. This meeting of two of the most important men in American diplomacy, however, was no emergency session to address impending attacks on the homeland, but rather, it was an unplanned, blasé chat between House and his son-in-law after a round of golf while on a family vacation. Remarkably, this interaction was the most common way intelligence moved from the State Department to the Oval Office throughout the First World War. With modernity at their fingertips, American diplomats and policymakers ignored their burgeoning bureaucracy in favor of an aristocratic, "great man" kind of diplomacy—

inadvertently scoring victories for innovative and more modern German espionage.

As the United States was increasingly drawn into World War I, it had neither a centralized nor effective intelligence agency to combat the country's new foes. Counterespionage operations were conducted by the Department of Justice's Bureau of Investigation, the Treasury, the Department's Secret Service, and local police departments, often in isolation from one

another. Before American entry into the war, foreign intelligence collected by American agents, particularly in Europe, was near unprecedented. With German subterfuge's increasing prominence in the United States, the American government faced mounting pressure to confront these threats in united and novel ways. Such was the impetus for the founding of the State Department's Bureau of Secret Intelligence in the winter of 1915.

Though Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, called this agency the Bureau of Secret Intelligence in his war memoirs, it was without a name for much of its history. Highly secretive and selective, the Bureau consisted of a few individuals in the State Department tasked with coordinating intelligence operations across federal agencies that had some relevance to foreign affairs. Yet this modern bureaucracy failed to merge with an antiquated foreign policy establishment. Foreign policy notables, mainly Colonel Edward M. House, drove foreign relations independently of the Bureau. Beyond the actions of principal deputy Gordon Auchincloss in the State Department, hired directly before American entry into the war, the Bureau itself had little real effect on the formation or enactment of American foreign policy throughout its short history. The Bureau's failures can be traced to two main problems: first, Wilson and House refused to incorporate the Bureau into policy planning, and second, the Bureau itself was perpetually understaffed.

Auchincloss carried some influence because of his constant contact with his father-in-law, Colonel House.⁷⁰ House was Wilson's main foreign policy adviser and his chief representative abroad, removed from any government department or agency. In many ways, House may have fit in well in 1815 Vienna. He was the fundamental arbiter of American foreign

⁷⁰ "Gordon Auchincloss Papers," 3 May 2014, Finding Aid at the Yale University Archives, New Haven, CT. <http://drs.library.yale.edu/HLTransformer/HLTransServlet?style=yul.ead2002.xhtml.xsl&pid=mssa:ms.0580&clear-stylesheet-cache=yes>. Hereafter cited as "GAP."

relations, did not liaise with federal departments and preferred to engage with the statesmen of Allied Europe over the then-novel bureaucrat.⁷¹

Though House disliked bureaucracy, the Bureau had little chance to affect foreign policy, mainly because of Wilson's distrust of Lansing and his State Department.⁷² Indeed, House negotiated Germany's Sussex Pledge to end unrestricted submarine warfare almost single-handedly without including any senior member from the State Department, and certainly no members from the Bureau.⁷³ In fact, as Wilson was debating a peace note to the belligerents in December 1916, House saw himself as central to the "great man" dynamic of European diplomacy, writing in his diary, "I fear the President has nearly destroyed all the work I have done in Europe."⁷⁴ House's diplomatic independence often impinged on the State Department's attempts at policymaking.

Curiously, though much ink has been spilled over World War I American foreign policy, few published works have addressed the Bureau. As we approach the centennial of the Great War, any analysis of the evolution of the federal government's first attempt at a modern intelligence agency and its effects on American policy during the war should be welcome. Furthermore, despite a wealth of historiography tackling the relationship between Wilson and other foreign policy notables, few historians have pulled the curtain back to reveal the federal departments and burgeoning bureaucracies behind them. A study of this Bureau is far more interesting as an examination of the emerging effects of modernity upon institutions, yet the State Department and foreign policy establishment loathe accepting it. I examine this contrast at two levels: (1) the White House and the State Department, and (2) the State Department and the

⁷¹ Cooper Jr., John Milton, *Woodrow Wilson: A Biography* (New York: Random House, 2009), 189.

⁷² George, Alexander L., and George, Juliette L., *Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House: A Personality Study* (New York: Dover Publications, 1964), 158.

⁷³ Cooper, *Woodrow Wilson: A Biography*, 364.

⁷⁴ Edward M. House's Diary, 23 December 1917, *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, Vol. 40, 304-305.

civil servants within it. Some diplomatic historians, particularly the renowned Wilson Papers editor Arthur S. Link, argue that Wilson's "individualist" policy formation was a function of perceived elitism and ineptitude in the foreign service,⁷⁵ though I take issue with such a generalization. There were certainly plenty of party hacks and aristocratic old boys appointed to various posts, but behind them laid a novel bureaucracy begging to be used. I argue that the Bureau was largely a failure, partly because of this tension. Mainly, however, it failed as it never grew beyond a collection of only a few individuals who liaised poorly with other federal agencies. It is not surprising then, that, despite its centrality in the State Department, it had little influence on foreign policy.

Precipitating Events

In many ways, 1915 was a year of shocks in the United States. The German U-boat *U-20* sunk the *Lusitania* off the coast of Ireland in May 1915, resulting in over 100 American casualties and the most blatant German violation of American neutrality to date.⁷⁶ Though U-boat warfare was one of the major causes of American entry into the war, far more immediately concerning to American authorities were German violations of neutrality of a different kind—sabotage and propaganda programs in the mainland United States. Beginning as early as 1914, German agents in the United States sought to undermine Allied interests and further Germany's interests, hoping to garner American intervention on behalf of the Central Powers.

For example, Germany chartered American vessels in order to subvert American shipping neutrality. Agents chartered these ships, made for a neutral port and radioed German military cruisers to be met somewhere in between. Then, in international waters, wartime goods were

⁷⁵ Link, Arthur, *Wilson the Diplomatist: A Look at His Major Foreign Policies*, (Franklin Watts: New York, 1957), 24/25.

⁷⁶ United States Department of State, *History of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security*, 6. Online. <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/176705.pdf>.

transferred from a “neutral” ship to a belligerent, evading the spirit of American neutrality. For the first two years, German agents operated with relative impunity until the Secret Service and Bureau of Investigation were able to invest serious resources toward tracking and intercepting German shipping fraud.⁷⁷

German activities were not limited to shipping fraud. In November 1915, American Secret Service agents discovered a passport fraud ring operated by Austrian consulate officials in New York, mainly to transport Central Power reservists in the United States to the front. Even more troublesome, German agents attempted to blow up bridges and roads along the Canadian border early into the war. In 1914, one German spy ring attempted to destroy the international bridge of the Canadian Pacific Railway in Vermont, but was intercepted and arrested by local police. In a second case, a German agent attempted to blow up the Welland Canal in New York, but was arrested in December 1915. In both cases, Secretary of State Robert Lansing attributed German failure to “the efficiency of the United States Secret Service and the special agents of the Department of Justice.”⁷⁸ The State Department was nowhere in sight.

However, federal authorities failed several times, sometimes gravely, to prevent debilitating German sabotage operations. The Austrian consulate in New York organized a number of clandestine attacks on American shipping. As Lansing described, “between March 6, 1915 and September 13, 1915, there were explosions on thirteen ships outward-bound from American ports, and...between March fifth and August twenty-ninth, there were ten explosions in industrial plants.”⁷⁹ On 30 July 1916, German agents successfully destroyed tons of munitions on New Jersey’s Black Tom Island, causing the deaths of seven Americans. The explosion felt

⁷⁷ Lansing, Robert, *War Memoirs of Robert Lansing, Secretary of State* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1935), 68.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 73.

similar to an earthquake, registering a 5.0 on the Richter scale and causing damage to the Statue of Liberty and buildings within a 25 mile radius.⁸⁰ The sheer amount of damage and psychological effect of the attack makes it one of the worst acts of terrorism the United States has even seen. This attack occurred after the creation of the Bureau of Secret Intelligence, showing serious deficiencies in American counterespionage abilities.

Under the growing number of German espionage and sabotage incidents, the United States was forced to face a pervasive and novel threat. Spy rings were elaborately organized, independent from each other though benefitting from bureaucratic efficiency. German espionage had entered the modern era, and American authorities were forced to respond. In each one of these areas—fighting shipping and passport fraud, counterespionage, foreign intelligence and propaganda—the State Department attempted some sort of organizational, if not operational, supremacy. Without it, the Wilson administration feared, the homeland would continue to sustain grave attacks from foreign nationals.

Establishing the Bureau of Secret Intelligence

There is some debate over the exact date when the Bureau was created, though most place it in the latter part of 1915. To be sure, its official creation certainly could not have occurred until William Jennings Bryan resigned his leadership of the Department of State in June 1915. Bryan was a staunch isolationist and idealist, appointed as secretary for his support of Wilson in the 1912 presidential election. Though the two men shared a sort of tempered moralism, Bryan was averse to any kind of involvement in World War I, and anything that might suggest belligerency. As Wilson, House, and Lansing all discussed the legality and practicality of

⁸⁰ “Liberty State Park: Black Tom Explosion,” last updated 26 January 2005, accessed 3 May 2014. http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/parks/liberty_state_park/liberty_blacktomexplosion.html.

arming merchantmen after the sinking of the *Lusitania*, Bryan resigned in protest.⁸¹ Lansing maintained in his memoirs that Leland Harrison, a former postal inspector and nascent chief of intelligence coordination for all counterespionage agencies, was awarded control over the infant Bureau in April 1916, as did the State Department's official administrative history.⁸²

Yet official records from Harrison's department and his personal papers paint a different picture. First, as early as May 1915, Harrison was compiling his "Human Espionage Activities" file, relaying a report from Secret Service Chief William Flynn to Lansing, then Counselor.⁸³ Indeed, correspondence between Harrison and other agency officials began quite early in 1915, suggesting that Harrison was, at least in some unofficial capacity, coordinating intelligence activities between the State Department and other agencies well before Bryan's resignation. It is likely, then, that individuals within the State Department were executing operations and coordinating intelligence services before the creation of the Bureau. Second, a press release published 12 December 1915 declared that:

A central organization for gathering evidence of offenses against the neutrality of the United States has been created as the first step in the federal government's determination to more stringently enforce neutrality, outlined by president Wilson in his address to Congress. The Postoffice Department, the State Department, and the Department of Justice and the Treasury Department will join in gathering information, which will uniformly be assembled and acted on in the State Department under the Direction of Counselor Polk...This plan was decided upon at a conference between Counselor Polk, Chief Flynn of the secret service, Chief Postoffice Inspector Koons and Assistant Attorney General Warren, who handled neutrality cases in the Department of Justice.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Jeffreys-Jones, Rhodri, *American Espionage: From Secret Service to CIA*, (Macmillan: New York, 1977), 43.

⁸² Lansing, *War Memoirs*, 318.

⁸³ Flynn, memorandum for the Secretary of the Treasury, 10 May 1915 in folder "Human Espionage Activities," General Correspondence 1915-1918, Box 8, Records of the Office of the Counselor, Department of State, National Archives, College Park M.D., hereafter abbreviated "OC."

⁸⁴ Newspaper Clipping, 12 December 1915, in folder "12 December 1915," Box 8, General Correspondence, Leland Harrison Papers, Library of Congress, Washington D.C., hereafter abbreviated "LHP."

Unless the *Washington Post* was incorrect in its reporting, it is unlikely that the Bureau was formed later than December 1915. Lansing and Wilson probably saw an opportunity to formalize it after Bryan's departure, though the more official Bureau carried little more efficacy than its progenitor.

Regardless of the official date, it appears that the main members of Wilson's foreign policy establishment were committed to the formation of some coordinating body for the growing number of counterespionage operations and their ensuing paperwork. After Bryan's departure from the State Department, Wilson's foreign policy principals, Lansing and House, met with the President to discuss the creation of a credible coordinating office to process and direct counterespionage activities.⁸⁵ The Bureau was made an ancillary office directly beneath the Counselor of the State Department, then Frank L. Polk. Therefore, at its inception, Harris and several advisors collected reports from other federal agencies, offered some direction, and then reported to Polk. Polk reported to Lansing who then reported to the President. Remarkably, information rarely diffused along this official chain of command.

Throughout the Bureau's existence, particularly at its onset, it suffered from chronic understaffing. Even in 1918, the height of wartime involvement, the office of the Counselor had only four principals, only one of whom, Harrison, dedicated his time to foreign and counterintelligence.⁸⁶ The other, Gordon Auchincloss, hired in the spring of 1917, split his time between these responsibilities and the more traditional legal questions the Counselor handled.⁸⁷ The office had only seven further employees,⁸⁸ and one can be sure that only a few of those aided Harrison, given the breadth of issues the Counselor directed each day. By virtue of its

⁸⁵ Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, 20 November 1915, reprinted in National Counterintelligence Center, *A Counterintelligence Reader*, (National Counterintelligence Center: 2004), Vol. 1, 104. Online.

⁸⁶ *Register of the Department of State, October 21, 1915* (Washington D.C.: USGPO, 1915), 24.

⁸⁷ Confidential Diary of Gordon Auchincloss, 31 March 1917, Box 1, GAP.

⁸⁸ *Register*, 24.

separation from other intelligence agencies and those actually in charge of foreign policy, the Bureau was poised for failure.

Counterespionage

From its inception, the Bureau's primary responsibility was counterespionage, but its first forays into counterespionage coordination reveal the degree to which it was dependent on other sources. In early 1915, a New York passport ring appeared to be operating with impunity, issuing false documents to German nationals wishing to return to Germany in order to enlist in its armed forces. At least two federal agencies were involved in apprehending the ring's directors, along with local New York City police investigators. Both Secret Service Chief Flynn and Bureau of Investigation (BOI) Director Warren sent regular reports to the Department of State on their surveillance of German consular officials.⁸⁹ Warren explained to Polk that Lansing asked the BOI to "prepare for him a resume of the evidence [it] had....in connection of Captain Von Papen with the passport frauds last winter, which summer [sic] I prepared and gave to Mr. Lansing." These and other reports from Department of Justice agents were complemented by reports from the Secret Service.⁹⁰ The State Department combined this intelligence with that provided by British intelligence,⁹¹ in this instance successfully pinning the passport ring on German consular officials. State Department Solicitor Lester Woolsey largely agreed with the Secret Service's and the Department of Justice's appraisal, and addressed a memorandum to both Lansing and Wilson that the United States demand the officials' recall. Later that month, Wilson did exactly that.⁹² In this case, various intelligence sources came together in the State Department to realize a presidential directive that had real consequences for American foreign policy. But as the war

⁸⁹ Letter, Flynn to Lansing, 3 November 1915, in folder "Passport Fraud," Box 8," OC.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Jeffrey-Jones, *American Espionage*, 58.

⁹² Ibid.

grew further protracted and House was extended further prerogative over American foreign policy, intelligence reports rarely made their way to the Oval Office.

This early instance of intelligence coordination also shows British MI6' ostensibly undue influence on American foreign policy. Two years before American entry into World War I, the British impelled eventual American entry into the war on behalf of the Allies. British intelligence's primacy over and, at times, manipulation of American foreign policy is a significant trend in the Bureau's short history. The few American intercepts of British programs in the United States show a belligerency, at least in terms of propaganda and subversion of American law, not so dissimilar from the Germans. For example, Edward Bell, then Secretary of the American Embassy in London, forwarded Harrison a report of an August 1915 conversation that Chancellor of the Exchequer Lloyd-George had with an American businessman, pressing him on where Britain could covertly buy munitions, and the implications of British ship transfers to Japan.⁹³ Furthermore, German Ambassador to the United States Johann von Bernstorff consistently alleged in diplomatic cables that the British had a propaganda machine in the United States at least as effective and pervasive as Germany.

Harrison thus understood that Britain was a far from friendly country during the war. According to Lansing, Harrison also delivered daily intelligence briefings to Lansing's office.⁹⁴ Yet, throughout the war, Lansing consistently refused to view Britain as a belligerent. Indeed, in early 1917, Lansing exclaimed, "[the United States] must go in on the side of the Allies, for we are a democracy."⁹⁵ Therefore, either Lansing did not read the reports, or he disregarded those that looked unfavorably upon Britain. Given Lansing's history of anglophilia, it is far more likely

⁹³ Memorandum, Harrison to Polk, 24 August 1915, in folder "Human Espionage," Box 8, OC.

⁹⁴ *State Magazine*, November 1991 (US Department of State: Washington, D.C.), HathiTrust, accessed 20 March 2014, 46.

⁹⁵ Cooper, *Woodrow Wilson: A Biography*, 364.

that Lansing disregarded at least portions of them. If similar anglophilia affected Harrison's preparation of the reports, then State's intelligence in general would be biased. If the reports were not biased, though, it is unlikely that they significantly influenced Lansing, and thus foreign policy in general. If Lansing did read the reports, and the reports themselves were biased, then American foreign relations themselves would have been skewed by Bureau anglophilia. Yet the sources are particularly limited in this area. There appear to be no records of Harrison's briefings, and the degree to which they influenced either Lansing or the White House is unclear.

To be fair, there are examples of successful coordination between the State Department and counterespionage branches of other agencies. For example, Wilson directed the Secret Service to surveil the German Embassy, partly in response to charges that German officials were involved in passport fraud. The Secret Service actually detailed a group of agents to the State Department who reported directly to Harrison. As German violations of neutrality grew more egregious, Lansing, and thereby Harrison, increased the level of surveillance, ordering the embassy's telegraph and telephone lines tapped in 1916. These agents were led by Joseph "Bill" Nye: the future Chief Special Agent of the State Department's limited wartime security service. He submitted daily briefings, and in the briefing for January 31, 1917, "Nye informed Lansing that during his (Lansing's) 4 p.m. meeting with [Bernstorff], the Ambassador would tell him that Germany had renewed unrestricted submarine warfare."⁹⁶ This operation was probably the epitome of interdepartmental collaboration, and gave Lansing fruitful intelligence independent from British sources. This January briefing and the information therein led directly to Bernstorff's dismissal as ambassador and America's entry into the war, illustrating that the Bureau did have some influence on American foreign policy, at least when Lansing read its reports.

⁹⁶ State Department, *History*, 8.

Most of the Bureau's successes were actually accidental. In July 1915, a Secret Service agent followed a major German spy ring's chief, Dr. Heinrich F. Albert, onto the subway. Albert dozed off on the train, giving the agent the opportunity to snatch the bag. Fortuitously, the bag contained major information on the identities of German spies in the Northeast along with information about planned operations.⁹⁷ The Germans thought it was English agents who stole the briefcase, shielding Secret Service counterespionage operations from further German scrutiny.⁹⁸ Yet the Germans' mistake is not so much a reflection on an American ability to keep their surveillance clandestine, as it is a reflection of the very real lack of capabilities that American intelligence services harbored relative to the English. Indeed, this incident is far from intricate or innovative. In fact, snatching the briefcase amounted to little more than a mugging. Given the limited manpower of the intelligence services in New York at that time, there is little reason to believe that any American intelligence service knew the contents of the briefcase beforehand. Indeed, in a December 1918 letter to Gordon Auchincloss, Chief Special Agent Nye calls it "a crime that [American intelligence was] so inefficient for three long years, but I hope some day we will wake up."⁹⁹ From the State Department's point man on field operations, this statement suggests that the Bureau had very real limitations at least until late 1918. In reality, the Secret Service, and thus the Bureau, just got lucky.

America's final major counterespionage success before its entry into the war came with the von Igel raid of 1916. After the successful culling of the German spy organization in the United States and von Papen's dismissal, his secretary Wolf von Igel continued his work in New York. In April 1916, the Germans decided to transfer documents detailing their entire spy organization in the United States to its embassy in Washington, where they would presumably be

⁹⁷ Jeffreys-Jones, *American Espionage*, 62.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 63.

⁹⁹ Letter, Nye to Auchincloss, 3 December 1918, in folder 147, General Correspondence, Box 7, GAP.

protected by diplomatic immunity. As they were removed from the office safe, Bureau of Investigation agents raided the office, where they arrested von Igel and seized his papers. This seizure, conducted without British intelligence or aid, gave the United States a more independent view of German actions beyond the front, including plans to encourage native revolts in Ireland and India.¹⁰⁰ But Bureau of Investigation agents conducted this raid, with no evidence of State Department involvement. In other words, this feat was not won by the Bureau of Secret Intelligence, but rather other government agents. Though, once the State Department received the information begotten by this raid, the information itself could affect foreign policy.

In many ways, Harrison's intelligence work was complemented by the political and policy work of Polk's main deputy, Gordon Auchincloss. Auchincloss's duties were not limited to counterespionage, but in his initial posting in New York in spring 1917 (the main center of German espionage), he helped ensure that the Bureau and other agencies were able to work effectively. In May, for example, Harrison worked with Auchincloss to convince New York politicians to table a bill outlawing indiscriminate government wiretaps.¹⁰¹ Whereas, Harrison worked extensively with other agencies to impede German sabotage, Auchincloss took the lead on financial crimes and violations of the 1917 Trading with the Enemy Act, consulting with the Secret Service and "Charles Warren of the Department of Justice occasionally."¹⁰² In his diary on 30 March, Auchincloss explains that "Chief Flynn of the Secret Service, called at my request to make certain investigations for me with reference to Muller, Schall & Co," a law firm suspected of aiding German money laundering.¹⁰³ Whereas Harrison worked solely to impede German agents, Auchincloss claims in his diary that Polk and House told him "everything,"

¹⁰⁰ Jeffreys-Jones, *American Espionage*, 63.

¹⁰¹ Letter, Auchincloss to Polk, 10 May 1917, in folder 15, General Correspondence, Box 6, GAP.

¹⁰² Auchincloss Diary, 27 May 1917, Box 1, GAP.

¹⁰³ Auchincloss Diary, 30 March 1917, Box 1, GAP.

which, if his diary is to be believed, suggests that he was far more involved in foreign policymaking than Harrison.

Though the State Department developed its own intelligence service as it continued to cooperate with the Secret Service and the Bureau of Investigation, these other agencies led the vast majority of counterespionage operations. Though initially established to coordinate these operations, there is little evidence to show that the Bureau ordered other agencies to undertake projects. Instead, it seems to be quite the opposite—other agencies informed *ex post facto* the Bureau of their operations. This fact in and of itself does not necessarily undermine the efficacy of the Bureau, so long as the Bureau effectively communicated the results of these operations to principal policymakers within the administration. Yet because it appears that Lansing read Harrison's reports only selectively, it is unlikely that Harrison's attempted coordination of counterespionage activities had much effect at all upon Lansing's formation of foreign policy. Furthermore, if Lansing rarely read these reports, it is likely that both Wilson and House communicated only rarely, if at all, with Harrison's Bureau.

Indeed, in both Harrison's personal and official papers, there were no records of any papers sent between Harrison and Wilson at all, and the only present records of communication between Lansing and Harrison came after Lansing's tenure as Secretary of State. Memoranda that made their way to Wilson's desk were addressed from other agencies to the White House with Harrison carbon copied. Therefore, it is probable that Harrison's work got lost in the bureaucratic jumble; particularly, as Wilson's principal foreign policymakers continued to operate in a diplomatic world focused on statesmen rather than the burgeoning bureaucracies behind them. This, too, was the case for the Bureau's forays into foreign intelligence.

Foreign Intelligence

As the United States neared outright war in early 1917, it faced a crisis in foreign intelligence. Like its counterespionage counterpart, the Bureau suffered from chronic understaffing, and, though it developed its own spy capabilities abroad, it remained largely dependent upon British intelligence. The entire Bureau was involved in foreign espionage, wartime foreign intelligence, in 1917, and much of the responsibility fell to Auchincloss in 1918. In many ways, the State Department depended upon intelligence from the British MI6, whose representative in Washington, William Wiseman, communicated intelligence to American officials while also coordinating English counterespionage and propaganda activities.¹⁰⁴ Wiseman had a striking amount of influence and access to both Wilson and House. Auchincloss notes that in May 1917, Wilson “talked freely with him and took him upstairs to [Wilson’s] study.”¹⁰⁵

According to Auchincloss’s diary, he became the main conduit between the State Department and Wiseman. Soon after Auchincloss began his work in New York, he writes that he met with Wiseman over lunch to go, “over fairly thoroughly the kind of cooperation that we should endeavor to establish between this country and England. I have asked him for information on certain names and he has promised to give them to me and from now on to deal with the State Department through me.”¹⁰⁶ As principal assistant to the Counselor of the State Department, Auchincloss was well-positioned to communicate intelligence and directives from Wiseman to the Bureau and the State Department at large.

While serving as House’s Secretary during winter 1917/1918 at the Interallied Conference, Auchincloss, “discussed generally....the possibilities of using the Poles for

¹⁰⁴ Jeffreys-Jones, *American Espionage*, 45.

¹⁰⁵ Auchincloss Diary, 29 May 1917, Box 1, GAP.

¹⁰⁶ Auchincloss Diary March 30 1917, Box 1, GAP. Though Auchincloss writes in detail about his interactions with Wiseman, there seem to be few, if any, sources to corroborate his description of his role.

intelligence work for the United States” with Wiseman and another American intelligence agent in Europe.¹⁰⁷ He continued to work on expanding American intelligence capabilities abroad throughout his time in Paris, meeting again with Wiseman and, “Somerset Maugham [perhaps the most important Anglo-American secret agent in Russia during and directly after the war] over lunch and....discussed....the establishment of an intelligence section by the Americans and the British composed of Poles for work in [Central Europe].”¹⁰⁸ These agents would have complemented covert consular officials throughout Central Europe already tasked with intelligence work, such as the young Allen Dulles.¹⁰⁹

Anglo-American cooperation defined American intelligence throughout the war. England’s cryptographic Room 40 was far superior to American counterparts in Naval and Military Intelligence, much to principal cryptographer H.O. Yardley’s rancor, who told Harrison in 1918 that weak American ciphers and poor investment in decoding abilities are “very much to be deplored.”¹¹⁰ Perhaps the most notable and widely known of Room 40’s contribution is its decoding of the Zimmerman Telegram, a major precipitating event of American entry into World War I.¹¹¹ Bell regularly communicated British intelligence to both Harrison and Lansing,¹¹² including occasionally sharing cracked German codes.¹¹³ But London was not always cooperative. In one instance, Lansing directed Harrison to lead a failed operation to infiltrate German intelligence circles with American secret agents to buy keys to German diplomatic

¹⁰⁷ Auchincloss Diary, 3 December 1917, Box 1, GAP.

¹⁰⁸ Auchincloss Diary, 6 December 1917, Box 1, GAP.

¹⁰⁹ Jeffreys-Jones, *American Intelligence*, 82.

¹¹⁰ Letter, Yardley to Harrison, 8 July 1918, in folder “Sisson Telegrams,” General Correspondence 1915-18, Box 8, OC.

¹¹¹ Keegan, John, *The First World War* (New York: Random House, 1998), 373.

¹¹² Jeffreys-Jones, *American Intelligence*, 75.

¹¹³ Letter, Page to Lansing, 7 October 1917, Bell’s Case Files, Box 2, OC

codes.¹¹⁴ Some schemes bordered on the theatrical. American consular officials in Scandinavia delivered the following suggestion for an operation in Germany:

You must in your work employ women, bring over a dozen skilled German speaking, immoral beauties from New York. Two should always be at the station when German trains arrive. I should place them where their nets soon would catch fish. The greatest weakness of the Germans is their readiness to talk too much. These women should every day report to a [central reporting station]. Step by step I should be glad to point out where the German offices are, their [sic] publications and we will meet them on their own ground.¹¹⁵

Harrison was tasked with a diverse range of foreign espionage operations, few of them particularly effective.

However, Harrison did direct a surprisingly large spy ring, particularly in Latin America. Though this responsibility may have devolved from his previous post in the Latin American division, he directed operatives in several countries. For example, Harrison corresponded extensively with one agent, W. Sprague Brooks, in Cuba about ostensibly nefarious German activities in Havana.¹¹⁶ Indeed, this correspondence reflects a relatively standard practice by which American agents conducted espionage abroad. Harrison communicated directions to American consulates and embassies by coded message that would then covertly relay these messages to American agents, often also to consular officials themselves. Brooks, along with other agents, submitted regular reports back to these consulates and embassies.¹¹⁷ That being said, beyond Harrison's daily intelligence briefings for Lansing, there is little evidence showing that intelligence from American agents made its way to the desks of foreign policy principals without Auchincloss's or Polk's intervention.

¹¹⁴ Jeffreys-Jones, *American Intelligence*, 77.

¹¹⁵ Memorandum, in folder "Scandinavian Intelligence Work," General Correspondence 1915-18, Box 8, OC

¹¹⁶ Memorandum, in folder "W. Sprague Brooks, General Correspondence 1915-18, Box 8, OC.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

Wartime foreign intelligence, contrary to popular belief, included agents in Allied countries. On 24 August 1917, Harrison forwarded a memorandum to Polk detailing a conversation between an American informant and Lloyd-George. Lloyd-George expressed English interest in covertly transferring English ships and American munitions to Japan.¹¹⁸ Any ship transfer would have upset a naval status quo in the Pacific and also would have subverted American law. At the very least, the Bureau tried to diversify its sources of intelligence, though it rarely ever truly subverted British influence. Given the Bureau's, "reliance on Anglo-French espionage for information on the Western front, and their involuntary dependence on Admiral Hall's code breakers....American intelligence was [near] incapable of independent assessment during World War I."¹¹⁹ Rather than American bureaucracy, intelligence more often came from British cigar clubs and tea rooms.

Foreign Relations

At this paper's heart, I attempt to determine the influence the Bureau had upon American foreign policy during World War I. Yet it is unlikely that any bureaucratic arm could have a significant impact on foreign relations, much less a novel and somewhat ineffective Bureau of Secret Intelligence. Link argues that,

in the areas that [Wilson] considered vitally important—Mexico, relations with the European belligerents, wartime relations with the Allied powers, and the writing of a peace settlement—Wilson took absolute personal control. He wrote most of the important notes on his own typewriter, bypassed the State Department by using his own private agents [and] ignored his secretaries of state by conducting important negotiations behind their backs.¹²⁰

If we are to accept Link's thesis, it is unlikely that the Bureau could have had much effect, particularly if Lansing had little influence on policy himself.

¹¹⁸ Memorandum, Harrison to Polk, 24 August 1915, in folder "Human Espionage," General Correspondence 1915-18, Box 8, OC.

¹¹⁹ Jeffreys-Jones, *American Intelligence*, 78.

¹²⁰ Link, *Wilson the Diplomatist*, 23.

Indeed, Wilson tended to ignore Secretary of the Treasury William Gibbs McAdoo, particularly regarding the Bureau. As the United States prepared to send troops to Europe, McAdoo wrote Wilson several times to enlarge the Bureau and make it a more effective intelligence organization. On 16 April, he wrote, “During the war it will not, I believe, be possible for Mr. Polk to successfully take care of the large volumes of work that will have to be handled....The work of an Intelligence Bureau, properly organized, ought to have the undivided attention of a suitable head and a competent staff of assistants.”¹²¹ McAdoo went on to describe in detail his proposed designs for a bigger, more centralized Bureau. It took seven months for Wilson to respond to McAdoo’s memorandum,¹²² this to a cabinet secretary and ultimate supervisor of the Secret Service.

The Bureau was only influential through Auchincloss’s relationship with his father-in-law Col. House. Auchincloss vacationed regularly with the House family, and the two often discussed intelligence work while away. Indeed, on August 31st, 1917, after a round of golf, the two discussed German cables sent through Swedish sources to agents in the U.S. ordering several sabotage operations.¹²³ In July, they discussed peace terms, after which Auchincloss left to spend quality time with his son.¹²⁴ Clearly, the Bureau failed to institutionalize itself as a resource for American diplomacy. Instead, it was relegated to family politics between golf games and tea time.

Auchincloss, though, did find himself in a more official capacity when he accompanied House to Europe as his secretary at the 1918 Interallied Conference. Auchincloss wrote in his

¹²¹ Letter, McAdoo to Wilson, 16 April 1917, in folder “16 April 1917,” General Correspondence, Box 522, William Gibbs McAdoo Papers, Library of Congress, Washington D.C., hereafter abbreviated as “MP.”

¹²² Letter, Wilson to McAdoo, 19 November 1917, in folder “19 November 1917,” General Correspondence, Box 523, MP.

¹²³ Auchincloss Diary, 31 August 1917, Box 1, GAP.

¹²⁴ Auchincloss Diary, 29 July 1917, Box 1, GAP.

diary in late November that he accompanied House “to call on [Prime Minister Georges] Clemenceau....to straighten him out before Lloyd George saw him at ten o clock.”¹²⁵ At a meeting of the war council, he had a physical seat at the table, though it is not clear how much influence he carried during the meeting itself.¹²⁶ These incidents were the height of Auchincloss’ influence. It is likely that Auchincloss’s official activities were circumscribed by his title—he probably served as little more than a glorified personal assistant.¹²⁷

Auchincloss was the only member of the Bureau that liaised regularly with a foreign policy principal and no other member of the Bureau, and perhaps no other members of the State Department had as much access to House as Auchincloss. As a result, the Bureau’s influence on foreign policy was intermittent and limited. Furthermore, it preserved a *personalpolitik* type of diplomacy; one that failed to adapt to the great bureaucratic potential available to it.

Conclusion

The creation of the Bureau of Secret Intelligence was largely reactive. The Wilson administration in 1915 was forced to address a growing problem of German espionage and sabotage in the United States. It chose to do so through an ad-hoc evolution of a small office within the State Department, reporting to the Counselor and Secretary of State. With so many competing dates for its official creation, it is clear that few principals considered it a significant part of the State Department or American intelligence. Instead, Harrison and his Bureau were isolated from the major policymakers of the Wilson administration, leaving reports unread and letters unanswered.

The Bureau suffered from two problems for its entire existence: understaffing and poor access to policymakers. Harrison, Auchincloss and several assistants could not hope to

¹²⁵ Auchincloss Diary 28 November 1917, Box 1, GAP.

¹²⁶ Auchincloss Diary, 20 November 1917, Box 1, GAP.

¹²⁷ “Gordon Auchincloss Papers,” Finding Aid, GAP.

coordinate the Secret Service, the Bureau of Investigation, Postal Inspectors and local police with their limited resources, much less implement counterespionage programs of the Bureau's own. Because intelligence sharing between American agencies was purely voluntary, the Bureau was at the mercy of larger, more experienced and better funded intelligence departments. Intelligence begotten by these agencies often happened by pure chance: a well-timed raid, a dozing German agent or a random American informant. There are only a few examples of well-executed cooperation across agencies - mainly the surveillance of the German embassy.

