The US Public and American Foreign Policy

Edited by
Andrew Johnstone and
Helen Laville

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Though often overlooked, public opinion has always played a significant role in the development and promotion of American foreign policy and this work seeks to comprehensively assess the impact and nature of that opinion through a collection of historical and contemporary essays.

The volume evaluates the role of organizations and movements that look to represent public opinion, and assesses the nature of their relationship with the government. The contributors utilize a number of different approaches to examine this impact, including polling data, assessments of the role of the media, and the wider consideration of ideas and ideology, moving on to examine the specific role played by the public in the policy making and policy promotion process.

Engaging with new questions as well as approaching old questions from a new angle, the work argues that whilst the roles change, and the extent of influence varies, the power of the public to both initiate and constrain foreign policy clearly exists and should not be underestimated. This work will be of great interest to all those with an interest in American foreign policy, American politics and American history.

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Acknowledgements

Abbreviations

AAAA	American-African Affairs Association
ACOA	American Committee on Africa
AEI	American Enterprise Institute
AFL	American Federation of Labor
AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations
AIPAC	American Israel Public Affairs Committee
AMSAC	American Society for African Culture
ANLCA	American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa
CAA	Council on African Affairs
CANF	Cuban American National Foundation
CBS	Columbia Broadcasting System
CDA	Cuban Democracy Act
CDAAA	Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies
CEDAW	Convention Eliminating Discrimination against Women
CFL	Chicago Federation of Labor
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CORE	Congress of Racial Equality
CSP	Center for Security Policy
FCC	Federal Council of Churches
FFF	Fight for Freedom
FMF	Feminist Majority Foundation
LEP	League to Enforce Peace
LIBERTAD	Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act
MPLA	Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola
MSB	Massachusetts State Board
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NAM	National Association of Manufacturers
NBC	National Broadcasting Company
NCRAC	National Community Relations Advisory Council
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization

NPC	Non-Partisan Committee for Peace through Revision of the Neutrality Law
NSC	National Security Council
NUL	National Urban League
PAC	Political Action Committee
PNAC	Project for the New American Century
PSI	Private Sector Initiative
UDL	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UNOCAL	Union Oil Company of California
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WWII	World War II

1 Introduction

Andrew Johnstone and Helen Laville

The relationship between public opinion and the development of US foreign policy has always been a contested one. The very principle of public involvement in foreign policy has been hotly debated. On one side range the advocates of the elite control of foreign policy, those who argue that the complex work of international relations and the advancement of the long-stem strategy interest of the United States should not be subject to the whims, passions and unreasoned positions of the general public. Alexis de Tocqueville warned that democracy and a stable foreign policy were mutually exclusive terrains, asserting, "Foreign Politics demand scarcely any of those qualities which a democracy possesses." De Tocqueville argued that democracies "obey the impulse of passion rather than the suggestions of prudence" and were driven to "abandon a mature design for the gratification of a momentary caprice."[1] The concern over the danger of allowing the unreasonable and overly emotional influence of public opinion on foreign relations has persisted well into the twentieth century. In his 1922 study on public opinion Walter Lippmann lambasted the influence of the public in foreign policy whilst diplomat/historian George Kennan sought to avoid the short-term "emotionalism and subjectivity" which made public opinion "a poor and inadequate guide for national action."[2] Set against this position are those who have sought to disprove the assumption of the over-emotional and unreasonable position of public opinion and have instead sought to define their position as "rational" and "sensible."[3]

While theorists have struggled with the ideological debate on the rationality of public opinion, and the advisability of the public's involvement in foreign relations, historians have long recognized and sought to assess the influence of the public opinion in the making of US foreign policy. Historian Melvin Small, for example, has insisted that consideration of the role of public opinion is fundamental to understanding the construction of US foreign policy, arguing "one cannot understand American diplomatic history without understanding the central role of public opinion in that history."[4] While it may be a challenging task for the historian to understand the exact nature of that role, the need for such an understanding has seen a large body of literature on the subject since the end of World War II.[5]

This scholarship has addressed a number of complex and challenging questions. Even the seemingly simple issue of what public opinion is has led to differing answers, though there is a degree of consensus. There are clearly a number of American "publics," with an elite public of opinion makers at the top. Just beneath the elite is an attentive public, representing up to a quarter of all Americans, which displays an educated awareness of international issues. Below that is the mass or general public, representing some 75 percent of the population.[6] There are also a number of different ways in which those publics can be represented in Washington. Public opinion can be transmitted through polls, the media, and through organized citizens' or interest groups and identity based organizations. In addition, opinion is transmitted to the presidency through Congress. Recent historians and commentators have criticized the excessive influence of interest groups in determining American foreign policy. In particular, the role of ethnic lobbies has come in for detailed scrutiny with critics suggesting that such groups have sought, and in some cases gained, undue influence on US foreign policy.[7] Yet criticism of the influence of public opinion only reinforces its significance.

The most vexing questions, however, remain about the role and impact of the public in the policy-making process. What role does the American public play in the policy forming and policy promotion process? How can historians assess the impact of the public, and the weight given to public opinion by different presidents and policy makers? Does the public have the power to create policy, or merely constrain it? To what extent can presidents lead (or even manipulate) public opinion to their own ends? On these issues, despite some excellent research on individual periods and issues, much work still needs to be done.

However, despite a handful of monographs and articles, the last two decades have seen the study of public opinion as an influence on US foreign relations fall from favor. There are a number of possible explanations for this, including the broader trend among historians toward social and cultural history that has led to the de-emphasis of top-down political history. More significantly, within the specific field of American foreign relations history, there has been a move away from domestic influences toward internationalization. This shift, placing the US in a more global context, has gone a long way to addressing criticisms that the history of American foreign relations (or diplomatic history) is methodologically unsophisticated and excessively US-centric. Yet while the development of a new international history, with its utilization of numerous international archives, is to be applauded, it has led to the relative neglect of internal domestic factors.[8]

In the volume that does more than any other to define the state of the field, Michael Hogan and Thomas Paterson's *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, there is no chapter on the influence of public opinion. To highlight how the theme has been passed over, it should be noted that the first edition of the book in 1991 did contain a chapter on public opinion, yet this was omitted from the second edition in 2004 despite its greatly expanded size.

Commenting on that omission in his 2008 Presidential Address to the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations, Thomas Schwartz argued that "explaining the history of American foreign relations without carefully examining public opinion and domestic politics was a bit like explaining the functioning of a car without discussing the internal combustion engine."[9]

Other historians have noticed the neglect on domestic politics in a broader sense. In his recent response to an assessment of the state of the field, Fredrik Logevall highlighted the lack of attention paid to domestic politics, and while his primary concern is party politics, he concedes that "public opinion, the media, and ethnic and other special interest groups have been similarly overlooked."[10] This is not to say that other approaches do not matter. However, to neglect domestic politics broadly, and public opinion specifically, overlooks a crucial determining factor behind US foreign policy. Indeed, the democratic nature of the American political system makes public opinion particularly relevant in the United States.

Despite the difficulties in assessing exactly how public opinion impacts on foreign policy, its relevance has been evident on numerous occasions through American history. Public opinion has clearly been influential in American wars; whether debating the aftermath of World War I, entry into World War II, or the conduct and execution of the Vietnam War. Yet the public's interest in American foreign policy is not confined to wars and conflicts. Throughout the nation's history, differing segments of society have organized to represent the public, in order to promote a particular foreign policy outlook. Whether they represent a particular ethnic group, religious affiliation, or gender, Americans have sought to influence their nation's place in the world.

The real impact of the public on US foreign policy lies somewhere between the claim that public opinion has too much influence on American foreign policy, and the implication in the current historiography that it has little or none at all. The challenge for historians, and the purpose of this volume, is to assess the impact and nature of that opinion more effectively.

The chapters in this volume have two broad aims. First, they aim to assess the *impact* that the public has had on US foreign policy. Through a focus on specific events, identity groups or ethnic lobbies, the question of the effect and influence of the public is analyzed. Despite the methodological challenges in making such assessments, consideration of public opinion is largely redundant without any such appraisal. The contributions utilize a number of different approaches to the question of impact. These include the use of polling data, the assessment of personal and organizational relationships between members of the public and the government, assessments of the role of the media, and the wider consideration of ideas and ideology.[11]

The second aim is to examine the specific *role* played by the public in the policy making and policy promotion process. The particular focus here is on the role of organizations and movements that look to represent public opinion, and an assessment of the nature of their relationship with the government. These organizations include private groups devoted primarily to

international affairs, but also labor, religious and women's organizations. While this type of approach has previously been utilized to study elite opinion, such an approach can be utilized to study all types of organizations and ad hoc collectives representing a "mass" or "general" public of millions of Americans.[12]

A focus on the public's role offers an alternative method for evaluating public opinion, and one that offers fewer methodological difficulties than the challenge of assessing impact. As a result, it offers diplomatic historians a path back to the study of public opinion, answering Ralph Levering's plea to "provide the broad perspective and the effective use of nonquantitative sources that often are missing in the political science literature."[13] Taken together, the consideration of both role and impact provides a deeper overall understanding of what public opinion is, how it is represented to the government, and how it translates into actual policy.

The chapters in this book represent case studies that address the relationship between the public and US foreign policy during the "American Century" – from 1898 and the Spanish-American War to the beginning of the twenty-first century and the war in Iraq. Not only did the late nineteenth century mark the point at which the United States became a world (and imperial) power, but it also marked a period of increased democratization. By the outbreak of World War I in Europe, American politicians were increasingly sensitive to public views due to progressive era reforms such as the direct election of Senators. The concurrent expansion of a mass media that increasingly claimed to represent the public only added to the need for accountability in foreign affairs as well as domestic. While the public's interest in foreign affairs has not been constant over the subsequent decades, it has always been considerable.

The impact of public opinion on foreign policy has been considered as being of particular importance at times of threatened or actual war. Whilst the interest of the American people in foreign relations may have been, at best, tepid during peacetime, the demands of war or the threat of war have sharpened minds and focused interest. The first section of this book, featuring chapters by Joseph Smith, Andrew Johnstone and Andrew Priest, considers the impact of public opinion on foreign policy when the United States has been in the shadow of war. A common theme running through each of these chapters is the extent to which public opinion acted to limit or constrain presidential action in a time of war. The role of the "yellow press" in influencing government attitudes on the eve of the Spanish-American War is well documented. However, in his chapter, Joseph Smith emphasizes the role of the press and public opinion in influencing the McKinley Administration during and after the conflict, with particular reference to the treatment of the US Army. In doing so, he further challenges John Hay's perception of the conflict as a "splendid little war," and emphasizes the sensitivity of President McKinley to the forces of public opinion.

Whilst Smith's chapter examines and qualifies public support for war in the 1890s, Andrew Johnstone's examines the organization of public opinion on the eve of World War II. In the absence of a direct threat, many Americans

were keen to stay out of world affairs altogether, making any effort to claim public support for intervention in the war problematic. In his chapter on internationalist organizations in the years immediately prior to Pearl Harbor, Johnstone examines two private citizens' groups fighting against the tide of non-interventionist sentiment. The Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies promoted maximum aid to Britain (and eventually the USSR); Fight for Freedom went further in arguing that the conflict was America's to fight as early as the spring of 1941. Despite being led by elites, both groups went out of their way to secure popular support from every possible sector of society in order to establish their democratic credibility with the Roosevelt Administration, Congress and the public at large.

Whilst public distaste for US involvement in war has been credited with delaying US entry into World War II, it has equally been seen as a major factor in demanding US exit from a later war. The impact of public opinion on President Lyndon Johnson's policy toward Vietnam is the focus of Andrew Priest's chapter. The role of public opinion during the Vietnam War is a subject of much historiographical controversy. Priest argues that the American public never turned against the war itself. Instead they turned against Johnson's specific policies for fighting it. Rather ironically, the strong desire for public support that led to secrecy over the conduct of the war was, in the end, the President's undoing.

The second section of this book, while still clearly concerned with the impact of public opinion, is equally concerned with addressing the role that the public (or publics) play in the direction of US foreign policy. The chapters in this section, by Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, Andrew Preston and Helen Laville address specific interest groups which have made efforts to direct US foreign policy in accordance with their particular group interest or ideological outlook. Through the analysis of specific ideological organizations or looser coalitions of ideas, these chapters focus more specifically on how public opinion is represented, and its role in the policy making and policy promotion process. If the chapters on wartime foreign policy analyze the perceived limiting power of public opinion, the publics addressed in the following chapters were more interested in positively facilitating or promoting a specific policy, course of action, or general foreign policy outlook.

In his assessment of the first two decades of the twentieth century, Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones highlights the significance of a sector of society often overlooked by historians of US foreign policy: organized labor. Through a case study of labor unions in Massachusetts, Jeffreys-Jones focuses on the often neglected foreign policy issue of the tariff. He concludes that those decades represented a golden-age for labor influence, in a nation whose economic foreign policy has been largely consumer driven.

In contrast to the protectionist caution of labor, Andrew Preston's analysis of religious internationalism emphasizes an organized section of private society that actively promoted a wider global role for the United States. Through a diverse array of methods including missionaries, personal

connections to various administrations, and the popular strength of their ideas, Preston argues that religion in America played a crucial role in convincing Americans of the need to play a wider role in world affairs, as well as helping to define that role.

The role of women in the making of American foreign policy is assessed by Helen Laville through the Feminist Majority Foundation's (FMF) campaign against gender apartheid in Afghanistan. In examining the relationship between the FMF, American foreign policy and global women's rights, Laville reveals the tension between the promotion of universal women's rights and a particular national foreign policy, particularly in the aftermath of 9/11. In sympathy with the growing volume of work on international non-governmental organizations, Laville argues that American women need to go beyond a specifically national level to work on an international platform for women's rights.[14]

The third section of the book addresses the role of ethnic lobbies within the US on American foreign policy. The chapters from Carl Watts, Jessica Gibbs and Elizabeth Stephens examine the extent to which ethnic groups within the US have been able to organize, influence and arguably direct the public opinion of their particular ethnic group within the US. Interestingly these chapters all demonstrate the importance of lobbying groups as both mediators and, frequently, manipulators of ethnic public opinion, positioning themselves between immigrant or racial groups and the construction of foreign policy. These chapters question both the authenticity and effectiveness of these lobby groups, examining both the extent to which they accurately reflect the public opinion of their supposed constituents, and also their ability to exercise an influence on US foreign policy.

In his assessment of the American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa (ANLCA) during the 1960s, Carl Watts questions the effectiveness of the organization as a lobbying group. Watts argues that a principal weakness of the organization was its inability to develop a broad-based constituency, being more concerned with the involvement of key spokesmen and women, rather than seeking to either elicit or represent the views of the wider African American community. In addition to organizational weaknesses within the ANLCA, Watts also argues that the ineffectiveness of the group – the only major African American organization focused on African issues – was related to wider bureaucratic political considerations within the Johnson Administration. Watts' chapter suggests the extent to which responsibility for the inclusion of public opinion in the construction of US foreign policy lies not only with the effectiveness of the lobby group or citizen organization, but also with the structural capacity within the administration to include interested views.

Considerations of the role of ethnic lobbies continue with Jessica Gibbs' assessment of the success of the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF) in the 1980s and 1990s. Focusing on the organization's close links with both the executive and legislative branches, Gibbs finds a lobby whose message was ideologically congruent with certain policymakers in Washington. However, in stark contest to the unsympathetic Washington environment

facing the American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa in the 1960s, it was the wider post-Cold War context that truly facilitated the success of CANF. In an atmosphere of apathetic internationalism, a minority of politicians with strongly held views on Cuba were able to work with the lobby to create anti-Castro legislation in the absence of a well organized opposition.

Finally, Elizabeth Stephens' chapter tackles the most famous, or infamous of ethnic interest groups, that of the pro-Israeli lobby. Stephens argues that the "special" nature of the US-Israel relationship, and the popular support for Israel within the United States, is best understood, not by reference to the narrow activities of interest and identity based lobby groups, but rather through the broader concept of political culture. Moving beyond the argument that American sympathy for Israel is the result of shadowy yet powerful lobbyists, Stephens argues that such sympathy is the result of a broader perception of shared interests and values between the two states and their people. The importance of lobby groups, she argues, lies in the extent to which they have fostered and encouraged this popular US belief in a shared political culture with Israel, rather than in their work as policy-focused advocates within elite political circles.

The final section of the book engages with analysis of the influence, or lack of it, of public opinion on contemporary foreign policy, focusing on the "War on Terror." Maria Ryan uses Gramscian theory to examine the relationship between the elite neoconservative movement and the wider American public. Ryan concludes that the neoconservatives had no interest in developing a broad-based movement, yet still managed to dominate the political agenda in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, influencing the direction of US foreign policy with little or no reference to "public opinion." Ryan argues that this top-down, "policy making elite" approach was only truly effective thanks to the power of events: the immediate aftermath of 9/11. In her argument that the neoconservatives neither wanted, sought nor claimed public support, Ryan's chapter suggests the continued influence of elite groups on foreign policy, but it situates this disregard for public opinion firmly in the context of what might be termed "post 9/11 panic."

The efforts of the George W. Bush Administration to secure support for the invasion of Iraq are the focus of Scott Lucas' chapter. Lucas uses polling data to highlight the uncertainty of public opinion as a whole, and more importantly to expose the malleability of public opinion on the eve of conflict. Given certain conditions (in this case the aftermath of 9/11, though it could also apply to the Gulf of Tonkin incident in Vietnam), Lucas concludes that the American public is prone to rally around the flag and support its government in a time of perceived threat or imminent war.

Lucas' chapter, together with Ryan's on the influence of the neoconservative elite on the foreign policy of the George W. Bush Administration, raise interesting questions about the future relationship between public opinion and American foreign policy. Given the ideological importance of "Democracy" and "democracy-promotion," within the neoconservative foreign policy

agenda it is ironic, if not a little cynical, that they would themselves be so disparaging of the place of democracy, in the shape of public opinion, within the formation of foreign policy. Taken together one of the most striking themes running through the case studies is the role of elites in driving forward public opinion. Indeed, many of the chapters here highlight the role of elite organizations and movements. However, in stark contrast to Ryan's study, it is clear from studies such as those by Smith and Johnstone, that most private organizations and even the press acknowledge a need to develop broad-based public support and a democratic coalition behind particular policies. Such coalitions then provide a space for opinion led by elites, but supported more widely, to press for a particular policy or course of action. A common path adopted by citizens' organizations is to adopt a dual role: to influence the mass or general public, and then represent that public to the government in order to gain further influence. However, as Ryan makes clear, it is possible for an elite to successfully promote its agenda with no real broad base, provided the wider international conditions are right.

With respect to the power of particular citizens' organizations, the broader conclusion of arguments such as those of Gibbs, Watts, Ryan and Stephens is that specific organizations and lobbyists are not all powerful. Lobbyists have most sway when they are swimming with a broader tide of public and political opinion. Indeed, the broader tide of opinion is crucial. Even the efforts of organizations that sought to represent a full cross-section of American opinion (such as internationalists on the eve of World War II) were not always fully successful in their aims. However, in the aftermath of 9/11, the tide of popular support for military responses that matched a neoconservative agenda enabled the ideas of a relatively small elite to gain national support.

The chapters contained here prove that the American people do have the power to impact on their foreign policy. This is usually done through the development of a broad-based coalition of popular support that reflects the diversity of the United States. However, it should be added that the power of public ideas to change foreign policy is not as strong as the power of events. Similarly, it is events such as the attacks on Americans as at Pearl Harbor or 9/11, or the unsuccessful or flawed prosecution of war, that are more likely to bring about immediate shifts in wider public opinion than the ideas of lobbies or elites. Yet the public clearly does have an impact on American foreign policy. The roles change, and the extent of influence varies, but the power of the public to both initiate and constrain foreign policy clearly exists. The need for further assessments of exactly how that power works is more important than ever.

Notes

1 Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Online. Available http: <http://ruth-king-james-bible.publicliterature.org/books/democracy_in_america/xdw.php> (Accessed September 29 2009).
2 W. Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, New York: Macmillan, 1922; G. Kennan, *American Diplomacy 1900–1950*, London: Secker and Warburg, 1952, p. 93.

3 See for example R. Shapiro and B. Page, *The Rational Public: Fifty Years of Trends in Americans' Policy Preferences*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992 and M. Nincic, "A Sensible Public," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 36, 4, pp. 777–89.

4 M. Small, "Public Opinion," in M. Hogan and T. Paterson (eds), *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 176.

5 Surveys include T. Bailey, *The Man in the Street: the Impact of American Public Opinion on Foreign Policy*, New York: Macmillan, 1948; R. Levering, *The Public and American Foreign Policy 1918–1978*, New York: Morrow, 1978; and M. Small, *Democracy and Diplomacy: The Impact of Domestic Politics on U.S. Foreign Policy, 1789–1994*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996. For a detailed methodological overview, see M. Small (ed.), *Public Opinion and Historians: Interdisciplinary Perspectives,* Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970. Examples of more focused historical studies include R. Hilderbrand, *Power and the People: Executive Management of Public Opinion in Foreign Affairs, 1897–1921*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981; J. Schneider, *Should America Go to War? The Debate over Foreign Policy in Chicago, 1939–1941*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989; M. Paton-Walsh, *Our War Too: American Women Against the Axis*, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002; M. Leigh, *Mobilizing Consent: Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy, 1937–1947*, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1976; H.S. Foster, *Activism Replaces Isolationism: U.S. Public Attitudes 1940–1975*, Washington: Foxhall Press, 1975; D. Foyle, *Counting the Public In: Presidents, Public Opinion and Foreign Policy*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1999; T. Smith, *Foreign Attachments: The Power of Ethnic Groups in the Making of American Foreign Policy*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000. Important perspectives from political science include G. Almond, *The American People and Foreign Policy*, New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1950; J. Rosenau, *Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: An Operational Formulation*, New York: Random House, 1961; B. Cohen, *The Public's Impact on Foreign Policy*, Boston: Little, Brown, 1973; O. Holsti, *Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2005.

6 On the stratification of American public opinion, see Almond, *The American People and Foreign Policy*, pp. 138–9, and Rosenau, *Public Opinion and Foreign Policy*, pp. 35–9. Almond used the term "general public," Rosenau preferred "mass public," which he estimated at 75–90 percent of the population.

7 For example, see J. Mearshimer and S. Walt, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008.

8 For examples of a more international history, see O. Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007; or E. Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

9 M. Hogan and T. Paterson (eds), *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations* Second Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. T. Schwartz, "'Henry, … Winning an Election is Terribly Important': Partisan Politics in the History of U.S. Foreign Relations," *Diplomatic History*, 33, 2, April 2009, p. 177.

10 F. Logevall, "Politics and Foreign Relations," *The Journal of American History*, 95, 4, March 2009, p. 1076. Also see F. Logevall, "A Critique of Containment," *Diplomatic History*, September 28, 4, 2004, pp. 490–6; J. Hanimaki, "Global Visions and Parochial Politics: The Persistent Dilemma of the 'American Century,'" *Diplomatic History*, September 27, 4, 2003, pp. 423–47.

11 While the role of Congress is an important element of domestic politics in a broader sense, and can be utilized to represent public opinion, it is beyond the scope of this volume.

12 This approach has been used in studies of elite organizations like the Council of Foreign Relations, yet it has not been utilized to study public opinion in a wider sense. For studies on the Council on Foreign Relations, see R. Schulzinger, *The Wise Men of Foreign Affairs*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1984; M. Wala, *The Council on Foreign Relations and American Foreign Policy in the Early Cold War*, Providence: Berghahn, 1994; and I. Parmar, *Think Tanks and Foreign* Policy, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004. In addition, studies that utilize a similar approach to assess state-private networks in the Cold War include F. Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper: The CIA and the Cultural Cold War*, London: Granta, 1999; and H. Laville and H. Wilford (eds), *The US Government, Citizen Groups and the Cold War: The State-Private Network*, London: Routledge, 2006.

13 R. Levering, "Public Opinion, Foreign Policy, and American Politics since the 1960s," *Diplomatic History,* July 13, 3, 1989, p. 384.

14 For an introduction to both domestic and international non-governmental organizations, see A. Iriye "A Century of NGOs" in M. Hogan (ed.), *The Ambiguous Legacy: US Foreign Relations in the "American Century,"* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Section One

The public and war

2 From coast defense to embalmed beef

The influence of the press and public opinion on McKinley's policymaking during the Spanish–American war

Joseph Smith

The question of the influence that the American press and public opinion exerted on the decision of the United States to go to war against Spain in April 1898 has attracted a considerable historical literature.[1] Less well-known is how policy decisions taken by the McKinley Administration during and after the war were also affected by public attitudes which were largely informed and shaped by the press. The allocation of financial resources to coast defenses and the division of the Atlantic squadron were intended to relieve public anxiety, while the raising of a mass volunteer army and the schemes for an early assault on Havana reflected a response to public expectations. The role of the press was particularly significant in accelerating the evacuation of the army from Cuba and in contributing to the post-war controversy over the treatment of American soldiers by the War Department.

When a major rebellion broke out in Cuba in February 1895 Americans were sympathetic toward what they perceived to be a struggle for freedom from Spanish tyranny. This attitude was stimulated by the American news-paper industry which was engaged in fierce competition for mass circulation.[2] Readers of the so-called "yellow" daily newspapers were bombarded with a steady barrage of sensational and often exaggerated stories reporting not so much on the actual course of the conflict but describing how Spain was turning the island into a wasteland of human misery and carnage. Some articles provoked criticism and even incredulity but they were effective in capturing public attention and thereby ensuring that Cuban affairs were pushed to the forefront of American political debate.

The political ramifications were evident in Congress where numerous reso-lutions recommending various courses of American action to aid the insur-gents were introduced in every session from December 1895 onwards. The impact on the executive was limited because President Grover Cleveland chose to pursue a policy of strict neutrality. In March 1897 the responsibility for conducting American diplomacy passed to William McKinley. As an avid reader of the daily press, the new President kept himself very well-informed on the attitude of the public toward events in Cuba.[3] Nevertheless, in his first year of office he saw his priority as leading America out of economic depression

and reluctantly turned his attention to foreign affairs. While he was convinced that the United States should avoid military intervention, he believed that strenuous diplomatic efforts should be made to persuade the Spanish government to bring about an end to hostilities.

The prospect of going to war against Spain, however, was significantly enhanced by the horrific news that the *USS Maine* had been blown up in Havana harbour on February 15 1898 with the loss of 266 American lives out of a total crew of 354. The conclusion that a treacherous Spanish conspiracy must have been responsible for the explosion dominated the front pages of most of the yellow press. "The Whole Country Thrills With War Fever," stated a typical headline.[4] McKinley resisted political and public pressure for retaliation and appointed a commission of naval officers to investigate and ascertain the cause of the explosion. He did, however, seek to improve the nation's military preparedness by arranging an emergency appropriation from Congress. Known as the "Fifty Million Bill," the measure was promptly passed on March 9. The huge appropriation of $50 million was designed to overawe the Spanish government into making diplomatic concessions. It was also a response to an emerging public concern expressed by residents along the eastern seaboard of the United States that war would expose their homes, property and lives to surprise raids and bombardment by warships that Spain would surely send to operate in the Atlantic. The Spanish navy lacked first-class battleships but was known to possess "overwhelming strength" in modern armoured cruisers.[5]

During March and April the American press attempted to keep track of the whereabouts of the "Spanish War Fleet" which was described as "the most formidable array of vessels that has yet left Spain for the West Indies."[6] The strategic thinking of the day suggested that the Spanish commander, Admiral Pascual Cervera, would form his cruisers into a "fleet in being" whose speed and mobility would outmanoeuvre the slower American battleships and, consequently, disrupt American naval resources and strategy.[7] Should war break out the *New York Times* warned that the most direct threat to the United States would come from Spanish warships engaging "in guerrilla warfare, swooping down upon coast towns and retreating before they are overtaken."[8] Even the nation's capital at Washington was believed to be virtually defenseless just as it had been in 1814 when invading British troops had burned the White House. In an interview with the press, the Commanding General of the Army, Major General Nelson A. Miles, informed the public: "In the event of war, the problem is to defend our coast cities. The old fortifications were too close to the cities, enabling ships of the enemy to keep out of range and to throw shells into the cities".[9] Secretary of War Russell A. Alger later acknowledged that "the condition of the coast defenses was far from what it should have been."[10]

To strengthen national defenses and allay public anxiety, McKinley made direct use of the emergency $50 million appropriation which had been passed in Congress. A sum of $15 million was allotted for the repair and

construction of the army's coastal fortifications especially artillery batteries. The perception of inadequate coast defenses also resulted in the establishment of a Northern Patrol Squadron consisting of five light cruisers to patrol the coastline between the Delaware Capes and Bar Harbor, Maine. In addition, a "Flying Squadron" of several armoured ships was stationed at Hampton Roads, Virginia. By remaining close to shore the squadron offered protection to the east coast from possible Spanish attack. The division of the navy into two sections, however, constrained naval policy options. It prevented the concentration of American naval strength in the waters close to Cuba and was criticized by Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan as a misuse of naval resources and "contrary to sound practice."[11] According to one American naval officer, the Flying Squadron was "the sop to the quaking laymen whose knowledge of strategy derived solely from their terror of a sudden attack by Cervera."[12]

McKinley's resistance to the intense political and public pressure for American military intervention came to an end on Monday April 11 when his "War Message" was read out to Congress. After outlining the evolution of the crisis in Cuba and the diplomatic attempts to reach a peaceful solution, it concluded that American military intervention had now become necessary to bring peace to the island. On April 19, by votes of 42 to 35 in the Senate and 310 to 6 in the House, Congress passed the joint resolution recognizing the independence of the Cuban people and demanding immediate Spanish political and military withdrawal. The President was authorized to use the armed forces of the United States to enforce the resolution. McKinley duly signed the resolution on April 20, and on the next day instructed the navy to enforce a naval blockade of the northern coast of Cuba.

The American press not only favored going to war but also encouraged the public to believe that the American army and navy would strike a quick and victorious blow at Spanish forces in Cuba. Secretary of War Alger had contributed to the expectation of early action by implying in statements to the press that a large force of fighting men could quickly be put into a combat role.[13] In fact, it was generally assumed that war plans were already in place for an immediate attack upon Havana. As early as April 2 the *New York Times* carried a headline stating that "Both The Army And Navy Ready" and "Could Strike A Decisive Blow Within Forty-eight Hours."[14] The first step would be naval bombardment of Havana by the powerful American battleships. "It is likely that little more than a day would elapse after the first shot before the Spanish flag would be down on El Morro or Cabanas," confidently predicted the *New York Times*.[15] The army would act in conjunction with the navy and dispatch a large number of troops to Cuba so that a simultaneous attack on Havana would take place from both land and sea. As Congress debated the War Resolution, the *New York Times* reported: "Both the army and the fleets are ready to act immediately [for] a dash on Havana and a quick sweeping victory that will take the Spanish flag and the Spanish soldier forever out of the island."[16] In Havana, Captain General

Ramón Blanco y Erenas was ready and waiting for battle to commence. On learning that war had been declared, he told a large crowd of Spanish loyalists that any approaching American warships would be "hurled back into the sea."[17]

But "a dash on Havana" did not occur. On April 22 the North Atlantic Squadron commanded by Admiral William T. Sampson duly took up its pre-assigned positions to blockade Havana and the northern coastline of Cuba. American army officers, however, were uncertain as to when, where and how American soldiers would attack Spanish forces in Cuba. "The advance guard of the army of occupation may not move on Cuba this week after all," dis-appointingly noted the *New York Times* and added, "there is high authority for the statement that the enterprise has been postponed for the present".[18] In reality, public anticipation of an early assault on Havana was overly optimis-tic because the United States initially lacked an army capable of launching a successful invasion against entrenched defensive forces. Indeed, senior army commanders considered an invasion unnecessary because the decisive battles would surely occur at sea. On April 20 at a special council of war meeting at the White House, General Miles argued against an attack to seize Havana. He pointed out that a land operation was undesirable because it would expose American troops to the many deadly tropical diseases which were known to be endemic in Cuba during the rainy season. "The most powerful influence which has operated to induce President McKinley to decide against sending any United States troops to Cuba at present," remarked the *New York Times*, "is fear of the effects of the climate on the men."[19] At the meeting Miles also disclosed that at least two months were needed to organize a credible Amer-ican expeditionary force. Moreover, he was particularly concerned that the safe transport of troops could not be guaranteed until the navy secured com-plete command of the seas by destroying the enemy fleet. In the meantime, army commanders envisaged a limited role for the army consisting mainly of landing small numbers of soldiers to seize isolated beachheads from which supplies could be delivered to the Cuban insurgents.

The pursuit of a strategy emphasizing small-scale overseas operations meant that only a relatively modest increase would be required in the size of the existing regular army. However, the passage of the War Resolution in Congress stimulated patriotic feeling and public pressure for prompt military action. "This became so intense that even the conservative administration [of President McKinley] was over-persuaded," commented General Miles.[20] Consequently, McKinley insisted that the army prepare itself for fighting a major overseas campaign. This was demonstrated on April 23 when he issued the first call for 125,000 volunteers to join the army.[21] Officials at the War Department had wanted less than half this number. They were now compelled to take on the huge challenge of transforming what had been a small peace-time force of regulars into a massive army consisting mostly of volunteer citizen-soldiers. In the process, officials found themselves overwhelmed with the practical problems of recruiting and organizing a new mass volunteer

army. Miles reckoned that more than 100,000 of those accepted were neither needed nor could be adequately equipped.[22] Nevertheless, the display of patriotism was sincere and impressive. Sectional differences were forgotten as Alger estimated that at least one million men responded to McKinley's first call for volunteers. From the American heartland in Emporia, Kansas, William Allen White captured the outburst of patriotic feeling:

> In April, everywhere over this good, fair land, flags were flying. Trains carrying soldiers were hurrying from the North, from the East, from the West, to the Southland; and as they sped over the green prairies and the brown mountains, little children on fences greeted the soldiers with flapping scarfs and handkerchiefs and flags; at the stations, crowds gathered to hurrah for the soldiers, and to throw hats into the air, and to unfurl flags. Everywhere it was flags … fluttering everywhere.[23]

The pressure of the press and public opinion for speedy offensive action on Cuban soil remained constant. Its influence on policymakers was evident on May 2, the day after Dewey's glorious naval victory at Manila Bay in the Philippines,[24] when McKinley brought Alger, Miles and Secretary of the Navy John D. Long to the White House to discuss future military strategy. As always, McKinley's preferred option was to make Havana the principal target of a major assault. The plan which emerged involved an amphibious landing of not less than 50,000 men to secure a beachhead at Mariel, about 25 miles west of Havana. This would be followed by an advance on the capital. It soon became evident, however, that the operation could not be executed unless American warships were released to guarantee safe transportation of the army from Florida to Cuba. This was still not possible so long as the reputedly powerful Spanish squadron of armoured warships remained undetected and at large in the Atlantic. Although the *New York Times* reported "the impatience of the country" and that the "President wants action," it explained that an invasion of Cuba at present "would be suicidal."[25] In the meantime, the force of army regulars assembled in Tampa, Florida, experienced, in the words of Richard Harding Davis, the "rocking-chair period." "The army had no wish to mark time, but it had no choice," summed up the *New York Herald* correspondent.[26]

All war plans were abruptly changed on May 26 when news reached Washington that Cervera's fleet was docked in the harbour of Santiago de Cuba. A council of war was promptly held in the White House and agreed that southeastern Cuba had now become the area of critical strategic significance. It was decided therefore to postpone the projected assault on Havana until later in the year so that the army invasion force could be sent instead to Santiago de Cuba. The Expeditionary Force comprised mainly of regulars of the Fifth [Army] Corps under the command of General William R. Shafter set sail from Tampa on June 8 and landed at Daiquirí and Siboney in eastern Cuba on June 22. Advancing inland from the coast the Fifth

Corps defeated a brave Spanish army, attacked Santiago de Cuba and secured the city's formal capitulation on July 17. Alger proudly remarked that "the expedition was successful beyond the most sanguine expectations."[27]

In the weeks following the capitulation of Santiago de Cuba, Shafter's main priority became the preservation of the health of his army. By authorizing American soldiers to fight in Cuba during the disease-ridden rainy season, McKinley had taken a calculated gamble with their health. The most dreaded disease was yellow fever. There was no known cure for this scourge which annually claimed hundreds, if not thousands, of lives in the tropical regions of the Caribbean and Brazil. American surgeons knew very little about the disease. In fact, a combination of anxiety and lack of medical knowledge resulted in their failing to distinguish between yellow fever and the more common and less deadly malarial fever. The first suspected cases of yellow fever among American troops were identified at Siboney on July 6. In accordance with the best medical advice currently available, Alger had instructed Shafter to move his troops from the lowland "fever belt" to higher mountainous ground which was believed to be much healthier.[28] He also stated that cases of yellow fever were to be isolated and not put on troopships for return to the United States. The prohibition included not just the individuals with yellow fever but was also extended to the rest of their regiment. Mindful of political and public concern in the states of the eastern seaboard, Alger was clearly determined not to risk the spread of yellow fever to the United States. The men would eventually be brought home but only when it was judged medically safe for them to leave. Meanwhile, they must remain in Cuba "until the fever has had its run."[29]

Shafter kept his army in place and did not attempt to move troops to higher ground. One reason was the requirement to retain a sufficient force to keep guard over the large number of Spanish prisoners-of-war awaiting repatriation to Spain. Another factor was the poor physical condition of the American soldiers and the impracticability of marching them and transporting their supplies and equipment along virtually impassable trails into the mountains. While Alger's instructions to Shafter were sensible, they did not take into account the reality that an increasing number of American soldiers in Cuba were falling victim everyday to the oppressive tropical climate, lack of medical care, and inadequate rations of food. During the days following the capitulation there was a growing incidence of disease, mainly malaria, typhoid and dysentery. On July 22 the correspondent, George Kennan, estimated that no more than half of the American troops were fit for active duty. He placed the blame not on the rigours of the Cuban climate but on neglect and lack of care caused by "bad management, lack of foresight, and the almost complete breakdown of the army's commissary and medical departments."[30] The American public was made aware of Kennan's damaging revelations when they were first published in *Outlook Magazine* on July 30. They coincided with and endorsed press reports of the poor physical condition of those Americans who were currently returning on troopships from

Cuba. A harrowing image was presented in the *New York World*'s description of one of the vessels as "a ship of death and horrors."[31]

General Shafter kept the War Department informed of the increase in cases of sickness among his troops as a matter of routine. There was, however, no warning of the furore which suddenly struck Washington during the early days of August. On August 2 Alger received a telegram from Shafter stating: "I am told that at any time an epidemic of yellow fever is liable to occur. I advise that the troops be moved as rapidly as possible whilst the sickness is of a mild type."[32] After consulting the Surgeon-General, George M. Sternburg, Alger repeated his standing instructions that the army should be moved to high ground as soon as it was feasible to do so. Shafter replied on August 3 saying that this was "practically impossible" given the weakened state of his men, of whom an estimated 75 percent had been or were currently suffering from malaria. But there was evidently no time to spare. "In my opinion," he stated, "there is but one course to take, and that is to immediately transport the 5th Corps and the detached regiments that came with it to the United States. If that is not done, I believe the death-rate will be appalling."[33] Within an hour Alger replied that Shafter should "move to the United States such of the troops under your command as not required for duty at Santiago."[34]

Prior to this exchange of telegrams with Alger, Shafter had convened a meeting on August 3 that was attended by his generals, Colonel Theodore Roosevelt and senior surgeons. They all agreed that the only way to avert an epidemic of yellow fever from breaking out was for the army to return to the United States as quickly as possible. Apprehension was expressed, however, that the War Department would continue to insist upon the bulk of the army remaining in Cuba. To help Shafter in his dealings with Washington, it was decided to compose a written letter of support for immediate evacuation. The resulting document was signed in turn by each general and by Colonel Roosevelt, and became known as the "Round Robin." Its main recommendation took the form of a virtual ultimatum and was bluntly worded: "This army must be moved at once or it will perish. As an army it can be safely moved now. Persons responsible for preventing such a move will be responsible for the unnecessary loss of many thousands of lives."[35]

Shafter sent the Round Robin along with other correspondence to Washington late on August 3 so that it was received the next day by Alger at the War Department. However, the text of the document had been leaked to a correspondent of the Associated Press at the general's headquarters on August 3. The result was the publication of the full text of the Round Robin in the American press on the morning of August 4 at the same time as the note was officially received at the War Department. Already alerted by Kennan's article and the reports of the grim conditions on board the first troop-ships arriving from Cuba, the public were now presented with sensational headlines in their daily newspapers such as "Shafter Army In Deadly Peril," "Flower Of The American Army Threatened With Death," and "Must Move The Army."[36]

It was by reading the daily press that President McKinley first learnt of the Round Robin. Though circumstantial evidence pointed to Theodore Roosevelt, it proved impossible to discover the source of the leak.[37] Whoever was responsible, the fact was that the signatories were successful in using the press to mobilize the force of public opinion in their favour and thereby effect a dramatic change of policy. At a time when delicate peace negotiations were taking place with Spain, the United States government was admitting publicly that its army in Cuba was in a state of utter collapse. McKinley and Alger, however, could not be seen to be ignoring their duty of care and acceded to Shafter's request for immediate action to save the army. On August 4 the War Department made the public announcement that new instructions were on their way to Shafter to prepare the evacuation of his troops "as fast as transportation can be provided."[38] Even though Alger revealed that he had actually sent virtually the same instructions to Shafter the previous day, the manner of the publication of the Round Robin made it appear that an insensitive administration was being forced to act belatedly and out of shame. Alger bitterly described the publication of the Round Robin as "one of the most unfortunate and regrettable incidents of the war."[39] There was, however, little public sympathy for the Secretary of War.[40] The press reported that Roosevelt had been privately rebuked for his involvement in the leak, but praised the colonel for succeeding "in awakening the War Department."[41] In a similar vein the *New York Times* remarked, "the commanding officers bullied the department into doing what it should have done two weeks earlier."[42] Shafter and his generals had effectively used the press not only to out-manoeuvre the War Department but also to clear themselves of any imputation of blame for the terrible condition of the army in Cuba. The evacuation of the Fifth Corps proceeded rapidly. It began on August 7 and was completed in less than three weeks. The destination for the evacuees was Montauk Point, New York.

War Department officials had given relatively little thought to preparing a camp in the United States to receive troops returning from Cuba. The matter was not considered to be particularly pressing. Following the capitulation of Santiago de Cuba, the Fifth Corps would be moved to higher ground and was expected to remain in Cuba for some weeks until all signs of tropical disease, especially yellow fever, had been eradicated. Meanwhile, on July 28 Alger approved Montauk Point in the state of New York as the site of the proposed reception camp. Located at the east of Long Island and 125 miles from New York City, it comprised 5,000 acres of virtually uninhabited land owned by the Long Island Railroad Company. The principal attraction of Montauk Point was its geographical remoteness. Troops could be landed and quarantined there until they were judged to be free from yellow fever. The War Department leased the land, and on August 2 signed contracts with local private companies to construct temporary housing and provide a supply of water. It was envisaged that a camp and medical facilities would be established for around 5,000 men.

Hardly had these arrangements been made when the Round Robin was published on August 4 and was followed by the decision to commence at once the evacuation of the whole Fifth Corps to Montauk Point. The generals had secured their objective, but it was the officials of the War Department who faced the consequences. Quite clearly, Montauk Point was not ready. The drilling of wells and laying down of wooden floorboards only started on August 5. Ironically, Montauk Point's very remoteness became a disadvantage because it meant a lack of an existing network of roads and available local supplies. The single-track railway linking Montauk Point with New York City was soon congested. Nevertheless, a "camp" consisting mainly of thousands of tents speedily came into existence. It was named Camp Wikoff, in honour of Colonel Charles Wikoff of the 22nd US Infantry who had been killed in the battle for the San Juan Heights.

Evacuees from Cuba began arriving at Montauk Point as early as August 8. Every day new units arrived, consisting of weak, emaciated men many of whom were visibly suffering from malarial fever or its after-effects. The impression was given of the return of a defeated rather than an all-conquering army. Many of the first arrivals were described as "in shabby condition" with "well worn uniforms" and some were "nearly barefoot."[43] Despite the best efforts of War Department officials, medical staffs and local contractors, the correspondent of the *New York Times* considered the camp to be "in a more or less chaotic state."[44] The image of sick and emaciated men returning from Cuba only to endure further suffering at Camp Wikoff was underlined by emotive headlines in the press such as "Some Of Our Heroes Forced To Drink From A Polluted Pond," "Not Enough Tents At Montauk," and "Sick Soldiers Sleeping On Ground."[45] The commander in charge of the camp, General Joseph Wheeler, privately complained that the press was "addicted to misrepresentation" and gave too negative a picture.[46] There was, however, little that he could do to assuage the pain and shock of the public as trains arrived each day at the camp bringing "hordes of mothers, wives, sisters, and sweethearts, in search of warriors bold, crippled, scarred, or worn."[47]

Conditions steadily improved in September, however, as shortages were remedied and the camp's affairs were energetically administered by General Wheeler. As men recovered their health, they were allowed to leave for their homes. The last batch of soldiers left Camp Wikoff on October 28. In a period of almost eleven weeks the camp received more than 20,000 evacuees. Of these 257 died while at the camp.[48] Cases of yellow fever were minimal and no epidemic occurred. Alger contended that the camp's record of achievement was "creditable," and cited the comment of Shafter that "it was the best camp I ever saw."[49] The seal of official approval was also given by President McKinley's visit to the camp on September 3. Nonetheless, the controversy surrounding the Round Robin and the reports of suffering at Camp Wikoff [50] were severely damaging to the reputation of the McKinley Administration. Blame was increasingly personalized and fastened, not upon

President McKinley or senior military officers, but directly upon Secretary of War, Alger. In popular speech the word "Algerism" was used as a pejorative term to denote maladministration and callous insensitivity. "The War Department is the scandal of President McKinley's Administration," declared the *New York Times* and described Alger as "a public nuisance and a public danger."[51] "We are sick and tired of Secretary Alger," summed up an editorial.[52]

To appease public opinion McKinley appointed a special presidential commission to investigate the War Department's conduct of the war. It was also an astute political move designed to forestall the appointment of a Congressional inquiry whose remit would be broader and politically partisan. The *New York Times* suspected that an official whitewash was intended and that "it is the business of the commission to make a nice, pleasant, ladylike report that the President can read with pleasure and Alger with pride."[53] Under the chairmanship of General Grenville M. Dodge, the "Dodge Commission" commenced its formal proceedings on September 26 1898 and continued until February 9 1899. No doubt to the satisfaction of McKinley and Alger, the first witnesses who appeared before the Commission revealed little that was particularly controversial or newsworthy. This changed abruptly on December 21 1898 when General Miles gave evidence. The general rekindled his longstanding personal feud with Alger[54] by accusing the War Department of including stocks of canned roast beef treated with chemicals in the food supplied to the army. Miles declared that soldiers in Cuba had suffered considerable sickness after eating what he graphically described as "embalmed beef." The press welcomed the opportunity to expose the "Great Beef Scandal" and to run sensational headlines such as "Alger's Embalmed Beef Smelt Like A Cadaver."[55] The *New York Herald* drew an analogy with the Round Robin in noting that Miles was technically in breach of discipline by speaking out in public, but that this was eminently justified "for the sake of the ill-fed, not to say poisoned, private soldier."[56]

The final report of the Commission dismissed Miles's allegation that beef had been treated chemically. While the canned beef was generally deemed of good quality, it was acknowledged that it had proved to be an unsuitable product for use in the tropics. The final report also found no incriminating evidence of corruption or maladministration by the War Department[57]. While the *New York Times* condemned the report as "shameful" and "cowardly," the generally muted response of the public to the findings showed that McKinley had successfully achieved his aim of using the commission to deflect political criticism.[58] Moreover, the heightened emotions arising from the war with Spain had not only been moderated by the passage of time but also overshadowed by other issues such as the conclusion of the Treaty of Paris, the occupation of Cuba, and the great debate over the annexation of the Philippines.