The majority of the United States' foreign intelligence came by way of MI6. Indeed, its most critical documents, the Zimmerman telegram among them, came almost exclusively from Britain. Indeed, Wiseman was afforded more access than anyone in the American intelligence services, ensuring British intelligence's primacy over the Bureau. In some ways, the anglophilia of American foreign policy principals supplanted their americophilia. Auchincloss's central duties when coordinating foreign intelligence were, in fact, the coordination of American activities to address areas that British intelligence highlighted. As a result, Harrison's burgeoning spy ring abroad held little sway over the Wilson White House.

Wilson and House, therefore, conducted foreign relations independently of the Bureau and its attempted intelligence coordination. Colonel House had no patience for novel, bureaucratized espionage, which he viewed as all but useless. Wilson himself was so withdrawn from his government, even serious letters between the Oval Office and cabinet secretaries went unanswered for months. Given the nature of Wilsonian foreign policy, the Bureau never stood a chance. Though a failure, the influence of the Bureau should not be understated. Allen Dulles began his intelligence career as one of Harrison's spies in Vienna. It would take the United

States intelligence community another two and a half decades to enter modernity with the OSS, but Dulles would be at its helm.

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“I Do What I Can for Organization:” Lincoln the Campaigner in 1860

William Redmond

Georgetown University

The sundering of the national Democratic Party at its convention in May of 1860 shattered any remaining hope the party might have had of retaining the White House that fall. The Democrats had lost so much public support in the wake of the *Dred Scott* decision and the battle over the Lecompton Constitution that by the time the national election arrived Abraham Lincoln noted in a letter to Dr. Anson G. Henry, “the chances were more than equal that [the Republicans] could have beaten the Democracy *united*. Divided, as it is, its chance appears indeed very slim.”¹²⁸ The nominations of John Breckenridge and Stephen Douglas, as well as the formation of the Constitutional Union party, split not just the Democratic Party but the entire election in two with Breckenridge and John Bell battling for Southern states while in the North the forces of Lincoln and Douglas engaged one another once more. The result was an electoral environment in which the Republican Party would have needed to fail on a spectacular scale in order to lose the presidency. However, Abraham Lincoln and other leaders of the fledgling party realized that simply holding the White House would be insufficient for pursuing their governing agenda. Since the Senate had long been a mechanism that resisted policy changes regarding slavery, with the equal representation afforded states combining with the practice of admitting states in pairs to prevent an antislavery majority from taking root, Republicans’ greatest

¹²⁸ Lincoln to Anson G. Henry, 4 July 1860, in *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln, Volume 4*.

opportunity lay in the House of Representatives, where William Pennington's Republican Speakership was barely propped up by a contentious coalition. Bearing in mind this environment, it became clear that Lincoln's great contribution to the election of 1860 was not in some brilliant plan to win the presidency in November. Rather, his unassuming nomination strategy – which allowed him to maintain good relations with his competitors and make use of them during the general election—and passion for electoral politics—led Lincoln to take a remarkably involved role not just in national campaign strategy, but also in drawing attention to Congressional and legislative districts the Republicans would need to decisively capture a majority and pursue their bold agenda.

Despite its role as one of the most significant elections in American history, scholarly study devoted to the campaign has only appeared in the last few years, and has had surprisingly little to say about Lincoln's role. The significance of the Democratic breakup comprised the focus of Douglas Egerton's and A. James Fuller's understandings of the election, leading them to reason that the election essentially ended and assured Republican victory the moment the Democratic convention failed to unify behind one candidate. James Luthin and Eric Foner emphasize the role of the Republican platform, which combined a variety of policies designed to appeal to different regions of the country. Although it was a more moderate document than past platforms and therefore more palatable to voters, it also maintained some key points in order to hold the support of party radicals. In terms of the actual campaign and its strategy, Stephen Douglas scholar James Huston saw Lincoln detached from the election, keeping himself

“cocooned in Springfield.”¹²⁹ The truth perhaps lies closer to Michael Green’s assertion that “no one took more care to assure a Republican victory, or strategized more carefully about how to achieve it, than Abraham Lincoln.”¹³⁰ What Green neglects, given his focus on the presidential election, is that Lincoln did not limit his strategy to the election in which he was a candidate. As for the platform and the inevitability of victory, those were valid points; the Democrats were hopeless and the platform did include material strategically designed to appeal to different people and regions. Lincoln’s importance was as a campaign strategist, organizing operatives around the country to prime important issues, focusing the electorate on areas that advantaged Republican victory. A look at Republican support among an expanding electorate, as well as Lincoln’s own letters, shows that Lincoln’s popular appeal as well as his involvement in the campaign may have contributed significantly to the party’s overall success in 1860.

Since forming in the first half of the 1850s out of a union of Free-Soilers, disaffected Whigs and Democrats, and other party-less political activists, the Republican Party had twice managed to establish one of their own as Speaker of the House as part of a governing coalition. They achieved this first with the aid of nativist Know-Nothings and later with disaffected Democrats angry at the Buchanan administration’s support of the Lecompton Constitution. This second Speaker was William Pennington of the Thirty-Sixth Congress, whose members were elected in 1858-59. Pennington was not selected until February 1, 1860 – two months after Congress convened – when party leaders at last cobbled together a majority for the forty-fourth

¹²⁹ James L. Huston, "The 1860 Southern Sojourns of Stephen A. Douglas and the Irrepressible Separation," *The Election of 1860 Reconsidered*, ed. A. James Fuller (Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2013), 41.

¹³⁰ Michael S. Green, *Lincoln and the Election of 1860*, (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2013), 66-67.

ballot after having abandoned John Sherman, the party's early frontrunner.¹³¹ As Jeffery Jenkins and Charles Stewart noted in their history of Speakership elections, the battle to get a Republican leader in 1860 taught the party how to “avoid a calamity” by forgoing their most ideological candidates and instead settling on one that could actually win, thus achieving “their first goal – electing a Republican Speaker.”¹³² This lesson would prove crucial to Lincoln's nomination later that year, and it in turn benefitted the Republican House he worked so relentlessly to strengthen.

Lincoln's strategy for securing the Republican nomination is best summed up in a letter he wrote to former Ohio Congressman Samuel Galloway in March 1860. He observed, “I suppose I am not the *first* choice of a very great many. Our policy, then, is to give no offense to others – leave them in a mood to come to us, if they shall be compelled to give up their first love.”¹³³ This strategy was twofold – it allowed Lincoln to support any nominee, and in the unlikely event it was him, no candidate for the nomination would have just cause to work against him in the general election. Indeed, almost immediately after his nomination Lincoln began correspondence with supporters of those who had sought the nomination, and even those party leaders themselves whom he had just defeated. In a letter to Salmon Chase dated May 26, 1860, Lincoln told him, “Holding myself the humblest of all whose names were before the convention, I feel in especial need of the assistance of all; and I am glad – very glad – of the indication that you stand ready.”¹³⁴ Indeed, as Lincoln further noted to Chase, the majority of those who had been put forward in Chicago came forward again to support the election of a Republican

¹³¹ Jeffery A. Jenkins, and Charles Stewart III, *Fighting for the Speakership: The House and the Rise of Party Government*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 221-223.

¹³² *Ibid*, 224.

¹³³ Lincoln to Samuel Galloway, 24 March 1860, in *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln Volume 4*.

¹³⁴ Lincoln to Salmon P. Chase, 26 May 1860, in *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln Volume 4*.

president. As Reinhard Luthin wrote in his 1944 study, *The First Lincoln Campaign*, the party's success came in no small part out of "rejecting...radical candidates...and the eagerness for victory which kept party lines tight in spite of major disappointment...The Democrats were not capable of similar action; they had tasted too long of success to appreciate the value of compromise and sacrifice."¹³⁵

These "tight lines" Luthin described were woven into a network of speakers and advisors who worked in key states while in direct contact with Lincoln himself. Unable to go into the field himself according to electoral tradition (a tradition which Stephen Douglas interestingly chose to ignore), Lincoln directed his surrogates to regions which best suited their skills and ideologies. One such example was Cassius Clay, a Kentucky Republican who had been considered for the Vice Presidential nomination, and who during the campaign became one of Lincoln's most frequent correspondents on the subject of the campaign in Indiana—a state which Lincoln believed would ensure total victory in the House should a Republican succeed in winning it.¹³⁶ Lincoln was in contact with both Clay and the relevant State Central Committees, planning out the best areas for him to give speeches in such a way as to maximize both audience size and speed of travel.¹³⁷ This attention to practical details was representative of Lincoln as the old Whig campaign operative, finding the best ways to use resources in order to win an election. He even made use of William Seward, the candidate whom Luthin dismissed as too radical and threatening to a Republican victory in the seemingly-sure year of 1860. Lincoln sent him north to

¹³⁵ Reinhard H. Luthin, *The First Lincoln Campaign*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1944), 223.

¹³⁶ Lincoln to Caleb B. Smith, 23 July 1860, *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln Volume 4*.

¹³⁷ Lincoln to Cassius M. Clay, 10 August 1860, *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln Volume 4*.

Chicago and Minnesota to energize the antislavery Republican base as only he could.¹³⁸ Though Lincoln intended the word “humblest” in his May 26 letter to Chase to refer to his background, this willingness to employ his former rivals in the service of the Republican cause indicated a humility Lincoln had that other nominees might have lacked. More arrogance might have harmed the party’s ability to frame its message for the different regions it needed to win—not just the White House, but a Congressional majority.

High-profile speakers were not Lincoln’s only means for getting involved in the election on a more direct level. Late in the campaign he criticized those who disliked the “dry, irksome labor” of campaign organizing and instead “prefer[red] parades, and shows, and monster meetings.” He emphasized “the importance of thorough organization” and told the letter’s recipient that “I do what I can in my position, for organization.”¹³⁹ Though unable to participate in such “parades, and shows, and monster meetings” himself, Lincoln was frequently in contact with operatives in a number of critical states such as New York, Pennsylvania, and Indiana – states whose outcome would shape not just the Electoral College, but the makeup of the House of Representatives. Almost immediately after his nomination Lincoln instructed Caleb B. Smith to “let me hear from Indiana occasionally,” as he considered the state a key to assuring a Republican victory.¹⁴⁰ Cassius Clay and Representative Schuyler Colfax proved key contributors to Lincoln’s knowledge of the campaign in Indiana, and similar networks brought him regular dispatches from New York, Pennsylvania, and elsewhere. Even months before the nominating convention, Lincoln was thinking about the best candidates for different districts, and he spent

¹³⁸ Lincoln to William H. Seward, 21 July 1860, *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln Volume 4*.

¹³⁹ Lincoln to Henry Wilson, 1 September 1860, *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln Volume 4*.

¹⁴⁰ Lincoln to Caleb B. Smith, 26 May 1860, *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln Volume 4*.

the months leading up to the election concernedly checking up on those districts he thought crucial to maintaining and strengthening the majority.

Lincoln was clearly very alarmed at the prospect of potentially losing a pair of congressional seats in Maine, and took unusually aggressive action in his attempt to discover the problem. Upon receiving a letter from “a friend in Chicago” warning him that such an outcome was likely, Lincoln immediately fired off an unusually aggressive letter to his Vice Presidential candidate Hannibal Hamlin (a Senator from Maine), declaring that Hamlin “must not allow it,” as faltering in Maine could start a chain of events that would lose the party the October 9 elections in Indiana and Pennsylvania and then the general election.¹⁴¹ Under most other circumstances during the campaign Lincoln avoided addressing numerous people on the same topic, but after hearing about Maine, he fired off three different letters, to Hamlin, Joseph Medill, and Elihu Washburne, describing himself as “annoyed” and referring to “anxiety I had about Maine.”¹⁴² It is clear in this letter that Lincoln saw the presidential election and Congressional races as inextricably linked, with success in one useful only if accompanied by success in the other. This broad way of looking at the election inspired the thinking behind an April 29 letter to Illinois Senator Lyman Trumbull, which pointed out that in Illinois, “we want something here quite as much as, and which is harder to get than, the Electoral vote – the legislature. And it is exactly in this point that Seward’s nomination would be hard upon us. Suppose he should gain us a thousand votes in Winnebago, it would not compensate for the loss of fifty in Edgar.”¹⁴³

Equating the desire to win the Illinois legislature to the desire to capture the White House seems

¹⁴¹ Lincoln to Hannibal Hamlin, 4 September 1860, *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*.

¹⁴² Lincoln to Joseph Medill, 4 September 1860, *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln Volume 4*.

¹⁴³ Lincoln to Lyman Trumbull, 29 April 1860, *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln Volume 4*.

like at least an unusual exaggeration and at most a strange case of misplaced priorities, but here again the critical job of capturing the Congress appears. In 1860, state legislatures selected Senators, so making sure a presidential candidate could energize voters in key legislative districts was every bit as important as targeting Congressional districts or the state as a whole. A letter to Trumbull written two days later reinforces this point as Lincoln clarifies, “I think S[eward] weaker than B[ates] in our close legislative districts; but probably not weaker in taking the whole state over.”¹⁴⁴ These letters demonstrate that Lincoln placed a premium on candidates’ abilities not only to get elected, but to have broad coattails that would sweep in a favorable Congress and aid in the successful execution of the Republican platform.¹⁴⁵

As the election results revealed, Lincoln had an incredible ability to energize down ticket races as Republicans won ninety-nine Congressional seats. (A further ten won in 1861 before Congress came into session, which ensured that even without Southern withdrawal the Republicans would be in a powerful position to assert their will in Congress.) The six-year-old party managed to hold onto all of its seats in the critical Electoral College battlegrounds of Illinois and Indiana, as well as in reliably Republican states such as Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont, and Wisconsin. Despite losses in New Jersey, New York, and Ohio, Republicans made gains in Michigan, Minnesota (which was new to the Union in 1860), and Pennsylvania.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ Lincoln to Lyman Trumbull, 1 May 1860, *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln Volume 4*.

¹⁴⁵ These are not the only letters in the *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* in which Lincoln discusses strategy in critical Congressional districts, however those others are partial correspondences and do not specify the states or regions with which they are concerned. For example, in a letter to Jesse W. Fell Lincoln informs him that, “Our friends all understand...the importance of carrying one of the three Districts you mention,” though since Fell’s letter is not in the Lincoln papers it is difficult to know what those districts are. It is however clear that the letters regarding Maine congressional districts and Illinois legislative districts are not outliers, but part of a consistent subgroup of communications Lincoln maintained throughout the campaign.

¹⁴⁶ *CQ Press Guide to Elections, Volume II*. Washington: CQ Press, 2010. s.v. “1860 House Elections.”

Michigan and Minnesota were firmly Republican territory, the kind of states to which William Seward was sent to fire up the party's radical base. Considering both states sent fully Republican delegations to Washington the following fall, it is difficult to suggest that Lincoln made the wrong choice in using the man Luthin considered to be dangerously extreme. In Pennsylvania, the Republican portion of the state's Congressional delegation swelled to four-fifths of the entire delegation to the House. As Lincoln observed in a letter to Seward after the October 9 elections in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana, the results in those states "surpassed all expectation, even the most extravagant," leading it to "look as if the Government is about to fall into [Republican] hands" no matter what came in the next month.¹⁴⁷ The Keystone State elected its first Republican governor by 32,000 votes only for Lincoln, a month later, to win by almost three times that. The Illinoisan clearly excited the electorate in an astounding way, and this no doubt helped sweep other Republicans into office.

Even for a period in which politics involved great masses of people, the election of 1860 saw a highly energized electorate. Election scholars estimate that the election of 1860 had one of the highest turnout rates in the decades between the mid-1840s and mid-1870s.¹⁴⁸ Voters cast 630,914 more ballots in 1860 than in 1856, and at the presidential level the Republican Party saw its vote share rise by 523,563 – almost the entire sum of the expanded electorate. Since 1858 when Republicans recaptured the House thanks to months of backroom wrangling, the new party's vote count in House elections rose by 420,403, with the percentage vote share rising in

¹⁴⁷ Lincoln to William H. Seward, 12 October 1860, *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln Volume 4*.

¹⁴⁸ Thomas E. Rodgers, "Saving the Republic: Turnout, Ideology, and Republicanism in the Election of 1860," *The Election of 1860 Reconsidered*, ed. A. James Fuller (Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2013), 165.

most districts as well (see appendix for Republican vote shares 1854-1860).¹⁴⁹ This disparity could be accounted for by the natural drop-off in votes between presidential and non-presidential years, but the number of votes for Republican House candidates rose by 577,456 between 1856 and 1860, an even greater increase than at the presidential level. It is possible that some of this was due to Republican candidates appearing on ballots in more areas, but all of this information taken together suggests that Abraham Lincoln likely had a strong energizing effect on the Northern electorate, helping to spur turnout and dramatically expand the Republican electorate. Luthin's theory that Republicans won primarily by being the more measured, compromising group in this election fails to take into account the fierce energy with which groups such as the Wide-Awakes took to campaigning; their work in particular contributed to increased turnout by exciting and drawing out young voters who might otherwise have abstained from participating.¹⁵⁰

Of course it is simple to look at Lincoln's Electoral and popular vote totals and determine that he would very likely have won even without a Democratic split. As he said in his letter to Anson Henry, "the chances were more than equal."¹⁵¹ Lincoln himself made no substantive policy additions to the Republican platform, and repeatedly refused to deviate from it. Upon his acceptance of the nomination he informed the convention chair George Ashmun, "It shall be my care not to violate, or disregard [the platform], in any part," and so he generally refused to express policy stands at all, instead directing people to the platform.¹⁵² Luthin argues that this platform contributed significantly to Lincoln's victory, as it formed a hodgepodge of policies

¹⁴⁹ *CQ Press Guide to Elections, Volume II*. Washington: CQ Press, 2010. s.v. "1858 House Elections."

¹⁵⁰ Green, 107-108.

¹⁵¹ Lincoln to Anson G. Henry, 4 July 1860, in *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln, Volume 4*.

¹⁵² Lincoln to George Ashmun, 23 May 1860, in *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln Volume 4*.

designed to appeal throughout the free states, bound together by the unifying notion of free labor. In New York and New England this meant temperance and slavery extension, the latter of which was critical in the Northwest along with a homestead bill. In Indiana and Illinois the campaign emphasized Unionist elements of the platform, and commercial interests dominated presentation in California (transcontinental railroad and daily overland mail), Pennsylvania, and New Jersey (a strong tariff to protect American labor).¹⁵³ If the varied appeal of these platform provisions was enough to secure Republican victory, then Lincoln's presence in the election was superfluous. In fact, after the critical October 9 elections in Indiana and Pennsylvania, Lincoln himself told his friends, "It is not my name, it is not my personality which has driven Douglas out of Indiana and Pennsylvania, it is the irresistible power of public opinion, which has broken with slavery."¹⁵⁴ Perhaps Lincoln believed this; it certainly matched the sentiments of the humble nominee addressing Salmon Chase a few days after the Chicago convention.

But what the Republican Party did in the face of an election which they were sure to win was not to nominate a well-regarded statesman with an expansive policy record, but a party activist and campaigner who invariably found that, "What time I can spare from my own business...I shall be compelled to give to politics."¹⁵⁵ Lincoln was both obligated to participate in the political life of his community and was insatiably drawn to it. Following his nomination he took office space in the governor's office in Springfield, from which he ran a shadow campaign strategy headquarters that communicated tirelessly with his party's major players and offered suggestions and concerns on a dizzying array of campaign topics. It was these skills as a political

¹⁵³ Luthin 220-222.

¹⁵⁴ Green 97.

¹⁵⁵ Lincoln to John M. Carson, 7 April 1860, in *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln Volume 4*.

organizer, dating back to the first years of Lincoln's life in Illinois, which made him such a formidable candidate.

Lincoln's nomination strategy of offending no one and accepting his role as everyone's second choice matters not simply because it made him the compromise candidate, as Michael Green observes, but also because it left Lincoln with a small army of powerful men willing to traverse the country in the service of his campaign, following a strategy of his devising to maximize enthusiasm in the right areas in the right ways. Green suggests that Seward slighted Lincoln by "campaign[ing] more for the party than for the candidate," but that attitude was in fact a primary goal of Lincoln's going back to his letters to Lyman Trumbull about different potential nominees' ability to carry important legislative districts. Lincoln's humility allowed him to understand that the election could not hinge on one candidate, but instead must hinge on a collaboration bringing as many co-partisans into office as possible. This campaign-oriented mind manifested itself again and again in Lincoln's presidency, from his recurring attempts (with varying success) to work with people who may not have completely agreed with him if he thought the goal was worth the compromise, and in his centralization of the war effort in his direct communications with generals in the field, an information web bearing striking resemblance to his campaign structure. That mind is Lincoln's great contribution to the election of 1860; it enabled him to assemble a campaign team no one else could and pursue a broader and more successful goal than other candidates might have sought.

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Appendix: House Election Results

State	District	1854 Total	1854 .%	1856 total	1856 .%	1858 total	1858 .%	1860 total	1860 .%
CA	AL (01)			21975		9381			
CA	AL (02)			21164					
IL	1	8372	69.3	18070	72.6	15811	69.8	21436	70.6
IL	2	6927	53.1	21518	67.2	21797	61.1	30834	64.4
IL	3	10474	62.8	19068	59.4	22313	57.7	29600	59.9
IL	4	10146	57	16175	51.1	19487	52.8	25668	54.6
IL	5	8935	52.4	10294	45.8	11648	45.4	14684	46.4
IL	6	9890	49.5	12077	46	11646	41.4	16244	43.4
IL	7	8451	50 (loss by 1 vote)	9878	43.2	11760	46.3	16313	45.9
IL	8	7917	58.1	7512	39.9	8410	41.8	13315	44.3
IL	9	2911	22	3419	17.4	2796	14.8	5207	19.9
IN	1	9051	47.9	7977	38.5			10731	44.3
IN	2	8345	48.3	7927	42.8	7434	44.4	10272	48.7
IN	3	9989	54.5	9113	46.2	9363	52.8	11545	54.5
IN	4	9061	51.9	8998	46.3	7856	45.5	10007	49.3
IN	5	9419	64.3	7183	39.2	9383	61.3	12237	62
IN	6	9824	51.4	10840	47.9	10776	52.6	13029	52.3
IN	7	9515	52.6	9529	46.1			11516	47.9
IN	8	10357	56.9	11302	50.5	11028	51.5	13310	53.7
IN	9	9989	54.9	12921	52.1	14541	53.6	16860	55.6
IN	10	7485	56	10699	51.7	10780	53.4	14267	55.6
IN	11	9389	56.6	11235	51.8	10748	51.7	13885	54.1
IO	1	11042	49.5	18065	50.2	23539	50.7	33936	52.9
IO	2	11424	53.3	21888	57.9	25503	52.8	36805	57.5
ME	1	9227	59.8	11215	53.4	10410	50.6	12018	53
ME	2	10007	57.8	12953	57.3	12031	54.5	12806	55.6
ME	3	5995	43.9	10562	56.1	8994	50.2	10065	52.5
ME	4	11610	77	13750	65	10552	60.1	12666	61.6
ME	5	10224	63	12517	60.1	10300	55.7	12317	59.8
ME	6	4307	38.7	8503	52.9	8297	51.5	9451	53.9
MA	1			7904	69.6	4854	72.6	7350	72.5
MA	2			11658	72.4	7385	71.4	10103	68.4
MA	3			10433	61.5	6524	54.9	10530	58.4
MA	4			5188	45.8 (win)	4507	47.7 (win)	7292	52.3
MA	5					6214	51.5	8014	50.8

MA	6			10044	69.4	5587	52	9644	63.1
MA	7			10814	61.9	7129	60.3	11373	60.2
MA	8			9616	67.4	6196	58.9	9272	64.6
MA	9			8920	53.7	7280	70.9	9745	54.6
MA	10			10845	72.4	6847	64.1	10021	75.1
MA	11			6709	43.9 (win)	7631	60.8	10409	67.6
MI	1	9877	53.1	13658	51.6	13048	49.8	16997	52.5
MI	2	11055	57.7	16467	62.1	14655	59.1	19162	60.1
MI	3	12865	55.8	23970	59.6	21952	55.7	28641	59
MI	4	9863	46.7	18715	55.2	16193	51.7	23650	55.3
MN	At-large							GOP	
MN	At-large							GOP	
MO	1					6631	34.3	11453	44.1 (win)
NJ	1					8393	48 (win)	10843	52.7
NJ	2					11471	56.7	13582	52.8
NJ	3					9713	51.2	12843	55.2
NJ	4			5876	33.8			10789	52.6
NJ	5			6480	30.5	11641	53.8	15802	49.4
NY	1			5449	26.8	8122	52.5	10631	47.2
NY	2			5869	27.9	6475	36.8 (win)	10870	44.9
NY	3			2126	19.8	3015	33.3	4585	41.1
NY	4			1497	13	2290	23	3324	26.7
NY	5			3274	23.2	4982	42.9	6877	41
NY	6			3991	26.3	5520	42.9	6546	35.1 (win)
NY	7			4100	25.7	8306	55.8	8417	43.8
NY	8			3760	25.3	9035	58.8	9417	41
NY	9			5935	32.6	7637	48.3 (win)	9882	46.5
NY	10			6156	39.3 (win)	6681	48.4 (win)	8311	50.5
NY	11			4912	27.8	8166	50.3	9789	49.6
NY	12			9247	45.5 (win)	10750	56.2	11795	52
NY	13			5206	37 (win)	8267	61.1	8650	51.1
NY	14			4631	25.7	9571	52	10043	48.2
NY	15			11717	51.6	11428	53.8	14924	58.8
NY	16			6799	44.5 (win)	7058	47.9	10571	58.7
NY	17			14722	70.7	12582	68.7	16134	68.4
NY	18			9719	44.6 (win)	10581	53.2	11602	49.1
NY	19			10724	54.7	9981	55.1	11310	57
NY	20			10618	56.2	11084	57.3	12536	58.3
NY	21			13357	62	10951	57.3	13960	62.2
NY	22			14380	65	11450	57.4	15253	63.7

NY	23			11149	64.6	9162	56.1	11865	59.9
NY	24			9748	61	8478	55.1	11175	60.4
NY	25			12631	63.3	10855	60.7	14437	64.5
NY	26			9368	53	8598	54.5	11581	58.3
NY	27			12383	56.3	10131	49.2 (win)	13482	57.2
NY	28			10509	53.4	9382	53.3	13167	60.8
NY	29			7786	51	7276	52.8	10704	59.4
NY	30			13867	64	9917	56.6	15342	67.5
NY	31			6885	51.7	6093	52.5	8662	58.8
NY	32			6923	34.8	12427	62.2	12256	52.8
NY	33			12046	64.3	10018	60.3	14303	66.8
OH	1	7716	63.5	4256	32.7	6785	48.8	6582	43
OH	2	7562	66	4343	32.6	8054	52.6	8469	48.1 (win)
OH	3	9058	58.3	9338	50.1	9715	49.5	10918	19.6
OH	4			9415	49.7 (win)	9371	49.5	10968	48.3
OH	5	8253	61.6	10018	51	10532	51.2	13756	52.3
OH	6	9990	65	7460	42.2	6922	45.8	8828	46.8
OH	7	9928	81.1	9027	59.7	8866	63.9	10693	70
OH	8	11000	76.7	9756	56.7	8716	59.5	10931	58.3
OH	9	8399	59.9	9382	48.7	9304	50.3	12096	48.9
OH	10	8865	65.3	5633	32.4	10592	55.1	11593	51.3
Oh	11	9818	58.7	10272	50.9	9446	49.3	11965	51.5
OH	12	9698	60.3	8582	46.7	8913	48.3	10131	47.9
OH	13	8617	59.8	9926	58.4	9426	57.1	11428	57.2
OH	14	8788	59.3	10414	57.8	9438	56.3	12040	57.1
OH	15	9371	59	9143	49.9	8949	50.7	9439	47.9
OH	16	7265	58.9	7248	48 (win)	7677	52.8	8560	50.2
OH	17	8332	58.1	6805	40.3	7311	50.3	8510	45.2
OH	18	8738	63.4	9394	58	8184	53.3	9720	58.3
OH	19	7699	71.4	9431	67.9	8557	65.1	11927	69.1
OH	20	6972	64.8	9567	66.6	8321	62.8	10840	72
OH	21	9860	65.3	9444	57.7	8883	57.5	9170	61.2
PA	1					6492	41.2	8581	45.1
PA	2					5653	58.4	6259	46.6 (win)
PA	3					6977	54.2	8931	49.1 (win)
PA	4			2457	13.4	9749	59.3	11568	49.3 (win)
PA	5					9701	57.4	10020	50.8
PA	6					4676	28.1	10140	56.8
PA	7					8324	50.8	10620	49.7
PA	8					7321	50.1	7111	41.6
PA	9					9513	60	12964	96.5 (unopposed)
PA	10					8897	61.4	12246	62.1
PA	11					7153	47.2 (win)	9867	50.9
PA	12					10023	61.8	11719	51.5
PA	13					6566	45.1	9096	42.7
PA	14			13325	71.3	11165	76.9	14922	71.4

PA	15					9238	55.7	11907	53.8
PA	16					8646	50.1	11712	49.3
PA	17					9348	50.7	11945	51.2
PA	18					9114	57.7	11185	57.6
PA	19					9257	53.1	11769	54.7
PA	20					5798	38.5	9443	47.1
PA	21			7674	54.6	6539	57.3	10507	61.3
PA	22			6840	57.1	5438	55.3	7978	72.8
PA	23					6721	64	7636	55.6
PA	24					8905	52.3	11745	52.6
PA	25			8944	68	6360	60.7	10705	65.9
VT	1			10398	76.2			10268	75.2
VT	2			13695	75.9	9615	72.9	12555	79.2
VT	3			9116	74.4	7418	69.3	8326	76.3
WI	1	7026	45.4	13111	50.6	14428	56.4	16197	54.5
WI	2	11936	60.2	26004	61.6	23917	54.3	36223	61.2
WI	3	13359	60.9	25808	52.5	23011	49	34002	54
TOTALS		502193		1100195		1257248		1677651	

The Roaring Nineties: Privatization and the Mongolian Stock Exchange

Nicolas Sambor

Columbia University

1991 was a bleak year for most Mongolians. The collapse of communism had pushed their nation towards political reform; inevitably, this first reformatory step produced sweeping change in every aspect of life. For the sake of clarity and brevity, this essay concerns itself with arguably the boldest of those changes: the privatization efforts of the 1990s executed by the "pure market economy fundamentalists" of the democratic Mongolian state.¹⁵⁶ Specifically, it examines the development of the Mongolian Stock Exchange (established in January 1991¹⁵⁷; henceforth abbreviated to "Stock Exchange") during this decade. It will endeavor to move beyond the face-value opinion held by much of the existing literature on the Stock Exchange—that it was merely an instrument devised as part of a grander project of privatization and was largely ineffective, at least until the introduction of secondary trading in 1995—in order to show that the Stock Exchange's development was inherently emblematic of the privatization project's own struggles.

A germ of progress: why build a stock exchange? 1990-91

The above question has largely evaded the crosshairs of commentators; in the context of the 1990s, this was understandable. The Mongolian government in this period was promoting a

¹⁵⁶ Morris Rossabi, *Modern Mongolia: From Khans to Commissars to Capitalists* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 25-26.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 53.

much vaster effort at privatization, of which the Stock Exchange was often simply an amusing footnote for foreign journalists.¹⁵⁸ Meanwhile, scholars were blessed with neither data nor a serious incentive to isolate the Stock Exchange for the purposes of analysis. After all, what did the Stock Exchange really do? Without a secondary market, the privatization project as it related to the Stock Exchange was confined to a stage that could only be considered preliminary. This stage involved the distribution of two types of vouchers to the public. The second of these, a blue voucher with a face value of 7,000 tugriks, was tailored for a system of exchange (of shares in privatized enterprises) in which the Stock Exchange would regulate all transactions of "large-value public assets."¹⁵⁹ Pomfret, in his work *Asian Economies in Transition*, described this aspect of the privatization project as "the most dramatic component of Mongolia's economic reforms."¹⁶⁰ By setting their sights thus on the privatization project at large, most research efforts truncated the complex and symbiotic relationship between privatization and the Stock Exchange. In particular, official reports prepared for international agencies like the IMF, World Bank, and Asian Development Bank consistently point to progress in the privatization project without producing a more nuanced consideration of the flaws that underlay many of the institutions (like the Stock Exchange) that privatization had generated or was about to generate.¹⁶¹ Although the Stock Exchange had been born from the desire to progressively privatize, it was itself a germ of progress. Its future development was not independent of the privatization project, but central to

¹⁵⁸ See Ron Gluckman, "Mongolia: Yurts, Yaks...and Stocks?," *Asian Business* 27, no. 10 (1991): 24; and "In Nomad's Land, Stocks Trade while Cattle Graze," *South China Morning Post*, September 3, 1995.

¹⁵⁹ Asian Development Bank, *Mongolia: A Centrally Planned Economy in Transition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 83. See also Frederick Nixon and Bernard Walters eds., *The Mongolian Economy: A Manual of Applied Economics for a Country in Transition* (Northampton, Mass.: Edward Elgar, 2000), 140.

¹⁶⁰ Richard Pomfret, *Asian Economies in Transition: Reforming Centrally Planned Economies* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 1996), 83.

¹⁶¹ See Elizabeth Milne et al., *The Mongolian People's Republic: Toward a Market Economy* (Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund, 1991), 30-32; and *Mongolia: Toward a Market Economy* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1992), 26-29.

it. Murrell hints at this in writing that privatization "was considered by the leading reformists to be the sine qua non of a successful transition...[but] swift formal privatization precluded any attempts at addressing the second aspect of privatization--developments within society and in its institutions that would secure that separation between the state and the new owners."¹⁶²The question at hand—why build a stock exchange?—was therefore instructive, but also unanswered. A serious consideration of it would have shown pure market economy fundamentalists that, in their haste to tear down the walls of Mongolia's command economy, had ignored their country's past. As it were, "the vast majority of Mongolia's citizens had almost no conception of the value of their shares or of what the Stock Exchange was...a market economy was beyond the experience of ordinary Mongolians, who had had almost no exposure to the outside world and were allowed no time to learn about these very new institutions."¹⁶³ Foreign consultants from the outside—Jeffrey Sachs, then of Harvard University, being an oft-cited example—were unable or unwilling to consider Mongolia more carefully; and this was perhaps to be expected.⁹ Yet, the "pure market economy fundamentalists" were themselves architects of both privatization and the privation that its imperfect implementation engendered. What now must be considered is their *acceptance* of such an outcome, in line with the economic dogma of "shock therapy," for this will offer an idea of why the Stock Exchange's piecemeal implementation in subsequent years was further reflective of the privatization project at large.