While the exact influence of the press and public opinion on McKinley and his policymaking can never be known, there is no doubt that he was an assiduous reader of the daily press and was sensitive to developments in

public opinion. The perception of public anxiety over the inadequacies of coast defense resulted in improvements in coastal fortifications and in the decision to split the Atlantic fleet into two separate squadrons. The weight of public expectation for an early engagement with the enemy in a land battle strengthened McKinley's desire that his military commanders should formulate and execute plans for a "dash on Havana." After the end of the fighting in Cuba, the assumption of a gradual and orderly withdrawal of the American army from the island was upset by the publication of the Round Robin. By deliberately leaking their letter to the press, American generals in Cuba brought the issue directly to the attention of the public and thereby compelled the War Department to agree to the immediate and precipitate evacuation of the army from Cuba. Subsequent negative press coverage of conditions at Camp Wikoff stimulated growing public criticism of the shortcomings and insensitivity of the War Department and led McKinley to set up a presidential commission of investigation. Although the work and findings of the Dodge Commission were favourable to McKinley, the controversy over "embalmed beef" showed the capacity of the press to inform and influence public opinion. By highlighting the sensational allegations made by General Miles, the press challenged the idea of "a splendid little war"[59] and endorsed instead the growing post-war public perception that Washington's management of the war effort had been characterized by bureaucratic incompetence and insensitivity.

Notes

1 The classic accounts are M. Wilkerson, *Public Opinion and the Spanish-American War: A Study in War Propaganda*, New York: Russell & Russell, 1932, and J. Wisan, *The Cuban Crisis as Reflected in the New York Press*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1934. See also the influential article by G. Auxier, "Middle Western Newspapers and the Spanish-American War, 1895–98," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 26, 1940, pp. 523–34. A readable overview of American journalists and their activities is C. Brown, *The Correspondents' War: Journalists in the Spanish-American War*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967.

2 The most prominent battle was being fought out in New York between Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World* and William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal*.

3 The celebrated journalist, Ida Tarbell, visited McKinley in the White House and noted his close and friendly relations with reporters. Each day he read five or six New York dailies, the Washington papers, one or two from Chicago, and up to a half dozen from other large cities. In addition, Tarbell remarked that "articles of special value and suggestiveness are frequently read and discussed" in conversations with friends and in cabinet meetings. See "President McKinley in War Times," *McClure's Magazine* 11, 1898, 213–14. For the importance that McKinley attached to his relationship with the press, see R. Hilderbrand, *Power and the People: Executive Management of Public Opinion in Foreign Affairs, 1897–1921*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981, pp. 30–3. For a brief period in early 1898 McKinley evidently stopped reading daily newspapers. See G. Linderman, *The Mirror of War: American Society and the Spanish-American War*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1974, p. 28.

4 *New York Journal*, February 18 1898.

5 *New York Times*, April 2 1898.
6 Ibid., March 31 1898.
7 Admiral William T. Sampson, the commander of the North Atlantic Squadron, believed that the Spanish squadron was "the fastest in the world." See W. Sampson, "The Atlantic Fleet in the Spanish War," *The Century Magazine* 57, 1899, 889.
8 *New York Times*, April 15 1898.
9 *New York Times*, March 31 1898.
10 R. Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1901, p. 10.
11 A. Mahan, *Lessons of the War with Spain, and Other Articles*, Boston: Little Brown, 1899, p. 56.
12 Captain Robley D. Evans of the *USS Iowa*, quoted in D. Trask, *The War with Spain in 1898*, New York: Macmillan, 1981, p. 84.
13 Alger evidently indicated that an army of 40,000 could be put in the field at ten days' notice. See M. Leech, *In the Days of McKinley*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959, p. 198. The *New York Times* claimed that Alger had said in August 1897 that "within thirty days after war broke out he could put into the field 'millions of fighting men'." See *New York Times*, August 9, 1898.
14 Ibid., April 2 1898.
15 Ibid., April 12 1898.
16 Ibid., April 19 1898.
17 *The Times* (London), April 23 1898.
18 *New York Times*, May 2 1898. On April 24 McKinley had approved the order given to the Asiatic Squadron under Commodore George Dewey to proceed with an attack on the Philippines.
19 Ibid.
20 N. Miles, *Serving the Republic*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1911, p. 272.
21 For the political debate over organizing the army, see G. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish-American War*, Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1971, pp. 80–101.
22 Miles, *Serving the Republic*, p. 270. More than 200,000 volunteers were eventually called out. Around 35,000 saw service overseas. See Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, p.266.
23 W. White,"When Johnny Went Marching Out," *McClure's Magazine* 11, 1898, quoted in Brown, *The Correspondents' War*, p. 158.
24 Problems with communications from Manila meant that Dewey's victory was not fully confirmed until a few days later on May 7.
25 *New York Times*, 19 and May 20 1898. The Pacific Ocean held no such danger from the Spanish navy so that a force of 2,500 troops was prepared and set sail from San Francisco for the Philippines on May 25.
26 R. Davis, *The Cuban and Porto Rican Campaigns*, New York: Scribner's, 1898, p. 42.
27 Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, p. 296. For an outline of the military campaign see J. Smith, *The Spanish-American War: Conflict in the Caribbean and the Pacific, 1895–1902*, London: Longman, 1994, pp. 119–59.
28 Alger to Shafter, July 13 1898, quoted in Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, p. 256.
29 See Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, p. 258.
30 George Kennan, *Campaigning In Cuba*, Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1899, pp. 215–16.
31 *New York World*, August 1 1898, quoted in Brown, *The Correspondents' War*, p. 435. The troopship in question was the *Concho*.
32 Shafter to Alger, August 2 1898, quoted in Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, p. 262.
33 Shafter to Alger, August 3, 1898, quoted in ibid., p. 263.
34 Alger to Shafter, August 3 1898, quoted in ibid., p. 265.
35 The text of the Round Robin is printed in ibid., p. 266.
36 See *Salt Lake Herald* and *St Paul Globe*, August 5 1898.

37 Roosevelt claimed that he had shown a draft of the document to assembled press-men. See R. Paine, *Roads of Adventure*, Cambridge, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1922, pp. 269–71. Colonel Leonard Wood believed that the leak had come from Shafter. On this see H. Hagedorn, *Leonard Wood: A Biography*, 2 vols, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1931, vol. I, p. 201.

38 Adjutant General Henry C. Corbin to Shafter, August 4 1898, quoted in Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, pp. 271–2.

39 Ibid., p. 269.

40 The publication of the leaked document not only embarrassed the War Depart-ment but also threatened to disrupt diplomatic negotiations which were currently taking place in Washington to bring a formal end to the war.

41 *Salt Lake Herald*, August 5 1898.

42 *New York Times*, August 25 1898.

43 *New York Times*, 9 and August 10 1898.

44 Ibid., August 10 1898.

45 Quoted in J. Dyer, *'Fightin' Joe' Wheeler*, University, La.: Louisiana State University Press, 1941, pp. 369–70.

46 Wheeler to Mark Hanna, September 5 1898 quoted in ibid., p. 372.

47 *New York Tribune*, September 11 1898, quoted in ibid., p. 372.

48 More American soldiers died at Camp Wikoff than had been killed in combat in Cuba.

49 Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, pp. 438, 448.

50 The press was also highly critical of the primitive living conditions experienced by volunteers at the training camps in Chickamauga Park, Georgia, and Camp Alger, Virginia.

51 *New York Times*, 9 and August 25 1898.

52 Ibid., 27 August 1898.

53 *New York Times*, November 28 1898.

54 Miles had clashed with Alger over the plan for an assault on Havana and had argued that the Expeditionary Force should be directed to Puerto Rico rather than Cuba. See E. Ranson, "Nelson A. Miles as Commanding General, 1895–1903," *Military Affairs* 29, 1965–6, 183–90.

55 *Salt Lake Herald*, April 5 99.

56 *New York Herald*, March 21 1899.

57 The commissioners adopted an ambivalent attitude toward Alger, and ended their report with the critical statement that "there was lacking in the general adminis-tration of the War Department during the continuance of the war with Spain that complete grasp of the situation which was essential to the high efficiency and dis-cipline of the Army." See "Report of the Commission Appointed by the President to Investigate the Conduct of the War Department in the War With Spain," 56th Congress 1st Session, Senate Document No. 221, 8 vols, Washington DC: General Printing Office, 1900. vol. 1, p. 116. After a short interval Alger resigned his office in August 1899.

58 *New York Times*, May 8 1898, quoted in E. Ranson, "The Investigation of the War Department, 1898–99," *The Historian* 34, 1971, 98.

59 John Hay's famous phrase was included in a letter written to Theodore Roosevelt and dated July 27. It was therefore coined before the Round Robin, Camp Wikoff, and the Beef Scandal. Hay's letter is quoted in W. Millis, *The Martial Spirit: A Study of Our War with Spain*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1931, p. 340.

3   To mobilize a nation

Citizens' organizations and intervention on the eve of World War II

Andrew Johnstone

From the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939 until Pearl Harbor, the American people were involved in a great debate over the direction of the nation's foreign policy. When considering foreign policy issues, President Franklin Roosevelt made numerous references to the importance of public opinion. Following the passage of the Lend-Lease Act, Roosevelt stated that "we have just now engaged in a great debate. It was not limited to the halls of Congress. It was argued in every newspaper, on every wave length, over every cracker barrel in all the land; and it was finally settled and decided by the American people themselves."[1]

The numerous references to "the public" and "public opinion" made by Roosevelt and his Administration were not just lip service to a democratic ideal. James Schneider has noted that "time and again in private messages to foreign leaders and in conversations with officials, Roosevelt cited public opinion as one determinant of his actions." While Warren Kimball admits that sometimes "public opinion was as much an excuse as a reason for Roosevelt's hesitation," the shadow of Woodrow Wilson was prominent in Roosevelt's mind. If this may have led him to overestimate public opinion, he rarely underestimated it.[2]

While the role of the isolationist movement during this period – especially the America First Committee – has been studied in depth, the extent of the interaction between the Roosevelt Administration and *internationalist* citizens' groups has not been fully analyzed. Some of the work done on internationalist groups of this period does not effectively bring out the connections between these groups and the Roosevelt Administration. Similarly, by taking one group at a time, the connections *between* private groups are left largely unexplored. Within these groups there was a wide range of what can broadly be termed internationalist opinion, from those who advocated aid to the allies short of war, to interventionists who openly suggested joining the war immediately. The internationalists were most clearly represented at this time by the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies (CDAAA) and Fight For Freedom (FFF).[3]

The CDAAA and FFF were the two main organizations in 1940 and 1941 that promoted a more active role for the United States with regard to World

War II. The CDAAA, formed in May 1940, argued for maximum aid to the Allies through a variety of policies, and continued to function until Pearl Harbor. The more militant FFF was set up in April 1941 to openly promote US involvement in the war, arguing that Nazi Germany represented a clear threat to the US that must be stopped. The elite leaderships of the CDAAA and the FFF worked to influence the wider mass public, but at the same time they sought to represent that wider public in order to influence the government. The focus of this chapter is on the development by the two organizations of both horizontal and vertical networks of interaction in order to expand their influence.[4]

Both organizations deliberately worked with different sectors of society in order to claim to represent the broadest possible range of the US public. This horizontal interaction with other citizens' organizations – whether focused on foreign policy matters or not – enabled the organizations to mobilize wider public support behind those policies. The vast number of diverse citizens' organizations reached by the CDAAA and FFF created broad public support (or at the very least, the appearance of such support) for greater US involvement in world affairs, if not outright intervention in the war in Europe.

This broad public support in turn gave the organizations leverage with the US government when it came to trying to influence policy. This vertical or state-private interaction between citizens' groups and the US government enabled the leaderships of both organizations to maintain close contact with the Roosevelt Administration in an attempt to influence official policy and stay up to date with the latest government policy planning.

It has been suggested that the organizations were merely fronts for the Roosevelt Administration or for the elite Council on Foreign Relations. However, the horizontal interaction of both organizations meant they were more than merely an elite. Indeed, for them, a sense of wider public support was essential to give democratic credibility to their cause. They consciously and actively sought to represent the American public to strengthen their case in the eyes of both the American people and the US government. That public support was then used to influence foreign policy in two ways. First, through broad democratic means: the mass support that would be registered through the new but rapidly developing science of opinion polling, as well as in the offices of members of Congress. Second, through close links and personal connections: the leaderships of the organizations sought and maintained personal relationships with the Roosevelt Administration.[5]

Assessments of the influence of the two organizations would conclude that they had only limited success in changing the minds of the American people (especially with respect to the more militant demands of FFF), and that changes in public attitudes were more clearly determined by events in Europe than by debates at home. Yet the methodology of the organizations reveals the importance of public support and consensus in American politics. In order to claim maximum credibility, the organizations needed to display geographical and generational breadth, as well as representing varieties of class,

ethnicity, and gender. In addition, the way that the two organizations worked with *and* influenced both the wider public *and* the government set a pattern for the future. The creation of vertical networks of interaction in particular is one of the most significant developments of this period with respect to the relationship between the American public and US foreign policy. Such networks would grow and develop during the Cold War, but they began before Pearl Harbor.[6]

The largest internationalist group to develop between the outbreak of war in Europe and Pearl Harbor was the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies. Based in New York out of the offices of the League of Nations Association, the organization evolved out of the even more cumbersomely titled Non-Partisan Committee for Peace Through Revision of the Neutrality Law (NPC), which was set up in 1939 and chaired, as the CDAAA initially would be, by William Allen White, editor of the *Emporia Gazette*. As a Midwesterner and lifelong Republican, White provided geographical and political cover for the more liberal leadership based out of New York, but the CDAAA's driving force was League of Nations Association director Clark Eichelberger.

The NPC dissolved with the swift revision of the Neutrality Acts, but it provided the structural basis for the formation of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, announced on May 20 1940. In response to the dramatic German advances in Europe, the Committee's opening statement argued that the war in Europe represented "a life and death struggle for every principle we cherish in America," and that it was time for the United States to "throw its economic and moral weight on the side of the nations of western Europe, great and small, that are struggling in battle for a civilized way of life; that constitute our first line of defense."[7]

Although it was headquartered in New York, the CDAAA soon expanded through a network of local chapters. More than 300 local chapters had been established in 47 states by the first week of July 1940, and there were additional chapters in the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, Canada, and even an outpost in London. By October 1941 there were well over 800 chapters. The chapters became centers for public meetings and debates, distributed official CDAAA literature, and sent numerous letters to Congress. Walter Johnson, an early historian of the CDAAA, argued that it "would have been a paper organization without the local chapters," and that they provided the Committee with its strength and influence. It is therefore unsurprising that in addition to the spontaneous outgrowth of chapters across the nation, the CDAAA actively created new chapters through field work.[8]

The quantitative expansion seen in the rapidly increasing number of chapters was clearly important in proving that the CDAAA had public support. However, the organization sought not only to display numerical clout, but also sociological breadth. The CDAAA leadership was certainly open to criticism that they represented an Eastern Establishment Anglophile elite on the Atlantic coast that did not accurately characterize American society. It was

also argued that they represented a generation that could afford to promote war as they would be too old to go to Europe and fight. In response, the group actively encouraged the creation of specific National Divisions to counter such views, adopting a "qualitative approach … to develop support in these 'weak spot' areas in which opposition is most likely to take root." Three sections of society that were specifically targeted due to their divided nature were students (and young people more generally), women, and labor. By October 1940 there were four National Divisions: the Youth Division, the College Division, the Women's Division, and the Labor Division.[9]

As those who would be most likely to have to go overseas to fight, many young people were against any policies that might drag the United States into war. The American Student Union, for example, was against any connection with the war. This left students with a more internationalist outlook to search elsewhere for representation, but it also exposed a need to develop student opinion. As a result, the autumn of 1940 saw the CDAAA leadership develop a College Division which created 68 chapters by June 1941. They created and distributed student-targeted literature, as well as organizing conferences and securing advisors including Max Lerner and Reinhold Niebuhr. The more general National Youth Division was less of a success in comparison, with little success in 1940 beyond New York City, though it was seen as an important area to cultivate support and was flagged up as an area to be strengthened.[10]

The National Women's Division, led by Mrs Rushmore Patterson, filled another social gap, as internationalist leaders sought to challenge the traditional assumption that women and mothers would take a pacifist approach to foreign affairs. To counter groups such as the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, the Women's Division looked to develop local women's committees throughout the country. It was hoped that representatives from larger women's groups such as the League of Women Voters would add weight to the Women's Division. However, it was not a priority for the national leadership, nor was it as successful as the College Division in developing chapters. As a result, it was left to organize such trivial activities as the CDAAA poster contest.[11]

The Labor Division was created in the knowledge that the memberships of the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations were divided over policies toward the war in Europe. However, the activity of the National Labor Division also struggled to spread beyond New York City, despite CDAAA pamphlets highlighting labor's stake in the war and the fact that British trade unions were behind the war effort. In addition to these specifically targeted weak spots, the CDAAA took advantage of pockets of professional support to develop five special committees of scientists, historians, physicians, dentists, and an aviation committee. While these may not have been as urgently needed as the College or Labor Divisions, they added to the broad range of support that the CDAAA could claim within its own ranks.[12]

The African American community was another section of society that the CDAAA approached, albeit with caution. Prominent racial divisions remained in the United States, and CDAAA leaders were reluctant to be seen as overly liberal with respect to domestic racial politics. There was never any consideration of a separate Division: it was unlikely to achieve mass support, and could lead to the loss of political support elsewhere. Instead the CDAAA leadership appealed to African American leaders, such as A. Philip Randolph and Ralph Bunche, to join them. In fact, Randolph was also against a separate "Colored Division," reasoning that African Americans should not need separate branches. Despite the relatively low-key approach to the African American community, the CDAAA still sought out support through pamphlets such as "Colored People Have a Stake in the War." While the community remained divided in the end, the involvement of some community leaders enabled the CDAAA to show that not all African Americans prioritized domestic concerns.[13]

The qualitative approach to expanding the CDAAA's public reach also led to horizontal interaction and cooperation with targeted organizations that did not normally or specifically deal with foreign policy issues. As with the CDAAA's own National Divisions, the sections of society targeted represented "weak spots" in the general profile of American internationalists. In addition to women's groups and labor organizations, highlighted areas included veterans' groups, such as the American Legion, and religious organizations, such as the Church Peace Union, in the knowledge that they were two divided sectors of society. These links strengthened the image of support provided by the CDAAA's own Divisions.[14]

Yet the qualitative approach to public opinion had its most direct success in the horizontal interaction with other organizations interested in foreign affairs. The easiest connections for the CDAAA to develop were with organizations that worked out of the very same building. These included the CDAAA's hosts at 8 West 40th Street in New York, the League of Nations Association, as well as the Association's research affiliate, the Commission to Study the Organization of Peace. There was also the American Union for Concerted Peace Efforts, which was largely dormant while the CDAAA was in action. In the summer of 1941, a further organization, the Free World Association, was set up there with the rather vast and vague aims of securing a democratic peace, and promoting freedom and justice. Unsurprisingly, the aims and memberships of these organizations overlapped greatly. Clark Eichelberger was director of them all, and would go on to become Chairman of the CDAAA in October 1941. As a result, these connections added little to the cause. Different cooperating committees could be added to a letterhead, but close inspection revealed the same individuals at the heart.[15]

More credible and impressive connections were made with committees that had no direct link with those at 8 West 40th Street. One of the more significant connections was that made with the Council for Democracy. Set up by Henry Luce and C.D. Jackson of *Time/Life* along with radio

commentator Raymond Gram Swing, it refused to discuss specific foreign policy issues, focusing instead on promoting democratic ideals and the freedoms guaranteed under the Bill of Rights. The Council took a slightly different approach to the CDAAA, deliberately avoiding a "mass public" appeal, with no chapters or grass-roots organization. However, it did act as a coordinating body (or "service agency"), and sought to cooperate with all possible trade, professional, patriotic, and civic organizations in the promotion of mutual aims. The national profile of those involved ensured a substantial amount of press coverage.[16]

Other examples of horizontal interaction came through numerous smaller groups. Friends of Democracy, established by L.M. Birkhead, used images of Nazi brutality to put its message across. One striking pamphlet from March 1941 described the America First Committee as a "Nazi Transmission Belt," arguing that Nazis endorsed America First policies, and that supporters of America First were often members of pro-Nazi organizations. February 1941 saw the announcement of a new organization, United Americans. Announced by Orville McPherson, publisher of the *Kansas City Journal*, the new group aimed to supplement the activities of the CDAAA, which McPherson claimed was hamstrung in the Midwest by its emphasis on providing aid to Britain rather than building up American defenses. The initial list of sponsors for United Americans included a number of figures associated with the CDAAA, including actor Douglas Fairbanks Jr, but despite the promise of a grand premiere, the group never took off. A further group created in the summer of 1941 was the Associated Leagues for a Declared War, who argued for an immediate declaration of war.[17]

However, the organization leading the public charge for involvement in the war was Fight for Freedom. The new group evolved out of a more informal group created the previous summer – known either as the Century Club group, after the exclusive location where it met, or as the Miller group, after one of its leaders, Francis Miller. Many were also CDAAA members, in what William Allen White called "the interlocking directorate of internationalism." Yet despite those connections, many Century Club group members were increasingly frustrated by the beginning of 1941 with the CDAAA's unwillingness to push ahead for a declaration of war, or even for greater support (such as convoying) to those fighting against Nazi Germany. When White resigned as CDAAA Chairman in January 1941 over comments that his main purpose was to keep America out of war, many hoped that CDAAA policy would move forward, but with no change forthcoming it was felt necessary to create a new organization. It was announced on April 19 1941, with a prominent Honorary Chairman in Senator Carter Glass and Rev. Henry Hobson as Chairman. However, like the CDAAA, FFF was really driven by one of its less well known figures, the Chairman of its Executive Committee, Ulric Bell (formerly of the *Louisville Courier Journal*).[18]

Bell argued that FFF represented "a real and insistent demand from thousands of citizens, high and low, for a medium through which to express their

views." Arguing that the government was "not equipped to mobilize and channelize public opinion," he openly admitted that the organization was in the propaganda business. Its aim was "to play a modest part in persuading our great representative body to be representative." This was necessary as those in opposition – the America First Committee – held the ear of Congress, and a new organization was needed to inform Congress of what the grass roots was really saying.[19]

To prove that it represented the real grass roots of the American public, FFF adopted the same approach in reaching the public as the CDAAA. In addition to a strong national organization, it was seen as essential to show quantitative strength by having the support of as many local chapters as possible: there were 372 by the time of Pearl Harbor. Yet the quality, range, and nature of that support was again crucial. A memorandum outlining the FFF's brief history highlighted the number of different sectors of society involved, including actors, architects, artists, military and government officials, authors and dramatists, businessmen, bankers, clergy, directors, educators, journalists, labor officials, lawyers, musicians, publishers, scientists, and women.[20]

FFF also sought to create special divisions, focusing on the same social groups as the CDAAA: labor, women, youth, and African Americans. Perhaps the most successful appeal was to labor, in part due to FFF's open support of collective bargaining. As a result, it was more effective than the CDAAA's Labor Division, but more importantly overall, labor was more firmly behind the internationalist cause than it was behind that of America First, which was in most cases extremely critical of the Roosevelt Administration, which had vast labor support.[21]

FFF only created a Women's Division in November 1941, and it barely had time to organize before the US was at war. However, prior to that it had worked informally with the Women's Committee for Action, which had existed since December 1940. The Committee saw itself as opposition to "the influence of the women lobbyists for peace who are giving Congress very effectively the idea that all women are against war and help to Britain if it involves any danger to ourselves." It was however a less public operation than the CDAAA's Women's Division, with no drive for mass membership. Instead, it worked behind the scenes, as it did during the Lend-Lease debate to create the youth organization Student Defenders of Democracy. This group, like the CDAAA's College Division, helped counter the idea that those who might have to fight were against the war.[22]

As with the CDAAA, FFF's approach to the African American community was through its prominent leaders, such as A. Philip Randolph and Adam Clayton Powell. However, FFF went further in creating a Harlem Division, though financial pressures limited its effectiveness, and eventually forced the branch to move to Midtown. Despite the extra effort (and the more liberal outlook of FFF compared to CDAAA policy), the internationalist movement was unable to convince the wider African American community that issues abroad were more pressing than those at home.[23]

Although both organizations sought the broadest and deepest public support, there were slight differences in approach. FFF officials argued that their approach was targeted at the common man, or a more mass public ("via Main Street"). This contrasted with what was seen as a more top down approach from the CDAAA, who "gather in the bigwigs, and then try to work down," leading to a "society complexion" that FFF claimed to avoid. However, while this criticism may have been valid in larger cities with greater degrees of social stratification, it was less effective in smaller communities. Additionally, FFF continued to emphasize its prominent members at a national level.[24]

Indeed, as 1941 progressed, relations between the CDAAA and FFF caused numerous challenges, and rather than working together against the forces of America First, they were increasingly competing with each other. Despite their efforts at creating a vast network of organizations in support of a more active foreign policy, the two organizations were in fact extremely competitive. Personal and policy differences at the leadership level, especially between Eichelberger and Bell, kept relations tense throughout 1941. From the view of the new, more militant FFF, the CDAAA was an overly conservative group whose time had passed. In the eyes of Ulric Bell, CDAAA policy tended to follow on the coat-tails of FFF policy, yet the older organization refused to fold into the newer one. From the CDAAA's perspective, the FFF was racing too far ahead of public opinion (and government policy), damaging the CDAAA's hard earned brand credibility, and trying to steal its members. Both groups were concerned about duplication of efforts, but neither was willing to cede superiority to the other.[25]

It was recognized that the inability of the two organizations to work together was hurting their cause, yet only in New York were the chapters of both groups able to come together. Arguing for cooperation, the CDAAA's New York chapter Director Gerald MacDonald argued that Roosevelt's policy of aggressive defense represented a basis for national unity that

> should permeate every stratum of society outside as well as within the government. It is most important that this unity be manifested in private groups of citizens such as those we represent which have been striving to rouse our people to the acuteness of the danger confronting us.

However, despite meetings regarding how best to move forward and suggestions of a merger, no solution was found prior to Pearl Harbor. In fact, following accusations from Eichelberger that FFF was becoming increasingly political (particularly pro-Wendell Willkie and Fiorello LaGuardia), Bell claimed that it was "impossible to cooperate" with the CDAAA, who were becoming "as much of an obstruction as the America First Committee."[26]

However, most of these disagreements took place behind the scenes. In the eyes of the public, the two organizations clearly worked together on a number of issues and had little to differentiate between them (though this in turn led

to confusion as to the need for two separate organizations). One issue where both organizations did agree, and the one area where they refused to open their doors to an additional social element, was communism. Following the German invasion of the USSR in June 1941, many American communists performed an abrupt policy U-turn and advocated increased mobilization and maximum aid to America's new ally. Yet despite supporting the provision of aid to the USSR, the CDAAA refused to hold joint meetings with any communist groups "who were opposed to American preparation and aid to Britain when Russia was playing with the Axis and have now changed their line simply because Russia has changed its line." FFF support for the USSR was even more reluctant, and not only did the organization avoid working with communist groups, communists were excluded from the organization altogether. The reluctance was not merely on ideological grounds, but also political ones, as any taint of communism would have provided the non-interventionist movement with a point of attack.[27]

Communists and non-interventionists aside, both the CDAAA and FFF consciously sought to extend their public reach as widely and as deeply as possible. The success of this horizontal interaction gave them greater weight when it came to influencing the government, as their mobilization of public opinion created a public space that enabled a more active and internationalist foreign policy to be enacted. However, vertical interaction was essential if the organizations were to provide direct support to the Roosevelt Administration or influence the creation of policy.

This vertical interaction between citizens groups and the government worked in a number of ways. First, and most obviously, the public support and horizontal interaction developed by the organizations was brought to bear on both the Executive and Legislative branches through traditional democratic means: direct correspondence, rallies and town hall meetings. This represents the more traditional activity undertaken by citizens' and interest groups, and was largely open and in the public domain. This was encouraged by the leaderships of both organizations, and was seen most clearly when particular policies and issues were debated. The most significant example was Lend-Lease debate. Once the bill was introduced, the internationalist leaders recognized that Roosevelt had effectively given them responsibility for promoting the Lend-Lease bill to the public, a responsibility they gladly accepted. The CDAAA, often working with Century Club group members, mobilized their vast network of organizational connections to organize rallies, distribute pamphlets, and deliver speeches and radio addresses. The two month debate saw the most heated exchanges between internationalist and non-interventionist groups, though the bill eventually passed with relative ease.[28]

The second type of vertical interaction was less obvious, more personal and took place behind the scenes. Here, although the organizations gained credibility from their mass memberships, it was the nature of their leaderships that was most important. The political experience of the organization leaders became advantageous to both parties as they worked together to further

shared goals. The established public reputation of William Allen White, the governmental experience of Lewis Douglas, the close personal relationship with Roosevelt of Thomas Lamont, and the State Department connections of Clark Eichelberger and Ulric Bell became increasingly significant.

Despite its non-partisan nature and Republican Chairman, the CDAAA was clearly sympathetic to the foreign policy aims of the Roosevelt Administration. In fact, it often went out of its way to act as a propaganda agency for those policies. Both William Allen White and Clark Eichelberger sought to synchronize organization policy with that of the Roosevelt Administration. White may have been a Republican, but his relationship with the President was close enough for Roosevelt to comment that White was "a very good friend of mine for three and a half years out of every four years." Regarding CDAAA activities, White later remarked that "I never did anything the President didn't ask for, and I always conferred with him on our program."[29]

Other figures, including J.P. Morgan partner Thomas Lamont, helped to keep the President in the loop about CDAAA activities. Lamont was responsible for informing the President about the Committee's formation five days before it went public, and he was glad to learn that the plan "did not go contrary in any way to your own ideas and plans." This is not to suggest that the organization would not have existed without presidential approval. However, it was certainly clear from the outset that the Committee's purpose was to give full support to the administration's policies.[30]

The most notable example of vertical interaction came with the destroyer-bases agreement of 1940. At a time when cooperation between the CDAAA and the Century Club group was at its peak, the two organizations worked together to ensure acceptance of a dramatic proposal whereby 50 overage destroyers were exchanged for 99 year leases on six Caribbean bases, two more of which in Newfoundland and Bermuda were given as gifts. The initial appeal for the destroyers had come from Winston Churchill, but Roosevelt was reluctant to act in an election year, either through Congress, where there would be heated debate, or through executive action which could be seen as unconstitutional. On 1 August 1940, Eichelberger, Ward Cheney (of the Century Club group), and Herbert Agar (of both organizations) visited Roosevelt, forcefully recommending the proposal. In addition, they argued that Roosevelt's Presidential opponent, Wendell Willkie, would not oppose the plan. Willkie had already met with the CDAAA's Lewis Douglas, and a further meeting with White helped reassure the President that Willkie would not attack any destroyer exchange in the election. To further reassure Roosevelt, four renowned lawyers, including CDAAA members Dean Acheson and George Rublee, wrote to the *New York Times* citing how any exchange undertaken by executive action would be legal. There is no doubt that the destroyer-bases exchange, eventually announced on September 3 1940, was greatly assisted by the leadership of both the CDAAA and the Century Club.[31]

The CDAAA increasingly looked to the Roosevelt Administration for guidance following the passage of the Lend-Lease Act in March 1941, as this

effectively provided for maximum aid to the allies, fulfilling the Committee's demands. To consider where the Committee should go next, it looked directly to the White House for advice. The CDAAA's lack of clear direction was thrown into even sharper relief with the creation of FFF, with its clear support for direct involvement in the war. Eichelberger sought advice and clarification from Roosevelt, asking "how can we most effectively support the policy upon which you have decided?" However, it is clear that Eichelberger's correspondence – while by no means ignored by the White House – did not receive as much attention from the President as White's had, which reflected both the nature of their personal relationship and the position of the CDAAA by the middle of 1941.[32]

By that point FFF had become the spearhead of public activities, at least in terms of policy, yet despite their forceful rhetoric and demands for war, they too were willing to take behind the scenes advice from the White House. In April 1941, FFF was asked to limit its appeals for Atlantic convoying of aid due to the strength of Congressional opposition. A further request from the White House in September delayed a proposed push for a Congressional declaration of war. Despite the fact that Roosevelt frequently used "trial balloon" speeches, and was usually happy for the internationalist organizations to move out in front of public opinion, it is telling that the administration thought that some actions could do more harm than good. It is also apparent that Roosevelt felt more confident taking small steps in the direction of involvement than big ones. Overall, it is clear that when FFF and the CDAAA received advice from the White House, they acted upon it.[33]

Nevertheless, it was clear that Roosevelt valued the role of FFF. In a letter to Ulric Bell a few weeks after Pearl Harbor, the President argued that the work of FFF "made a contribution to the national defense and to the national security which is incalculable," and that the government "appreciates everything you did to arouse the nation to impending peril." In fact, the internationalist organizations had played such a significant role in the lead up to war, that in the aftermath of Pearl Harbor, attempts were made to find an alternative function for them. In mid-December 1941, Archibald MacLeish of the Office of Facts and Figures met with Eichelberger and Lewis Douglas, along with William Agar of FFF and Ernest Angell of the Council for Democracy, to promise governmental support to any citizens' organization willing to help in the war effort, particularly in the field of national morale. MacLeish argued that there was important work to be done by such committees, "who could carry the story of the war effort to the people in ways which would not be available to the government and which could supplement the government's efforts most effectively." This endorsement of the past work and future potential of the internationalist organizations was endorsed by Roosevelt himself, who noted that MacLeish was "taking just the right line."[34]

In fact, efforts to incorporate the internationalist organizations into a more formal state-private structure for morale and domestic counter-propaganda began in the summer of 1941 before the United States was at war. The Office

of Civilian Defense, established in May 1941 and led by Fiorello LaGuardia, had a broad remit that included national morale. At that time, a memorandum from Roosevelt urged Lowell Mellett, Director of the Office of Government Reports, to meet with LaGuardia, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, and Ulric Bell regarding "the whole subject of effective publicity to offset the propaganda of the Wheelers, Nyes, Lindburghs [sic], etc."[35]

Later that summer, Adlai Stevenson (then assistant to Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox) contacted Bell regarding a proposed government-public organization to promote national unity and support for the administration, while countering the isolationist rhetoric of America First. The projected organization was to consist of two parts. The first part was a Government Liaison Committee, including Stevenson, Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy, William Elliot from the Office of Production Management, Coordinator of Information William Donovan, and a representative from the Office of Civilian Defense. The other half was a Public Liaison Committee, comprising Bell (representing FFF), Eichelberger (CDAAA), and Angell of the Council for Democracy. Space was left for other committee representatives, but the lack of any highlighted just how successful the CDAAA and FFF had been in dominating the public debate. Although nothing came of the proposal, it reflected the administration's belief in the worth of such organizations, acknowledged the work they had done, and helped display the value of the vertical interaction between the administration and citizens' organizations. It was no surprise that many leaders of both the CDAAA and FFF (including Bell, Douglas, and Eichelberger) went on to work with the Roosevelt Administration during the war.[36]

The debates over American entry into World War II did not succeed in uniting Americans behind the President's foreign policy, let alone convincing them of the need for war. Although the internationalists proved that a comfortable majority did back Roosevelt, a vocal minority remained, and their work remained unfinished. Nevertheless, their organizations were still of considerable political significance. A wartime State Department assessment of the organizations argued that they acted as catalysts, helping to "clarify issues and to crystallize existing attitudes … to mobilize them, to make them vocal. They converted an existing, and more or less widespread, attitude into an effective demand for action on a particular measure at a particular time." Yet what was also significant about the debate was the formation of a network of private interest groups working together first to educate the public about foreign affairs and secondly to channel that public support.[37]

The "horizontal interaction" between the internationalist committees increased and developed as the period progressed. The CDAAA and FFF had overlapping memberships, and both established connections with leaders of less overtly political interest groups, at least in terms of foreign affairs, including students, church leaders, women's groups, and labor unions. They worked to create new organizations where groups did not already exist, and they set up links with committees that were well established. Their aim was to

target sections of society that were characterized as anti-war in order to work toward the appearance of unity at the very least. Mark Chadwin has accurately argued that the organizations could be seen as "a carefully cultivated attempt by a determined minority to give the impression of size and spontaneity." There is no doubt that the internationalists were determined, and that they made a conscious and deliberate appeal for national unity behind Roosevelt's policies, but there is also no denying the public support that was mobilized by the committees.[38]

That support was then channelled in the direction of Washington. The experience of organizational leaders like Clark Eichelberger, Ulric Bell, William Allen White, and others such as Lewis Douglas, Herbert Agar, and Thomas Lamont meant the organizations had a considerable number of contacts in formal government. Even for those who were not personally familiar with the President, other administration members and State Department officials provided a wealth of advice, information and support to sympathetic groups such as the CDAAA. This "vertical interaction" between non-governmental organizations and formal institutions of government meant that private individuals could wield significant influence within government, as the CDAAA and the Century Club group did during the destroyer-bases exchange. The interaction worked both ways, as it allowed Roosevelt to have an informal propaganda service, one which often sought his advice and followed his instructions. As Michael Sherry has noted, Roosevelt's Administration avoided official propaganda "in favour of an informal public-private cooperation that would largely prevail for decades after the war." As a result, in addition to the vast effort to mobilize the American public against the fascist threat, further significance of such networks lay in their potential for years to come.[39]

Notes

1 S. Rosenman (ed.), *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 10, New York: Harper and Bros., 1950, p. 63.

2 J. Schneider, *Should America go to War?* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989 p. xiv; W Kimball, *The Juggler*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991, p. 204 fn.13.

3 On the CDAAA, see W. Johnson, *The Battle Against Isolation*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1944; for the FFF see M. Chadwin, *The Hawks of World War II*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968. This chapter refers to both the Committee to Defend America and Fight For Freedom as internationalists, though the latter group are often referred to as interventionists to distinguish their more hawkish policies. For studies of isolationist, or more accurately, non-interventionist movements, see W. Cole, *America First*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1953; M. Jonas, *Isolationism in America*, Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1966; and J. Doenecke, *Storm on the Horizon*, Lanham: Roman and Littlefield, 2000.

4 For two classic works that attempted to define the stratification of American public opinion, see G. Almond, *The American People and Foreign Policy*, New York: Praeger 1950, pp. 138–39; J. Rosenau, *Public Opinion and Foreign Policy*, New York: Random House, 1961, pp. 27–43.

5 For the suggestion that the organizations were fronts for the Roosevelt Administration see M. Small, *Democracy and Diplomacy*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1996, p. 70. For arguments that they were fronts for the Council on Foreign Relations, see M. Wala, *The Council on Foreign Relations and American Foreign Policy in the Early Cold War*, Providence: Berghahn, 1994, pp. 171–81; and I. Parmar, *Think Tanks and Foreign Policy*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004, pp. 151–7.

6 For work on state-private networks in the Cold War, see F. Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper: The CIA and the Cultural Cold War*, London: Granta, 1999; H. Laville and H. Wilford (eds), *The US Government, Citizen Groups and the Cold War: The State-Private Network*, London: Routledge, 2006.

7 William Allen White Committee Press Release, May 20 1940, box 36, file 9, CDAAA Papers, Mudd Library, Princeton University; Johnson, *The Battle Against Isolation*, pp. 69–70, 74–75; C. Eichelberger, *Organizing For Peace*, New York: Harper and Bros, 1977, pp. 121–6.

8 The only state the CDAAA failed to establish itself in was North Dakota. Memorandum on Chapter Organization, October 9 1941, box 5, file 18, CDAAA Papers; Johnson, *The Battle Against Isolation*, pp. 74–5.

9 Policies, Aims and Accomplishments of the CDAAA, pp. 8, 15, October 9 1940, box 9, file 15, CDAAA Papers.

10 Memorandum on Chapter Organization, October 9 1941, box 5, file 18, CDAAA Papers; Policies, Aims and Accomplishments of the CDAAA, p. 15, October 9, 1940, box 9, folder 15, CDAAA Papers; Report on College Division, June 1941, box 28, file 25, CDAAA Papers.

11 Eichelberger to Patterson, July 26 1940, box 29, file 4, CDAAA Papers; Policies, Aims and Accomplishments of the CDAAA, p. 8, October 9 1940, box 9, file 15, CDAAA Papers; M. Paton Walsh, *Our War Too: American Women Against the Axis*, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002, pp. 93–6.

12 Policies, Aims and Accomplishments of the CDAAA, p. 8, October 9 1940, box 9, file 15, CDAAA Papers; Organized Labor's Stake in the War, not dated, box 29, file 2, CDAAA Papers; Policies, Aims and Accomplishments of the CDAAA, p. 8, October 9 1940, box 9, file 15, CDAAA Papers.

13 I. Parmar, "' … another important group that needs more cultivation': The Council on Foreign Relations and the mobilization of Black Americans for interventionism, 1939–41," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, September 27, 5, 2004, p. 717; Greene to Olson, October 7 1940, box 8, file 43, CDAAA Papers; Colored People Have a Stake in the War, not dated, box 8, file 44, CDAAA Papers.

14 Policies, Aims and Accomplishments of the CDAAA, p. 15, October 9 1940, box 9, file 15, CDAAA Papers.

15 Minutes of the Advisory Group called together by the Committee for Concerted Peace Efforts, February 25 1939, box 4, file 7, Hugh Moore Fund Papers, Mudd Library, Princeton University; American Union for Concerted Peace Efforts Board Minutes, December 13 1940, box 4, file 7, Hugh Moore Fund Papers; International Free World Association Memorandum on Activities and Plans, 5 August 1941, box 6, file 5, Hugh Moore Fund Papers; Free World Association Executive Committee Minutes, October 28 1941, box 6, file 16, Hugh Moore Fund Papers.

16 Chadwin, *The Hawks of World War II*, pp. 22, 114, 157; Council for Democracy: A Brief Statement of Aims and Activities, not dated, box 26, file 8, FFF Papers, Mudd Library, Princeton University.

17 Chadwin, *The Hawks of World War II*, pp. 22, 114–15, 121; Johnson, *The Battle Against Isolation*, p. 185; *New York Times*, February 10 1941, p. 10; *Chicago Daily News*, February 19 1941, p. 3; History and Program of the Leagues for a Declared War, September 1941, box 2, file 11, FFF Papers.

18 Chadwin, *The Hawks of World War II*, pp. 32–42, 159–71; Johnson, *The Battle Against Isolation*, p. 114; What is the Fight for Freedom? not dated, box 132, file 7 Freedom House Archives, Mudd Library, Princeton University.

19 Rex Stout interview with Ulric Bell (transcript), October 1 1941, box 4, file 3, FFF Papers.

20 Chadwin, *The Hawks of World War II*, p. 190; What is the Fight for Freedom? not dated, box 132, file 7, Freedom House Archives.

21 Chadwin, *The Hawks of World War II*, pp. 180–4.

22 Walsh, *Our War Too*, pp. 126, 150–1, 186.

23 Parmar, "' … another important group that needs more cultivation … ," p. 717; Chadwin, *The Hawks of World War II*, pp. 184–6.

24 Graham to Bell, July 10 1941, box 51, file 4, FFF Papers.

25 See Eichelberger to Local Chapters, May 2 1941, box 34, file 7, CDAAA Papers; Project for Cooperation between CDAAA and FFF, June 1941, box 8, file 12, CDAAA Papers; Memo to Bell from Graham, July 2 1941, box 4, file 2, FFF Papers; Hugh Moore Memorandum re: Meeting with Fight for Freedom, October 13 1941, box 5, file 18, CDAAA Papers; Eichelberger to Tom, November 26 1941, box 2, file 24, CDAAA Papers.

26 Gerald MacDonald Press Release, June 2 1941, box 8, file 12, CDAAA Papers; Memo from Ulric Bell, November 7 1941, box 4, file 4, FFF Papers.

27 Eichelberger to CDAAA Chapters, 9 August 1941, box 34, file 10, CDAAA Papers; Spivack to the City Editor of the *New York Times*, June 25 1941, box 15, file 21, FFF Papers.

28 Johnson, *The Battle Against Isolation*, pp. 206–9.

29 S. Rosenman (ed.), *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 5, New York: Random House, 1938, p. 465; W. Johnson, *William Allen White's America*, New York: Henry Holt, 1947, p. 529.

30 Lamont to Roosevelt, May 15 1940, PPF 70, FDR Papers, Franklin Roosevelt Library.

31 Eichelberger, *Organizing For Peace*, pp. 130–5; R. Browder and T. Smith, *Independent*, New York: Knopf, 1986, pp. 149–51.

32 Memorandum from Mrs K. Roosevelt, May 1 1941, OF 4320, box 1, FDR Papers; Eichelberger to Roosevelt, June 25 1941, box 45, file R-1941, Clark Eichelberger Papers, New York Public Library.

33 Chadwin, *The Hawks of World War II*, pp. 203–4.

34 Roosevelt to Bell, January 1 1942, PPF 2409, FDR Papers; MacLeish to McIntyre, December 22 1941, OF 4230, FDR Papers.

35 Roosevelt to Mellett, May 19 1941, OF 4422, FDR Papers.

36 Stevenson to Bell re: Proposed Organization, 1 August 1941, box 18, file 11, FFF Papers.

37 Attitudes and Activities of the Organized "Peace" Pressure Groups, 1920–41, box 65, file 286, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress.

38 Chadwin, *The Hawks of World War II*, p. 190.

39 M. Sherry, *In the Shadow of War*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995, p. 54.

4 Power to the people? American public opinion and the Vietnam war

Andrew Priest

Of all the myths perpetuated about the Vietnam War, perhaps the most pervasive concerns the role of the American public. A commonly held view in the United States and elsewhere is that American public opinion ended the Vietnam War. This view suggests that as the United States became more deeply embroiled in the Southeast Asian conflict, and particularly after the 1968 Tet Offensive demonstrated that it was becoming a bloody stalemate, the disparity between positive US government statements about progress and the reality of the situation on the ground exacerbated a "credibility gap" that led to Americans opposing the war in increasing numbers. They saw it as an ill-conceived and immoral campaign and forced the administration of Lyndon B. Johnson to rethink its policies and begin withdrawing.

Many figures across the political spectrum have done much to promote this idea. Those on the political left who were heavily involved in the peace movements themselves often proclaim their success in ending the war. Curiously many conservatives concur, blaming especially the peace movements and media for, inter alia, undermining the American effort in Vietnam, providing the leadership of North Vietnam with comfort and propaganda, and rendering victory on the battlefield impossible. There is general agreement that this resulted in disillusionment among huge swathes of the American population and necessitated the effective resignation of one president, Lyndon Johnson, and the withdrawal of American forces under his successor, Richard Nixon. Such a view has largely been accepted by both policymakers and the general public alike in the years since Vietnam. This view is far from accurate, however.