Privation and privatization: the struggles of the Stock Exchange, 1991-95

The message of shock therapy, regrettably, reached few if any ordinary Mongolians. If anything, the therapeutic aspect of it was difficult to see from any angle. A report by the

¹⁶² Peter Murrell, "Reform's Rhetoric-Realization Relationship: The Experience of Mongolia," in *The Evolutionary Transition to Capitalism*, ed. Kazimierz Poznanski (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), 87-88.

¹⁶³ Rossabi, *Modern Mongolia*, 50-51.

Independent in January 1995 offered rare comments from Mongolians not affiliated with the group of élites that ran affairs: "I preferred the old system. Economically, it was better. But I like the freedom now, freedom to talk, a free press... We knew that democracy would happen. But my own standard of living was better in the old times because I always had a job."¹⁶⁴ These comments shed light on how the pure market economy fundamentalists' implementation of shock therapy—and the turmoil it wreaked on the lives of Mongolia's citizenry—was obscured by the proclamation that the fate of Mongolian democracy hinged on the provision of bitter but necessary economic medicine. The Stock Exchange, its internal dysfunction thus concealed to most Mongolians, became an ostensibly positive sign of *both* economic reform and democratic change. This calculus, by rebranding shock therapy as a calculated risk, inverted its true message to those who had most reason to pause before enacting drastic reform. The pure market economy fundamentalists had wholeheartedly embraced a mantra that ordinary Mongolians would adopt more painfully; namely, that only radical economic transformation would render political reform irreversible.¹⁶⁵ That subsequent reports on the Mongolian economy continued to praise the speed and radicality of the privatization project only strengthened the belief in privatization to which they had become beholden. This belief was so strong that such reports could calmly offer opinions that on closer reading become resoundingly disturbing; for instance, "further increases [in the unemployment rate, which was 6 percent at the end of 1990] are expected as the

¹⁶⁴ Teresa Poole, "Capitalism has also Brought Mongolians Unemployment and Alcoholism Along With their Shares," *Independent*, January 12, 1995; and Peter Hannam Bloomberg, "Stock Market Key to Mongolian Capitalism: Many Here are Yearning for a Return to Soviet-Style Central Planning," *Financial Post*, August 30, 1995.

¹⁶⁵ Sakhiya Lhagva and Tsedendambyn Batbayar, "Mongolian Economy in Transition: Present Status and Problems," in *Asian Transitional Economies: Challenges and Prospects for Reform and Transformation*, eds. Seiji F. Naya and Joseph L.H. Tan (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1995), 267.

privatization program, which is under implementation, progresses."¹⁶⁶ Consequently, if what primarily legitimized the privatization project was *not* the adequacy of economic reforms, but the consequences of reducing or reversing those reforms instead, then assessments of the Stock Exchange in its first five years became naturally lenient and simplistic. This seems especially true for journalistic accounts of the Stock Exchange in this period. In 1992, Nicholas D. Kristof of the *Chicago Tribune* wrote that "everyone in a poor and remote country like Mongolia is suddenly talking about stock prices. As a result of a remarkable economic transformation under way here, a nation of herdsmen is becoming a nation of stockholders."¹⁶⁷ Similarly, in 1995 the *Wall Street Journal* noted that, "the result [of Mongolia's program to privatize state-run enterprises] is what [Naidansürengiin Zoljargal, the chairman of the Stock Exchange] proudly describes as one of the world's best-designed exchanges, with automated, scripless trading and with no restriction on foreign investors."¹⁶⁸ The abolition of restrictions on foreign investment seemed to have given the Stock Exchange an extra-Mongolian character; in turn, its documented appeal to foreign capitalists as virgin territory ("It's far away, it's exotic, and all the foundations are in place"¹⁶⁹) gave privatization a second wind.

To the victors go the spoils: a second wind from secondary trading

The Stock Exchange had been ostensibly revitalized by the upgrading of its machinery, but, it was the advent of secondary trading in 1995 that promised truly tangible returns for the "nation of stockholders." Pomfret noted that "without secondary trading valuations are make-

¹⁶⁶ Asian Development Bank, *Mongolia: A Centrally Planned Economy*, 27.

¹⁶⁷ Nicholas D. Kristof, "Mongolia Shepherds Privatization Along: Herdsmen are Investing in Stocks," *Chicago Tribune*, July 26, 1992.

¹⁶⁸ Kathy Chen, "Brave Capitalists Trek to Mongolia Where New Exchange is High-Tech," *Wall Street Journal*, October 24, 1995, Europe.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

believe, because no money has changed hands, apart from the brokers' fees."¹⁷⁰ Privatization, then, had finally exited the stage of make-believe. Yet, for some amongst Mongolia's global watchers, an aura of disbelief surrounding the whole affair remained. Indeed, the gently mocking tone taken by one journalist in describing Tumurtseren, a shepherd "whose possessions comprise 13 sheep, two horses and four cows...[to] this portfolio, he recently added shares in a nearby farm, lately decollectivized...[he] is very bullish on his investment, as are his four cows" might have raised chuckles (rather than genuine comprehension) amongst the readership of the financial newspaper *Barron's*.¹⁷¹

But keener eyes would have seen there was something more to Tumurtseren's situation. Kristof wrote that the shepherd, standing barefoot outside his *ger*, quipped: "We don't really know what a share is."¹⁷² The piece had gone on to suggest that distributing dividend checks to a significantly nomadic population would be a key difficulty of a privatization program "riddled with difficulties." Unfortunately, it had pointed out a secondary consequence of privatization, rather than that aspect of privatization, which had fundamentally uprooted decades of Mongolian history, culture, and social thought. It was this: secondary trading, in dynamizing the Stock Exchange, had produced a game of clear winners and losers, something running contrary to the spirit of the command economy that had engulfed the Mongolian state for nearly 70 years. The collapse of communism had exposed the vast majority of Mongolians—poor, uneducated, without connections—to the foreign vultures that circled the carcass of state industry.¹⁹ It would not do, for their sake, that Tumurtseren and his fellow "investors" did not even know what a share was. As such, the question was now not whether Mongolians like Tumurtseren would lose,

¹⁷⁰ Pomfret, *Asian Economies in Transition*, 83-84.

¹⁷¹ Alan Abelson, "Up and Down Wall Street," *Barron's National Business and Financial Weekly*, July 27, 1992.

¹⁷² Kristof, "Mongolia Shepherds Privatization Along," *Chicago Tribune*, July 26, 1992.

it was in what way and by how much. In a system "ripe for exploitation and abuse," poverty-stricken and ill-educated Mongolians certainly stood to lose economically, since it was likely that "brokerage firms and other entrepreneurs [would take] advantage of ill-informed and credulous citizens by offering them a pittance for their vouchers."¹⁷³ However, they also stood to lose politically too. The Stock Exchange was not just internally legitimized by the equation of democracy with pure, free-market capitalism, which prevented any fruitful objections to the problems this conflation of ideas caused. It was also externally legitimized by the growing role of foreign investment that would make foreign parties—not ordinary shareholding Mongolians—into the fulcrum of Mongolian capitalism. What spoils, all things considered, would thus head to foreign victors? Data on the Stock Exchange in the 1990s support the assessment that, a band of risk-seeking capitalists aside, foreign investment in Mongolia had been growing at a crawl due to a lack of confidence in the Mongolian banking system.¹⁷⁴ It appeared to matter little that the Mongolian government had erected a series of laws to further the cause of privatization. For instance, Mongolia's Foreign Investment Law of 1990, "offer[ed] some tax incentives, but has failed to attract many investors. The inconvertible currency, overvalued exchange rate, distorted domestic prices and chronic infrastructure problems made it unlikely that many foreign investors would come to Mongolia in the early 1990s."¹⁷⁵ A combination of these factors, revealing the Mongolian government's obsession with big-picture privatization at the expense of nursing small and medium-sized local businesses, rendered the Stock Exchange, for all its rich potential, a poor provider of capital to such enterprises.¹⁷⁶ Yet this account of the Stock Exchange does not quite

¹⁷³ Rossabi, *Modern Mongolia*, 51.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 59.

¹⁷⁵ Pomfret, *Asian Economies in Transition*, 82.

¹⁷⁶ Rossabi, *Modern Mongolia*, 99.

gel with how the specter of foreign domination remained a fixture of common discourse in Mongolia during this period. The Economist Intelligence Unit reported "as early as 1993...that 'many ordinary people express the traditional fear that the growing presence of Chinese, mainly small businessmen, in Mongolia could be a prelude to a Chinese takeover.'...[and] that the Chinese, either on their own or through Mongolian agents, would buy majority shares in important enterprises on the Stock Exchange."¹⁷⁷ How did such fears problematize the judgment pronounced by foreign observers on the potential of the Stock Exchange, or the statistical observations of the Stock Market—"eerily quiet" in 1998—that painted an increasingly grimmer picture of foreign investment?²⁵

Adventure capitalists and Chinese tanks: the Stock Exchange's foreign dimension

The interaction of these three forces is henceforth central to a discussion of the Stock Exchange beyond the introduction of secondary trading in the mid-1990s. The "second wind" of privatization mentioned earlier in this essay was primarily ideological rather than tangible in the form of hard investment. However, this second wind was no less potent as a result. Reformers disheartened by the lack of economic progress in the first half of the 1990s needed only to take a look at the news that reported the "opening of the Stock Exchange" (in the context of secondary trading¹⁷⁸) in 1995 to realize that the privatization project, abetted by nascent foreign interests, was not to be slowed down. Moreover, the curtailing of privatization efforts and "shock therapy" by the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) between 1992 and 1996 was effectively reversed by the pro-privatization Democratic Union's shock victory in the 1996 elections.¹⁷⁹ At

¹⁷⁷ Ibid. 231.

¹⁷⁸ See "Mongolia to Open Stock Market to Foreigners" (East Asian Executive Reports 17, Jan 15, 1995), 4.

¹⁷⁹ Morris Rossabi, "Mongolia in the 1990s: from Commissars to Capitalists?" Accessed February 12, 2014. <http://www.hunmagyar.org/turan/mongol/mong90.html>.

once, this restored hope for those who stood—if not in the short run, certainly in the long run—to gain from privatization and its attendant investment opportunities. Distinguishing between the long-term and short-term interests of believers in privatization within and outside of Mongolia allows us to begin resolving the disjunction between the potential of the Stock Exchange (which was continually rising) and its relative impotence in practice. The latter, a product of the haste with which the Mongolian government had attempted to, "achieve what has never been done anywhere in the world: to build a market economy and a democratic polity simultaneously,"¹⁸⁰ was considered a reparable state of affairs by foreigners whose comments echoed the former instead. To be sure, their views were those of a vocal minority; but pronouncements like "in five year's [sic] time this place will be filled with pin-striped investment bankers from New York and elsewhere" had other "adventure capitalists" beginning to take notice.¹⁸¹

With the adventure capitalists, however, came attention from China. There seems an ominous pragmatism inherent to Mongolian attitudes about China in the 1990s, summed by Zoljargal himself: "If you don't allow Chinese business to invest, their tanks will invest in Mongolia. So which do you want?"¹⁸² The sense in this dichotomy relies on the assumption that Mongolians retained a collective memory of Chinese oppression during the Qing Dynasty. One could surmise that the Stock Exchange and privatization had forcefully eroded Mongolians' connections to communism but not those to their so-called cultural heritage. Yet, broadly speaking, any fears of renewed oppression from China failed to seriously stymie Mongolia's

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ "In Nomad's Land," *South China Morning Post*, September 3, 1995. "Adventure capitalist" is a phrase borrowed from the book of the same name by the investor Jim Rogers, who travelled to Mongolia among other places. See Jim Rogers, *Adventure Capitalist: The Ultimate Investor's Road Trip* (New York: Random House, 2003), 111-13.

¹⁸² Ibid.

efforts to establish rules for unrestricted foreign investment, or even reduce trade with the Chinese. Indeed, relations between Mongolia and China expanded between 1990 and 1996, both in exports (from less than 1% to 17.1%) and imports (from 2% to 15.1%).¹⁸³ What Mongolians exhibited was not simply unalloyed fear towards Chinese tanks. On the part of the average Mongolian man, he had internalized the presence of Chinese businesses as something that, in spite of historical factors, was to become an unavoidable part of daily life. He was allowed to express his fears of Chinese dominance through rumor and hearsay; popular criticism of the privatization project had arisen in 1997 from such channels.¹⁸⁴ But, just as the Mongolian populace had accepted the Stock Exchange as a legitimate component of democratic reform, so they accepted equally that relations with China, onerous in the short term, were to be of "paramount significance in the future."¹⁸⁵ Towards other foreigners they were not so much ambivalent as unaware, given Mongolia's insularity in communist times. Truthfully, however, it was not the brief of the average Mongolian to worry about how foreign interests were reshaping their country's economic landscape, insofar as what they immediately could perceive was personal economic prosperity. That responsibility to weigh the country's interests against foreign ones belonged to the elite within the Mongolian government, in their dealings with companies from Soco (the oil company that agreed an export pipeline route to China in 1997¹⁸⁶) to Ivanhoe Mines, Rio Tinto, and others.

¹⁸³ Rossabi, "Mongolia in the 1990s: from Commissars to Capitalists?"

¹⁸⁴ Rossabi, *Modern Mongolia*, 231.

¹⁸⁵ Rossabi, "Mongolia in the 1990s: from Commissars to Capitalists?"

¹⁸⁶ Robert Corzine, "Soco Agrees New Pipeline to China," *Financial Times*, October 29, 1997.

Conclusion: taking stock of the Stock Exchange

This essay intends to conclude its examination of the Stock Exchange by demonstrating that, at all times since its inception, the Stock Exchange has embodied some aspect or another of the internally and externally influenced struggles of Mongolia's privatization project. By 1997, privatization had already succeeded in ravaging the Mongolian economy and introducing turmoil into the lives of ordinary Mongolians; yet in 1996 political change with the Democratic Union's victory had contrived to reinvigorate the cause for privatization. At the same time, the Stock Exchange had floated into the crosshairs of both ambitious neighbors like China and risk-seeking private foreign investors as a raw but serious opportunity. The Stock Exchange's relative inactivity and corrupt underbelly in 1998 ("supervision was lax...enforcement of [regulations against insider trading and distortion of information] was minimal"¹⁸⁷) were, to be sure, problems for those without the financial and political clout to play corrupt officials at their own game and come out winners. But the most well-known eventual investors in Mongolia were clearly of this ilk. As Rossabi notes: "Among the first to recognize the potential of Mongolia's natural resources was the financier Robert Friedland, who has a long history in the mining industry and was nicknamed 'Toxic Bob' for the environmental disasters his companies have left in their wake."¹⁸⁸ For "Toxic Bob" and other wealthy, seasoned "adventure capitalists," the laxity of regulation in the Stock Exchange and the Mongolian economy in general might have even helped their cause. Friedland's company, Ivanhoe Mines, commenced operations in the early 2000s, spurring the entry of various other companies like Rio Tinto, itself embroiled in a dispute with the Mongolian

¹⁸⁷ Rossabi, *Modern Mongolia*, 99.

¹⁸⁸ Morris Rossabi, "Meteoric Mongolia," *Foreign Affairs*, January 29, 2013.

government in 2009 over its ownership of a gold and copper mine at Oyu Tolgoi.¹⁸⁹ Corruption, insofar as it oiled the levers of privatization—whether in mining agreements or the Stock Exchange—seemed thus to be as endemic to the Mongolian economic landscape as any of the other things cited by organizations like the IMF, World Bank, and Asian Development Bank. Zoljargal, having already shown himself to be pragmatic about the need to negotiate Chinese aggression through economic cooperation, was "impishly" frank in his explanation of how he had gotten the Stock Exchange up and running in the span of only several years: "I had to pay a lot under the table to get phone lines to the provinces that work...Fortunately, I'm a very good accountant. The Ministry of Finance has checked my books three times, and they didn't find anything. I'm a better accountant than the Ministry of Finance."¹⁹⁰ This, apart from raising worrying (and hitherto unexplored) questions about the inner workings of Mongolia's Ministry of Finance, presents the Stock Exchange as an institution—surely not alone in the Mongolian economy—standing on *necessarily corrupt* foundations. In this light, there is much to criticize in the Asian Development Bank's assertion that "[g]iven the lack of expertise at the Stock Exchange and the paucity of expertise that is available even outside Mongolia in the design and implementation of the [voucher] scheme, institutional strengthening of the Stock Exchange is a matter of highest priority."¹⁹¹ If Zoljargal's brutally honest admission of his recourse to corruption is anything to go by, similar methods were arguably employed in any further attempts at "institutional strengthening." On the whole, what has made the Stock Exchange such a fascinating institution to analyze is the complex and diverse array of parties it has involved during its development—some by necessity, others by ambition. One finds it increasingly

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Kristof, "Mongolia Shepherds Privatization Along," *Chicago Tribune*, July 26, 1992.

¹⁹¹ Asian Development Bank, *Mongolia: A Centrally Planned Economy*, 86.

difficult to tar heroes and villains alike with their respective brushes, as much of the academic literature and journalistic accounts of the Stock Exchange have. Unlike Zoljargal, Jeffrey Sachs, one of the catalysts of shock therapy on the Mongolian economy, never overtly argued that corrupt measures could be condoned in order have things functioning as they ought to. Yet Sachs' pulling out of his advisory team from Mongolia to deal with "more pressing issues in Moscow" left the country's young economic reformers in the lurch, perhaps doing more systemic damage to the Mongolian economy than Zoljargal ever did in his tenure at the Stock Exchange.¹⁹² Meanwhile, China's involvement in Mongolian economic affairs, seen as intrusive and potentially oppressive by Mongolians in the late 1990s, was welcomed by the chairman of Mongolia's Mineral Resources Authority in 2004 as something offering immense future prosperity.¹⁹³ As new Mongolian companies and foreign investors emerge, they promise to add new layers of complexity to the state of the privatization project. Understanding it in its totality—as this essay has argued throughout—will surely require a thorough examination of the Mongolian Stock Exchange.

¹⁹² Holstrom, "Reforming Economies: Sachs Appeal," *Euromoney* 02 (1992): 32.

¹⁹³ James Brooke, "Mongolia's Shifting Ties: More China, Less Russia," *New York Times*, July 09, 2004, Late Edition (East Coast).

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A Shift in Philosophy: The American Jewish Congress and the Fight to End Discrimination in Stuyvesant Town, New York

Gregory Segal

University of Pennsylvania

“Negroes and whites don’t mix. Perhaps they will in a hundred years, but they don’t now.”¹⁹⁴ With this statement, President Frederick H. Ecker of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company announced his intention to exclude African Americans from the company’s ambitious new development, Stuyvesant Town.¹⁹⁵ This was no ordinary housing project; in June 1943, the City of New York signed a contract with Metropolitan Life for the redevelopment of eighteen blocks of Manhattan’s East Side into Stuyvesant Town, a moderately-priced development that would house approximately 25,000 people.¹⁹⁶ Spearheaded by New York City’s legendary planning commissioner Robert Moses, the company agreed to provide the necessary funding to a newly formed subsidiary, the Stuyvesant Town Corporation, while the city would give extensive assistance to enable the project to come to fruition.¹⁹⁷ Many speculated that this endeavor would become a national model to address housing shortages after World War II.¹⁹⁸ Nevertheless, as a

¹⁹⁴ “Negroes and Whites Don’t Mix!’, Metropolitan Life President Says,” *New York Amsterdam News*, May 29, 1943. ProQuest Historical Newspapers, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/226024072>.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ “Exclusion of Negroes from Subsidized Housing Project,” *The University of Chicago Law Review* 15, no. 3 (Spring 1948): 745. JSTOR, <http://jstor.org/stable/1597547>.

¹⁹⁷ Charles Abrams, “The Walls of Stuyvesant Town,” *The Nation*, March 24, 1945, 328, EBSCO MegaFILE, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=keh&AN=13427280&site=ehost-live>.

¹⁹⁸ Charles Abrams, *Forbidden Neighbors* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955), 244.

result of the decision to exclude African Americans, Stuyvesant Town became a major battleground over housing discrimination over the next decade.

The fight to dismantle this policy occurred primarily in the courtroom, through a legal battle waged by three organizations: the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and the American Jewish Congress (AJCongress).¹⁹⁹ Upon first glance, this alliance is unexpected. The NAACP had an undeniable interest in Stuyvesant Town given that Metropolitan Life was barring African Americans from living in the development, and the litigation fit into the ACLU's efforts to defend civil rights across a wide array of instances.²⁰⁰ By contrast, the AJCongress was a Jewish advocacy organization.²⁰¹ Since Metropolitan Life had not barred Jews from the development, the organization's involvement cannot be explained by such a clear and direct rationale. However, the AJCongress, through its Commission on Law and Social Action (CLSA), would play an indispensable role in the Stuyvesant Town case by spearheading the litigation.²⁰²

While many works have investigated the creation of Stuyvesant Town, the role of the AJCongress remains largely unexplored. As demonstrated by Joel Schwartz' *The New York Approach*, much of the scholarship on Stuyvesant Town looks at the project's importance in the context of Moses' career and the redevelopment of New York.²⁰³ Two works focus on the mobilization against discrimination in Stuyvesant Town: Stuart Svonkin's *Jews Against Prejudice* and Martha Biondi's *To Stand and Fight*. While Svonkin established a chronology of

¹⁹⁹ Joseph B. Robison, "A Victory Over Discrimination," *Congress Weekly*, March 26, 1951, 7.

²⁰⁰ "Private Attorneys General: Group Action in the Fight for Civil Liberties," *The Yale Law Journal* 58, no. 4 (March 1949): 757, 581. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/793083>.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 589.

²⁰² Shad Polier, "Law and Social Action," *Congress Weekly*, November 27, 1950, 4.

²⁰³ Joel Schwartz, *The New York Approach* (Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1993).

the litigation, he focuses primarily on the case's larger impact on the issue of housing discrimination in the U.S. without considering the implications of the AJCongress' role as it related to the identity of the organization.²⁰⁴ Biondi's narrative offers a similar chronology but pays much greater attention to other parties in the case, such as the response of Metropolitan Life, or groups outside the litigation, like communist organizations or tenants in Stuyvesant Town.²⁰⁵ Arthur Simon's *Stuyvesant Town, U.S.A.* even explicitly admits that it did not fully capture the role played by the AJCongress.²⁰⁶

While these works acknowledge that the AJCongress played a part in this case, they do not answer the pivotal question of *why* the AJCongress became so involved in the first place. This paper does not intend to be a legal history of the Stuyvesant Town litigation, but instead will use the story as a lens to examine the goals and strategies of the AJCongress in the late 1940s and early 1950s. In the wake of World War II, the AJCongress reoriented its focus from trying to protect Jews by countering anti-Semitism to fighting discrimination against all groups, including African Americans. Upon further examination, the Stuyvesant Town case exemplified this philosophical shift in the AJCongress, reflecting its new broader approach as well as a change in method, with new attention paid to litigation and legislation. This paper will demonstrate how the Stuyvesant Town case embodied this wider and more proactive approach.

The Shift in Strategy of the AJCongress

The American Jewish Congress was founded in 1919. Alongside the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the AJCongress was one of the

²⁰⁴ Stuart Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice* (New York: Columbia UP, 1997).

²⁰⁵ Martha Biondi, *To Stand and Fight* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2003).

²⁰⁶ Arthur Simon, *Stuyvesant Town, U.S.A.* (New York: New York UP, 1970).

leading American Jewish advocacy groups. These organizations, by definition, had a particular focus on advocating for Jews and defending them against anti-Semitism.²⁰⁷ Traditionally, this placed them at odds with groups who advocated for other minorities, such as African American Civil Rights organizations.²⁰⁸ For instance, while discrimination against African Americans was defined by lines of race and color, it was much more difficult to differentiate Jews as a separate race.²⁰⁹ Jewish groups often feared moving backwards by aligning themselves with African Americans, worrying about the ramifications of associating their goals with a party even further outside the mainstream of American society.²¹⁰

The methods employed by Jewish groups also reflected the perception that they were fighting a different kind of battle. African-American organizations typically challenged discrimination codified by law, while anti-Semitism tended to be informal and a social phenomenon.²¹¹ With these contrasting challenges came different tactics; as a piece in *The Yale Law Journal* noted in March 1949, “Discrimination against Jews in the United States is usually non-governmental, non-violent, and extremely subtle. An organization set up to fight defensive legal battles would be virtually useless.”²¹² Accordingly, Jewish groups initially tended to focus on education, combating anti-Semitism by shaping public opinion and teaching what was not acceptable.²¹³ This approach stood directly counter to that of an organization like the NAACP, whose main focus was pushing for legal and political change.²¹⁴

²⁰⁷ Henry Epstein, “The Programs of Jewish Civil Rights Organizations,” *The Journal of Negro Education* 20, no. 3 (Summer 1951): 367, 373. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2966011>.

²⁰⁸ “Private Attorneys General: Group Action in the Fight for Civil Liberties,” *The Yale Law Journal*, 589.

²⁰⁹ Henry Epstein, “The Programs of Jewish Civil Rights Organizations,” 367.

²¹⁰ Cheryl Lynn Greenberg, *Troubling the Waters* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2006).

²¹¹ “Private Attorneys General: Group Action in the Fight for Civil Liberties,” *The Yale Law Journal*, 589.

²¹² *Ibid.*

²¹³ David W. Petegorsky, *On Combatting Racism* (New York: American Jewish Congress, 1948), 8.

²¹⁴ “Private Attorneys General: Group Action in the Fight for Civil Liberties,” *The Yale Law Journal*, 581.

World War II dramatically altered the outlook of American Jewish organizations. After the tragedy of the Holocaust, Jews around the world questioned their identities as individuals and as a group.²¹⁵ For American Jewry, this included reexamination of the previous methods used to protect Jews; after all, Jews were well-assimilated into German society before the rise of the Nazi party, and were seen to be in a stronger position than Jews in other European countries only several decades before the Holocaust.²¹⁶ In the aftermath of this event, Jews in the United States felt tremendous insecurity and vulnerability, wondering if a similar decline in status could occur in the U.S.; as Svonkin describes, “. . . even as Jews were increasingly ‘at home in America,’ they still felt ‘uneasy at home.’”²¹⁷ This was clearly reflected by the AJCongress, as questions of the future of Jewish identity covered the pages of its weekly publication, the *Congress Weekly* and other writings by the organization’s leaders.²¹⁸ For example, David W. Petegorsky, Executive Director of the AJCongress, published a pamphlet in March 1948 that captured the organization’s concerns after World War II.²¹⁹ He argued that previous tactics which sought to maintain a “favorable climate of opinion” to defend against anti-Semitism would be insufficient if greater changes in society occurred:

What it means, in effect, is that when the climate is good, the weather is good. But, unfortunately, when the climate changes, so does the weather . . . And whatever atmosphere has been generated about good-will through the use of educational techniques and special or mass media approaches is rapidly blown away by far stronger forces generated by our social organism.²²⁰

²¹⁵ A similar point is raised in Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice*, 8-9.

²¹⁶ Thomas Childers, “German Political Culture,” (lecture, HIST-430, Philadelphia, PA, September 5, 2012).

²¹⁷ Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice*, 8-9.

²¹⁸ This is based on a thorough scan of each edition of the *Congress Weekly* from 1942 to 1951, available at the Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies in Philadelphia, PA.

²¹⁹ David W. Petegorsky, *On Combatting Racism*, 3-14.

²²⁰ *Ibid.* 3.

Making an unmistakable allusion to the rapid decrease in the status of Jews in Nazi Germany, he questioned the effectiveness of previous tactics in the face of “. . . periods of social instability, political chaos and economic stress.”²²¹ This new perspective resulted in the search for a different strategy; as historian Cheryl Greenberg argued, the Holocaust led Jewish organizations to look toward pluralism and forging alliances in the quest to protect Jews.²²² As a result, the new outlook altered the position of Jews in the landscape of civil rights advocacy in the U.S.

The first signs of such a change emerged in a series of articles published by Rabbi J. X. Cohen, the Chairman of the AJCongress’ Commission on Economic Discrimination, in the *Congress Weekly* in 1944. The publication printed an abridged version of an address Cohen gave before the NAACP in October 1944, entitled, “Fighting Together for Equality.”²²³ Cohen began by noting, “America is a multi-group society.”²²⁴ Invoking the liturgy of the Exodus, he argued that there were parallels between the enslavement of the Jews in Egypt and the situation of African Americans in the United States.²²⁵ Cohen later employed Holocaust imagery as he argued, “Today both peoples find themselves the victim of intolerance and discrimination,” with the Jews oppressed in Nazi Germany while African Americans were discriminated against in the U.S.²²⁶ He called for the two groups to join together to “remove the barricades blocking equality of opportunity,” declaring, “I say this to all minority groups constituting our Nation, that is, to all Americans: make no mistakes, you are also the sufferers, if discrimination against Negroes and

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² Cheryl Greenberg, “Negotiating Coalition: Black and Jewish Civil Rights Agencies in the Twentieth Century,” in *Struggles in the Promised Land*, ed. Jack Salzman and Cornel West (New York: Oxford UP, 1997), 155-7.

²²³ J. X. Cohen, “Fighting Together for Equality,” *Congress Weekly*, November 3, 1944, 9.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

²²⁵ *Ibid.* 10.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

Jews is not ameliorated and eradicated. Discrimination against any part is a threat against all.”²²⁷

The following December, Cohen published another article for the *Congress Weekly* based on remarks he gave at the New York State Conference of the NAACP.²²⁸ In these remarks, Cohen called conflict between Jews and African Americans an “irony,” claiming that “anti-Semitism is a blood brother of race hatred.”²²⁹ By forging this connection between discrimination against Jews and African Americans, Cohen’s writings suggested that Jews had an interest in working to protect people outside of the Jewish community.

The writings of more prominent leaders of the AJCongress reflected this new philosophy. For instance, Executive Director Petegorsky made a similar argument for a broader and more proactive approach. He contended that the biggest threat against Jews did not come from “organized hate groups” or “anti-Semitic agitators,” but instead from “the imperfections and shortcomings of our democratic system.”³⁷ These gaps would become “the nuclei around which and out of which reaction and hatred begin to develop.”²³⁰ Since these “shortcomings” typically involved the issue of race, he argued that the rules which govern society must be changed, rather than just public opinion.²³¹ As he argued, “That does not mean simply working for tolerance and understanding, or seeking special privileges for Jews or any other particular group in the country. It means fighting on dozens of fronts to establish and extend the democratic rights of all groups in America wherever these rights are curtailed.”²³² Making a similar argument, Shad Polier, the Vice President of the AJCongress and later a key figure in the Stuyvesant Town litigation,

²²⁷ *Ibid.* 11.

²²⁸ J. X. Cohen, “The Negro and Anti-Semitism,” *Congress Weekly*, December 22, 1944, 5.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*

²³⁰ *Ibid.* 4.

²³¹ *Ibid.*

²³² *Ibid.*

published an article in the *Congress Weekly* in November 1949. “Committed to the task of bringing about the enrichment of Jewish communal life in America,” he wrote, “the Congress necessarily is committed to a program which embraces far more than is involved in the cliché of ‘defense activities.’ Its program calls for a bold and militant leadership which can endow Jewish life in this country with affirmative content.”²³³ Polier acknowledged that while some efforts might not bring a direct benefit to the Jewish community, the AJCongress must prevent discrimination and separation whenever it occurred to prevent it from advancing further.²³⁴

This new philosophy was translated into organizational change with the creation of the Commission of Law and Social Action (CLSA).²³⁵ As Polier wrote on the fifth anniversary of the beginning of this body, the CLSA was established in November 1945, “. . . in order to give new direction and strength to the struggle of the Jewish Community for equality within the framework of the American democracy.”²³⁶ The resolution establishing the CLSA encapsulated this new direction, which included a plank stating the need to “combat anti-Semitic violence, defamation and discrimination” alongside the goal “To fight every manifestation of racism and to promote the civil and political equality of all minorities in America.”²³⁷ In Polier’s essay celebrating the CLSA’s creation, he noted this revolutionary new approach:

Third, with respect to the community as a whole, we view the fight for equality as indivisible and as part of the general struggle to protect democracy against racism. Hence, any manifestation of racism, whether against Jews, Negroes, Japanese, Puerto Ricans or others, affects all Americans, majority and minority alike. Any victory achieved *by* the Jewish community or any other group *for* the Jewish community or any other group, is a victory for all.²³⁸

²³³ Shad Polier, “For the Rights of All Men,” *Congress Weekly*, November 14, 1949, 5.

²³⁴ *Ibid.* 6.

²³⁵ Shad Polier, “Law and Social Action,” *Congress Weekly*, November 27, 1950, 3.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*

²³⁷ *Ibid.*

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

Polier later concluded, “By legal and other means which force the abandonment of discriminatory *conduct*, we pave the way to ultimate elimination of both discrimination and prejudice.”²³⁹ With the new belief that discrimination against other groups must be challenged through litigation and legislation in order to protect Jews, the CLSA would serve as the tool to carry out this mission; as Greenberg noted on its creation, “Not that older methods of community education were jettisoned . . . rather they were supplemented by this more activist, more structural, more public approach.”²⁴⁰ Accordingly, the CLSA embodied the dramatic shift in the outlook and tactics of the AJCongress, and the CLSA’s involvement in Stuyvesant Town was a manifestation of this new strategy.

Discrimination in Stuyvesant Town

To properly examine the approach the CLSA took to Stuyvesant Town, one must first understand the nature of discrimination in the development. The deep and pervasive discrimination in Stuyvesant Town made it a perfect setting for the CLSA’s new, more assertive approach, while its larger importance as a precedent suggests why the AJCongress became interested in the first place.