While many historical analyzes have taken issue with such clear-cut, simplistic accounts, there remains among historians a fascination with the more radical figures who opposed US action in Vietnam. The vast majority of scholarship by historians about the social dimensions of the war in the United States tends to focus upon the impact of peace movements, student protests and draft resistance.[1] Relatively little attention has been paid to American society more broadly and its influence on policymaking.[2] This omission is serious because it has helped to foster the belief that the peace movements were crucial in ending the war. Indeed, the terms "public opinion" and

"peace movements" might even be said to be synonymous in many people's minds, as if those who opposed the war by demanding peace were representative of and supported by the American public. In fact, peace movements largely did not reflect American public attitudes; a significant minority of the American population continued to support the war even as it generally became less popular and the methods of the more extreme groups alienated many people.[3] It is therefore highly contestable as to whether the peace movements had any significant impact on the war and the way it was fought, and if they did it was because public opinion reacted *against* them.[4]

While historians have focused on debates about peace movements, political scientists have, in contrast, produced many studies examining American public attitudes toward Vietnam.[5] These throw up some surprising results. For example, they demonstrate quite clearly that by 1968, when Johnson decided not to seek re-election following the public relations disaster of the Tet Offensive, American public opinion was deeply divided over the war. This, one might argue, is to be expected. Yet they also show that during 1968 support for withdrawal actually remained relatively low, while escalation was the preferred option for a significant proportion of the American population. The year 1968 also saw some of the bloodiest fighting of the entire conflict and the election to the presidency of Richard Nixon, a well-known conservative with much support on the right wing of the Republican Party. It is also worth noting that following Nixon's election, it took a further four years for the US to complete total military withdrawal from Vietnam during which time thousands more Americans and Vietnamese died.

It therefore remains difficult to ascertain the impact of public opinion on the conduct of policy. Of course it is almost impossible to disaggregate it from other influences acting upon policymakers, such as the progress of the war itself or other domestic and international events. Yet while it seems that Johnson, and to a lesser extent Nixon, did struggle to maintain support from the American public when conducting policy on Vietnam, the idea that a combination of peaceniks, hippies, Marxists and journalists undermined the American effort and, for the first time in US history, forced the government to rethink its policies and eventually withdraw from a foreign war is outlandish. Yet such views are still promoted, particularly because these radical groups are seen to have given succour to the North Vietnamese regime and its own propaganda efforts to undermine the American presence in Vietnam.[6]

The main focus of this chapter will be the Johnson Administration's struggle to gain and maintain mass support for the Vietnam War between 1964 and 1968, the critical period for public opinion. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first considers Johnson's attempts to win public support for his Vietnam policies. The second examines public reactions to the war, and why and how the American people turned against it. The third and final section briefly explores some of the consequences that these debates have had on foreign policy making since. It is the main contention of the chapter that while public opinion was undoubtedly crucial to the way the war developed,

its broader significance has largely been misunderstood, with important implications for the relationship between public opinion and foreign policy making in the years since.

Fighting for public opinion

The Vietnam War was undoubtedly a pivotal event in modern US history. Not since the Civil War one hundred years before had such fundamental themes in American public life – war, race, social inequality – coalesced in such a way that the very fabric of American society appeared to be under threat. During the 1960s while the US was fighting a war in a foreign country it was also tackling civil rights and poverty at home. These developments converged to set off a chain of public discontentment exacerbated both by the coming of age of the young, affluent "baby-boom" generation and developments in technology that allowed events at home and abroad to be broadcast directly into people's living rooms. Such discontentment, in turn, sparked off protests and unrest on student campuses and in American cities that to some appeared to foreshadow revolution.

It therefore seems ironic that Lyndon Johnson's Vietnam policies were always influenced and tempered by his desire for public support.[7] Indeed, perhaps never before had a president considered the American public so carefully when making foreign policy as Johnson did over Vietnam. Johnson's consideration of the American people could be seen in two ways. The first was in his caution when escalating the war. Johnson felt that the public would not stand for a massive commitment of American forces that would undermine his domestic reforms, but he was also fearful that a public backlash over the "loss" of Vietnam would be worse than the one about China in 1949 and lead to the American public questioning US credibility as a global power.[8] He therefore steered a middle course to avoid potential public disquiet, slowly building-up forces over time without seeking a congressional declaration of war or fully explaining his actions to the people. The second was evident in his eagerness to galvanize and channel popular support for the action he was taking. The president was obsessed by the media and determined to use it to get his message across in public speeches and radio and television addresses.

This strategy was, however, flawed from the beginning. Johnson's message on Vietnam was at once both confusing and dishonest. He continually dissembled when explaining his actions, most notoriously during the infamous Gulf of Tonkin incident and subsequent congressional resolution. On 2 August 1964 in the Gulf of Tonkin off the North Vietnamese coast, an American destroyer, the USS *Maddox*, was attacked by enemy patrol boats. Two days later, the *Maddox* and another ship, the *C. Turner Joy*, were apparently attacked again in the same area. The Johnson White House responded by asking Congress for a resolution effectively giving the President the ability to respond as he saw fit. For Johnson, the resolution demonstrated a firm commitment in Vietnam without overly worrying the American people

and his success in assuring its passage through Congress was because his rhetoric cut through any doubts to offer purpose and moral clarity. US naval vessels had been attacked by North Vietnamese patrol boats in open, international waters and it was the duty of the US to respond. Historian George Herring describes Johnson's handling of the episode as "masterly" and notes that it was reflected in the president's popular support "skyrocketing" from 42 to 72 percent.[9] It gave him the freedom to authorize immediate air strikes against North Vietnamese targets in response and then to expand the bombing and introduce US ground forces the following year. And yet the events themselves were shrouded in mystery. The *Maddox* had been involved in covert operations almost certainly in North Vietnamese territorial waters, while reports of the subsequent attack were based on questionable intelligence and judgments. None of this was reported to Congress or the people; instead the president presented the episode as a case of clear, unambiguous aggression on the part of the North Vietnamese.[10]

This caution and obfuscation continued as Johnson expanded the US role and as sustained bombing of North and South Vietnam, Operation Rolling Thunder, began in February 1965. Rolling Thunder was deliberately limited to avoid large numbers of Vietnamese civilian casualties and it included bombing pauses in an attempt to induce the enemy to come to the negotiating table. But it was also an appeal to international and domestic sentiment, demonstrating Johnson's humanity and desire for a negotiated settlement with the North Vietnamese. Yet the White House refused to acknowledge that Rolling Thunder signaled a significant shift in policy, claiming "we seek no wider war."[11] Furthermore, this action inevitably led to further escalation with the introduction of two marine battalions in March 1965 and the addition of 40,000 troops the following month. Once again the administration tried to play these developments down, claiming that they were purely defensive.[12]

Such actions can be explained at least in part by Johnson's fears and insecurities. Both he and his advisors felt that public support for the war could quickly be lost and the president was always gloomy about the problems he faced in convincing the American people and the international community of the value of the enterprise. In May 1964, before the Gulf of Tonkin incident, he had confided many of his anxieties to his friend and mentor Senator Richard Russell (D-GA), telling him candidly, "I don't think the people of the country know much about Vietnam and I think they care a hell of a lot less."[13] By April of the following year, as Johnson was in the process of making the first significant commitment of ground troops and criticism of the war stirring, he made a major televised speech at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. In it, he set out the reasons for being in Vietnam, and offered the North Vietnamese leadership the possibility of civil engineering projects to help rebuild Vietnam and a peace initiative.[14] While ostensibly making overtures toward the Hanoi regime, Johnson's real reason for making such an offer was the need to win over the American people. This was clear afterwards as he complained that nearly all the responses to his speech had been negative.[15]

Johnson's pessimism was somewhat understandable and his view of the public attitude largely accurate. There was long standing indifference and apathy among the people toward the situation in Vietnam. Even as the US stood on the brink of its major military commitment in 1964 and 1965, few among the general public were concerned or even particularly interested.[16] The president's negative appraisal of the prospects for public support was also heavily influenced by his ambitious domestic legislative program, the Great Society reforms intended to improve the fortunes of America's underclass. As he explained later, the tension between "the woman I really loved," the Great Society, and "that bitch of a war" in Vietnam meant that "I was bound to be crucified either way I moved."[17] His refusal to ask Congress for a declaration of war and relatively slow escalation of troop numbers during 1965, while undoubtedly also taking in international opinion, was bound up in his desire to pass ambitious Great Society domestic legislation by dampening down criticism of the war in Vietnam. He thus sought to tread a fine line between his foreign and domestic policy and left and right wing sensibilities in the US.

Although he took this approach, Johnson was in fact offered both the advice and the opportunity to be more open about his actions in Vietnam and win people over. The American people supported the overarching *moral* commitment to the preservation of a non-communist South Vietnam,[18] and Johnson had considerable latitude to take any number of actions in the months following his overwhelming electoral victory in November 1964.[19] Moreover, when Johnson made the decision to commit troops during the second half of 1965, support for the war rose considerably in line with the typical "rally-round-the-flag" phenomenon identified by political scientists.[20] Simultaneously, many of his closest advisors were telling him to seek to explain more clearly the purpose of the mission. In his pivotal, "fork in the road" memorandum of February 1965, which argued for a more robust response, National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy urged the president to explain to the American people that the struggle in Vietnam would be long and drawn out, suggesting that the administration had not done this suffi-ciently in the past.[21] Later in the year when Johnson was making his momentous decision to increase the number of US forces in the country, he and his advisors debated the merits of a paper written by Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara in which McNamara recommended calling up the reserves and asking Congress to put the nation on a war footing. Such action was supported by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Earle Wheeler.[22] Yet rather than encourage the president to explain the rationale behind American policy and be straight with the people, he continued to try and hide his actions. As he told his advisors, he would "play our decisions low-key."[23]

A losing battle

Between 1965 and 1967 the deteriorating political and military situation in South Vietnam impelled Johnson, he believed, to authorize ever greater

increases in troop numbers. By the middle of 1967 the total number of US forces reached almost 450,000 and it continued to rise.[24] In 1965 well over 1,000 were killed in action. In 1967 it was almost 10,000.[25] And, in turn, as more troops died Johnson faced growing international and domestic criticism regarding his policies. By late 1967, more people opposed Johnson's Vietnam policies than supported them.[26]

This opposition ran across the political spectrum. The right generally criticized him for not being firm enough. Support for taking a tougher line, expanding the bombing and even invading North Vietnam could be found here. These were the "hawks." On the left were the "doves," who generally supported a much more cautious approach, perhaps withdrawal or negotiation. Neither group was homogenous or distinct, nor were they often particularly well-organized or focused. As Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones effectively demonstrates, the reactions of four minority groups – students, African Americans, women and labor – toward the war were usually to try to bring it to an end, but he also shows the limitations and contradictions of their approaches. Students, the first dovish group to protest the war in significant numbers, for example, were deeply divided over the correct course of action to follow. While their early successes in garnering attention and support were because their groups were open and chaotic in nature, this soon alienated many within the groups as well as outside them, and allowed the political establishment at both the regional and national level to exploit divisions and dismiss them as a force. At the other end of the spectrum, labour unions and their rank-and-file members were generally much more likely to be hawkish and support Johnson's (and then Nixon's) policies, in line with union bosses. This gave the government much needed help with fighting and then prolonging the war. Yet even here it is challenging to generalize about the extent and reasons for labor support, as well as necessary to acknowledge the changing attitudes and persistent doubts of many American workers about the nature of the war.[27]

It was the doves who generally garnered the most public attention because they were able to harness the media to promote their views and because they resorted to original and sometimes extreme measures in order to get noticed. Protests began as soon as Johnson started taking military action in 1965 and as the war continued so the numbers swelled and media coverage of their antics grew. By 1967, newspaper and television reports were filled with accounts of rallies, marches and student sit-ins protesting the war. In October, a 100,000-strong march across the Potomac River included an attempt to levitate the Pentagon building and ended with violence and mass arrests.[28]

Some historians assert that the peace movements profoundly affected the course of the war because they encouraged others to join and made opposition to the war acceptable.[29] Yet in reality their impact was decidedly limited. Even on campuses themselves, a very small minority of faculty and staff actually participated in the various sit-ins and demonstrations that to many still typify the antiwar movement, while those who supported the protesters'

ultimate goals did not necessarily support their tactics.[30] Young people were actually more likely to support the war than their elders.[31] The impact of the more radical groups therefore rarely extended beyond the campus gates and if it did, their activities were rejected by the vast majority.[32] For example, polls conducted at the time of the 1968 presidential election showed that of white voters who regarded themselves as doves, a majority opposed Vietnam War protesters with almost a quarter rating them extremely negatively.[33] Such repulsion was reflected at the ballot box. Student unrest undoubtedly helped propel social conservative Ronald Reagan to greater prominence in California and his condemnation of radical peace protesters was instrumental in his victory in the gubernatorial campaigns of 1966 and 1970.[34]

What, then, made so many people turn against the war? Although generalizing about a population's reactions to an event and their reasons for having them is notoriously difficult, it does seem possible to make some tentative suggestions. Partly it was length of the conflict (indeed, one could argue that it was surprising support remained as high as it did for as long as it did) and as more troops died, more people came to question the value of the cause. In studies of public support for the war, there is a correlation between the length of the war, numbers of troops killed and declining support.[35] But there were undoubtedly other factors; most notably Johnson's handling of the war. As people's doubts grew they were increasingly reinforced by prominent political figures on the left and right who began to question the efficacy of Johnson's policies. During early 1966, Senator J. William Fulbright (D-AR), Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, held televised hearings into the war, a relatively early development that "probably helped make dissent respectable."[36] As the war went on, diverse establishment figures in the mainstream of American public life who often held conflicting views on the appropriate response to the situation in Vietnam, such as Fulbright, Senator Mike Mansfield (D-MT, Senate majority leader), Senator John C. Stennis (D-MS, chairman of the Preparedness Subcommittee), Senator Robert F. Kennedy (D-NY), civil rights leader Martin Luther King and former Vice-President Richard Nixon, persuaded more people to come out in opposition.[37]

By 1967, the Johnson Administration was also publicly divided over the best course of action in Vietnam and hemorrhaging personnel disaffected with the president's policies. The most prominent of these was Robert McNamara. McNamara had been harboring doubts about the US strategy in Vietnam for some time and had expressed them privately to Johnson, noting that the approach was not having the desired effect in persuading the enemy to desist and suggesting alternative courses of the action. His reports grew more pessimistic over time, and recognized growing public dissatisfaction with the lack of progress.[38] In August 1967, McNamara testified before the Stennis Committee and was candid in his views, reserving particular opprobrium for the Rolling Thunder bombing campaign.[39] This further exposed divisions within Washington (including Congress) and the country at large but it did not

dissuade President Johnson from continuing on his chosen course. In late October 1967, McNamara told Johnson that pursuing "our present action in Southeast Asia would be dangerous, costly in lives, and unsatisfactory to the American people" and recommended a bombing halt and major review of US policy.[40] Johnson's decision to reject McNamara's proposals was, he said, based on the fact that a bombing halt "would be interpreted in Hanoi and at home as a sign of weakening will."[41] McNamara left his post at the start of the following year.

The length of the war, battle deaths and growing dissent were all important, but it was the Tet offensive of early 1968 that struck the decisive blow against Johnson. On January 30 1968, during the Vietnamese Tet holiday, North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces attacked towns, cities and military installations in a change of tactics that was supposed to encourage the southern population to rise up in revolt against their government. Ultimately, this failed and the communist forces were decimated. Nonetheless, Tet illustrated the lack of progress and brought the full horror of the conflict into people's homes. It exposed the administration's claims of success as being, at the very least, wishful thinking and convinced many Americans that the war would last for a considerable while longer.

The American media was clearly central in conveying the significance of the Tet episode to people back in the US. Vietnam was the first television war and it was impossible for the government to hide the impact of the attack on American forces and South Vietnam. Tet also starkly exposed the inhumanity of warfare. In one of the most enduring images of the battle, a South Vietnamese Army colonel executed a Viet Cong suspect on the streets of Saigon by shooting him in the head. An edited film of the execution was broadcast by the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) and Associated Press photographer Eddie Adams' horrifying image of it appeared in all major US newspapers. In the weeks that followed, Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) news anchorman Walter Cronkite delivered a withering attack on government policy, suggesting that the US was "mired in stalemate." Cronkite was "the most trusted man in America" and his statement greatly concerned the president and his colleagues.[42]

In their memoirs, both Johnson and Commander of American forces in Vietnam General William Westmoreland complained that there was misinterpretation and falsehood in media reporting that turned Americans against the war.[43] Yet such claims that journalists did not reflect American successes, especially during Tet, are not supported by the evidence. There were undoubtedly some cases of incorrect reporting, most notably that during the Tet offensive Viet Cong operatives had gained access to the US Embassy building (they had, in fact, only entered the embassy compound) and this no doubt had an impact on public perceptions. Yet most of the reporting was accurate. Before Tet, it was also generally supportive of the American effort and much of this continued even afterwards.[44] Reporting of Tet certainly had a negative impact on the war, widening the credibility gap, but it mainly

served to reinforce the pessimistic views that had been developing over the previous years among both elites and the masses.[45]

Furthermore, if the lack of success seen during Tet signaled a shift in American perceptions of the war, it certainly did *not* indicate that a majority of Americans supported withdrawal. On the contrary, the number of people favoring escalation had actually *risen* during 1967 and even during 1968 the proportion of those in favor of withdrawal was never more than 20 percent.[46] While the Tet offensive was a public relations disaster for Johnson and led directly to his refusal to seek re-election, analyzing its consequences reveals that the hawks were still prominent in American society. For example, one of the reasons Johnson announced his decision not to accept the Democratic Party's nomination on March 31 1968 was the success of Senator Eugene McCarthy (D-MN) in the New Hampshire primary earlier in the month. McCarthy ran as a peace candidate and while Johnson's name was not on the ballot, McCarthy polled an impressive 42 percent of the Democratic vote in comparison to 48 percent for the president via an organized write-in campaign. At the time and since this has commonly been interpreted as a sign that the American people supported McCarthy's antiwar stance. Yet, this was a protest vote rather than a vote for peace and of those who put their mark next to McCarthy's name, more actually wanted a stronger military response than wanted withdrawal. As a result, many of these Democratic voters supported Republican nominee Richard Nixon in the election later that year.[47]

Ultimately, Johnson's decision not to run for another term was a highly personal one, but of all the factors influencing him Johnson claimed that the "state of mind and morale on our domestic front was most important."[48] It did little to quell the sense of anxiety and turmoil in the US, however, followed as it was by the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy and riots at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago and in other US cities throughout 1968, nor did it alter people's perceptions of the war. Johnson was now clearly a spent force. Over time, his appeals to the American people to support his crusade in Vietnam had come to seem desperately out of touch with the reality both in the US and Vietnam. As Johnson biographer Doris Kearns suggests: "Apparently hoping that his words would conceal or even change established facts, and in an effort to halt the erosion of his support, Johnson indulged more and more freely in distortion and patent falsehoods."[49] By 1968, this could no longer be countenanced by most of the American people.

The consequences of defeat

The decline in support for American policies in Vietnam has led to a perception that the war changed American public attitudes to foreign policy.[50] Before the war it seemed that a general consensus existed among the populace concerning Cold War threats that gave the president freedom of action in committing American troops abroad. Vietnam appeared to have shattered

that consensus and commentators began to suggest that Vietnam signified an era in which there would be a new type of conflict, heavily influenced by popular attitudes and fought as much in American homes as on the battlefields.[51]

Yet, as we have seen, the American people remained deeply divided over the best course of action in Vietnam and this continued after Richard Nixon's election in November 1968. While Nixon saw that the American people would not stand for further expansion of the American commitment and promised them "Peace with Honor" in the run-up to the election, he knew this would take time.[52] As president from January 1969 he progressively withdrew US forces and sought a negotiated settlement. He also successfully exploited the feeling among many voters that their views were not being represented by those who protested the war. In one of his most famous televised public statements in November 1969 he successfully appealed to the "great silent majority" as he called it, meaning those who supported the government's policies but did not participate in demonstrations or other political activities.[53] Nixon also periodically stepped up bombing throughout Indochina and initiated the invasion of neighboring Cambodia and Laos. This caused further dismay and protest on university campuses, most infamously at Kent State in Ohio where four students were shot dead by the National Guard. Despite this continued turmoil, the last American forces left Vietnam in 1973 following the signing of peace accords at the end of the previous year. This was a full four years after Johnson had left office, during which time a further 16,000 Americans had died on the battlefield.[54] The war finally ended in 1975 as North Vietnamese forces overran the South and captured Saigon.

Nixon's success in appealing to the "silent majority" was based in part on the fact that many Americans did continue to support American objectives and remained sympathetic to the need to take a stand against communism in places such as Vietnam. This was particularly the case for the conservative right, which appealed to the American people with arguments that the war was necessary and ending it would have significant implications for American credibility and global preeminence.[55] Granted, more people supported withdrawal during the Nixon years than had done under Johnson, yet it is significant that only after the Nixon Administration actually began to withdraw troops did support for withdrawal increase markedly, reaching above 70 percent during 1971 and 1972.[56] In this sense, public opinion seemed to reflect government policy rather than dictate it.

There is, of course, a good deal of truth to the proposition that congressional and media scrutiny of foreign policy decision-making increased greatly during the war and in the years that followed. The War Powers Act of October 1973 was a direct attempt to limit the actions of presidents in foreign policy in the wake of Vietnam, while suspicion of government ushered in by Vietnam was compounded by the Watergate scandal that led to Nixon's resignation in August 1974. Yet just as the impact of peace movements and the

media on support for withdrawal from Vietnam have come to be regarded as fact, so has the influence of public opinion on foreign policy since American defeat. In fact, as Richard Sobel has shown, while public opinion may place a limit on foreign policymaking, to suggest that it sets the agenda is simply not supported by evidence.[57]

So while the constraining effect of public opinion has undoubtedly been important as a result of Vietnam, its greatest impact has been in making presidents and other leading policymakers fearful that there will be a public backlash against troop commitments abroad. Successive presidents have followed an unwritten rule that the American people will not allow the US to become engaged in long-term conflicts in foreign countries where the risks to American soldiers' lives outweigh any threat to US national security, as this is likely to lead to disaffection and calls for withdrawal. This tends to override any close reading of actual public attitudes toward war. As Lunch and Sperlich succinctly put it: "No matter what the actual predisposition of public opinion about foreign policy, elites may constrain themselves if they believe a negative public reaction would be registered at the next election."[58] In its most extreme form this is known as the "Vietnam syndrome," which, depending on one's perspective, is either a positive check on presidential power or a malign influence on foreign policy that limits US ability to conduct itself abroad.[59]

Therefore the enduring lesson from the Vietnam War that the American public will not stand for foreign military ventures – while misleading – has been highly influential. Since Vietnam, policymakers have considered popular views much more carefully when committing American troops abroad and this has often determined their approach to particular issues. From Ronald Reagan's policies in the Americas in the 1980s, to George H.W. Bush's actions in the Gulf in the early 1990s and Bill Clinton's approach to crises in East Africa and the Balkans, all presidents felt the need to balance possible military actions in foreign lands with potentially negative reactions of domestic audiences. In many instances this has led to extreme caution, suggesting that policymakers had over-interpreted public timidity in foreign policy and "misread the public mood."[60] Ironically, it has also sometimes encouraged presidents to undertake clandestine foreign activities instead of subjecting them to public scrutiny. In the case of the Iran-Contra affair during the Reagan Administration, which can be interpreted as a case of policymakers being terrified of negative domestic assessments of post-Vietnam foreign policy actions, Reagan himself came close to being toppled. More recently, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, while initially seeming to have overturned conventional wisdom about public opinion, have once again reinforced the idea that the people will not stand for lengthy and indecisive military campaigns.

Conclusion

While it is impossible to ascertain the full impact of the American public on Vietnam policy, it is clear that it was significant. However, this significance

has been consistently misinterpreted. Support for withdrawal was low for much of the war, support for escalation was often high, and the activities of antiwar protesters had a largely negative impact, or at least reinforced people's existing views rather than changing them. Throughout, a majority of Americans wanted the United States to win or at least see that the government was achieving its goals. As this could not be done, Johnson began to lose support. Yet if he had made a case for the war and his policies, he would have been far more likely to have developed a strong base of support to nurture and maintain. This is not to suggest that the war could have been won had the president done this, but the spikes in support for presidential action demonstrated that the will of the American people could be marshaled.

Instead of this, Johnson's refusal to be honest about troop increases and the fact that the United States was at war contributed to the growing credibility gap. Johnson was not the first president to be circumspect with the American people about US actions in Vietnam (both Eisenhower and Kennedy had certainly also done so before him) but because the situation in Southeast Asia was now so desperate his actions were of far greater significance. Johnson felt that an open discussion would undermine his ambitious domestic program and undo his presidency. This was, however, a fundamental flaw in his approach, exposing the deep contradictions between his domestic and foreign policies and, ironically, leading to the public dissent he was so desperate to avoid. The lie was exposed most starkly during the Tet offensive. After being fed positive reports for so long, it was hard for the American people to believe that success was imminent when they saw the carnage being inflicted on American and South Vietnamese forces. Press and television coverage, while significant, was not the fatal bullet in the battle for public opinion. This had been fired long before and the wound was self-inflicted.

The American government's inability to win over public opinion was less to do with an electorate that was unreceptive to its actions than to Johnson's own failings as a war leader. The public ultimately did not turn against the war itself but rather the president, his policies, and the way he had so clearly misled them. In his memoirs, Johnson complained "that the American people never had a chance to understand the Vietnam conflict in all its dimensions."[61] He did not acknowledge that primary responsibility for this lack of understanding rested with him as president. On the evidence of recent foreign policy endeavors, it is a lesson his successors have failed to heed.

Notes

1 The literature is vast, but see, for example, C. DeBenedetti (C. Chatfield, Assisting Author), *An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era*, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1990; M.S. Foley, *The War Machine: Draft Resistance During the Vietnam War*, Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2003; K.J. Heineman, *Campus Wars: The Peace Movement at American State Universities in the Vietnam Era*, New York and London: New York University Press, 1993; A.E. Hunt, *The Turning: A History of Vietnam Veterans*

Against the War, New York and London: New York University Press, 1999; M. Small, *Johnson, Nixon and the Doves*, New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 1988; T. Wells, *The War Within: America's Battle over Vietnam*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994.

2 A notable exception is R. Jeffreys-Jones, *Peace Now! American Society and the Ending of the Vietnam War*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999.

3 For example, George Herring suggests that "a majority of Americans found the antiwar movement, particularly its radical and hippy elements, more obnoxious than the war itself." G.C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950–1975*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 2002, p. 209.

4 This is argued convincingly in A. Garfinkle, *Telltale Hearts: The Origins and Impact of the Vietnam Antiwar Movement*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995. For an alternative perspective, see Small, *Johnson, Nixon and the Doves*.

5 See, for example, S.S. Garter and G.M. Segura, "War, Casualties, and Public Opinion," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 42, 3, 1998, pp. 278–300; L.H. Gelb, "The Essential Domino: American Politics and Vietnam," *Foreign Affairs*, 50, 1972, pp. 459–75; L.R. Jacobs and R.Y. Shapiro, "Lyndon Johnson, Vietnam, and Public Opinion: Rethinking Realist Theory of Leadership," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 29, 3, 1999, pp. 592–616; B.W. Jentleson, "The Pretty Prudent Public: Post Post-Vietnam American Opinion on the Use of Military Force," *International Studies Quarterly*, 36, 1, 1992, pp. 49–74; W.L. Lunch and P.W. Sperlich, "American Public Opinion and the War in Vietnam," *Western Political Quarterly*, 32, 1, 1979, pp. 21–44; M. Lorell and C. Kelley Jr. (with the assistance of D. Hensier), "Casualties, Public Opinion, and Presidential Policy During the Vietnam War," Project Air Force Report, RAND, R-3060-AF, 1985; J.E. Mueller, *War, Presidents and Public Opinion*; S. Verba, R.A. Brody, E.B. Parker, N.H. Nie, N.W. Polsby, P. Elkman, and G.S. Black, "Public Opinion and the War in Vietnam," *American Political Science Review*, 61, 2, June 1967, pp. 317–33; E.R. Wittkopf, *Faces of Internationalism: Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1990.

6 See, for example, M.P. Giorgi, "Losing the War for US Public Opinion During the Vietnam War," Air Command Staff College, Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, April 2005.

7 Jacobs and Shapiro, "Lyndon Johnson, Vietnam, and Public Opinion," pp. 595–9.

8 L.B. Johnson, *The Vantage Point: Perspectives on the Presidency, 1963–1969*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971, pp. 151–2.

9 Herring, *America's Longest War*, p. 145.

10 Radio and Television Report to the American People Following Renewed Aggression in the Gulf of Tonkin, 4 August 1964; Remarks at Syracuse University on the Communist Challenge in Southeast Asia, 5 August 1964, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson*, 1963–4, Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1965, pp. 927–30; Johnson, *The Vantage Point*, pp. 115–17.

11 Statement by the President Upon Ordering Withdrawal of American Dependents From South Viet-Nam, February 7 1965, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson*, 1965, Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1966, pp. 153–4; Herring, *America's Longest War*, p. 154.

12 Herring, *America's Longest War*, p. 158.

13 M. Beschloss, *Taking Charge: The Johnson White House Tapes, 1963–1964*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997, p. 365.

14 Johnson, *Vantage Point*, pp. 132–4.

15 See M. Beschloss, *Reaching for Glory: Lyndon Johnson's Secret White House Tapes, 1964–1965*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001, pp. 271–3.

16 Lunch and Sperlich, "American Public Opinion," p. 22.

17 D. Kearns, *Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream*, London: Andre Deutsch, 1976, p. 251.

18 R.B. Woods, "The Politics of Idealism: Lyndon Johnson, Civil Rights and Vietnam," *Diplomatic History*, 31, 1, 2007, p. 8.

19 As Frederik Logevall has argued, perhaps the most obvious of these was withdrawal. See F. Logevall, *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of War in Vietnam*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999, pp. 404–11.

20 Mueller, *War, Presidents and Public Opinion*, p. 53; Lunch and Sperlich, "American Public Opinion," p. 25.

21 See Bundy to President Johnson, February 7 1965, 84, VI, *Foreign Relations of the United States* (hereafter *FRUS*), 1964–8, vol. II, Vietnam, January-June 1965, Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1996.

22 Memorandum for the Record, July 21 1965, 72, *FRUS*, 1964–68, vol. III, Vietnam, June-December 1965, Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1996; Herring, *America's Longest War*, pp. 164–6.

23 Quoted in B. VanDeMark, *Into the Quagmire: Lyndon Johnson and the Escalation of the Vietnam War*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 207.

24 Herring, *America's Longest War*, p. 182.

25 Herring, *America's Longest War*, p. 267.

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27 Jeffreys-Jones, *Peace Now!*

28 J. Miller, *Democracy is in the Streets: From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago*, 2nd ed., Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1994, pp. 281–2.

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30 See, for example, A.H. Barton, "The Columbia Crisis: Campus, Vietnam, and the Ghetto," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 32, 3, 1968, pp. 333–51; E. M. Schreiber, "Opposition to the Vietnam War among American University Students and Faculty," *British Journal of Sociology*, 24, 3, 1973, pp. 288–302.

31 Lunch and Sperlich, "American Public Opinion," pp. 32–4.

32 This is developed in Garfinkle, *Telltale Hearts*, pp. 13–20. See also, for example, G.J. DeGroot, "The Limits of Moral Protest and Participatory Democracy: The Vietnam Day Committee," *Pacific Historical Review*, 64, 1, 1995, pp. 95–119.

33 P.E. Converse, W.E. Miller, J.G. Rusk, and A.C. Wolfe, "Continuity and Change in American Politics: Parties and Issues in the 1968 election," *American Political Science Review*, 63, 4, 1969, p. 1087.

34 G.J. DeGroot, "Ronald Reagan and Student Unrest in California, 1966–70," *Pacific Historical Review*, 65, 1, 1996, pp. 107–29.

35 Mueller, *War, Presidents and Public Opinion*, pp. 59–60; Lorell and Kelly, "Casualties, Public Opinion, and Presidential Policy," pp. 20–30.

36 Mueller, *War, Presidents and Public Opinion*, p. 53.

37 Lunch and Sperlich, "American Public Opinion," p. 31; Converse et al., "Continuity and Change in American Politics," pp. 1083–105. See also J.A. Fry, *Debating Vietnam: Fulbright, Stennis, and their Senate Hearings*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006, esp. pp. 78–80: 141–2; R.B. Woods, *Vietnam and the American Political Tradition: The Politics of Dissent*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003.

38 See McNamara to President Johnson, November 30 1965, 212, *FRUS*, 1964–68, vol. III, McNamara to President Johnson, October 14 1966, *FRUS*, 1964–8, 268, vol. IV, Vietnam 1966, Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1998; (Draft Memorandum) McNamara to President Johnson, May 19 1967, 177, *FRUS*, 1964–8, vol. V, Vietnam 1967, Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 2002.

39 Fry, *Debating Vietnam*, pp. 115–45.

40 (Draft Memorandum) McNamara to President Johnson, November 1 1967, 375, *FRUS*, 1964–8, vol. V; Johnson, *The Vantage Point*, p. 372.
41 Johnson, *The Vantage Point*, p. 377.
42 K.J. Turner, *Lyndon Johnson's Dual War: Vietnam and the Press*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1985, pp. 231–2.
43 See Johnson, *The Vantage Point*, p. 384; W.C. Westmoreland, *A Soldier Reports*, New York: Dell, 1980, pp. 438–9. This view is largely supported in the classic accounts of the Tet offensive. See P. Braestrup, *Big Story: How the American Press and Television Reported and Interpreted the Crisis of Tet 1968 in Vietnam and Washington*, Novato: Presidio, 1994; D. Oberdorfer, *Tet! The Turning Point in the Vietnam War*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.
44 See D.C. Hallin, *The "Uncensored War": The Media and Vietnam*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986; W.M. Hammond, *Reporting Vietnam: Media and Military at War*, Lawrence, University of Kansas Press, 1998.
45 D.F. Schmitz, *The Tet Offensive: Politics, War and Public Opinion*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005; C.J. Pach, "Tet on TV: US Nightly News Reporting and Presidential Policy Making," in C. Fink, P. Gassert and D. Junker (eds), *1968: The World Transformed*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 55–81.
46 Lunch and Sperlich, "American Public Opinion," p. 25.
47 Converse et al., "Continuity and Change," p. 1092.
48 Johnson, *The Vantage Point*, p. 365.
49 Kearns, *Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream*, p. 311.
50 See, for example, Lunch and Sperlich, "American Public Opinion," pp. 43–4.
51 For a discussion of the breakdown in consensus, see R.A. Melanson, *American Foreign Policy Since the Vietnam War: The Search for Consensus from Richard Nixon to George W. Bush*, 4th ed., Armonk and London: M.E. Sharpe, 2005.
52 See R. Nixon, *RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon*, London: Macmillan, 1978, pp. 347–9.
53 Address to the Nation on the War in Vietnam, November 3 1969, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Richard Nixon*, 1969, Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1971, pp. 901–9.
54 Herring, *America's Longest War*, p. 267.
55 See S. Scanlon, "The Conservative Lobby and Nixon's 'Peace with Honor' in Vietnam," *Journal of American Studies*, 43, 2, 2009, pp. 255–76.
56 Lunch and Sperlich, "American Public Opinion," pp. 25–6.
57 R. Sobel, *The Impact of Public Opinion on US Foreign Policy Since Vietnam*, New York and Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001.
58 Lunch and Sperlich, "American Public Opinion," p. 32.
59 For contrasting perspectives, see G.C. Herring, "Reflecting the Last War: The Persian Gulf and the 'Vietnam Syndrome'," *Journal of Third World Studies*, 10, 1, 1993, pp. 37–51; W. Safire, "Syndrome Returns," *New York Times*, April 30 2001, A19.
60 T.B. McCrisken, *American Exceptionalism and the Legacy of Vietnam: US Foreign Policy since 1974*, Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p. 168. McCrisken notes that in the case of the US withdrawal from Somalia in 1993 it seems that "policy makers are now more sensitive to the tenets of the Vietnam syndrome than the public at large."
61 Johnson, *The Vantage Point*, p. 241.

Section Two

Public interests and ideology

5 Organized labor and the social foundations of American diplomacy, 1898–1920

Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones

The argument put forward in this chapter is that in the era when American diplomacy took on a recognizably modern shape, organized labor for a finite period displaced the consumer as the main social group influencing policy from below. The argument rests on the assumption that, with a brief interlude in 1919, the tariff was the most important foreign policy issue for organized labor.[1]

The chapter takes a particular approach to methodology and evidence that reflects and attempts to counter the problems that historians face in trying to estimate how ordinary people influenced foreign policy. Such estimation cannot be holistic because, in the words of the fictional Gilbert Pinfold, "the man in the street does not exist."[2] It is precisely to avoid meaningless generalizations about the common citizen that scholars try to "parse" society and find out which groups might have been influential. For example, in his book *The American People and Foreign Policy*, political scientist Gabriel Almond offered generalizations based on public opinion polls about the roles of age, sex, income, occupation, education, and region.[3]

However, polling data do not exist for the period before 1936. Historians of the pre-1936 period have to contend not just with the absence of polls, but with politicians who insisted that they acted from principle and never succumbed to plebeian influence. They took that patrician line for good reason. At the start of the period we are discussing, newspapers pounced on politicians they thought were "truckling to the labor vote."[4] Politicians tried not to leave a trail of evidence indicating that they responded to pressures from below.

Nobody believed them, and circumstantial evidence abounds to show that in reality even the haughtiest presidents bent an ear to public opinion. The historian Robert C. Hilderbrand demonstrated how improved public relations became a hallmark of executive governance beginning with the presidency of William McKinley (1897–1901). President Woodrow Wilson's promise of weekly press conferences showed that the heightened awareness of public opinion persisted. The White House needed public backing for its new overseas ventures, and created "functional indexes for evaluating public views." In Hilderbrand's judgment, public opinion having had "little impact on foreign

policy making before 1897," became a significant factor in policymaking thereafter.[5]

Yet neither the tariff nor organized labor has received as much attention as it deserves. The economic historian Frank Taussig noted that the tariff was the main campaign issue for the Republicans by the 1880s. The Democrat Grover Cleveland made it the sole subject of his annual address to Congress in December 1887. The Republican Benjamin Harrison won the 1888 presidential election by campaigning for higher tariffs – in a close contest, the issue inspired a large turnout on polling day.[6] The historian Tom Terrill noted that the tariff was "one of the dominant issues of national politics" in the Gilded Age and "reached a climax as an issue in the 1890s" yet "historians have treated the tariff much as one treats an unwanted member of the family."[7]

Some historians have nevertheless recognized the importance of the tariff. In his 1996 study *Democracy and Diplomacy*, Melvin Small noted that in the aftermath of the Spanish-American War, tariff issues "had a good deal to do with determining the economic, social, and political destinies of Cuba and the Philippines."[8] The tariff affected everybody's life, ranging from the farmer who sought inexpensive machinery and reciprocal export opportunities to the industrial worker who wanted protection from cheap imports and low-wage foreign competition. As Terrill and Small suggested, it is an issue that needs to be written into the history of US foreign policy.

As for labor, there is a double evidential problem that helps to account for the relative scarcity of attention given to its influence on foreign policy. First, there is the above-mentioned reluctance on the part of politicians to say what really made them tick. Second, there is the inarticulacy of the masses. As Herbert Gutman urged, historians need to work harder to find the snatches of song, the motives behind strikes and demonstrations, and the meanings of traditions remembered by immigrant communities in order to understand working people's culture and behavior.[9] Going that extra mile has been beyond the inclination of most diplomatic historians.

Less forgivably, they have also neglected fully to analyze the impact of the more highly literate section of the workforce, organized labor. To measure and understand that impact, it is necessary to delve beneath the national level and the relationship between the leadership of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and executive-level politicians.[10] At the local level, organized labor could deliver votes in a manner likely to help determine the election or defeat of politicians in a position to influence foreign policy.

Elizabeth McKillen recognized this in her study of Chicago labor in the period of the debate over World War I and the League of Nations. McKillen set out to examine "foreign policy issues both from the 'bottom up' and from the 'top down.'" She concluded that the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL), and by extension other city federations, powerfully challenged the leadership of AFL president Samuel Gompers, who had succumbed to "corporatist" ways, and who thus supported American war policy too uncritically. She further argued that immigrant influences within the CFL pushed America in the

direction of rejecting the League of Nations and embracing Irish independence.[11] This chapter will similarly draw on a local case study, that of Massachusetts. Like Chicago, Massachusetts had a significant Irish-American population, but the evidence in this case points away from the effectiveness of the Hibernian lobby.[12]

The chapter will portray the period of labor prominence, 1898–1920, as an interlude between times when the consumer had a strong impact on foreign policy. The nineteenth-century consumer exerted a downward pressure on tariffs, but the high-tariff "producer" or worker came into his own in the 1890s, with far-reaching consequences for America's new insular possessions. World War I disrupted international trade and the tariff was less significant than other economic issues in the debate over the League of Nations in 1919. After that interlude, protectionist advocacy and legislation returned with a vengeance. However, in the 1920s lobbyists bolstered by the nation's newly enfranchised women ran a slow-fuse but ultimately successful anti-tariff campaign that spelled the end of labor's ascendancy.

Nineteenth-century America was predominantly a rural society and the farmers were a major political force. The agricultural interest by and large dictated low tariffs. Yet the defeat of the predominantly agricultural South in the Civil War heralded a change in economic policy. With the rise of industry there was a new definition of the American interest. Manufacturing enterprises demanded protection through higher tariffs.[13] Capitalists pushing for this policy found they had a useful ally. Their employees – millions of enfranchised citizens – wanted protection against low-paid foreign workers.

Such considerations framed the tariff debates of the second half of the nineteenth century. Henry Carey, the economic guru of the Radical Republicans, advocated higher tariffs arguing that they supported higher wages. Workers sent him a flood of supportive petitions.[14] When consumers objected to such arguments, higher tariff advocates argued that the interests of producers and consumers were not divergent. The wool manufacturer John Hayes tried to draw the sting from the argument that higher tariffs drove up prices, observing that "in this country we are all producers as well as consumers."[15]

William McKinley's career illustrated the political role of the tariff locally in Ohio, and then on the national stage. In his days as an aspiring statesman, he rarely spoke on the tariff without mentioning its advantages for labor. The Congressman built his vote on labor support – "I speak for the workingmen of … Ohio" – and advocated protection as the best way of safeguarding labor's interest.[16] Opposing a proposed downward revision of the tariff in 1878, McKinley maintained that labor would be the "first to suffer" from it. In subsequent speeches he promised that higher tariffs would bring higher wages. Playing on the abolitionist associations of his Republican Party, he claimed that the South had supported free trade only because it went hand in hand with slavery, and that protection would guard the welfare of freedmen as well as white workers. In 1885 he said that the preservation of the US-European wage differential was his "chief ground" for calling for protection.[17] The

benchmark higher-tariff law of 1890 came to be known as the McKinley Tariff – an indication of how its sponsor had made his name.

But in the same year McKinley lost his seat. A gerrymander contributed to his loss, but also he had momentarily taken his finger off the pulse of the nation. America was beginning to experience a change of economic climate. American productivity had improved and the nation's manufactured goods were now competitively priced. Because the tariff invited reciprocal import duties, protectionism no longer seemed so much in the American interest. The crash of 1893 and ensuing slump suggested a need for more wealth producing exports, as did the contemporary fear of post-frontier social cataclysm. At this critical point, McKinley, by now back in politics and at the end of his second term as governor of Ohio, delivered the keynote address to the founding meeting National Association of Manufacturers (NAM).

In this 1895 speech to the NAM, the erstwhile arch protectionist spoke of the merits of reciprocal trade agreements. He had fought with senior Republicans over the issue in the debate over the 1890 tariff.[18] But he now introduced new reasoning: "It is a mighty problem to keep the whole of industry in motion" and it "cannot be kept in motion without markets."[19] McKinley's cautious embrace of a new liberalism did not signify a revival in the power of the nineteenth-century agricultural consumer. His appeal was to business interests. He was financially conservative, but a political risk-taker – the NAM took on organized labor in an open-shop campaign and its search for overseas markets and cheap labor inspired a globalization process that left American workers uneasy about job security and living standards. In the meantime, farmers who stood to benefit from easy credit and inflation resented McKinley's defense of the gold standard. But his decisive victory in the presidential election of 1896 seemed to vindicate McKinley's political judgment.

In his pursuit of a hard-money policy that kept inflation under control, McKinley – if only in an accidental way – helped the consumer. He continued his deflationary vigilance in the Spanish War. Like any war, the conflict with Spain in 1898 was potentially inflationary, but President McKinley achieved prudent management of the war's finances. After the war, he wrote to the junior senator from Massachusetts, Henry Cabot Lodge, explaining that his administration had issued only 200 million of the 400 million dollars worth of war bonds authorized by Congress, and these at only 3 percent interest, a rate soon to be reduced to 2 percent.[20]

McKinley's aim was to promote a stable economic environment for American business – the recognition of the urban consumer as a new force in American politics did not come until the presidency of McKinley's successor, Theodore Roosevelt.[21] But events were to confirm that McKinley still wanted to remain the champion of the American worker, regardless of his wobble over protectionism.

The discussion of tariff reciprocity in the 1890s was a significant development and came just at the moment when America was emerging as a world

power. The possibility of tariff variation was a powerful addition to the US foreign policy arsenal – more powerful, one might argue, than gunboat diplomacy or its successor, CIA covert operations. A change in the US tariff could – and did – make or break the economies and governments of foreign nations, especially those with economies based on trade in a limited number of commodities and vulnerable to changes in the demand for those commodities in the giant US market. Until the passage of the Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act of 1934 that vested the power of tariff negotiations in the executive and removed it from Congress, tariff policy was particularly subject to the vagaries of politics. Ordinary people – including wage earners and their labor unions – could influence foreign policy by lobbying on the tariff.

In the aftermath of the war with Spain in 1898, the tariff issue came to the fore in the debate over the newly acquired insular possessions. Should the tariff continue to protect American workers from the islanders' cheaper products and lower wages? The answer would be a resounding "yes." The decision meant that territorial imperialism was dead in the water, that Cuba and in the longer term the Philippines would have to be allowed their independence, and that American capitalists would in significant numbers seek to situate their factories abroad.

The evidence from Massachusetts suggests that, in the case of one significant state at least, organized labor was largely responsible for the tariff decision and its fateful consequences. Massachusetts was a leading industrial state with fifteen Electoral College votes, a number exceeded only by four other states.[22] It was reliably Republican in its voting patterns, and thus less ardently courted than other states as an electoral prize. However, both its senators took a keen interest in imperial policy, and the policy debate that took place inside the Republican Party was just as important as the contests between Republicans and Democrats on election day.

Together with a few others like Theodore Roosevelt, Senator Lodge was a member of the imperialist faction that briefly propelled the United States in the direction of territorial empire.[23] To their mutual embarrassment, Lodge's imperial ambitions put him into a different camp from his senior colleague in the Senate, the venerable abolitionist and Radical Reconstructionist, George Frisbie Hoar. Senator Hoar opposed insular acquisition on the ground that America had not solved its race problem at home, and was thus unfit to govern the non-white populations of distant lands. The Teller amendment to the war message of April 19 1898 had required self-determination in Cuba, but the fates of the Philippines and Puerto Rico remained potential areas of contention between the Bay State Republican colleagues.[24]

The labor issue would help to heal the breach. At first sight, such a proposition might seem unlikely. Preoccupied as he was with racial justice, Hoar was responsive to labor only to a lesser degree.[25] The Republicans as a whole seemed unresponsive to the labor issue. In December 1910 Governor Eugene N. Foss of Massachusetts, a former Republican who had broken the political mould by winning election as a Democrat, would launch an

all-out attack on Lodge's labor record, accusing him of being an elitist. The following month, Lodge only just squeaked through in his Senate re-election bid.[26]

But there is no reason for historians to take their cue from such partisan attacks. The adult Lodge may have been known for his gentlemanly reserve, but he had fond childhood memories of talking with workingmen such as sailors on Boston's China clippers.[27] As a politician, he was acutely aware of the interests of working people, and of the strategic value of the labor vote. On the eve of the war with Spain, he privately criticized textile manufacturers who reduced wages while paying out dividends. In another letter, he supported the Knights of Labor and AFL in their demand for immigration restriction.[28] Revealing the weight he attached to the labor vote in the debate over imperialism, Lodge engaged the lobbying services of the former Grand Master of the Knights of Labor, Terence V. Powderly, and kept President McKinley informed of the outcomes.[29]

In the event, labor persuaded the Republicans, and not vice versa. From labor's point of view, the annexation of the insular acquisitions on the basis of free trade and free migration of labor would have been a disaster for American living standards. Cigarmakers took the lead in pressing this point. Cigarmaking was in those days a major industry (cigarette-smoking took off only in the 1920s), and AFL President Samuel Gompers was a former cigarmaker. Cigarmakers protested "the annexation of the Philippines will be a direct blow to the cigar industries of this country."[30] Cigarmakers' Union president Adolph Strasser appealed for the support of William Jennings Bryan, the Democratic presidential candidate. Bryan was actually a tariff reformer and had made his name as an anti-protectionist orator, but he was also making a strong appeal for the support of the working man. Strasser warned him that in 1896 Manila was already exporting almost 200 million cigars, with the unfair advantage that workers there were paid between 15 and 25 cents a day. At the time, American wages peaked at around $3.50.[31]

Bryan had campaigned for free silver in 1896, but in anticipation of the 1900 re-match with McKinley he instead began to beat the anti-imperialist drum. In Massachusetts, Lodge felt he had to respond. On February 6 1899, the Senate was due to ratify the peace treaty with Spain in terms that incorporated the US acquisition of the Philippines. The Cigarmakers' Union petitioned him to vote against the treaty. He refused, and the treaty passed by a narrow margin. However, in his reply to the cigarmakers, Lodge argued that the treaty did not establish policy toward the Philippines, and that the archipelago would not necessarily come within the US tariff.[32]

In harmony with the McKinley Administration, and in a manner that reconciled him with Senator Hoar's position, Lodge continued to trim his positions on imperialism and free trade. In 1899, his selection to be chairman of the Senate Philippines Committee gave his views and actions greater authority. But his change of emphasis may be most clearly discerned in the case of Puerto Rico.

Initially, Lodge favored free trade with Puerto Rico, a policy that would have left the road open to full annexation. The Caribbean territory produced filler tobacco that did not compete with the wrapper leaf grown in the Connecticut and Housatonic valleys in Massachusetts – the tobacco growers in those areas were more concerned about the mooted increase in Sumatra wrapper leaf production in the Philippines.[33] As for labor, Lodge at first assured his constituents that Puerto Rican filler tobacco was unfinished, so its import would actually benefit cigarmakers in the Bay State by giving their employers improved access to cheap raw material.[34]

But even in the case of Puerto Rico, Lodge modified his position. He explained to the wool merchant Winthrop Martin why this was a political necessity. With the approach of the 1900 presidential election, the Democrats

> wanted to establish a Congressional precedent that we are bound to have free trade with our new possessions and make them part of the United States. They would then have turned round on the stump and demanded that we abandon the Philippines because we could not afford to take all that cheap labor within our tariff.[35]

The Republicans took the wind out of the Democratic anti-imperialist sails by steering away from low-tariff imperialism. It must be acknowledged that the story did not end there. Under Republican aegis there occurred some specific if limited trade liberalizations: the sugar tariff on Cuban imports was lowered by 25 percent in 1903, Puerto Rican sugar imports came in free after 1901, the tariff was lifted on Philippine sugar imports in 1909, and President William Howard Taft wanted extensive free trade with the Philippines together with imperialist retention.[36] Taft demanded, "legislation be adopted by Congress admitting the products of the Philippine Islands to the markets of the United States, with such limitations as may remove fear of interference with the tobacco and sugar interests in the United States."[37] But in 1900 labor had won an emphatic victory.

The success of labor and its allies is remarkable, when it is considered that many (though not all) businessmen, farmers, and consumers would have preferred a more liberal foreign policy. It stands out in further comparisons, too. The *debate* on race was important at the time, as evidenced in the statements of Senator Hoar and many others. But the direct *impact* on policy of African Americans, many of them recently disenfranchised through Jim Crow, was small. As for women, they had not yet won national suffrage, and their leaders had a tendency to succumb to breakthrough syndrome – they thought that in foreign policy you had to behave just like a man to gain acceptance. They mounted neither an economic nor a pacifist challenge to the war and its aftermath. Susan B. Anthony, founder of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, delivered herself of the observation, "our folks do seem to have deadly guns, and do know how to make them take certain effect."[38]

On September 8 1919 William A. Nearly, president of the Massachusetts State Board (MSB) of the AFL, told his annual convention, "I have a little surprise that I wish to speak of to you."[39] He announced that Éamon de Valera would address the conference the next day. Earlier in the year, De Valera had left England's Lincoln prison and accepted the nomination of the Irish parliament to be president. In the autumn of 1919, he visited Boston to press the case for Irish independence and to protest the exclusion of Ireland from the newly agreed upon League of Nations. Following his address to the MSB, that body voted to reverse labor's previous position on the League of Nations. Massachusetts labor had hitherto favored American membership of the League, but now the MSB proclaimed itself to be against it.

Historians have used various means to estimate public opinion at the time of the League debate. John Cooper, for example, considered the press, the US Senate's voting record and the 1920 general election.[40] But the MSB vote and labor politics generally were also significant. In Massachusetts at the time of the anti-League vote, the membership of unions affiliated to the MSB and AFL stood at 185,000 – a number that stood considerably higher than the entire state-wide vote cast for Bryan in 1900.[41] The vote can be seen in the context of a significant continuum. Immediately in its wake Henry Cabot Lodge, by now the Bay State's senior Senator and chairman of the Senate foreign relations committee, presented Congress with his famous list of reservations to the League proposal. A month later his Democratic junior colleague David Walsh announced his opposition to the treaty. On November 19, the Senate fell short in its production of the two-thirds majority necessary to the endorsement of the treaty.

The MSB vote was one of those events, eventually too numerous to be resisted, that precipitated America's self-exclusion. It was also a significant indicator of opinion, illustrating the instrumentality of labor in the League of Nations debate. Of course, there were as ever elitist factors at work. Historians explaining the failure of the US to join the League have debated the respective responsibilities of intransigently opposed national leaders – President Wilson on the one hand, Senator Lodge and his allies on the other.[42] Additionally, there were other pressures from below. Scholars have particularly focused on the Irish-American lobby. Arthur Link and Selig Adler were amongst those who voiced judgments similar to Ralph Stone's that the "Irish vote, always important in American politics, had added significance for the league fight."[43] Like the pro-Israel lobby in later years, the pro-Irish lobby inspired a certain reverence in the interpreters of American foreign policy.

Some historians have quite reasonably questioned the strength of the Irish-American lobby. To be effective, an ethnic lobby needed to be united in purpose and divided in party loyalty. Where the League was concerned, the Irish-Americans were disunited in purpose, as most of them were internationalist as well as pro-Hibernian. In regard to party loyalty, they were virtuous to a fault in being so predictably Democrat.[44] To be sure, a surname

analysis suggests that three-sevenths of the MSB delegates in 1919 were of Irish extraction, a proportion that is roughly consistent with that for labor in the nation as a whole.[45] The guest appearance of De Valera at the MSB convention would have been exciting for the sizable Irish-American contingent. However, their receptiveness to his Irish nationalism came at least in part because they were turning against the League for other reasons.

The reasons had to be persuasive, for pro-League sentiment had been entrenched and organized. The main pro-League lobby, the League to Enforce Peace (LEP), recognized the strategic value of labor support. In the early months of 1919 the LEP's dedicated labor secretary Peter W. Collins reached beyond the AFL leadership to labor's grass-roots. He persuaded local leaders to use their political lobbying experience to help induce state legislatures to pass pro-League resolutions (32 state legislatures did pass such resolutions).[46] Still further evidence of grass-roots opinion came from local labor organizations that petitioned Congress. From Massachusetts, 242 out of approximately 500 local labor bodies petitioned Congress in the issue. One of them was against the League, all the rest in favor. As the prime opponent of the League, Senator Lodge worried with good reason that the internationalist sentiments of Massachusetts labor would damage the Republicans' prospects at the ballot box.[47]

It took more than the Irish issue to turn this massive support into opposition. It required a change in economic conditions. Labor had prospered in the recent war – as Taussig noted, it kept out cheap imports more than any tariff could have done. Wartime prosperity was a major reason why labor, in contrast to its reaction to the War with Spain, had failed to voice a distinctive view. However, with the return of peace, there was a danger of renewed low-wage immigration and low-price imports from impoverished Europe. Inflation had risen to record levels in 1918. The rate of unemployment amongst organized wage earners in Massachusetts climbed to 11.2 percent by March 1919, the second-highest rate for a decade. At first – in the spring and summer of 1919 – wage earners placed their faith in the League and the associated proposal for an International Labor Organization in the hope that it would iron out injustices arising from inequalities of labor and the problems of post-war instability.[48]

To counter the appeal of the League, Lodge offered an American nationalist solution. He argued that international consultation was more costly and less effective than domestic measures. He urged immigration restriction. In similar vein, his Republican Party would soon forget its earlier flirtations with free trade and opt for a return to a high tariff policy. By a stroke of luck, economic recovery now played into Lodge's hands. In September 1919, the month when the MSB rejected the League, retail food prices were no higher than in December 1918, and Bay State unemployment had dropped to 2.4 percent. America now seemed able to look after its own economic problems, which made it safe for the MSB to vote against the League.[49]

Organized labor in Massachusetts played a role both in supporting and in defeating the League proposal, and it seems reasonable to say that American labor as a whole was a potent influence on foreign policy during the imperialism and League debates. But labor was about to lose its position of relative ascendancy.

Labor's non-impact on an important aspect of foreign policy had already been evident in the First World War, when Samuel Gompers sat on the Council of National Defense and chaired the Labor Advisory Board – in 1917–18 labor received a higher standing in exchange for its loyalty and productivity. This proved to be just a preliminary phase in labor's own, long-running, breakthrough syndrome. The leaders of organized labor were faithful followers in the Second World War and the Korean War. Labor turned against the Vietnam War only late in the day and when the war's inflationary effects threatened workers' real incomes and employment prospects.[50]

In the Cold War, the AFL-CIO turned its attention to organizing "free" trade union movements in countries where there was a threat of communism, operating in tandem with the CIA to prop up non-communist governments (for example in France and Italy in the late 1940s) and overthrow leftist democracies (for example in Guyana and Chile in the 1960s and 1970s).[51] The AFL-CIO's attempts to organize labor in foreign countries did have a powerful rationale – it was a way of modifying the potentially pernicious effects of globalization. But it did not exert a discernibly distinctive effect on US government policy.

It may seem strange to say that labor's influence was on the wane after 1920. The Republicans' tariff policies in the following decade would appear to indicate continuing impact. The Fordney-McCumber law of 1922 and the Smoot-Hawley act of 1930 might have been drafted by an unreconstructed William McKinley. Then during the New Deal years under the Democrats there was right-to-organize legislation and a boom in union membership. However, by the end of the 1930s there was a popular reaction against "Big Labor," and organized labor has never recovered the popularity it once enjoyed. Thus in the interwar years, all was not as it seemed.

One factor that contributed to the relative decline of labor was the resurrection of that old political animal, the consumer. Just when rural America was going into decline and the producer ethic of the cities seemed on the brink of triumph, women won the vote. In the year of the ratification of the nineteenth amendment (1920), women spent about 90 percent of the average household budget. Female scholars soon developed a consumer-orientated economics that prepared the way for the Chicago School.[52] On the political front, women's organizations mounted powerful campaigns for lower prices – and thus lower tariffs. In a campaign radio broadcast in 1932, President Herbert Hoover appealed to women not to punish the Republicans for their tariff policies. Women were workers as well as consumers, he pointed out, and the tariff would protect their jobs, too.[53] His appeal was in vain. Defeat and reciprocity followed. Labor would in future play a smaller role in the politics of foreign policy.

Notes

1 I would like to thank Joseph Smith for his critique of an earlier draft of this chapter. The chapter draws on research conducted with the assistance of a 1971–72 Fellowship at the Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History at Harvard University, for which I reiterate my gratitude. The research yielded a book draft entitled "Social Bases of American Diplomacy in the Age of the Consumer, 1898–1973." In part, the current chapter reconstitutes an updated portion of a still unpublished portion of that stillborn project. The chapter also synthesizes elements of three publications that arose from the manuscript: "Massachusetts Labour and the League of Nations Controversy, 1919," *Irish Historical Studies*, September 19, 1975, 396–416; "Massachusetts Labour, Henry Cabot Lodge, and the Abortion of Empire," in S. Ricard and H. Christol (eds), *Anglo-Saxonism in U.S. Foreign Policy: The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1899–1919*, Aix-en-Provence: Publications de l'Université de Provence, 1991, pp. 25–47 and "From Peace to Prices in the Tariff Decade [the 1920s]," Chapter 3 in my book *Changing Differences: Women and the Shaping of American Foreign Policy, 1917–1994*, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1995, pp. 29–49.

2 Pinfold uttered the words in R. Harwood, *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold from the Novel by Evelyn Waugh*, Oxford: Amber Lane, 1983, p. 12. Waugh's novel *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold: A Conversation Piece* appeared in 1957, when it was already fashionable to knock "the man on the street." In 1948, the American diplomatic historian Thomas A. Bailey asserted that the "man in the street" was ignorant, and had abdicated his sovereignty. Bailey stated that hyphenism had been a powerful factor in American history, but insisted that it was on the way out. See T. A. Bailey, *The Man in the Street: The Impact of American Public Opinion on Foreign Policy*, Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1964 [1948], p. 318. In the 1950s, the search for an "American" identity, indivisible in the face of the monolithic Communist challenge, discouraged any effort to examine social fissures and how they may have influenced foreign policy. Thus for Henry M. Wriston, "the fact of democracy" was irrelevant: irrespective of the nature of society, diplomats made foreign policy. H. M. Wriston, *Diplomacy in a Democracy*, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1974 [1956] p. 9.

3 G. A. Almond, *The American People and Foreign Policy*, New York: Praeger, 1964 [1950], pp. 116–35. Almond bucked the trend mentioned in the previous note.

4 *New York Times*, October 28 1894; *New Orleans Times-Democrat*, March 20 1895; *St. Louis Republic*, May 27 1900; *San Francisco Examiner*, September 26 1901.

5 R. C. Hilderbrand, *Power and the People: Executive Management of Public Opinion in Foreign Affairs, 1897–1921*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981, pp. 4–5, 95.

6 F. W. Taussig, *The Tariff History of the United States*, 8th ed., New York: G.P. Putnam, 1931, pp. 253, 255; R. F. Hamilton, *President McKinley, War and Empire: President McKinley and the Coming of War, 1898*, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2006, p. 50.

7 T. E. Terrill, *The Tariff, Politics, and American Foreign Policy 1874–1901*, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1973, pp. 3, 12. In a more recent study, David M. Pletcher made amends in noting that post-Civil War trade expansionists saw the tariff as the supreme foreign economic policy issue facing their nation. D. Pletcher, *The Diplomacy of Trade and Investment: American Economic Expansion in the Hemisphere, 1865–1900*, Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1998, p. 33.

8 M. Small, *Democracy and Diplomacy: The Impact of Domestic Politics on U.S. Foreign Policy, 1789–1994*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, p. 27.

9 H. G. Gutman, *Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America: Essays in Working-Class and Social History*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1977, p. 9.

10 Typically, works linking labor and foreign policy in the 1898–1920 period deal with national leadership, especially that of AFL president Samuel Gompers, and treat this as a subject of intrinsic interest – showing, for example, that Gompers was unhappy about the War of 1898 and American imperialism, but keen to support World War I. See J. C. Appel, "The Relationship of American Labor to United States Imperialism, 1895–1905," University of Wisconsin Ph.D., 1950, p. 133; D. L. McKee, "Samuel Gompers, the AFL and Imperialism, 1895–1900," *Historian*, 21, Winter 1959, 187–99; R. Radosh, "American Labor and the Anti-imperialist Movement," *Science and Society*, 28, Spring 1964, 91–100; W. G. Whittaker, "Samuel Gompers: Anti-imperialist," *Pacific Historical Review*, November 38, 1969, 429–45; S. Larson, *Labor and Foreign Policy: Gompers, the AFL and the First World War, 1914–1918*, London: Associated University Presses, 1975; J. Bedford, "Samuel Gompers and the Caribbean: The AFL, Cuba, and Puerto Rico, 1898–1906," *Labor's Heritage*, 6, Spring 1995, 4–25.

11 E. McKillen, *Chicago Labor and the Quest for a Democratic Diplomacy, 1914–1924*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995, pp. x, 216, 221.

12 How significant would that be? A state not a city, Massachusetts elected Senators not Congressmen – and the Senate was influential in the determination of foreign policy, in this case particularly so, as Senator Henry Cabot Lodge played a major role. There is also a methodological issue. Should the locality subjected to special historical scrutiny be selected because it was especially influential, or because it was representative? As a maritime entity, was the Bay State less or more typical of America than land-locked (if lakeside) Chicago?

13 For a summary of this complex debate, see Pletcher, *Diplomacy of Trade*, pp. 34–41.

14 D. Montgomery, *Beyond Equality: Labor and the Radical Republicans, 1862–1872*, New York: Knopf, 1967, pp. 24, 86, 343.

15 J. L. Hayes, *Protection a Boon to Consumers*, Boston: John Wilson, 1867, p. 49.

16 Speech in the House, January 27 1883, William McKinley Papers, Library of Congress (henceforth McK).

17 Speeches in the House, April 15 1878, April 6 1882, October 29 1885, McK.

18 See J. Smith, *Illusions of Conflict: Anglo-American Diplomacy Toward Latin America, 1865–1895*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979, pp. 144–5.

19 Hamilton, *President McKinley*, p. 106; McKinley quoted in W. A. Williams, *The Contours of American History*, New York: Norton, 1988, p. 363.

20 McKinley to Lodge, September 8 1900, McK.

21 Theodore Roosevelt was a political visionary in recognizing the urban consumer as a new animal in American politics – as evidenced in his intervention in the anthracite coal strike of 1902 to ensure heating fuel in American homes, and in his championing of pure food and drugs legislation. Apparently, however, he did not conceive of the consumer as someone who might vote to guard his *economic* interests.

22 G. Rystad, *Ambiguous Imperialism: American Foreign Policy and Domestic Politics at the Turn of the Century*, Lund: Scandinavian University Books, 1975, pp. 87, 107. The arguments in the section that follows are amplified in Jeffreys-Jones, "Massachusetts Labour and Empire."

23 See W. C. Widenor, *Henry Cabot Lodge and the Search for an American Foreign Policy*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980, pp. 70–1.

24 P. W. Stanley, "Hoar and Lodge on the Philippine Question," Honors thesis, Department of History, Harvard University, 1962, p. 78.

25 In a well-publicized speech, Hoar did declare, in January 1899, "no American Workman, no American home, will be better for the Philippines." See R. E. Welch, Jr., *George Frisbie Hoar and the Half-Breed Republicans*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971, p. 234.

26 Foss speech quoted in Lodge's reply, a pamphlet published under the union label and titled *Henry Cabot Lodge: Symphony Hall, Boston, January 3, 1911*.

27 K. Schriftgiesser, *The Gentleman from Massachusetts: Henry Cabot Lodge*, Boston: Little, Brown, 1944; H. C. Lodge, *Early Memories*, New York: Scribner's, 1913, pp. 22, 37, 79, 106, 113.

28 Lodge to "Charles" (Francis Adams?), January 31 1898, and Lodge to Prescott F. Hall (secretary of the Immigration Restriction League), February 3 1898, in Henry Cabot Lodge Papers: Letters and Correspondence, Massachusetts Historical Society (henceforth HCL).

29 There are cryptic references to Lodge-Powderly meetings in HCL, and a copy of the reporting letter Powderly to Lodge, December 11 1999, is in the William McKinley Papers.

30 Petition, Cigar Makers' Union of Scranton, Pa., to Senator Matthew Quay, January 4 1899, Legislative Division Files, Library of Congress (henceforth LD).

31 P. E. Coletta, *William Jennings Bryan*, 3 vols, Vol. I: *Political Evangelist*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964, p. 55; petition, James Wood and Adolph Strasser to Senator William Jennings Bryan, February 1 1899, LD. $3.50 was the minimum wage for miners in Colorado. See M. Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World*, Chicago: Quadrangle, 1969, p. 40.

32 *Boston Globe*, January 30 1899. In the event, Bryan did improve his vote in Massachusetts at the expense of McKinley, but the President still won comfortably by a margin of 239,000 to 157,000: Rystad, *Ambiguous Imperialism*, p. 298.

33 *Boston Evening Transcript*, January 4 1999; Lodge to W. J. Wright, January 31 1900, HCL.

34 Lodge to W. J. Wright, January 31 1900, HCL. Stanley, "Hoar and Lodge," pp. 59–60.

35 Lodge to Winthrop L. Marvin, March 5 1900, HCL.

36 Taussig, *Tariff History*, p. 398. The extent of the Republican tariff reforms remained limited. Filipino nationalist Vicente Nepomuceno attacked US rule in the archipelago in 1904 partly for its racialist practices and partly for economic reasons: "a prohibitive tariff has shut out all commerce and dwarfed our revenue." See P. A Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States and the Philippines*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006, p. 275.

37 "Special Report of Wm. H. Taft Secretary of War to the President on the Philippines," January 27 1908, Washington: GPO, 1908, p. 79. This piece of evidence is taken from Adam Burns, "An Imperial Vision: William Howard Taft and the Philippines, 1900–1921," University of Edinburgh Ph.D., 2010, Chapter 5.

38 Susan B. Anthony quoted in K. S. Anthony, *Susan B. Anthony: Her Personal History and her Era*, Garden City: Doubleday, 1954, p. 450. In similar vein, Harriet Stanton Blatch, Anthony's collaborator in writing a history of women's suffrage and a significant emancipationist in the Progressive era, remarked in 1918, "War! It does make the blood course through the veins." H. Blatch, *Mobilizing Woman-Power*, New York: The Woman's Press, 1918, p. 57. On women, war and peace in the First World War, see Jeffreys-Jones, *Changing Differences*, chapter 2. K. L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998, offers a different kind of gender perspective, and is a reminder that foreign policy is influenced by culture and ideology, as well as by lobbying and economics.

39 *Proceedings of the Thirty-fourth Annual Convention of the MSB of the AFL held at Greenfield, Mass., September 8–10 1919* [henceforth *Proc MSB*], p. 7. The arguments and evidence in the following section are amplified in Jeffreys-Jones, "Massachusetts Labour and League."

40 J. M. Cooper, Jr., *Breaking the Heart of the World: Woodrow Wilson and the Fight for the League of Nations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 424–6.

41 Massachusetts State Federation of Labor (as the MSB came to be known), *History of the MSFL, 1887–1935*, Boston: MSFL, 1935, p. 57.

42 See T. A. Bailey, *Woodrow Wilson and the Lost Peace*, New York: Macmillan, 1944, and R. Stone, *The Irreconcilables: The Fight Against the League of Nations*, Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1970.

43 Stone, *Irreconcilables*, p. 102, and compare with A. S. Link, *Wilson the Diplomatist: A Look at His Major Foreign Policies*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1957, p. 133, and S. Adler, *The Isolationist Impulse: Its Twentieth-century Reaction*, London: Abelard-Schuman, 1957, p. 85.

44 See R. A. Burchell, "Did the Irish and German Voters Desert the Democrats in 1920?" *Journal of American Studies*, 6, August 1972, p. 157, and J. P. O'Grady, in J. P. O'Grady (ed.), *The Immigrants' Influence on Wilson's Peace Policies*, Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1967, p. 8.

45 91 of 242 delegates. *Proc MSB 1919*, pp. 60–5; M. Karson, *American Labor Unions and Politics, 1900–1918*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1965, pp. 221–4.

46 Collins to W.R. Boyd (national campaign manager, League to Enforce Peace [LEP]), February 18 1919, papers of the LEP, Houghton Library, Harvard University. See also Chapter 40, "The Fight for the Treaty in America, 1919–20," in T. A. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American People*, 7th ed., New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1964, pp. 667–80.

47 Petitions in the Legislative Branch, National Archives, Washington DC; *History of the MSFL*, p. 37; Lodge to L.A. Coolidge, January 1 1919, to J.W. Weeks, July 31 1919, and to J.H. Sherbourne, December 4 1919, all HCL.

48 Taussig, *Tariff History*, p. 448; "Comparison of the course of retail prices in the United States with the Massachusetts minimum wage decrees," a graph appended to the *Seventh Annual Report of the Minimum Wage Commission of Massachusetts for the Year Ending November 30, 1919*; Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Bureau of Statistics, Labor Division, *Forty-Eighth Quarterly Report on the State of Employment, December 31, 1919*, p. 20; *Proc MSB*, 1918, pp. 133–4; *Proc MSB*, 1919, pp. 4–5.

49 Ibid.; Lodge to L.A. Coolidge, 9 August 1919 and May 31 1919, HCL.

50 This theme is amplified in a further outcome of the "Social Bases" project, R. Jeffreys-Jones, "Labor," Chapter 6 in Jeffreys-Jones, *Peace Now! American Society and the Ending of the Vietnam War*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999, pp. 178–221.

51 For a sample of perspectives on these controversial events, see R. Radosh, *American Labor and United States Foreign Policy: The Cold War in the Unions from Gompers to Lovestone*, New York: Vintage, 1970, pp. 399–405; J. Prados, *Safe for Democracy: The Secret Wars of the CIA*, Chicago: Ivan Dee, 2006, pp. 8–9, 16–17; and H. Wilford, "AFL-CIA: Labor," Chapter 3 in H. Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008, pp. 51–69.

52 Jeffreys-Jones, *Changing Differences*, pp. 40–1, 210 n 45; H. Kyrk, *A Theory of Consumption*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1923.

53 "Radio Address to the Women of America, October 7, 1932," in *Public Papers of the Presidents: Herbert Hoover, 1932–1933*, Washington DC: GPO, 1977, pp. 491ff.

6 Religion and world order at the dawn of the American century

Andrew Preston

Contrary to enduring myth, Americans have never been an isolationist people. Since before there was even a United States, Americans have engaged the wider world vigorously and energetically. They have, however, often been a unilateralist people, a helpful distinction invented not by George W. Bush but by the historian Walter McDougall. Isolationism implies that Americans have attempted to seal themselves off from the outside world and limit their affairs to the United States, and perhaps other parts of the Western hemisphere. Such a state of geopolitical purity is obviously chimerical because it is impossible, even in theory, especially for a robustly commercial-industrial nation such as the United States. Unilateralism, on the other hand, more accurately describes the traditional parameters of US foreign policy: unilateralists do not deny the wider world or seek to avoid it; instead, they involve themselves deeply in world politics and economics but seek to do so strictly on their own terms, without obligation or binding commitment to any other nation or people. This, it is clear, is what George Washington meant in his famous 1796 Farewell Address, in which he warned Americans from involving themselves in "permanent alliances."[1]

And on the whole, Americans acted accordingly. Since Washington's time – indeed, even before, throughout the colonial era – they have been energetic participants in world politics and economics, interacting with other nations and peoples in official and unofficial diplomatic, economic, and cultural roles. But when they conducted official governmental business, they did so unilaterally, without entering into permanent, entangling alliances of infinite duration.

All this changed with the turn of the twentieth century, and with it the dawn of the so-called "American Century." The years between 1890 and 1914 witnessed one of the high-water marks of globalization, when movements of people, capital, and goods, and improvements in transportation and communication led to the creation of an informal global network. People at the time recognized this increasingly interconnected nature of world politics; in turn, their new perceptions led to the formation of a new variant of geopolitical thinking. This was a thoroughly modern view of world politics. "We can no more return to the old policy of isolation than we can return to be but thirteen colonies along the Atlantic coast," declared the Reverend Lyman

Abbott, one of the nation's most renowned and widely-read editors, in support of US imperialism in the Philippines.[2] "There are certain great focal points of history toward which the lines of past progress have converged, and from which have radiated the molding influences of the future," observed the missionary leader and polemicist Josiah Strong in 1891. The birth of Christ marked one such focal point, the Reformation another. And in Strong's opinion, so too did his own time. Technology had quickened the pace of life beyond all recognition and fundamentally internationalized American life, even local life. A traveller in mid-century could expect a journey to Oregon to take up to eight months; by 1891, the same journey had been cut to under a week. Strong had many other examples of similarly breathtaking progress. Such advances had brought untold benefit to humanity, but they also had the potential to create new threats. "The progress of civilization brings men into closer contact," Strong noted. Under the influence of Christianity, he hoped this would lead to universal peace, but he also acknowledged that closer contact could also mean an increase in the frequency and devastation of war.[3]

Among American officials and strategists, then, the new global intimacy presented as many challenges as it did opportunities, for threats that were once thought distant were now seen to be closing in on the United States. With the advent of air power in the 1930s and the rise of hostile, powerful threats in Germany and Japan, Americans feared they had lost their "free security," and thus their freedom to abstain from involvement in European politics. American perceptions of national security, once defined narrowly in terms of national defense and the hemispheric balance of power, had become global. Thus American foreign policy-makers were faced with a seemingly new and revolutionary situation: threats were no longer local, but global, and events originating from afar could directly affect the United States. In response, US foreign policy became less unilateralist and more internationalist – that is, less willing to stand aloof and more enthusiastic about joining with other countries, on a permanent basis, to manage a stable and prosperous world system.[4]

Yet for some Americans, predominantly religious Americans, the internationalist turn was nothing new. Religious communities had long been practicing their own versions of internationalism because they had long formed global networks of their own. Christianity, moreover, was itself a community with a global vision and objectives. And to American Christians, faith was the prerequisite for the proper ordering of society, be it domestic or international. It was the only source of justice in the world. William Preston Few, the founding president of Duke University and a leading Christian educator, outlined this vision in 1911, at the zenith of the American missionary enterprise and the Social Gospel. "Jesus Christ had proposed to be the founder of an everlasting state and the legislator of a world-wide society," Few argued, "and therefore at the very outset of his public career he had deliberately determined to build his empire upon the consent and not upon the fears of mankind."[5]

Protestant missionaries, active throughout the nineteenth century and living life on the very edge of globalization, provide the clearest example of internationally activist Americans.[6] Through the ecumenical movement, a transatlantic, multinational initiative that aimed to bridge the many schismatic divisions within Protestantism, American Protestants formed lasting ties with their foreign counterparts. Not coincidentally, the missionary and ecumenical movements were deeply related, often inseparable in methods and aims. Above all, they shared the same commitment to achieving world peace through the spread of Christian love, harmony, and unity. And they shared a deep revulsion for the selfishness – the ultimate sin for any progressive, liberal Christian – of unilateralism and isolation. "We are here to meddle with other people's affairs," boasted the Reverend W. S. Crowe at the Lake Mohonk peace conference in 1899. It was, he and other internationalist Christians believed, the only path to progress.[7] "Do not tell us that we must avoid entangling alliances," proclaimed a missionary magazine in calling for a more robust US response during the 1900 Chinese Boxer Rebellion.[8] America's duty was to intervene on the side of humanity and prosperity, not to remain idly – and immorally – on the sidelines. One New York preacher admonished his listeners that Christ's command to "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," from the Book of Mark (chapter 16, verse 15), "did not pertain to one people, or to some favored section of the globe. In its reach and scope it took in the whole earth."[9]

Other examples of faith-based American internationalism included Catholic and Jewish immigrants from eastern, central, and southern Europe, who maintained close ties to their families, friends, and political causes back home. As a result, Polish and Irish nationalism, tightly partnered with Roman Catholicism in the face of imperial dominance from Orthodox Russia and Anglican Britain, and Jewish Zionism all found a strong base of support in the United States. Simply by moving to the United States, then, European Catholics and Jews formed vibrant transatlantic communities that had, at heart, an anti-colonial and internationalist sensibility.[10] By the nature of their faith, and the central authority provided by the Vatican, American Catholics also had an innately internationalist worldview. And while Zionism was an avowedly nationalist movement, by the nature of its inherently diasporic composition, Zionism's very essence was internationalist.

The only other Americans to possess such an international perspective were the traders, merchants, and industrialists who took part in an increasingly global marketplace. Yet their worldview was, naturally, rooted in economic imperatives and did not take normative concerns into account. Business interests were concerned with the bottom line, and thus had little time for the promotion of values and norms. By contrast American Christians, like all Christians, possessed a worldview underpinned by a belief that their faith offered the best system for social organization. In this view Christianity – especially wedded to liberal American principles of religious freedom, republicanism, and the free market – was a progressive force that, when spread,

would inevitably make the world a better place. Though international in scope, US economic concerns could offer nothing to rival this internationalist vision of a better world.

Two important aspects of religious internationalism stand out. First, these networks were almost entirely private, independent of the state – indeed, though there were exceptions, the First Amendment's separation of church and state prohibited religious groups from receiving state support. Religious communities therefore organized and mobilized on their own, without any government funding or assistance. Voluntarism formed the basis of religious activism. Religious Americans occasionally acted out of a concern for what they perceived to be the national interest – this was sometimes the case with Protestant missionaries – but usually they acted in the interest of their own community, denomination, or faith. Second, despite standing apart from official government activities, religious internationalism provided a key link between foreign policy-making elites and the religious communities who promoted an internationalist mindset. Most often this link formed through individuals, usually policy-makers who themselves happened to be religious. But often religious communities, by pooling their strength in numbers, brought their popular presence to bear upon the White House and State Department in ways that altered the diplomacy of the United States.

Both of these aspects have been either overlooked or insufficiently explored in the existing historical literature. And yet both, as we shall see, helped transform the United States from a unilateralist, regional power to a global hegemon responsible for maintaining world order. When it became clear to American foreign policy-makers – first during World War I and later, more decisively, during World War II – that their role in world politics would be broader and deeper than ever before, they found religious Americans ready to make a contribution. American Christians and Jews – and especially mainline Protestants – forwarded worldviews based on concepts of a common humanity, universal values, and, in the parlance of the times, international brotherhood. From the bottom up, their numbers, and thus influence on popular debates, were enormous; and from the top down, they had key allies in policy-making positions, pious politicians and statesmen such as Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, Harry Truman, and John Foster Dulles who shared their ecumenical, internationalist vision. Thus not only did these religious visions provide some of the architecture for the new internationalism – such as collective security – they also made the new internationalism acceptable to a wide spectrum of Americans. Emanating mostly from the bottom-up, then, the religious influence also came to be felt from the top-down.

American Protestants had been paying great attention to questions of world order since the late nineteenth century, long before most other Americans had given the matter much thought. This was very much in keeping with their tradition of reformist political activism, such as their campaign against the slave trade, their abolitionism, and their opposition to Indian Removal during the antebellum era.[11] Moreover, Protestants, mostly Quakers

and mainline Congregationalists and Presbyterians, but also Baptists and Unitarians, formed the backbone and most of the membership of the first peace movement in American history.[12] Thus by the advent of America's globalist turn, Protestants had already sought to apply Christian ethics to politics and international relations in ways that forwarded a progressive agenda. Contrary to the American diplomatic tradition, theirs was a "sticky" internationalism based on a worldview that envisioned embedding the United States, and American security, into a liberal world system of interconnectedness and mutual dependence.

Protestants began implementing their internationalist vision to matters of faith, both at home and abroad. At home, this was fulfilled by the ecumenical movement, an interdenominational initiative to bridge the many divisions separating the various branches of Protestantism. Central to the ecumenical outlook was cooperation through communication – in order to facilitate denominational harmony, it was necessary to bring the various churches together into a single organization. At first this need was fulfilled by the Evangelical Alliance, founded by American and British clergy in 1846 in London but soon after a predominantly American organization. The Alliance functioned as both a forum for denominational cooperation and political activism and encouraged dialogue with Roman Catholicism at a time when anti-Catholicism ran high in the United States.[13] Other efforts, such as the World's Parliament of Religions in 1893, supplemented and broadened the Alliance's efforts and extended them beyond the confines of Christianity.[14] Yet it was not until the formation of the Federal Council of Churches (FCC), in 1908, that the Protestant ecumenical movement was able to create a truly broad and powerful organization that had resonance beyond the pulpit and pew. At its height in the 1920s, the FCC represented thirty-three major denominations and perhaps two-thirds of all American Protestants.[15] Its impact upon American foreign relations, particularly regarding the emergence of collective security, international organization, liberal internationalism, and world order, would be profound.

Abroad, missionaries performed many of the same functions. Protestant missionaries have not been treated kindly in the existing historiography of US diplomatic history, and with good reason. All too frequently, they placed themselves in the service of empire, helping to entrench American political and military dominance in Latin America, the Middle East, the Philippines, and especially China. Yet even more frequently, missionaries acted independently of the US government and criticized the extension of American power abroad. Not all mainline Protestant missionaries were imperialists, and very few believed the best way to bring about progress was at the point of a gun.[16] For their part, US foreign service officers bemoaned the missionary influence, seeing it as an intrusion into the normally orderly affairs of state. "That our Protestant missionaries require restraining in their ardor there can be no doubt," the diplomat and Chinese expert William W. Rockhill complained in 1901. "How is it going to be done? The Lord only knows."[17]

This was because missionaries fervently believed – often even more fervently than they believed in evangelism – that they were agents of progressive change. They spread the gospel, often to regions where it was unwanted, and so were most certainly practitioners of cultural imperialism. But they also built hospitals and health clinics, schools and universities. And they promoted what they considered to be universal values, such as religious liberty, women's rights, and political autonomy. Indeed, most often their local impact was not to implant American values, although often they did, but to foster indigenous anti-colonial or anti-authoritarian movements that were both nationalist and republican. Armenian, Syrian, Egyptian, and Lebanese movements for self-determination owed much to American Protestant missionaries, as did the Chinese and Turkish democratic modernization movements. Without the influence of American missionaries, for example, Sun Yat-sen may never have launched China's first modern nationalist movement.[18]

The coming of war to Europe in 1914, followed by American belligerence three years later, did not diminish this internationalist fervor. On the contrary, World War I invigorated it by giving it purpose and vision. In 1916, a year before the United States entered the war, the Reverend William Douglas Mackenzie issued a manifesto for American internationalists. "We discover that we are moving on with all other peoples," said Mackenzie,

> and that as the years carry us they are converging upon something. …
> We are more and more doing business with all the nations of the world as
> our neighbors, and therefore history is drawing us all, I think, to some
> one center – some one meaning. Call it mystical, call it philosophical, call
> it religious, call it what you like – all the nations are being drawn toge-
> ther; and we are moving with them, and can no longer try either to move
> at a tangent away from their history or to remain unmoving in some
> isolated center of our own interests and our own self-sufficiency.

The war, Mackenzie and others argued, did not vindicate American unilateralism, much less isolation. Rather, it illustrated just how deeply enmeshed Americans were in the affairs of the world, and illuminated America's responsibility to others.[19]

Religious organizations realized this, too. In the years between its founding and the outbreak of World War I in Europe, the Federal Council established its footing but found it difficult to resonate with a national audience wider than its member churches. This changed, dramatically, with the war, and especially when the United States joined as a belligerent in 1917. The Great War was the overwhelming issue of the day, an epochal event that had the potential to alter not only American society but Christian theology. Every Protestant church and denomination had an opinion on the war and an idea of what should be done about it. But they had little impact simply because they could speak only for their particular institution or synod. The FCC thus provided an ideal vehicle for the churches to effect social and political

change at a time when several other groups, from labor to women, were also clamoring for attention. To approach the problems of the war in a systemic and coherent way, the FCC established the General War-Time Commission of the Churches, a broad-based organization with separate divisions to deal with specific issues raised by the war. Its responsibilities ranged from the equitable treatment of minorities in the United States – such as immigrants but especially African Americans – to the welfare of US soldiers in Europe.[20]

But the focus of the General War-Time Commission of the Churches, and of the FCC as a whole, also fell upon postwar reconstruction, in particular the task of devising a new world system that would prevent future wars from occurring. These organizations called for the establishment of an international organization that would facilitate communication among nation-states, provide a forum for the debate and arbitration of disputes, regulate international commerce and trade, ensure racial and religious tolerance, and oversee disarmament. According to a major ecumenical conference, held in Pittsburgh in October 1917, the establishment of a peaceful world order required the "abandonment of pagan nationalism … of unlimited sovereignty, and of the right to override and destroy weak neighbors." In their place must arise "the familyhood of nations, the limitation of local and of national sovereignty, and the right of all nations and races, small and great, to share in the world's resources and in opportunity for self-directing development and expanding life."[21] In parallel with the Wilson Administration, then, the FCC and its subsidiaries were also thinking about a structure for a postwar international organization. In effect, it was also drafting plans for a league of nations.

Drafting these parameters for a new world system did not require much intellectual or organizational effort for members of the FCC. After all, they had been functioning within precisely such a system since the Federal Council's founding in 1908. Their logic was simple: if an interdenominational organization (such as the FCC) could bring about religious peace, then surely an international organization (such as the League of Nations) could bring about world peace. Applying a national model to international affairs was also not much of an innovation for the FCC – as Christians, they were long accustomed to perceiving themselves as belonging to a world-wide community that brought with it rights and responsibilities, and privileges and obligations, and underpinned by a sense of common welfare. And just as individual denominations were required to cede a portion of their identity in the name of a greater religious good, the FCC expected individual states to relinquish some of their sovereignty in the name of a greater international good. As Robert Speer, Chairman of the General War-Time Commission of the Churches, wrote in 1917:

> We betray our mission and fail God if we shrink into a nationalistic sect that can conceive only of our own national functions, unless those national functions include for us the whole human brotherhood and the duty of speaking and thinking and living by the law of a world love.[22]

Toward the close of the war in 1918, William H. P. Faunce, a prominent Baptist layman, professor at Brown University, and Commission member, similarly envisioned a "Christian civilization" that would emerge from the ashes of war. Such a Christian civilization would be based upon internationalist principles of a common humanity, in which all nations and races would be obliged to one another for the maintenance of an equitable system of global peace and justice. In establishing this system upon the devastations and ruins of Europe, the United States was "divinely and imperatively summoned now to lead, to set men dreaming of the day of God, to unite men in executing the great new structure of international life."[23]

President Woodrow Wilson consulted closely with FCC members on plans for a new world order. This was unsurprising, for Wilson himself had been raised and educated within a Presbyterian theological and political tradition that prioritized Protestant modernism and church unity. He had spoken to the FCC's founding convention while he was still president of Princeton University, and returned to do so on several occasions once he was President of the United States. For their part, the Federal Council, along with its sister organizations Church Peace Union (founded by the industrialist Andrew Carnegie in 1914) and the World Alliance for the Promotion of International Friendship Through the Churches, called for an ecumenical solution to world politics as a way to prevent future wars. They supported US intervention in 1917, albeit with little enthusiasm, and then offered Wilson their services to build support for the idea that the United States had entered "a war to end all wars." The FCC set up its War-Time Commission not only to coordinate relief agency efforts but also to propagandize plans for a Wilsonian postwar peace, while both the FCC and the Church Peace Union worked with the government's Committee on Public Information – the notorious Creel committee – to set up the Committee on the Churches and the Moral Aims of the War to ensure ecclesiastical and congregational support for the nation's war aims. The clergy especially threw their weight behind the League of Nations as *the* indispensable ingredient for perpetual peace.[24]

But the mainline churches did not have a monopoly on Wilsonian idealism. Pacifists and other peace advocates, which had traditionally been almost exclusively evangelical Protestant and were still, through World War I, overwhelmingly Christian, also sought a world without war, and they also envisioned the construction of perpetual peace being built upon a foundation of global interconnectedness. Solving social problems at home, once the concern only of the people living in a particular nation, was now an international affair. "If the apostles of Anti-Christ are marching back and forth across modern Europe," wrote the pacifist Willard Sperry in the inaugural 1918 issue of *The New World*, a periodical he founded with his fellow Christian socialists Norman Thomas and Harry F. Ward,

> the same spirit is also sitting in our counting houses, stock exchanges …
> mills, mines, [and] slums. This evil genius of an un-Christian attitude

toward life is the same in the Colorado mines and the New England mills
and on the New York curb that it is in Belgium.

Both the causes of the war and its solution were larger than particular grie-
vances between the European powers: they were more innate, as much social
as political or strategic, and they were fundamentally international. Thus only
an internationalist vision could solve the problem once and for all. Concluded
Thomas: "War will not be eliminated from the world while the spirit of war
remains in our economic and industrial systems."[25]

   Rather than helping humanity reach these lofty goals, World War I and the
failure to reach an equitable, progressive postwar settlement, simply crushed
them. In response, American Protestants repudiated the very idea that war
could be progressive, recoiled in horror from their own wartime belligerence,
and retreated from their alliances with politicians and diplomats. The inter-
war period marked the crest of the wave of American pacifism and, in the
1930s at least, the only period in American history when the United States
approached something akin to isolationism. The Protestant churches, joined
by many Catholics, rode this wave in a grand attempt to tether foreign policy
to the pacifist teachings of Christ.

   Yet the vast majority of American clergy were defiantly not isolationist.
America First and other isolationist organizations made little headway with
the churches. The reason was simple: most clergy remained committed inter-
nationalists. They continued to situate the United States within a mutually
dependent world community and continued to promote ecumenical foreign
policy solutions – from the Good Neighbor policy to the Pan-American
Union to the Locarno treaties to the United States joining the World Court –
that were liberal internationalist by nature.[26] "When the continents were once
unknown one to the other, and even those peoples who were only a little way
apart had little or no dealings, like the Jews and Samaritans, in that day it
was possible to cherish illwill and misunderstanding with relatively small
evil," explained Martin Hardin, a Presbyterian minister in Chicago, in 1927.
But "when the English Channel can be crossed in ten minutes and the
Atlantic Ocean in a few hours, and when science has put into our hands
infinite powers of destruction, if our world is to remain fit to live in it will be
because we rise to a Christian conception of neighbourliness." Only peaceful,
ecumenical settlements could alleviate world tension. "The world has gone
about as far as it can go without a new spirit and a higher ideal," Hardin
claimed. "Our Lord alone has the spirit and the ideal which is adequate to
meet modern humanity's needs of a sense of moral obligation to the human
race – neighborliness from which no people is excluded."[27]

   American clergy thus had little patience for the interwar Republicans' tepid
reaction to international crises, such as the Hoover Administration's inaction
in the face of Japan's seizure of Manchuria in 1931–33. They wanted the
United States to take the lead in framing a response to protest Japanese
aggression and to substitute in its place an internationalist solution to

militarism. The problem was, pacifist internationalism had little behind it except moral suasion and rhetorical hectoring. Unsurprisingly, such an approach did not impress the other great powers – or even the US government. Missionaries had become progressively less nationalistic and more tolerant and cosmopolitan in their outlook. Similarly, the ecumenical movement, including its leaders in the FCC, embraced something close to the extreme pacifist stance. Embarrassed by the passion of their support for the Wilson Administration's war against Germany – against "Prussian militarism" – the churches turned against any use of armed force and instead advocated purely cooperative solutions in world politics. They were liberal internationalists at a most inauspicious time for their pacifist creed, and thus had little effective response to the rise of fascism and Nazism in Europe and imperial militarism in Japan.[28]

Yet as internationalists, committed to the establishment of a progressive international society and emotionally tied to the fate of other nations, particularly in Europe and East Asia, the pacifist clergy offered a latent potential for the kind of more forceful, muscular liberal internationalism that would eventually prevail in World War II and the early Cold War. It was at this point that the Christian realists amalgamated two strands of liberal, Christian internationalism that had competed since Wilsonianism had collapsed at the end of World War I: the idealism of the pacifists and the pragmatism of the liberals. When hitched to the neo-orthodox theology of the doctrine of original sin, the end product was Christian realism, a political and religious ideology that was perfectly suited to the American Century.