The agreement between New York City and the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company to create Stuyvesant Town was the beginning of one of the first urban redevelopment projects in the United States. Faced with pressing housing shortages and limited money to spend, cities sought a new method to create housing at a lower cost. Entering this void was Robert Moses’ concept of a redevelopment corporation, where a private company would be given tremendous aid and

²³⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁰ Greenberg, *Troubling the Waters*, 114. A similar point is made by “Private Attorneys General: Group Action in the Fight for Civil Liberties,” *The Yale Law Journal*, 589-90.

assistance by the state to replace substandard housing.²⁴¹ In 1942, New York passed the Redevelopment Companies Law to create this new type of public-private partnership.²⁴² The law noted the public interest in improving housing while acknowledging, “. . . these conditions cannot be remedied by the ordinary operation of private enterprise; that provision must be made to encourage the investment of funds in corporations engaged in providing redevelopment facilities . . . ”²⁴³ Accordingly, the “cooperation of the state and its subdivisions is necessary to accomplish such purposes,” through means such as tax exemptions or land acquisition in hopes of incentivizing a company to carry out urban redevelopment.²⁴⁴ For Moses, this was a pivotal aspect of his plans to redevelop New York City, as Schwartz asserted, “Urban redevelopment was the most important public policy undertaken by New York after World War II.”²⁴⁵

In Stuyvesant Town, the core of this assistance came in the form of a large tax exemption given to Metropolitan Life to make the development less expensive to build. The tax break would be worth \$50 million over 25 years, over half of the project’s final cost of \$90 million.²⁴⁶ This facilitated the project in multiple ways: in addition to helping Metropolitan Life cover the cost of the project, it also kept rents lower for prospective tenants, making the apartments more attractive without hurting Metropolitan Life’s bottom line.²⁴⁷ Because the contract established

²⁴¹ Charles Abrams, *Race Bias in Housing* (New York: American Civil Liberties Union, 1947), 14-5.

²⁴² Robison, “A Victory Over Discrimination,” 7.

²⁴³ Joseph Dorsey, Monroe Dowling, and Calvin Harper, *Petitioners, v. Stuyvesant Town Corporation and Metropolitan Life Insurance Company*, 339 U.S. 981 (1950). PETITION. File Date: 10/14/1949. *U.S. Supreme Court Records and Briefs, 1832-1978*. Gale, Cengage Learning, <http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:3947/servlet/SCRB?uid=0&srchtp=a&ste=14&rcn=DW3901659874>, 30.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 31.

²⁴⁵ Schwartz, *The New York Approach*, xv.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 5.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

limits on the rents Metropolitan Life could charge, there was no doubt that this assistance was vital to convince the insurance company to make this investment.²⁴⁸

New York City also exercised its power of eminent domain to help facilitate the project.²⁴⁹ New York City condemned eighteen blocks in the East Side of Manhattan, from 14th to 20th Streets as well as 1st Avenue, Avenue C, and the East River.²⁵⁰ This was an act of what was called “slum clearance,” with approximately ten thousand low-income tenants forced to find another place to live.²⁵¹ Rents in the new development would be nearly doubled compared to the housing previously in this location; even if an evicted African-American tenant was allowed to live in Stuyvesant Town, they would likely not have been able to afford it.²⁵² According to Charles Abrams, housing expert and lawyer for the Stuyvesant Town litigation, this only reinforced patterns of living already found in New York, writing, “With all this expenditure not a single slum dweller is actually to be rehoused. The present residents of the area will be crowded into other slums . . . ”²⁵³ Given the minority-heavy population of the slums, the clearance of such an area to make room for housing intended only for whites reinforced the divide between the two groups. Moreover, not only did the condemnation of the land displace thousands of people, but it also cleared out a variety of important community buildings, including a church, a series of stores, and a low-rent housing project.²⁵⁴ Perhaps most shockingly, the city also destroyed a public school that was not replaced in the eventual development.²⁵⁵ Metropolitan Life President

²⁴⁸ Robison, “A Victory Over Discrimination,” 7.

²⁴⁹ “Exclusion of Negroes from Subsidized Housing Project,” *The University of Chicago Law Review*. 745.

²⁵⁰ *Dorsey v. Stuyvesant Town*, 339 U.S. 981 (1950). PETITION, 6.

²⁵¹ Abrams, *Forbidden Neighbors*, 252.

²⁵² Simon, *Stuyvesant Town, U.S.A.*, 30.

²⁵³ Abrams, “The Walls of Stuyvesant Town,” 328.

²⁵⁴ Abrams, *Forbidden Neighbors*, 252.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

Ecker commented that this decision was made in fear that “Negros might attend.”²⁵⁶ As a result of these changes in housing and community gathering places, the city not only made room for a new development, but altered the living patterns in this section of Manhattan, reinforcing racial separation by barring African Americans from the development.

By turning this piece of land into private property, the city transferred extensive control over the development to Metropolitan Life. For instance, the city gave the streets inside Stuyvesant Town to Metropolitan Life, leaving them with complete control over 19% of the site area.²⁵⁷ The company got permission to put signs declaring that the area was “private property.”²⁵⁸ Police power was also turned over to the company, allowing them to exert more authority over the territory.²⁵⁹ In each of these instances, powers traditionally associated with the state were now given to Metropolitan Life. Given Metropolitan Life’s plan to discriminate in the development, Abrams raised a fascinating point in regards to this decision, “In divesting itself of police powers over streets and exercising its eminent domain, the City used its prerogatives to aid private interests that openly refused to abide by the restrictions to which government itself is a subject.”²⁶⁰ In effect, the state was giving authority to another body not liable to the same rules, allowing them the freedom to implement discriminatory practices unavailable to the state. This appeared to be a potential means for a governmental body to circumvent laws intended to prevent discrimination.

The importance of Stuyvesant Town was clear to all parties involved. Without question, the urban redevelopment corporation model as established by Moses in Stuyvesant Town

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁷ *Dorsey v. Stuyvesant Town*, 339 U.S. 981 (1950). PETITION, 6.

²⁵⁸ Abrams, *Race Bias in Housing*, 15.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

appealed to cities across the country; As Schwartz comments, “Moses’ bold plans for the gashouse district were proclaimed by urban experts as the model for revitalizing cities across the country.”²⁶¹ By 1945, ten states already passed laws that would allow the creation of developments like Stuyvesant Town,²⁶² while by the end of 1949, a total of twenty five states had redevelopment laws, showing the increasing popularity of this model.²⁶³ If Metropolitan Life was allowed to discriminate in Stuyvesant Town, it would set a precedent that would make it possible to discriminate in similar projects throughout the country. In Abrams’ eyes, this could result in a shifting of housing patterns, as he argued that the Stuyvesant Town model, “carried to its logical conclusion in our future living patterns, would mean selected ‘respectable’ families living in fenced-off neighborhoods, while the ‘undesirables,’ poor or rich, would be relegated to their ghettos.”²⁶⁴ The plans for Stuyvesant Town thus raised issues on the national level, not only for the nature of public and private power but also for the future of housing patterns in the U.S.

Dorsey v. Stuyvesant Town Corporation and Polier v. O’Dwyer

Given these circumstances, the AJCongress involved itself in Stuyvesant Town based on the convergence of the issues raised by the development and the organization’s new approach. Stuyvesant Town was an opportunity to actively defend the rights of another group, aligning with the AJCongress’ broader and more proactive approach through an assertive legal strategy. The potential for collaboration between the AJCongress and the NAACP and ACLU became a reality, and it is difficult to overestimate the pivotal role played by the AJCongress, especially the CLSA, in the Stuyvesant Town litigation. First and foremost, as Polier notes, “the work of

²⁶¹ Schwartz, *The New York Approach*, 95.

²⁶² Abrams, *The Future of Housing*, 321.

²⁶³ *Dorsey v. Stuyvesant Town*, 339 U.S. 981 (1950). PETITION, 23-5.

²⁶⁴ Abrams, *Race Bias in Housing*, 15.

prosecuting the action was delegated to the staff of the CLSA.”²⁶⁵ Of the three primary lawyers who argued the case, two of them were from the CLSA (Will Maslow and Polier argued alongside Abrams). The litigation was broken into two separate lawsuits. In the first case, *Dorsey v. Stuyvesant Town Corporation*, three African American war veterans sued for admittance to Stuyvesant Town.²⁶⁶ The second brought a different perspective to the case, as *Polier vs. O’Dwyer* was filed on behalf of the Vice President of the AJCongress himself.²⁶⁷ This was a taxpayer lawsuit aimed at New York City for its pivotal part in the creation of Stuyvesant Town.²⁶⁸ While the nuances and intricacies of the CLSA’s legal arguments are best covered in a legal history, they reflect the AJCongress’ new approach opposing the discrimination found in Stuyvesant Town.

The crux of the CLSA’s case relied on a defense of the Fourteenth Amendment, seeking to apply it to a private company or organization. As a *Harvard Law Review* article wrote in January 1948, “The Stuyvesant Case . . . provides a microcosm of many of the problems in the application of the Fourteenth Amendment to private organizations.”²⁶⁹ The fact that the Fourteenth Amendment only articulated what States could not do suggested that it did not apply to a private company; for instance, while the state could not legally discriminate against a person, a private organization theoretically could do so.²⁷⁰ Nevertheless, placing an urban development project such as Stuyvesant Town into this paradigm was very difficult. A January 1948 essay in *The Yale Law Journal* explained such challenges: “Urban redevelopment housing,

²⁶⁵ Polier, “Law and Social Action,” 4.

²⁶⁶ “Exclusion of Negroes from Subsidized Housing Project” *The University of Chicago Law Review*, 745-7.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁹ “Applicability of the Fourteenth Amendment to Private Organizations,” *Harvard Law Review* 61, no. 2 (January 1948): 349. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1335778>.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

for which neither the label ‘public’ nor ‘private’ is wholly appropriate, presents a unique legal problem.”²⁷¹ On one hand, a private company owned and operated Stuyvesant. Metropolitan Life put in the resources to execute the project, and it was entirely legal for a landlord to select tenants as they wished. At the same time, it was unlikely that the project would have been possible without the involvement of the city.²⁷² *The Yale Law Journal* posited, if there was such extensive state action to enable the project to come to reality, why should the project be able to ignore the same standard as if it were carried out by the state itself?²⁷³

In the *Stuyvesant Town* case, the CLSA used the latter argument to clam that discrimination in *Stuyvesant Town* was unconstitutional. In their brief for *Dorsey v. Stuyvesant Town Corporation*, they asserted:

The housing accommodations from which petitioners were barred because of race were made available through the exercise of exclusive state powers; they were constructed and are now available because of the cooperation of the State and under the supervision of the State; state controls place a ceiling on the rents which may be charged; and the entire project was conceived and executed to serve a purpose declared by the State Legislature to be a public purpose.²⁷⁴

The *Stuyvesant Town Corporation* thus had a “character as a state agency from the duties imposed upon it by state statutes.”²⁷⁵ They contended that “. . . the City made an indispensable contribution to the construction of the enterprise. Without the exercise of government powers this moderate rent housing project would not have come into being.”²⁷⁶ In this formulation, the AJCongress sought to expand the protections of the Fourteenth Amendment. While the argument in *Dorsey v. Stuyvesant Town Corporation* was not directly applied to Jews, by

²⁷¹ Issac N. Groner and David M. Helfeld, “Race Discrimination in Housing,” *The Yale Law Journal* 57, no. 3 (January 1948): 437. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/793236>.

²⁷² “Applicability of the Fourteenth Amendment to Private Organization,” *Harvard Law Review*, 349.

²⁷³ Groner and Helfeld, “Race Discrimination in Housing,” *The Yale Law Journal*, 441.

²⁷⁴ *Dorsey v. Stuyvesant Town*, 339 U.S. 981 (1950). PETITION, 11.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.* 16.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.* 13.

expanding the protections of the Fourteenth Amendment to publically assisted housing, all groups would be covered.

The CLSA also sought to preserve existing rules against racial zoning. Zoning based on race had been declared illegal decades before Stuyvesant Town, a practice that involved an area of land being designated for a particular race.²⁷⁷ However, Stuyvesant Town posed the potential to reintroduce racial zoning through its ability to assert housing patterns through private companies. As the *Harvard Law Review* article from January 1948 argued, “When Stuyvesant Town excludes Negroes, the effect is the same as if the eighteen blocks were zoned on racial lines. Such zoning would be prohibited if done by a state or one of its subdivisions.”²⁷⁸ The lawyers for the plaintiffs in *Dorsey v. Stuyvesant Town Corporation* turned toward the fact that the New York City Board of Estimate was aware that Metropolitan Life planned to discriminate. In their brief, they wrote, “Certainly, the Stuyvesant Town area is now effectively ‘zoned’ against Negroes. Further redevelopment projects may just as effectively zone minority groups into or out of adjacent areas.”²⁷⁹ Accordingly, the CLSA recognized the potential for urban redevelopment corporations to create patterns similar to zoning and made a point to attack this issue in their brief.

In *Polier v. O’Dwyer*, Polier’s suit offered many of the same arguments as seen in *Dorsey* but from a different perspective. Instead of directly challenging his right to enter the development, Polier argued as a taxpayer that his taxes should not be used to support a

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.* 19.

²⁷⁸ “Applicability of the Fourteenth Amendment to Private Organizations,” *Harvard Law Review*, 349.

²⁷⁹ *Dorsey v. Stuyvesant Town*, 339 U.S. 981 (1950). PETITION, 19.

discriminatory policy.²⁸⁰ While the two suits were consolidated, a piece in *The University of Chicago Law Review* article asserted that the *Polier* suit had special importance:

However, a taxpayer's suit to enjoin allowance of the tax exemption by the City as long as the defendants continued to discriminate attacks immediately and directly the state aid, assumes at once the presence of state action without regard to whether the project is public, quasi-public, or private, and leaves only the question of whether the admitted state action is sufficiently connected with discrimination.²⁸¹

The article concluded, "It is true that the *Dorsey* case raises the same question, but it does not do it with the same directness or with the same rhetorical force."²⁸² Accordingly, *Polier's* action helped the case by presenting the issues in a different light.

The briefs from the case reflected a tremendous awareness of the larger implications of these arguments. The *Dorsey v. Stuyvesant Town Corporation* brief filed by the CLSA clearly articulated the idea that urban redevelopment corporations were spreading across the U.S. Several pages of this brief were dedicated to a list of the states who have passed redevelopment laws as well as the various nuances among them.²⁸³ On the spread of these laws, the brief stated, "Thus urban redevelopment has become a principal device for the replanning and rebuilding of extensive areas throughout the country. The operation of all the projects constructed under these laws may be affected by this case."²⁸⁴ The brief showed an awareness of the larger impact of the *Stuyvesant Town* case for housing discrimination across the U.S. It also displayed an understanding of other long-term impacts that could come from *Stuyvesant Town*. As the *Dorsey* brief described, "Further redevelopment projects may just as effectively zone minority groups into or out of adjacent areas. The result will differ from the ordinary casual grouping of

²⁸⁰ "Exclusion of Negroes from Subsidized Housing Project," *The University of Chicago Law Review*, 747.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.* 753.

²⁸² *Ibid.*

²⁸³ *Dorsey v. Stuyvesant Town*, 339 U.S. 981 (1950). PETITION, 23-5.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 26.

neighborhoods because, and to just the extent that, government support and control give permanence and stability to the project patterns.”²⁸⁵ In this formulation, the CLSA equated urban redevelopment companies with an attempt to reassert discriminatory housing patterns, displaying the AJCongress’ broad attention to civil rights concerns.

The AJCongress’ Coverage of the Stuyvesant Town Case

Primarily through its own publication, the *Congress Weekly*, the AJCongress presented the Stuyvesant Town case to its members as an example of their new methods and collaboration with other organizations. Each development in the case, from briefs filed to court rulings, found their way into the pages of the *Congress Weekly*.²⁸⁶ This coverage reflects how the Stuyvesant Town case was conceived in the minds of AJCongress leaders as they brought it to their membership.

As the AJCongress presented the issue to the public, there was a far greater focus on the social concerns of the case, rather than its legal elements. In a letter written by Polier to *The New York Times* in August 1947, he appealed to the public to become informed about Stuyvesant Town and to push the legislature to pass a law limiting Metropolitan Life’s actions.²⁸⁷ In this presentation, Polier focused on Metropolitan Life’s claim that admitting African American tenants would deter white people from living in the development, writing, “The pattern, based primarily on fears and prejudices, which has followed where racial minorities have moved into a new neighborhood has no application to a large, self-contained area that creates its own

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.* 19.

²⁸⁶ For instance, see coverage of events in the Stuyvesant Town case in the weekly “Chronicle of Events” section, *Congress Weekly* May 9, 1947; December 27, 1948; July 25, 1949, October 24, 1949; April 17, 1950.

²⁸⁷ Shad Polier, “Racial Policies in Housing,” *The New York Times*, August 6, 1947. ProQuest Historical Newspapers, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/107848615>.

environment.”²⁸⁸ Hailing the success of projects with residents of different races, he argued that race has not proven to be a deterrent in previous projects; accordingly, the fair selection of tenants, “would go a long way toward breaking up the ghetto pattern with all its attendant evils.”²⁸⁹ Polier informed the public of the discriminatory practices in Stuyvesant Town, but with a clear eye toward their social, rather than legal, implications. This was an extremely common point made throughout coverage of Stuyvesant Town; for instance, several newspaper articles reported that a majority of tenants living in Stuyvesant Town opposed the barring of African American tenants.²⁹⁰

The AJCongress also presented the Stuyvesant Town litigation as an example of its new strategy. For instance, in October 1948, Joseph Robison, one of the case’s attorneys, published an article in the *Congress Weekly* that described the CLSA’s efforts since its inception in 1945.²⁹¹ He praised the CLSA’s approach, writing, “During the year the program of legal, legislative and social action which the American Jewish Congress pioneered to protect and safeguard the rights of all Americans received increasing recognition and confirmation in practicing legal and legislative measures to outlaw discrimination as the fountainhead of prejudice.”²⁹² What evidence did he provide of this success? He looked toward the defense of the Fourteenth Amendment, noting that “Several court actions were begun last year which challenged this subterfuge. This is a new form of attack upon the discrimination evil which has excellent

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁰ “Jewish Group Hits Housing Ban,” *New York Amsterdam News*, December 4, 1948. ProQuest Historical Newspapers, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/225979202>; “62 Per Cent in White Homes Favor Negro Residents,” *The Chicago Defender*, October 30, 1948. ProQuest Historical Newspapers, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/492778936>.

²⁹¹ Joseph B. Robison, “The Fight for Civil Rights,” *Congress Weekly*, October 1, 1948, 12-4.

²⁹² *Ibid.* 12.

possibilities under recent Supreme Court decisions.”²⁹³ To provide an example, Robison immediately turned to the suit against Metropolitan Life as “the outstanding case in point” that demonstrated this effort.²⁹⁴ In addition, Polier published an article in the *Congress Weekly* in November 1949 entitled, “For the Rights of All Men,” where he placed the Stuyvesant Town case in the larger arc of Jewish efforts to defend the rights of all minority groups.²⁹⁵ He begins by boldly asserting, “Sociologically, it is plain that the difference between the segregation of Negroes and the persecution of Jews is only skin deep.”²⁹⁶ Providing an example of the CLSA’s efforts, he mentions Stuyvesant Town, explaining, “in our much cited brief in the Stuyvesant Town case we have called for an end to racial segregation in governmentally subsidized housing.”²⁹⁷ Soon after referencing the case, he writes:

This is not to say that our activities are compounded wholly of altruism, or that they are entirely divorced from our more partisan and proximate objective of enhancing the security of Jews in America. On the contrary, since we believe Jewish interests to be inseparable from the interests of justice we have always contented that for the Jewish community there is an unflinching advantage to be derived from performance of the principled act.²⁹⁸

In the articles by Polier and Robison, Stuyvesant Town was presented as evidence of the organization’s larger shift in approach. As CLSA leadership described their efforts to their constituents, the Stuyvesant Town case became a central part of this illustration.

The Stuyvesant Town litigation was also used to highlight the group’s collaboration with other advocacy organizations, especially the NAACP. Most notably, in July 1949, the AJCongress published an excerpt of the previously mentioned article from *The Yale Law Journal*, which

²⁹³ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁵ Shad Polier, “For the Rights of All Men,” *Congress Weekly*, November 14, 1949, 5-8.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.* 5.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.* 6.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

detailed the efforts of the CLSA in relation to the ACLU and NAACP.²⁹⁹ While the article never explicitly drew this connection, the fact that the *Congress Weekly* published an article during the Stuyvesant Town litigation educating readers about the AJCongress' two main allies in this legal fight was extremely significant. This article described the philosophies and methods of these two organizations.³⁰⁰ While it offered the greatest praise for the CLSA and suggested ways the ACLU and NAACP could be more effective, it concluded by explaining how these groups could work together on civil rights issues.³⁰¹ In addition, on the fifth anniversary of the creation of the CLSA, the AJCongress dedicated the *Congress Weekly* to the topic of civil rights, emphasizing the progress the body had made over the past decade. This included an article by Walter White, the Director of the NAACP, which hailed the history and potential of Jewish and African-American collaboration.³⁰² "As our organization grew in size and prestige," he wrote, "there developed also a fuller realization of the fundamental similarity of the problems of adjustment facing all peoples victimized by irrational prejudices and discriminations."³⁰³ White argued that a main turning point in collaboration between the NAACP and Jewish organizations as a whole was the creation of the CLSA by the AJCongress.³⁰⁴ As he listed successes of NAACP collaboration with Jewish advocacy groups, one item he emphasized was the effort to end discrimination in Stuyvesant Town.³⁰⁵ The fact that the *Congress Weekly* included a piece by White, the Director of the NAACP, underscores the significance of collaboration with other advocacy groups in the eyes of the AJCongress.

²⁹⁹ "Fighters for Civil Liberties," *Congress Weekly*, July 25, 1949, 12.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.* 12-5.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.* 15.

³⁰² Walter White, "Equality is Indivisible," *Congress Weekly*, November 27, 1950, 5-7.

³⁰³ *Ibid.* 5-6.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.* 6.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

The Brown-Isaacs Bill and the End of Discrimination in Stuyvesant Town

The litigation itself was unable to force a change in Stuyvesant Town. By a 4 to 3 decision, the New York Court of Appeals ruled in favor of Metropolitan Life.³⁰⁶ This ruling was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which in June 1950, refused to consider the case.³⁰⁷ While this ended the legal battle to end discrimination in the development, the AJCongress' efforts in Stuyvesant Town were not entirely unsuccessful.

Only days after the Supreme Court refused to review *Dorsey v. Stuyvesant Town Corporation*, two members of the New York City Council, Earl Brown and Stanley M. Isaacs, introduced a bill intended to end discrimination in Stuyvesant Town.³⁰⁸ The Brown-Isaacs Ordinance prohibited racial and religious discrimination in housing owned or assisted by New York City, which would include Stuyvesant Town.³⁰⁹ Fitting into the AJCongress' newfound focus on legal and legislative activism, CLSA drafted the bill and AJCongress' leaders spoke in favor of it at hearings held by the City Council.³¹⁰ Maslow and Robison, two lawyers for the Stuyvesant Town case, later pointed to this law as evidence of "a growing realization that well conceived and adequately enforced legislation works."³¹¹ For the AJCongress, the Stuyvesant Town case was a pivotal moment that helped it articulate its new approach. When New York Mayor Vincent Impellitteri signed the Brown-Isaacs bill into law on March 14, 1951, he used the pen of

³⁰⁶ "Ask High Court to Study Housing," *The Chicago Defender*, October 29, 1949, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/492764402>.

³⁰⁷ "Negroes Lose Plea on Stuyvesant Ban," *The New York Times*, June 5, 1950, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/111714795>.

³⁰⁸ Joseph B. Robison, "The Story of Stuyvesant Town," *The Nation*, June 2, 1951, 515, EBSCO MegaFILE, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=keh&AN=13369862&site=ehost-live>.

³⁰⁹ Robison, "A Victory Over Discrimination," 7.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.* 8-9.

³¹¹ Will Maslow and Joseph B. Robison, "Civil Rights Legislation and the Fight for Equality, 1862-1952," *The University of Chicago Law Review* 20, no. 3 (Spring 1953): 364. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1597662>.

Dr. Stephen S. Wise, one of the founders of the American Jewish Congress, to sign the bill into law, reflecting the incredible role played by the AJCongress over the course of this battle and what it represented to the organization.³¹² To this day, Stuyvesant Town serves as an example of the strong collaboration between Jewish organizations and African American groups at this point in American Civil Rights history.

³¹² Robison, "A Victory Over Discrimination," 7.

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Misreading Shadows: Elusive Victory, Enigmatic Defeat: *The USSR, the US, Egypt, and Israel during the “War of Attrition,” 1969-1970*

Matthew Schweitzer

University of Chicago

I. A Diverse Array of Actors

As the guns of June 1967 fell silent, Yitzhak Rabin could hardly find words to describe his country’s resounding victory. Speaking at the Hebrew University only three weeks after the ceasefire, he mused about how Israeli forces had “struck the enemy so accurately that no one in the world understands how it was done.”³¹³ When given the honor of naming the confrontation, he chose from the list of proposals the “‘Six-Day War’....evoking the days of creation.”³¹⁴ Jewish soldiers, civilians, and politicians felt, unwisely it turned out, that their war with Arab neighbors was over.³¹⁵ Yet in Israel’s genesis, Arabs saw darkness. Arab leaders devised more reserved labels – “The Disaster,” “The Setback,” or the sterile “June War.”³¹⁶ The trauma forced them to begin an “audit during a moment of great stress and clarity,” trying desperately to understand how “a small state had displayed their historical inadequacy.”³¹⁷ The ground was laid for subsequent conflict.³¹⁸

³¹³ Quoted in: Howard M. Sachar, *A History of Israel from the Rise of Zionism to Our Time*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976), 660.

³¹⁴ Quoted in: Michael Oren, *Six Days of War* (San Francisco: Presidio Press, 2003), 309: Other proposed names included the “War of Daring,” the “War of Salvation,” and the “War of the Sons of Light,” demonstrating the mythical light in which Israelis saw their victory.

³¹⁵ Chaim Herzog, *The Arab-Israeli Wars* (New York: Random House, 1982), 195.

³¹⁶ Oren, *op. cit.*, 310.

³¹⁷ Fouad Ajami, *The Arab Predicament: Arab Political Thought and Practice Since 1967* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 12.

³¹⁸ Oren, *op. cit.*, 310-313.

These strategic dialogues, coupled to virulent public outrage across the Arab World, thus began the thousand days between 1967 and 1970 in which Israel and Egypt engaged in what Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser ominously labeled the “War of Attrition.” The “War” was defined by a series of isolated, escalating, and bloody skirmishes across the Egyptian frontiers in Suez. A singular focus on the localized violence, however, belies the War’s broader geopolitical implications. Standing one step removed from these rivalries, the superpowers saw the scuffle as a major battlefield in the greater Cold War. The United States backed Israel to face Soviet support for Egypt. Advisors from Moscow traveled to Cairo to train commanders on Soviet technology. Russian pilots engaged Israeli Mirages and Phantoms over the Sinai, and sailors from the Black Sea docked in Port Said and Alexandria.³¹⁹ Important recent scholarship suggests that the massive Russian intervention for Egypt was part of a larger Soviet strategic initiative in the Cold War context, rather than merely a response to Israeli movements.³²⁰

It is through this complex, superpower-tinted lens that historians should understand the nature of victory and defeat from 1967-1970. Who won, and who lost, the so-called War of Attrition? The answer lies in diplomatic rather than local military history. Numbers alone indicate an Israeli success: her commandos performed better, and her air force shot down more enemy aircraft. Egypt, on the other hand, seemed to win the propaganda fight while at the same time taking advantage of Israel’s strategic complacency. Neither side, in the end, had a clear advantage. Yet by broadening the problem’s geographic and political scope, an answer rooted in

³¹⁹ Several Russian pilots were killed during these engagements.

³²⁰ For example: Isabella Ginor, “Under the Yellow Arab Helmet Gleamed Blue Russian Eyes: Operation Kavkaz and the War of Attrition, 1969-1970.”, *Cold War History*, Vol. 3, Issue 1 (2002), 127-156; Dima P. Adamsky, “Zero-Hour for the Bears: Inquiring into the Soviet Decision to Intervene in the Egyptian–Israeli War of Attrition, 1969–70”, *Cold War History*, Vol. 6, Issue 1 (2006), 113-136; Dima P. Adamsky and Uri Bar-Joseph, “The Russians are not coming: Israel's intelligence failure and soviet military intervention in the War of Attrition”, *Intelligence and National Security*, Vol. 21, Issue 1 (2006), 1-25.

superpower politics emerges. Neither the Arab states nor Israel won or lost in 1970 in terms of local developments. Although the War of Attrition, and the subsequent Yom Kippur War in 1973, was defined by Middle East rivalry, the Cold War superpowers' heavy hands ultimately shaped the character of the conflict and US-brokered ceasefire.

This interpretation allows for a clearer answer to the question of which side prevailed. The United States, plagued by intelligence failure, ultimately emerged farthest behind in 1970 -- although Secretary of State William Rogers had seemingly brokered a ceasefire that year -- whereas the Soviet Union managed to successfully restructure their intelligence apparatus in the region, equip the Egyptian military for its 1973 attack across the Suez, and maintain influence in their battered and demoralized client under America's nose. Egypt, Israel, and to a lesser extent, the other Arab States played primary roles only in this proxy war.³²¹ Ultimately, though, the USSR won -- if "winner" is the appropriate term -- while the US came out with clear intelligence and diplomatic deficiencies, which in turn handicapped the Israelis. Neither Israel nor Egypt benefitted or lost. By thus focusing on the great power politics at play between the Soviet Union and the US in Sinai, an image of the victors, losers, and those in the middle is revealed.

II. Victory and a Euphoric Israel

For Israelis, the Six Day War represented salvation. Rabin expressed the prevailing view during his speech at the Hebrew University, that the triumph revealed "an understanding that only [Israelis'] personal stand against the greatest dangers would achieve victory for their country and for their families, and that if victory was not theirs the alternative was

³²¹ Jordan's, Syria, and the PLO's story in the Northeast of Israel provided a fascinating backdrop against which the US-Soviet spat in Sinai played out, but should be regarded as a separate war.

annihilation.”³²² Throughout Israel the outcome of the war led to feelings of “jubilation, increased security, and some complacency.”³²³ Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) had seized control of Jerusalem’s Old City, closed to Jews since 1948, officially annexing the territory despite UN Security Council resolutions against such action -- a stunning symbolic victory for Israel. The seized lands in the Golan Heights provided a security umbrella for Israeli settlement in the Huleh Valley; the IDF gains along the West Bank provided a buffer zone against future invasion; and finally the incredible prize of the Sinai -- with its water-reinforced border at Suez -- added 23,000 square miles of desert between the Israeli State and its dangerous Egyptian adversary.³²⁴

In their euphoria, Israelis expected Nasser’s regime -- their most vocal belligerent -- to buckle under the weight of defeat and humiliation. The void, they hoped, would leave room for a more moderate government with which it could sign a lasting peace settlement.³²⁵ At first it seemed as if the catastrophe would push Israel’s Arab enemies over. Hafez al-Assad of Syria reportedly shot a junior officer who suggested formally studying the debacle. King Hussein in Jordan waxed fatalistic, declaring that “I seem to belong to a family which must suffer and make sacrifices for its country without end.” And most dramatically, in Egypt, Nasser threatened resignation: “I have taken a decision with which I need your help. I have decided to withdraw totally and for good from any official post or political role...May God be with us -- hope, light and guidance in our hearts.” Although his request was refused by tens of thousands of protestors,

³²² Quoted in: Sachar, *op. cit.*, 661.

³²³ Trevor N. Dupuy, *Elusive Victory: The Arab-Israeli Wars, 1947-1974* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1978), 344.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, 345-348.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 344

his anger and frustration were real and shared by millions of Arabs.³²⁶ These sentiments ultimately had the opposite effect than those for which Israeli leaders hoped.

The Israelis were, although disappointed in Nasser's survival, satisfied that even if a peace settlement were not immediately realized, it would be many years -- if not many generations -- before Arab armies could pose any credible threat.³²⁷ Most western opinion agreed with the Israeli view, lulling Israeli commanders into a strategic slumber. Israelis did not think it necessary to take expensive measures to protect the Sinai Peninsula, and there was even talk of reducing the IDF to minimum levels.³²⁸

III. 1967-1969: Egypt Rebuilds and the Soviets Posture

The Arabs, plunged into gloom, shared none of Israel's lethargy. The Egyptians in particular approached 1967 cautiously. Above all, they faced the fact that Israel was to be a permanent fixture. Sights were lowered from annihilating the Jewish State to merely regaining the territories lost.³²⁹ Pushing quickly ahead at the Arab League summit in Khartoum on August 29th, 1967, only two months after the catastrophe, Egyptian and Syrian leaders, among others, agreed to the "three no's" of no peace, no negotiation, and no recognition of Israel.

While Israel slept, Egypt looked to its superpower patron to rebuild. The Soviet Union was poised to play a critical role in propping Egypt up for another battle. Throughout 1967 politicians in Moscow "viewed the escalating crisis with cool aloofness and virtually fatalistic resignation."³³⁰ A 1981 Brookings Institute report concluded that, of all parties involved in 1967,

³²⁶ Oren, op. cit., 313.

³²⁷ Dupuy, op. cit., 345.

³²⁸ Zeev Schiff, *A History of the Israeli Army, 1870-1974* (San Francisco: Macmillan, 1984), 241.

³²⁹ Dupuy, op. cit., 347.

³³⁰ Sydney D. Bailey, *Four Arab-Israeli Wars and the Peace Process* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), 240.

the Soviets' behavior was "the most restrained, conservative, and cautious."³³¹ Legal scholar and former US Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Eugene Rostow concluded: "the Soviet Union wanted the fruits of war without the war."³³² The USSR largely achieved these limited objectives in 1967. Emerging relatively painlessly from 1967, it would throughout the thousand days continue to play a significant role in both Egyptian reconstruction and broader international diplomacy.

Egyptian analysts after June 1967 begrudgingly accepted Israel's battlefield superiority. Their subsequent reconstruction was shaped around offsetting, and eventually matching, their neighbor's military capability. The Soviet Union was central to their efforts. Having emerged from 1967 unscathed while at the same time cementing its importance to Egypt, the USSR inserted itself into the simmering crisis. The Six Day War initiated a new period of rivalry between the Soviets and the United States in the Middle East. As the nature of that rivalry transformed in such a way as to make the regional course of events "no longer unambiguously favorable to Soviet interests," Moscow sought new avenues along which it could confront the US penetration into Israeli politics.³³³ Soviet analysts had, as early as 1965, understood Israel's military superiority, although failed to shape their policies according to this knowledge. A study group within the USSR Academy of Sciences prepared a report for the Central Committee in which it expressed "high confidence" in a clear-cut Israeli victory against Arab states. Yet the

³³¹ Stephen S. Kaplan, *Diplomacy of Power: Soviet Armed Forces as a Political Instrument* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1981), 167.

³³² Eugene Rostow to Sydney D. Bailey, quoted in: Bailey, *Ibid.*, 241.