The apostle for Christian realism was Reinhold Niebuhr, a Michigan minister in the Reformed Church who had moved to New York to teach at Union Theological Seminary. Niebuhr had been a pacifist, shaken by the horrors of World War I and determined never again to commit his theology to servicing the state at war. Alarmed by the staggering inequalities between rich and poor and by the continuing problems of industrial democracy during the boom years of the "roaring twenties," Niebuhr was also a socialist, sympathetic to communists, who wanted to carry the progressivism of the Social Gospel much farther than most Christian reformers had thus far been willing to do. But his views began to change in the 1930s, as the limits of both communism and pacifism became evident. Both were idealistic creeds that had shown precious little success in meeting the crises of the Great Depression. In place of these noble but unhelpful, even counter-productive ideals, Niebuhr began developing a doctrine of Christian realism. Based on the neo-orthodox, and theologically conservative, idea of original sin, Niebuhr argued that ideals were ill-suited to the real world and could never solve problems if disengaged from the way the world actually worked. In the face of fascism and aggressive militarism, pacifism was doomed to fail. This made pacifism as dangerous as fascism and militarism, Niebuhr claimed, because it distracted Americans from realistically facing up to and meeting the challenges in front of them.[29]

Underpinning Niebuhr's analysis was the assumption that the world was interconnected – materially, politically, and ideologically – and that it would be impossible, irresponsible even, for the United States to remain aloof from the fray. As illustrated by the effective use of air power by all sides in the war, but especially Japan, this was true even before the end of the war; but the advent of atomic warfare in 1945 made geopolitical cooperation, through some sort of ecumenical endeavor such as international organization, a matter of urgency. For Niebuhr as for ecumenists in general, the shrinkage of the world due to modern weapons technology had made war too dangerous, and potentially apocalyptic, to continue unregulated by the world community.[30] But the rise of American power and the nature of the world system meant that establishing a new world order was now America's responsibility. "There is a fateful significance," he wrote in 1943 in an article that called attention to the FCC's efforts to promote a postwar international organization,

> in the fact that America's coming of age coincides with that period of world history when the paramount problem is the creation of some kind of world community. The world must find a way of avoiding complete anarchy in its international life; and America must find a way of using its great power responsibly.

The most "urgent problem" facing the world was "the establishment of a tolerable system of mutual security" that would "avoid both a tyrannical unification of the world and the alternative anarchy," but such a system would be possible only "if each nation is ready to make commitments, commensurate with its power." The stakes could not be higher. "If America fails to do this, the world is lost for decades to come," Niebuhr concluded. "America must not fail."[31]

Other religious internationalists were able to make that leap between the popular and the elite, between opinion-forming and policy-making, and even provide a bridge between the two worlds. Perhaps the most important transitional figure was John Foster Dulles, a future secretary of state and probably, in the words of an Episcopalian newspaper, "the most influential layman in the world."[32] Dulles was a prominent Wall Street lawyer, occasional diplomat – he had served on the US delegation to the 1919 Paris Peace Conference – and active member of the Federal Council of Churches. He was a devout but liberal member of the Presbyterian Church and staunch internationalist. He was, in other words, the ideal choice to head up the FCC's wartime Commission on a Just and Durable Peace, established to explore the various plans for postwar settlement and recommend the best, most Christian framework for perpetual peace.[33] Dulles effectively blended Niebuhr's realism with liberal idealism (but not pacifism) to create a useful framework for post-World War II world order. Outlined in the widely read booklet *Six Pillars of Peace*, the Commission's vision for postwar order dovetailed neatly with the Roosevelt Administration's ongoing plans to create a new, regulatory world

order that would manage international political and economic conflict by placing the United States – now the ultimate mediating force in the world – at the very center of the system.[34] Dulles then took this vision with him to the San Francisco Conference that established the United Nations, where he worked with fellow ecumenist Frederick Nolde to enshrine not only liberal internationalism but also universal human rights as the foundations of the UN Charter, and with it a new world order.[35] Whether it was just, the ecumenical vision was undoubtedly durable, and the United States certainly no longer a unilateralist nation.

It is impossible to know whether the transformation of American diplomacy, from conservative unilateralism to liberal internationalism, would have happened without the religious contributions of missionaries, ecumenists, and clergy. But the manner in which it actually did unfold owed much to their ideas. Their broad acceptance among most Americans was helped by the national audience the clergy were able to command, and to the links they had formed with elite policy-makers. By serving as a link between elites and the people, America's churches played an indispensable part in ushering in a new epoch of American foreign relations, even of world history.

Notes

1 W. McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State: The American Encounter with the World Since 1776*, Boston: Mariner, 1997, pp. 39–56.

2 Quoted in I.V. Brown, *Lyman Abbott, Christian Evolutionist: A Study in Religious Liberalism*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953, p. 175.

3 J. Strong, *Our Country*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963 [1891], pp. 13–15, 117.

4 There has been much written on this development, but for a good overview see F. Ninkovich, *Modernity and Power: A History of the Domino Theory in the Twentieth Century*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994. On the effects of the disappearance of free security, see C. Craig and F. Logevall, *America's Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009.

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7 Gender apartheid? American women and women's rights in American foreign policy

Helen Laville

On March 29 1999, the Directors Guild of America theatre in New York hosted a Gala performance for the Feminist Majority Foundation's (FMF) campaign against gender apartheid in Afghanistan. Hosted by the chair of the campaign, Mavis Leno (wife of *The Tonight Show* host, Jay Leno), the Gala was attended by stars such as Melissa Etheridge, Geena Davis, Angelica Houston, Nancy Sinatra and Gillian Anderson. Addressing the Gala, FMF chair Eleanor Smeal explained that the purpose of the campaign was to motivate American women to become activists, persuading their government to act against the abuses of women's rights in Afghanistan: "If the women's movement is to mean anything and if the United Nations Declaration is to mean everything, we cannot rest while these horrific conditions of gender apartheid exist."[1] The campaign achieved mass support with the involvement of agony aunt columnist Abigail Van Buren, otherwise known as "Dear Abby." A petition launched in 2000, urging the US government to do more to help Afghan women and girls, received over 211,000 signatures. In her Congressional testimony in October 2001 Smeal reported on the impact of the campaign, claiming, "In both 1999 and 2000, officials at the US State Department told us that we had successfully mobilized a US constituency on a foreign policy issue and that they had received more mail from Americans on restoring women's rights in Afghanistan than on any other foreign policy issue."[2] International recognition of the campaign came with a 2002 nomination for the Nobel Peace prize. In the same year the campaign dropped the gender apartheid reference, becoming the "Campaign for Afghan Women and Girls," the title it continues to use.

The campaign against gender apartheid in Afghanistan was a public campaign to influence US foreign policy on behalf of global women's rights. In his 1995 study *Changing Differences: Women and the Shaping of American Foreign Policy, 1917–1994,* Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones suggested a range of motivating factors which have encouraged women to take an active role in foreign policy. These have included; efforts to create bargaining chips for domestic negotiations, an interest in working toward a more peaceful world or safer environment, the need for women as household managers and consumers to influence international economic policy, and the desire to express their

equality and full citizenship through participation in the traditional male preserve of foreign policy elites. Finally Jeffreys-Jones suggested that American women might seek to influence US foreign policy as part of their international feminist ideals. American women, he argues, might be motivated by "the more idealistic feminist goal to exert appropriate pressure on the US government, in order to help one's sisters in foreign countries where sexual repression is worse than in the United States."[3] The FMF campaign against gender apartheid in Afghanistan is an example of this motivation, with American women seeking to influence US public opinion and thereby foreign policy in order to promote the rights of women in other countries. This chapter examines the relationship between the FMF, American foreign policy, and global women's rights. First, it will review the FMF's campaign in the early period (1997–2001), examining the way in which the campaign used the paradigm of racial apartheid in order to influence American public opinion on behalf of women in Afghanistan. Whilst the first period of the campaign focused on economic and diplomatic efforts, the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11 2001 had a significant impact on the FMF's work, drawing them into a closer alliance with their government, and causing them to become aligned with the calls for military intervention in Afghanistan. This development drew criticism from other feminist groups, both in the United States and internationally. The second part of this chapter will investigate the relationship between the FMF and American foreign policy after 9/11. It will review the consequences of making women's rights a goal of US foreign policy, focusing on the use of military intervention. Finally this chapter will argue that in order to further the cause of global feminism, American women should seek not to make women's rights part of American foreign policy, but instead promote the cause of women's rights from an international platform rather than as part of a national foreign policy agenda.

The Campaign Against Gender Apartheid 1997–2001

The use of both the phrase and the paradigm "gender apartheid" by the FMF to describe the position of women in Afghanistan was a crucial element of their lobbying campaign. The term "Apartheid of Gender" was first used in the 1992 *State of the World's Children Report* by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).[4] The report highlighted a range of obstacles to gender equality in the developing world, including access to education, jobs, social security, property, health care and civil liberties, arguing that the "accident of being born female" had a serious detrimental impact on an individual's opportunities in life. The original linkage of the term "apartheid" with "gender," therefore, pointed to a wide range of social, economic and political factors which could be addressed through development policies to ensure equality for women and girls. In 1997, however, the term "Gender Apartheid" was adopted by the FMF in its campaign

against the treatment of women in Afghanistan. Not only did the campaign operate under the formal title "Campaign to End Gender Apartheid in Afghanistan," its chair Mavis Leno, made frequent and effective use of the phrase in her press interviews on behalf of the FMF. As communications scholar Margaret Cavin has argued, the use of the phrase was crucial in conveying quickly and succinctly both the justification for the campaign and the call for action:

> [Leno] had to briefly communicate the details of her message and her preferred billboard-like statement [was] "gender apartheid" … her message was usually well seasoned with the two word phrase that alluded to another historical narrative that inducted elements of a world behind a just cause and success.[5]

Using racial apartheid as paradigm for the denial of women's rights in Afghanistan was crucially important in the attempt to arouse public opinion in the United States, and to persuade Americans into activism on behalf of women in Afghanistan. The comparison between racial apartheid in South Africa and the denial of women's rights in Afghanistan worked in four ways. First, it constructed a stark comparison between international action on racial injustice and international inaction on women's rights issues. The 1992 UNICEF report which first made use of the analogy between racial and gender apartheid focused on this anomaly, proposing that, "the New World Order should oppose the apartheid of gender as vigorously as the apartheid of race."[6] This comparison between levels of international activism on gender and racial apartheid was a point elaborated by feminist activist Andrea Dworkin, who noted,

> Jimmy Carter had a human rights dimension to his foreign policy so that South Africa was held accountable for its racism. Countries that systematically segregate women, like Saudi Arabia, have nothing to fear from this human rights president. … Is there a single standard of human rights that includes women or not?[7]

The FMF campaign similarly made frequent allusion to the discrepancy between international activism on racial apartheid and to the position on "gender apartheid." FMF president Eleanor Smeal, for example, argued, "If this was happening to any other class of people around the world there would be a tremendous outcry. We must make sure these same standards are applied when it is women and girls who are brutally treated."[8] The frequent comparisons between international activism against racial injustice and international apathy on gender-based injustice promoted a sense of feminist outrage at the low status of women and their rights, which was crucial in motivating American women into activism on behalf of Afghan women. The second function of the comparison between racial and gender apartheid was to separate

gender discrimination from the religious and cultural sphere in which it is frequently situated. Making the abuse of women's rights analogous to the denial of rights based on racial discrimination, suggests that women's rights are similarly subject to international, rather than national regulation and jurisdiction, and subject to absolute human rights standards rather than being subordinate to cultural or religious practices. Mahnaz Afkhami has argued that the use of apartheid as a metaphor for women's rights situated women's rights within a framework of universal human rights, rather than within a national, religious or cultural framework.[9] In their use of the analogy with racial apartheid, the FMF argued that the denial of the rights of women could not be justified by cultural or religious defenses, and was as an appropriate and deserving concern of American foreign policy as was racial apartheid.

The third function of naming the denial of women's rights as "gender apartheid" was that it associated the fight for women's rights with a campaign which is now universally regarded as a morally and ethically impeccable goal. The association between gender apartheid and racial apartheid positions activists against gender apartheid in an ethically unambiguous position in which the goal of altering gender structures within other nations is presented as being as uncomplicated an ethical imperative as that of altering structures based on racial identification. Finally the comparison between racial and gender apartheid serves to link the international struggle against gender apartheid with the successful campaign against racial apartheid and the important role played by activist groups, consumer organizations, NGOs and public opinion, which succeeded in altering the foreign policies of national governments in the interests of a human rights agenda. The campaign against racial apartheid in South Africa originated not with the foreign policies of national governments, but with the activism of non-state actors, who subsequently forced their governments to act even where it was arguably against their economic or strategic interests. In the US, for example, the government was forced to take action against South Africa when the Senate approved the application of sanctions over the veto of President Ronald Reagan. The rejection by the US Senate of President Reagan's policy of constructive engagement with South Africa in favour of much more radical steps was a demonstration of the power of public opinion and activism over Presidential authority in the construction of US foreign policy. Senator Lowell Weicker explained, "While it is true that the President is the architect of foreign policy, he is not the Czar of foreign policy."[10] Aligning the campaign against the abuse of women's rights in Afghanistan with the campaign against racial apartheid in South Africa suggested the similar aim of public opinion and activism forcing a change to foreign policy on the basis of ethical issues, regardless of strategic or economic interests. The use of the term "gender apartheid" by the FMF, therefore, served to explain, justify and promote American public opinion and activism on behalf of global women's rights. It sought to overcome the historical restriction of women's rights within national

boundaries, and to instead situate them within a human rights framework that necessitates action from other nations.

The Apartheid model could arguably have operated successfully as a strategy for challenging the denial of women's rights. In a perceptive article in the American Bar Association's *Human Rights Magazine*, Tom Lantos, co-founder of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, pointed to the involvement of American businesses in countries such as Saudi Arabia, which practice "gender apartheid." Lantos suggests that the most appropriate way for the United States to signal its refusal to accept these practices would be to launch consumer and economic sanctions, such as those developed through the Sullivan Codes, which governed the relationship of US businesses to South Africa. Lantos asks:

> The question is whether Americans are as concerned today about US corporations' support of gender apartheid in Saudi Arabia as the late Leon Sullivan and a host of others in the anti-apartheid movement were disturbed by the obedience of American businesses to racist apartheid policies in South Africa.[11]

The FMF initially appeared to have some success pursuing a strategy of consumer activism and pressure on American business. The initial work of the FMF's campaign against gender apartheid focused on international pressure on governments and businesses to not legitimize the Taliban government in Afghanistan. Their public pronouncements focused first, on documenting the abuse of women's rights under the Taliban rule in Afghanistan, and second on demanding a range of measures which the US and the UN could take to oppose these abuses. These objectives focused on economic sanctions, the non-recognition of the Taliban regime, and the listing of the Taliban as an international terrorist organization. The FMF focused on petitioning the government, and on putting pressure on American businesses that planned to invest in Afghanistan. In 1998, they claimed a victory when the Union Oil Company of California (UNOCAL) dropped plans they had been working on since 1996 to build a pipeline through Afghanistan. FMF's attempts to petition the State of California to revoke UNOCAL's license, suggests a useful avenue of involving US government in the regulation of American business involvement in Afghanistan, and, in future, potentially other nations such as Saudi Arabia.

The Post 9/11 Campaign

Whilst the use of the apartheid model suggested a strategy of consumer activism and public opinion to influence both American international business and US economic policy, after 9/11 the FMF campaign for a feminist goal in American foreign policy moved from agitating for diplomatic and economic sanctions against Afghanistan, and became embroiled in the question of

military intervention in Afghanistan. With the question of military intervention, the parallels between the campaign to end racial apartheid and gender apartheid broke down. However shocked and outraged international opinion may have been over racial apartheid, no-one seriously suggested military intervention in order to rescue black South Africans. The shifting of FMF's campaign to end gender apartheid through economic and diplomatic action into the realm of military intervention forced many feminists to critically examine the relationship between American women's activism, global feminism and US foreign policy. Specifically, it forced many to question the extent to which American women's campaigns for global justice for women should cooperate with their government in order to secure their aims. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the growing likelihood of military intervention in Afghanistan, many feminist activists were forced to ask themselves if the logical conclusion of their campaigns to influence public opinion against the Taliban included support for military intervention in order to rescue the women of Afghanistan. Moreover they were forced to question the extent to which such support allowed the US government to use women's rights as a rhetorical device to justify military intervention.

As the momentum toward military intervention from the Bush Administration grew, many feminists, both within the United States and on the international stage expressed their unease with the seeming synergy between the FMF's campaign and the military ambitions of the Bush Administration. Iris Marion Young, for example, criticized the "Bush administration's rhetoric of saving the women of Afghanistan to legitimate its war," adding

> I wonder whether some seeds for such cynical appeals to the need to save women might not have been sown by some recent American and European feminist discourse and practice that positioned itself as protector of oppressed women in Asia and Africa.[12]

Central to the critiques of feminists such as Young was the argument that the FMF campaign positioned American women as superior, righteous and determined to rescue their oppressed Afghan sisters. In doing so, they employed rhetoric which reinforced stereotypes of Muslim women as passive victims, whilst heroicizing the involvement of American women.[13] Under the guise of international sisterhood, the FMF articulated a narrative in which Afghan women were dependent on their more liberated American sisters to rescue them. Moreover, calls for American women to work on behalf of Afghan women were frequently presented as an expression of the power of American women, whose claims to feminist activism all too frequently took the form of offers to rescue and save Afghan women. Actress Gillian Anderson, for example, announced to the March 1999 Gala, "Let this be the first day that we stand shoulder to shoulder with our sisters around the world and declare that their persecution and abuse is our business."[14] Mavis Leno similarly explained the FMF's campaign; "Tonight we are saying that American

women will not stand by any longer while Afghan women and girls suffer under this outrageous regime of gender apartheid."[15] As with the use of the term "gender apartheid" these calls to international sisterhood were undoubtedly successful in motivating American women to lobby their government on behalf of women's rights in Afghanistan. However, many feminist critics, particularly Muslim feminists, have questioned whether the ends justified the means, and if the strategic deployment of the rescue narrative by American feminists was, in the end, a wise choice. Specifically they have pointed to the ease with which these images of passive victims in need of rescue by American women, became absorbed into a post 9/11 rhetoric in which the FMF's rescue mission was backed by the military might of the US government. In these accounts, the work of the campaign against gender apartheid in Afghanistan was hijacked by the US government, who were able to draw upon the FMF's successful work in raising public awareness of the position of women in Afghanistan. The passive images of women desperately waiting for rescue conjured up by the FMF ultimately served to justify the US military intervention. Specifically referencing the FMF campaign, Young worried

> I fear that some feminists adopted the stance of the protector in relation to the women of Afghanistan. What is wrong with this stance, if it has existed, is that it fails to consider women as equals, and it does not have principled ways of distancing itself from paternalistic militarism.[16]

Criticisms of the FMF's campaign's use of the rescue narrative suggested that the use by the FMF of images of passivity and references to the need to save Afghan women pre-2001 were simply hijacked by the US government in the post-2001 period in order to justify military action. However, the complicity of the FMF with the US government went further than unwitting, rhetorical support, and included both tacit and overt support for military invasion, to the extent that Iris Marion Young could plausibly accuse Smeal of "jump[ing] onto the war bandwagon."[17] The leaders of the FMF campaign saw in the days after 9/11 an opportunity to increase their profile and force action on the issue of women's rights in Afghanistan. In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks there was a surge of interest in the position of Afghan women. Eleanor Smeal reported,

> In the wake of the tragic events of September 11, we have seen an overwhelming outpouring of public support for Afghan women … With the nation's focus on Afghanistan and increased visibility about the plight of Afghan women, Americans want to know how to help. In the past few weeks, tens of thousands of individuals have used our website to send messages to the Administration and Congress urging that Afghan women not be forgotten. Action teams are now forming at the incredible pace of more than 100 per week.[18]

Mavis Leno reported a huge increase in requests from the media for information and interviews, explaining, "One of the good things that came out of the hideous unspeakable situation obviously was huge visibility for what had happened to these women and for the profoundly villainous nature of the Taliban."[19] With the media spotlight suddenly on their campaign, the FMF were determined to make the most of their opportunity. Leno explained, "This was the chance we had been waiting for and we were not going to fluff it if possible."[20]

The FMF seized their "chance" by supporting the growing calls within the administration for military intervention in Afghanistan. Interestingly the FMF had begun even before the 9/11 attacks to link the issue of women's rights to national security. In his account of the meeting between the FMF campaigners and President Clinton in the Oval Office in March 1999, Roy Gutman suggests that the FMF, aiming for a more radical approach from the US government, argued that Taliban was a security risk to the United States. In her recollection of the meeting, Smeal claimed that the women's arguments had focused, not just on the ethical imperatives of women's rights, but on the security risk that a Taliban-controlled Afghanistan posed to the region and to the world: "Our role focused on US policy to remove the Taliban … we saw this as a threat to our own democracy … We said there were major, multiple security risks to the United States."[21] Smeal expressed frustration that at their White House meeting, Clinton seized on the issue of increased support for Afghan refugees, particularly programmes to send women students from Afghanistan to US colleges, rather than tackling the problem as a foreign policy issue.

In the aftermath of 9/11, however, global women's rights suddenly acquired a new status within US foreign policy. Many feminist groups had initially been pessimistic about the Bush Administration's concern for international women's rights. In his first day in office President Bush had re-instated the so-called global gag order (also known as the Mexico City policy), which mandated that family planning institutions in the developing world which received US aid were banned from providing or even discussing abortion. To many American feminists, the Bush Administration was more interested in appeasing the neo-conservative anti-UN groups of the religious right within the US, than it was in promoting a global women's rights agenda. The reaction of feminist groups to the Bush Administration's conversion to global women's rights could be characterized as surprise, as activists such as Smeal and Martha Burk of the National Council of Women's Organizations were assiduously courted by the White House. Burk explained that in the heady early days of the planning for intervention in Afghanistan she received three or four summons to the White House, and was fielding calls from the administration officials almost once a week. Eleanor Smeal elaborated, "They were anxious to meet with us … in fact they apologized [for not having met sooner] and even for not having more women on staff."[22]

In both their collaboration with the US government through Congressional testimony and in their public pronouncements, the FMF in the aftermath of

9/11 repeated their arguments that there was a link between the abuses of women's rights in Afghanistan and the security of the US. Their public statement after the attacks argued,

> Our campaign to Stop Gender Apartheid in Afghanistan has worked tirelessly to bring to the attention of U.S. policy makers that the Taliban must be stopped and that the war that they are waging against women and ethnic minorities in Afghanistan poses a real threat to global security and our national security.[23]

Moreover, rather than utilizing the apartheid metaphor, the FMF campaign instead began to speak of the women of Afghanistan as having been "hijacked" and as the victims of terrorists. As Margaret Cavin has pointed out, Mavis Leno made frequent references to the women of Afghanistan as terrorist victims, aligning their plight with that of the American casualties of 9/11. Appearing on *Larry King Live*, in September 2001, Mavis Leno explained, "They [women of Afghanistan] have been hijacked as surely as those people on the airliners were hijacked. … When the Taliban took over, they took away every kind of weapon. Believe me, no one there has a box cutter."[24] The FMF's post-9/11 statement spoke of Afghan women in similar terms, asserting

> We must remember the Taliban was never voted into power by the Afghan people … The Taliban has held the Afghan people hostage. The Afghan people are not our enemy. In removing the Taliban, the U.S. and its allies must rescue and liberate the people, especially women and children, who have suffered so terribly under the Taliban's rule.[25]

The positing of Afghan women as hijacking victims moved away from a discourse of apartheid, which could be resolved through diplomatic and economic methods, and instead developed a narrative of victimhood and hijacking which suggested the need to rescue Afghan women.[26] This move of the FMF was clear in Eleanor Smeal's October 2001 testimony to Congress. Rather than oppose military involvement, the FMF supplied grist for the rescue narrative, reminding their government merely to be careful to minimize civilian casualties in the pursuit of military success, and to ensure that Afghan women played an important part in reconstruction efforts; "The removal of the Taliban together with the restoration of the rights of women, broad-based, multi-ethnic constitutional democracy, and economic development are essential in the fight to end terrorism and free women. In any rebuilding of Afghanistan, women must be in leadership roles."[27] In the journal *American Prospect*, Smeal elaborated the FMF's position,

> We aren't in favor of bombing that just kills civilians. I hope as few people are killed as possible through Special Forces operations. In

removing the Taliban, the United States and its allies must rescue and liberate the people, especially the women and children who have suffered so terribly under the Taliban's rule.[28]

Notwithstanding these caveats and the linkage by the FMF of military intervention with humanitarian aid and committed reconstruction packages, the fact remains that the FMF's support for military intervention in Afghanistan suggested their willingness to accept that the logical conclusion of a feminist goal for American foreign policy is military intervention where necessary in order to secure that goal. For some, the logic of securing women's rights through military intervention seemed obvious. Political commentator Phyllis Chesler, for example, has argued "American feminists, myself included, were horrified by the excesses of the Taliban, but our campaign against them proved ineffective. It took the American military invasion to rid the country of those thugs."[29] In an interview for *Front Page* magazine she explained,

> Feminists understand that you have to call the police when a man is beating his wife to death, or when a rape is in process; it is contradictory for feminists to resist the use of military force when women are being stoned to death, hung, jailed and tortured.[30]

Other critics were far less comfortable with the synergy between the FMF's campaign and US foreign policy that emerged in the build-up to the invasion of Afghanistan. The reactions to the consequences of the FMF's qualified support of US military intervention in order to secure the rights of Afghanistan women illustrates the problematic nature of a "feminist goal" of American foreign policy. First, there were and are many feminist groups, both within the United States and based in the Middle-East who are considerably less sanguine than the FMF about the possibility of securing women's rights down the barrel of a gun.[31] The US group Code Pink for example has argued that the continuation of the war in Afghanistan, whilst ostensibly seeking to secure the rights of Afghan women, in fact makes their lives harder. Their petition to end the war explained, "Protecting the rights of women is often given as a rationale for the war in Afghanistan, but what we hear from the women of Afghanistan is that the ongoing combat in their country causes incalculable suffering." Their petition to the US Congress, urges the US government to "quit hiding behind the skirts of Afghan women and come forward in support of real and sustained peace."[32] Women from Muslim, Arab and Middle Eastern groups have been vocal in their insistence that military intervention in Afghanistan has made life far worse for Afghan women. Rania Masri of the Arab Women's Solidarity Association, for example, in a statement to the United Nations, explained, "There is no such bomb that can kill only guilty people. I don't want to speak the language of violence of the terrorists, nor do I want the US to do that as a nation."[33] Arab women

activists Sonali Kolhatkar and Mariam Rawi have deplored the continuing support by the FMF for US military presence in Afghanistan, arguing,

> Waging war does not lead to the liberation of women anywhere. Women always disproportionately suffer the effects of war, and to think that women's rights can be won with bullets and bloodshed is position danger-ous in its naïveté. The Feminist Majority should know this instinctively.[34]

The second weakness of the linkage between feminist goals and US foreign policy, which was to become painfully clear in the case of Afghanistan, was the impossibility of imposing women's rights onto other nation states as part of any reconstruction package or effort. In their qualified support for military intervention in Afghanistan the FMF insisted that women be included in post-war reconstruction. In her testimony to Congress Eleanor Smeal insisted:

> In the Reconstruction, women will be essential. If a Loya Jirga or any other assembly takes place, there must be a representation of women from each of the different parties and ethnic groups and women's groups must be included so that women's leaders will be the decision makers for Afghanistan's future … The restoration of a broad-based democracy, representative of both ethnic minorities and women, with women at the table, is necessary to break the back of a terrorist and war-torn existence.[35]

Drawing upon the post World War II historical model, Smeal argued, "We [the United States] realized after World War II that the only way to break the back of fascism was to re-establish constitutional democracies in Germany and Italy, to establish one in Japan, to provide rights to women."[36]

Smeal's confidence that the US government, if constantly prompted by its allies in the American feminist movement, could provide rights in the new Afghanistan proved to be somewhat misplaced. First, it is possible that having been willing to use the need to rescue Afghan women as the rational for military intervention, the American administration simply lost interest in securing their rights in the new administration. As journalist James Wol-cott has argued, "Women's Rights aren't at the center of the war on terror, nowhere near the center. They're a flimsy detachable rationale that neo-conservatives won't hesitate to discard if inconvenient to their goals."[37] Second, even had the US Administration been as sincerely committed to women's rights as Eleanor Smeal would have hoped, even had women's rights been at the very top of the reconstruction agenda, it remains questionable how far the US could simply provide or, to put it more bluntly, impose women's rights as a condition of the new Afghanistan. When the Afghanistan parliament passed a law which legalized rape within marriage, President Karzai was faced with an international outcry from Western nations, includ-ing the UK, the US and Germany. Insisting the law had been misinterpreted, President Karzai hastily promised to review the law and to scrap it where it

contravened Afghanistan's equal rights provision. Nonetheless, the fact that the law was passed, in however a chaotic fashion, suggests that however extensive and sincere efforts by the US to secure women's rights in the new Afghanistan may have been in the period after their invasion, it remains a possibility that laws passed by the new independent state may not secure women's equality in the fashion the FMF would want. Whilst it is a relatively simple matter to invade a country on the basis of their mistreatment of women, it remains a far more complicated matter to ensure that the post-invasion state which evolves is committed to women's equality.[38]

Finally, the embrace by the US military and diplomatic forces of women's rights, rather than advancing the cause of women's rights, may well do much to hinder them. When women's rights become part of US foreign policy, it can strengthen the argument of those nations who seek to deny women their rights that such rights are part of a neo-colonial Western imperialist project. Whilst many Afghan women gathered to protest the introduction of the laws which legalized marital rape, there were also those, both male and female, who supported the argument and viewed protest against it as being both pro-Western and anti-Islamic. An Associated Press report quoted one pro-tester as insisting, "We don't want foreigners interfering in our lives. They are the enemy of Afghanistan."[39] US feminist support of their government's military intervention in order to secure women's rights may have served to promote the identification of women's rights with an American, or Western agenda. To quote Aimee Chew,

> The Bush administration's posturing at defending women's interests has delimited a difficult and fraught political terrain for those committed to women's rights. … For one, as the place of women becomes a contested battleground between nationalism and occupation, it grows harder for feminist organizers to independently push an agenda that risks coming into conflict with nationalist conservatives. That is, the ideological confusion created by the US occupation posing as feminist lends credence to reactionaries who further an anti-woman agenda in the name of nationalism.[40]

Conclusion

The State Department's office of International Women's Issues has explained the centrality of women's rights to US foreign policy:

> Promoting women's political and economic participation is an important element of US foreign policy and a key component of transformational diplomacy. Global respect for women is a Bush administration foreign policy priority. The United States is in the forefront of advancing women's causes around the world, helping them become full participants in their societies through various initiatives and programs that help

increase women's political participation and economic opportunities and support women and girls' access to education and health care.[41]

This idea of a "feminist goal" for American foreign policy may, at first glance, seem admirable. American women could use their political influence, financial power and their sense of feminist activism in order to direct their government's foreign policy in order to secure the rights of women in other nations. In practice, however, the alignment between advocates of global feminism and American foreign policy is an uneasy one. The ease with which the FMF's campaign to end Gender Apartheid, both wittingly and unwittingly, supported military intervention in Afghanistan demonstrates the need for American feminists to scrutinize their efforts on behalf of global feminism. First, US Feminists should be wary of making appeals for action by American women in such a way that the strength, righteousness and power of US women is presented in stark contrast to the helplessness and passivity of women in other nations. In her critique of the FMF campaign, Sonia Kolhatkar, vice president of the Afghan Women's Mission argued,

> The Feminist Majority aggressively promotes itself and its campaign by selling small squares of mesh cloth, similar to the mesh through which Afghan women can look outside when wearing the traditional Afghan burqa. The postcard on which the swatch of mesh is sold says, 'Wear a symbol of remembrance for Afghan women', as if they are already extinct. An alternative could have been "Celebrate the Resistance of Afghan Women" with a pin of a hand folded into a fist, to acknowledge the very real struggle that Afghan women wage every day.

Kolhatkar acknowledges that the casting of Afghan women as passive victims was fundamental in arousing the pity, and thus the activism of American women, asking, "How 'effective' would the Feminist Majority's campaign be if they made it known that Afghan women were actively fighting back and simply needed money and moral support, not instructions?"[42] The strategic use of the passive victim narrative might arguably be successful in arousing the activism of US women. Feminist critic Cyra Akila Choudhury has argued that Muslim women's groups may have themselves have "sometimes strategically deployed constructions [of] victimization expected by Liberals to garner much needed support."[43] However, she warns that "the exportation of a victim narrative can give rise to a one-dimensional view on the part of Western partner organizations that it then disseminated within Western societies."[44] The ease with which the FMF's narratives of passive Afghan women was adopted or co-opted by the US government should cause American feminists to be more mindful of the possible consequences of using narratives that rely on the helplessness of foreign women as victims in order to interest both the US public and the US government in global women's rights.

Secondly, American feminists should recognize the extent to which their work on behalf of global feminism could be co-opted in the service of other goals of US foreign policy. Aimee Chew has specifically urged the FMF to withdraw their support of US military intervention in Afghanistan and to consider the extent to which their support of the invasion served the interests of the US government's own agenda:

> This entangled complicity and exploitation should make US feminists – as stakeholders in the world's premier military and economic superpower – uncomfortable. How do paternalistic leaders continue to manoeuvre and manipulate the interests of certain women and minorities for imperial ends? Have they 'co-opted' feminist aims – and if so, whose feminism?'[45]

US feminists should be wary of the extent to which the concept of a feminist goal serves to provide a justification for selective US military intervention. As Jindy Pettman has argued, women's rights risk becoming seen as "rights of convenience" providing a fig leaf of humanitarian justification for military intervention which cannot but help make women's lives more difficult.[46] Furthermore, even if women's rights were a constant objective in US foreign policy, with consistent standards applied equally to all nations in all regions, many feminists have still argued that US foreign policy should not seek to have a feminist goal. Specifically, the identification of women's rights with any one nation, or alliance of nations, harms rather than helps the cause of global women's rights.

But if American feminists should avoid entangling alliances with their government, what should their involvement in "global feminism" be? Arguably the task of American feminists is not to promote a more prominent role for women's rights within their nation's foreign policy, but to constantly seek to detach the global advance of women's rights from a national agenda. This is not just because the association of feminism with Western nations may be detrimental to its progress. It is also because the identification of women's rights with any one nation obscures the extent to which the biggest impediment to global women's rights has not so much been the oppositions or actions of any particular nations, but rather, as scholars such as Cynthia Enloe and Ann Elizabeth Mayer have argued, the assumption that national sovereignty has precedence over international standards on women's rights. To quote Enloe:

> As feminists have discovered when they have pressed for rape in war and domestic violence to be classified as violations of international codes of human rights, particular regimes have adamantly opposed such an expansion of international legal doctrine on the grounds that it would violate their states' hard-won post-colonial sovereignty[47]

Those states which have most fervently defended national sovereignty from international women's rights legislation have historically consisted of a bizarre

alliance of Middle Eastern States and the US. American women should promote global women's rights not as something America provides and secures, but as something it acknowledges and yields to.[48] Rather than seeking a feminist goal for US foreign policy, US women should seek to challenge the use of women's rights as a tool of national foreign policy, and to work toward strengthening international law and international standards of human rights.

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Section Three

Interests and ethnicity

8   African Americans and US foreign policy

The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa and the Rhodesian crisis

Carl P. Watts

Melvin Small has observed that among the attentive public in the United States: "organized ethnic groups have exerted a major influence in national foreign policy debates. Ethnic political activism has been a unique problem for diplomats representing the multicultural United States."[1] Yet it has also been suggested that during the Cold War the interests of American ethnic and racial groups were effectively subordinated to the "national interest," defined simply as opposition to communism.[2] There is some validity in the argument that during the early Cold War African American interests were sublimated in the political struggle against communism. Civil rights activists who drew international attention to the state of American race relations and criticized the colonial practices of US allies were considered "Un-American."[3] However, the mid-late 1950s proved to be something of a watershed with the waning of McCarthyism, the schools desegregation decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, and the resistance to desegregation at Little Rock, Arkansas. These not only gave impetus to the efforts of the civil rights movement, but also shone the light of international scrutiny on American domestic politics and race relations.[4] US policy-makers were faced with an obvious dilemma, as Mary Dudziak has observed: "How could American democracy be a beacon during the Cold War, and a model for those struggling against Soviet oppression, if the United States itself practiced brutal discrimination against minorities within its own borders?"[5] African Americans increasingly sought to take advantage of international concern about racial issues, linking their own civil rights campaign with the struggle of oppressed African majorities in South Africa, the Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique, and Britain's Central African Federation. This chapter is situated in that context; it analyzes the nexus between US domestic politics and foreign policy toward Southern Rhodesia, with particular reference to the American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa (ANLCA), the "only substantial attempt at organized group activity on behalf of Africa by black Americans" at the height of the independence movement in Africa.[6]

James Meriwether has commented that the formation of the ANLCA "indicates just how important contemporary Africa and its freedom struggles had become to the civil rights leadership and to the struggle in America."[7]

The ANLCA deserves analysis not simply because it was a symbol of African American interest in the problems of Africa, but also because the organization received coverage in the national press, had access to President Kennedy, Secretary of State Rusk, and State Department officials, and established contacts with African leaders. Yet despite the significance of the ANLCA in these terms, it ultimately failed to influence the policy of the US government. As Anthony Lake recognized, "It was an important failure, for this was the only anti-apartheid group with a natural interest in Africa."[8] This chapter will agree with previous analyzes, which have acknowledged that the ANLCA suffered from a number of specific organizational weaknesses that inhibited its ability to influence US policy toward Africa.[9] However, close reading of primary sources on the Rhodesian crisis demonstrates that even if these weaknesses had not been so pronounced the ANLCA would still have struggled to influence US policy. This was primarily because the elements in the US government that were sympathetic to the ANLCA were themselves marginalized and ineffective, especially under President Johnson. Senior policy-makers in the Johnson Administration were determined to resist both domestic and foreign efforts to draw the United States too far into the Rhodesian crisis. As I have argued elsewhere, the bureaucratic context of US foreign policy formulation is crucial to understanding the behavior of the Johnson Administration during the Rhodesian crisis.[10] Johnson and his senior officials were especially concerned that the issue of white minority rule could become a vehicle for a separate African voice in US foreign policy, which they were determined to resist. This study therefore suggests that African American interest group activity should not be examined in isolation; rather it must be analyzed in relation to the legislative and executive *response* to pluralist pressures.[11]

The foundation of the ANLCA

Until the mid-1950s the most prominent organization that claimed to represent African American interest in Africa was the Council on African Affairs (CAA). The CAA was very critical of US policy, particularly toward African independence movements, but this left-wing position tended to undermine its credibility in the context of the deepening Cold War and in 1955 the organization disbanded.[12] In 1953 civil rights leaders, churchmen, and liberal politicians formed the American Committee on Africa (ACOA), which by 1965 had around 16,000 members.[13] According to its Executive Secretary, the white liberal George Houser, the ACOA was founded "to give active, tangible support to the liberation of Africa from colonialism, racism, and other social and political diseases of the same nature."[14] The ACOA sought to discourage all cooperation – especially in the economic sphere – between the United States and the minority regimes in southern Africa, but particularly South Africa. It provided assistance to and publicity for African nationalists visiting the United States and United Nations to make speeches, and provided funds for the legal defense and welfare of political prisoners and their families.[15] The

ACOA cooperated with civil rights and cultural groups, but "the ACOA always remained dominated by white liberals, and whether it should be seen as a vehicle for African American concerns remains problematic."[16] In late 1961 the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the American Society for African Culture (AMSAC), the National Urban League (NUL) and many other groups came together to form the ANLCA, which aimed to represent the various strands in African American thinking about US policy toward Africa.[17] They were encouraged by recent domestic developments; President Kennedy had deployed Federal troops to suppress riots resulting from the admission of the first black student at the University of Mississippi.[18] In the announcement for its first conference in November 1962, the founders of the ANLCA explicitly linked the domestic civil rights campaign with African issues:

> We believe the 19 million American Negro citizens must assume a greater responsibility for the formation of United States policy in sub-Sahara Africa. Negroes are of necessity deeply concerned with developments in Africa because of the moral issues involved and because the struggle here at home to achieve in our time equality without respect to race or color is made easier to the extent that equality and freedom are achieved everywhere.[19]

It might be argued that although this was a natural and valid assumption, the ANLCA was facing an uphill struggle in seeking to make such linkage politics effective because African Americans considered racism in the United States and the struggle for civil rights to be more important than foreign affairs (a point considered further below). Nevertheless, the ANLCA was attentive to the many problems of southern Africa, including the serious situation in Southern Rhodesia, which grew out of the dissolution of the Central African Federation.

The ANLCA and the Rhodesian crisis

In 1953 the British Government established the Central African Federation, which has been described as "the most controversial large-scale imperial exercise in constructive state-building ever undertaken by the British government."[20] The Federation consisted of the territories of Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia, and Nyasaland. The Europeans in these territories constituted of a tiny minority of the population (8 percent in Southern Rhodesia, 3 percent in Northern Rhodesia, and just 0.3 percent in Nyasaland) but their social, economic and political dominance stimulated the growth of African nationalism. Racial tension increased throughout the Federation and in January 1959 there was widespread rioting in Nyasaland. By the middle of the following year, the British Government concluded that the Federation in

its original form was no longer viable. New constitutions were authorized for Nyasaland (July 1960), Southern Rhodesia (February 1961) and Northern Rhodesia (February 1962), which anticipated the formal dissolution of the Federation on January 1 1964.[21]

The ANLCA took an interest in the problems of the Central African Federation at its first conference. The conference resolutions dealing with the Federation deplored the US decision to abstain on a recent UN resolution supportive of the African nationalists in Southern Rhodesia, and called for the United States to adopt a policy that would contribute to the dissolution of the Federation, establish universal suffrage in all three territories, remove the white minority regime in Southern Rhodesia, and establish a new constitution for that territory. Martin Luther King and several others from the ANLCA were able to meet with President Kennedy on December 17 in order to discuss US policy, but it resulted in no discernible changes in the government's position on southern Africa.[22] By the time of the second conference in September 1964 the Federation had been dissolved and the Rhodesian problem was developing into a crisis. Nyasaland had already obtained independence (as the state of Malawi), Northern Rhodesia was about to become independent (as the state of Zambia), and there were international concerns that the white minority in Southern Rhodesia might declare their independence unilaterally, which could ignite a regional conflagration. In its 1964 conference resolutions the ANLCA first called upon the US Government to affirm in the United Nations its opposition to Rhodesian independence until the African majority enjoyed full political participation on the basis of "one man, one vote." Second, it expressed regret that the US representative had abstained from the vote at the United Nations on the resolution calling upon the British Government to hold a constitutional conference. Third, it urged the US Government to "lend its full weight to obtaining the release of political prisoners in Southern Rhodesia." Finally, it condemned Ian Smith's attempt to coerce the tribal chiefs into supporting his demand for immediate independence.[23] However, the resolution on Southern Rhodesia – like the others passed by the second conference of the ANLCA – had little impact on US policy, as Andrew DeRoche has commented: "While the ANLCA's resolutions manifested the desire of African American leaders that racial justice be extended to southern Africa, they basically failed to influence US policy toward Southern Rhodesia in the fall of 1964."[24]

Over the course of the next year the situation in Southern Rhodesia continued to deteriorate and in November 1965 the government in Salisbury made its illegal Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI).[25] African American leaders quickly moved to pressure the US government to adopt strong measures against the Rhodesian government. Martin Luther King declared that UDI was "one of the most serious threats to freedom and justice to emerge on the African continent since the establishment of apartheid in South Africa," and urged the administration to sever all diplomatic and economic ties with Rhodesia.[26] Roy Wilkins suggested that African Americans "fully support whatever measures may be necessary to crush this racist

revolt."[27] The expression "whatever measures" could be interpreted to include the use of force, but the US government was unwilling to provide Britain – which it regarded as the responsible power – with much support for such a course of action (even if there had been sufficient political will in Britain to attempt it).[28] Nevertheless, the Johnson Administration recognized that it must act against the illegal Rhodesian government, and domestic influences were clearly a significant determinant of that action, as one official wrote: "The United States is inescapably involved in Africa by reason of its large, increasingly politically-conscious Negro minority. A 'Zionist' type of emotional concern, affecting local voting, could emerge."[29] The US government became publicly committed to implementing a policy of selective economic sanctions against Salisbury, and to aid the Zambian economy (which suffered energy shortages following withdrawal of Rhodesian supplies). These measures were sufficient to maintain the goodwill of African American interest groups such as the ANLCA in late 1965 and early 1966. They largely accepted US and British assurances that the Rhodesian rebellion would be swiftly terminated.[30] However, the failure to bring Rhodesia quickly to heel meant that the Johnson Administration "became caught in a wicked crossfire of public opinion."[31] African Americans lambasted US policy for being too cautious, but the emerging pro-Rhodesia lobby became increasingly vocal in its opposition to stronger action. The introduction of mandatory UN sanctions in late 1966 failed to quell African and African American discontent and in 1967 the ANLCA joined the cacophony of international voices that urged the use of force to bring down the white minority regime in Rhodesia.[32] By that time, however, the ANLCA had turned its attention to the civil war in Nigeria, and the organization was withering slowly, partly as a result of its internal problems.

Explaining the failure of the ANLCA

The failure of the ANLCA to influence US policy during the Rhodesian crisis (and African affairs more generally) has been explained mainly by reference to a number of specific organizational weaknesses. These included insufficient finances, lack of a permanent structure, an elitist support base, ineffective lobbying tactics, and limited or inaccurate information about African affairs. These deficiencies became more pronounced after UDI, when the ANLCA faced the countervailing Rhodesia lobby. However, the contention of this chapter is that prevailing attitudes in the Johnson Administration provide a more powerful explanation of the limitations on the ANLCA.

Organizational Weaknesses

The inability of the ANLCA to raise sufficient funds was a serious problem from an early stage. Between August 1962 and January 1963 it received almost $11,000 in donations of between $500 and $2000 from sponsoring organizations such as the NAACP, AMSAC, CORE, and the NUL, as well

as contributions of \$100–\$300 from other organizations and individuals. By January 1963, however, the ANLCA was \$2,500 in debt and it was estimated that a minimum budget of just over \$17,000 was needed to keep the ANLCA operating on an interim basis.[33] Ted Brown, the Executive Director, was concerned about the ANLCA's public image. In March 1963 he lamented that if the black community could not raise the minimum finances "there would certainly be a serious question as to the American Negroes' ability to be an influencing force in US-African relations."[34] By the end of 1963 the ANLCA was \$7,000 in the red and although it recovered to a modest deficit of around \$500 by mid-1965 it is clear that the lack of finances was a serious impediment to its effectiveness.[35] This is evident, for example, in its inability to make the transition from an ad hoc to a permanent organization.

The ANLCA had an unusual, temporary structure. The initial Planning Committee arranged a Call Committee, which consisted of established civil rights leaders, to issue a call for sponsors and arrange conferences.[36] The Call Committee was supposed to evaluate the results of the conferences and to consult with the sponsoring organizations to determine what further activities could be undertaken to give effect to the conference resolutions.[37] Ted Brown tried to turn the ANLCA into a permanent organization and his consistent efforts in this regard can be traced through the ANLCA records.[38] The Call Committee was sympathetic to this aim but their commitments to the civil rights organizations in which they were involved militated against this and Call Committee meetings were consequently infrequent (up to eight months apart). The failure to transform the ANLCA from an ad hoc organization also contributed its inability to raise sufficient finances.[39] American and British officials who monitored the ANLCA noted that its effectiveness was undermined by the fact that it was not a permanent organization.[40]

The ANLCA never succeeded in mobilizing the majority of African Americans in support of its attempts to influence US policy toward Africa. Attendance at conferences consisted mainly of civil rights leaders and academics. Ted Brown recognized that this narrow base was a weakness in a memo to the Call Committee in May 1967:

> It would seem that a major upheaval is necessary to move United States – Africa relations into a position of higher priority in Washington. This, then, means that we must dedicate our concerns for improving US – Africa relations in the whole Southern Africa area by involving continuously the influence of 22 million black Americans from every segment of community life.[41]

Although the ANLCA emphasized from its inception the link between civil rights and the problems of contemporary Africa, most African Americans who were politically active regarded African causes as a distraction from their efforts to improve their own situation. President Kennedy himself remarked upon this to his advisers during their discussions of US policy toward

southern Africa.[42] After the Civil Rights Act (July 1964) and Voting Rights Act (August 1965) many civil rights activists were grateful toward President Johnson and did not wish to alienate the administration by pressing for changes in US foreign policy.[43] Indeed, this attitude manifested itself in foreign policy issues beyond Africa. One study of the 1968 election found that Martin Luther King's controversial attempts to link the civil rights campaign with opposition to the Vietnam War did not have any discernible effects on African American voting behavior.[44] Even those African Americans who did exhibit a keen interest in foreign affairs, and who identified strongly with the cause of African independence, recognized the cultural distance between themselves and Africans with whom they came into contact, especially through the Peace Corps.[45] A further issue in relation to the membership base of the ANLCA is that it was perceived as too moderate by many African American activists who wished to move beyond political lobbying as a tactic. A journalist for the Associated Negro Press commented that the resolutions of the 1962 ANLCA conference were "more conservative than those sought by many of the younger and more activist elements of the Negro community."[46] These younger activists were attracted increasingly toward more radical forms of political association under leaders such as Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael.

The ANLCA also failed to learn from the mistakes that had been made by other interest groups seeking to influence US policy toward Africa. Anthony Lake has observed that the American Committee on Africa had only a limited influence "because it focused, at least until the late 1960s, on New York and the United Nations rather than on Washington and the American government."[47] Further, when the ACOA did campaign in Washington it targeted the Bureau of African Affairs, which was already sympathetic to its aims, rather than the sections of the Johnson Administration that constrained the Africanists. Consequently, the ACOA "irritated the Bureau by pestering it to push for actions which could not possibly be sold to the rest of the bureaucracy."[48] The ANLCA repeated the errors of the ACOA by lobbying in New York and it failed to develop systematic attempts to influence policy-making in Washington beyond occasional meetings with the president, secretary of state, and lower level officials.[49]

The ANLCA did aim in the long-term to establish a special committee, based in Washington, to serve as "an educational and informational service for the Conference as well as the groups the Conference would like to influence, including government."[50] However, the failure to achieve this objective meant that the ANLCA suffered from a lack of accurate information about the situation in southern Africa. Officials in the Bureau of African Affairs observed that the ANLCA was "a long way from being an effective organ for bringing pressure to bear on the US Government," not least because its members had demonstrated a great deal of ignorance on African matters.[51] To be fair, it is clear that lack of understanding about the situation in Southern Rhodesia was not limited to the ANLCA, as DeRoche has acknowledged:

"In general, Southern Rhodesia did not capture the attention of the American public before UDI."[52] One student group at Princeton University found that there was so little news about Southern Rhodesia in the United States – even though UDI was imminent – that it had to solicit information from a prominent British interest group.[53] Ignorance persisted even after UDI, despite the fact that information became more plentiful. One member of Congress referred repeatedly to the state of "Zambodia" and others confused the situation in Southern Rhodesia with that in South Africa.[54] Misunderstandings, then, were clearly widespread in the United States, but mistakes made by ANLCA were obviously an obstacle to the elevation of its status in Washington.

The organizational weaknesses of the ANLCA tended to become more glaring when compared with the countervailing interests that sprang up in the wake of UDI.[55] The Rhodesian lobby was diverse; it included companies opposed to sanctions, religious organizations that emphasized the Christian influence of white Rhodesians, white supremacists, anti-communists, and those with anti-British and anti-UN tendencies. More than a dozen different pressure groups emerged. Among the more significant was the American-African Affairs Association (AAAA), which grew out of the old "Katanga lobby." It was closely associated with the conservative *National Review*, which became a mouthpiece for criticism of US policy. Two well-organized and powerful groups – the Friends of Rhodesian Independence and the American-Southern African Council – were engaged in a number of activities including organizing American tours to Rhodesia, sponsoring speakers, orchestrating letter-writing campaigns, and raising funds. The Rhodesian government encouraged its US supporters by establishing an Information Office in Washington, which published a monthly journal, *Rhodesian Commentary*, and weekly newsletter, *Rhodesian Viewpoint*. These publications – which achieved a circulation of 13,000 by late 1966 – repeatedly emphasized that the Rhodesian position was similar to that of the American colonies in 1776, and stressed white Rhodesia's Christian, anti-communist credentials. The Rhodesia lobby was also successful in mobilizing congressional support, based mainly on racial sentiments among Southern congressmen but also reflecting a perception that the Rhodesian regime was an effective bastion against the spread of communism in southern Africa.[56] The most outspoken critic of US policy was former Secretary of State Dean Acheson, who regarded the issue of Rhodesian independence as a purely internal matter and consistently denounced the use of sanctions against the regime in Salisbury.[57] In addition to vociferous conservative opposition, African American groups such as the ANLCA also had to contend with general disillusion among many white liberals in the United States who reviled the endemic corruption and one-party rule in many newly independent states in Africa, and who were also concerned about the rising militancy of African American activists.[58] These problems added to the organizational woes of the ANLCA, and contributed to the attitudes that they encountered in the US government.

Attitudes within the Johnson Administration

Initially it appeared that the ANLCA would enjoy insider group status: as noted above, the ANLCA leadership met with President Kennedy in December 1962 to discuss the resolutions of its recent conference. This was an historic moment: "Never before had such a large group of black leaders met for such a long time with the President to discuss the nation's relations with Africa."[59] In January 1963 Ambassador Adlai Stevenson met with the ANLCA leadership to discuss in detail some of the issues that had been raised with the President.[60] In June 1963, Undersecretary of State for African Affairs G. Mennen Williams encouraged Secretary of State Dean Rusk to address an ANLCA-sponsored dinner in New York, arguing that it would "lend renewed dignity to the efforts of both white and black groups to focus on national issues on which all can cooperate."[61] On that occasion Rusk declined but in September 1964 he delivered a speech to the second biennial meeting of the ANLCA. British officials in Washington advised the Foreign Office: "Mr. Rusk rarely delivers speeches about Africa and it is a measure of the importance of his audience that he did so on this occasion."[62] However, they also recognized that although African American leaders had the ear of the White House on domestic civil rights issues, it was by no means clear that they enjoyed similar leverage on US policy toward Africa.[63] Indeed there is considerable evidence that President Johnson, and many in his administration, were determined to prevent the development of a distinct African American voice in US foreign policy.

In December 1964 the ANLCA pressed the White House for a meeting with Johnson to discuss African policy. According to a National Security Council (NSC) memorandum, Johnson made it clear: "He doesn't think it at all a good idea to encourage a separate Negro view of foreign policy. We don't want an integrated domestic policy and a segregated foreign policy."[64] The NSC suggested that as Rusk had a "particularly high standing" with the ANLCA leaders he should try to deter them from pursuing a distinct African American agenda on African affairs.[65] Rusk met with the ANLCA in March 1965. He did not state the administration's position as baldly as Johnson had privately, but rather stressed the problems associated with US policy, such as its strategic interest in the Azores base, which made its dealings with Portugal on African matters somewhat delicate.[66]

Rusk's subtle approach clearly did not have its intended effect. The NSC discovered shortly afterwards that the ANLCA intended to hold a meeting to attempt to create a permanent organization for influencing US foreign policy toward Africa, which NSC staffer Rick Haynes saw as "an attempt to organize an 'ethnic lobby' out of a heretofore relatively ineffective and loosely constituted interest group."[67] In order to remove the *raison d'etre* of such an ethnic lobby, Haynes urged a high-level US "friendship tour" of African states, which would combat the impression that US interest in Africa was only triggered during times of crisis.[68] Clifford Alexander, one of Johnson's special

assistants, had similar concerns about the ANLCA, and suggested that the Bureau of African Affairs should "not give as much time and attention to representatives of the Conference as they have in the past."[69]

Yet officials remained relatively relaxed about the ANLCA. Haynes recognized that it lacked the organizational capabilities and financial resources to be effective. He also suggested that other interest groups such as the ACOA and AMSAC were "anxious to sabotage the creation of an all-Negro lobby which might diminish their respective importance."[70] Haynes concluded at the end of August 1965 that the ANLCA "has proven itself to be a loose conglomeration of disparate organizations which lacks the expertise and background to be of any real help to us in formulating African policy."[71] Haynes suggested that Lee White, President Johnson's civil rights adviser, should emphasize to the ANLCA leadership the importance of consulting with the State Department before taking public positions critical of US policy, and should express the administration's hope that the ANLCA would be helpful on African matters.[72]

One contemporary commentator noted that a significant barrier to African American influence on US foreign policy was "the institutional racism within the political structure, which ensures that very few blacks are strategically located in the political system."[73] The problem was particularly acute among the bureaucratic elite and indeed one of the goals of the ANLCA was, "To persuade the United States Government to more effectively utilize Negroes in policy and management position in the Department of State and the Foreign Service."[74] Between 1957 and 1970 there was a 100 percent increase in the number of African American Foreign Service officers, but their absolute numbers remained tiny: just 68, or 1.2 percent of the total establishment.[75] From the perspective of African American interest groups seeking to influence the bureaucracy this could have significant implications because the cultural background of bureaucrats often determines their disposition on an issue.[76] Perhaps if more African Americans had been employed in the bureaucracy it would have been a good deal easier for the ANLCA to exercise influence on the administration. On the other hand, there is some evidence to contradict this argument. National Security Adviser McGeorge Bundy described Rick Haynes as "the ablest young Negro I have met in ten years of fairly constant looking."[77] Yet, as noted above, Haynes was far from sympathetic to the position of the ANLCA; like many other bureaucrats in the administration he was dismissive and perhaps even hostile to its efforts to involve itself in the policy-making process.

Conclusions

It is clear that the Rhodesian policy of the Johnson Administration was determined in large measure by domestic considerations, especially after UDI. As Tim Borstelmann has explained, "The Johnson administration in 1965 believed that its record on racial discrimination was quite strong, and it had

no interest in besmirching that reputation by a high-level engagement with the racially explosive situation in southern Africa."[78] Johnson and his officials hoped that if they steered a middle course between African American demands for stronger action in southern Africa, and white demands for total disengagement, they would be able to avoid racial polarization in the United States. However, such hopes were forlorn and between 1965 and 1968 Johnson struggled to contain the rise of black power, spiraling urban racial violence, and a white backlash that ultimately resulted in the election of Richard Nixon. African American radicals increasingly linked their cause with those of revolutionaries abroad, in Vietnam and southern Africa, unwittingly "reviving a critique of America's role in a white-dominated international system that had been articulated a generation earlier by African American leftists like W. E. B. Du Bois and Paul Robeson."[79] It is no coincidence that in this atmosphere of increasing radicalism the ANLCA – a more moderate organization than either the Council on African Affairs that preceded it or the African Liberation Support Committee that followed it – withered away by the end of the 1960s.

The organizational weaknesses in the ANLCA provide a clear explanation for its failure to influence US policy during the Rhodesian crisis or, indeed, toward Africa more generally. Those factors have rightly been stressed in this chapter, as they have been in previous studies. However, the obvious desire of the Johnson Administration to marginalize the ANLCA was a more significant reason for its failure. Yet despite its inability to achieve specific objectives the ANLCA was undoubtedly a prominent part of the constraining environment of public opinion in which the Johnson Administration was compelled to operate. One American diplomatic historian writing in the 1960s observed that, "decisions have to be taken in a climate of opinion which is created by public sentiment, and which defines the limits of action. … The *tone* of our foreign policy is not set in the White House or in the State Department, but in the great body of the citizenry."[80] Although Johnson's policy toward Rhodesia was uninspiring, and was assailed from the left and the right of the political spectrum, it was nevertheless preferable to what followed. After 1969 – by which time the ANLCA was defunct – American policy became favorable toward the white regime in Rhodesia. The results of this shift were illegal, since it involved breaking UN mandatory sanctions against Rhodesia; and immoral, because it abandoned the principle of democracy in Rhodesia.[81] Aside from its contribution to maintaining a middle course in US policy, the ANLCA was also significant because it "marked a new, more Pan-African page in the relationship with Africa," which firmly established the linkage between the domestic campaign for civil rights and the liberation struggles in Africa.[82] Further, as Edward Erhagbe has acknowledged, the ANLCA offered valuable lessons to later African American interest groups. TransAfrica, for example, had similar aims to the ANLCA but it consciously tried to avoid the organizational problems that had plagued its predecessor (though it, too, sometimes struggled with

organizational issues).[83] Perhaps the greatest legacy that the ANLCA bequeathed to African Americans was a lesson derived from one of its principal failures: the effectiveness of an interest group depends upon its ability to build a broad-based constituency. As one African American activist and political scientist wrote: "An examination of the history of the American anti-apartheid movement will show that a key to its victory was the *combination* of mass power and of elite power, of building at the base of society but also manipulating its top echelons."[84]

Notes

1 M. Small, "Public Opinion," in M. Hogan and T. Paterson (eds), *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 173–4. The term "attentive public" refers to the 10 percent of the population who take an active interest in foreign affairs, as opposed to the vast majority who remain disengaged except during periods of acute crisis or war. See G. Almond, *The American People and Foreign Policy* (New York: Prager, 1962).

2 S. Huntington, "The Erosion of the National Interest," *Foreign Affairs*, 76, 5, September–October, 1997, pp. 28–49. Huntington argues that since the end of the Cold War, Americans have become "unable to define their national interests," partly because "ethnic interests have come to dominate foreign policy." (p. 29).

3 See, for example, G. Horne, *Communist Front: The Civil Rights Congress 1946–1956* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1988); B. Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and US Foreign Affairs, 1935–60* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); and P. Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937–1957* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997).

4 For the pivotal nature of Little Rock see C. Fraser, "Crossing the Color Line in Little Rock: The Eisenhower Administration and the Dilemma of Race for US Foreign Policy," *Diplomatic History*, 24, 2, Spring 2000, pp. 233–64.

5 M. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 3.

6 M. Morris, "Black Americans and the Foreign Policy Process: The Case of Africa," *The Western Political Quarterly*, September 25, 3, 1972, p. 458.

7 J. Meriwether, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa and its Arden House Conference: Politicizing and Institutionalizing the Relationship with Africa," *Afro-Americans in New York Life and History*, 21, 2, July 1997, p. 39.

8 A. Lake, *The 'Tar Baby' Option: American Policy Toward Southern Rhodesia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), pp. 71–2.

9 E. Erhagbe, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa: A New African American Voice for Africa in the United States, 1962–70," *Working Papers in African Studies* no. 157 (Boston University: African Studies Center, 1991), esp. pp. 19–23; and Meriwether, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," esp. pp. 52–5.

10 C. Watts, "G. Mennen Williams and Rhodesian Independence: A Case Study in Bureaucratic Politics," *Michigan Academician*, 36, 3, Fall 2004, pp. 225–46; and "The United States, Britain, and the Problem of Rhodesian Independence, 1964–65," *Diplomatic History*, 30, 3, June 2006, pp. 429–70.

11 A point also recognized by M. Lawrence in an unpublished paper, "Balancing Domestic Pressures: LBJ and Southern Rhodesia," delivered at the annual conference of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations, University of Kansas, 23–5 June 2006.

12 Erhagbe, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," pp. 4–5; and Meriwether, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," p. 40.

13 A. DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome: The United States and Zimbabwe, 1953–1998* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2001), p. 101; Lake, *The 'Tar Baby' Option*, pp. 70–71; T. Noer, *Cold War and Black Liberation: The United States and White Rule in Africa, 1948–1968* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1985), p. 42.

14 Quoted in Lake, *The 'Tar Baby' Option*, p. 71.

15 Ibid.

16 Meriwether, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," p. 42.

17 DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, p. 101; and Lake, *The 'Tar Baby' Option*, p. 71. For the full list of sponsors see Erhagbe, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," p. 9, and Meriwether, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," pp. 59–60, n. 24.

18 DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, p. 70.

19 Library of Congress [hereafter LoC], NAACP Papers, group III, box A198, ANLCA, 1962 file, letter of 21 August 1962, quoted in Erhagbe, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," p. 7; M. Krenn, *Black Diplomacy: African Americans and the State Department 1945–1969* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1999), p. 118; and Meriwether, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," p. 39.

20 R. Hyam, "The Geopolitical Origins of the Central African Federation: Britain, Rhodesia and South Africa," *Historical Journal*, 30, 1, March 1987, p. 145.

21 See J. Wood, *The Welensky Papers: A history of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland* (Durban: Graham Publishing, 1983); and P. Murphy (ed.), *British Documents on the End of Empire Series B, Volume 9, Central Africa* (2 vols), London: The Stationery Office, 2005.

22 Erhagbe, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," pp. 11–12; and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, p. 71.

23 Bentley Historical Library, the University of Michigan [hereafter BHL]: G. Mennen Williams Papers, State Department Files, Microfilm Edition, series V, "Miscellaneous," reel 23, "Resolutions of the American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," September 1964.

24 DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, pp. 101–2.

25 See ibid. pp. 103–12; and Noer, *Cold War and Black Liberation*, pp. 191–6.

26 Lyndon Baines Johnson Library, Texas [hereafter LBJL]: White House Central file, box 65, telegram, King to Johnson, November 11 1965.

27 LBJL: White House Central file, box 65, telegram, Wilkins to Johnson, November 12 1965.

28 Thomas Mann, the US Undersecretary of State for Economic Affairs, advised President Johnson that any British request for American troops in Rhodesia should be refused but a request for an airlift to move and support British troops should be treated sympathetically. LBJL: White House Confidential file, Mann to the President, December 22 1965. On the use of force see C. Watts, "Killing Kith and Kin: The Viability of British Military Intervention in Rhodesia, 1964–65," *Twentieth Century British History*, 16, 4, Dec. 2005, pp. 382–415; and P. Murphy, "'An intricate and distasteful subject': British planning for the use of force against the European settlers of Central Africa, 1952–65," *English Historical Review*, CXXI, 492, June 2006, pp. 746–77.

29 LBJL: National Security File [hereafter NSF], Country file, box 97, "Rhodesia – Memos, 12/63–1/66," Note on the Rhodesian Crisis, enclosed with Memorandum from Jack Valenti to McGeorge Bundy, November 19 1965.

30 DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, pp. 115 and 126; and Noer, *Cold War and Black Liberation*, p. 207.

31 Noer, *Cold War and Black Liberation*, p. 207.
32 Erhagbe, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," p. 17.
33 Ibid, pp. 9–10; and Meriwether, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," p. 53.
34 LoC: NUL Papers, II, 1, box 2, folder "ANLCA 1963," Theodore Brown to the Call Committee, March 8 1963, quoted in Meriwether, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," p. 53.
35 Erhagbe, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," p. 17; Meriwether, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," p. 54.
36 The Call Committee consisted of James Farmer (CORE), Dorothy Height (National Council of Negro Women), Martin Luther King (Southern Christian Leadership Conference), A. Philip Randolph (Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters), Roy Wilkins (NAACP), and Whitney Young (NUL). Meriwether, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," pp. 44–5.
37 Erhagbe, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," pp. 52–3; and Meriwether, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," p. 53.
38 LoC: NAACP Papers, Group IV, Administrative file, 1961–72, box A42, General Office file, Theodore Brown to the Call Committee, March 27 1965, enclosing memoranda by Ted Harris and Edgar Draper; Theodore Brown to the Planning Committee, June 29 1966.
39 Meriwether, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," pp. 53–5.
40 LBJL: NSF, Files of Ulric Haynes, Box 1, Memorandum, Haynes to Komer, April 14 1965; The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew [hereafter, TNA]: FO 371/176519, J. K. E. Broadley, British Embassy, Washington, to John Wilson, West and Central Africa Department [hereafter WCAD], Foreign Office, October 12 1964.
41 LoC: NAACP Papers, General Office file, box A38, Theodore Brown to the Call Committee, May 17 1967, quoted in Erhagbe, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," p. 20.
42 T. Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American race relations in the global arena* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), p. 168.
43 Noer, *Cold War and Black Liberation*, p. 169.
44 P. Converse et al., "Continuity and Change in American Politics: Parties and Issues in the 1968 Election," *American Political Science Review*, 63, 4, Dec. 1969, p. 1085, cited in Morris, "Black Americans and the Foreign Policy Process," p. 455.
45 Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line*, p. 169.
46 W. Payne, "United States Negroes Discuss Africa," *Africa Report*, 7, Dec. 1962, p. 14 quoted in Meriwether, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," p. 55.
47 Lake, *The 'Tar Baby' Option*, p. 71.
48 Ibid.
49 Erhagbe, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," p. 20.
50 LoC: NAACP Papers, Group IV, Administrative file, 1961–72, box A42, General Office file, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa: A brief statement of its future development," p. 2.
51 TNA: FO 371/176519, J. K. E. Broadley, British Embassy, Washington, to John Wilson, WCAD, Foreign Office, October 12 1964.
52 DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, p. 101.
53 Rhodes House Library, Oxford: Papers of the Africa Bureau, MSS Afr. s1681, box 258, file 10, David Wiley, Southern Africa Committee, National Student Christian Federation, Princeton University, to the Rhodesia Circle, Africa Bureau, London, October 24 1965.
54 Noer, *Cold War and Black Liberation*, pp. 224–5.
55 For brief overviews of the Rhodesian lobby see DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, pp. 145–7; Lake, *The 'Tar Baby' Option*, pp. 72–3 and 103–20; and Noer,

Cold War and Black Liberation, pp. 221–5. For a more comprehensive treatment of Rhodesian sympathizers in the US see G. Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun: The United States and the War Against Zimbabwe, 1965–1980* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

56 See R. Arsenault, "White on Chrome: Southern Congressmen and Rhodesia, 1962–71," *Issue: A Journal of Opinion*, 2, 4, Winter 1972, pp. 46–57.
57 See D. Brinkley, *Dean Acheson: The Cold War Years, 1953–1971* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 315–27.
58 Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line*, pp. 181–2; T. Lyons, "Keeping Africa off the Agenda," in W. Cohen and N. Bernkopf Tucker (eds), *Lyndon Johnson Confronts the World: American Foreign Policy 1963–1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 246; and Meriwether, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," p. 55.
59 Meriwether, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," p. 50.
60 Erhagbe, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," p. 13; and Meriwether, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," pp. 50–1.
61 BHL: G. Mennen Williams Papers, State Department files, Microfilm Edition, series I, "Correspondence," reel 5, Williams to Rusk, June 7 1963.
62 TNA: FO 371/176519, J. E. Killick, British Embassy, Washington, to C. M. Le Quesne, WCAD, Foreign Office, September 30 1964.
63 Ibid.
64 LBJL: NSF, Africa Country file, box 76, vol. II (7/64–6/65), "Africa – General, Memos and Misc." [1 of 2], Komer to Bundy, January 6 1965, quoted in Krenn, *Black Diplomacy*, p. 134; and Lyons, "Keeping Africa off the Agenda," p. 272.
65 LBJL: NSF, Africa Country file, box 76, vol. II (7/64–6/65), "Africa – General, Memos and Misc." [1 of 2], Bundy to Rusk, January 7 1965, quoted in Krenn, *Black Diplomacy*, p. 134.
66 LBJL: NSF, files of Ulric Haynes, box 1, memorandum, Haynes to Bundy, March 4 1965.
67 LBJL: NSF, files of Ulric Haynes, Box 1, memorandum, Haynes to Komer, March 25 1965.
68 Ibid.
69 LBJL: NSF, Africa Country file, box 76, vol. II (7/64–6/65), "Africa – General, Memos and Misc." [1 of 2], Alexander to Bundy, [n.d.], quoted in Krenn, *Black Diplomacy*, p. 134.
70 LBJL: NSF, files of Ulric Haynes, box 1, memorandum, Haynes to Komer, April 14 1965.
71 LBJL: NSF, files of Ulric Haynes, box 1, memorandum, Haynes to Lee C. White, 30 August 1965.
72 Ibid.
73 Morris, "Black Americans and the Foreign Policy Process," p. 456.
74 LoC: NAACP Papers, Group IV, Administrative file, 1961–72, box A42, General Office file, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa: A brief statement of its future development," p. 1.
75 Morris, "Black Americans and the Foreign Policy Process," p. 457. For a detailed discussion of African Americans in the State Department see Krenn, *Black Diplomacy*, pp. 144–62.
76 Morris, "Black Americans and the Foreign Policy Process," pp. 457–8.
77 Quoted in J. Prados, *Keepers of the Keys: A History of the National Security Council from Truman to Bush* (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1991), p. 170.
78 Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line*, p. 196.
79 Ibid., p. 221.
80 D. Perkins, *The Evolution of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2nd ed., 1966), p. 152.

81 T. Hughes, "Foreword" in Lake, *The 'Tar Baby' Option*, pp. vii–x.
82 Meriwether, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," pp. 55–7.
83 Erhagbe, "The American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa," pp. 26–7.
84 W. Johnson, "Getting Over by Reaching Out: Lessons from the Divestment and Krugerrand Campaigns," *The Black Scholar*, 29, 1, Spring 1999, p. 4.

9　The American public and the US–Israeli "special" relationship

Elizabeth Stephens

> "There is a prodigious force in the expression of the wills of the people. When it stands out in broad daylight, even the imagination of those who would like to context it is somehow smothered."
>
> Alexis de Tocqueville

> "The convictions that leaders have formed before reaching high office are the intellectual capital they will consume as long as they continue in office."
>
> Henry Kissinger

The US–Israeli "special" relationship is an axiom of international relations. It is a relationship that has endured, on a domestic scale, transitions from Democrat to Republican administrations and on the international stage the transition from the Cold War to the "War on Terror." It is a relationship that is without equal in international affairs and one in which a small state of five million people is perceived, by many, to hold sway over the interests and policies of a global superpower. The reason for the depth and longevity of the US–Israeli relationship has long been debated. It has been attributed to national and strategic interest, economic imperatives and the activities of domestic pressure groups. While each of these rationales goes some way to elucidating the dynamics of the relationship, they do not adequately account for the groundswell of public opinion in support of Israel.

A complimentary explanation that contributes greatly to understanding the force of public support in defense of Israel, resides in the concept of political culture. While somewhat imprecise and impressionistic, this concept reveals much about the origins of an American commitment that is often costly in economic and diplomatic terms. It is not contended that political culture is the sole explanatory factor in the depth and longevity of the US–Israeli relationship, but that it shapes the core values of American society that influence the approach to foreign affairs. In perceiving their society to be a beacon of what they like to call "freedom" and "democracy," in a world in which these values are largely absent, Americans have been encouraged to believe that they share a political kinship with societies similarly imbued and that they have an obligation to assist where such values are under threat. It is this

belief that sets Israel apart from other nations and forms the bedrock of the US–Israeli "special relationship."

Political speeches are replete with references to the values that the US and Israel share. Bill Clinton, in the 1992 presidential election campaign, drew on Israel as an example of a "democratic ally" and claimed that "Democracy has always been our nation's perfecting impulse … democracy abroad also protects our own concrete economic and security interests here at home."[1] Sixteen years later, Hillary Clinton echoed similar sentiments in her own bid for the presidency when, before the New York chapter of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), she said that "what is vital is that we stand by our friend and our ally and we stand by our own values. Israel is a beacon of what's right in a neighbourhood overshadowed by the wrongs of radicalism, extremism, despotism and terrorism."[2]

It is the repeated references to the values and beliefs that Americans cherish and the way in which Israel is perceived to epitomize them that reveals a great deal about the bedrock of the US–Israeli relationship. While the pro-Israel lobby is indispensable in mobilizing and operationalizing support for Israel, even the most well organized and funded lobby could not survive and flourish in an environment that is hostile to the interests it espoused. In promoting Israel's interests on Capital Hill and amongst the population at large, the pro-Israel lobby is tapping into a previously existing fund of goodwill toward the Jewish state, which is shared by broad swathes of the American public. The circumstances that have created a domestic environment conducive to public support for Israel predates the creation of the modern state of Israel and lies in the political cultural foundations of the United States of America. It is to an exploration of the evolution of America's cultural identity and the way in which it has created the perception of an alignment of interests between the US and Israel, amongst politicians and broad swathes of the public alike, that we now turn.

What is culture and why does it matter?

Culture is expressed in the "whole way of life" of a society.[3] It encompasses the customs and civilization of a particular time or people and embraces widely shared ideas of what is and is not regarded as socially acceptable. Culture is expressed through religion and education and other forms of social interaction, including literature and the graphic arts, music and the media. While cultural expression is often to be found in a common understanding of the meanings of terms, these may be altered under pressure of experience, contact with other societies and scientific and geographical discovery. It is precisely because culture permeates virtually all aspects of life, that it is through an evaluation of the culture of a society that we can understand decision-makers' responses to both national and international events and the likely direction of public opinion.[4] Culture, for the purposes of this chapter, will be defined as the ideas, values and images which are transmitted from one generation to another and serve to shape the way of life of the society.[5]

Political culture is that aspect of social experience that focuses on the political dimension of a society, shaping the political system and the framework of political ideas. Political culture refers to the ideologies, beliefs, values, attitudes, opinions and institutions that govern political behaviour and structure the political system. It makes the social life of a society distinctive by expressing the kinds of common values associated with a sense of national identity which large numbers of citizens share. Such values concern the nature of society, the obligation of the individual to that society, the relationship of a society to other societies and perceptions of the way in which the world should be.[6] In *The Social Contract,* Rousseau highlighted the importance of political culture by claiming it has independent authority because it is akin to a law that is "engraved on the hearts of the citizens. This forms the real constitution of the state … and insensibly replaces authority by force of habit."[7]

There is a mutually reinforcing role between individuals and society in the formation of political culture and foreign policy, with the most influential members of society playing a particularly central role in the creative synthesis of political culture.[8] Ideas, Max Weber explained, must be carried by powerful social groups to have powerful social effects and it is the elites of a society that play the most integral part in shaping political culture. In the US, this group includes policy-makers, those actively engaged in political lobbying and those journalists, business executives, intellectuals or religious leaders that contribute to the cultural dialogue out of which relevant values and attitudes are developed.

Yet despite the disparity of influence amongst different members of society in shaping political culture, the essence of a society is in part derived from the way in which shared experiences are interpreted. The essence of a democracy, as Alexis de Tocqueville explained, is that the people question their leadership and force them to rule within limitations of what society deems acceptable. While US leaders may attempt to shape minds they have to act within a framework of generally accepted ideas of America's role in the world and the values the country is perceived to embody and represent.[9] Public opinion acts as a gravitational field[10] that holds foreign policy decision-makers to a clearly defined range of acceptable decisions[11] and it is a forum to which decision-makers must rationalize their actions.[12]

Public opinion can influence decision-makers by bringing particular issues to the top of the agenda, limiting the options for acceptable action and, if not actually changing policy, then changing the rhetoric surrounding a policy. As Risse-Kappen notes, "in most cases, mass public opinion set broad and unspecified limits to the foreign policy choices [and] defined the range of options available for implementing policy goals."[13]

In international relations, if a state can make itself resonate with another state in terms of values, and link that identification with powerful forces of public opinion, it will create a lever through which to pursue its objectives.[14] This is particularly true in the case of the US where the polity defines itself in

terms of values and ideals and looks to other states to promote the values it holds dear. This strategy has been adopted to great effect by Israel in its relations with US where it has formed enduring alliances with various groups of the American public based on cultural and religious affinity.

Israel as a reflection of America

Broad swathes of the American public have endorsed a foreign policy conducive to Israel's interests, to some extent, because Israel is seen as a reflection of the American self. Shared values, cultural affinity, a common ethical and religious heritage, capitalist economic systems, the Judaic tradition and the Judeo-Christian heritage are commonly perceived to unite the US and Israel.[15] American political culture has established an identity of who "we" the people and country are and equally important, who "we" are not. With many similarities between the US and Israel's legitimating myths of history, Israel has become part of the "we" in the American mindset.[16]

Israel has a parliament elected by free and secret ballot and a government that is perceived as changing in accordance with the will of the governed. Israeli Arabs are permitted to vote in elections and there are Israeli Arab members of the Knesset. Debates between the different political and ideological persuasions of the political parties characterize Israeli political life and these ideas are also central to Western political systems. These democratic principles tap into a familiar theme in American foreign policy that concerns the American mission to spread the benefits of "freedom" and democracy around the world, the origins of which can be seen in the nineteenth-century belief in Manifest Destiny – that expansion was readily apparent and inexorable.[17] These principles received fresh impetuous during the democratization agenda of the administration of George W. Bush who declared that peace and security in the Middle East could be achieved through the expansion of democracy and freedom there.[18]

Like America, Israel is a "settler state"[19] – a nation of immigrants who left inhospitable lands for a new one where they endeavoured to build a just and free society, irrespective of the impact on the indigenous populations. Both are colonial societies and the American experience, in striving to escape persecution and establish an independent national homeland, had a parallel in a Jewish state created as a haven for world Jewry out of the ashes of the Holocaust. A parallel is also seen between the struggle of the Israelis against the Arabs and the struggle of the Pilgrim Fathers against the American Indians. There is, in addition, a corresponding dedication to the values of pioneering peoples.[20] The US placed great importance on those who heeded the call to "go west" and Israel attributed equal salience to the settlers who moved to and developed the frontier lands.[21] This identification came to the fore during the Kennedy Administration, where the young president saw similarities between his own deeply held values and those of the early Israeli pioneers.[22]

Origins of identification

While the American identification with Israel, from a cultural and religious sense, can be traced to the early settlers, the more modern affinity emerged in the 1960s and not as is often believed with President Truman's virtually instantaneous recognition of Israel in 1948.[23] At this time Washington was too preoccupied with establishing boundaries in the newly emerging Cold War world to become the protector of what was viewed as another weak, Third World, state. The desire to avoid such entanglements was reinforced by the uncertainty surrounding Israel's political orientation with the Soviet Union anticipating that as many of Israel's Jewish inhabitants were leftwing refugees from Eastern Europe, Israel would embody the trappings of a socialist state. This was by no means a fanciful projection, with socialist Zionists, such as David Ben-Gurion and Golda Meir, in power, who espoused socialist values.

The potential association between Israel and Communism was reinforced in the late 1940s and early 1950s, by the relatively high number of Jews appearing in espionage prosecutions in the US,[24] which demonstrated Moscow's penchant for using Jewish party members for intelligence work.[25] The trials of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, Morton Sobell, Harry Gold and David Greenglass, all of whom justified their collusion with the Soviet Union in terms of the need to defeat Nazi Germany because of its perpetration of the Holocaust, were a particular embarrassment to American Jewish organizations.[26] As Holocaust rhetoric was a staple of Communist Party policy, American Jewish organizations were determined to distance themselves from it, and, by implication, from the Holocaust itself.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Jewish organizations worked on a variety of fronts to alter the American frame of cultural reference by limiting the association between Jews and Communists in the public mind. Their principle co-operative venture was the "Hollywood Project," in which they jointly employed a West Coast representative to lobby film producers to portray sympathetic images of Jews. For example, the producer of *I Married a Communist* agreed that no Communist character would be given a "name that can even remotely be construed as Jewish,"[27] while in *The Red Menace*, the only sympathetic character in the film was a Jew.[28]

Simultaneously, Jewish organizations conducted a purge of their members, expelling their leftist chapters and anyone who could remotely be considered to have Communist sympathies. During this period it was the American Jewish Committee that was the most active and its monthly magazine *Commentary* published hard-line anti-Soviet articles that were, according to its editor Norman Podhoretz, "part of a secret programme to demonstrate that not all Jews were Communists." The Committee also secured agreements from *Time* and *Life* magazine and a number of New York newspapers not to publish letters from readers commenting on the Jewishness of accused Communists. The American Jewish Committee also participated in and financially

supported the McCarthyite All-American Conference to Combat Communism and, like many other mainstream Jewish organizations, did not involve itself in the campaign for clemency for the Rosenbergs.[29] Their efforts met with success in the early 1960s when Kennedy acknowledged that Israel had shown its preference for Western ideals as opposed to those of communist nations.[30]

While the disassociation of Jews and Communists in the public mind was a powerful imperative, it was only one of a number of factors that explain the reticence of American Jews to draw attention to the Holocaust during this time or to demand that Washington extend greater support to the Jewish homeland. America emerged victorious from the Second World War and the post-war years were a time of optimism that united the American people, including recent immigrants, into a shared experience of the American dream.[31] The 1950s and 1960s saw a sharp decline in anti-Semitism in the US as reflected in a fall in the number of attacks on American Jews, in part because Jews were increasingly seen as less "foreign" than in the past. Generally, they were no longer the new immigrants, but third-generation Americans: by the 1950s three-quarters of American Jews were native born.[32] Rising educational levels of American Jews, combined with economic growth, encouraged them to become fully integrated into American society.[33] It was not until this process of assimilation and acceptance was complete, when Jews felt comfortable in America as Americans, and when the lustre of America itself had dimmed, that American Jews were ready to acknowledge the full extent of the Holocaust, the corollary of which was to lobby for greater US support for Israel.

In their marginalization of the Holocaust, Jews were not only focusing on integration; they were also repudiating their status as victims. While identification with the struggle and pioneering spirit of the new state of Israel was positive and had parallels in the American society of which they were a part, the victim status of Holocaust Jews was shameful and dispiriting. How and when this avoidance of confronting the Holocaust was overcome represented a truly fundamental and complex cultural shift that reached its peak during the war of June 1967.

The Americanization of the Holocaust

After almost a fifteen year hiatus, the impetuous for increased engagement with the idea of Israel as a "sanctuary" for the Jewish people and the Holocaust came with the announcement by David Ben-Gurion, Israel's prime minister, on May 23rd 1960, that Israeli agents had captured the former SS officer Adolf Eichmann in Argentina and secretly transported him to Israel where he would stand trial. Eichmann was charged with directing the Jewish Section of Nazi Germany's Reich Main Security Office and ruthlessly presided over a major phase of the Final Solution. The trial was beamed into the homes of millions of Americans through the relatively new, and

quintessentially American, medium of the television. Media coverage of the trial effectively told "the story of a government-sponsored genocide using the industrial process."[34] As the trial took on the form of a televised drama, the mass audience who consumed the images came to see Israeli Jews as activists rather than through the traditional stereotype of Jews as victims.

The image of the righteousness of Israel's actions was maintained at the forefront of American consciousness by the television networks. Prime-time television docu-dramas like *The Defenders* and *Dragnet, The FBI*, began to feature the Holocaust as a "guest topic." These programmes depicted individual cases involving Holocaust survivors and former Nazis, or neo-Nazis, and explored the larger challenge of coming to terms with the injustices of the Holocaust in the postwar era. For example, in "Death's Head Revisited" an episode of the *Twilight Zone*, Eichmann is implicitly re-tried in the other-worldly court of the *Twilight Zone*. The technical capabilities of television's special effects and the endless possibilities of the science fiction genre provided viewers with the rewarding spectacle of witnessing the victims of Nazism rising up and bringing their persecutor to justice. This appealed to the American sense of "justice" and the triumph of "good" over "evil."[35] Through television genres the symbols of the swastika and jackboots and the numbered tattoo on the forearms of concentration camp survivors consolidated the Holocaust as a recognizable concept in American culture. In simplifying the symbols and meaning of the Holocaust, mainstream television offered viewers a less complex and more accessible account of events and encouraged Americans to identify with the Jews and Israel in a way that news coverage and political statements never could.

The "Americanization of the Holocaust," the title of a number of works on this subject, implies that this event has been refracted through means of representation that resonate with American culture. Events are only comprehensible to cultures, like people, from within the confines of their own experiences, interests and values[36] and the willingness to engage in an external event is generally motivated by an internal exigency. The Holocaust was admitted into American life in distinctly American terms and has gradually been assimilated into US public discourse and political culture.[37] This process of cultural and geographical translation was facilitated by the coming era of mass television ownership with its distinct formats and generic conventions. American behavior is disciplined through the narratives in the television dramas and the way in which nationalities are scripted into moral geography.[38]

The public encounter with the Holocaust represented the intersection of a medium that was very American with a virulent mode of Jewish persecution that was perceived as exclusively European. A human cataclysm had taken place in the Old World and had gained admittance to American consciousness through the medium of "entertainment that Americans had devised to protect their historical innocence."[39] The construction of a topology of national identity was a key interest of early television depictions of the Holocaust and through this topology US viewers came to understand their

relationship to the other national identities portrayed in the dramas. The image of America in Holocaust programmes is constructed, in part, through a process of differentiation – of contrasting the US with various others i.e. the Old World in contrast to the New World.[40]

The incredible power of television universalized the Holocaust in two ways. First, it became the referent for collective suffering and the ultimate standard of describing and representing victimization. Second, in the political sphere, it dramatically became a point of moral consensus. A politician could maximize their political capital by advocating the memorialization of the Holocaust and be assured that their actions would generate public support.

At the same time, the Holocaust as a subject was rekindled in Western Europe, especially through imported American television series. However this did not lead to the forging of any special relations between European governments and Israel. Therefore, we need to explore cultural factors complementary to and beyond the Holocaust reawakening to explain why the American attitude toward Israel was different. Exploration of the Holocaust and by implication the meaning of Israel as a "safe haven" for the Jewish people occurred during the 1960s, a time of immense domestic turmoil within the US.

In the post-war years America viewed itself as the richest, freest, most powerful and most just nation on earth and it is obvious why Jews would wish to be fully integrated into such a society. Yet with the advent of the civil rights movement and the bleak war against Communism in Vietnam (1959–75), a preoccupation with destruction, victimization and survival came to the fore. The critique of the justness of American society and its controversial use of power opened up the vista of America, not as a shining example to the world, but as a country that had inflicted suffering both at home and abroad. A growing awareness of the consequences of "man's inhumanity to man" was epitomized by the apparent hopelessness of the plight of the American black underclass and televized images of the burned limbs of innocent Vietnamese peasants. The vocabulary used to describe the more unpalatable aspects of American life replicated that more commonly associated with contemporary images of the Holocaust. The urban slums in which the poor existed were called ghettos, the attempt of a strong nation to destroy another people was called genocide and the potential for a conflict using atomic weapons was called a nuclear Holocaust. As American culture began to absorb this new reality and the survivor figure emerged as the hero of culture, Jews were conferred with the moral prestige of being the ultimate "worthy"[41] victims of man's evil.[42] As African Americans articulated their unique status, constraints on the public expression of Jewishness and the Jewish historical experience were lifted.[43] A dramatic transformation occurred in which difference was valued more highly than conformity, giving rise to a new era of social political openness that was willing to respond to and absorb diversity.[44]

American culture was profoundly, if belatedly, influenced by the Second World War and the Holocaust. One explanation for this was enumerated by

Morris Dickstein in an article on black humour novels of the early 1960s: " … it's because the unsolved moral enigma of that period and that experience most closely expresses the conundrum of contemporary life fifteen years later."[45] Parallels were drawn between the Jewish underclass of Nazi Germany and the black underclass of 1960s America. This broad preoccupation with destruction and victimization caused the idea of "survival" to become a pervasive concept in American life in the 1970s. Images of "survivors" emerged everywhere in popular culture. The terminology for coping with daily routines, as much as actual life-and-death struggles, adopted the language of survival. "Survival" guides began to appear in bookstores covering the whole spectrum of everyday life, from how to survive dieting and parenthood to getting a job. As survival became an accolade and a sought after virtue in American culture, the survivors of the Holocaust were afforded a new status in society. They were perceived as "real survivors" to quote Henry Greenspan.[46] Elie Wiesel embodied much of the moral prestige associated with "surviving" and the fact that he survived, in contrast to Anne Frank, who did not, enabled this prestige to be assigned to a living person. The gradual entry of Israel into American culture began to shape public perceptions of Israel in a positive way and increased the confidence of American Jews to campaign more actively for the enhancement of US–Israeli ties.

The victory of American values

The event that galvanized public opinion in favour of the sovereign Jewish state was the Six Day War of June 1967. Its significance for US–Israeli relations lies in the total victory of a state that was increasingly perceived to embody American values. The war was quick and decisive and the television coverage of the "heroic" Jewish nation won the hearts and minds of large sectors of the American public and provided a sharp contrast to the televized images of the burned limbs of the Vietnamese peasants created by the US imbroglio in South East Asia.[47] The Israeli Defense Forces reunified the holy city of Jerusalem, placing the Wailing Wall, the holiest site in Judaism, under Jewish control for the first time in two thousand years. Gaza, the Golan Heights, the West Bank and the Sinai – "the occupied territories" – became part of "Greater Israel." In contrast to 1956–57, when Eisenhower compelled Israel to return the Sinai to Egypt after the second Arab-Israeli war, Johnson and his successors exercised no such pressure and invariably vetoed any efforts within the United Nations Security Council to force Israel to comply with Resolution 242, passed in November 1967, which sought to undo Israel's recent territorial gains. This changed American attitude reflected the realization of the role Israel could play as a regional superpower in the Cold War balance of power and the cultural turn in the US position toward Israel, marking the blossoming of a special relationship that would become ever deeper.[48]

With the decisive defeat of Egypt, Syria and Jordan, the last vestige of Israel as a vulnerable or socialist state were cast off and replaced by the image

of the Jews standing on the front line, defending America against the proxies of the Soviet Union. Israel's victory was equated with the reassertion of the power of American ideals and demonstrated that American values could triumph over the enemies of "freedom." The Six Day War was heralded by some as a quasi-victory for the US that extended the American "frontier" into the Middle East, in a way that the Johnson Administration had failed to do in Southeast Asia. Israeli soldiers were fighting and dying to protect what were regarded as American as well as Israeli interests, and, in contrast to American GIs in Vietnam, Israeli fighters were not being humiliated by so-called Third World upstarts.[49] Israel's "liberation" of territory from the "feudal," undemocratic and Soviet-aligned Arab states, resonated with the redemptionist interpretation[50] of the American past and bestowed on America the God-given mission to redeem a sinful world and the moral authority to lead.[51] It was through this ideological and cultural prism that Israel's victory over the Arabs, the continued plight of the Palestinian refugees and the unilateral unification of Jerusalem was viewed.

It is this cultural alignment that is fundamental to explaining the success of the pro-Israel lobby in galvanizing public support for Israel. While Walt & Mearsheimer, in their controversial work *The Israel Lobby*,[52] explain the dynamics of the US–Israeli relationship in terms of the power and influence of the Israel lobby – an amalgamation of state-private networks that lobby the executive and legislature to advance Israel's interests – they overlook the crucial role American political culture plays in this. While there is undoubtedly a state-private network in operation in the US that works to Israel's advantage, its influence derives from its ability to capitalize on widespread belief that there is indeed a confluence of interests between the two states.[53] The lobby could not function effectively in an environment that was hostile to its activities. In this regard Walt & Mearsheimer overlook an integral element of the US–Israeli relationship. Rather than shaping US policy in a vacuum the pro-Israel lobby has effectively tapped into the deep seated cultural affinity between the US and Israel that permeates much of mainstream American society. It is this cultural affinity that provides the connection between the US and Israel and the lobby that has operationalized it and made it work.