³³³ Oded Eran, "Soviet Middle East Policy, 1967-1973," in Itamar Rabinovich and Haim Shaked, ed., *From June to October: The Middle East between 1967 and 1973* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1978), 29-30.

Committee for Middle East leadership refused to acknowledge this pessimistic conclusion, focusing instead on the Soviet-supplied Arab military buildup in the 1950s and 1960s.³³⁴

By 1968, analytical realities had caught up with Russian pride. The 1967 War was the “first major regional development since 1955 of an unfavorable or at least ambiguous nature from the Soviet point of view.”³³⁵ The total defeat of its Arab clients using Russian weapons was particularly painful to the Kremlin. The Soviets took emergency measures aimed at minimizing the setbacks in prestige and at a speedy reversal of Israeli territorial gains. Quickly dispatched from Moscow, USSR diplomat Nikolai Podgorny arrived in Cairo on 20 June 1967 to head a large military delegation, which included the Soviet Chief of Staff that “symbolized dramatically the Soviet role as protector of the Arabs.”³³⁶ He was authorized to offer Egypt a resupply of all military material lost in the War. Evidence suggests that by 1968 the Kremlin had fulfilled nearly 80% of its promises. Egyptian aircrafts and warships made frequent visits to Egyptian ports during the year of defeat, extending a security umbrella over its beaten client.³³⁷ The collaboration quickly intensified; Podgorny even suggested to Nasser the establishment of a Russian military base in Alexandria.³³⁸

Damage control dictated global strategy. The Central Committee assessed the Middle East crisis as a “clash of ideologies....a confrontation between progressive Arab regimes and the vanguard of world imperialism, Israel.”³³⁹ Using this international framework, the Soviet

³³⁴ Oded Eran, “Soviet Perceptions of Arab Communism and its Political Role,” in M. Confino and S. Shamir, eds., *The USSR and the Middle East* (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1973); John Dornberg, *Brezhnev: The Masks of Power* (Andre Deutsch, 1974), 212-214.

³³⁵ Eran, “Soviet Middle East Policy, 1967-1973,” *Ibid.*, 31.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, 30-31.

³³⁷ *Middle East Record* (Vol. III 1967, Jerusalem: Israeli Universities Press, 1971), 17.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, p.11.

³³⁹ Central Committee Report quoted in Ginor, *op. cit.*, 129.

leadership geared to “oppose the export of counterrevolution and the policy of oppression.”³⁴⁰ As early as June 14, a squadron of Tupolev Tu-16 bombers arrived in Egypt for “moral support.” Soviet tension flared so high that a Soviet submarine commander was ordered, in early spring 1968, to be ready to launch eight SS-12 nuclear missiles at Israel “if the latter took offensive action.”³⁴¹ These orders were complemented by a massive airlift of personnel, arms, munitions and other materiel to Cairo via Yugoslavia. Soviet pilots, who had spent three days in their planes on alert during the June War, were soon tasked with “frenetic construction of aircraft shelters in the frontier commands of Egypt, and even the USSR.” Yuri V. Natsenko, commander of a MiG-21 air reconnaissance wing based near Alexandria, recalled “everyone...waiting for what was to come next. Far-sighted commanders understood the conflict was not over.”³⁴²

The United States misread Russian intentions, seeing the resupply effort as part of general Soviet stumbling around the region. A report presented to White House advisor McGeorge Bundy concluded, “[t]he Soviets, disappointed with Nasser’s performance, may wish to make Algeria their major tool for troublemaking in the area.”³⁴³ Perceiving Russian actions in Egypt through this lens, a joint US/USIA/CIA memorandum urged American policymakers to be “careful about our Soviet relations and not force the Soviets into a corner.” Above all, the document warned against “falling into the Soviet trap of tying the US with Israel.” To avoid this pitfall, these inter-service analysts suggested, “not to focus for the time being on the Soviet

³⁴⁰ Francis Fukuyama, “Soviet Military Power in the Middle East, or Whatever Became of Power Projection?” in Steven L. Spiegel, Mark A. Heller, and Jacob Goldberg, ed., *The Soviet-American Competition in the Middle East* (University of California: Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, 1988), 163-164.

³⁴¹ Ginor, op. cit., 129-130.

³⁴² Yuri V. Natsenko, “Aviation in Egypt,” in V.Z. Safonov, et. al., ed., *Secret Classification Removed* (Moscow: Council of Veterans of Hostilities in Egypt, 1998), 45.

³⁴³ Ginor, op. cit., p. 130; Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile: The Soviet-Egyptian Influence Relationship since the June War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 13-14: The US conclusion was opposite reality: the Algerian President’s intervention was already seen in Moscow as a hindrance to the main effort in Egypt.

military resupply. This is not yet of alarming proportions, and to focus on it would be wrong since a number of Arab countries would come to view the Soviet Union as its [sic] benefactor.” American leaders should instead “hammer home the point that Soviet military investment has cost the individual Soviet and Czech citizen consumer goods, automobiles, refrigerators, etc. A new buildup would delay Soviet economic progress.”³⁴⁴ In fact, Operation *Kavkaz* (Caucases), as the Soviet resupply effort between 1967 and 1969 was called, provided numerous benefits for thousands of Soviet military personnel and their families. Over 50,000 servicemen were posted to Egypt during this period, and their pay was luxurious. A radio intelligence officer, for example, out of a monthly wage of 90 Egyptian pounds, could save enough for a Soviet-made car in seven months. Returning from their 15-month deployment, these soldiers could afford the finest of Russian fashion and cultural living.³⁴⁵ Unsurprisingly, the American rhetoric fell on deaf ears in both Russia, where standards of living were improved for those involved in the secretive *Kavkaz* operation, and in Egypt, where Soviet military power symbolized the country’s desire to strike Israel again.

Russian military aid to Egypt continued to increase in the face of US misinterpretation. Even as US President Lyndon B. Johnson conferred with Soviet leaders at the Glassboro summit, USSR representatives in Cairo promised Nasser “much more active assistance in reorganizing Egypt’s air defense.” By 1969, there were over 430 Soviet military advisors in Egypt. The year before, Soviet Defense Minister Andrei Grechko made a “hitherto unreported tour” of Egypt’s armed forces. Russian warships docked in Alexandria under new “privileged access” agreements. These outlets were strategically critical for the USSR, which had recently lost its

³⁴⁴ “John F. Walsh, Executive Secretary, Control Group to McGeorge Bundy,” White House, 15.6.07, secret, Lyndon B. Johnson Library, box 15: Memos to President and the White House [digitized].

³⁴⁵ Ginor, op. cit., 130.

only Mediterranean naval base in Albania. Recent eyewitness accounts found in the Russian State Archive even suggest it was a Soviet missile boat -- not an Egyptian craft as previously supposed -- stationed in Port Said that fired the “opening shots” of the War of Attrition, sinking the Israeli destroyer *Eilat* in October 1967.³⁴⁶

Soviet land-force commitments followed in August 1968. Anatoly Yegorin, correspondent for the Novosti news agency, watched as artillery duels along Suez between Israeli and Egyptian forces were commanded, in Egypt, by Soviet military advisors. Nasser, who had not allowed Russian experts into his army during the June War, was compelled by 1968 to post an advisor to each of his battalions. Soviet diplomats had skillfully asserted, “No advisor, no arms.” That way, went the calculation in Moscow, “we can exert complete control over the entire Egyptian army.”³⁴⁷ By the end of 1968, Soviet personnel had been deployed across Egypt, where they became commonly known as *askaryun Suviet* (Soviet soldiers). Soviet surveillance units began arriving in Egypt that year to monitor Israeli air-traffic transmissions, bringing with them advanced equipment that Egyptian operators were either unable or not trusted to handle. Russian shipments of SAM-2 missile systems and MiGs arrived at the same time, restoring Egyptian anti-aircraft assets destroyed or captured by the Israelis. Yitzhak Rabin was so concerned by the Egyptian “rebirth” that he instructed the Israeli Ambassador in Washington to “speed up as much as possible deliveries of F-4 Phantoms....Egyptian inventories projected for 1970 were being exceeded by 1 November 1969.” The Americans dragged their feet, increasing the delivery rate only a token amount. Rabin was just discovering what had been Cold War strategy in Moscow since 1967: the Russians were waging a full-fledged secret war west of Suez. Yet his realizations

³⁴⁶ Ibid., 132.

³⁴⁷ Nadav Safran, *Israel, the Embattled Ally* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1982), 262-263; Rubinstein, *op. cit.*, 80.

were handicapped by intransigent Israeli policy. Yegorin, who was working in Cairo, noted with a tinge of sadness, “Someone had decided to send our boys into war, but without giving their fathers, mothers, or people any inkling of it.”³⁴⁸

By the “official” start of the War of Attrition in 1969, the Soviet land presence included an indeterminate number of *Spetsnaz* (special forces) units deployed along the front, over 500 military advisors,³⁴⁹ and hundreds of air force personnel. The *Spetsnaz* were particularly potent, designed to conduct pinprick raids across the Suez to collect “Israeli military booty.” One such mission may have retrieved parts from a downed F-4 Phantom, the preeminent American fighter-bomber used in Vietnam, which were immediately shipped to Moscow for analysis. These successes were hugely important in the context of Russia’s parallel conflict in Southeast Asia.³⁵⁰ Soon a 10,000-person strong Russian Air Defense Division arrived in Suez, solidifying the Kremlin’s commitment to the conflict. These deployments, contrary to American analysis, were part of a longer-term armament campaign by the Soviet Union.³⁵¹

Ultimately, the Soviets were motivated by fear. They reacted to the Suez confrontation as a direct part of the global Cold War struggle and a serious security concern to the motherland. They viewed, for example, the American F-4 Phantom as a direct threat to Russian territory by virtue of its range and payload. The USSR, wrote Yegorin, “thus deployed as if the enemy was 120 kilometers outside Moscow, not Cairo.”³⁵² Vladimir Vinogradov, the Soviet Ambassador to

³⁴⁸ Anatoly Yegorin, “From Under the Yellow Arab Helmet Gleamed Blue Russian Eyes,” in *Trud-7* (Translated from original Russian, Moscow, 6 March 1998), 22.

³⁴⁹ Ginor, *op. cit.*, p. 134: Each advisor was assigned at least one interpreter, so the actual number of Soviet personnel in Egyptian divisions was likely much higher.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 135.

³⁵¹ Dima Adamsky, “Disregarding the Bear: How US Intelligence Failed to Estimate Soviet Involvement in the Egyptian-Israeli War of Attrition”, *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 5 (2005), 803-831, 804.

³⁵² *Ibid.*

Egypt in 1970, maintained 28 years later that his country's presence in Egypt was of vital defensive importance "to oppose [the] United States military machine and its advance guard from approaching our Southern border."³⁵³ Nasser understood the situation well, joking with Vinogradov in 1970 that the "Arab-Israeli conflict [was] in truth a Soviet-American conflict."³⁵⁴ This claim held immense truth.

IV. The United States Misunderstood Soviet Involvement

Never before the Egyptian-Israeli War of Attrition had the Soviet Union put its own forces in jeopardy for an Arab nation. The singular nature of Russian involvement raised a series of conundrums for analysts in Washington who were trying to understand Moscow's motivations. Their conclusion, which was codified in subsequent historiography, was that the USSR's intervention in Egypt was a direct response to Israeli deep penetration raids in January 1970. This interpretation ignored the close relationship between Egyptian and Russian military leaders going back to 1967 and earlier. Indeed, the Soviet rearmament effort in Egypt was not a response to regional stimuli but rather was framed in the global Cold War context vis-a-vis NATO and US forces in the region. The deployment of the Air Defense Division (AD) in 1969 marked only a concluding shift in Russian strategy rather than a wholly new operational doctrine.³⁵⁵

Yet the AD deployment marked the US' and Israel's culminating intelligence failure in the War of Attrition. No intelligence warning was issued in either Washington or Jerusalem before the Soviet intervention, and leaders in both capitals assigned the lowest priority to such a

³⁵³ V.M. Vinogradov, "Soviet Warriors in Egypt," in Safonov, op. cit., 7-8.

³⁵⁴ Ibid., 12-13.

³⁵⁵ Adamsky, op. cit., 805, 830: The Soviets had considered sending the AD Division as early as 1968 to complement the deployment of ground and naval advisors in 1967-1968.

contingency. Thus, the US and Israeli establishments were “surprised and unprepared for the Soviet act.” The nascent Israeli Military Intelligence (AMAN) was relatively inexperienced in the “Soviet intelligence business,” and therefore relied heavily on US assessments to construct their policy, since complacency from the 1967 victory precluded the rapid development of Israel’s own intelligence branches until after 1973. Reliance on US estimates became especially blind in 1970 when Israeli officials were considering escalating the War of Attrition by sending fighter-bombers deep into Egyptian territory. Neither Israelis nor Americans would truly understand the Soviet-supported capability of Egyptian air defense to shoot down such raids until the rude awakening in the Yom Kippur War. Since the Americans estimated the risk of Soviet intervention as low, the “lion’s share of the responsibility for the Israeli misperception in 1970 must be attributed to Washington.”³⁵⁶ This intelligence failure was crucial, for it both framed American involvement in the region and informed the unsuccessful Rogers Treaty in 1970, which ended the War of Attrition but also laid the groundwork for October 1973.

Although the US intelligence community possessed the most information on Soviet activities during the Cold War, quantity did not always go “hand in hand” with quality.³⁵⁷ American collection efforts were technologically superb, but were poor at predicting Soviet intentions. Robert Gates, then an officer in the CIA, lamented after the 1973 war that “Our intelligence collection capabilities are not very adept at obtaining accurate or reliable information on the thinking of the Soviet leadership....Thus, in predicting Soviet intentions, we work in an area where our special assets are of only marginal assistance.”³⁵⁸ Central Intelligence Agency reports, for example, pinpointed Russian military buildup from 1967-1969 but failed to

³⁵⁶ Ibid., 804-805.

³⁵⁷ Ibid., 807.

³⁵⁸ Robert M. Gates, “The Prediction of Soviet Intention,” *Studies in Intelligence* (Spring 1973) 1–39.

determine where the materiel was going until 1970. And even then, the Agency failed to put their findings from 1967 together with the 1970 invasion to form a comprehensive picture of Soviet intervention.³⁵⁹ In April 1967, two months before the Six Day War, the Office of National Estimates published a report in which they concluded that “Moscow almost certainly views the Egyptian-Israeli dispute as promoting its interests but at the same time the Soviets do not want an outbreak of large-scale conflict in the area.”³⁶⁰ One month later, the CIA affirmed the report’s findings, labeling it “one of the proudest achievements of the CIA.”³⁶¹ During the June War American analysts found that their estimates of Egyptian-Israeli military ratios were surprisingly accurate, instilling a sense of confidence at the highest levels of the intelligence communities in Washington and Jerusalem that the Americans understood the situation perfectly. Yet this estimate represented a gross miscalculation in not foreseeing the escalation of Egyptian-Israeli conflict after 1967, defining it as a “low risk probability.”³⁶² Encouraged by their perceived success, the US took the USSR’s “watchful conduct to be axiomatic.” Thus, the “conception of Soviet cautious conduct in the Middle East was born.”³⁶³

American -- and by proxy, Israeli -- confidence in Moscow’s caution was so great that in late 1967, a CIA working paper, *Soviet Foreign Policy*, interpreted the decision to replace Egyptian military equipment lost in the June War as “provisional....a political holding action.” US experts refused to believe that the Russians sought military bases in the Arab World, or that

³⁵⁹ Raymond L. Garthoff, “Estimating Soviet Military Intentions and Capabilities,” in Gerald K. Haines and Robert E. Leggett, eds., *Watching the Bear: Essays on the CIA’s Analysis of the Soviet Union* (Washington, DC: Center for the Studies of Intelligence, 2001), 13.

³⁶⁰ National Intelligence Estimate No. 30-67, *The Arab Israeli Dispute: Current phase* (13 April 1967), 1-2. Accessed electronically at CIA FOIA Electronic Reading Room.

³⁶¹ Rhodi Jeffreys-Jones, *CIA and American Democracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 165.

³⁶² Adamsky, op. cit., 809.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*; CIA Intelligence Information Cable, No. IN02285, *Soviet Position/MIDEAST Situation* (25 June 1967) 1-5. Accessed electronically at CIA FOIA Electronic Reading Room.

Moscow would ever expand its regional involvement “beyond the technical level.”³⁶⁴ In a 1968 report, *Soviet Interests and Intentions in Arab States*, the authors doubted that “in the foreseeable future the Soviets intend to make binding military commitments to any Arab states, or to establish military bases as such in the Middle East.”³⁶⁵ The annual intelligence overview on the Soviet Union affirmed this stance: “The USSR has no desire to give Arabs a hold over its policies.”³⁶⁶ These memoranda came as Soviet warships docked in Port Said, and talks were ongoing in Cairo between Nasser and Podgorny about the establishment of naval and air force bases in Alexandria.³⁶⁷ In March 1968 Soviet diplomats concluded the bilateral Soviet-Egyptian Treaty on Military-Naval Privileges, which gave Moscow definitive permission to establish its own naval and ground installations on Egypt’s soil,” marks “the climax of Soviet influence in Egypt.”³⁶⁸ US officials were ignorant of these developments, or at least chose to ignore them. Confidence in the original assessment was so high that by 1969 scholars speculated that intercepted radio transmissions of Russian-speaking pilots from Egypt were merely Soviet-trained Yemenis talking to each other.³⁶⁹

In the first months of 1969, the CIA offered the new Nixon Administration an assessment of Soviet involvement in the area under Brezhnev. Sticking to their analyses from two years earlier, these confidential reports noted that “Brezhnev and his colleagues were...[a] cautious, conservative group which had adopted a defensive posture in international affairs.” This estimate

³⁶⁴ Quoted in Adamsky, *Ibid.*, 810.

³⁶⁵ Special National Intelligence Estimate No. 11-9-68 / 335, *Soviet Interests and Activities in Arab States* (18 Jan. 1968) 4–5. Accessed electronically at CIA FOIA Electronic Reading Room.

³⁶⁶ CIA Memorandum No. 0577 /68, *The USSR: Problems, Policies, and Prospects 1967–1968* (9 Jan. 1968). 8. Accessed electronically at CIA FOIA Electronic Reading Room.

³⁶⁷ Ginor, *op. cit.*, 131.

³⁶⁸ Adamsky, *op. cit.*, 812.

³⁶⁹ Phillip Mosely, “The Soviet Search for Security” in J.C. Hurewitz, ed., *Soviet-American Rivalry in the Middle East: The Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science*, Columbia University (Montpellier: Capital City Press, 1969), 222.

did not stress the Soviet military threat.³⁷⁰ Consistent with their assessment of Soviet global conduct, these analysts concluded that it was “highly unlikely” that the Russians would “directly conduct” operations against the Israelis nor would they engage in “attacks on Israel.”³⁷¹ As Russian sources have since indicated, these estimates were at least one year out of date, if ever they were accurate to begin with. In Washington, Soviet military conduct in the Third World was divided into two distinct categories: intervention and involvement. “Involvement” comprised arms supplies and military training of the client both in the USSR and on-site. “Intervention” implied direct deployment of Soviet soldiers in combat conditions. The Kremlin was employing both strategies in 1969, but the Americans only identified and tracked the former category. They therefore had a warped view of the magnitude of Russian involvement in Egypt. As journalist Zeev Schiff noted, US miscalculations had disastrous effects on the already complacent Israelis. The prevailing sentiment in Jerusalem was thus, “if the Americans aren’t worried, why should we be?”³⁷² This shared sentiment was directly responsible for the decision to launch Israeli deep penetration raids against Egypt that year, further infuriating both Egyptians and their Soviet combatants.

By the start of the War of Attrition, American analysts understood very well Soviet military capabilities in the Middle East. Forgotten CIA reports warned that Soviet airborne and amphibious troops had sufficient capability to intervene effectively in the Arab World. It had become impossible to ignore the fact that Egypt was the “largest Soviet-equipped military force

³⁷⁰ Adamsky, *op. cit.*, 812.

³⁷¹ National Intelligence Estimate No. 11-69/369, Basic Factors and Main Tendencies in Current Soviet Policy (27 Feb. 1969) 2–3. Accessed electronically at CIA FOIA Electronic Reading Room.

³⁷² Quoted in Richard Parker, *The Politics of Miscalculation in the Middle East* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993), 154.

in the free world.”³⁷³ But Washington failed to realize that the mammoth extent of Russian involvement *and* intervention meant that another Arab defeat would, in essence, be a Soviet defeat as well. For the Kremlin, such an outcome was unacceptable. Continued assurances that Soviet shipments to Egypt would slow flew in the face of reality. They tirelessly asserted that the Soviets would never send pilots or soldiers to fly or fight against Israel, and that Russian boots on the ground numbered -- at most -- in the low hundreds. Israel readily accepted this view since it confirmed their strategic biases.

Soon, the factual knowledge became obscured by this false interpretation of Soviet strategy. So confident were Americans and Israelis to downplay Russian intervention that in late 1969 a number of sources suggested that Jerusalem treat the “threat of Soviet intervention as Egyptian disinformation aimed to enhance Cairo’s deterrent posture.”³⁷⁴ The analysis of Nasser’s January 1970 visit to Moscow, which Secretary of State Henry Kissinger submitted to President Nixon, underscored how superficial the American understanding was: “Nasser is about to demonstrate Soviet inability to get him out of a box.”³⁷⁵

This type of interpretation culminated in the clearest evidence of American intelligence failure on 31 January 1970. Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin delivered a letter addressed to President Nixon to Kissinger’s office, from Premier Alexei Kosygin, in which the Russian leader described the dangers to peace posed by Israeli military actions and by Israeli refusal to withdraw from Arab territories conquered in 1967. It then concluded with a sharp warning: if Israel continued to bomb Arab territory, the USSR would take swift action to “rebuff the

³⁷³ Adamsky, *op. cit.*, 815.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 816-817.

³⁷⁵ Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston, MA: Little Brown 1979), 571.

arrogant aggressor.”³⁷⁶ Analysts in the United States frantically sought information on Soviet intentions and ability to follow through on these threats. Answers were posted almost as breathlessly, and were framed along the accepted intelligence conception, which insisted that it would be uncharacteristic of Russia to send troops into the Middle East: “The almost unanimous opinion among the Soviet experts in the White House, CIA, State and Defense Departments was that Moscow was bluffing....” Joseph Sisco, Assistant US Secretary of State, declared to a gathering of Congressmen that the letter was a result of high pressure *Egyptian* negotiations on the USSR to take a firmer stance with the West and Israel.³⁷⁷

The Kosygin letter was the first in a series of ignored overt signs in the Soviet press warning of direct Russian intervention during the War of Attrition. If American analysts had interpreted these developments correctly, they would have likely been able to figure out what was about to transpire. In August 1969 the Soviet press launched a vehement anti-Zionist campaign, comparing Israel to Nazi Germany and repeating charges that US Air Force pilots participated in the Israeli bombing raids earlier that year. In October the Telegraphic Agency of the Soviet Union (TASS) broadcast that Washington “offered Israel the opportunity not only of receiving military aircraft, but also of having the use of American pilots and personnel for technical maintenance.”³⁷⁸ These accusations which were printed in prominent dailies *Pravda* and *Krasnaia Zvezda* prepared the Soviet public for the Kremlin’s supposedly parallel move. This anti-Israel campaign matched that undertaken during the 1967 conflict. The *Kommunist* ran an editorial on Soviet military matters during the Six Day War; since this journal was widely read by the party faithful, it was reasonable to assume that the article’s design was to prepare the

³⁷⁶ Parker, op. cit., p. 145; Kissinger, *Ibid.*, 561.

³⁷⁷ Adamsky, op. cit., 817.

³⁷⁸ TASS Statement, Moscow (31 Oct. 1969).

politburo for a major shift in Moscow's Middle East policy. Ultimately, leaders in Washington interpreted these and hundreds of other such articles as merely part of a "psychological warfare campaign" against Israel.³⁷⁹

In the meantime, Russian engineers began work constructing SAM-2 and SAM-3 missile batteries 30 km west of the Suez Canal. Known as the "T" excavations for their shape, US satellite operators noticed these strange formations in mid-January. Israeli Air Force (IAF) analysts suspected these were for some kind of antiaircraft systems but did not identify SAM directly. Nevertheless, understanding something massive was underway, IAF pilots bombed the sights on a 24-hour schedule. Israel passed this information on to the US, but Washington returned only silence. For "inconceivable reasons" the same analysts who would spot Soviet aircraft bringing SAM-3 missiles a month later would fail to make any connection to the fortifications in Suez. Thus, no intelligent or effective warning was issued, neither to the US executive nor Israel.

V. Conclusion: A Soviet Intelligence Victory

By March 1969 nothing had been heard from Moscow, and Kissinger began to suspect Soviet military intervention. On 17 March the US Administration finally realized the shocking magnitude of its intelligence blunder, when the first incontrovertible intelligence arrived in Foggy Bottom showing a large Soviet ground presence. Yet even as late as May, exact Soviet troop counts were still unknown. Along the corridors of power in Washington and Jerusalem, a stunned silence fell as, behind closed doors, a frantic intelligence search was underway.

³⁷⁹ Ibid., 818.

A scarcity of comprehension, not a shortage of information, was the ultimate cause of the fiasco. The Soviets had pulled off a massive intelligence coup, fully rearming the Egyptian military and avoiding the watchful eyes peering over from Washington and Jerusalem. Russian arms played a crucial role in taming the IAF and Israeli tank battalions three years later in the Yom Kippur War, precipitating the Jewish State's first major military defeat.

It would be folly, though, to label Egypt as a "winner." Although their army was given new life, they were saddled with Soviet advisors, soldiers, and ships in their ports, cities, and airfields. Israel certainly was no victor. In many ways she was the ultimate loser in 1970. Her feelings of complacency from 1967 combined with reliance on US intelligence caused her to wait unprepared and in the dark for the catastrophe in 1973. The United States too came out behind in this intelligence duel. Her entire security apparatus was shaken to the core after the realization of mammoth Soviet intervention in Egypt, the most dangerous weaknesses bared for the entire international community to see. Although US Secretary of State William Rogers forced through the ceasefire that ended the shelling and air raids in 1970, this agreement would quickly dissolve. It was founded on misunderstanding and symbolized a frantic attempt to regain the diplomatic upper hand. The Soviets held the best cards, no matter how hard Washington tried to call their bluff.

Indeed, the Russians were the masterminds during the thousands days of 1967-1970. Their military apparatus in full gear, they managed to reequip a nation, and bring it from the brink of dissolution to an apex of power. And throughout the process the Russians managed to operate in nearly complete secrecy, using the US' prejudices to its advantage. *Kavkaz* was

perhaps the Russian's most successful operation so far in the Cold War, and certainly represented the high water mark of Russian influence in the region.

By focusing on the great power politics at play in the War of Attrition, a fascinating image of global machination is revealed. The 1969-1970 conflict can be appropriately placed into its international context. Moscow and Washington were just as central as Cairo or Jerusalem to the fighting's outcome, and the emergence of even bloodier war three years later. Yet the inverse was also true; the unholy Soviets, and their American adversary, were brought into the desperate struggle for the Holy Land. At its heart lay the slow-motion Egypt-Israeli maelstrom. And so, through the sands where Moses walked and bullets flew, the Russian Bear tread silently but struck deep.

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The Demise of Chene Street: Urban Crisis in Detroit's Lower East Side

Christopher White

University of Michigan

The history of Detroit's uneven development and blatantly racist housing policies have been thoroughly explored by many acclaimed scholars, including Thomas Sugrue,³⁸⁰ Joe T. Darden,³⁸¹ and Reynolds Farley.³⁸² In some part, all of these scholars have pointed to structural racism and enforced inequality in Detroit as the culprit for much of the city's current problems. Yet this is not to say that the city cannot grow out of its troubled history. In fact, it has become increasingly more difficult to deny the recent revival of Detroit, between the opening of Midtown's Whole Foods, the purchase of the Packard plant and its new owner's first foray into demolishing parts of it, and the conversion of well-positioned low-income housing into expensive apartments.³⁸³ Despite the image of urban decay and the consequences of de-industrialization that surround the city's reputation in the media, Detroit seems to be on the cusp of some sort of revival. For a city that recently declared bankruptcy and has been declining in population for over fifty years, these new developments may come as a surprise to many. The flow of capital back into the city, however, has been enabled by the city's unique history of land distribution, in which class and racial lines heavily divided the city's population and businesses. After extensive de-industrialization and the exodus of much of the city's white population to the

³⁸⁰ Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996).

³⁸¹ Joe T. Darden, *Detroit: Race and Uneven Development* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987).

³⁸² Reynolds Farley and Sheldon Danziger, *Detroit Divided* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2000).

³⁸³ Nancy Derringer. "Coming to Terms with Gentrification in Detroit." *Bridge Magazine*, August 21, 2014.

suburbs, huge parts of the city have become vacant or have decayed beyond repair. Property values in many central areas of the city have recently hit rock bottom, allowing investors to purchase property at historic lows with little risks of losing value. Therefore, it may be unsurprising to see the resurgence of property investment within the city limit, for the risks and upfront costs can easily be mitigated by the wealth of those participating in Detroit's current process of gentrification.

Although it is easy to point to the riots of the late 1960s and early 1970s as the cause of much of Detroit's dilapidation and urban decay, the roots of the social upheaval from that time can be placed several decades earlier, in the 1940s and 1950s. Similarly, most of the history of Detroit's unfair housing policies—which included the limitations enforced by homeowners associations, the presence of “blockbusting” realtors, and the segregation encouraged by the city's own urban renewal and housing projects—can be traced all the way back to the decade following World War II, with the roots of these policies originating in the New Deal. The structures that allowed neighborhoods to develop in strict terms of race and class remain relevant to Detroit today, as they helped facilitate the rapid migration of whites to the suburbs, specifically in ways that were destructive to the economic longevity of the city and key to the existence of much of the city's currently vacant land. Most of the land that is now vacant exists on Detroit's Lower East Side, from the abandoned automotive plants to the north stretching all the way down to the remnants of the Black Bottom along the river's edge.

Once a vital part of the city's economic and residential landscape, the black neighborhoods that used be on Hastings Street, the Poles that populated St. Aubin and Canfield Street, and array of peoples that could be found on Chene Street have all but disappeared from

the city. The remnants of this vibrant immigrant community are quite difficult to find, resting in abandoned churches, burned-out houses, and in the memories of the people who were often forced to leave the neighborhoods that they were born in. The decline of Detroit's immigrant communities in the Lower East Side occurred simultaneously with the general decline of the city as a whole. Although the simple answer behind their shared fates may be the decline of the auto-industry's presence within the city, other more complicated narratives shed light on the subject. For example, the narrative of destructive de-industrialization popularized by Thomas Sugrue helps explain the city's focus on reviving the interest of industry at the expense of the working class, with the residents of Chene Street being the victims of near-sighted policy. Reynolds Farley suggests the importance of the city's changing demographic, in terms of class, race, and gender as an inseparable part of the city's 20th century crisis. Yet neither historian effectively examines how the tumultuous 1950s affected Detroit on the neighborhood level, and how destructive change along Detroit's Lower East Side may have assisted in the city's steady decline.

By limiting the scope of historical analysis to just several Detroit neighborhoods along the Lower East Side—including Poletown, Chene Street, and Paradise Valley communities—this essay will seek to use these neighborhoods as a case study of how a combination of political, economic, and racial forces within the city worked to destroy the integrity of Detroit's most long-lasting lower-class communities. Between the combination of a series of mismanaged urban renewal projects, the construction of the Edsel Ford and Chrysler Freeways, and the cession of northern Poletown to General Motors for industrial development, the city of Detroit systematically uprooted and destroyed its Lower East Side in an effort to revitalize the city's

center. The success of these projects remains to be in question, with data showing no strong correlation between the city's policy in the Lower East Side and signs of economic growth within the city. Instead, Poletown and Paradise Valley simply became victims of a coalition of corporate and government forces that, though they may have been racially motivated, disregarded the importance of maintaining a strong working-class community within the city of Detroit. However, the immigrant and working-class community that once dominated Detroit's Lower East Side offered the city a form of life and excitement that could not be replicated by the towering Renaissance Center, or through the expansion of the central business district. Chene Street and Paradise Valley, as belittled as they were by the city's elite, were vitally important pieces of the city's cultural and economic landscape. By gutting the centers of its own working-class communities, Detroit damaged itself so deeply that it has become an icon of industrial decline. Even today, the city is trying to recover.

The heart of Detroit's working class community could once be found in the Lower East Side, specifically on Chene Street, which was situated perfectly between the Downtown District and the automobile factories to the northeast. The Chene Street community had its roots in an early wave of Polish immigrants who sought permanent settlement in Detroit, desiring to escape their homeland due to a combination of economic and political factors that troubled their divided country. While Prussian Poles desired political sovereignty, those from Austria-Hungary and Russia desired economic security, yet nearly all Polish immigrants to Detroit desired some form of cultural unity.³⁸⁴ Detroit was a popular destination for early Polish immigrants from Prussia due to the concentration of German organizations that already existed there, which were

³⁸⁴ Karen Majewski, lecture on Poles, October 28, 2014.

particularly well-equipped to deal with incoming German-speaking immigrants. By 1875, German immigrants had already established around 20 different relief and aid organizations, such as Arbeiter Halle, which provided aid to working-class immigrants in need, along with three Catholic congregations.³⁸⁵ After the foundation of St. Albertus in 1871, Detroit's first Polish parish, the fledgling Polish community in Detroit started to develop internally and differentiate itself from the nearby German community, which increased its attractiveness as an endpoint for Polish immigrants coming to America. This community had a strong focus on developing its culture, with many local schools teaching in Polish and uniting immigrants from both Prussia and Galicia under one identity.³⁸⁶

Empowered by the growth of the auto industry and the manufacturing plants that formed the northern periphery of Poletown, the Chene Street district became one of Detroit's most prosperous communities of local businesses by the late 1940s; yet, many storefront owners and customers casually spoke in Polish more often than English.³⁸⁷ Similar to other major cities, Detroiters in the Chene Street neighborhood lived so close to where they worked and shopped that there was no need to own a car—everything was in walking distance. Polka halls, pool halls, and three different movie theaters offered residents an array of modes of entertainment.³⁸⁸ Chene Street by the 1940s had grown from just a small community of immigrants into a successful Polish diaspora, filled with local businesses and its own urban culture. To the south of Poletown, African Americans were developing a similar community.

³⁸⁵ Olivier Zunz, *The Changing Face of Inequality: Urbanization, Industrial Development, and Immigrants in Detroit, 1880-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982) 186.