Christians reunited

Public opinion in support of Israel has been consolidated still further by a series of religious revivals that have swept across the US since 1967 and have shaped perceptions of the Middle East.[54] The balance of power between different religious strands shifts over time[55] and the close integration of Israel into American culture is reflected in the loss of political influence suffered by mainstream liberal Protestant churches that have become more critical of Israel in contrast to the growing strength of Evangelical and Fundamentalist Christians who are more interested in Biblical prophecy and Israel's role in the lead-up to the Apocalypse than ever before.[56] Ironically right wing

Christian interest in Israel had been minimal following the declaration of the Jewish state because their interpretation of Biblical prophecy predicted that the Jews would rebuild the Temple on its original site and while the holy sites of Jerusalem were in Arab hands the countdown until the end of time appeared to have slowed. This lack of interest was compounded by the secular and quasi-socialist image of the Israel of the 1950s which was less attractive to conservative Christians than to liberal ones. During the Cold War the anti-religious communist menace was of far greater salience to them until Israel's victory in the Six Day War reinforced the assumption that America's national interest would be enhanced by the expansion of democracy.

Israel's reuniting of the Old City and the bringing of the Temple site into Jewish hands, in June 1967, reinforced the religious belief that the end of time – the Rapture – was approaching. This was a powerful impetus for the American religious revivals that took place during this period. Since then, popular culture and religion have become increasingly interwoven,[57] with a series of best-selling books and television drama reinforcing the interest of millions of Americans in the possibility that the end-time as prophesied in the Old and New Testaments is now unfolding in the Middle East.

While perceptions of Israel amongst the religious community are by no means uniform, a powerful tendency exists within many Protestant sects to see the Jews as "God's chosen people." One of the most notable and numerically powerful Christian organizations that actively support Israel is the Christian Evangelicals, a movement with more than 40 million members. The majority of American Christians that align with Israel are members of the National Council of Churches (NCC) of Evangelical Fundamentalists, who adhere to a literal interpretation of the Bible and fervently believe that God himself wants Israel to take possession of all the Arab lands it can capture.[58] In February 2006 the lobbying group, Christians United for Israel, was founded by the Evangelical pastor John Hagee, a regular on Christian television networks whose San Antonia "prayer wall" is an exact replica of the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. For these fervent Christians, support for Israel has little to do with the endorsement of the government's political strategies or the maintenance of the state as a safe haven for world Jewry. It is based on literal Biblical interpretations concerning the end time and the seminal role Israel plays in this. In supporting Israel, evangelicals believe they are supporting God,[59] just as God has called them to do.[60]

Religion has always been a significant force in US politics,[61] identity and culture and the Christian Right has become a core constituency in American politics and key to the success of the Republicans. These evangelical enthusiasms imbued Ronald Reagan's first presidential election campaign, with references to "Judaeo-Christian Civilization" an important component of this new widely held religious view of the world that fuelled his campaign. In 2004, when George W. Bush was re-elected, his victory owed much to the overwhelming support of Evangelical Christians. More recently, John McCain

made the previously unknown Sarah Palin his vice-presidential nominee in the hope that her gender and the fact she is an Evangelical Christian might help repeat Bush's success of capturing a large proportion of the Christian voting bloc.[62] Generally, the Christian Right has opposed the Middle East peace process because ultimate success would entail Israel giving up the occupied territories. Although Bush is the first president to specifically advocate a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestinian problem incurring the wrath of considerable numbers of Christian Zionists, in practice no real pressure was exerted on Israel to achieve this.[63] The perceived triumph of the US in the ideological battle with the Soviet Union in the 1980s and Reagan's cultivation of this group was another factor that gave renewed vigor to Evangelical and Fundamentalist Christians. Religious revivals give rise to missionary interest and activity and their focus increasingly turns outward. Adherents to Christian movements are some of the most patriotic, deploying religious righteousness, and favor national assertiveness and the use of force to destroy their enemies.[64]

The confrontation that has emerged between Islam and the West, has caused many Christian organizations to view Islam as the enemy and affects the way in which many Americans view the conflict between Israel and its neighbours. In the aftermath of 9/11, a new polarization pitted Islam against the West, the struggle was couched in terms that have permeated American history. In place of the "Evil Empire" there was an "Axis of Evil" and the neoconservative certainty regarding the identity of evil led them to turn their nation's foreign policy into a morality contest.

Conclusions

Public opinion in support of Israel is in part derived from the "irreducible core" of values the two states are perceived to share. These cultural similarities have their origins in the religious and cultural heritage bestowed on the US by the Pilgrim Fathers and have been reinforced over the generations through a process of religious, political and cultural evolutions. Where US relations with many states, particularly non-democracies, are largely a matter of realpolitik, the enduring special relationship with Israel embodies a unique cultural affinity that encompasses broad swathes of American society. This is not to say that cultural identification is the most pervasive explanation for US support of Israel but it does undoubtedly play a powerful role in shaping American perceptions of the world, their place within it and their preferred choice of allies. This paper has demonstrated why the cultural dimension is critical to an understanding of why the US-Israel special relationship was formed and why it endures to this day regardless of who occupies the White House. Political culture forms a constant in American-Israeli relations underpinning ties notwithstanding shifts in the international landscape arising from the end of the Cold War, the short-lived New World Order and the ongoing War on Terror. Ever since 1967 the US has alienated much of the

Muslim world, not least in the Middle East, through its uncritical support of Israel but remains steadfastly prepared to keep paying this price. What is clear is that the neglected cultural backdrop, which ensures that the predicaments of Israeli leaders are equated with Moses and other Old Testament figures in American Evangelical churches, especially in the Bible belt southern states, means that US governments will continue to grapple with the diplomatic, strategic and economic consequences of their fidelity to Israel and public opinion will encourage them to do so.

Notes

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10 The Cuban lobby and US policy toward Cuba

Jessica Gibbs

In the existing literature on ethnic interest groups and foreign policy there is little consensus as to how effective such groups have been in exerting influence upon policymakers or how important a role they ought to play.[1] This chapter examines the involvement of the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF) and other Cuban-American lobby groups in policymaking, focusing on the 1980s and 1990s. It analyzes the ways in which these groups influenced policy, considering whether the Cuban-American case during this period provides support for critics such as Samuel Huntington and former Defense Secretary James Schlesinger, who argued in 1997 that ethnic groups had indeed "acquired an excessive influence" over US foreign policy.[2] It will argue that CANF began to complicate the formation of foreign policy only a few short years after Reagan officials encouraged conservative Cuban-Americans to create the organization. Furthermore, contrary to predictions in the 1980s, CANF reached new heights of influence under the less ideologically-motivated George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton.[3]

The establishment of an exile community

Not long after the Cuban revolutionaries came to power in January 1959, the Eisenhower Administration opted for a strategy of destabilization. In March 1960, Eisenhower formally approved the Central Intelligence Agency's project "to bring about the replacement of the Castro regime with one more devoted to the true interests of the Cuban people and more acceptable to the US in such a way as to avoid any appearance of US intervention."[4] At the same time, economic measures were taken against Havana, since, as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State argued in April 1960, "the only foreseeable means of alienating internal support is through disenchantment and disaffection based on economic dissatisfaction and hardship."[5] Yet just as Washington sought to foment discontent in Cuba, the discontented were allowed to enter the United States, initially to participate in the destabilization strategy but also because of the public relations impact of large numbers of refugees voting with their feet against the revolution. After a brief experiment with a policy of migration restriction following the October 1962 Missile Crisis, the

two governments reached an agreement in 1965 establishing the "Freedom Flights." These brought some 260,000 dissatisfied Cubans direct to the United States (a further 5,000 arrived by boat before the airlift was established and another 70,000 came via Spain) to join the more than 200,000 who had arrived between 1959 and 1962.[6] In 1966, Congress passed the Cuban Adjustment Act, which remains in force to this day and allows Cubans who have come to the United States without an immigrant or refugee visa to apply for adjustment to permanent residence, without the need to make a case for asylum. In addition to their special migratory privileges, Cubans benefited from a dedicated, federally-funded Refugee Program. This was designed both to enable them to flourish in the United States so that their success would provide a more telling contrast to the economic failures of their home country, and to ease the burden on the states in which they settled, thus mitigating political backlash against the open door policy. The program provided financial assistance to encourage Cubans to move away from South Florida, but although large numbers settled in New Jersey, New York and California, a high proportion remained in (or returned to) Miami, a pattern of settlement that would later enhance Cuban political clout.

In the early post-revolutionary years Cubans were involved principally as agents rather than instigators of US foreign policy, though their militant activities were at times hard to control and commando-style raids on the homeland continued even after Washington withdrew support.[7] The policy of economic denial – culminating in a total embargo on all trade – and political isolation adopted by the United States was not a product of exile pressure, but an executive-led response to Cuban actions that broke the bounds of the traditional relationship between the two countries.[8] Although émigrés were occasionally invited to testify at congressional oversight hearings, and may have acted as an additional barrier to improved relations with Cuba, there was no systematic involvement in the policymaking process.[9] In the 1970s, however, as part of a wider trend toward congressional activism, members of Congress began to challenge executive dominance over US-Cuba policy just as it was becoming clear that not all émigrés were opposed to rapprochement with Havana. New organizations were emerging in contrast to the anti-Castro political groups of the early years, attracting support particularly from younger Cubans.[10] In 1975, a *Miami Herald* poll found that 49.5 percent of émigrés were at least prepared to visit Cuba.[11] In the same year, at hearings on a proposal by House liberal Jonathan Bingham (D-New York) to lift the embargo, Cubans with a range of views were invited to testify. Exile activists Jorge Mas Canosa and Ramón Bonachea condemned the proposal.[12] Mas Canosa warned that resuming trade with Cuba would be "the final crushing blow to the already cool relations between the Cubans in exile and the US government."[13] However Michael Germinal Rivas of Cuban Christians for Justice and Freedom supported normalization. While Rivas acknowledged that he represented a minority (which he put at 10 percent) among émigrés, he claimed that the large majority (75 percent)

were "somewhat ambivalent about it" and only a hard core minority of 15 percent opposed any changes of this sort.[14] Although polling in the 1980s suggests this assessment was hopeful, there was certainly more diversity than before.[15]

Cuban intervention in the Angolan civil war set back efforts in the mid 1970s to improve relations, but pro-normalization émigrés such as Rivas were encouraged by the Carter Administration's more determined approach. The administration rapidly lifted restrictions on travel to Cuba, signed an agreement on fishing rights and maritime boundaries and negotiated the reciprocal opening of interests sections to cover some of the functions of embassies in the absence of diplomatic relations. Secret negotiations continued even after Castro dispatched troops to Ethiopia in early 1978. However, the failure of the administration, aware that dealing with Havana had become more politically sensitive, to announce an agreement reached on the release and admission to the United States of 3,000 political prisoners prompted Castro to invite émigrés (most of whom were unaware of the government-to-government negotiations) to a "Dialogue" that led to accords on political prisoners, emigration and family visits.[16] Dialogue participant Lourdes Casal, who recognized that in the past "Cuban exiles have been manipulated more often than they have been manipulators," and "except when their interests coincided with US policies, they have had little impact," was pleased by what she saw as their growing influence, praising the effectiveness of the recently-formed Cuban American Committee for the Normalization of Relations.[17] Yet the Dialogue provided more support for her original thesis on limited émigré impact. As the broader normalization process broke down in the context of heightened Cold War tensions and the revelation of a "Soviet brigade" in Cuba, the Committee found Washington less receptive.[18] The downturn in relations was only exacerbated by the 1980 Mariel boatlift, which brought 125,000 Cubans, including several thousand recently released criminals, to the United States.

The Reagan Administration and CANF

While Casal's optimism about the pro-normalization émigré lobby was misplaced, she was prophetic when it came to their ideological opponents:

> The strategy of those right and center groups opposed to the normalization of relations is likely to be one of emphasizing the dangerousness of Cuba's position of solidarity with liberation movements throughout the world and of exaggerating the importance of this to US national security. In this respect, they would be following the lead of US hardliners.[19]

In 1981 a small group of conservative émigrés established the CANF. A number of scholars and journalists have drawn attention to the deep involvement of Reagan Administration officials in its creation, an involvement which,

as Patrick Haney and Walt Vanderbush point out, is not contemplated in the standard literature on interest groups.[20] Reagan's first National Security Adviser Richard Allen suggested that émigrés follow the model of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and introduced them to AIPAC lawyer Barney Barnett who recommended the creation of legally separate research, lobbying and funding entities.[21] By virtue of this structure, CANF was able to receive $390,000 in federal funds via the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) to publicize Cuban human rights violations between 1983 and 1988, while donating an almost identical amount to election campaigns, including those of members of Congress who had championed the NED such as the House Foreign Affairs Committee chair Dante Fascell (D-Florida).[22] Haney and Vanderbush argue persuasively that the common outlook of Reagan officials and the founding members of CANF, together with the need to convince a Democrat-controlled House of Representatives of the gravity of the communist threat to the Western Hemisphere, led to a strategic partnership between the administration and the lobby group.[23] Under this partnership, CANF lobbied Congress in support of the administration's Central American policies, including assistance to the Nicaraguan *contras*. This was a controversial cause among the public, who consistently gave Reagan policy in Central America lower ratings than they gave the president himself, but one dear to the heart of both the president and émigrés, who raised funds, donated blood and sent doctors to tend to the contra wounded.[24] In exchange, CANF gained privileged access to policymakers and the chance to participate in government programmes.

One of CANF's early goals was the creation of a surrogate home service for Cuba, similar to Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. According to the administration and CANF spokespeople, the aim of the service, named Radio Martí after the Cuban independence leader José Martí, was to allow Cubans to hold their government accountable.[25] Reagan officials emphasized that it would inform Cubans about military adventurism abroad, fostering the unlikely notion that Mariel boatlift arrivals had been unaware of the presence of Cuban troops in Angola.[26] CANF representatives appeared several times at congressional hearings to make the case for Radio Martí, but Manuel Gomez, President of the Cuban American Committee for the Normalization of Relations, was given only one opportunity to argue against it.[27] He held that Radio Martí would not be able to broadcast "objective and verifiable" information since the Cuban-Americans associated with it "can be identified with strongly partisan sectors associated in the past with exaggeration and misinformation."[28] Yet despite concerns among even those who favored the service that "credibility can be established only if Radio Marti is not perceived by Cubans as a propaganda mouthpiece of either the United States or Cuban exile groups," CANF chair Jorge Mas Canosa was appointed to a three-year term as chair of the President's Advisory Board in 1984, a position he held until his death in 1997.[29] Defeating opposition from members of Congress and US broadcasters, who charged that the service was unnecessary, costly

and would lead to increased Cuban interference with domestic broadcasting, Radio Martí went on air on May 20, 1985.

CANF benefited from the administration's Private Sector Initiative (PSI), a scheme designed to attract private money to refugee resettlement amid concerns about high levels of refugee welfare dependency.[30] Three pilots were set up in the late 1980s (the others were for Iranians and Vietnamese), but the CANF Exodus program was by far the largest.[31] By the time the PSI was discontinued in the mid 1990s, nearly 10,000 Cubans who had reached third countries had been allowed to enter the United States as Exodus refugees, with CANF selecting and coaching applicants for their interviews with US immigration officials.[32] Participation in the PSI won CANF support and – like the other marks of the administration's favor – helped elevate its profile above competing organizations. At the NED, not only did CANF receive substantial grants for projects related to human rights, but, according to Elliott Abrams, former Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, it probably also had an "informal veto" on other Cuba-related NED grants.[33] The Reagan Administration made some key appointments of CANF associates, such as Otto Reich and José Sorzano. Reich ran public relations for the *contras* as director of the Office for Public Diplomacy and later became US Ambassador to Venezuela, while Sorzano, CANF president between 1985 and 1987, served first as deputy to Jeane Kirkpatrick, Reagan's abrasive UN ambassador, and then as senior director for Latin America on the National Security Council.

The Reagan Administration's relationship with CANF was not the lobby group's only strength. Had this been the case, CANF would not have been a desirable partner. CANF had energetic leadership. It had wealthy board members and supporters who contributed both personally and via CANF's political action committee, the Free Cuba PAC, to the election campaigns of well-placed members of Congress, both Democrats and Republicans, and occasionally even to challengers (Joseph Lieberman's 1988 challenge to the maverick Republican embargo-opponent Lowell Weicker received CANF funding). Crucially, the foreign policy agenda CANF shared with the administration resonated among Cubans in 1980s Miami. A 1984 poll of Hispanic voters found that Miami Cubans supported an increase in defense spending by a margin of 78 percent, military aid to the *contras* by a margin of 64 percent, and were opposed to normalization of relations with Cuba by a margin of 53 percent (émigrés elsewhere were more evenly divided).[34] In swing-state Florida these voters counted in state-wide contests as well as in Miami-Dade congressional districts. While there was some diversity of opinion even in Miami, CANF strove for the impression of unity, accusing groups such as the Cuban American Committee (formerly 'for the Normalization of Relations') of acting as an internal lobby for Castro.[35] CANF also monitored media coverage and sought to influence research on Cuba.[36]

CANF soon began to assert itself, and even to challenge the administration. The foundation took the lead in applying the Reagan doctrine of

support to "freedom fighters" opposing pro-Soviet regimes to Angola, where Cuba continued to provide military backing to the MPLA government. Mas Canosa was instrumental in the repeal of the Clark Amendment in 1985, which paved the way for US aid to Jonas Savimbi's National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) movement. Veteran Florida Democrat Claude Pepper, one of Savimbi's foremost supporters in Congress, explicitly acknowledged CANF's influence on his views on both Angola and contra funding.[37] The friends CANF had made in Congress later constrained the executive branch's peacemaking efforts in Southern Africa. In his account of the complex negotiations, facilitated by the superpowers, between South Africa, Angola, and Cuba, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Chester Crocker noted that Washington did not have the normal range of tools to work with: "We could not promise to terminate some sanction in return for a South African or Cuban action we wanted because other actors within the American system would have blocked us."[38] On migration, CANF mounted a direct attack on administration policy, using allies in Congress to promote legislation in 1987 that promised to scupper efforts to return thousands of Mariel ex-convicts to Cuba (one of the highest priorities in bilateral relations at the time).[39] The legislation, sponsored by Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-New Jersey), would have forced the administration to restart migrant and refugee processing, which had been interrupted to pressure Havana to reinstate a bilateral migration agreement suspended after Radio Martí broadcasts began. Also in 1987, Senator Lawton Chiles (D-Florida) attached an amendment to an authorization bill earmarking $100,000 for engineering studies for another item on the CANF wish list, a television equivalent of Radio Martí.[40]

TV Martí faced serious legal and technical obstacles. As a signatory to the International Telecommunications Union, the United States was committed to non-interference with the domestic television channels of other countries, while consultants advised that the signal produced by the most cost-effective option (an air balloon tethered 10,000 feet above the Florida Keys) would be very easy (and cheap) for Havana to jam.[41] At a 1988 meeting with CANF, Elliott Abrams was cagey about committing the administration until TV Martí had proved effective. However Vice President Bush, with his presidential election campaign well underway, "flatly endorsed" the station "to widespread jubilation" among the assembled audience.[42] Shortly afterwards the Senate approved $7.5 million in start-up costs.[43] In contrast to Radio Martí, there was very little congressional scrutiny. A last minute hearing convened by Representative George Crockett (D-Michigan), an opponent of TV Martí, revealed how effectively CANF had penetrated the House Foreign Affairs Committee (members of the committee received two-thirds of the $182,000 distributed by the Free Cuba PAC in 1988).[44] Mas Canosa, who used most of his statement to complain about Cuban emigration procedures, was allowed to interrupt other witnesses and even the subcommittee chair.[45] Test broadcasts started in spring 1990, and in August, shortly after his administration

issued a report acknowledging that Havana had "consistently and effectively jammed the TV Martí signal" since tests began, President Bush approved permanent funding.[46] As of 2009, successive administrations have requested, and Congress has approved, more than $500 million in funding for both Radio and TV Martí, even though TV Martí has virtually no audience in Cuba.[47]

The Bush Administration, the Clinton Challenge and the Cuban Deomcracy Act

The collapse of Communist governments in the old Eastern bloc and the disintegration of the Cuban-Soviet alliance raised hopes that the Cuban leader would be the next to fall and increased opposition among the public to the re-establishment of relations with Havana.[48] The CANF prescription of further economic pressure – as the final nail in Castro's coffin – received almost unanimous backing from Miami Cubans. In March 1991, the first Florida International University Cuba poll of émigrés and US-born Cuban-Americans in South Florida found that 86.6 percent of respondents who expressed an opinion favored tightening the embargo, though, interestingly, there was also considerable support for policies opposed by CANF, such as establishing a national dialogue between exiles, dissidents and the Cuban government (39.8 percent) and unrestricted travel to Cuba (45.3 percent).[49] However, President Bush initially resisted attempts by members of Congress to implement CANF's agenda, vetoing the Mack amendment prohibiting trade between Cuba and foreign subsidiaries of US companies because it would put subsidiaries in the invidious position of having to choose between US and host country law. The principal sponsors of the amendment were Florida senators Connie Mack (Republican) and Bob Graham (Democrat), recipients of Cuban-American campaign contributions who also sought to increase their appeal to Cuban-American constituents.[50]

Despite the administration's opposition, the subsidiary trade ban became a key provision of the 1992 Cuban Democracy Act (CDA). The CDA was designed to have wide appeal, with "Track I" for those members of Congress who favored more economic pressure on Cuba, and "Track II" for those who advocated more contact. Track I was based on CANF recommendations, while Track II was the brainchild of Richard Nuccio, the Western Hemisphere subcommittee staff member who drafted the bill for the subcommittee chair, Bob Torricelli (D-New Jersey). Torricelli's "conversion" to the anti-Castro cause was largely, if not entirely, due to CANF. A contra aid opponent who had visited Cuba in 1988 and co-sponsored legislation to lift the embargo on medical exports the following year, by 1991 Torricelli had become a hawkish critic of Bush's Cuba policy.[51] Not only had he begun to receive funds from Cuban-Americans, including the CANF's Free Cuba PAC, but votes from the largest Cuban-American community outside Florida would be useful in a future senate race.[52] Another key recipient of such funding was Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, the first Cuban-American member of Congress, who in

1989 had won Florida's heavily Cuban 18th district in an election dominated by ethnic voting.[53] Ros-Lehtinen was influential in shaping the CDA. More hard-line than Mas Canosa himself, she was far from enthusiastic about Track II, stripping out provisions allowing for educational and scientific exchanges and the opening of news bureaus.[54] CANF also attempted to create a coalition of dissident groups in Cuba to support the CDA, though with only modest success (the most prominent dissidents rejected the bill).[55]

Mas Canosa's masterstroke was to play the presidential candidates off against each other. The Bush Administration objected to much of the CDA, in particular the subsidiary trade ban and the mandatory sanctions on countries assisting Cuba (included in a section euphemistically entitled "International Cooperation"). Although the sponsors were prepared to concede on the sanctions – left to the president's discretion in the final version – they were determined to close the "loophole" of subsidiary trade.[56] In April, Bush issued an executive order implementing a CDA provision banning ships engaged in trade with Cuba from docking in the United States within six months, and pledged to work with Congress on a bill which tightened the embargo "while preserving the proper constitutional prerogatives of the Congress and the President."[57] A few days later, however, candidate Bill Clinton, seeing an opportunity to tap into Miami money, win Cuban-American votes, and force Republicans to devote more time and energy to Florida, told a crowd of wealthy émigrés that the administration "has missed a big opportunity to put the hammer down on Fidel Castro." Clinton collected $125,000 in campaign contributions, and Bush reconsidered his position.[58] On May 5, the administration agreed with Mas Canosa and Torricelli on a version of the CDA that retained the subsidiary trade ban.[59]

The CDA, having become, as Torricelli put it, a "consensus proposal," passed both houses of Congress by large margins and was signed by Bush in October, at a Miami ceremony to which the Democratic sponsors Graham and Torricelli were not invited.[60] Clinton's attempt to use the CDA as a campaign issue was moderately successful. Although he only won about 22 percent of the vote in Dade County Hispanic precincts (and lost Florida by 86,000 votes), he had eaten into the Republican lead.[61] But the big winner was Mas Canosa, who had squeezed Bush, lined Clinton up behind the CDA, and put himself in a strong position to influence policy under either candidate.

The first Clinton Administration (1993–97): continuity and change

Although Mas Canosa had told supporters that they need not fear a Clinton Administration, the arrival of the first Democrat president since Carter created expectations of change.[62] If, as Damian Fernandez had argued in 1987, "the success or failure of Cuban foreign policy lobby efforts are dependent on the Executive branch," the appointment of embargo opponents like Morton Halperin, who had led the American Civil Liberties Union campaign to lift

restrictions on travel to Cuba, looked promising.[63] However, an early episode in which the administration heeded CANF objections to the appointment of a Cuban-American moderate who had twice visited Cuba as Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs suggested little appetite to challenge the foundation.[64] In addition, the 1992 election of two more pro-embargo Cuban-Americans, Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-Florida) and Bob Menendez (D-New Jersey) had strengthened the group of hardliners within Congress who opposed any relaxation of sanctions. The Clinton Administration was in fact extremely cautious on Cuba before summer 1994. While the administration interpreted the CDA as allowing the president to reduce sanctions "in carefully calibrated ways in response to positive developments in Cuba," and was officially prepared to do so, Richard Nuccio, who had left the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee for the State Department, later told researchers that US policymakers had no "first step in mind."[65]

Despite the emergence in 1993 of the moderate anti-embargo Cuban Committee for Democracy, and Eloy Gutierrez Menoyo's *Cambio Cubano*, organizations which attracted some interest in the media and from Congress, Clinton deferred to CANF again in August 1994, when his administration sought to respond to a mass exodus of Cuban rafters. Immediately after announcing that Cubans picked up at sea by the Coast Guard would be detained at Guantánamo Naval Base, a decision expected to be unpopular among émigrés, Clinton interrupted his own birthday party to grant concessions to Mas Canosa for his acceptance of the policy change. Mas Canosa pushed for a blockade of Cuba, but was appeased by an end to cash remittances and family visits to Cuba, save in exceptional circumstances, new restrictions on humanitarian donations and the contents of gift parcels, a removal of the general license for academic research and freelance journalists, an expansion in Radio and TV Martí signal strength and broadcasting hours and an administration commitment to focus on Cuban human rights violations. These concessions reduced the administration's room for manoeuvre when bilateral talks, strictly limited to migration, took place in September. Although the administration was criticized for its failure to consult émigrés across the spectrum of political views in August, senior officials who visited Miami in September to reassure émigrés about the contents of the talks again restricted their meetings to conservatives.[66]

The following spring however, the limits of CANF lobbying on an issue with which the wider public was engaged were revealed when the administration eluded CANF – and Congress – by holding ultra-secret negotiations with Havana on migration. These resulted in an agreement under which the Guantánamo group would be admitted, but future rafters intercepted at sea would be returned to Cuba unless, in exceptional cases, it appeared that they might have grounds for asylum. US diplomats would monitor Havana's undertaking not to carry out reprisals against returnees. The agreement had the backing of Senator Graham, and of Florida Governor Lawton Chiles, who had won re-election in 1994 partly on the basis of his strong

anti-rafter stand, but shrill voices in Congress and among émigrés condemned it, continuing to define all who left Cuba as political refugees.[67] CANF angrily withdrew the offers of sponsorship for the Guantánamo rafters it had promised the administration, as Mas Canosa declared that "to destroy in secret negotiations the institution of political asylum is totally unacceptable."[68]

CANF still had influential friends in Congress where the Republican-backed Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act, better known as the Helms-Burton Act, was under consideration. A complex and controversial bill, Helms-Burton went through several versions before passage in March 1996, following the shootdown by the Cuban Air Force of two civilian planes piloted by the exile organization Brothers to the Rescue. The most important aspect of Helms-Burton with respect to US-Cuba policy – and the constitutional balance between the executive and Congress – was the long list of conditions to be met before the president could recognize a Cuban government as a "transition" and then a "democratically elected" government. In the final version, Lincoln Diaz-Balart, revealing his lack of trust in the Clinton Administration, inserted a new provision, not present in either the Senate or House-passed version, which codified the executive orders establishing the embargo into law.[69]

But the provision which sparked most debate was Title III, a new right-of-action allowing US citizens and companies to sue foreign investors "trafficking" in property taken from them by the Cuban government. This was open not only to the US citizens and companies whose claims had been certified by the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission for negotiation with a future Cuban government, but also to émigrés who had become citizens after the original expropriation (the "Cuban-American claimants"). Title IV denied visas to such "traffickers." According to Dan Fisk, who drafted the bill for Senator Jesse Helms (R-North Carolina), an inveterate Castro-basher and a fierce champion of private property rights, although CANF initially provided only "reluctant support" for the property provisions,

> … once Mas [Canosa] saw the enthusiasm for the provisions from the larger Cuban-American community, CANF became a "true believer". The surprise for both the Cuban-American leadership and many in Congress was the resonance that the right-of-action provisions had with the Cuban-American community; by including them in the right-of-action, we ensured their support and required the community's leadership to catch up with its followers.[70]

CANF lobbied hard for the bill, and CANF's Democratic allies in the House and Senate participated as sponsors, giving it a deceptive bipartisan gloss, but Helms-Burton can best be understood as part of a wider challenge to Clinton foreign policy following the Republican victory in the 1994 congressional elections.[71] Like Bush in 1992, the Clinton Administration initially

resisted Congress's attempt to seize the initiative. Helms-Burton, Clinton officials argued, was an extraterritorial extension of US law and would restrict the flexibility of the executive branch. In September 1995, Secretary of State Warren Christopher informed Congress that he would recommend a veto, though this did not prevent the House from adopting the legislation by 294 votes to 130 (227 Republicans and 67 Democrats in favor, 125 Democrats, four Republicans and one Independent against).[72] In the Senate Helms was forced to modify the bill, dropping Titles III and IV. But pressure was piled on Clinton by the endorsement of Helms-Burton by Republican presidential contenders Bob Dole and Phil Gramm. As Richard Nuccio puts it, "the Cuban-American community had learned that in the presidential cycle, if they organized it right, they could ride the presidential competition through a bill in Congress."[73] On this occasion, the lobbying efforts of CANF and the Cuban-American property claimants were aided in February 1996 by Havana's violent response to the provocative actions of Brothers to the Rescue which dramatically altered the political context. Clinton, guided by his domestic political advisers rather than his foreign policy team, immediately reached an uneven compromise with Congress. The only concession to the president was a provision allowing him to suspend Title III or the right to bring lawsuits under the legislation for six months at a time if suspension "is necessary to the national interests of the United States and will expedite a transition to democracy in Cuba."[74] After the congressional furore over the shootdown died down, Clinton acted to defuse the Helms-Burton time bomb. He suspended the right to bring lawsuits in July 1996, and again at six-monthly intervals for the remainder of his presidency, a policy continued by George W. Bush and (as of August 2009) by Barack Obama.

Conclusion

It is undeniable that CANF gained much influence over policy during this period. However, it is important to emphasize that this influence was invited. The CANF case demonstrates that, as Paul Watanabe has argued, an ethnic lobby group's influence is enhanced by the desire of policymakers to seek support from particular communities by adopting positions deemed likely to elicit their support.[75] The Reagan Administration gave CANF an entrée to the policymaking process, and the foundation rapidly cemented its position by campaign contributions to members of Congress, particularly those on key committees. By 1987, CANF was persuading congressional allies to challenge the executive branch. By the 1990s, it was using presidential candidates, tempted by Florida's finely-balanced 25 electoral college votes, to squeeze incumbents. Within Congress, members of Congress who sponsored anti-Castro legislation responded to the perceived hard-line preferences of their Cuban-American constituents (while disregarding their support for dialogue and unrestricted travel), to the generosity of Cuban-American donors and to the congruence of CANF's agenda with their own views, or

to some combination of the above. There were limits to CANF influence, as demonstrated by the failure to fully implement the Helms-Burton Act and the Clinton Administration's decision to return migrants to Cuba in spring 1995, but the foundation's record was impressive, particularly compared to that of anti-embargo/pro-normalization Cuban-American organizations.

A key question is why so many members voted for the CDA and Helms-Burton though they neither courted Cuban-American votes nor received Cuban-American campaign contributions. Although CANF occasionally funded challengers to its congressional opponents, it did not do so on a large scale. Ideology played a role, with more liberal members within each party being more likely to oppose the measures, and party was important in the case of the Republican-backed Helms-Burton. But as the United States entered the post-Cold War world, and the public lapsed into what commentator James Lindsay describes as "apathetic internationalism," it appears that most congressmen deferred to the small group of anti-Castro legislators who dominated both the relevant committees and debate on the floor of the House and Senate. As Lindsay argues, "politicians who abandon foreign policy… cede power to colleagues whose interest in foreign policy arises from personal passion" (as well as, in this case, campaign contributions and constituency pressure). Those catering to groups with "narrow but intense preferences" – such as CANF and the Cuban-American property claimants – found only a few predominantly liberal-minded Democrats (and even fewer Republicans) prepared to challenge their prescriptions for US Cuba policy.[76]

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Section Four

The public and the war on terror

11 Neoconservatism and the American public

Was 9/11 a hegemonic moment?

Maria Ryan

In the aftermath of 9/11, as neoconservatism became the "cause célèbre" of international politics, one popular caricature of the neocons in the blogosphere and occasionally in the mainstream media was the image of the "cabal."[1] The principal intellectual architects of the foreign policy of the George W. Bush Administration, in particular the Iraq War, were depicted as a secretive and tightly-knit group that had spent the Clinton years, while they were out of office, surreptitiously plotting and privately contriving the future of US foreign policy away from the prying eyes of the public, waiting for the day that they and their allies could return to government and unfold their master plan.[2] The way in which the neocons were catapulted into the public eye after 9/11 made many suspicious of their apparently sudden influence and seemed to lend credence to the feeling that a small group had "hijacked" US foreign policy post-9/11.[3] Of course this was not the case; the neocons and their allies had never hidden their activities in the 1990s. In fact they had taken out full page advertisements in *The New York Times* and set up web sites and magazines to publicize their views and build momentum for their cause but, unlike after 9/11, what they had to say did not particularly register with the general public, which, at the time, was largely uninterested in the travails of the neoconservatives, hence the suspicion that greeted the "sudden" emergence of the post-Cold War generation of neocons after 9/11.

Post-Cold War neoconservatism was a public enterprise from the beginning – but it was also a thoroughly elite one. The neoconservative-led network was comprised of members of what Bruce Kuklick calls "the decision-making class;"[4] key figures in the Washington DC-based foreign policy establishment, many of whom had served in government before and were positioning themselves for a return, and others who resembled what Tony Smith calls "scholar-activists" – openly partisan campaigners based at think tanks and engaged in research on US foreign relations.[5] What kind of a relationship could such a network have with ordinary Americans? On the one hand, there was an informal but very real exclusivity to the socially elite organizations; on the other, their output – in the form of magazines, advertisements and web sites – was available to all.

This chapter will examine the relationship between neoconservatism and the American public. It will do so through the prism of Gramscian theory about political and ideological leadership and what Gramsci saw as the special role of intellectuals in the creation of political "hegemony." Gramscian theory is particularly useful in analyzing the relationship between an ideological elite and the masses because of Gramsci's exploration of and insistence on the importance of an alliance between the leadership elite and the grassroots in order for an ideological perspective to become widely accepted and entrenched (or "hegemonic") across society as a whole. For Gramsci, the "moment of hegemony" represented a successful fusion of the attitudes and desires of the general public with those of the leadership elite via the intellectuals. This chapter is not a comprehensive overview of Gramsci's work but it draws on aspects of his theories to shed new light upon the connection between the neocons and the American public. With its emphasis on the importance of such an alliance, the Gramscian framework illuminates in new ways the relationship between neoconservative intellectual elites and the American public.

This chapter will examine the activities of the neoconservative network during the Clinton years and then consider the apex of its influence on US foreign policy in the aftermath of 9/11. It will consider the role and purpose of the network; who it directed its activities toward; how it sustained itself financially and, ultimately, whether the neoconservatism it espoused ever became, in Gramsci's language, "hegemonic." First, though, it will take a closer look at the concept of hegemony and the role of intellectuals in creating it.

Hegemony, consent and the intellectuals

Gramsci's major contribution to the Marxist tradition was his rejection of historical materialism as the sole explanatory factor in history and his insistence on the importance of *ideas*, particularly in countries with well developed civil societies. Materialism did not adequately explain the power dynamics of advanced parliamentary democracies of the West, Gramsci believed. In contrast to traditional Marxist theorists, who argued that power was invested solely in the means of production (the economic "structure" or "base") and that civil and political society (the two elements of the "superstructure") were simply an expression of these economic arrangements, Gramsci believed that in advanced parliamentary democracies, power was dispersed across *both* the structure *and* the superstructure.[6] Unlike in Russia, civil society in the West had become "a very complex structure and one which is resistant to the catastrophic 'incursions' of the immediate economic element (crises, depression etc.)."[7] In other words, the superstructure was invested with its own power relationships independent of the economic base. Accordingly, exercising leadership across the whole of society required maintaining a dominant position in the superstructure too. In the West, capturing control of the means of production was not sufficient to produce political change; it required control of

political society (i.e. the State) and civil society as well as the economic base. For Gramsci, materialism was not the sole explanatory factor behind social and political control and although class conflict existed, so did other social antagonisms which did not derive from control of the means of production. Thus, any meaningful explanation of the achievement and maintenance of power had to allow for the influence of ideas and human will on history.[8]

Gramsci's work offers a point of departure for trying to understand how ideas actually function in society.[9] What makes one ideological perspective resonate across society and form the basis for governing while others remain at the margins? For Gramsci, the answer was in the process of *hegemony*; the way in which one social group rose to a leadership position across both structure and superstructure. A hegemonic leadership position was achieved by creating and maintaining a *system of alliances* with other classes and groups in civil society and the economic sphere. Alliances were therefore both horizontal (across the superstructures – such as legal, religious and educational institutions) and vertical (with elements of the economic base – the relations of production, such as the working classes, conditions of labour and property relations.)[10] In another departure from Marx, Gramsci claimed that these alliances should incorporate but also transcend economic concerns to include other groups with cultural, ideological or political arguments with the existing ruling coalition. In other words, the alliance should have a *national* dimension as well as a class dimension.[11] Gramsci referred to such an alliance as an "historic bloc."[12] An historic bloc was a heterogeneous coalition that would only succeed if compromises were forged between the different groups in the bloc. The leading group would have to exercise "a balancing and arbitrating function" between the different interests in their bloc so that there would be "a continuous process of formation and superseding of unstable equilibria … between the interests of the fundamental group and those of the subordinate groups – equilibria in which the interests of the dominant group prevail, but only up to a certain point."[13] By being responsive to the needs of these varied groups, the class that led the bloc of alliances would gain the consent of those it led.

What Gramsci referred to as "the moment of hegemony" came when an historic bloc successfully manoeuvred itself into a leadership position across both the structure and the superstructure.[14] (This was in contrast to the "moment of force," or rule by coercion.) At the moment of hegemony, the ideology of the leading bloc became institutionalized and normative across society. The bloc captured the spirit and desires of the public and ruled primarily with the *consent* of those it governed. This is a key point for Gramsci. In his schema, power is not simply imposed on the unwilling masses by those in control of the means of production. The successful exercise of power depends on gaining the consent of the public, who believe that the ruling bloc is an expression of *their own* interests too. Gramsci warned of "extremely serious consequences" if the leading bloc failed to give "conscious leadership" to the feelings and desires of the masses.[15] In other words, it was essential that the rulers enjoyed a high level of genuine grass-roots support.

It is important to note, however, that while hegemony is characterized primarily by consent, it is not *purely* consensual.[16] Gramsci describes the State as "hegemony protected by the armour of coercion" meaning that even in a system characterized primarily by consent derived from civil society, the *threat* of force emanating from political society is always present even if it is usually unstated.[17] After all, the ultimate guarantor of the free civil society is the State's monopoly on the legitimate use of force. Equally, although Gramsci sees political society as primarily coercive, the State can also generate ideological beliefs which are popular and widely held; for instance beliefs about the nature of parliamentary democracy. Thus the division between the two elements of the superstructure – political and civil society – and the qualities that are derived from them – coercion and consent respectively – is not absolute.[18] Hegemony is rule characterized *primarily* by consent derived mainly from civil society, rather than rule by coercion, which emanates from political society (the State).

Successful hegemony – rule characterized primarily by consent rather than coercion – requires the ruling bloc of alliances to be flexible and respond to new circumstances and the changing wishes of the public. There must be a continual process of negotiation between the leaders of the historic bloc and their subordinate allies. For Gramsci, the maintenance of power is an ongoing practice; "a continuous process of formation."[19]

The key organizers in the achievement and maintenance of hegemony are the society's intellectuals.[20] Gramsci ascribes to them the function of "active participant in practical life, as constructor, organizer, 'permanent persuader', and not just a simple orator."[21] Adamson describes Gramsci's intellectual as "the central mediation between structure and superstructure" while Showstack-Sassoon characterizes the intellectuals as the "connecting fibres within and between areas of social reality."[22] Their job was to facilitate the development of successful alliances by conveying an ideological vision to the masses. This undertaking should be an edifying one; one that, in Gramsci's words, would lead the masses "to a higher conception of life" with the end result being the construction of "an intellectual-moral bloc" between the public and the intellectuals.[23] However, to avoid appearing overly intellectualized and aloof from the masses, the intellectuals' vision should also incorporate elements of the popular cultural consciousness (patriotism, for example).[24] In Gramsci's words, it must have a "national-popular" dimension.[25] The question that concerns us here is whether neoconservative intellectuals ever led the creation of a hegemonic moment. Did the American public ever genuinely view neoconservatism as an expression of its own interests and beliefs?

The Clinton years

The post-Cold War neoconservative-led network that emerged in the early to mid-1990s formed "a lively counter-government, a government in exile" as it were, during the 1990s while President Clinton was in power.[26] From the

beginning, the touchstone of the new neoconservative foreign policy was a belief in preserving what the neocon columnist, Charles Krauthammer, referred to as America's "unipolar moment." By "unipolar," Krauthammer meant America's position as the "*single pole* of world power" which was able to be the "decisive player *in any conflict in whatever part of the world it chooses.*"[27] The demise of the only other competing superpower – the Soviet Union – meant that the US was now the single pole of power in every region of the world, according to Krauthammer. The bipolarity of the Cold War had thus given way to a new unipolarity and the principal objective for US foreign policy in the post-Soviet years was to preserve and maintain the unipolar moment as far into the future as possible. The Pentagon's 1992 Defense Planning Guidance document, authored by Paul Wolfowitz, Lewis Libby and Zalmay Khalilzad – who would all become supporters of the Project for the New American Century – used a similar formulation: it called for the United States to prevent the emergence of all global and regional rivals.[28] For these neocons, the new strategic touchstone would be the active preservation of America's supposed "unipolarity;" precluding the emergence of rivals, unilaterally if necessary.

To pursue this objective the neocons formed a mutually beneficial alliance with other conservative nationalists, who also shared their belief in American unipolarity. Conservatives such as Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney worked with and supported the activities of the neoconservatives because these conservatives were also unipolarists.[29] It was Cheney, after all, who had symbolically signed the final version of the Defense Planning Guidance in January 1993, despite being a lame-duck Secretary of Defense. Unipolarism – rather than "exporting democracy" or "hard Wilsonianism" – was *the* key unifying concept that facilitated the creation of a political and intellectual network of neoconservatives and conservative nationalists.[30] While the network was led by a core group of neocon activists, such as William Kristol, Robert Kagan, Richard Perle and Frank Gaffney, it received vital support from other conservatives who shared their expansive definition of the national interest (although this is not to say that the alliance constituted an historic bloc – a point we will return to).

A neoconservative "national-popular?"

The two most important neoconservative intellectual organizers in the post-Cold War years were William Kristol and Robert Kagan. Elements of their approach were strongly reminiscent of Gramsci's call for a "national-popular" vision. Kristol and Kagan showed a keen awareness of the need to tap into the popular consciousness so as to ensure lasting support for the kind of robust internationalism they envisaged. In 1996, Kagan and Kristol wrote that their expansive vision of America's role in the world would be undergirded by citizen involvement in the project through appealing to a unique sense of America's destiny. Reflecting on Ronald Reagan's enduring

popularity, they claimed that America's success abroad (and the fate of the Republican Party at home) required "a more elevated vision of America's international role." Such a foreign policy would "celebrat[e] American exceptionalism" in order to facilitate a foreign policy based on "an elevated patriotism." The public would be educated – or "prepar[ed] and inspire[ed]" – to understand the special responsibilities of being the world's sole superpower, which had their origins in America's exceptional political character. This "inspir[ation]" might include some form of military service but, most importantly, it meant giving the public a "broad sustaining foreign policy vision" and a "sense of mission" that would sustain long-term support for an activist foreign policy by affecting "a lasting political realignment."[31] The following year, Kristol and David Brooks, a senior editor at Kristol's neocon magazine *The Weekly Standard*, wrote that an understanding of "American greatness" was essential to revitalize conservatism, re-moralize society and inform a neoconservative foreign policy. "Our nationalism is that of an exceptional nation," they wrote and this would be the bedrock of an assertive foreign policy.[32]

These ideas ostensibly appeared to reflect Gramsci's insistence that for an intellectual vision to succeed – to become hegemonic – it had to incorporate elements of the world view of the masses. But Kristol, Kagan and Brooks departed from Gramsci with regard to how ideas were spread and who should do this. The neocon strategy was a "top down" dissemination of ideas in which the intellectual elite would provide instruction that would trickle down, via the Republican Party, to the masses. For Gramsci, hegemony could not be achieved by one group imposing a set of values on another in this top-down fashion.[33] An ideology could only be strong enough to become hegemonic if it had developed through a process of exchange – a dialogue – between the dominant group and the subordinate groups with which it was allied.[34] It could only remain hegemonic as long as that dialectical process continued. The neocons, in contrast, believed that their ideas would spread outwards from themselves to the foreign policy community and the main body of the Republican Party and downwards from the Party to the public. Reaching the grass-roots directly was not their priority. Despite the influence of the neocons in the aftermath of 9/11, during the Clinton years their network made very little attempt to communicate – let alone have a dialogue – with the masses. Their activity was a thoroughly elitist enterprise and this is evident in two key respects: first, in their principal target audience and second, in who their financial backers were.

Target audience

Many of the neoconservatives and their unipolarist allies were based at think tanks such as the American Enterprise Institute, the Project for the New American Century and the Center for Security Policy and wrote for magazines and journals such as *The Weekly Standard* and *Commentary*. They used these platforms to target two particular groups: first, the Republican Party and second, in a broader sense, the elite, Washington DC-based foreign

policy establishment: the "decision-making class," of which they were a part, that helped shape opinion on international affairs.[35] These influential Washington-based organizations and individuals were their principal audience. If the public received the information emanating from the neocons, it could only be salutary but it was not the priority. In targeting this narrow segment of American society, the neoconservative-led network was attempting to do several things. In the immediate sense, it sought to pressurize the incumbent President to follow a more hawkish line in foreign affairs. It also wished to marginalize the influence of balance-of-power realism and a supposed neo-isolationism within both the Republican Party and the Washington foreign policy establishment and, in doing so, win these two groups over to the neocons' own vision of American unipolarism. Finally, in expounding a new grand strategy for a post-Cold War America, the neocons and their allies were positioning themselves as potential appointees to the next Republican administration.