³⁸⁶ Thaddeus Radzialowski, "The View from a Polish Ghetto: Some Observations on the First One Hundred Years in Detroit," *Ethnicity* 1 (1974): 128-129

³⁸⁷ Ed Nowak, interview by Marian Krzyzowski, August 6, 2003, transcript.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

The Lower East Side of Detroit, known as Black Bottom by the French for its rich topsoil, became a popular site for African Americans looking for work in the city's factories between 1914 and 1945. Situated between Gratiot and the river, the Black Bottom was a notorious slum and one of the city's poorest areas, reserved for lower-class blacks. Just to the north, between Gratiot and Grand Boulevard, was the Paradise Valley community, a commercial hub and a cultural center that attracted tens of thousands of African American immigrants.³⁸⁹ Along Hastings and St. Antoine streets one could find churches, jazz clubs, grocery stores, barber shops and clothing stores run by the city's burgeoning black community. However, Paradise Valley was also a neighborhood in great need of repair. By the 1940s, over two-thirds of the community was classified as substandard housing.³⁹⁰ As Detroit's African American population increased, it became increasingly difficult for blacks to find suitable housing, as much of Detroit's finer housing was restricted for whites only.

Housing covenants and other racist housing policies blocked most blacks from finding housing in the city outside of Black Bottom. Ossian Sweet, a black middle-class doctor who ran a clinic in the Black Bottom, made national news when he attempted to move into an all-white neighborhood in Detroit's East Side in September 1925. Only days after moving in, a riot descended on his home, ending in a shootout and a long series of court trials. Even blacks who lived as far north as Eight Mile were subject to discriminatory housing policies, often enforced by the federal government. When a developer proposed to build an all-white subdivision just west of the black Eight Mile community, he was denied funds from the Federal Housing

³⁸⁹ Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis*, 36-37.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 37.

Authority on the grounds that it was too close to a slum.³⁹¹ In a compromise to receive the federal funds, the developer agreed to build a “foot-thick, six-foot-high wall, running for a half-mile on the property line separating the black and white neighborhoods.”³⁹² No matter where blacks lived within the city, they found themselves restricted and boxed-in by city housing policies, exacerbating the poor conditions that plagued established black neighborhoods like Paradise Valley.

Despite the frustrations felt by many blacks concerning discrimination and housing, many took pride in Paradise Valley for its independence as an all-black community. For example, some businesses in Paradise Valley, like Blackwell Drug Store, were so successful that they rivaled their white competitor-stores. Rosetta Johnson, an early resident of Paradise Valley, recalled the success of several black businesses in a detailed interview: “Blackwell Drug Stores were just like Cunningham’s. They was the same size, they had the same procedures. The same, it was just, it was nice. But it was just owned by black people.”³⁹³ Although both Black Bottom and Paradise Valley were often decried as slums by the city council, residents felt that if they were safe neighborhoods, fitting for starting a family. Jesse Pearson, who grew up in the Black Bottom on Mullet Street, between St. Aubin and Chene, never needed a key to his house as a kid, as the door was never locked.³⁹⁴ Crime and neighborhood safety were not nearly as problematic as the city often suggested. Pearson found success in running a newspaper route, which enabled him to purchase a house at the young age of eighteen. Like many other blacks, Pearson was unable to find steady work in the city’s manufacturing plants; instead he worked at a pharmacy until he

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 64.

³⁹² Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis*, 64.

³⁹³ Rosetta Johnson, interview by Marian Krzyzowski, June 12, 2004, transcript.

³⁹⁴ Jesse Pearson, interview by Marian Krzyzowski, May 3, 2003, transcript.

was drafted into service during World War II. Pearson's account of Black Bottom is consistent with those of many historians, especially in his inability to find a job in an automotive plant. Yet Pearson's success inside a Black Bottom pharmacy (which may have been the successful Blackwell's Pharmacy) suggests a level of socioeconomic diversity and entrepreneurship within the city's working-class that deserves more attention than it has historically received.

Although the common narrative remains to be that of single black men moving north to find work with Henry Ford, the population boom experienced by Detroit in the wake of World War I demanded a wide range of workers, including jobs that could be staffed by black women. Rosetta Johnson moved to Detroit to find work as a nanny and later became a file clerk for several doctors who ran a clinic out of the Fisher building.³⁹⁵ However, Johnson was unable to escape the scrutiny of her coworkers, who often judged her harsher than they would other file clerks. "I had to take care of the laundry but I was supposed to be a file clerk. And then the secretary and I had it because she wanted me to, she wanted me to be like a maid, she wanted me to mop up. But they had groups that cleaned up the buildings, and they still do." Johnson's story as a single black woman in the city highlights the possible economic mobility of blacks, but also the power of racism in restricting the extent of that mobility. Employment within the city's automobile industries, although a large factor in attracting many blacks to Detroit, was not the sole source of income and sustainability within the city's working-class communities, including Paradise Valley and the Black Bottom.

The Black Bottom's proximity to the Polish and German communities farther north on Chene Street facilitated early encounters of racial integration, which were often peaceful and

³⁹⁵ Rosetta Johnson, interview by Marian Krzyzowski, June 12, 2004, transcript.

welcomed by both communities. It was not entirely uncommon for schools to have an even mix of both black and white students, and black and white teachers. At Miller High School, Rufus Apple recalled little racial hostility at his integrated school, instead mentioning that he was even friends with an Italian boy who'd often stay the night at his place, and he'd do the same at his house occasionally.³⁹⁶ The neighborhoods that were built up around Chene did not follow the same pattern of racial segregation as the affluent white suburbs or the lower-middle class white suburbs, and instead, united workers along class lines. It was not uncommon for blacks to find work in the Polish community further north on Chene Street,³⁹⁷ with accounts of black workers in Polish shops quite common. The relationships between the different cultures and ethnicities along Chene Street were occasionally tense, with several isolated hostilities occurring during the 1943 and 1967 race riots. However, possibly due to the level of racial integration within the neighborhood, Chene Street residents who endured the 1967 riots were often targeted as nonwhites. Ed Nowak, a Polish business-owner on Chene Street, failed to recall seeing any blacks looting his neighbor's homes and storefronts during that famous 1967 riot.³⁹⁸ According to Nowak, the looters on Chene Street that broke into stores, set buildings on fire, and tarnished racial tensions in the neighborhood were largely young white males.

The housing crisis in the Lower East Side became increasingly precarious after Albert Cobo was elected as the mayor of Detroit in 1949. Embarking on urban renewal projects of a scale not seen before in the city, Cobo planned to clear out an area in the lower Black Bottom known as the Gratiot-site. Both blacks and whites originally advocated for Cobo's "slum

³⁹⁶ Rufus Apple, interview by Marian Krzyzowski, November 8, 2003, transcript.

³⁹⁷ Ed Nowak, interview by Marian Krzyzowski, August 6, 2003, transcript.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

clearance” project. The expectation was to for the Gratiot-site to be redeveloped with low-income public housing, but as the residents would soon learn, this was not the case ³⁹⁹. Before announcing plans for the site’s future, the city had already managed to persuade several hundred families to move out of the area, without informing them of the city’s legal responsibility to find them housing.⁴⁰⁰ The housing that the city did find for the residents who failed to move out on their own accord was often of worse condition than that which they left, exacerbating the housing crisis for the city’s black population. The Detroit Urban League found that 85% of those who were affected by urban renewal projects were non-whites, aggravating racial segregation in the city by forcing many black families into an unwelcoming housing market.⁴⁰¹ In fact, after clearing out much of the Gratiot area, private investors convinced Cobo that low-income public housing would only further depreciate land values and was not an economically viable strategy for the city. Cobo agreed.⁴⁰² Relocated residents were largely left on their own to find housing, a strategy that only compounded the city’s housing crisis even further.

Eventually, the city conceded that public housing would indeed have to be built in the Gratiot-site, but only as middle-class housing. By 1958, the first of a pair of 22-story luxury apartments opened in Gratiot-site, now renamed Lafayette Park. The residents who first moved into the towers were often white educated professionals, as many blacks found it difficult to afford the apartments.⁴⁰³ Although Lafayette Park was supposed to be an experiment in integrated housing, as it was open to both middle-class blacks and whites, high prices kept most

³⁹⁹ June Manning Thomas, *Redevelopment and Race Planning a Finer City in Postwar Detroit* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2013), 58.

⁴⁰⁰ Manning, *Redevelopment and Race*, 60.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*, 63.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*, 65.

blacks out. This did little to solve the problem generated by Lafayette Park's construction, in that thousands of relocated blacks were not offered affordable housing, even after their homes were taken from them on short notice.

At the forefront of this troubled housing situation and population migration were real-estate agents, who seemed to simultaneously be on both sides of the issue. Real estate brokers known as "blockbusters" became known for their methods of breaking apart all-white neighborhoods and selling homes to blacks. This was a profitable business, especially when sales to middle-class blacks, who no longer desired to live in the congested and segregated East Side areas, grew exponentially as urban renewal projects pushed many residents out of their homes. By 1962, it was estimated that as high as a third of the city's black population had been adversely affected by urban renewal projects,⁴⁰⁴ highlighting the need for many blacks to move into once all-white neighborhoods. While the black realtors of the Detroit Realtist Association fought for the rights of black homeowners as a civil necessity, other realtors saw the potential profit of land speculation and scare-tactics as much more lucrative.⁴⁰⁵ Many of these opportunistic realtors fueled white suspicions of black takeover through devious tactics, such as selling one house to a black family and then immediately alerting the rest of the neighborhood of an imminent black takeover, prompting many whites to panic and sell their homes at below-market prices.⁴⁰⁶ Middle-class blacks who sought to escape their substandard housing were then willing to pay marked-up prices to live in seemingly high-quality "mixed" neighborhoods, and soon found many of their white neighbors moving out en masse.

⁴⁰⁴ Manning, *Redevelopment and Race*, 65.

⁴⁰⁵ Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis*, 195.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 196.

Homeowners and residents were not the only victims of the East Side's changing economy and demographic; many small businesses and large industries were forced to leave the city as well. In an effort to connect the inner city to the surrounding suburbs, city planners devised a system of freeways that would bring commuters right into the heart of downtown. However, through a combination of shutting down local businesses to make way for freeway construction and through an exodus of businesses out the city center, the freeways actually managed to stifle growth within the city proper. Between 1948 and 1954, Detroit's central business district lost over a third of its share in area retail sales.⁴⁰⁷ Freeways made it easier for mobile whites to travel to large shopping malls out in the city's suburbs, drawing business away from local stores like J. L. Hudson's, which failed to remain competitive within the city by the end of the 1950s. Closer to the river, construction of the Chrysler Freeway uprooted much of the Hastings Street neighborhood in the Black Bottom, hurting local businesses as well as forcing more families out of their neighborhoods. The Edsel Ford Expressway cut right through the northern end of Paradise Valley, and split Poletown in half, separating the much of the community's center from the manufacturing plants just north of it. The building of the Edsel Ford Expressway, for example, required the demolition of around 2800 buildings.⁴⁰⁸ "Sure there have been some inconveniences in building our expressways and in our slum clearance programs, but in the long term more people will benefit,"⁴⁰⁹ commented Mayor Albert Cobo, on the destructive tendencies of the city's expressway and urban renewal projects. "That's the price of progress."

⁴⁰⁷ Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis*, 67.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 48.

Over time, the policies pursued by Alberto Cobo and Detroit city planners have come increasingly under fire. The city's flagrant use of eminent domain and aggressive approach to slum clearance not only failed to make the city safer, but assisted in the elimination of the city's historic working-class communities. Certainly, such policies did little to stop white flight out of the city. While around 65% percent of the population of the Three-County Metropolitan area (Wayne County, Macomb County, and Oakland County) lived within Detroit's city limit in 1945, only 45% percent of that same population remained in the city by 1960.⁴¹⁰ The city's failure to build even half of the public housing projects it originally proposed in the 1940s exacerbated the housing-crisis in the city, which was so severe that the crisis persisted even as the population declined. Although Ruth Glass may have not had Detroit in mind in her 1976 essay, she summarized the tendency of failed urban projects, like those in the Motor City, to expedite suburbanization, stating that "the centrifugal process is usually accelerated by the drive to make space for the extension of commercial, administrative and ceremonial sites in the central area; and also by the wish to keep the poor out of sight."⁴¹¹ Detroit's desire to make way for commercial space and expressways was surprisingly paradoxical. In the presence of an industrial decline that threatened much of the city's workforce, planners scrambled to accommodate the needs of the manufacturers who remained in the city, with blatant disregard to the smaller businesses that offered stability in neighborhoods like Chene Street.

By demolishing already successful neighborhoods to make way for larger roads and space for private development, city planners hoped to appeal to the needs of manufacturers that

⁴¹⁰ Farley & Danziger, *Detroit Divided*, 49.

⁴¹¹ Ruth Glass, *Clichés of Urban Doom and Other Essays* (Oxford, England: B. Blackwell, 1989) 127.

repeatedly requested more space and improved sites if they were to remain in the city.⁴¹² Yet jobs continued to move out of the city, such as with the closing of the Packard Automotive Plant in 1956. In truth, the city could not prevent the 70,000 jobs that left Detroit from 1954 to 1960 with urban renewal policies, as most of the jobs were lost due to changes in both the demand for cars and through internal changes within automotive companies.⁴¹³ The Big Three automakers increased their market shares through a combination of absorbing their competitors and producing their own parts in highly integrated and automated facilities, which rendered many independent suppliers within the city obsolete. Furthermore, the shift to efficient single-story automotive plants required larger parcels of land, which Detroit could not easily provide. After eliminating their competition within the city, automobile manufacturers relocated their factories out of the city where land was more easily available, creating a job shortage for the working-class communities who were left behind.

The planners of Detroit, despite their efforts and desires to revive the city, accomplished little development that had succeeded in growing the city. When the former Detroit planner, Mel Ravitz, spoke to the American Society of Planning Officials in 1972, he gave a powerful criticism of the Detroit City Plan Commission's misguided attempts in revitalizing the city, ultimately declaring their efforts pointless. "If we would make our urban regions more rational, more efficient, and more comfortable, we must understand that what has hitherto passed as planning is passé. The colorful charts, the exotic sketches, even zoning restrictions and master plans, are no longer effective tools to reshape the region."⁴¹⁴ Ravitz's indictment of the city

⁴¹² Manning, *Redevelopment and Race*, 74.

⁴¹³ Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis*, 136-137.

⁴¹⁴ Manning, *Redevelopment and Race*, 143.

council for its lofty and high-minded plans inside the central business district, such as the renewal of the waterfront and the construction of the Renaissance Center, was not without weight. At a time when the tax base was sharply declining and the city was in dire need of practical city planning, such as low-income housing and an organized system of mass transit, money was spent on improving the appearance of downtown. The working-class of Detroit, whose neighborhoods had been bulldozed for freeways and failed renewal projects, had nothing to benefit from the Detroit City Plan Commission's policies; the city had forsaken the working-class in exchange for appeasing the central business district and the automobile corporations.

The Lower East Side was easily the neighborhood most affected by the extensive de-industrialization and mismanaged city planning that had spread like an epidemic across the city, crippling Detroit's economy by 1960. Yet the story of the East Side is also more complicated as employment records may imply. After the destruction of Black Bottom and much of Paradise Valley, blacks who had once been highly concentrated on the East Side found themselves spread across the city in a considerably less organized fashion, populating areas all along the West Side, and further south and east than they had before.⁴¹⁵ Although this particular pattern of black migration and distribution across the city may seem like a victory for integrated housing, it is impossible to analyze this population shift without accounting for the forced relocation of many Detroit blacks by the city government. Furthermore, the widening distribution of the city's black population came at the expense of the once concentrated urban cores of Black Bottom and Paradise Valley, which were of important cultural and social significance. Of course, new cores of black culture and neighborhood life arose with the city's changing landscape, evidenced by

⁴¹⁵ Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis*, 186-188.

the success of Motown, but these new urban cores were not centers of working-class integration and cross-cultural interaction as they once were along the Lower East Side.

The deterioration of the Lower East Side, which was visible by 1960, dramatically worsened during the 1970s and early 1980s. Although the city's industrial base had showed signs of weakness in the decades prior, the mass exodus of industry from the city in the late 1960s and early 1970s precipitated an inner-city recession unlike any Detroit had experienced before. Data collected in Reynolds Farley's *Detroit Divided* reveals this recession very clearly, with the unemployment rate among whites and blacks increasing from 3.0 percent to 7.7 percent and 7.6 percent to 22.0 percent respectively between 1970 and 1980.⁴¹⁶ Of course, the working-class felt the brunt of the recession, with the lower quintile of the city's earners receiving a smaller share of income in 1980 than they had in 1970, while the upper quintile of the city's earners kept their share of income the same.⁴¹⁷ The effects of the 1970s on the Lower East Side were crushing, making it difficult for the once vibrant Poletown community to stay afloat. When General Motors offered Detroit a chance for a new factory inside the city limit, Coleman Young, the mayor, and other planners jumped on the idea, unsure of where they could fit a new factory inside the city. Consistent with the history of the city's use of eminent domain and renewal projects, Coleman Young and his city council turned their eyes towards the East Side, eager to find land, or make land where none was available.

Coleman Young had already made a name for himself as a proponent of big business in Detroit, overseeing the expansion of the city's central business district and the establishment of

⁴¹⁶ Farley & Danziger, *Detroit Divided*, 82.

⁴¹⁷ Farley & Danziger, *Detroit Divided*, 91.

the Renaissance Center. Young had even received the seal of approval from Henry Ford II, who commended Young for his sensibility and compliance with the city's power elite.⁴¹⁸ Therefore, when Young used the city's new quick-take law to seize much of northern Poletown in the summer of 1980, local leaders remained relatively nonplussed. However, to those who were living in Poletown, one of the few integrated communities in Detroit and a bastion for the city's working-poor, the news came as a genuine surprise, infuriating the local residents. By using the quick-take law, Young had hoped to claim northern Poletown for industrial use and move residents out before any local-level response could be mustered. But at the first public meetings held in the Parke elementary and Kettering high schools, over 1000 Poletown residents showed up to voice their anger and disbelief over the city's seizure of their neighborhood.⁴¹⁹ Poletown north of Grand Boulevard was to be converted into a massive factory site for General Motors, which had been offered as part of a deal to bring industry back into the city. However, as many critics pointed out, General Motors would only bring half of the 6000 jobs it originally promised the city, as the new plant would be heavily automated.⁴²⁰ Detroit's city council was willing to sacrifice every last piece of the city's East Side, including the local communities that the city desperately needed, in exchange for potential jobs and the interest of investors.

Despite the quick organization by Poletown residents to protest the GM Poletown plant and the city's seizure of their neighborhood, their cries fell on deaf ears. Coleman Young, who denounced Poletown's cultural identity as a little more than myth made by the residents to garner public support, failed to acknowledge the opposition to the Poletown plant and his use of

⁴¹⁸ Jeanie Wylie, *Poletown: Community Betrayed* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989) 39.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 62.

⁴²⁰ Wylie, *Poletown: Community Betrayed*, 50-51.

eminent domain, defending it by declaring it no different than the city's seizure of Paradise Valley decades earlier.⁴²¹ Yet unlike in Paradise Valley, where the city removed a black neighborhood in exchange for a publicly-owned expressway, Poletown would be bought off by the city and sold directly to private industry. When Poletown residents saw little success in the legal front against the plant, even after receiving the help of Kenneth Cockrel and Ralph Nader, they began to organize marches and protests around city hall. In response, looting and arson became rampant in the Poletown neighborhood, only months away from its slated destruction. One resident blamed the arson on the city itself. "They have been burning houses all over this neighborhood. I think Coleman Young's behind it. They're destroying the neighborhood so they can condemn it."⁴²² Poletown residents were not the only ones noting the prevalence of arson in condemned neighborhoods. Tommy Stephens, owner of the Raven Blues Lounge near the Poletown Plant site, agreed on the peculiarity of arson to occur within neighborhoods that were both condemned, but still partially populated.⁴²³ Regardless of the organizers behind the arsons, the effects were the same. Many Poletown residents caved to the pressure and accepted government money in exchange for their homes. Those that did not were forcefully removed from the neighborhood. Not even Detroit's historic Polish district would survive the 20th century, as the Poletown Plant was well under construction by 1982. The Lower East Side had come full circle, being forcefully deposed of both its white and black neighborhoods.

Detroit's Lower East Side, from Poletown to Paradise Valley, was once the cultural and economic center for the city's working-class, with its variety of immigrant groups, especially

⁴²¹ *Ibid.*, 66.

⁴²² *Ibid.*, 132.

⁴²³ Tommy Stephens, lecture on Detroit history, October 2, 2014.

blacks and Poles, living in such close contact with each other, often with integrated schools. Although the city's dominant manufacturing industry employed much of the Lower East Side, there was also great socioeconomic diversity in areas like Chene Street and Paradise Valley, in which entrepreneurship and local businesses thrived in communities where almost everyone would walk to work, giving the area a unique blend of street life and culture unlike anywhere else in the city. But through the extensive use of eminent domain and under the guise of "urban development" and "urban renewal," the city demolished much of the East Side to make way for freeways, poorly designed housing projects, and eventually, highly automated factories. Clearly, the planners of Detroit did not seek to protect the vitality of their city's most successful working-class communities, and perhaps in desiring a city for the white middle-class, or perhaps under the duress of the city's corporate elite, had those communities systematically destroyed. Although the Lower East Side did suffer from the declining economic situation in Detroit, especially in the late 1950s when many manufacturers left the city, the area was hurt even more by the policies implemented by the city council to dismantle it. The social and economic forces that plagued Detroit in the latter half of the 20th century created a situation that city planners couldn't remedy, which Mel Ravitz was quick to note. But Ravitz failed to mention the decline that had been perpetuated by the very same policies designed to revitalize the city's economy. Chene Street and the rest of Detroit's Lower East Side could have possibly supplied the city with the entrepreneurship and racial integration that the city needed to survive and thrive through the tumultuous 1960s and 1970s. Instead, the elite of Detroit deliberately demolished their city's working-class, and the aftershocks of that decision can still be seen today. The damage can be seen in the vacant lots, the burned-out homes, and the abandoned businesses. On that note, it

seems that the recent gentrification of the city is not a revival after all, but only a continuation of its history. The working-class and street-side entrepreneurs are not moving back into the city—middle-class whites and corporations that cater to them are moving back in. Perhaps Detroit doesn't need a Whole Foods or fancy high-rises near the Renaissance center. Perhaps Detroit needs a new Chene Street.

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“Stand Down Margaret, Please Stand Down:”

Musical and Political Opposition to the Conservative Government (1979-1990)

Cecily Zander

University of Virginia

“Most young people rebel and then gradually they become more realistic. It’s very much part of life, really. And when they want to get Mrs. Thatcher out of No. 10 – I’ve usually not met most of them. And it really is lovely to have a chance to talk to them – and it’s nice they know your name!”

Margaret Thatcher, “The Margaret Thatcher Interview!!?”, Tom Hibbert, *Smash Hits*, March 2, 1987

During Prime Minister’s Question Time on March 25, 1982, Mr. Jocelyn Cadbury, the Conservative Member for Parliament from Birmingham, Northfield, raised the perceived problem of the increase in crime that had taken place over the course of his party’s first term of government under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher. Cadbury asked, “Whether any Hon[ourable] Members listen to the so-called punk rock music,” adding, “occasionally, I have tried to decipher some of the words of the songs which come under the heading of punk.” This was an exercise he found difficult, not least because “the singers usually screech out the lyrics.” “When I have been able to understand the message,” Cadbury concluded, “[I]t sometimes seems to propagate an ethos of violence which must have a disturbing effect on the behavior of young people.”⁴²⁴

⁴²⁴ HC Deb 25 March 1982 vol. 20, cols. 1107-81.

By 1982, “the so-called punk rock music” of which Cadbury spoke had not only become a staple in the pop charts, but also a political presence in the United Kingdom. In 1982 alone, bands with roots in the initial punk explosion such as Madness and The Jam (with two different songs) charted at number one.⁴²⁵ Cadbury’s speech represents one way in which ‘punk’ music and the cultures that surrounded it were perceived during the period of the Thatcher government, from 1979-1990, and Cadbury was not alone in his portrayal of music as a corrupting and insidious force.

Even prior to 1979, members of the government had shown concern about music having a negative social and cultural presence. During a June 4, 1977 House of Commons debate on security and safety at pop concerts, Mr. Bruce George, a Labour MP, profiled the problem punk rock posed, especially as it became increasingly popular. “There may be a danger of exaggeration, but I have been to a couple of punk rock concerts and seen how even quite respectable youngsters respond to this phenomenon. Despite the total opposition of the Press, a punk rock record by the Sex Pistols has shot to the top of the hit parade,” George added, “Young people are listening to this new phenomenon and it is one about which we should be concerned.”⁴²⁶ Nearly a decade later, during an April 25, 1986 debate over television and sound broadcasting, Mr. Robert Key, a Conservative MP, ascribed even greater power to not only punk music, but also popular musicians: “I believe that a culture of violence is being actively created not just by the makers of videos but by the makers of violently aggressive pop music.”⁴²⁷

⁴²⁵ “Official Charts Company, “All the Number One Singles, 1982”, [http://www.officialcharts.com/all-the-number-ones-singles-list/_/1982/].

⁴²⁶ HC Deb, 14 June 1977, vol. 933, [cc334-46].

⁴²⁷ HC Deb, 25 April 1986, vol. 96 [cc568-623].

Existing Scholarship

Music has come to be seen as an important element in the development of popular historic and academic narratives of the late 1970s and '80s. Music recorded during Margaret Thatcher's time in office is a phenomenon of multiple forms that needs to be accounted for. Over the course of Thatcher's years in power music became more political, and musicians began to wield measurable political influence.

A growing body of historical, sociological, and less commonly, musicological scholarship explores the music of the Thatcher era, though few studies explicitly address the developing link between music and politics, beyond affirming the general consensus that as Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher inspired an uncommonly vehement response in the music community. Existing analyses focus primarily on the music and the significance of musical movements, such as punk, from a cultural perspective. Within this scholarship, few attempts have been made to provide a framework that places music parallel to politics in order to identify points of confluence or juxtaposition. Scholarship on the phenomenon of music aimed at Thatcher has taken varying approaches, but primarily authors either focus on Thatcher as a target for musical vitriol, making no argument about change over time, or emphasize one musician or musical group, thus leaving out elements of both the musical and political landscape.

In both a historic and cultural sense music has long been understood to have political potential. In a work that addresses the relationship between music and politics from the perspective of a political scientist John Street engages both musicological and sociological precepts to argue that "The boundaries between the two realms of music and politics ... are

largely illusory.”⁴²⁸ Street’s approach suggests that music is not just useful, but also necessary for politics. Street also contends that music works primarily at the level of experience, from which political thinking can grow. It is this facet of understanding in the relationship between music and politics that is reflected in movements like Red Wedge. “Music has the capacity to make us do and feel things that we would not otherwise,” Street claims, “with immediacy and directness.”⁴²⁹ Street’s arguments reflect earlier work by Simon Frith, who has suggested that the meaning of music comes from the interaction between the song, the artist, and the audience; and depends not only on the lyrics but also on the performance.⁴³⁰ As a result, Jeremy Tranmer has argued, in a synthesis of Frith and Street, “political songs should be seen not as being a simple reflection of the times they were written but as creating a framework in which some young people interpreted and experienced these times.”⁴³¹

While the study of the relationship between music and politics has shifted to acknowledge that this interaction exists in both directions, specific scholarship on the Thatcher era lacks this dimension. In a study that notionally addresses punk music in Britain through 1984, Matthew Worley asserts that “The prevailing motifs were ones of evacuation, desolation,

⁴²⁸ John Street, *Music and Politics* (London: Polity, 2012), p.1.

⁴²⁹ Ibid, p.173.

⁴³⁰ Simon Frith, *Performing Rights: On The Value of Popular Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) Frith identifies how music is categorized for consumption and associated by artists, producers, and, ultimately, by listeners with larger social and cultural distinctions. Frith insists that it is precisely the aesthetic element of music that matters to an audience. Frith’s arguments, however, are wholly sociological, whereas Street incorporates much of Frith’s work with his own perspective as a political scientist.

⁴³¹ Jeremy Tranmer, “Charity Politics and Publicity: Musicians and the Strike”, in Simon Pople and Ian W. Macdonald ed. *Digging the Seam: Popular Cultures of the 1984/85 Miner’s Strike* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012) p. 77.

and wholesale destruction, all of which were typically mixed into punk's broader palette of alienation, unemployment, and violent inner-city life to present a bleak picture of Britain." "Generally," Worley writes, "the Cold War served as an ominous backdrop to punk's sense of a world poised on the brink of chaos and collapse."⁴³² Worley's approach thus suborns a very broad political landscape to being neither a product of music, nor an inspiration for it.. Brian Cogan, in a similar study of punk politics in Britain during the first half of the 1980s, argues that the true political power of bands such as Crass and Throbbing Gristle lay in their ability to provide "a form of 'subcultural capital,'" which "allowed symbolic entrance into a social order bounded by the rules of the particular subculture." "Starting with the vague political leanings of The Clash," Cogan argues, "one could discover other, more provocative bands that gave a more articulated version of their radical politics than most punks."⁴³³ Outside of the presumed to be understood politics of 'punk,' Cogan never explains what those politics are—nor does he detail what involvement with those radical politics represented in terms of engagement outside of the subculture.

Neil Nehring, in the broadest study on musical trends during the Thatcher era only states that "Dance and rock music were interfused throughout the period and, far from surrendering to Thatcherism, steadfastly opposed it." Nehring writes, "The scenes organized around every genre of music need to be regarded in a similar light, as offering non-conformist identities on a

⁴³² Matthew Worley, "One Nation Under the Bomb: The Cold War and British Punk to 1984," *Journal for the Study of Radicalism*, Volume 5, Number 2, Fall 2011, pp. 65-83 Worley also fails to address how the music was received by the media or a general audience, thus stripping it almost completely of any real agency.

⁴³³ Brian Cogan, "Do They Owe Us a Living? Of Course They Do!: Crass, Throbbing Gristle, and Anarchy and Radicalism in Early English Punk Rock", *Journal for the Study of Radicalism*, Volume 1, Number 2, 2008, pp. 77-90.

personal level, and by extension the possibility of change and social transformation more generally.”⁴³⁴ The philosophy of the music is once again addressed, but Nehring fails to give reasons why musicians would have desired social change. He does not discuss why audiences would seek out political music, while still admitting it was ubiquitous during Thatcher’s years in office.

Political Background

The two Prime Ministers who preceded Margaret Thatcher in office were Harold Wilson and James Callaghan, Labour Party stalwarts who together served from 1973-1979, though Wilson had earlier served as Prime Minister, from 1964-1970. Under their governments, “inflation averaged 15.6 percent, and hit the astonishing figure of 24 percent in 1975.” This rampant inflation, in addition to increasing industrial unrest, culminated in the so-called “Winter Of Discontent” of 1978-79. Autoworkers, firemen, bakers, truck drivers, teachers, postmen, health-care workers, garbage men, and gravediggers all went on strike. In early 1979 Callaghan was asked, “What is your general approach, in view of the mounting chaos in the country at the moment?” The Prime Minister replied by saying, “Well, that’s a judgment that you are making. I promise you that if you look at it from outside, and perhaps you’re taking rather a parochial view at the moment, I don’t think that other people in the world would share the view that there is mounting chaos.”⁴³⁵ However, chaos was indeed mounting, and Callaghan’s failure to bring about, “the end of the militant trade unionism that had wrecked the economy,” wrote Nigel

⁴³⁴ Neil Nehring, “Everyone’s Given Up and Just Wants to Go Dancing: From Punk to Rave in the Thatcher Era”, *Popular Music and Society* Vol. 30, No. 1, February 2007, pp. 1–18.

⁴³⁵ “Jim Callaghan: A Life In Quotes”, *BBC News*, March 26, 2005.

Lawson. It “played a major part in driving [his] government from office.”⁴³⁶ As John Campbell has chronicled in his two-volume biography of Margaret Thatcher, “public tolerance of the assumption that the country could only be governed with the consent of the unions—the conventional wisdom of the past four decades—had finally snapped.”⁴³⁷ Callaghan’s Labour government quickly caved to meet union demands for higher wages and for the first time since 1924 a government was voted out by the House of Commons, as the Labour party lost their vote of confidence and a general election was called.

Margaret Thatcher had become the Conservative party leader and Leader of the Opposition on February 11, 1975. In his extensive study on Thatcher as an opposition leader, Philip Norton has pointed out that “She neither forged a clear philosophy nor established strong and consistent electoral support for her beliefs and her party.” Norton writes, “what delivered victory to the Conservative party in 1979 was the Winter of Discontent.”⁴³⁸ Thatcher echoed this thinking herself, saying that by the time Labour lost its vote of confidence, “we had a fight on

⁴³⁶ Nigel Lawson, *The View From No. 11* (London: Bantam Press, 1992), p. 161. Lawson served in various roles under the Thatcher Government, beginning as Financial Secretary to the Treasury, moving to Secretary of State For Energy in 1981, and becoming Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1983. His memoir provides an exhaustive portrait of the Thatcher years.

⁴³⁷ John Campbell, *Margaret Thatcher Volume 2: The Iron Lady* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2003), p. 6.

⁴³⁸ Philip Norton, “Margaret Thatcher: 1975-79” in Timothy Heppell ed. *Leaders of the Opposition: From Churchill to Cameron* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 97-98. Much of the scholarship on Thatcher begins with her elevation to the Premiership in 1979, glossing over her time as Leader of the Opposition for many of the reasons Norton provides. Had Callaghan called an election in 1978, Norton posits, Thatcher would likely have gone down in history as nothing more than an “also-ran.” How Thatcher would manage to solve the problems of the industrial sector and pull Britain out of economic recession were not entirely clear. Thatcherism as an economic philosophy was no more developed in 1979 than it was a political philosophy. Interestingly James Callaghan had responded to Britain’s deepening economic recession by adopting deflationary policies and cuts in public expenditure, which anticipated the monetarism that Margaret Thatcher would bring to Downing Street after 1979, albeit in a much more sustained, unrelenting, fashion.

our hands, of course; but barring accidents it was a fight we should be able to win.” Thatcher believed that the Winter of Discontent had led the public to believe that “socialists everywhere had run out of steam and ideas.”⁴³⁹ Thatcher did not write that the British public voted for her or her policies, but rather that they voted Conservative because Labour had failed so resolutely. Even upon her election to the Premiership, Thatcher’s closest advisors were not entirely confident that she would be successful as Prime Minister. Thatcher’s advisor John Hoskyns wrote in his diary following her victory, “I somehow could not get excited... because I knew the chances of the new government achieving anything where so many had failed were small.”⁴⁴⁰ In the immediate aftermath of the 1979 election it appeared Hoskyns might be right. Within a year of her election, the Conservative Party’s popularity was flagging and an opinion poll on March 10, 1980 conducted by *The Evening Standard* suggested that six out of ten Londoners were dissatisfied with Margaret Thatcher’s Conservative government.⁴⁴¹ On March 22, The Jam’s “Going Underground” entered the Official Pop Charts at number one, where it would remain for three weeks.⁴⁴²

The Beginnings of a Musical Opposition

Paul Weller’s songwriting had been political from the earliest days of The Jam, as evidenced by their first album, ‘In The City’, released in 1977. As Caroline Coon—the London

⁴³⁹ Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), p. 4.