The think tanks and magazines that the neoconservatives were associated with usually stated their intended audience openly. Frank Gaffney's Center for Security Policy (CSP), to which many neocons were affiliated, stated on its online home page that the purpose of the organization was to "preserve a sense of identity and community among like-minded security policy practitioners, awaiting a day when many of them [might] be called upon to serve once again in government."[36] It went on to describe its intended audience as:

> [T]he U.S. security policy-making community (the executive and legislative branches, the armed forces and appropriate independent agencies), corresponding organizations in key foreign governments, the press (domestic and international), [and] the global business and financial community.[37]

The American Enterprise Institute (AEI), which also employed a number of prominent neoconservatives, had a similar purpose. According to its mission statement, its work was aimed at government officials and legislators, business executives, professionals, journalists, and (lastly) interested citizens. AEI scholars testified frequently before congressional committees, provided consultation to all branches of government, and are often cited and reprinted in the national media.[38] Similarly, the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs was established in order "to communicate with the national security establishment to explain the role Israel can and does play in bolstering American interests, as well as the link between American defense policy and the security of Israel."[39] The most interesting case is that of *The Weekly Standard*, the neoconservative news weekly, established by Kristol and John Podhoretz in 1995. The magazine became the seminal neoconservative publication and an important arena for the discussion, development and dissemination of neocon ideas during the Clinton years. Kristol claimed at the outset that the magazine was consciously trying to be the voice of a new

conservative era when it was launched in September 1995. Advance copies were hand delivered to the door steps of 200 of the most influential conservatives in Washington and the print run of the *Standard* began at a rather modest 50,000; a good indication that the editors did not envisage a mass market magazine with a large national circulation but one that reached a smaller number of people with influence.[40]

For the most part, then, the neoconservative-led network was not trying to connect with the general public. To be sure, members of the public might well be exposed to some of the elite media that the neocons appeared in – *The Weekly Standard* or *Foreign Affairs*, for example – but if and when this happened, it was merely an advantageous by-product of the main purpose of the exercise, which was to reach opinion-makers inside the Washington beltway and the Republican Party. Rather than being a grass-roots movement that reflected all or some of the concerns of its base, the neocon coalition projected its ideas at a geographically narrow and socially elite segment of society because, to them, that was what mattered. Kristol and his allies were not followers of Gramsci; in this respect their views were closer to the ideas of Leo Strauss, who taught that intellectuals acted as society's "propagandists."[41] Political life, wrote Strauss, was "characterized by controversies between groups struggling for power within the political community." Politics was a competition between intellectuals asserting opposing claims.[42] Irving Kristol, father of William and the so-called "godfather of neoconservatism," claimed that Strauss was one of the most important intellectual influences on him.[43] He, too, believed that intellectuals were responsible for establishing the moral, cultural and political climate of the country.[44] Kristol's son, William, has, in turn, cited Strauss as a major intellectual influence and several other neocons also studied Strauss.[45] Though it is impossible to state with certainty that these intellectuals acted as they did because they were Straussians, his views nevertheless resonate with their actions. Broadly speaking, this was the intellectual tradition that some of the key post-Cold War neocons inherited. For them, intellectual primacy was paramount and they worked toward this objective in a thoroughly elitist fashion, never attempting to form alliances with groups beyond their own narrow social base – the essential feature of an historic bloc and a prerequisite for the attainment of hegemony. This is not to say that a group acting in this manner could never achieve power; it could, but non-hegemonic rule would be weak, lacking in legitimacy and may require the leaders to resort to coercion in order to maintain their position. As Ransome points out, successful hegemony – rule based primarily on consent – requires exercising a leadership role over the masses *before* the accession to power.[46]

Funding

It was not just the neocons' intended audience that demonstrated how elite the network was. Their magazines and think tanks were supported financially by a handful of conservative philanthropic foundations; principally the Olin

Foundation, the Bradley Foundation and the Scaife Family foundations. The exception was *The Weekly Standard*, which was funded solely by the conservative media tycoon, Rupert Murdoch.

John Olin, the founder of the Olin Foundation, had spoken in the 1970s of the need to fund a "counter intelligentsia" of scholars, think tanks and publications to promote conservative ideas in the face of what he saw as the liberal establishment and the legacy of the 1960s.[47] Olin and his counterparts at the Bradley and Scaife foundations were very active in funding this counter intelligentsia throughout the 1970s and 1980s and in the 1990s, neoconservative think tanks such as the Center for Security Policy and the American Enterprise Institute, all benefitted from their largesse. Between 1992 and 2001, the American Enterprise Institute received 197 philanthropic grants in total. Of those, 142 came from the Olin, Bradley or Scaife Foundations, with the remaining 55 coming from thirteen conservative foundations that were less frequent donors. The Project for the New American Century (PNAC), the lobbying organization established by William Kristol and Robert Kagan in 1997, received its initial start-up grants from the Olin and Scaife foundations, and shortly after its establishment it received a contribution from the Bradley Foundation. The pattern is the same for other neoconservative organizations.[48]

The Weekly Standard was funded exclusively by Murdoch rather than by the foundations. After being approached by William Kristol and John Podhoretz, Murdoch agreed to finance the magazine, despite projected losses stretching into millions for the first couple of years. He invested approximately three million dollars into the *Standard* during its first year although Kristol was sole editor and publisher of the magazine. Murdoch himself remained adamant that the magazine was simply "a meeting of minds" and that Kristol retained complete editorial control. Kristol claimed he was

> happy to talk to him (Murdoch) about content. I welcome his thoughts and ideas. But the notion he's doing this to get his foot in the door in Washington is, of course, ludicrous. He doesn't have any trouble getting his calls returned.[49]

Kristol's claims seemed to be validated in subsequent years because the magazine's articles and particularly its editorials clearly reflected the distinct brand of internationalism advocated by Kristol and other neocons in other publications elsewhere.

The elite financing of these media meant that the neoconservative-led network was almost completely lacking in grass-roots support and had no base amongst the general public. The neoconservatives and their allies did not act in a secretive manner. They were lobbyists; their endeavours were very public. They simply did not attract a great deal of attention in the pre-9/11 period because, for the most part, their activities were not directed at the general public. At an institutional level, there were no organizations for the public to

join or to donate to, in the way that one might support an NGO or charity. There were no fundraisers and no newsletters. It was an elite network directing its activities at an elite audience. Accordingly, there was no moment of neoconservative hegemony in the pre-9/11 period. The neocons and their unipolarist allies never attempted to form an historic bloc of alliances. Ultimately, this was never their objective; they did not try to do this because they did not believe they needed to. To them, politics was a competition between rival elite groups and political leadership was achieved by winning those elite battles rather than building a broad-based coalition that cut across classes and other social divisions, as Gramsci had advocated.

9/11 and after

Yet it cannot be denied that 9/11 heralded a period of influence for neoconservative ideas. Policies that the neocons did so much to generate credence and currency for during the 1990s (preventive war, regime change in Iraq, the willingness to embrace unilateralism) became the driving force behind US foreign policy.[50] If it was not hegemony, then what was the nature of the influence they exerted? There were certainly high levels of public support for these policies over a sustained period of time. Opinion polls demonstrate conclusively the importance of 9/11 in generating support for the "war on terror" and the invasion of Iraq. On September 20 2001, after he had made clear his intention to respond to the 9/11 terrorist attacks by force, George W. Bush's approval rating reached a stratospheric 90 percent; a record in a Gallup Poll. It stayed above 80 percent until March 4 2002 – two months after the articulation of the "axis of evil" – and above 70 percent until 22 July that year, by which time Iraq had openly been in the administration's crosshairs for some time.[51] Five months after the terrorist attacks, almost 80 percent of the American public thought it was "very important" to pursue terrorist targets *outside* of Afghanistan, while over 80 percent approved of the decision, never voted on by Congress, to send a contingent of troops to the Philippines to help counter "Muslim terrorists"; the post-9/11 name for the separatists on the Philippine island of Mindanao.[52]

Moreover, the administration's persistent linking of Iraq and 9/11 led significant percentages of the public to believe that Saddam had been involved in the terrorist attacks. A *New York Times*/*CBS* poll of January 2003 showed that 45 percent of Americans believed that Saddam was "personally involved" with the attacks.[53] By September 2003, according to a *Washington Post* poll, this had increased to 69 percent.[54]

In a more abstract sense, Mario Del Pero argues that neoconservatism is a manifestation of exceptionalist nationalism that resonated with the public after 9/11 because that event unleashed a surge of exceptionalist nationalism.[55] This would imply that, in the aftermath of 9/11, neoconservatism was able to capture the spirit and desires of the American public. Del Pero's interpretation of neoconservatism has a great deal of merit; since

neoconservatism aimed to preserve America's supposed unipolar position, it was a uniquely American endeavour.

In the aftermath of 9/11, it did seem that the public supported some of the policies espoused by neoconservatives and neoconservatism itself tapped into popular narratives of American exceptionalism. Yet as we have seen 9/11 could not and did not lead to a truly hegemonic neoconservative moment since the neocons and their allies had never attempted to engage with or cultivate grass-roots support. Because of this, the post-9/11 support for policies they had advocated did not rest primarily on consent freely given. As is now widely documented, the Bush Administration resorted to coercion to achieve its objectives. In this case, it was non-violent coercion but nevertheless there was a concerted effort to manipulate public opinion on Iraq, terrorism and weapons of mass destruction by cherry picking intelligence and publicizing information that ostensibly supported the administration's case for war and ignoring anything that challenged it.[56] This fell short of what Gramsci called "the moment of force" – the use of violent coercion – but it went well beyond engaging in a genuinely mutual dialogue in order to win the consent of the public. To a significant degree, then, public opinion was manipulated and misled by the administration.

This may not be the only explanation for the public's support for the invasion of Iraq, however. We cannot discount the claim that the public was also motivated by revenge and pre-existing images of Saddam as a troublemaker, rather than by any national security rationale articulated by the neocons and their allies. Whereas the neocons and their unipolarist allies saw 9/11 as the gateway to a larger project to preserve America's supposed unipolar status, many Americans viewed the invasion of Iraq as an act of retribution. Public opinion data compiled by Liberman and Skitka suggests a strong relationship between Americans' desire to avenge 9/11 and their bellicosity toward Iraq.[57] Liberman and Skitka argue that even before the "axis of evil" speech in January 2002, significant percentages of the public favoured attacking Saddam as revenge for 9/11. In November 2001, 73 percent of those surveyed supported this course of action on the grounds that it would constitute retribution for 9/11, as opposed to concerns about WMD or links to Al Qaeda. In the four months after the attacks, this support for targeting Iraq was based on three "irrational" factors.[58] First, displaced blame – when the desire to punish one offender is so strong that it carries over toward others, particularly where there is a superficial resemblance between the targets. Second, intergroup antipathy, meaning that Arabs, Muslims and terrorists were conflated, derogated and collectively blamed for 9/11 (exacerbated by pre-existing images of Saddam as America's evil nemesis) and, third, a new risk assessment. The anger engendered by the terrorist attacks transformed assessments of risk, leading to a belief that attacking Iraq would be worth the risks it might involve. After January 2002, however, the administration's public attempt to make the case for war on the basis of Weapons of Mass Destruction and links with Al Qaeda had "a substantial impact" on public opinion and became a

much more important basis on which people gave support to a proposed invasion of Iraq. In other words, as anger over the 9/11 attacks faded in 2002, support for an invasion was sustained to a significant extent by the rationales proffered by the Bush Administration.[59] Whereas the neocons and their supporters saw the invasion as the gateway to a larger project to preserve America's position as the single pole of world power, for the public it was initially about revenge and subsequently about the security rationale constructed by the Bush Administration.

   That said, Gramscian hegemony does not require different strands of an alliance to support the same policy for exactly the same reasons. Alliances are heterogeneous phenomena where those involved do not necessarily share *identical* interests. Gramsci is somewhat vague on the degree of consensus required over rationales. As Perry Anderson points out in his seminal 1973 essay, Gramsci presents three different versions of hegemony, where each has a slightly different mix of force and consent depending on the circumstances.[60] Moreover, as Joseph Femia points out, consent can be equivocal or pragmatic; active or passive.[61] Subordinate members of the alliance may not necessarily agree with some of the motives of the leading members but the key point is that they all act in such a way as to further the principal objectives that they do share, whatever they may be. In this case, that meant supporting the invasion of Iraq, even if the general public did not view this in the same way as the neocons and their sympathizers. What these divergent motives do show us, however, is that the vision of a unipolar America was never embedded in the national consciousness. This makes sense, given the neocons' failure to prioritize building grass-roots support before their moment of influence. Despite Kristol, Brooks and Kagan's recognition that long term support would require tapping into America's widespread sense of exceptionalism, they never reached out beyond their own narrow social base meaning that at the height of their influence, their leadership (if we can call it that) could never constitute anything more than what Gramsci referred to as a period of "limited hegemony."[62] This was a moment of influence very different to his usual use of the term "hegemony." "Limited hegemony" was superficial leadership characterized by reactive, short-term public support that lacked legitimacy because its agenda was never embedded in the national consciousness; it was never a true representation of the desires of the masses because they had not been involved in its creation. The frailties of limited hegemonic rule meant that the ruling cohort could not rely on governing primarily through consent and would have to resort to coercion to achieve its principal objectives. In the long term, this resulted in a loss of legitimacy for both the neocons and the Bush Administration. By 2008, Bush's disapproval rating had reached 71 percent, higher than any other President in American history.[63] The public's failure to understand (and arguably even its distaste for) the unipolar project meant that support for the ventures in Iraq and Afghanistan quickly eroded as the US became bogged down in the post-war insurgencies.

Conclusion

In Spring 2004, John Ikenberry declared "the end of the neo-conservative moment." Ikenberry argued that in the two years after 9/11, neoconservative ideas had "taken Washington by storm" and provided the intellectual rationale for a radical new foreign policy.[64] Ikenberry was right to argue that the influence of the neocons on US foreign policy was waning but from a Gramscian perspective, the neoconservative moment had never been hegemonic. Their ideas had, as Ikenberry pointed out, taken Washington itself by storm but they had not put down roots in the country at large. The neocons disinclination to engage in an exchange with the masses in the pre-9/11 period meant that they never created the diverse, cross-class and trans-class alliances that were needed to sustain hegemony in the long term. Even their moment of "limited hegemony" was triggered by an external event – 9/11 – rather than through exercising leadership over the masses. In order to drum up support for the invasion of Iraq, the Bush Administration resorted to manipulating or "coercing" (albeit non-violently) public opinion by constructing a case for war based on intelligence that had been cherry-picked and exaggerated to suit the administration's purpose.

The intellectual architects of the war on terror had formed an elite network that believed in a "top down" approach to the dissemination of ideas – an approach which seemed to endure despite the obvious failure to retain high levels of public support for the operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. When those operations became unpopular, the neocons who spoke out to defend themselves blamed the Bush Administration for failing to execute the strategy properly. "The problem here is not a selling job," said Kenneth Adelman, a former member of the Center for Security Policy who had lobbied for regime change in Iraq. "The problem is a performance job." "You have to hold the President responsible" said Richard Perle.[65] The "scholar-activists" had done their job; their allies in government had failed. Presumably vindicated by the success of PNAC, in 2009 Kristol and Kagan decided to replicate that organization and form a new pressure group for the Obama era, this time called the Foreign Policy Initiative, suggesting that they remain devoted to the top down approach.[66] Similarly, John Bolton, who had been a director of the American Enterprise Institute before serving in the Bush Administration, returned there as a senior fellow in 2007. Perle continues to work at the AEI and Paul Wolfowitz became a visiting scholar there after his departure as head of the World Bank in 2007. There is no indication, then, that the intellectual architects of the Iraq war wish to change their modus operandi.

Neither is it likely that the demise of the neoconservatives and their allies will lead to any major changes in US foreign policy, in spite of their failure to become hegemonic. The unipolarist approach advocated by the neocons and their intellectual allies only ever accentuated existing trends in US foreign policy. The neocons had an impact because they were able to forge a close

working alliance with other conservatives – such as Cheney, Rumsfeld and Bolton – who shared their commitment to maintaining America's position as the single pole of world power. This in itself contributed to what Andrew Bacevich identifies as the emergence of a long-term, virtually unchallengeable post-Cold War bipartisan consensus in US politics that the country should remain the world's pre-eminent power.[67] Thus neoconservatism was not a revolutionary force. Perhaps, then, the more important lesson from the neoconservative moment of influence is the impact that intellectual movements can have *without* becoming hegemonic.

Notes

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62 Hoare and Nowell Smith, *Selections from the Prison Notebook*, pp. 210–76; D. E. Paul, "The Siren Song of Geopolitics: toward a Gramscian Account of the Iraq War," *Millenium: Journal of International Studies*, 36, 1, 2007, pp. 51–76. Paul argues that 9/11 was a neoconservative moment of American "Caesarism" – meaning a systemic crisis in which the old ruling order is challenged but the new is unable to fully assert itself. According to Gramsci, such an impasse could lead to the emergence of charismatic "men of destiny" – such as Caesar or, as Gramsci had witnessed in Italy, Mussolini. Paul argues that the American systemic crisis was caused by the Asian financial crisis of 1997, the Florida election debacle of 2000 and 9/11 and the anthrax attacks.
63 P. Steinhauser, "Poll: More disapprove of Bush than any other president," CNN.com, May 1 2008. Online. Available HTTP: <http://www.cnn.com/2008/POLITICS/05/01/bush.poll/> (accessed July 28 2009).
64 G.J. Ikenberry, "The End of the Neo-Conservative Moment," *Survival*, 46, 1, Spring 2004, p. 7.
65 D. Rose, "Neo Culpa," *Vanity Fair*, January 2007. Online. Available HTTP: <http://www.vanityfair.com/politics/features/2006/12/neocons200612> (accessed July 29 2009).
66 See http://www.foreignpolicyi.org/ Online. Available HTTP: <http://www.foreignpolicyi.org/> (accessed 10 August 2009).
67 A. Bacevich, *American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002, p. 215.

12 "You don't launch a marketing campaign in August"

The Bush Administration and the public before and after the Iraq invasion

Scott Lucas

On August 26 2002, Vice President Dick Cheney stood at a podium in Nashville, Tennessee, and told the 103rd Convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars: "We now know that Saddam has resumed his efforts to acquire nuclear weapons."[1]

In almost all narratives, Cheney's speech is the starting gun for the US march to the 2003 Iraq War. Over the next two weeks, the Bush Administration would send out its top members to tell Sunday talk shows and national newspapers of the imminent threat, with chemical, biological and nuclear weapons of mass destruction, from Saddam Hussein's Iraq. The President would follow with high-profile speeches on September 12 at the United Nations and on October 7 in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he declared,

> The evidence indicates that Iraq is reconstituting its nuclear weapons program. Saddam Hussein has held numerous meetings with Iraqi nuclear scientists, a group he calls his 'nuclear mujahedeen' – his nuclear holy warriors. … Iraq has attempted to purchase high-strength aluminum tubes and other equipment needed for gas centrifuges, which are used to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons.[2]

Those narratives do note obstacles in the political and military path, notably the resistance between December 2002 and March 2003 of other UN members such as France and Germany to a resolution authorizing war, but US public opinion is rarely one of those hindrances. Whether the Bush Administration's campaign is treated as an honest presentation of the facts or a deployment of "weapons of mass deception," its American constituents are largely passive recipients of the pretexts for military action.

The assumption is far from insignificant. While polls between August 2002 and March 2003 portray "basic support for US military action,"[3] that backing was often qualified by the insistence on UN or coalition authorization. Many respondents did not want the President to have unlimited war powers, and a majority of Americans continued to see Osama bin Laden, rather than Saddam Hussein, as the primary threat to their country.

The basic fact remains, however, that for a large majority of Americans, these conditions evaporated in the days before the launch of the US attack.

Was this primarily because of the administration's distortion and manipulation of the evidence of Saddam's weapons of mass destruction, supported by arguments such as the humanitarian "liberation" of Iraq's oppressed people? Or is the simpler but wider cause that most of the populace will support a Commander-in-Chief and the military, irrespective of their previous positions, when America goes to war?

The answer to those questions, both testing and transcending Ole Holsti's claim of a post-Cold War "period in which the relationship between public opinion and foreign policy takes on added rather than diminished significance,"[4] will be far more than a footnote in the history of American foreign policy. For if this was an episode of Bushian deception, then it might be treated as an anomaly, in which the public, cognisant of the differences between the attackers of 9/11 and the leader of Iraq, was "tricked" out of a commitment to multilateral action. However, if the public swing to endorsement of military operations was more the product of accepting and indeed validating the Government's decision for war, then the Bush Administration's pre-March 2003 campaign is merely a supporting factor. Far more important is the prospect that "internationalism," long before and well after 2003, is a thinly-sustained idea in American political culture; it can be overridden by the invocation to support the national colours in conflict and the shallowest of references to a "coalition of the willing."

The Bush Administration's consideration of the overthrow of Saddam Hussein had begun long before Dick Cheney's presentation to the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The first item on the agenda of the administration's first National Security Council meeting in 2001 was "Regime Change in Iraq." Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld outlined the objective, "Imagine what the region would look like without Saddam and with a regime that is aligned with US interests. It would change everything in the region and beyond. It would demonstrate what US policy is all about."[5] The administration, after meetings over three days, did not reach any firm decisions; instead, three working groups were established to consider options such as "smart sanctions" and stimulation of and support of an internal coup.

There was little consideration of public opinion in these initial deliberations; instead, the administration's course was set by other strategic factors. The US had not acted overtly for regime change since the relatively small 1983 Grenada and 1989 Panama operations, pulling back from the toppling of Saddam in the 1991 Gulf War, and the administration's military priorities were pursuit of Missile Defense and "transformation" of forces. The option of a "build-up" of Iraqi opposition was a revival of plans pursued more than a decade earlier, notably support of the Iraqi National Congress and Ahmed Chalabi, who led an unsuccessful coup attempt in 1995–96.[6]

The public position changed little throughout the spring and summer. "Smart sanctions" were abandoned as a possibility in June/July, primarily because of a lack of support from other countries in the United Nations, and the administration concentrated on room for manoeuvre with Missile defense,

beginning the process to abrogate the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. In a speech scheduled for September 11, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice was to declare that the main threat to US security was from long-range missiles:

> We need to worry about the suitcase bomb, the car bomb and the vial of sarin released in the subway. [But] why put deadbolt locks on your doors and stock up on cans of mace and then decide to leave your windows open?[7]

Both the strategic framework and the rhetorical presentation were changed by Al Qa'eda's attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Under the umbrella of the "War on Terror," the administration called for rapid military plans and deployments against enemy states. The suggestion of some officials, notably Undersecretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, for an invasion of Iraq was set aside for the overthrow of the Taliban in Afghanistan; however, as President Bush later made clear to journalist Bob Woodward, "If we could prove that we could be successful in [the Afghanistan] theater, then the rest of the task would be easier."[8] By September 29, Rumsfeld was asking the Joint Chiefs of Staff to begin preparations for an Iraqi war. On November 21, only days after the fall of Kabul, before the capitulation of the Taliban in other Afghan cities, and with no resolution through the killing or capture of Osama bin Laden, President Bush, via Rumsfeld, instructed General Tommy Franks to start the formal planning for an assault.[9]

Bush's sole reference to Iraq, in his speech of September 20 to a joint session of Congress, was the historical declaration, "This war will not be like the war against Iraq a decade ago, with a decisive liberation of territory and a swift conclusion."[10] The administration's private consideration of whether Iraq was behind the October 2001 anthrax attacks did seep, through deliberate or unintentional leaks, into the media,[11] but it was only in mid-November that the first orchestrated references to Iraq and its weapons of mass destruction were made.[12]

Once those first articles appeared, however, the floodgates for the administration's rhetoric were opened. On the day after Bush ordered formal military plans for Iraq, the *Los Angeles Times* asked, "After Kabul, Should Iraq Be Next?" The same week, Bush declared, "Saddam is evil … I think he's got weapons of mass destruction. And I think he needs to open up his country to let us inspect." He added, "Afghanistan is just the beginning" of a war on terrorism.[13] On December 9 2001, Vice President Cheney introduced the direct Iraq–9/11 connection, claiming on the national talk show *Meet the Press* that one of the 19 hijackers had met with an Iraqi official in Czechoslovakia in spring 2001.[14] Eleven days after that, the first of the dubious "weapons of mass destruction" stories appeared, as Judy Miller of the *New York Times* featured the declaration of Saddam's hidden stockpiles by Iraqi defector Adnan Ihsan Saeed al-Haideri, supplied by the Iraqi National

Congress, even though the CIA had already concluded that al-Haideri's claims were false.[15]

The general impression from samples of public opinion, however, was that the administration's disclosures were merely reinforcing an existing public sentiment for war with Iraq. A series of polls between November 2001 and March 2002 showed support for war between 67 and 78 percent.[16] A Gallup poll carried out between 14 and 16 December 2001 highlighted:

> Nearly three-quarters of Americans (74 percent) currently favor sending troops into Iraq to oust Saddam from power. Despite a lack of concrete evidence tying the Iraqi president's regime to terrorism worldwide or specifically to the Sept. 11 attacks, support for his overthrow increased 22 percentage points from its most recent pre-Sept. 11 level of 52 percent.

Gallup noted the continuity in US attitudes over a decade: "At least a majority of Americans have supported any kind of military action against Iraq since the conclusion of the Persian Gulf War. In fact, the level of current public support for a strike against Saddam is similar to that seen shortly after the Gulf War ended (70 percent in June 1993)."[17]

There were caveats on the public backing, however. A PSRA/*Newsweek* poll offered the potentially important finding in November that backing for war dropped to 56 percent when framed as "large numbers of U.S. ground troops to ensure control of the country;" Gallup found support, under the same condition, in March and April at 46–47 percent. However, the question was only asked on these three occasions; with war still a general prospect rather than a detailed certainty, the topic of ground forces did not feature in public debate at the start of 2002.[18]

Instead, the more immediate issue was the right time to focus on Iraq: "A majority of Americans (52 percent) believe that the U.S. should wait until hostilities in Afghanistan cease to go after Saddam, suggesting that the public sees the need to finish the war in one theater before undertaking a potentially much larger second campaign."[19] In March 2002, Vice President Cheney set off on an overseas mission to meet that condition, telling foreign leaders that it was time to move away from Afghanistan (even though eight US troops had died only days earlier in the unsuccessful operation in the Tora Bora mountains to capture Osama bin Laden) and concentrate on Iraq.

The problem for the Vice President, however, was that overseas reaction would not match the support of American constituents. Cheney had told the Council on Foreign Relations in mid-February, "If aggressive action is required, I would anticipate that there will be the appropriate support for that, both from the American people and the international community."[20] Yet, while Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair offered general support, the British set the conditions that "efforts had been made to construct a coalition/ shape public opinion, the Israel-Palestine Crisis was quiescent, and the options for action to eliminate Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)

through the UN weapons inspectors had been exhausted." Equally important, Britain could not deliver on the necessary pretext for war, failing to provide a dossier of Saddam's WMD violations by the end of March.[21] Middle Eastern rulers were far less receptive than Blair to Cheney's arguments.

It was these rebuffs that raised a possible intersection between the attitudes of foreign governments and those of the US public. It was one thing for Americans to back a war in principle, another to accept a unilateral invasion. When asked whether the US should "act now" or "wait for its allies," only 22 percent of respondents supported the former option; the reframing of the question in December 2001, "Do you think the U.S. should take immediate action against Iraq or try to develop an international consensus before taking action against Iraq?" brought 36 percent support but 54 percent opposition. The Bush Administration had to face the prospect that a "Coalition of One" would not be sufficient to retain public backing. The domestic challenge was now firmly linked to the challenge of international diplomacy.

A pair of Top Secret British memoranda, prepared upon the return of British officials from meetings in Washington in July 2002, highlighted both the difficulties for the White House and its attempted solution through manipulation of evidence. A Cabinet Office memorandum declared, "The US Government's military planning for action against Iraq is proceeding apace. But, as yet, it lacks a political framework." Part of the necessary framework was a campaign to establish the legitimacy of the war, so the officials recommended "the development of an information campaign to be agreed with the US," with "an ultimatum [for United Nations inspections which] could be cast in terms which Saddam would reject."[22] Two days later, the head of Britain's Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) wrote to the Prime Minister and his highest-level advisors, "Military action was now seen as inevitable. … The intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy." A British official, taking notes on the Prime Minister's subsequent meeting, summarized: "The case was thin."[23]

On August 16 2002, the Bush Administration took up the issue at the National Security Council. There was unanimous agreement for Powell's proposal of a tough new UN resolution and more intrusive weapons inspections, but debate ensued on the content of the President's justification at the UN General Assembly on September 12. The Pentagon and Cheney argued that Bush should declare that the United States had existing legal authority to attack based on Iraq's material breach of past resolutions, but Powell and the State Department argued for an opportunity for UN weapons inspections to work.[24]

By this time, however, the administration faced another, unexpected impediment. The *Wall Street Journal* published an opinion piece by Brent Scowcroft, the National Security Advisor in the administration of Bush's father, which argued, "The central point is that any campaign against Iraq, whatever the strategy, cost and risks, is certain to divert us for some indefinite period from our war on terrorism."[25] Scowcroft appeared on television to expand on his criticism, and other advisors to the elder Bush, such as James Baker, added to the concern.[26] For the first time, the White House faced the

prospect of a widespread public rebellion against an Iraq operation. So Cheney made a decision: he would make the case, even before the President's appearance at the UN, for a pre-emptive attack.

Thus the oft-cited mantra of Andrew Card, Bush's Chief of Staff, "From a marketing point of view, you don't introduce new products in August," is very, very wrong.[27] The White House Information Group had already been set up, and now Cheney had made the most provocative of challenges to Baghdad and to any dissenters in the US. The next day, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld reinforced the message to US Marines at Camp Pendleton in California,

> At Pearl Harbor we lost several thousand Americans. In the 21st century we're dealing not simply with conventional capabilities, but potentially with unconventional capabilities, with chemical and biological and radiation and nuclear weapons. That creates a different circumstance. There you're not talking about sustaining an attack and losing hundreds or a few thousand, you're talking about risking the lives of tens of thousands and potentially hundreds of thousands of people.[28]

It was now that the measurement of public opinion finally came into play, as polling organizations belatedly focused on the attitudes to war against Iraq. In a telephone poll conducted August 19–21, just after the Scowcroft/Baker criticisms and before Cheney's speech, Gallup found that 53 percent of Americans favoured a ground invasion, a marked decline from the previous December and a return to the levels of February 2001, while 41 percent were opposed. (Other surveys had similar results.)[29] Only 20 percent maintained their support if the US acted unilaterally. The increase in scepticism occurred despite the continuing belief that Saddam was connected with terrorism – 86 percent of respondents believed he backed groups planning to attack the US and 53 percent still connected him to 9/11 – and the opinion of 94 percent of the survey that he had developed or was developing weapons of mass destruction. (More than 80 percent believed Saddam would use them against the US.)[30]

A poll threw up further challenges. Almost 70 percent said that their support was dependent on Congressional approval of military action. This was not problematic, as the administration intended to get a supporting resolution; however, 68 percent also wanted UN endorsement. Perhaps more surprising, given the Cheney and Rumsfeld speeches, 58 percent said "the Bush administration has not done enough to explain to the American public why the United States might take military action to remove Saddam Hussein from power."[31]

On Sunday, September 8 2002, the administration tried to leave no doubt about its campaign. Cheney, Rice, Rumsfeld, and Powell each appeared on political talk shows to highlight the threat from Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. The Vice President said on *Meet the Press*,

> What we've seen recently that has raised our level of concern to the cur-
> rent state of unrest, if you will, if I can put it in those terms, is that
> [Saddam] now is trying, through his illicit procurement network, to
> acquire the equipment he needs to be able to enrich uranium to make the
> [atomic] bombs.

Rice put the security case succinctly, "We don't want the smoking gun to be a
mushroom cloud."[32]

There was another flank to the attack. On the same day, Judith Miller and
Michael Gordon, using information liberally leaked by the administration,
declared on page one of the *New York Times* that "Iraq has stepped up its
quest for nuclear weapons and has embarked on a worldwide hunt for mate-
rials to make an atomic bomb."[33] Bush officials, having provided the material
for the story, could now base their rhetoric on the "facts" of independent
journalism. Both Rice and Cheney cited the article, with the Vice President
continuing his case on *Meet the Press*:

> There's a story in The *New York Times* this morning – this is – I don't –
> and I want to attribute *The Times*. I don't want to talk about, obviously,
> specific intelligence sources, but it's now public that, in fact, he has been
> seeking to acquire, and we have been able to intercept and prevent him
> from acquiring through this particular channel, the kinds of tubes that
> are necessary to build a centrifuge.

At the same time Cheney tailored other statements both to support the
administration's diplomatic strategy (which, ironically, he had opposed in
private deliberations) and to meet public concerns: "We're working together
to build support with the American people, with the Congress, as many have
suggested we should. And we're also, as many have suggested we should,
going to the United Nations."[34] Four days later, Bush did go to the UN
General Assembly, although he offered an addendum to his presentation of
an international front: "If Iraq's regime defies us again, the world must move
deliberately, decisively to hold Iraq to account. We will work with the UN
Security Council for the necessary resolutions. But the purposes of the United
States should not be doubted."[35]

Whether these statements, repeated and amplified over the following weeks,
altered public opinion or merely shored up pre-existing sentiments, the next
Gallup poll (September 13–16 2002) was a reassurance for the administration.
While firm support for a war had only increased, to a 57–39 margin, one-
third of those opposing the conflict "would not be upset whether such a war
did or did not occur." The White House could now count on more than two-
thirds of Americans endorsing or accepting military action.[36]

The threat to the administration was that "a majority of Americans say
they would oppose using U.S. ground troops to invade Iraq if the United
Nations were opposed to the action, or if the United States had to take this

action alone." Thus, the pattern of the White House's diplomacy, and its inter-action with domestic attitudes, was woven: in November, the US obtained a 15–0 Security Council vote for Resolution 1441, which mandated a further meeting to ensure "full compliance … to secure international peace and security" if Iraq was found "in material breach" of requirements for inspec-tion and verification of its stocks of weapons of mass destruction.[37] In a poll the following week, 76 percent of respondents doubted that Saddam would comply. However, only 31 percent said "that if Saddam does not comply with the U.N. resolution, the United States should invade Iraq with ground troops." If, however, there was a further UN resolution authorizing war, that figure rose to 71 percent.[38]

Contrary to the expectations of many, Saddam accepted the UN inspec-tions, which began on November 27 2002, and the head of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), Hans Blix, gave his first report to the Security Council on January 14 2003. The previous day, however, President Bush had let it be known, first to Saudi Ambassador Bandar and then to his Secretary of State, Powell, that the invasion of Iraq was now a certainty.[39] So the conflict had been set in motion: in advance of any United Nations resolution and without confirmation of its "coalition," the administration had decided on war.

A poll at the start of January indicated that American support for a ground assault had slipped to a margin of 53–42, but it was a survey from January 31–February 2 that spelled out the difficulties for the Bush path to war. Gallup summarized, "Many Americans are not convinced that the most ser-ious weapons charges against Iraq definitely have merit (although the vast majority suspect they do)." In striking contrast to the 94 percent in August 2002 who believed Saddam had developed or was developing chemical, bio-logical, and nuclear munitions, "only half are certain Iraq has weapons of mass destruction or the facilities to make them;" another 44 percent thought this "likely but not certain." Only 39 percent were certain that Saddam had ties to Al Qa'eda (48 percent said "likely"). So "three in five Americans [now] consider Iraq to be a long-term, rather than an immediate, danger to the United States."[40]

Put bluntly, this was the bleakest picture of public backing for armed con-flict with Iraq, not only since 9/11 but since the advent of the Bush Admin-istration, emerging after the President had decided there was no turning back from a military showdown. This was the critical backdrop for Secretary of State Powell's presentation to the United Nations on February 5 2003, for "if Powell presents convincing evidence that any of these charges are true, a majority of Americans would then believe the United States is justified in using military action against Iraq."[41]

Powell's appearance offered a partial solution for the White House. Well-received by the media, it also widened support for war to a 63–34 margin; of the 34 percent opposed, more than half (20 percent of the total survey) said their minds could be changed. However, there was still a "red line" for a

majority of Americans. Only 39 percent would back military operations without a second UN resolution; over the next month, that number fluctuated between 30 and 38 percent.[42]

And that resolution never came. With countries such as France, Germany and Russia insisting on further inspections before military action, the US could not be sure that a resolution in the UN Security Council would not be vetoed. Indeed, by early March, there was no prospect that Washington and its British ally could even get a majority vote in favour. On March 14, Secretary of State Powell signalled that the US was abandoning the effort.[43]

Logically, then, the administration should have faced a crisis with its domestic constituency on the eve of war. Yet on March 18 2003, after President Bush's final ultimatum to Saddam – leave Iraq or there will be an attack – and the day before the first US aerial assault, Gallup reported "66% of Americans approve of the president's decision to go to war if Saddam Hussein does not leave Iraq within 48 hours. A strong majority of 68% also agrees that the United States has done all it can do to solve the crisis diplomatically."[44] Only one-third of Americans, according to CBS News, now thought Bush "should have waited for specific United Nations approval of military action before issuing [the] ultimatum."[45]

So what had happened to the significant minority of Americans who favoured war, but only with United Nations approval? The Gallup summary was blunt but sweeping in its claim, "The American public has basically endorsed the Bush administration's attempts to position the United Nations and such allies as France and Germany as too slow and too unrealistic." Two-thirds of Americans said the administration "has done the best job possible given the circumstances or that it had done a fairly good job, while making some mistakes," while "only 37% of Americans now say the United Nations is doing a good job trying to solve the problems it faces, down 13 points since January."[46]

The turn against the UN was supported by a vitriolic anti-French and anti-German campaign in American political culture. The black comedy of steps such as Congressmen Bob Nye's renaming of french fries in the Capitol cafeteria as "Freedom Fries" or *The New York Post*'s depiction of the French and German Foreign Ministers, with superimposed animal heads, as the "Axis of Weasels" was only the tip of the public iceberg. Gallup found, in a poll of March 14–15, that "64% of Americans currently express an unfavorable view of France, while only about half that number, 34%, have a favorable view. These numbers represent a major reversal of opinion from that expressed just last month."[47]

And the overwhelming image of Saddam Hussein, despite the far-from-certain findings of the UN inspector, was that he was a threat to the US. Almost 90 percent of Americans continued to believe that Saddam was "involved in supporting terrorist groups that plan to attack the United States," and 51 percent still connected him to the events of September 11

2001. For a third of those who asserted the Iraqi involvement with terrorism, this was the main reason for a military invasion.

Yet this rising antipathy toward international institutions and other countries, and the underlying conceptions of the Iraqi leader, are far from sufficient to explain the sharp rise in acceptance of a war without any international legal support and with only a handful of active members in the "coalition of the willing."[48] On the weekend before Bush's Sunday night ultimatum, slightly more than half of Americans offered support for an invasion even if the UN Security Council voted against a resolution. That figure fell to 47 percent if there was no vote at all.[49]

The most direct explanation – an Occam's Razor of public opinion and foreign policy – is "the well-documented tendency for Americans to rally around their leaders when there is the actual reality of war."[50] As Gallup noted, public opinion was also finely balanced (and the vote for Congressional support was much narrower) before the 1991 Gulf War, but "as the bombing of Iraq began, support jumped 24 percentage points overnight." The conclusion? "Americans would like to have the United Nations involved in any decision to go to war, but they (that is, Americans) are prepared to go to war with just a few allies and without U.N. approval if it comes to that – at least in the short term."[51] Thus, in the first polls after US air and ground operations began, 76 percent of Americans supported the war, a figure close to the 79 percent of 1991. The support was buttressed by optimism about the course of the war. Two-thirds of those polled thought the conflict would be resolved within three months (7 percent thought it would be over within a week), and the same figure predicted that at most there would be "several hundred" casualties. Almost 80 percent believed that the US operations would succeed in removing Saddam from power.[52]

Although there was a "blip" in military operations at the end of March, with the US and British advance hindered by sandstorms and enemy attacks, the downturn did not last long enough to take the conflict beyond the short term envisaged by most Americans. Support remained around 70 percent up to Saddam Hussein's departure from Baghdad on April 9. The same figures were recorded for approval of the President, approval of Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, and approval of the conduct of the war.[53] Attention turned, even before Saddam's flight, to the future of the US in the country, with 84 percent of respondents believing "that rebuilding Iraq and establishing a new government will be more difficult for the United States than winning the war and taking control of Iraq."[54] (However, in light of subsequent events, it is striking that only 21 percent believed that "a significant number" of US troops would be in Iraq "longer than two years" from the end of the war.[55])

The feel-good factor from the short-term military victory lasted through the spring and most of the summer. A month after the "liberation" of Iraq, 65 percent of Americans said "the United States and its allies are winning the war against terrorism," a sharp increase from the 37 percent recorded at the start of March. Two-thirds of Americans absolved the administration of

the charge of misleading the public over Iraq's weapons of mass destruction; indeed, more than 80 percent still believed "Iraq had facilities to create weapons of mass destruction … had biological or chemical weapons … [and] was trying to develop nuclear weapons before the war." At the same time, the perception of a long war was settling in amongst the public: 77 percent believed that circumstances would "require the U.S. to put military troops in combat situations in other countries as it did in Iraq and Afghanistan."[56]

It was only in September 2003, after the Iraqi insurgency had been marked by a series of bombings, including the destruction of the United Nations headquarters and the assassination of the leading Shia cleric Ayatollah Mohammad Baqr al-Hakim, that doubts emerged. Support fell to 50 percent, down from 63 percent a month earlier, a decline paralleled in Bush's approval rating. The catalyst for the increased scepticism did not appear to be the general resistance but the specific issue of Saddam Hussein: almost 90 percent of Americans believed he was still alive and almost half thought he was "actively directing terrorist attacks."[57]

The common allegation is that the Bush Administration led the US public into war with Iraq through the manipulation, even fabrication, of "intelligence."[58] As Garth Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell state bluntly, "What we do know is that propaganda played a key role in bringing [the Iraq war] about."[59] Even former White House spokesman Scott McClellan, while stopping short of saying Bush deliberately lied, has described the administration's "political propaganda campaign" to ensure war took place.[60]

The allegation of Government intent is undoubtedly true. Within hours of the strikes on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the administration was seeking evidence to tie Saddam Hussein to the attacks. Donald Rumsfeld ordered, "Best info fast. Judge whether good enough hit S.H. [Saddam Hussein] at same time. Not only UBL [Osama bin Laden]. Go massive. Sweep it all up. Things related and not."[61] Senior officials, notably the Vice President, pressed the CIA to find the "right" evidence to verify Saddam's development of weapons of mass destruction, while an *ad hoc* unit was established in the Department of Defense, directed by Assistant Secretary of State Douglas Feith, to arrange and disseminate the appropriate "analyzes."[62] Cheney's "aluminum tubes" allegation of August 26 2002 was based on specious evidence which was upheld by a few analysts in the CIA but disputed by many others. And the Powell presentation of February 5 2003 to the United Nations was largely a series of tenuous connections and evidence from sources which were discredited, either at the time or subsequently.

But does this add up to the "leading" of public opinion into a war? This was not a case, as Warren Strobel had identified in the 1990s, of the "continuing testimony to the power of the chief executive to lead, at least in the short run, in ways that are not automatically in line with prevailing sentiment" or, in the conclusion of Quincy Wright's oft-cited 1942 *The Study of War,* "executive action … hampered by an active and independent public opinion."[63] A majority of Americans, in every poll since the end of the 1991

Gulf War, had supported the renewal of hostilities with Saddam Hussein, the figure never falling below 52 percent before and after 9/11. This was not an episode which turned on the American public deciding that it wanted war but on an administration moving toward that policy, assured of general backing for its measures. Indeed, a case can be made that the Executive die was cast in November 2001 when military plans were ordered and that the political effort was launched in March 2002.

How then could this constitute, in the claim made by Ole Holsti, a post-Cold War "era in which public opinion plays a more autonomous role?"[64] In the case of Iraq, there were two important provisos to the public's general acceptance of White House initiative. The lasting condition attached to the general support of the American public was that the US should be joined by others in the invasion of Iraq. The reasons for this were never drawn out by surveys – added military security through additional forces? political, moral, and legal legitimacy? a rejection of the image of American dominance and imperialism? – but the caution remained up to March 19 2003. The second challenge to the Executive's position was the possibility of a shift in the discourse within the political elite that could alter the base of public opinion.

The two conditions intersected in August 2002. The failure of the Cheney mission in March to assemble a coalition meant that the administration had to set aside the political possibilities for military action. That suspension was compounded and reinforced by international complications, such as the flare-up of violence between Israel and Palestine, and domestic crises such as the Enron debacle. So the administration concentrated on establishment of a general framework for its political and military approach, embodied in the "preemptive action" unveiled in President Bush's June speech at West Point and later presented in the 2002 National Security Strategy.[65] Planning for an Iraq operation proceeded, but as the British memoranda of July 21–23 noted, this lacked a political framework both in the march to war and in the aftermath of occupation. It was only at the beginning of August that the administration turned once again to the mechanics of diplomacy, with Powell pushing for (and winning) a path through the United Nations.

With the delay in the administration's implementation, a space opened up for the questioning of a war strategy, particularly in the relatively slow news cycle of the summer. The comments of Brent Scowcroft and James Baker opened up, for the first time, the possibility of a debate that would unsettle the general level of public support. Dick Cheney's speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars was meant, first and foremost, to forestall that debate by re-establishing the fundamentals that had underlay the public's acceptance of war since 1991: 1) Saddam was still a threat; 2) Saddam was seeking capabilities to elevate that threat; 3) the first priority of US national security strategy was to preclude that threat. Meanwhile, the other prong of the administration's approach, recourse to the United Nations, was implemented to meet the major condition of public endorsement.

This did not settle the issue. The objection to unilateral American action would persist up to March 2003. However, when confronted in the end with a decision of maintaining the condition or accepting the administration's launch of military operations, most of the public chose the latter. The Bushian manipulation of evidence, supported by a mainstream media which allowed itself to be framed as independent presenters of that evidence, may have played a part in that decision. In the end, however, American public opinion followed a simple but powerful rule: in time of war, side with your Government.

What responsibility, if any, should be placed on the Bush Administration and its pre-war selling of the invasion for the post-"liberation" debacle in Iraq? As Holsti puts the general case,

> Leaders who ascribe the most importance to public opinion and are most sensitive to public preferences may also be the most likely to engage in oversell. The temptation may appear all the more attractive if the costs of hyperbolic or misleading rhetoric are not adequately appreciated at the time or if it is believed that these costs will not have to be paid until much later – perhaps even by another administration.[66]

That allegation is likely to be examined and supported as the 2003 Iraq War turns from contemporary episode into "history," not just with the hyperbole on the issue of weapons of mass destruction but also in areas such as the response of Iraqi citizens to occupation and Iraq's capabilities to establish a new political system and to pay for post-war reconstruction. Similarly the formula of an "Iraq Syndrome," following the "Vietnam Syndrome," with a supportive public opinion in the early stages of "successful" war giving way to an oppositional public opinion as success is complicated and then recedes, will be debated.[67]

In that context, the Bush Administration and Iraq 2001–3 may be framed as an anomaly rather than as a representative example in a wider post-Cold War pattern of US foreign policy and public opinion. The administration's goal, and thus its attitude to opinion, was geared to an unprecedented goal: establishment of a perpetual American "preponderance of power" through a demonstration case of regime change in Iraq. The complications with that quest overwhelmed Bush's effort, as the administration moved from soundbite (Donald Rumsfeld's "Freedom's untidy") to the assertiveness of Bush's "Bring It On" to the "freedom agenda" of 2005 to the myth of the "surge" from 2007.

This explanation may be a comfort – there is unlikely to be a repeat of this episode – but it is also an opt-out from more important conclusions. Future administrations may not have the strategic framework of a unipolar era but the Obama White House has already intervened, with both "soft" and "hard" power, in the name of other goals from the persistent War on Al Qa'eda to "liberal intervention." Those future administrations may invoke the need for

multilateral co-operation, but they will also maintain the doctrine of American primacy and thus American "freedom of action."

Internationalism, in other words, is secondary if not disposable to national interests and pursuits. And, beyond any specifics of the manipulations of the Bush Administration, internationalism proved disposable for the American people. A majority of the American populace set international support as a condition for the march to war, but they put aside that requirement when faced with the imminence of military action and the call to arms of their President. The prospect that they will do so again is the overriding legacy of the Bush Administration's war in Iraq.

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