⁴⁴⁰ John Hoskyns quoted in Richard Vinen, *Thatcher’s Britain: The Politics and Social Upheaval of the Thatcher Era* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2009), p. 100.

⁴⁴¹ “Poll Gives Labour Lead in Britain,” *Evening Standard*, March 11, 1980, p.00.

⁴⁴² “Official Charts Company, “All the Number One Singles, 1981”, [http://www.officialcharts.com/all-the-number-ones-singles-list/_/1980/].

artist, journalist, and political activist—chronicled in her 1977 account of the burgeoning new wave punk rock movement, “They started playing after school in their local pub. In May 1976, Joe Strummer said they were great. In August they parked their gig van by Soho market... [and] they startled Saturday afternoon shoppers with a fast, raw, energetic blast of sixties R&B. By March, 1977, they were playing original songs written by Weller.”⁴⁴³ The tenth track on that first album of original material, released on May 20, 1977, “Time For Truth,” bemoaned the decline of the British Empire and expressed disparaging sentiments about then Prime Minister James Callaghan. Weller questioned, “Whatever happened to the great Empire,” saying, “I think it's time for truth, and the truth is you lost, Uncle Jimmy.”⁴⁴⁴ Weller’s lyrics however, spoke of an idealized England, much more in the style of his favorite songwriter Ray Davies of The Kinks than The Sex Pistols or The Clash.⁴⁴⁵ As the Margaret Thatcher government made its first steps toward solving the economic problems facing Britain, it moved further from Weller’s idealized vision, and “Going Underground” speaks to this transition. “You choose your leaders and place your trust, as their lies put you down and their promises rust,” Weller sings, predicting, “you'll see kidney machines replaced by rockets and guns, and the public wants what the public gets, but I don't get what this society wants, I'm going underground.”⁴⁴⁶ Weller sang of a rejection of politicians and the political system, but as the Thatcher era moved forward, Weller, and other musicians would ultimately reintegrate into the fabric of that same political system.

⁴⁴³ Caroline Coon, *1988: The New Wave Punk Rock Explosion* (New York: Hawthorne Books, 1977).

⁴⁴⁴ The Jam “Time For Truth”.

⁴⁴⁵ “The Paul Weller Interview”, Chris Salewicz, *The Face*, May 1982.

⁴⁴⁶ The Jam, “Going Underground”.

In an interview in *Smash Hits* prior to the release of “Going Underground” Weller lamented, “I’m sitting there in front of the TV moaning on about world politics... maybe I’m only an armchair radical. But every night I watch the news and I get so frustrated. I write it all down.”⁴⁴⁷ Contemporaries of The Jam also expressed similar frustration with the news and popular media. On their debut album *Pink Flag*, also released in 1977, the English post-punk band Wire included similar songs, entitled “Reuters” and “Ex-Lion Tamer.” In “Ex-Lion Tamer,” vocalist Colin Newman sings, “Next week will solve your problems, but now, fish fingers all in a line, and all the milk bottles stand empty, stay glued to your T.V. set.”⁴⁴⁸ Again, Newman’s portrait was one of Britain in decline; a Britain where nothing could be done to stop that decline, other than watch the news as it continued. The members of Wire became so frustrated by the changes occurring in England that by November, 1986 they had chosen to record in Berlin, because as Newman later remembered, “London was Thatcher. There was a lot about London in the 80s that wasn’t very attractive.”⁴⁴⁹ Politically engaged and politically frustrated, in his songwriting Weller increasingly began to include his sentiments about Britain and its current government. As Thatcher and the Conservatives became more aggressive with their policies Weller’s songwriting would follow suit, and other artists would begin appearing in the charts with distinctly anti-Thatcher songs.

Through the remainder of 1980, the policies of the Thatcher government continued to develop as the Conservatives began to impose the economic philosophy of Thatcherism on the

⁴⁴⁷ “Riding Waves and Setting Standards”, *Smash Hits*, March 6, 1980.

⁴⁴⁸ Wire, “Ex-Lion Tamer”.

⁴⁴⁹ Colin Newman quoted in Wilson Neate, *Read and Burn: A Book About Wire* (London, Jawbone Press, 2012), p. 224.

British economy and workforce. However, two successive quarters of economic contraction had forced Britain into recession for the second time in five years.⁴⁵⁰ By the end of the year a MORI poll showed Labour at 56 percent with a 24-point lead over the Conservatives. Thatcher's early struggle with the economy was due, in part, to the fact that the initial "tight money policy adopted to battle inflation bankrupted small firms and increased unemployment." Nevertheless, it remained Thatcher's policy "to adhere to strict economic principles." Thatcher's primary goal of privatization, which she construed to promote. "in terms of a revolutionary (or at least radical) transformation of national life, remained at the forefront."⁴⁵¹ As Thatcher would write in her memoirs, "No theory of government was ever given a fairer test or a more prolonged experiment in a democratic country than democratic socialism received in Britain. Yet it was a miserable failure in every respect. Far from reversing the decline of Britain vis-à-vis its main industrial competitors, Thatcher's policy accelerated it."⁴⁵²

On March 16, 1981, The House of Commons approved Thatcher's new austerity budget despite 30 Conservative party members voting against the bill or abstaining. Official government statistics published just six days later put unemployment in Great Britain at 2,400,000, around 10 percent of the workforce.⁴⁵³ In 1981, 365 economists signed a letter to the *Times* which argued

⁴⁵⁰ "UK GDP since 1955" *The Guardian*, November 25, 2009.

⁴⁵¹ Duane Windsor, "Reprivatizing Britain: Thatcherism and Its Results" in Stanislao Pugliese ed. *The Political Legacy of Margaret Thatcher* (London: Politico's, 2003), p. 124. On coming to power, the Conservatives followed a policy of Monetarism (similar to the Callaghan government) – seeking to control the money supply in order to control inflation. This involved higher interest rates, and higher taxes. The policy reduced inflation from over 20% to 5%, but at the cost of a deep recession and unemployment rising to over 3 million.

⁴⁵² Thatcher, *Downing Street Years*, p. 4.

⁴⁵³ "Move to Halt Race Riots in Britain", *New Sunday Times*, March 22, 1981.

that the government should reverse its economic policy and seek an end to the recession. On October 17, 1981, Thatcher stood behind her policy. She addressed the Conservative Party Conference: “To those waiting with bated breath for that favorite media catchphrase, the U-turn, I have only one thing to say: You turn if you want to. The lady’s not for turning!”⁴⁵⁴ Increased frustration with the rising unemployment rate in urban areas, compounded with existing racial tensions resulted in the race riots of spring and summer of 1981.⁴⁵⁵

On July 16, Mr. Jim Lester, a Conservative MP, discussed shifts in the style of popular music, seeing them as indicators of larger social and political trends, “The environment has changed from that of the 1960s, when young people listened to the Beach Boys and the Beatles and danced to such songs as "Glad All Over" and "All You Need is Love.” The present generation of punks and skinheads have adopted the culture of shock and negativism,” Lester bemoaned, “The music to which they listen at mind-blowing volume is described as "heavy metal", and the power today is big boot power.” He then described the reasons he believed this negativity was so popular, in an attempt to explain the major rioting that had taken place only five days earlier in Brixton, “I believe that there are three major reasons for the rock bottom sense of feeling among many young people. They have no place in the family. They have no

⁴⁵⁴ Margaret Thatcher, “Speech to Conservative Party Conference ('the lady's not for turning') [“The Reason Why”]” [<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104431>].

⁴⁵⁵ The 1982 inquiry by Lord Leslie Scarman into the Brixton Riots blamed "racial disadvantage that is a fact of British life.” He also advised the government to end that racial disadvantage and tackle the disproportionately high level of unemployment among young black men - as high as 50% in Brixton. [<http://www.theguardian.com/society/1999/feb/17/guardiansocietysupplement4>].

place in the community. They have no work. The combination of those three alienate them from our society and values.”⁴⁵⁶

While Lester was speaking to the House of Commons and Brixton was rioting, “Ghost Town” by The Specials held the number one spot in the pop charts—where it stayed for three weeks.⁴⁵⁷ Though the musical style of The Specials had little in common with that of Paul Weller and The Jam, they were a deeply politically conscious group. In an interview given in August 1981, Neville Staples, the Specials’ lead singer said, “It’s very depressing in England now, and everyone is saying there’s more of this to come and worse.” Terry Hall, another vocalist with band agreed, adding, “Our government leaders aren’t interested in knowing the way people feel. If they were, they’d just resign, because they aren’t helping anybody. The kids can’t go to the Prime Minister and say, look, ‘we are unemployed, what are you going to do to help us?’ There’s no way they can approach people like that.”⁴⁵⁸

Hall’s comments throw into sharp relief the perceived disconnect, on the part of musicians, between those with political power and those without. Hall’s assertion, that members of the government were unapproachable and unconcerned with the problems facing British youth jars with Lester’s comments to the House of Commons, in which he clearly acknowledged that a problem existed. That Lester chose to cite the way music had changed over the course of three decades did, however, demonstrate a growing sense among politicians that music had political force, which Jocelyn Cadbury would also note less than a year later. In making a choice to cite

⁴⁵⁶HC Deb, 16 July 1981, vol. 8 [cc1475-503].

⁴⁵⁷ “Official Charts Company, “All the Number One Singles, 1981”, [http://www.officialcharts.com/all-the-number-ones-singles-list/_/1981/].

⁴⁵⁸ “The Pop Life”, *New York Times*, August 12, 1981.

songs rather than statistics, Lester ascribed a power to music: the ability to bring into focus particular issues, and make voices heard “at a mind-blowing volume.”⁴⁵⁹ This apparent growing political concern and awareness aside, the year-end MORI poll showed that Margaret Thatcher had become the most unpopular postwar British prime minister.⁴⁶⁰ The events of the next year, however, would alter the musical and political landscape, as Thatcher would have her greatest success ever, resulting in the true polarization of her musical opposition.

The Falklands

1982 began in much the same way as the previous years of Margaret Thatcher’s Premiership. Statistics published on January 26 put unemployment at over three million, and on February 13, The Jam were back at number one, with their single “Town Called Malice.”⁴⁶¹ When pressed to explain why he believed in making political statements through his music, Paul Weller responded, “The worst thing is when people feel they’re powerless to do anything about it, and they think, ‘Fuck it: I might as well have a good time if I can’t change it.’” To me all those pop groups are just feeding them that – that’s morally wrong as well as dangerous.”⁴⁶² Weller’s comments demonstrated his belief that music could achieve political change, but also his sense that most pop groups failed to recognize this, and thus produced music that had the opposite of its intended effect. In “Town Called Malice,” Weller once again sketched an image of a declining Britain: “Struggle after struggle, year after year. The atmosphere’s a fine blend of

⁴⁵⁹ HC Deb, 16 July 1981, vol. 8 [cc1475-503].

⁴⁶⁰ [<http://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/researcharchive/3158/Margaret-Thatcher-19252013.aspx>].

⁴⁶¹ “Official Charts Company, “All the Number One Singles, 1982”, [http://www.officialcharts.com/all-the-number-ones-singles-list/_/1982/].

⁴⁶² “The Paul Weller Interview”, Chris Salewicz, *The Face*, May 1982.

ice, I'm almost stone cold dead, in a town called malice.” Weller’s bitter musical portrait depicted a nation that seemed to have lost what he had earlier called the great empire, and replaced it with a place where “A whole street's belief in Sunday's roast beef gets dashed against the Co-op.”⁴⁶³

Weller’s reference to what he perceived as Thatcher’s dismantling of socialist institutions, such as the selling of Council Houses under the Right To Buy scheme, which by 1982 had resulted in the sale of some 200,000 properties, made a clear statement about his belief in socialism.⁴⁶⁴ Weller’s attack on Thatcher’s Britain was parodied by other musical groups, most notably Mark E. Smith and The Fall who introduced live performances in 1982 with a song, entitled “A Town Called Crappy,” in which Smith sings, “Got to get out of that city called Crappy, now I don't like Maggie, all the money I made out of mods has made me feel guilty, a town called Crappy.”⁴⁶⁵ While Smith’s parody implies that it was widely understood that Weller’s song was a criticism of Thatcher’s Britain, he also clearly found Weller’s approach to be lacking in pointed criticism. However, the type of criticism Smith may have wanted would be heard within the next year as Margaret Thatcher began to do everything within her power to convince the British people how powerful Great Britain still was.

With the outbreak of “a most improbable war... on a tiny group of rocks in the South Atlantic called the Falkland Islands,” Margaret Thatcher’s government, and her career as Prime

⁴⁶³ The Jam, “Town called Malice”.

⁴⁶⁴ Thatcher Years In Graphics [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in_pictures/4446012.stm].

⁴⁶⁵ Released on The Fall record Room To Live, Castle/Sanctuary CMRCD1135; 20 June 2005 (live version recorded at Hammersmith Palais, London; 25 March 1982). In his notes accompanying the 2005 expanded version of Room To Live Daryl Easlea writes: "The intro... showed again Smith's dalliance with topicality, as the title was a swipe at the UK's then-no.1 single, 'A Town Called Malice' by The Jam.

Minister were rescued.⁴⁶⁶ From the eighteenth century the Falklands, had been a British territory and in 1982 were home to eighteen hundred British subjects. The islands lay 300 miles off the coast of Argentina, and the Argentine government had long asserted a competing claim of ownership over them. In 1982 Argentina was in the hands of a military junta, and its leader Gen. Leopoldo Galtieri believed that he might be able to legitimate his government by taking back the islands with what looked to be any easy victory over Britain, and more importantly perceived British ‘imperialism’. On April 2, Argentine troops invaded the Falklands and overwhelmed the British detachment. Following an uproar in the British Government with condemnations of the Argentine action coming from across the political spectrum, on April 5, “a task force sailed for the Falklands, with aircraft carriers *Hermes* and *Invincible* joined by a fleet of smaller assault ships destroyers and supply craft.”⁴⁶⁷ Of chief importance for Thatcher was that the British hold the moral and legal high ground throughout the operation. With solid footing in international law secured by an April 3 United Nations declaration denouncing the Argentine action, an April 10 European Union imposition of trade sanctions on Argentina, and the support of United States satellite information, Thatcher proceeded to take back the Falklands over the next three months. By June 14, the islands were securely returned to British hands.

At a cost of 236 British and 750 Argentine lives, Margaret Thatcher had won her improbable war, and transformed her image in the eyes of the British people. In her memoirs Thatcher remembered, “how great the burden was which had been lifted from my shoulders.”⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶⁶ Hitchcock, *The Struggle for Europe*, p. 321.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 322.

⁴⁶⁸ Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc. 1993), 235.

For the first time in her Premiership, Thatcher had achieved great success, and “the Falklands campaign became synonymous with national pride and resilience.”⁴⁶⁹

Just two days after the task force was launched on April 7, however, the Falklands question divided Parliament. Tony Benn, a Labour MP said to the House of Commons, “The task force involves enormous risks, it will cost this country a far greater humiliation than we have already suffered, and, if history repeats itself, it will cost the Prime Minister her position. The attempt will fail.”⁴⁷⁰ However, after the successful recapture of the Falklands, Benn recorded in his diary, “I feel somehow that we are at a real turning point in politics. The military victory in the Falklands War, Thatcher’s strength, and the counterattack of the right of the Labour Party on the left...make me feel more than ever before that I need to pause and think and work out a new strategy.”⁴⁷¹ Benn believed that victory in the Falklands had strengthened Thatcher’s position as the leader of her party, while also causing further turmoil in an already bitterly divided Labour party. A June 16 editorial in *The Guardian* reflected this view:

“The Prime Minister's standing on VF Day will not be her standing on Polling Day. Nevertheless, the Ten Weeks War has done wonders for her. Last year she was bottom of the pops: the ‘worst Prime Minister’ said 48 per cent of Gallup respondents, 12 per cent worse than Neville Chamberlain. When she arrived at Blackpool for her party conference last autumn she opened *The Times* and read ‘The Most Unpopular Prime Minister Since Polls Began.’”

⁴⁶⁹ Klaus Dodds, *Pink Ice: Britain and the South Atlantic Empire* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 174.

⁴⁷⁰ “Falkland Islands”, Hansard, HC Deb, 07 April 1982, vol. 21 [cc959-1052].

⁴⁷¹ Tony Benn, *The Benn Diaries: 1940-1990* (London, Arrow, 2005), p. 532.

If the General Election were to be held the next day, the newspaper thought, “She would be queen of all.”⁴⁷² The truth of the matter was, however, that Thatcher’s approval rating still only managed to reach 40 percent.⁴⁷³

A Deepening Musical Response

Popular musical responses did not approve of Thatcher’s conduct during the war. Both The Exploited and Crass produced explicit criticisms of the war, targeting Thatcher’s handling of the conflict and the motives behind it. The Exploited’s “Let’s Start a War (Said Maggie One Day)” was a blatant accusation that Thatcher started the Falklands conflict in order to distract attention from the unemployment crisis. Moreover, it questions patriotic heroism, declaring, “You fight for your country. You die for their gain”⁴⁷⁴ Crass’s vitriolic songs “Sheep Farming in the Falklands” and “How Does it Feel to be the Mother of a Thousand Dead?” blamed Thatcher for taking the nation to war for personal political gain. “Sheep Farming” puts an imperialist label on Thatcher’s conduct of the war: “Friggin’ in the riggin’, another imperialist farce, another page of British History to wipe the national arse.” Crass calls the British people who were taken in by Mrs. Thatcher’s War “sheep” and “Brit-wit[s], hypocrite[s],” concluding that “the bulldog turned round and crapped in our eyes.”⁴⁷⁵ These songs, by fringe punk bands, with a harsh and angry

⁴⁷² “Patriotism has worked its old magic”, *The Guardian*, June 16, 1982.

⁴⁷³ [<http://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/researcharchive/3158/Margaret-Thatcher-19252013.aspx>.]

⁴⁷⁴ The Exploited, “Let’s Start a War (Said Maggie One Day)”.

⁴⁷⁵ Crass, “Sheep Farming in the Falklands”.

sound, were not as hugely popular with mainstream listeners, though “How Does It Feel” topped the Independent Charts⁴⁷⁶ on November 6, 1982, and remained there for three weeks.⁴⁷⁷

The Falklands War brought opposition music into sharper focus for many government officials. Members of Parliament even began referencing specific albums in the House of Commons, rather than simply referring to general movements such as ‘punk’ as they had previously done. Opposition ministers even began deploying opposition music in support of their own position. On October 21, 1982, Ray Powell, a Labour MP for Ogmores asked in the House Of Commons, “Is the Prime Minister satisfied with the disruption that her miserable Ministers, who are acting against the country... Will she take time off today to listen to the new record "How does it feel to be the mother of 1,000 dead?"⁴⁷⁸ A *Times* editorial discussing the speech described the ensuing scene, in which, “philistines on both sides of the House consulted one another anxiously as to whether it was they or Mr. Powell who was out of touch.”⁴⁷⁹ In an open letter published in the weekly music paper *Sounds*, Crass’s lead singer Penny Rimbaud wrote:

“I have written this letter to ask you if you are doing enough, or indeed anything to oppose this slow, but inevitable, drift towards total war. Music is a powerful tool through which radical ideas have been expressed since time immemorial, yet at a time when the world is threatened almost daily with annihilation, rock n’roll

⁴⁷⁶ Iain McNay of Cherry Red first suggested to the weekly trade paper *Record Business* the idea of an independent record chart, and the first independent chart appeared in 1980, published in *Record Week*, and later licensed to *Sounds*. The definition of whether or not a single was “indie” had depended on the distribution channel by which it was shipped. The record needed to be delivered by a distribution service that was independent of the four major record companies: EMI, Sony Music Entertainment, Warner Music Group, and Universal Music Group.

⁴⁷⁷ Barry Lazell, *Indie Hits: 1980-1989: The Complete U.K. Independent Charts (Singles and Albums)* (London: Cherry Red, 1997).

⁴⁷⁸ HC Deb, 21 October 1982, vol. 29, [cols. 498-502].

⁴⁷⁹ “Uproar Cancelled Due to Ideological Confusion” *The Times*, October 22, 1982.

appears to have increasingly concentrated on shallow fun and cretinous escapism.⁴⁸⁰

Though the music Rimbaud and Crass produced was never as popular or successful as that produced by Paul Weller and The Jam, the similarity in their outlook on the power of music and its failure to realize its own potential is striking. While not all musicians were taking notice of their ability to exert political power through music, British politicians did, especially in the months following the Falklands War. It would be Thatcher's next great fight—against the National Union of Mine Workers (NUM)—that would bring musicians with similar views together, in support of a common cause.

The Miners Strike 1984-85

On June 9, 1983, in her second general election, Margaret Thatcher won a landslide victory over Michael Foot, who led a highly divided and weakened Labour Party that earned only 28 percent of the vote. She took a majority of 144 seats, the largest Conservative majority since 1935.⁴⁸¹ Thatcher now had an opportunity to strike at the trade unions, which she had long considered, “to be one of the chief causes of the British disease,” causing the two decades long pattern of strikes and industrial unrest that had plagued the country.⁴⁸² Thatcher viewed the opposition as “...revolutionaries who sought to impose a Marxist system on Britain whatever the means and whatever the cost.”⁴⁸³ Thatcher may not have been entirely incorrect. Arthur Scargill, the president of the NUM had begun his political life as a member of the Young Communist

⁴⁸⁰ Penny Rimbaud quoted in *The Story Of Crass*.

⁴⁸¹ <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-information-office/m09.pdf>.

⁴⁸² Hitchcock, *Struggle For Europe*, p. 325.

⁴⁸³ Thatchers, *Downing Street Years*, 339.

League, and when asked how he had become a militant trade unionist in 1975 replied, “At the age of fifteen I decided that the world was wrong and I wanted to put it right, virtually overnight if possible. I was in the Young Communist League for about six or seven years and I became a member of its National Executive Committee responsible for industrial work. So that was my initial introduction into socialism and into political militancy.”⁴⁸⁴ Following an announcement in early March of 1984 by Chairman of the Coal Board, Ian MacGregor, 20 pits would close and put 20,000 miners out of work. Miners at Cortonwood colliery in Yorkshire walked out in protest at midnight on March 5. On March 12, the Miners' Strike began, pitting the NUM, led by Scargill against the Thatcher government. More than half of the 187,000 members of the NUM joined the strike.

As Andrew J. Richards has observed, a large-scale strike launched in protest of job cuts was unusual for 1984. In Britain, he notes, trade unions had traditionally launched strikes for claims on wage rises and rights at work, but strikes in defense of jobs had been very rare.⁴⁸⁵ However, Ian McGregor observed by the time the miners were striking for their jobs, “the decline of coal had been hastened by the ever cheaper price of oil and gas.” In addition, McGregor asserted, “no matter what criteria you chose, the market for coal in the UK had declined consistently since just after the First World War...by the early 1980s, with billions spent on new technology, we had a work force of 200,000 and a demand for little more than 100 million tons a year,” down from 300 million in 1923.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸⁴ Arthur Scargill (interview) "The New Unionism", *New Left Review* (July–August 1975).

⁴⁸⁵ Andrew J. Richards, *Miners on Strike: Class Solidarity and Division in Britain* (Oxford: Berg, 1997).

⁴⁸⁶ Ian McGregor, *The Enemies Within: The Story of the Miners Strike, 1984-5*, (London: Coolins, 1986), pp. 119-120.

This perceived decline did not mean that the miners would be easily beaten. Thatcher's long fight against the miners further galvanized the politics of those already disillusioned by the state of her Britain and the direction in which she was taking the country. The Miner's Strike of 1984-85 brought musicians together in support of a common cause and inspired artists who would begin leading the musical opposition against Thatcher. Paul Weller, with his new band The Style Council, was famously involved with benefit concerts for the striking miners. He performed alongside pop acts he had previously deemed apathetic, such as Wham!. However, it was not solely established popular acts that played to benefit the miners. Music that skewed well outside even the popular independent charts responded to the plight of the miners.

One of the most engaged of these acts was the industrial group Test Dept. who summed up their view in the not so succinctly titled song "Long Live British Democracy Which Flourishes and is Constantly Perfected Under the Immaculate Guidance of the Great, Honourable, Generous, and Correct Margaret Thatcher, She is the Blue Sky in the Hearts of All Nations, Our People Pay Homage and Bow in Deep Respect and Gratitude to Her, the Milk of Human Kindness." The group's socialist agenda stemmed from, as they put it, a desire to "feed off the corpse of British 'culture'... utilizing the waste of a dying civilization to create a new pure and honest music."⁴⁸⁷ In a brief, spoken-word section at the beginning of the song the band offered their position on the complacency of Britain under the Thatcher government: "We willingly take our place as subjects, stripped of the power of protest, subject to the will of the

⁴⁸⁷ Test Dept. quoted in S. Alexander Reed, *Assimilate : A Critical History of Industrial Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 150.

State. We concede our birthright to our rulers, forgetful of the struggles of those before us.”⁴⁸⁸ It was “with Test Dept. more than nearly any industrial act of the era, [that] every action was political – not merely in punkish negation, but in unambiguous partisan terms.”⁴⁸⁹ As a partisan opposition force the band stated that people have “seen what the Conservative government has done to this country and [Test. Dept.] have become increasingly relevant through that. If there had been a socialist government it would have been a completely different story.”⁴⁹⁰ Test Dept. recorded an entire album with a choir of striking miners from South Wales, entitled *Shoulder to Shoulder*, demonstrating their deep political convictions and commitment to a musical opposition.

The Redskins, a band whose rise to popularity coincided with the ongoing Miners Strike, took the opportunity during a November 1984 appearance on BBC 4’s *The Tube*, inviting a striking miner onstage in the middle of their set. The band, who released their first single in 1982 and their first record, *Neither Moscow Nor Washington*, in 1986, unlike Paul Weller, Crass, or even Test Dept., had not had a record deal prior to the years of the Thatcher government. Many of the acts that came out in support of the striking miners shared this trait. For The Redskins and other groups, the strike provided a launching point and a target for their political music.

In an interview with *Melody Maker*, Chris Dean, the Redskins lead vocalist, and *NME* journalist (under the name ‘X’) admitted, “Just because (our song) ‘Keep On Keeping On’ gets in the Top 40 Thatcher isn’t screaming pain and agony and running for nearest exit.” The

⁴⁸⁸ “Long Live British Democracy...”.

⁴⁸⁹ S. Alexander Reed, *Assimilate*, 150.

⁴⁹⁰ Test Dept. quoted in *Ibid*, 150.

Redskins thus adapted the manifesto set out by Weller and Rimbaud into a more mellow reflection: “Pop music can be pleasantly surprising, it can continue to be politically inspirational, but you don’t think ‘Rock ‘n’ roll’ is the central arena political debate or central agent change.” For Dean, as he had made clear in an earlier *Melody Maker* interview, it would have been antithetical to not include politics in music: “The thing is, The Redskins is a band, and the people in it happen to be very political animals, and we can’t escape that. We are outside, or whatever. It would be completely dishonest in our case to get up onstage and not use that platform.”⁴⁹¹ Dean recalled playing a concert with Joe Strummer, saying “[Strummer] always had very soggy politics. When we played with him at Brixton I said to him, ‘You should say something about the miners strike’ and he was only half there. He was going, ‘They’ve got a bit trouble there at the moment, haven’t they, there’s something blowing up’... and he didn’t seem to latch on to it.”⁴⁹² Strummer represented something of punk music’s old guard, in which it was important to be ‘political’, in an anti-establishment sense, but perhaps not pointed. Dean’s comment also falls in line with what Mark E. Smith and The Fall seemed to be saying earlier with their parody of The Jam.

For many musicians the Miners Strike would mark the transition to the understanding Dean and his band had already reached—that artists needed to have reasonable expectations regarding what their music could achieve. Coupled with this realization, the Miners Strike would also inspire other new political musicians, notably Billy Bragg as and The Housemartins, whose approach to politics and music would become markedly different as Thatcher’s years in power

⁴⁹¹ Adam Sweeting, “The Redskins: Keeping On And On” *Melody Maker*, February 11, 1984.

⁴⁹² “Red On Arrival: The Redskins” *Melody Maker*, December 8, 1984.

continued. As Bragg later wrote in his autobiography, “the 1984 Miner’s Strike provided me with my political education, teaching me to think in an ideological way, encouraging activism and offering me an alternative history of Britain.”⁴⁹³ Though they achieved popular chart success only after the Miner’s Strike had ended The Housemartins, “were most committed to making sure the consequences of the now long finished miners’ strike were not forgotten.”⁴⁹⁴ When asked what he would say to people who say pop and politics shouldn’t be mixed, Paul Heaton, the lead singer of the Housemartins shot back, “Fuck off.”⁴⁹⁵ Heaton, much like Chris Dean of the Redskins firmly believed, “pop politics don’t change votes,” but he tempered his view in saying, “but I think it does breed political discontent.”⁴⁹⁶ Political discontent was exactly what the Labour Party was hoping to target, as they teamed with musicians in order to reach young voters in the months before the June 11, 1987 General Election.

Music and Politics Together: Red Wedge

As the Miners Strike came to a close, Labour politicians had taken notice of the increasing number of political acts on the music scene and began discussing how to convert this anti-Thatcher sentiment into potential Labour party votes in the next General Election. Minutes from Labour Party Meetings as early as 1983-84, following Labour’s ignominious defeat in the

⁴⁹³ Billy Bragg, *The Progressive Patriot: A Search for Belonging* (London: Bantam Press, 2006), p. 3.

⁴⁹⁴ Nick Swift, *The Housemartins: Now That’s What I Call Quite Good, The Authorized Autobiography* (Books Sales Limited, 1988), p. 43.

⁴⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 43.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 46.

1983 General Election reflect a growing concern that “young people had not voted for the party in sufficient numbers at the last election.”⁴⁹⁷

The British General Election of June 11, 1987 would thus pit Thatcher—bolstered by her victories in the Falklands and over the miners—against a Labour Party under the leadership of Neil Kinnock. The Labour Party was still struggling to articulate a more centrist political philosophy in order to shift away from the left leaning manifesto of 1983. Kinnock’s first task had been to re-unite his party, bringing the hard left elements of the party back to a center-left position. In his first speech as leader of the Labour Party, Kinnock, told the Labour Conference, “Remember how each and every one of you felt on that dreadful morning of 10th June and think to yourselves ‘9th June 1983—never, ever again will we experience that!’”⁴⁹⁸ The Labour Party therefore pursued a strategy of reaching out to young and first time voters by using the music festivals and pop concerts they were already so keen on attending. In order to attract these votes the party tapped several prominent musicians to form a collective in the mold of Rock Against Racism or Live Aid. These musicians toured the country playing concerts that would double as Labour Party rallies. The 1984-85 Labour Party minutes detail the initial stages of the organizing effort where, “there was to be a tour...any profits from the tour would be for the benefit of the party. Each performance would display prominently a Labour Party banner, and Labour’s charter for youth was printed on the back of the tour posters. Members would be very welcome at each concert. The tour would be advertised at schools and colleges.”⁴⁹⁹ On the surface, Red Wedge, as

⁴⁹⁷ Labour Party Minutes [SC83-84]

⁴⁹⁸ Neil Kinnock quoted in Martin Westlake, *Kinnock* (New York: Brown Book Group, 2001).

⁴⁹⁹ Labour Party Papers, [PM84-85]

the collective became known, seemed to be little more than a front for Labour politicians to attempt to merge their party platform with what was popular amongst their young constituents. However, the musicians involved with Red Wedge believed they were doing more than fronting for a political party. They saw Labour as an alternative to the Conservatives, but the Labour Party's platform was not necessarily aligned with their views.

In order to understand the Red Wedge in its proper context, it is vital first to understand how both the Labour Party and the Conservative Party viewed the relationship between popular music and politics. Quoted in *The Times*, Lynne Franks, then a Labour PR agent said, "The Labour Party reached the Eighties and discovered pop as a way of reaching young voters of the future."⁵⁰⁰ The young voters of the future to which Franks referred would have been born in and after 1965, and they had thus come of age musically in a pop-oriented and post-Beatles world. They were the first generation of voters who had been able to buy music on compact discs and cassette tapes rather than records. They knew music as a product that could be tightly packaged, easily transported, and increasingly commoditized, which was reflected in the way Red Wedge sought to present the politics of the Labour Party. In *The Guardian*, Anna Joy David—who would later become a potential party candidate for Labour—the political coordinator of Red Wedge insisted, "Most young people on the left who are political are probably active outside the organized structures of the Labour Party,"⁵⁰¹ Red Wedge was therefore constructed as an attempt to bring young voters to the Labour Party, so that they might be taken in under its auspices. The thinking of the party could be easily broken down: bring young voters together within the setting

⁵⁰⁰ *The Times* (London), November 18, 1986.

⁵⁰¹ *The Guardian*, November 17, 1987.

of a pop concert, introduce them to the Labour Party ideology, and inform them in such a way that they would no longer operate on the political margins, but would hopefully take an active role and vote in the General Election of 1987. In the run-up to the election, Sally Morgan, the coordinator for Labour's youth campaign explained, "Having the patronage of Billy Bragg, Paul Weller and Jerry Dammers, has been an enormous boost to our campaign." "Red Wedge," she said, "has enabled us to reach lots of young people who wouldn't otherwise be interested in politics."⁵⁰² Dammers was a very important addition for Red Wedge, as his image as the musician behind the song "Free Nelson Mandela" lent credibility to the effort.

The musicians involved with Red Wedge viewed their role differently than both the party with which they were associated and the party that was the object of their political attack. The collective described itself as an organization that had been set up by various artists, musicians, young actors, and writers. Within this group, "each has differing political views but all are totally committed to the same thing—the creation of a fairer, saner society which benefits all and not just a few." Red Wedge was attempting to open up politics to young people by giving them a platform for voicing their opinions and also tacitly insuring these opinions would be suborned and channeled into votes for Labour. While it was unclear how this alternative political effort would manifest itself, the implementation of Red Wedge was a major step for the Labour Party to take in recognizing they could not remain disassociated from young voters.

The Conservative Party initially responded to the formation of Red Wedge by attempting to encourage stars of similar stature to those on the side of the Labour to campaign on their behalf. However, *The Times* reported in November of 1986, "Finding the right stars for the Tory

⁵⁰² *The Times* (London), November 18, 1986.

Party has not been easy. As Mr. John Biffen told friends at this year's party conference: 'Central Office has been casting about like crazy for some top-heavy coal miner's daughter to take on Billy Bragg.'⁵⁰³ The perhaps pithy reference to a Loretta Lynn song from 1969 may provide some indication of why pop stars were unwilling to align themselves with the Conservatives. Once again, Biffen's nearly twenty year old cultural reference demonstrated how out of touch the Conservatives were with the British public and culture. The Conservatives seemed to have very little sense of what would attract young voters. "The signal failure of the Tory party youth committee in being able to recruit anybody with any sort of credibility among the young indicates just how out of touch the government is with this spirit of idealism," read an editorial in *The Sunday Times*. The paper continued, "The name by which the new group is known within Conservative Central Office, the Yup committee, in itself suggests a frantic pursuit of the genus yuppie, a creature virulent in the imaginations of marketing executives and some Fleet Street editors, but, in truth, as chimerical as the unicorn."⁵⁰⁴

Faced with a paucity of stars willing to come out for their party values, the Conservatives quickly changed their approach, offering instead an attack on Red Wedge. The Conservative party's deputy chairman, Peter Morrison, in charge of the party's approach to the youth vote, offered the final word on the Conservative position toward young voters: "We believe strongly that they're go-ahead, sensible and want the challenges and aspirations everyone else wants. In no sense are we going to patronize them with Red Wedge and that sort of thing. That says to

⁵⁰³ *The Times* (London), November 6, 1986.

⁵⁰⁴ *The Sunday Times* (London), November 9, 1986.

them, there are certain issues you're too young to understand.”⁵⁰⁵ Then, on March 25, in what was at best, a bizarre attempt to gain youth support in the face of Labour and Red Wedge, Margaret Thatcher interviewed with *Smash Hits* magazine. The article began with saying, “Margaret Thatcher is a serious politician and she wants your vote.” Prior to the actual text of the interview the magazine commented on the oddity of the situation:

“So what, might you ask, is Mrs. Thatcher doing talking to *Smash Hits*? Simple, really: you see, pop goats, she wants you, the youth of the nation, batting on her team. Fancy that. So here we are, me, Mrs. T and a couple of "helpers" – a young press officer to lend support on taxing youth-oriented questions, and a bloke with an impressive tape recording machine to record the conversation for posterity.”

The presence of the young press-officer once again belies the degree to which Thatcher and the Conservatives were removed from the current cultural and social conditions in Britain.

When interviewed by the BBC in 1986, Paul Weller commented on his involvement in Red Wedge: “I’ve got a good opportunity to express my feelings, and that’s why I do it.” He continued, “If I was an author, I wouldn’t get questioned so much about ‘is this right’ ... it’s only because I’m working within pop music that people question it.”⁵⁰⁶ In an interview in July, 1987, Billy Bragg reflected on his reasons for joining Red Wedge. He lamented, “These things I believed in passionately—had come to nothing...and the conclusion I reached was that it was because they operated in a vacuum.” Bragg believed, “Every artist who writes something, let's not even use the word 'political,' but some kind of social commentary, if they're worth anything as performers, they're going to look at ways to manifest that in their action.”⁵⁰⁷ For both Weller

⁵⁰⁵ *The Times* (London), May 27, 1987.

⁵⁰⁶ “The Style Council - Paul Weller Interview” BBC Newsnight, 1986.

⁵⁰⁷ *The Globe and Mail* (Canada), July 29, 1987.

and Bragg, before and after the 1987 General Election there was no reason their music could not be political. In actuality, it seemed natural to them that the music would be political. In early 1987, Weller furthered his point in an interview in *The Independent*, “We are musicians who’ve got political ideas and attitudes that we put into our work. I quite like a few older political songwriters, like Sly Stone, Curtis Mayfield, and Norman Whitfield, and you know we wear those influences very much on our sleeve.”⁵⁰⁸

On February 5, 1986, a debate took place in the House of Lords in reference to a desire to avoid politicization in education, so that one political party might not unduly influence the youth of Britain over another while they were in school. Thomas Trenchard, formerly a junior minister to the Thatcher government, said, “Of course the young at that age always want the latest trend in music. I can only tell your Lordships that they are worse, if anything, than the many examples that have been given today of written pamphlets and literature.” As a result of their musical proclivities Trenchard found the youth of Britain to be “anti-everything—monarch, police, defense, colonialism, race, sex, the law. You name it, they are ‘agin’ it.”⁵⁰⁹ Consequently, Trenchard should not have been surprised that during the 1987 General Election the youth of Britain were arrayed against Thatcher.

There were political musicians, however, who avoided joining Red Wedge because they believed it did not have the power to affect the change they wished to see in government. The Housemartins, who shared the same record label as Billy Bragg, were one such group. When asked by NME why they hadn’t joined Red Wedge their vocalist Paul Heaton responded, “I

⁵⁰⁸ John Reed, *Paul Weller: My Ever Changing Moods* (New York: Omnibus Press, 2002), p. 201.

⁵⁰⁹ HL Deb, 05 February 1986, vol. 470 [cc1168-251].

appreciate the work Red Wedge are doing. We've had meetings with them but they were unable to give us any policies. We really want to challenge them to policies; unless the musicians in Red Wedge actually come out and say they want the music business nationalised, which we most certainly do, we can't support them." Heaton continued, "It should be a proper Red Wedge, a Red Wedge which wants to do away with the Royal Family, to nationalize the music industry, to withdraw imperialism from Northern Ireland once and for all. Clear policies. But you see they're in a difficult position because they use Labour Party headquarters—which means that if there was any revolutionary input it'd probably be kicked out." Heaton concluded, "they aren't really a Wedge, they're a wodge of varying ideas, people from the Right wing of the Labour Party through to communist and revolutionary sympathisers. They need to clarify what they stand for."

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Heaton and his Housemartins band mates viewed Red Wedge as too soft to be able to manufacture any real political change, not buying into what appeared to them to be empty rhetoric. Heaton outlined, with tremendous clarity, the gaps in thinking that would prevent Red Wedge from being an effective political force. Most glaringly, they were not united behind a common political purpose. Each musician or act had a separate agenda that they might wish to promote—all fitting under the broad, unclear heading of 'anti-Conservative.' Dave Wakeling, The Beat's guitarist and singer's comment at a Red Wedge concert in 1987, illustrates the point, albeit incoherently: "The big heart of the Midlands is being strangled. Bus stop conversations between strangers are now a form of nostalgia, instead of the normal chat. Families argue more, and folk don't go for a drink after work—they drink at home instead of working. So vote

⁵¹⁰ "The Housemartins: If You Love Jesus", *NME*, December 20, 1986.

Labour.”⁵¹¹ Even Billy Bragg admitted, “The Labour Party has accepted Red Wedge without trying to control us. We're not saying the Labour Party is all wonderful, and I don't even say 'vote Labour,' I'm just asking people to think about the issues and to think about what society should be about.”⁵¹² Paul Weller similarly said, “If you ask us all questions you'll get different answers, but we all want to get rid of the Tories.”⁵¹³

Though Labour made significant gains in the 1987 election among youth voters, Red Wedge could not push them to victory over Thatcher and the Conservatives. Was Red Wedge a failure, or was it simply expected to achieve too much? Simon Frith in a profile of Tom Robinson published in *The Observer* in June 1986 quoted Robinson as saying, “stars give their fans a sense of solidarity, can boost the morale of people embattled in their daily lives. Political pop is always played to the converted.” Robinson further suggested, “both RAR and Band Aid were successful because they focused moods already there.”⁵¹⁴ The observation is astute, and gets to the heart of Red Wedge's struggle to contribute more significantly to the 1987 Labour Party campaign. What Red Wedge has tried to do was convert their individual musical audiences, who were not necessarily open to becoming members of the Labour Party, into a political audience. With time, however, opinions on the success of Red Wedge have mellowed somewhat, with Billy Bragg saying in 1996, “There was a feeling immediately afterward that we hadn't actually achieved very much, but now, in retrospect, I think we did. We hadn't set out to

⁵¹¹ *The Guardian*, June 8, 1987.

⁵¹² *Ibid.*

⁵¹³ Reed, Paul Weller, 198.

⁵¹⁴ “Tom Robinson: Staying True”, Simon Frith, *The Observer*, June 1986.

change the world, just to create some common ground between young people and the Labour Party. I think that's what we did.”⁵¹⁵

Legacy

After the 1987 General Election there was little political music to be found in either the pop charts or on the records of stalwart anti-Thatcher performers. By the end of 1988 unemployment had reached its lowest level in 8 years and on May 4, 1989, Margaret Thatcher celebrated a decade in office. In the year and half that followed, however, she was ousted by her own party and replaced by John Major on November 28, 1990. Thatcher’s political legacy was, by her own assessment, reflected in what she viewed as “a revolution of privatization, deregulation, tax-cutting, wider ownership, restoring self-reliance, building ladders out of poverty, strengthening our defenses, securing the Atlantic alliance, restoring the country’s morale and standing.”⁵¹⁶ Despite even these self-identified achievements, and despite holding the office of Prime Minister for eleven and a half years, Margaret Thatcher was never popular with the British people. On average, “her job approval rating showed that less than 40 percent of the public was satisfied with her performance—a significantly poorer rating than that enjoyed by Attlee, Churchill, Eden, Macmillan, and Wilson.”⁵¹⁷

Thatcher’s political and historical legacy continues to be played out and discussed today, as her impact as Britain’s longest serving Prime Minister of the twentieth century is still being felt. Following her death on April 8, 2013, her legacy came under both scrutiny and reflection.

⁵¹⁵ “Red Wedge”, Johnny Black, *Q*, March 1996.

⁵¹⁶ Margaret Thatcher, *The Path to Power* (New York: Harper Collins, 1995), p. 476.

⁵¹⁷ Hitchcock, *Struggle For Europe*, 331.

The London School of Economics Public Policy Group found that, “under Thatcher, Britain confronted some of the underlying structural problems in its economy—one which desperately needed both shaking and freeing up.” In doing so, however, “people lost their jobs, and some parts of the country—especially those which relied on heavy industry—have never recovered economically. Nor it seems will they ever vote Conservative again.” Thatcher’s example for future politicians, the report suggested, was that, “They should also realize that winning elections doesn’t automatically mean that they’ve united the whole country behind them: Mrs. Thatcher never managed to do both. Nor, in the end, did she convert most British people to her way of thinking.”⁵¹⁸ What then, should be made of the song “Ding Dong the Witch is Dead” from *The Wizard of Oz* appearing in the official pop charts in the week following Thatcher’s death? Writing in *The Guardian* Dorian Lynskey suggested, “It’s a one-line joke with all the subtlety of a Hitler moustache scribbled on a photograph. But it’s a provocative expression of dissent by people whose views aren’t exactly over-represented elsewhere,” continuing, “She [Thatcher] was a deliberately divisive politician who caused a great deal of suffering to sectors of society that she didn’t value and it’s absurd to insist that people should hold their tongues just because she became old and frail.” Lynskey concluded, “That just isn’t human nature and the charts, at their most interesting, reflect the messy, visceral, impulsive side of human nature.”⁵¹⁹

Did Margaret Thatcher leave a true musical legacy, or was the vehement and vitriolic musical opposition toward her merely an expansion of existing anti-authoritarian and politicized

⁵¹⁸ LSE Public Policy Group, “The Legacy of Margaret Thatcher” (London: LSE Public Policy Group).

⁵¹⁹ “Thatcher Ding Dong! chart campaign is puerile – but the best protest available”, Dorian Lynskey, *The Guardian*, April 11, 2013.

music? Had Mrs. Thatcher not gone to war for the Falklands and defeated the miners, and held office for over a decade would music have reached the point of being co-opted by the opposition in an effort to get more young people to vote? Would Britain have reached the point, as Martin Cloonan argues it did by the mid-1990s, where “the government was now seeing popular music as a part of the rebranding of the UK and whereby culture was seen as a key economic force?”⁵²⁰ A point at which Noel Gallagher (of Oasis) remembers having no regrets about coming out in support of the Tony Blair government, because, “it was a great time in history. The grip of Thatcherism was being smashed. New Labour had been brilliant in opposition. When Tony Blair spoke, his words seemed to speak to people, young people.”⁵²¹ Did the political music of the Thatcher era make all of this possible? In a sense, yes, because it was during Thatcher’s years in power that both musicians and politicians realized that they could use one another. Politicians shifted away from being wary of popular music and the insidious hold they felt it had on young people to appearing in pop music videos, as Neil Kinnock did in 1986, for Tracy Ullman’s “My Guy.” Musicians in turn moved further from a wholesale rejection of politicians the political system to a reintegration into the political mainstream. They transitioned from not trusting the government to working with politicians to put a good government in office. It was under Mrs. Thatcher that the rules of engagement between politicians and musicians were rewritten, allowing a rich cultural and political history of Margaret Thatcher’s years in office to survive.

⁵²⁰ Martin Cloonan, *Popular Music and the State in the UK: Culture Trade or Industry* (Oxon: Ashgate, 2007), p. 22.

⁵²¹ “Noel Gallagher: ‘New Labour were brilliant in opposition’”, *NME*, October 24, 2013.

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Insights into the Early 20th Century Debate Over Vivisection Via The Case of Udo J. Wile

Jacob Ziff

University of Michigan

“The stuff went into their veins; in a few days the delighted experimenters watched these beasts drag their hind legs limply after them; the palsy crept up their bodies to their front legs and shoulders - they died in a clammy, dreadful paralysis.”⁵²²

The process of obtaining cervical matter - brain tissue - is nothing short of gruesome. The shaving of the skull to produce a clear area; the odor of iodine used to clean the skin; the numbing with a local anesthetic to quell the consciousness of a dental drill boring into one's skull; the gleam of the long thin needle plunging into the opening; and finally, the slow withdrawal of the various types of brain matter and ventricular fluids.⁵²³ All conjures a visceral sensation of impersonalized science, complete with the imagery of shimmering metal and futuristic appliances. It is only natural to require consent for such an operation, by the subject or at least his family, as the removal of part of one's brain is no trivial matter. Yet, no consent of any kind was sought or provided in 1915 when Udo Wile, a young doctor and newly appointed professor of Dermatology and Syphilology at the University of Michigan, performed this exact procedure on six patients. All six patients were being cared for at Pontiac State Hospital and were paretic as a result of a syphilitic virus that had travelled to the brain, causing loss of motor

⁵²² Paul de Kruif, *Microbe Hunters*, (NY: Harvest, 1926), 182-183. hereafter “De Kruif, *Microbe Hunters*”. Here, de Kruif describes the isolating and testing on rabbits of the poison produced by the bacterium that causes diphtheria.

⁵²³ Udo J. Wile, “Experimental syphilis in the rabbit produced by the brain substance of the living paretic,” *J. Exp. Med.*, 1916, 23: 199-202 (hereafter “Wile, ‘Experimental syphilis in the rabbit’”).

functions.⁵²⁴ Udo Wile was no monster; in fact, he was a beloved professor and extraordinarily accomplished researcher who made significant contributions to Syphilology and Dermatology. So what could have driven him to perform such a heinous act?⁵²⁵ A closer look at the state of the scientific community and its values at that time provides valuable insight into why a bright young doctor would execute such an ethically irresponsible experiment.

At the turn of the 20th century, the scientific community was abuzz with fresh hopes for understanding the intricacies behind life and death. In the previous twenty years, the concept of a specific microbe causing a specific disease found a scientific foundation, and led to an explosion of new research concerning everything from causality to life-saving treatments to protective vaccinations. The allure of discovering the next great breakthrough kept the engines hot and running full speed ahead, as scientists raced to become the next Robert Koch or Louis Pasteur. Paul de Kruif illustrates the sense of purpose driving investigators, “It wasn’t a science— it was a crusade.”⁵²⁶ The opportunities were vast and the limitations few. The code of ethics established in 1847 by the American Medical Association did not address research techniques. This left researchers free reign to exercise whatever means necessary to achieve their goals—including the widespread use of live animals.⁵²⁷ De Kruif analyzes the extensive and necessary use of animals in Roux’s investigation for a cure to diphtheria. He recalls, “the hecatombs of corpses” piling up and how the, “maimings and holocausts and mistakes, [were] always the necessary

⁵²⁴ Wile, “Experimental syphilis in the rabbit” p. 200.

⁵²⁵ Harry L. Arnold, Jr., MD, “Udo Julius Wile, A.B., M.D., LL.D. (1882-1965),” *J. American Academy of Dermatology*, 1984, 10: 157-162. Hereafter “Arnold, ‘Udo Wile’”.

⁵²⁶ De Kruif, *Microbe Hunters*, p. 182.

⁵²⁷ Emily Vogul, “Perspectives on the Experimentation of Udo J. Wile: Insights into the Past and Considerations for Today,” *Michigan Journal of History*, 4, 2006.

preludes to [Roux's] triumphs."⁵²⁸ Unsurprisingly, it was not long before red flags were raised and people started asking questions about the integrity of such experiments. The dispute over the moral and ethical issues of using animals in studies erupted as vivisectionists, people in favor of the use of animals, battled anti-vivisectionists in the scientific and public realm.

Towards the latter part of the 19th century, sides formed as the antivivisectionists aligned with the American Humane Association (AHA), founded in 1877, while those in favor of the use of animals organized as the Bureau for the Protection of Medical Research (BPMR), a subsection of the American Medical Association (AMA).⁵²⁹ While the principal concern of the AHA was the cruel misuse of animals, it also forewarned the eventual dulling of a doctor's senses towards the torment of living creatures, including humans. Antivivisectionist and renowned professor of medicine at Harvard, Henry Jacob Bigelow warned, "If hospital service makes young students less tender of suffering, vivisection deadens their humanity and begets indifference to it."⁵³⁰ Antivivisectionists asserted that the constant witnessing of agony, justified in the name of science, would distort researchers and increase the chances of investigators overstepping their moral boundaries and operating on humans. In its 1899 manifesto, *Human Vivisection. A Statement and an Inquiry*, the AHA officially reiterated this concern: "To whomsoever, in the cause of Science, the agony of a dying rabbit is of no consequence, it is likely that the old or

⁵²⁸ De Kruif, *Microbe Hunters*, p.189, 192.

⁵²⁹ American Humane Association, *Human vivisection. A statement and an inquiry*. (Chicago. American Humane Association, 1899), p 22. Hereafter "AHA, *Human vivisection*".

Susan Lederer, "'The Right and Wrong of Making Experiments on Human Beings': Udo J. Wile and Syphilis," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 1984, 58, p. 389. Hereafter "Lederer, "The Right and Wrong".

⁵³⁰ Lederer, "The Right and Wrong" p. 381. Citing Albert T. Leffingwell for the original quotation, *The Vivisection Question* (Chicago: Vivisection Reform Society, 1907), p. 48.

worthless man will soon be a thing which in the cause of learning may well be sacrificed.”⁵³¹

Yet, despite the considerable dissemination of antivivisectionist propaganda, as well as the occasional newspaper stories about pets being stolen for experimental use, the AMA, specifically the BPMR, was successful in obtaining public support for continuation of research using animals; drawing attention to the availability of new treatments whose development relied on vivisection.

Riding off the recent discoveries of vaccines and treatments for multiple diseases, including rabies, diphtheria, and syphilis, vivisectionists fended off criticism in the first decade of the 20th century and continued their quest for dominance over microbes. During this time, Udo Wile graduated from Columbia University and Johns Hopkins Medical School, and he set off for Europe to do postgraduate research in the field of Syphilology.⁵³² In 1913, Wile teamed up with Berlin researchers Edmond Forster and Egon Tomaszewski to explore the presence and viability of *Spirochaeta Pallida*, the microbe that causes syphilis in the paretic nervous system.⁵³³ The notion that syphilis might be the basis for paresis, a disease caused by the breakdown of the neurological system, had been present in the scientific community for some time. Although various researchers had already performed investigation of this relation in the same year, the trio took a more radical approach to the question and sought to prove the

⁵³¹ AHA, “Human Vivisection,” quoted from Judge A. N. Waterman, cover page.

⁵³² Arnold, “Udo Wile” p. 158. De Kruif confirms that it was common for graduating american scientists to go to Europe for post-graduate research.

⁵³³ Arnold, “Udo Wile” p. 158.

microbe's existence in the *live* brain tissue of paretics. In order to acquire such proof, the group performed brain punctures on actual living patients suffering from paresis.⁵³⁴

In September of 1913, Wile reported the research findings in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. The report consisted of their empirical data, a 40% occurrence rate of the microbe in the brains, with the suggestion that the real rate was in fact 100%, along with a detailed description of how the brain tissue was extracted. "A revolving dental drill is thrust quickly through the skin and deeper tissues," explains Wile, "a few rapid revolutions of the drill in the hands of an assistant suffice to pierce the skull."⁵³⁵ Perhaps predicting controversy over their methods, Wile included an assurance that, "The operation is extremely simple...danger is not encountered, nor is any important center disturbed by the operation. In all cases thus far examined, practically no pain has been experienced."⁵³⁶ The young doctor found the work to be momentous, as he proclaimed, "The finding of the organism in the living brain by Forster...may, it is hoped, lead to important changes in the therapy of the disease."⁵³⁷ Despite the proclamations of the importance of the experiment, the report did not make the splash that was hoped for— nor did it cause the condemnation that was perhaps expected. Thus, with the intention of reproducing these results with more success while also assuming that the experiment would not be denounced since its procedure had already been published, Wile sought to repeat the group's work in

⁵³⁴ Udo J. Wile, "The demonstration of the *Spirochaeta pallid* in the brain substance of living paretics (Forster and Tomaszewski)," *JAMA*, 1913, *61*: 866. Hereafter "Wile, 'Demonstration of the *Spirochaeta pallida*.'" This is the first experiment which the procedure of obtaining live brain matter was employed. Wile, "Experimental syphilis in the rabbit," p. 199-200. In his later paper, Wile recalls the prior investigations in the brain for the bacterium which causes syphilis, concluding that the sample needed to be taken from a live brain and be directly injected into the testes of a male rabbit.

⁵³⁵ Wile, "Demonstration of the *Spirochaeta pallida*," p. 866.

⁵³⁶ Wile, "Demonstration of the *Spirochaeta pallida*," p. 866.

⁵³⁷ Wile, "Demonstration of the *Spirochaeta pallida*," p. 866.

Michigan. However this time, Wile's investigation would draw the attention, and criticism, that had not been triggered by the previous report.

Needing patients suffering from paresis, Wile consulted Dr. Edmund A. Christian, superintendent of the Pontiac State Hospital in Michigan. Upon obtaining consent from Dr. Christian, but from neither the patients nor their families, Wile repeated the procedure used in Forster and Tomaszewski's study to extract the cervical matter from the brains of six paretics.⁵³⁸ Once the samples were collected, Wile confirmed the presence of *Spirochaetes* in five of the six brains— more than double the rate discovered in the prior study. Following Robert Koch's postulates of isolating and reproducing the disease in animals, the young doctor injected the syphilitic samples into the testes of a male rabbit. After a couple of weeks, the rabbit developed signs of the disease, and a biopsy confirmed the presence of *Spirochaeta pallida* in the reproductive organs. Adhering to Koch's methods, Wile transferred the testicular juice from this first animal into a second, thereby infecting it with the specific strain of syphilis. This process continued through four rabbits, at which time Wile submitted his article for the *Journal of Experimental Medicine*, a publication of the Rockefeller Institute. It was disseminated in the February issue of 1916.⁵³⁹

Wile concluded that a more virulent neurotropic strain of *Spirochaetes* existed in the brains of advanced paretics; yet, he made no reference to the possible future therapeutic advancements that the findings would provide. Additionally, unlike the first paper, he did not

⁵³⁸ Lederer, "The Right and Wrong," p. 386. Christian, when questioned about the unethical nature of the experiment, himself goes on record as saying, "The consent of the guardians or relatives of the patients was not secured as it was not necessary...the operation did not retard or hasten the course of the disease." p. 388.

⁵³⁹ Wile, "Experimental syphilis in the rabbit," p. 200-202.

include any reassurance that the technique by which he obtained the brain samples was safe. In fact, the one reference that Wile made about harvesting cervical matter produced more alarm than confidence. “By means of a long thin trocar needle connected to a syringe,” Wile described, “a small cylinder of gray and white matter with some fluid from the ventricle was removed.”⁵⁴⁰ The lack of an explanation of the utility of the experiment or a guarantee that it was harmless to the patients may help explain why the paper received such criticism.

Due to the article’s scientific rhetoric and lack of assurance about future benefits, the publicity that covered the work misconstrued the study’s purpose and the techniques by which it was performed. One Charleston newspaper reported that Wile had actually extracted the entire brain content from these paretics, and it questioned how the state of Michigan had no laws protecting their insane. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* also expressed its concern over the investigation in its editorial from April 14th, 1916, “Human Vivisection”—“We have never objected to a moderate and reasonable vivisection of animals for the sake of scientific development, but we are certainly opposed to taking the brains out of insane persons and driving rabbits to the madhouse.”⁵⁴¹ The editorial excited public opinion of the matter with phrases such as “boring a hole,” and “lapping up some of the brains.” The report finally condemned the investigation, proclaiming, “This is cruelty to animals in a degree which it is hard to express.” It also questioned, “What’s the use of proving a man insane by boring a hole in his head and dipping out his brains by the spoonful?”⁵⁴² This is further evidence that confusion about the purpose of the experiment was common. Among those roused by the accounts of newspapers

⁵⁴⁰ Wile, “Experimental syphilis in the rabbit,” p. 200.

⁵⁴¹ “Human Vivisection,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 174, p. 105, 14 April, 1916.

⁵⁴² *ibid.*

were Wile's colleagues and fellow proponents of vivisection, who saw the publicity as a major threat to the continuation of medical research.

Dr. William Williams Keen, a prominent Philadelphia surgeon, had been avidly defending medical research for more than thirty years when he read the *Inquirer's* worrisome editorial. Taken aback by the editorial, Keen immediately consulted Simon Flexner, scientific director of the Rockefeller Institute.⁵⁴³ Flexner instructed Keen to seek out an explanation from Victor C. Vaughan, Dean of the University of Michigan Medical School. On April 19th, Keen wrote to Vaughan expressing his concerns and seeking clarification of the issue. "Not knowing any of the facts I was not willing, of course, to make any public protest or explanation... The facts when fully known might convince me that these were justifiable experiments, but," as Keen admitted, "they would have to be mighty strong facts."⁵⁴⁴ The Philadelphia surgeon continued to communicate his unease when he wrote, "One paper of this kind does us more harm than all the blatant vaporings of the antivivisectionists," and suggested that the American Society for the Defense of Medical Research take a strong stand against all experiments using human vivisection.⁵⁴⁵ Vaughan's letter of response, dated April 25, explained Wile's work in further detail, informing him of the, "curative value," of the experiment.⁵⁴⁶ With regards to backlash from the AHA, Vaughan commented, "It is possible that the antivivisectionists will make much of it, but... [the individuals] did not suffer pain, their symptoms have not been aggravated in any

⁵⁴³ Lededer, "The Right and Wrong," p.389.

⁵⁴⁴ William Williams Keen to Victor C. Vaughan. 19 April, 1916, University of Michigan Medical School Records, Michigan Historical Collections, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan. Hereafter "Keen to Vaughan, 14 April 1916".

⁵⁴⁵ Keen to Vaughan, 14 April 1916.

⁵⁴⁶ Victor C. Vaughan to William Williams Keen, 25 April 1916, University of Michigan Medical School Records, Michigan Historical Collections, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan. Hereafter "Vaughan to Keen, 25 April 1916".

way, and since it is possible that good may come from the demonstration of living virulent spirochetes [sic] in the brain in Paresis, I am inclined to the opinion that the work was justifiable.”⁵⁴⁷ Vaughan continued by thanking Keen for all of his contributions to medical research and ended by suggesting that, “If the enthusiasm of a young man has carried him too far,” Wile would be happy to take advice from any respected individual such as Keen.⁵⁴⁸ Vaughan’s letter served to extinguish some of fire sparked by Wile’s experiment—but not all.

Other letters addressing the issue continued to pour into Vaughan’s office. Walter Bradford Cannon, the chairman of the American Medical Association’s BPMR, wrote directly to Wile, making clear the direct deleterious effects Wile’s work could have on the future of medical research. Cannon emphasized the importance of dealing with public opinion, and he stated that Wile had imprudently gone on record by saying he had, “Absolutely no interest in the matter, whatever people may wish to think regarding the experiment.”⁵⁴⁹ Cannon lectured that, “No one man has any reason whatever to be disregarding of the conviction which mankind cherishes that the right of the individual to determine the uses to which his body shall be put, is a sacred right which no investigator is justified in violating.”⁵⁵⁰ Cannon used these words as a gateway to his real point—that the whole scientific realm would suffer from Wile’s blunder, as it would be, “cited again and again during the coming years as an instance of the disregard of medical men

⁵⁴⁷ Vaughan to Keen, 25 April 1916.

⁵⁴⁸ *ibid.*

⁵⁴⁹ Lederer, “The Right and Wrong,” p. 389. Quoted from “Human Vivisection in Michigan - the betrayal of a sacred trust,” *Our Dumb Animals*, 1916. 49: 34.

⁵⁵⁰ Walter Bradford Cannon to Udo J. Wile, cc Victor C. Vaughan, 27 April 1916, University of Michigan Medical School Records, Michigan Historical Collections, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan. Hereafter “Cannon to Wile, 27 April 1916”.

for those who are helpless in their charge.”⁵⁵¹ Finally, Cannon, like Keen, suggested that the AMA make an example out of Wile and his experiment, “so that there may be a standard of conduct which the medical profession can point to and for infractions of which careless persons may be held accountable.”⁵⁵² As if the message were not clear enough by then, Cannon concluded by mentioning that a copy of the letter would be sent to Wile’s boss, Vaughan, so as to inform him of the Chairman’s attitude on the matter.⁵⁵³ According to early 20th century professional conventions, this was an extreme denunciation.

Both Cannon and Keen issued an editorial and a protest, respectively, in the November 4th issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.⁵⁵⁴ Cannon wrote about a doctor’s responsibility to acquire knowledge, but only as long as this knowledge served the current patient. He asserted that getting consent before a doctor performs any act on a patient is obligatory, but he made no specific mention of Wile himself.⁵⁵⁵ Keen, on the other hand, singled out Wile’s case as a prime example of how antivivisectionists had skewed their portrait of medical research to fit their agenda. Keen strategically overshadowed Wile’s wrongdoings by instead offering multiple examples of antivivisectionist propaganda that twisted quotations and facts alike to serve their agenda.⁵⁵⁶ The two publications served their purposes magnificently, drawing attention away from the Wile case and the mixed emotions it had raised. They also

⁵⁵¹ Cannon to Wile, 27 April 1916.

⁵⁵² *ibid.*

⁵⁵³ *ibid.* Vaughan had completed his term as president of the AMA from 1914-1915, thus Cannon thought it pertinent that he should know of the stance Cannon was taking.

⁵⁵⁴ Lederer, “The Right and Wrong,” p. 395.

⁵⁵⁵ Walter Bradford Cannon, “The Right and Wrong of Making Experiments on Human Beings,” *JAMA*, 1916, 67: p. 1372-73. Hereafter “Cannon, ‘The Right and Wrong’”.

⁵⁵⁶ William Williams Keen, “Inveracities of antivivisection,” *JAMA*, 1916, 67: p. 1390-1391.

provided guidelines for correct ethical behavior, along with denunciation of erroneous antivivisectionist material.

The brief scare produced by the reaction to Udo Wile's experiment led defenders of medical research to try and frantically control the damage. As the controversy subsided and investigators continued to use animals without much threat to the continuation of medical research, scientific investigators and the AMA had dodged a bullet—or so it seemed.

But was everything good and right? The success of the vivisectionists in covering up Wile's controversy allowed for medical research to continue more or less without constraints. But it also swept the necessary conversation concerning medical ethics under the rug. Was Cannon's assurance that a doctor would no longer work on a patient, "unless the consent of the person on whom the operation is to be performed has previously been obtained," really adhered to?⁵⁵⁷ To answer that, one must look at later developments. Official legislation requiring the consent of the patient would not come until more than half a century later, with the passing of the National Research Act in 1974, which created the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research.⁵⁵⁸ During this intervening period, however, investigators did not seem to heed Cannon's commandment. The Tuskegee experiments, run by the US government, began in 1932 and finally ended in 1972, led to the refusal of life-saving treatment for some syphilitic patients. The radiation trials, which were again commissioned by the US government, included feeding children radioactive cereal. In Guatemala, US government doctors purposefully infected unsuspecting peasants with Syphilis.

⁵⁵⁷ Cannon, "The Right and Wrong," p. 1373.

⁵⁵⁸ "US Public Health Service Syphilis Study at Tuskegee", Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov (12 November, 2014)

The list goes on.⁵⁵⁹ One can only wonder how much pain and suffering future generations encountered because of the blind eye society and the government had turned towards medical ethics and the idea of informed consent after the initial alarm that Wile case raised.

Again, Udo Wile was no monster. The University of Michigan professor went on to have an illustrious career in Dermatology and Syphilology. He is responsible for and reported on numerous dermatological discoveries, and he developed the modern curriculum for teaching Dermatology. He also voluntarily served in both world wars, and was awarded, along with many other prestigious titles, France's order of Commander of the Order of Public Health for his introduction of the use of penicillin to cure syphilis (only the third to be appointed as such, the second was Alexander Fleming).⁵⁶⁰ The government and medical society's failure to recognize the severity of need for medical reform after Wile's research serves as testimony to how tunnel-visioned and determined the scientific community was in the early 20th century. The debate over medical ethics was silenced before it had really begun, leaving investigators free rein in their experiments and allowing the suffering of future patients, or victims, of unethical medical research

⁵⁵⁹ Jacob Ziff, interview with Dr. Joel Howell, 2 April 2014.

⁵⁶⁰ Arnold, "Udo Wile" p. 157-162.

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